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THE SEMINARY AND THE WAR.

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Union Seminary has an illustrious record of patriotic service in times of war. Its students responded to the call of their country in 1861. It is one of the cherished distinctions of the institution that it emptied its halls into that immortal army which was always outnumbered but never outfought, and that its students took part in that tremendous struggle in which the North won the victory and the South in so great a measure won the glory. A number of these students laid down their lives in that conflict, the first three to fall being the Rev. Dabney Carr Harrison, chaplain, killed at Fort Donelson; Edgar Wirt Carrington, killed at Seven Pines, and Captain Hugh A. White, killed at Second Manassas—all in 1862. About seventy others served as chaplains or soldiers in the ranks. One of the most distinguished of these, still with us, a universally honored and beloved citizen of Richmond, is the Rev. James P. Smith, D. D., captain and aide de camp to Stonewall Jackson, and for nearly fifty years past stated clerk of the Synod of Virginia. One of the professors in the Seminary, Dr. Robert L. Dabney, was General Jackson's chief of staff, and subsequently his biographer.

The Seminary, therefore, is simply showing itself true to type in sending so many of its sons into the great army which in our day is going forth to battle for the saving of Christian

THE POWER OF CHRIST.

A BOOK STORY OF THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO **MARK**.

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Message of Mark: In Christ the power of God is available for man. "If I touch but his garments, I shall be made whole." (Mk. 5:28; 6:56. A. R. V.)

GENERAL INTRODUCTION.

1. *Author, Date, Place and Occasion.*

John Mark (see Acts 12:12, 25; 13:5, 13; 15:36-39; Col. 4:10; 1 Pet. 5:13; Mk. 14:51-52; Philemon vs. 24; 2 Tim. 4:11) wrote his graphic and realistic account of the power of Christ about 61 A. D. at Rome, probably at the earnest request of Paul and Peter and the Roman Church. Irenaeus informs us that "Matthew published a written gospel also among the Hebrews in their own dialect, while Peter and Paul in Rome were preaching the gospel and founding a church. But after the departure of these, Mark the disciple and interpreter of Peter, he also having written the things preached by Peter, transmitted them to us." In speaking of Peter's preaching in Rome, Eusebius declares: "So greatly, however, did the light of piety enlighten the minds of Peter's hearers that it was not sufficient to hear but once, or to receive the unwritten teaching of the divine preaching, but with all manner of entreaties they importuned Mark, whose gospel we have, and who was a follower of Peter, that he should leave them in writing a memorial

of the teaching which had been orally communicated to them. Nor did they cease their solicitations until they had prevailed with the man, and thus became the cause of that writing which is called the gospel according to Mark."

2. *The Readers and the Purpose.*

Mark probably wrote primarily for the Christians at Rome in 61 A. D. His purpose is clearly revealed by the content and arrangement of the book itself, and by the emphasis which it places upon the idea of the "power of Christ," which runs through almost every paragraph of the book. The Romans admired power and delighted in the thought of a far-reaching kingdom. Hence, Mark's purpose is to present Jesus Christ as the all-conquering Son of God; as the mighty servant of God and of man, employing his superhuman power in freeing men from the dominion of sin, in healing their sicknesses, in doing them good; in short, in making God's beneficent power and grace available for every human need. His aim is to show how the Son of God wields almighty power in the establishment of a universal kingdom of grace. Mark has been called "the disciple and interpreter of Peter." His book is the expansion of two well-known sayings of Peter: "Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God unto you by mighty works and wonders and signs which God did by him in the midst of you" (Acts 2:22); and "Jesus of Nazareth, how God anointed him with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good, and healing all that were possessed of the devil; for God was with him" (Acts 10:38).

3. *Theme of the Book.*

The theme is briefly stated in 1:1:—"the good tidings of Jesus Christ, the Son of God." The coming of the mighty Son of God is the best news ever heralded to the human race; for he makes available for men the infinite power of God. The central idea of Mark's book is the power of Christ. From its opening paragraph containing the testi-

mony of John Baptist, "There cometh after me he that is mightier than I," on to the closing paragraph with the statement, "The Lord working with them," the power of Christ is the gracious music running through the entire book, and sounding loudest at the end to linger longest in the memory. (See Mark 1:7, 8, 13, 27, 31; 2:10, 12, 14, 28; 3:5, 8, 11, 13, 15, 27; 4:41; 5:20, 30, 42; 6:2, 5, 7, 41, 51, 56; 7:30, 37; 8:8, 23-25; 9:23; 10:53; 11:15-18; 12:36; 13:26; 14:25, 62; 15:22-39; 16:6, 9, 12, 14-18, 19-20.)

Mark represents Christ's power as *superhuman*. He was clothed with all the attributes of God. His power was also *unselfish*. He never used it for his own benefit, but always in doing good to others. It was *saving*, beneficent power. He used every particle of it in saving the bodies, minds and souls of men. It was *victorious* power. It never met defeat. "Mark's gospel," says Lange, "presents a series of victorious conflicts." It was *available* power. Suffering, sin-burdened men had but to touch the hem of his garment, and they were made whole (5:28; 6:56). It is an *ever-present, ever-working* power." The Lord working with them" (16:20). The mighty Son of God is advancing through the deeps of time, conquering and to conquer.

Gathering these various aspects of Christ's power into one statement, we may say that the complete theme of Mark's book is: In the almighty and all-loving Christ every power of God is available for every need of man; or, Jesus Christ wields almighty power in the establishment of a universal Kingdom of grace.

DETAILED ANALYSIS.

- I. *The appearance of the all-conquering Son of God and his preparation for the display of his almighty power.*
1:1-13.

Christ's preparation was three-fold:

- A. The preaching of John Baptist. 1:1-8.

1. John's preaching was the beginning of "the good news" and the fulfilment of Old Testament prophecy. 1:1-3.
2. Substance of his preaching. 1:4-8.
 "Prepare by repentance for the coming of him who is mightier than I and who shall baptize you with a baptism mightier than mine, even the baptism of the Holy Spirit."

B. Christ's own baptism. 1:9-11.

His baptism with water symbolized his enduement with the Holy Spirit, who descended on him in the form of a dove, thus preparing him for his ministry of power and signifying the gentleness of his reign. A voice out of heaven proclaimed him to be the Messianic Son of God.

C. The temptation. 1:12-13.

Christ's power is seen in his defeat of Satan, and in the subjection of wild beasts and of angels to him.

II. *The Son of God mightily proclaims the Kingdom of power.*
 1:14-8:26.

Six stages: A, B, C, D, E, F.

A. The beginning. 1:14-45.

1. The first proclamation. 1:14-45.
 It sounded through Galilee like a mighty trumpet.
2. The first call for helpers. 1:16-20.
 What power over men! He calls four fishermen, and "straightway" leaving their nets they followed him.
3. The first miracle. 1:21-28.

Healing of a demoniac in the synagogue at Capernaum. Marvelous power! Even the unclean spirits obey him (1:27).

4. The first Sabbath in Capernaum. 1:29-34.

Christ reveals his power over disease, all manner of sickness and demons.

5. First preaching tour in Galilee. 1:34-45.

(1) Tour was undertaken after prayer. 1:35-39.

(2) It proved to be a triumphant procession, crowded with displays of almighty power. 1:40-45.

B. The opposition. 2:1-3:6.

Mark selects five incidents which illustrate the power and the authority of Christ and the opposition caused by the impact of that power of those who were determined not to accept Jesus as the mighty Messianic Son of God.

1. Paralytic healed and his sins forgiven. 2:1-12.

In 2:6-7 Mark first refers to opposition to Jesus on the part of the scribes and Pharisees.

2. Call of Levi and the feast in his house. 2:13-17.

Christ's power over men is strikingly seen in the immediate response of Levi, who leaves a comfortable income and follows Jesus. In 2:16-17 note the opposition of the scribes, and the reason for it.

3. Jesus' answer to a question about fasting. 2:18-22.

The Pharisees and the disciples of John Baptist complain that Jesus and his disciples do not fast. In his answer Jesus clearly asserts his supreme authority over John Baptist, the Pharisees and the Old Testament dispensation. His reply is divided into two parts:

(1) The incongruity of fasting and joy. 2:18-20.

"As long as I am with my disciples, they cannot but rejoice. Hence they cannot fast and be sad."

(2) The incongruity of new and old. 2:21-22.
 "Such observances as fasting are not befitting to the new gospel era."

4. Plucking grain on the Sabbath day. 2:23-28.

The Pharisees claim that Jesus and his disciples violate the law of the Sabbath (2:23-24). Christ makes three points in his answer:

- (1) It is right to violate the strict letter of the law to satisfy hunger (2:25-26).
- (2) The Sabbath law itself is the servant of man, and not man the servant of the law (2:27).
- (3) I, the Son of man, am Lord even over the Sabbath law (2:28).

5. A withered hand healed on the Sabbath. 3:1-6.

C. The separation. 3:7-35.

As a result of the opposition to Jesus on the part of the Jewish leaders, there now begins a separation between the followers of Christ and the rest of the community. Mark records four incidents to show the growth of this separation.

1. Withdrawal of Jesus and his disciples to the sea of Galilee. 3:7-12.

However, so great is the fame of Jesus that great crowds from all parts of the land follow him to his place of retirement; and he has to procure a boat to be in attendance on him in order to keep the people from falling upon him and crushing him in their eagerness to obtain his healing touch: "The meaning of it all is, that the period of conflict does not signify a loss of popularity, but rather that the great access of favor with the people swells the tide of opposition."

2. Appointment of the twelve. 3:13-19.

As the separation grows, the community of believers increases, and Christ appoints the twelve to help him in the work of teaching his new followers.

3. Antagonism between Christ's Kingdom and the Kingdom of Satan. 3:20-30.

These two kingdoms are hostile, the one to the other. Between them can be no compromise or collusion. The spirit of the one is the Holy Spirit of God; the spirit of the other is Satan himself. Those who identify these two opposite spirits reveal in themselves an irrecoverable moral blindness and hardness, and thus become guilty of endless sin and never receive forgiveness.

4. Natural and spiritual kinsmen. 3:31-34.

The climax of the separation caused by Christ is seen in that those who by nature are close to each other may be far removed spiritually.

D. The instruction. Chs. 4-5.

Christ now begins to instruct those who have separated themselves from the world to become his followers. This he does by means of parables (teaching) and by miracles (deeds).

1. Instruction by parable. 4:1-34.

The parables of the Kingdom's growth, in which is also illustrated its separating power.

(1) The sower. 4:1-20.

Central truth of the parable: the effect of preaching depends on the condition of hearer's heart.

a. Parable given. 4:1-9.

b. Parable explained. 4:10-20.

c. Parable applied. 4:21-25.

Here Christ makes a personal application of the parable to the Twelve. He makes two points: first, the purpose of truth is to determine character and conduct; considered as seed, truth bears fruit, considered as light, it

shines (4:21-23); second, the measure and increase of the knowledge of truth will be proportioned to the hearer's capacity (4:24-25).

- (2) The land bearing fruit of itself. 4:26-29.

Central truth: the perfect adaptation of divine truth to the human heart insures its slow, but certain and steady, growth.

- (3) The mustard seed. 4:30-34.

Central truth: the small beginning and gradual growth of the Kingdom is not inconsistent with its ultimate greatness.

2. Instruction by miracle. 4:35-5:43.

- (1) Christ's power over nature is seen in his stilling the tempest. 4:35-41.

- (2) His power over demons is illustrated in the healing of the Gerasene demoniac. 5:1-20.

- (3) His power over chronic disease is shown by healing the woman with an issue of blood. 5:25-34.

- (4) Finally, his power over even death is seen in his raising Jairus' daughter to life again. 5:21-24, 35-43.

- E. The extension of Christ's ministry of power amid increasing opposition. 6:1-7:23.

1. His rejection at Nazareth leads to a wider extension of his work. 6:1-6.

2. A sending forth of the Twelve by two and two is occasioned by the extension of his ministry. 6:1-29.

- (1) Having been instructed by Christ, the Twelve go forth and preach repentance, cast out demons and heal the sick. 6:7-13.

- (2) The ministry of the Twelve stirs the guilty conscience of Herod Antipas, the tetrarch of Galilee. 6:14-29.

3. Feeding of the five thousand. 6:30-44.

The return of the Twelve brought together a vast multitude of people, who in their eagerness to hear Jesus had failed to provide themselves with food. In compassion the Saviour feeds them.

4. Walking on the sea. 6:45-52.

5. Two-fold result of this wider extension of his ministry: popularity and opposition. 6:53-7:23.

(1) Popularity. 6:53-56.

Multitudes from the district of Gennesaret flock to Jesus and are healed.

(2) Opposition. 7:1-23.

Scribes and Pharisees from Jerusalem condemn Christ for allowing his disciples to disregard the ceremonial law about eating with unwashed hands. Christ's reply to his enemies is two-fold: (a) You set aside even the law of God in order to keep the traditions of men (7:6-13); (b) it is not what a man takes into his stomach but what comes out of his heart, that defiles him (7:14-23).

F. The retirement. 7:24-8:26.

Northern Galilean ministry. Training the Twelve.

1. Syro-phoenician woman's daughter healed. 7:24-30.

2. Deaf and dumb man healed. 7:31-37.

3. Feeding of the four thousand. 8:1-10.

4. Pharisees rebuked for demanding a sign. 8:11-13.

5. Disciples warned against the leaven of the Pharisees and of Herod. 8:14-21.

6. Blind man healed. 8:22-26.

III. *The Son of God announces that his Kingdom of power is to be won only through his suffering, death and resurrection.* 8:27-13:37.

This section is linked together by three announcements of

Christ's death (8:31; 9:30-31; 10:32-34). These three announcements also give us the three organic divisions of this section of the book.

A. First announcement of his death, and events connected therewith. 8:27-9:29.

1. Occasion of the announcement was the apostles' bold profession that Jesus is the promised Messiah. 8:27-30. Simon Peter speaks for the Twelve. It was only when the apostles had been brought to a firm belief in his Messiahship that Christ could announce to them his approaching death.
2. His death announced, and the conditions of discipleship in view of his death made plain. 8:31-9:1.
3. The glory that should follow his death anticipated in the Transfiguration. 9:2-13.

This is the meaning and purpose of the Transfiguration. It gave Peter, James and John, the leaders of the Twelve, a glimpse of the glory beyond the death of Christ, the crown beyond the cross, the Kingdom that should issue from his sufferings and death.

4. Christ's announcement of his death caused the apostles to lose faith in him, as shown in their failure to heal the dumb demoniac. 9:14-29.

B. Second announcement of his death, and instructions connected therewith. 9:30-10:31.

1. Death announced. 9:30-32.

In 9:31 it is said that he "was teaching" (imperfect tense) his disciples as to his death; that is, his death was the theme of repeated and constant instruction.

2. Instruction given in view of his approaching death. 9:33-10:31.

(1) True greatness. 9:33-37.

True greatness consists in self-denying service for others.

- (2) Selfish and jealous exclusiveness condemned. 9:38-50.

All who are sincerely doing work for Christ belong to him, however humble that work may be (vs. 38-41), and by opposing any humble worker for Christ, you may cause one of his "little ones" to stumble (vs. 42-50).

- (3) Marriage and divorce. 10:1-12.
 (4) Little children blessed. 13:13-16.

Little children represent the very spirit to which the Kingdom belongs.

- (5) The peril of riches. 10:17-31.

Wealth may prove to be a barrier shutting men out of the Kingdom of God, as illustrated in the case of the rich young ruler.

C. Third announcement of his death, and events connected therewith. 10:32-13:37.

1. The announcement. 10:32-34.

As Jesus begins his last journey to Jerusalem, he once more makes his death the central subject of his instruction.

2. Again he teaches his disciples the meaning of true greatness, which is sacrificial ministry for others. 10:35-45.

3. Blind Bartimaeus cured. 10:46-52.

4. The triumphal entry. Jesus saluted as Messiah (Sunday). 11:1-11.

Here begins the last week in Jerusalem. Mark gives large space to our Saviour's last week.

5. The barren fig tree. 11:12-14 (Monday).
 6. Cleansing of the temple. 11:15-19 (Monday).
 7. The fig tree withered. 11:20-26 (Tuesday).
 8. Conflict with the Jewish leaders. 11:27-12:40 (Tuesday).

- (1) Christ's authority challenged. 11:27-33.
- (2) Parable of the vineyard. 12:1-12.
- (3) Three questions by the Jewish rulers. 12:13-34.
- (4) Jesus' question concerning David's son. 12:35-37.
- (5) Warning against the scribes. 12:38-40.
- 9. The widow's two mites. 12:41-44 (Tuesday).
- 10. Discourse concerning the downfall of the temple and city and concerning his second coming. 13:1-37 (Tuesday).

IV. *The Son of God through death and resurrection conquers death and takes his universal Kingdom of power.* Chs. 14-16.

- A. Events leading to his death. 14:1-15:20.
 - 1. Sanhedrim conspire stealthily to put Jesus to death (Wednesday). 14:1-2.
 - 2. Mary of Bethany anoints Jesus beforehand for his burying (Wednesday). 14:3-10.
 - 3. Judas conspires with the Sanhedrim to deliver Jesus up to them (Wednesday). 14:11-17.
 - 4. Institution of the Lord's Supper (Thursday). 14:12-26.
 - (1) Preparation for the Passover. 14:12-16.
 - (2) At the Passover, Jesus predicts his betrayal. 14:17-21.
 - (3) He institutes the Supper. 14:22-26.
 - 5. Prediction of Peter's denial (Thursday). 14:27-31.
 - 6. The agony in Gethsemane (Thursday). 14:32-42.
 - 7. The betrayal and arrest (Thursday). 14:43-52.
 - 8. Trial before the Sanhedrim (Friday). 14:53-65.
 - 9. Peter's denial (Friday). 14:66-72.
 - 10. Trial before Pilate (Friday). 15:1-20.
- B. The crucifixion, death and burial (Friday). 15:21-47.

C. The resurrection of Jesus Christ. Ch. 16.

The all-conquering Son of God bursts the bands of death, and, coming forth alive and victorious out of the grave, resumes the direction and control of his universal and unending Kingdom of power.

1. An angel announces the resurrection. 16:1-8.
2. Various appearances to the disciples. 16:9-13.
3. Final appearance accompanied by the commission and empowering of the apostles. 16:14-18.
4. The ascended Son of God continues to work in mighty power with the apostles. 16:19-20.

“The Lord working with them” (16-20).

He is working still; and he will continue to work until “the Kingdom of the world is become the Kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ: and he shall reign for ever and ever.”