

**-Psalm 119:136-176, Mark 1-6 (#94)**

**Psalm 119:136-176**— The psalmist pleads for deliverance from his adversaries in order to devote himself to God's law.  
*How does the psalmist's passion for God's Word encourage you?*

**Mark**— The gospel of Mark was written by John Mark, the cousin of Barnabas, to the Gentiles in the city of Rome sometime between 55 to 65 A.D. as he heard it from the Apostle Peter. The key verse Mark 10:45 says, "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many (NIV)." This verse presents Jesus as the suffering servant with the first half of the book showing Him as the Servant of the Lord, and the last half revealing His suffering as a ransom for the sins of the world. The gospel of Mark is the shortest of the gospels and is a book of deeds showing a rapid succession of actions by Jesus with very little of His teaching as compared with the other gospels. The last 12 verses of this gospel were omitted in earlier manuscripts and possibly added later to the gospel to give it a sense of completeness.

**Mark 1**— Skipping the genealogy, birth, and childhood of Jesus, Mark starts his book with the public ministry of John the Baptist, the forerunner of Jesus, as prophesied in Isaiah 40:3. Jesus came from Nazareth to be baptized by John in the Jordan River, and then is immediately compelled by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by Satan (vv. 1-13). After the imprisonment of John the Baptist, Jesus preaches the good news of the kingdom of God in Galilee and calls four fishermen to become His disciples and follow Him (vv. 14-20). As He comes to Capernaum and enters the synagogue, all are astonished at Him since He teaches with authority and uses that authority to command the unclean spirits to leave a man (vv. 21-28). After the healing of Peter's mother-in-law, all those who were sick or demon-possessed were brought to Jesus for healing and deliverance. Early the next morning Jesus was able to get away to a deserted place to pray before being found by Peter who urged Him to take advantage of His popularity (vv. 29-39). A leper implored Jesus to heal him if He was willing. Jesus said, "I am willing, be made clean (vv. 40-45)."

*How did Jesus prepare Himself for His extremely busy schedule? See verse 35.*  
*Thinking of our busy schedules, what are some creative ways we can get alone with God in prayer and reading the word?*

**Mark 2**— Returning to Capernaum, Jesus enters a home to teach, but the house was so full of people that four men who brought a paralyzed man to be healed were unable to bring him through the door. Taking the man to the roof and then making a hole in the roof, they let him down in a mat in front of Jesus. First, after seeing the faith of the men, Jesus declares that the man's sins are forgiven. Then, to show His authority to forgive sins, Jesus heals the paralyzed man (vv. 1-12). After calling Levi (Matthew) to follow Him, Jesus went to the house of Levi who had invited his tax collector friends to eat with Jesus. Seeing Him mingling with tax collectors and sinners, the scribes complained to Him about associating with such men (vv. 13-17). People came to Jesus and asked him why His disciples were not fasting like the disciples of John and the Pharisees. Jesus indicated that when He is gone they indeed would fast. He said that He had not come to follow the old wine of Judaism but the new wine of the Kingdom of God. Complaining about His disciples eating grain while walking through the fields on the Sabbath,

Jesus declared that He was the Lord of the Sabbath (vv. 18-28). *The Pharisees asked Jesus why His disciples did not fast (v. 18). Should Christians fast today? If so, what would be the purpose of fasting? See verse 20, Matthew 6:16-18, and Acts 13:1-3.*

**Mark 3**— Jesus heals the man with the paralyzed hand on the Sabbath which causes the Pharisees and Herodians to unite in order to plot His murder (vv. 1-6). The common people follow Jesus in masses to such an extent that they would crush Him. Because of this, He would have to teach them from a small boat that was a few feet away from the shore (vv. 7-12). Of all the disciples that followed Jesus, He chose twelve to be His Apostles (sent ones) so that He could personally invest Himself in their lives in order to prepare them and empower them for ministry (vv. 13-19). Thinking Jesus had gone off the deep end, His family came to restrain Him and take Him back home. Instead of conceding to His family's wishes, He emphasized His spiritual family that is united to do the will of God in their lives. When the scribes accuse Jesus of being demon-possessed, He warns them of the foolishness of their accusation since it would cause the kingdom of Satan to be divided. Attributing the Holy Spirit empowered work of God done by Christ to that of Satan would cause the scribes to be eternally damned since a person cannot be saved by the Holy Spirit when at the same time rejecting the manifestation of the Holy Spirit (vv. 20-35). *The family of Jesus thought that He had become unhinged and possibly deranged, and they came to have a family intervention and take charge of Him. Do you have any family members that oppose your faith in Christ? What would you say is the best way to deal with them so that they will come to know Christ?*

**Mark 4**— Jesus delivers the parable of the Four Soils by the Sea of Galilee, and then privately explains their meaning to the twelve disciples (vv. 1-20). He says that we are responsible to let our light shine for Him and not keep it hidden. The person who is diligent to listen and apply spiritual truth will be given a greater understanding of God's truth (vv. 21-25). He then proceeds to give two parables to his disciples: (1) the Growing Seed (vv. 26-29) and (2) the Mustard Seed (vv. 30-34). He and His disciples head across the Sea of Galilee when a fierce windstorm arises causing the boat to become swamped with water. Jesus, who is sleeping in the stern of the boat, is awakened by His frantic disciples. Rebuking the wind, the sea immediately becomes calm, and the disciples marvel at the person of Jesus (vv. 35-41). *Analyze verses 35 to 41, the story of Jesus calming the storm. (1) Why was Jesus able to sleep during the storm? (2) What did the disciples not understand about Jesus? (3) Of what did the disciples accuse Jesus? (4) What was the real reason the disciples were fearful? (5) What does this story say about our trust in the Lord when we are fearful during our storms of life?*

**Mark 5**— As Jesus travels to the region of Gerasenes which is the Gentile side of the Sea of Galilee, He confronts a man possessed by a legion of demons who is completely uncontrollable and self-mutilating. Jesus casts the demons out of the man and allows them to enter a herd of pigs that rush down a steep bank and die in the sea. The people of Gadara were more fearful of Jesus than the demons and asked Him to leave their region. Although he wanted to be with Jesus, the former demon-possessed man is told to go back to his people and tell them the great things the Lord has done for him (vv. 1-20). Returning to the Jewish side of the Sea of Galilee, a synagogue leader by the name of Jairus begs Jesus to come and heal his daughter who is on the verge of death. On the way to the house of Jairus, a woman who has been suffering from bleeding for twelve years touches Jesus and is healed. Coming to the house of Jairus and finding the 12 year old girl dead, Jesus goes to her room with her parents and raises her from the dead to the utter astonishment of everyone (vv. 21-43). *Why did the people of Gadara beg Jesus to leave their region? What does this say about their values? How does this apply to our world and church?*

**Mark 6**— Jesus returns to His hometown of Nazareth and is amazed at their unbelief which limited the miracles He was able to do (vv. 1-6a). He sends out the twelve disciples in pairs to nearby villages with the message of repentance, the ministry of healing the sick, and with authority over unclean spirits (vv. 6b-13). Herod Antipas thinks that Jesus is John the Baptist raised from the dead. Previously he had imprisoned John the Baptist, and then reluctantly executed him at the request of the daughter of his unlawful wife Herodias who hated John the Baptist for His convicting preaching about their sin (vv. 14-29). After a busy time of healing the sick and casting out demons, Jesus tried to take the disciples to a remote place by boat. When they came to shore, a huge crowd was awaiting them. After teaching into the night, Jesus had compassion on the multitude and fed five thousand men (plus women and children) through the multiplication of the five loaves and two fish (vv. 30-42). After sending the disciples in a boat to the other side of the sea, Jesus comes to them walking on the water in the middle of the night during a huge storm. He tells them to take courage and not be afraid. Upon arriving at Gennesaret, Jesus continues His ministry of healing (vv. 45-56). *As you meditate on the story of Jesus feeding the five thousand, what are some lessons we can draw from this story about the disciples, and for our own personal lives?*

*Sources for summary and questions: 1. Serendipity Bible for Groups, c. 1988 Littleton, CO. 2. MacArthur Study Bible ESV, 1997 Thomas Nelson, Inc. 3. Life Application Bible HCSB c. 1988 Tyndale House Publishers, Inc. 4. The Complete Bible Companion c.2014 Barbour Publishing, Inc. Uhrichsville, OH. 5. ESV Study Bible c. 2008 Crossway Bibles, Wheaton, IL. 6. The World Bible Handbook, Lawrence Richards, Word Inc. Waco, TX. 7. The Quest Study Bible NIV, c. 1994 Zondervan Publishing & Christianity Today, Grand Rapids, MI & Wheaton, IL. 8. The Transformation Study Bible, c. 2009, David C. Cook. 9. Key Ideas Bible Handbook, Ron Rhodes, c. 2016, Harvest House Publishers, Eugene, OR. 10. 500 Questions & Answers from the Bible, c. 2006, Barbour Publishing, Uhrichsville, OH. 11. Understanding the Bible c. 2000, Holman Publishers, Nashville, TN. 12. Homan Bible Handbook, c.1992, Homan Bible Publishers, Nashville, TN. 13. Moody Bible Commentary, c. 2014, Moody Publishers, Chicago, IL. 14. Life Essentials Study Bible, c. 2011, Holman Bible Publishers, Nashville, TN. 15. The Message, c. 2002, Eugene Peterson, NavPress Publishing Group, Colorado Springs, CO.*

## **Psalms 120-121, Mark 7-12 (#95)**

**Psalm 120**— This is a psalm requesting deliverance from deceitful and violent men. *How would you compare the heart of the psalmist with that of his fellow citizens (vv. 5-7)?*

**Psalm 121**— This is a song reminding us of God's provision. *List all the ways God takes care of us as given in this psalm.*

**Mark 7**— The conflict with the Pharisees and scribes continues as they accuse Jesus of not following the tradition of the Elders which was doing a ritual hand washing before they ate. Since Mark was written to a non-Jewish audience, he explained the customs and traditions of the Jews. Jesus taught that the Pharisees used the tradition of the Elders to keep from obeying the law given by God through Moses. He made it clear that the real defilement of a person arises from the evil thoughts, words, and actions that come out of the heart, not any food that goes into the body (vv. 1-23). Withdrawing to Tyre and Sidon, Jesus heals the demon possessed girl and is amazed at the faith of her Greek mother who was from the region of Phoenicia in Syria. He then heals the deaf mute giving him the ability to hear and speak clearly at the astonishment of the crowd (vv. 24-37). *By what measurement should we judge the traditions of our church, and how can we keep church traditions from becoming ritualistic or overly formal?*

**Mark 8**— While Jesus is in Decapolis, a Gentile area, He has compassion on a crowd of 4000 men (plus women and children) that had been with Him three days and had become very hungry. Being slow to remember and learn, His disciples questioned where they would find enough food to feed such a large crowd. After feeding the multitude with seven loaves and some fish, Jesus and His disciples get into a boat and travel to the district of Dalmanutha (vv. 1-10). The Pharisees demand a sign but Jesus sighs because He knows that even though they had seen many powerful miracles that no sign will convince them that He is the Messiah. The disciples receive a rebuke from Jesus for their lack of trust in Him since they discussed with great concern how they had not remembered to bring bread with them on the boat, but they were forgetting that Jesus had just fed 4000 people with only seven loaves of bread (vv. 11-21). Jesus heals a blind man in stages instead of instantly. After Peter declares Him as the Messiah, Jesus reveals to them that He must suffer and die at the hands of the Jewish leaders and then will rise again. Peter is then rebuked by Jesus for trying to persuade Him to not go to the cross. He then declares that no one can follow Him unless that person follows the way of the cross which involves obedience, suffering, dying to self and the world, and boldly declaring allegiance to Him (vv. 22-38). *Jesus said in verse 38, "For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words...the Son of Man will also be ashamed of him when He comes in the glory of His Father with the Holy Angels (HCSB)." Do you remember a time in your life when you were ashamed to identify yourself with Christ? If so, describe what happened. What can you do to keep from being ashamed of Christ?*

**Mark 9**— Taking Peter, James, and John on a high mountain with Him, Jesus was transfigured before their eyes. Appearing with Elijah and Moses, His clothing became dazzling white, and He received approving words of His Father (vv. 1-13). Returning from the mountain, a large crowd meets Him, and He heals a demon-possessed boy who His disciples could not heal. The disciples were arguing about who was the greatest, but Jesus makes it clear that the greatest is the one who is the servant of all. The measure of true greatness is self sacrificing service to the least important of society such as a little child was in that day (vv. 14-37). #12 p. 578 Although the disciples were unable to cast the demon out of the boy, they were forbidding another man from doing it since he was not of their group. Jesus told them not to stop that man from doing it. He warns of the seriousness of sin in our lives that cause others not to believe in Him. Using hyperbole, Jesus puts emphasis on taking extreme measures to rid sin from our lives because of its damning effects on us and the lives of others. As Christians, we need to have saltiness which means complete allegiance to Christ, His teachings, and His gospel so that we can be effective witnesses to the world. A part of our saltiness is to be at peace with other Christians by recognizing our common loyalty to Christ and the gospel (vv. 38-50). *The teaching of verses 38 to 41 is that we need to acknowledge other Christians who are not a part of our church, group, or denomination. What are the essential scriptural beliefs necessary to be held by another ministry, group, or church in order for us to recognize them as truly Christian and orthodox? In other words, what are the fundamental doctrines (teachings) of the historic Christian Church?*

**Mark 10**— Chapter 10 begins our Lord's final journey which starts at Galilee, continues through Judea, and ends with His suffering on the cross in Jerusalem. Answering a question of the Pharisees, Jesus speaks on the subject of marriage and divorce (vv. 1-12). He encourages the little children to come to Him and teaches that everyone must approach Him like a little child. The rich young ruler comes to Jesus to find out how to inherit eternal life, and Jesus tells him that the one thing he lacks is to sell everything he has, give it to the poor, and follow Him. Stunned by the demand, he went away grieving. Thinking that being rich was a sign of God's blessing and approval, the disciples were also astonished at His words. Then Jesus assures them that leaving behind the security of material possessions to follow Christ will be duly rewarded in this life and the next life (vv. 13-31). Jesus then reveals for the third time that He was going to Jerusalem to suffer and die but would rise from the dead three days later. James and John ask for a special place with Jesus in His future kingdom. He uses this occasion to teach that the greatest in the kingdom is the one who shows a servant's heart (vv. 32-45). As Jesus, His disciples, and a large crowd are leaving Jericho, a blind beggar continually cries out to Jesus to have mercy on him, and he receives his sight (vv. 46-52). *Some say that Jesus never disapproved of homosexuality. After reading verses 5 to 9, how would you answer them?*

**Mark 11**— After two of His disciples found a young donkey in the way Jesus had described, He mounts it and crosses over into Jerusalem with the shouts and praises of the people (vv. 1-11). The next day Jesus enters the temple complex and throws out all those who are there for commercial reasons instead of the purpose of making it a house of prayer for all nations. Returning the next day from Bethany to Jerusalem, the disciples commented that the fig tree Jesus had cursed the previous day was completely withered from the roots up. Jesus used this as an illustration of believing prayer (vv. 12-26). Being angry at this intruder and the loss of money at the temple complex, the Jewish leaders ask Jesus by what authority He is doing these things. Jesus astutely asks them a question which they do not wish to answer because of their fear of the crowd (vv. 27-33). *What were the lessons Jesus was teaching by cursing the fig tree? See also vv. 20-26, Luke 13:6-9, John 15:4, 6, 8, 16, and Hosea 9:10.*

**Mark 12**— During this final week before His death, Jesus has a series of confrontations with the Jewish leaders who were desperate to find a way to kill Him. He gives them the parable of the Evil Farmers, and they understand He is talking about them (vv. 1-12). Now, even more offended and anxious to destroy Him, they try to trap Him in His own words by asking Him if it was lawful to pay taxes to Caesar or not. Jesus amazed them with His answer (vv. 13-17). Then the Sadducees, who reject the resurrection, give Him a hypothetical case of a woman who was married to seven different men (one at a time) and each in time died. “In the resurrection, whose wife will the woman be?” Jesus made it clear that there would be no marriage in resurrection and then cited Moses to prove there will be a resurrection (vv. 18-27). Surprisingly, a scribe asks Jesus a great question as to which command is the most important of all (vv. 28-34). Then Jesus turns on the religious leaders asking them a difficult question and riddle about the relationship of David and the Messiah from Psalm 110:1 (vv. 35-37). Jesus then condemns the scribes for their desire for recognition, their hypocrisy, exploitation of widows, ostentatious dress, and greed. In comparison, a poor widow is commended for her generosity because she gave all that she had (vv. 38-44). *In verse 34 Jesus said that the scribe who had answered correctly was “not far from the kingdom of God.” What does it mean that a person is “not far from the kingdom of God,” and what would be necessary for that person to be a part of kingdom of God?*

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## Psalms 122-123, Mark 13-16, Jeremiah 41-42 (#96)

**Psalm 122** — This is a psalm sung by the Israelites as they made their pilgrimage to Jerusalem. *What are some things that these pilgrims are instructed to do?*

**Psalm 123** — This psalm is an expectant prayer to God for mercy and relief from prideful contempt. *Are you actually expecting an answer when you pray?*

**Mark 13**— Jesus gives His Olivet Discourse (taught from the Mount of Olives) to His disciples, prophesying events in the future that will take place before His second coming. He says that although the years ahead will be marked by false messiahs, wars, disasters, growing wickedness, and persecution of God's people, they still have not come to the final day of God's wrath that will be poured out in an unprecedented fashion during the Tribulation period when Israel sees the abomination of desolation (vv. 14, 19) that was spoken by Daniel the prophet (Daniel 9:24-27). Since we don't know when Christ will come back, we need to be faithful, watchful, and ready for His imminent (any moment) coming. The context of this chapter is especially to be applied to the nation of Israel who will need to be prepared to flee Judea for protection when they see the man of lawlessness appear in the temple and demand to be worshipped as God (II Thessalonians 2:1-12). The key words for all of us regarding Christ's second coming are to "Be Alert and on guard" and to "Watch out/Stay awake (vv. 5, 9, 23, 33, 35, and 37)." *What are the signs Jesus gave to signal the end of the age?*

**Mark 14**— The Jewish leaders had determined that they must get rid of Jesus because He was becoming more and more confrontational about their evil practices. A woman (Mary - John 12:3) anoints Jesus with costly perfume for His burial which He predicts would be proclaimed to the whole world in memory of her (vv. 1-9). The chief priests are overjoyed that Judas was breaking rank and willing to betray the Lord. Jesus sends two disciples to go and prepare for the Passover in a large upper room. He inaugurates the Lord's Supper with His disciples and points out that one of them will betray Him. Jesus foretells Peter's denial and then agonizes in prayer in the garden of Gethsemane, knowing of His forthcoming suffering and death. Although Jesus prays that the Father will take away this cup of suffering from Him, He says, "Nevertheless, not what I will, but what You will (vv 10-42)." Awakening His disciples, Judas and a crowd come to arrest Jesus and take Him away to the high priest's house. Upon hearing from Jesus that He is the Son of God, the Jewish leaders have the evidence they need to accuse Him of blasphemy and then bring Him to Pilate. Peter denied Jesus three times and then weeps bitterly (vv. 43-72). *Judas betrayed Jesus, and Peter denied Him. Explain how the betrayal of Judas was different from Peter's denial.*

**Mark 15**— The assembly of Jewish leaders takes Jesus to Pilate and accuses Him of subverting the nation and many other things, but Jesus would not answer them. Knowing that He was innocent and that the chief priests were envious of Him, Pilate tried to liberate Jesus by offering to release Him instead of the evil Barabbas, but religious leaders would have none of it. Because of the continual cries of the mob to crucify Him, Pilate gives Jesus over to their will and delivers Him up to be crucified (vv. 1-15). He is mocked and beaten by the soldiers and then delivered over to death. Jesus was led away towards the place called “The Skull” (Golgotha/Calvary), and Simon from Cyrene helped Him carry His cross. Jesus is hanged between two criminals and is taunted by the chief priests, those who passed by, and even those with whom He was crucified. At three in the afternoon after darkness had covered the land for three hours, Jesus cried out with a loud voice, “My God, My God why have You forsaken me?” Then Jesus again cried out with a loud voice and breathed His last. The curtain in front of the Holy of Holies in the temple was split in two from top to bottom (vv. 16-39). Joseph of Arimathea asks and receives permission from Pilate to take the body of Jesus and hurries to wrap it in fine linen and place it in a tomb cut out of the rock. Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Jesus saw where His burial tomb was located (vv. 40-47).

*1. Jesus cried out, “My God, My God why have you forsaken me?” Was Jesus actually abandoned by His Father? Explain. 2. Why did the curtain in the temple split in two from top to bottom?*

**Mark 16**— On the day after the Sabbath at sunrise, Mary Magdalene and the other women go to the tomb with spices to anoint the body of Jesus. Coming to the tomb, they find that the large stone that covered it was rolled away, and a young man in a white robe was sitting in the tomb. They are told that Jesus the Nazarene has been resurrected and that they are to go and tell the disciples and Peter to meet Him in Galilee. The women were completely astonished and overwhelmed by the words (vv. 1-8). Most reliable manuscripts of the book of Mark finish the book at verse 8 but verses 9-20 were most likely added later to give the book completeness. The book closes with the appearance of Jesus with Mary Magdalene, the two men walking on the road, and Jesus appearing to the eleven apostles. The Great Commission is given by Jesus with the mention of signs that accompany those who believe. The book ends with the ascension of Jesus to heaven and then sitting at the right hand of God (vv. 9-20).

*Verse 16 says, “Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.” Does the Bible teach that water baptism is necessary to be saved?*

**Jeremiah**— Jeremiah’s ministry lasted from 627 until 586 B.C. when he was forcibly taken to Egypt by a group who were afraid of Babylonian reprisals. God called Jeremiah as a young man to be a prophet of doom because of the continued evil of Judah. There was a revival under the leadership of King Josiah, but from the moment of his death (609 B.C.), the real hearts of the leaders and people were exposed. God called Jeremiah to confront them about their sin and His forthcoming judgment and urged them to repent and return to Yahweh. The role of a prophet was



very difficult for Jeremiah since the people didn't want to hear the truth. He did not declare God's judgment with a hard heart but with such a tender heart that he was called the "weeping prophet." Even though he suffered beatings, imprisonment, great persecution, and was left to die in a cistern full of mud, God promised to be with him and protect him. Although the world would say that Jeremiah's life was a failure, in reality it was a huge success because for forty years he was obedient and faithful to God's calling regardless of the opposition or personal cost. #3 p. 1195

**Jeremiah 41**— Although warned, Gedaliah, the one appointed by Babylon to be in charge of the land, was assassinated by Ishmael who also struck down the Judeans and Chaldean soldiers that were with him. Then Ishmael and his men killed 70 of 80 men who came to Jerusalem to worship. Ishmael went to the town of Mizpah and took captive the people that were left and headed back to Ammon (vv. 1-10). Johanan and the commanders went after Ishmael and his men but they escaped. However, Johanan and his men were able to rescue the captives taken by Ishmael and brought them back to the town of Gibeon. They decided to escape to Egypt because of their fear of the king of Babylon (11-18). *What deceptive tactics did Ishmael use to assassinate Gedaliah and his men as well as killing 70 men from Samaria who were coming to Jerusalem to worship? Who does this remind you of? See also II Corinthians 11:3.*

**Jeremiah 42**— Fearful of the king of Babylon, Johanan and all the people that were left in Israel want to go to Egypt. Before leaving for Egypt, they approach Jeremiah asking him to seek the Lord's will on the matter. After ten days Jeremiah received direction from the Lord and summoned Johanan, the commanders of the armies, and all the people. Yahweh, through Jeremiah, said in no uncertain terms they must not go to Egypt but must stay in the land and the Lord will protect them and cause them to receive favor in the eyes of the King of Babylon. However, if they decide to go to Egypt, the Lord says, "know for a certainty you shall die by the sword, by famine, and by pestilence in the place where you desire to live (v. 22)." *What does Jeremiah promise the people, and what does Johanan and the people promise Jeremiah? See verses 4 to 6.*

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