

Week 4 – Essential Promises

February 24, 2021

John 1:1-14

- A. “In the Beginning...” - Origins and self-understanding
 - a. Gen 1 — Creation, Exodus, and Torah-Wisdom
 - b. Greek tradition — from Homer’s gods to the pre-Socratics *archai* and the stoics’ *logos*
- B. The Word (*Logos*): Common Ground
 - a) *Logos*:
 - i. creative
 - **Genesis 1:3** – “And God said,”
 - **Psalms 33:6-9** – “By the word of the LORD were the heavens made, their starry host by the breath of his mouth. He gathers the waters of the sea into jars; he puts the deep into storehouses. Let all the earth fear the LORD; let all the people of the world revere him. For he spoke, and it came to be; he commanded, and it stood firm.
 - ii. revelatory
 - **Isaiah 9:8** “The Lord has sent a message (word) against Jacob; it will fall on Israel.
 - **Ezekiel. 33:7** - “Son of man, I have made you a watchman for the house of Israel; so hear the word I speak and give them warning from me.
 - iii. delivering
 - **Ps. 107:20** – “He sent forth his word and healed them; he rescued them from the grave.”
 - **Isaiah 55:9-11** – “As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts. As the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater, so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.”
 - b) Wisdom: Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes; some Psalms - Poetic personification of Wisdom
 - The prologue is set up in a similar fashion to the book of Job. We have a passage that pulls back the curtains to tell of the larger story going on before reading the secondary story that illustrates the larger story
 - Examples of wisdom personified: Job: 28:12-28, Proverbs 1:20, Proverbs 8:1, Proverbs 8:22-31
 - c) Making sense of life... light to live by in a meaningless world (the problem of human ***transcendence and immanence***) There is a tension that needs to be embraced in our understanding of God. Jesus embodies the tension. He is “the word.”

C. Exodus imagery: (Exodus 33-34)

1. tabernacled: not transient but the dwelling of God with his people
 - **Exodus 25:8** - "Then have them make a sanctuary for me, and I will dwell among them"
2. glory:
 - **Exodus 33:22** – "When my glory passes by, I will put you in a cleft in the rock and cover you with my hand until I have passed by."
3. grace and truth:
 - **Exodus 34:5-7** – "Then the LORD came down in the cloud and stood there with him and proclaimed his name, the LORD. ⁶ And he passed in front of Moses, proclaiming, "The LORD, the LORD, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, ⁷ maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin. Yet he does not leave the guilty unpunished; he punishes the children and their children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation."
4. saw his glory ... incarnation

D. Father and Son Language

1. Davidic language
2. A tie back to Exodus and to God who calls Israel his son.
 - **Exodus 4:22** – "Then you shall say to Pharaoh, 'Thus says the LORD: Israel is my firstborn son.'"
3. The language also helps understand how the connection between father and son begins to define the relationship that humans have with God. John also includes a theme of what it means to become 'children of God.'

Mark 1:1-15

A. Witness of John

1. Jewish traditions of preparing Israel's way
 - **Exodus 23:20** - "See, I am sending an angel ahead of you to guard you along the way and to bring you to the place I have prepared. ²¹ Pay attention to him and listen to what he says. Do not rebel against him; he will not forgive your rebellion, since my Name is in him."
 - **Malachi 3:1** - "See, I will send my messenger, who will prepare the way before me. Then suddenly the Lord you are seeking will come to his temple; the messenger of the covenant, whom you desire, will come," says the LORD Almighty.
2. We must note the quotation from Isaiah 40 and NT writers use of OT
 - **Isaiah 40:3-4** – "A voice cries out: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be

lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low;
the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain.
Then the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all people shall see it
together, for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.”

B. Baptism

1. Jesus does not need a baptism of repentance, but he identifies with the nation.
2. Location of the baptism is the Jordan River. This was not just an arbitrary body of water that was convenient for John. There was a message being conveyed concerning Israel, the Exodus and the Promised Land.
3. The focus on Jesus of “Galilee” is important in the text, because the text ends in Mark 16:7 with a note that the women should go to Galilee and there they will see him.
4. The spirit comes and equips him for the task at hand.
5. The use of the word “immediately” is a favourite Mark word. It’s used 42 times in the book of Mark, 36 of those between chapters 1-10.
6. “torn open” or “torn apart” – it is a word used twice in the gospel of Mark. The second time being in 15:38 – “The curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom.”
 - **Isaiah 64:1-4** - O that you would tear open the heavens and come down, so that the mountains would quake at your presence—as when fire kindles brushwood and the fire causes water to boil—to make your name known to your adversaries, so that the nations might tremble at your presence! When you did awesome deeds that we did not expect, you came down, the mountains quaked at your presence. From ages past no one has heard, no ear has perceived, no eye has seen any God besides you, who works for those who wait for him.
7. The dove most certainly represents the spirit of God which hovered over the waters of creation in Genesis 1:2 - The phrase could be upon him or into him. The dove also has ties to the Noah story of Genesis...which is also about a New Creation!!!
8. Mark was written in a roman context. Caesar was considered son of the gods. To use this phrase was also calling people to choose their allegiance.
9. **The OT sonship and kingship are in view**
 - **Psalms 2:7-8** – “I will proclaim the decree of the LORD: He said to me, “You are my Son; today I have become your Father. Ask of me, and I will make the nations your inheritance, the ends of the earth your possession. “
 - **Isaiah 42:1** - “Here is my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen one in whom I delight; I will put my Spirit on him

C. Wilderness and Moses

1. He goes to the wilderness – this is bigger than an individual spiritual testing. In the wilderness echoes verses 3-4
2. The idea of temptation should conjure up images of Eden.
3. It places the story in the context of Noah and Exodus (40 years, 40 days)

4. **"The time (*kairos*) is fulfilled"** - The Greeks have two words for time, *chronos* and *kairos*. *Chronos* is chronological time — the time of day or the time of year. *Kairos* is significant time — opportune time — decisive time — critical time.
5. 'the time is fulfilled' – Daniel 7 & 9 both refer to a timetable
 - Daniel 9 makes a 70x7 years to wait for God's purposes
 - Jesus is picking up on this long range plan of God
6. It's a message of repentance. Repentance can be misunderstood as simply asking people to give up your sins. Josephus, the ancient historian, writes about going to an army leader and suggesting that there is a better way to win the war. Josephus tells this leader to 'repent and believe in me.' He was suggesting that the army leader should give up his battle plans and his way of doing things and do it my way, a different and better way. Metanoia is a change of way, a giving up of our vision and submitting to another.

Quote from 'The Voyage of the Dawn Treader' – CS Lewis

"Aslan's voice told him, "You **will** have to let me undress you," and he tore the skin from **Eustace**, picked him up, and dropped him into the pool. As **Eustace** washed, he realized that his arm was no longer in pain because he had turned back into a boy."