

THE MIRACLES OF THE KING

The Gospel of Mark 5:1 - 6:6

Bible Study Tools

Markan Sandwich: The writer of the Gospel of Mark has a favorite literary structure that he uses throughout the Gospel. It is a story within a story - like a literary sandwich. Mark will begin to tell a story and then imbed another story and then return to conclude the original story. This technique is like "Inclusio" which we explained before as the same word or phrase at the beginning and end of a section.

Mark does this to compel the reader to **compare and contrast** the two stories. It is in this comparative analysis that the reader finds the complete teaching of the gospel. Again, our tendency is to read each story independently without taking the time to compare and contrast. Look at the people, the places, the details, the social status of the participants, their display of faith or their response to Jesus.

Repeated Words: Remember to pay attention to this. Notice when a story **breaks an established pattern** in the Gospel - what does that change mean?

Questions to Consider

- Note where the story of the demoniac takes place. Who is there, what are they like?
- How does Jesus treatment of the demoniac in this story differ from what we have seen so far in his ministry?
- Note the structure of the Jairus story. What are the points of comparison and contrast that tie the sandwich together and what is Mark trying to teach us through it?
- Put yourself in Jairus' sandals... what is he feeling? What is Jesus teaching him and the disciples?
- Why is Jesus' visit to Nazareth included here in the story? What does it have to say about faith?

Comments & Applications

The Decapolis: This is the region to the East of the Sea of Galilee. It was mainly populated by Gentiles and had some large and fully developed Greek towns with markets and public buildings. It would have been an area held in contempt by pious Jews from Capernaum.

The bleeding woman: She probably has endometriosis which caused a constant menstruation. This would make her ritually unclean according to the Mosaic Law and she could not worship.

Mary's Son: It is unusual that Jesus is referred to in this way. Normally a child's family connection is traced through his father like in the OT Genealogies. What are the people of Nazareth remembering about Jesus?

Note **the response of the crowd** in each of the stories (demoniac, the mourners at Jairus' house, the people of Nazareth) Think about this through the lens of the parable of the sower.

