

This week's reading:

February 26: Numbers 28 – 30

February 27: Numbers 31 – 33

February 28: Numbers 34 – 36

March 1: Mark 1 – 4

March 2: Mark 5 – 8

March 3: Mark 9 – 12

March 4: Mark 13 – 16

March 5: Deuteronomy 1 – 3

Summary:

February 26: Numbers 28 – 30

Numbers 28 & 29 continues the laws with how offerings should be presented.

Numbers 30 gives ordinances concerning vows. **(Note:** Israel, as God's holy people, must be holy in every avenue of life. The depth of sin and how it affects people is clearly shown in God's provision of a law and should lead all people to cry out for a Savior as we fall woefully short of God's standard.)

February 27: Numbers 31 – 33

Numbers 31 returns to the events of the wanderings as Israel is given victory in battle over the Midianites. **(Note:** As Moses' last official act as leader of Israel, God gives the nation success and hope as they move towards the land.)

Numbers 32 has the settling of some of the tribes east of the Jordan river on the condition they will aid the other tribes in taking their promised lands.

Numbers 33 recaps the trip thus far. **(Note:** For those who doubt the historicity of the Bible and label it a fairy tale: I give you the 33rd chapter of Numbers. God's working with Israel is painstakingly recorded and preserved for good and for ill. We can trust our Bibles.)

February 28: Numbers 34 – 36

Numbers 34 – 36 gives instruction for the division of the land. The borders, cities of refuge, cities for the Levites, and inheritance are laid out.

March 1: Mark 1 – 4

Mark 1 hits the ground running as John the Baptist preaches, Jesus is baptized, and Jesus' public ministry of proclamation and healing begins. **(Note:** John always marks the beginning of Jesus' ministry because that is what God promised the prophets. Jesus' ministry has a historical basis.)

Mark 2 does not slow down as healings continue, and disciples are called. **(Note:** Mark does not pause or slow down at all. Jesus has already in 2 chapters demonstrated: Divine approval, power over demons and illness, the ability to teach with authority as God, knowledge of what men are thinking. Jesus is demonstrating that He is God.)

Mark 3 shows Jesus challenge the conventions of the day by performing miracles on the Sabbath and assembles His group of followers. **(Note:** Jesus as God is the right interpreter of Scripture. By challenging the man-added laws He is establishing the right understanding of the Old Testament that we should follow. By opposing the religious leaders, Jesus is opposing man's traditions and upholding God's standard.)

Mark 4 ramps up Jesus' teaching ministry and ends with a powerful demonstration of

His deity as Jesus calms the storm. **(Note:** Jesus's teaching is centered upon the Kingdom of God. Jesus is bringing the message of redemption and showing its nearness by providing, physically, the mercy of God.)

March 2: Mark 5 – 8

Mark 5 picks up with the narrative with the demoniac possessed by Legion. Jesus continues His ministry of healing after delivering the man. **(Note:** Alongside the testimony of God at the baptism, you now have the testimony of the demonic realm as to who Jesus is. You can add power over death to the proofs that Jesus is giving.)

Mark 6 continues Jesus teaching the people and shows Him sending out the disciples to minister. The death of John the Baptist is given in this chapter, as well as well-known miracles (walking on water & 5,000 fed). **(Note:** You can also add power over the creation itself to the list of things over which Jesus wields His authority.)

Mark 7 shows Jesus butting heads with the Pharisees and attacking their tradition keeping in place of God honoring. **(Note:** One of the themes that must be picked up on in the Gospels is the right understanding of the world. The leadership of Israel had forsaken God's commands by elevating their own. Jesus continually pushes back against this; and establishes the authority and power of God. Man has not forgotten this problem, it is the outworking of our sinful pride at work.)

Mark 8 has the 4,000 fed and Peter confesses Jesus is the Christ (Messiah). **(Note:** The entire Gospel thus far has been building to this point. Jesus has been proving His divine power and Godly teaching; now the disciples are beginning to take note and a slight shift in Jesus' ministry will begin.)

March 3: Mark 9 – 12

Mark 9 begins with the Transfiguration, as Jesus is shown in His glory and concludes with teaching on: power/prayer, the resurrection, and kingdom living. **(Note:** If there was any doubt as to the identity of Jesus, the Transfiguration removes it. Remember though; Peter, who saw this, still denied Christ. The power to change the heart and mind of a person is not in an experience, but in the work of God. Also see the change in Jesus' ministry; the cross is being predicted and the work of salvation is being explained.)

Mark 10 continues Jesus' teaching and interaction with the people who are recognizing His wisdom and Godly character. **(Note:** Jesus does not remove the hard edges from the Law; He reinforces them. The problem with people is not the Law or a lack of knowledge, it is sin.)

Mark 11 has Jesus entering in Jerusalem and cleansing the Temple before silencing the religious leaders.

Mark 12 continues Jesus' teaching on the Temple mount as He answers the challenges of every leadership group, before confounding them.

March 4: Mark 13 – 16

Mark 13 continues Jesus' teaching (now unchallenged) as He explains the end and the second coming of Christ. **(Note:** Jesus ensures His followers are prepared and knowledgeable about the world and her reaction to God's working. They must be able to minister and live in a hostile place; part of that ability is the knowledge of God's promises to redeem and the return of Christ.)

Mark 14 shows the religious leaders plotting Jesus' death and the last Passover meal of Jesus (Lord's Supper), before moving to the garden of Gethsemane where Jesus is

arrested and brought to false trials.

Mark 15 has Jesus before Pilate as Jesus is condemned, crucified, and buried.

Mark 16 sees the women attending to the tomb and seeing the angelic messenger delivering the message of the Resurrection. **(Note:** Much is made and written of the ending of Mark. The best/earliest manuscripts end at verse 8, and I see no reason why that is an issue. We know from Acts and the letters of the New Testament that the women did in fact deliver their message (as well as from 3 other Gospels); and have no issue with Mark ending his account where he does.)