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**Mark: Every Man's Gospel**  
**Introductory Themes: Gentile Nations**  
Texts: Various

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**Introduction:**

Have you ever done some amazing feat that really had an incredible return? The return may have come in the form of stomach-turning thrill, the applause of the crowds, the admiration of an onlooker, or the laugh of an audience. The net result is that you want to do that again but you're unsure that the return will be the same. Do have an idea of what I'm after?

6:31-44

8:1-10

Why two miracles so similar?

Let's start at the beginning. There are certain passages in the Bible that help us understand how the Bible fits together. There are other passages that are better understood in light of how the Bible fits together. The Gospel of Mark will really unfold before your eyes if you understand how the Bible fits together.

**Big Picture**

Let me give you the big picture.

A word about resources: God's Big Picture (Vaughn Roberts).

Much of the Scripture is devoted to explaining or recording how God fulfills the promises He made to Abraham. The covenant God made with Abraham reveals God's plan to save a people and bring them into His land. The Abrahamic Covenant contains both the Old and New Covenants.

- Under the Old Covenant, God physically saves the people of Israel (the physical descendants of Abraham) from the Egyptians and brings them into the Promised Land, Palestine.
- Under the New Covenant, God spiritually saves His people (the spiritual descendants of Abraham) from sin and condemnation and brings them into the spiritual land (salvation rest now and the new heaven and new earth).

**The Abrahamic Covenant Physically Fulfilled**

Genesis 15:1-7; Genesis 17:1-8 make three promises: (1) Abraham's descendants would become a great nation (cf. Gen. 12:2; 13:16; 15:5; 16:10); (2) Abraham's descendants would possess the Promised Land (cf. Gen. 12:7; 15:18-21; 17:8); (3) Abraham's descendants would be God's own people (cf. Gen. 17:2, 7-8; 18:19). How and when were these promises fulfilled?

- *The Promise of "Many Descendants" Physically Fulfilled*

Exodus 1:6-13

- *The Promise “I Will Be Their God” Physically Fulfilled*

Deuteronomy 7:6-8

God had a relationship with Israel that He did not have with any of the other nations in the world at that time. It was not a saving relationship in which the Israelites were spiritually redeemed (cf. Heb. 3:19), but the entire nation was physically redeemed and chosen to be the recipients of God’s love in a way that no one else was at that time. God protected them and fought on their side. He talked to them and gave them the Scriptures. He used Israel to bring the Messiah into the world.

- *The Promise of “Possession of the Land” Physically Fulfilled*

Joshua 21:43-45

Nothing else needed to happen for God to make good on his word to Abraham. His promises of rest and possession of the land had been fulfilled, just like his promises of many descendants and a special relationship with God. It was all fulfilled by the time of the conquest of the Land of Canaan under Joshua.

### **The Abrahamic Covenant Spiritually Fulfilled**

- *The Promise of “Many Descendants” Spiritually Fulfilled*

The promise was made to Abraham that his offspring (seed) would be like the stars in heaven. Moses used the word *seed* as a collective singular – a singular noun used to refer to the whole collection of the same kind of object – as in grass seed.

Paul capitalizes on this singular in Galatians 3:16 to give Genesis 15:5 a meaning that no one could have gotten had not the Holy Spirit revealed it to Paul in this way. Paul is providing us with the final fulfillment of Genesis 15:5.

Galatians 3:28-29

Being a seed or descendant of Abraham in the New Covenant sense has nothing to do with blood relation to Abraham as it did in the Old Covenant era. Jesus Christ and all those joined to him by faith, namely the church, are the spiritual or New Covenant descendants of Abraham.

- *The Promise “I Will Be Their God” Spiritually Fulfilled*

The Israelites were loved, chosen and redeemed by God, but most of them are in hell because of unbelief (cf. Heb. 3:19). God did not set His saving love on all of those people. God did not choose Israel the nation in the same sense He chose believers before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight (cf. Eph. 1:4).

Hebrews 8:7-12

This passage describes the contrast between the Old and New Covenants (vv.8,9). We must focus on how the New Covenant “will not be like” the Mosaic Covenant. In what way will it be different? The answer is given in v.10. Christ

purchased complete forgiveness of sins and a God-loving heart for every last person in the New Covenant.

The result is that all those in the NC era can actually approach God.

Hebrews 10:19-22

Jesus Christ purchased the spiritual fulfillment of the Abrahamic promise. He paid the ultimate price so that we might be reconciled to God.

- *The Promise of “Possession of the Land” Spiritually Fulfilled*

The NT treats the land promise made to Abraham as a promise of true spiritual rest for God’s true people. Joshua only gave them physical rest in the physical land. The Israelites did in fact receive this rest, but the author of Hebrews tells us that Joshua never gave them true spiritual rest.

Joshua 21:43-45

Hebrews 4.8-11

The author of Hebrews is pointing past a physical fulfillment concerning physical land and rest from war to a spiritual rest. The promise of Canaan as an everlasting possession is finally and ultimately fulfilled with the everlasting possession of our eternal salvation in the new heaven and the new earth.

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Mark is written for a Gentile audience. But Mark also highlights that Jesus is ministering to both Jews and Gentiles and he seems to highlight the ministry to Gentiles – the outsiders as we said last week.

Mark portrays what the commentators call a “northern” Jesus. He focuses on the ministry of Jesus oriented in the regions outside of Jerusalem in the Gentile regions. Jesus made his “home” region Galilee – a predominantly Gentile region. (see Matthew 4:15 quoting Isaiah 9:1). So he lived in the Jewish territory that was known for its Gentile population.

But more than that, Mark demonstrates that Jesus frequently leaves Galilee for Gentile regions:

(NOTE: 3:8, 22; 7:1 – the Pharisees sent deputies to spy on Jesus. They were indignant at the thought that he would treat both the Jews and Gentiles equally.)

- Decapolis, east of the Sea of Galilee he healed the demoniac (5:1-20, esp. 20)
- Tyre and Sidon he encounters the Syrophenician woman (7:24-30)
- In the same region he heals a deaf mute (7:31-37)
- Decapolis he feeds the 4,000! – demonstrating that the same power available to the Jews (cf. 6:31-44) is also available for the Gentiles.

### **The Mission**

Mark 11:17 – Gen 12:1-3; Acts 3:25; Gal. 3:6-8 (Ps. 22:27-28)