

African Memory of Mark 1	
<p>One approach to GM is what is termed 'narrative criticism,'¹ which analyzes how the text functions as a story. We will use the term 'author' for the final editor of GM, and 'audience' for who the author thinks will be hearing (or reading) the story. In many ancient texts, the 'audience' could be referred to as 'you,' as in 'To you has been given the mystery of the kingdom of God, but to those outside, everything happens in parables.' 'You' as the audience may be included in a double reference to both people in the story, such as some disciples, as well as to the listener/reader. These ancient rhetorical devices were used to shape the listener/reader as at some point an insider with special knowledge that the story character may share or not, or as an outsider, who is lacking that knowledge. We will track them through GM and see how we experience the story.</p>	
<p>The Proclamation of John the Baptist</p> <p>1 The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.</p> <p>2 As it is written in the prophet Isaiah,</p> <p>"See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way; 3 the voice of one crying out in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight,'"</p> <p>4 John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. 5 And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan,</p>	<p>Ahearne-Kroll says that an expectation of insider audience is created in the first 3 chapters. The audience not only observes what other characters observe, but the narrator and audience are given access beyond that of the disciples.</p> <p>1-1 What do the terms 'Son of God' and 'Son of Man' mean? For 1st century listeners, 'Son of God' refers to his humanity [c.f. King Solomon, 2 Samuel 7:14]</p> <p>1-2 Actually, this combines Isaiah 40:3, Exodus 23:20, and Malachai 3:1</p>

¹ Stephen P. Ahearne-Kroll (2010). *Audience inclusion and exclusion as rhetorical technique in the Gospel of Mark*. **Journal of Biblical Literature** 129(4), 717-735.

confessing their sins. ⁶ Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. ⁷ He proclaimed, "The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. ⁸ I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

The Baptism of Jesus

⁹ In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. ¹⁰ And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. ¹¹ And a voice came from heaven, "You are **my Son, the Beloved**; with you I am well pleased."

The Temptation of Jesus

¹² And the Spirit **immediately** drove him out into the wilderness. ¹³ He was in the wilderness forty days, tempted by Satan; and he was with the wild beasts; and the angels waited on him.

The Beginning of the Galilean Ministry

¹⁴ Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, ¹⁵ and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news."

Jesus Calls the First Disciples

¹⁶ As Jesus passed along the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother

1-11 The listener is given the privilege of knowing what Jesus privately experienced. It is not evident that anyone else was aware. The voice of God appears twice in GM. G-d speaks directly to Jesus. We can speculate about how this experience was passed down.

1-13 The number 40, among others, is significant in the Hebrew Bible.

The audience alone learns of Jesus testing by Satan.

Andrew casting a net into the sea—for they were fishermen. ¹⁷ And Jesus said to them, “Follow me and I will make you fish for people.” ¹⁸ And **immediately** they left their nets and followed him. ¹⁹ As he went a little farther, he saw James son of Zebedee and his brother John, who were in their boat mending the nets. ²⁰ **Immediately** he called them; and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men, and followed him.

The Man with an Unclean Spirit

²¹ They went to Capernaum; and when the sabbath came, he entered the synagogue and taught. ²² They were astounded at his teaching, for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes. ²³ Just then there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit, ²⁴ and he cried out, “What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are, the **Holy One of God.**” ²⁵ But Jesus rebuked him, saying, “Be silent, and come out of him!” ²⁶ And the unclean spirit, convulsing him and crying with a loud voice, came out of him. ²⁷ They were all amazed, and they kept on asking one another, “What is this? A new teaching—with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him.” ²⁸ At once his fame began to spread throughout the surrounding region of Galilee.

Jesus Heals Many at Simon’s House

²⁹ As soon as they left the synagogue, they entered the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. ³⁰ Now

1-18 Note the word, ‘immediately...’ It is used 17 times in GM and much less in other gospels. [See Bp. Peter’s handout, which is labeled AfricanMarkImmediately.]

1-22 Men usually followed the trade and status of their fathers, so Jesus’ teaching with authority was not expected.

1-24 Holy One of God: This term was also applied to Elisha [2 Kings 4:9] as counter to the unclean spirit. A prophet would restore the boundary between the demonic realm of death and the world of life created by God. Unclean spirits were sometimes connected to fallen angels [Levine & Brettler, 2017].

Simon's mother-in-law was in bed with a fever, and they told him about her at once.³¹ He came and took her by the hand and lifted her up. Then the fever left her, and she began to serve them.

³² That evening, at sunset, they brought to him all who were sick or possessed with demons.³³ And the whole city was gathered around the door.³⁴ And he cured many who were sick with various diseases, and cast out many demons; and he would not permit the demons to speak, because they knew him.

A Preaching Tour in Galilee

³⁵ In the morning, while it was still very dark, he got up and went out to a deserted place, and there he prayed.³⁶ And Simon and his companions hunted for him.³⁷ When they found him, they said to him, "Everyone is searching for you."³⁸ He answered, "Let us go on to the neighboring towns, so that I may proclaim the message there also; for that is what I came out to do."³⁹ And he went throughout Galilee, proclaiming the message in their synagogues and casting out demons.

Jesus Cleanses a Leper

⁴⁰ A leper came to him begging him, and kneeling he said to him, "If you choose, you can make me clean."⁴¹ Moved with pity, Jesus stretched out his hand and touched him, and said to him, "I do choose. Be made clean!"⁴² **Immediately** the leprosy left him, and he was made clean.⁴³ After sternly warning him he sent him away at once,⁴⁴ saying to him, "See that you say nothing to anyone; but go, show yourself to the priest, and offer

for your cleansing what Moses commanded, as a testimony to them.”
⁴⁵ But he went out and began to proclaim it freely, and to spread the word, so that Jesus could no longer go into a town openly, but stayed out in the country; and people came to him from every quarter.

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