

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MARK

The Book of Mark was likely written in Rome between 64-67 AD. Mark was very close to Peter, and Peter was in Rome in the times the book was written, and he was martyred there as well. Some have said that this book is the Gospel according to Peter as told to Mark. Mark's gospel was written in Rome before any of the other three (Matthew, Luke, John) and it was written to a more gentile audience than the others. Mark takes time to explain some Jewish customs to his readers and to define some terms that the others do not.

Mark does not give much history or any genealogy or even introductions to main characters as you would find in the other gospels. He gets right to the point and makes the point about Jesus, the kingdom of God, and how to respond to God.

Mark is an interesting character. He is known also as John Mark...John represents his Jewish name and Mark (Markos) represents his Roman name...his mother's name was Mary and she had a large home where leaders gathered and prayed, and the family had servants and housekeepers which means they were likely wealthy people. Mark was also a cousin to Barnabas, Paul's missions companion, and was a member of their first missionary journey where Mark was an assistant to Paul and Barnabas and a teacher to their converts. The Lord was using Mark and he had an excellent reputation with the other leaders.

So why did Mark 'bail out' of the missions work and go back home? Some scholars believe that Mark had trouble with the gentiles being offered salvation by faith alone. Mark took his leave from Paul and Barnabas in Acts 13:5-13.

Interestingly, in the verses in Acts 13, he is referred to as John...only by his Hebrew name...John Mark was from a family of Hebrews of the

Hebrews (Like Paul and Barnabas) and he needed time to reconcile this 'revelation'! Two years later, Paul and Barnabas split up temporarily over this issue. This 'rift' is healed and we find Mark in Rome with Paul. (See Colossians 4:10, Philemon v24) Paul speaks of Mark as a fellow worker and a great comfort to him. Mark and Paul were finally reconciled.

Mark was a great friend of Peter, Paul, and Barnabas. Some say he was priest before his conversion. Once he got saved, he amputated a finger which got him out of his priesthood automatically. It is spoken of Mark that after Barnabas died, he went to Alexandria and founded a church there. He was the first Bishop of the church and died during the eighth year of Nero's reign there.

1 The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. ² As it is written in Isaiah the prophet: "Behold, I send My messenger ahead of You, Who will prepare Your way;

³ The voice of one crying in the wilderness, 'Make ready the way of the Lord,

Make His paths straight.'" ⁴ John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁵ And all the country of Judea was going out to him, and all the people of Jerusalem; and they were being baptized by him in the Jordan River, confessing their sins. ⁶ John was clothed with camel's hair and wore a leather belt around his waist, and his diet was locusts and wild honey. ⁷ And he was preaching, and saying, "After me One is coming who is mightier than I, and I am not fit to stoop down and untie the thong of His sandals. ⁸ I 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 in Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. ¹⁰ Immediately coming up out of the water, He saw the heavens opening, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon Him; ¹¹ and a voice came out of the heavens: "You are My beloved Son, in You I am well-pleased." ¹² Immediately the Spirit *impelled Him to go out into the wilderness. ¹³ And He was in the wilderness forty days being tempted by Satan; and He was with the wild beasts, and the angels were ministering to Him. Mark 1:1-13 NASB

- ***A new beginning! A new start to announce good news!***
- ***The gospel of Jesus Christ, the inbreaking of God's kingdom, the advent of His salvation.***
- ***The Gospel is good news and Jesus Christ is the good news, what Jesus preaches is the good news...the Messenger is also the message.***
- ***Jesus means Yahweh is Salvation***
- ***Christ – the anointed One – Messiah.***

"She will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins." Matthew 1:21 NASB

- ***Jesus, the Son of God! God has come to people, speaking to them in their 'mother tongue.'***
- ***John the Baptist (see Mark 1:2-4) appears.***

"Behold, I am going to send My messenger, and he will clear the way before Me. And the Lord, whom you seek, will suddenly come to His temple; and the messenger of the covenant, in whom you delight, behold, He is coming," says the Lord of hosts. Malachi 3:1 NASB

- ***He comes to pave the way and to 'introduce' Jesus, the One Israel has been waiting for.***
- ***John appears at the Jordan River...a well-planned issue.***

- ***The Jordan River is where Jacob crossed to reconnect with Esau.***
- ***Joshua led Israel across the Jordan River into the promised land when God parted the waters.***
- ***Elijah and Elisha focused much of their work around the Jordan River. This is an historic 'venue.'***
- ***John was preaching...which is also translated as 'heralding'...the Herald would go out before the king and draw people's attention to the coming of the king...this truly fits John the Baptist's purpose.***
- ***John was 'heralding' baptism for the forgiveness of sins.***
- ***Gentile converts were always baptized and several Old Testament prophets declared that they should 'wash themselves clean' via being baptized.***

¹⁶ "Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean; remove the evil of your deeds from My sight.

Cease to do evil, ¹⁷ learn to do good; seek justice, reprove the ruthless, defend the orphan, plead for the widow. Isaiah 1:16-17 NASB

- ***Repentance here, comes from an Old Testament word meaning to 'return to' or turn back to...this is more than and is beyond just a change of mind...but a total commitment to serving God and relying on Him, doing His will. This was used by most of the Old Testament Prophets. (v4)***
- ***John 'heralded' his message and people came out in droves. (v5)***
 - ***Repentance relates to every part of life as does forgiveness.***
- ***John dressed like an OT prophet and had a 'Euell Gibbons' diet...certainly a modest and non-indulgent diet. (Locusts, wild honey...some historians say 'carob' not locusts. (v6-8)***

- ***John's baptism was to prepare people for Jesus...John's element was water...anyone could do that...Jesus baptized people in the Holy Spirit, not water, only God could do that...(v8)***
- ***Jesus' baptism...no fanfare, no genealogy, no endorsements or profile...***

⁹ In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. ¹⁰ And when He came up out of the water, at once he [John] saw the heavens torn open and the [Holy] Spirit like a dove coming down [to enter] into Him. Mark 1: 9-10 AMPC

- ***The verb 'torn open' is only used here and in Isaiah 64:1, where Isaiah writes, "Oh, that you would rend the heavens...tear them open..."***
- ***A voice came out of the heavens saying..."You are My Son." (v11)***
- ***You are well loved!***
- ***I am well pleased with you.***

⁷ "I will surely tell of the decree of the Lord: He said to Me, 'You are My Son, today I have begotten You. ⁸ 'Ask of Me, and I will surely give the nations as Your inheritance, and the very ends of the earth as Your possession. Psalm 2:7-8 NASB

- ***The Spirit came to Him, upon Him...like a dove.***
 - ***This is some baptism!***
- ***Jesus goes to the wilderness to confront the enemy. (v12-13)***
 - ***Forty days of temptation, deception, and lies for Jesus.***
 - ***He was tempted for forty days, He had to 'navigate' wild animals and He was ministered to by angels.***

Jesus Preaches in Galilee

¹⁴ Now after John had been taken into custody, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of God, ¹⁵ and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel." ¹⁶ As He was going along by the Sea of Galilee, He saw Simon and Andrew, the brother of Simon, casting a net in the sea; for they were fishermen. ¹⁷ And Jesus said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you become fishers of men." ¹⁸ Immediately they left their nets and followed Him. ¹⁹ Going on a little farther, He saw James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, who were also in the boat mending the nets. ²⁰ Immediately He called them; and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired servants, and went away to follow Him. ²¹ They *went into Capernaum; and immediately on the Sabbath He entered the synagogue and began to teach. ²² They were amazed at His teaching; for He was teaching them as one having authority, and not as the scribes. ²³ Just then there was a man in their synagogue with an unclean spirit; and he cried out, ²⁴ saying, "What business do we have with each other, Jesus of Nazareth? Have You come to destroy us? I know who You are—the Holy One of God!" ²⁵ And Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be quiet, and come out of him!" ²⁶ Throwing him into convulsions, the unclean spirit cried out with a loud voice and came out of him. ²⁷ They were all amazed, so that they debated among themselves, saying, "What is this? A new teaching with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey Him." ²⁸ Immediately the news about Him spread everywhere into all the surrounding district of Galilee. Mark 1:14-28 NASB

- ***Jesus comes preaching into Galilee.***
- ***John the baptist is arrested and Jesus is preaching the gospel of the Kingdom.***
 - ***His message is... "The time is fulfilled and the Kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel..."***
- ***Jesus came "making a public proclamation with formality, gravity, and authority, which must be heeded and obeyed...be***

having a change of mind regarding your former life, and be putting your faith in the good news.” Wuest