



World Christian Fellowship

www.wcflondon.com
wcflondon@gmail.com

Gospel of Mark

Gospel of Mark is a "busy" book. In this Gospel, Jesus seems the busiest, moving from one event to another quickly.

One of the key words in the Gospel is '*immediately*', occurring more than 40 times. Jesus portrayed as a servant busy meeting needs and busy being God's Messiah.

Gospel of Mark's emphasis is on the deeds of Jesus more than on the words of Jesus. "The Gospel of Mark pictures Christ in action.

Meaning and Author

Mark was written by John Mark (the name John is Hebrew, while Marcus is Latin),

John derived from Hebrew word which means God is gracious. Mark means polite.

Mark, for whom this gospel is named, was a close companion of the Apostle Peter.

In the book of Acts Mark appears quite often.

(Acts 12:12, 25; 15:37, 39).

It was to John Mark's mother's home in Jerusalem that Peter went when released from prison **(Acts 12:12)**.

John Mark was a cousin of Barnabas. **(Colossians 4:10)**

Mark accompanied Paul and Barnabas on Paul's first missionary journey **(Acts 12:25; 13:5)**.

Acts 13:13,

But he deserted them along the way in Perga and returned to Jerusalem.

When Barnabas wanted Paul to take John Mark on the second missionary journey, Paul refused. The friction which resulted between Paul and Barnabas led to their separation **(Acts 15:38–40)**.

John Mark's earlier hesitancy evidently gave way to great strength and maturity, and in time he proved himself even to the Apostle Paul.

Colossians 4:10,

When Paul wrote the Colossians, he instructed them that if John Mark came, they were to welcome him.

Paul even listed Mark as a fellow worker.

Philemon 1:24,

Later, Paul told Timothy to “Get Mark and bring him with you, for he is useful to me for ministry”

2 Timothy 4:11,

John Mark’s restoration to useful ministry may have been, in part, due to the ministry of Peter.

Peter’s close relationship with Mark is evident from his description of him as “Mark my son”.

1 Peter 5:13,

Peter, of course, was no stranger to failure himself, and his influence on the younger man was no doubt instrumental in helping him out of the instability.

Although there is no direct internal evidence of authorship, it was the unanimous testimony of the early church that this Gospel was written by John Mark.

The most important evidence comes from Papias, Bishop of Hierapolis (A.D. 140), who quotes an even earlier source.

1. Mark was a close associate of Peter, from whom he received the tradition of the things said and done by the Lord.
2. Whole of this tradition did not come to Mark as a finished, sequential account of the life of our Lord. But

from the direct and indirect preaching of Peter to the early Christian communities.

3. Mark accurately preserved this material. The conclusion drawn from this tradition is that the Gospel of Mark largely consists of the preaching of Peter arranged and shaped by Mark.

Justin Martyr, wrote around A.D. 150, referred to the Gospel of Mark as “the memoirs of Peter,” and suggested that Mark committed his gospel to writing while in Italy. This agrees with the uniform voice of early tradition, which regarded this gospel as having been written in Rome, for the benefit of Roman Christians.

Irenaeus, wrote around A.D. 185, called Mark “the disciple and interpreter of Peter,” and recorded that the second gospel consisted of what Peter preached about Christ.

Date and Place of Origin

The testimony of the church fathers differs as to whether this gospel was written before or after Peter’s death (A.D. 67–68).

Evangelical scholars have suggested dates for the writing of Mark’s gospel ranging from A.D. 50 to 70. A date before the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple in A.D. 70 is required by the comment of Jesus in **Mark 13:2**.

It is therefore likely, though not certain, that Mark was written at an early date, probably sometime in the 50s.

According to early church tradition, Mark was written “in the regions of Italy” (Anti-Marcionite Prologue) or, more specifically, in Rome (Irenaeus; Clement of Alexandria).

These same authors closely associate Mark’s writing of the Gospel with the apostle Peter. The above evidence is consistent with,

1. The historical probability that Peter was in Rome during the last days of his life and was martyred there, and
2. The Biblical evidence that Mark also was in Rome about the same time and was closely associated with Peter (**2Timothy 4:11; 1Peter 5:13**)

Background and Setting

Whereas Matthew was written to a Jewish audience, Mark seems to have targeted Roman believers, particularly Gentiles.

When employing Aramaic terms, Mark translated them for his readers.

Mark 3:17,

Mark 5:41,

Mark 7:11,

Mark 7:34,

Mark 10:46,
Mark 14:36,
Mark 15:22,
Mark 15:34,

On the other hand, in some places he used Latin expressions instead of their Greek equivalents!

Mark 5:9,
Mark 6:27,
Mark 12:15,
Mark 12:42,
Mark 15:16,
Mark 15:39,

Mark also reckoned time according to the Roman system.

Mark 6:48,
Mark 13:35,

Mark carefully explained Jewish customs.

Mark 7:3-4,
Mark 14:12,
Mark 15:42,

Mark omitted Jewish elements, such as the genealogies found in Matthew and Luke.

The gospel of Mark also makes fewer references to the OT and includes less material that would be of particular interest to

Jewish readers—such as that which is critical of the Pharisees and Sadducees (Sadducees are mentioned only once, in **Mark 12:18**).

When mentioning Simon, the Cyrene (**Mark 15:21**), Mark identifies him as the father of Rufus, a prominent member of the church at Rome (**Romans 16:13**). All of this supports the traditional view that Mark was written for a Gentile audience initially at Rome.

Recipients

The evidence points to the church at Rome, or at least to Gentile readers.

- Mark explains Jewish customs,
- translates Aramaic words, and
- special interest in persecution and martyrdom (**Mark 8:34–38; 13:9–13**)

A Roman destination would explain the almost immediate acceptance of this Gospel and its rapid propagation.

Many believe Mark to be the first of the four Gospels written, and that it was written in Rome.

Mark was not one of the twelve disciples. Perhaps the only mention of him in the gospel is a shadowy one in **Mark 14:51-52**.

As a youth, he may have been part of the larger group that followed Jesus.

The early church met at the home of Mark's mother, Mary, in Jerusalem (**Acts 12:12**).

To the hard working and accomplishment-oriented Romans, Mark wrote a gospel that emphasizes Jesus as God's Servant. Because no one cares about the pedigree of a servant, the gospel of Mark has no genealogy of Jesus.

Another indication that Mark wrote his Gospel for the Roman mind is that he uses more Latin words than any of the other Gospels.

There are also more Latin phrases and idioms like *speculator* (6:27), சேவகனுக்கு *sextarius* (7:4), செப்புக்குடங்கள் *census* (12:14), நாம் *quadrans* (12:42), ஒரு துட்டு *praetorium* (15:16), தேசாதிபதியின் அரமனை *flagellate* (15:15), வாரினால் அடிப்பது *centurion* (15:39). நூற்றுக்கு அதிபதி

When Bible translators go to a people who have never had the Scriptures in their own language, they usually begin by translating the Gospel of Mark.

Mark is the most translated Gospel book in all the world.

One reason is because it is the shortest Gospel and the other reason is because this Gospel was written for people unfamiliar with first century Judaism. Mark wrote it for the Romans.

Historical and Theological Themes

Mark presents Jesus as the suffering Servant of the Lord.

Mark 10:45,

Mark focus is on the deeds of Jesus more than His teaching, particularly emphasizing service, and sacrifice.

Mark omits the lengthy discourses, often relating only brief excerpts to give the gist of Jesus' teaching.

Mark also omits any account of Jesus' ancestry and birth, beginning where Jesus' public ministry began, with His baptism by John in the wilderness.

Mark demonstrated the humanity of Christ more clearly than any of the other evangelists, emphasizing Christ's human emotions.

Mark 1:41,

Mark 3:5,

Mark 6:34,

Mark 8:12,

Mark 9:36,

Mark also mentions Jesus's human limitations!

Mark 4:38,

Mark 11:12,

Mark 13:32,

Other small details that highlight the human side of the Son of God.

Mark 7:33-34,

Mark 8:12,

Mark 9:36,

Mark 10:13–16,

Purpose

Since Mark's Gospel is traditionally associated with Rome, it may have been occasioned by the persecutions of the Roman church in the period c. A.D. 64–67.

The famous fire of Rome in 64, probably set by Nero himself but blamed on Christians, resulted in widespread persecution. Even martyrdom was not unknown among Roman believers.

1. Mark writing to prepare his readers for such suffering by placing before them the life of our Lord.
2. There are many references, both explicit and veiled, to suffering and discipleship throughout his Gospel.

Mark 1:12–13,

Mark 3:22,30

Mark 8:34–38,
Mark 10:30,33–34,45
Mark 13:8–13,

Overview

The Gospel of Mark has 16 chapters
678 Verses

Part I- The King and His Kingdom (Mark 1:1 -5:43)

1. The Ministry in Galilee (Mark 1:1-5:43)

The Return of the King (Mark 1:1-15)

The Pattern of the Kingdom (Mark 1:16-45)

The Message of the Kingdom (Mark 2:1-3:6)

Kingdom Life (Mark 3:7-3:35)

Kingdom Growth (Mark 4:1-34)

Kingdom Authority (Mark 4:35-5:43)

2. Jesus Withdraws from Galilee (Mark 6:1-8:30)

Kingdom Rejection (Mark 6:1-56)

Kingdom Heart (Mark 7:1-37)

Who is the King? (Mark 8:1-30)

Part II- The Suffering of the King (Mark 8:31-16:8)

1. The Journey to Jerusalem (Mark 8:31-10:52)

The Beginning of the End (Mark 8:31-9:32)

Following the King (Mark 9:33-10:52)

2. The Jerusalem Ministry (Mark 11:1-13:37)

Battle in Jerusalem (Mark 11:1-12:44)

The End is Near (Mark 11:1-12:44)

3. The Suffering of Jesus (Mark 14:1-16:20)

The Second Garden (Mark 14:1-72)

The Path to Glory (Mark 15:1-15:52)

On the Third Day (Mark 15:53-16:8)

Post resurrection (Mark 16:9-20)