

# Mark Introduction

## MARK

### In Galilee (ch. 1-8)

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- 1:1 - Mark says, "The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God"
- 1:2-8 - Isaiah 40 and Malachi 3 fulfilled in John the Baptist
- 1:9 - Jesus is the Son of God, "**You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased.**"
- 1:12-13 - Spirit of God led Jesus into conflict with Satan.
- 1:14-3:21 - Jesus teaches, heals and reveals he is the Messiah and King of God's Kingdom.
- 3:22-8:26 - People respond to Jesus in a variety of ways: acceptance, confusion, rejection, opposition. Overall, general confusion and misunderstanding.

### Journey to Jerusalem (ch. 8-10)

- 8:27 - Jesus asks his disciples who he is, and Peter answers, "**You are the Christ,**" (but, is thinking Jesus is the warrior king to overthrow Rome, etc.)
- 8:31 (9:9; 9:31; 10:32)- Jesus began to teach them that he must die in Jerusalem.
- 8-10 - Jesus is a servant, and his followers must also be willing to suffer in order to serve. Disciples do not understand this.
- 9 - Jesus is transfigured and God says, "**This is my beloved Son; listen to him.**"

### In Jerusalem (ch. 11-16)

- 11 - Triumphal Entry, curses fig tree, cleans temple court
- 12 - Parables and debates on the temple mount
- 13 - Future of that generation and destruction of temple; predictions of Jesus' return to set up kingdom.
- 14 - Plot to kill Jesus; Jesus' anointing, betrayal, arrest and trials
- 15 - Jesus crucified, dead, buried
- 15:39 - Roman centurion says, "**Truly this man was the Son of God!**"
- 16 - Angel reports to women that Jesus is alive, saying, "He has risen; he is not here. See the place where they laid him. But go, tell his disciples."

--- Mark's book ends- ---

### Organization of the Book:

1. The Gospel of Mark is an organized proclamation that begins, "The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God."
  - a. This then is followed by a quote from the OT combining Isaiah 40 and Malachi 3.
  - b. Which is then immediately followed by John the Baptist fulfilling those prophecies.
2. Mark has organized the book to serve his purpose of proclaiming the Gospel and leading his readers into making a decision themselves just as the people who encountered Jesus had to make a decision.
3. The first half of the book introduces Jesus and the response of people. The midway point is at Caesarea Philippi where Peter confesses that Jesus is the Messiah (although Peter did not fully understand Jesus' mission).
4. The second half of the book follows Peter's confession and Jesus' teaching that he must be crucified with the events in Jerusalem the final week of Jesus' life.
5. So, the arrangement of the book occurs in these locations:
  - a. Chapters 1-8 in Galilee
  - b. Chapters 8-10 in Caesarea Philippi and to Jerusalem
  - c. 11-16 in Jerusalem
6. Each of the three parts has someone confessing that Jesus is the Son of God, the Messiah:
  - a. Chapter 1 God himself says, "**You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased.**"
  - b. Chapter 8 Peter says, "**You are the Christ.**" And, then in the next chapter at the Transfiguration God speaks again saying, "**This is my beloved Son; listen to him.**"
  - c. Chapter 15 the Roman Centurion guarding the cross and facing Jesus when he died said, "**Truly this man was the Son of God!**"

### History of the study of the Mark's Gospel:

1. For the first 400 years it was considered a small version of Matthew. A scholar named Victor of Antioch around 490 AD expressed his frustration with the fact that there were zero commentaries on Mark in his day.
  - a. Victor wrote a commentary on Mark and included this line concerning what we call Mark 16:9-20 in his writing: "do not appear in the existing Gospel with most copies." He was not referring to Egyptian copies (papyrus), but to the available copies of Mark in Syria and Palestine. He admits that he and others added to their text of Mark the extended version of what we call chapter 16. Here are Victor of Antioch's exact words:

- b. Victor of Antioch wrote: ‘But even if the words “And having risen early” along with the words following, do not appear in the existing Gospel with most copies, as they are considered spurious, we however, having found them in most of the accurate copies, and in accordance with the Palestinian Gospel, exactly how the truth of Mark really is, have added together also that material in it, that follows the Master’s resurrection- after the words “for they were afraid,” that is, from “And having risen early on the first day of the week” and so on, up to the words “by the signs accompanying. Amen.” ‘
2. Beginning in the 1800’s scholars began to consider that Mark was the source of the material found in Matthew and Luke.

### Mark and Peter tradition

1. Every early church father associates Mark with Peter. Mark wrote down Peter’s account of the teaching and events of Jesus’ life and mission.
2. Papias, bishop of Hierapolis, wrote in 140 AD in his book “Exegesis of the Lord’s Oracles” (lost but quoted by Eusebius in 325 AD) concerning what he himself learned from the previous generation or who he calls “the Elder” which could have been an old contemporary of Jesus or a one of the first disciples of the Apostles:
 

*“And the Elder said this also: ‘**Mark, having become the interpreter of Peter, wrote down accurately whatever he remembered of the things said and done by the Lord, but not however in order.**’* For neither did he hear the Lord, nor did he follow him, but afterwards, as I said, Peter, who adapted his teachings to the needs of his hearers, but not as though he were drawing up a connected account of the Lord’s oracles. So then Mark made no mistake in thus recording some things just as he remembered them. For he took forethought for one thing, not to omit any of the things that he had heard nor to state any of them falsely.”

  - a. This gives apostolic authority to the book of Mark since he was recording Peter’s teaching. Peter was an eyewitness.
3. In Old Latin MSS (written 160-180 AD) the Prologue to Mark includes this introductory comment:
 

*“...Mark declared, who is called ‘stump-fingered’, because he had rather small fingers in comparison with the stature of the rest of his body. He was the interpreter of Peter. After the death of Peter himself he wrote down this same gospel in the regions of Italy. “*

  - a. This supports the origin of Mark’s writing in Rome and Italy
  - b. This is a written witness after the time of Papias, but before the writing of Irenaeus.
    - i. Apostle John → Polycarp, Papias, Ignatius → Irenaeus (is the order of their lives)
4. Irenaeus includes in his writing that the source for the Gospel of Mark was the preaching of Peter and that Mark undertook to transmit the proclamation of Peter in writing only after the apostle’s death.
5. In 170-190 AD the Muratorian Canon was written that list the books that were recognized by the church of Rome to be Scripture. It includes this broken phrase referring to Mark by saying:
 

*“...at some things he was present, and so he recorded them.”* This seems to indicate that Mark wrote the things he was present to hear Peter speak about.
6. With these early church witnesses to Mark and his Gospel we have testimony from Asia (Papias), Rome (Prologue and the Muratorian Canon, and Lyon which is France today (Irenaeus). Agreeing with these are Tertullian from North Africa and Clement from Alexandria, Egypt around 200 AD.