

2019-2020 Bible Study

#12

12/10/19

Mark

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Setting the Stage for Mark

- You are a 30-year old, 1st Century Gentile:
 - Living in Rome in 65 A.D.
 - Married with a family
 - Working for the Roman Government
 - Worshiping the Roman gods including the emperor
 - Curious about a new religion presented by Peter and his followers in Rome based on the teachings of a deceased Jewish rabbi

Setting the Table for 65 A.D.

- 26-36 Pontius Pilate was 2nd Roman Governor
- 30 Jesus was crucified and the early church began
- 33 First Deacons were appointed
- 35 Stephen was martyred
- 37 Christian worship spread to Antioch
- 38 Paul flees Damascus
- 41-44 Herod Agrippa I ruled in Jerusalem
- 42 James was beheaded (by Agrippa II)

Setting the Table for 65 A.D.

- 44 Paul was brought to Antioch
- 45 Paul visits Jerusalem to help with famine
- **45-49 Paul's 1st missionary journey**
- 48-49 Herod Agrippa II ruled Jerusalem
- 49 Jews expelled from Rome by Claudius
- **49-52 Paul's 2nd missionary journey**
- 50 Apostles and Paul meet for 1st council

Setting the Table for 65 A.D.

- **53-58 Paul's 3rd missionary journey**
- **60-61 Paul's Journey to Rome (Acts 27: 1-28:14)**
- 64 Emperor Nero begins persecution of Christians
- 60s Matthew's Gospel written
- **64-68 Peter (age 62-67) and Paul (age 62) martyred in Rome (after fire in 64, before end of Nero's reign in 68)**
- 66-70 Jewish Revolt

Mark

- **Authorship:**

- Mark was **not** one of the 12
- He may have been, like Luke, part of the 70
- He was a disciple of Paul and Barnabas for a short time and later a disciple of Peter in Rome
- *Papias, Bishop of Hierapolis around 120 A.D. said, "Peter's words were written down by Mark"*
- Mark's work can be seen as the "Gospel of Peter" just as Luke's work can be seen as the "Gospel of Paul"
- His original audience was the Jewish Christians in the Church in Rome

Mark (Cont)

- **Date of Composition:**

- The Fathers of the Church are all over the place on the date and location of his composition
- Some believe it was completed before the death of Peter as a martyr (between 64 and 68 A.D.)
- Others believed he completed it after Peter's crucifixion
- Some indicate that he wrote down the preaching of Peter in *Rome*
- Others propose that he wrote it later in *Alexandria*
- A further complication is that there are four different endings to the gospel of Mark

Mark (Cont)

- **Mark 1:1-4** *“The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God...for the forgiveness of sins.”*
 - Mark’s story of John the Baptist begins with a quote are from **Isaiah** and one from **Malachi 3**
 - Father reminded us that Mark’s Gospel does not contain an “infancy narrative”
 - He asked that we look at **Matthew 2 & 3** where we see the end of the infancy story and the beginning of the John the Baptist story concerning the Baptism of Jesus in the Jordan River
 - This is an example of the synoptic story where we see how **Mark** and **Matthew** line up side by side ¹

Mark (Cont)

- Jesus went all over *Galilee* preaching the Gospel (Good News) healing infirmities and diseases
- Eventually, He made His way to *Caesarea Philippi* where He asked his disciples, “Who do people say I am?”
- Peter replied that He was “the Christ, the son of the living God”
- Immediately after this event, they left *Galilee* for *Jerusalem*
- Thus, the framing of the “Galilean ministry” was the Baptism of Jesus to His departure from *Caesarea Philippi* for *Jerusalem*

Mark (Cont)

- Father pointed out that at the baptism of Jesus, we hear a voice from heaven saying “behold my son” which is the Messianic title for the king
- So, Christ is the son of the living God who was being baptized by John when the Holy Spirit descended upon Jesus
- Thus, the Galilean ministry was to reveal to His disciples that He was the long-awaited *Christ* they had been waiting for over the previous 500 years
- The second half of the synoptic story was designed to reveal to His disciples that this messianic King was also the divine king from all eternity

Mark (Cont)

- The second half of the “synoptic story” begins with the “Transfiguration” where Jesus reveals His divine glory that will again shine forth from the tomb at His resurrection
- Father pointed out that we will be jumping around as we review the synoptic story
- In the future course on the “synoptics,” we will spend a great deal of time in a study of **Matthew** and look at the differences found in **Mark** and **Luke**
- In this course, we need to take a more limited look at each gospel since we also need to review the rest of the New Testament
- At this point, we will return to **Matthew 3**

Matthew 3

12/3/19

Outline for Matthew 3

- The Preaching of John the Baptist
 - John the Baptist/ John the Baptizer
 - Located on the east side of the Jordan
 - Kingdom of Heaven/ Kingdom of God
 - Relationship to the prophets: Isaiah and Malachi
 - Baptism of water and the Holy Spirit
- The Baptism of Jesus
 - Importance of the Law

Setting the Stage for Matthew

- You are a 30-year-old **1st Century Jew**
 - Living in Jerusalem in 65 A.D.
 - Married with a family
 - Working as a shopkeeper
 - Attempting to live a “righteous life”
 - Curious about “the new way” of Judaism including:
 - Who is the Rabbi *Joshua*, son of *Joseph* the carpenter, from Nazareth
 - The rumor that he is the long-awaited “Messiah”

Transition

- Remember, there were no chapter breaks in the original scrolls
- **Matthew:**
 - Followed his infancy narrative with the story of the Baptism of Jesus by John the Baptist in the Jordan River
 - Did not give the details of the birth of John the Baptist, the roles played by his parents Elizabeth and Zachariah
 - or mentions Mary's visit to En-Karim
 - Picked up the story with Jesus as an adult from Galilee

Transition (Cont)

- We will discover that Jesus came to:
 - Proclaim the “Good News”
 - Redeem mankind from sin through his death and resurrection
 - Initiate the “Kingdom of God”
 - The Church is:
 - One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic
 - The Church militant – on earth
 - The Church suffering – in purgatory
 - The Church triumphant – in heaven

Transition

- The Baptism of Jesus is in:
 - Matthew 3:13-17
 - Mark 1:9-11
 - Luke 3:21-22
 - John 1:29-34

Matthew 3

- **Matthew 3:1** *“In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, ‘Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand’”*
 - Father Sebastian pointed out that even though “John the Baptist” is a correct translation from the Greek, it has created confusion in modern times
 - Some “Southern Baptists” believe that their denomination can be traced back to John the Baptist

Matthew 3 (Cont)

- Mark refers to him as “John the Baptizer” (**Mark 1:4**) which helps some people understand that he was not the first “Southern Baptist”
- John the Baptist was, in fact, preaching the word in the wilderness of *Judea* on the East side of the *Jordan*
- Thus, when the Jews wanted to be baptized by John, they had to cross to the Eastern side of the *Jordan* to the place where the Jews originally crossed into the Promised Land
- This was a renewal of the **Exodus** story *

Matthew 3 (Cont)

- **Matthew 3:2** *“Repent, for the **Kingdom of heaven** is at hand”*
 - Another confusing term used by Matthew was the “kingdom of heaven”
 - Both **Mark** and **Luke** use the term “kingdom of God”
 - **John** indicates that the use of the term “heaven” was a circumlocution for the word “God” since “heaven” was the place where God resided

Matthew 3 (Cont)

- Remember, **Matthew** was a 1st century Jew writing to Jews who avoided saying or writing the holy name “Yahweh” in accordance with the 3rd commandment
 - You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain” (Exodus 20:7)
 - You shall not **profane** the name of the Lord your God” (Leviticus 19:12)
- “Profane” meant to make something “common”
- Thus, a good Jew would avoid the holy name altogether

Matthew 3 (Cont)

- When reading the Hebrew Bible in their synagogues, they would substitute “*Elohim*” for the word “*Yahweh*”
- This was translated in the Septuagint as “*Kairos O Theos*” (Lord, the God)
- Then, they began to use the word “heaven” as it was the place where God was

Matthew 3 (Cont)

- Father pointed out that this began as far back as the period of the *Maccabees* where *Judas Maccabaeus* talks about:
 - “Heaven helping us”
 - Let us pray to heaven (meaning to pray to God)
- This is the same circumlocution that we now see in **Matthew**
- So what did **Matthew** attribute to John the Baptist?
- “The kingdom of heaven is at hand”
- Later in **Mark** and **Luke**, who were writing to a more Gentile audience, this was no longer such a big issue *

Matthew 3 (Cont)

- **Matthew 3:3** *“for this is he who was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah when he said, the voice of one crying in the wilderness: prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight”*
 - This is from **Isaiah 40:3**
 - *Isaiah* had prophesied that the *Babylonians* would come and destroy Jerusalem (**Isaiah 39:1-8**)
 - Then he prophesied about its future restoration *

Matthew 3 (Cont)

- **Matthew 3:4** *“Now John wore a garment of camel’s hair, and a leather girdle around his waist: and his food was locusts and wild honey”*
 - This should remind us of how the prophet *Elijah* was dressed (**2 Kings 1:8**)
 - This happened when *Elijah* crossed the Jordan toward the east and was taken in a fiery chariot to heaven (**2 Kings 2:11**)
 - As just discussed, this is the place where John the Baptist will appear *