

Bible Stuey 2022-2023

Class #12

12/13/22

Introduction to Mark

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Transition

- This concludes our look at Luke's nativity narrative
- As mentioned, we will now conduct a brief orientation of the **Gospel of Mark**
- Then, we will begin a detailed study of the rest of the **Gospel of Matthew** as our guide to the synoptics

Intro to Mark

- The statement, the **Gospel According to Mark** (Once again, this was not found in the original text, but added later by a scribe)
- Like many others, (Saul – Paul) he had a Jewish name – John, and a Latin name - Mark
- The **authorship** of the Gospel of Mark has been attributed to Mark, who was a disciple of Peter and Paul in the early church
- He initially accompanied Paul and Barnabas on their first missionary journey, but dropped out early to return to Jerusalem

Intro to Mark (Cont)

- He was later seen as a companion of Peter in Rome
- Tradition has it that after the martyrdom of Peter and Paul in Rome, he moved to Alexandria, Egypt
- There he established a Christian community later described as the **Coptic Church** (shorten form of the word Egypt)
- Also, according to tradition, he wrote his gospel from information he received from Peter in Rome

Intro to Mark (Cont)

- This can be surmised from the:
 - Humble absence of Peter from many of the stories
 - Explanation of Palestinian customs (indicating his audience was not Palestinian)
 - Translation of Aramaic words and phrases, indicating that his audience was not familiar with Aramaic, the common language of the Palestinians
 - Tendency to Latinized terms, rather than using the Greek equivalents
 - Conclusion of the crucifixion story with the conversion of a Roman soldier confessing that Jesus was the Son of God

Intro to Mark (Cont)

- This would indicate that his audience was primarily Roman
- Father pointed out that Biblical Greek had very few Latin words in it (in fact, there are no Latin words in classical Greek)
- The only time we find Latin in Greek was when you had Latin as the mother tongue of the audience
- We also know that because Mark was not a native of Italy, Latin was not his mother tongue

Intro to Mark (Cont)

- Another opinion states that he was writing in Greek for a people who spoke Greek in a Latin way, which was primarily in Rome during this period
- All of the above points to the tradition of the early Church that Mark wrote down the gospel as it was preached by Peter in Rome
- Father pointed out that if Bible scholars put more emphasis on the early Church traditions, we would not end up with crazy ideas like Marcin priority (a German Protestant idea over the last couple of centuries presently being completely discounted)

Intro to Mark (Cont)

- The **date of composition** is difficult to pin down
 - *Eusebius* (AD 340) said it was composed during the reign of *Emperor Claudius* (AD 41-54)
 - *Irenaeus* (AD 180) said Mark composed his Gospel shortly after the death of Peter (AD 67)
 - *Clement of Alexander* (AD 200) said Mark wrote before the death of Peter
- Thus, the range is from the early 40s to the late 60s, but most likely before AD 70 since Mark recorded Jesus' prophecy about the destruction of Jerusalem, but does not imply that it had taken place

Intro to Mark (Cont)

- Father pointed out that we do not find such discrepancies in the date of composition for Matthew or Luke
- There are questions as to where he wrote his gospel (Rome or Alexandria)?
- When did he write it (Before or after the death of Peter) ?
- Further, there are four or five different endings to Mark's gospel

Intro to Mark (Cont)

- The short version ends with, *“and they ran from the tomb and were afraid and told no one”*
- A slightly longer version ends with, *“and Jesus appeared to them and said go tell my disciples”*
- A longer version ends with, *“and Jesus appeared and said to some of the disciples on the road toward the village of Emmaus”* This refers to the story from Luke
- Then, we have the fullest version which is what we have in today’s bible

Intro to Mark (Cont)

- Father asked which ending is correct and why are there so many different endings?
 - He suggested that we have these discrepancies because they reflect his gospel at different stages of development
 - Most likely, he took notes of Peter's stories before he died
 - After Peter died, he collected his notes and wrote his gospel; so, the second stage was after Peter died
 - Then, he fled from Rome and went to Alexandria, where he further developed his gospel producing another stage

Intro to Mark (Cont)

- Then he added an extra portion to the ending while in Alexandria
- Thus, the shortest ending might be the earliest form
- After he arrived at Alexandria, he extended it by using information from Matthew and Luke
 - Road to Emmaus was clearly from Luke
 - Baptize all nations came from Luke and Matthew
- Father further pointed out that, Mark was an apostolic figure, but not one of the twelve
- Thus, after finding out what the others had written, he incorporated their information into his gospel

Intro to Mark (Cont)

- The **structure and theme** of Mark's Gospel focuses primarily on Jesus as the Son of God
 - The gospel begins with this declaration
 - Jesus is repeatedly identified as such throughout the gospel
 - Jesus identifies himself this way
 - The gospel ends with this same theme in the story of the centurion

Intro to Mark (Cont)

- Structure
 - **Prologue:** Preparations for Jesus the Messiah by the Baptist his forerunner (1:1-15)
 - **Jesus' Public Ministry:** The Messiah's widespread ministry (1:16-8:30)
 - **Passion Narrative:** The suffering Messiah (8:31-15:47)
 - **Resurrection Epilogue:** The risen Messiah (16:1-20)

Intro to Mark (Cont)

- Mark's Gospel is similar to Luke's except for the infancy narrative
- All three gospels begin to line up with the baptism of Jesus, and from here on are very similar
 - This story kicks off the Galilean ministry which then concludes with Caesarea Philippi (*you are the Christ, the son of the living God*)
 - After this, Jesus heads for Jerusalem, with a brief pause for the *Transfiguration* (which serves as an intro to the next portion of the Gospel)

Intro to Mark (Cont)

- The second half of the gospel climaxes with the passion narrative which includes His death and resurrection
- This is followed by the post-resurrection stories
- The various differences between the gospels are due to the focus on their audiences

Intro to Mark (Cont)

- We can see from Peter's speech in **Acts 10**, that the simple form of the gospel includes:
 - Jesus' baptism
 - The great things He did among the people of Galilee
 - His eventual trip to Jerusalem, where he was rejected, and crucified
 - Finally, God raised Him from the dead