



# Mark 1 & 2 - January 2024

## Introduction



### Mark and his Gospel

Mark lived in Jerusalem and was probably a teenager when Jesus was crucified. About ten years later, his family home was one of the places that the early Christians held their meetings. On one occasion, after Peter had been arrested for his preaching, then released in a miraculous way, it was Mark's home that he went to:

**Acts 12:11-12** <sup>11</sup> Then Peter came to himself and said, 'Now I know without a doubt that the Lord has sent his angel and rescued me from Herod's clutches and from everything the Jewish people were hoping would happen.' <sup>12</sup> When this had dawned on him, he went to the house of Mary the mother of John, also called Mark, where many people had gathered and were praying.

A couple of years later (46AD) Mark went on Paul's first missionary journey, to Cyprus, then Pamphylia (now S.E.Turkey) but Mark left them there to go home. So Paul wouldn't take him on his next journey.

**Acts 12:25** <sup>25</sup> When Barnabas and Saul had finished their mission, they returned to Jerusalem, taking with them John, also called Mark.

**Acts 15:36-39** <sup>36</sup> Some time later Paul said to Barnabas, 'Let us go back and visit the believers in all the towns where we preached the word of the Lord and see how they are doing.' <sup>37</sup> Barnabas wanted to take John, also called Mark, with them, <sup>38</sup> but Paul did not think it wise to take him, because he had deserted them in Pamphylia and had not continued with them in the work. <sup>39</sup> They had such a sharp disagreement that they parted company. Barnabas took Mark and sailed for Cyprus.

Later on, Paul and Mark were reconciled. By the time that Paul was under house arrest in Rome (AD 62-64), writing some of his letters, Mark was with him at times and acting as Paul's messenger.

**Colossians 4:10** <sup>10</sup> My fellow prisoner Aristarchus sends you his greetings, as does Mark, the cousin of Barnabas. (You have received instructions about him; if he comes to you, welcome him.)

**2 Timothy 4:11** <sup>11</sup> Only Luke is with me. Get Mark and bring him with you, because he is helpful to me in my ministry.

Peter was also imprisoned in Rome at this time. Around 64AD both Peter and Paul were executed when the Roman Emperor Nero was persecuting the Christians there. Peter was concerned that his memories of Jesus' life and teaching should be preserved. Mark's Gospel may well be how this happened.

**1 Peter 5:13** <sup>13</sup> She who is in Babylon (*code for the church in Rome*) chosen together with you, sends you her greetings, and so does my son Mark (*'son' in the faith, younger disciple*).

**2 Peter 1:13-15** <sup>13</sup> I think it is right to refresh your memory as long as I live in the tent of this body, <sup>14</sup> because I know that I will soon put it aside, as our Lord Jesus Christ has made clear to me. <sup>15</sup> And I will make every effort to see that after my departure you will always be able to remember these things.

Papias was a church leader in Hierapolis, near Laodicea and Colossae, in what is now S.W.Turkey. In 120AD he wrote what he remembered John (author of the Gospel and Letters of John) said.

*'The Elder (John) used to say: Mark, in his capacity as Peter's interpreter, wrote down accurately as many things as he recalled from memory—though not in an ordered form—of the things either said or done by the Lord.'*

It is thought that Mark's Gospel was the first to be written down, between 60AD and 70AD. Matthew and Luke probably both used Mark as a framework for their own Gospels soon afterwards. John wrote his Gospel later, perhaps around 90AD.

Mark may have later left Rome and been a leader of the church in Alexandria in Egypt.

## The Sermon Series

- Jan 7 Mark 1: 1-13 The beginning of the good news
- Jan 14 Mark 1: 14-28 The Kingdom of God is near
- Jan 21 Mark 1: 29-45 The authority of Jesus
- Jan 28 Mark 2: 1-12 Who can forgive sins but God alone?
- Feb 4 Mark 2: 13-17 Jesus – Friend of sinners

*From Feb 11 to Mar 17 we shall be looking at the rest of the Ten Commandments; we looked at the first 4 commandments in October/November 2023.*

*After Holy Week and Easter, we continue Mark's Gospel.*

- Apr 7 Mark 16: 1-8 The resurrection*
- Apr 14 Mark 2: 18 – 3:6 People who met Jesus – the religious
- Apr 21 Mark 3: 7-19 People who met Jesus – the crowds and the 12
- Apr 28 Orchard Grove Vision*
- May 5 Mark 3: 20-35 People who met Jesus – the blasphemers