



Lecture #6 Part 2

INTRODUCTION TO MARK

- D. What do we know about John Mark
1. His mother was a well-known believer in Jerusalem in whose house the church met (possibly the night of the Lord's Supper, cf. [Mark 14:14–15](#); [Acts 1:13–14](#); [Acts 12:12](#)). He was possibly the unnamed man who fled from Gethsemane ([Mark 14:51–52](#)).
 2. He accompanied his uncle Barnabas (cf. [Colossians 4:10](#)) and Paul back to Antioch from Jerusalem ([Acts 12:25](#)).
 3. He was a companion of Barnabas and Paul on the first missionary journey ([Acts 13:5](#)), but returned home suddenly ([Acts 13:13](#)).
 4. Later Barnabas wanted to take Mark on a second missionary journey, but this caused a terrible disagreement between Barnabas and Paul ([Acts 15:37–40](#)).
 5. He was later reunited with Paul and became a friend and co-worker ([Colossians 4:10](#); [2 Timothy 4:11](#); [Philemon 24](#)).
 6. He was a companion and co-worker with Peter ([1 Peter 5:13](#)), possibly in Rome.
 7. **I Clements**, written from Rome about A.D. 95, alludes to Mark (as does *Shepherd of Hermes*).
 8. **Justin Martyr** (A.D . 150), in quoting [Mark 3:17](#), adds that it comes from Peter's memory.
 9. **Clement of Alexandria** (A.D. 195) asserts that those who heard Peter preach in Rome asked Mark to record these sermons.
 10. **Tertullian** (A.D. 200) in *Against Marcion* (4:5) says Mark published Peter's memories.
 11. According to **Eusebius'** *Eccl. His. 4:25*, **Origen** (A.D. 230) in *Commentary on Matthew* (there is no known commentary on Mark by anyone until the fifth century) says Mark wrote the Gospel as Peter explained it to him.



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12. Eusebius himself discusses the Gospel of Mark in *Eccl. His. 2:15* and says Mark recorded Peter's sermons at the behest of those who heard them so that they could be read in all the churches. Eusebius bases this tradition on the writings of **Clement of Alexandria**.

E. Mark's involvement seems confirmed by [Mark 14:51–52](#), where a man flees naked from the Garden of Gethsemane, just after Jesus' arrest. This unusual and totally unexpected detail seems to reflect Mark's personal experience.

IV. DATE

- A.** The Gospel is the eyewitness account and interpretation of Jesus' life, actions, and teachings, apparently taken from his sermons. They were compiled and distributed after his death, so says the **Anti-Marcionite Prologue** and **Irenaeus** (who also adds after the death of Paul). Both Peter and Paul were martyred under Nero in Rome (church tradition). The exact dates are uncertain, but if true, then probably the date of Mark was in the mid-sixties.
- B.** It is possible that the **Anti-Marcionite Prologue** and **Irenaeus** do not refer to Peter's death, but his departure (i.e. exodus) from Rome. There is some traditional evidence (i.e. **Justin and Hippolytus**) that Peter visited Rome during the reign of **Claudius (A.D. 41 to 54)**, (**Eusebius' Eccl. His. 2:14:6**).
- C.** It seems that Luke concludes Acts with Paul still in prison in the early sixties. If it is true that Luke used Mark in his Gospel then it must have been written before Acts and, therefore, earlier than the early sixties.
- D.** The authorship and date of Mark does not in any way affect the historical/theological/evangelistic truths of this (or any) gospel. Jesus, not the author, is the key figure!
- E.** It is surprising that none of the Gospels (even **John**, written A.D. 95–96) refers or alludes to the destruction of Jerusalem (cf. **Matthew 24; Mark 13; Luke 21**) in A.D. 70 by the Roman general, later Emperor, Titus. **Mark** was probably written before this event. It is even possible that **Matthew** and **Luke** were also written before this major judgment on Judaism. It simply must be stated that the exact dates for the composition of the Synoptic Gospels is uncertain at this time (as is their literary relationship to one another).