

Mark

Who, When, Where

Written by Markos (Mark). There are two Markos mentioned in the New Testament. One was a cousin of Barnabas and companion of Paulus and Barnabas, and also known as Yohannes. The other was a companion of Petros and sometimes referred to outside the Bible as Markos the Evangelist.

Mark is kind of a cut down version of Matthew, so a lot of people think it must have been written after. But of course, Matthew might be an expanded version of Mark?

Either way they were probably written pretty much around the same time, in the 60's somewhere.

Presumably not written in Jerusalem.

The story is set around Yeshua's life in Israel, but Markos was travelling around with Petros, so he could have been in many places when he wrote this gospel.

Summary

Markos is a very summarised version of the story of Yeshua's ministry. Kind of like just the highlights.

Markos seems to focus quite a bit on the miracles that Yeshua did, more than lengthy details of his teaching.

It doesn't actually say who wrote it, but it has traditionally thought to have been Markos, the companion of Petros.

Markos also doesn't use a lot of Jewish jargon unless he explains what it means. So presumably he was thinking his readers would be mostly non-Jews, which is also where Petros has his own ministry.

Before You Read

From what you already know about Yeshua - if you had to write a summary of his life, which stories would you include?

Why do you think Yeshua did so many miracles?

If he had come to this generation instead of 2,000 years ago, how do you think it would have been different?

Key Verses

Mark 2:27

And he said to them, "The Sabbath came to be because of the person, not the person because of the Sabbath."

The Jews had become very legalistic about the Law. Interpreting it literally instead of trying to understand the spirit of what it meant and doing that.

That made them very judgemental. To the point that they decided to kill the son of God because he had healed a man on a Sabbath!

Do you think they might have missed the point somewhere?

Mark 6:3

Isn't this the craftsman, son of Maria, and brother of Yaakov, and Yoses, and Yehuda, and Shimon? And aren't his sisters here with us?" And they took offence at him.

The people of his home town were so caught up in their preconceptions about Yeshua that they didn't realise that the Messiah, the Anointed, the son of God, had grown up in their very town.

How about you? What preconceptions do you have? Are they right? Are you willing to put them aside and investigate to find the truth?

BTW: this verse also clearly says that Yeshua had brothers and sisters. So the Roman Catholic concept that Maria remained a virgin is clearly not correct.

Mark 8:43

And when he'd called the crowd to himself, along with his disciples, he said to them, "Let anyone who wants to follow after me renounce themselves, and let them pick up their stake and let them follow me."

This saying is quoted in all four gospels. The Greek word stauros means a stake or a pole. It's often translated cross, but it didn't always have a crossbar. It's not important whether it did or not. It was a symbol of the way the Romans executed people.

Yeshua isn't saying we should all be dragging a wooden pole wherever we go. He is saying "deny yourself", to the point of being willing to be executed. Be willing to hang your self on a stake. Give up your own ambitions, and goals, and wants... and follow Yeshua. Die to your self and live for him.

What does that look like for you? What would you have to give up? How would Yeshua want you to deny your self?

Mark 9:43

And if your hand makes you stumble, cut it off. It's better for you to enter into life maimed, than to have two hands and to go off into Gehenna, into the unquenchable fire,

If we took this literally no Christians would have hands. So what is Yeshua saying here? This is more about how important it is to not sin. How awful the consequences are if you do.

At the time, Yeshua was preaching to Jews, who were under the Law. Fortunately for us, our righteousness comes from Yeshua, and what he did. So we can keep our hands... but we should still be very conscious about the seriousness of our sins.

Mark 10:45

For even the Son of Man didn't come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life to be a ransom for many."

How important do you think you are? Do other people know that?

Yeshua, son of Yahweh, creator of the universe and everything in it, came to earth... to serve us!

How awesome is that! How humble is that!

Does that challenge you? Are you humble? Inwardly as well as outwardly?

Mark 15:34

And at the ninth hour Yeshua shouted in a loud voice, saying, "Eloi. Eloi. Lama sabachthani", (which is translated as "My god. My god. Why have you abandoned me?").

Jews counted their day starting at 6am. So the 9th hour is 3 in the afternoon.

This was the real punishment Yeshua endured for us. Not just the agonising physical death, which many others also endured. But being abandoned by his father. The father he had been with since eternity past was suddenly turning his back on him and letting him suffer for the sin of mankind.

This is the only time I can think of where Yeshua didn't seem to know something. He knew men's thoughts, he knew God's will, he knew the Law inside out. He knew he was going to die... but it seems he didn't know God was going to abandon him.

Can you imagine?

Why would he endure that for you?

Mark 16:15

And he [Yeshua] said to them, "Having gone into all the world, proclaim the good message to all the creation."

This verse isn't as popular as the equivalent one in Matthew. But it provides an interesting view to the same event.

This is how Markos remembered Yeshua saying it.

It's also important to remember that he was speaking to a group of people. We don't each have to go into all the world. But we need to do that as a team. Between us, we need to go to everyone.

Which bit are you doing?

And we don't all have to be evangelists, but we all have to be doing something. How are you helping out on the team?

After You Read

What verses really stood out to you?

How would you summarize this book in a sentence or two? What is it about? What is God trying to say to us?

Which one of Yeshua's miracles impresses you the most?

If you had been around at that time, would you have been convinced that he was the son of God?

How about at the end where it says signs will follow those who trust in what Yeshua has taught. Do you see that happening around you? Do you see it happening in your life?