

The Gospel of Mark

Following Jesus on the Way

Lay Preachers' & Worship Leaders' (Virtual) Gathering

Westminster College, Cambridge

10 August 2020

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Collect for Education (*Book of Common Prayer*, 261)

Almighty God, the fountain of all wisdom: Enlighten by your Holy Spirit those who teach and those who learn, that, rejoicing in the knowledge of your truth, they may worship you and serve you from generation to generation; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Mark
=
RCL Year B

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Significant Markan texts missed by RCL

3.7-19 = calling of 12 disciples

4.1-25 = parables about Kingdom of God

**5.1-20 = exorcism of Gerasene demoniac

**6.35-52 = feeding of 5,000; Jesus walks on

Sea 7.9-13 = Jesus debates Pharisees

**8.1-26 = feeding of 4,000; Pharisees seek a sign; disciples misunderstand; Jesus heals blind man at Bethsaida

**9.1 = Jesus claims Kingdom is imminent: his followers will not taste death before it comes

Significant Markan texts missed by RCL

9.10-29 = Jesus teaches about Elijah, heals spirit-possessed child

******10.32-34 = Jesus's third passion prediction

11.12-12.27 = disputes in Temple and with Pharisees, Herodians, and Sadducees

13.9-23 = Mark's Jesus anticipates future based on events in 30s through 60s CE, false prophets and messiahs

Five Fast Features of Gospel of Mark

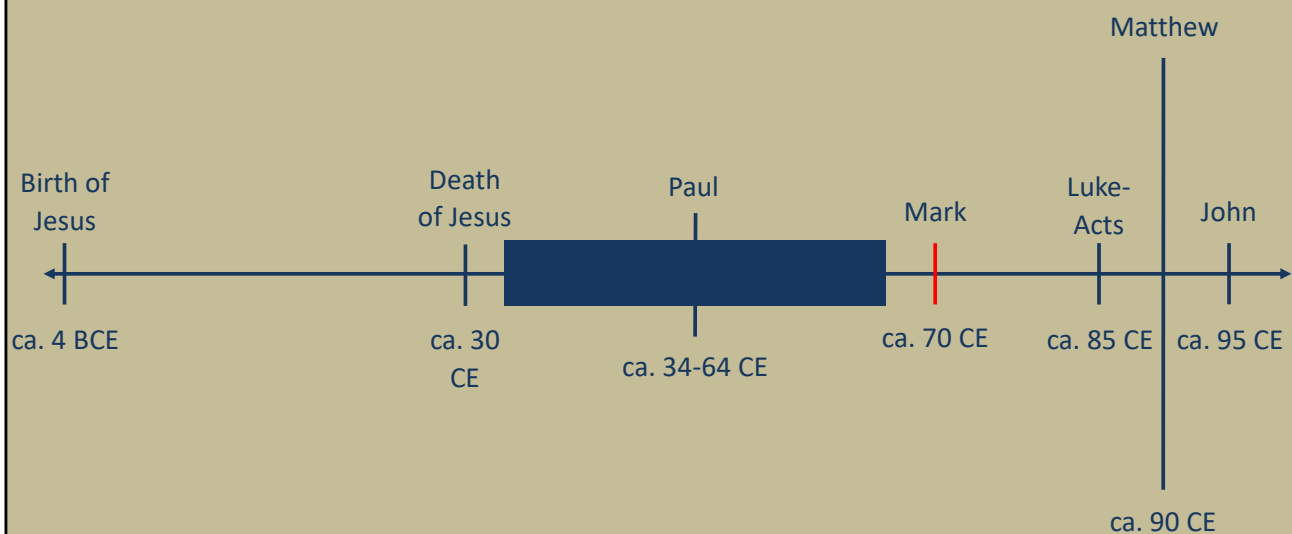
Author: "Mark"

Date: shortly before/after 70 C.E. (68-73?)

Origin: Rome; or Syria, Judea, Decapolis

Audience: Persecuted Christians, perhaps in 60s at Rome?

Source(s): Oral, maybe written Jesus tradition, maybe Pauline letters



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Basic Structure(s) of Mark

1.1-8.26. Judea → Galilee, where Jesus serves and teaches

Arrival, callings, healings, exorcisms, teachings (1.1-3.6)

Apostles, family, crowds, parables, exorcisms, healings, teachings (3.7-6.6)

JB dies, feedings (2x), Pharisees, healings (6.7-8.26)

8.27-16.8. Galilee → Jerusalem, where Jesus is crucified, raised

Peter's confession, passion predictions (3x), transfiguration, scribes / Pharisees, exorcism, disciples compete, healing (8.27-10.52)

Arrival in Jerusalem, Temple events, scribes / Pharisees, mini-apocalypse (11.1-13.37)

Anointing, Passover meal, betrayal, trials, crucifixion, burial, tomb (14.1-16.8)

Basic Structure(s) of Mark

1.1-10.45. Judea → Galilee → Jericho in Judean hills

10.46-16.8. Judean hills, Jerusalem

1.1-15. Beginning

1.16-8.26. Ministry

8.27-16.8. Death

Important Aspects of the Gospel of Mark

- ✓ Short, ending at 16.8
- ✓ Terse, non-native language with rapid-fire transitions ('immediately')
- ✓ Secrecy motif, but certain figures recognize Jesus's identity
- ✓ Exorcisms reveal Jesus as teacher with power
- ✓ Retrospective emphasis on Jesus's shocking death

Following the Markan “Way of the Lord”

LXX quotations in Mark 1.2-3

‘See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,
who will prepare your way;
the voice of one crying out in the wilderness.
“Prepare the way of the Lord,
make his paths straight,”’

‘way’ occurs 14 more times in Mark

Jesus and his disciples are frequently ‘on the way’ (5x)

Clearest example. ‘Immediately [Bartimaeus] regained his sight and followed [Jesus] on the way’ (10.52)

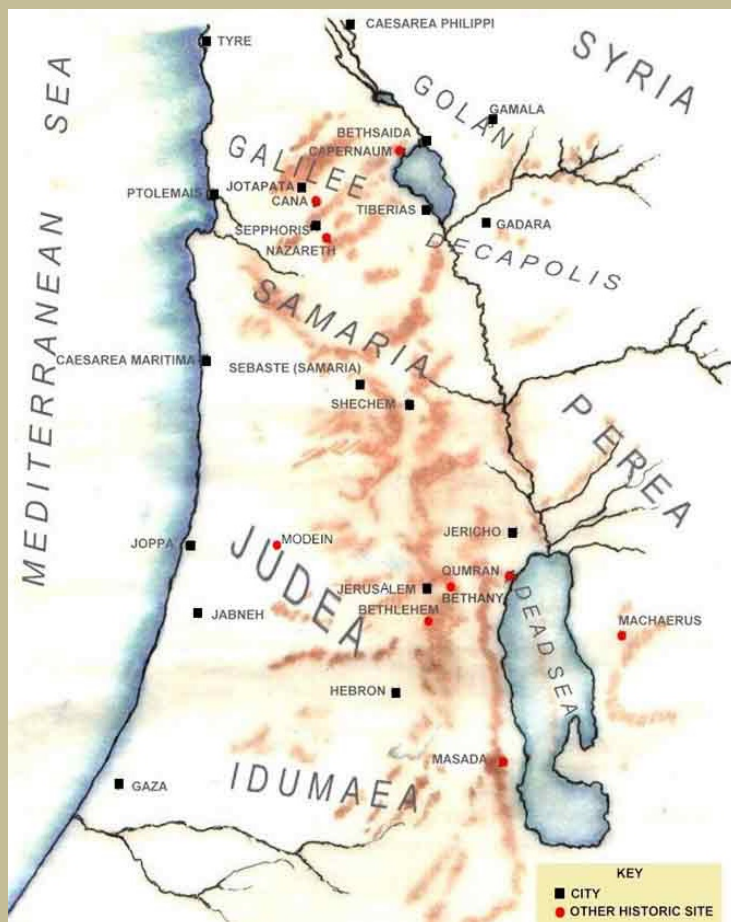
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What marks the Markan way of Jesus?

- ✓ Following
explicitly mentioned 20x
- ✓ Discipleship
particularly in service of others (see 8.27-10.52)
- ✓ Persecution and suffering
3 passion predictions by Jesus
- ✓ Possibly death
unexpected death of the Messiah, the Son of God

Following Jesus in Mark with words and images

13



Ancient Israel
(1st Cent. CE)

Source: Jewish Virtual Library



‘John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness... In those days
Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by
John in the Jordan.’
(Mk 1.4-11)

15



‘And the Spirit
immediately drove him
out into the wilderness.
He was in the wilderness
forty days, tempted by
Satan; and he was with
the wild beasts; and the
angels waited on him.’

(Mk 1.12-13)



‘They went to Capernaum; and when the sabbath came, [Jesus] entered the synagogue and taught.’ (Mk 1.21)

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‘As soon as they left the synagogue, they entered the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John.’ (Mk 1.29)

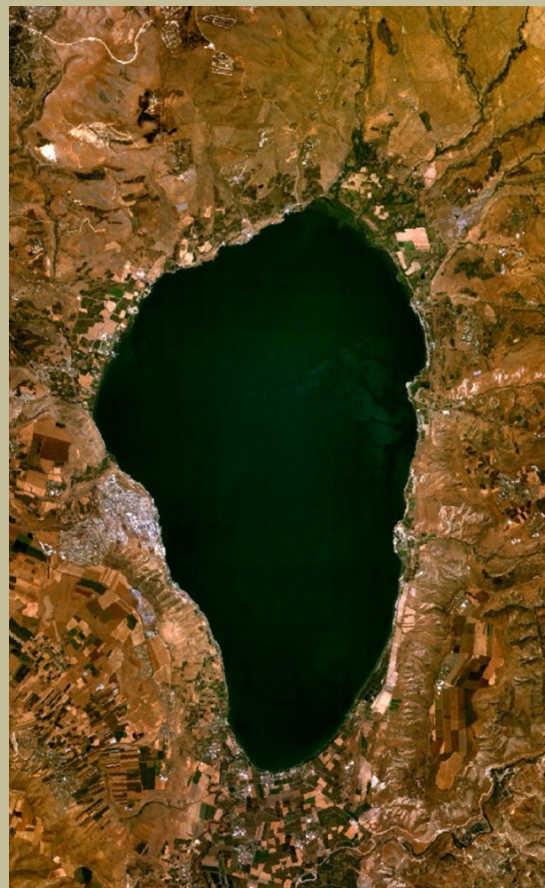


‘Jesus departed with his disciples to the sea, and a great multitude from Galilee followed him...’ (Mk 3.7)

19

Sea of Galilee (Lake Tiberias)

Source: NASA World Wind





‘On that day, when evening had come, he said to them, “Let us go across to the other side.” And leaving the crowd behind, they took him with them in the boat, just as he was. Other boats were with him. A great windstorm arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that the boat was already being swamped.’ (Mk 4.35-37)

21



‘They came to the other side of the sea, to the country of the Gerasenes.’ (Mk 5.1)



‘And he went away and began to proclaim in the Decapolis how much Jesus had done for him; and everyone was amazed.’

(Mk 5.20)

23



‘He left that place and came to his hometown, and his disciples followed him. On the sabbath [Jesus] began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were astounded.’ (Mk 6.1-2)



‘After saying farewell to them, [Jesus] went up on the mountain to pray.’ (Mk 6.46)

25



‘After saying farewell to them, [Jesus] went up on the mountain to pray.’ (Mk 6.46)



‘They came to Bethsaida. Some people brought a blind man to [Jesus] and begged him to touch him.’ (Mk 8.22)

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‘Jesus went on with his disciples to the villages of Caesarea Philippi; and on the way he asked his disciples, “Who do people say that I am?” And they answered him, “John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; and still others, one of the prophets.” He asked them, “But who do you say that I am?” Peter answered him, “You are the Messiah.”’ (Mk 8.27-29)

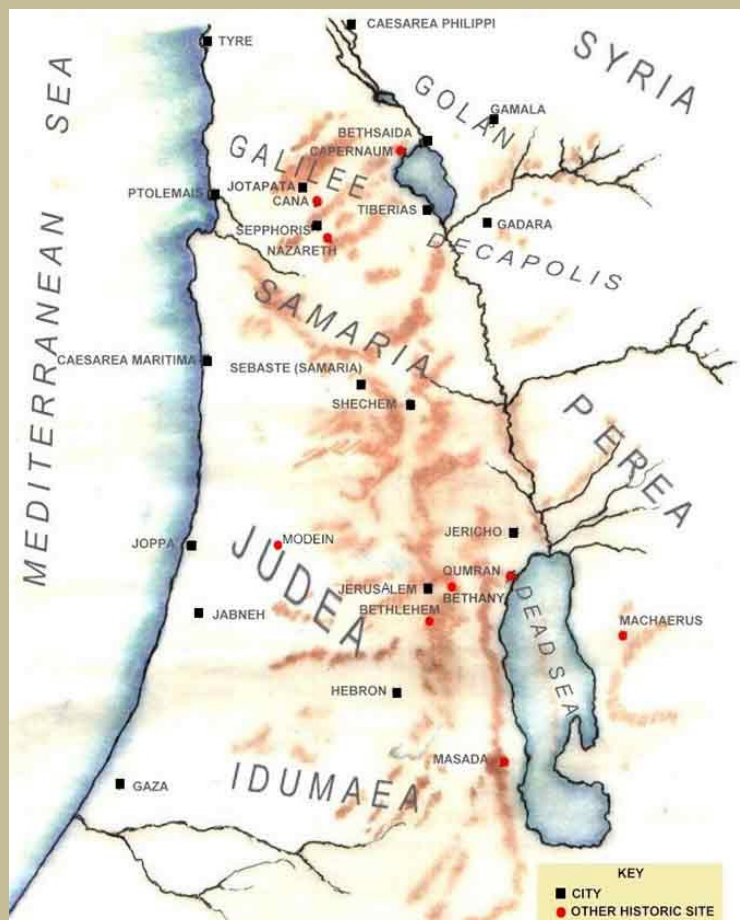


‘Six days later, Jesus took with him Peter and James and John, and led them up a high mountain apart, by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, and his clothes became dazzling white, such as no one on earth could bleach them.’ (Mk 9.2-3)

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‘[Jesus] left that place and went to the region of Judea and beyond the Jordan.’

(Mk 10.1)



Source: Jewish Virtual Library



‘They were on the road, going up to Jerusalem...’ (Mk 10.32)

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‘When they were approaching Jerusalem, at Bethphage and Bethany, near the Mount of Olives, [Jesus] sent two of his disciples... Then he entered Jerusalem and went into the temple... And he entered the temple and began to drive out those who were selling and those who were buying in the temple’ (Mk 11.1-15)



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33



‘As [Jesus] came out of the temple, one of his disciples said to him, “Look, Teacher, what large stones and what large buildings!”’ (Mk 13.1)



‘As [Jesus] came out of the temple, one of his disciples said to him, “Look, Teacher, what large stones and what large buildings!”’ (Mk 13.1)

35



‘...[Jesus] was sitting on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple...’
(Mk 13.3)



‘They went to a place called Gethsemane; and [Jesus] said to his disciples, “Sit here while I pray.”’ (Mk 14.32)

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‘Then they brought Jesus to the place called Golgotha (which means the place of a skull).’

(Mk 15.22)





‘Then they brought Jesus to the place called Golgotha (which means the place of a skull).’ (Mk 15.22)

39



‘Then Joseph bought a linen cloth, and taking down the body, wrapped it in the linen cloth, and laid it in a tomb that had been hewn out of the rock. He then rolled a stone against the door of the tomb.’ (Mk 15.46)

Concluding question

How and where is Jesus calling you and your community of disciples to follow him on the Way?