

Week of January 9 - 15

Overview of Mark

John Mark was a young Hebrew man who joined the early Christians who celebrated the incarnation of the Jewish Messiah and who wrote the Gospel of Mark. John was his Roman name; John was his Jewish name.

His cousin was Barnabas, and his mother was Mary, in whose home many were praying when Peter came after he was released from prison. Evidence suggests Mark's Gospel was strongly influenced by Peter who called Mark his "son." He traveled with Paul and Barnabas and befriended many of Jesus' twelve apostles. It was on Paul and Barnabas' first journey that for some unexplained reason, he separated himself from their company and returned to Jerusalem. Paul refused to take John Mark on the next journey because he had abandoned them, resulting in a parting of the ways. Paul and Mark finally reconciled as Mark was with Paul in his first imprisonment in Rome. Later, he was with Peter in Babylon, then with Timothy in Ephesus.

Mark's Gospel is a simple, concise, unadorned, powerful account of Jesus' ministry, emphasizing more of what Jesus did than of what He said. Mark quickly jumps from one episode in Jesus' life and ministry to another, often using the word "immediately."

His Gospel provides the ministry of Jesus from his baptism by John the Baptist to his death and burial – there is no information about his birth or his post-resurrection appearances. It shows Jesus as a heroic man of action, an exorcist, a healer, a miracle worker, and the Son of God.

Because neither Jesus nor his original disciples left any writings behind, the Gospel of Mark is the closest document to an original source on Jesus's life that we have.

Summary of this Week's Readings from Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John

During the reign of Caesar Tiberius, Pontius Pilate, and Herod Agrippa, Anna and Caiaphas were the head priests, and Zachariah's son John began to proclaim God's message in the desert. He presented a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins as written in the book of Isaiah, "The voice of one calling in the desert. Prepare the way of the Lord; make straight paths for Him."

John wore a garment made of camel hair with a leather belt and he ate locust and wild honey. People came to him from Jerusalem and all over Judea confessing their sins and desiring to be baptized in the Jordan River. He called those who gathered a brood of snakes and openly confronted religious leaders about their motives for coming.

"Prove your repentance is real by your actions. Don't think you'll get by just because you are Abraham's descendants. "The time has come for the ax to strike the roots. Every tree that does not yield good fruit is going to be chopped down and burned."

To prove their sincerity, John told them to share their clothing with those who lacked, to share their food with those who were hungry, and to be fair and honest in their dealings. The crowd thought John might be the Christ, but he said, "The one who will follow me is so much mightier than me that I don't deserve to take his shoes off. I baptize with water as a token of repentance, but He will baptize with the Holy Spirit and with fire. He will gather the wheat into His barn, but will burn the chaff with unquenchable fire."

A group of Temple priests from Jerusalem confronted John about who he was and what he was doing and asked him if he was the Christ, the reincarnated spirit of Elijah, or another great prophet. He said he was neither. "Then who are you?" they demanded, "We want to tell those who sent us."

"I am the voice of one calling in the desert, 'Make straight the way of the Lord.'" They asked him why he was baptizing if he wasn't the Christ or a great prophet. He said he only baptized with water, but there is Someone among us Whom you don't recognize, but Who will overshadow me.

The next day Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan River to be baptized by John. John pointed Him out and said, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! This is the one I meant when I said, 'A man who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.' I did not know him, but the reason I came baptizing with water was that he might be revealed to Israel."

John was reluctant to baptize him, but Jesus persuaded him it would fulfill all righteousness. After baptizing Jesus, John saw the Spirit descend and light on Jesus and knew that this was indeed the Son of God.

John announced, "This is the one I said would follow me, who is to be regarded ahead of me. All of us have experienced His gracious blessings. Moses delivered the law, but Jesus is the source of grace and truth. No one has ever seen God. But he has come to reveal the very heart of God. After John baptized Jesus with water, the Holy Spirit of God recognized Jesus as His son, saying, "You are my beloved Son with Whom I am well pleased."

The Holy Spirit then led Jesus to go into the wilderness to be tested by Satan. After forty days and nights without food, he was tired and hungry. The devil tempted him to turn stones to bread so He could eat. Jesus said, "Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God."

Next, the devil put on top of the temple and dared Him to jump citing Psalms, that angels would save the Child of God and keep Him from stumbling and getting hurt. Jesus said, "It is also written: 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'"

Finally, the devil set Him on top of the world and enticed Him with all the splendor of the Earth saying that he could give Him anything on Earth if He would only bow to him. Jesus said, "Away from me, Satan! It is written: 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve Him only.'"

The devil left Jesus alone in the wilderness; angels appeared and ministered to Him.

Luke tells us at the end of Chapter 3 that Jesus is 30 years old when this occurred and gives His genealogy, tracing it back through Mary and David to Adam, whereas Matthew traced His genealogy back from Joseph to Abraham.

MATTHEW

LUKE

Abraham	Abraham
Isaac	Isaac
Jacob	Jacob
Judah	Judah
Perez	Perez
Hezron	Hezron
Ram	Ram
Amminadab	Amminadab
Nahshon	Nahshon
Salmon	Salmon
Boaz	Boaz
Obed	Obed
Jesse	Jesse
David	David

Paternal Line

Maternal Line

Solomon
 Rehoboam
 Abijah
 Asa
 Jehoshaphat
 Joram
 Uzziah
 Jotham
 Ahaz
 Hezekiah
 Manasseh
 Amon
 Josiah
 Jeconiah
 Shealtiel
 Zerubbabel

Nathan (Solomon's brother)
 Mattathah
 Menan
 Melea
 Eliakim
 Jonan
 Joseph
 Judah
 Simeon
 Levi
 Matthat
 Jorim
 Eliezer
 Jose
 Er
 Elmodam
 Cosam
 Addi
 Melchi
 Neri

} Intermarriage {
 Shealtiel
 Zerubbabel

Abiud	←(Zerubbabel's sons)→	Rhesa
Eliakim		Joannas
Azor		Judah
Zadok		Joseph
Achim		Semei
Eliud		Mattathiah
Eleazar		Maath
Matthan		Naggai
Jacob		Esli
Joseph	* Son-in-law to	Nahum
	↘	Amos
		Mattathiah
		Joseph
		Janna
		Melchi
		Levi
		Matthat
		Heli
		Mary