

Key to Mark

1. BACKGROUND

Writer is John Mark (Mark is Roman name), son of one of the N.T. Marys (Acts 12:12) and nephew of Barnabas (13:5). Mark is thought to be an intimate companion of Peter who calls him his son (I Peter 5:13). Possibly this is largely Peter's gospel but written down by Mark. Also, Mark was the companion of Paul and Barnabas on their first missionary journey. Later he was rejected (Acts 15:37-39) but at the end of Paul's life was much desired (II Timothy 4:11).

Date of the writing is about A.D. 60.

Written especially to the Romans; Mark presents CHRIST as Servant (GOD's).

2. THEME

Mark presents CHRIST as a mighty Man of Action. He is seen as the Servant of JEHOVAH. The key-word is "power." The key verse is 10:45. The book is filled with deeds. Miracles are much more prominent than discourses. A characteristic word is "straightway" or "immediately" (used 19 and 11 times respectively).

No genealogy is given, for who is interested in the background of a servant? The immediate audience is the Roman who would greatly appreciate such a man of active power.

3. MAIN DIVISIONS:

Wonderful works (1-9);
wonderful teachings (10-14);
wonderful sacrifice (15; 16).

4. SPECIAL CHARACTERISTICS:

That the Gospel was written in Rome and for the Romans is strongly evidenced by the frequent use of Latin terms such as "legion" and "centurion." Mark also uses the Roman terms for division of night.

No genealogy is given, for the Romans looked not for a Messiah. Nor is Jewish law mentioned, nor Jewish prophecies.

Mark explains that the Jordan is a river (1:5); and that the Pharisees "**used to fast**" (2:18); and that the Mount of Olives is "**over against the temple**" (13:3) for the benefit of those unacquainted with these terms.

Mark has room to mention 20 miracles but only 4 parables. Also, at the crucifixion he quotes the Roman centurion as remarking, "**Truly this Man was the Son of God.**"

5. OUTLINE:

The Manifestation of the Servant-Son (1:1-11)
The Servant-Son Tested as to His Fidelity (1:12, 13)
The Servant-Son at Work (1:14-13:37)
The Servant-Son Obedient unto Death (14:1-15:47)
The Servant-Son now Risen and Given all Authority (16:1-20)

6. OUTSTANDING TEACHINGS:

Mark deals somewhat (1:24; 1:32-34; 3:11, 12) with the problem of demon possession. Are demons real? Or, is this just another term for mental affliction?

The rather plain teaching of Scripture is that the demon-possessed were not merely lunatic but were cases of "invaded personality."

Christ's casting out of demons therefore was definite and real, and a mark of His power over the massed forces of evil.

The miracles in Mark are very prominent. They include 17 bodily cures, 9 miracles over the forces of nature, 6 cures of demoniacs, 3 raised from the dead. In addition, Jesus accomplished uncounted other (1:32-34; 6:53-56) miracles.

These manifestations of divine power are a mark of God's authentication of JESUS' mission (see John 15:24).

7. KEY:

Look for "plenty of action" in Mark's Gospel. CHRIST is a Man of power. He has everything at His fingertips. As such, He appeals to men of action in all centuries, particularly young men, men of industry and business, men of science. To these, CHRIST can easily become their Ideal.

~ end of Mark ~

<http://www.baptistbiblebelievers.com/>
