

The Gospel According to St. Mark  
Bible Study Curriculum  
High School Ministry







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## I. Introduction

<b>The 4 Gospels comparison</b>				
	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
To whom it was written	Jews	Romans	Greeks	Christians
Subject	The Messiah the king	The Messiah the conqueror of Satan	Christ the lover of mankind	Christ the Incarnate Word
Main message of Jesus	Fulfills the Law	Performs wonders	Saves mankind	Dwells among us
Gospel content	Focuses on prophecies	Focuses on deeds	Focused on history	Focused on theology
Symbol	The human face	The lion	The Ox	The Eagle

<b>Symbols of the Four Gospels</b>			
			
<b>Matthew</b> <i>Winged Man</i>	<b>Mark</b> <i>Winged Lion</i>	<b>Luke</b> <i>Winged Ox</i>	<b>John</b> <i>Eagle</i>

An 8 minutes illustrative video that could be used by servants to prepare or to show kids part at the beginning of each unit. Use only till the minute 8:20, as the last part is not verified.

<https://youtu.be/HGHqu9-DtXk>

### **Servant's preparation:**

*A link for the whole series of 22 sermons covering the whole book of St. Mark's gospel*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ibq9HrbU1b8&list=PLvMAQ886ucetCnNPq4ft5YY0dujWRuADy>

An introduction sermon to Gospel of St. Mark by Abouna Daoud Lamei in English

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ibq9HrbU1b8&list=PLvMAQ886ucetCnNPq4ft5YY0dujWRuADy>

### **A BIOGRAPHY OF SAINT MARK\***

#### **HIS UPBRINGING**

- ❖ St. Mark was born in 'Cyrene,' one of the cities of Pentapolis in Libya, in a town called 'Ebryatolis,' from Jewish parents related to the tribe of Levi. His father's name is 'Aristopolis,' and his mother
- ❖ 'Mary' was a pious woman, of some stature among the early Christians of Jerusalem.
- ❖ Mark had two names (Act 12:12, 25; 15:37): **John**, a Hebrew name which means "the kingdom of God," and **Mark** a Latin name which means "Hammer."

- ❖ St. Mark was a relative of Barnabas, the Apostle. (nephew or Cousin Col. 4:10). His father was also a cousin of St. Peter's wife.
- ❖ He learned and mastered both Greek and Latin.
- ❖ After the barbarians attacked their home, they left Cyrene to Palestine, where he and his mother enjoyed the company of the Lord Jesus Christ. Mark's mother, Mary, was one of the women who ministered to the Lord with their resources. She offered her house to the Lord to eat the Passover with His disciples in the upper room. There, He washed their feet and gave them the Sacrament of the Eucharist. By that, her house became the first church in the world, consecrated by the Lord Himself through His holy presence and His practicing of the Sacrament of the Eucharist. In that same upper room, the Holy Spirit came upon the disciples (Act 2:1-4), and in it the disciples assembled.
- ❖ St. Mark was one of the seventy apostles chosen by the Lord for ministry, as testified by **Origen** and by St. Epiphanius.
- ❖ St. Mark attended the wedding of Cana of Galilee; and he was the man carrying the pitcher of water who met the two disciples sent by Lord Jesus to prepare the Passover (Mk. 14:13,14; Lk. 22:11). He was also the young man who left his linen cloth and fled naked during the incident of the arrest of the Lord (Mk. 14:52)

\*Much of the information above is from Holy Tradition which other denominations do not often acknowledge. We have got to appreciating and valuing the wealth we have in our tradition.

### **Why do we see a lion in his icon?**

- ❖ St. Mark attracted his own father to Christianity when he struck two hungry lions dead by the sign of the cross.
- ❖ He started writing his gospel by describing John the Baptist as a lion roaring in the wilderness and he also portrayed Jesus as the Divine Master serving the power of a lion.

### **HIS MISSIONARY WORK:**

- ❖ He began his preaching with Saint Peter in Jerusalem then joined St. Paul and St. Barnabas on their first missionary journey, but he left them and return to Jerusalem. Later he traveled with St. Barnabas to Cyprus from which he proceeded to Lybia his homeland.
- ❖ In 61 A.D. he went to Egypt and established the church of Alexandria which we all belong to. History tells us the story of how Anianus accepted the Christian Faith, as the first Egyptian to do so. When Mark's footwear needed repair, he approached Anianus the shoemaker, who, as the needle pierced his finger, he uttered the words "O God the One." St. Mark healed him in the name of Lord Christ, and began talking to him of "God, the One." Anianus and his household accepted faith. As Christian faith quickly spread in Alexandria, St. Mark ordained Anianus a bishop, and with him three priests and seven deacons.

- ❖ The pagan mob rose in anger, which compelled St. Mark to leave Alexandria to Perga (Lybia), and from there he headed to Rome, where he joined St. Peter and St. Paul, to remain with them until their martyrdom in the year 64 A.D.
- ❖ When St. Mark returned to Alexandria in the year 65 A.D. to find out how the Christian faith had flourished, he decided to visit Pentapolis before getting back to Alexandria to be martyred at the district of 'Bokalia.'

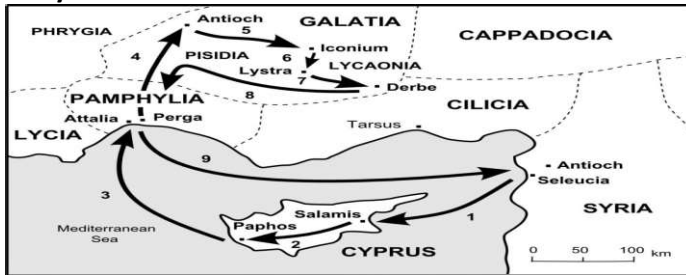
### **The message and features of the Gospel:**

- ❖ It is believed to be the oldest of the four Gospels written between the years 65 to 70 A.D.
- ❖ While in Rome, the people asked him to write a summary of what they had received by word of mouth, so he wrote it to the Romans after the death of St. Peter and St. Paul.
- ❖ Writing his gospel to the Romans, explains why he may have not included many prophecies from the Old Testament like the gospel of Saint Matthew which was addressed to the Jews and why he had to explain many popular Jewish words and traditions.
- ❖ The Romans believed in authority and influence through war and violence, so he offered to them Jesus Christ as the true ruler over devils 1:27, disease 1:42, nature 4:41, plants 11:12-20, and the temple 11:33. Angels minister to him 1:13, He is Lord of the Sabbath 2:28, knows what's in the heart and mind of people 2:8, speaks with authority 1:12, feeds the multitude 6:33, the destroyer of death 5:35. His authority is evident through love, kindness, service, humility, and through pain.
- ❖ The Romans believed in authority through violence, pride, and oppression, but St. Mark the Evangelist proclaimed the authority of the Lord through humility and ministry to others (9:33; 10:35, 45).

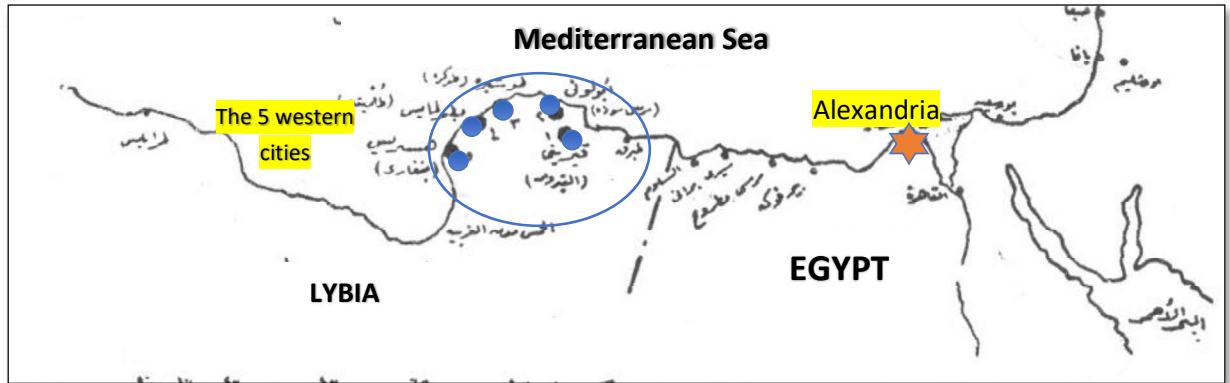


# I. St Mark Proclamation Maps

## First Journey with St Paul



## The Medetirraian Missionary- Egypt and the Five Western Cities



### 1- Unit 1: (Chapter 1-6)

#### Getting to Know Christ: Chapter 1:1-11

#### His Ministry in Galilee: Chapters 1:12-6:30

- 1) In chapter 1, St. Mark begins by describing Christ as a servant to mankind, sacrificing Himself, aiming to deliver us. That is why he does not detail the birth of Christ, but rather focuses on His ministry.
- 2) John the Baptist prepares the road for Christ the servant (Chapter 1)
- 3) Jesus served in Galilee, prayed for us in the desert, healed many on the Sabbath, in the house, by the sea, and wherever He went.
- 4) Jesus called others to preach with Him (the disciples)
- 5) His service is resisted (Chapter 2)
- 6) Jesus continued His preaching (Chapter 3)
- 7) His parables were marveled at by the people despite the resistance by the scribes (Chapter 4).
- 8) He commanded the evil spirits, death, and disease (Chapter 5).
- 9) Strange behavior towards this Servant who is unique in His love and work (Chapter 6)

### 2-Unit 2:

#### His retreat from Galilee (Chapters 7 to 9)

- 1) Jesus left Galilee not to avoid the trouble but to prepare the minds to accept the cross. He fed the multitude, healed whoever touched Him, and comforted even the Gentiles.
- 2) St. Mark recorded many conversations and questions that revealed Jesus's person and mission in chapters 8 to 10.
- 3) Through His transfiguration, He acknowledged His kingdom.

### **3-Unit 3:**

#### **His service in Judea chapter 10:**

In this chapter, he provides us with life examples for the path of the cross.

- A. The difficult commandment (no divorce)
- B. Accepting children with love
- C. Wealth
- D. Leaving all to take up the cross
- E. Discarding the love of higher positions.

### **4- Unit 4:**

#### **Crucifixion and resurrection chapters 11 to 16**

- 1) The events of the passion week,
- 2) His entry to Jerusalem (Chapter 11).
- 3) Resisting Him in Jerusalem (Chapter 12).
- 4) The cross and the signs of the end (Chapter 13).
- 5) The preparation of the cross (Chapter 14).
- 6) The events of the crucifixion (Chapter 15).
- 7) His resurrection declared the glory of this unique Servant, who is capable of rising from the dead.
- 8) The One who rose from the dead is still serving us, as He sent His disciples to preach and He is still serving His church.
- 9) He ascended to heaven so that our hearts may ascend with Him also



## D. Chapter 14

### **Servant's preparation:**

A sermon about Chapter 14 explaining the Gospel of St. Mark by Abona Doud Lamei in English

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aK5RBQder4c&list=PLvMAQ886ucetCnNPq4ft5YY0dujWRuADy&index=19>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T4Z4ZsNEars&list=PLvMAQ886ucetCnNPq4ft5YY0dujWRuADy&index=20>

### **Brief introduction:**

At the beginning of each lesson, please review book overview questions.

- ✓ Who is St. Mark? He was one of the 70 apostles whose house was the 1<sup>st</sup> church Jesus used and who later preached in many countries including Egypt where our Coptic church originated.
- ✓ Who did he write his gospel to? The Romans
- ✓ What is the main message of the book? To show the great power of Jesus Christ who through His amazing actions, He demonstrated His Divine power.

### **Remember:**

Last lesson, we talked about the signs of the end of the world, Jesus mentioned many things to come but He emphasized that no one knows the time. That is why we should always be ready for that day and never get distracted by trying to figure out when and what events are happening. God wants us to focus on heaven and how we could get there and bring others with us.

### **Main points in the Chapter:**

1. The Plot to Kill Jesus 1-2
2. The Anointing at Bethany [The woman who poured perfume on Jesus's feet] 3-9
3. Judas Agrees to Betray Jesus 10-11
4. Jesus Celebrates the Passover with His Disciples 12-21
5. Jesus Institutes the Lord's Supper 22-26
6. Jesus Predicts Peter's Denial 27-31
7. The Prayer in the Garden 32-42
8. Betrayal and Arrest in Gethsemane 43-52
9. Jesus Faces the Sanhedrin 53-65
10. Peter Denies Jesus, and Weeps 66-72



### **Lesson overview:**



In this chapter, we have many events that happened on Covenant Thursday, Jesus washed the disciples' feet to teach them to serve each other and be humble. He instituted the sacrament of Eucharist. Judith betrayed Him while the sinful woman poured perfume on His feet. As a full human, Jesus was so stressed while praying in the garden asking God to help Him pass through this tough mission. He teaches us to pray when we are stressed as He can feel our painful feelings. Finally, Peter who thought he was strong, denied knowing Jesus when he got scared. That teaches us to pray always, asking God to strengthen our faith so we can tolerate trials.

### **Meditation:**

#### **1. The Plot to Kill Jesus 1-2**

The high priests and scribes plotted to kill Him, not apprehending that, even in their evil intention, they were consummating the plan of the Lord Christ, who assigned, by Himself, the day of His passion, to be crucified on the day of Passover

#### **2. The Anointing at Bethany [The woman who poured perfume on Jesus's feet] 3-9**

There was a woman who encountered Him, while He was in the house of Simon the Leper, to offer Him her pure love, together with her living practical faith, to get from the Lord, in return, an eternal praise and glory!

The episode of pouring the costly oil over the Lord Christ, was mentioned in all the four gospels (Mt. 26:6; Mk. 14:3; Lk. 7:21; Jn. 12:3). It is obvious that the action of pouring of the costly oil, happened more than once. There were different views concerning the identities of those responsible for these actions; yet, the prevailing views are:

- (1) The woman mentioned in the gospel of John, is Mary, the sister of Lazarus.
- (2) The one mentioned in the gospel of Luke, is a sinner, who did that during the ministry of the Lord.
- (3) The woman mentioned in the gospels of Matthew and Mark, poured the oil during days of the Paschal (Holy) week. Some say, it was not the sinner, most probably Mary, the sister of Lazarus, who poured it, as an offer of love and thanksgiving; while others say, it was that sinner herself, who poured it with tears, begging for the remission of her sins.

#### **3. Judas Agrees to Betray Jesus 10-11**

St. John Chrysostom; What a folly! Yes, love for silver and greed, were what brought all that evil on the traitor. Love for silver takes souls over, leading them everywhere, and transforming minds into a state of madness! Love for silver captivated Judas by its madness, to forget all the talks of the Lord Christ, His discipleship, His warnings, and His confirmations .

#### **4. Jesus Celebrates the Passover with His Disciples 12-21**

- St. Cyril the Great, sees that, as the devil has entered into Judas' heart, the Lord kept the name of the owner of the upper room secret, in order not to let Judas plot to give Him up while He was there upper room.
- Jesus proclaimed the betrayal, to give His betrayer a chance to repent and retreat if he so wished. Indeed, the Holy Scripture has spoken of the traitor, yet it did not commit Judas to betray. He could not claim, that in him, the prophesy of betrayal had to be realized; as God's prior knowledge

of it, does not commit him to act, and does not free him of the responsibility. If Judas' heart happened to move in repentance, the crucifixion events, would have taken place in another way, as God plans, without the condemnation of Judas.

- It is obvious that He did not reveal his identity, to spare him a greater shame

#### **5. Jesus Institutes the Lord's Supper 22-26**

After eating the Jewish Passover, He offered the new Passover; The symbol preceding what it symbolizes. He presented first the Passover according to the Law, so as not to be counted as a breaker of the Law

Up till now, Christ who set the table, is sanctifying it Himself. No man changes the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ, but Christ Himself who was crucified for us. The priest utters the words, but the, sanctification occurs through the power of God, and His grace, through His words.

#### **6. Jesus Predicts Peter's Denial 27-31**

There is no doubt that the apostle Peter, with his zeal and his great love for the Lord, thought that he is capable of standing by Him till death. But the Lord knows about him what he does not know about himself. Despite Peter's zeal and love, he is weak, and in need, not to testify for himself as having courage, but humbly to ask for God's support.

#### **7. The Prayer in the Garden 32-42**

He entered with His disciples to the garden, to present them with a practical living example of life of praying and watching during times of afflictions

It could not be said that the Lord Christ, had no knowledge if it would be possible to take that cup away from Him, but He sure knew clearly, and He had firmly proclaimed His suffering beforehand That expression, "If possible, take this cup away from Me," is not to be taken as a desire to escape crucifixion. That phrase was recorded by the evangelist, to confirm His incarnation, and His advent under Passion. He was also intending to teach virtues to humanity.

We should entreat Him not to lead us into temptation, yet, if it is not according to His will, we should ask Him to do, whatever He chooses

#### **8. Betrayal and Arrest in Gethsemane 43-52**

Once more, speaking of Judas, St. Mark confirms that he is "one of the twelve," to underscore how horrible his crime was, especially that he made of the 'kiss' a way to give Him up.

As for the young man who fled naked, that was St. Mark, the author of this gospel.

#### **9. Jesus Faces the Sanhedrin 53-65**

- By tearing his clothes, that should not have been torn according to the Law, Caiaphas condemned, not just himself, but the Levite priesthood as a whole! By tearing his clothes, he proclaimed his disgust for Christ's words, that he considered as blasphemy; and accordingly, all the Sanhedrin, condemned Him to be worthy of death (Verse 64). Yet, as he or they, had no authority to put their verdict into effect, Jesus was led to the Roman governor to ratify His crucifixion.

- The Lord Christ faced two accusations:

1. "We heard Him say, 'I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and within three days, I will build another made without hands.'" (verse 58) This accusation, actually, bore false witness, as He did not say, 'I will destroy this temple,' but said, 'Destroy;' and did not

say 'this temple that is made by hands,' but, 'this temple,' meaning the temple of His body. They misunderstood His words; yet, that testimony, despite its falsification, confirmed His talk about His death and His resurrection on the third day, becoming therefore, a living basis for preaching after His resurrection.

2. When the high priest asked Him: "Are you the Christ?" Jesus said yes. The high priest did not like that answer, and he tore his clothes, saying, "What further need do we have for witnesses? You have heard the blasphemy!" (verse 63). The second one was based on complete ignorance, and a misunderstanding of the words of the Lord Himself
- The Lord did not intend by His silence to offend anyone, but He knew that they would not benefit from His words, but rather they were looking for a chance to find in them something to condemn Him with; so He kept silent hoping that they may reconsider their attitude.

### **10. Peter Denies Jesus, and Weeps 66-72**

But, when he denied for the third time, and the Lord turned and looked at him, he cried bitterly... We cannot say that he cried because of a mere look of rebuke by the Lord's bodily eyes, but his remorse was realized deep within, in his mind and will

### **Application:**

#### **1- A sinful woman poured perfume on Jesus' feet:**

Judith betrayed Him while the sinful woman poured perfume on His feet. We can compare both acts and see how a sinner could be saved while a disciple betrays God.

#### **2-Jesus washes the disciples' feet:**

In order to fulfill the mission of spreading the gospel, the disciples would need to learn to serve. Pride and arrogance would ruin the disciples' relationship to God, to each other, and to the people they were trying to save. Humility and service to others is the evidence of love. It's an important lesson for us as well. People line up to do the tasks that are considered important, glamorous, or respected. But Jesus showed humility by doing the task that no one wanted to do. He washed the disciples' feet -- a dirty job usually performed by the lowest ranking person in the room. Was Jesus the lowest ranking person? No. He was Lord and Teacher. He knew he would soon be at the Father's side in heaven. Did he think it was too lowly a task for him to do? No. Are there tasks that we won't do because they are lowly? Because they are dirty? Because they are unpleasant or hard? But aren't those the jobs that most need to be done? And won't God reward those who do His work? We need to be willing to do whatever is needed. Jesus was not only willing, he prepared himself to do this service. Have we made plans to serve others?

#### **3- Passover feast**

- Jesus obeyed the Jewish law and took the Passover feast
- Jesus provided his own memorial from the elements of the Passover feast - a feast that commemorated an event which was designed to foreshadow Christ's own death.

- Comparing the 10<sup>th</sup> plague to Jesus's sacrifice

Tenth Plague [Passover]	Christ's Sacrifice
Firstborn of all men and animals killed	Firstborn of God killed
Only the blood of the lamb saved Israelites	Only the blood of Christ saves us
This plague freed the Israelites from slavery to Egypt	This sacrifice frees us from sin
Commemorated by all Israelites in a feast	Commemorated by Christians in Lord's Supper

#### 4- How to respond to sin: repentance

- ❖ Both Judas and Peter were filled with remorse for what they had done. But after their sins, they had very different responses. Judas hanged himself, while Peter, along with the other apostles, boldly helped establish the New Testament Church.
- ❖ *Peter clearly had the response to sin God desired.*
- ❖ It seems evident that Peter recalled that Jesus' ministry involved calling sinners to repentance (Matthew 9:13; Mark 1:14-15). Having just repented of his own sin of denying Christ, and having received the Holy Spirit, he was able to boldly advise believers on the Day of Pentecost that they, too, needed to repent of their sins and be baptized (Acts 2:38).
- ❖ In addition to being sorry for our sins, there is also another important element connected with repentance. This is the understanding and belief that God can and does forgive our sins when we truly repent (Acts 3:19; 1 John 1:9).
- ❖ After feeling remorse for our sins and repenting of having committed them, we also need to have faith that our sins have truly been forgiven. And then we need to move forward, changing and living our lives as God desires.
- ❖ Peter's faith did not fail. After he repented of His denial of Christ, He fulfilled the ministry to which he had been called.
- ❖ May we all likewise repent of our sins, change, and move forward with faith that we have indeed been forgiven!

#### True or False

1. Jesus wanted to teach the disciples how powerful he was. F
2. Jesus taught the disciples out of love. T
3. Jesus said that if we do these things, we'll be miserable. F
4. Leaders in the church are servants. T
5. As long as we do good things, it doesn't matter what our motivation is. F

6. Jesus disregarded the Jewish laws. F
7. Judas betrayed Jesus accidentally. F
8. Jesus was being rebellious by asking God to "let this cup pass." F
9. Jesus was overpowered by the armed mob. F
10. Peter killed one of the soldiers. F
11. Judas pretended to be a friend of Jesus. T
12. Jesus knew he was going to die. T
13. Judas was offered 40 pieces of silver for betraying Jesus F
14. The disciples kept falling asleep because they didn't understand the seriousness of the situation. T
15. Jesus resisted being arrest by the soldiers as His time didn't come yet F

**Memory Verse:**

***38 Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."***