

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







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## I. Introduction

The 4 Gospels comparison				
	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

Symbols of the Four Gospels			
			
Matthew Winged Man	Mark Winged Lion	Luke Winged Ox	John Eagle

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.'

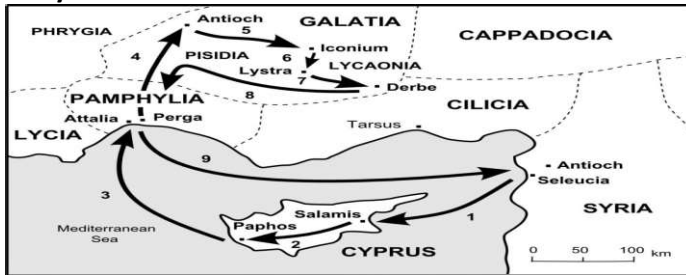
### **The message and features of the Gospel:**

- ❖ 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).

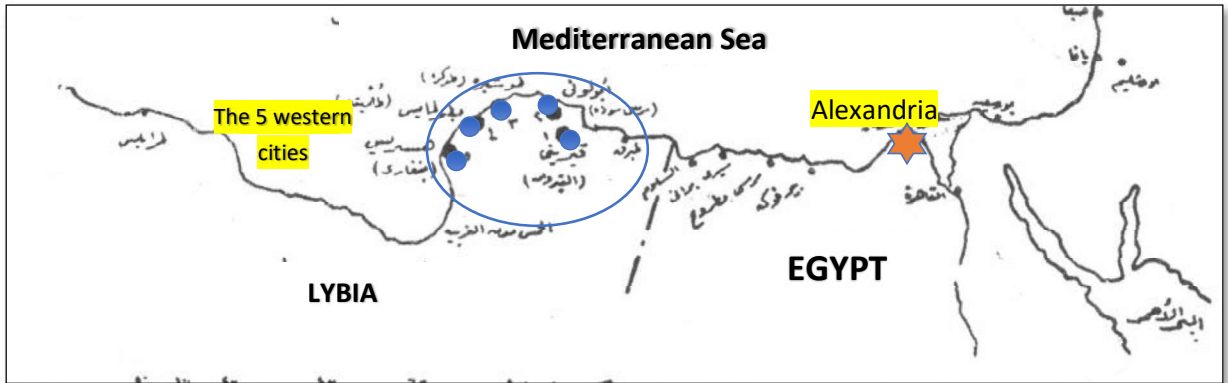


# I. St Mark Proclamation Maps

## 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



## E. Chapter 15

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

A sermon about Chapter 15 explaining the Gospel of St. Mark by Abona Doud Lamei in English  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g8dmswjWHcw&list=PLVMAQ886ucetCnNPq4ft5Y0dujWRuADy&index=21>

### **Brief introduction:**

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

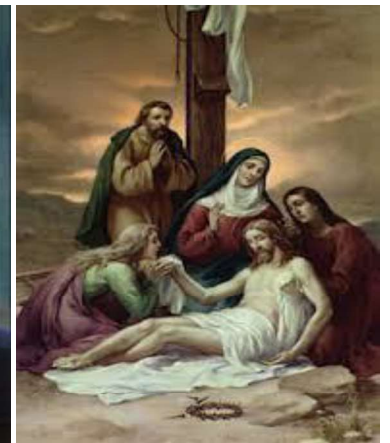
- ✓ Who is St. Mark? He was one of the 70 apostles whose house was the 1<sup>st</sup> church Jesus used and who later preached in many countries including Egypt where our Coptic church originated.
- ✓ Who did he write his gospel to? The Romans
- ✓ What is the main message of the book? To show the great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

### **Remember:**

Last lesson, we went over 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 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 always pray asking God to strengthen our faith so we can tolerate trials.

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

1. Jesus Faces Pilate. 1-15
2. The Soldiers Mock Jesus 16-20
3. The King on a Cross 21-33
4. Jesus Dies on the Cross 34-39
5. Jesus Buried in Joseph's Tomb 40-47



### **Lesson overview:**



In this chapter, we see the cost of sin and how Jesus had paid it on the cross. After the fake trial, Jesus was sentenced to die on the cross by Pilate. Pilate offered to release Barrabas, but the Jews hated Jesus and refused to let him go. Jesus was mocked and humiliated by the soldiers, then carried His cross to Golgotha. As Jesus was dying on the cross, many miracles happened, the sun was darkened, an earthquake occurred, and the veil of the temple was torn. The centurion believed that Jesus was the son of God. Jesus was buried in a tomb of a rich man.

### **Meditation:**

#### **1. Jesus Faces Pilate. 1-15**

The Lord was accused but said nothing! In His silence, He was right, as He was in no need to defend Himself. Self-defense is only for those who fear defeat. He does not confirm the accusation, but does ignore them as being inexecutable

Out of ignorance and envy, they were crying, 'Crucify Him;' not knowing that they were realizing unintentionally, the prophecies in their hands

#### **2. The Soldiers Mock Jesus 16-20**

St. Jacob El-Serougi comments on these events, saying:

- 1) They bared Him of His clothes like shearers; yet He was silent like a lamb in the shearers' hands!
- 2) He discarded His clothes, so as to clothe those who left the Paradise naked! Clothed them with His clothes, to remain Himself in disgrace...
- 3) They bared Him of His clothes, and clothed Him with a purple robe, the color of blood, to adorn the murdered Groom!
- 4) They twisted a crown of thorns for His head; that is fitting for Him, as He came to uproot thorns from earth!
- 5) He carried the curse of the earth, through the crown put on His head; and mightily bore the weight of the whole earth!
- 6) Sins, transgressions, afflictions, sufferings, and strikes were twisted with the crown of thorns, to be placed on His head to carry!
- 7) Through His crown of thorns, He uprooted the cursed seed of the serpent!
- 8) Through the crown of thorn, He destroyed the crown of the devil, who desired to become a god over creation!

#### **3. The King on a Cross 21-33**

- They brought Him to the Place Golgotha, that is translated as the place of the skull (verse 22), claimed to be the burial place of Adam.
- That was the custom of the Romans, as a way of numbing the senses, to spare the one crucified feeling the whole weight of pain. But the Lord came, for our sake, to carry, willingly, the pain; to bend, on our account, under its weight.
- St. Cyril the Great says: [Two robbers were crucified with Him, started by mocking Him; one of them likened, in his behavior the evil Jews, while the other, admirably took a different trend. He believed in Him; and amid his bitter suffering, condemned the vicious attitude of the Jews, and the

blaspheming words of his partner crucified with him. Confessing his sins, and admitting that he is justly receiving the due reward of his deeds]

#### 4. Jesus Dies on the Cross 34-39

- As the Creator was raised on the cross by the hands of His creation, that intended to get rid of Him through its denial, it deprived itself of the Sun of righteousness, so that darkness came into the hearts, demonstrated by the veiling of sun from the sixth until the ninth hour.
- According to the flesh, the Lord Christ was totally exhausted, and could not, at that time, cry out with such loud voice. But He did, to proclaim that what was going on their hands, was not out of weakness on His part, but a satisfaction of His divine work, that He stated beforehand through His prophets
- The veil that is a divider between the holy place and the Holy of Holies, refers to the inability of man to enjoy the divine heavenly sanctuaries. The Lord Christ came to open up the way to heaven by His blood, to enter with us into the bosom of His Father, also inviting the gentiles

#### 5. Jesus Buried in Joseph's Tomb 40-47

- Origen says, there were three women mentioned by name: Mary Magdalene, Mary mother of James, and a third, called by St. Matthew, 'mother of Zebedee's sons, was mentioned as Salome by St. Mark. Anyhow, while the disciples refrained from following the crucified, even from afar, the women were following Him, and some of them got the honor of enjoying the Christ risen from the dead, before the disciples did. By that, the gospel gave the woman back her dignity, and proclaimed her sanctity, after suffering a long history of bitter resentment on the part of the world.
- The Lord did not wish, His body to be wrapped by His disciples, lest there would be accusation, that they stole the body before burying it. But He was wrapped by an honorable righteous man
- He was placed in a new tomb, in Joseph's tomb, as Christ did not have His own burial place

#### **Application:**

In this chapter, let us focus on our savior and His indescribable love to us. Jesus went on the cross for a reason, by His own will and for each one of us.

**To Remember:** Christ voluntarily sacrificed himself for our redemption

**...for a reason**

God wants a close relationship with man, John 3:16

Our sin separates us from God, Isa. 59:2

Justice requires that our sins be paid for, Rom. 6:23

God provided a sacrifice to pay for our sins, 1 John 4:10

**...voluntarily**

Jesus had the choice, Matt. 26:53, 54

He was sinless, 1 Pet. 2:22

Jesus had the power, John 19:11

Jesus had the will, Matt. 26:39

Pleased not himself, Rom 15:3

He loved us, Eph 5:2

**...for you**

You have nothing to offer that isn't God's already, Luke 17:10

The Father wants a close relationship, so He paid your cost, John 3:16

So that you could choose to be close to Him, James 4:8

This relationship is voluntary, Mark 16:16

**Discussion point: Illustrative Story:** to make this an object lesson, give someone a dollar bill. Say we all went out to a restaurant to eat. We all eat until we're stuffed but Tom eats nothing. Then the waiter delivers the bill. We're broke. Only "Tom" has any money. Who will pay the bill? Tom's the only one with money. Who should pay the bill? We should. But we can't. If Tom pays, is that fair? No. Is it merciful of him? Yes! Jesus paid our bill for us. We could never have enough to pay for our sins. Should we be grateful? Yes! How do we show our gratitude? Jesus said, "if you love me, keep my commandments." John 14:15

**Discussion questions:**

1. How were Annas and Caiaphas related? Annas was Caiaphas' father-in-law
2. What was Jesus convicted for? Blasphemy and treason
3. What motivated his trial? Envy
4. What caused Peter to deny Christ? fear
5. What are some feelings Jesus may have felt during His crucifixion? embarrassment, discouragement, anger, sorrow,...
6. How do you think Mary felt? distressed, sorrowful, helpless, distraught
7. How do you think God felt? (pleased with his Son, sorrowful for Jesus' pain, angry at mankind)
8. If Jesus asked God to forgive those who killed him, how should I treat those who hurt me?
9. If Jesus had to die for our sins, how serious is sin?
10. Is there anything I can suffer that Jesus won't understand?
11. What miracles occurred while Jesus died? (earthquake, the temple veil tore in two, darkness for 3 hours, dead came out of the grave)
12. What did the soldiers do instead of breaking Jesus' legs? (pierced his side)
13. Why did they place a sign "King of the Jews" on Jesus' cross? to mock His claim to kingship, and to indicate the charge against him
14. How did the soldiers mock Jesus as a prophet? ("tell us who hit you")
15. What did they offer Jesus when he was thirsty? vinegar on a sponge

### **Optional illustrative fun experiment:**

Fill three clear plastic bottles with 8 to 10 ounces of water. Add a small amount of liquid bleach to one of the bottles. You'll also need red and blue food coloring and a clear pitcher or jar to hold the water from all three bottles.

Drop four drops of blue food coloring into one bottle of plain water. Say: **When Jesus came into our world as a baby, he had to leave his home in heaven. We often think of heaven as being up above the blue skies.** Drop four drops of red coloring into the second bottle of plain water.

Say: **When Jesus grew up, he suffered and died on a cross.**

Ask:

- **What did soldiers put on Jesus' head?** (A crown of thorns)
- **What did they put through his hands and feet?** (Nails)

Say: **Red reminds us of the blood Jesus bled and how much he hurt.** Pour the two bottles at once into the large pitcher or jar.

Washing Our Sins Away

Say: **Purple reminds us that Jesus had to leave heaven, come to our world, and become a person like us so he could shed his blood to take away our sins. When Jesus died on the cross, had he done anything wrong? No. Jesus was perfect. He was clear and clean just like our last bottle.**

Pour the bleach/water solution into the purple water.

Say: **Jesus never sinned. Jesus died on the cross because he loves each of us so much. One day, we'll go to heaven to be with Jesus. Our blue water reminds us of that. keep your eyes on our blue water. It'll become clear.**

say: **Jesus cleanses us from all sin. Jesus loves us so much that he was willing to leave his home in heaven and die on a cross for us. What a wonderful Savior!**

### ***Memory Verse***

***:<sup>39</sup> So when the centurion, who stood opposite Him, saw that He cried out like this and breathed His last, he said, "Truly this Man was the Son of God!"***