

JOHN MARK, EVANGELIST

Text: Mark 14:51-52

INTRO: In this lesson we will take a biographical look at John Mark, writer of the 2nd gospel, cousin of Barnabas, apparent convert of Peter, & sometimes companion of Paul. John was his Jewish name, Mark his Greek name.

It is commonly believed that the young man mentioned in our text was Mark himself. There seems to be no other logical reason why this incident would be mentioned at all. The first time John Mark is mentioned by name was in Acts 12:12.

I. JERUSALEM, 44 A.D. ACTS 12:12.

A. The house of his mother was a common meeting place for the church. This may have been the place of the upper room where the L.S. was instituted.

READ MARK 14:13-17

B. Mark's intimacy with Peter is evident from Acts 12:9-12.

C. Peter makes reference to him in 1 Pet 5:13 as "Mark, my son," leading most commentators to conclude that it was Peter who had converted Mark to Christ.

D. Early tradition is unanimous that Mark was the writer of the 2nd gospel & that he wrote it under the influence of Peter. Several things

within the gospel itself seem to farther confirm that tradition.

II. JERUSALEM, LATER THE SAME YEAR.

- A. The disciples who were driven from Jerusalem by persecution went as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus & Antioch, preaching the gospel--but to Jews only.
- B. Eventually, some disciples from Cyprus & Cyrene began to preach & convert Greeks also.
- C. The church in Jerusalem heard that the Gentiles were receiving the gospel & sent Barnabas to Antioch to help in their conversion.
- D. In time, Barnabas made a trip to Tarsus to persuade Saul to return to Antioch with him to help in the work there.
- E. While Barnabas & Saul worked with the church in Antioch, Agabus, a prophet from Jerusalem foretold a famine that would greatly affect the brethren in Judea.
- F. The church in Antioch gathered relief to send to their Jewish brethren & sent it to the elders of the Judean churches. Barnabas & Saul served as messengers to deliver that relief.

G. When Barnabas & Saul returned to Antioch, John Mark accompanied them.

Acts 12:25, And Barnabas & Saul returned from Jerusalem when they had fulfilled their ministry, and they also took with them John whose surname was Mark.

III. ANTIOCH, SYRIA. 45 A.D. ACTS 13:1-5.

A. In Salamis, Barnabas & Saul preached in the synagogues.

B. As they preached in Paphos, Sergius Paulus, a Greek, who was an official of the Roman government, became interested in their message & evidently became a disciple.

C. A Jewish sorcerer & false prophet in Paphos, Jewish name: Bar-Jesus, Greek name, Elymus, opposed the work of Barnabas & Saul & sought to undo the conversion of Sergius Paulus. The H.S. enabled Saul to strike the false prophet with temporary blindness.

D. From this time, Saul became known as Paul & became recognized as the leader of the evangelistic expedition, Acts 13:13a.

IV. 45 A.D. FROM PAMPHYLIA, JOHN MARK
DEFECTS & RETURNS TO JERUSALEM. ACTS
13:13.

A. Several reasons or excuses have been suggested.

1. Homesickness.
2. Fear of perils in the mountainous country
3. Displeasure that Paul had become the recognized leader instead of cousin Barnabas.
4. Concern for his mother.
5. Desire to rejoin Simon Peter.
6. J.H. Farmer's theory: He objected to the offer of salvation to the Gentiles on an equal basis with the Jews.
 - a. Farmer cites the case of Sergius Paulus as a turning point.
 - b. The question as to whether Gentiles needed to be circumcised was not settled till 5 years later, in Acts 15.
 - c. Even after the question was supposedly settled, both Peter & Barnabas backed away from Gentile converts under pressure from Jewish brethren, Gal. 2:11-14.

V. ANTIOCH, 47 A.D. ACTS 15:36-40.

A. Whatever reason or reasons Mark had for departing were not sufficient for Paul.

B. Tho Paul & Barnabas strongly disagreed as to whether to give Mark a 2nd chance, they apparently did not disagree that his previous defection had been unwarranted.

C. Mark shows some strength of character when, in the face of disappointment, he makes the best of the situation. When he can't go where he might choose, he chooses to go where he can.

D. If Farmer is correct in his theory, Mark's willingness to accompany Paul would indicate that he now understands the truth re Gentiles & salvation.

VI. ROME, 63 A.D. 16 years have passed since the last mention of Mark. He has written his gospel, probably about 58 A.D., with a Roman readership in mind. He has rejoined the apostle Paul.

A. Philemon 23-24, "my fellow laborer."

B. Colossians 4:10, "if he comes to you, welcome him."

VII. WITH PETER IN BABYLON, ABOUT 65 A.D.

1 Peter 5:13

VIII. FINAL MENTION, 68 A.D. Mark is evidently somewhere between Ephesus & Rome.

2 Tim 4:9-12, Be diligent to come to me quickly; for Demas has forsaken me, having loved this present world, & has departed for Thessalonica--Crescens for Galatia, Titus for Dalmatia. Only Luke is with me. Get Mark and bring him with you, for he is useful to me for ministry.

CONCLUSION: There are numerous lessons we might learn from the life of the evangelist Mark.

1. Past failures need not keep us from future success.
2. Disappointments need not destroy our usefulness.
3. Disagreements with co-workers need not necessarily alienate us permanently.

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