
THE
AFRICAN MEMORY
OF MARK

REASSESSING EARLY CHURCH TRADITION

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 IVP Academic
An imprint of InterVarsity Press
Downers Grove, Illinois

2011

Table 1. Composite African chronology of Mark (*Italics indicate disputed event or source; all dates conjectural*)

Date (estimated)	Event	Place (established or traditional)	Sources or Purported Evidence	Classic Consensual, Coptic and African Memory of Mark
6 B.C.- A.D. 1	Jesus' birth	Bethlehem	Matthew 2:1 <i>Chrysostom</i> Dionysius Exiguus	consensus
A.D. 1-3	flight of Holy Family to Egypt	<i>Nile from Pelusium to Asuit</i>	Matthew 2:13-15	consensus
5-15	birth of Mark on the African continent as Diaspora Jew	<i>Cyrene, Pentapolis in Libya, Ebrayatolis</i>	synaxaries, Sawirus	Martyrium Marci, Shenouda III, Girgis
5-20	civil unrest in Pentapolis, Libya, North Africa	Cyrene	Suetonius, Josephus	consensus
15-30	Diaspora Jewish Messianic movements in Africa	Freedmen's synagogue in Jerusalem, including Jews from Cyprus, Cyrene and Alexandria	Acts 6:9 and passim	consensus
20-30	<i>family of Mark immigrates from Cyrene to near Jerusalem</i>	Jerusalem near Mt. Zion	<i>Mark 14:12-26, Acts 12:12</i>	synaxary, Sawirus, Shenouda III, Girgis
33	disciples guided to Passover Supper crucifixion resurrection appearances ascension Pentecost	upper room (<i>Mary/Mark's home</i>) Golgotha tomb Mount of Olives upper room in Jerusalem— <i>Mary's safehouse = "where they had been staying"</i>	Mark 14:12-26 Mark 15:21-41 and parallel Gospel passages Mark 16:1-8 and parallel Gospel passages Luke 24:50-53; Acts 1:6-11 Acts 2:1-13; <i>cf. Acts 12:12; Mark 14:12-26</i>	consensus

Date (estimated)	Event	Place (established or traditional)	Sources or Purported Evidence	Classic Consensus, Coptic and African Memory of Mark
34-35	apostles arrested, warned, released Barnabas, Mark's cousin, lays proceeds of field sale at apostles' feet stoning of Stephen with Cyrenian and Alexandrian collusion	Jerusalem	Acts 4 and 5 Acts 4:36-37 Acts 6:8-8:1	consensus
41	gospel preached in Antioch first to Jews, then to Greeks by men from Cyrene and Cyprus	Antioch	Acts 11:19-21	consensus
43	Barnabas and Saul in Antioch (<i>with Mark</i>)	Antioch	Acts 11:22-30	consensus
43/44	persecution by Herod Agrippa martyrdom of James the Greater Peter's imprisonment Peter's flight from prison to Mary's home	Jerusalem the home of Mary, Mark's mother (<i>same upper room as Passover Supper and Pentecost</i>)	Acts 12:1-5 Acts 12:6-17	consensus
43/44	Peter departs to an "another place"	unknown	Acts 12:17	
43/44	Peter sends greetings from "my son Mark" to churches in Asia Minor	<i>pre-Roman refuge location— Babylon of Cairo</i>	1 Peter 5:13, Strabo's Geographica 17.1.30, Diodorus Siculus 1.56.3, Josephus's Antiquities 2.15.1	Girgis
44-48	famine in Jerusalem	Jerusalem	Acts 11:27-30	consensus

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47	<p>famine visit of Barnabas and Paul from Antioch to Jerusalem (<i>with Mark</i>)</p> <p>Herod's death</p> <p>John Mark taken by Paul and Barnabas on first missionary trip</p> <p>Paul and Barnabas continue first missionary journey</p>	<p>Jerusalem</p> <p>Caesarea</p> <p>Jerusalem, Antioch, Seleucia, Cyprus, Salamis, Paphos, Perga</p> <p>Pisidian Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, Derbe, Attalia</p>	<p>Acts 11:30</p> <p>Acts 12:19-23</p> <p>Acts 12:25-13:13</p> <p>Acts 13:14-14:25</p>	<p>consensus</p>
48	<p>report to Antioch church</p>	<p>Antioch</p>	<p>Acts 14:26-28</p>	<p>consensus</p>
49	<p>conflict with Judaizing Christians prompts Council of Jerusalem apostles' letter to Gentiles</p>	<p>Antioch, Galatia and Jerusalem</p>	<p>Acts 15:1-21</p>	<p>consensus</p>
50-52	<p>Paul writes Galatians</p> <p>Paul's second missionary journey with Silas and Timothy</p> <p>Paul refuses to take Mark</p> <p>Mark accompanies Barnabas to Cyprus</p>	<p>Galatia</p> <p>Syria, Cilicia, Derbe, Lystra, Iconium, Pisidian Antioch, Troas, Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea, Athens, Corinth, Ephesus, Caesarea, Antioch</p> <p>Antioch</p> <p>Cyprus</p>	<p>letter to the Galatians</p> <p>Acts 15:36-18:22</p> <p>letters to the Thessalonians</p> <p>first letter to Corinthians</p> <p>Acts 15:36-38</p> <p>Acts 15:36-41</p>	<p>consensus</p>
53-57	<p>Paul's third missionary journey</p>	<p>Galatia, Phrygia, Ephesus, Macedonia, Greece, Troas, Miletus, Patara, Tyre, Caesarea, Jerusalem</p>	<p>Acts 18:23-21:16</p>	<p>consensus</p>

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56/57	Paul writes letter to Romans during three-month stay in Greece Paul greets Rufus (of Cyrene, then in Rome, known to Mark) and his mother (as a "mother to me")	Corinth	Acts 20:2-3 Romans 16:13	consensus
c. 57-59	Paul's arrest and trial Paul's trial before Felix Paul imprisoned Paul's trial before Festus and Agrippa	Jerusalem Caesarea Caesarea Caesarea	Acts 21:27-22:30 Acts 23:31-24:27 Acts 24:27 Acts 25:1-26:32	consensus
60-61	Paul imprisoned in Rome	Rome	Acts 28:11-31	consensus
61	Mark in Rome during Paul's first imprisonment Mark expected to visit Colossae	Rome Colossae	Philemon 24; Colossians 4:10 Colossians 4:10	consensus
61-62	Mark preaches, heals and ordains future leadership for Libyan churches in the Pentapolis	Cyrene and all of the Pentapolis	synaxary	synaxary, Sawirus, Girgis, Shenouda III
61-63	Mark founds church in Alexandria	Alexandria	synaxary	early synaxaries, Sawirus, Girgis, Shenouda III

Date (estimated)	Event	Place (established or traditional)	Sources or Purported Evidence	Classic Consensual, Coptic and African Memory of Mark
64	<i>Mark in Ephesus at beginning of Paul's second imprisonment</i> Mark requested by Paul to come to Rome with Timothy <i>Mark through Aquileia on his way from Ephesus to Rome</i>	<i>Ephesus</i> <i>Ephesus</i> <i>Aquileia</i>	2 Timothy 4:11; cf. 1 Timothy 1:3 2 Timothy 4:11 Sawirus	early synaxaries, Sawirus Girgis, Shenouda III <i>disputed</i>
64	<i>Mark in Rome</i> Nero burns Rome	Rome	Eusebius, Jerome	consensus
64-67	<i>Mark in Rome during Peter's second imprisonment</i>	Rome	2 Timothy 4:11	consensus
67	Paul arrested and imprisoned	Rome	2 Timothy 1:16-17; 2:9; 4:9-16	consensus
67-68	Peter and Paul martyred in Rome Mark writes Gospel <i>Mark evangelizes Aquileia</i>	Rome	Irenaeus John the Elder, Papias via Eusebius	consensus <i>disputed</i>
68	<i>Mark martyred April 26</i>	Alexandria	Eusebius, Jerome, Peter of Alexandria	synaxary, Sawirus, Girgis, Shenouda III
69	<i>successors of Mark in Alexandria beginning with Anianus</i>	Alexandria	<i>martyrdom sites</i>	synaxaries, Sawirus, Girgis, Shenouda III Martyrium Marci
70	fall of Jerusalem	Jerusalem	Josephus	consensus
71-78	Great Jewish Diaspora	ancient world	Josephus	consensus
70-120	further accounts of Mark writing the Gospel of Mark	Rome	John the Elder, Papias through Eusebius	Clement, Sawirus, Shenouda III

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100-120	accounts of Mark writing under Peter's direction	Rome	Eusebius on Papias Muratorian fragment anti-Montanist writings	consensus
130-150	Mark described as stump-fingered	Italy Rome	Muratorian fragment anti-Montanist writings Hippolytus's Philosophumena	consensus
180	vibrant presence of Christianity in Africa	Africa	Irenaeus's Against Heresies 1.10.2	consensus
c. 185-210	references to Mark in Africa	Alexandria	Clement of Alexandria's Outlines (Hypotyposis), including Adumbrations and references to "earliest presbyters"	insufficiently examined
c. 200	references to Mark in Africa	Alexandria	Clement's presumed <i>Letter to Theodore Mar Saba</i> discovery by Morton Smith	<i>disputed</i>
190s-250s	references to Mark in Africa	Alexandria	Origen's homilies and commentaries	exegetical studies
c. 200s-300s	account of Mark's martyrdom in Alexandria	Alexandria	Martyrium Marci	liturgical hagiographic studies
320s	account of Mark in Alexandria	Alexandria	Eusebius's Church History	liturgical hagiographic studies
390s	references to Mark in Alexandria	Antioch, Bethlehem	Chrysostom's Homilies, Jerome's Lives of Illustrious Men	consensus

Date (estimated)	Event	Place (established or traditional)	Sources or Purported Evidence	Classic Consensual, Coptic and African Memory of Mark
2nd-10th centuries	transmission of proto-synaxaries in primitive forms	Egypt, Ethiopia, Rome, Antioch	calendars, synaxaries	liturgical consensus
9th century	synaxaries in Arabic	Egypt	Johannes den Heijer	Sawirus
960s-990s	History of the Patriarchs	al-Ashmunein	David W. Johnson, Johannes den Heijer, Stephen J. Davis	Sawirus