

THE COMING OF THE KING

The Gospel of Mark 1:1-15

Bible Study Tools

Old Testament Quotes: The New Testament is a Jewish book, written by people whose world view was shaped by the Hebrew Scriptures. When an OT passage is quoted, the student must look it up in the OT and read before and after. Remember the OT did not have chapters and verses, so a quote of a famous passage would cause the Jewish reader to remember the surrounding context from which the quote was taken.

Another Jewish literary practice was "**Conflation**." This was the fusing together of passages from different OT books that share a common theme. Look at both original passages to try to understand why they were chosen by the author.

Finally, "**Allusion**" is another literary device. The author may not quote a passage but use certain images that create a connection. It may be a description or the use of certain similar details that make the NT story feel like a famous OT story or event.

Questions to Consider

- Read the OT passages that are quoted by Mark at the opening of his gospel. What can you learn about the anticipation of the coming of the Christ?
- Look at the terms that appear in the passage like, "gospel (good news)," "Christ," "kingdom," "messenger." Where do they appear in the Old Testament?
- What was the purpose of John's baptism? Why did Jesus get baptized by John? What is its significance?
- Think about the temptation of Jesus; list the cast of characters. What temptation in the OT does it remind you of?

Comments & Applications

Source of the Gospel: the Gospel of Mark was written by John Mark, the disciple of Paul and of Peter, who is mentioned as a young man who lived in Jerusalem at the time of Jesus. Mark listened to the sermons of Peter and he seems to be the source of the gospel's information.

Audience: the book is written by a Jew but to a predominately Gentile audience in Rome. Think about how this affects the point of view of the author as he builds this account of Jesus' life.

This is the **shortest gospel** of the four, therefore every detail is important. You must ask yourself, "Why did Mark include this detail in the story?" Because he obviously left many details out.

Most scholars believe that Mark is the **earliest of the four gospels**. His focus is on the actions of Jesus, not his words. Therefore he recounts Jesus' life by his careful arrangement of the stories and their relationship to each other. Always think, "How does this story fit together with the rest of the context?"

