

## From the Gospel According to

# MARK

According to ecclesiastical testimonies the evangelist Mark is the same person who in the book of Acts is called John (Acts 13:5,13) and sometimes Mark (Acts 12:12,25 25:39). Mary, Mark's mother, had a house in Jerusalem, in which the first Christians used to gather for prayer (Acts 12:12). From Colossians 4:10,11 we learn that he was Barnabas' nephew and of Jewish descent.

Mark accompanied Paul and Barnabas, as an assistant, on their first missionary journey (Acts 12:25 13:5), but later turned back (Acts 13:13). On this account Paul refused to take Mark with him on his second apostolic journey (Acts 15:37-39). At a later period however, Mark became reconciled with Paul and remained one of his most faithful co-workers (Col. 4:10, Phil:24, 2Tim. 4:11).

The book of Mark is characterized as the Gospel of action since its author tells us more of what Jesus did than what He said. Mark reports 18 miracles performed by the Lord and only four parables.

Finally the majority of the ancient fathers of the church testify that Mark's Gospel was written from the beginning in the Greek language.

Mark 1:8: **"I indeed have baptized you with water: but He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost".**

In the various denominations the baptism in water differs and one reason for this may be the mistranslation of the above verse.

The translation "with water" and "with the Holy Spirit" is not correct and may lead into misconceptions. One may understand that John the Baptist was "pouring water" upon those that he baptized or he was "sprinkling them with water".

In the Greek text we read: **"I indeed have baptized you en hu dati ( ἐν ὕδατι ) but He shall baptize you en Pneumati Hagio ( ἐν Πνεύματι Ἁγίῳ ) "**.

In the original text the preposition "en":in with dativ "*hudati*": dativ of **hudor** ( ὕδωρ ) water, and *Pneumati Hagio*: dativ of **Pneuma Agion** ( Πνεῦμα Ἅγιο ) : Holy Spirit" is used.

So according to the above we read: **"I indeed have baptized you in water: but He shall baptize you in the Holy Ghost"**.

To baptize in water means to sink the whole body in water, so as to be completely covered. It symbolizes the burying of the old self. (Rom. 6:4).

Likewise during the baptism in the Holy Spirit, Jesus Christ is sinking the believer in the Holy Spirit. (see also Acts 1:5)

Mark 1:25: **"..Hold thy peace, and come out of him.."**

In the Greek text we read: **"..phimothete ( φημώθητι ) , and come out of him" "*Phimothete*": aipp of the verb **phimoo** ( φημώω ) : from **phimos** ( φήμος ) (a muzzle). So "*phimoo*" means to muzzle, to put to silence.**

We find this verb being used many times in the New Teatment:

In Mt.22:12 we read: "**..and He saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless** (*ephimothē: aop of phimoo*)".

In Mt. 22:34 we read: "**But when the Pharisees had heard that He had put the Sadducees to silence,** (*ephimose: ao of phimoo*) **they were gathered together.**"

In 1Cor. 9:9 and in 1Tim.5:18 we read: "**Thou shalt not muzzle** (*phimoseis: fut. of phimoo*) **the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn**".

Finally in 1Pet. 2:15 we read: "**For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence** (*phimoun: pinf of Phimoo, representing linear and continuous action*) **the ignorance of foolish men:**".

So according to the above we can read the verse in Mk. 1:25: "**Be silent, and come out of him**".

Mark 2:22 : "**And no man putteth new wine into old bottles; else the new wine doth burst the bottles, and the wine is spilled, and the bottles will be marred: but new wine must be put into new bottles**".

In the Greek text the word **askous** (ἀσκούς) is used, pl of **askos**: (ἀσκός).

"Askos" is skin made into a bag, especially a wineskin. It was made of sheep, goat or camel skin and was used for liquids, epecially water and wine.

The Israelites, most, of them being shepherds and farmers, were quite familiar with the use of wineskins and were well aware of the danger of putting new wine into old and worn out wineskins.

Our Lord Jesus Christ was always using examples from the every day life of the people to whom He was preaching the Word of God. He was able to convey the divine truth to them by using parables or examples from their life.

So according to the above we read: "**And no man putteth new wine into old wineskins; else the new wine doth burst the wineskins, and the wine is spilled, and the wineskins will be marred: but new wine must be put into new wineskins**".

Mark 3:21: "**..and when His friends heard of it, they went out to lay hold on Him: for they said, He is beside Himself**".

In the Greek text the expression: **..oi par'Autou..** ( οἱ παρ' αὐτοῦ ) is used. This means His own relatives, His own kinsmen.

So we read verse 3:21: "**..and when His relatives heard of it, they went out to lay hold on Him: for they said, He is beside Himself**".

Mark 3:29: "**..but he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation.**"

The Word of God is crystal clear and does not allow any room for misunderstanding. By using though the expression: "in danger of", an element of doubt concerning this vital issue is introduced.

When one is close to a bottle filled with deadly poison it is an act of criminal indifference not to be warned of

the danger of drinking from it. The truth has to be told plainly, that he will definitely die if he drinks from it.

Concerning the above verse, in the Greek text we read: "...but he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is **enohos ( ἔνοχος )** of eternal damnation".

"*Enohos*" means: guilty of, subject to, liable to.

For example in Hebrews 2:15 we read: **"...and deliver them, who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to(enohoi) bondage."** People living away from Jesus Christ are already under the bondage of Satan.

So according to the above we read the verse in Mark 3:29: **"...but he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is guilty of eternal damnation"**.

(see also Mt.5:21,22).

Mark 4:21 : **"And He said unto them, Is a candle brought to be put under a bushel, or under a bed? and not to be set on a candlestick?"**

Since each compound word is characterized by its final component, a "candlestick" is a narrow object with a hole or spike at the top which holds a candle (\*Collins dict). What has been translated as "candle" is the Greek word **luchnos ( λύχνος )** and what has been translated as "candlestick" is the Greek word **luchnia ( λυχνία )**. Both words are derived from the primary Greek word "luke" which means: light. **Leukos ( λευκός )** : white.

"*Luchnia*" is a composite lighting system, whereas "*luchnos*" is a simple lighting instrument like a lamp. Both though emit light.

The Lord Jesus Christ says for those believing in Him: **"Ye are the light of the world"**. (Mt. 5:14)

Also in the New Testament, "*Luchnia*" is used as a symbol of the Christian church. (Revel. 1:20).

So according to the above we understand that a candle after, is lighted, is brought to be placed upon the already shining "*luchnia*".

(see also: Rev. 1:12)

Mark5:30 : **"And Jesus, immediately knowing in Himself that virtue had gone out of Him, turned Him about in the press, and said, Who touched My clothes?"**

In the Greek text we read: **"And Jesus, immediately knowing in Himself that **dunamis ( δύναμις )** had gone out of Him... "**

"*Dunamis*" means: force, power and specifically miraculous power.

The Lord Jesus Christ, just before His Ascension, promised to His disciples: **"But ye shall receive power, (*dunamin*) after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you:"**. (Acts 1:8).

The apostle Paul in 1Cor. 1:18 says **"For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish, foolishness; but unto us which are saved, it is the power (*dunamis*) of God."**

The word "*dunamis*": power is used 117 times in the New Testament.

All the words derived from the stem "*duna*", have the basic meaning of being able, capable.

So **dunatos** ( **δυνατός** ) means to be powerful or capable, strong. In 2Cor.12:10 we read: "**Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong (*dunatos*)**".

**Dunameis** ( **δυνάμεις** ) (pl.) means: powers, miracles coming from that mighty power of God inherent in Christ (Mt. 13:54, and other verses) and which power was given to His disciples and apostles (Acts 19:11). Also in Mt.24:29 we read of the "**powers(*dunameis*) of the heavens**", meaning the forces regulating stability and balance in the Universe.

On the other hand "virtue" is the translation of the Greek word **arete** ( **ἀρετή** ), from the verb **aresko** ( **ἀρέσκω** ): to please. "*Arete*" denotes in a moral sense what gives man his worth, his efficiency. In the New Testament it has been translated as moral virtue, excellency, perfection.

In 2 Pet. 1:5 we read: "**And besides this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue (*arete*); and to virtue (*arete*), knowledge.**"

So according to the above we read the verse in Mark 5:30 as: "**And Jesus, immediately knowing in Himself that power had gone out of Him, turned Him about in the press, and said, Who touched My clothes?**".

Mark 8:24-25: "**And he looked up, and said, I see men as trees, walking. After that He put His hands again upon his eyes, and made him look up; and he was restored, and saw every man clearly**".

In the above verse we can appreciate the richness and beauty of the Greek language and how the Word of God uses it to convey His message to us.

In the above incident the Lord Jesus Christ restores the sight to a blind man stepwise, and this is an example of the maturity process we undergo under the continuous blessing of the Holy Spirit.

Initially after the Lord Jesus had put His hands upon the blind man's eyes, the blind man "looked up". The Greek verb used is: **anablepsas** ( **ἀναβλέψας** ): apt of the verb **anablepo** ( **ἀναβλέπω** ): a compound verb from the prep. **ana** ( **ἀνά** ): properly meaning up, but often meaning (by implication) repetition, intensity, or reversal, and the verb **blepo** ( **βλέπω** ): to look at, see.

So "*anablepo*" means to look up, to regain one's sight.

After the Lord Jesus Christ put His hands upon the man's eyes for the second time, in the Greek text we read: "...After that He put His hands again upon his eyes, he "*dieblepsen*", and saw every man clearly". **Dieblepsen** ( **διέβλεψεν** ), is the ao. of the verb "**diablepo**" ( **διεβλέπω** ), a compound verb made out of the preposition **dia** ( **διά** ): through, and the verb **blepo** ( **βλέπω** ).

"*Diablepo*": to look through, to stare with eyes wide open, see clearly.

So according to the above the verse in Mark 8:25 can be read as: "**And he looked up, and said, I see men as trees walking. After that He put His hands again upon his eyes, he saw clearly and was restored, and saw every man clearly**".

Mark 9:19 : **"He answereth him, and saith, O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you?"**.

In the Greek text we read: "He answereth **autois ( αὐτοῖς )** and saith,..".

"Autois": dat. pl. of the personal pronoun accusative form. It means: "them".

So in the Greek text we read: **"He answereth them and saith, O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you?"**.

Mark 10:43-45 : **"But so shall it not be among you: but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister: and whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all. For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many."**

The Greek language is very rich in describing the various states of service towards God as well as to the other people. So we are able to discern at least six states as:

**Doulos ( δούλος )**: slave, or bond servant. It is derived from the verb **deo (δέω )**: to bind. Used in the absolute sense, it means to be deprived of freedom. In "doulos" the relation of dependence upon the master is prominent and a state of servitude is the main thought. (see also Rom.16:1).

**Oiketes ( οἰκέτης )**: household servant, from **oikeo ( οἰκέω )**: to dwell, and **oikos ( οἶκος )**: house.

In Luke 16:13 we read: **"No servant (oiketes: servant belonging to a certain household) can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon."**

The word "oiketes" also to be found in: Act. 10:7, Rom.14:4, 1Pet. 2:18.

**Diakonos ( διάκονος )**: a minister, a servant ,a deacon. In "diakonos" the main reference is to the service or advantage rendered to another. In 1Tim. 4:6 apostle Paul admonishes Timothy to be a good "diakonos" of Jesus Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ Himself says in John 12:26: **"If any man serve (diakonei) Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there shall also My servant (diakonos) be: if any man serve (diakonei) Me, him will My Father honor."** Regarding the menial duties in the church we find the term of "diakonos tes ekklesias": "deacon of the church". (see also ...Rom 16:1).

**Huperetes ( ὑπηρέτης )**: subordinate, servant, attendant officer. It is a compound word derived from the prep. **hupo ( ὑπό )**: under, and **eretes ( ἐρέτης )**: literally meaning a rower. In "huperetes", servant, the predominant reference is to the labor done for the lord. In Luke 1:2 we read: **"..even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eyewitnesses, and ministers (huperetai: servants) of the word"**.

*Huperetes* is the subordinate official who waits to accomplish the commands of his superior. In Mt.5:25 we read: **"..lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer (huperete), and thou be cast into prison."**

**Therapon ( θεραπεύων )**: servant is one who that willingly and voluntarily subjects himself to the service of someone else superior than himself. In Hebrews 3:5 Moses is called "therapon". The word stems from the verb "therapeuo", which has a broad spectrum of relative meanings. (see also Heb. 3:5).

**Oikonomos ( οἰκονόμος )**: a house steward. A compound word from "oikos": house and **nemo ( νέμω )**: to administer. So "oikonomos" is one who manages a household, or a steward of an estate (Lk. 12:42,

16:1,3,8, Rom. 16:23, 1Cor. 4:1,2, Gal. 4:2, Tit.1:7, 1Pet.4:10). The meaning of the word is closer to "therapon".

So according to the above the aforementioned verse in Mark 10:43-45 can be read as: "**But so shall it not be among you: but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your servant (*huperetes*): and whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be bondservant (*doulos*: slave) of all. For even the Son of man came not to be served (*diakonethenai*: ainf of diakoneo) unto, but to serve (*diakonesai*: ainf of diakoneo), and to give His life a ransom for many**".

Mark 11:22-24: "**And Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God. For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith.**

**Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them**".

In the above verses there are certain points of vital importance, the misinterpretation of which has given origin to many false teachings one of which is the Word-Faith movement.

In verse 22 we read: "...Have faith in God." In the Greek text we read: **..ehete pistin Theou.** ( ἔχετε πίστιν Θεοῦ ).

"ehete": pim of the verb **eho** ( ἔχω ): have, which involves a command for a continuous or repetitive action.

**"pistin"** ( πίστιν ) : faith.

**"Theou"** ( Θεοῦ ): gen. sg. of "**Theos**" ( Θεός ): God.

"..ehete pistin Theou" means: "...have the same faith as God has". or more simply stated: "...have God's faith".

In order to be translated as "...Have faith in God" the Greek text should say: "...ehete pistin Theo". **Theo** ( Θεῷ ): dat. sg. of "**Theos**".

The second point of interest is to be found in verse 23: "**..and shall not doubt in his heart,..**"

In the original text the Greek verb **diakrithe** ( διακριθῇ ) has been used, which is the passive aoseb of the verb **diakrino** ( διακρίνω ). This is a compound verb made out of the prep. **dia** ( διὰ ) denoting the channel of an action, through, and the verb **krino** ( κρίνω ): to distinguish, judge.

"Diakrino": to separate thoroughly, and as a consequence to hesitate, to doubt. The passive aoseb, "diakrithe" means: to be thoroughly separated by someone else.

So according to the above the second point of interest in verse 23 can be read as: "**..and shall not be thoroughly separated in his heart,..**". The only way for this to happen is one to have "faith of God".

And indeed further down in verse 23 we read: "**...,but shall believe that..**".

In Romans 10:17 we read: "**So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God**". ("rhema of God". see also Rom. 10:17).

We understand that the only way for someone to be filled with this faith, that cannot be "diakrithe", is to

receive the Word of God by the power of the Holy Spirit. Then one is given the full assurance of the concrete faith, that cannot be "*diakrithe*", because it is not one's mere desire or wish but the Word of God by the power of the Holy Spirit. Then and only then every fear and doubt is chased out of one's soul and one becomes bold and confident to utter the command: "**Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea**". So we see it is not man, but God speaking through man.

In Acts 10:20 we see the Holy Spirit speaking to Peter and giving him full assurance into his heart, in order not to hesitate to go to Cornelius' house. We read: "**Arise therefore, and get thee down, and go with them, doubting nothing** (meden: nothing, *diakrinomenos*: ppt of *diakrino*): **for I have sent them.**".

Also in Romans 14:23 we read: "**And he that doubteth (*diakrinomenos*) is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith: for whatsoever is not of faith is sin**".

That is if someone's faith is not concrete and solid, but is separated thoroughly (*diakrinetai*) by doubt, then if he proceeds to eat, he is damned, because he does not eat with faith. And whatsoever is not of faith is sin.

In James 1:6 we read of the man that asks from God "*diakrinomenos*" in his heart: "**But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering (**meden diakrinomenos** - **μηδέν διακρινόμενος**): for he that wavereth (*diakrinomenos*) is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed**".

The third point of interest in Mark 11:24 is what has been translated in this particular verse as "desire".

The Greek verb used is: **aiteisthe** ( **αἰτεῖσθε** ): pnp of the verb **aiteo** ( **αἰτέω** ): ask, request, beg. It means the seeking by the inferior from the superior (Acts 12:20), by a beggar from the giver (Acts 3:2), by the child from the parents (Mt. 7:9), by man from God (Mt. 7:7, Lk:11:9-10, Js 1:5, 1Jn 3:22).

From the verb "*aiteo*", the word **aitema** ( **αἷτημα** ) is derived.

"*Aitema*": a thing asked, an asking, petition, request. In 1 John 5:14-15 we read: "And this is the confidence (**parresia**, - **παρρησία** - see also 2 Cor. 3:12) that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He heareth us: and if we know that He hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions (*aitemata*) that we desired (*aitekamen*: asked) of Him."

From the above verse we see that if we want our "*aitemata*" to be answered, then these must be according to the will of God.

Also in 1John 3:21-22 we read: "**Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God. And whatsoever we ask, we receive of Him, because we keep His commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in His sight.**"

We see from the above verses that obedience to God's commandments is absolutely necessary for someone to receive answer to his requests.

Finally we must acknowledge that God is sovereign and trust in Him "**..that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us,..**" (Eph. 3:20).

From this brief analysis of the verb "*aiteo*" we understand that this is completely different from the verb "*apaiteo*": demand.

Finally returning in Mark 11:24 we read: "**Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them**".

Regarding the same incident, that is the withering of the fig tree, the Lord Jesus says in Matthew 21:22: **"And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive"**.

Again here we see that the prerequisite for the answered prayer is to believe, that one will receive what he is asking from the Lord.

Many people try to "believe" by using self concentration, psychological manoeuvring, or so called mind control, in order to receive from God what they desire. Of course all these things are very easily thoroughly separated (*diakrinontai*) from doubt. More importantly though, these people show total disrespect to the Word of God and the blessed action of the Holy Spirit, by using these means. They put God aside and play the lethal game "little Gods", which, if they remain unrepented, will lead them to the eternal damnation.

What the Lord Jesus means in Matthew 21:22 and Mark 11:24 as "faith", is not what one may try, by various means, to impose upon one's soul and upon Him, but what God is ready and willing to give us, when we take the proper position before Him.

Summarizing all the above, when we stand in prayer before God to ask something from Him:

1. We must have fully forgiven everyone who has erred against us. (Mk. 11:25).
2. We must confess all our sins, transgressions, or omissions to purify the fellowship with Him (1 Jn. 1:7), ask for His forgiveness, through the blood of Jesus Christ His Son (1 Jn. 1:7,9) and also ask for the power of the Holy Spirit so as not to repeat them. (2 Thess. 2:13.)
3. We must be in His will, obeying His commandments (Jn. 15:7, 1 Jn. 3:21-22).
4. We must ask according to His will. (1 Jn. 5:14-15).
5. We must fully acknowledge that He is Sovereign, He is the Lord, that He really loves us, and we must allow Him to offer us **"..exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us."** (Eph.3:20). Then we will really be able **"..in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving to let our requests be made known unto God"**. (Phil. 4:6).
6. Then the Holy Spirit comes and gives us the promise that our requests (*aitemata*) will be answered, and full assurance comes into our hearts, that is "faith of God".

Mark 13:8 : **"..these are the beginning of sorrows."**

To describe the sequence of events that will occur during the last days in the world, the Lord Jesus used the accurately descriptive Greek word **odines** ( **ὀδίνες** ).

"Odines" are the pains or throes of childbirth, and is used metaphorically of any great pain, travail or anguish.

(For an analysis of the word "odin" see also Mt. 24:8 and Rom. 8:22)

Mark 14:38: **"Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation. The spirit truly is ready, but the flesh is weak"**

In the above verse the Greek word **prothumon** ( **πρόθυμον** ) is used. It is a compound word, made out of the primary preposition **pro** ( **πρό** ): for, in front of, above, before, and the word **thumos** ( **θυμός** ): spirit (for thumos see also Rom. 2:4).

"*Prothumos*": forward in spirit, willing, eager.

Of course there is a difference of meaning between being ready to do something, and being willing to do it. One may be ready but not willing to do something, in case he is obliged or compelled to do it. The Word of God wants us not only to do things but also to do them freewillingly and with joy. This is why we read in 1Pet.5:2: **"Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly** (*prothumos*: adverb of *prothumos*);".

In the Greek text we find in Mt.26:41 exactly the same verse as in Mk. 14:38. There we read: **"Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing (*prothumon*), but the flesh is weak."**