



Mark The Evangelist Saint and Martyr

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Summarized By: A Mighty Arrow From St. Mary & Archangel Micheal
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Many titles are used to describe

Saint Mark: the Apostle; the Preacher; the Evangelist; the Martyr; and the Beholder of God. In the following article, we will try to point out the importance of this great saint to our lives as Christians.

St. Mark's Home

St. Mark's home is infamous for countless reasons. In it the Lord Jesus Christ observed the Passover with His disciples. He washed their feet and gave them His covenant: His Holy Body

and Blood. His home is where the disciples hid before the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. In it the Holy Spirit filled the disciples, allowing them to speak in tongues. This great home was also the first Christian Church.

The Holy Gospel of St. Mark

It is agreed among scholars that St. Mark was the first to write the Holy Gospel, the good news about our God and Savior Jesus Christ.

A Universal Preacher

Although St. Mark was particularly the preacher for Egypt, he was also a universal preacher for all humanity. Besides Egypt, St. Mark preached in Judea, Lebanon, Syria, Antioch and in Cyprus. He reached Paphos, Pamphylia, Rome, Colossi, Venice and Aquila.

His First Miracle

Aristopolis, St. Mark's father, was the first to receive the faith through his son. On their way to Jordan they were faced by two beasts, a lion and lioness. The father realized that they would be eaten soon by the beasts. He urged his son to escape, and leave him to the lions. St. Mark assured him that our Lord Jesus Christ would protect them and prayed saying, "O Christ the Son of God, save us." Immediately the lions perished and they were saved. Aristopolis



accepted the Lord Jesus Christ immediately and became a Christian. Perhaps this was one of the reasons why St. Mark is always portrayed in his icons with a lion next to him.



St. Mark The Apostle

St. Mark and the Church of Alexandria

Saint Mark has a special place in the hearts of all Christians, specially Egyptian Christians (the Copts) because he was the first to preach Christianity in Egypt. He was the one who led their forefathers to accept the faith and to confess that Jesus Christ is the Savior, and the Son of God. Before entering Alexandria, St. Mark was praying for God to provide him with the spiritual

means for the success of his mission. By the time he arrived, his sandal was torn, so he went to Anianus, a cobbler, to repair it. While Anianus was holding the needle, it went through his finger and he screamed from pain and said, "O' the One God". St. Mark was delighted when he heard this phrase, which was an appropriate chance to begin talking to him about that One God. It was also appropriate to ease him from his pain first, so he took some mud and spat on it and put it on his wound, saying, "In the name of Jesus Christ, Son of God, heal this hand." It was healed on the spot as if nothing happened to it. Anianus was surprised at the miracle which was done in the name of Jesus Christ and opened his heart to the Word of God. St. Mark began to talk to him spiritually and Anianus invited him to his home to talk more about God. Anianus and his family became believers and St. Mark baptized them. This home was the first fruit in St.

St. Mark's preaching in Egypt.

With great enthusiasm St. Mark was able to convert many to the Christian faith in spite of the numerous religions of the Egyptians. The name "Mark" means a "hammer", the hammer that broke down the idols in Egypt. In fact the Egyptians called him "the exterminator of idols". Saint Mark established the Theological School of Alexandria which enlightened the world with knowledge. This school was able to stand against the school for the pagans and to combat their ideas. As the number of believers in Egypt increased tremendously and a church was



built in the eastern part of Alexandria known as Pokalia, the pagans became very annoyed with St. Mark. They considered him to be a direct threat to them so they planned to kill him.

His Arrest and Torture

In 68 AD, the 14th. year of Niron's reign, on the 29th. of Barmoda, while the Christians were celebrating Easter in the church in Pokalia, the pagans gathered to kill St. Mark. The crowd attacked the church at the time St. Mark had just completed the Eucharist. They arrested him and tied a long strong rope around his neck and they pulled him along the streets and the roads of the city. With extreme cruelty they kept pulling him over the rough rocky surface of the streets that his flesh was lacerated with wounds and his blood was all over the roads. The Saint thanked God who made him worthy to suffer in His name. By At midnight, Saint Mark saw an angel, who touched him and said, " O Mark, the good servant, the time has arrived to receive your award now ". " Be courageous, as your name has been written in book of life. " This comforted him and he raised his hand towards heaven and said, "Thank you my Savior Jesus, You never left me alone, You accepted me and blessed me with Your mercy." As the angel left, the Savior appeared to him and gave him peace and said. " O Mark, my disciple and my evangelist, peace be with you." The disciple screamed and said, "O' my Lord Jesus." When the vision ended, he became cheerful and comfortable, as his heart was ready to meet the Lord.

His Death and Burial

The following morning, on 30 Barmoda, the idolaters came to take him from the prison and again surrounded his neck with a thick rope and repeated what they did with him the pervious day. While he was pulled over the stones he prayed to God to forgive them and his soul left him for his Creator, to receive the crown of martyrdom. As if his killing was not enough in the eyes of the killers, they prepared a big fire to burn his body, but heavy stormy rain extinguished the fire and dispersed the crowds. Some courageous believers took the body of the saint and put it in a coffin. They dug a tomb under the church of Pokalia, in the east side and buried the Saint. They later named the church after him, thus St. Marks name was given to the first church in Egypt. The church celebrates his martyrdom on 30 Barmoda.

Saint Mark was the first Patriarch in Egypt and our Popes have all been his successors; in fact, Pope Shenouda the III is the 117th Patriarch in succession to Saint Mark. By succession, we mean the apostolic succession to the Saint, in completing his work of preaching and spreading the word of God. May his blessings be with us all, Amen.

Reference:

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