

Gospel of Mark - Notes

The present system of using BC (before Christ) & AD (anno domini = "in the _____ of our _____") was devised in 525 by the Eastern Roman monk Dionysius Exiguus

In Dionysius' day the _____ method of dating was in use as the Roman emperor Diocletian had decreed that his reign (284-305) would be the starting point.

Prior to Diocletian there were various methods of dating events

- ⇒ From the founding of _____ in 753 BC (as we would say it now)
- ⇒ From the times of the varied _____ in office
- ⇒ _____ Caesar introduced a 365-day solar calendar in 45–46 BCE

Dionysius plan was to unseat Diocletian's status since he had been a _____ of the church. For unknown reasons, however, Dionysius was _____ a few years in his reckoning.

Dionysius' system did not come into _____ use until the 9th century. Modern scholars now believe the actual date of Jesus' birth was around 5-6 BC.

Secularly minded people today use BCE (before common era) & CE (common era) but the _____ beginning point Dionysius used remains as the basis of the system.

Why does this figure in our study of Mark's gospel?

Matthew records that Herod (the _____) had all the children of Bethlehem & the vicinity killed. They sought all male infants _____-years-old and under (2:16). This indicates that he understood from the _____ that the time of Jesus' birth was as much as two years prior. Herod, however, _____ in 4BC, so this would put the birth of Jesus as early as 6BC or "Before Christ".

For this reason it is helpful to know that our present method of reckoning time is not from the _____ text but rather in this case from the best attempt of Dionysius.

Biblical time references to events and individuals, in contrast, remain firmly _____ by secular findings.

Date of the writing – Unknown, but likely the mid to late 60s – There is no reason to assume as some claim that Mark preceded the gospels of Matthew & Luke

Authorship – Most certainly John Mark of Acts 12:12 & 25 & 1st Peter 5:13

- ✓ Papias was an apostolic father who lived c. 60-130
- ✓ Eusebius was known as the “Father of church history”

He wrote of Papias in his Ecclesiastical History, Book III, Chapter 39:

“This also the presbyter said: Mark, having become the interpreter of Peter, wrote down accurately, though not in order, whatsoever he remembered of the things said or done by Christ. For he neither heard the Lord nor followed him, but afterward, as I said, he followed Peter, who adapted his teaching to the needs of his hearers, but with no intention of giving a connected account of the Lord's discourses, so that Mark committed no error while he thus wrote some things as he remembered them. For he was careful of one thing, not to omit any of the things which he had heard, and not to state any of them falsely. These things are related by Papias concerning Mark.”

There is no evidence either internal or external that compels the reader to deny Papias' claim of Mark's authorship