

# Come Back

## Mark 16:9-14

### Dr. Pierre Cannings

- I. Come to One- Refused to Believe v.9-11 John 20: 8-10; 16-19
  - a. Mary Magdalene John 20:16-18
    - i. Cast out of Demons - Mary Magdalene. One of the most prominent of the Galilean women to have followed Jesus. Although none of the canonical gospels tells the story of the initial encounter between Mary Magdalene and Jesus, she appears in all four accounts, most significantly as a witness to the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus
    - ii. According to Luke, a Mary called Magdalene (*Maria hē kaloumenē Magdalēnē*, only in Luke 8:2) was one of a large group of women who provided for Jesus and the Twelve out of their means (Luke 8:2). The group included some women who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities. One of these was Mary “from whom seven demons had gone out” (Luke 8:2; cf. Mark 16:9),
    - iii. Mary was with the band of Galilean women who accompanied Jesus to Jerusalem, witnessed his crucifixion from a distance, observed the tomb with his body in position, went to the tomb with the burial spices which they had prepared, found the tomb empty, and experienced the startling appearance of two men in dazzling apparel (Luke 23:49, 55–56; 24:1–9). In the Lukan account, Mary is specifically identified as one of those who told the apostles about the Easter day events, only to have the report fall on deaf ears
    - iv. Mary was counted not only as the first witness to the resurrection of Jesus but also as the first herald of the resurrection to the church. The first person to proclaim the resurrection testimony upon which saving faith derives (1 Cor 15:14) is a woman.
  - b. Reported
    - i. **Report- to give an account of something<sup>1</sup>, report (back), announce, tell**
  - c. Those who were with Him
    - i. Mourning and Weeping
      - 1. Mourning- **to experience sadness as the result of some condition or circumstance,**
      - 2. Weeping- Crying
    - ii. They refused to believe it
      - 1. Refused to Believe- disbelief unfaithful

2. and the disciples' disbelief reflects Luke 24:11. V. 10 records that the grief of Peter (14:72) has now overtaken the entire apostolic company, although, as the following verse indicates, it is not a grief that leads to faith. The disciples, whose later proclamations of the gospel were met with disbelief, cannot have forgotten their own disbelief of the same message from Mary, and hopefully were more understanding and effective heralds because of it.

## II. Come to Two – Them Either v. 12-13

### a. Two of them-

- i. 16:12–13. These verses summarize the story about the two Emmaus disciples (Luke 24:13–35). The words **two of them** indicate that they were part of the group who disbelieved Mary's report (cf. Mark 16:10–11). **While they were out walking**, going from Jerusalem into **the country**, Jesus **appeared** (cf. v. 9) to them **in a different form**

### b. They did not believe them either

- i. Believe- Conviction based on testimony that something is true or that someone is reliable. As used in the Bible, to believe in God involves the element of trust, not mere acknowledgment of his existence
- ii. The disciples, however, were no more receptive of the report of these messengers than they were of the report of the women in v. 11.

## III. Come Myself- Third Try – v. 14 Luke 24:25-26 John 20:19

### a. He Appeared to the eleven themselves

#### i. Reclining at the table

1. Scared of the Jews John 20:19

### b. Reproached

- i. Reproached- **to find justifiable fault with someone, reproach, reprimand**
- ii. Unbelief **unwillingness to commit oneself to another or respond positively to the other's words or actions, lack of belief, unbelief**
- iii. Hardness of Heart **an unyielding frame of mind, hardness of heart, coldness, obstinacy, stubbornness**
  1. denotes the persistent unreceptivity of a man to the declaration of God's saving will, which must be accepted by the heart of man as the centre of his personal life
- iv. They had not believed
  1. The third appearance is to the eleven as they were reclining at table, when Jesus rebukes their lack of faith and their spiritual obtuseness, and gives them his final instructions and promises.
  2. their unbelief and hardness of heart (*sklērokardian*; cf. Mark 10:5) because they refused **to believe** the testimony of eyewitnesses to His resurrection earlier that day. By hearing about Jesus'

resurrection (before seeing **Him**) they learned what it was like to believe the testimony of eyewitnesses.

v. Believe He had Risen

1. Jesus Christ's resurrection represents a demonstration of the power of God, the confirmation of the divinity of Jesus Christ and the grounds of hope for Christian believers.
2. **Jesus Christ's resurrection was a demonstration of God's power**  
**The power of God the Father Eph 1:18-20** *See also Mt 22:29-32; Ac 2:24; 3:15; 10:40; 13:29-30; Gal 1:1; Col 2:12*
3. **The power of the Holy Spirit Ro 1:4; 1Ti 3:16; 1Pe 3:18**
4. **The resurrection confirmed Jesus Christ as the Son of God**
  - a. **Jn 20:30-31** *John calls Jesus Christ's miracles "signs" (see also Jn 2:11; 6:2) and his resurrection is the climax, confirming his identity beyond all doubt; Ro 1:4* *See also Ps 2:7; Ac 13:33*
5. **The centrality of the resurrection of Jesus Christ**
  - a. **As the basis of faith 1Co 15:14-15** *See also Ac 3:15; 4:33; 17:18; 24:21; Ro 10:9; 2Ti 2:8; Heb 6:1-2*
6. **As the basis of believers' justification Ro 4:25; 8:34**
7. **As the basis of Christian hope Ac 24:15; 1Co 15:19**
8. **As the basis of believers' resurrection 1Co 15:20-23** *The Law of Moses (Ex 23:16) provided for an offering of the firstfruits of crops to God. The firstfruits were the guarantee of the full harvest to come. The NT sees the resurrection of Jesus Christ as the firstfruits of the full ingathering of all God's people when Jesus Christ comes again. See also Jn 14:19; Ac 26:23; Ro 8:11*

## Exegetical Outline

### Mark 16:9-14

#### IV. I'll Come to One- First Denial v.9-11 John 20:16-19

##### a. Mary Magdalene John 20:16-18

- i. Cast out of Demons - Mary Magdalene. One of the most prominent of the Galilean women to have followed Jesus. Although none of the canonical gospels tells the story of the initial encounter between Mary Magdalene and Jesus, she appears in all four accounts, most significantly as a witness to the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus
- ii. According to Luke, a Mary called Magdalene (*Maria hē kaloumenē Magdalēnē*, only in Luke 8:2) was one of a large group of women who provided for Jesus and the Twelve out of their means (Luke 8:2). The group included some women who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities. One of these was Mary “from whom seven demons had gone out” (Luke 8:2; cf. Mark 16:9),
- iii. Mary was with the band of Galilean women who accompanied Jesus to Jerusalem, witnessed his crucifixion from a distance, observed the tomb with his body in position, went to the tomb with the burial spices which they had prepared, found the tomb empty, and experienced the startling appearance of two men in dazzling apparel (Luke 23:49, 55–56; 24:1–9). In the Lukan account, Mary is specifically identified as one of those who told the apostles about the Easter day events, only to have the report fall on deaf ears
  1. Mark 16:1 (WBC Vol. 34B): It is done with dispatch (as no doubt it was for the other two crucifixion victims), but not with devotion. The women, who were devoted to Jesus (cf. 14:3–9), now hope to complete the process. Due care for the corpse was very important to Judaism of late antiquity and is reflected in an apocryphal tradition that tells of angels who tend to the burial of righteous Abraham: “and they bore his precious soul in their hands in divinely woven linen. And they tended the body of the righteous Abraham with divine ointments and perfumes until the third day after his death. And they buried him in the promised land”
- iv. Although 16:9–11 come from a later time, they indicate that in the memory of the church Mary was counted not only as the first witness to the resurrection of Jesus but also as the first herald of the resurrection to the church. The first person to proclaim the resurrection testimony upon

which saving faith derives (1 Cor 15:14) is a woman.<sup>226</sup> The reference to her being exorcised of seven demons in v. 9 comes from Luke 8:2; her report to the mournful disciples in v. 10 reflects John 20:14, 18 (so, too, the *Gospel of Peter* 26); and the disciples' disbelief reflects Luke 24:11. V. 10 records that the grief of Peter (14:72) has now overtaken the entire apostolic company, although, as the following verse indicates, it is not a grief that leads to faith. The disciples, whose later proclamations of the gospel were met with disbelief, cannot have forgotten their own disbelief of the same message from Mary, and hopefully were more understanding and effective heralds because of it.

- b. Reported
  - c. Those who were with Him
    - i. Mourning and Weeping
      - 1. Mourning- **to experience sadness as the result of some condition or circumstance,**
      - 2. Weeping- Crying
    - ii. They refused to believe it
      - 1. Refused to Believe- disbelief unfaithful
- V. I'll Come to Two - Second Refusal v. 12-13
- a. Two of them-
    - i. 16:12–13. These verses summarize the story about the two Emmaus disciples (Luke 24:13–35). The words **two of them** indicate that they were part of the group who disbelieved Mary's report (cf. Mark 16:10–11). **While they were out walking,** going from Jerusalem into **the country,** Jesus **appeared** (cf. v. 9) to them **in a different form**
  - b. They did not believe them either
    - i. Believe- Conviction based on testimony that something is true or that someone is reliable. As used in the Bible, to believe in God involves the element of trust, not mere acknowledgment of his existence
    - ii. The disciples, however, were no more receptive of the report of these messengers than they were of the report of the women in v. 11.
- VI. I'll Come Myself- Third Try – v. 14 Luke 24:25-26
- a. He Appeared to the eleven themselves
    - i. Reclining at the table
      - 1. Scared of the Jews John 20:19
  - b. Reproached
    - i. Unbelief **unwillingness to commit oneself to another or respond positively to the other's words or actions, lack of belief, unbelief**

---

<sup>226</sup> On the significance of the resurrection witness of the women for the mission and life of the church, see L. Schottroff, "Die mutigen Frauen aus Galiläa und der Auferstehungsglaube," *Diakonia* 20 (1989): 221–26.

- ii. Hardness of Heart **an unyielding frame of mind, hardness of heart, coldness, obstinacy, stubbornness**<sup>3</sup>
  - 1. denotes the persistent unreceptivity of a man to the declaration of God's saving will, which must be accepted by the heart of man as the centre of his personal life
- iii. They had not believed
  - 1. The third appearance is to the eleven as they were reclining at table, when Jesus rebukes their lack of faith and their spiritual obtuseness, and gives them his final instructions and promises.
  - 2. their unbelief and hardness of heart (*sklērokardian*; cf. Mark 10:5) because they refused **to believe** the testimony of eyewitnesses to His resurrection earlier that day. By hearing about Jesus' resurrection (before seeing **Him**) they learned what it was like to believe the testimony of eyewitnesses.

The secondary ending is constructed around the theme of calling the disciples from unbelief (vv. 11, 13, 14 [2x], and 16) to belief (vv. 16, 17). In a general way, it parallels the story of the calling of Thomas from unbelief to belief in John 20:24–29

---

<sup>3</sup> William Arndt et al., [\*A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature\*](#) (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 930.

## Ideas

At some point we have to believe the unbelievable and instead of weeping we should be waiting. Taking care of the body in anticipation ... Mary told them and they didn't believe

Many of us want Jesus to be what he always been not recognizing the power in which he functions. They mourned because they forgot the power that was coming in his resurrection they limited it to his presence not the power to come. His power didn't die with

Their lack of faith Mark 16:9-14

## Word Studies

Risen on the First Day

**Mary Magdalene**- Mary Magdalene. One of the most prominent of the Galilean women to have followed Jesus. Although none of the canonical gospels tells the story of the initial encounter between Mary Magdalene and Jesus, she appears in all four accounts, most significantly as a witness to the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus.<sup>4</sup>

According to Luke, a Mary called Magdalene (*Maria hē kaloumenē Magdalēnē*, only in Luke 8:2) was one of a large group of women who provided for Jesus and the Twelve out of their means (Luke 8:2). The group included some women who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities. One of these was Mary "from whom seven demons had gone out" (Luke 8:2; cf. Mark 16:9), an indication that because of her serious condition, an exorcism had been performed on her, most probably by Jesus himself. Mary was with the band of Galilean women who accompanied Jesus to Jerusalem, witnessed his crucifixion from a distance, observed the tomb with his body in position, went to the tomb with the burial spices which they had prepared, found the tomb empty, and experienced the startling appearance of two men in dazzling apparel (Luke 23:49, 55–56; 24:1–9). In the Lukan account, Mary is specifically identified as one of those who told the apostles about the Easter day events, only to have the report fall on deaf ears (Luke 24:10–11; cf. Mark 16:9–11).<sup>5</sup>

---

<sup>4</sup> Raymond F. Collins, "[Mary \(Person\)](#)," ed. David Noel Freedman, *The Anchor Yale Bible Dictionary* (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 579.

<sup>5</sup> Raymond F. Collins, "[Mary \(Person\)](#)," ed. David Noel Freedman, *The Anchor Yale Bible Dictionary* (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 579.

Mourning – **to experience sadness as the result of some condition or circumstance, *be sad, grieve, mourn***<sup>6</sup>

Weeping- cry

Refused to Believe- disbelief unfaithful

Believe- Conviction based on testimony that something is true or that someone is reliable. As used in the Bible, to believe in God involves the element of trust, not mere acknowledgment of his existence.<sup>7</sup>

Reproached- **to find justifiable fault with someone, *reproach, reprimand***<sup>8</sup>

Unbelief- **unwillingness to commit oneself to another or respond positively to the other's words or actions, *lack of belief, unbelief***<sup>9</sup>

Hardness of Heart - **an unyielding frame of mind, *hardness of heart, coldness, obstinacy, stubbornness***<sup>10</sup>

denotes the persistent unreceptivity of a man to the declaration of God's saving will, which must be accepted by the heart of man as the centre of his personal life (→ 612).<sup>11</sup>

---

<sup>6</sup> William Arndt et al., [\*A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature\*](#) (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 795.

<sup>7</sup> Walter A. Elwell and Barry J. Beitzel, [\*"Belief, Believe," Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible\*](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1988), 276.

<sup>8</sup> William Arndt et al., [\*A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature\*](#) (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 710.

<sup>9</sup> William Arndt et al., [\*A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature\*](#) (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 103.

<sup>10</sup> William Arndt et al., [\*A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature\*](#) (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 930.

<sup>11</sup> Friedrich Baumgärtel and Johannes Behm, [\*"Καρδιά, Καρδιογνώστης, Σκληροκαρδία,"\*](#) ed. Gerhard Kittel, Geoffrey W. Bromiley, and Gerhard Friedrich, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964–), 614.



## Commentary Studies

### MARK 16:9–20

It is virtually certain that 16:9–20 is a later addition and not the original ending of the Gospel of Mark. The evidence for this judgment is complex, and it is necessary to discuss the problems in some detail before taking up the secondary ending itself.

Since none of the autograph copies of documents of the NT survives, the Greek text of the NT is constructed from later copies of manuscripts dating from A.D. 135 at the earliest to about A.D. 1200 at the latest. These copies, of which more than five thousand exist, range in size from scraps little larger than postage stamps to complete manuscripts of the Bible. In general, these copies show remarkable agreement among themselves. The most notorious exception to this otherwise happy rule, however, is the ending of Mark, which presents the gravest textual problem in the NT. The two oldest and most important manuscripts of the Bible, codex Vaticanus (B) and codex Sinaiticus (ⲁ), omit 16:9–20, as do several early translations or versions, including the Old Latin, the Sinaitic Syriac manuscript, about one hundred Armenian manuscripts, and the two oldest Georgian manuscripts. Neither Clement of Alexandria nor Origen shows any awareness of the existence of the longer ending, and Eusebius and Jerome attest that vv. 9–20 were absent from the majority of Greek copies of Mark known to them. An ingenious system of cross-referencing parallel passages in the Gospels that was devised by Ammonius in the second century and adopted by Eusebius in the fourth century (hence the name Eusebian Canons) does not include Mark 16:9–20. The apocryphal *Gospel of Peter* does not contain the longer ending, and concludes, as does Mark 16:8, with the fear of the women. Although a majority of ancient witnesses, including Greek uncial and minuscule manuscripts, church fathers, and versions in other languages do include vv. 9–20, this does not compensate for the textual evidence against them. The inclusion of vv. 9–20 in many manuscripts is accounted for rather by the fact that the longer ending, which must have been added quite early, was naturally included in subsequent copies of the Gospel. Many of the ancient manuscripts that do contain the longer ending, however, indicate by scribal notes or various markings that the ending is regarded as a spurious addition to the Gospel. External evidence (manuscript witnesses) thus argues strongly against the originality of the longer ending.<sup>121</sup>

The secondary nature of the longer ending is further corroborated by the application of the techniques of literary criticism to 16:9–20. This is apparent beginning in the first verse of the

---

<sup>121</sup> The evidence against the longer ending of vv. 9–20 also includes the so-called shorter ending of Mark, a thirty-four-word epilogue to the Gospel that is attested by four late uncial manuscripts and several versions of dubious authority (Old Latin, Harklean Syriac, Sahidic, Bohairic, and Ethiopic). The shorter ending usually occurs in the above witnesses between v. 8 and vv. 9–20, and reads as follows: “They announced briefly to those around Peter all the things they had been commanded. And after these things also Jesus himself sent through them from east to west the holy and imperishable proclamation of eternal salvation. Amen.” See B. Metzger, *TCGNT*, 122–26.

longer ending, which is a conspicuous non sequitur: whereas the subject of v. 8 is the frightened and fleeing women, v. 9 begins by presupposing the resurrected Jesus, who appears to Mary Magdalene. The latter, moreover, is introduced as a newcomer (“out of whom [Jesus] had driven seven demons,” v. 9), although Mark has mentioned her three times immediately before (15:40, 47; 16:1).<sup>132</sup> In vv. 9–20 Jesus is for the first time in Mark referred to as the “Lord Jesus” (v. 19), or simply “the Lord” (v. 20), rather than Mark’s custom of calling Jesus by his given name. Such reverential nomenclature likely derives from later Christian worship. Particularly noticeable is the number of new words that appear nowhere else in Mark. In the so-called shorter ending of Mark nine of the thirty-four words are new,<sup>143</sup> and in the longer ending there are an additional eighteen words that otherwise do not appear in Mark,<sup>154</sup> plus several unique word forms and syntactical constructions.<sup>165</sup> Several of Mark’s signature stylistic features are likewise absent from the longer ending.<sup>176</sup> The longer ending also includes themes peculiar to itself, some of which contradict Markan themes. The repeated chastisement of the disciples for their “disbelief” (Gk. *apistein*; *apistia*; vv. 11, 14, 16) of the gospel proclamation (Gk. *kērygma*; vv. 11, 13, 14, 15, 16–18, 20) is unique to the longer ending, and the prominence given to charismatic signs in vv. 17–18 stands in stark contrast to the reserve of Jesus in Mark with regard to signs and sensation (cf.<sup>18</sup> 8:11–13).

External and internal evidence thus necessitates the conclusion that 16:9–20 is not the original ending of Mark but rather a later addition to the Gospel. The longer ending is a patchwork of resurrection appearances (or summaries) taken from the other three Gospels,<sup>197</sup> the chief theme of which is the unbelief of the disciples (vv. 11, 13, 14, and 16). Although the longer ending is clearly secondary, it is nevertheless very old. The earliest witnesses to the longer ending come from the *Epistula Apostolorum* 9–10 (c.<sup>20</sup> 145), perhaps Justin Martyr (*Apol.*<sup>21</sup> 1.45; c.<sup>22</sup> 155), Tatian’s *Diatessaron* (c.<sup>23</sup> 170), and Irenaeus (*Adv. Haer.*<sup>24</sup> 3.9–12; c.<sup>25</sup> 180).

<sup>132</sup> H. B. Swete, *The Gospel According to St Mark*, 399.

<sup>143</sup> *Syntomōs*, *exangellō*, *anatolē*, *achri*, *dysis*, *exapostellō*, *aphtartos*, *kērygma*, *sōtēria*.

<sup>154</sup> *Phainō*, *pentheō*, *akeinos*, *theaomai*, *apisteō*, *heteros*, *morphē*, *poreuomai*, *hysteros*, *hendeka*, *parakolouthēō*, *ophis*, *thanasimos*, *blaptō*, *analambanō*, *synergeō*, *bebaioō*, *ekolouthēō*.

<sup>165</sup> For example, the form of *parēngelmena*, *Hieron* as an adjective, and the following syntactical constructions: *meta tauta*, *Kyrios Iēsous*, *meta to lalēsai*, *tois met’ autou genomenois*.

<sup>176</sup> Most notably, the absence of the initial *kai* in Mark’s sentence structure, the absence of the historic present tense of verbs, and the absence of *euthys*.

<sup>18</sup> cf. compare

<sup>197</sup> V. 9 = Luke 8:2; vv. 9–11 = Matt 28:9–10; Luke 24:9–11; John 20:11–18; vv. 12–13 = Luke 24:13–35; vv. 14–18 = Matt 28:16–20; Luke 24:36–49; John 20:19–23; Acts 1:6–8; vv. 19–20 = Luke 24:50–53; Acts 1:9–11.

<sup>20</sup> c. about

<sup>21</sup> *Apol.* Justin Martyr, *First Apology*

<sup>22</sup> c. about

<sup>23</sup> c. about

<sup>24</sup> *Adv. Haer.* Irenaeus, *Against All Heresy*

<sup>25</sup> c. about

180). This means that the longer ending “must be dated to the first decades of the second century.”<sup>268</sup> Of further interest in this regard is the fact that the resurrection harmony of the longer ending is composed of texts drawn largely from tradition that later became canonical,<sup>279</sup> and not from the plethora of apocryphal Gospels that were beginning to circulate in the second century. This testifies to a collection of the four Gospels no later than early in the second century, and with the collection a recognition of the authority of the four Gospels vis-à-vis other early Christian literature.<sup>1280</sup>

Mark 16:9–20 is thus a later and, in several respects, incongruous addition to the Gospel. Whether or not the longer ending was excerpted from an earlier document and added to the end of Mark or composed specifically for Mark is difficult to say. On the one hand, the awkward splice at v. 9 and the theological incongruities of the longer ending might be taken as evidence for its existence in a prior document.<sup>1291</sup> Nevertheless, stylistic arguments are not conclusive in this instance since the longer ending makes no attempt to conform to Mark’s vocabulary, style, and theology. The concern of the longer ending is with content rather than style, that is, to rectify the omission of a resurrection appearance of Jesus in Mark. This has been accomplished by adding a resurrection harmony composed of texts from the other three Gospels. Since Mark’s lack of a resurrection appearance is unique among the Gospels (and this includes the apocryphal Gospels and those from Nag Hammadi), and since we do not possess an extant text similar to the longer ending, it may be that vv. 9–20 were composed especially with the problem of Mark’s ending in mind.<sup>1302</sup>

The chief remaining question concerns the original conclusion of the Gospel of Mark. There are two possibilities. One is that Mark concluded at 16:8. This is the position held by a majority of recent interpreters of Mark.<sup>1313</sup> In this view, Mark intentionally leaves the conclusion “open-ended.” For some scholars Mark has given enough clues in the body of the Gospel for

---

<sup>268</sup> M. Hengel, *Studies in the Gospel of Mark*, trans. J. Bowden (London: SCM Press, 1985), 167–69. On the dating of the longer ending, see J. Kelhoffer, *Miracle and Mission: The Authentication of Missionaries and Their Message in the Longer Ending of Mark* (Tübingen: Mohr/Siebeck, 2000), 169–244.

<sup>279</sup> In the longer ending of Mark there are certain references to texts from Matthew, Luke, and John, and possible references or allusions to texts from Acts, Colossians, 1 Timothy, Hebrews, and James.

<sup>2810</sup> See again Hengel, *Studies in the Gospel of Mark*, 72; and Kelhoffer, *Miracle and Mission*, 15. The latter argues that “the decision by the LE’s [longer ending’s] author that the end of Mark was deficient [was] only possible at a time when the four Gospels had been *collected and compared with one another*” (author’s emphasis).

<sup>2911</sup> For example, Metzger, *TCGNT*, 125: “In view of the inconcinnities between verses 1–8 and 9–20, it is unlikely that the long ending was composed *ad hoc* to fill an obvious gap; it is more likely that the section was excerpted from another document.” For further discussion favoring the existence of a preexisting document, see Swete, *The Gospel According to St Mark*, 399.

<sup>3012</sup> For a discussion of the entire issue and a conclusion in favor of the latter view, see J. Kelhoffer, *Miracle and Mission*, 158–69.

<sup>3113</sup> For a survey of positions favoring an original ending at 16:8, see J. F. Williams, “Literary Approaches to the End of Mark’s Gospel,” *JETS* 42 (1999): 21–35.

readers to supply the resurrection account themselves.<sup>1324</sup> For others the inconclusive ending halts readers in their presumption to preempt the conclusion of the story, forcing them to unconventional responses.<sup>1335</sup> For others the sober ending demands readers to ponder the cross and discipleship rather than taking refuge in enthusiasm and triumphalism.<sup>1346</sup> Still others suggest that since Jesus' "original Jewish disciples didn't get the message," the risen Jesus is to be found in a Gentile gospel for Gentile readers.<sup>1357</sup> In these and similar interpretations, the final word of "fear" in v. 8 leaves readers, like the women, in a state requiring a response of faith. A resurrection announcement as opposed to a resurrection appearance is sufficient, in this view, because for Mark faith is elicited by hearing rather than by sight. The conclusion to the Gospel of Mark must be supplied, in other words, by each reader's response of faith.

The chief argument in favor of this view is that our earliest and most reliable manuscripts end the Gospel at 16:8. This is a strong argument, and it is held by excellent scholars. In my judgment, however, the argument is not persuasive. The suggestion that Mark left the Gospel "open ended" owes more to modern literary theory, and particularly to reader-response theory,<sup>1368</sup> than to the nature of ancient texts, which with very few exceptions show a dogged proclivity to state conclusions, not suggest them.

Several important arguments can be adduced in favor of the view that 16:8 was not the original, or intended, ending of Mark.<sup>1379</sup> First and perhaps most important, it is hard to imagine a Gospel that begins with a bold, resounding announcement of divine Sonship (1:1) ending on a note of fear and panic (16:8). The purpose of the centurion's confession in 15:39 is to bring Mark's readers to a confession of faith, whereas a conclusion at 16:8 leaves them in bewilderment. It has often been rightly observed that v. 8 seems to break off in mid-sentence, and this is more apparent in Greek, where the final word is a conjunction (Gk. *ephobounto gar*; "for they were afraid"). Although Greek sentences very occasionally ended in *gar* ("for"), there

---

<sup>3214</sup> J. L. Magness, *Sense and Absence: Structure and Suspension in the Ending of Mark's Gospel*, SBLSS (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1986), 14: "Mark affirms and communicates a resurrection and [a] post-resurrection reunion without narrating them."

<sup>3315</sup> For example, M. Trainor, "The Women, the Empty Tomb, and *That* Final Verse," *BibToday* 34 (1996): 177–82.

<sup>3416</sup> So R. W. Swanson, " 'They Said Nothing'," *Currents in Theology and Mission* 20 (1993): 471–78.

<sup>3517</sup> So W. R. Telford, *Mark*, NTG (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), 149.

<sup>3618</sup> The inexplicable ending at 16:8 inevitably leads to convoluted attempts to explain it; e.g., A. Lincoln, "The Promise and the Failure: Mark 16:7, 8," *JBL* 108 [1989]: 295–96: "So the argument has been that vv. 7, 8 provide a closure in which the reader discovers that one set of expectations produced by the preceding plot has been reversed but that, on the review that this provokes, there is a coherence with another consistent pattern of plot which gives an explanation for the initial shock."

<sup>3719</sup> See T. W. Manson, *The Servant-Messiah: A Study of the Public Ministry of Jesus* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1953), 93–99.

are only three known examples of Greek books ending in this way.<sup>2380</sup> Given the vast Greek literary corpus, which consists of more than sixty million words, it is scarcely compelling evidence to cite three documents ending with *gar* as a precedent for Mark's ending. At any rate, Mark does not end sentences with *gar*, nor does any of the four canonical Evangelists, and this leads us to assume that the sentence is either broken off or incomplete.

Considering the centrality of Jesus in the Gospel of Mark, and especially the promise of his appearance to the disciples in Galilee (14:28; 16:7), it seems incongruous for Mark to conclude with a resurrection announcement rather than with a resurrection appearance. The expectation of a resurrection appearance is further anticipated by the three passion predictions, each of which ends in a resurrection announcement (8:31; 9:31; 10:34), as well as by the example of Elijah in 9:9–13. Again, Mark's Gospel generally conforms to the skeleton of the *kērygma*, an early preaching outline of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. It is worth questioning why a Gospel otherwise faithful to the *kērygma* would depart from it at the crucial point of the resurrection when the other Gospels and Paul (1 Cor 15:3–8) include resurrection appearances as indispensable keystones of the *kērygma*.

The abnormality of Mark's ending is made even more apparent when we compare the Gospel of Mark with the plethora of Gospel-like literature from both the NT Apocrypha and Nag Hammadi. Although the Gospel genre varies considerably in these two bodies of literature, all the documents that purport to deal with the life of Jesus include appearances or words of Jesus, or both, to the disciples following the resurrection.<sup>2391</sup> The only exceptions to this are *The Protevangelium of James* and *The Infancy Narrative of Thomas*, which contain only apocryphal legends of Jesus' youth; the *Gospel of Truth* and the *Gospel of the Egyptians*, which do not focus on either the words or deeds of the historical Jesus; and the *Gospel of Thomas*, which contains only supposed sayings of Jesus, but no deeds. Even the *Gospel of Peter*, which breaks off with the fear of the women as does Mark 16:8, contains resurrection appearances of Jesus prior to that event. An ending of the Gospel of Mark at 16:8 is thus not only an aberration among the canonical Gospels but also among the diverse and fluid Gospel genres of the early centuries of Christianity.

One must further consider what effect the fear and bewilderment at 16:8 would have had on Mark's Roman readership as it grappled with faith in the midst of persecution. Would an "open ending" at 16:8 or the promised resurrection appearance of Jesus to the disciples better achieve Mark's purpose of presenting Jesus as God's Son? I think not, nor would an open ending be much encouragement to Mark's readers facing the savagery of Nero's persecution. Finally, as was suggested above, the rather existential interpretation of each reader supplying his conclusion by a decision of faith is more suited to modern sensibilities than to ancient literary

---

<sup>3820</sup> Only in Plotinus's *Ennead* (32.5), Musonius Rufus's *Tractatus XII*, and Plato, *Protagoras* 328c; see Lincoln, "The Promise and the Failure: Mark 16:7, 8," *JBL* 108 (1989): 284; P. W. van der Horst, "Can a Book End with *gar*? A Note on Mark 16:8," *JTS* 23 (1972): 121–24.

<sup>3921</sup> So *Gospel of the Nazarenes*, *Gospel of the Hebrews*, *Gospel of Philip*, *Gospel of Peter*, *Acts of Pilate*, *Epistula Apostolorum*, *Apocryphon of James*, *2 Apocalypse of James*, *Epistle of Peter to Philip*, *Gospel of Mani*, *Gospel of Nicodemus*, and the *Questions of Bartimaeus*. In *Thomas the Contender*, *Dialogue of the Savior*, and the *Gospel of Mary* the tractate consists of a dialogue of the risen Savior with the disciples.

canons. If such were Mark's purpose, the dogged appendices in vv. 9–20 are surely artless testimony that he failed in his intent. It was the custom in antiquity to conclude books with a resolution of major conflicts, not to leave them unresolved.

There is thus considerable reason to doubt that 16:8 was ever the intended conclusion to the Gospel of Mark. My own judgment is that it probably was not. What might have happened to the original ending we shall probably never know. The most plausible suggestion is that it was lost due to wear-and-tear on the last leaf of a codex.<sup>4022</sup> Or perhaps Mark was interrupted or died before completing it. The latter suggestion is a distinct possibility if Mark composed his Gospel, as we suspect, in the mid-sixties of the first century. It would not be surprising if Mark's name were among the martyrs of Nero's reign.<sup>413</sup>

How Mark may have ended the Gospel is, of course, unknown, but one tantalizing piece of evidence allows us to make a brief and modest attempt at a suggested ending. We have noted throughout the commentary that Matthew frequently follows Mark quite closely. That is particularly true of Mark 16:6–8, where the report of the women at the tomb in Matt 28:5–8 parallels Mark nearly verbatim. On the basis of this parallelism it seems plausible to suggest that Mark originally ended more or less like Matthew 28, with the exception of the report of the guards at the tomb in 28:11–15.<sup>424</sup> Two pieces of evidence undergird this suggestion. First, Mark leads readers to expect an appearance of Jesus to the disciples in Galilee (14:28; 16:7), just as Matthew reports in 28:9–10. Second, we have noted that the authority (Gk. *exousia*) of Jesus is one of Mark's signature motifs for Jesus' nature and bearing. Every Markan episode of Jesus' filial authority as the Son of God is reproduced in Matthew.<sup>435</sup> The only place where Matthew includes a reference to Jesus' *exousia* that is *not* found in Mark is in the parting commandment of the resurrected Christ that "all authority (Gk. *exousia*) in heaven on earth has been given to me" (Matt 28:18). It seems plausible to suggest that Matthew also gleaned this reference to Jesus' authority from the original ending of Mark. Thus, two things Mark has led us to expect in a resurrection narrative—an appearance of Jesus to the disciples in Galilee and a transferal of his authority to the disciples—constitute the essence of Matthew's ending in

---

<sup>4022</sup> We have examples of other ancient codices missing either first or last leaves. The *Muratorian Canon*, which begins with the last line describing the Gospel of Mark, is missing (at least) the first page. Likewise, the final leaf of Mark in Codex Washington (W) contains a puncture hole and a tattered upper corner; and the final leaf of Mark in Codex Beza (D) is written in a different hand, evidently added later to compensate for a lost final leaf.

<sup>4123</sup> Adolf Schlatter suggests further possible reasons for an incomplete ending: a hindrance that interrupted Mark's work; persecution; the necessity of flight; a pressing call to another work, leaving the uncompleted Gospel in the hands of fellow believers; or possibly that Mark intended a sequel, as did Luke in Acts (*Die Evangelien nach Markus und Lukas*, 151–52).

<sup>4224</sup> The report of the guard at the tomb (Matt 28:11–15) is a Matthean addition corresponding to Matt 27:62–66. A variant of the view I propose was suggested by A. Farrer, *St. Matthew and St. Mark* (London: Dacre Press, 1954), 144–59.

<sup>4325</sup> Mark 1:22//Matt 7:29; Mark 1:27//Matt none; Mark 2:10//Matt 9:6; Mark 11:28//Matt 21:23; Mark 11:29//Matt 21:24; Mark 11:33//Matt 21:27. Matthew does not reproduce Mark's second reference to Jesus' *exousia* ("authority") in Mark 1:27, however.

28:9–10 and 16–20. Those seven verses have as good a claim as any to being the substance of Mark's original ending.<sup>44</sup>

### AN EARLY CHRISTIAN RESURRECTION MOSAIC (16:9–20)

The secondary ending is constructed around the theme of calling the disciples from unbelief (vv. 11, 13, 14 [2x], and 16) to belief (vv. 16, 17). In a general way, it parallels the story of the calling of Thomas from unbelief to belief in John 20:24–29. The secondary ending can be divided into four parts: a resurrection appearance to Mary Magdalene (vv. 9–11), an appearance to two travelers (vv. 12–13), an appearance to the eleven (vv. 14–18), and the ascension (vv. 19–20).

**9–11** In all four Gospels, Mary Magdalene's name is found among the first witnesses of the resurrection. Although 16:9–11 come from a later time, they indicate that in the memory of the church Mary was counted not only as the first witness to the resurrection of Jesus but also as the first herald of the resurrection to the church. The first person to proclaim the resurrection testimony upon which saving faith derives (1 Cor 15:14) is a woman.<sup>4456</sup> The reference to her being exorcised of seven demons in v. 9 comes from Luke 8:2; her report to the mournful disciples in v. 10 reflects John 20:14, 18 (so, too, the *Gospel of Peter* 26); and the disciples' disbelief reflects Luke 24:11. V. 10 records that the grief of Peter (14:72) has now overtaken the entire apostolic company, although, as the following verse indicates, it is not a grief that leads to faith. The disciples, whose later proclamations of the gospel were met with disbelief, cannot have forgotten their own disbelief of the same message from Mary, and hopefully were more understanding and effective heralds because of it.

**12–13** The second appearance to the two travelers presupposes and summarizes the story of the resurrected Jesus appearing to two travelers on their way to Emmaus (Luke 24:13–35). The note about appearing "in a different form" explains why Jesus was not recognized in the original story (Luke 24:16) and is thus the earliest extant commentary on the latter passage. The disciples, however, were no more receptive of the report of these messengers than they were of the report of the women in v. 11.

**14** In 16:14 Jesus himself appears to the disciples. The longer ending presents three testimonies to the disbelieving disciples in an order of increasing authority: one female witness (vv. 9–11), two male witnesses (vv. 12–13; the Greek pronouns are masculine), and the resurrected Jesus himself (v. 14). Jesus upbraids the disciples for their disbelief of the earlier witnesses, whose testimony he confirms. V. 14 assures readers that the testimony of the church to the resurrection of Jesus is, in fact, the testimony of the risen Lord himself.

The appearance of Jesus to the eleven in 16:14–18 looks like an early Christian catechism on the resurrection. After v. 14 (which reflects Luke 24:36–38 and John 20:19), the Latin church father Jerome (d<sup>46</sup>. 420) included the following conversation between Jesus and the eleven:

---

<sup>44</sup> James R. Edwards, [\*The Gospel according to Mark\*](#), The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI; Leicester, England: Eerdmans; Apollos, 2002), 497–504.

<sup>4526</sup> On the significance of the resurrection witness of the women for the mission and life of the church, see L. Schottroff, "Die mutigen Frauen aus Galiläa und der Auferstehungsglaube," *Diakonia* 20 (1989): 221–26.

<sup>46</sup>d. died

And [the disciples] made excuse, saying: "This age of iniquity and unbelief is under Satan who, through unclean spirits, does not permit the true power of God to be apprehended. Therefore, reveal your righteousness, now."

To which Jesus responded:

"The limit of the years of the authority of Satan has been fulfilled, but other terrible things are drawing near. And on behalf of those who have sinned, I was delivered to death, in order that they might turn to the truth and sin no more, in order that they might inherit the spiritual and incorruptible glory which in heaven consists in righteousness."<sup>477</sup>

This later addition to the secondary ending is instructive because it reveals that even after Jesus' victorious resurrection from the dead the early church continued to wrestle with the problems of sin and temptation, and that it blamed its disobedience, at least in part, on the devil.<sup>48</sup>

The last 12 verses of Mark (16:9–20) known as "the longer ending of Mark" constitute one of the most difficult and most disputed textual problems in the New Testament. Were these verses included or omitted in Mark's original text? Most modern English translations call attention to the problem in some way such as adding an explanatory footnote at verse 9 (NAS<sup>49</sup><sub>B</sub>), setting this section apart from verse 8 with an explanatory note (NI<sup>50</sup><sub>V</sub>), or printing the whole section in the margin (RS<sup>51</sup><sub>V</sub>).

The *external* evidence includes the following: (1) The two earliest (fourth century) uncial manuscripts (Sinaiticus and Vaticanus) omit the verses though their respective scribes left some blank space after verse 8, suggesting that they knew of a longer ending but did not have it in the

---

<sup>4727</sup> *Against Pelagius* 2.15; cited in *NTApoc* 1.248–49.

<sup>48</sup> James R. Edwards, *The Gospel according to Mark*, The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI; Leicester, England: Eerdmans; Apollos, 2002), 504–505.

<sup>49</sup> NASB New American Standard Bible

<sup>50</sup> NIV New International Version

<sup>51</sup> RSV Revised Standard Version



manuscript they were copying. (2) Most all other manuscripts (fifth century on) as well as early versions support the inclusion of verses 9–20. (3) Several later manuscripts (seventh century on) and versions supply a “shorter ending” after verse 8 which is clearly not genuine but all these manuscripts (except one) continue on with verses 9–20. (4) Early patristic writers—such as Justin Martyr (*Apology* 1. 45, ca<sup>52</sup>. A.D. 148), Tatian (*Diatessaron*, ca<sup>53</sup>. A.D. 170), and Irenaeus who quoted verse 19 (*Against Heresies* 3. 10. 5)—support the inclusion of these verses. However, Eusebius (*Questions to Marinus* 1, ca<sup>54</sup>. A.D. 325) and Jerome (*Epistle* 120. 3; *ad Hedibiam*, ca<sup>55</sup>. A.D. 407) said verses 9–20 were missing from Greek manuscripts known to them. (5) An Armenian manuscript of the 10th century attributed verses 9–20 to “the presbyter Ariston,” probably Aristion, a contemporary of Papias (A.D. 60–130) who was purportedly a disciple of the Apostle John. (6) If Mark ended abruptly at verse 8, then it is easy to see why some early copyist(s) wanted to provide a “suitable” ending for the Gospel from other authoritative sources. However, if verses 9–20 were part of the original, it is difficult to see why the early copyists would have omitted it.

*Internal* evidence includes this data: (1) The transition from verse 8 to verse 9 involves an abrupt change of subject from “women” to the presumed subject “Jesus” since His name is not stated in verse 9 of the Greek text. (2) Mary Magdalene is introduced with a descriptive clause in verse 9 as though she had not been mentioned already in 15:40, 47 and 16:1. (3) About 1/3 of the significant Greek words in verses 9–20 are “non-Markan,” that is, they do not appear elsewhere in Mark or they are used differently from Mark’s usage prior to verse 9. (4) The Greek literary style lacks the vivid, lifelike detail so characteristic of Mark’s historical narrative. (5) Mark would have been expected to include a Resurrection appearance to the disciples in Galilee (14:28; 16:7), but the appearances in verses 9–20 are in or near Jerusalem. (6) Matthew and Luke parallel Mark until verse 8 and then diverge noticeably, suggesting that Mark began its literary existence without verses 9–20.

Equally astute and conscientious interpreters differ widely in their evaluations of this data and reach opposing conclusions. Those who include these verses in light of the preponderance of early and widespread external support must still account satisfactorily for the internal evidence which appears to distinguish these verses from the rest of the Gospel. And those who omit these verses must still account for their early and widespread attestation externally and give a suitable reason for Mark’s seemingly abrupt conclusion at verse 8. Four possible solutions for this have been suggested: (1) Mark finished his Gospel but the original ending was lost or destroyed in some way now unknown before it was copied. (2) Mark finished his Gospel but the original ending was deliberately suppressed or removed for some reason now unknown. (3) Mark was unable to finish his Gospel for some reason now unknown—possibly sudden death. (4) Mark purposely intended to end his Gospel at verse 8.

Of these options, numbers 1 and 2 are unlikely even though the view that the original ending was accidentally lost is widely accepted. If Mark’s Gospel was a scroll manuscript rather than a codex (leaf form of book) the ending would normally be on the inside of the scroll and

---

<sup>52</sup>ca. *circa*, about

<sup>53</sup>ca. *circa*, about

<sup>54</sup>ca. *circa*, about

<sup>55</sup>ca. *circa*, about

less likely to be damaged or lost than the beginning of the scroll. If the incompleteness of Mark is assumed, number 3 is the most probable option but due to its very nature it cannot be confirmed. In light of Mark's use of the theme "fear" in relation to Jesus' followers (cf. v. 8), many modern interpreters incline toward option 4.

A final conclusion to the problem probably cannot be reached on the basis of presently known data. A view which seems to account for the relevant evidence and to raise the least number of objections is that (a) Mark purposely ended his Gospel with verse 8 and (b) verses 9–20, though written or compiled by an anonymous Christian writer, are historically authentic and are part of the New Testament canon (cf. similarly the last chapter of Deut.). In this view, very early in the transmission of Mark's Gospel (perhaps shortly after A.D. 100) verses 9–20 were added to verse 8 without any attempt to match Mark's vocabulary and style. Possibly these verses were brief extracts from the post-Resurrection accounts found in the other three Gospels and were known through oral tradition to have the approval of the Apostle John who lived till near the end of the first century. Thus the material was included early enough in the transmission process to gain recognition and acceptance by the church as part of canonical Scripture. These verses are consistent with the rest of Scripture. The development of the theme of belief and unbelief unifies the passage.

#### *A. Three of Jesus' post-resurrection appearances (16:9–14)*

This section contains three of Jesus' post-resurrection appearances before His Ascension. (See the chart, "Forty Days—from Resurrection to Ascension," at Matt. 28:1–4.)

##### **1. HIS APPEARANCE TO MARY MAGDALENE AND HIS FOLLOWERS' UNBELIEF (16:9–11) (John 20:14–18).**

16:9–11. These verses turn abruptly to **Mary** Magdalene's return visit to the tomb while it was still **early** (cf. "very early," v. 2) that same morning. Though mentioned three times previously in Mark (cf. 15:40, 47; 16:1), she was described here for the first time as the **Mary out of whom Jesus had expelled seven demons** (cf. Luke 8:2). Jesus **appeared**, made Himself visible, to her **first**. This suggests that people could not recognize **Jesus** in His resurrected state unless He deliberately revealed Himself to them (cf. Luke 24:16, 31).

Mary **went and told those who had been with Him** that she had seen Jesus. This designation for Jesus' followers was not used earlier in Mark or in the other Gospels (but cf. Mark 3:14; 5:18). The clause probably refers to Jesus' disciples in general (cf. 16:12), not just the Eleven (cf. Acts 1:21). They all **were mourning and weeping** over Jesus' death, a description unique to this account.

On hearing **that Jesus was alive and ... had been seen** (*etheathē*, not used elsewhere in Mark) by Mary, the disciples refused to **believe** (*ēpistēsan*, a verb not used elsewhere in Mark) her report (cf. Luke 24:11). Apparently a short time later Jesus appeared to the other two women, confirming the angel's announcement and urging them to tell His disciples (cf. Matt. 28:1, 9–10).

##### **2. HIS APPEARANCE TO TWO FOLLOWERS AND THE UNBELIEF OF THE REST (16:12–13).**

16:12–13. These verses summarize the story about the two Emmaus disciples (Luke 24:13–35). The words **two of them** indicate that they were part of the group who disbelieved Mary's report (cf. Mark 16:10–11). **While they were out walking**, going from Jerusalem into **the country**, Jesus **appeared** (cf. v. 9) to them **in a different form** (*hetera morphē*, "a form of a different kind"). This could mean that He took on a form different from that in which He appeared to Mary Magdalene or, more likely, that He appeared to them in a form different from that in which they had previously recognized Him as **Jesus**. When they **returned** to Jerusalem **and reported** the event **to the rest** of the disciples, **they did not believe** their report **either** (cf. v. 11). Apparently, despite affirmative statements (cf. Luke 24:34), the disciples initially seemed to regard Jesus' post-resurrection appearances as apparitions (cf. Luke 24:37).

### 3. HIS APPEARANCE TO THE ELEVEN AND HIS REBUKE OF THEIR UNBELIEF (16:14) (Luke 24:36–49; John 20:19–25).

16:14. **Later** (*hysteron*, a comparative adverb not used elsewhere in Mark) on the evening of the same day (cf. v. 9) **Jesus appeared to the Eleven** themselves while **they** sat **eating** (their evening meal is implied in Luke 24:41–43). **He rebuked** (*ōneidisen*, a strong verb not used of Jesus elsewhere) their unbelief and hardness of heart (*sklērokardian*; cf. Mark 10:5) because they refused **to believe** the testimony of eyewitnesses to His resurrection earlier that day. By hearing about Jesus' resurrection (before seeing **Him**) they learned what it was like to believe the testimony of eyewitnesses. This would be necessary for all those to whom they would preach in their coming missionary outreach.<sup>56</sup>

### Form/Structure/Setting

Although scholars are almost evenly divided over the question of whether v 8 was the original conclusion of the Gospel of Mark (see Comment on 16:8), almost all regard both the so-called Long Ending (i.e., vv 9–20) and the Short Ending as textually spurious (Taylor, 610: "almost universally held conclusion"). Most think the longer passage is a late secondary conflation of traditions found in Matthew, Luke, John, and Acts, enriched with a few legendary details. Perhaps the most interesting suggestion of authorship comes from H. H. Evans (St. Paul the Author), who has proposed that the Apostle Paul wrote Mark 16:9–20. This far-fetched proposal, however, has gained no following. (In another work, Evans also advanced the theory

---

<sup>56</sup> John D. Grassmick, "[Mark](#)," in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 193–195.

that Paul wrote Luke-Acts!) Conybeare (Exp 4.8 [1893] 241–53) suggested that Mark 16:9–20 was composed by the second-century apologist Aristion. Nineteenth-century contemporaries Burgon (Last Twelve Verses) and J. P. P. Martin (Partie pratique) argued that Mark 16:9–20 is authentic, while very recently Powell (The Unfinished Gospel) has suggested that Mark's lost ending is preserved in John 21.

Farmer (Last Twelve Verses) finds the evidence for and against the originality of Mark 16:9–20 evenly divided. He is himself inclined to view it as original. According to his understanding of the synoptic relationships this means that the last twelve verses of Mark are a conflation of details found in Matthew and Luke. If the ending is genuine, then Farmer would have his best evidence for the posteriority of Mark. However, it is much more probable that the ending is not original, even if it does preserve some details that may have been part of the original ending.

Parts of Mark's long ending appear to be based on various elements found in the other Gospels and Acts. Some of the most obvious elements are as follows:

V 11: Lack of belief (cf. Luke 24:11)

V 12: Two on the road (cf. Luke 24:13–35)

V 14: Reproach for unbelief (cf. John 20:19, 26)

V 15: Great Commission (cf. Matt 28:19)

V 16: Salvation/Judgment (cf. John 3:18, 36)

V 17: Speaking in tongues (cf. Acts 2:4; 10:46)

V 18: Serpents and poison (cf. Acts 28:3–5)

V 18: Laying hands on the sick (cf. Acts 9:17; 28:8)

V 19: Ascension (cf. Luke 24:51; Acts 1:2, 9)

V 20: General summary of Acts

The material appears to be abbreviated and/or summarized from these sources (cf. Pesch, 2:545–46: Mark 16:9–20 is “ein kompilatorisches Exzerpt von den Evangelien vorausliegenden Traditionen” [“a compiled excerpt from previously existing traditions in the Gospels”]; see also Metzger, TCGNT 1, 122–28; Thomas, JETS 26 [1983] 407–19). This point can be illustrated by comparing a portion of the spurious ending to Mark's Gospel (Mark 16:12–13) to the much longer description of the two disciples on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24:13–35). The whole

“slow of heart to believe”

All the elements in Mark 16:12–13 have their counterpart in the longer story in Luke 24. Most of the vocabulary in Mark 16:12–13 is found in Luke 24. Is the Markan passage a secondary summarizing pastiche, or is it a primitive, pre-synoptic tradition? Given the spurious status that most textual critics assign to the Longer Ending of Mark's Gospel, not too many scholars would be seriously inclined to view Mark 16:12–13 as the original form of the story and to view Luke 24:13–35 as an expanded and embellished version.

The parallels with Acts and the other Gospels, the high concentration of vocabulary found nowhere else in Mark, the absence of these verses in our oldest copies of Mark (e.g.,  $\mathfrak{X}$  B) and in the earliest fathers (e.g., Clement of Alexandria and Origen), and the awkward connection

between vv 8 and 9 have led most scholars to conclude that the Long Ending of Mark was not part of the original Gospel.

#### Comment on Long Ending

9 ἀναστὰς δὲ πρωτὶ πρωτῇ σαββάτου ἐφάνη πρῶτον Μαρίᾳ τῇ Μαγδαληνῇ, παρ' ἧς ἐκβεβλήκει ἑπτὰ δαιμόνια, "But when he rose early on the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, from whom he had cast out seven demons." πρωτῇ, "early," is a favorite word in Mark; its usage here is inspired by 16:2: "And very early [λίαν πρωτῇ] in the morning of the first day of the week they come to the tomb." On ἐφάνη, "he appeared," cf. Matt 2:13: "an angel of the Lord appeared [φαίνεται] to Joseph in a dream." On Mary Magdalene, παρ' ἧς ἐκβεβλήκει ἑπτὰ δαιμόνια, "from whom he had cast out seven demons," cf. Luke 8:2: ἀφ' ἧς δαιμόνια ἑπτὰ ἐξεληλύθει, "from whom seven demons had gone out" (and Comment on Mark 15:40).

10 ἐκείνη πορευθεῖσα ἀπήγγειλεν τοῖς μετ' αὐτοῦ γενομένοις πενθοῦσι καὶ κλαίουσιν, "That woman, going, announced to those who had been with him, as they were mourning and weeping." ἐκείνη, "that woman" (i.e., Mary Magdalene), goes τοῖς μετ' αὐτοῦ γενομένοις, "to those who had been with him" (i.e., the disciples), so that she may fulfill the command of the young man encountered at the empty tomb (cf. 16:7). The language recalls John 20:18: ἔρχεται ... ἀγγέλλουσα τοῖς μαθηταῖς, "she goes ..., announcing to the disciples." The disciples are said to be πενθοῦσι καὶ κλαίουσιν, "mourning and weeping." Following his denials, Peter ἔκλαιεν, "began to weep" (Mark 14:72). On πενθεῖν, "to mourn," cf. Matt 9:15: "Can the wedding guests mourn [πενθεῖν] as long as the bridegroom is with them? The days will come, when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast."

11 κἀκεῖνοι ἀκούσαντες ὅτι ζῆ καὶ ἐθεάθη ὑπ' αὐτῆς ἠπίστησαν, "And they, having heard that he was alive and had been seen by her, did not believe." ζῆν, "to be alive," is found in Mark 5:23; 12:27, but the wording here may be indebted to Luke's resurrection narrative (24:5: "Why do you seek the living [τὸν ζῶντα] among the dead?"; 24:23: "[they] did not find his body; and they came back saying that they had even seen a vision of angels, who said that he was alive [ζῆν]"). θεάεσθαι, "to see," which is found frequently in John, does not appear elsewhere in Mark (Taylor, 611). The response of unbelief, "they did not believe [ἠπίστησαν]," is probably inspired by Luke 24:11: "but these words seemed to them an idle tale, and they did not believe [ἠπίστουν] them" (cf. Luke 24:41; Matt 28:17; John 20:25).

12 Μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα δυσὶν ἐξ αὐτῶν περιπατοῦσιν ἐφανερώθη ἐν ἑτέρᾳ μορφῇ πορευομένοις εἰς ἀγρόν, "But after these things he appeared in another form to two of them as they were walking, going in the country." We have here a clear allusion to the story of the two disciples walking on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24:13–35). In Luke's story, Jesus appears to two men who are πορευόμενοι, "going" (24:13), to a village that is about seven miles from Jerusalem. When Jesus encounters them, they are out of the city in the country. Mark 16:12 says Jesus was ἐν ἑτέρᾳ μορφῇ, "in another form," which explains Luke 24:16: "But their eyes were kept from recognizing him."

13 κἀκεῖνοι ἀπελθόντες ἀπήγγειλαν τοῖς λοιποῖς· οὐδὲ ἐκείνοις ἐπίστευσαν, "And when they returned, they reported to the rest; but they did not believe them." This is precisely what the two men on the road to Emmaus do (cf. Luke 24:33–35). The second unbelieving response is probably inspired by the second unbelieving response in Luke 24:41 (cf. the first unbelieving response in Luke 24:11).

14 ὕστερον [δὲ] ἀνακειμένοις αὐτοῖς τοῖς ἑνδεκά ἐφανερώθη καὶ ὠνειδίσεν τὴν ἀπιστίαν αὐτῶν καὶ σκληροκαρδίαν, “Later, he appeared to the eleven themselves as they reclined; and he reproached their unbelief and hardness of heart.” Jesus appears to the eleven while they reclined, which again is inspired by the setting in Luke 24 (cf. 24:41, where Jesus requests something to eat). The risen Jesus rebukes the disciples, asking them, “Why are you troubled, and why do questionings rise in your hearts?” (Luke 24:38). On σκληροκαρδία, “hardness of heart,” cf. Mark 10:5. On ἀπιστία, “unbelief,” cf. Mark 6:6.

ὅτι τοῖς θεασαμένοις αὐτὸν ἐγγεγερμένον οὐκ ἐπίστευσαν, “because they had not believed those who had seen him risen,” represents a later perspective. No doubt many in the early church marveled at the apostles’ reluctance to believe the first reports of the resurrection (cf. John 20:19, 24–29).

## THE APPENDIX

Verses 9–20 are omitted by Tisch., double-bracketed by WH., inserted in the Revisers’ Text, but with a space between it and the preceding passage, and Treg. inserts in the same space κατὰ Μάρκον. WH., in their Notes on Special Passages, pronounce against the genuineness. This is done primarily on the authority of  $\kappa$  B, one ms. Lat. Vet. and mss. of the Arm. and Æth. versions. L, 274 marg., the ms. of Lat. Vet. mentioned above, Harcl. marg. and Æth. mss. m and a give what is known as the Shorter Conclusion, as follows: Πάντα δὲ τὰ παρηγγελμένα τοῖς περὶ τὸν Πέτρον συντομῶς ἐξήγγειλαν· μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα καὶ αὐτὸς ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἀπὸ ἀνατολῆς καὶ ἄχρι δύσεως ἐξαπέστειλεν δι’ αὐτῶν τὸ ἱερὸν καὶ ἄφθαρτον κήρυγμα τῆς αἰωνίου σωτηρίας—And they reported briefly to Peter and those in his company all the things commanded. And after these things Jesus himself also sent forth through them from the east even to the west the holy and incorruptible message of eternal salvation. L virtually closes the Gospel with v. 8, and gives this shorter ending as current in some places, and then the longer ending as also current. The testimony of Eusebius, Victor, and Jerome is that these verses were to be found in some mss., but not in the oldest or best. They are not recognized in the Ammonian sections nor the Eusebian canons. And there is an ominous lack of reference to them in those passages of the Fathers which treat, for instance, of baptism, the resurrection, and the ascension. It is very true that this external evidence is not enough by itself, though it is always to be remembered that  $\kappa$  B are the most important witnesses to the text.

But the internal evidence for the omission is much stronger than the external, proving conclusively that these verses could not have been written by Mk. The linguistic differences alone are enough to settle this,—enough to show, even if we had Mk.’s autograph, that they were not original with him, but copied directly from another source. ἐκεῖνος is used in the passage five times in a way quite unknown to the Synoptics, but common to the fourth Gospel. πορεύομαι is used three times, but does not occur elsewhere in the Gospel. This is the more remarkable, as it is in itself so common a word, and the occasions for its use occur on every page. In this section, it is the favorite word for going. τοῖς μετ’ αὐτοῦ γενομένοις, as a designation of the disciples, is another unfamiliar expression. θεάομαι, as a verb of seeing, does not occur elsewhere in Mk., and is infrequent elsewhere, but is used twice in this passage. In

fact, it is the only verb for seeing in the passage. ἀπιστέω also occurs twice in this passage, but not elsewhere in this Gospel. Μετὰ (ὁ) ταῦτα is a phrase not found in Mt. or Mk. It occurs a few times in Lk., and constantly in Jn. Ὑστερον is another expression used to denote succession of events, not found elsewhere in Mk. θανάσιμον occurs only here in the N.T. βλάπτω occurs elsewhere in the N.T. only in Lk. 4:35. συνεργοῦντος is a good Pauline word, and is found once in Jas., but only here in the Gospels. βεβαιοῦν is found in Paul's epistles and in Heb., but not elsewhere in the Gospels. ἐπακολουθεῖν occurs twice in 1 Tim., and once in 1 Pet., but not elsewhere in the Gospels. To sum up, there are in all 163 words in this passage, and of these, 19 words and 2 phrases are peculiar, not occurring elsewhere in this Gospel. There are 109 different words, and of these, 11 words and 2 phrases do not occur elsewhere in this Gospel. Of these, the use of πορεύομαι, ἐκεῖνος, and θεάομαι, would of themselves constitute a case, being, from the frequency of their use, characteristic and distinctive in this vocabulary, while the entire disuse of these common words is a peculiarity of the rest of the Gospel. But the argument from the general character of the section is stronger still. In the first place, it is a mere summarizing of the appearances of our Lord, a manner of narration entirely foreign to this Gospel. Mark is the most vivid and picturesque of the evangelists, abbreviating discourse, but amplifying narration. But this is a mere enumeration. The first part of the chapter, relating the appearance of the angels to the women, is a good example of his style, and is in marked contrast to this section.

But a graver objection arises from the character of the σημεῖα that are promised here to follow believers. The casting out of demons, and the cure of the sick, belong strictly to the class of miracles performed by our Lord. They are miracles of beneficence performed on others. And in the speaking with tongues, possibly we do not get outside of that sphere. But we do have an anticipation of the new conditions of the apostolic era and of the charismata which distinguish its activity from our Lord's, that is, to say the least, unexampled in the teaching of Jesus. Moreover, this refers either to the speaking with foreign tongues of the day of Pentecost, or to the ecstatic speech which St. Paul calls speaking with tongues in 1 Cor. If the former, then it is not repeated. And if the latter, then St. Paul depreciates it, and for good reasons. Either would be against our Lord's selection of it here as a representative miracle. But the taking up serpents, and the drinking of deadly things without harm, belong strictly to the category of mere thaumaturgy ruled out by Jesus. Our Lord does not exempt himself nor his disciples from the natural consequences of their acts. The very principle of his kingdom is, that he and they shall take their place in the ordinary conditions of human life, and shall there be exposed, not only to the ordinary dangers of that life, but to the extraordinary perils incident to an uncompromising righteousness in an evil world, and without any miraculous safeguards. But here, that miraculous safeguarding is promised as the condition distinctly supplanting the ordinary. But the most serious difficulty with this passage is, that it is inconsistent with the preceding part of the chapter in regard to the place and time of the appearances to the disciples, following Lk.'s account, whereas the first part accords with Mt.'s very different scheme. The angels tell the women that Jesus precedes them into Galilee, and will be seen by his disciples there. But the appearance to Mary Magdalene was on the day of the resurrection, and near the tomb. The appearance to the two on their way into the country was evidently that to the disciples going to Emmaus, also on the day of the resurrection. And that to the eleven as they were reclining at table, was evidently also identical with that recorded in Lk. 24:36 sq., and was therefore in

Jerusalem, and on the evening of the resurrection. Immediately after this, in both accounts, comes the ascension, and leaves no time for appearances in Galilee. In St. Matthew, on the other hand, there are no appearances in Judæa, except that to the women on their way from the sepulchre. They have received from the angels the same message as in Mk. 16:7, that Jesus precedes them into Galilee, and in accordance with this, the disciples go there, and Jesus appears to them on the mountain. Plainly, then, the first verses of our chapter are framed on Mt.'s scheme of the Galilean appearances, and v. 9–20 on Lk.'s scheme of appearances in Judæa. And the two are mutually exclusive. On the other hand, the ending of the Gospel, with these verses omitted, is abrupt. But if this abruptness were foreign to Mk.'s manner, it would not show that this ending is genuine, only that the difficulty was felt by copyists, one of whom supplied this ending, and another the shorter ending. The existence of the two is presumptive proof of the original omission. But really, the brevity of this ending is quite parallel to the beginning of the Gospel, the beginning and ending being both alike outside the main purpose of the evangelist. It is not strange therefore, but rather consonant with Mk.'s manner.

#### VARIOUS APPEARANCES TO THE DISCIPLES

9–20. The first appearance is said to be to Mary Magdalene, from whom he had cast out seven demons. Then there is the appearance “in another form” to two of the disciples on their way into the country. Both of these reports were brought to the disciples, and were received with incredulity. The third appearance is to the eleven as they were reclining at table, when Jesus rebukes their lack of faith and their spiritual obtuseness, and gives them his final instructions and promises. They were to go into all the world, and proclaim the glad-tidings to all creation. He who believes their message and is baptized will be saved; and he who disbelieves will be condemned. Moreover, believers were to be accredited by certain signs done in his name. They were to cast out demons, speak with tongues, handle serpents and drink poisons with impunity, and heal the sick with the laying on of hands. After this discourse, the Lord was taken up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God. And the disciples went out everywhere with their message, the Lord helping them, and confirming their word with the promised signs.

9. Ἀναστὰς δὲ πρωὶ πρώτη σαββάτου ἐφάνη πρῶτον Μαρία τῇ Μαγδαληνῇ, παρ’ ἧς ἐκβεβλήκει ἑπτὰ δαιμόνια—And having arisen early on the first day of the week, he appears first to Mary Magdalene, from whom he had cast out seven demons. This is not a callida junctura, and could scarcely have been written by Mk. himself, with what he had just written in mind. The identification of Mary Magdalene, after she had been mentioned three times in the preceding narrative, is especially inconsistent. παρ’ ἧς—this is the only case of the use of this prep. in describing the casting out of demons, and it is as strange as it is unexampled. This appearance to Mary Magdalene is given in J. 20:14. The story of the different appearances, in this paragraph, though taken from different gospels, is told by the compiler in his own manner, with some marked variations, and in all cases in a condensed form. The incident of the seven demons is from Lk. 8:2.

παρ’ ἧς, instead of ἀφ’ ἧς, Treg. WH. RV. CDL 33. It should be remembered that  $\kappa$  B do not contain this paragraph.

10. ἐκεῖνη—this unemphatic use of ἐκεῖνος reminds us of the fourth Gospel, but is foreign to Mk. And yet, in this paragraph, it is found in v. 10, 11, 20. The use in v. 13, while it is more or less emphatic, is foreign to Mk.'s style. πορευθεῖσα—Here is a more striking anomaly. For this word, though it occurs here three times, v. 10, 12, 15,—in fact, is the staple word for going,—is not



found elsewhere in Mk., though it is so common a word, and the occasions for its use are so frequent. This makes the striking feature, that this common word is dropped from Mk.'s vocabulary, and suddenly appears here. The other evangelists use it constantly. τοῖς μετ' αὐτοῦ γενομένοις—to those who had come to be (associated) with him. This paraphrase for his disciples is also unknown to Mk., and to the other evangelists. πενθοῦσι—weeping. This word πενθοῦσι is also a word occurring only here in this gospel, but that does not count, as it is about the rate of its use in the other books of the N.T.

11. Mark agrees with Luke that the first report of the resurrection was disbelieved. Mt., however, states that the message of Jesus was acted upon, and so implies their belief in the report of the resurrection. This appearance to Mary Magdalene is condensed from J. 20:11–18. The verbal anomalies are in the use of ἐκεῖνοι, ἐθεάθη, and ἠπίστησαν. ἐθεάθη is used twice in the paragraph here, and in v. 14, and nowhere else in Mk. ἠπίστησαν is found here and in v. 16 (twice in Lk.), and nowhere else in Mk.

12, 13. This appearance to the two on their way into the country is condensed from Lk.'s account of the appearance to the two disciples on their way to Emmaus. It differs from that in its account of their non-recognition of Jesus, and of the reception given to their story. Instead of the ἐν ἑτέρᾳ μορφῇ, in another form, Lk. attributes their failure to recognize him to the fact that their eyes were restrained from knowing him. And instead of the unbelief of their story told here, Lk., on the contrary, says that the eleven met them with the story of Christ's actual resurrection (ὄντως) and his appearance to Peter. The verbal peculiarities are in the use of μετὰ ταῦτα and πορευομένοις. μετὰ ταῦτα is found in Lk., is very frequent in J., but is not found in Mt. and Mk.

14. This appearance to the eleven on the evening following the resurrection is given in both Lk. and J. It differs from both accounts again in the matter of Jesus' reproach of their unbelief of the stories of his resurrection. In Lk. it is not this for which he chides them, but for their idea, in spite of their acceptance of those stories, that his present appearance was that of a ghost. J. records only their gladness. The verbal peculiarities are in the use of ὕστερον, and θεασαμένοις. ὕστερον is found in the other gospels, but not elsewhere in Mk.

Insert δὲ after ὕστερον, Treg. (Treg. marg. WH.) RV. AD, mss. Latt. Memph. Syrr. Add ἐκ νεκρῶν, from the dead (Treg. marg. WH.) AC\* X Δ Harcl.

15. These last words in Mt. are given on the mountain in Galilee. In Lk., the farewell is said at Bethany. These instructions in Lk. are given, the same as here, at the supper in Jerusalem, but they are separated from the ascension and the final words. πᾶσιν τῇ κτίσει—to all creation. Every creature, AV., would require the omission of the article. The two elements prominent in these instructions, the preaching and the baptizing, are common to Mt. and Mk.