

# Theology on the Web.org.uk

*Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible*

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

[PayPal](https://paypal.me/robbradshaw)

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

---

A table of contents for *The Evangelical Quarterly* can be found here:

[https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles\\_evangelical\\_quarterly.php](https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_evangelical_quarterly.php)

## THE END OF THE SECOND GOSPEL

### I

PROFESSOR N. B. STONEHOUSE, in his book, *The Witness of Matthew and Mark to Christ*, which was reviewed by Professor Ross in our April number (pp. 152 ff.), has an important chapter on "The Conclusion of Mark",<sup>1</sup> which will serve as a starting-point for our consideration of this subject.

He first examines the arguments which have been urged from time to time in favour of the authenticity of the Longer Markan Ending (Mark xvi. 9-20), and shows their weakness on grounds both of external and of internal evidence, including under the latter its distinctive style and sentence-construction,<sup>2</sup> and its lack of continuity with what precedes. The result is a demonstration as conclusive as any proof of this kind can be that these twelve verses are not an integral part of the Gospel to which they have so long been attached. But this being so, we have to account somehow for the abruptness of the ending of the Gospel proper at xvi. 8: "And they went out and fled from the tomb, for trembling and amazement possessed them; and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid." Professor Stonehouse considers the two alternative possibilities: either (a) the Gospel as we have it is incomplete (having either been left unfinished by the author or having subsequently suffered mutilation), or (b) the Gospel was designedly brought to an end with these words. Of these two alternatives he decides against the former, and his defence of the latter position reveals high powers of insight and exegesis, even though some readers

<sup>1</sup> Pp. 86-118.

<sup>2</sup> It is worth noticing C. C. Torrey's remark that the Greek of these twelve verses is Greek of a different sort from that of the body of Mark's Gospel, in contrast to which these verses show no trace of translation from Aramaic (*The Four Gospels* [1933], p. 304). Dean Burgon's disciple E. Miller tried to reconcile the evident change of style with his master's insistence on the genuineness of these twelve verses by supposing that the style of the Gospel as far as xvi. 8 was substantially Peter's, and that perhaps after Peter's arrest Mark concluded the Gospel with matter which was Peter's but in a style that was his own. "Here the Master's tongue ceased: here the disciple took up his pen for himself" (J. W. Burgon and E. Miller, *The Traditional Text of the Holy Gospels* [1896], p. 306). Burgon's confident appeal to the verdict of posterity, expressed in the words of Pindar, ἀμέραι δ' ἐπιλοιοὶ μάρτυρες σοφώτατοι, has been answered in this case as in several others in a sense which would have surprised him. He was a far greater scholar than most of his opponents, and any thesis which he chose to defend he would naturally defend with great scholarship; but his general reputation as a "champion of lost causes" is not irrelevant to his contributions to textual criticism. *Puellula, puerulus, Qui nascitur in mundo vivus, Aut fato liberalis fit, Aut fato fit conservativus*; and Burgon was pre-eminently one of those *qui fato sunt conservativi*.

may find his arguments falling somewhat short of complete conviction.

It has often been rashly argued that the ending *ἐφοβοῦντο γάρ* is on grammatical and stylistic grounds improbable if not impossible.<sup>1</sup> This argument has been shown to be precarious, notably by Professor R. H. Lightfoot in *Locality and Doctrine in the Gospels* (1937), pp. 10 ff., where sufficient parallels are adduced from Biblical and extra-Biblical Greek to show that from the philological and literary viewpoint *ἐφοβοῦντο γάρ* is a perfectly possible ending.<sup>2</sup> To Professor Lightfoot's argument here Professor Stonehouse refers with approval.

Accepting this conclusion about Mark xvi. 8, our author proceeds to examine this verse in the light of its context—its immediate context, which is the Resurrection narrative of xvi. 1-8, and its wider context, which is the whole of Mark's Gospel. First, he examines the silence and fear of the women. "They said nothing to anyone." Yes, but their silence must have been broken some time, otherwise their story would have remained forever untold. Why should their silence not have come to an end when they met some of the disciples? "They said nothing to anyone"—except to the disciples. True, this is what the other Evangelists tell us, and we may be accused of the deadly sin of harmonising if we read Mark's narrative in the light of theirs instead of following those whose guiding principle seems to be that any interpretation which makes the Evangelists contradict each other is more likely to be the right one. It is opportune here, besides, to refer to Frank Morison's argument in *Who Moved the Stone?* (1930), pp. 292 ff., that the words, "they said nothing to anyone", simply mean that they did not publish the matter abroad. He compares with *οὐδενὶ οὐδὲν εἶπαν* of Mark xvi. 8 the similar words *μηδενὶ μηδὲν εἶπησ* of Mark i. 44, which do not mean that the healed leper was to keep his cleansing a dead secret, but that he

<sup>1</sup> Cf. J. R. Harris's opinion that *ἐφοβοῦντο γάρ* "is not a literary ending, nor a Christian ending, and can hardly be a Greek ending". He goes on to predict that if the "missing leaf" following *ἐφοβοῦντο γάρ* should ever be recovered, its first two words will be *τοὺς Ἰουδαίους*—"for they were afraid of the Jews" (*Side-lights on N.T. Research* [1908], pp. 87 f.).

<sup>2</sup> The view that the Gospel was intended to end here has also been upheld by Wellhausen, *Das Evangelium Marci* (1903), p. 146; W. Bousset, *Kyrios Christos* (1913), pp. 78 f.; Ed. Meyer, *Ursprung und Anfänge des Christentums* i. (1921), pp. 17 f.; J. M. Creed in *JTS* xxxi. (1930), pp. 175 ff. and *The Gospel according to St. Luke* (1930), p. 314; Jülicher-Fascher, *Einleitung in das NT* (1931), pp. 309 ff.; M. Goguel, *La Foi à la Resurrection de Jésus* (1933), pp. 176 ff.; M. S. Enslin in *JBL* xlii. (1927), pp. 62 ff. and *Christian Beginnings* (1938), pp. 387 f.; E. Lohmeyer, *Markus* (1937), pp. 358 ff.

should not do what in point of fact he did—blaze the story abroad.

However this may be, Mark not only says that the women kept silent, but he gives us the reason for their silence; it was due to fear, "for they were afraid". What was the nature and cause of this fear? Dr. Stonehouse argues that it was not blind terror but reverential awe—and, of course, if we understand Mark thus then we need not find any inconsistency in the First Evangelist's account that their fear was accompanied by great joy (Matt. xxviii. 8). They knew on this occasion what it meant to "rejoice with trembling". This is a perfectly common sense of *φοβέομαι*, and that this verb is here conjoined with the words *ἐκθαμβέομαι*, *τρόμος*, and *ἔκστασις*, supports this interpretation of its present use. What, then, caused their astonished awe and trembling? Why, says Dr. Stonehouse (p. 108), "the doubt-shattering witness of the empty tomb", as interpreted by the angel,<sup>1</sup> who told them that the tomb was empty because their Lord was risen, as He had foretold. This is considered by Dr. Stonehouse to be a fitting note on which the Evangelist should bring his Gospel to an end: the simple announcement that the Lord was risen.

The abruptness of the ending at xvi. 8 is enhanced by the fact that we get no account of the fulfilment of the angel's promise in verse 7 that the disciples, if they went into Galilee, would see their Lord there.<sup>2</sup> We (no doubt naturally) expect to hear how they went and met Him there, but we are disappointed. Of course, if Mark intended to continue his story but was prevented, or if he did continue it but the end of his Gospel was quickly lost, the abruptness needs no further explaining. We may then, with B. H. Streeter,<sup>3</sup> look for an echo of Mark's Lost Ending in John xxi, or, with E. J. Goodspeed,<sup>4</sup> in Matt. xxviii. 9 ff. But if Mark did end his Gospel

<sup>1</sup> Taking the "young man" of Mark xvi. 5, in the light of the other Gospels, to be an angel. Frank Morison (*Who moved the Stone?*, pp. 235, 251 ff., 273 ff., 295 ff.) identifies him with the "servant of the priest" mentioned in the reference to the Appearance to James in the *Gospel according to the Hebrews*. But if Mark means us to take the "young man" as an ordinary human being (which is doubtful), a good case could be made out for his being Mark himself.

<sup>2</sup> Wellhausen, Meyer, and Creed, accepting xvi. 8 as the proper end of the Gospel, regarded xvi. 7 as an interpolation, because it disturbed the unity of the passage. The promise of Christ here referred to, *προάξω ὑμᾶς εἰς τὴν Γαλιλαίαν* (Mark xiv. 28), can easily mean, as J. Weiss pointed out, "I will lead you forth into Galilee"; the relation between the Jerusalem and Galilee appearance-narratives presents a new aspect if we understand the words thus.

<sup>3</sup> *The Four Gospels* (1930), pp. 351 ff.

<sup>4</sup> *New Solutions of N.T. Problems* (1927), pp. 116 ff.; *Introduction to N.T.* (1937), p. 156.

deliberately at xvi. 8, some satisfactory explanation is desirable. And here Dr. Stonehouse examines the theory of E. Lohmeyer<sup>1</sup> (who is followed hesitantly by R. H. Lightfoot<sup>2</sup>) that the event in Galilee to which the angel pointed forward was no mere Resurrection appearance such as the other Evangelists narrate, but the Second Advent. Naturally, in that case, Mark could not relate the fulfilment of the promise, for no such fulfilment had taken place at the time of writing. Dr. Stonehouse's faithful dealing with this theory is not the least valuable thing in this chapter. He shows quite clearly that in the passages where Jesus speaks of the life-mission of the Son of Man it is the Resurrection that is contemplated as the vindicating consummation. Where the Second Advent is specially emphasised, as in the Eschatological Discourse of ch. xiii, it is not in connection with the life-mission of the Son of Man. In reply to the ultra-eschatological emphasis of Lohmeyer Dr. Stonehouse says (pp. 111 f.):

"There is, we think, a basic error in this whole approach to an understanding of Mark's eschatological perspective: it judges Mark's outlook more in terms of Jewish apocalyptic than in the light of indications provided by Mark himself. For Mark, while including definite intimations of a future manifestation of the Son of Man with great power and glory on the clouds of heaven, clearly underscores in his gospel the significance of the historical manifestation upon the earth of the heavenly Son of Man. There is an unrealized eschatology but also a realized eschatology. In three passages an appearance of the Son of Man which is still future to Mark and his readers is described (Mark viii. 38; xiii. 26; xiv. 62), but the ten other references to the Son of Man clearly imply that in his historical appearance Jesus was already the Son of Man. Moreover, the meaning which this title bears is not narrowly eschatological; it points to the heavenly, transcendent character of his person. His avowals of his right to forgive sins 'upon the earth' and to exercise lordship over the sabbath spring from his consciousness of being the Son of Man (Mark ii. 10, 28). And the whole of the record of the final journey to Jerusalem is pervaded by the teaching, not that he was to become the Son of Man by his appearance on the clouds after an interlude of suffering, but that the necessity of his suffering was found in the conviction that he, the Son of Man, had come for this very purpose. 'The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many' (x. 45). 'The Son of Man goeth as it is written concerning him; but woe to that man through whom the Son of Man is betrayed' (xiv. 21). 'The hour has come; behold, the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners' (xiv. 41). These passages, together with the references to his instruction concerning his death in Mark viii. 31; ix. 31 and x. 33, establish unmistakably the conclusion that Mark describes Jesus as acting, not out of a consciousness of prospective dignity as the Son of Man, but as the one who in his entire historical life possesses the authority and power and dignity of the Son of Man, and yet is called upon to give up his life. In

<sup>1</sup> *Galiläa und Jerusalem* (1936), pp. 35 f.; *Markus*, pp. 358 ff.

<sup>2</sup> *Locality and Doctrine in the Gospels*, pp. 24 ff.

view of the transcendence of his person it was inconceivable that death should be the end; final vindication must come through the power of God. But the striking feature of the whole story is that the vindication in prospect is the resurrection on the third day. The final glory of the Messiah will indeed appear at the consummation, but the element of vindication that forms a part of the very warp and woof of the fabric of the passion narrative is the resurrection rather than the return of Christ (Mark viii. 31; ix. 31; x. 33; cf. ix. 9). Accordingly, the brief witness to the resurrection in Mark xvi. 1-8 not only is completely congruous with the entire disposition of Mark's narrative but also provides the very climax which the attentive reader would have expected."

According to Dr. Stonehouse, then, the intimation of the Resurrection as having taken place forms a fitting end to this Gospel. If we still feel that the ending is surprisingly abrupt, it corresponds in this respect to the beginning of Mark, which with scarcely any preamble plunges us at once *in medias res*.<sup>1</sup> There may also be some substance in the words of B. Weiss<sup>2</sup> that "the Appearances of the Risen One, according to the oldest conception, belong no longer to the earthly activity of Jesus", though his following words, "and therefore no longer to the Gospel", can be accepted only in a limited sense. Mark does not call his record "the Gospel", but "the beginning of the Gospel";<sup>3</sup> we may therefore modify Weiss's statement by saying that the Appearances were regarded as events subsequent to the *beginning* of the Gospel. That they were from the earliest days an essential part of the *Gospel* is as evident from the reports of the *kerygma* in Acts as it is from 1 Cor. xv. 5-8.

What, in any case, is the most satisfactory point to bring to a close the story of Christ's life and work on earth? We should probably say the Ascension; but in fact Luke's Gospel is the only one of the four which records the Ascension, and perhaps not even Luke's, if the words "and was carried up into heaven" are to be regarded as a non-western interpolation in Luke xxiv. 51.<sup>4</sup> But even so, none of the other three Gospels ends abruptly as Mark's does, just as none of them begins abruptly like his.

<sup>1</sup> As Stonehouse points out, pp. 116 f.

<sup>2</sup> *Die Evangelien des Markus und Lukas* (1901), p. 245.

<sup>3</sup> Stonehouse (pp. 8 f.) prefers to regard Mark 1. 1 as directly referring only to the section about John the Baptist, indicating its significance in the context of the story of Jesus. I regard the evidence for the view expressed above as stronger.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Westcott and Hort, *N.T. in Greek* ii (1882), p. 73. It is also possible that ἀνελημφθη was not present in the original text of Acts i. 2: see J. H. Ropes, *Beginnings of Christianity* iii: *The Text of Acts* (1926), pp. 256 ff.

## II

Mark, we have said, describes his record as "the *beginning* of the gospel of Jesus Christ". Similarly Luke describes the subject-matter of his "former treatise" as "all that Jesus *began* both to do and to teach". It is a commonplace to say that Luke proceeds in his second volume, the Book of Acts, to relate what Jesus after His Ascension *continued* to do and teach—by His Spirit in the Apostles and in His disciples generally. Is there any evidence that Mark contemplated or composed a *continuation* of the gospel of Jesus Christ, as a sequel to *his* Gospel? This idea has commended itself to not a few scholars, several of whom have tried to formulate theories which, while giving expression to this idea, have aimed at combining with it an account of the abrupt ending of Mark's Gospel.

B. Weiss,<sup>1</sup> P. Feine,<sup>2</sup> F. Blass<sup>3</sup> and Dr. W. K. Lowther Clarke<sup>4</sup> have supposed that Mark wrote such a continuation of his Gospel, and that this continuation was used by Luke as a source for the earlier part of Acts. Blass expresses himself thus:

"Suppose that Mark was the author who had written a continuation to his Gospel, and that this continuation fell into Luke's hands at some time after he had finished his own Gospel. I find that conjecture, for instance, in Weiss's book on Mark, of course as a conjecture, not as a certainty; he thinks it probable that Mark really had closed his Gospel at xvi. 8, and afterwards wrote a continuation beginning with the appearances, that is to say, the first actions of the risen Christ, and going on to tell what the same Christ had done afterwards by means of His apostles".<sup>5</sup>

Blass argues further<sup>6</sup> that this continuation was written in Aramaic, as indeed the Second Gospel itself seems to have been originally; and it is interesting to notice that there are certain sections of the earlier part of Acts (especially i. 1–v. 16; ix. 31–xi. 18, and part of chapters xii and xv) where there is pretty strong linguistic evidence for an Aramaic substratum.<sup>7</sup>

F. C. Burkitt's hypothesis was not quite on the same lines; he did not envisage a second volume by Mark, but thought it

<sup>1</sup> *Einleitung in das NT* (1886).

<sup>2</sup> *Eine workanonische Ueberlieferung des Lukas in Evangelium und Apostelgeschichte* (1891).

<sup>3</sup> *Philology of the Gospels* (1898), pp. 141 f.

<sup>4</sup> *Theology* xxix (1934), pp. 106 f.

<sup>5</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 141.

<sup>6</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 193 ff.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. J. de Zwaan in *The Beginnings of Christianity* ii (1922), pp. 44 ff.

possible that his Gospel " may have lost about a third of its original contents, and that the work once dealt with the period covered by Acts i-xii ".<sup>1</sup> He emphatically did not believe that Mark intended either his whole work or the first part of it to end at xvi. 8.

All this theorising on the basis of inadequate evidence is a pleasant pastime; it will do no harm so long as we bear in mind Foakes-Jackson's dictum: " We should constantly remember that source-criticism in the New Testament is largely guess-work. " <sup>2</sup> Bearing this dictum in mind, we might venture the suggestion that Mark did intend " the beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ " to end at xvi. 8, but that while he may have contemplated writing a sequel beginning with the Resurrection Appearances, there is no evidence that this ever saw the light of day as a finished work. Certainly Mark (for we need not have the slightest hesitation in accepting the traditional identification of the Second Evangelist with the John Mark of Acts xii. 12, etc.) had exceptional opportunities for knowing the story of the primitive Jerusalem Church. He may even have prepared some written memoranda of what he knew. At any rate, when Luke and he were together in Rome (Col. iv. 10, 14), it cannot be doubted that Luke availed himself of Mark's knowledge, not only of the story of Jesus, but also of the story of the early Church. In so far as there are some indications in the early chapters of Acts of a written and not simply an oral Aramaic source, we may take into consideration the possibility that Mark supplied Luke with some notes in writing, perhaps translated from earlier notes made in Aramaic. We cannot say more. On the supposition that Mark intended one day to write a *δεύτερος λόγος* of his own, Zahn makes a wise comment:

" It may be that parts of the intended continuation were worked out by him and stood at the disposal of the author of Acts; that Mark himself published such a continuation is very improbable, in view of the absence of any tradition of it. " <sup>3</sup>

On the whole, however, this very tentative line of approach to the question may be thought to support, for what it is worth, the view that Mark's " beginning of the Gospel " was deliberately brought to an end with Mark xvi. 8.

<sup>1</sup> *Christian Beginnings* (1924), p. 83.

<sup>2</sup> *The Acts of the Apostles* (1931), p. xv.

<sup>3</sup> *Geschichte des NT Kanons* ii (1892), p. 931.



## III

If we are right in this conclusion, then the Empty Tomb plays a more important rôle in the Gospel story than is commonly allowed. "The early Christians", says a recent American writer,<sup>1</sup> "did not believe in the resurrection of Christ because they could not find his dead body. They believed because they did find a living Christ." "Once the Disciples were convinced by the visions they had had", says Dr. C. J. Cadoux,<sup>2</sup> "that Jesus was alive and active despite his death on the Cross, their belief that his tomb must therefore be empty would follow inevitably as the night the day, whether there was any actual evidence for it or not." But Mark, if we are right, is content to close his narrative with the Empty Tomb, with the explanation offered by the young man in white that it was empty because the Lord had risen. Did the women believe the young man's account? There is reason to hold that they did, and that this was the cause of the wondrous awe which possessed them. If we combine the evidence of John xx. 1 ff.,<sup>3</sup> we may infer that Mary Magdalene left the other women before she had time to hear the young man's words; but that same chapter gives us an account of one "early Christian"—the Beloved Disciple—who did believe when he saw the empty tomb and the vacated grave-clothes, before he beheld the risen Christ. Naturally, our estimate of the worth of this narrative will depend largely on our reaction to what Professor Raven<sup>4</sup> calls "the Johannine taboo".

Lohmeyer's theory of the significance of Mark's conclusion does not command our agreement in its essential features, but he is right in insisting that "the Lord's appearances are not the only argument for the truth of his resurrection. The story of the empty tomb, with or without an angelic appearance, was itself long esteemed by primitive Christian beliefs as a conclusive proof".<sup>5</sup> Lohmeyer overstates his argument for this, possibly because it fits in with his special viewpoint to minimise

<sup>1</sup> C. T. Craig, *The Beginning of Christianity* (1943), p. 135.

<sup>2</sup> *The Historic Mission of Jesus* (1941), p. 284.

<sup>3</sup> Miss Dorothy Sayers, bringing her dramatic sense to bear upon the apparently discrepant appearances at the Sepulchre, writes: "The divergences appear very great on first sight. . . . But the fact remains that *all* of them, without exception, can be made to fall into place in a single orderly and coherent narrative without the smallest contradiction or difficulty, and without any suppression, invention, or manipulation, beyond a trifling effort to *imagine* the natural behaviour of a bunch of startled people running about in the dawnlight between Jerusalem and the Garden" (*The Man Born to be King* [1943], p. 35).

<sup>4</sup> C. E. Raven, *Jesus and the Gospel of Love* (1931), p. 165.

<sup>5</sup> Translated by R. H. Lightfoot in *Locality and Doctrine in the Gospels*, p. 47.

the primitive significance of the Resurrection Appearances. But the fact remains that, while these Appearances constituted the more important evidence for the Apostles' claim that their Lord had risen, the prominence given to the Empty Tomb in all four Gospels reflects the emphasis laid on this, too, in the early Apostolic Preaching. And it is important to notice that it was the Empty Tomb that impressed itself on the minds of the Jewish opponents of Christianity as a stumblingblock to be got rid of somehow. That this was so in the first century A.D. is plain from Matt. xxviii. 11-15; the story that the disciples stole the body of Jesus from the tomb "becomes a kind of fixture among the Jews, being mentioned by Justin Martyr and Tertullian, and again in the *Toledoth Jeschu*. *This admission of the Jewish authorities that the tomb was empty on the morning of the third day is to be strongly emphasised.*"<sup>1</sup> So wrote the late Professor W. M. Alexander, concluding, after an examination of the arguments for and against the record of the Empty Tomb, with the words: "*The Empty Tomb is a fact as invincible as any other fact of the best attested History.*"<sup>2</sup> The emphasis which he expressed by the use of italics would become still heavier if we could be sure that our earliest Gospel ended with the account of the Empty Tomb, before the narration of any Resurrection Appearance.

#### IV

What shall we say now about the passage which appears in our Bibles as Mark xvi. 9-20? Let us emphasise that when we discuss the authenticity of these verses we are not necessarily calling in question either their antiquity or their truth or their divine inspiration.<sup>3</sup> This is often forgotten, by a confusion of the issue. Divine inspiration is independent of any particular human authorship, especially in the case of verses attached to a book of the Bible which is itself, strictly speaking, anonymous. The *one valid proof* of divine inspiration is the "inward work of the Holy Spirit, bearing witness by and with the word in our hearts";<sup>4</sup> and if we find that the Holy Spirit by His testi-

<sup>1</sup> *The Evangelical Quarterly* i. (1929), p. 30.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 32.

<sup>3</sup> Similarly, while the evidence forbids us to suppose that John vii. 53-viii. 11 originally formed part of the Fourth Gospel, we do not for a moment doubt either the historicity or the divine inspiration of this *pericope*.

<sup>4</sup> Least of all can Biblical Numerics or Gematria be considered as providing such a proof, especially in the hands of a very popular modern exponent, who reaches conclusions in Biblical literature by numerical methods which have proved to lead to still more "wonderful" conclusions when applied to the nursery-rhyme *Three Blind Mice*!

*monium internum* thus authenticates these verses as His, we accept them without further question as part of God's Word written. But that is quite apart from the question of their human authorship.

As regards the antiquity of these twelve verses, it is unquestionable, though Rendel Harris tells us<sup>1</sup> that he was once rebuked by W. F. Moulton for asserting it. Although we consider F. C. Conybeare's argument that they were written by Aristion the elder, the Disciple of the Lord,<sup>2</sup> as falling far short of proof, they cannot well be later than the early years of the second century, and may indeed belong to the first. They were not composed as an appendix to Mark, but as an independent catechesis, summarising the Resurrection Appearances narrated in the Apostolic Preaching. As for the place where this catechesis was composed, arguments have been advanced in favour of both Rome and Asia Minor, with the balance of evidence probably on the side of Rome.<sup>3</sup>

Comparison of the end of Mark with those of the other Gospels seemed at an early date to indicate an intolerable abruptness, and an urge was felt to round it off in a more pleasing manner. One attempt to satisfy this urge has given us the so-called "Shorter Ending" found in some MSS. and Versions:

But they reported to Peter and those who were with him all these things which had been commanded them. And after this Jesus Himself also appeared to them and sent through them from the east even to the west the sacred and incorruptible proclamation of eternal salvation.<sup>4</sup>

Hardly anyone has supposed that this "Ending" is genuine; it is too obviously an *ad hoc* fabrication which never had any independent existence; therefore it can properly be called an Appendix. That it is a true summary is patent, but that is all that can be said for it.

About the middle of the second century, however, the catechetical summary of the Resurrection Appearances which already had an independent existence was felt to provide a

<sup>1</sup> *Side-lights on N.T. Research*, p. 91.

<sup>2</sup> *The Expositor* IV. viii (1893), pp. 241 ff.; cf. IV. x. (1894), pp. 219 ff. See the very able criticism of this theory by Streeter in *The Four Gospels*, pp. 344 ff. (Streeter's whole chapter on "The Lost End of Mark", pp. 333-360, will repay careful study.)

<sup>3</sup> See Streeter, *op. cit.*, pp. 348 ff.

<sup>4</sup> In the Greek MSS. L, Ψ, 099, 0112, 274 (mg.), 579; in the Latin MS. k; in the Syriac Harklean margin; in one Sahidic MS. and in the margins of two Bohairic MSS., and in seven Ethiopic MSS. Of these authorities, k has this Short Appendix only after verse 8; the others add the Longer Ending after the Short Appendix, which fact is itself evidence that the Longer Ending was added later.

suitable ending to the Gospel, and so the custom started and rapidly spread of attaching it to the Gospel.<sup>1</sup> By the time when the Byzantine<sup>2</sup> recension of the N.T. text was made, early in the fourth century, its position at the end of Mark was well enough established for it to be included here in this recension from the very first, whence it appears in the vast majority of our MSS. of the N.T. But even in the earlier part of the fourth century Eusebius knew that the accurate copies of the Gospel brought it to an end at xvi. 8,<sup>3</sup> and so he omitted the following twelve verses from his Table of Canons.<sup>4</sup>

But while these verses appeared in the Byzantine recension from the start, they were absent from the earliest forms of the other chief textual families. Their absence from the two best representatives of the Alexandrian family (Ⲭ and B) is well-known. And here it may be remarked that attempts to minimise this coincidence between Ⲭ and B on the ground that this part of both MSS. was written by one and the same scribe can no longer be allowed, now that Milne and Skeat's examination of Ⲭ since it was brought from Leningrad to London in 1933 has shown clearly that Tischendorf was mistaken in identifying Hand B of Cod. B with Scribe D of Cod. Ⲭ<sup>5</sup> There is good evidence that the twelve verses were also absent from the Caesarean text in its earliest form.<sup>6</sup> (Unfortunately, the Chester Beatty papyrus P 45 is defective here and does not help us.) That they were absent from the early text of Antioch is implied by their absence from the Sinaitic Syriac version, which represents this text. And although it was perhaps in some form of the Western text that they were first attached to Mark, yet their omission

<sup>1</sup> Those who rely on the arguments of A. C. Clark should note carefully that he does not profess to push his N.T. textual researches farther back than c. A.D. 150; "the ultimate problems of New Testament autographs", he says, "do not concern me" (*The Primitive Text of the Gospels and Acts* [1914], p. vi). See the reviews of this book by F. G. Kenyon in the *Church Quarterly Review*, Oct. 1914, pp. 68-72, and by J. H. Moulton in the *Classical Review* xxix. (1915), pp. 49-54.

<sup>2</sup> So called because it was the standard text of the Byzantine Empire, circulating from Byzantium as a centre, although its basis was the revision made by Lucian of Antioch c. A.D. 300 (probably in conjunction with the Lucianic recension of the LXX). Having regard to its place of origin, Hort called it the Syrian text. See Streeter, *op. cit.*, pp. 112 ff.; Hort's Introduction in *The N.T. in Greek* ii., pp. 90 ff., 132 ff. (Hort's classic treatment of the problem of Mark xvi. 9-20 appears in pp. 28-51 of the Appendix to the same volume.)

<sup>3</sup> Euseb., *Ad Marinum* iii. 1 (see Hort's Appendix, p. 31, for a translation). Burgon and Hort agreed in believing that Eusebius was indebted to Origen for this information.

<sup>4</sup> As is noted at the end of Codd. 1, 1582, and other MSS.

<sup>5</sup> See H. J. M. Milne and T. C. Skeat, *Scribes and Correctors of the Codex Sinaiticus* (1938), pp. 89 f.

<sup>6</sup> See Streeter, *op. cit.*, pp. 88, 335 f. The evidence is found in Codd. 1, 22, 1582, important witnesses to the Caesarean text.

from the African Latin (represented by the MS. k) indicates that at first the Western text also lacked them. At this point it is relevant to recall C. H. Turner's words:

"Where B and k agree, we have perhaps the greatest security that any two witnesses can give us of external evidence for the recovery of the apostolic text."<sup>1</sup>

This agreement, and consequently this security, we find for the omission of xvi. 9-20 from the autograph of Mark's Gospel.

We have just mentioned two versions—and these the earliest of versions—which lack these verses: the Sinaitic Syriac and the African Latin. The Old Armenian and Georgian versions also lacked them; and originally also probably the Ethiopic and the Sahidic Coptic.<sup>2</sup>

In the Washington Codex of the Gospels (Cod. W) the Longer Ending is expanded by the insertion of further matter after xvi. 14. After the words "He upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen Him after He was risen", this MS. continues:

And they excused themselves, saying, This age of lawlessness and unbelief is under Satan, who by his unclean spirits does not allow the true power of God to be comprehended. Therefore now reveal Thy righteousness.<sup>3</sup> So they spoke to Christ; and Christ addressed them thus: The limit of the years of Satan's authority has been fulfilled, but other terrible things are drawing near even to those sinners on whose behalf I was handed over to death, that they may turn to the truth and sin no more. In order that they may inherit the spiritual and incorruptible glory of righteousness in heaven, go ye into all the world and proclaim the Gospel to all the creation—

and so on then to the end of verse 20. The interpolation may be quite early; it was possibly inserted in this place while yet these verses circulated as an independent catechesis, before they were attached to Mark's Gospel. Streeter considered that "the addition found in W favours the hypothesis that it (the Longer Conclusion) was originally composed as a catechetical summary of Resurrection Appearances, not as a conclusion to the Gospel".<sup>4</sup>

The Appearances recorded in these verses are apparently gathered from the other three Gospels. With verses 9 and 10 cf. John xx. 11-18; with verse 11 cf. Luke xxiv. 11; with

<sup>1</sup> Quoted by W. F. Howard in *The Bible in its Ancient and English Versions*, ed. H. W. Robinson (1940), p. 82. Turner's words referred especially to Mark's Gospel.

<sup>2</sup> See the evidence in Hort and Streeter, *loc. cit.*, and most fully in S. C. E. Legg, *Nouum Testamentum Graece: Evangelium secundum Marcum* (1935), *ad loc.*

<sup>3</sup> Jerome knew of this passage as far down as "reveal Thy righteousness" as extant "in quibusdam exemplaribus et maxime in graecis codicibus" (*Contra Pelag.* ii. 15).

<sup>4</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 333 f.

verses 12 and 13 cf. Luke xxiv. 13-35<sup>1</sup>; with verse 14 cf. John xx. 19f.; with verses 15 and 16 cf. Matt. xxviii. 16-20; with verse 19 cf. Luke xxiv. 50 f. Verse 19 adds the fact, stressed in the primitive *kerygma*, that Christ had taken His seat at God's right hand. Verse 20 summarises the apostolic activity described in the Book of Acts. As for the Dominical Logion in verses 17 and 18, it also has parallels in Acts; the signs of casting out demons, speaking with tongues, taking up serpents, and laying hands on the sick so that they recover can all be exemplified in that book. We are left with the promise that "if they drink any deadly thing, it shall in no wise hurt them", which, as Philip's daughters told Papias, found a fulfilment in "Joseph called Barsabbas, who was surnamed Justus" (Acts i. 23).<sup>2</sup>

Our conclusion with regard to these twelve verses, then, is that while we cannot regard them as an integral part of the Gospel to which they are now attached, no Christian need have any hesitation in reading them as Holy Scripture.

F. F. BRUCE.

*University of Leeds.*

<sup>1</sup> Since this paper went to press, a well-known Evangelical author has remarked to me in a letter: "Referring to the walk to Emmaus, Mark (ver. 13) says that the two to whom the Lord revealed Himself in the breaking of bread 'went away and told it unto the rest: neither believed they them'. Luke in his full narrative of the incident (xxiv. 33) says that the two 'rose up that very hour, and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven gathered together, and them that were with them, saying, *The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon.*' There seems no possibility of reconciling these opposed statements. If the circumstantial account by Luke be accepted, the statement in the other account can scarcely be inspired, and, as regards that verse at least, Mark's present ending is untrustworthy."

<sup>2</sup> Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.* iii. 39. 8.