

---

December 2023

## A Scribal Fabrication? A Text-Critical Defense of Mark 16:9-20 as Divinely Inspired and Canonically Authoritative

Justin R. Bamba

*Liberty University*, [jrbamba@liberty.edu](mailto:jrbamba@liberty.edu)

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.liberty.edu/eleu>



Part of the [Biblical Studies Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Bamba, Justin R.. 2023. "A Scribal Fabrication? A Text-Critical Defense of Mark 16:9-20 as Divinely Inspired and Canonically Authoritative." *Eleutheria: John W. Rawlings School of Divinity Academic Journal* 7, (2). <https://digitalcommons.liberty.edu/eleu/vol7/iss2/2>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Rawlings School of Divinity at Scholars Crossing. It has been accepted for inclusion in *Eleutheria: John W. Rawlings School of Divinity Academic Journal* by an authorized editor of Scholars Crossing. For more information, please contact [scholarlycommunications@liberty.edu](mailto:scholarlycommunications@liberty.edu).

---

## **A Scribal Fabrication? A Text-Critical Defense of Mark 16:9-20 as Divinely Inspired and Canonically Authoritative**

### **Abstract**

The variant endings of Mark 16 continue to capture the interest of scholars and readers alike. The two main contenders for the authentic ending to Mark's Gospel are the Short Ending (16:1-8) and the Longer Ending (16:1-20). Although some struggle with whether vv. 9-20 should even be read and preached in church, it is the goal of this paper to put such confusion and doubts to rest. This paper contends that the overall text-critical evidence (both external and internal) points to the authenticity of Mark's Longer Ending. It also explores how the other variant endings entered the manuscript record and concludes with a final defense of the Longer Ending as the divinely inspired and canonically authoritative ending to Mark's Gospel. As such, the Longer Ending, as with the rest of Scripture, remains "useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work" (2 Tim. 3:16-17, NIV).

### **Keywords**

Textual Criticism, Mark, Longer Ending, Canonicity, Inspiration

### **Cover Page Footnote**

Justin R. Bamba, MA in Biblical Studies, Liberty University (in progress; expected 2024).

### A Scribal Fabrication? A Text-Critical Defense of Mark 16:9-20

It is well-known that the ending of Mark's Gospel "is a flash-point in NT criticism."<sup>1</sup> One need only flip through the pages of an English Bible and begin reading Mark 16 to immediately notice some unusual notations, such as brackets enclosing vv. 9-20 and a boldened heading or a footnote cryptically mentioning that the oldest manuscripts end at v. 8. And depending on the version, readers may discover in their Bibles' footnotes that there are additional variants with Mark's endings, such as an interpolation between v. 8 and v. 9 and an additional statement after v. 14. However, such notations and footnotes are rather confusing to readers without a background in Greek or textual criticism, and many struggle with whether Mark's Long Ending (vv. 9-20) should even be read and preached in church.<sup>2</sup> There is a general consensus in modern scholarship that Mark 16:9-20 was not in the original manuscript.<sup>3</sup>

This paper shall seek to provide a close analysis of the text-critical issues and evidence surrounding the different endings to Mark's Gospel and explore theories that explain the emergence of the variant endings. This paper contends that the overall evidence points to the authenticity of Mark's Longer Ending. A discussion of "divine inspiration" shall follow in order to address concerns that may arise from such a conclusion. Ultimately, this paper shall argue for the nuanced thesis that though Mark 16:9-20 may not have been a part of the Gospel's first "draft," this Longer Ending is the authentic, divinely inspired ending to Mark's Gospel, and thus holds profound implications for believers everywhere.

---

<sup>1</sup> Maurice A. Robinson, "The Long Ending of Mark as Canonical Verity" in *Perspectives on the Ending of Mark*, ed. by David A. Black (Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 2008), 40.

<sup>2</sup> Consider such top Google results as "Why I Won't Preach Mark 16:9-20." <https://sharperiron.org/article/why-i-wont-preach-mark-169-20>; "Why We Will No Longer Be Preaching the Longer Ending of Mark's Gospel." <https://gbcbowie.org/blog/why-we-will-not-be-preaching-the-longer-ending-of-marks-gospel/>; "Why I Will Not Be Preaching the Longer Ending of Mark." <https://g3min.org/longer-ending-mark/>. Furthermore, note that many commentaries end their textual exposition at verse 8, and relegate any discussion of the LE to an appendix or additional note. See for example, William L. Lane, *The Gospel of Mark* (Grand Rapids, MI: W. B. Eerdmans, 1974); David E. Garland, *Mark* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1996); R. T. France, *The Gospel of Mark* (Grand Rapids, MI: W. B. Eerdmans, 2002); Francis J. Moloney, *The Gospel of Mark: A Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2002); Darrell Bock, *Mark* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2015); Eckhard J. Schnabel, *Mark: An Introduction and Commentary*, vol. 2 (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2017).

<sup>3</sup> N. Clayton Croy, *Mutilation of Mark's Gospel* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2003), 14.

### English Versions and Their Renderings of Mark 16

Prior to a text-critical analysis of Mark 16, it will be helpful to briefly survey how the English versions render the variant endings of Mark. Most (if not all) of the English versions contain the two major endings: the Short Ending (SE, vv. 1-8), and the Longer Ending (LE, vv. 9-20). However, the way in which they present the text and the amount of additional information they include in the footnotes varies significantly. It should become apparent how confusing, even concerning, such discrepancies can be for the average reader.

For example, although they place both the SE and the LE in the main text, the NIV, ESV, and CSB clearly separate vv. 1-8 and vv. 9-20 with a dividing line and/or a bracketed message alerting the reader to the fact that “the earliest manuscripts” or “some ancient witnesses” do not include vv. 9-20. Additional information, such as the interpolation between v. 8 and v. 9 (i.e., the Intermediate Ending, IE), is provided in concise footnotes in the NIV, ESV, and CSB. The NLT and LEB similarly demarcate vv. 1-8 but include both the LE and the IE in the main text, albeit with conspicuous headings. In typical fashion, the LEB also provides an extensive series of footnotes detailing that the issues in the manuscripts that give rise to such variant readings.

On the other hand, the NASB and the AMP provide Mark 16:1-20 as a single, uninterrupted stream of text and unobtrusively place vv. 9-20 in brackets. The casual reader may not even notice the subtle notation. The NASB also includes the IE in the main text, though it does so at the end of the passage, with conspicuous double-brackets and italics. The AMP makes no mention of any other alternate endings, neither in the main text nor in the footnotes.

Lastly, the ASV, RSV, and KJV take it a step further and provide vv. 1-20 as a single, uninterrupted text and do so *without* any brackets or italics. The RSV concisely notes alternate endings in the footnotes, as does the ASV. The KJV is the only major version that provides Mark 16:1-20 without any interruptions, notations, or footnotes of any sort.

### An Examination of the External Evidence

Although there are several ways of classifying the variant endings to Mark’s Gospel as found in extant manuscripts, there are essentially four different endings.<sup>4</sup> These include the Short Ending (SE), the Longer Ending (LE), the

---

<sup>4</sup> David C. Parker, “The Endings of Mark’s Gospel” in *The Living Text of the Gospels* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 124-147 offers six different readings. Michael W. Holmes, “To be Continued...the Many Endings of the Gospel of Mark” *Br* vol. 08, no. 4 (2001) categorizes 9 different endings. Nicholas P. Lunn, *The Original Ending of Mark: A New Case for*

Intermediate Ending (IE), and the Freer Logion; other variations are simply some combination of these four. The details of these variant endings and their respective textual witnesses shall be examined below.

### The Short Ending (vv. 1-8)

The SE consists of Mark 16:1-8, which ends Mark's Gospel with the women fleeing the tomb out of fear and astonishment (v. 8). As shall be examined in the next section, the LE has significantly more textual support, as the SE is only supported in three Greek witnesses (Ⲙ B 304). However, these include the notable Alexandrian Codices Sinaiticus and Vaticanus. These two codices are the expertly crafted, "*deluxe* editions" of the Holy Scriptures and descend from the remarkably ancient and well-preserved Alexandrian text-type.<sup>5</sup> Although these two witnesses date back to the fourth century, their text seems to descend from a second-century prototype.<sup>6</sup> Maurice Robinson, who himself argues for the LE, acknowledges that these two primary witnesses alone are enough to keep the controversy from being settled entirely in favor of the LE.<sup>7</sup>

Several ancient versions also conclude Mark 16 with v. 8, including a Sinaitic Syriac MS (fourth century), two of the oldest Georgian MSS (fifth century roots), one Sahidic MS (early third century), and roughly one hundred

---

*the Authenticity of Mark 16:9-20* (Cambridge: James Clarke Company, 2015) offers five different endings. J.K. Elliott, "The Text and Language of the Endings to Mark's Gospel" in *The Language and Style of the Gospel of Mark* (Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, 1993) offers five different endings as well.

<sup>5</sup> J.K. Elliott, "The Last Twelve Verses of Mark: Original or Not?" in *Perspectives on the Ending of Mark*, ed. by David A. Black (Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 2008), 81. See also Bruce M. Metzger and Bart D. Ehrman, *The Text of the New Testament: Its Transmission, Corruption, and Restoration*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 278.

<sup>6</sup> See William R. Farmer, *The Last Twelve Verses of Mark* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1974), 30 and Parker, "The Endings of Mark's Gospel," 137.

<sup>7</sup> Robinson, "The Long Ending of Mark as Canonical Verity," 44-45. See also Matthew D. McDill, "A Textual and Structural Analysis of Mark 16:9-20" *Filología neotestamentaria* vol. 17, no. 33-34 (2004), 29. Of further note is the discussion surrounding the blank column in the Codex Vaticanus, and whether the blank space suggests a scribal awareness of the LE or whether the space is too small to fit vv. 9-20 and must therefore be due to other reasons. Daniel B. Wallace, "Mark 16:8 as the Conclusion to the Second Gospel" in *Perspectives on the Ending of Mark*, ed. by David A. Black (Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 2008), 16-29; David A. Black, "Mark 16:9-20 as Markan Supplement" in *Perspectives on the Ending of Mark*, ed. By David A. Black (Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 2008), 105; Elliott, "The Last Twelve Verses of Mark," 81, 84n7; Lane, *The Gospel of Mark*, 424n1; Robinson, "The Long Ending of Mark as Canonical Verity," 51, 52n4. Ultimately, the evidence is inconclusive, and the blank column offers little support to either ending.

Armenian MSS (ninth century or later).<sup>8</sup> The obvious shortcoming of this body of textual support is that it derives primarily from a single text-type. Some have argued that the Armenian MSS are proto-Byzantine<sup>9</sup> or represent the Caesarean text-type,<sup>10</sup> which would certainly broaden the breadth of SE's support. However, this argument is far from conclusive.

As for the testimony of the early church fathers, the evidence does not fare much better. Clement of Alexandria (c. 150 – c. 211), Origen (c. 185 – c. 254), Cyprian (c. 200 – c. 258), and Cyril of Jerusalem (c. 313 – c. 386) show no awareness of any material past v. 8.<sup>11</sup> However, as many scholars have pointed out, it is little more than an argument from silence to cite these church fathers in support of the SE.<sup>12</sup> Thus, their testimony should be weighed cautiously, though to be fair, any argument for the conclusion of v. 8 and the nonexistence of vv. 9-20 will inevitably be an argument from silence. It does not help that Mark's Gospel was less popular and rarely cited in the second century.

Though occurring later, the testimony of Eusebius (c. 260 – c. 339) and Jerome (c. 347 – c. 419) offer better support for the SE. Each describes the status of the textual evidence of their day. Eusebius notes that mss with the LE do exist, but that the majority end with v. 8.<sup>13</sup> Interestingly, he does not consider the LE to be spurious and maintains the canonical status of both endings. Jerome makes a similar observation, recording that the LE is supported in very few mss.<sup>14</sup> Some have argued against the legitimacy of Jerome's testimony, asserting that Jerome is essentially translating and repeating what Eusebius wrote;<sup>15</sup> however, there seems insufficient reason to warrant this dismissal. Jerome was a remarkable scholar in his own right and demonstrated his own awareness of the manuscript evidence at

---

<sup>8</sup> See Wallace, "Mark 16:8 as the Conclusion to the Second Gospel," 19; Farmer, *The Last Twelve Verses of Mark*, 39; Lunn, *The Original Ending of Mark*, 23.

<sup>9</sup> Wallace, "Mark 16:8 as the Conclusion to the Second Gospel," 20.

<sup>10</sup> Elliot, "The Last Twelve Verses of Mark," 125.

<sup>11</sup> Lane, *The Gospel of Mark*, 349.

<sup>12</sup> See Farmer, *The Last Twelve Verses of Mark*, 30; Holmes, "To be Continued...the Many Endings of the Gospel of Mark"; Jennifer Wright Knust and Tommy Wasserman, *To Cast the First Stone: The Transmission of a Gospel Story* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2019), 20.

<sup>13</sup> Eusebius, *Ad Marinus*, NPB 4.255ff.; translation from Parker, "The Endings of Mark's Gospel," 134.

<sup>14</sup> Jerome, Letter to Hedibia, in *Epistola* 120, *PL* 22.980-1006; translation from Parker, "The Endings of Mark's Gospel," 135.

<sup>15</sup> See Parker, "The Endings of Mark's Gospel," 134-135 and James Snapp Jr., *Authentic: The Case for Mark 16:9-20*, 9-10, accessed October 16, 2023, [https://www.academia.edu/12545835/Authentic\\_The\\_Case\\_for\\_Mark\\_16\\_9\\_20](https://www.academia.edu/12545835/Authentic_The_Case_for_Mark_16_9_20)

the time.<sup>16</sup> In terms of external evidence, this point then seems to be the strongest in the SE's favor. Although the manuscript evidence today offers heavy support for the LE, based on the testimony of Eusebius and Jerome, it seems that this was not always the case. At the least, the overall evidence suggests that the SE was in circulation by the second century.

### The Longer Ending (vv. 9-20)

The LE includes vv. 9-20 with Mark 16:1-8. Its external support is indisputably early and widespread. The majority of Greek manuscripts support the LE and are found across all the major text-types, Western, Caesarean,<sup>17</sup> Byzantine, and Alexandrian, including notable Codices Alexandrinus, Bezae, and Ephraemi Syri rescriptus.<sup>18</sup> Its inclusion is also supported in many of the earliest translations, including the Old Latin, the Vulgate, several of the Syriac (e.g. the Curetonian, the Peshitta, the Harklean), and the Bohairic Coptic.<sup>19</sup>

The writings of the early church fathers and their contemporaries suggest that there was an awareness of the LE even in the second century. Justin Martyr (c. 100 – c. 165),<sup>20</sup> Tatian (c. 120 – c. 180),<sup>21</sup> Hippolytus (c. 170 – c. 235),<sup>22</sup> and Celsus (second century A.D.)<sup>23</sup> all allude to material found only in the LE of Mark.<sup>24</sup> Irenaeus (c. 130 – c. 200) directly quotes v. 19 and attributes it to the Gospel of Mark.<sup>25</sup> This of course predates the testimony of Sinaiticus, Vaticanus,

---

<sup>16</sup> Darrell Bock points out that it is Jerome, not Eusebius, who mentions the Freer Logion. Darrell Bock, "The Ending of Mark: A Response to the Essays" in *Perspectives on the Ending of Mark*, ed. by David A. Black (Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 2008), 130n4.

<sup>17</sup> The unresolved question of whether Caesarean MSS should be classified as a legitimate text-type is of little consequence, as its inclusion here simply demonstrates the broad scope of the Longer Ending's external attestation.

<sup>18</sup> Wallace claims, "at least 95 percent of all Greek MSS and ancient versions have the LE." Wallace, "Mark 16:8 as the Conclusion to the Second Gospel," 10. Lunn writes that "if an actual figure were calculated...it would probably be in excess of a thousand." Lunn, *The Original Ending of Mark*, 25.

<sup>19</sup> See Holmes, "To Be Continued...the Many Endings of the Gospel of Mark" and Parker, "The Endings of Mark's Gospel," 126.

<sup>20</sup> *Apology* 1.45.5. See Robinson, "The Long Ending of Mark as Canonical Verity," 46.

<sup>21</sup> *Diatessaron*. See Lunn, *The Original Ending of Mark*, 26.

<sup>22</sup> *Apostolic Constitutions*, 8.1. See Parker, "The Endings of Mark's Gospel," 133.

<sup>23</sup> See Farmer, *The Last Twelve Verses of Mark*, 31.

<sup>24</sup> Snapp provides a thoroughly comprehensive list of early allusions to and quotations of the LE. Snapp, *Authentic*, 10-16. See also Amy Donaldson, "Explicit References to New Testament Variant Readings Among Greek and Latin Church Fathers" vol. 2 (PhD diss., University of Notre Dame, 2009), 397-408, <https://curate.nd.edu/downloads/und:5999n298v6v>.

<sup>25</sup> *Against Heresies*, 3.10.6. See Parker, "The Endings of Mark's Gospel," 133.

Eusebius, and Jerome for the SE.<sup>26</sup> The vast majority of the external evidence heavily favors the authenticity of the LE.

### The Intermediate Ending and the Freer Logion

The remaining two alternative readings have significantly less external support than the previous two endings. The IE adds two sentences to the end of v. 8 and is attested only by the fourth-century Codex Bobbiensis.<sup>27</sup> Due to its limited and comparatively late attestation, it is clear that the IE was a scribal addition and not a part of the Gospel's original manuscript. The existence of the IE does little more than corroborate one's preference for the SE or LE. Those who support the originality of the SE will argue the interpolation as evidence that the LE did not yet exist, since it is unlikely that the rich material of the LE would be replaced with the colorless IE.<sup>28</sup> On the other hand, those who favor the LE will argue that the scribe who created the IE was simply unaware of the LE or created the IE to provide an alternate reading out of "liturgical or lectionary concerns."<sup>29</sup> The corroborative value of the IE shall be reexamined later in this paper.

As for the Freer Logion, this variant ending adds a statement after v. 14 and is only supported by Codex Washingtonianus (dated fourth or early fifth century). However, Jerome was aware of this reading and references it in his treatise *Against the Pelagians*.<sup>30</sup> Like the IE, it is clear the Freer Logion is not the original ending of Mark; however, because its new material is inserted after v. 14, it should be counted among the witnesses attesting the LE.

### Preliminary Conclusions from the External Evidence

Concerning authenticity, this survey of the external evidence for the various endings to the Gospel of Mark has revealed two main contenders, namely the SE and the LE. In terms of external evidence, the LE is by far the best attested. In the fourth century, there is an awareness of a problem within the corpus of manuscripts, as evidenced by the testimonies of Eusebius and Jerome and by the emergence of such variations as the IE and the Freer Logion.

---

<sup>26</sup> Robinson, "The Long Ending of Mark as Canonical Verity," 47-48.

<sup>27</sup> Note some manuscripts include this addition but also add vv. 9-20. For example, MSS L/019, Ψ/044, 083, 099, 274<sup>mg</sup>, 579, L-1602. Robinson, "The Long Ending of Mark as Canonical Verity," 41.

<sup>28</sup> See Wallace, "Mark 16:8 as the Conclusion to the Second Gospel," 24-25 and Bruce Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1994), 105.

<sup>29</sup> Robinson, "The Long Ending of Mark as Canonical Verity," 58-59.

<sup>30</sup> Parker, "The Endings of Mark's Gospel," 128.



Throughout the following centuries, particularly by the sixth century, numerous manuscripts appear that have some combination of the SE, LE, and IE.<sup>31</sup> Although there is significant evidence that both the SE and the LE were in circulation during the second century, the difficulty is that the evidence does not, with any degree of certainty, point back further than this. Thus, while the LE is still by far the best attested ending, it is still necessary to examine the internal evidence for further insights as to which ending is original.

### **An Examination of the Internal Evidence**

Although it is the best attested ending, there are two pieces of internal evidence that cast doubt on the authenticity of the LE: (1) the “non-Markan” material in vv. 9-20 and (2) the disjointed transition between v. 8 and v. 9.<sup>32</sup> However, this does not mean the internal evidence entirely favors the second contender, the SE, since v. 8 is an almost shockingly abrupt conclusion and brings little closure to the Gospel. This has led some to argue that neither the SE nor the LE are the original endings to Mark’s Gospel, but that the original ending has been lost. A close examination of these internal issues will ultimately show that the LE still stands as the best available option for the original ending of Mark.

### **The Loss of Mark’s Original Ending**

It is often argued that the autographs or earliest copies of Mark’s Gospel were damaged early in the transmission process, with the result that the original ending to Mark’s Gospel was irretrievably lost. Note that this would have to be extremely early in the transmission process indeed, since based on the external evidence, the LE must have appeared early enough to gain acceptance and be widely quoted in the second century. N. Clayton Croy probably provides the most comprehensive argument that the Gospel of Mark lacks both its original beginning and ending.<sup>33</sup> He suggests that Mark’s Gospel was originally written on a codex, whose beginning and ending would be the most vulnerable, since only the vulnerable bottom sheet need drop out.<sup>34</sup> However, since codices came into use more towards the end of the first century, it is more likely that Mark’s Gospel was written on a roll, in which case the end would be the most protected part of the

---

<sup>31</sup> For a similar sketch of the variant endings’ textual history, see Parker, “The Endings of Mark’s Gospel,” 136-137 and Elliot, “The Last Twelve Verses of Mark,” 87.

<sup>32</sup> McDill, “A Textual and Structural Analysis of Mark 16:9-20,” 31.

<sup>33</sup> Croy, *The Mutilation of Mark’s Gospel*.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 151-152.

document.<sup>35</sup> All this is of course mere conjecture, since the manuscripts to Mark's Gospel in existence today generally do not date earlier than the fourth century. But if the internal evidence reveals irresolvable issues for the SE and the LE, then this theory of a lost original ending could be a plausible explanation.<sup>36</sup> However, it will be shown that this theory is not actually the case.

### Verse 8 as a Viable Conclusion to Mark's Gospel

There are two main issues with v. 8 that, at least initially, cast doubt on its viability as Mark's intended conclusion to his Gospel, one grammatical and one thematic. The first is the fact that the manuscripts supporting the SE end the Gospel with the postpositional particle *γάρ*, which is grammatically strange to say the least, and leaves the sentence in limbo. However, as rare as the grammatical construction is, it is not without precedent in other Greco-Roman literature, such as Plotinus's *Ennead* 5.5.<sup>37</sup>

Secondly, there is the issue of the SE's rather abrupt ending that seems to bring little closure to the Gospel. For one, it leaves the Gospel without a record of Jesus' post-resurrection appearances, which is arguably the event that precipitated the spread of Christianity and the writing of the Gospel accounts. Furthermore, Mark seems to exhibit a consistent habit of demonstrating "the reliability of Jesus' words by narrating their fulfillment,"<sup>38</sup> so it is strange that Christ would prophesy his resurrection three times (8:31, 9:31, 10:34) only for his words to remain unfulfilled.<sup>39</sup> Other themes left without closure by the abrupt ending at v. 8

---

<sup>35</sup> See Wallace, "Mark 16:8 as the Conclusion to the Second Gospel," 35 and Bock, "The Ending of Mark: A Response to the Essays," 132. On the other hand, Elliot maintains that a roll was just as likely to be damaged on both ends as a codex. Elliot, "The Last Twelve Verses of Mark," 81.

<sup>36</sup> As for *deliberate* excisions of the original reading early in the transmission process, scribal alterations of that magnitude are extremely unlikely. See Robert D. Marcello, "Myths About Orthodox Corruption" and Zachary J. Cole, "Myths About Copyists" in *Myths and Mistakes in New Testament Textual Criticism*, ed. Elijah Hixson and Peter J. Gurry (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2019).

<sup>37</sup> See P.W. van der Horst, "Can a Book End with a ΓΑΡ? A Note on Mark XVI.8," *JTS* 23 (1972), 121-124 and J. Lee Magness, *Marking the End: Sense and Absence in the Gospel of Mark* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2002), 84. Those who still maintain the unlikelihood of Mark ending with *γάρ* include Croy, *The Mutilation of Mark's Gospel*, 48; Elliot, "The Last Twelve Verses of Mark," 89, 93; Parker, "The Endings of Mark's Gospel," 142.

<sup>38</sup> Croy, *The Mutilation of Mark's Gospel*, 58. See also Snapp, *Authentic*, 150 and Robinson, "The Long Ending of Mark as Canonical Verity," 67.

<sup>39</sup> See Parker, "The Endings of Mark's Gospel," 143-144; Wallace, "Mark 16:8 as the Conclusion to the Second Gospel," 14.

include the following: a potential Elijah motif,<sup>40</sup> a Son of God and enthronement motif,<sup>41</sup> and a “messianic secret” motif.<sup>42</sup> The abrupt break in such thematic patterns suggests that the SE was not the way Mark intended his Gospel to end, and the closure that many of these themes find in the LE demonstrate that vv. 9-20 may not be as non-Markan as some make them out to be.

Nevertheless, many who have continued to support the SE have argued that the abrupt ending at v. 8 was intentional, designed to “draw the reader *into* the story,”<sup>43</sup> to “spur readers to action, [and] to continue the story in their own lives.”<sup>44</sup> Mark does seem to take a more realistic, “boots on the ground” approach to his Gospel and does seem to take special care to make his readers feel as if they are present at these events, watching them unfold. However, it is difficult to see how the abruptness of the SE and the absence of a resurrection account are truly in keeping with Mark’s “realistic” style and are consistent with his motifs of fear and astonishment.<sup>45</sup> Furthermore, if Mark had truly intended to conclude his Gospel with v. 8, his compositional design and literary subtlety were apparently lost on his immediate followers and the later scribal copyists, who found the abruptness of the SE to be dissatisfying, even wrong, as evidenced by scribal additions such as the IE.<sup>46</sup> Such literary arguments notwithstanding, it remains unlikely that the SE was Mark’s intended conclusion to his Gospel.

### Internal Arguments Against the LE

Those who support the authenticity of the LE must still acknowledge that vv. 9-20 does contain certain peculiarities. First of all, the style and vocabulary of the passage exhibit points of difference with the rest of the Gospel. For example, there are seventeen words that are not used elsewhere in the Gospel, in addition to an “un-Markan” use of certain verbs.<sup>47</sup> However, scholars such as Maurice

---

<sup>40</sup> Warren A. Gage, “Jesus as the New Elijah and the Textual Question Regarding the Ending of the Gospel of Mark” quoted in Robinson, “The Long Ending of Mark as Canonical Verity,” 67-68.

<sup>41</sup> Robinson, “The Long Ending of Mark as Canonical Verity,” 68-70.

<sup>42</sup> Croy, *The Mutilation of Mark’s Gospel*, 168 and Parker, “The Endings of Mark’s Gospel,” 146.

<sup>43</sup> Wallace, “Mark 16:8 as the Conclusion to the Second Gospel,” 38.

<sup>44</sup> Croy, *The Mutilation of Mark’s Gospel*, 27.

<sup>45</sup> Lane, *The Gospel of Mark*, 341. See also, Wallace, “Mark 16:8 as the Conclusion to the Second Gospel,” 38.

<sup>46</sup> Elliot, “The Last Twelve Verses of Mark,” 93.

<sup>47</sup> Elliot, himself a thoroughgoing eclectic, provides a detailed treatment of the internal evidence against the originality of the LE. Elliot, “The Text and Language of the Endings to Mark’s Gospel.” See also Parker, “The Endings of Mark’s Gospel,” 141-142 and Wallace, “Mark 16:8 as the Conclusion to the Second Gospel,” 29-31.

Robinson have argued that “at most, the *general* rarity of these particular words is as appropriate to Mark as to any other Gospel.”<sup>48</sup> And Bruce Terry argues that the concentration of rare features seen in the LE is an intentional and legitimate literary device used by Mark to highlight the climax of his gospel, i.e. his resurrection account. Note as well that it is quite difficult to draw concrete conclusions about authenticity on the basis of style and vocabulary alone, particularly when the passage in question is as short as the LE.<sup>49</sup>

But if the LE is indeed original, there is also the difficulty of the disjointed transition between v. 8 and v. 9. For v. 9 does not seem to continue the thought of v. 8—the subject is no longer the fearful women, it is Jesus, and Mary is introduced as if for the first time.<sup>50</sup> But again, this may be an intentional literary device on Mark’s part, intended to further highlight the climactic material of the LE.<sup>51</sup> Terry adds that there are four other instances in Mark’s Gospel where the juncture is similarly awkward (Mk. 2:13, 6:45, 7:31, 8:1).<sup>52</sup> And though the awkward transition is typically cited against the LE, if someone was fabricating a more satisfactory ending to Mark’s Gospel than v. 8, one must wonder why they did not create a smoother transition.

Thus, despite the “linguistic peculiarities”<sup>53</sup> that are present in the LE, they do not convincingly refute Markan authorship. In fact, James Kelhoffer, in his extensive internal analysis of the LE, perceived a striking resemblance between

---

<sup>48</sup> Robinson, “The Long Ending of Mark as Canonical Verity,” 61.

<sup>49</sup> Consider the work of G. Udny Yule, a statistician, who sought to determine whether the book *De Imitatione Christi* was truly written by Thomas à Kempis. He argued that a sample of 10,000 words, similar in length and content, are needed to make a proper comparison. G. Udny Yule, *The Statistical Study of Literary Vocabulary* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1944), quoted in Harold W. Hoehner, *Ephesians: An Exegetical Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2002), 46.

<sup>50</sup> See Parker, “The Endings of Mark’s Gospel,” 138 and Holmes, “To Be Continued...the Many Endings of the Gospel of Mark.”

<sup>51</sup> Terry argues that the initially strange introduction of Mary is a literary device that introduces a previously mentioned/encountered character in the form of a flashback. Terry, “The Style of the Long Ending of Mark,” accessed October 16, 2023, <https://bterry.com/articles/mkendsty.htm>. McDill adds that “what is claimed to be an ‘awkward junction’ may just be a clear demarcation of a new discourse unit.” McDill, “A Textual and Structural Analysis of Mark 16:9-20,” 55.

<sup>52</sup> Terry, “The Style of the Long Ending of Mark.”

<sup>53</sup> Wallace argues that the external evidence made the LE suspicious to begin with, but that these “linguistic peculiarities” decisively tip the scales against the LE. Wallace, “Mark 16:8 as the Conclusion to the Second Gospel,” 31. However, the opposite is the case. The external evidence heavily favors the LE and the explanations for these internal anomalies only confirm that.

vv. 9-20 and the rest of Mark's Gospel.<sup>54</sup> The internal evidence then appears consistent with the external evidence, and both tend to support the authenticity of the LE.

### Theological Issues with the LE of Mark

Other arguments against the authenticity of the LE are more theological in nature. However, as with the previous arguments based on style and vocabulary, arguments based on unique theological concepts or authorial habits should be weighed with caution. For example, it seems difficult to establish with any degree of certainty that Mark could not have written the LE simply because the references to "sign gifts" are more Johannine than Markan, or because "tongues" is nowhere mentioned in the Gospels.<sup>55</sup> If, as James Snapp Jr. argues, the author of LE did not have access to the other Gospels,<sup>56</sup> there seems little reason to think that Mark would have been constrained to follow a rigid outline for his Gospel. These criticisms seem to be based more upon the literary and theological perspective of the critics than upon anything unique to the LE or Mark.

The only theologically difficult issue is the statement about picking up snakes and drinking deadly poison (v. 18), since these find little support in the rest of Scripture and might "belong better in the New Testament apocrypha."<sup>57</sup> The debate is often complicated by the notoriety v. 18 has gained from groups that use the verse to support practices of serpent-handling. Nevertheless, modern misapplications and hermeneutical errors have no bearing on the authenticity of a Scriptural passage.

Besides, the two ideas concerning snakes and poison are not entirely without biblical precedent. Consider Jesus' words as he commissioned the 72 disciples, "Behold, I have given you authority to tread on serpents and scorpions" (Lk. 10:19a), and also the Apostle Paul's apparent immunity from a viper on the island of Malta (Acts 28:1-6).<sup>58</sup> As to the idea of immunity from poison, consider

---

<sup>54</sup> However, note that James Kelhoffer himself still concludes that the LE is not original, being the work of a forger or imitator. James A. Kelhoffer, *Miracle and Mission: The Authentication of Missionaries and Their Message in the Longer Ending of Mark* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2019), 49. Snapp agrees with Kelhoffer on the "striking resemblance" between the LE and the rest of Mark's Gospel; however, Snapp argues that a theory of a "pastiche-maker" creating vv. 9-20 is "absurdly complex." Snapp, *Authentic*, 161.

<sup>55</sup> Elliot cites these examples and other issues in his argument against Markan authorship of the LE. Elliot, "The Last Twelve Verses of Mark," 90-92.

<sup>56</sup> Snapp, *Authentic*, 23.

<sup>57</sup> Elliot, "The Last Twelve Verses of Mark," 90.

<sup>58</sup> Parker, "The Endings of Mark's Gospel," 139. See also Farmer, *The Last Twelve Verses of Mark*, 65-74 and Kelhoffer, *Miracle and Mission*, 340-416.

the story of Elisha and the “death” in the pot of stew (2 Kgs 4:38-41).<sup>59</sup> Furthermore, the early patristic writers apparently had no issue with these ideas; in fact, they referred to the second half of the LE (vv. 15-20) more frequently than they did the first (vv. 9-14).<sup>60</sup> Granted, the resolution of these theological issues does not positively prove Markan authorship; nevertheless, this discussion again reflects the limited nature of internal evidence. Overall, the internal evidence remains consistent with Markan authorship and supports the authenticity of the LE.

### The Historical Development of the Variant Endings

The external and internal evidence has been shown to affirm the authenticity and Markan authorship of the LE. If the LE is indeed the authentic ending to Mark’s Gospel, it becomes necessary to explain how the other variant endings entered the manuscript record. Any theory concerning the historical development of these variant endings must address the objections discussed earlier in regard to the external and internal evidence of the LE’s authenticity. For example, some explanation is needed for the origins of the SE and its appearance in circulation so remarkably early (by the second century). Again, if the LE is original, it is difficult to understand why it would have been deleted from the SE.<sup>61</sup> There are also several stylistic and grammatical peculiarities in the LE, especially when compared to the rest of Mark’s Gospel. The awkward transition between v. 8 and v. 9 is the example most relevant to this discussion. Hypothetical reconstructions of the textual history do not “prove” the authenticity of the LE, but it will greatly strengthen the credibility of this thesis if there is a plausible explanation for how the different endings came about.

Snapp has offered a theory that addresses these issues and supports the authenticity of the LE herein being defended.<sup>62</sup> He argues that sometime after the martyrdoms of Peter and Paul, Mark was in Rome and almost finished writing his Gospel—which was primarily based on the recollections of Peter—when he found himself in danger for his life. He was forced to stop writing and sent his

---

<sup>59</sup> Parker, “The Endings of Mark’s Gospel,” 139. Kelhoffer also draws a similarity to the “water of testing” administered by the priests to solve accusations of adultery (cf. Num. 5:11-31). He also adds, after surveying Jewish, Greco-Roman, and Christian sources, that the evidence “concerning poison drinkers in antiquity before the sixth century is literary rather than historical.” Kelhoffer, *Miracle and Mission*, 467, 470.

<sup>60</sup> See Wallace, “Mark 16:8 as the Conclusion to the Second Gospel,” 13.

<sup>61</sup> See the discussion regarding the theory of a lost original ending in Snapp, *Authentic*, 8.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, especially 178. Black has offered a theory that fits these “criteria” as well, arguing that Mark later added the LE to the rest of the Gospel after Peter’s martyrdom. However, his theory is tightly connected to his answer to the Synoptic problem. See Black, “Mark 16:9-20 as Markan Supplement,” 103-123.

incomplete text to some close colleagues for safe keeping (hence the abrupt incompleteness of the SE). Recognizing that the Gospel was incomplete and unsatisfactory without an adequate conclusion, these colleagues “published” the Gospel and began copying it, only *after* they had added a catechetical text Mark had composed at an earlier date concerning Jesus’ post-resurrection appearances.<sup>63</sup> This explains the stylistic and grammatical peculiarities of the LE as well as the awkward transition between v. 8 and v. 9. Additionally, any copyists who were aware of Mark’s catechetical text (the LE) before it was added to the end of his Gospel could have viewed the LE as valuable, even authoritative, but could have had qualms including it in what they considered strictly the “memoirs of Peter.”<sup>64</sup> Such scribes may have opted to leave that text out of their copies, hence the proliferation of the SE. If such copyists were in the scriptoriums at Egypt, this would explain why the mss supporting the SE are of the Alexandrian text-type.

This is a promising theory, as it both preserves the authenticity of the LE and accounts for the conflicting evidences examined previously. And though Snapp’s theory posits the LE as a later addition by colleagues of Mark, it is equally possible that Mark wrote and later added the LE to the Gospel himself. Dangerous circumstances could have prevented him from finishing his Gospel (as under Snapp’s theory), and he could have finished the Gospel later when circumstances allowed. It is also possible that Mark wrote and added the LE later, after receiving feedback that his original ending at v. 8 was unsatisfactory and confusing. One need not be dogmatic about the specific situation that halted Mark’s writing. Such hypothetical reconstructions of the variant endings’ transmission history are of course mere speculation; however, they are plausible explanations of the evidence that has traditionally undermined the authenticity of the LE.

### **The Long Ending as Authentic and Divinely Inspired**

Now those who hold a rigid and mechanical view of divine inspiration, imagining an author seated at his desk and writing out an entire biblical text in one sitting as dictated by the Holy Spirit, may find themselves uncomfortable with the implications of the theories discussed above. Such an image of divine inspiration is clearly inconsistent with a theory proposing that the inspired author (i.e., Mark) wrote an initially incomplete, yet divinely inspired Gospel, which was then completed at a later date by others, and that a portion of inspired Scripture

---

<sup>63</sup> Farmer argues a similar point. Farmer, *The Last Twelve Verses of Mark*, 107. But it is Snapp who fleshes out this thesis and explores new corroborating details.

<sup>64</sup> Snapp, *Authentic*, 179.

(the LE) existed separately and prior to its inclusion with the rest of the Gospel. The first step to alleviating such concerns is to heed Matthew McDill's advice and distinguish between "questions of originality, authenticity, and canonicity."<sup>65</sup>

Those who adhere to the aforementioned image of divine inspiration (or those who are strict inerrantists) tend to tightly connect "originality" with "divine inspiration," i.e., that whatever was in the very first ms was inspired and anything added later is not. Naturally one does not want to condone freelance additions to the canonical Scriptures, so this sentiment does not entirely miss the mark. However, what it fails to recognize is that the process by which Scripture was composed and finalized was quite complex—it very often involved a multiplicity of authors and editors over an extended period of time.

For example, in the Old Testament, the hand of redactors is often plainly evident in their additions and reorganization of the texts (e.g., Num. 12:3, Deut. 34, the "Psalms of David," and the "Psalms of Hezekiah") that led to the final form of Scriptures that are available and considered inspired today. Or consider the Pentateuch; surely the "original" content, as recorded by Moses, was believed to be divinely inspired long before it took the final form in Hebrew mss today.<sup>66</sup> And surely the words the prophets proclaimed were divinely inspired long before they were written down, as were the words of Jesus Himself, long before they were written down or translated from Aramaic to Greek.<sup>67</sup> Thus, a more nuanced conception of divine inspiration is needed.

Scripture is clear about its divine origins and its status as God-breathed (cf. 2 Pet. 1:20-21 and 2 Tim. 3:16-17).<sup>68</sup> But as indicated by the previous examples of redactors and oral transmission, a Scriptural text was considered divinely inspired and authoritative at each stage of the compositional process—from the first oral or written drafts to the current, final form. Thus, the believers who received and "canonized" these documents were less concerned about the earliest forms of the texts than with the authority (and in the case of the New Testament, *apostolic* authority) that lay behind them. In other words, the early church sought to preserve (and later canonize) those documents that were connected to the apostles, whether written by them or one of their close

---

<sup>65</sup> McDill, "A Textual and Structural Analysis of Mark 16:9-20," 42.

<sup>66</sup> Mosaic authorship is presumed for the sake of simplicity. For a more comprehensive discussion concerning the origins of the Pentateuch, see T. Desmond Alexander, *From Paradise to the Promised Land: An Introduction to the Pentateuch* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2012), 3-110, esp. 109-110.

<sup>67</sup> Paul J. Achtemeier, *The Inspiration of Scripture: Problems and Proposals* (Philadelphia, PA: The Westminster Press, 1980), 155.

<sup>68</sup> For further lists and discussion of the biblical texts concerning Scripture's self-authentication as the divinely inspired Word of God, see Wayne Grudem, "Scripture's Self-attestation and the Problem of Formulating a Doctrine of Scripture," in *Scripture and Truth*, ed. D. A. Carson and J. D. Woodridge (Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 1992), 19-59.



associates; these they considered to be Scripturally authoritative and thus divinely inspired.<sup>69</sup>

Returning to the LE of Mark's Gospel, to say that the LE was composed earlier, added later, and involved more than a single author, does not disprove the divine inspiration of the LE. Now under the hypothetical reconstructions examined above, the LE was not *original*, in the sense that it was in the "first draft." But the LE, along with the rest of Mark's Gospel, was produced in a divinely inspired process that ultimately met the canonical standard of apostolicity.<sup>70</sup> Those who choose to avoid reading or preaching the LE of Mark would do well to consider its approval and inclusion in the canonical Scripture since the time of the earliest church fathers.<sup>71</sup> As argued in this paper, there is insufficient evidence to warrant a departure from this tradition.

### Conclusion

The variant endings in Mark 16 have continued to capture the interest of scholars and readers alike, perhaps due in part to their extensive length. The debates and confusion over which endings are original, if any, have led many to avoid reading or preaching the LE altogether. However, based on the external, internal, and theoretical considerations discussed in this paper, Markan authorship of the LE is the most reasonable conclusion. And as the authentic and divinely inspired ending to Mark's Gospel, the LE rightfully belongs in the canon of Scripture and should continue to guide followers of Jesus Christ.

---

<sup>69</sup> For a brief but helpful discussion of the criteria of canonicity, see William W. Klein, Craig L. Blomberg, Robert L. Hubbard, Jr., *Introduction to Biblical Interpretation*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Academic, 2017), 178-180.

<sup>70</sup> Note that under this model of divine inspiration, the question of Markan authorship becomes less important; and if it was Mark's colleagues who actually wrote the LE in his stead, that still would not affect the status of the LE as authentic and divinely inspired. Consider the words of John Burgon, that "the question is not at all one of *authorship*, but only one of *genuineness*." John Burgon, *The Last Twelve Verses of the Gospel According to S. Mark: Vindicated Against Recent Critical Objectors* (James Parker & Co., 1871).

<sup>71</sup> See McDill, "A Textual and Structural Analysis of Mark 16:9-20," 42 and Achtemeier, *The Inspiration of Scripture*, 118-123.

### Bibliography

- Achtemeier, Paul J. *The Inspiration of Scripture: Problems and Proposals*. Philadelphia, PA: The Westminster Press, 1980.
- Alexander, T. Desmond. *From Paradise to the Promised Land: An Introduction to the Pentateuch*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2012.
- Black, David A. "Mark 16:9-20 as Markan Supplement." In *Perspectives on the Ending of Mark*. Edited by David A. Black. Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 2008.
- Bock, Darrell. "The Ending of Mark: A Response to the Essays." In *Perspectives on the Ending of Mark*. Edited by David A. Black. Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 2008.
- Bock, Darrell. *Mark*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2015.
- Burgon, John. *The Last Twelve Verses of the Gospel According to S. Mark: Vindicated Against Recent Critical Objectors*. James Parker & Co., 1871.
- Cole, Zachary J. "Myths About Copyists." In *Myths and Mistakes in New Testament Textual Criticism*. Edited by Elijah Hixson and Peter J. Gurry. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2019.
- Croy, N. Clayton. *The Mutilation of Mark's Gospel*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2003.
- Donaldson, Amy. "Explicit References to New Testament Variant Readings Among Greek and Latin Church Fathers." Volume 2. PhD diss., University of Notre Dame, 2009.  
<https://curate.nd.edu/downloads/und:5999n298v6v>
- Elliot, J.K. "The Last Twelve Verses of Mark: Original or Not?" In *Perspectives on the Ending of Mark*. Edited by David A. Black. Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 2008.
- . "The Text and Language of the Endings to Mark's Gospel." In *The Language and Style of the Gospel of Mark*. Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, 1993.

- Farmer, William R. *The Last Twelve Verses of Mark*. London: Cambridge University Press, 1974.
- France, R. T. *The Gospel of Mark*. Grand Rapids, MI: W. B. Eerdmans, 2002.
- Gage, Warren A. "Jesus as the New Elijah and the Textual Question Regarding the Ending of the Gospel of Mark." Quoted in Maurice A. Robinson. "The Long Ending of Mark as Canonical Verity." In *Perspectives on the Ending of Mark*. Edited by David A. Black. Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 2008.
- Garland, David E. *Mark*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1996.
- Grudem, Wayne A. "Scripture's Self-attestation and the Problem of Formulating a Doctrine of Scripture." In *Scripture and Truth*. Edited by D. A. Carson and J. D. Woodridge. Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 1992.
- Holmes, Michael W. "To be Continued...the Many Endings of the Gospel of Mark." *BR* vol. 17, no. 4 (2001): 12-23.
- Kelhoffer, James A. *Miracle and Mission: The Authentication of Missionaries and Their Message in the Longer Ending of Mark*. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2019.
- Klein, William W., Craig L. Blomberg, Robert L. Hubbard, Jr. *Introduction to Biblical Interpretation*. Third Edition. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Academic, 2017.
- Knust, Jennifer Wright and Tommy Wasserman. *To Cast the First Stone: The Transmission of a Gospel Story*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2019.
- Lane, William L. *The Gospel of Mark*. Grand Rapids, MI: W. B. Eerdmans, 1974.
- Lunn, Nicholas P. *The Original Ending of Mark: A New Case for the Authenticity of Mark 16:9-20*. Cambridge: James Clarke Company, 2015.
- Magness, J. Lee. *Marking the End: Sense and Absence in the Gospel of Mark*. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2002.

- Marcello, Robert D. "Myths About Orthodox Corruption." In *Myths and Mistakes in New Testament Textual Criticism*. Edited by Elijah Hixson and Peter J. Gurry. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2019.
- McDill, Matthew D. "A Textual and Structural Analysis of Mark 16:9-20." *Filología neotestamentaria* vol. 17, no. 33-34 (2004): 27-44.
- Metzger, Bruce M. *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*. 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1994.
- Metzger, Bruce M. and Bart D. Ehrman. *The Text of the New Testament: Its Transmission, Corruption, and Restoration*. 4<sup>th</sup> Edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.
- Moloney, Francis J. *The Gospel of Mark: A Commentary*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2002.
- Parker, D. C. "The Endings of Mark's Gospel." In *The Living Text of the Gospels*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.
- Robinson, Maurice A. "The Long Ending of Mark as Canonical Verity." In *Perspectives on the Ending of Mark*. Edited by David A. Black. Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 2008.
- Schnabel, Eckhard J. *Mark: An Introduction and Commentary*. Volume 2. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2017.
- Snapp Jr., James. *Authentic: The Case for Mark 16:9-20*. Accessed October 16, 2023. [https://www.academia.edu/12545835/Authentic\\_The\\_Case\\_for\\_Mark\\_16\\_9\\_20](https://www.academia.edu/12545835/Authentic_The_Case_for_Mark_16_9_20).
- Terry, Bruce. "The Style of the Long Ending of Mark." Accessed October 16, 2023. <https://bterry.com/articles/mkendsty.htm>.
- van der Horst, P.W. "Can a Book End with a ΓΑΡ? A Note on Mark XVI.8." *JTS* vol. 23 (1972): 121-124.

Wallace, Daniel B. "Mark 16:8 as the Conclusion to the Second Gospel." In *Perspectives on the Ending of Mark*. Edited by David A. Black. Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 2008.

Yule, G. Udny. *The Statistical Study of Literary Vocabulary*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1944.