

未完待续——马可福音 16:9-20

To Be Continued—Mark 16:9-20

Introduction and Outline

- Scripture Reading: Mark 16:9-20; Acts 1:1-11

Mark 16:9-20 (NASB1995)

9 [Now after He had risen early on the first day of the week, He first appeared to Mary Magdalene, from whom He had cast out seven demons. 10 She went and reported to those who had been with Him, while they were mourning and weeping. 11 When they heard that He was alive and had been seen by her, they refused to believe it. 12 After that, He appeared in a different form to two of them while they were walking along on their way to the country. 13 They went away and reported it to the others, but they did not believe them either. 14 Afterward He appeared to the eleven themselves as they were reclining at the table; and He reproached them for their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they had not believed those who had seen Him after He had risen. 15 And He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation. 16 He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved; but he who has disbelieved shall be condemned. 17 These signs will accompany those who have believed: in My name they will cast out demons, they will speak with new tongues; 18 they will pick up serpents, and if they drink any deadly poison, it will not hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover.” 19 So then, when the Lord Jesus had spoken to them, He was received up into heaven and sat down at the right hand of God. 20 And they went out and preached everywhere, while the Lord worked with them, and confirmed the word by the signs that followed.]

- All textual evidence strongly indicates the Gospel of Mark ends at verse 8, and that the content thereafter was added later. Still, a deep study of how this passage comes about will strengthen our overall confidence in the Bible.

- Outline:

Title: To Be Continued—Mark 16:9-20

1. The Reliable Bible (vv. 9-20 Footnotes)
2. The Perfect Ending (v.8)
3. The Truthful Sequel (vv. 9-20; cf. Act 1:3)
 - 3a. Jesus Appears to Mary (vv. 9-11; cf. John 20:1-18; Luke 24:10-11)
 - 3b. Jesus Appears to Two Disciples (v.12; cf. Luke 24:13-25)
 - 3c. Jesus Rebukes Disciples’ Lack of Faith (vv. 13-14; cf. 24:33-40)
 - 3d. Jesus Announces the Great Commission (vv. 15-16; cf. Matthew 28:18-20)
 - 3e. Jesus Gives Miraculous Witness (vv. 17-18; cf. Act 2:43, 28:3-5)
 - 3f. Jesus Ascends to Heaven (vv.19-20; cf. Luke 24:51-52; Act 1:9-11)

The Reliable Bible (vv. 9-20 Footnotes)

- The New American Standard Bible (NASB) brackets verses 9-20, stating that this section only appears in some later manuscripts. The Chinese New Version also has a similar footnote after verse 8, saying, "Some manuscripts do not have verses 9 to 20." Then, another footnote after verse 20 says, "A few manuscripts have a shorter ending after verse 8; while other manuscripts place it after verse 20."

【Explanation】 What this all means, essentially, is that there are all kinds of different versions to Mark's ending: some have a longer ending; some have a shorter one; and the shorter ending is placed in different places. However, the earliest manuscripts end at verse 8 and have no additional ending at all.

【Significance】 The existence of so many different manuscripts actually serves as historical evidence, demonstrating that the Bible as a whole is extremely accurate and reliable. Scholars of classical literature unanimously agree that, among all ancient texts, the Bible has far more manuscripts and is more reliable than any other literature. God has preserved for us thousands of ancient manuscripts as witnesses, and these manuscripts are perfectly consistent in the vast majority of their content.

【Reflection】 Why are there so many manuscripts of the Bible? **Because believers then had an intense love for God's Word.** There was no printing technology back then, so if you wanted to own a copy of God's Word, you had to copy it by hand yourself. If you wanted your friends or family to own it too, you would hand copy additional copies. These manuscripts are a testimony to how deeply Christians have loved God's Word from the very beginning. It is through these Bible-loving saints that God preserved His testimony generation after generation, so that we can still read His Word today. Pretty exciting, isn't it?

【Question】 So, why does Mark 16:9–20 exist? Because verse 8 seems like an incomplete ending, and scribes wanted to “complete” it... But is the Spirit-inspired ending really imperfect? Think about it.

The Perfect Ending (v.8)

- “...trembling and astonishment had gripped them; and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.” This is the true ending of Mark.

One scholar says, *“the literary power of ending the Gospel so abruptly [is] that the readers are now drawn into the story itself. ... The readers must now ask themselves, ‘What will I do with Jesus?’”*

【Application】 The women reacted with fear and trembling when they saw the empty tomb—so how should I respond to the living Lord? Mark is inviting us to **complete the story with our own lives.**

【Analysis】 Fear, amazement, and wonder are recurring themes throughout the Gospel of Mark (see 1:22, 27; 2:12; 4:41; 5:15, 33, 42; 6:51; 9:15, 32; 10:24, 32; 11:18; 12:17; 15:5; 16:5, 8). This has always been the response when people had an encounter with Jesus. That Mark ends with the word “afraid” is intentional—it invites us to come before the Lord Jesus with the same reverent awe.

【Goal】 What this reverential fear produces is a life of **humility and obedience to the Lord.** Without this fear, a shallow understanding of the gospel will only produce a prideful, self-centered life. A life that humbly submits to the Lord understands that Jesus saved us so we may be rid of our selfish desires in order to serve Him with our whole lives. In contrast, a prideful “self-serving” Christian life assumes Jesus saved us just so we may enjoy health, wealth, and prosperity. There’s a world of difference between the two.

The Truthful Sequel (vv. 9-20; cf. Act 1:3)

- 【Source of Content】 The scribes essentially created a “stir-fry mix” here, blending together materials from the endings of the other three Gospels and the beginning of Acts. They tried to summarize as many events as possible using the fewest words—recounting the historical events where Jesus appeared to His disciples again and again between His resurrection and ascension.
- 【Verses 9-11】 This is drawn from John 20:1–18, along with an identifier for Mary Magdalene from Luke 8:2.

【Key Point】 The risen Lord Jesus made His first appearance to a woman who had once been possessed by seven demons—someone from the lowest social class and with whom no one wants to associate.

- 【Verses 12】 This verse draws from Luke 24:13-35

【Key Point】 Jesus appeared to two disciples on the road to Emmaus. He first opened the Scriptures to them, and as they began to understand, their hearts burned within them. Only then did Jesus allow them to recognize Him.

- 【Verses 13–14】 These verses are based on Luke 24:33–40.

【Key Point】 The disciples did not believe the testimony about Jesus’ resurrection, and Jesus rebuked them for their lack of faith. Yet even as He rebuked them, He continued to appear to them, allowing them to touch Him to strengthen their faith.

- 【Verses 15 -16】 These verses are drawn from Matthew 28:18–20.

【Key Point】 Jesus announced the Great Commission to all His disciples. One essential element of the Great Commission is baptism, which is why the early believers summarized the

message here as “Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved.” That’s how important baptism is to them.

- 【Verses 17-18】 Content comes from Acts 2:43; 28:3–5.

【Key Point】 “These signs will accompany those who have believed” is not a general promise for all believers, but a special kind of Gospel witness God gave to the early church. Miracles confirmed the identity of true apostles (2 Corinthians 12:12; Hebrews 2:4), and thereby confirmed the gospel message they preached. The reference to “pick up serpents” alludes to an incidence of Paul; “if they drink any deadly poison, it will not hurt them” is likely John’s experience. Paul and John were both apostles—this promise does not apply to believers today.

- 【Verses 19-20】 These verses are drawn from Luke 24:51–52 and Acts 1:9–11.

【Key Point】 Jesus ascended into heaven on a cloud from the Mount of Olives. The disciples then began spreading the gospel far and wide—a mission that continues to this day. The Lord has always “worked with them,” as He still does today.

Summary

Back to the title: To Be Continued. Though our study of Mark is now over, God’s redemptive work in human history is not over—and we are personally taking part in this divine mission. As we devote ourselves to this work that lasts into eternity, we are reminded that the same Jesus who was taken up into heaven will one day return in the same way to take us home to be with Him.