

THE END
MARK 16:9-20 / FEB. 21, 2018 / WED

I. FIRST, MARK'S ENDING IS SUSPICIOUS.

- A. Mark 16:8 is thought by most serious scholars to be the actual end of Mark—Mark 16:8. But there are questions about this ending.
1. For one thing the word "afraid" isn't a very positive word to end on.
 2. For another thing, where did the other ending come from (16:9-20),
- B. There are four main theories about the end of Mark.
1. One, that 16:8 is in fact the way Mark intended to end his book even though it seems abrupt.
 2. Two, the original ending has been lost somehow.
 3. Three, perhaps Mark was somehow interrupted and not able to finish his gospel.
 4. Four, perhaps 16:9-20 is the actual ending that Mark wrote. There are at least two problems with this theory.
 - a. First, these verses are not found in the earliest and best Greek manuscripts of Mark's gospel.
 - b. Second, two notable early church pastors believed it was not the original ending—Eusebius and Jerome.
- C. Regardless of what we make of 16:9-20, most of these verses are found elsewhere in either the other gospels or the book of Acts.
1. Verses 9-11 about Jesus' appearance to Mary Magdalene are also found in Luke 24 or John 20.
 2. Verses 12-13 about Jesus' appearance to two travelers (On Road to Emmaus) is found in Luke 24.
 3. Verses 14-18 about Jesus' appearance to the eleven disciples is found in Matt. 28 and Luke 24.
 4. Verses 19-20 about Jesus' ascension is found in Acts 1.
 5. Verse 18 about picking up snakes, not drinking poison may be referred to in Acts 28:2-6.

Mark 16:18

18 they will pick up snakes with their hands; and when they drink deadly poison, it will not hurt them at all; they will place their hands on sick people, and they will get well.”

Acts 28:2-6

2 The islanders showed us unusual kindness. They built a fire and welcomed us all because it was raining and cold. 3 Paul gathered a pile of brushwood and, as he put it on the fire, a viper, driven out by the heat, fastened itself on his hand. 4 When the islanders saw the snake hanging from his hand, they said to each other, “This man must be a murderer; for though he escaped from the sea, the goddess Justice has not allowed him to live.” 5 But Paul shook the snake off into the fire and suffered no ill effects. 6 The people expected him to swell up or suddenly fall dead; but after waiting a long time and seeing nothing unusual happen to him, they changed their minds and said he was a god.

II. THE NEW AMERICAN COMMENTARY HAS A GOOD CONCLUSION ON MARK’S ENDING (P. 272)