

THE GOSPEL OF MARK

fully 'parsed' and rhetorically analysed

**a Literal English Translation
to display word order and syntax**

along with the Greek

Introduction:

My analysis of the Gospel of Mark, as indeed of all the New Testament Books, employs both Rhetorical Analysis and 'Parsing'. It takes account of the fact that any rhetor was writing primarily to facilitate his reader/reciter in carrying out his role. The writer of the first century was duty bound to follow conventions that his reader/reciter would understand. The focus of Rhetorical Analysis is, therefore, on the writing skills that the rhetor employed, his writing style and his choice of book structure. 'Parsing', on the other hand, is the skill that the first century reader needed. He had to be able to resolve a whole text (of columns of letters, from the first?) into its component parts. It was not that he had to resolve, say, a 'sentence' into its component parts and describe the parts in terms of their grammar. Rather, the grammar of any text enabled him to define the book's clauses, sentences and paragraphs, which, when once defined, helped him to understand the relationships between the parts themselves and the functions of these parts within the whole text.

To discern the Writing Style and Structure of any New Testament Book is the essential, first step in establishing its Leading Idea. That we have, today, all manner of views on the Leading Ideas of all the New Testament Books is itself testimony to New Testament Scholarship's erstwhile lack of interest in the writing discipline of the first centuries BC and AD. It may be, however, that New Testament Scholarship will yet develop an appropriate discipline for reading its Books!

Writing Style:

With the opening piece of the Gospel, the rhetor informs his reader/reciter of the writing rhythm that he will be encountering throughout his reading of the text. This opening piece reads:

<i>Ἀρχὴ</i>	A	
<i>τοῦ εὐαγγελίου</i>	B	
<i>Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ</i>	B'	('B prime')

I designate the three lines: A, B and B', in the manner that the contents suggest. A is the introductory piece; B is the first development and B' is the second, paralleling and concluding development. The piece, therefore, is a three part whole. (It is indeed this rhythm of pieces that all the New Testament Books, and a number of the Old Testament Books, employ.)

The Greek text of Mark's Gospel, in this document, then, has been fully 'parsed'. Whilst it may be that this has not been done for many centuries (possibly seventeen or more?), it was something that each first century reader/reciter would have done as a matter of course.

When one sees for the first time, that this rhythm of pieces works at between five and seven literary levels simultaneously throughout the whole of the book, it is a cause for admiration and amazement. But for the first century reader, it would have been commonplace.

What this 'parsing' allows *is* amazing, when seen for the first time. It gives us sight of all the pieces and the relationships between the pieces within the whole Gospel. Because of 'parsing' what this rhetor has written, we can now define accurately all the beginnings and endings of all the pieces which the rhetor created. All editions of the Bible, indeed, could now demonstrate no variation in their presentations of breaks in the text. All commentaries, also, could now be based on the same reading of the text, the rhetor's intended reading!

And this is my first point. Given the discovery of this method of analysis we can get very near in our day to establishing the original text!

The establishing of the book's writing style brings clarity to the reading of the rhetor's presentation.

The rhetor of Mark's Gospel demonstrates a disciplined approach too in regard to the structuring of his work.

The Structure of the Book:

For twenty-five years or so now, I have been seeing the evidence which leads me to the conclusion that the structure of Mark's Gospel is that of Four Series of Seven Days, with both Prologue *and* Epilogue. The material here represents further development of my doctoral thesis, ***The Markan Matrix***, published in 1999, and its summary in ***New Testament: New Testimony to the skills of the writers and first readers***, published in June 2006.

What immediately follows is taken from the latter.

MARK'S GOSPEL

For both Jews and Gentiles, a drama: Jesus completed the Old Covenant and established the New.

Title: 1.1

Prologue: 1.2-20 (ABB')

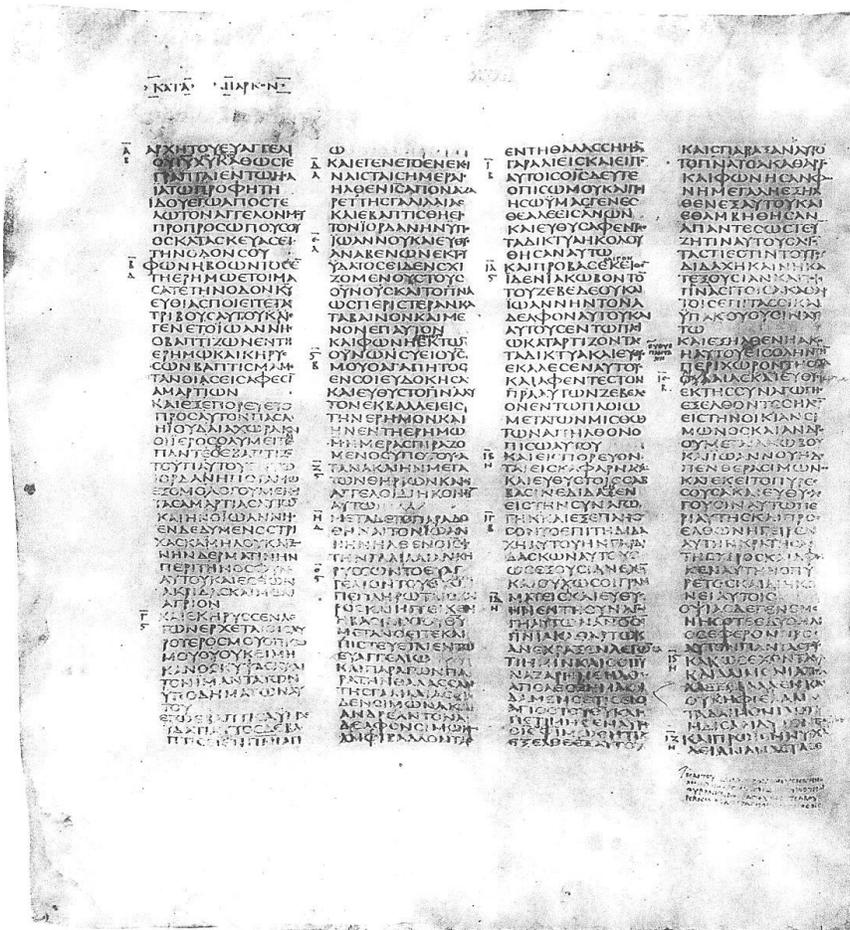
	Old Covenant being fulfilled...				Old.../New...	New Covenant being established			
	A	B	B'	X		A	B	B'	
	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4		Day 5	Day 6	Day 7	
Series:									
1: Jesus' First Days of Mission in Galilee and by its Sea (172 verses)	1.21-38 AA'	1.39-45 AA'	2.1-22 AA'	2.23-3.6 AA'		3.7-4.41 AA':AA'	5.1-20 AA'	5.21-43 ABB'	A
2: Days of Increase in Jesus' Mission (119 verses)	6.1-29 AA'	6.30-52 ABB'	6.53-7.23 ABB'	7.24-30 abb'		7.31-37 abb'	8.1-21 AA'	8.22-26 abb'	B
3: The Days of Jesus' Journeying to the Cross and Glory (112 verses)	8.27-9.1 ABB'	9.2-32 ABB'	9.33-50 ABB'	10.1-16 ABB'		10.17-31 ABB'	32-45 ABB'	46-52 abb'	B'
4: Jesus' Jerusalem Days, Passion and Resurrection (239 verses)	11.1-11 AA'	11.12-19 abb'	11.20-13.37 ABB'	14.1-11 abb'		14.12-72 ABB'	15.1-47 AA'	16.1-8 abb'	A'

Epilogue: 16.9-16,19,20a (ABB')

Where A is introductory, B is the first development and B' is the second and completing development of a three-part progression; where X indicates a central turning point; and where, in the Series themselves, 'A' signifies the presence of a lower-level abb' formation (likewise also a, B, b, B' & b').

Mark demonstrates a numerical/numerological interest in a 'four times seven' scheme which may be interpreted as: 'Jesus fulfils God's universal purposes'.

A reduced image of the opening folio of Mark's Gospel, Codex Sinaiticus (AD331?)



In this sample above, of an ancient manuscript, we can see how the Greek (capital) letters are in juxtaposition, without gaps between words, and how a space appears at the end of a line, followed, in the line below, by an *edentation* (the opposite of an indentation). We can be certain that this was an early method for signifying a break in the text, the beginning of a new paragraph or section of the book. Further, we may properly judge that these signifiers of sectional structure were fully present in the *exemplar*, the writer's original manuscript, but that these were omitted (*thoughtlessly*) or changed (*with much thought* – because of a doubt over the earlier version(s)) in the much repeated long-hand copying of the text, firstly from the original, subsequently from copies of the original and then from copies of copies.



MARK'S GOSPEL

Mark's Gospel is to be viewed as a matrix, which reads both vertically and horizontally:

Vertically, for example:

In the two middle series, B and B' (in the artwork: C1 and C1'):

compare the first days of each: for Jesus' identity: in both, he is John the Baptist, Elijah, a prophet;

compare the last days of each: for stories of healings of blind people (the only two in the Gospel);

compare the middle days: for common openings: 'from there', rising up', 'into the region'.

In the two outer series, A and A' (in the artwork: 1 and 1'):

compare the first days of each: Jesus enters a city and the principal place of Jewish worship there;

compare the last days of each: these are stories of resurrection (the only two in the Gospel);

compare the middle days: they tell of plots against Jesus (the first and the last in the Gospel).

Horizontally, for example:

In the first Days of each three day sub-series (Days 1 and 5):

in the **First Series** we read about healings and casting out of demons (the demons are to be quiet);

in the **Last Series** we read about 'two' disciples being sent by Jesus who foresees things.

In the second Days of each sub-series (Days 2 and 6):

in the **First Series** we read about individual men to whom Jesus ministered;

in the **Second** we read about desert banquets, of 5,000 in the first and 4,000 in the second;

in the **Third** we read about 'two' with Jesus in glory and, in turn, 'two' wishing to be with him in glory;

in the **Fourth** we read about the clearing of the temple of the old means of sacrifice and, in turn, about the new means of our being made right with God.

There are many more correspondences, of course, than these, of a straightforward Series to Series, Day to Day kind.

There are also *inclusios* in regard to the first and last Days of Series (e.g. the First Series: the healings of individual women and raisings from beds).

There are also *chiastic* correspondences (e.g. First Series Fifth Day and Last Series Third Day, and also First Series Third Day and Last Series Fifth Day: for teaching content; see also First Day and Last Day for references to 'sunset' in the former and 'sunrise' in the latter).

THE GOSPEL OF MARK:

THE ORIGINAL TITLE: Mark 1.1:

Beginning
of the (*tou*) Gospel (*euangeliou*)
of Jesus (*-ou*) Christ (*-ou*).

THE PROLOGUE: Mark 1. 2-20:

As it has been written

A

in Isaiah
the prophet,
'Behold! (*Idou*)
I send my (*-ou*) messenger before your (*-ou*) face (*-ou*),
who will prepare your way (*-ou*).
A voice of one crying in the desert,
"Prepare the way of the Lord (*-ou*),
make straight the paths of him (*-ou*)."

There came to pass John,
the one baptizing in the desert,
and preaching a baptism of repentance
for the forgiveness of sins.

And went out to him
all the Judaeen country
and all the Jerusalemites.
And they were baptized by him
in the Jordan river,
confessing their sins.

And there was John,
clothed in camel hairs,
and a leather belt
around his waist,
and eating
locusts
and wild honey.

And he preached,
saying,
'There comes one stronger than me,
after me,
Of whom I am not fit,
kneeling,
to loosen the thong of his sandals:
I baptized you in water;
but he will baptize you in Holy Spirit.'

And it came to pass in those days,

came Jesus

from Nazareth

in Galilee,

and he was baptized

in the Jordan

by John.

And immediately,

coming up

out of the water,

he saw the heavens being opened,

and the Spirit

as a dove coming down into him,

and there was a voice out of the heavens,

‘You are my beloved Son,

in you I have been well pleased.’

And immediately,

the Spirit threw him out

into the desert.

And he was in the desert

forty days,

tempted by Satan.

And he was with the wild animals,

and the angels ministered to him.

B

And after the imprisonment of John

B'

came Jesus
into Galilee,

preaching the Gospel of God
and saying,

‘The time has been fulfilled
and the kingdom of God has drawn near.

Repent

and believe
in the Gospel.’

And passing along, beside the Sea of Galilee,

he saw Simon

and Andrew,

the brother of Simon,

casting into the sea,

for they were fishermen.

And he said to them, Jesus,

‘Come after me,

and I will make you to become fishers of men.’

And immediately,

leaving the nets,

they followed him.

And going forward a little,

he saw James,

the son of Zebedee,

and John,

his brother,

and they

in the boat

mending the nets.

And immediately,

he called them.

And leaving their father

Zebedee

in the boat,

with the hired servants,

they went away,

after him.

SERIES ONE: Mark 1.21-5.43:
JESUS' FIRST DAYS OF MISSION
CONFINED TO GALILEE AND THE REGION OF ITS SEA:

DAY ONE: Mark 1.21-38:

And they come to Capernaum.

A

And immediately on the Sabbath,
entering into the synagogue,
he taught.

And they were amazed at his teaching,
for he was teaching them as having authority,
and not as the scribes.

And immediately,
there was in their synagogue
a man with an unclean spirit.

And he cried out
saying,
'What to us
and to you,
Jesus of Nazareth?
Have you come to destroy us?
I know who you are:
the holy one of God.'

And Jesus scolded him,
saying,
'Be quiet.
and come out of him.'

And the unclean spirit throwing him,
and shouting loudly,
came out of him.

And all were astonished,
so that they debated among themselves,
saying,
'What is this?
A new teaching with authority,
and he commands the unclean spirits,
and they obey him.'

And news went out about him,
immediately everywhere,
into all the environs of Galilee.

And immediately

A'

out of the synagogue
going forth,

they came to the house of Simon and Andrew,
with James and John.

Now Simon's mother-in-law was laid low,
fever-stricken,
and immediately they ask him about her.

And approaching,
he raised her up,
taking her hand,
and the fever left her,
and she served them.

And as evening came,

when the sun set,
they bring to him
all the sick
and the demon-possessed,
and there was all the city
gathered
at the door.

And he healed many
who were ill
with various diseases.

And he expelled many demons,
and he did not allow the demons to speak,
because they knew him.

And very early in the night,

getting up,
he left there,

and he went away to a desert place,
and there he prayed.

And hunted him down,
Simon
and the ones with him.

And they found him.

And they say to him,
'Everyone is looking for you.'

And he says to them,
'Let us go elsewhere,
into neighbouring towns,
in order that I may preach there also.
For this purpose I came.'

DAY TWO: Mark 1.39-45:

And he went,

A

preaching
in their synagogues
in all of Galilee,
and casting out demons.

And there comes to him a leper,
beseeching him,
and falling on his knees,
and saying to him,
'If you are willing,
you are able
to cleanse me.'

And being full of compassion,
stretching out his hand,
he touched him,
and he says to him,
'I am willing,
be cleansed.'

And immediately,
the leprosy left him,
and he was cleansed.

And strictly warning him,

A'

immediately
he cast him away.

And he says to him.....