

To Be Continued... The Many Endings of the Gospel of Mark

By [Michael W. Holmes](#) *Bible Review* 17:4, August 2001

Francis Ford Coppola filmed two endings for *Apocalypse Now*, and John Fowles's *The French Lieutenant's Woman* offers a choice of endings. But nothing quite matches the last chapter of the Gospel of Mark for variety. At least nine versions of the ending of Mark can be found among the 1,700 surviving ancient Greek manuscripts and early translations of the gospel.

The differences are not insubstantial. The shortest form ends with the three women at the tomb. The stone is rolled back, the body is gone. An angelic figure informs the women that Jesus has been raised from the dead, but Jesus himself is never seen again. The women, the final verse ([Mark 16:8](#)) of this short form records, are so frightened they run away and don't tell anyone what they have seen—or failed to see.

In the longest versions of Mark's ending, by contrast, the resurrected Jesus shows himself to Mary Magdalene, to two disciples on the road and then to the 11 disciples in Jerusalem. Jesus commands his followers to proclaim "the good news to the whole creation" before he is "taken up into heaven" and seated "at the right hand of God." In the conclusion to this long form, which includes [Mark 16:9–20](#), we learn that the 11 did as Jesus bid them: "They went out and proclaimed the good news everywhere, while the Lord worked with them and confirmed the message by the signs that accompanied it."

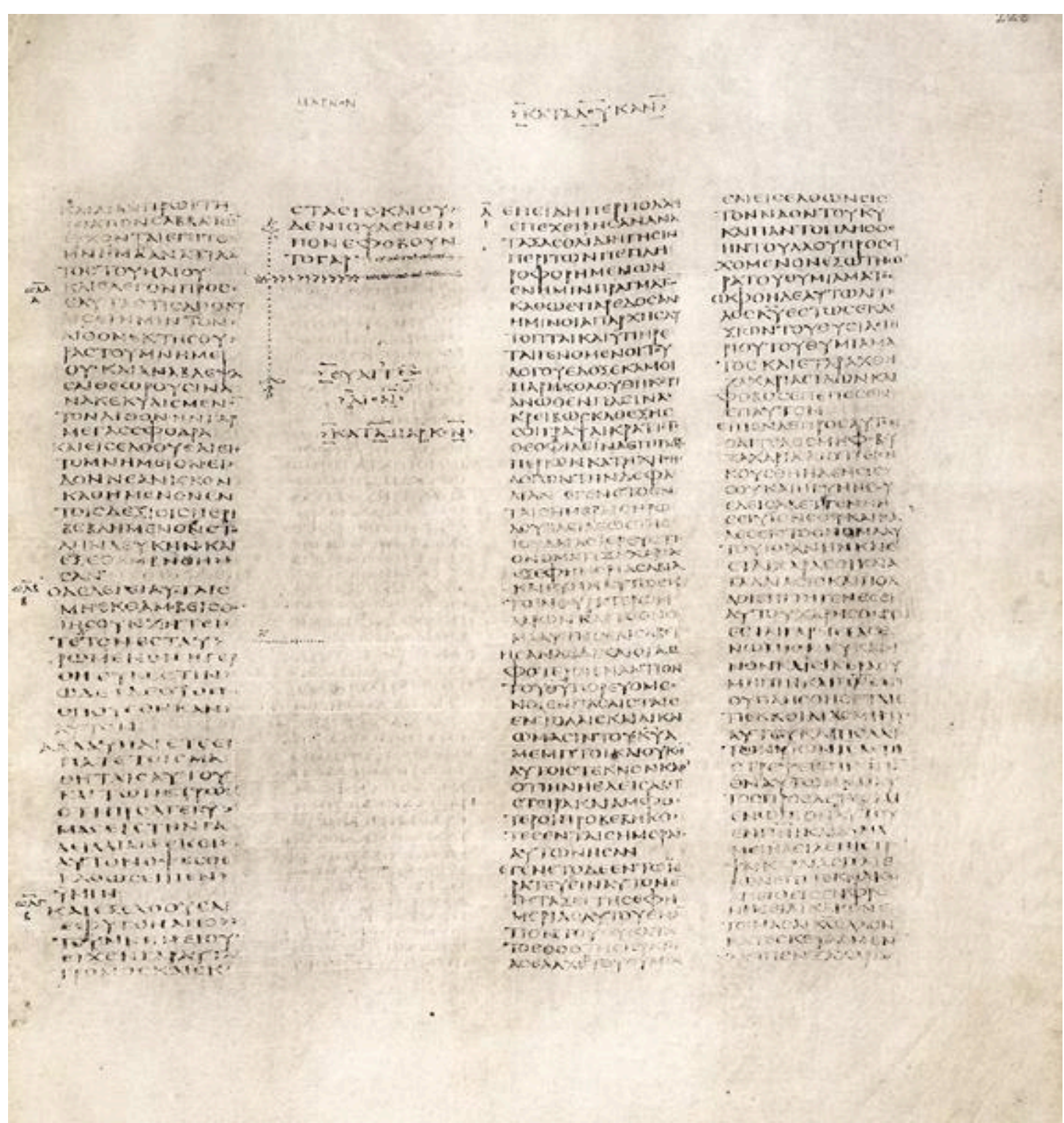
The difference is critical—to Bible scholars trying to determine which ending is the earliest, to biographers mapping the course of Jesus' life, to historians trying to trace how it came to be recorded, to theologians contemplating Jesus' resurrection, and to curious readers who simply want to know how the story ends.

To determine, if possible, which ending is the original, let's survey all nine versions and the earliest sources in which they are found.

Form 1 of Mark's ending, like all nine forms, begins with the opening lines of [Mark 16](#), the gospel's final chapter.^a The stage is set, however, in [Mark 15](#): It is early evening after the crucifixion but before sundown, when the Sabbath will begin. Joseph of Arimathea asks Pilate for Jesus' body. Joseph wraps the corpse in a linen shroud and lays it out in a rock-hewn tomb. He then seals the tomb by rolling a stone in front of the entryway.^b Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James (previously identified in [15:40](#) as the mother of James and Joses) witness the burial. Thus concludes chapter [15](#).

Form 1 opens with [Mark 16:1](#). It is now two mornings later (the third day^c), and the Sabbath has ended. Three of Jesus' followers—Mary Magdalene,^d Mary the mother of James, and Salome—arrive at the tomb, carrying spices to anoint Jesus' body. Instead of a corpse, however, they find an angelic young man in a white robe seated in the tomb:

¹When the sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, so that they might go and anoint him. ²And very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen, they went to the tomb. ³They had been saying to one another, "Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance to the tomb?" ⁴When they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had already been rolled back.



⁵As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man, dressed in a white robe, sitting on the right side; and they were alarmed. ⁶But he said to them, "Do not be alarmed; you are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has been raised; he is not here. Look, there is the place they laid him. ⁷But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him, just as he told you."

⁸And going out they fled from the tomb, for terror and amazement had seized them; and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.

Mark 16:1–8

Form 1 ends here, with the three frightened women fleeing the scene.

This short form is found in two of the oldest (fourth century), most complete and most famous Greek biblical manuscripts:⁸ Codex Sinaiticus, which was discovered by the 19th-century German adventurer and scholar Constantin von Tischendorf in St. Catherine’s Monastery at the foot of Mt. Sinai (for which it is named), and which is now in the British Library, and Codex Vaticanus, in the Vatican Library.¹

The only other Greek witness with exactly this form of chapter 16 is a 12th-century copy of Matthew and Mark.² We also have copies of Syriac, Sahidic Coptic and Armenian translations dating as early as the fourth century that preserve this short form.^f This short ending was well known in the days of the early church historian Eusebius of Caesarea (c. 260–340). Eusebius wrote:

The accurate copies conclude the story according to Mark in the words of the young man seen by the women and saying to them, “Do not be afraid. You seek Jesus...for they were afraid.” For the end is here in nearly all the copies of Mark.³

Eusebius’s report is echoed some decades later by Jerome (c. 342–420), who based his Latin translation of the New Testament on the oldest Greek texts known at the time. Speaking of Mark 16:9–20 (the final verses that are not included in the shortest form), he writes that this section “is found in only a few copies of the Gospel—almost all the Greek copies being without this final passage.”⁴

Form 2 is an intermediate form, consisting of Mark 16:1–8 plus two sentences:

And all that had been commanded them they told briefly to those around Peter. And afterward Jesus himself sent out through them, from east to west, the sacred and imperishable proclamation of eternal salvation.

This intermediate ending is found only in Codex Bobbiensis, an Old Latin manuscript that was written in the late fourth or early fifth century but that preserves a text whose roots go back at least to the early third century. We know this because the text is very similar to that cited by Cyprian, bishop of Carthage (d. 258), in his writings.

Form 3 is the long form. There are actually two variants of this form, which we’ll call 3a and 3b. *Form 3a* consists of chapter 16:1–8 (ending with the women fleeing) plus verses 9–20, which read in full:

⁹Now after he rose early on the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, from whom he had cast out seven demons. ¹⁰She went out and told those who had been with him, while they were mourning and weeping. ¹¹But when they heard that he was alive and had been seen by her, they would not believe it.

¹²After this he appeared in another form to two of them, as they were walking into the country. ¹³And they went back and told the rest, but they did not believe them.

¹⁴Later he appeared to the eleven themselves as they were sitting at the table; and he upbraided them for their lack of faith and stubbornness, because they had not believed those who saw him after he had risen. ¹⁵And he said to them, “Go into all the world and proclaim the good news to the whole creation. ¹⁶The one who believes and is baptized will be saved; but the one who does not believe will be condemned. ¹⁷And these signs will accompany those who believe: by using my name they will cast out demons; they will speak in new tongues; ¹⁸they will pick up snakes in their hands, and if they drink any deadly thing, it will not hurt them; they will lay their hands on the sick, and they will recover.”

¹⁹So then the Lord Jesus, after he had spoken to them, was taken up into heaven and sat down at the right hand of God. ²⁰And they went out and proclaimed the good news everywhere, while the Lord worked with them and confirmed the message by the signs that accompanied it.

Mark 16:9–20

This long form is found in more than 1,600 Greek manuscripts (or almost 95 percent of all the manuscripts we have). Some date to the late fourth or early fifth century. These include (in approximate chronological order) manuscripts known as Codex Bezae, recognized for its unique readings (named for Calvin’s successor at Geneva, Theodore Beza, who once owned the manuscript); Codex Alexandrinus (now in the British Library); and Codex Ephraemi Syri rescriptus (a palimpsest decoded by Tischendorf. The original Greek text was erased in the 12th century and the vellum pages were then reused to copy the sermons of the fourth-century Syrian patriarch Ephraim—thus the description “rescriptus,” i.e., “rewritten”).

These verses are also found in a wide range of early translations. They include most manuscripts of the Old Latin; the Vulgate (Jerome’s Latin translation); the Syriac translations known as the Curetonian (named for a 19th-century editor), the Peshitta (which was eventually accepted as the standard version of the New Testament in Syriac) and the Harklean (a revision made by Thomas of Harkel, bishop of Mabbug, Syria, in 616 of an earlier Syriac version); and the Bohairic Coptic translation.

This long version was known among the early church fathers. The Christian apologist Justin Martyr (d. c. 165) probably knew the longer ending;⁵ the church father Irenaeus, who quotes [Mark 16:19](#) in his work *Against Heresies* (written c. 175), certainly did.⁶ The apologist Tatian apparently cited it in his *Diatessaron*, a late-second-century harmony of the Four Gospels, and the church father Hippolytus (c. 170–236) quotes [16:17–18](#). Then there is the observation of Eusebius (also echoed by Jerome), who, after stating that “nearly all the copies of Mark” ended at [16:8](#), goes on to say: “What follows [that is, verses [9–20](#)] is found but seldom, in some copies but by no means in all.”

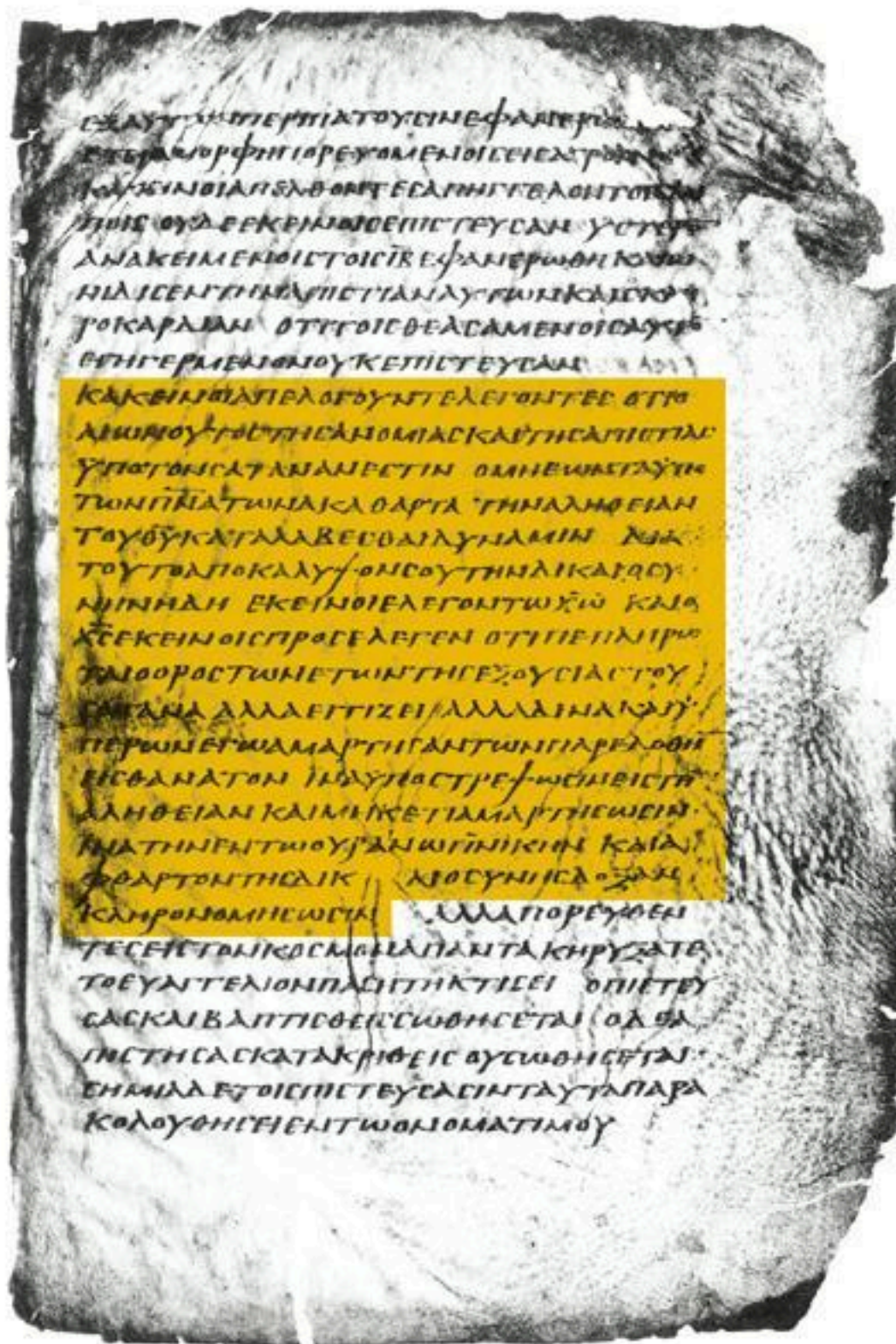
Form 3b occurs in several manuscripts that include the long form ([Mark 16:1–20](#)) but indicate (in different ways) that this longer ending might not be original. In five medieval manuscripts, the long form is accompanied by asterisks or *obeli* (the - symbol), marks traditionally used by ancient scholars to indicate suspect or spurious material. In 12 manuscripts, the long form is accompanied by a critical note. One typical note reads: “In some copies the evangelist finished here [that is, [Mark 16:8](#)]⁷—which is also as far as Eusebius the student of Pamphilius canonized; but in many copies this also [[16:9–20](#)] is in circulation.”

Form 4 is an expanded version of the long form. It consists of [Mark 16:1–20](#), with an additional passage inserted after verse [14](#). In [Mark 16:14](#), Jesus upbraids the 11 for failing to believe those who

said they had seen him resurrected. In the inserted passage, the disciples make excuses for themselves:

And they excused themselves, saying, “This age of lawlessness and unbelief is under Satan, who does not allow the truth and power of God to prevail over the unclean things of the spirits. Therefore reveal your righteousness now”—thus they spoke to Christ. And Christ replied to them, “The term of years of Satan’s power has been fulfilled, but other terrible things draw near. And for those who have sinned I was handed over to death, that they may return to the truth and sin no more, that they may inherit the spiritual and imperishable glory of righteousness that is in heaven.”

This addition is found today in only a single, fourth- or early-fifth-century manuscript, Codex Washingtonianus, now housed in the Freer Gallery of Art at the Smithsonian. (The additional verses are often called the “Freer Logion,” *logion* meaning “saying.”)



Although Codex Washingtonianus did not become known until the early part of the 20th century, a shorter version of its distinctive addition had long been known, preserved in a comment by Jerome:

In some exemplars and especially in Greek manuscripts of Mark, at the end of his gospel, there is written: Afterwards when the eleven had sat down to a meal, Jesus appeared to them and rebuked their unbelief and hardness of heart because they had not believed those who had seen him after his resurrection. And they made excuses, saying, "This age of lawlessness and unbelief is under Satan,

who does not allow the truth and power of God to be grasped by unclean spirits. Therefore reveal your righteousness now.”^z

Our final form, *Form 5*, is a combination form that appears in several manuscripts in four variations, which is how we get a total of nine different versions of Mark. The basic elements of Form 5 are [Mark 16:1–8](#), followed by the intermediate ending of Form 2 (“And all that had been commanded them they told briefly to those around Peter...”), plus verses [9–20](#) (this constitutes Form 5a). The variant versions of Form 5 also include critical notes commenting on these passages.

One variant (Form 5b), for example, adds two critical notes.^a The first note introduces the intermediate ending; it reads: “This also is in circulation.” The second critical note follows the intermediate ending and introduces verse [9](#). It reads: “This also is in circulation after ‘For they were afraid’”—a reference to verse [8](#), in which the frightened women flee the tomb. In other words, the scribe is telling us that in some copies of Mark’s gospel, the intermediate ending follows verse [8](#); in others, verses [9–20](#) immediately follow verse [8](#). The other variants (Forms 5c–d) attach a similar critical note to either the intermediate ending or verses [9–20](#) (but not both). These critical notes found in Form 5 indicate a continuing awareness of the multiple endings of the Gospel of Mark.

The remarkable diversity among the ancient manuscripts and translations is also reflected in modern English translations. Form 3a (the long form) is transmitted by the King James version (1611), while Form 3b (the long form with asterisks or notes) is represented by the Revised Version of 1881, the Jerusalem Bible (1966) and the New King James Version (1982). The closest representation of Form 1 (the short form) is probably the original Revised Standard Version (1946): Although it does provide the reader with both the intermediate and long endings, it prints them as a footnote in type that is both smaller and italicized, thus signaling that the gospel ends at [16:8](#). Many modern translations—the New Revised Standard Version (1989), the New Living Translation (1996), the Revised English Bible (1989), the New American Bible (rev. 1986), the Contemporary English Version (1995) and the New American Standard Bible (updated 1995)—offer variations of Form 5, the combination form, typically printing [16:1–8](#), the intermediate ending, [16:9–20](#), and various critical notes.

In short, whether examining ancient manuscripts or consulting modern English translations, a reader of the Gospel of Mark encounters an astonishing number of alternative endings for the gospel. Which of these alternatives—if any—comes closest to the original? How did the Gospel of Mark really end?

To answer these questions, scholars make use of textual criticism—the science and art of identifying and restoring the earliest recoverable form(s) of a document. When confronted with two or more competing forms of the same text (usually referred to as variant readings), the text critic attempts to determine which form best accounts for the origin of the other forms. The reading that best explains the existence of the other forms is the one most likely to be the original.

Textual criticism works with two basic kinds of evidence—historical (the surviving manuscripts, early translations and patristic citations) and literary (vocabulary, style and content).^a

Let’s apply the techniques of textual criticism to Form 4, the expanded form that includes verses [1–20](#) with an additional passage, the so-called Freer Logion, in which the disciples make excuses for having doubted that Jesus had been resurrected.

The earliest historical evidence comes from Jerome, who referred to this form in his *Dialogue Against Pelagius*, written in 415 C.E. This indicates that the form was probably known by the end of the fourth century, but (according to Jerome, at least) was present in only a few copies, only one of which

survives (the fourth- or fifth-century Codex Washingtonianus). In short, the historical support for this form is relatively late and very slender.

The literary evidence is equally weak. Several words and phrases (“this age,” “excuse oneself,” “to sin” and “to return”) used in this inserted passage occur nowhere else in Mark, and some (“terrible things,” “term” and “to reply”) occur nowhere else in the New Testament. Furthermore, the style and tone of the dialogue do not match that found throughout the rest of the gospel. Based on the narrow historical base and the unusual vocabulary and style, it is clear that Form 4 is a poorly attested, expanded version of Form 3 (the long form) and has no claim to originality.

A similar conclusion may be made about Form 2, the intermediate form, which includes verses [1–8](#) plus two additional sentences (“And all that had been commanded them they told briefly to those around Peter. And afterward Jesus himself sent out through them, from east to west, the sacred and imperishable proclamation of eternal salvation”). The oldest manuscript in which this passage is found, the Latin Codex Bobbiensis, preserves a textual tradition that can be traced back to the early third century. Yet this is the only manuscript that includes this ending in a pure form; the other manuscripts that include the intermediate ending insert critical notes or comments suggesting that this is not the standard reading (see under Form 5 above).

The literary evidence for Form 2’s intermediate ending is no stronger: First, the additional passage opens with a statement that seemingly contradicts the preceding verse: Verse [8](#) tells us the women “said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid,” but the addition says they told everything “to those around Peter.”⁹ Second, nowhere in any of the Gospels does one find a florid phrase like “the sacred and imperishable proclamation of eternal salvation.” Form 2 has the feel of something tacked on to [16:8](#) to bring some sense of closure (awkward though it may be); it has no claim at all to being the original ending of Mark’s gospel.

If Form 2 is secondary, then all the permutations of Form 5, which place the intermediate ending between verses [16:1–8](#) and [16:9–20](#), are also secondary. They appear to be the work of copyists who were confronted by multiple endings for the same gospel and, rather than choose between them, preserved everything.

Thus, of the nine surviving forms, only two have any serious claim to be original, Form 1 (the short form) and Form 3a (the long form).

Our earliest historical evidence for Form 3a is not a manuscript, but a citation by a church father. Irenaeus’s quotation of [16:19](#) indicates that this long form was in existence by 175 C.E. or so at the latest. At the time of Eusebius in the early fourth century, however, the long form still was found in only a small minority of manuscripts—“in some copies but by no means in all,” in his words. In the very late fourth and the fifth century, the long form appeared in several Greek manuscripts and translations. Because this “long” form was part of the textual tradition that became standard in the Byzantine empire, which produced about 90 percent of the surviving Greek manuscripts, it eventually came to dominate the Greek manuscript tradition. In summary, the historical evidence for Form 3a is early (third quarter of the second century) but very narrow until the fifth century or later.



As for the historical evidence for Form 1, the short form, neither Clement of Alexandria (c. 150–c. 215) nor Origen (c. 185–c. 254) indicates any awareness of anything beyond [16:8](#). But this is an argument from silence, so not too much weight can be placed on it. More substantial is Eusebius’s testimony in the early fourth century that the “accurate”—indeed, as he says, “nearly all”—copies of Mark end at [16:8](#). The earliest manuscript witnesses for Form 1, Codex Sinaiticus and Codex

Vaticanus, date to about the same time, but have been shown to preserve a textual tradition that dates back to around the time of Irenaeus (c. 175).¹

To these manuscripts we must add all those that preserve the intermediate ending (Forms 2 and 5), since they testify indirectly to a shorter form that ended at [16:8](#). We must also add the manuscripts listed under Form 3b, in particular those that include along with [16:9–20](#) a critical note (“In some copies the evangelist finished here”), since they too testify to the existence of manuscripts that end at [16:8](#). Finally, the evidence of the early translations that range from Syria (the fourth-century Sinaitic Syriac version) to North Africa (the Old Latin Codex Bobbiensis) demonstrates that the short form was widely dispersed geographically at an early period.

In summary, the evidence for a short form of Mark ending at [16:8](#) is both early (mid- to late second century) and broad.

Most textual critics agree that the evidence supporting the short form (Form 1) outweighs the evidence for the long form (Form 3a). But because both forms are demonstrably early, the historical evidence, though favoring one form over the other, is not decisive. Before choosing between them, we must evaluate the literary evidence.

In favor of the originality of the long form, some scholars have suggested that the short form was created by Alexandrian biblical scholars who were embarrassed by the references to handling snakes and drinking poison and therefore deliberately excised verses [9–20](#).¹⁰ But why would they have excised 12 verses, when eliminating only two (verses [17–18](#)) would have done the job?

Two further considerations stand against this suggestion. First, it flies in the face of virtually everything that is known about the careful habits of ancient Alexandrian scholars: While they “obelized” or otherwise marked passages that aroused their suspicion, they did not omit them. Second, substantial literary evidence suggests that [16:9–20](#) is a later addition to the last chapter of Mark. To begin with, the long form opens with a very awkward transition: Whereas the subject of [16:8](#) is the women fleeing the tomb, the subject of [16:9](#) (“Now after he rose”) is not identified, and must be inferred from the context (indeed, Jesus is not mentioned by name until [16:19](#)). Mary Magdalene, who is mentioned in [16:1](#) for the third time (see [15:40](#), [47](#)), is reintroduced in [16:9](#) as though she were a new character (“Mary Magdalene, from whom he had cast out seven demons”), while the other women named in [16:1–8](#), Mary the mother of James and Salome, are not even mentioned.

Furthermore, the long form does not fulfill the promise made in [Mark 16:7](#), in which the young man in the tomb predicts the appearance of the risen Jesus in Galilee; instead it recounts a series of resurrection appearances that have been derived from the accounts in Matthew, Luke and John.¹¹

The vocabulary and style are also suspect: At least 17 words or phrases (for example, “form,” [16:12](#); “not believe,” [16:11](#), [16](#)) found in [16:9–20](#) either do not occur elsewhere in Mark or are used here with a different sense than elsewhere in the gospel, and three words or phrases (“those who had been with him,” [16:12](#); “deadly” and “they will recover,” [16:18](#)) occur nowhere else in the New Testament. Also, two of Mark’s favorite transitional words, “immediately” (used 40 times in Mark) and “again” (26 times in Mark) don’t occur at all in [16:9–20](#).¹²

In the end, verses [9–20](#) give every indication of having been tacked on to the end of [16:8](#), probably sometime early in the second century. In short, the literary evidence confirms what the historical

evidence suggests: The short form, Form 1, [16:1–8](#), represents the earliest recoverable ending of Mark.

But is the earliest recoverable ending the original ending? It does make for an abrupt and grammatically awkward conclusion to the gospel, and the reader is left with no account of any resurrection appearances. Moreover, in [Mark 14:28](#), Jesus makes a promise to the 12 disciples (“After I am raised up, I will go before you to Galilee”), but this promise remains unfulfilled. For these reasons, many scholars have suggested that the original ending of Mark has been lost or that the gospel was never finished.¹³

Abrupt and awkward are not the same as impossible, however, as has been noted by those scholars who identify [16:1–8](#) as the complete, original ending.¹⁴ Furthermore, the absence of a resurrection appearance or the fulfillment of the promise of [14:28](#), while certainly surprising, may well be deliberate. In addition, the odds that a book would be left unfinished or be damaged precisely at a point that could be taken as the end, in such a way that no one would notice that the damage had occurred, strike many scholars as simply incredible.

Ironically, the answer to our initial question (“How did the Gospel of Mark really end?”), rather than leading us to a conclusion, has opened up more questions. In the end (if there is an end), does any of it matter?

In the words of one Marcan scholar, “No point in a story is as significant for appreciation and interpretation as its ending.”¹⁵ A gospel that ends at [16:8](#) is open-ended, tense; the turmoil created by the juxtaposition of hope in [16:7](#) (where the angelic figure promises the women that Jesus “is going ahead of you to Galilee”) and disappointment in [16:8](#) (“they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid”) is unresolved. The reader is provoked and challenged.

The intermediate and longer endings, however—as well as modern hypotheses about a long-lost ending and contemporary translations that print multiple endings—all represent attempts to resolve this tension. As the literary scholar Frank Kermode has noted, unfinished, discordant stories are not easily tolerated.¹⁶

And so, in the end, the endings of Mark leave us as readers with a question: How will we choose to end the matter? Will we tolerate the ambiguity, or seek to resolve it? Will we force an ending upon the gospel that accords with our expectations, or will we see the ending not as an ending at all, but as a beginning that forces us to rethink our expectations?

The Long and Short of Mark’s Ending

Form 1: Short Form

[Mark 16:1–8](#)

¹When the sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, so that they might go and anoint him. ²And very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen, they went to the tomb. ³They had been saying to one another, “Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance to the tomb?” ⁴When they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had already been rolled back. ⁵As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man, dressed in a white robe, sitting on the right side; and they were alarmed. ⁶But he said to them, “Do not be alarmed; you are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has been raised; he is not

here. Look, there is the place they laid him. ⁷But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him, just as he told you. ⁸And going out they fled from the tomb, for terror and amazement had seized them; and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.



Noli Me Tangere—“Don’t Touch Me”—the title of this oil painting (c. 1550) by Titian, now in London’s National Gallery, is borrowed from the Gospel of John ([20:17](#)), where the resurrected Jesus warns Mary Magdalene to stay away because he has not yet ascended to his father. The longer ending of the Gospel of Mark also describes their encounter, Jesus’ first after the resurrection: “Now after he rose early on the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, from whom he had cast out seven demons. She went out and told those who had been with him” ([Mark 16:9–10](#)). In Titian’s painting, Mary grasps a jar of ointment in one hand. Jesus holds either a hoe—perhaps an attempt to explain why, in John’s gospel, Mary first mistakes Jesus for a gardener—or a shepherd’s staff. That Jesus has risen from the dead is apparent from the nail holes in his feet and the billowing white shroud that he has tied around his neck as a cloak. Titian’s work hangs in the National Gallery.



Form 2: Intermediate Form

equals [Mark 16:1–8](#) + intermediate ending

Mark 16:1–8

(quoted under Form 1)

plus intermediate ending

And all that had been commanded them they told briefly to those around Peter. And afterward Jesus himself sent out through them, from east to west, the sacred and imperishable proclamation of eternal salvation.

Form 3: Long Form

3a equals Mark 16:1–8 + Mark 16:9–20

Mark 16:1–8

(quoted under Form 1)

plus Mark 16:9–20

⁹Now after he rose early on the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, from whom he had cast out seven demons. ¹⁰She went out and told those who had been with him, while they were mourning and weeping. ¹¹But when they heard that he was alive and had been seen by her, they would not believe it. ¹²After this he appeared in another form to two of them, as they were walking into the country. ¹³And they went back and told the rest, but they did not believe them. ¹⁴Later he appeared to the eleven themselves as they were sitting at the table; and he upbraided them for their lack of faith and stubbornness, because they had not believed those who saw him after he had risen. ¹⁵And he said to them, “Go into all the world and proclaim the good news to the whole creation. ¹⁶The one who believes and is baptized will be saved; but the one who does not believe will be condemned. ¹⁷And these signs will accompany those who believe: by using my name they will cast out demons; they will speak in new tongues; ¹⁸they will pick up snakes in their hands, and if they drink any deadly thing, it will not hurt them; they will lay their hands on the sick, and they will recover. ¹⁹So then the Lord Jesus, after he had spoken to them, was taken up into heaven and sat down at the right hand of God. ²⁰And they went out and proclaimed the good news everywhere, while the Lord worked with them and confirmed the message by the signs that accompanied it.

3b equals Mark 16:1–20 + asterisks, *obeli* or a critical note

Mark 16:1–20

(quoted under Forms 1 and 3a)

plus asterisks, obeli or a critical note

In some copies the evangelist finished here [that is, Mark 16:8]

...but in many copies this also [16:9–20] is in circulation.

Form 4: Expanded Long Form

equals [Mark 16:1–14](#) + Freer Logion + [Mark 16:15–20](#)

[Mark 16:1–14](#)

(quoted under Forms 1 and 3)

plus Freer Logion

And they excused themselves, saying, “This age of lawlessness and unbelief is under Satan, who does not allow the truth and power of God to prevail over the unclean things of the spirits. Therefore reveal your righteousness now”—thus they spoke to Christ. And Christ replied to them, “The term of years of Satan’s power has been fulfilled, but other terrible things draw near. And for those who have sinned I was handed over to death, that they may return to the truth and sin no more, that they may inherit the spiritual and imperishable glory of righteousness that is in heaven.”

plus [Mark 16:15–20](#)

(quoted under Form 3)

Form 5: Combination Form

5a-d equals [Mark 16:1–8](#) + critical note +

intermediate ending + critical note + [Mark 16:9–20](#)

[Mark 16:1–8](#)

(quoted under Form 1)

plus critical note

This also is in circulation.

plus intermediate ending

(quoted under Form 2)

plus critical note

This also is in circulation after “For they were afraid.”

plus [16:9–20](#)

(quoted under Form 3)



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