

**THE INTERNATIONAL REVISION
COMMENTARY ON THE NEW
TESTAMENT, VOL. II: THE
GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MARK**

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The international revision commentary on the new testament, Vol. II: The Gospel according to Mark by Philip Schaff

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THE
INTERNATIONAL REVISION COMMENTARY
ON THE
NEW TESTAMENT

BASED UPON THE REVISED VERSION OF 1881

BY
ENGLISH AND AMERICAN SCHOLARS
AND MEMBERS OF THE REVISION COMMITTEE

EDITED BY
PHILIP SCHAFF, D. D., LL. D.

*Professor of Sacred Literature in the Union Theological Seminary of New York,
President of the American Committee on Revision.*

VOL. II
THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MARK.

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PREFACE.

THIS is the beginning of a series of popular commentaries on the New Testament, based upon the Revised Version of 1881, to be issued in small handy volumes. It is a cheap and abridged edition of the author's 'Illustrated Popular Commentary,' of which two large volumes have appeared, and two others are nearly completed. The large size and costly outfit of that book limits its circulation. By omitting the illustrations, the general introduction, the emendations of the Old Version, and the parallel passages, the price of the book has been reduced, in the hope of enlarging its field of usefulness. The text is, of course, that of the Revised Version, which hereafter must be the basis of every popular commentary. The American readings and renderings have been, for convenience sake, transferred to the foot of the page, with the exception of those changes which refer to classes of passages.

The new title which is to distinguish this edition from the 'Illustrated Commentary,' involves no pretension, but simply expresses a fact. It is an international and interdenominational work of British and American Scholars and Revisers. The majority of contributors were officially connected with one of the two Companies for the Revision of the New Testament, and the others were in full sympathy with the work. Moreover the aim of this commentary falls

in with the International Sunday School Lesson system which has done so much in a short time to promote the popular study of the Bible throughout the English speaking world.

The plan of this commentary was conceived about thirty years ago. Its execution has occupied much of the time and strength of the contributors during the last twelve years. It was matured with the Revision in the Jerusalem Chamber and the Bible House. Its object is to make the results of the Revision available for the benefit of the rising generation of all denominations.

May the blessing of the God of the Bible rest upon this and upon every other effort to make its meaning clearer to the understanding and dearer to the heart of the reader.

PHILIP SCHAFF.

New York, October, 1881.

INTRODUCTION.

§ 1. *The Author of the Gospel according to Mark.*

This Gospel was written by MARK, or JOHN MARK, as he is also called (Acts 12: 12, 25; 15: 37). Its genuineness, attested by explicit testimony, has been little disputed; while its brevity and freshness have led to the opinion that it was the primitive Gospel. The theory that it once existed in briefer form and was enlarged to its present size by additions from various sources, is unsupported by evidence. (On the conclusion, see chap. 16: 9.)

MARK, or JOHN MARK, was a Jew, probably a native of Jerusalem, where his mother Mary resided (Acts 12: 12). She was a person of some repute among the early Christians, as Peter, when released from prison, naturally went to her house. Mark was probably converted by that Apostle (1 Pet. 5: 13), and the minute account of the young man who followed Jesus on the night of the betrayal (Mark 14: 51, 52), together with the omission of the name, points to the Evangelist as the person concerned. Going with Paul and Barnabas (his 'cousin,' Col. 4: 10), as their 'attendant' (Acts 13: 5), on their first missionary journey, he left them at Perga (13: 13), and in consequence became the occasion of 'sharp contention' between them (15: 36-40). Afterwards in Rome he appears as a companion of Paul (Col. 4: 10; Philem, 24). He was with Peter when that Apostle wrote his first Epistle (1 Pet. 5: 13), but was at Ephesus with Timothy at a date probably later (2 Tim. 4: 11).

Trustworthy details respecting his after life are wanting, but ancient writers agree in speaking of him as the 'interpreter' of Peter. This may mean that he translated for the Apostle, but more probably that he wrote his Gospel in close conformity to Peter's preaching.

§ 2. *The Character of the Gospel according to Mark.*

The close relation of the Evangelist to Peter is confirmed by the Gospel itself. Many events are recorded, as if from the lips of an eye-witness. Some suggest that the Gospel is based upon a diary of Peter. The style shows the influence of that Apostle. Peter's address to Cornelius (Acts 10) has been called the Gospel of Mark in a nutshell. A comparison of the accounts in Matt. 16: 13-23 and Mark 8: 27-33, indicates that Peter himself (or an enemy of his, which is impossible) occasioned the omission of the praise ('Thou art Peter,' etc.), and yet the insertion of the rebuke ('Get thee behind me, Satan,' etc.). Mark alone mentions the two cock-crowings, (chap. 14: 72), thus increasing the guilt of Peter's denial. Even if not submitted to the Apostle for approval (as Eusebius asserts on the authority of Clement of Alexandria), the faithfulness of the history may well be accepted.

The Gospel begins with the baptism of John, gives few discourses, dealing mainly with facts arranged in chronological order (see § 5), narrating these in brief, rapid sketches with graphic power. No subjective sentiments or reflections are interwoven (see, however, chap. 7: 19). Special prominence is given to the periods of rest and withdrawal on the part of our Lord, as if to prepare for fresh conflict and victory. Hence this Gospel is said to present the Messiah as the powerful King. Peculiar to this Evangelist are the repeated use of 'straightway,' and of the present tense in narratives, the prominence given to the power over evil spirits, such touches and incidents as the following: that Jesus was 'in the *hinder* part of the ship, *asleep on the boat cushion*' (4: 38); that 'He looked round about on them *with anger*' (3: 5); beholding the rich young man 'He loved him' (10: 21); the vivid details of the escape of the 'young man' (14: 51, 52). A few miracles and one parable also are found only here. These peculiarities serve to show both independence of the other Evangelists and the close relation to some eye-witness.

Although written in Greek, the Gospel was designed for Roman readers, and is especially adapted to their mind, so easily impressed by exhibitions of energy and power. It exhibits Christ as the spiri-

tual conqueror and wonder-worker, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, filling the people with amazement and fear. Mark introduces several Latin terms; he even uses the Roman names of coins instead of the Greek for Greek (12 : 42), which Luke does not, and notices that Simon of Cyrene was 'the father of Alexander and Rufus' (15 : 21), who were probably Christians in Rome (Rom. 15 : 13). It is therefore most likely that the Gospel was written in that city, before the destruction of Jerusalem, whether before or after the Gospel of Luke, is uncertain (see § 3).

Mark may be said to form the connecting link between Matthew and Luke, Peter and Paul, the Jewish and the Gentile Christianity. But his Gospel is independent of the other two. Its similarity to Matthew has not only led the mass of readers to undervalue it, but exposed it to numerous slight alterations on the part of the early copyists. Precisely where Mark's peculiarities were most apparent, these attempts to produce literal correspondence with Matthew have been most frequent. Modern textual criticism has achieved here a proportionately greater work of restoration. Well nigh every verse of this Gospel as presented in the Revised Version contains some slight emendation which is due to a careful comparison with the earlier manuscripts and versions. In this commentary special attention will be called only to the more important corrections of the Greek text.

§ 3. *Time and Place of Writing.*

As already intimated, it is most likely that this Gospel was written at Rome. The date must be placed before the destruction of Jerusalem, an event which is only referred to as predicted. A more precise designation of the date involves protracted discussion in regard to the relation of the three earlier Gospels to each other. (These Gospels are usually termed 'Synoptical,' and their writers the Synoptists.)

Briefly stated, the case stands as follows:

According to the testimony of the earliest Christian fathers, Matthew wrote first, then Luke, and Mark third. This testimony is, of course, rejected by those who hold theories respecting the origin of these Gospels calling for another order. But even if we leave these