Bibliography: Gospel of Mark

Overview


Critical Commentaries


**Academic Studies**


Redaction-critical approach that surveys literary-critical studies in a chapter on Mark as literature; served as the standard introduction to Mark for more than a decade.


including prayer, kingdom, power, healing, blindness, and discipleship.

Barton, Stephen. *Discipleship and Family Ties in Mark and Matthew.*


———. *Following Jesus: Discipleship in the Gospel of Mark.*
JSNTSup 4. Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1981. A study in redaction-criticism that explores the theme of discipleship under three main headings: the disciple and the cross, the disciple and the world, the disciple in the community.


———. *Temptation and the Passion: The Markan Soteriology.*
SNTSMS 2. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965. Attempts to show, through a redactional study of these two sections of Mark’s Gospel, that Mark construes Jesus’s
accomplishment primarily as the redemption of humanity from sin rather than, as is sometimes thought, as a cosmic defeat of Satan.


———. *The Disciples according to Mark: Markan Redaction in Current Debate*. JSNTSup 27. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1989. Argues that the conflicting interpretations that redaction critics have offered for Mark’s treatment of the disciples derive from basic flaws inherent in the methodology of redaction criticism itself.


Booth, Roger. *Jesus and the Laws of Purity: Tradition History and Legal History in Mark 7*. JSNTSup 13. Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1986. A historical study of the legal traditions involved in this passage, which concludes that Jesus did not deny the concept of cultic purity absolutely but only relativized that concept in comparison with ethical purity.

Boring, M. Eugene. *Truly Human/Truly Divine: Christological Language and the Gospel Form*. St. Louis: CBP Press, 1984. Written for the nonspecialist; shows how the Gospel, as a literary form, incorporates within it a double image of Jesus: Jesus is (like us) weak, the crucified man from Nazareth; he is (not like us) strong, the powerful Son of God.


Brock, Rita Nakashima. *Journeys by Heart: A Christology of Erotic Power*. New York: Crossroad, 1988. Interprets stories of Christian origin in Mark’s Gospel from the perspective of feminist, relational theology; discovers in the miracle and passion stories a source of “erotic” (i.e., heart-based) power that is the basis of life and community.


Croy, Clayton. *The Mutilation of Mark’s Gospel*. Nashville: Abingdon, 2003. A sustained argument in support of the thesis that the original ending of Mark’s Gospel has been lost, with an
additional proposal that the beginning of the Gospel may have been lost as well.


Donahue, John R. *Are You the Christ? The Trial Narrative in the Gospel of Mark*. SBLDS 10. Missoula, MT: Society of Biblical Literature, 1973. A redactional analysis of this important section of Mark’s Gospel and its relationship to the work as a whole; special emphasis is given to the temple theme and to Christology.


Fowler, Robert M. *Let the Reader Understand: Reader-Response Criticism and the Gospel of Mark*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991. Examines the rhetoric of Mark’s Gospel with an emphasis on those features that allow interpretations that are intentionally ambiguous.


Hengel, Martin. *Studies in the Gospel of Mark*. Philadelphia:
Fortress, 1985. A collection of three essays. Concentrates in the main on the historical origins of Mark’s Gospel; argues for a reappropriation of the traditional views that the Gospel was written in Rome in 69 and contains materials handed down by Peter through John Mark, referred to in Acts 12.

Attempts to delineate the unique perspective of Mark’s community concerning Christology and discipleship.

———. *The Son of Man in Mark*. Montreal: McGill University Press, 1967. Studies the use of the term “Son of Man” in the Old Testament and intertestamental literature and then examines all of the occurrences in Mark; argues for a coherent pattern in Mark’s use of the term.


Iverson, Kelly R. *Gentiles in the Gospel of Mark: “Even the Dogs under the Table Eat the Children’s Crumbs”*. LNTS 339.


Kelber, Werner H. The Kingdom in Mark: A New Place and a New Time. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1974. Studies Mark’s concept of the “kingdom of God” in reference to a proposed reconstruction of Christian community following the destruction of Jerusalem in 70. Dates the Gospel after this event and states that the event precipitated its production.
Mark’s Story of Jesus. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979. An interpretive retelling of Mark’s story of the life and death of Jesus, understood as a journey beginning in Galilee and ending in Jerusalem. Espouses the view, long debated by scholars, that Mark depicts the disciples at the close of his story as permanently alienated from Jesus.

The Oral and the Written Gospel: The Hermeneutics of Speaking and Writing in the Synoptic Tradition, Mark, Paul, and Q. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983. Develops the thesis that Mark, by putting the Gospel into a written form, put an end to the creative development that had characterized it in the oral stage.

The Passion in Mark: Studies on Mark 14–16. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1976. A collection of redaction-critical essays; investigates each pericope in Mark’s passion account in terms both of the role that it plays within the passion account itself and of the thematic links that it exhibits to other parts of the narrative.

The Genesis of Secrecy: On the Interpretation of Narrative. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1979. An examination of Mark by a literary critic rather than a biblical scholar; questions whether it is possible to find any unity of coherence intended by the author of the Markan narrative. Written from the perspective that one can find no coherence to life itself, but contains scattered insights into Mark along the way.
Kingsbury, Jack Dean. *The Christology of Mark’s Gospel*. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983. Uses literary method to reappraise Mark’s portrait of Jesus. After brief chapters on the “messianic secret” and recent approaches to Mark’s understanding of Jesus, shows how Mark, in the course of his story, gradually unveils the identity of Jesus. A separate chapter deals with the special way in which “the Son of Man” is used.

———. *Conflict in Mark: Jesus, Disciples, Authorities*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1989. A literary study of Mark as narrative; focuses on the story lines of the three most important characters in the narrative.


verse of Mark’s Gospel in light of “suspended endings”

elsewhere in the Bible and in other ancient literature.


———. *In the Company of Jesus: Characters in Mark’s Gospel.*


Marcus, Joel. *The Mystery of the Kingdom of God.* SBLDS 90.
Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1986. A redaction-critical analysis of Mark’s parable chapter whose thesis is that whereas the stress in 4:3–20 is on the hiddenness of the kingdom, in 4:21–32 it is on the kingdom’s moving from hiddenness to manifestation.

Martin, Ralph P. *Mark: Evangelist and Theologian.* Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1973. Deals with the origins of Mark’s Gospel so as to understand it in light of them. By telling of Jesus’s suffering messiahship, Mark gives encouragement to his own persecuted church in Rome and summons it to faithful discipleship.

Matera, Frank J. *The Kingship of Jesus: Composition and Theology in Mark 15*. SBLDS 66. Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1982. Shows how Mark has composed chapter 15 of his passion account in such fashion as to highlight a royal theology that comes to climactic expression in the centurion’s confession of Jesus as the Son of God.

———. *What Are They Saying about Mark?* New York: Paulist Press, 1987. Surveys twenty-five years of Markan research, discussed in easily understood language. The book has been replaced in the series by another, more up-to-date volume by Daniel Harrington, but it remains valuable for its treatment of works in the mid-twentieth century dealing with four major topics: the setting in which Mark’s Gospel arose, Mark’s understanding of Jesus and of discipleship, principles Mark used in composing his Gospel, and present-day literary approaches to Mark’s Gospel.

ineptly edited that it is futile to look for overarching purpose in his redaction.


Myers, Ched. *Binding the Strong Man: A Political Reading of Mark’s Story of Jesus*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1989. Applies literary criticism, sociohistorical exegesis, and political hermeneutics to interpret the entire text of Mark’s Gospel as a “manifesto of radical discipleship.”


words and deeds, demonstrating how his identification of the poor and outcasts was seen as subversive by political and religious authorities.


Petersen, Norman R. *Literary Criticism for New Testament Critics*. GBS. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1978. In chapter 3, the whole of Mark’s narrative is investigated to show that Mark locates his story’s resolution in the meeting that the young man in white, following Jesus’s own words, predicts Jesus will have with the disciples in Galilee. The reader is invited to project that, at this
meeting, the disciples come out from under their cloud of ignorance.


Robbins, Vernon K. *Jesus the Teacher: A Socio-Rhetorical Interpretation of Mark*. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984. A study of sociorhetorical criticism that understands Mark to have combined biblical-Jewish and Greco-Roman traditions and conventions. Mark’s Jesus is at once biblical prophet and Greco-Roman philosopher and teacher; he fulfills Jewish
messianic expectations in a way that would capture the attention of non-Jews of Mediterranean society.


Senior, Donald. *The Passion of Jesus in the Gospel of Mark*. Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, 1984. Offers a detailed but eminently readable analysis of the passion account of Mark. Analysis is preceded by a chapter on the material leading up to the passion account and is followed by a chapter emphasizing the theology of the account.


themes: the life of Christian community and the relationship of discipleship to Christology.


A detailed exegetical study of Mark 11, including comparison of themes found here that are also in the Old Testament, in rabbinic literature, and in other New Testament books.


Eight essays by scholars who have contributed to what the editor terms a “literary explosion” in the area of Markan studies. Any such collection necessarily gives an incomplete picture, but the essays included here add insights into Mark’s Gospel. The introductory essay contains a good review of issues currently debated by scholars.


Examines the negative realities, failures, and misunderstandings portrayed in Mark’s Gospel to explicate the evangelist’s theology as a realistic one in which faith and disbelief coexist.

Tolbert, Mary Ann. *Sowing the Gospel: Mark’s World in Literary-Historical Perspective*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1989. Takes the parable of the sower as the key to understanding Mark’s Gospel
as persuasive literature proclaiming the gospel within a particular social-historical setting.


Williams, James G. *Gospel against Parable: Mark’s Language of Mystery*. BLS 12. Sheffield: Almond, 1985. Book’s contention is that Mark is a narrative gospel, the product of bringing together “biography” and “parable.” It sets forth the mystery of the kingdom as revealed in “the way” of Jesus, the suffering Son of Man.