

JERUSALEM AND THE END AND MARK'S AGE

In Mark, Jesus predicted that Jerusalem would fall (13). This happened in 70 AD. So was Mark written after this event? Some say it could have been written before it because one did not need to be a prophet to foretell this for it was as inevitable as the shameful fall of Napoleon. Some say that since the account does not give a lot of detail and is not sensationalist that it is too sober to have been written following the event. But

Mark likes to be short and sweet anyway so that argument is junk.

Some say that the gospel of Mark must have been early because its prediction that the end of the world and the return of Jesus would come with the destruction Jerusalem proved wrong. But it only linked the end of the world with the fall of Jerusalem. It does say that the end would not be far off after that and that the fall would be a sign it was coming but it does not say when. Christians could still have regarded the prophecy as correct and expected the end say any time up to forty years afterwards. The prophecy might have been corrected after the event if it was thought to have failed. Why would anybody write a gospel in the late sixties AD if the world were to end soon in 70AD? And many put that date on Mark. It is a known fact that all the false Messiahs of the first century before 70 AD believed that the time of destruction had come and that a Messiah would come to vanquish the Romans (page 71, Jesus Hypotheses). Jesus never actually said that he would come back to do that but he said he would come back after the destruction of Jerusalem.

The claim that Mark and the other two synoptic gospels Luke and Matthew were written prior to 70 AD when they say Jesus predicted the destruction of Jerusalem and do not say that Jesus' word was fulfilled is a lame one and never fails to make it into most apologetic books. This is one of the circumstances in which an argument from silence is no good. First, they had no need to say Jesus' prophecy was fulfilled for their readership would have been able to see that for themselves. Second, there were lots of things people think should have been said in the gospels and which went unmentioned. There's no pleasing everybody. For example, in the resurrection accounts is there a bibliography and a library mentioned where one can go to see the affidavits of independent witnesses to check the gospels out? There is nothing at all which is why the accounts are a complete insult to the intelligence. They judge Jesus as a good teacher full of wisdom and truth. But they would have to be experts in ethical philosophy for that to be the case. Where are the academic records that Jesus was a leading light in human and divine wisdom? If the gospels had been written before 70 AD it would be very likely that they would warn the Jews to convert before the destruction of the Holy Land. I know the gospels stressed repentance anyway but when they make so much of this attack on Jerusalem and dread it you would expect them to put in a warning in the account of what was to come. A Christian webpage <http://www.bible.ca/false.maphttp> for which the homepage is WWW.BIBLE.CA gives a chunk from The Wars of the Jews by Josephus which was written in 75AD to prove that Matthew 24 which says that signs would be reported in the skies and several other things all happened in 70AD.

Jesus tells the disciples that they will be thrown out of the synagogues. He did not need to be a prophet to foresee that either. The Jews did not like his most dedicated followers.

In the prophecy, Jesus says that one stone of the temple will not be on another when Jerusalem falls. The wailing wall disproves this. The author of Mark did not know that it was still standing for he would not have written such a literalistic prophecy. His Jesus wouldn't speak metaphorically in such a grave and solemn discourse. The author could not find out if the whole Temple was gone which indicates that his prophecy was invented a long time after the event. The nearer you are in time to the event the more facts you will have.

The gospel says we won't know when Jesus comes back and it reveals things like that the gospel must be preached to all nations first (Mark 13). The only way to reconcile the two is if the worldwide preaching had been thought to have taken place. This could not have been thought to have happened until near the end of or after the first century.

Jesus' prophecy of destruction and the overthrow of worldly kingdoms proves that the gospel was written after 70 AD because if it had been written before that time the Romans would have understood the prophecy of destruction as a threat to their power. They knew there was a danger that some might try to arrange the fulfilment of the prophecy so zealots could be incited to rebel because of it. The Romans did not like anybody predicting destruction and world war for that made citizens less keen on working to advance their power. This tells us that the gospel was certainly written after 70 AD at a time when there was widespread war and dissension through the empire when it did no harm to make prophecies like that.

Some feel that when Jesus said some around him will see the coming of the son of man that the gospel was written when at least some of the apostles were still alive. The Jesus Papyrus claims that Mark 9:1 where Jesus prophesies that there are some standing around him who would not die before they see the kingdom of God coming in power means the

transfiguration and not the second coming (page 50). That is odd for the resurrection appearances would be a better candidate. And since Mark never says that the transfiguration was supernatural – it could have been a divinely inspired illusion and not an obvious miracle – the transfiguration is out. Some accepting the second coming interpretation argue that this statement of Jesus indicates that the gospel was written before the generation that Jesus lived with died for Mark would not present Jesus as being a false prophet. But that is assuming that Mark thought that prophets had to be always right when they predict in the name of God. The assumption is just an assumption so Mark 9:1 gives no indication of the date of Mark.

If you think Mark put in the prophecy that they would see Jesus coming on the clouds to take over the world in glory then ask yourself this. Did he not care or realise that he was showing Jesus was far from infallible and possibly a religious fanatic? Maybe he didn't care. He did describe Jesus being racist to a woman, rude to his family, telling a man off for calling him good. It would not be the first time a flawed hero was promoted deliberately as a flawed hero. Mark might have ended his gospel at 16:8 where we read the tomb is found empty and there are no appearances of Jesus mentioned. All we have is men in white saying Jesus rose as he said he would. Is that a cliff-hanger? Are we left to wonder if he really rose as he said he would? If so the gospel reads like something intended to be a sort of fictional novel as opposed to infallible scripture. In that case, the dating question may not even matter.

The stress on bearing trials from God in the gospel allegedly points to its being written in times of persecution, specifically between 60 and 70 AD when the antichristian Roman Emperor Nero was in action, But there is doubt if Nero seriously persecuted Christians. The New Testament says that the Christians were victimised lots of times from the start. The mere anticipation of persecution could suffice to explain the texts. Before 70 AD the Christians acted as if Jesus were about to come on the clouds of Heaven any minute. Christians then could not tell their suffering brethren that they were suffering for a good purpose. This gospel does so it was written long after 70AD.

Page 71 of Reasons for Hope says that no New Testament book looked on the destruction of Jerusalem as a past event and on this basis dates them all prior to that disaster which is a dreadfully weak argument – how could the gospels admit that they wrote a prophecy by Jesus after the event? It says that the anti-Jewish John would have used it to prove that God was against the Jews. First of all we have only a few out of the many documents we could have had in the New Testament. Second the Church was out to proclaim Jesus and not just to destroy Judaism. The John writer might not have known of the prophecy or perhaps he doubted that it was a prophecy. There are many possibilities but Christians select the ones that suit their preconceived ideas. Apologists are never honest.

The time of the Bar Kochba revolution makes a good candidate for the composition of Mark. At that time the Romans were confident that they stood under no more danger from Jewish zealots.

Since Mark was the first gospel this tells us that the other ones were much later. The reason this tells us that the gospel was written late rather than written early and hidden is that leaks are always possible so it was safer to write it late. Perhaps it is possible the author never let anybody see the manuscript.

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www.bowness.demon.co.uk/thiede.htm

This informs us that Thiede ignored the main objections Elliott made to his silly theories in a response added to The Jesus Papyrus. Thiede uses the work of scholars that does not support his conclusions at all and twists them and misquotes them to make it look like it does.

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www.breadofangels.com/7quenoch/article2.html

HIGHER CRITICAL REVIEW, By Daryl D Schmidt

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