

## Moroni quotes sections of Mark that are of dubious origin

Many [theological anachronisms exist in the Book of Mormon](#), but among the most problematic is the quotation of the end of the book of Mark by Moroni.

### The verses in question

Moroni, son of Mormon, finishes the record of his father Mormon by quoting a message of Jesus Christ to “his disciples who should tarry.” Mormon says, in [Mormon 9:22–24](#):

22 For behold, thus said Jesus Christ, the Son of God, unto his disciples who should tarry, yea, and also to all his disciples, in the hearing of the multitude: **Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature;**

23 And he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned;

24 And these signs shall follow them that believe—in my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick and they shall recover;

The book of Mark [ends with these verses](#)

15 And he said unto them, **Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.**

16 **He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.**

17 **And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues;**

18 **They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.**

*Phrases that match exactly between the Book of Mormon and Mark 16 have been emboldened above.*

### The problem

The appearance of these verses in the Book of Mormon is problematic because they are almost certainly part of a later addition to the end of the book of Mark. This later addition (of which verses 15–18 are a part):

1. **Is not in the earliest and best manuscripts.**

BYU religion scholar [Lincoln Blumell](#) writes:<sup>1</sup>

Mark 16:8 is currently the earliest attested ending for Mark's gospel (appearing in Codex Sinaiticus [Σ] and Codex Vaticanus [B] [the earliest complete manuscripts of Mark]), its abruptness is problematic...

**2. Appears to have escaped the awareness of many of the early Christian fathers.**

Blumell [continues](#):

others [of the early Christian fathers] seem not to have known about them [Mark 16:9–20] or were unsure of their authenticity

**3. Was written in a different writing style than the rest of the gospel of Mark.**

E. P. Gould wrote:

... the internal evidence for the omission is much stronger than the external, proving conclusively that these verses could not have been written by Mk. The linguistic differences alone are enough to settle this,—enough to show, even if we had Mk.'s autograph, that they were not original with him, but copied directly from another source.

there are in all 163 words in this passage, and of these, 19 words and 2 phrases are peculiar, not occurring elsewhere in this Gospel. There are 109 different words, and of these, 11 words and 2 phrases do not occur elsewhere in this Gospel. ...

But the argument from the general character of the section is stronger still. In the first place, it is a mere summarizing of the appearances of our Lord, a manner of narration entirely foreign to this Gospel. Mark is the most vivid and picturesque of the evangelists, abbreviating discourse, but amplifying narration. But this is a mere enumeration. The first part of the chapter, relating the appearance of the angels to the women, is a good example of his style, and is in marked contrast to this section.

Specific examples from the verses in question (vs. 17 and 18, specifically) [include the words](#) παρακολουθήσει and θανάσιμόν, “the former occurring only here in Mk., and the latter only here in N.T.”

**4. Is somewhat inconsistent with verses directly preceding it.**

For instance, [Kilgallen](#) notes ([quoting wikipedia's summary of his work](#)):

The turn from verse 8 to 9 has also been seen as abrupt and interrupted: the narrative flows from “they were afraid” to “now after he rose”, and seems to reintroduce Mary Magdalene.

... the active tense “he rose” is different from the earlier passive construction “[he] has been risen” of verse 6

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<sup>1</sup>In general, see section “11. Mark 16:9–20 KJV” in [A Text-Critical Comparison of the King James New Testament with Certain Modern Translations](#) by BYU religion professor [Lincoln Blumell](#).

James Tabor color-codes the end of Mark to demonstrate where the author of the forged ending [pulled material](#) (i.e., from Matthew, Luke, and John) and where they likely provided original material.

## Conclusion

Moroni states that Jesus spoke to the disciples in the New World using the exact verbiage from a section of Mark that is almost certainly a later addition to the book of Mark. By itself, such an occurrence may be dismissed in a number of ways: perhaps Joseph was merely playing loose with the translation in that instance ([like with deuterio-Isaiah](#)) or perhaps the later addition was *somehow* reflective of words Jesus actually spoke in the New World.<sup>2</sup> Regardless, the quotation is problematic, especially viewed in light of [the massive number of parallels to writing from the early 1800s](#), generally. The author's usage of these verses from the New Testament is highly consistent with the modern origin model (i.e., the Book of Mormon was authored by a mind(s) from the early 1800s) and in some tension with the ancient origin model.

## References:

1. [A Text-Critical Comparison of the King James New Testament with Certain Modern Translations](#). Studies in the Bible and Antiquity: vol 3, Article 5. BYU religion scholar Lincoln Blumell.
2. [wikipedia: Mark 16](#)
3. The [appendix](#) of "A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to St. Mark" by Ezra Palmer Gould.
4. Mormon Discussion group "[How did Mark 16:18 get into the Book of Mormon?](#)"
5. [Bart Ehrman - Mark 16:9-20 is fake](#)
6. [The "Strange" Ending of the Gospel of Mark and Why It Makes All the Difference](#)
7. Heard through [this comment](#).

While these twelve verses are not omitted in any modern NT edition, they are placed in either double brackets or italics with a note about their absence in certain early manuscripts. ...

... from a text-critical standpoint Mark 16:8 is currently the earliest attested ending for Mark's gospel (appearing in Codex Sinaiticus [8] and Codex Vaticanus [B]), its abruptness is problematic, giving rise to various theories against its authenticity.

Blumell does not conclude the ending is *necessarily* inauthentic (despite acknowledging the problematic evidence), but his conclusion is open-ended and rests on no evidence:

... If it is not the original ending to Mark, then at the very least it probably contains some of the characteristics of the original ending (i.e., postresurrection appearances and a charge to spread the gospel).

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<sup>2</sup>On the Mormon Dialogue discussion group, the apologetic [is advanced](#): "Assuming that Mark didn't write those words, must we then believe that Jesus didn't speak them and someone else wrote them down so the later 'interpolator' could add them to Mark's account?"

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