

The Priority of Mark

The Study of the Synoptic Gospels

Studying the three Synoptic gospels, there is a literary relationship between them which means that is the question as to the sources used when they were written. The gospels tend to agree close or closely in order and words. It is seen in narratives and quotations. Stein also discussed the fragmentary hypothesis, whereby they vary in length but not a continued document. This approach is accounted for the Torah's diversity, but it is not able to account for the consistency of its structure, especially its arrangement of its dates and the order of these events. There were theories upon theories, arguments upon arguments, problems upon problems, and comparisons. Matthew and Luke's gospels were addressing their Greek-speaking audience. In the discussion of length between Matthew and Luke, it was seen that Mark was an abridgement of Matthew and Luke. It showed that Mark omitted a large portion of scripture out of the text. The calculations of percentages of wordings and comparisons were not concluded as to the purpose or reason Mark eliminated so much text. In Table 4, when the gospels were paralleled, Mark was the longest of the three accounts. Therefore, it appears that Mark is not an abridged work. The argument regarding grammar and style was an observation that was indicated as inferior compared to Matthew and Luke. It was shown that Matthew and Luke's grammar was of better quality. The argument of difficulty showed that Mark was the most difficult of the three gospels regarding understanding. The argument about the verbal agreement in its writing, in Table 2.1, showed some singular verb followed by a compound subject. Here, the verb should have been plural. This was about the style or manner in which the wording was presented. For example,

"These two arguments are similar in that they both argue that within the triple tradition the Matthew-Mark agreements against Luke, the Mark-Luke agreements against Matthew, and the paucity of Matthew-Luke arguments against Mark both in wording and in order are best explained on the basis of a Markan priority, Stein, p.53" In comparison, Mark is seen as more primitive of the gospels. The argument of literary agreement, this argument was a comparison of Matthew and Mark. In Table 2.23, such an agreement does exist in the Synoptic Gospels, and the explanation is that there is a bias of the Markan priority. Another is the argument from redaction, which is "the process of editing text for publication, what is left after redaction would be virtually useless, Webster Dictionary." It is the heaviest argument in favor of Markan priority when comparing the Synoptic Gospels. In the Matthean use of Mark, it is seen that redactional consistency that is emphasized in Matthew. The redaction criticism is viewed in Markan use of Matthew. In comparing the Matthean redactional in Markan and Luke, the theological most used title for Jesus is the "Son of God" in all three Synoptic Gospels. It is clear that there is a strong usage of the title for Jesus is the "Son of God." There were different emphasis in comparison with phrases, for example, "to fulfill" and "this was to fulfill." In the discussion on style, in the Gospel of Mark, there is repeated use of "immediately." It is acknowledged that Mark tends to add "immediately" to his text, whether written or oral. In the final argument, regarding Mark's writing as being primitive. In the church usage, the title for Jesus is Lord in traditional gospel responses. Therefore, Mark is more primitive than Matthew.

Synoptic Gospel 1

The interior of synagogues during the time of Mark were strikingly beautiful. There were three types of architectural design/styles used during that time period. These design types were: 1. The Basilica with an upseat Beth Alpha; The Basilica type, as at Capernaum and Chorazin and the Broad House. They were elaborately decorated with symbols like palm citron and frond. The Bema or platform was provided for the reading of the scriptures. The niche was provided to display the Ark or Chest for the Biblical Scrolls. In the 1980's, archeologists unearthed fragments of the ark Niche from Narration. In the 3rd Century, many synagogues were discovered with pictures on walls with biblical writings. There are problems with the synoptic gospel where three of them appear to resemble each other and one doesn't. One can see that Matthew, Mark and Luke share many similarities that are striking. The Synoptic Problem is why the name that has been given to the problem and why the Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke are so similar. Similarity is seen in the parallel account of events; the wording and order. In the study, there is the existence of a literary relationship. Therefore, the relationship was investigated as to the nature of the relationship. One explanation, in 1817 was the notes that the disciples had taken and memorabilia of Jesus' deeds and words. The so-called Ur-Gospel is another theory that of primitive. The two-document hypothesis explains which of the three synoptic gospels is dominate. This hypothesis has been studied over the last century and a half. In the Q Hypothesis problems do exist. The Marken Priority is an agreement that there exists some sort of two documents hypothesis, that is these gospels were a written "Q". It is suspected that there is a fourth document unique materials found in Matthew, the "M" material and in Luke, the "L" material which comes from two different sources. It shows the existence of agreement in Matthew and Luke. It also shows the agreements against Mark even in the omission created by the short gospel of Mark. There is overlapping material. The "Q" material overlapped in Matthew and Luke and was preferred over Mark.

Finally, the Synoptics and John is discussed. Clement of Alexandria came near to this in his famous assertion; “Last of all John, perceiving that the bodily facts had been made plain in the Gospels being urged by his friends and inspired by the Spirit, composed a spiritual Gospel.”

The study of literature in early Christianity, was done by the individuals in it and the theological movements at the time. Archeology also had its place with artefactual digs of that day would determine the understanding of the early Christians community, life and culture. The natural materials that were there is the evidence of ancient history and had great input for the followers of Jesus. There is always an enquiry about literature, with many questions, for example, how it works, what is the meaning, and in what way literature should be handled? The idea of meaning is a correct way to begin to understand what is 'meaning'. It must be understood that there are many questions that must be debated regarding the author's intent, because there are modern readers today and ancient authors, especially because of the vast amount of time between them. "Even with the most optimistic of readers will struggle to identify the authorial intention behind Mark's cryptic description of the young man who fled naked from the Garden of Gethsemane. The same applies to what Paul meant when he said that "women will be saved through childbearing, Wright, p. 61, 2019." There isn't any one that knows the absolute accuracy of what is the author's true intent. There is an argument of Intentional Fallacy whereby the author's intent cannot be ascertained and that the literary literature is in the mind of readers. Furthermore, one could also ask, what is Isaiah's intention in Isiah 53 which states, "What the text 'meant' and what it means. Isaiah is not a prophecy of the Messiah but a portrait of how Yahweh's Servant-prophet becomes the means of Israel's being put right with God, of Israel personal renewal, and of the nations coming to acknowledge Yahweh. But one can see how the chapter came to help people understand Jesus significance, "Wright, p. 63,2019." It appears to be three parts to the 'meant' and the 'meaning. The text is interpreted by its rhetorical criticism and narrative criticism. The narrative criticism hangs on the interpretation or perception of the reader. "The rhetorical criticism's aim is to classify each New Testament writing against a species of rhetoric such an deliberative (persuading, forensic, (defending), or epideictic (praising), and then identify the rhetorical function of each individual unit of the text in order to discern its usage in relation to the original situation of the author and audience, " Wright, p.67, 2019." There are several narratives and criticism comparison in order to understand the author's intent. The reader has a role in the interpretation of the meaning of the text in spite of who the readers are or their perspective, as well as their social persuasion. They bring their own experiences and their perspectives to the text. Wright states that Martin contends that, 'Texts don't mean. People mean with texts.' In other words, meaning is not retrieved from the text but created by readers using the text," Wright, p.71,2019." In the communicative process, three components are included in the globular hermeneutical strategy. There is, also, the literary theories suggestion to manipulate the text in order to see how it affects you, what does it do for you is the main purpose of the text. The text becomes personal to the readers and nothing is right or wrong in the examination. The text becomes readers and the readers alone. In contemporary consciousness, this approach appeals to many of the elements. Finally, fusing of the text is the bringing together the horizons of reader's understanding, the intent of the author and what is the text indicating. The New Testament as literature has had long discussions regarding inquisitive appropriation of the authors, the text, and the engagement of faithful readers in a sympathetic manner.