

MARK'S GOSPEL: ITS STRUCTURAL FORM, WITH ITS FOUR SERIES OF SEVEN DAYS

For both Jews and Gentiles, this gospel is in the form of a Greek Tragedy in which Jesus completes the Old Covenant and establishes the New.

TITLE: 'Beginning' / ' of the Gospel' / 'of Jesus Christ' (the gospel's writing style is indicated here: it is abb') 1.1

PROLOGUE: Old Covenant prophecy is fulfilled: the Day of the Lord is coming. (AD 70 is referenced in the Jerusalemites and Judeans who seek 'water baptism' in the Jordan.) Jesus is baptised, announced 'Son' by God and filled with the Spirit. After forty days in the desert, he begins his ministry by calling (FOUR) disciples (TWO BY TWO). 1.2-20 (ABB')

THE NARRATIVE'S FOUR SERIES (two plus two, in a classical Greek chiastic composition):

	Old Covenant being fulfilled...			Old.../New...	New Covenant being established		
Compare: Homer's structure for the <i>Iliad</i> -----	A -----	B -----	B' -----	X -----	A -----	B -----	B'
	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7
	Days of Jesus in Galilee						
A Jesus' Authority & Power are revealed; his fame spreads rapidly in Galilee; opposition to him does too! (172 verses)	1.21-38 ABB'	1.39-45 ABB'	2.1-22 ABB'	2.23-3.6 ABB'	3.7-4.41 ABB'	5.1-20 ABB'	5.21-43 ABB'
	Days of Increase in Jesus' Mission						
B Jesus is a Prophet: Jews and gentiles alike receive 'Bread' ('Life') from his hands (no longer scraps) (119 verses)	6.1-29 ABB'	6.30-52 ABB'	6.53-7.23 ABB'	7.24-30 ABB'	7.31-37 ABB'	8.1-21 ABB'	8.22-26 ABB'
	Days of Jesus' Journeying to the Cross and Glory						
B' Jesus is the Christ': his followers will be 'baptised' as he, <i>and</i> 'drink the Cup' he drinks... (112 verses)	8.27-9.1 ABB'	9.2-32 ABB'	9.33-50 ABB'	10.1-16 ABB'	10.17-31 ABB'	32-46a ABB'	46b-52 ABB'
	Days of Jesus in Jerusalem						
A' Jesus' Authority & Power are challenged; his teaching is about cataclysmic times; the focus is on his Passion and Resurrection (239 verses)	11.1-11 ABB'	11.12-19 ABB'	11.20-13.37 ABB'	14.1-11 ABB'	14.12-72 ABB'	15.1-47 ABB'	16.1-8 ABB'

EPILOGUE: After giving evidence of his resurrection three times (the first to Mary Magdalene, from whom Jesus had exorcised SEVEN demons), Jesus sits down at the right hand of God. Everywhere' the New Covenant is preached, that believers who are baptised will be 'saved'. (This Aristotelian Epilogue is 16.9-16,19,20a in the form, ABB')

Where A is introductory, B is the first development and B' is the second and completing development of a three-part progression; where X indicates a central turning point; and where, in the Series themselves, 'A' signifies the presence of a lower-level abb' style of writing (likewise also a, B, b, B' & b').

The writer demonstrates a numerical/numerological interest in a 'four times seven' scheme which can be interpreted as: 'Jesus fulfils God's universal purposes'. He clearly presents on Day 1 the sun setting on the Sabbath of the Old Covenant and on Day 28 the sun rising on the Sabbath of the New Covenant. The Bread and Wine of the middle two series are symbols for Jesus' disciples; they help them express solidarity with Jesus both in his life and in his death. In Series A', in the first three days, Jesus points to the old means of being made right with God, and in the final three days to the new means of being made right with God: Jesus' death is 'a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God'; he is 'Christ our Passover, sacrificed for us' (see Paul for both these understandings).