

460, line 7	"instances"	"instance"
461, line 8	"מטרה"	<i>Need for consistency; װ is sometimes pointed (e.g., cf. p. 460, line 3), sometimes unpointed (e.g., 460, lines 8, 9, 18, 20; 461, lines 1, 4, 5)</i>
474, lines 15-18	"Israel, . . . Israel, . . ."	<i>Both the punctuation and verb tenses need reexamination</i>
478, lines 18-19	". . . in the late Second Temple period. Though a couple of points . . ."	". . . in the late Second Temple period, though a couple of points . . ."

Furthermore, the word "community" is confusingly related to both "has" and "have" (97, lines 7-8). Some embedded parentheses are unbalanced (115, line 4; 354, line 27). The sentence beginning "The Aramaic probably . . ." (48, line 21) is nonsensical. Finally, with regard to the source index: (1) the reference on p. 528 to 4Q213b (4Q^AAramaic Levi^c) has been typeset incorrectly; (2) all the references to 4Q405 (4Q^{Shir}Shabb^e) 20 ii-21-22 (531) need to be reindexed; and (3) the references to 4Q541 (4Q^TLevi^d) 9 i and 24 ii (535) have been typeset incorrectly, yielding page numbers in the index that look like references to the Qumran text, while both 4Q541 24 ii and 24 ii 5-6 should be indexed *after* 4Q541 9 i 3-5, not before.

Despite the methodological concerns and typographical and grammatical errors described above, I have no hesitation in recommending Flether-Louis's book. Though costly, it is a goldmine of information and analysis of important literature found at Qumran, and the reader will be amply rewarded in studying his analyses. He raises provocative and important questions that deserve further study and dialogue. For example, can his view be sustained that the apparent interest of the Qumran community in the high-priestly breastpiece helps explain the name "Essenes," which has been the subject of so much discussion for decades? The dust has certainly not yet settled on his controversial, revisionist reading of the *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice*. Yet, if the general outlines of his understanding of liturgical anthropology end up remaining in force, such an understanding will have a significant effect not only on the interpretation of the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Qumran community, but also on the interpretation of the literature of the Second Temple and the NT.

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France, R. T. *The Gospel of Mark*, NIGTC. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002. 752 pp. Hardcover, \$55.00.

France's commentary on Mark follows a typical pattern for Gospel commentaries: foreword, list of abbreviations, bibliography, and introductory questions, followed by extensive commentary on the Greek text, with concluding indices. Following the Foreword and list of Abbreviations, the author provides a

twenty-page Bibliography of works referred to in the commentary. Most of the works listed in the bibliography come from the twentieth century, particularly from the period 1960-2000 (although there is only one reference to 2000). Interestingly, there are many more references from the 1990s in the book section than in the articles section. France does note that the Anchor Bible commentary on Mark 1-8 by Joel Marcus was published too late to be taken into account in the current work and that the Word Biblical commentary on Mark 8:27-16:20 by Craig Evans had not yet been published when France's commentary went to press. The most recent commentary that France regularly interacts with is that of Robert Gundry, published in 1993. However, France also notes that his contribution is intended to be "a commentary on Mark, not a commentary on commentaries on Mark" (1).

After a brief discussion of his purpose, France proceeds to typical introductory material, including a discussion of the Gospel genre and related ideas (Mark fits roughly the "lives of famous men" type of literature, with its own distinctive touch [5-6]), an outline of the Gospel ("A Drama in Three Acts"—Act 1, Galilee, Mark 1:14-8:21; Act 2, On the Way to Jerusalem, Mark 8:22-10:52; and Act 3, Jerusalem, Mark 11:1-16:8 [13-14]); a discussion of Mark as storyteller (with particular focus on the sandwiching technique [18-20]), Mark's theology (Christology, discipleship, Kingdom of God, secrecy, eschatology, Galilee, and Jerusalem [23-35]); the origin and dating of the book (France takes early church tradition more seriously than many modern interpreters, discounting the value of reconstructions of the provenance from mainly internal criteria [35-41]); and the Synoptic problem (he believes Mark to be the earliest surviving Gospel, but quotes with favor J. A. T. Robinson's view that the most primitive state of the Synoptic tradition is not consistently in one Gospel [43-45]).

The commentary proper follows a consistent pattern of dividing the text into sections with three successive types of comments: textual notes on the manuscript evidence for important variant readings, overview of the ideas and issues that the textual section deals with, and specific commentary on individual verses. France does not provide either the Greek text itself or a translation of it, but makes ample reference to the Greek text in his notes and translates phrases or words that he is discussing. At the end of the commentary, France includes an appended note on the textual evidence for the ending of Mark, followed by an index of modern authors, a select index of Greek words and phrases, and an index of biblical and other ancient sources.

If there is one word I could use to evaluate France's commentary, it would be "balanced." He is a careful reader of the text and weighs not only what he reads, but what others have said about the text. While numerous illustrations of his skill as an exegete could be listed, I will provide just a few. At Mark 1:45, he persuasively argues against a suggestion that the first part of the verse has Jesus as subject rather than the leper. He also credibly counters Myers's and Malina's suggestion that Jesus is unable to enter towns because of his contact with a leper. At the introduction to 4:35-41, he has an interesting discussion of variation in

tenses in the pericope. At 8:30, he usefully notes that "this is the only place in the gospel where a specifically *messianic* secret is mentioned" (330). He then goes on to give thoughtful reasons for the secrecy motif and counters Wrede's contention that it was a Marcan apologetic invention. France's overviews of what he calls Act 2, 8:22-10:52 (320-321) and Act 3, 11:1-16:8 (426-427) provide a clear summary of Mark's story and themes. At 12:13-17, he gives an excellent summary about Jesus' teaching on the poll tax, with helpful historical and theological data. At 14:62-64, he carefully and thoughtfully wends his way through the difficult issues of Jesus' confession and the consequent accusation of blasphemy, giving a useful summary of recent scholarship and his balanced argumentation on the topic.

On the negative side, I was at first annoyed by the fact that the commentary does not contain either the Greek text or a translation of it. I did get used to it, but I would prefer the Greek text to be included. It would add only about thirty to sixty pages and would provide the reader with the Greek text that France was using for his comments.

France does not seem to take seriously enough the value of narrative studies in explaining Mark's story. This is well illustrated in his negation of 16:8 as the most likely ending of Mark. Contra exegetes who see Mark 16:8 as a provocative or ironic ending that calls on the reader to "go tell," France notes: "Unfortunately, most readers of Mark have not recognised this 'artful substitute for the obvious' (163) [quoting N. R. Petersen, *Interpretation* (34) 1980]; it sounds suspiciously like an exegetical counsel of despair on the part of an interpreter who recognises that, taken literally, 16:8 is an impossible ending" (672, n. 9).

France takes a minority view on Mark 13 that the Parousia is not the topic until 13:32. I do not find the argumentation convincing that 13:24-27 refers to the ingathering of the nations into the church, fulfilling 13:10. First, in Mark 6 the mission is outward going, not inward gathering. Second, in 13:10 the context of witness is one of persecution. The proclamation of the gospel to the nations may not be all about evangelism, but rather in this context more particularly about warning of judgment. Third, the term *eklektos* is used in the Gospel of Mark only in 13:20, 22, 27. In each case, it suggests those who are already linked to God and Christ, which is not the sense of the term *ethnos* in 13:10.

There are a few minor points that can be addressed briefly. In the 7:31-37 story of the healing of the mute man, the use of the term "dumb" and "dumbness" is recognized today as being pejorative. The terms "mute" and simply "unable to speak" are preferable. There are errors: e.g., on page 44 "Gspels" should be "Gospels" and on page 49 an open parenthesis stands where there should be a colon.

In conclusion, France's commentary is well worth reading. It contains a wealth of exegetical detail and presents, overall, a balanced and thoughtful exposition of the text of Mark.