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**“The End of the Beginning”: Mark’s Longer Ending (16:9–20)
and the Adaptation of the Markan Storyline**

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Abstract

This paper analyses the reception of Mark 1:1–16:8 in 16:9–20 and asks how the Markan storyline may have changed as a result of the added twelve verses. It is argued that several prominent Markan themes are revised in the Longer Ending and that the new ending not only overshadows the rhetorical force of 16:8 but also tidies up several unresolved aspects of the Markan plot. One such unresolved plot-line is the question of how the disciples, who had abandoned Jesus (14:50) and who never meet him again within the Markan narrative, would, in accordance with Jesus’s earlier prediction (13:9–13), have reversed course and become heralds of the gospel amidst persecution.