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BOOK REVIEWS

Dr Fr John Kallikuzhuppil CMI, *The Temple Section in Mark (Mk 11-12), An Introduction to the Passion Narrative*, Bengaluru: Dharmaram Publications, 2020. Pages: xxi+394. ISBN 978-81-945014-0-4.

The doctoral dissertation of Dr Fr John Kallikuzhuppil CMI titled *The Temple Section in Mark (Mk 11-12), An Introduction to the Passion Narrative*, is the result of many years of serious study and research done by Dr John under the guidance of Prof Albert Vanhoye, SJ, at the prestigious centre of biblical studies, Biblicum, Rome. This work is a thorough redaction critical analysis of the possible correlation between the Temple section (11:1-12:44) and the Passion Narrative (14:1-16:8) in the Gospel of Mark from a thematic, structural and literary perspective. The study is also undertaken to know whether the above narratives form an organic whole in the Gospel of Mark. The research further tries to highlight the unique style, composition, vocabulary and the motif of Mark in comparison with other synoptic gospels and the Gospel of John. Even though this research was completed in 1982, even today it is a very relevant, meaningful and useful study material for any serious reader and scholar on the book of Mark and for those who are interested to know the reason for the death of Jesus from the primary source coming from Mark. The book is a great contribution in biblical scholarship and the understanding of Christian faith from the perspective of the mystery of Christ, the master story of the New Testament.

Dr John, the author himself, writes of the book as follows: "The Mystery of Jesus, revealed in the Gospels is inexhaustible. One who approaches it by faith is enlightened anew. This study is an attempt to know and to make known the Mystery of Jesus' person as preached by Mark. If it has been in some way helpful to those who are already introduced into this Mystery and to those who would still desire to know it, the author has achieved his purpose." The author is justified because in a digital age marked by the search for spiritualities that goes beyond the boundaries of religions and religious practices, the mystery of Christ with its captivating, challenging, and unimaginable story of resurrection is one of constant attack but attraction to millions of

seekers of truth. The book of Mark, the first of the gospels coming from the third quarter of the first century CE is a focus of study and research for millions of seekers of knowledge, truth, wisdom and meaning of life.

The author develops the theme in a very clear, logical, coherent, simple, straight forward and systematic way making it very reader friendly. The internal coherence of the Gospel of Mark and its external connections are systematically analysed in the book. The writer has undertaken a detailed and penetrating study of Mark chapters 11 and 12 from linguistic, structural, thematic and theological aspects and in comparison with other synoptic Gospels and the Gospel of John. This is aimed at high-lighting the unique style and message of Mark and its antiquity and priority over the other Gospels. Compared with the Matthean and Lukan versions, the writer claims that the Markan version is unique in its narratives and is different from that of Mathew and Luke and it is primitive in character, longer, more vivid and concrete in narrations.

The work has also researched all the relevant topics both from the First and New Testaments in an in-depth study of the passages. The rich intertextual analysis and interpretation coming from both the Testaments are very solid, authentic, meaningful and faithful.

This research is an exhaustive study on Mark chapters 11 and 12. Some of the theological interpretations are very penetrating, illuminating and revealing. Summary statements in each section show the findings and that is very helpful to understand the theological message of each of the sections, their logical connections and the arrival and departure points. The references, citations, and the interpretations are a valuable guide for any reader who would like to undertake further study on the related points.

The author concludes that there are clear and direct relations between the Temple section and the Passion Narrative in the Gospel of Mark. He comes to this conclusion after a detailed study of the literary, structural and thematic aspects and the relationships between particular units, pericopes and subsections in both the narratives and in the overall framework of the Gospel.

The author, Fr John Kallikuzhipil CMI was a professor of Biblical Studies in Dharmaram Vidya Kshetram, Bengaluru from 1970 until his death in 1988. Sincere appreciation to Dharmaram Publications, Bengaluru, India for bringing out this scholarly work. I am sure that this work will be a valuable guide to all those who seriously try to unravel the mystery of Christ, the Son of God, hidden in the Gospel of Mark and preached and continued to be preached for the salvation of all.

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