

Het Evangelie van Markus
A. van Veldhuizen

Het Evangelie van Mattheus
J.A.C. van Leeuwen
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We here receive two little volumes in a proposed series of popular, practical expositions of the books of the New Testament. Part of the collaborators are also engaged in preparing a new Dutch translation of the Scriptures. In that, however, not individual opinions but a consensus and compromise of collective scholarship will find expression, and a long period is required for its precipitation. In order not to keep the public waiting till then, in the present series the individual writers are offered free scope for submitting their favorite personal views and conclusions. The processes by which these have been reached are to be entirely kept from the reader. Only results will be presented, and these in the most untechnical form without the introduction of Greek words or theological terminology. Whether the entire absence of the last-named element will contribute to the popularity of the series may seem doubtful, for the Dutch are still on the whole a theologically-inclined people and hardly ever study the Scriptures without reflection upon doctrinal issues.

The plan of the separate volumes is uniform, each consisting of an introduction, the translation, based on Nestle's Greek text, and a brief running commentary. From the nature of the case the last occupies most of the space. A possible more scientific impulse on the part of some readers is met by a select bibliography at the close of the introductory section.

The attitude of the authors both in isagogical and in theological questions is a moderately conservative one. That the Evangelists made mistakes is conceded. Mark in his one quotation Chap. 1:2 made one, and another in connection with Abiathar, 2:26. The tradition about Mark as the author is accepted and the date is placed about 70. Matthew also is from the Apostle whose name it bears, in preference to the view that the name Matthew was attached originally to the Logia and only passed over from that source to the First Gospel. Our Greek text of Matthew is the translation of an Aramaic original. The two-document hypothesis, specifically the dependence of Matthew on Mark or on an Ur-Markus, is not favored. Dr. van Leeuwen regards Matthew as older (in its Aramaic form) than Mark and assumes that Mark made use of it in writing his Gospel. As a tentative date for the Aramaic Matthew the period from 50-60 is named.

The expository comments are on the whole in keeping with the purpose of the work to give instruction of a popular kind. Here and there the resolve to exclude all reference to scientific processes and debates has interfered with the intelligibility of the statements. It is exceedingly doubtful whether from the casual references to Wrede's "Messianic secrecy" the average reader will be able to form any clear view of Wrede's hypothesis, and yet without such a view, the introduction of this critic's name is wholly useless. Apt to mislead is the statement on p. 28 of the introduction to Mark that "even Wrede brings out the metaphysical and divine aspect of Jesus in Mark." That Wrede brings this out is not out of keeping but wholly in line with his theory.