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REWRITING THE ENDING: MALACHI'S THREAT AND THE DESTRUCTION OF THE TEMPLE IN THE GOSPEL OF MARK

by

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A Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School,
Marquette University,
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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ABSTRACT
REWRITING THE ENDING: MALACHI'S THREAT AND THE DESTRUCTION OF THE TEMPLE IN THE GOSPEL OF MARK

John Michael Strachan, B.A., M.A., M.A., Th.M.

Marquette University, 2022

This is a study of the presence of the OT book of Malachi in the Gospel of Mark. The Gospel begins (1:2–3) with a conflated quotation of Mal 3:1; Exod 23:20; and Isa 40:3. Recent studies have judged that Isa 40:3 is hermeneutically influential on Mark's presentation of Jesus. Similarly, I aim to show that Mal 3:1, with its promise of a messenger who would proceed Yahweh's sudden arrival at the temple, is hermeneutically influential in ways heretofore not commonly recognized. The heart of my proposal is that Mark 1–13, that is, roughly three-quarters of the Gospel, is framed by an *inclusio* that opens with a reference to the first half of Mal 3:1 in 1:2b and closes with a reference to the second half of the same verse in 13:35–36.

In Chapter One, I examine the first half of this *inclusio*. While some have minimized the significance of Mal 3:1 in Mark's opening quotation, I argue that Mark's conflation of these three verses is a development of an intertextuality already present in Malachi.

In Chapter Two, I investigate the second half of the *inclusio*, making the case that Mark alludes to Mal 3:1b in the Parable of the Porter at the end of ch. 13. As I shall document, despite lexical similarities between these two texts, this possible allusion has gone largely, although not entirely, unrecognized. Chapters Three and Four explore some of these implications.

In Chapter Three, I propose that Mal 3:1 provides the narrative logic for chs. 11–12. In Chapter Four, I give a summary reading of Mark 13 that anticipates the allusion to Malachi's threat at the end of the discourse. Through close attention to Mark's allusions to the OT, I attempt to show that Jesus's prediction of the temple's destruction is the dominant theme throughout the discourse. As one of Israel's prophets, Malachi had promised an end to Israel's story—end as both goal and fulfillment. In his Gospel, especially in chs. 1 and 13, Mark is rewriting that ending.

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Introduction

> [I]t is possible ... that the allusion to John [the Baptist] here [in Mark 11:30] takes the reader back to the beginning of the gospel and recalls this verse of Malachi [3:1b] and its ultimate fulfillment in the coming of Jesus to the temple.... Since the language of 3:1b is never found in the New Testament, the suggestion made here can never be proven.
>
> John R. Donahue

Fifty years ago, the renowned Jesuit scholar John R. Donahue completed his dissertation on the Gospel of Mark at the University of Chicago.[1] In it, he mentions his hunch that Jesus's appeal to John the Baptist in his dispute with the temple authorities (Mark 11:30) is an allusion to Mal 3:1b. While Mark's initial reference to Mal 3:1 quotes only the first half of the verse (Mark 1:2), Donahue entertained the possibility that the second half may have some significance in Mark as well. As quoted above, he concludes that this suggestion can never be proven since "the language of 3:1b is never found in the New Testament."

My acquaintance with this quotation came about after I had completed my work, but I was gladdened when I realized that 50 years later, as I prepare to graduate from a Jesuit university by completing my own study on Mark, I am able to provide some of the proof for which Donahue's hunch calls. That is, this study claims to find what Donahue determines is never found: the language of Mal 3:1b in the NT, specifically in Mark 13:35–36.

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[1] Donahue graduated in 1972. His dissertation, directed by Norman Perrin, was published the next year: *Are You the Christ? The Trial Narrative in the Gospel of Mark*, SBLDS 10 (Missoula, MT: Society of Biblical Literature, 1973); the epigraph is found on p. 121 n. 2.

My starting point is that in the first century CE, some inheritors of Israel's scriptural tradition, Mark included, "believed themselves to be living in *a narrative in search of an ending.*"[2] What Christians would later call the OT provided the framework for that narrative and its promised conclusion. Various groups in Early Judaism were likewise engaged in creating competing stories-about-the-story.[3] According to Wright, *the story* had "a specific shape: that of Deuteronomy's scheme of blessing-exile-restoration"; "a specific schedule: that of Daniel's 'seventy weeks,' variously calculated"; and "a specific goal: some kind of great reversal, involving some at least of the many elements of eschatology (including the eventual return of Israel's God) that swirled around, unsystematized, in the minds of scripture-reading second-temple Jews."[4] I argue

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[2] N. T. Wright, "Narrative Theology: The Evangelists' Use of the Old Testament as an Implicit Overarching Narrative," in *Biblical Interpretation and Method: Essays in Honour of John Barton*, ed. Katharine J. Dell and Paul M. Joyce (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 193.

[3] "The competing-stories-about-the-story model" is the name given to Wright's approach to the OT in the NT by Matthew W. Bates, "The Old Testament in the New Testament," in *The State of New Testament Studies: A Survey of Recent Research*, ed. Scot McKnight and Nijay K. Gupta (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2019), 90. According to Bates, Wright is an example of the recent rise of narrative approaches, which "should be regarded as one of the most important trends in the study of the OT in the NT" (87). As for the term "Early Judaism," I prefer this to other possibilities, such as Second Temple Judaism, because several relevant Jewish authors, like Josephus, wrote after the destruction of the Second Temple. According to John J. Collins, Early Judaism extends from the conquests of Alexander (336–323 BCE) to the reign of Hadrian (117–138 CE) and the Bar Kokhba Revolt (132–135 CE). As he rightly states, the latter events "mark the end of an era, but not the end of Judaism by any means" ("Early Judaism in Modern Scholarship," in *Early Judaism: A Comprehensive Overview*, ed. John J. Collins and Daniel C. Harlow [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012], 2–3).

[4] Wright, "Narrative Theology," 193; he adds "variously calculated" because "[t]here is strong evidence to show that the Essenes, the Pharisees, and the Zealots all thought they could date, at least approximately, the time when the Son of David would come, and that in each case their calculations were based upon Daniel's prophecy of the 70 weeks (Dan. 9:24–27)" (Roger T. Beckwith, *Calendar and Chronology, Jewish and*

that Mark wrote his Gospel to tell the end of that story and that this is evidenced in the way the OT shapes his narrative.[5] The outline form of that ending had already been written by the prophets; Mark is rewriting the ending.

One prophet whose writings had helped give shape to the expected end was Malachi. At the end of Mal 2, the people charge Yahweh with covenantal unfaithfulness because of his absence. In ch. 3, Yahweh responds that he will send his messenger ahead of him, and then he will come to his temple suddenly (2:17–3:1). It is well known that Mark includes a reference to Mal 3:1a in the quotation at the beginning of his Gospel (1:2). What has gone largely unnoticed is that at the end of ch. 13, in the Parable of the Porter (13:34–37), Mark has language and imagery that is strikingly similar to Mal 3:1b, that is, the second half of the same verse. Yet no monograph or journal article has examined the possibility that this is intentional nor considered the implications of this possible allusion for reading the Gospel.

As Mark sees it, his narrative is to be the climax of a story started long ago, and he is not the only author who undertakes this task in the first century. The other canonical Gospels likewise attempt to show that "Jesus' teaching and actions, as well as his violent

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Christian: Biblical, Intertestamental and Patristic Studies, AGJU 33 [Leiden: Brill, 2005], 217).

[5] In referring to "Mark," I make no claim about the authorship of the Gospel. I utilize "Mark" both as shorthand for "the author of the Gospel known as the Gospel according to Mark" and to refer to the text of the Gospel. Context will make clear which is intended. On the authorship of Mark: Joel Marcus, *Mark 1–8: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB 27 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), 17–25; Adela Yarbro Collins, *Mark: A Commentary*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2007), 2–6.

death and ultimate vindication, constituted the continuation and climax of the ancient biblical story."[6]

Nor was this an enterprise distinctive of the Jesus movement. Several examples outside it could be given, but I have selected one with relevance to Mark 13 and the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple.[7] Josephus claims that what most incited the Jewish people to war with Rome was "an ambiguous oracle, likewise found in their sacred scriptures, to the effect that at that time (κατὰ τὸν καιρὸν ἐκεῖνον) one from their country would become ruler of the world" (*B.J.* 4.312–314).[8] He claims that although the "wise men" of the Jews thought it referred to someone of their own race, in fact the prophecy signified Vespasian, who has been proclaimed Emperor on Jewish soil. Although Josephus does not state this here, Vespasian was in power when Rome destroyed the Jerusalem Temple, and its destruction could only happen because "God ... now rested over Italy" (*B.J.* 5.367).[9]

The ambiguous oracle is "best explained as a reference to Daniel—not only to [the seventy weeks] passage in chapter 9, but to the book as a whole, and especially to the

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[6] Richard B. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Gospels* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2016), 5.

[7] Wright examines "this habit of retelling Israel's story" in OT and early Jewish literature in *Paul and the Faithfulness of God*, Christian Origins and the Question of God 4 (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2013), 114–39.

[8] Josephus, *The Jewish War*, trans. Henry St. J. Thackeray, 3 vols., LCL (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1927–1928).

[9] Similarly *B.J.* 5.412: "My belief, therefore, is that the Deity has fled from the holy places and taken His stand on the side of those with whom you are now at war."

predictions of chapters 2 and 7."[10] Josephus is remarkably vague about the meaning of these chapters in Daniel. He refuses to give an interpretation of the stone that breaks down the statue representing the four kingdoms (2:34–35, 45) because, he says, he is expected to write about the past and not "what is to be" (*A.J.* 10.210). [11] He also omits Dan 7 in his summary of the prophet (*A.J.* 10.263–64). He does note, however, that what makes Daniel unique among the prophets is that he not only prophesied future things but also "fixed the time (καιρὸν ὥριζεν) at which these would come to pass" (*A.J.* 10.268).

As with the stone in Dan 2, when Josephus writes about Deut 32—the classic hymnic summary of Deuteronomic blessings and curses—he says only that they contain "a prediction of future events, in accordance with which all has come and is coming to pass (γίνεται)" (*A.J.* 4.303). How Josephus interpreted passages like Dan 2, 7, 9, and Deut 32 is not at issue. What matters is that although he writes the ending differently, like Mark Josephus understands the latter half of the first century to be that moment when Israel's story is reaching its climax.[12] Daniel's 70 weeks were being fulfilled by a Roman

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[10] Wright, "Narrative Theology," 191; similarly William den Hollander, "Jesus, Josephus, and the Fall of Jerusalem: On Doing History with Scripture," *HvTSt* 71 (2015): 5, http://dx.doi.org/10.4102/hts.v71i1.2942. On the other hand, according to Craig A. Evans the "ambiguous oracle" refers to Num 24:17, not a passage in Daniel ("The Beginning of the Good News and the Fulfillment of Scripture in the Gospel of Mark," in *Hearing the Old Testament in the New Testament*, ed. Stanley E. Porter, McMaster New Testament Studies [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006], 91). He connects the oracle with the "portents that foretold the coming desolation," such as a star that resembled a sword standing over the city and a comet which continued for a year (*B.J.* 6.288–89).

[11] Josephus, *Jewish Antiquities*, trans. Henry St. J. Thackeray et al., 9 vols., LCL (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1930–1965).

[12] Similarly Hollander: "For Josephus, then, the nagging question of God was to be answered by viewing the destruction of the temple within the framework of salvation history presented in the Jewish Scriptures. The catastrophe that had befallen the Jewish nation could only be understood as a further outworking of the sin-punishment paradigm

emperor. Deuteronomy 32 was coming to pass in his own day. Daniel had fixed the time, and that time was now.

Therefore to understand Mark interpreters must reckon with the fact that in the first century there were some who expected to experience in their own time the decisive moment promised long ago by the prophets. Mark believed it had occurred in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, and likely would occur soon in the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple as well.[13] Josephus claims to have experienced it, or at least he told the Romans that he had, in the rise of Vespasian to power.

This study is an attempt to reread the Gospel of Mark by taking seriously a previously unexploited pair of references to Malachi. It is both exegetical, in that my work employs conventional methods of exegesis, and methodological, in that I explore new avenues of connection within chs. 1–13. I seek not only to defend the proposition that there is an allusion to Mal 3:1b at the end of ch. 13, but also to show that the detection of this allusion has exegetical significance. In short, I argue that by the allusion to Mal 3:1b at the end of ch. 13, Mark expects his readers to hear in Jesus's prediction of the temple's destruction the judgment threatened long ago in Mal 3.

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that was laid out in the book of Deuteronomy and applied to the history of Israel by the prophets" ("Fall of Jerusalem," 4).

[13] There is a consensus that Mark was written shortly before or after the first Jewish war with Rome, which lasted from 66 to 74 CE. According to Josephus, there was a huge fire that precipitated the temple's collapse (*B.J.* 6.250–87), but Mark makes no mention of a fire. If Mark had written after 70 CE, this omission would be surprising, especially since Mal 3:2 warns that Yahweh will be "like a refiner's fire" when he comes to his temple.

Methodology

Since the publication of Hays's *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul*, scholarly investigation into the OT in the NT has been indebted to his definitions and criteria.[14] I share with Hays the presupposition that Mark is "deeply embedded in a symbolic world shaped by the Old Testament—or, to put the point in a modern critical idiom, that [his] 'encyclopedia of production' is constituted in large measure by Israel's Scripture."[15] This manifests itself in the numerous quotations and allusions that Mark makes to the OT, especially in his opening verses: the gospel of Jesus Christ begins just

[14] Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989); further in Hays, *The Conversion of the Imagination: Paul as Interpreter of Israel's Scripture* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005); Hays, *Reading Backwards: Figural Christology and the Fourfold Gospel* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2014); Hays, *Gospels*.

[15] Hays, *Gospels*, 10; "encyclopedia of production" is an allusion to the concept of "encyclopedia" in the work of Umberto Eco. Hays continues: "This does not mean that the symbolic world of Greco-Roman pagan antiquity is insignificant for the Gospels, but that it is secondary; the Evangelists' constructive Christological affirmations are derived chiefly from hermeneutical appropriation and transformation of Israel's sacred texts and traditions." In contrast to the approach of Hays, Dennis R. MacDonald examines the influence of the classical Greek literature on Mark and proposes that Mark intentionally imitates Homer (*Homeric Epics and the Gospel of Mark* [New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000]; further in MacDonald, *The Gospels and Homer: Imitations of Greek Epic in Mark and Luke-Acts*, The New Testament and Greek Literature 1 [Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2015]).

as it was written in the prophet Isaiah.[16] Therefore "a discerning interpretation of a [Markan] text will often require recovery and exploration of these precursor texts."[17]

However, uncovering these "precursor texts" is not always easy.[18] This is because identification of antecedent sources is more an art than a science:

> The identification of allusions and especially of echoes is not a strictly scientific matter lending itself to conclusive proof, like testing for the presence or absence of a chemical in the bloodstream. The identification of allusions, rather, is an art practiced by skilled interpreters within a reading community.... The "yes" or "no'" judgment about any particular alleged allusion is primarily an *aesthetic* judgment pronounced upon the fittingness of a proposed reading.[19]

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[16] According to Howard Clark Kee, there are 57 quotations and approximately 160 allusions to the OT in chs. 11–16 alone ("The Function of Scriptural Quotations and Allusions in Mark 11–16," in *Jesus und Paulus: Festschrift für Werner Georg Kümmel zum 70. Geburtstag*, ed. E. Earle Ellis and Erich Grässer [Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1975], 171).

[17] Hays, *Gospels*, 10.

[18] Stanley E. Porter decries the lack of precise terminology in studies of the OT in the NT: "The range of terminology used to speak of the way a NT writer may use the OT or a related text is simply astounding" (*Sacred Tradition in the New Testament: Tracing Old Testament Themes in the Gospels and Epistles* [Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2016], 6). Porter distinguishes between formulaic quotation, direct quotation, paraphrase, allusion, and echo, and defines each (*Sacred Tradition*, 27–47). Yet his definitions often confuse rather than bring clarity. What he calls "paraphrase" is what most would consider to be an allusion, and his concept of "allusion" does not require intentionality (G. K. Beale, *Handbook on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament: Exegesis and Interpretation* [Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2012], 30 n. 1). For this reason, I continue with Hays's categories. A quotation is identified by either a citation formula or the verbatim reproduction of an extended chain of words. An allusion imbeds several words from the source or explicitly mentions a notable character or event, and failure to properly identify the allusion will result in an impoverished or diminished reading. An echo is the least distinct of the three, and the surface meaning is typically intelligible to readers even if they fail to hear the echoed language (*Gospels*, 10).

[19] Hays, *Conversion*, 30.

To aid in this task, Hays develops seven criteria now well-known: (1) Availability; (2) Volume; (3) Recurrence or Clustering; (4) Thematic Coherence; (5) Historical Plausibility; (6) History of Interpretation; and (7) Satisfaction.[20]

Availability asks whether the alleged source was available to the author. This criterion is more challenging for students of OT intratextuality and of Jesus tradition in Paul than for students of the OT in the NT. Volume asks two things: how many words or syntactical patterns the two texts share, and how distinctive, prominent, or popular the alleged precursor text is.[21] Recurrence asks if an author elsewhere refers to the same source broadly defined.[22]

Thematic coherence is similar to recurrence, except rather than asking if an author alludes to the source elsewhere, it asks if there is a similarity or coherence in the way the author reads the source. Historical plausibility asks if an author can in fact have intended the alleged meaning effect of any proposed allusion. The logic of this criterion is that if it can be shown that proposed allusions do have analogies and parallels in other

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[20] Hays, *Echoes of Scripture*, 29–32; Hays, *Conversion*, 34–45. Beale endorses these criteria with only slight modification (*Handbook*, 32–34). Hays's criteria rely upon the work of John Hollander, *The Figure of Echo: A Model of Allusion in Milton and After* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981).

[21] Hays acknowledges that one problem arising from this criterion is that it presumes that we know "what text form of the scriptural passages was available" to the NT author (*Conversion*, 35).

[22] Porter: "[Recurrence] may work to determine more or less frequent echoes, but it does not seem to be able to determine a singular echo, or where there is such a thing as an echo" (*Sacred Tradition*, 10). But none of Hays's criteria is meant to determine a singular echo on its own. Presumably, it is to critiques like this that Beale refers when he says that "Porter's criticisms at times reflect a too-narrow understanding of Hays's criteria" (*Handbook*, 34).

contemporary writings, "then we are on firmer ground in placing interpretive weight upon them."[23] While this criterion asks the interpreter to pay due attention to other contemporaneous readings of the proposed source or sources, history of interpretation asks if other readers of the NT text have seen the proposed allusion or echo.[24]

The last criterion is satisfaction. This is arguably the most difficult criterion to define, and yet Hays judges it the most important.[25] Here he is most overtly dependent on Hollander: "We evaluate Hollander's study of echo—if we are willing to read him on his own terms—not by asking whether it provides an adequate theory of intertextuality in Milton but by asking whether his readings are good readings."[26] The decision will be mostly subjective, and it will be up to the interpretive community to decide whether a

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[23] Hays, *Conversion*, 41.

[24] One way to approach this criterion is to look at works that compile references to the OT in the NT: Henry Gough, *New Testament Quotations Collated with the Scriptures of the Old Testament* (London: Walton & Maberly, 1855); David McCalman Turpie, *The Old Testament in the New: A Contribution to Biblical Criticism and Interpretation* (London: Williams & Norgate, 1868); Patrick Fairbairn, *Hermeneutical Manual* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1876); Crawford Howell Toy, *Quotations in the New Testament* (New York: Scribner's Sons, 1884); Willhelm Dittmar, *Vetus Testamentum in Novo: Die Alttestamentlichen Parallelen des Neuen Testaments in Wortlaut der Urtexte und der Septuaginta* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1899); Eugen Hühn, *Die alttestamentlichen Citate und Reminiscenzen im Neuen Testament* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1990); Gleason L. Archer and Gregory Chirichigno, *Old Testament Quotations in the New Testament* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1983); Robert G. Bratcher, *Old Testament Quotations in the New Testament* (London: United Bible Societies, 1984); Bradley H. McLean, *Citations and Allusions to Jewish Scripture in Early Christian and Jewish Writings through 180 C.E.* (Lewiston, NY: Mellen, 1992); Evans, *Ancient Texts for New Testament Studies: A Guide to the Background Literature* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2005), 342–409.

[25] Hays, *Echoes of Scripture*, 31.

[26] Hays, *Echoes of Scripture*, 32.

proposal qualifies as a good reading. As a result of this study, I hope readers will find themselves saying, "Oh, *so that* is what [Mark] means here in passage *x*; and furthermore, if that's right, then we can begin to understand what he means in passage *y* and why he uses *these* certain words in that place."[27] This would mean I have met the criterion of satisfaction.

One last comment about Hays's methodology should be made: regardless of whether we are considering a proposed quotation, allusion, or echo, "readers should be on the alert for the possibility that any particular intertextual connection may create a poetic effect known as 'metalepsis.'"[28] This is "a literary technique of citing or echoing a small bit of a precursor text in such a way that the reader can grasp the significance of the echo only by recalling or recovering the original context from which the fragmentary echo came and then reading the two texts in dialogical juxtaposition."[29]

As Hays's criteria indicate, the conversation—or reading in dialogical juxtaposition—involves more than two texts. According to Francis Watson, this hermeneutical conversation is between "three bodies of literature: [NT texts], the scriptural texts to which they appeal, and the non-Christian Jewish literature of the Second Temple period that appeals to the same scriptural texts."[30] For the purposes of

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[27] Hays, *Conversion*, 44.

[28] Hays, *Gospels*, 11.

[29] Hays, *Gospels*, 11. Here and elsewhere, Hays is indebted to the foundational work of C. H. Dodd, *According to the Scriptures: The Sub-Structure of New Testament Theology* (London: Nisbet, 1952).

[30] Watson, *Paul and the Hermeneutics of Faith*, 2nd ed., T&T Clark Cornerstones (London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2016), 2.

this study, what matters more than what Malachi or Daniel might have meant in their original context is what Mark as a first-century reader might reasonably have thought they meant.

Recent Research on the Study of the OT in Mark

Interest in the OT in the NT goes back at least as far as the debates between the theological schools of Antioch and Alexandria.[31] Yet in 1993 Marcus could write that "Mark's use of the Old Testament has been a relatively neglected subject in recent scholarship."[32] There are many reasons for this, but principal among them is that Mark was neglected early on in favor of Matthew and Luke.[33] And even when Mark was read, it was regarded as merely a companion to the other Gospels, rather than being allowed to speak on its own terms.[34]

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[31] Robert M. Grant and David Tracy, *A Short History of the Interpretation of the Bible*, 2nd ed. (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984), 63–72.

[32] Marcus, *The Way of the Lord: Christological Exegesis of the Old Testament in the Gospel of Mark*, SNTW (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1992), 2.

[33] Indeed, Mark did not come into its own until the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in connection with the quest for the historical Jesus (so Collins, *Mark*, 1).

[34]Samuel Sandmel: "Mark in many treatments is explained incorrectly because Matthew and Luke (and John) are read with him" ("Prolegomena to a Commentary on Mark," in *New Testament Issues*, ed. Richard A. Batey [London: SCM, 1970], 45–56). Sandmel's name is prominent in the discussion for his 1961 SBL presidential address, published as "Parallelomania," *JBL* 81 (1962): 1–13.

So far as I have been able to discover, the first monograph to be written on the OT in Mark was that of Alfred Suhl, a student of Willi Marxsen.[35] According to Suhl, Mark's primary purpose was to address his community rather than relate past events. Mark is concerned neither with OT proofs nor with the notion of promise and fulfillment. The OT in Mark is mainly for coloring: it is illustrative, to show that the same God who spoke in the OT is also involved in the events of the Gospel and therefore in the present of Mark's community. Appealing to 1 Cor 15:3–4 by way of analogy, Suhl holds that Mark is interested only in showing that what happened to Jesus was "according to the Scriptures."

Suhl may be challenged in several ways. First, he never adequately addresses the fact that important moments in Mark's Gospel are often marked by OT quotations. Second, he seems not to recognize Mark's sophistication, especially in the opening quotation.[36] Third, it is not clear why Mark bothers to quote the OT at all if there is no sense of fulfillment, as Suhl insists.

Suhl's work evidently sparked fresh investigations of the matter.[37] Several studies appeared soon after his that investigated particular OT themes in Mark or the OT in

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[35] Suhl, *Die Funktion der alttestamentlichen Zitate und Anspielungen im Markusevangelium* (Gütersloh: Mohn, 1965); Marxsen is best remembered for his *Mark the Evangelist: Studies on the Redaction History of the Gospel*, Ger. orig. 1959, trans. James Boyce et al. (repr., Nashville: Abingdon, 1969).

[36] According to Suhl, καθὼς γέγραπται in 1:2 "does not as yet say very much for Mark" (*Funktion*, 137).

[37] Some of Suhl's conclusions were already anticipated in Siegfried Schulz, "Markus und das Alte Testament," *ZTK* 58 (1961): 184–97. After Suhl: Hugh Anderson, "The Old Testament in Mark's Gospel," in *The Use of the Old Testament in the New and Other Essays: Studies in Honor of William Franklin Stinespring*, ed. James M. Efird (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1972), 280–306; W. S. Vorster, "The Function of the Use of the Old Testament in Mark," *Neot* 14 (1981): 62–72; Morna D. Hooker, "Mark," in *It Is Written: Scripture Citing Scripture: Essays in Honour of Barnabas*

particular sections of Mark. For example, Ulrich Mauser examined the OT basis for Mark's wilderness theme; and Lars Hartman sought to identify the OT traditions in Mark 13 in comparison with early Jewish apocalyptic texts.[38] Hartman argues that ch. 13 is a midrash on the book of Daniel and is a maximalist in identifying possible antecedent sources. But even he makes no mention of the possibility of an allusion to Mal 3:1 in the Parable of the Porter. Kee makes no mention of this possibility either.[39] In 1980, Hans-Jörg Steichele published his dissertation on OT motifs in Markan Christology.[40] This was followed by several studies that for various reasons have had little impact on modern readings of Mark.[41]

After these works, several important monographs were written on the OT in Mark. The first is *The Way of the Lord* by Marcus. His principal aim is to uncover Mark's Christology by examining passages in which "christological points are scored by means

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Lindars, SSF, ed. D. A. Carson and H. G. M. Williamson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 220–30.

[38] Mauser, *Christ in the Wilderness: The Wilderness Theme in the Second Gospel and Its Basis in the Biblical Tradition*, SBT 39 (Naperville, IL: Allenson, 1963); Hartman, *Prophecy Interpreted: The Formation of Some Jewish Apocalyptic Texts and of the Eschatological Discourse Mark 13 Par.*, ConBNT 1 (Lund: Gleerup, 1966).

[39] Kee, "Function."

[40] Steichele, *Der leidende Sohn Gottes: eine Untersuchung einiger alttestamentlicher Motive in der Christologie des Markusevangeliums: zugleich ein Beitrag zur Erhellung des überlieferungsgeschichtlichen Zusammenhangs zwischen Altem und Neuem Testament*, Biblische Untersuchungen 14 (Regensburg: Pustet, 1980).

[41] J. Duncan M. Derrett, *The Making of Mark: The Scriptural Bases of the Earliest Gospel*, 2 vols. (Shipston-on-Stour: Drinkwater, 1985); Wolfgang Roth, *Hebrew Gospel: Cracking the Code of Mark* (Oak Park, IL: Meyer-Stone, 1988); Dale Miller and Patricia Miller, *The Gospel of Mark as Midrash on Earlier Jewish and New Testament Literature*, Studies in the Bible and Early Christianity 21 (Lewiston, NY: Mellen, 1990).

of reference to Old Testament texts."[42] He begins with the introductory quotation and makes his way systematically through the Gospel, although he moves directly from Jesus's baptism (1:9–11) to the transfiguration (9:2–8) and from Jesus's question about Ps 110:1 (12:35–37) to the passion narrative (chs. 14–16).[43] Marcus's conclusions regarding the OT in Mark are consistent with my goal of reading the Gospel as the climax of a story rushing towards its conclusion in the first century. He maintains that Mark's exegesis of the OT

> reflects the eschatological expectation that gripped the Jewish world in the period leading up to and including the Jewish War of A.D. 66–74. Spurred on by the conviction that God was about to act decisively to fulfill his ancient promises to his people, throw off the hated yoke of pagan rulers, and establish his worldwide rule through a purified Israel, Jews were rereading their ancient writings as prophecies of this hoped-for-act of saving holy war.[44]

A few years after Marcus's monograph, Rikki E. Watts published his *Isaiah's New Exodus and Mark.*[45] There is considerable overlap between Marcus and Watts.[46] But whereas Marcus's work is primarily concerned with Christology, Watts's purpose is to show that Mark's fundamental hermeneutic for presenting and interpreting Jesus derives from the sources of his opening quotation: "Isaiah 40:3 presages the inauguration of the

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[42] Marcus, *Way*, 8.

[43] Marcus discusses Mark 13 mostly in his examination of references to Dan 7:13 in the passion narrative.

[44] Marcus, *Way*, 199.

[45] Watts, *Isaiah's New Exodus and Mark*, WUNT 2/88 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1997).

[46] Watts notes in the preface: "One monograph in particular—*The Way of the Lord* by Joel Marcus ...— has two chapters that gratifyingly offer independent support to elements of the thesis as originally proposed" (*New Exodus*, v).

long-awaited Isaianic New Exodus while the Malachi 3:1/Exodus 23:20 conflation highlights the threat inherent in Yahweh's New Exodus coming."[47]

By now it will be clear that the present study develops ideas in Watts's monograph. In agreement with Watts, I argue that Mark's opening quotation has extended hermeneutical influence on the Gospel, although Watts's work concentrates mostly on the influence of Isaiah while I give more attention to Malachi. What is distinct about my approach is (1) that Watts does not consider the potential allusion to Mal 3:1 in the Parable of the Porter; and (2) that similar to Marcus's work, Watts has no discussion of Mark 13.

Five years after Watts, Thomas R. Hatina published *In Search of a Context: The Function of Scripture in Mark's Narrative*.[48] Hatina's work was the first since Suhl to incorporate all the scriptural quotations in Mark. He is critical of the methodology of Watts and Marcus, which he labels the source-oriented approach, because it treats Mark's exegesis of the OT as the hermeneutical key to the Gospel "[i]nstead of focusing on the salient features of Mark's narrative, such as prominent themes and the plot, from which one might determine an interpretive paradigm."[49] Hatina insists on interpreting OT quotations and allusions first and foremost within their Markan narrative contexts. As a result, his reading of ch. 13 is similar to the one I propose in Chapter Four below.

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[47] Watts, *New Exodus*, 5.

[48] Hatina, *In Search of a Context: The Function of Scripture in Mark's Narrative*, JSNTSup 232 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 2002).

[49] Hatina, *Search*, 46.

Since Hatina's study, several monographs have appeared on the OT in specific sections of Mark.[50] The only full-length work on the presence of OT quotations and allusions throughout the whole Gospel is Watts's 2007 commentary.[51] This work is not a commentary in the usual sense, though, because it is concerned only with those places where Mark quotes or alludes to the OT. Unlike in his earlier monograph, Watts does examine Mark 13 in the commentary, but once again makes no mention of a possible allusion to Mal 3:1 in Mark 13:35–36.

Lastly, Hays's *Echoes of Scripture in the Gospels* devotes an extensive chapter to each of the canonical Gospels.[52] Hays describes how each Evangelist carries forward and renarrates the story of Israel, draws on scriptural stories and images to interpret the significance of Jesus, and shapes the story of the church by evoking texts from Israel's Scripture.[53] Regarding the OT in Mark, he writes, "Many of the key images in this mysterious narrative are drawn from Israel's Scriptures; indeed, a reader who fails to discern the significance of these images can hardly grasp Mark's message."[54]

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[50] Kelli S. O'Brien, *The Use of Scripture in the Markan Passion Narrative*, LNTS 384 (London: T&T Clark, 2010); Paul T. Sloan, *Mark 13 and the Return of the Shepherd*, LNTS 604 (London: T&T Clark, 2019).

[51] Watts, "Mark," in *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, ed. G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007), 111–249.

[52] On Mark: *Gospels*, 15–103.

[53] Hays, *Gospels*, 14.

[54] Hays, *Gospels*, 15.

Procedure

The above survey of recent studies of the OT in Mark has shown that, although it was once a neglected area in the field of NT studies, this way of reading and interpreting Mark's Gospel has had a resurgence of late. My intention in this study is to become a participant in this resurgence.

In Chapter One, I examine the first half of my proposed *inclusio*. Mark 1:2–3 has a conflated quotation of Mal 3:1a; Exod 23:20; Isa 40:3 that is attributed to "Isaiah the prophet." That Mal 3:1 is part of this quotation is a commonplace in Markan scholarship, although recently some have sought to minimize its significance. Others have argued that Mark 1:2b or even all of 1:1–3 is a gloss. I seek to demonstrate not only that these verses come from the hand of Mark but also that his conflation of the three verses reflects an intertextuality already present within Mal 3:1.

The second half of my proposed *inclusio* is the subject of Chapter Two. My contention is that in the Parable of the Porter, that is, at the end of ch. 13, Mark intentionally alludes to the second half of Mal 3:1. The implications of this allusion are numerous. If indeed Mark begins ch. 1 with an allusion to the first half of Mal 3:1 and ends ch. 13 with an allusion to the second half, then all of Mark that precedes his passion narrative may plausibly be read through the hermeneutical lens of Malachi's threat. This is especially true of chs. 11–13, which are the focus of my next two Chapters.

Already, Watts and Marcus have argued that Isa 40:3 is hermeneutically determinative for Mark 8:22–10:52, his so-called Way section. Chapter Three below examines the possibility that Mal 3:1 is likewise hermeneutically determinative, but for Mark 11–13. Malachi's threat is that the Lord will come suddenly to his temple.

Accordingly, at the start of ch. 11 Jesus arrives at the city and makes his way to the temple. Malachi 3 provides the narrative logic for this. So it is that Mark presents Jesus as enacting the judgment Malachi had threatened, and his subsequent disputes with the temple authorities are likewise reminiscent of the prophetic disputes in Malachi.

Finally, in Chapter Four, I suggest a reading of Mark 13 that is consistent with hearing an allusion to Mal 3:1b at the end of the discourse. More specifically, I agree with those who read the entirety of ch. 13 as a prediction of the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple.

Chapter 1

An Overlooked *Inclusio,* Part 1: Malachi 3:1a in Mark 1:2

> The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. As it is written in Isaiah the prophet, "Behold, I send my messenger before your face, who will prepare your way, the voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.'"
>
> Mark 1:1–3 ESV

1.1 Introduction

Mark frames the first thirteen chapters of his Gospel with an *inclusio*. The first half of the *inclusio* is part of a quotation that he attributes to the prophet Isaiah (1:2a).[1] It is a commonplace in Markan studies that the opening verses of Mark set the stage for what immediately follows, but it has recently been argued that these verses serve a larger purpose.[2] Because the first half of my proposed *inclusio* occurs within these introductory

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[1] The reading τοῖς προφήταις, which is attested in A W $f^{1.13}$ 𝔐 sy^{h} bo^{mss}, is a later reading intended to correct Mark's "mistake." Similarly R. T. France, *The Gospel of Mark*, NIGTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), 60; Marcus, *Mark 1–8*, 142; Collins, *Mark*, 133. Regarding ἐν τῷ Ἡσαΐᾳ, Mark 1:2 and Rom 9:25 are the only examples of a NT author citing an OT passage with ἐν plus the name of an author, and according to Marcus there is nothing exactly comparable in rabbinic literature (*Mark 1–8*, 142). Mark may be making the subtle point that although the words he quotes are found in book of Isaiah, not to mention the books of Exodus and Malachi, the person speaking is not Isaiah but God. This is consistent with the proposal of Frank Moore Cross Jr. that the setting for the prologue of Second Isaiah (40:1–11) is the heavenly court ("The Council of Yahweh in Second Isaiah," *JNES* 12 [1953]: 274–77). Likewise Christopher R. Seitz argues that all of chs. 40–48 is speech "from the divine council without need of prophetic agency" ("The Book of Isaiah 40–66: Introduction, Commentary, and Reflections," *NIB*, 6:246).

[2] Marcus writes: "It would be no exaggeration ... to say that 'the way of Jesus/the way of the Lord' is not only the double theme of Mark's Gospel but also the controlling paradigm for his interpretation of the life of his community" (*Way*, 47). The debate over the extent of Mark's opening section does not need to be repeated here. Robert A. Guelich summarizes the various proposals and concludes: "Mark 1:1 and 1:2–3 form the heading for the opening section of Mark's Gospel, and this opening section begins with

verses, it is likely that Mal 3:1, along with Isa 40:3, has extended hermeneutical influence on Mark's Gospel.[3]

As for the second half of the quotation, there is a consensus that it derives from Isa 40:3 LXX: Mark 1:3 is nearly verbatim with Isa 40:3 LXX, and he attributes the quotation to Isaiah.[4] There is less agreement about the first half. Malachi 3:1a is commonly identified as the source of Mark 1:2b, usually with some influence from Exod 23:20. Recently some have questioned this conclusion because the first part of Mark 1:2b is practically identical to Exod 23:20 LXX.[5] Without denying the presence of Exod 23:20 LXX in Mark 1:2b, I will argue that the center of gravity is on Mal 3:1 and not Exod

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1:4 and concludes with Jesus' preaching in 1:15" ("'The Beginning of the Gospel': Mark 1:1–15," *BR* 38 [1982]: 5–6).

[3] Watts: "Strangely, however, apart from passing comments on a possible connection with John the Baptist and the Temple and fig tree complex, no one seems to grant much weight to the fact that Mark has also included the Malachi/Exodus text in his citation and that they too might be programmatic" (*New Exodus*, 60). He does attempt to correct this oversight, but he makes no mention of Mal 3:1b in Mark 13:35–36 and does not discuss Mark 13 in relation to Isaiah's new exodus nor Malachi's threat.

[4] The form of Isa 40:3 in Mark 1:3 is dependent upon the syntax of the LXX, ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ (Krister Stendahl, *The School of St. Matthew and Its Use of the Old Testament*, ASNU 20 [Philadelphia: Fortress, 1968], 4). The Masoretic accentuation, while late, connects במדבר with פנו דרך rather than with קורא. This is supported by the supposed parallelism between במדבר פנו דרך יהוה and ישרו בערבה מסלה לאלהינו. Darrell L. Bock has argued on the basis of the imperfect parallelism in the MT and support for the LXX rendering in the Peshitta, Vulgate, and rabbinic exposition that the MT and LXX likely reflect competing renderings of an original Hebrew *Vorlage* (*Proclamation from Prophecy and Pattern: Lucan Old Testament Christology*, JSNTSup 12 [Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1987], 95).

[5] Marcus identifies Exod 23:20 LXX as the source of the first half of the quotation and attributes only ὃς κατασκευάσει τὴν ὁδόν σου to Mal 3:1 (*Mark 1–8*, 142). Robert H. Gundry likewise downplays the allusion to Mal 3:1 (*The Use of the Old Testament in St. Matthew's Gospel: With Special Reference to the Messianic Hope*, NovT Supp 18 [Leiden: Brill, 1967], 11 n. 2).

23:20. The presence of Exod 23:20 in Mark 1:2b is best explained by an intertextuality already present in Mal 3:1.

But two objections must be answered. First, some conclude that Mark 1:2b is an early gloss.[6] Second, it has recently been argued that Mark 1:1–3 is a later addition comparable to the Gospel's longer ending. Both arguments run counter to my thesis regarding the importance of Mark 1:2b in the Gospel.[7] Therefore in this chapter I will (1) investigate Mark's introductory quotation; (2) argue that, despite the similarities between Exod 23:20 LXX and Mark 1:2b, Mal 3:1a is to be regarded as the primary source; and (3) defend the authenticity of Mark 1:1–3 as a whole. If these conclusions are correct, readers attentive to Mark's opening quotation will expect Mal 3:1, along with Isa 40:3, to have hermeneutical influence on the Gospel.

1.2 Mark's Opening Quotation

The Gospel of Mark opens with a beginning (ἀρχή), but Mark's beginning is different from that of the other canonical Gospels—no description of Jesus's birth, no mention of his mother and father, no genealogy, no mention of preexistence. Instead, Mark begins his Gospel with a quotation that he attributes to the prophet Isaiah and with

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[6] E.g., J. A. T. Robinson, "Elijah, John and Jesus: An Essay in Detection," *NTS* 4 (1958): 267–68; Ernest Best, *The Temptation and the Passion: The Markan Soteriology*, SNTSMS 2 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965), 114 n. 1; Stendahl, *School*, 51. This theory was popularized by M.-J. Lagrange, *Évangile selon Saint Matthieu*, 3rd ed., *EBib* (Paris: Libraire Victor Lecoffre, 1927), cxx.

[7] J. K. Elliott, "Mark 1.1–3 – A Later Addition to the Gospel?," *NTS* 46 (2000): 584–88.

the baptism and preaching of John the Baptist in the wilderness. Through the opening quotation, Mark introduces the narrative, identifies its principal character, and orients its readers to the place of his gospel within the grand narrative of Israel and Israel's God.

According to Hays, Mark "presupposes that Israel has reached a moment of crisis" and is "still in exile."[8] Some of the people of God have returned to the land, but by "still in exile" Hayes refers to more than physical absence.[9] Put another way, in the

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[8] Hays, *Gospels*, 16. The seminal studies of this notion of continuing exile are Odil Hannes Steck, *Israel und das gewaltsame Geschick der Propheten. Untersuchungen zur Überlieferung des deuteronomistischen Geschichtsbildes im Alten Testament, Spätjudentum und Urchristentum*, WMANT 23 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1967); Steck, "Das Problem theologischer Strömungen in nachexilischer Zeit," *EvT* 28 (1968): 445–58. This theme is studied extensively from a variety of perspectives in James M. Scott, ed., *Exile: Old Testament, Jewish, and Christian Perspectives*, Journal for the Study of Judaism Supplement Series 56 (Leiden: Brill, 1997); Scott, ed., *Restoration: Old Testament, Jewish, and Christian Perspectives*, Journal for the Study of Judaism Supplement Series 72 (Leiden: Brill, 2001). Presently, this theme is often associated with Wright because it features prominently in many of his writings, especially in Wright, *The New Testament and the People of God*, Christian Origins and the Question of God 1 (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992), 268–72; Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God*, Christian Origins and the Question of God 2 (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1996), xvii–xviii, 126–27, 203–4, 248–50; and more recently Wright, *Faithfulness*, 139–63. His arguments are summarized and evaluated in Carey C. Newman, ed., *Jesus and the Restoration of Israel: A Critical Assessment of N. T. Wright's* Jesus and the Victory of God (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1999); Scott, ed., *Exile: A Conversation with N. T. Wright* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2017).

[9] The return from the Babylonian exile is sometimes offered as an apparent rebuttal to Wright's claims, e.g., by Maurice Casey, who states, "We would need stunningly strong arguments to convince us that these Jews really believed they were in exile when they were in Israel" ("Where Wright Is Wrong: A Critical Review of N. T. Wright's *Jesus and the Victory of God*," *JSNT* 69 [1998]: 99). But there was more than one exile in Israel's history: the Assyrian exile of the ten northern tribes of Israel in 722 BCE (2 Kings 15–17) and the Babylonian exile of the two southern tribes of Judah in 586 BCE (2 Kings 24–25). While the Babylonian exile had come to an end in 539 BCE, the Assyrian exile had not. Therefore, Brant Pitre concludes, "even during the Second Temple period, the greater portion of Israel remained in Exile" (*Jesus, the Tribulation, and the End of the Exile: Restoration Eschatology and the Origin of the Atonement*, WUNT 2/204 [Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005], 34). Since the restoration envisioned in the OT is a restoration of all twelve tribes, e.g., Ezek 37:11–14, 15–28, the theme of

words of Wright, "within the *continuing narrative* which virtually all Jews believed themselves to be living in, ... a great many second-Temple Jews interpreted *that part of the continuing narrative in which they were living* in terms of the so-called Deuteronomic scheme of sin-exile-restoration, with themselves still somewhere in the middle stage, that of 'exile.'"[10]

Mark opens his Gospel with the words of Isa 40:3, the *locus classicus* of Israel's hope for restoration from exile, and he ties this hope to his titular sentence (1:1) with καθὼς γέγραπται (1:2).[11] This quotation not only calls to mind the Deuteronomic scheme

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continued exile is not merely a metaphor. It is literal in the sense that not all twelve tribes have returned and theological in the sense described by Hays and Wright.

[10] Wright, *Faithfulness*, 140. He later summarizes: "What then does 'exile' mean, in this continuing sense? Answer: the time of the curse spoken of in Deuteronomy and Leviticus, a curse that lasts as long as Israel is 'the tail and not the head', still subject to the rule, and often the abusive treatment, of foreign nations with their blasphemous and wicked idolatry and immorality, not yet in possession of the promised (even if laughably ambitious) global sovereignty. As long, in other words, as the condition of Israel is much like that in Egypt, they will be waiting for the new exodus. As long as Persia, Egypt, Greece, Syria or Rome are in charge, the 'exile' is not really over. And as long as that exile is not over, we are still in Deuteronomy 29, hoping and praying that Daniel's 490 years will soon be complete, that the Messiah will come at last, and that—in Daniel's majestic language—Israel's God will act in accordance with his righteousness, his faithfulness to the covenant" (*Faithfulness*, 150).

[11] Joseph A. Fitzmyer discusses the corresponding phrase כאשר כתוב in 1QS 8.14, where it introduces a quotation of Isa 40:3 ("The Use of Explicit Old Testament Quotations in Qumran Literature and in the New Testament," *NTS* 7 [1961]: 300–301; repr. in Fitzmyer, *Essays on the Semitic Background of the New Testament*, SBLSBS 5 [Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1971], 3–58). Isaiah 40:3 LXX and Mark 1:3 are identical except for the change of τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν to αὐτοῦ. This is likely for Christological purposes, although this is not the only explanation; 1QS 8.13, which likewise is dependent upon Isa 40:3, substitutes the third person pronoun for the divine name: ללכת למדבר לפנות שם את דרך הואהא, "to go to the desert to prepare there the way of him" (Klyne R. Snodgrass, "Streams of Tradition Emerging from Isaiah 40:1–5 and Their Adaptation in the New Testament," *JSNT* 8 [1980]: 160). Further on Isaiah's role in Mark: Marcus, *Way*; Watts, *New Exodus*; Hooker, "Isaiah in Mark's Gospel," in *Isaiah in*

of sin-exile-restoration but also signals that in what follows God's promised deliverance is at hand because "the time is fulfilled" (1:15).[12] Now is the moment when God will "rend the heavens and come down" (Isa 63:19).[13] The salvation promised "in Isaiah" has come at last, but it has not come alone. Mark's quotation contains more than a reference to Isaiah; it also alludes to Mal 3:1 and Exod 23:20.[14]

It is often wondered why Mark attributes the quotation to Isaiah alone while including material from other parts of the OT. Several proposals have been made. First, Mark may be unaware that 1:2b is not from Isaiah; he has simply made a mistake.[15] Related to this is the possibility that Mark has borrowed a string of quotations known as a *testimonium.* This theory suggests that the *testimonium* known to Mark was transmitted

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the New Testament, ed. Steve Moyise and Maarten J. J. Menken, The New Testament and the Scriptures of Israel (London: T&T Clark, 2005), 35–49.

[12] This language is suggestive of an apocalyptic understanding of history as foreordained by God with pivotal events occurring on a specific timetable. If so, Mark 1:15 may be an allusion to Dan 7:22: "until the Ancient One came; then judgment was given for the holy ones of the Most High, and the time arrived when the holy ones gained possession of the kingdom."

[13] Mark alludes to this Isaianic, apocalyptic prayer when he describes the "rending" of the heavens at Jesus's baptism (1:10). Mark has σχίζω, which seems to reflect קרע from Isa 63:19 MT, whereas Matt 3:16//Luke 3:21 (Q) has a form of ἀνοίγω, as in Isa 64:1 LXX [=63:19 MT]. Isaiah's apocalyptic prayer acknowledges the people's sin and the need for God to bring deliverance to his people.

[14] The combination of Isa 40:3 and Mal 3:1 has been recognized for quite some time, e.g., Origen, *Commentary on John* 6.24 (*AEG* 1:279–80); Jerome, *Letters to Pammachius* 57.9 (*NPNF*^{2} 6:116). Both authors consider Mal 3:1 alone to be the source of the first half of Mark's quotation and not Exod 23:20.

[15] So Hooker, "Mark," 220.

under the name of its most prominent source, Isaiah.[16] Second, 1:2b may be a later gloss.[17] Third, Mark may attribute the quotation to Isaiah because it is the most extended part of the conflation or because of the immense popularity of Isaiah.[18]

Attributing the quotation to Isaiah most likely reflects "not ignorance but theological intentionality."[19] The ascription indicates that "the overall conceptual framework for [Mark's] Gospel is the Isaianic New Exodus, the prophetic transformation of Israel's memory of her founding moment into a model for her future hope."[20] Isaiah the prophet and his announcement of the end of the exile is "the central theme" of the Gospel and "the proper context for understanding the gospel's beginnings."[21] Hays writes: "By naming Isaiah in particular—and by bringing the quotation to its climax with words taken from Isa 40, Isaiah's pivotal declaration of hope for the end of the exile—Mark signals his readers that the *euangelion* of Jesus Christ is to be read within the matrix of Isaiah's prophetic vision: God will return to Zion and restore Israel."[22]

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[16] J. Rendel Harris, *Testimonies*, 2 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1916–1920), 1:49, 2:64-65; Dodd, *According to the Scriptures*, 24; Stendahl, *School*, 51; Martin C. Albl, *"And Scripture Cannot Be Broken": The Form and Function of the Early Christian* Testimonia *Collections*, NovT Supp 96 (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 21; Richard N. Longenecker, *Biblical Exegesis in the Apostolic Period*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 150.

[17] Vincent Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark: The Greek Text with Introduction, Notes, and Indexes*, 2nd ed. (London: Macmillan, 1966), 153.

[18] Gundry, *Use*, 125; Gundry, *Mark: A Commentary on His Apology for the Cross* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993), 42.

[19] Hays, *Gospels*, 21; similarly Marcus, *Way*, 16; Watts, *New Exodus*, 88–90.

[20] Watts, *New Exodus*, 90.

[21] Marcus, *Way*, 18.

[22] Hays, *Gospels*, 21.

1.3 Exodus 23:20 or Mal 3:1?

While there is little doubt about the source of Mark 1:3, the matter becomes more complicated when trying to identify the source of the first half of the quotation. The two most common suggestions are Exod 23:20 and Mal 3:1a, and the complications in deciding between these two verses are best examined by viewing the LXX of Exodus and Malachi together with Mark set between them:[23]

Exod 23:20 LXX	Mark 1:2b	Mal 3:1a LXX
καὶ ἰδοὺ ἐγὼ ἀποστέλλω τὸν ἄγγελόν μου πρὸ προσώπου σου, ἵνα φυλάξῃ σε ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ, ὅπως εἰσαγάγῃ σε εἰς τὴν γῆν, ἣν ἡτοίμασά σοι.	ἰδοὺ ἀποστέλλω τὸν ἄγγελόν μου πρὸ προσώπου σου, ὃς κατασκευάσει τὴν ὁδόν σου ...	ἰδοὺ ἐγὼ ἐξαποστέλλω τὸν ἄγγελόν μου, καὶ ἐπιβλέψεται ὁδὸν πρὸ προσώπου μου ...

While earlier commentators identified the source of Mark 1:2b as Mal 3:1, the first half of Mark 1:2b and Exod 23:20 LXX are nearly identical. Only the emphatic ἐγώ in Exod 23:20 LXX distinguishes the two. This similarity might therefore promote agreement with recent proposals that downplay the presence of Mal 3:1.

But Exod 23:20 LXX cannot account for the relative clause ὃς κατασκευάσει τὴν ὁδόν σου. This derives from Mal 3:1, but not from the LXX.[24] In Mark 1:2b,

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[23] This literary device has gone by many names. James R. Edwards surveys the research on intercalations in Mark and prefers to call them sandwiches ("Markan Sandwiches: The Significance of Interpolations in Markan Narratives," *NovT* 31 [1989]: 193–216). I note that Edwards employs the term "interpolation" both for Mark's ordering of his material, and, as conventionally, of later editions.

[24] Mark 1:2 differs from Mal 3:1 LXX as follows: (1) Mark has ἀποστέλλω, Malachi has ἐξαποστέλλω, which is perhaps due to the influence of Exod 23:20 LXX or because of Mark's demonstrable preference: he has ἀποστέλλω twenty times (1:2; 3:14;

"κατασκευάσει assumes the Masoretic reading (*piel*) while the LXX reads *qal*: ἐπιβλέψεται, for which reason the Synoptics' dependence on the Hebrew text is obvious."[25] If Mark is not quoting the LXX, and since the phrase ὃς κατασκευάσει τὴν ὁδόν σου does not have a parallel in Exod 23:20, it is best to consider Mark 1:2b to be a faithful, if unique, rendering of Mal 3:1 MT, albeit with slight influence from Exod 23:20.[26] This conclusion, however, requires overlooking the near verbatim similarities between Mark 1:2b and Exod 23:20 LXX. Further complicating this question is the likelihood that Mal 3:1 is itself already alluding to Exod 23:20 and Isa 40:3.

1.4 Malachi 3:1 in Intertextual Context

Mark's allusion to Mal 3:1 belongs to the fourth disputation (2:17–3:5), which follows a form of prophetic discourse common to all of Malachi's oracles.[27] The prophet

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3:31; 4:29; 5:10; 6:7, 17, 27; 8:26; 9:37; 11:1, 3; 12:2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 13; 13:27; 14:13), ἐξαποστέλλω not once; the only alleged occurrence of ἐξαποστέλλω is in the Shorter Ending appended to 16:8; (3) Mark has paratactic καί, not the relative pronoun ὅς; (4) he has κατασκευάσει τὴν ὁδόν, not ἐπιβλέψεται ὁδόν; (5) he has the first-person, possessive pronoun μου, not the second; (6) πρὸ προσώπου follows τὸν ἄγγελόν μου rather than ὁδόν; and (7) he has σου following τὴν ὁδόν.

[25] Stendahl, *School*, 51.

[26] Stendahl rightly asks, "To what extent are we justified in making use of the M.T. as the Hebrew text with which the quotations in the N.T. should be compared?" (*School*, 166). There is no simple answer, but for the sake of convenience I will have the designation MT indicate the Hebrew text likely available to Mark in the first century when there is no reason to suspect another Hebrew reading. The designation is admittedly anachronistic.

[27] This is a more precise subcategory of the broader form of judgment speech against the nations (Claus Westermann, *Basic Forms of Prophetic Speech* [Philadelphia: Westminster, 1967], 169–76).

and his audience are engaged in a "point-counterpoint" confrontation whereby there is a charge by the prophet, a refutation by the audience, and then a rebuttal by the prophet. In the fourth disputation, the prophet's charge is that the people have wearied the Lord. The people's rebuttal is a form of denial. They want to know how they have wearied him. The prophet's response echoes their indictment of Yahweh with covenantal faithfulness for his failure to come to his people. They want to know: "Where is the God of justice?" (2:17).

The prophet's initial charge has הוגעתם, the *hiphil* perfect of יגע, "to grow weary," which occurs in this form only here and Isa 43:23–24. In Isa 43, there is a play on words that climaxes in הוגעתני בעונתיך, "you have wearied me with your iniquities" (43:24). This connection with Isa 43 is important because it sets Malachi's disputation in the context of the hope for Isaiah's new exodus.

Beginning with a reference to the Babylonian exile (43:14), Isa 43:14–21 describes the exiles' return as making "a way in the sea" (43:16), a clear allusion to the events at the Red Sea in the first exodus. Isaiah follows this allusion with the words, "Remember not the former things, nor consider the things of old. Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert" (Isa 43:18–19).[28] Wild beasts, jackals, and ostriches will honor Yahweh at the time of this new exodus because he has given them water, even though the water was intended for Israel (43:20–21).

[28] That "the way" in Isa 43:19 is "in the wilderness" favors Isa 40:3 LXX against the MT.

The subsequent verses include a play on the word יגע. Yahweh states that Israel did not call upon him but has instead been weary (יגעת) of him (43:22), though he had not wearied (הוגעתיך) them with his commands (43:23). Now they have wearied him (הוגעתני) by their iniquities (43:24). Yahweh reminds them that he is the one who forgives sins (43:25) and invites them to begin to remember him again. He adds: "Let us argue together; set forth your case, that you may be proved right" (43:26). Yahweh then declares that Israel's mediators, likely the temple cultus, had sinned (Isa 43:27), and therefore God is going to destroy Israel (43:28).

Because (1) Mal 2:17 and Isa 43:23–24 are the only occurrences of the *hiphil* perfect of יגע in the OT; (2) Isa 43:22–24 has יגע in a wordplay that is quite indisputable; (3) Isa 43 invites Israel to contend with Yahweh and set forth their case, which corresponds to the disputation in Mal 2:17–3:15; and (4) both Mal 2:17–3:5 and Isa 43 contain a threat against the people, it is probable that Malachi's opening words in 2:17 are an intentional allusion back to Isa 43:23–24.

In Malachi, the prophet declares that the people have wearied the Lord, and their answer is "How have we wearied him?" (Mal 2:17). The prophet responds that they have wearied Yahweh with two complaints: (1) they claim that "Everyone who does evil is good in the sight of the LORD, and he delights in them"; and (2) they ask, "Where is the God of justice?" The two accusations are of an absence of justice and an absence of presence. The people look both for the world to be ordered rightly, as Yahweh had promised would happen at the end of the Babylonian exile, and for the presence of the God of justice. The complaints are equivalent to indicting Yahweh for covenantal

unfaithfulness.[29] Hence the question: "Where is the God of justice?" (2:17). Malachi's answer: "He is coming" (3:1). But first there will be a messenger who will prepare his way.

1.4.1 The Messenger, the Lord, and the Messenger of the Covenant

One of the most significant exegetical problems in this disputation is the identity of the three coming figures (Mal 3:1). The people have asked for the God of justice, and now Malachi announces that Yahweh is coming, and he is not coming alone. The prophet refers to those who are coming by the following three titles: (1) "my messenger," מלאכי; (2) "the lord," האדון; and (3) "the messenger of the covenant," מלאך הברית. Approaches to identifying these three figures may be categorized as the three-character approach, the two-character approach, and the one-character approach.[30] For the following reasons, the two-character approach is to be preferred.

First, מלאכי. There have been numerous proposals for the identity of this figure, but since "[t]he scholarly consensus is that Mal 3:23–24 are a gloss upon 3:1–5," it is common to identify the מלאכי with Elijah.[31] In support of this identification, there is a

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[29] Verhoef, *Haggai and Malachi*, 176.

[30] Summarized in Andrew E. Hill, *Malachi: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB 25D (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 286–88.

[31] Beth Glazier-McDonald, *Malachi: The Divine Messenger*, SBLDS 98 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1987), 259. Proposed referents: the prophet Malachi; an unnamed prophet; an ideal figure or prophetic forerunner such as Elijah; a mythical Messiah ben Joseph of the Rabbis who was to precede the Messiah ben David; a heavenly representative of Yahweh, such as the angel of Yahweh; or perhaps an independent, spiritual servant of God (Jonathon Gibson, *Covenant Continuity and Fidelity: A Study of Inner-Biblical Allusion and Exegesis in Malachi*, LHBOTS 625 [New York: T&T Clark,

clear parallel between הנני שלח (3:1) and הנה אנכי שלח (3:23). Likewise, the messenger prepares the way for the coming of the Lord (יבוא אל היכלו האדון) in 3:1, and Elijah prepares the people for the Day of the Lord (בוא יום יהוה) in 3:23. There is therefore good reason to identify the מלאכי of 3:1 with Elijah in Mal 3:23–24.[32]

Second, concerning האדון, several observations can be made that suggest that the identity of האדון is Yahweh. First, the figure the people are seeking is Yahweh (2:17). Second, the Jerusalem Temple is called "his temple" (היכלו); only Yahweh could make such a claim (3:1). Third, האדון frequently refers to Yahweh in the OT, and apart from 1:6a all other references to אדון in Malachi refer to Yahweh (1:6c, 12, 14). Fourth, the coming which מלאכי/Elijah prepares for is referred to as "the great and terrible day of יהוה" (3:23). It is probable therefore that האדון is to be identified as Yahweh, and that האדון must be a figure other than מלאכי/Elijah.

Third, while identifying the מלאך הברית is possibly made more difficult by the fact that this title is unique in the OT, there is an emerging consensus that this figure is none other than האדון. This identification is secured by the chiasm in the second half of 3:1, which is framed by בוא on the outside with האדון and מלאך הברית, the subjects of בוא, on the inside.[33] This analysis is supported by a further parallel between the two clauses: האדון is described as אשר אתם מבקשים, "whom you seek," while מלאך הברית is described by an

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2016], 167–68). Note: the MT and LXX versification at the end of Malachi agree (with one difference) against the versification of English translations. I follow the MT versification unless specifically referring to the LXX.

[32] Likewise Glazier-McDonald, *Malachi*, 261–70. It is not disputed that Malachi as known to Mark included all of ch. 3.

[33] Gibson, *Covenant Continuity*, 169.

identical construction, אשר אתם חפצים, "in whom you delight." The author of Malachi has carefully constructed the second half of 3:1 as a chiasm with internal parallels to indicate that he intends not two figures but one.[34] There are therefore not three figures in Mal 3:1 but two: "my messenger" and "the Lord/messenger of the covenant" for whom "my messenger" prepares the way.

1.4.2 Exod 23:20 in Mal 3:1a

Exod 23:20 MT הנה אנכי שלח מלאך לפניך לשמרך בדרך ולהביאך אל המקום אשר הכנתי	Mal 3:1a MT הנני שלח מלאכי ופנה דרך לפני
Exod 23:20 LXX καὶ ἰδοὺ ἐγὼ ἀποστέλλω τὸν ἄγγελόν μου πρὸ προσώπου σου, ἵνα φυλάξῃ σε ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ, ὅπως εἰσαγάγῃ σε εἰς τὴν γῆν, ἣν ἡτοίμασά σοι.	Mal 3:1a LXX ἰδοὺ ἐγὼ ἐξαποστέλλω τὸν ἄγγελόν μου, καὶ ἐπιβλέψεται ὁδὸν πρὸ προσώπου μου ...

Exodus 23:20 belongs to the Book of the Covenant (20:22–23:33), which explicates the Decalogue (20:1–17) that precedes it. The covenant is conditioned on obedience, and the primary concern in the closing section (23:20–33) is the people's faithfulness to Yahweh despite the worship of other gods in the land to which they are heading (23:23–24). So the angel/messenger of 23:20 will go before the people to guard them on their way, bring them to the place that Yahweh had prepared for them (23:20), and drive out the foreign nations and their gods (23:29–30).

[34] It may even be that the twofold mention to the coming of the Lord was intended to parallel the people's twofold complaint.

Many commentators hear Exod 23:20 in Mal 3:1.[35] Exodus is undoubtedly available to the author of Malachi, and the verbal and syntactical agreement goes beyond mere coincident: "The relationship between Mal 3:1 and Exod 23:20 is too striking to be accidental."[36] These two verses alone share the combination of הנה, a first-person pronominal suffix or pronoun, the participle שׁלח, and the object מלאך.[37] Further, the description of Yahweh as the מלאך הברית in Mal 3:1 supports this association.

However, differences between the contexts have led some to minimize, even dismiss, the possibility of an allusion to Exod 23:20.[38] For example, Snyman concedes no connection between Exod 23:20 and Mal 3:1 because, he argues, "the two texts address vastly different situations."[39] Exodus 23:20 addresses the people in the wilderness while they are on their way to the promised land, while in Mal 3:1 the people have already

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[35] David L. Petersen, *Late Israelite Prophecy: Studies in Deutero-Prophetic Literature and in Chronicles*, SBLMS 23 (Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1977), 42–43; Glazier-McDonald, *Malachi*, 130–31; Petersen, *Zechariah 9–14 and Malachi: A Commentary*, OTL (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1995), 209–10; Douglas Stuart, "Malachi," in *The Minor Prophets: An Exegetical and Expository Commentary*, ed. Thomas Edward McComiskey (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998), 1350–52; Hill, *Malachi*, 265; Cilliers Breytenbach, "The Minor Prophets in Mark's Gospel," in *The Minor Prophets in the New Testament*, ed. J. J. Menken and Steve Moyise, LNTS 377 (London: T&T Clark, 2009), 29–30; Gibson, *Covenant Continuity*, 170–74.

[36] Glazier-McDonald, *Malachi*, 130.

[37] Gibson, *Covenant Continuity*, 172. Gibson notes that these similarities are present in the LXX as well. In the overlapping material, the verses are identical except for ἐξαποστέλλω in Mal 3:1 LXX over against ἀποστέλλω in Exod 23:20 LXX.

[38] Karl William Weyde, *Prophecy and Teaching: Prophetic Authority, Form Problems, and the Use of Traditions in the Book of Malachi*, BZAW 288 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2000), 288; Andrew S. Malone, "Is the Messiah Announced in Malachi 3:1?" *TynBul* 57 (2006): 231; S. D. Snyman, "Once Again: Investigating the Identity of the Three Figures Mentioned in Malachi 3:1," *Verbum et Ecclesia* 27 (2006): 131.

[39] Snyman, "Once Again," 1042.

settled in the promised land. Snyman also notes that in Exod 23:20 "it is clearly the angel of Yahweh that is meant," for Exod 23:21 declares, "my name is in him," which is "close to an identification of Yahweh and the angel."[40] In Mal 3:1, the messenger is a human figure, later identified as Elijah *redivivus* (4:5).[41]

Another notable difference is that while the angel in Exod 23:20 is said to go before the people "to guard you on the way and to bring you to the place that I have prepared," the messenger's role in Malachi is at best ambiguous for the people. The messenger/Elijah's task in 3:23 is to "turn the hearts of parents to their children and the hearts of children to their parents," but if the people do not listen, Yahweh will come and "strike the land with a curse."[42]

Differences between the contexts of Exodus and Malachi are undeniable, but they do not nullify the connection between these two verses. On the contrary, by way of the differences Malachi's creative development of Exod 23:20 is exposed. In the context of a covenantal unfaithfulness that has resulted in a delay of the Isaianic new exodus, Yahweh will once again send a מלאך. This time the מלאך will prepare the way for Yahweh's return and the new exodus, and if the people persist in their covenantal unfaithfulness, the results of his arrival will be disastrous.

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[40] Snyman, "Once Again," 1042.

[41] The LXX adds τὸν Θεσβίτην to make clear that this is Elijah the Tishbite.

[42] Gibson argues that Elijah's task in Malachi is to bring about the end of "generational covenant infidelity which has resulted in the current curse on Israel and the imminent חרם if things do not change" (*Covenant Continuity*, 254).

1.4.3 Isa 40:3 in Mal 3:1

Isa 40:3 MT	Mal 3:1a MT
קול קורא במדבר פנו דרך יהוה ישרו בערבה מסלה לאלהינו	הנני שלח מלאכי ופנה דרך לפני

In addition to Exod 23:20, Malachi also alludes to Isa 40:3. The sequence of the *piel* פנה with דרך as a direct object occurs only in Mal 3:1; Isa 40:3; 57:14; and 62:10, and only in Mal 3:1 (דרך לפני) and Isa 40:3 (דרך יהוה) is it Yahweh's way that is prepared. In Isa 57:14 and 62:10, it is the people's way, not Yahweh's. The allusion to Isa 43:23–24 in Mal 2:17 increases the plausibility of this allusion. Malachi has already indicated that his conceptual framework is the Isaianic new exodus, and now he alludes to the principal announcement of this great motif.[43] Further, while there is no explicit mention of a messenger in Isa 40:3, קול קורא likely refers to a herald or messenger, particularly in the context of an address to the divine council.[44]

As with Exodus, so with Isaiah. The situation in Malachi's time is different from the one envisioned in Isaiah, but there are similarities. The people have returned to the land, but the promises of the new exodus appear to be delayed. Isaiah had warned of Yahweh's imminent arrival (56:1). Now again the people have wearied the Lord (43:23), and so the Lord will prepare a way. Already in Isa 40:3 the way of the Lord is synonymous with a reversal of judgment and the hope of salvation. This joyful

[43] There are other links between Isa 40 and 43: Yahweh is the one who makes "a way in the sea" (הנותן בים דרך; 43:16) and "a way through the wilderness" (אשים במדבר דרך; 43:19).

[44] So Steven L. McKenzie and Howard N. Wallace, "Covenant Themes in Malachi," *CBQ* 45 (1983): 554.

expectation is no longer the case in Malachi. The Lord whom the people seek will come, but if the people remain faithless, his arrival will bring devastation, not a blessing.

1.4.4 Exod 23:20 and Isa 40:3 in Mal 3:1

Malachi draws on these two passages that describe the first and second exodus to give an ironic answer to the question of the delayed return of Yahweh in 2:17, "Where is the God of justice?" Yahweh will return, as he promised, but in judgment.[45] For Malachi, the way is the Lord's, as it was in Isa 40 and, as in Exod 23:30, a מלאך will prepare the way.[46] In Exod 23:20, preparing the way meant driving out the idolatrous nations from before the people of Israel. Now in Mal 3:1 the situation is different. Faithless Israel has

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[45] McKenzie and Wallace, "Covenant Themes," 553.

[46] This connection between Exod 23:30 and the messenger/angel of Mal 3:1 and Elijah of 4:5 is recognized in later Jewish exegesis. Commenting on Yahweh's sending of Moses as "My messenger" to lead the people out of Egypt in Exod 3:13 ("that I have sent thee"), *Exod. Rab.* 3:4 has, "Our Sages said it is symbolic of the first deliverance, for with an *anoki* Israel came into Egypt, as it is said: '*I* (anoki) *will go down with thee into Egypt'* (Gen. XLVI, 4), and with an *anoki* will I take you out. It is also symbolic of the latter redemption, for with an *anoki* will they be healed and redeemed, as it is said: *Behold*, *I* (anoki) *will send you Elijah the prophet.*" So also *Exod. Rab.* 32:9 reflects on the angel who is sent before the people in Exod 23:20. It concludes, "In the millennium, likewise, when [the angel] will reveal himself, salvation will come to Israel, as it says, *Behold, I send my messenger, and he shall clear the way before Me* (Mal. III, 1)." Likewise, *Deut. Rab.* 11.9 connects Exod 23:20 with the sending of Elijah the prophet in Mal 3:23. Jacob Mann also notes that when Exod 23:20 was read (Seder 61a) the *haftarah* included Mal 3:1–8, 23–24 (*The Bible as Read and Preached in the Old Synagogue: A Study in the Cycles of the Readings from Torah and Prophets, as Well as from Psalms, and in the Structure of the Midrashic Homilies*, 2 vols. [Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press, 1940–1966], 1:479-80). This possibly pre-Christian connection between Mal 3:1 and Exod 23:20 may also be suggested by Q (Matt 11:10//Luke 7:27), where the quotation of Mal 3:1 shows similar influence of Exod 23:20 in the change from ἐξαποστέλλω to αποστέλλω. As I will argue below, any relationship between the two verses is likely reflects an intertexuality already present in Mal 3:1.

become like the idolatrous nations (3:23–24). The problem is not Yahweh's tardiness but Israel's idolatry.[47] Before he comes, Yahweh will send his messenger, later identified as Elijah (3:23), who is tasked with turning the people's hearts. Should he fail, when the Lord comes he will destroy the land with a curse (3:24).[48]

To summarize: the combination of Exod 23:20 and Isa 40:3 in Mark continues an ironic adaptation of these verses already present in Mal 3:1. Malachi draws on the imagery of the exodus, filtered through the promised Isaianic new exodus, which has been delayed, to rewrite the ending of Israel's story. The language of promise and hope becomes the language of threat. The messenger/angel goes not before the people but before the Lord. The preparation of the way is a threat not to Israel's enemies, as in Exodus, but to Israel, who has been faithless—indeed, idolatrous, just like the surrounding nations.[49]

1.5 Mal 3:1a in Mark 1:2b

The question was asked above whether Mark intends to refer primarily to Exod 23:20 or to Mal 3:1b in the first part of his introductory quotation. The above considerations have made answering this question difficult. The main argument favoring

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[47] Watts, "Mark," 118.

[48] Sirach 48:10 refers to Mal 3:23–24, stating of Elijah, "At the appointed time, it is written, you are destined to calm the wrath of God before it breaks out in fury, to turn the hearts of parents to their children, and to restore the tribes of Jacob."

[49] Ironically, Israel becoming like the nations around her is precisely what the messenger/angel of Exod 23:20 was intended to prevent (23:33).

Exod 23:20 is that Mark's language is nearly identical to Exod 23:20 LXX. The main argument favoring Mal 3:1 is that, while Exod 23:20 can account for part of the quotation, Mal 3:1 can account for all of 1:2b. But what we have also seen is that Malachi is developing and reinterpreting the same wording of Exod 23:20 that Mark includes in his quotation. The allusion to Exod 23:20 in Mal 3:1 accounts for the presence of Exod 23:20 in Mark 1:2b and suggests that Mark has Mal 3:1a primarily in mind, although Exod 23:20 is not far behind.

Further supporting the priority of Mal 3:1 is Mark's description of John the Baptist in Mark 1:6, where he is designated a prophet with a clear allusion to the description of Elijah in 2 Kgs 1:8 LXX. This designation is consistent with the connection between "my messenger" and Elijah in Malachi.[50] Later in Mark, although not speaking of a "messenger," Jesus's disciples ask about the coming of Elijah (9:11) in an apparent reference to Mal 3:23–24.[51] It is generally agreed that Jesus's answer ("But I tell you that Elijah has come, and they did to him whatever they pleased, as it is written of him"; 9:13) is a reference to the Baptist.[52]

What is still surprising is the way in which Exod 23:20 stands out in Mark 1:2 because of its similarity to the LXX. As I mentioned, this has led some commentators to

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[50] The connection between the messenger and Elijah in Malachi may also explain why Mark has ἀποστέλλω in 1:2b rather than ἐξαποστέλλω, which Mal 3:1 LXX has; cf. Mal 3:22 LXX: καὶ ἰδοὺ ἐγὼ ἀποστέλλω ὑμῖν Ηλίαν τὸν Θεσβίτην πρὶν ἐλθεῖν ἡμέραν κυρίου τὴν μεγάλην καὶ ἐπιφανῆ).

[51] In Mal 3:24 LXX, Elijah will return/restore (ἀποκαταστήσει) the heart of a father to a son and the heart of a man to his neighbor; in Mark 9:12, Elijah comes to restore (ἀποκαθιστάνει) all things.

[52] Matthew makes this explicit in 17:3.

distance Mal 3:1 from Mark 1:2, but to do so is to miss what Mark is doing. He is not only introducing his Gospel and announcing its central theme. He is also laying out the hermeneutical foundation for his reading of the OT. The introductory quotation is his Exhibit A as to how the OT will be reread and reinterpreted throughout the Gospel. Malachi had reinterpreted the language of the Yahweh's messenger going before the people and judging the nations (Exod 23:20) and the language of the salvific way of the Lord (Isa 40:3). He transformed those words into a threat against the people of God (Mal 3:1). Now Mark presents this as the defining example of how the OT must be read to make sense of the story he is going to narrate.

Malachi had drawn on Israel's scriptural tradition to rewrite the ending of Israel's story, and so will Mark throughout his Gospel, especially in ch. 13. Mark intends Exod 23:20 and Isa 40:3 to stand out, perhaps at first glance even over Mal 3:1, because it is not Mal 3:1 of itself that is relevant for Mark, but instead how Mal 3:1 reinterprets the language of Exod 23:20 and Isa 40:3. That is to say, Mark is making clear from the beginning that his rereading of the OT and his rewriting of the end of Israel's story are taking place in continuation of the living prophetic tradition. Mark is developing the inner-biblical exegesis already taking place in Malachi's allusions to Isa 40:3 and Exod 23:20.

Before examining the second part of my proposed *inclusio*, however, I must address two possible objections.

1.6 A Lost Beginning?

According to Elliott, there are eight possibly non-Markan features in 1:1–3. These lead him to the conclusion that 1:1–3 are not original.[53] Elliott's observations are intriguing, but no point is particularly persuasive. As his first example, he judges Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ non-Markan since it is found only in 1:1, but this phenomenon occurs in Matthew as well: Matthew has Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ in 1:1, and after the genealogy, when Matthew begins the narrative proper, he has Ιησοῦ Χριστοῦ again in 1:18. After this the title disappears from Matthew as from Mark.

Likewise, Elliott argues that outside of 1:1, "εὐαγγέλιον refers to Jesus' sayings (not actions) or is a résumé of his teaching."[54] But in 1:14–15, where εὐαγγέλιον occurs twice, what is the εὐαγγέλιον that Jesus proclaims? It cannot be his sayings nor his actions at this point. Rather, it is that the kingdom of God is at hand.[55] By attaching εὐαγγέλιον in 1:1 to the *locus classicus* of Israel's coming salvation, Mark bridges the

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[53] Elliott, "Mark 1.1–3," 584–86. In addition to the textual features discussed below, Elliott argues that the outer leaves of a codex were the most vulnerable, and so if the ending of Mark was "evulsed" [= forcibly removed] and a new ending added, it may be that a new beginning has been added as well. This is of course speculative.

[54] Elliott, "Mark 1.1–3," 584: in 1:1 εὐαγγέλιον "refers to messianic action, and is a stepping stone towards the even later change in meaning whereby the noun designates a distinctive genre of literature recounting Jesus' ministry."

[55] Because of the connection between εὐαγγέλιον in the NT and εὐαγγελίζω in the LXX, especially in Isa 40:9; 52:7; and 61:1, Jesus's conception of the kingdom of God is customarily related to the new exodus and the end of the exile.

gap for his readers between what Jesus preached and the later, fuller meaning of the term.[56]

Elliott also observes that in Mark καθώς always follows a main clause (4:33; 9:13; 11:6; 14:16, 21; 15:8; 16:7). This is true, but only if there is a full stop after 1:1. Guelich has argued against this.[57] The same goes for his claim that 1:1 is the only verbless sentence in Mark. [58] Whether 1:1 is an independent sentence or attached to 1:2–3, it is a title, and a title does not demand a verb. Similarly, although Mark has ἀρχή in a temporal sense elsewhere (10:6; 13:8, 19), this information is neutral when it comes to judging the nuance of ἀρχή in 1:1 [59]

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[56] Similarly Collins: "the author probably used the phrase here in a traditional way in order to reinterpret the notion of 'gospel' for the intended audience" (*Mark*, 130 n. 4).

[57] Guelich, "Beginning," 5–15; Guelich, *Mark 1–8:26*, WBC 34A (Dallas: Word, 1989), 7. C H. Giblin objects to Guelich's proposal, but does not respond to his argument that καθὼς γέγραπται never begins a new sentence when it is occurs with an introductory quotation ("The Beginning of the Ongoing Gospel (Mk 1,2–16,8)," in *The Four Gospels 1992: Festschrift Frans Neirynck*, ed. F. Van Segbroeck et al., BETL 100 [Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1992], 983).

[58] Elliott acknowledges that there is another verbless sentence in Mark, in 13:8b. There is no stated verb, but "is" is implied (Elliott, "Mark 1.1–3," 586).

[59] Eve-Marie Becker determines that ἀρχή is polyvalent (*Das Markus-Evangelium im Rahmen antiker Historiographie*, WUNT 194 [Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006], 112). After noting the similarities between Hos 1:2a LXX and Mark 1:1, Collins writes: "The word [ἀρχή] seems to have a more complex function in Mark, since what follows immediately is a quotation from scripture. On the one hand, the events recounted in the entire work constitute only 'the beginning' of the good news. The narrative as a whole is open-ended, and important predictions and promises remain unfulfilled when the account ends. On the other hand, the account of the life of Jesus, which constitutes the beginning and cause of the proclamation of the good news, must also have a particular beginning. Thus, Mark 1:1 also introduces the first unit of the text, Mark 1:2–15, which introduces the rest" (*Mark*, 131).

Elliott's next claim, that 1:2 is the only place where καθὼς γέγραπται introduces a quotation, understates the evidence. Twice the phrase refers indirectly to OT verses (9:13; 14:21), and in 7:6 a quotation is introduced with the related phrase ὡς γέγραπται. The role of καθὼς γέγραπται in 1:2 is therefore not categorically different from other occurrences of καθὼς/ὡς γέγραπται.

Beyond this, two further arguments against his conclusion may be made. First, there is no evidence in the textual history to support Elliott's hypothesis, as he acknowledges.[60] This alone makes Elliott's proposal doubtful. Second, the strongest argument against Elliott's conclusion is the hermeneutical influence of 1:1–3 on the Gospel, which is already discussed.

1.7 An Early Gloss?

The claim that 1:2b is an early gloss or interpolation is more common than Elliott's hypothesis. Observations that appear to favor considering 1:2b to be a gloss are as follows: (1) Mark attributes the quotation to Isaiah alone;[61] (2) there is a lack of agreement in pronouns between 1:2 and 1:3;[62] (3) the text types are not the same;[63] (4)

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[60] Elliott writes: "[A] decision to remove Mark 1.1–3 from the printed text would be without any manuscript support. All of our surviving copies of Mark's Gospel (excluding, of course, fragmentary manuscripts) being with 1.1; none begins at v. 4" ("Mark 1.1–3," 587).

[61] Robinson, "Elijah," 267.

[62] Robinson, "Elijah," 267; Stendahl, *School*, 51.

[63] Stendahl, *School*, 51.

Isa 40:3 LXX is quoted in Matt 3:3 and Luke 3:4 without Mal 3:1/Exod 23:20; and (5) the quotation of Mal 3:1/Exod 23:20 in Q 7:27 (Matt 11:10//Luke 7:27) is nearly identical to Mark 1:2, which "strongly suggests that this is where it came from."[64]

The argument in favor of a supposed inscriptional error is that Mark attributes the quotation to Isaiah alone because initially it consisted only of Isa 40:3. But Mark describes John the Baptist as Elijah only a few verses later (1:6), and he implies this connection between John and Elijah again later (9:13). Since there is a link between the messenger and Elijah in Malachi, it is probable that the allusion to Mal 3:1 is intentional and therefore original to Mark. Further, placing Mal 3:1a between the mention of Isaiah by name and a quotation from Isaiah is likely an example of the characteristically Markan technique of intercalation.[65]

The oft-noted switch from σου in 1:2 to αὐτοῦ in 1:3 is not problematic once it is recognized that 1:3b is an address inside an address. In 1:2, Yahweh speaks to an unidentified figure and tells this figure that a messenger will go before him to prepare his way. In 1:3a Yahweh is still speaking and declares that the messenger is a voice crying in the wilderness. Then in 1:3b Yahweh announces what the messenger will cry. The speech within speech more than accounts for the change in pronouns. And if this transition is still problematic, the problem persists no matter who joined 1:3 to 1:2, and therefore need not be suggestive of a later gloss.

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[64] Robinson, "Elijah," 267 n. 1; similarly Stendahl, *School*, 50.

[65] Edwards, "Sandwiches." Edwards argues that "the middle story nearly always provides the key to the theological purpose of the sandwich" (196), which would suggest that even though Isaiah is named, Mal 3:1 provides the key to the theological purpose of Mark's Gospel.

Likewise, mixing text types is rare but does not necessitate considering 1:2 a gloss. This argument assumes that we can easily establish the text types of Isa 40:3; Exod 23:20; and Mal 3:1, but this is increasingly dubious. Exodus 23:20 and Mal 3:1 appear to have influenced each other in different ways even before their inclusion in Mark, and both may have influenced Isa 40:3 as well.[66] As already noted, the MT and LXX of Isa 40:3 may reflect different versions of an unknown Hebrew *Vorlage*.

Matthew 3:3 and Luke 3:4 have Isa 40:3 without Mal 3:1/Exod 23:30; Q 7:27 (Matt 11:10//Luke 7:27) has Mal 3:1/Exod 23:20 without Isa 40:3. This suggests that these passages were already widely quoted independently before being conflated in Mark, but it does not follow that Mal 3:1/Exod 23:20 is therefore a gloss in Mark 1:2.[67] Indeed, the interplay between the three verses requires some familiarity with these passages in Greek and Hebrew. For example, while the link between Mal 3:1 and Isa 40:3 is established by the shared words פנו דרך, Mark has different verbs for פנו in the two halves of his quotation. In his allusion to Mal 3:1 he has a form of κατασκευάζω, while in his quotation of Isa 40:3 he has ἑτοιμάζω.

Marcus argues that Mark has brought these verses together in Greek "on the basis of his knowledge that they contained identical expression in the Hebrew or Aramaic text."[68] This suggests both that the two passages were already well known to Mark and

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[66] Stendahl, *School*, 47–54; Gundry, *Use*, 9–12.

[67] Marcus, *Way*, 16.

[68] Marcus, *Way*, 16. This is consistent with Martin Hengel's description of Mark as author: "Mark was a Greek-speaking Jewish Christian who also understood Aramaic. That is evident from the correct Aramaic quotations in his Gospel. I do not know any other work in Greek which has as many Aramaic or Hebrew words and formulae in so narrow a space as does the second Gospel" (*Studies in the Gospel of Mark* [Philadelphia:

his intended audience, which is why he does not change them, and that the connections between the two verses (Mal 3:1 and Isa 40:3) in Hebrew were also well known. Further, conflating two or more verses into one quotation is characteristically Markan.[69]

Similar to the argument for a lost beginning to the Gospel, there is no textual support for considering 1:2b an early gloss, and the allusions to Mal 3 later in the Gospel increase the likelihood that Mark 1:2b is original. There seems, therefore, to be no significant reason to consider Mark 1:1–3 or Mark 1:2b as non-Markan, and, on the contrary, several good reasons to consider these three verses as originating from the Evangelist.

1.8 Conclusion: Malachi's Threat and Isaiah's New Exodus

While Mark attributes his opening quotation to "Isaiah the prophet" (1:2), the quotation begins with allusions to Exod 23:20 and Mal 3:1, which are followed by the explicit quotation of Isa 40:3 LXX. Despite some who doubt the authenticity of 1:1–3 or 1:2b, there is no good reason to think that this introductory quotation does not originate from the hand of Mark. By beginning his Gospel in this way, Mark binds his narrative of the life of Jesus to the promise of a return from exile, which the prophets often described

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Fortress, 1985], 46). According to C. F. D. Moule, one mark of semiticized Greek is *parataxis*, to which Mark is "particularly prone" (*An Idiom Book of New Testament Greek*, 2nd ed. [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1959], 172).

[69] Kee, "Function," 175–78. Outside Mark 1:2–3, Kee points to 1:11 (Isa 42:1/Ps 2:7); 11:1–11 (Zech 9:9/Ps 118:25–26); 11:17 (Isa 56:7/Jer 7:11); 12:1–12 (Isa 5:1–2/Ps 118:22–23); 13:24–26 (Isa 34:4/Josh 2:10/Ezek 32:7–8/Dan 7:13–14); and 14:62 (Dan 7:13/Psa 110:1).

using the language of the exodus.[70] Mark's readers, especially any unfamiliar with the context of his allusion to Malachi, will have heard in Mark's words a message of hope. The new exodus has begun. The end of the exile has come. Yahweh is at last returning to his people. This is good news!

But it is not all good news. For hidden inside the promises of Isaiah and Exodus is Malachi's threat. Malachi promised a messenger. Mark identifies this messenger as John, and in preparing the way for Jesus John prepares the way of the Lord. For "the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple" (Mal 3:1b).

[70] Bernhard W. Anderson, "Exodus Typology in Second Isaiah," in *Israel's Prophetic Heritage: Essays in Honor of James Muilenburg*, ed. Bernhard W. Anderson and Walter Harrelson (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1962), 177–95.

Chapter 2

An Overlooked *Inclusio*, Part 2: Mal 3:1b in Mark 13:35–36

> "Therefore stay awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or when the rooster crows, or in the morning—lest he come suddenly and find you asleep."
>
> Mark 13:35–36

2.1 Introduction

The second half of my proposed *inclusio* is found at the end of Mark 13 in an allusion to Mal 3:1b. Because the allusion has gone mostly unnoticed, in this chapter I seek to establish its validity. It is surprising that many readers of Mark's Gospel have not noticed the similarities between these two passages, especially since some have even anticipated finding another reference to Mal 3:1 in Mark's Gospel.[1] This is due in part to the work of Dodd, who argued that NT quotations of the OT refer to the larger context of their OT source.[2] In this case, it is suspected that even though Mark only quotes from the first half of Mal 3:1 in his opening quotation, it is probable that he has more of Malachi in mind than merely the first half of one verse.

Because the second half of Mal 3:1 warns of the Lord coming suddenly to his temple, when Jesus arrives in Jerusalem and visits the temple this seems like a natural place for Mark to allude to Mal 3:1b. In fact, some commentators express surprise that

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[1] The usual suspects are Jesus's entry into Jerusalem and the temple incident. Hooker's non-prejudicial term "incident" is preferrable to such descriptions as "the cleansing of the temple" ("Traditions about the Temple in the Sayings of Jesus," *BJRL* 70 [1988]: 7).

[2] Dodd, *According to the Scriptures*, 126–27.

Mark makes no explicit mention of Mal 3:1b at the beginning of ch. 11 when Jesus arrives at the temple. C. K. Barrett writes, "The Malachi prophecy, too, of the Lord who comes suddenly to his Temple, is so manifestly appropriate, one would think, that it is surprising to find no reference to it."[3] Likewise, France connects Mal 3:1–4 (and other OT texts) to Jesus's temple incident and comments, "None of these texts is directly alluded to in Mark's wording, but they would be likely to occur to an observer with a reasonable knowledge of the OT and of current messianic expectation."[4]

This expectation that Mal 3:1 has hermeneutical value in Mark that extends beyond the opening verses is not without merit. However, this argument is best supported by reasonably clear references to Malachi and not general intuition. In the next chapter, I will argue for the hermeneutical import of Mal 3 for interpreting Mark 11–13 much like others have argued for the hermeneutical import of "the way of the Lord" (Isa 40:3) for interpreting Mark 8:22–10:52. Echoes of Mal 3 that others have thought they heard, like the one by Donahue in the Introduction, are supported by my proposed *inclusio*, the latter half of which will be the subject of this chapter. I will argue that Mark does contain

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[3] Barrett, "The House of Prayer and the Den of Thieves," in *Jesus und Paulus: Festschrift für Werner Georg Kümmel zum 70. Geburtstag*, ed. E. Earle Ellis and Erich Grässer (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1975), 20. William L. Lane likewise writes that Jesus's "violent expulsion of the merchants could be explained ... as the coming of the Lord to his Temple, whose purging action is the immediate prelude to judgment (Mal 3:1–5)" (*The Gospel According to Mark: The English Text with Introduction, Exposition, and Notes*, NICNT [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974], 404–5). However, Lane offers no specific reference to Malachi.

[4] France, *Mark*, 438. Barnabas Lindars says similarly of Jesus's actions in the temple, "[I]t is tempting to see the incident as a dramatization of Mal. 3.1 .... But although Mal. 3.1 is quoted more than once by the Synoptists, none of the accounts of the cleansing contain any hint of it" (*New Testament Apologetic: The Doctrinal Significance of the Old Testament Quotations* [Philadelphia: Westminster, 1961], 108).

another allusion to Mal 3:1 in his Gospel, and that it occurs at a significant moment in his narrative: immediately preceding Mark's passion narrative (14:1–15:47) and in the parable that concludes Jesus's only extended discourse in Mark (13:5–37).

The Parable of the Porter (13:34–37) involves a master (ὁ κύριος), who leaves his house (τὴν οἰκίαν αὐτοῦ) and goes on a journey. Since his servants do not know when the master of the house will come (ἔρχεται), they must stay awake because when he comes, he will come suddenly (ἐξαίφνης). Mark's clustering of the words κύριος, ἔρχομαι, and ἐξαίφνης combined with the Jewish notion of the temple as the Lord's house strongly suggests that in the Parable of the Porter Mark intends an allusion to the second half of Mal 3:1. This states that after sending the messenger who will prepare the way before him, "the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple."

Should my proposed allusion be accepted, there are significant implications for the Gospel of Mark. First, if Mark begins his Gospel with an allusion to Mal 3:1a and closes ch. 13 with an allusion to Mal 3:1b, then chs. 1–13 may be considered a single section within the Gospel of Mark that is marked off by this *inclusio*. The Gospel can then be divided into two major sections: 1:1–13:37 and 14:1–16:8.[5]

[5] This division immediately calls to mind Martin Kähler's famous description of the Gospels as "passion narratives with extended introductions" (*The So-Called Historical Jesus and the Historic, Biblical Christ*, Ger. orig. 1892, trans. Carl E. Braaten [repr., Philadelphia: Fortress, 1964], 80 n. 11). That the beginning of Mark's passion narrative in 14:1–2 starts a new section distinct from chs. 11–13 is signaled "by the attention-grabbing hypotactic construction, by one of the Gospel's rare time notices, which sets the subsequent events within a Passover context, and by a reference to the plot by the scribes and Pharisees, which will quickly result in Jesus' death" (Marcus, *Mark 1–8*, 63).

Second, because Mark alludes to the first half of Mal 3:1 at the beginning of his Gospel and to the second half at the end of ch. 13, Mark indicates a progression in his narrative from Jesus walking the way of the Lord (8:22–10:52) to Jesus arriving as Lord at the temple. (11:1–13:37). This argument would affirm the expectations of those who have looked for an allusion to Mal 3:1 in the opening scenes of ch. 11. It also suggests that chs. 11–13 are to be read as a coherent whole that begins with Jesus arriving at and pronouncing judgment upon the Temple (as he does the barren fig tree), climaxes with Jesus's prediction of the Temple's destruction, and in between has Jesus engaged in disputations with religious leaders in the Temple.

Third, the presence of Malachi's threat that the Lord will come suddenly to his Temple (an event that Malachi describes as יום יהוה הגדול והנורא, "the great and terrible day of the LORD;" 3:23) at the end of Mark 13, along with commands to watchfulness, implies that all of Mark 13 can be read with the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple as its primary reference. These last two implications will be the subject of Chapters Three and Four respectively.

2.2 An Overlooked Allusion

So far as I am aware, only two scholars have noted the similarity of Mal 3:1b and Mark 13:35–36, and the significance of this potential allusion is only minimally developed by both. The first is Troy Martin, who argued, in contrast to the consensus, that the chronological markers in the Parable of the Porter "reflect Jewish practice in the environs of Jerusalem during the late Second Temple period":

> At the end of the discourse, Jesus relates the parable of the Porter (Mark 13:34–36), in which several intertextual echoes such as κύριος, οἰκίας, ἔρχεται, ἐλθὼν, and ἐξαίφνης recall LXX Mal 3:1, "The Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple." Malachi 3:10 specifically identifies this temple with the Lord's house. Thus, this parable forms an inclusio with Mark 13:1–3; the discourse begins and ends with reference to the Jewish temple. Even though this parable shifts the focus from the house of the Lord in vv. 1–3 to the Lord of the house, it nevertheless associates the names in v. 35 with the temple in Jerusalem, as does the entire context of the discourse in Mark 13.[6]

But after making this observation, Martin does not further develop the significance of this allusion.

The second is Marie Noonin Sabin, who describes the three parables of chs. 12–13 as "three parables of hope: of God's vineyard taken away from 'hired hands' and given back to the family; of God returning suddenly to his own house (as in Mal 3:1); and of the primal fig tree—symbol of the primal sacred space—coming back into bloom."[7] The second parable she refers to is almost certainly the Parable of the Porter, but in her discussion of this parable she makes no mention of Mal 3:1.[8] With these exceptions, the similarities between Mal 3:1b and Mark 13:35–36 have gone unnoticed.

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[6] Martin, "Watch During the Watches (Mark 13:35)," *JBL* 120 (2001): 692–93.

[7] Sabin, *Reopening the Word: Reading Mark as Theology in the Context of Early Judaism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 109.

[8] Sabin, *Reopening*, 59–61.

2.3 Mal 3:1b in Mark 13:35–36

Mal 3:1b LXX	Mark 13:35–36
καὶ ἐξαίφνης ἥξει εἰς τὸν ναὸν ἑαυτοῦ κύριος, ὃν ὑμεῖς ζητεῖτε, καὶ ὁ ἄγγελος τῆς διαθήκης, ὃν ὑμεῖς θέλετε, ἰδοὺ ἔρχεται, λέγει κύριος παντοκράτωρ.	[35] γρηγορεῖτε οὖν· οὐκ οἴδατε γὰρ πότε ὁ κύριος τῆς οἰκίας ἔρχεται, ἢ ὀψὲ ἢ μεσονύκτιον ἢ ἀλεκτοροφωνίας ἢ πρωΐ, [36] μὴ ἐλθὼν ἐξαίφνης εὕρῃ ὑμᾶς καθεύδοντας.
Mal 3:1b MT ופתאם יבוא אל היכלו האדון אשר אתם מבקשים ומלאך הברית אשר אתם חפצים הנה בא אמר יהוה צבאות	

Malachi 3:1b and Mark 13:35–36 share several words that only occur together in these verses. In the LXX, ἐξαίφνης occurs together with ἔρχομαι only in Job 1:19 and Mal 3:1 and with κύριος only in Mic 2:3 and Mal 3:1. Malachi 3:1 is therefore the only text in the LXX where κύριος, ἔρχομαι, and ἐξαίφνης occur together, and the exact three words appear together in the NT only in Mark 13:35–36.

Of the three words shared by Mal 3:1b and Mark 13:35–36, κύριος and ἔρχομαι are too common to point to the dependence of one text upon another (the volume is low, in Hays's terminology), but the rarity of ἐξαίφνης *turns the knob in the other direction*. ἐξαίφνης is rare in both the LXX and the NT. In the LXX, it occurs only ten times in nine verses.[9] In the NT, it occurs only here in Mark 13:36, twice in Luke (2:13; 9:39), and twice in Acts (9:3; 22:6). Nowhere else is it said that a master/Lord comes suddenly other than Mal 3:1b and the Parable of the Porter.

[9] 3 Macc 4:2; Prov 24:22; Job 1:19; Mic 2:3; Hab 2:7; Mal 3:1; Isa 47:9 (2x); Jer 6:26; 15:8.

2.4 Mal 3:1b

As discussed in Chapter One, Mal 3:1b is structured as a chiasm. The interclausal *waw* before the non-verb פתאם, "suddenly," is disjunctive and distinguishes the role of מלאכי in 3:1a from the role of מלאך הברית/האדון in 3:1b.[10] The adverb פתאם is then placed in an emphatic position and is followed by the chiasm indicated by בוא at the beginning and end. Although the verbs on the outside of the chiasm are the same in the MT (בוא), the LXX has ἥκω for the first occurrence of בוא and ἔρχομαι for the second. With this exception, the LXX is a faithful translation of the MT.[11]

Because of its emphatic position, the word פתאם stands out in Mal 3:1b, and the LXX maintains this emphatic position for ἐξαίφνης. Malachi 3:1 is the only occurrence of פתאם in Minor Prophets, but in the prophetic writings the word has an ominous tone because it refers to the suddenness of Yahweh's judgment against Jerusalem (Isa 29:5; 30:13; Jer 6:26) and Babylon (Isa 47:11; Jer 51:8). According to Hill, it carries this same sense in Mal 3:1.[12]

This interpretation of פתאם is consistent with the parallels between Mal 3:1 and 3:23, where the messenger is named Elijah, and the coming of the Lord to his temple is

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[10] Hill, *Malachi*, 267.

[11] Since the alleged allusion to Mal 3:1a in Mark 1:2b was not dependent upon the LXX, it is at least plausible that in Mark's translation, the two occurrences of בוא were both translated ἔρχομαι. This suggestion is entirely speculative and is not necessary for my argument. Still, if Mark has a translation of Mal 3:1 that has ἔρχομαι instead of ἥκω, then all the words Mark borrows (κύριος, ἔρχεται, and ἐξαίφνης) occur together in the first clause of Mal 3:1b.

[12] Hill, *Malachi*, 267.

referred to as the great and terrible day of the Lord. It is Elijah's task to call the people back to covenant loyalty פן אבוא והכיתי את הארץ חרם, "lest I come and strike the land with a decree of utter destruction" (3:24). The word translated "curse" is חרם; it "specifies the nature of this divine judgment ... and the extent of Yahweh's *strike* (*nkh*) against the land—*total destruction*."[13]

Malachi 3:1b is, therefore, a threat against the people, the land, and the temple. The people have wearied the Lord and accused Yahweh of being unfaithful to the covenant, but they are the ones who have been unfaithful. So they must listen to the messenger/Elijah whom he will send because the Lord will come to his temple suddenly (Mal 2:17–3:1): "But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears?" (Mal 3:2). If the people fail to listen, when the great and terrible day of the Lord comes Yahweh will strike the land with a curse. (3:23).

2.5 House and Temple

Sabin argues that an overlooked feature of the Parable of the Porter is the identification of the "house." In Jewish tradition the temple is commonly referred to as

[13] Hill, *Malachi*, 382. Here, as I argued above, Malachi refers to Deutero-Isaiah, specifically to Isa 43:28. In Mal 2:17, the prophet's indictment that the people had wearied the Lord (and their response, "How have we wearied him?") alludes to Isa 43:22–24. In the same section (43:22–28), Yahweh declares through the prophet that because of Israel's persistent sinfulness, "I will profane the princes of the sanctuary and deliver Jacob to the ban (חרם) and Israel to reviling." The translation is my own, taking the imperfect verbs as future tense, which agrees with the targum but not the LXX or Vulgate. In support of a *waw* conjunctive (future tense) translation, see John N. Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah, Chapters 40–66*, NICOT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 157 n. 60.

the Lord's house. If this association is present in the Parable of the Porter, it would establish an additional link between Mal 3:1 and Mark 13:35–36. Several arguments can be made in support of this reading: (1) this understanding of "house" is already present in Mark's Gospel; (2) the man who goes on a journey (ἄνθρωπος ἀπόδημος) is likely a reference to Yahweh's departure from the temple as described by the prophet Ezekiel; and (3) Mark 11–13 is a single section and is focused from beginning to end on the temple.[14] This latter point will be developed in the next chapter, but I will make the other two arguments now.

[14] A qualification must be made from the outset of this discussion. In Mark 13:35, Mark refers to a man returning from his journey as ὁ κύριος τῆς οἰκίας, "the lord of the house." Here Mark has οἰκία, not οἶκος. In the LXX, οἶκος and οἰκία are synonymous (οἶκος being the far more common term). However, there is a general exception: "the term [οἰκία] nowhere refers to a temple" (Moisés Silva, ed., *New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology and Exegesis*, 2nd ed., 5 vols. [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2014], s.v. "οἶκος"). Mark has οἶκος twelve times (2:1, 11, 26; 3:20; 5:19, 38; 7:17, 30; 8:3, 26; 9:28; 11:17 [2x]), οἰκία sixteen times (1:29; 2:15; 3:25, 27 [2x]; 6:4, 10; 7:24; 9:33; 10:10, 29; 12:40; 13:15, 34, 35; 14:3). In Mark the two terms are synonymous, e.g., in 7:17, εἰσῆλθεν εἰς οἶκον, and in 7:24, εἰσελθὼν εἰς οἰκίαν—in both cases "house." The exception to this synonymity is direct references to the tabernacle/temple where Mark has οἶκος each time (2:26; 11:17). This evidence could suggest that οἰκία in Mark 13:35–36 is not a reference to the temple, but two arguments can be made against this. First, οἰκία is more common in Mark, and Mark 13:33–37 has been significantly editorialized and contextualized (on which see Evans, *Mark 8:27–16:20*, WBC 34B [Nashville: Nelson, 2001], 339–40). Second, as I will argue below, there are other reasons to suggest that οἰκία in 13:35–36 is a reference to the temple other than the word itself, i.e., reading οἰκία as a reference to the Jerusalem Temple does not depend solely on the choice between οἰκία and οἶκος. Third, in the Parable of the Porter, οἰκία is not, strictly speaking, the Jerusalem Temple. It is a fictional house from which a master has gone on a long journey and to which he will suddenly return, and therefore οἰκία is appropriate. Only secondarily, considering the context, is οἰκία the Jerusalem Temple.

2.6 The House of the Lord in Mark

This reading of "house" as a reference to the sanctuary or temple is indeed already present within the Gospel of Mark. In Mark 2:26, Jesus mentions David, who "entered the house of God, in the time of Abiathar the high priest, and ate the bread of the Presence."[15] Likewise, in Mark 11:17, when Jesus pronounces judgment upon the Temple, he quotes Isa 56:7 and says, "Is it not written, 'My house (ὁ οἶκός μου) shall be called a house (οἶκος) of prayer for all the nations'?" Given that Jesus is in the temple and the temple is the referent in Isa 56:7 as well, the meaning of "house" here is certainly the Jerusalem Temple. Mark's readers are therefore well prepared to hear the ὁ κύριος τῆς οἰκίας as "the Lord of the temple."

2.7 The Man who Goes on a Journey

That Mark intends his readers to make a connection between the "house" in the Parable of the Porter and the Jerusalem Temple is further strengthened by the parable's link with an earlier parable.[16] Mark first describes ὁ κύριος τῆς οἰκίας in the Parable of the Porter as ἄνθρωπος ἀπόδημος, "a man who is away on a journey" (13:34). This is the only occurrence of ἀπόδημος in the NT. ἀποδημέω is only slightly less rare: it occurs in

[15] The problem of Abiathar is well known. David interacted with Abiathar's father, Ahimelech, in 1 Sam 21, not Abiathar. Marcus proposes that the "reference to Abiathar may also be meant to invoke the larger biblical context in 2 Sam 15, which would have numerous points of contact with the Markan situation in the Jewish War" (*Mark 1–8*, 241).

[16] Sabin, *Reopening*, 60.

Matt 21:33; 25:14; Mark 12:1; Luke 15:13; 20:9. Therefore, in Mark the root ἀποδημ- occurs only in the Parable of the Wicked Tenants (12:1–12) and in Parable of the Porter (13:34–37).

The Parable of the Wicked Tenants begins: "A man planted a vineyard and put a fence around it and dug a pit for the winepress and built a tower, and leased it to tenants and went into another country" (ἀποδημέω)" (12:1).[17] Jesus is speaking "to them" (αὐτοῖς), which is the same group who were questioning his authority to take the action he did in the Temple. In 11:33, Jesus refuses to give them (αὐτοῖς) a straight answer about the source of his authority, but instead he will speak to them in parables. The similarity between the opening words of this parable and Isaiah's Song of the Vineyard (5:1–7) is widely recognized.[18] Moreover, there is widespread Jewish interpretation of the tower of Isa 5:2 as the Jerusalem Temple and the wine vat as the altar.[19] So, e.g., Tg. Isa. 5 reads:

5.1 *The prophet said*, I will sing now for *Israel—which is like a vineyard, the seed of Abraham, my friend—my friend's* song for his vineyard: *My people*, my beloved *Israel, I gave them a heritage* on a *high* hill *in* fertile *land*. 5.2 And *I sanctified them* and *I glorified them* and *I established them as the plant of a* choice vine; and *I* built *my sanctuary* in *their* midst, and I even *gave my altar to atone for their sins; I thought that they would do good deeds, but they made their deeds evil*.... 5.5 And now I will tell you what I *am about to do* to my *people*. I will *take up my Shekhinah from them*, and *they*

[17] Mark's language throughout the parable seems to be dependent upon both the MT and LXX.

[18] The secondary literature on the Parable of the Wicked Tenants is vast. Especially helpful summaries in Evans, *Mark 8:27–16:20*, 210–40; Collins, *Mark*, 540–49. The vineyard is of course a common symbol for Israel in the OT, e.g., Ps 80:8–18; Isa 27:2–6; Jer 2:21; 12:10; Ezek 19:10–14; Hos 10:1.

[19] Johannes C. de Moor, "The Targumic Background of Mark 12:1–12: The Parable of the Wicked Tenants," *JSJ* 29 (1998): 63–80. This imagery of a tower for the temple is also found in Mic 4:8.

shall be for *plundering*; I will break down *the place of their sanctuaries*, and *they will be* for trampling.[20]

What is striking about this Aramaic paraphrase is not only its cultic orientation but also the likelihood that Mark's parable depends on it or that they share a common background. The targum adds to Isa 5:1 the notion of an inheritance (אחסנא), a concept which Mark develops with his cognates "heir" (κληρονόμος) and "inheritance" (κληρονομία).[21]

The cultic paraphrase of the targum should not be overlooked; its interpretation "is consistent with the anti-Temple establishment thrust of the Markan parable."[22] Given the widespread Jewish reading of the tower as the Jerusalem Temple, Jesus's pronouncement of the temple's judgment the previous day (Mark 11:20), the explicit question about Jesus's authority to take this action (11:28), and Jesus's location in the temple (11:27), it is probable that Mark intends his readers to interpret the tower in his parable in the same way.

Therefore, with ἀποδημ- Mark has linked the Parable of the Porter to the Parable of the Vineyard, a parable in which the temple features both contextually and in its interpretation. As such, ὁ κύριος τῆς οἰκίας may be compared to ὁ κύριος τοῦ ἀμπελῶνος in the Parable of the Wicked Tenants. This further strengthens the understanding of οἰκία

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[20] Bruce D. Chilton, *The Isaiah Targum: Introduction, Translation, Apparatus and Notes*, ArBib 11 (Wilmington, DE: Glazier, 1987), 10. Italicized words are where the targum offers an interpretive gloss on the MT. This interpretation is also found in 4Q500*; t. Me'il* 1.16; *t. Sukkah* 3.15; cf. 1 En. 89:56, 66–67; Barn. 16:1–5.

[21] Evans, *Mark 8:27–16:20*, 226. This position is in stark contrast to the older view that the parable is dependent solely on the LXX.

[22] Evans, *Mark 8:27–16:20*, 226.

as a reference to the temple, especially given how rare ἀπόδημος and ἀποδημέω are in the NT in general and in Mark in particular (12:1; 13:34).

But more can be said about how Mark has linked these two parables. In the Parable of the Wicked Tenants, if the vineyard owner is Yahweh (as practically all commentators agree) and if both the setting in Mark and the Aramaic paraphrase suggest a cultic interpretation, then when Mark says that the vineyard owner "went off to another country" (ἀπεδήμησεν), it is probable that Mark has in mind the departure of the glory of God from the First Temple in Ezek 9–11. This interpretation is especially probable since *Tg. Isa.* 5:5 explicitly mentions the departure of the Shekinah as part of the judgment on the temple.[23]

Mark's initial description of the ὁ κύριος τῆς οἰκίας as ἄνθρωπος ἀπόδημος is therefore theologically motivated. By linking the two parables, Mark indicates that the ὁ κύριος τῆς οἰκίας (13:35) is Yahweh, who once departed from his temple but will return suddenly to his house. By creating an *inclusio* with his allusion to Mal 3:1a in Mark 1:2b and to Mal 3:1b in 13:35–36, Mark provides his readers with the hermeneutical lens through which to read chs. 1–13, and especially chs. 11–13, in which the Lord comes to his temple, pronounces judgment, disputes with its leaders, and predicts its destruction, all of which accords well with the conceptual framework of the disputation oracles throughout Malachi and the threat of ch. 3.

[23] The targum refers in the same verse to the destruction of "their sanctuary;" Jesus will predict the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple in Mark 13:2.

2.8 Trocmé's Hypothesis

In 1963, Étienne Trocmé argued for the existence of two editions of the Gospel of Mark. There was canonical Mark, on which Matthew was dependent and which "apart from a few unimportant details ... was the same one we read today."[24] There was also a shorter version of Mark that ended at ch. 13, and this was the version on which Luke was dependent. According to Trocmé, throughout Matthew, including the passion narrative, Matthew shows dependence on Mark even when this dependence "requires an illogical arrangement of the source material."[25] Matthew also does not omit "essential groups of sayings or narrative passages to be found in the canonical Mark."[26] Taken together, these observations suggest for Trocmé that Matthew knows with possible minor variation the same version of Mark that we know today.

The evidence from Luke, however, points in a different direction. Trocmé reasons that Luke 22–24 is "a separate account of the passion relating all the events recounted in Mark 14–16 without being in any way based on those chapters or on the independent narrative that preceded them."[27] If Mark as Luke knew it contained chs. 14–16, it is

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[24] Trocmé, *The Formation of the Gospel According to Mark*, trans. Pamela Gaughan (1963; repr., Philadelphia: Westminster, 1975), 219. Trocmé's claim has nothing in common with that of Morton Smith concerning a secret Gospel of Mark (*Clement of Alexandria and a Secret Gospel of Mark* [Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1973]).

[25] Trocmé, *Formation*, 218.

[26] Trocmé, *Formation*, 218.

[27] Trocmé, *Formation*, 221. On the next page, Trocmé notes that in the sections common to Mark and Luke outside the passion narrative Mark and Luke share more than 50% of words; in the passion narrative, that number drops to 27% (222).

improbable that Luke would have ignored them as he supposedly has. Likewise, it is also doubtful for Trocmé that Luke's version of Mark suffered accidental mutilation so that the last three chapters of Mark are simply missing in Luke's copy. Trocmé deduces therefore that Luke knew a version of Mark that ended at ch. 13. Trocmé supports this hypothesis by pointing to alleged differences between Mark 1–13 and 14–16 and concludes that the Gospel of Mark originally consisted only of chs. 1–13, to which an editor later attached a passion narrative.[28]

Trocmé's argument has not garnered much support, and I do not intend to defend or criticize his argument here. Nevertheless, Trocmé's observations are harmonious with my proposal that Mark has created an *inclusio* that begins in 1:2 with an allusion to Mal 3:1a and ends in Mark 13:35–36 with an allusion to Mal 3:1b. At the very least, my proposed *inclusio* suggests that Mark 1–13 must be regarded as its own section within the Gospel of Mark. In its canonical form, Mark has links between chs. 1–13 and 14–16, as Robert Henry Lightfoot has argued.[29] But Trocmé is undoubtedly correct when he says of Mark 13:37 ("And what I say to you I say to all: Stay awake"), "This would be a simple and straightforward but at the same time entirely suitable conclusion to the foregoing chapters if the Passion story did not begin immediately afterwards."[30] This is especially true if the command to stay awake is, as I will argue later, a command to vigilance in

[28] Trocmé's full argument is set out in *Formation*, 224–40.

[29] Lightfoot, *The Gospel Message of St. Mark* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1950), 48–59.

[30] Trocmé, *Formation*, 225.

light of the imminent fulfillment of Malachi's threat, for Mark the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple.

2.9 Conclusion

My proposed allusion meets the criteria I outlined in the Introduction. Malachi is available to Mark, and there are significant lexical similarities between Mal 3:1b and Mark 13:35–36a. Related to this, if ὁ κύριος τῆς οἰκίας is interpreted as "the Lord of the temple," then both texts have the rare concept of the Yahweh coming to his temple suddenly. Together with the presence of Mal 3:1b in Mark's introductory quotation, the two allusions to Mal 3:1 form an *inclusio*, which supports and is supported by Trocmé's conclusions.

Two further arguments can be made, to be developed fully in the next chapter. First, Mark's presentation of John the Baptist suggests that, for Mark, John is the messenger/Elijah of Mal 3:1, 23–24 who prepares the way of the Lord/Jesus. This portrayal of John occurs at the beginning of Mark, is developed at various points through the Gospel, and comes to an end in ch. 11 when Jesus relates his authority to enact the temple's judgment to the source of John's ministry. Therefore, not only does Mark quote Mal 3 in his introduction, but Malachi plays a significant role in Mark's understanding of John and his presentation of Jesus's authority.

Second, chs. 11–13 contain several echoes of Mal 3 and have a redactional focus on the temple. Like Mark's Way section (8:22–10:52), in which Isaiah's "way of the Lord" has hermeneutical import, I will argue that Mal 3 is hermeneutically important for chs. 11–13. That is to say, Mal 3 provides the narrative logic for the events that occur

after Jesus arrives at the city, and so an explicit allusion to Mal 3 at the end of this section sufficiently accounts for Mark's narration.

Chapter 3

Malachi's Threat as the Context of Mark 13

> And seeing in the distance a fig tree in leaf, he went to see if he could find anything on it. When he came to it, he found nothing but leaves, for it was not the season for figs. And he said to it, "May no one ever eat fruit from you again." And his disciples heard it.
>
> Mark 11:13–14

3.1 Introduction

My argument has been that the presence of both halves of Mal 3:1 creates an *inclusio* that begins in Mark's introductory quotation and ends in the Parable of the Porter. In Chapter One, I argued that Mal 3:1a is present in Mark 1:2b; in Chapter Two, that Mal 3:1b in present in Mark 13:35–36. In this chapter, I consider the purpose and function of this *inclusio*. Just as "the way of the Lord" in Isa 40:3 plays a hermeneutically influential role in Mark's Way section (8:22–10:52), so Malachi's threat in 3:1 that the Lord will come suddenly to his temple is hermeneutically influential on chs. 11–13. This conclusion will be supported by several arguments. First, that Mark 11–13 is a coherent unit within the larger section of chs. 1–13. Frequently, chs. 11–15 are grouped under the heading "Jerusalem Ministry" or equivalent, but there are good reasons (including the proposed *inclusio*) to regard chs. 11–13 as a single section.[1] Second, that there are echoes

[1] Marcus divides the Gospel of Mark into three acts with a prologue (1:1–15) and an epilogue (16:1–8). He labels Act I "Jesus' Early Ministry" (1:16–8:21); Act II "On the Way" (8:22–10:52); and Act III "Jerusalem Ministry" (11:1–15:47). Within these acts, there are major sections, and he identifies 11:1–13:37 the fifth major section, which he labels "Teaching" (*Mark 1–8*, 64). Geographical or spatial markers are often taken to be indicators of Mark's structure: e.g., Lightfoot notes that chs. 1–9 are situated in Galilee while the remaining chapters are situated in Jerusalem. For Lightfoot, this division is theological: "Galilee and Jerusalem therefore stand in opposition to each other.... Galilee

of Mal 3 throughout these three chapters. And third, that Mal 3 provides the narrative logic of chs. 11–13.

3.2 Mark 11–13

Chapters 11–13 are to be considered a single section distinct from the passion narrative because they have their own internal coherence. They also have framing devices that set them apart from later chapters.[2] Most discussions of the coherence of chs. 11–13 refer to William R. Telford, who observes (1) that chs. 11 and 13 both begin with a reference to the Mount of Olives (11:3; 13:1); (2) that both ch. 11 and ch. 13 contain Mark's only references to a fig tree (11:13, 20, 21; 13:28); (3) that Mark's placement of Jesus's temple action (11:15–19) between the cursing of the fig tree (11:12–14) and withering of the fig tree (11:20–25) arguably prefigures imminent judgment upon the Jerusalem Temple, which Jesus explicitly predicts in 13:2; and (4) that in 11:11, Jesus arrives at the temple for the first time, and in 13:1, he leaves the temple for the last time.[3]

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is the sphere of revelation, Jerusalem the scene only of rejection" (*Locality and Doctrine in the Gospels* [New York: Harper & Brothers, 1938], 124–25). Likewise, Helen K. Bond writes, "Mark's work has a relatively clear structure. The basic concept is a geographical one, with Galilean material (located particularly around the Sea of Galilee) in the first half, followed by a travel narrative in the middle section (8:22–10:52), and concluding with material set in Jerusalem" (*The First Biography of Jesus: Genre and Meaning in Mark's Gospel* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2020], 98). The *inclusio* that Mark creates with his allusions to Mal 3:1 suggests that geographic divisions do not alone account for Mark's structure.

[2] Marcus, *Mark 9–16: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB 27A (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 767.

[3] Telford, *The Barren Temple and the Withered Tree: A Redaction-Critical Analysis of the Cursing of the Fig-Tree Pericope in Mark's Gospel and Its Relation to the Cleansing of the Temple Tradition*, JSNTSup 1 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1980), 216–17.

An additional argument can be made beyond those given by Telford. Nowhere else in Mark's Gospel is the temple featured so prominently. With one exception, all occurrences of ἱερόν in Mark are in chs. 11–13.[4] The one exception is 14:49, which refers to events in chs. 11–13.[5] When Mark refers to the temple in chs. 14–15, it is ναός, not ἱερόν. Just as the frequent recurrence of ὁδός in 8:22–10:52 is a defining characteristic of that section, so ἱερόν in 11:1–13:37.[6] In Mark, the way of the Lord (8:22–10:52; cf. Isa 40:3) leads to his temple (11:1–13:37; cf. Mal 3:1).

3.3 The Way of the Lord to His Temple

It is not, of course, a fresh claim that Mark 8:22–10:52 forms a cohesive section within the Gospel. It begins and ends with the healing of a blind man (8:22–26; 10:46–52) and is framed by ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ, "on the way" (8:27; 10:52). ὁδός is the leitmotif of this

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Telford lists a few more links that are less persuasive. He writes: "In 11.1–10, we are presented with Jesus' *triumphant entry* into Jerusalem, an anticlimactic event which for Mark has betokened rejection for the *Son of God.* In 13.24–27, 32–37 we are told of Jesus' *triumphant return*, a climactic event signaling vindication for the *Son of Man*, *judgment* for the Jews and *blessing* for the Christian community.... In 11.27–33, Jesus' authority is called into question; in 13.24–27, it will be made manifest. In 11.12–14, the fig–tree withers as a sign of an eschatological judgment; in 13.28-29, it blossoms as a sign of an impending Parousia!"

[4] Mark 11:11, 15 [2x], 16, 27; 12:35; 13:1, 3; 14:49.

[5] Marcus, *Mark 9-16*, 770.

[6] Willard Swartley, "The Structural Function of the Term 'Way' (Hodos) in Mark's Gospel," in *The New Way of Jesus: Essays Presented to Howard Charles*, ed. William Klassen (Newton, KS: Faith and Life, 1980), 73–86; Best, *Following Jesus: Discipleship in the Gospel of Mark*, JSNTSup 4 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1981), 15; Marcus, *Way*, 31–37. Gundry critiques this conclusion (*Mark*, 440–42); but see Watts's response (*New Exodus*, 128–32).

section and develops the Isaianic announcement of the way of the Lord that featured prominently in the opening quotation (1:2–3).[7] This section is also well known for its three predictions of the passion (8:31–38; 9:31–50; 10:32–45), which occur in the context of "the way" (8:27; 9:33; 10:32).

In Mark's opening quotation, the meaning of "the way of the Lord" is obscure. The reader is left to wonder what Mark intends when he introduces his work with Isaiah's announcement of the return of Yahweh to Zion. Mark implies by his portrayal of John the Baptist that the Isaianic way of the Lord is now the way of Jesus, but he says nothing in the immediate context of the quotation about what this might mean. Now Mark gives his answer. The way of the Lord, the return of Yahweh to Zion, is the way of Jesus as he travels to Jerusalem, where he will suffer and die.[8] From a narrative perspective, this is

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[7] Best, "Discipleship in Mark: Mark 8.22–10.52," *SJT* 23 (1970): 323–37; Swartley, "Function"; Marcus, *Way*, 31–37; Watts, *New Exodus*, 221–94.

[8] Even in the Way section, there are occurrences of ὁδός that may not have this full theological weight. Gundry cites 2:23; 4:4, 15; 6:8; 8:3 and others to strip all instances of ὁδός of any theological value: "'The way' is simply the road on which an event takes place as Jesus and others travel between localities, whatever the direction or destination of their travel.... More often than not, we should translate ὁδός with 'road' to avoid unintended theological connotations associated with way'" (*Mark*, 442). In contrast to Gundry's claim, Marcus concludes that the Gospel's opening quotation has prepared Mark's readers to hear this theological nuance in ὁδός: "[Mark] has ... prefaced the reference to the Lord's way with the conflated citation that speaks of the way of Jesus. When, therefore, those readers encounter in 8:22–10:52 the picture of Jesus and his disciples *on the way* up to Jerusalem, they will probably be led to surmise that this way of Jesus is the Deutero-Isaian 'way of the Lord'" (*Way*, 35). This is consistent with Watts's conclusion about Mark's opening sentence: "In keeping with the role of the opening sentence in literary antiquity, Mark's sole explicit editorial citation of the OT should be expected to convey the main concerns of his prologue and, therefore, his Gospel" (*New Exodus*, 32).

what the reader should expect since John the Messenger prepared the way for Jesus "and they did to him whatever they pleased" (9:13).[9]

The way takes Jesus up to Jerusalem (ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ ἀναβαίνοντες εἰς Ἰεροσόλυμα). This combination of ἀναβαίνω and ὁδός evokes a cultic pilgrimage to Jerusalem, which is consistent with how "the way" is transfigured in Deutero-Isaiah into Yahweh's eschatological pilgrimage to Zion.[10] Timothy C. Gray writes:

> What is the point of this eschatological pilgrimage? The climax of the way of the new exodus in Deutero-Isaiah is reached when the Lord returns to Zion and once again takes up his reign, thereby redeeming Jerusalem (52:8–10), which is the subjection of the proclamation (εὐαγγελίζω) of the gospel in LXX Isaiah (Isa 52:7).[11]

Mark thus portrays Jesus as walking the way of Yahweh's long-awaited, eschatological pilgrimage back to his temple. He signals this by the repeated recurrence of ὁδός, which (with one exception) disappears from the narrative once the pilgrimage has arrived at

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[9] If the First Jewish Revolt against the Romans is the background for Mark's Gospel, "Mark may thus wish to imply, for frequent hearers of his message, that it is not the revolutionary struggle against the Romans but Jesus' way up to suffering and death in Jerusalem that truly represents the triumphant return of Yahweh to Zion prophesied by Isaiah" (Marcus, *Mark 1–8*, 149).

[10] Gray, *The Temple in the Gospel of Mark: A Study of Its Narrative Role*, WUNT 2/242 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008), 14–19; similarly Marcus, *Way*, 31–33. Glazier-McDonald identifies this same cultic pilgrimage to Jerusalem theme in Deutero-Isaiah: "The scenario envisioned by Deutero-Isaiah and the enthronement psalms is complemented strikingly by Mal 3:1 and other verses within the prophecy" (*Malachi*, 138).

[11] Gray, *Temple*, 17.

Jerusalem and the people of the city spread their cloaks before Jesus εἰς τὴν ὁδόν, "on the way" (11:8).[12]

3.4 The Triumphal Entry

It is here, as Jesus arrives in Jerusalem and heads to the temple, that many commentators have expected to find a reference to Mal 3:1b. As Jesus enters Jerusalem for the first time and makes his way to the temple, the Lord has come to his temple just as Malachi foretold. Mark has left his readers contextual clues that point to a connection between these events and his introductory quotation, just as he expected them to pick up the theological overtones of ὁδός in the Way section. It should be noted that as frequently as the word ὁδός occurs in 8:22–10:52, not once does Mark refer to "the way of the Lord" after 1:3. The reader is left to work out for herself the meaning of ὁδός as it repeatedly occurs in that section.

Some readers of Mark may wish that he was more explicit, but that is not his rhetorical strategy. Instead, he is "a master of allusion, saying far more than is explicit on the surface of the text. Interpreting literature *always* involves catching allusions, perceiving nuances, picking up hints and construing meaning—usually to the absence of certainty."[13] This is the task that Mark sets before the reader in chs. 11–13: to catch

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[12] In Mark 12:14 ("teach the way of God"), ὁδός occurs one last time, but it is on the lips of those who are questioning Jesus and does not have the sense of road or movement.

[13] Timothy J. Geddert, "The Implied YHWH Christology of Mark's Gospel: Mark's Challenge to the Reader to 'Connect the Dots,'" *BBR* 25 (2015): 326. This lack of certainty is not problematic even if it is not ideal. A comparison can be made to Hays's notion of volume. NT authors are not always explicit in their references to the OT, but

allusions, perceive nuances, and pick up hints, many of which point the reader back to Mal 3.

Because בוא ("to come") occurs twice in Mal 3:1b (and in a prominent position on the outside of the chiasm) and because Malachi says that it is האדון ("the Lord") who is coming, it is probable that Mark intends an echo of Mal 3:1b in his description of Jesus as ὁ ἐρχόμενος ἐν ὀνόματι κυρίου, "he who comes in the name of the Lord" (11:9), even though these words are a quotation of Ps 117:26 LXX (118:26 MT).[14] Mark's opening quotation (1:2–3) has already associated Jesus with κύριος by claiming that John the Baptist, who prepares the way for Jesus, is the one who prepares the way of the Lord (1:2–4). Further, when Jesus arrives in Jerusalem in the name of the Lord, he heads directly εἰς τὸ ἱερόν, "into the temple" (11:11).

It should be remembered that Mark can refer to an OT passage with only a few words (cf. σχιζομένους τοὺς οὐρανούς in Mark 1:10, which calls to mind Isa 63:19 MT)

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several factors can "turn up the volume" so that the OT passage can be heard. To ignore the implicit aspects of Mark's communication is to ignore part of what he intends to communicate to his readers, perhaps even the most essential part. Geddert continues: "Everything Mark aims to communicate with the reader is part of 'Mark's meaning,' regardless whether Mark chooses to communicate it unmistakably or through a set of hints and pointers. We may have greater *certainty* about what the text communicates explicitly than about what it communicates implicitly, but if implicit communication is intended by an author, then to overlook it is to misinterpret the literary work. To discount implicit communication in principle (because what is merely implied is by definition uncertain) is to abandon the goal of interpretation."

[14] Gray: "By bringing the 'coming' motif into climax with the citation of Psalm 118, Mark evokes the intertextual connotations of the Psalm, thereby showing that the 'coming' theme must be understood in light of its prophetic and scriptural antecedents. One wonders if the motif of 'coming' echoes the prophecy of Malachi, where 'the Lord whom you seek will come suddenly to the temple' (Mal 3:1), in addition to Psalm 118. This text from Malachi ties together the three key terms, κύριος, ὁδός, and ἔρχομαι" (*Temple*, 44).

and that Mark has already obscured an allusion to Malachi inside a quotation that he attributes to Isaiah (Mark 1:2–3). "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord" is a quotation of Ps 117:26 LXX, but when ὁ ἐρχόμενος ἐν ὀνόματι κυρίου arrives at the Jerusalem Temple, it is plausible that Mark also intends for his readers to hear an echo of Mal 3:1b.[15] The echo of Mal 3:1b at the beginning of ch. 11 and the allusion to Mal 3:1b at the end of ch. 13 complements Telford's proposal that chs. 11–13 are a single section and implies that, whereas the Isaianic way of the Lord was the leitmotif of 8:22–10:52, Malachi's threat operates similarly in chs. 11–13.

3.5 The Withered Fig Tree

Mark's placement of the temple incident (11:15–19) between the two halves of the cursing of the fig tree (11:12–14, 20–21) is another example of intercalation in Mark.[16] He contextualizes the temple incident to indicate that Jesus's actions and words are far more than a "cleansing." They are the symbolic enactment of the end of the cultic

[15] This proposal is supported by the number of commentators who have expected to find an allusion to Mal 3:1 in the opening verses of ch. 11.

[16] Notice of intercalation seems to have begun with Ernst von Dobschütz, "Zur Erzählerkunst des Markus," *ZNW* 27 (1928): 196–98. The now-standard study on this intercalation is Telford, *Barren Temple*. Gundry challenges this near-consensus (*Mark*, 671–82). He has been answered by Watts, who emphasizes (1) that Mark's frequent appeal to the OT suggests that his intended audience is familiar with the OT and its imagery; and (2) that the context in Mark establishes the symbolic interpretation (*New Exodus*, 311–15).

practice in the temple and the temple's physical destruction.[17] In this sense, Jesus's actions and words correspond directly to Malachi's threat.

In the opening scene, Jesus sees a fig tree in the distance and goes to see if there is any fruit on it. When he finds none, he pronounces a curse against it: "May no one ever eat fruit from you again" (11:14). The day after the temple incident, the disciples find the fig tree withered away (11:20).

It is well known that the fig tree appears widely in the OT as a symbol of God's people. Further, as Telford observes,

> the fig tree was an emblem of peace, security and prosperity and is prominent when descriptions of the Golden Ages of Israel's history, past, present, and future, are given—the Garden of Eden, the Exodus, the Wilderness, the Promised Land, the reigns of Solomon and Simon Maccabeus and the coming Messianic Age. It figures prominently in the prophetic books and very often in passages with an *eschatological import*. Common to these passages are the twin motifs of *blessing* and *judgement*. The blossoming of the fig-tree and *its giving of its fruits* is a descriptive element in the passages which depict Yahweh's visiting his people with *blessing*, while *the withering of the fig-tree*, the destruction or withholding of its fruit, figures in imagery describing *Yahweh's judgment* upon his people or their enemies.[18]

Given this background, the two halves of the fig tree scene in Mark invite a symbolic interpretation, but one that will depend on rightly reading the narrative context.[19] Jesus

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[17] So Telford, *Barren Temple*, 216–18, 231–33, 238–39; E. P. Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1985), 61–90; Sharyn Echols Dowd, *Prayer, Power, and the Problem of Suffering: Mark 11:22–25 in the Context of Markan Theology*, SBLDS 105 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988), 39–55; Watts, *New Exodus*, 311–18; Hays, *Gospels*, 26–29.

[18] Telford, *Barren Temple*, 161–62.

[19] Geddert: "Mark has given evidence over and over again that the *context* in which a pericope is placed is an essential clue as to how it is to be construed" (*Watchwords: Mark 13 in Markan Eschatology*, JSNTSup 26 [Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1989], 116).

has come to the fig tree and found it barren, and so he pronounces a curse upon it (ἡ συκῆ ἣν κατηράσω; 11:21). There is no promise of restoration and no hope for future fruitfulness in his words. There is only a pronouncement of final judgment (11:14).

One OT passage that stands out in Telford's discussion is Hag 2. Jesus's prediction of the temple's destruction is that "[t]here will not be left here one stone upon another" (Mark 13:2). In Haggai, the prophet recalls that before "stone was placed upon stone in the temple of the LORD" (2:15), the land had been unfruitful, but from the day construction began on the Second Temple, "the vine, the fig tree, the pomegranate, and the olive tree" become fruitful again because of the Lord's blessing (2:19). If the fig tree is once again unfruitful, then something has gone wrong with the temple, and it will be taken down just as it was built: stone upon stone (Mark 13:2; cf. Hos 2:15).

Immediately before the temple incident, there is again an echo of Malachi's threat when Jesus pronounces a curse upon the fig tree. Malachi had warned that on the day when the Lord comes to his temple, if the people do not listen to the messenger/Elijah, Yahweh will "strike the land with a curse" (3:1; 3:24 [4:6 MT]). Now Jesus, having come to the city as ὁ ἐρχόμενος ἐν ὀνόματι κυρίου, has entered at the temple and "looked around at everything" (11:11).[20] His next action is to pronounce a curse upon the fig tree (11:14). As Telford writes:

> The Lord whom they sought *had* suddenly come to his Temple (cf. Mal. 3.1 and Mk. 1.2) but had condemned rather than restored it! Elijah the prophet *had* been

[20] Geddert argues that looking around at everything is an allusion to Jeremiah's temple sermon in which Yahweh says to the people, "I too am watching" (7:11). While connected only by the notion of watching/looking, the probability of this allusion is increased both by the fact that Jesus quotes the same verse during the temple incident (*Watchwords*, 129); and by Telford's claim that Mark 11:11 is characteristically Markan, hence redactional (*Barren Temple*, 24).

> sent before the great and terrible day of the Lord (Mal. 4.5; cf. Mk. 9.12) but they had done to him whatever they pleased (Mk. 9:13)! Therefore the Lord would come and smite the land with a curse (Mal. 4.6) and the blow *had* been struck against the barren fig-tree![21]

Additionally, Hays argues that Jesus looking for figs on the fig tree in Mark 11:13 is an allusion to Jer 8:13, where Yahweh does the same: "When I would gather them, declares the LORD, there are no grapes on the vine, nor figs on the fig tree; even the leaves are withered, and what I gave them has passed away from them."[22] According to Hays, the one who goes looking for figs is the Lord, which further suggests that Jesus's cursing of the fig tree is more than a prophetic action. Jesus is acting as the Lord when he goes looking for figs and curses the fig tree for its barrenness. When this interpretation is read back into the temple incident (as Mark's intercalation implies), echoes of Mal 3 (in which it is none other than the Lord who comes to his temple and strikes the land with a curse) become even louder.

One additional comment should be made here. Since there are echoes of Mal 3:1b in Mark 11:9, 11; 13:35–36, the dividing of the fig tree incident into two is best read as Mark's way of signaling a chronological gap in the fulfillment of Mal 3:1. Along these lines, Marcus argues that in the pre-Markan story that Marcus finds preserved in Matt 21:18–19, the fig tree probably shriveled immediately upon receiving Jesus's curse since "withered from the roots" makes more sense in that context. If so, then Mark is

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[21] Telford, *Barren Temple*, 163; similarly Watts, *New Exodus*, 134, 315–16.

[22] Hays, *Gospels*, 77–78; so already Richard A. Cantrell, "The Cursed Fig Tree: Luke and a Difficult Text," *TBT* 29 (1991): 105–8.

responsible for splitting the fig tree story into two.[23] But this is not merely a mark of skillful storytelling. Mark is declaring that the temple incident and the physical destruction of the temple are theologically the same event, i.e., together they are the fulfillment of Mal 3:1b even if they are separated chronologically. Jesus's cursing of the fig tree corresponds to the temple incident, and finding the fig tree withered from the root corresponds to what will happen when Jesus's words in Mark 13:2 are fulfilled.

3.6 The Temple Incident

Mark intends the temple incident to be read within the framework of the two halves of the fig tree scene. This is confirmed by Jesus's words in the temple after driving out the merchants and moneychangers. He says, "Is it not written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer for all the nations'? But you have made it a den of robbers'" (11:17). Like Mark's introductory quotation, this saying is introduced by γέγραπται and

[23] Marcus, *Mark 9-16*, 788. Collins argues instead that intercalation goes back to the oral stage of the material to aid the listener in determining when a story has concluded: "Modern literary critics should then be cautious about exaggerating the degree to which the intercalated stories are intended to interpret one another. The discernment of complex literary designs may be indeed be illuminating of the Markan text, but they probably should not be attributed to the author's intention" (Collins, *Mark*, 524–25; quoting Werner H. Kelber, *The Oral and the Written Gospel: The Hermeneutics of Speaking and Writing in the Synoptic Tradition, Mark, Paul, and Q* [Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983], 67; Paul J. Achtemeier, "*Omne Verbum Sonat*: The New Testament and the Oral Environment of Late Western Antiquity," *JBL* 109 [1990]: 21). Rafael Rodríguez notes that "even though the main thrust of his argument has been discredited, [NT] scholars continue to cite Achtemeier as the definitive authority substantiating the claim that reading in antiquity was reading aloud" (*Oral Tradition and the New Testament: A Guide for the Perplexed* [London: Bloomsbury, 2014], 43). He adds: "New Testament scholarship needs to recognize and acknowledge that Achtemeier was simply wrong."

combines multiple OT passages. The first part of the quotation derives from Isa 56:7 LXX.[24] The place Jesus "cleanses" is the outer court, commonly referred as the Court of the Gentiles, and Jesus's words are often interpreted as an expression of his intention to return this court to a proper place of worship for Gentiles.[25]

This interpretation is not consistent with Jesus's actions, however. By overturning the tables of the moneychangers and the seats of those who are selling doves (11:15), Jesus prevents purchasing items necessary for sacrifice and precludes people from paying the annual half-shekel tax that paid for the daily whole offerings.[26] In the next verse, Mark writes that Jesus "would not allow anyone to carry anything (σκεῦος) through the temple" (11:16). While σκεῦος can refer to an object or thing in general, it can have a more specific meaning with a qualifier or in a specific context. Since Jesus is preventing this σκεῦος from being carried διὰ τοῦ ἱεροῦ, the reference here is presumably to cultic objects, such as containers used for transporting animal blood or other sacrificial elements.[27] By preventing the trading of money, the buying of sacrificial animals, and the

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[24] Isaiah 56:7 LXX (ὁ γὰρ οἶκός μου οἶκος προσευχῆς κληθήσεται πᾶσι τοῖς ἔθνεσιν) differs from Mark 11:17 (ὁ οἶκός μου οἶκος προσευχῆς κληθήσεται πᾶσιν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν) only slightly. Two other passages have similar wording: Isa 60:7 LXX (καὶ ὁ οἶκος τῆς προσευχῆς μου δοξασθήσεται) and 1 Macc 7:37 (σὺ ἐξελέξω τὸν οἶκον τοῦτον ἐπικληθῆναι τὸ ὄνομά σου ἐπ᾽ αὐτοῦ εἶναι οἶκον προσευχῆς καὶ δεήσεως τῷ λαῷ σου). In 1 Macc 7:37, the temple is a house of prayer explicitly τῷ λαῷ σου, "for your people." It may be that Jesus's words are intended to challenge this Maccabean view of the temple.

[25] Marcus, *Mark 9-16*, 791; among other commentators.

[26] Jacob Neusner, "Money-Changers in the Temple: The Mishnah's Explanation," *NTS* 35 (1989): 288–89. Gray refers to Matt 17:24–27 and 4Q159 2.6–7 to argue that this view was current in Jesus's day (*Temple*, 28 n. 77).

[27] Marcus, *Mark 9-16*, 783. Marcus makes a connection between these cultic containers and Zech 14:21: "And there shall no longer be traders in the house of the LORD of hosts on that day." Merchants who supply ritually pure containers for sacrifice

carrying of cultic vessels through the temple, Jesus brings the cultic function of the temple to a halt and thereby enacts its eschatological end.

The second half of Jesus's short discourse in the temple is a quotation of Jer 7:11 LXX. This half of the quotation indicates how Mark expects his readers to understand this incident. The quotation is from Jer 7:1–8:3, Jeremiah's temple address, where the prophet is told to "stand in the gate of the LORD's house" and proclaim the word of the Lord (7:2). What follows is an indictment of the people that ends with a prediction of the temple's destruction. By putting these words on the lips of Jesus, Mark portrays Jesus as a Jeremiadic prophet standing in the temple and likewise predicting its destruction.[28] What Jesus says is not lost on the chief priests and the scribes, who "heard it and were seeking a way to destroy him" (Mark 11:18). What Jesus enacts symbolically by bringing the sacrificial cult to a halt, in combination with the words of Jeremiah's temple sermon, he will soon state explicitly (Mark 13:2).

Because Jesus overturns the tables of the moneychangers and the seats of those who are selling doves, the reference to making the Lord's house "a den of robbers" is sometimes regarded as an expression of unjust economics. Vincent Taylor writes, "The

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are to be excluded because one day all the pots in Jerusalem would be holy. Hays also refers to Zech 14:21, although he does so without mentioning σκεῦος (*Gospels*, 27). According to Kelber, over half the occurrences of σκεῦος in the LXX denote a sacred cult object (*The Kingdom in Mark: A New Place and a New Time* [Philadelphia: Fortress, 1974], 101).

[28] Hays: "Consequently, when Jesus storms into the temple, overturns the tables of the money changers, and invokes Jeremiah's image of the temple as *a den of robbers*, there can be no doubt that the allusion is meant to recall the wider context of Jeremiah's prophetic tirade, and that that action foreshadows the temple's destruction that is later specifically prophesied in Mark 13:1–2" (*Gospels*, 28).

action of Jesus is a spirited protest against injustice and the abuse of the Temple system. There is no doubt that pilgrims were fleeced by the traders ... and that the Temple police and above all the priests were ultimately responsible."[29] But Sanders argues that the business arrangements around the temple were not abusive and were necessary for the people to keep the commandments.[30] Further, as Gray notes, Jesus drives out *both* the sellers and the buyers (11:15): "Why would those who are being fleeced, the ἀγοράζοντας, be on the receiving end of Jesus' demonstration, if the goal was simply to protest unjust business practices?"[31]

But if Jesus is not protesting unjust business practices, what does he mean by calling the temple a "den of robbers" (σπήλαιον λῃστῶν)? In Jeremiah's temple sermon, he asks the people if they think they can continue to disobey Yahweh's commands and then come into his house and say, "We are delivered!" (Jer 7:8–10). Jeremiah asks, "Has this house, which is called by my name, become a den of robbers (מערת פרצים; σπήλαιον λῃστῶν) in your sight?" (7:11). Jeremiah's charge is not that the people have engaged in unjust business practices in the temple, but that, because of their covenantal unfaithfulness, they have turned the temple into a place that the wicked flee to "like murderous brigands to their cave, confident in escaping judgment simply because of their

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[29] Taylor, *St. Mark*, 463.

[30] Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism*, 61–76. Though Sanders concludes that the reference to Jer 7:11 is secondary, he nevertheless understands the symbolic action, which points to the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple, as deriving from the historical Jesus.

[31] Gray, *Temple*, 26.

cultic largesse."[32] By quoting Jeremiah's temple address, Jesus similarly indicts the people with covenantal unfaithfulness and a misguided trust in the temple.

Several connections between Jeremiah's address and Malachi's threat can be made. First, both are concerned with Yahweh dwelling with his people. In Malachi, the return of Yahweh to Zion has been delayed, and the people ask, "Where is the God of justice?" (2:17). The prophet answers that a messenger will prepare the Lord's way (3:1). This preparation is later defined as the people's restored covenantal faithfulness (3:24 MT). In Jeremiah, the prophet's opening words are a command for the people to mend their ways so that Yahweh can continue to dwell with them (7:3, 5). The Lord's presence in his temple, and the consequences of his presence or absence, are directly related in both passages to the people's actions.

Second, the list of sins in Jer 7 and Mal 3 is similar. Jeremiah tells the people that for Yahweh to continue to dwell with them, they must amend their ways, i.e., "not oppress the sojourner (גר), the fatherless (יתום), or the widow (אלמנה)" (7:6). So also in Malachi, the prophet warns that Yahweh's judgment will be directed "against those who oppress ... the widow (אלמנה) and the fatherless (ויתום), against those who thrust aside the sojourner (גר)" (3:5).

Third, Malachi's oracle and Jeremiah's temple sermon end with judgment. Jeremiah is explicit that this judgment will fall upon the temple: "Therefore I will do to the house that is called by my name, in which you trust, and to the place that I gave to you and to your ancestors, just what I did to Shiloh" (7:14). Malachi is less specific:

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[32] Watts, "Mark," 210; further on Isa 56:7 and Jer 7:11 in Mark 11:17, Watts, *New Exodus*, 322–32.

"Then I will draw near to you for judgment" (3:5). The language of "drawing near" harkens back to the prophet's warning that "the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple" (3:1). Malachi also has traditional prophetic imagery of judgment, such as refining metals (Isa 12:5; Jer 6:29; 9:7; Zech 13:9) and launderer's soap (Jer 2:22).[33] And when Mal 3:1 is read together with 3:23–24, threat and urgency are united.

3.7 Malachi 3 and the Narrative Logic of Mark 11–13

Jeremiah 7 is "essential to the dramatic logic of the narrative" of Mark11–13. Hays writes:

> [T]his section of Mark's narrative (Mark 11–13) focuses relentlessly on Jesus' prophetic critique of the temple and its authorities. Jesus enters Jerusalem as the returning Davidic king and performs an act of prophetic symbolism foreshadowing the temple's demise (11:1–25); this action triggers a series of controversies with various Jewish authorities in Jerusalem (11:27–12:44); Jesus prophesies the destruction of the temple as part of the birthpangs of the coming kingdom (13:1–37).[34]

Jesus comes to the temple as κύριος (as more than a prophet), enacts its judgment, predicts its destruction, and disputes with its leaders.

But the full logic of this narrative is disclosed when we bring together Mal 3 and Jer 7. First, Malachi is engaged in disputes with the religious leaders of his day. In Jeremiah's temple sermon, there is no dialogue between the people and the prophet, but this is a consistent feature of the book of Malachi.

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[33] Gary Edward Schnittjer, *Old Testament Use of Old Testament: A Book-by-Book Guide* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Academic, 2021), 469.

[34] Hays, *Gospels*, 28.

Second, Mark 11–13 is framed by several literary devices, including an echo of and an allusion to Mal 3:1b. As we have seen, ch. 11 begins with an echo of Mal 3:1b when Mark presents Jesus as the one who comes to the temple in the name of the Lord (11:9, 11). Chapter 13 ends with the command for everyone to be on the alert (11:37) because, after a long journey, the master (ὁ κύριος) of the house/temple is coming suddenly (ἔρχεται ἐξαίφνης) (11:35–36). Since Mark frames these chapters with references to Mal 3, all of this depends more heavily on Mal 3 than Jer 7.

Third, when Jesus is asked by what authority he acts and teaches in the temple, his answer is an appeal not to Jeremiah but to John the Baptist and hence to the connection that Mark has been weaving through the Gospel between John as the prophesied forerunner of the Lord and John as the forerunner of Jesus (Mark 11:27–33).

3.8 By What Authority?

Immediately following the second half of the fig tree scene, with the fig tree now withered to the root, Jesus again enters Jerusalem and walks around in the temple (11:27). This scene occurs the day after the temple incident, that is, the same day as the disciples' discovery of the fig tree now withered (Mark 11:19–20). Mark places this scene "between two parables of judgment (the withered fig tree and the vineyard)."[35] He is layering events and creating multiple overlapping intercalations that tie together 11:12–12:12.[36] ἐν

[35] Marcus, *Mark 9-16*, 798.

[36] Dowd suggests that 11:12–33 forms a double intercalation: Episode 1: fig tree is cursed (11:12–14); Episode 2: Temple is cleansed (11:15–19); Response 1: fig tree is observed to be withered (11:20–25); Response 2: Temple action is challenged (*Prayer*, 38). If Marcus is right about the significance of placing the challenge to Jesus's temple

ποίᾳ ἐξουσίᾳ ταῦτα ποιεῖς/ποιῶ occurs at the beginning and end of the dispute (11:28, 29, 33). In context, ταῦτα refers to the events of the previous day and perhaps also the triumphal entry.[37]

The question about Jesus's authority dominates this scene.[38] Jesus is approached by the chief priests, scribes, and elders, who ask, "By what authority are you doing these things, or who gave you this authority to do them?" (11:28). Jesus does not give an immediate answer. Instead, he asks them a question about John the Baptist: "Was the baptism of John from heaven or from man?" (11:30). John's prominent role in Mark suggests that Jesus is doing more than tying his opponents into an intellectual knot.

Mark's Gospel begins with an OT quotation that speaks of a messenger who will be a voice crying in the wilderness, "Prepare the way of the Lord." Then ἐγένετο Ἰωάννης, "John appeared" (1:4). Thereafter, the reader is to follow Mark's clues as to how John relates to the OT quotation. John is dressed like the prophet Elijah in the wilderness baptizing and preaching about someone mightier who would come after him: "and it came to pass (καὶ ἐγένετο) in those days that Jesus came from Nazareth of

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incident between the withering of the fig tree and the Parable of the Wicked Tenants, then Mark's layering is even more complex than Dowd recognizes.

[37] Some argue that ταῦτα refers to everything that has occurred in the Gospel up to this point. Inasmuch as Mark's narrative has been pointing towards Jesus's arrival at the temple since the opening verses, it could be argued that Jesus's entry into the city and the temple incident sum up all that has come before. In context, though, Mark seems to have in mind the previous day's shocking events.

[38] Marcus postulates that this scene was the center of a pre-Markan source that consisted of the triumphal entry, the cleansing of the Temple, the dispute over Jesus's authority, and the debates about taxes and resurrection. In this case, the disputation is the central section of that collection and indicates that the essential question is Jesus's authority (*Mark 9-16*, 798).

Galilee" (1:9).[39] The reader again is enabled to discern the relationship between Jesus and John, and the question of Jesus's identity—and therefore of his authority—is linked with the identity of John.

Since John is the messenger who prepares the way of the Lord, because John prepares the way for Jesus, it follows that Jesus is the Lord of Isa 40:3 and Mal 3:1 who will return to his city and come suddenly to his temple.[40] Therefore when Jesus finally arrives at Jerusalem (his only visit in the Gospel of Mark) and comes to the temple, the question of his authority "to do these things" is already connected to the question of the identity of John the Baptist, which Mark now makes explicit on the lips of Jesus (11:29–30).

In contrast to this view, Gundry argues that "Jesus uses John only to impale the Sanhedrin on the horns of an embarrassing dilemma, and then refuses to answer the question put to him.... The whole dialogue has to do with nothing deeper than saving and losing face."[41] But this conclusion ignores the arc of the Gospel to this point. With the opening quotation, Mark tells of the appearance of a messenger who will precede

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[39] This translation is from the RSV because the ESV leaves καὶ ἐγένετο untranslated.

[40] Watts: "The implication of Mark 1:2, that Jesus is to be identified in some way with the personal manifestation of Yahweh's judging presence, appears to be confirmed by his immediate action on reaching Jerusalem" (*New Exodus*, 134–35). While this is not the place to investigate Mark's Christology, I agree with Geddert's summary statement: "In comparison to the other Gospels, Mark has the lowest *explicit* Christology but the highest *implicit* Christology. Mark implies in numerous ways that *Jesus is God*, indeed is the embodiment of Yhwh" ("Christology," 325). Different perspectives on Mark's Christology are described and responded to in Anthony Le Donne, ed., *Christology in Mark's Gospel: 4 Views*, Critical Points (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Academic, 2021).

[41] Gundry, *Mark*, 667.

Yahweh in his return to Zion, the Lord coming to his temple. Mark has arrived at this climactic moment in his narrative, and if there is still some question about Jesus's authority to act and speak as he has in the temple, the answer to that question has everything to do with the identity of John.

Mark makes this evident in two ways. First, Jesus's interlocutors recognize that if they say that John's baptism was from God, i.e., that John was a divinely sent prophet, then Jesus will ask, "Why then did you not believe him?" (11:31).[42] John makes only one statement in direct address in the entirety of the Gospel: "After me comes he who is mightier than I, the strap of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. I have baptized you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit" (1:7–8). In other words, to "believe him" in 11:31 is to believe what John said about someone more powerful coming after him. To believe John is to believe what he has said about Jesus. Second, since this is the last time that Mark mentions John the Baptist, John's role in the Gospel gives Jesus's question increased prominence.[43]

3.9 John the Baptist in the Gospel of Mark

There is no character more closely allied with the mission and ministry of Jesus than John the Baptist. Mark begins his narrative with John (1:4), and John is the one who is baptizing Jesus when the voice from heaven declares that Jesus is the beloved son

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[42] Their understanding of Jesus's question indicates that "the baptism of John" is a synecdoche for John's entire ministry including what he taught.

[43] John R. Donahue and Daniel J. Harrington, *The Gospel of Mark*, SP 2 (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2002), 336.

(1:9–11). John's arrest is the impetus for the start of Jesus's ministry, and Jesus's ministry resumes John's with his call to repent (1:14–15). If Mark's readers are left wondering what happened to John after his arrest, then they must wait for an answer until ch. 6. There John's martyrdom is described in one of the rare scenes in the Gospel in which Jesus is entirely absent (6:14–29).[44] By describing Jesus's death in such detail, Mark hints that John is the forerunner of Jesus not only in ministry but also in death.

Central to John's role as the forerunner of Jesus is his characterization as Elijah. Mark describes John's appearance as Elijah-like in ch. 1. Later, in response to Jesus's question to his disciples ("Who do people say that I am?"), the disciples answer, "John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; and still others, one of the prophets" (8:27). The disciples' answer anticipates what Mark later confirms when the disciples ask Jesus after the Transfiguration, "Why do the scribes say that first Elijah must come?" (9:11). The question alludes to Mal 3:22–23, as does Jesus's answer.[45]

Marcus argues that Jesus's answer in 9:12 is not a statement but a question. He translates Jesus's reply: "Is it really the case that Elijah, when he comes first, restores all

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[44] This is noteworthy because the subject of biographies of the time would be the principal actor or speaker in nearly every scene (so Bond, *First Biography*, 98; and already Richard A. Burridge, *What Are the Gospels? A Comparison with Graeco-Roman Biography*, 25th anniversary ed. [1992; repr., Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2018], 189–91).

[45] Collins: "The first part of Jesus' response confirms the contemporary Jewish tradition, based on Malachi, that Elijah would return in the last days. The Markan Jesus not only alludes to scripture here but also expands it, so that Elijah 'restores' not only 'hearts' but all things. This expansion gives Elijah a significant eschatological role" (*Mark*, 430).

things?"[46] By way of the question, Mark is thereby inviting his reader to reconsider Mal 3, the first words of his introductory quotation. According to Sir 48:10, which is dependent upon Mal 3:22–23 ("it is written"), when Elijah returns he is "destined to calm the wrath of God before it breaks out in fury, to turn the hearts of parents to their children, and to restore the tribes of Jacob." But is this restoration certain in Malachi? Is it the case in Malachi that Elijah will indeed restore all things no matter what? This is the question Jesus asks of his disciples, that is, that Mark asks of his readers.

Mark implies that the answer is no. In fact, "Elijah has come, and they did to him whatever they pleased" (9:13). This assertation calls for a rereading of Mal 3 that answers this question: "What happens if Israel rejects the messenger?" Mark's Gospel, especially chs. 11–13, is an answer to that question; the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple is the fulfillment of Malachi's threat. The people rejected the messenger, and therefore the Lord has come in judgment.

Since John the Baptist plays a significant role in the narrative, it is therefore doubtful that when Mark comes to his final mention of John (11:30) it is only "to impale the Sanhedrin on the horns of an embarrassing dilemma."[47] On the contrary, because of

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[46] Codex Bezae (D) supports this reading, but as Marcus acknowledges, even though it is not the original "it probably conveys the intended sense: the Markan Jesus is not *affirming* that Elijah restores all things, as in the usual interpretation ..., but *questioning* it." Marcus argues that taking 9:12 as a question makes better sense because the suffering of the Son of Man would not confirm but rather contradict the notion that Elijah had restored all things: "If Elijah had already restored everything before the Messiah came, if the breach in human relations had already been healed, as promised in Mal 4:5–6, what need would there be for the Son of Man's suffering?" (*Mark 9-16*, 644–45).

[47] Gundry, *Mark*, 667.

Mark's association of John the Baptist with the messenger/Elijah, in Jesus's answer to his opponents there is another echo of Mal 3.[48] Jesus's opponents want to know by what authority he had done "these things." Mark's answer: his own, for Jesus is the Lord for whom John prepared the way, and he has come to his temple in judgment.

3.10 Other Anti-Temple Passages in Mark 11–12

I have been arguing that Malachi's threat is the leitmotif of Mark 11–12 in much the same way that the way of the Lord is the leitmotif of Mark 8:22–10:52. Jesus's arrival in Jerusalem, his temple action (including his quotation of Jer 7:11), the cursing of the fig tree, and his disputations in the temple, especially the question about his authority, all have echoes of Mal 3 and draw the reader back to Mark's introductory quotation. Jesus has walked the way of the Lord (8:22–10:52) and now, in partial fulfillment of Mal 3:1b, the Lord has come to his temple. But as Malachi asked, "But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears?" (3:2).

There are also other at first less apparent passages in chs. 11–12 that signal judgment against the Jerusalem Temple: (1) the "this mountain" saying (11:22–24); (2)

[48] Similarly Hooker: "For Mark, an incident in which Jesus answered a question about his own authority by pointing back to the activity of John must have seemed a clear claim to be the mightier one whom John foretold. But there may well be particular significance in the fact that Jesus is at this point being challenged in the temple about his activities there. In 1.2, Mark quoted Mal. 3.1 of John. It is possible that Mark would have understood the link between Jesus and the Baptist, who is the messenger of Mal. 3.1, to indicate that Jesus must be the Lord who comes suddenly to his temple" (*The Gospel According to Saint Mark*, BNTC [London: Black, 1991], 272–73).

the rejected stone saying (12:10–11); and (3) the first commandment saying (12:28–34). I will briefly consider each of these.

3.10.1 "This Mountain"

Jesus's initial reply to Peter's observation about the withered fig tree (11:21) is "Have faith in God" (11:22). Once again, Mark has left his readers to connect the dots. In Jeremiah's temple sermon, part of the prophet's indictment of the people is that they have put their faith in the temple and thought the temple will save them even if they continue to transgress the covenant.[49] Mark's description of Peter's remark to Jesus ("Peter remembered," 11:21) implies the connection that Mark expects his readers to make, namely that "Jesus' effective curse on the tree has negative implications for the Temple with which the tree has been linked."[50] Mark aids his reader in making this connection by creating a link between Peter's response (ῥαββί, ἰδέ; 11:21) and the words of the unnamed disciple praising the temple's beauty (διδάσκαλε, ἰδέ; 13:1), to which Jesus responds by predicting the temple's destruction (13:2).[51] In this context, the command to

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[49] Jeremiah 7:4: "Do not trust in these deceptive words: 'This is the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD.'" Marcus: "It is probable, moreover, that in the Markan context the Jewish revolutionaries, who established the headquarters for their last-ditch battle against the Romans in the Temple itself, stressed God's eternal loyalty to the sacred edifice (cf. Josephus, *War* 5.459; 6.285–86)" (*Mark 9-16*, 794). Marcus cites Hengel, *The Zealots: Investigations into the Jewish Freedom Movement in the Period from Herod I until 70 A.D.* (1961; repr., Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1989), 240–44.

[50] Marcus, *Mark 9-16*, 793.

[51] This sequence is noted by Ched Myers, *Binding the Strong Man: A Political Reading of Mark's Story of Jesus* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1988), 304.

have faith in God implies "and not in the temple" or "even if the temple is destroyed" (cf. Jer. 7:4).

As an example of this anti-temple faith that Jesus demands, he tells his disciples to say to "this mountain" (ὄρει τούτῳ) to be taken up (ἄρθητι) and cast into the sea (βλήθητι). "This mountain" may be the Mount of Olives or the Temple Mount, and most judge it to be the second of these.[52] Marcus discusses Ps 46, where Yahweh promises to deliver Zion from the raging sea, and Isa 2/Mic 4, which portray the Temple Mount as exalted over all other mountains: "The Markan Jesus ... converts the positive Isaian imagery (exaltation) into a symbol for destruction (lifted up and cast into the sea) and transforms what the Psalm avers to be impossible (subjugation by the waters of chaos) into the Temple's certain fate."[53] This is consistent with Jesus's following sayings, which

[52] The Mount of Olives is of course mentioned in 11:1; 13:3. According to Zech 14:14, "On that day [the LORD's] feet shall stand on the Mount of Olives, which lies before Jerusalem on the east; and the Mount of Olives shall be split in two from east to west (ימה) by a very wide valley; so that one half of the Mount shall withdraw northward, and the other half southward." וימה literally means "to the sea," so this passage has been taken to account for the mountain saying (Grant, "The Coming of the Kingdom," *JBL* 67 [1948]: 298–301; Grant, *Miracle and Natural Law in Graeco-Roman and Early Christian Thought* [Amsterdam: North-Holland, 1952], 167; C. F. Evans, "'I Will Go before You into Galilee,'" *JTS* NS 5 [1954]: 7; Charles W. F. Smith, "No Time for Figs," *JBL* 79 [1960]: 322). However, while the mountain in Zech 14:4 is split east to west ("to the sea"), it does not move towards the sea. It moves from north to south (Dowd, *Prayer*, 74). Alternatively, in favor of "this mountain" as the Temple Mount see Watts, *New Exodus*, 332–37; Marcus, *Mark 9-16*, 785. In contrast to either identification, Collins writes that the "proverbial and traditional character of the saying ... makes it unlikely that a particular mountain is meant" (*Mark*, 535). She judges that the identification of "this mountain" with the Temple Mount is the result of an overinterpretation of the fig tree.

[53] Marcus, *Mark 9-16*, 794.

are about praying (cf. "My house shall be called a house of prayer"; 11:17) and the forgiveness of sins, both of which were connected to the temple cultus.[54]

3.10.2 The Rejected Stone

When Jesus enters Jerusalem, the cry of the crowd includes the words of Ps 118:26 [117:26 LXX]: "Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the LORD." There is an echo of Mal 3:1b in this cry because Jesus comes to the city, and then immediately to the temple, as Lord. At the end of the Parable of the Wicked Tenants, Ps 118 is quoted again. This time it is Jesus who quotes from the psalm. He asks, "Have you not read this Scripture: 'The stone that the builders (οἱ οἰκοδομοῦντες) rejected (ἀπεδοκίμασαν) has become the cornerstone; this was the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes'?" (Mark 12:10–11, quoting Ps 118:22–23 [117:22–23 LXX]).[55]

The stone in the quotation corresponds to the beloved son of the parable, and Jesus has already been identified as the beloved son at his baptism (1:11) and at the

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[54] John Paul Heil argues that the reference to God as "your Father in heaven" continues Mark's anti-temple theme: "Although the temple was the special place of God's presence on earth, his true dwelling place is in heaven, from where he hears prayers and grants forgiveness of sins. See the several references to God's hearing prayers and forgiving from heaven in the account of Solomon's dedication of the temple (1 Kgs 8:27–51)" ("The Narrative Strategy and Pragmatics of the Temple Theme in Mark," *CBQ* 59 [1997]: 80 n. 10).

[55] For Watts, these two quotations of Psalm 118 frame Mark 11:1–12:12. He proposes the following structure ("Mark," 206–8, further 212-214):

Jesus, "triumphant" Davidic king (Ps. 118:25–26) (11:1–11)
Cursing of the fig tree (11:12–14)
Jesus' temple demonstration (Isa. 56:7/Jer. 7:11) (11:15–19)
Withered fig tree, and mountain-moving (11:20–25)
Jesus, rejected but vindicated Davidic king (Ps. 118:22–23) (11:27–12:12).

transfiguration (9:7). Because the only other occurrence of ἀποδοκιμάζω in Mark is in 8:31, where Jesus prophesies his rejection by the Jewish leaders, in 12:10–11 "Jesus uses Ps. 118:22–23 to prophesy his death and resurrection."[56]

According to Watts, in contemporary Jewish interpretation, the most common understanding of the stone was Davidic, but it could also be understood as Abraham, Jacob, or Israel.[57] There was likewise a strong connection between the stone and the temple. The psalm itself suggests, in the words of Frank-Lothar Hossfeld and Erich Zenger, that "this is about the building of the Temple. In terms of intertextual links, we should say more precisely: it is about the (re)building of the destroyed Temple, and indeed of Jerusalem."[58] In T. Sol. 22:7–23:4, Ps 118:22 is quoted by Solomon after he enlists the help of a demon to place an immovable stone at the center of the temple to complete its construction. 1 Peter 2:4–7 also preserves this temple interpretation of the stone.

That Mark intends this temple-interpretation is suggested by the location of the quotation at the end of the Parable of the Wicked Tenants, which also refers to the temple, though indirectly. Further, there are links between the quotation of Ps 118:22 and Jesus's prediction of the destruction of the temple (Mark 13:1–2):

> And as [Jesus] came out of the temple, one of his disciples said to him, "Look, Teacher, what wonderful stones (λίθοι) and what wonderful buildings (οἰκοδομαί)!" And Jesus said to him, "Do you see these great buildings

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[56] Marcus, *Way*, 114.

[57] Watts, "Mark," 213.

[58] Hossfeld and Zenger *Psalms 3: A Commentary on Psalms 101–150*, trans. Linda M. Maloney, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2011), 242.

> (οἰκοδομάς)? There will not be left here one stone another (λίθος ἐπὶ λίθον) that will not be thrown down."

These two passages are connected by λίθος, the οἰκοδομ- root, and "seeing" (cf. "it is amazing in our eyes," 12:11; "Look!" 13:1).[59] Mark connects the fate of the beloved son/rejected stone with the temple, which will be torn down λίθος ἐπὶ λίθον. Both will be destroyed by the Romans. One will be lifted up; the other will be left in ruins.

3.10.3 The First Commandment

As part of the series of disputations in the temple, Jesus is asked by a scribe, "Which commandment is the first of all?" (12:28). Jesus gives a twofold answer: "The most important is, 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength' [Deut 6:4–5]. The second is this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself' [Lev 19:18]. There is no other commandment greater than these" (12:29–31). The scribe repeats Jesus's answer and says, "[This] is much more than all whole burnt offerings (ὁλοκαυτωμάτων) and sacrifices."[60] The scribe's answer echoes 1 Sam 15:22 and Hos 6:6, which remind Israel that Yahweh demands more than the temple cultus. Mark comments that the scribe has answered wisely, and Jesus responds, "You are not far from the kingdom of God." After this, no one dares to ask Jesus anything.

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[59] Marcus, *Way*, 120–21.

[60] Heil comments that the seven occurrences of ἐξ ὅλης in 12:30, 33 to express loving God with one's whole being is intentionally contrasted with the lesser ὁλοκαύτωμα, *whole*-burnt offering ("Narrative," 85).

3.11 Conclusion

Malachi 3:1b is hermeneutically influential on Mark 11:1–13:37 just as Isa 40:3 is on 8:22–10:52. The only explicit reference to Mal 3:1b is at the end of ch. 13, but there are echoes of Mal 3:1 throughout chs. 11–13. It is important to remember that "the way of the Lord" never occurs in the Way section. Instead, Mark signals his theme by the repeated occurrence of ὁδός. Likewise, ἱερόν occurs repeatedly (8x) in chs. 11–13. Malachi had predicted that, after the messenger/Elijah, the Lord would come suddenly to his temple. For Mark, this occurs in two stages, which correspond to the two halves of the fig tree scene. The first is the temple incident. Jesus shuts down the temple cultus and quotes from Jeremiah's temple sermon, which announced the temple's destruction. The second is the destruction of the temple, which Jesus predicts in 13:2.

Between the temple incident and Jesus's prediction of the temple's destruction, Jesus is involved in various disputes. These disputes are comparable with the disputation oracles in Malachi. In the principal dispute, which is about his authority regarding his actions in the temple, Jesus appeals to John the Baptist. If John is the messenger who goes before the Lord and prepares his way, then Jesus is the Lord who has come to his temple/house and pronounces its judgment.

Chapter 4

Malachi's Threat and Mark 13

> And as he came out of the temple, one of his disciples said to him, "Look, Teacher, what wonderful stones and what wonderful buildings!" And Jesus said to him, "Do you see these great buildings? There will not be left here one stone upon another that will not be thrown down."
>
> Mark 13:1–2

4.1 Introduction

As an appendix to his book, *The Meaning of Paul for To-Day,* Dodd presents his reading of Romans in an abridged paraphrase.[1] In this chapter, I intend something similar. But rather more than a paraphrase of Mark 13, what I present is a guided reading, a sketch as it were, that is sustained by the argument I have been making.

The allusion to Mal 3:1b in the Parable of the Porter suggests that Malachi's threat is hermeneutically influential on ch. 13 as it is on chs. 11–12. Because of this, I agree with those who read the entirety of the discourse as a prediction of the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple.[2] There are, of course, other possible interpretations of Mark 13,

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[1] Dodd, *The Meaning of Paul for To-Day*, Christian Revolution Series 11 (London: Allen & Unwin, 1920), 160–68.

[2] This interpretation has received fresh support recently: G. B. Caird, *New Testament Theology*, ed. L. D. Hurst (Oxford: Clarendon, 1994), 365–66; Wright, *Victory*, 339–66; Hatina, "The Focus of Mark 13:24–27: The Parousia or the Destruction of the Temple?," *BBR* 6 (1996): 43–66; Scot McKnight, *A New Vision for Israel: The Teachings of Jesus in National Context* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 139–49; Hatina, *Search*, 325–73; Watts, "Mark," 223–29; Michael F. Bird, "Tearing the Heavens and Shaking the Heavenlies: Mark's Cosmology in Its Apocalyptic Context," in *Cosmology and New Testament Theology*, ed. Jonathan T. Pennington and Sean M. McDonough, LNTS 355 (London: T&T Clark, 2008), 45–59; Gray, *Temple*, 106–55. Similar to this interpretation are France, *Mark*, 494–546; Keith Dyer, *The Prophecy on the Mount: Mark 13 and the Gathering of the New Community*, International Theological

as well as complex questions about Mark's sources and the composition of the discourse.[3] Thankfully, this ground has already been covered in George R. Beasley-Murray's *Jesus and the Last Days*, which surveys the history of interpretation of Mark 13 since David Friedrich Strauss.[4] That is, Beasley-Murray provides the chronological baseline from which I proceed.

4.2 Mark 13:1–4

Mark 13 begins with Jesus leaving the Jerusalem Temple for the last time (ἐκπορευομένου αὐτοῦ ἐκ τοῦ ἱεροῦ; 13:1) and making his way to the Mount of Olives, where he sits "opposite the temple" (κατέναντι τοῦ ἱεροῦ; 13:3). As in chs. 11–12, his actions point beyond their physical performance. First, Jesus's movement from the temple to the Mount of Olives alludes to Ezek 9–11, which describe "how the divine glory abandons first the temple, which has been profaned, and then the city, so leaving temple and city and nation to their fate."[5] Second, Jesus sits opposite the temple. Sitting

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Studies 2 (Bern: Lang, 1998), 195–200, 276–77. France and Dyer agree with the above until 13:32, where they maintain that Jesus changes topics from the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple to the unknown time of his parousia.

[3] Robert H. Stein has created a chart setting out various proposals for interpreting the discourse as a whole (*Jesus, the Temple, and the Coming of the Son of Man: A Commentary on Mark 13* [Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2014], 584–85).

[4] Beasley-Murray, *Jesus and the Last Days: The Interpretation of the Olivet Discourse* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1993).

[5] Beasley-Murray, *Last Days*, 380; similarly Evans, *Mark 8:27–16:20*, 295; Marcus, *Mark 9-16*, 871. Josephus reports that before the destruction of the Second Temple, a voice was heard in the inner sanctuary saying, "We are departing hence" (*B.J.* 6.300).

is a posture for teaching in Jewish tradition, but it is also connected with judgment.[6] The setting for Mark 13 is explicitly κατέναντι τοῦ ἱεροῦ (13:3).[7]

In between Jesus departing from the temple and sitting on the Mount of Olives, an unnamed disciple draws Jesus's attention to the temple's magnificent buildings (13:1). The disciple's exclamation (διδάσκαλε, ἰδέ) looks back to Peter's exclamation at the discovery of the withered fig tree (ῥαββί, ἰδέ; 11:21). By dividing the fig tree scene into two parts, Mark signals a chronological gap between the pronouncement of judgment and the coming destruction. By linking the disciple's exclamation to Peter's, Mark indicates that Jesus is now predicting the latter.

Jesus responds to the disciple with a prediction that reverses the imagery of Hag 2:15.[8] In response, Peter, James, John, and Andrew come to Jesus privately as he sits on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple (13:3).[9] They ask him two questions: "Tell us,

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[6] Heil, "Narrative," 87. In Mark 12:41, Jesus sits opposite the treasury (καθίσας κατέναντι τοῦ γαζοφυλακίου). The widow's offering of ὅλον τὸν βίον αὐτῆς (12:44) connects to the sevenfold repetition of ἐξ ὅλης in 12:30, 33, where the scribe says that loving God with all that you are and your neighbor as yourself "is much more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices" (12:33).

[7] Marcus connects this with 12:36 and Jesus's quotation of Ps 110:1 (*Mark 9-16*, 871).

[8] This verse describes the Second Temple as having been built λίθον ἐπὶ λίθον. As the temple was built, so it will be torn down (Evans, *Mark 8:27–16:20*, 299). Because the builders have rejected the son/stone (12:10), the stones of the temple will be rejected as well (13:2). In chs. 11–13, οἰκοδομή and οἰκοδομέω occur only in the Parable of the Wicked Tenants (12:1, 10) and in the opening sentences of ch. 13. Later, οἰκοδομέω occurs twice more (14:58; 15:29). In both, it is part of the accusation that Jesus said he would destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days.

[9] After the opening section of Mark (1:1–15), Jesus's first action is to call these same four disciples (1:16–20). Marcus writes: "Near its end ... Jesus' ministry recapitulates its beginning"(*Mark 9-16*, 873).

when will these things (ταῦτα) be, and what will be the sign when all these things are about to be accomplished (ὅταν μέλλῃ ταῦτα συντελεῖσθαι πάντα)?" (13:4).[10]

The disciples' second question alludes to Dan 12:7 (LXX: συντελεσθήσεται πάντα ταῦτα; MT: תכלינה כל אלה). Those who judge that ch. 13 refers to more than the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple often make a distinction between ταῦτα and ταῦτα πάντα because of this.[11] In Dan 12:6, an angel (who appeared in 10:4–5) is asked by two others standing near Daniel, "How long shall it be until the end of these wonders (הפלאות)?" The angel responds that "when the shattering of the power of the holy people comes to an end, all these things would be finished" (12:7). According to Collins, "The end of these wonders" in Dan 12:7 is not the close of the age but Antiochus's arrogant words and deeds.[12]

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[10] This twofold question along with the repeated ταῦτα recalls the first disputation in the temple, where ταῦτα referred to the temple incident (11:27–33).

[11] E.g., Rudolf Pesch, *Naherwartungen. Tradition und Redaktion in Mk 13*, KBANT (Düsseldorf: Patmos, 1968), 101–5; so also Hartman: "the two clauses do not necessarily express exactly the same things.... [T]his particular phraseological similarity to Dn 12,7 indicates that συντελεῖσθαι here really alludes to 'the close of the age'" (*Prophecy Interpreted*, 221). Marcus makes the case that Jesus's disciples ask two distinct questions because of a distinction between ταῦτα and ταῦτα πάντα: ταῦτα refers back to 11:28 and the temple incident; ταῦτα πάντα looks forward to 13:30, where it "occurs between a description of the eschaton (13:24–27) and a reference to the dissolution of the universe (13:31)" (*Mark 9-16*, 874). But Marcus's distinction is problematic because both ταῦτα (13:29) and ταῦτα πάντα (13:30) occur between "the eschaton" and "the dissolution of the universe," to quote his terms, and appear not to have the distinct meanings he suggests.

[12] Collins, *Daniel: A Commentary on the Book of Daniel*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993), 399; similarly Carol A. Newsom, *Daniel*, OTL (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2014); John Goldingay, *Daniel*, rev. ed., WBC 30 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Academic, 2019), 550.

The allusion to Dan 12:7 therefore does not indicate that the disciples have asked two different questions.[13] On the contrary, it makes a connection between the judgment predicted to befall the enemy of the people of God and the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple. This recasting of OT texts in which words originally spoken against the enemies of the people of God are now applied to the temple is a common feature in Mark 13. It is also consistent with how Malachi has adapted Isa 40:3 and Exod 23:20 to create a threat against the temple.

4.3 Mark 13:5–8

Mark 13:5–23 is the second section of ch. 13 after the introductory verses. It is framed by βλέπετε in 13:5, 23, and by πλανήση/ἀποπλανᾶν in 13:5, 22.[14] According to Geddert, βλέπω has a specific meaning in the Gospel: "every usage of the term in Mark appears intended by the author to contribute to a carefully devised call for discernment concerning realities which lie beyond the observations of the physical senses."[15] Together βλέπω and πλανάω form a central concern of 13:5–23: the disciples are to look out so that they will not be led astray.[16]

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[13] Likewise, the two questions asked by Jesus's opponents in 11:28 are synonymous.

[14] Geddert, *Watchwords*, 81–88; Gray, *Temple*, 103.

[15] Geddert, *Watchwords*, 60. Mark 13 has βλέπετε three more times in addition to the above chiasm. In 13:2, it precedes the prediction of the temple's destruction; in 13:9, it indicates a new subsection of 13:5–23; in 13:33, it occurs right before the Parable of the Porter.

[16] Marcus: "The first sentence of this discourse sounds its *Leitmotif*: 'Look out, lest someone lead you astray' (... 13:5b; cf. 13:9, 23, 33)" (*Mark 9-16*, 879). Because

The initial warning is to watch out for deceivers (13:5). Jesus says, "Many will come in my name (ἐπὶ τῷ ὀνόματί μου) and say, 'I am he!' and they will lead many astray" (13:6). The scene is patterned after Jer 14. In response to Jeremiah's prediction of the temple's destruction, false prophets are claiming in Yahweh's name (בשמי; ἐπὶ τῷ ὀνόματί μου) that judgment will not befall the city. The phrase "in my name" occurs twice in Jer 14:14–15, and the warning concerns future war and famine (cf. Mark 13:7–8). Despite the false prophets' claim, Jeremiah's prediction is sure, as is Jesus's, and again Mark places Jesus in the role of Yahweh.[17]

War, earthquake, and famine are of course stock imagery in apocalyptic literature and eschatological prophecies.[18] Still, several phrases in 13:5–8 are suggestive of specific prophetic passages, e.g., the command not to be alarmed (μὴ θροεῖσθε), dependent on Jer 51:46 and part of an oracle predicting the destruction of Babylon.[19]

Marcus mentions the other occurrences of βλέπω in ch. 13, I assume that he refers to 13:5–37 when he writes "this discourse," but since there is no mention of being deceived after 13:22 it would be better to say that "Look out, lest someone lead you astray" is the leitmotif of 13:5–23, which is part of the discourse's larger concern that the disciples see rightly.

[17] Gray finds that the mention of deceivers in the context of a prediction of the temple's destruction likewise calls to mind Ezek 13–14 and Mic 3, in which false prophets arise and promise peace even when judgment upon city and temple have been foretold (*Temple*, 112).

[18] Lane, *Mark*, 458; Evans, *Mark 8:27–16:20*, 307–8; Pitre, *Tribulation*, 239; Gray, *Temple*, 116; Marcus, *Mark 9-16*, 874–78. Gray observes that in the OT the imagery is found most often in oracles against Jerusalem (*Temple*, 116–17).

[19] Pitre, *Tribulation*, 227; similarly Evans, *Mark 8:27–16:20*, 306; France, *Mark*, 511; Gray, *Temple*, 112–13. Not only do both passages contain parenesis against fear, predictions of rumors, and predictions of war in antithetical parallelism, but Jeremiah exhorts the people to flee the condemned city to save their lives, just as Jesus does in Mark 13:14–16. Jerusalem now plays the role of the wicked city facing Yahweh's judgment as the exile comes to an end.

Within this allusion to Jeremiah, Mark also makes two allusions to Daniel. The first is δεῖ γενέσθαι (13:7), the second, τὸ τέλος (13:7). First, δεῖ γενέσθαι is an allusion to Dan 2:28–29 Theod.[20] God has revealed to Nebuchadnezzar "what must happen at the end of days," ἃ δεῖ γενέσθαι ἐπ᾽ ἐσχάτων τῶν ἡμερῶν (2:28).[21] What has been revealed to the king is the kingdom of God coming as a stone (λίθος) that "will pulverize and scatter all the kingdoms, and it will stand up forever" (2:44). As with Jer 51:46, so this allusion also recasts Jerusalem's role in the ending of its own story. The coming of the kingdom of God does not bring salvation to Jerusalem but the judgment prophesied to fall on the kingdoms of this world.

Second, according to Hartman, the primary reference is 9:26, which tells of an anointed one (משיח) who will be cut off and the army of the prince who will come and destroy Jerusalem and its temple, and "to the end there shall be war."[22] Hence Pitre, in conclusion:

> When viewed in the light of these Danielic allusions, specially the declaration that "to the end" there would be wars and desolation, Jesus' prophecy of "the end"—an end that will take place after a period of *war*, at a decreed *time*, in response to a question about the destruction of the *Temple* (Mark 13:1–4)—can quite reasonably be interpreted as referring to "the end" as described by the prophet Daniel.[23]

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[20] Beasley-Murray, *Last Days*, 396–97; Dyer, *Prophecy*, 103; Evans, *Mark 8:27–16:20*, 307.

[21] Daniel 2:29 Theod has ὅσα δεῖ γενέσθαι ἐπ᾽ ἐσχάτων τῶν ἡμερῶν. Unless otherwise indicated, all translations of the LXX are from NETS.

[22] Hartman, *Prophecy Interpreted*, 148–50.

[23] Pitre, *Tribulation*, 228.

The "end" in Dan 9 relates the death of an anointed one to the destruction of the city and its temple. Mark makes this connection between the death of Jesus and the destruction of the temple. And since Mark alludes to this chapter again in 13:14, it is probable that τὸ τέλος (13:7) is not the end of the world but the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple.[24]

Like Malachi before him, Mark is recasting the end of Israel's story. Prophecies of blessing (Dan 2) become threats, Jerusalem is recast as Babylon (Jer 51), and the end of the city and its sanctuary is coming (Dan 9). As noted, deceivers, wars and rumors of wars, earthquakes, and famines are stock imagery in predictions of judgment, and in context that judgment is directed at Jerusalem and its temple. Jesus names these things the ἀρχὴ ὠδίνων, "the beginning of the birth-pangs" (13:8).[25] Therefore, the labor pains of 13:5–8 are not separable from what follows nor irrelevant to the disciples' question. They are not "non-signs."[26] They are the *beginning* of labor pains, i.e., not yet the climactic moment, but not distinct from it either.

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[24] Wright, *Victory*, 345–48; Gray, *Temple*, 115; Stein, *Temple*, 79; Sloan, *Mark 13*, 170.

[25] Marcus observes that this last clause in 13:8 is sometimes translated in a way that minimizes the eschatological significance of the 'labor pains', e.g., RSV: "This is but the beginning of the birthpangs;" the Greek has only ἀρχὴ ὠδίνων ταῦτα. Gundry claims that the asyndeton of the clause and the forward position of ἀρχή favor an implied adversative. Marcus counters: "it is unclear how the absence of a particle leads to supplying the English word 'but,' and asyndeton is ubiquitous in our passage, which may reflect Aramaic or popular Greek style rather than emphasis" (*Mark 9-16*, 878). He translate the clause "These things are indeed the beginning of the labor pains."

[26] Contra Stein, who labels 13:5–13 "non-signs" (*Temple*, 76–85).

As with the other imagery in 13:5–8, birth pangs are a frequent metaphor for divine judgment.[27] Pitre examines this image in the OT and Early Judaism and concludes: "it is linked not only to suffering in general, but to tribulation which (almost always) does one of two things: accompanies *the destruction of a city or nation* or precedes *the coming of the Messiah*."[28] Not surprisingly, the city most frequently described as being in birth pangs is Jerusalem.[29]

4.4 Mark 13:9–13

In 13:5, the disciples were to watch out (βλέπετε) for deceivers. In 13:9, the disciples must watch out for themselves (βλέπετε δὲ ὑμεῖς ἑαυτούς). These verses are marked as a subsection of 13:5–23 by δέ (13:9, 14) and an *inclusio* formed by the reason for their persecution: ἕνεκεν ἐμοῦ, "because of me" (13:9) and διὰ τὸ ὄνομά μου, "because of my name" (13:13). Verses 5–8 describe the birth pangs that will occur on an international stage and signal the beginning of the tribulation that culminates in the temple's destruction; 9–13 the trouble that will afflict the disciples of Jesus in particular.

Jesus warns them of a coming period of persecution. They will be arrested, beaten, and put on trial before Jewish and Gentile rulers. These persecutions are

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[27] Some consider the birth pangs of Mark 13:8 to be a pre-technical example of its rabbinic use (Lane, *Mark*, 458–59; Gundry, *Mark*, 763; France, *Mark*, 512). Further on rabbinic commentary in Mark Dubis, *The Messianic Woes in First Peter: Suffering and Eschatology in 1 Peter 4:12–19*, StBibLit 33 (New York: Lang, 2002), 6–13.

[28] Pitre, *Tribulation*, 229.

[29] Gray, *Temple*, 118–19.

presented in three small sections, each of which has παραδίδωμι (13:9, 11, 12). In Mark, this word occurs in the mention of John's arrest (1:14), the description of Judas as the betrayer of Jesus (3:19), and in Jesus's predictions of his death while "on the way" (9:31; 10:33).[30] In these latter occurrences, it is ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου who will be handed over, which suggests an allusion to Dan 7. Here "the holy ones of the Most High" (7:25), who are represented by the Son of Man (בר אנש, 7:13 MT; υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου LXX), are given into the hand of the wicked ruler (7:25).[31] Since Mark has already alluded to Daniel twice in the previous subsection, it is probable that an allusion to Dan 7:25 is implied here as well.[32]

Jesus states that the gospel must (δεῖ) first be preached to all the nations (εἰς πάντα τὰ ἔθνη; 13:10). John's arrest, already alluded to by παραδίδωμι, led to Jesus's initial preaching of the gospel in Galilee (1:14). Likewise, the disciples' persecution will

[30] παραδίδωμι occurs frequently in the passion narrative (14:10, 11, 18, 21, 41, 42, 44; 15:1, 10, 15), as also in pre-creedal summaries of the passion, which arguably predate Mark.

[31] The connection between the Son of Man and the holy ones of the Most High is not explicit in Dan 7, but may be observed by comparing the vision and the interpretation. In the vison, the Son of Man receives an everlasting kingdom so that all peoples, nations, and languages may serve him (7:14), but in the interpretation it is the holy ones of the Most High whose kingdom shall be "an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey them" (7:26)

[32] Hartman, *Prophecy Interpreted*, 167–69. Gray lists several more connections between the disciple's persecution and Jesus's Passion (*Temple*, 120–23). As Pitre suggests, "The fact that this handing over will only be for a set period of time ('a time, two times, and half a time') (Dan 7:25) may also provide the impetus for Jesus' call for endurance to 'the end'—i.e., to the end of the appointed period of persecution (Mark 13:14)" (*Tribulation*, 260).

result in the preaching of the gospel to all nations as they give testimony before Jewish and Gentile rulers (13:9–11).

The rationale for Jesus's prediction of the Gentile mission probably derives from Isa 66.[33] It is necessary (δεῖ) that the gospel be preached to all nations first because "it is the Gentiles themselves who, once having heard of the glory of the LORD, will bring back the scattered Israelites to Zion: 'And they shall bring all you brothers from all the nations as an offering to the LORD ... to my holy mountain Jerusalem, says the LORD' (Isa 66:20)."[34]

Mark 13:9–13 also appears to have been influenced by Mic 7.[35] While Mark's "brother will betray brother" may come from Isa 66:5, interfamilial strife is more prominent in Micah: "for the son treats the father with contempt, the daughter rises up (MT קום; LXX ἐπαναστήσεται) against her mother, the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; a man's enemies are men of his own household" (7:6). This is similar to Jesus's warning: "Brother will deliver brother over to death, and the father his child, and children will rise (ἐπαναστήσονται) against parents" (Mark 13:12). In the next verse, the

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[33] Alternatively, Mark may have changed topics away from the temple because he cannot not imagine the completion of worldwide evangelism before the destruction of the temple. But Marcus judges that "[a]s a member of the Pauline mission ..., Mark probably thinks that this eschatological prerequisite of worldwide evangelism is nearly complete (cf. Rom 15:23–24; Col 1:23) and that therefore the end is imminent" (*Mark 9-16*, 886).

[34] Pitre, *Tribulation*, 263. Further connecting chs. 11–12 and ch. 13: ἔθνη occurs only here and in Jesus's indictment against the temple for failing to be a house of prayer πᾶσιν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν (11:17; quoting Isa 56:7).

[35] Pitre: "It is hard to overestimate the significance of this prophecy [Mic 7:6–18] for understanding Jesus' allusion to the time of strife in Mark 13:12, and for the entirety of Mark 13:9–13" (*Tribulation*, 260); similarly Wright, *Victory*, 347–48.

prophet's response to this time of strife is to say, "I will wait for the God of my salvation" (7:7; MT אוחילה לאלהי ישעי; LXX ὑπομενῶ ἐπὶ τῷ θεῷ τῷ σωτῆρί μου). This is akin to Jesus's saying that the one who endures to the end will be saved (ὁ δὲ ὑπομείνας εἰς τέλος οὗτος σωθήσεται; Mark 13:13).[36]

And it is more than verbal links that connect Mic 7 and Mark 13:9–13. The salvation promised is described with new exodus and end of the exile imagery (Mic 7:12–15), and the judgment is specifically upon Israel (7:2). The prophet even describes himself as one "who ... finds no cluster to eat; there is no first-ripe fig for which I hunger" (7:1; cf. Mark 11:12–14, 20–21). In response to the coming judgment, the faithful must wait for the Lord (7:7), and the enemy of the faithful is described as those who ask, "Where is the LORD your God?" (7:10). Malachi 3:1 is the prophet's response to the question "Where is the God of justice?" In Micah, the prophet predicts concerning those who ask this question: "My eyes will see her downfall; now she will be trodden down like the mire of the streets" (7:10).

By alluding to Isa 66, Mark is recasting the end of Israel's story. With Mic 7, he likewise draws on Israel's prophetic history to tell both of judgment falling upon the people and of the need to endure to the saved. Nothing Mark has said thus far suggests that he has left the theme he began developing in earnest since Jesus arrived at the temple in ch. 11.

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[36] Similarly Hartman, *Prophecy Interpreted*; Gundry, *Mark*, 740; Beasley-Murray, *Last Days*, 406; Pitre, *Tribulation*, 260.

4.5 Mark 13:14–23

Jesus's response to his disciples now enters a new phase. There is a shift from ὅταν δὲ ἀκούσητε, "when you hear" (13:7), to ὅταν δὲ ἴδητε, "when you see" (13:4). The disciples wanted to know the signs that foretold "when (ὅταν) all these things are about to be accomplished" (13:3). At first, they were not to be alarmed by what they heard (13:7); wars, rumors of wars, famine, and earthquakes were but the beginning of the birth pangs (13:8). But now, "when you see the abomination of desolation (τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως) standing where he ought not to be ..., then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains" (13:14). Previously they had been told to endure (13:13); now they must flee.

What then is this desolating sacrilege? Three passages in Daniel (9:26–27; 11:31–35; 12:8–13) speak of it, and they all refer to the same event: the destruction of Jerusalem and its temple.[37] Mark has already alluded to Daniel many times in ch. 13 and to 9:26–27 specifically in 13:7. In Dan 9, the angel Gabriel tells Daniel that the exile will last not 70 years, as Jeremiah predicted (25:11–12; 29:10; cf. Dan 9:1–2), but "seventy weeks of years" (9:24). In the last week, sacrifices and offerings will be suppressed, the abomination of desolation will be set up "in their place," and the city and the sanctuary will be destroyed (9:26–27).[38]

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[37] Various positions on the abomination of desolation are surveyed in Desmond Ford, *The Abomination of Desolation in Biblical Eschatology* (Washington, DC: University Press of America, 1979); W. A. Such, *The Abomination of Desolation in the Gospel of Mark: Its Historical Reference in Mark 13:14 and Its Impact in the Gospel* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1999); Beasley-Murray, *Last Days*, 407–16.

[38] "in their place" is Collins's translation (*Daniel*, 346–47). The MT has על כנף, "upon the wing." But the LXX has ἐπὶ τὸ ἱερόν, and Collins insists that the LXX

This connection is not unique to Dan 9. In all three places where the abomination of desolation is mentioned in Daniel, it relates to the destruction of the temple (Dan 11:31; 12:11).[39] This should not be overlooked. The disciples have asked for a sign that will precede the temple's destruction; τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως is that sign. Rather than switching to a different topic, as many suggest, Jesus answers their question with an allusion to one of the most explicit eschatological prophecies of the temple's destruction, Dan 9:25–27.[40]

Additionally, in all three passages, the abomination of desolation is connected with the cessation of the daily sacrifice.[41] In Mark, then, Jesus's temple action (11:15–16)

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translators cannot have read כנף. He suggests instead the emendation על כנם, "in their place," which makes the LXX reading a paraphrase (*Daniel*, 358).

[39] Apparently, the only other occurrence of the phrase in pre-Christian literature is 1 Macc 1:54, where Antiochus's forces erect the βδέλυγμα ἐρημώσεως upon the altar of burnt offering in the Jerusalem Temple.

[40] It is sometimes claimed that "the entire discourse is out of relation to the prophecy with which it begins," but, as Beasley-Murray maintains, when Jesus speaks of τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως, he has in mind "a blasphemous event which will entail the destruction of the temple and the city, and will be the means by which the prophecy of 13:2 will be fulfilled" (*Last Days*, 411). According to his history of interpretation, the predominant view in the 20th century was that the discourse was thematically disconnected from 13:1–4. More recently, Gundry likewise insists that Jesus never answers the disciples' question (*Mark*, 740).

[41] Pitre: "The central characteristic of this profanation, although sometimes curiously ignored by New Testament scholars, should also be highlighted. In all three texts the profanation is carried out by means of the *forced cessation of sacrifice*, in particular the termination of the 'continual burn offering,' the *tamid*, which was offered every day in the Temple (Dan 9:27; 11:31; 12:11). Here it should be emphasized that the actual text of Daniel is far less focused on the precise identification of the 'the abomination of desolation' that is 'set up' (i.e., whether it is a statue or idol or altar) than on the fact that this abomination will bring the sacrifices to a halt" (*Tribulation*, 304).

interrupts the daily temple cultus, which is to say, he symbolically prefigures the very thing explicitly connected with the abomination of desolation in Daniel.

When the disciples see the abomination of desolation, they are to flee to the hills (13:14). Jesus's command to flee to the hills (εἰς τὰ ὄρη; 13:14) and not look back (εἰς τὰ ὀπίσω; 13:16) doubtless alludes to Gen 19:15–17, the prototypical flight from a condemned city.[42] The wicked city from which the people must flee is no longer Sodom but Jerusalem.[43] A final note about the flight to the hills: one does not fly to the hills to escape the dissolution of the universe.[44] On the contrary, these commands make sense only if the Jerusalem Temple is still the focal point of the discourse.

The warning to fly to the hills is followed by Jesus saying that "in those days (αἱ ἡμέραι ἐκεῖναι) there will be such tribulation as (θλῖψις οἵα) has not been from the beginning of the creation that God created until now, and never will be" (Mark 13:19). He adds that if the Lord had not shortened the days of that tribulation, "no human being would be saved. But for the sake of the elect, whom he chose, he shortened the days"

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[42] So Hartman, *Prophecy Interpreted*, 154; Pitre, *Tribulation*, 314–15; Gray, *Temple*, 133–14; Marcus, *Mark 9-16*, 895. W. D. Davies and Dale C. Allison Jr observe that the flight from Sodom became prototypical of eschatological flight from wickedness in the final days (*A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to Saint Matthew*, 3 vols., ICC [Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1988], 3:347).

[43] This would be shocking except that Isaiah already made this connection as part of an indictment of the temple cultus (Isa 1:10–11). In addition to the flight from Sodom, Mark may also intend echoes of the flight from Babylon, which the prophets had predicted as part of the new exodus (Isa 48:20; Jer 50:8, 28; Zech 2:6–7).

[44] This warning is "more useful to a refugee from military invasion than to a man caught unawares by the last trumpet" (Caird, *Jesus and the Jewish Nation* [London: Athlone Press, 1965], 21).

(13:20). The imagery of these verses has been read as suggestive of a judgment that extends beyond Jerusalem.[45]

But this unprecedented tribulation is another allusion to Daniel, this time to Dan 12:1–2: "And there shall be a time of trouble (MT עת צרה; LXX ἡ ἡμέρα θλίψεως), such as (οἵα) never has been since there was a nation till that time. But at that time your people shall be delivered."[46] This chapter has already been referred to in the disciples' question (Mark 13:4) and the reference to the abomination of desolation (13:14).[47] The imagery refers once again to judgment upon Jerusalem, particularly judgment connected with the exile, and the heightened language is fitting since Israel's story is coming to its climax in the time of this unparalleled tribulation. In Dan 12:1, those who will be save are "every one whose name shall be found written in the book;" in Mark 13:20, it is for the sake of the elect that the days are cut short.

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[45] E.g., Evans: "Unless we view this statement as unbridled hyperbole, the warning that the period of tribulation will be so severe that unless shortened it will extinguish human life argues that the prophecy portends more than the Jewish war. To be sure, this war threatened all Jewish lives in Jerusalem (though, as it turned out, many thousands survived), but the fate of the whole of humanity did not hang in the balance" (*Mark 8:27–16:20*, 322).

[46] So Gray, *Temple*, 135.

[47] The earlier editorial comment, "let the reader understand" (13:14), is probably an allusion to Dan 12 as well. The prophet is told to "shut up the words and seal the book, until the time of the end" (12:4). A few verses later, Daniel says that he heard but did not understand (12:8), and in response is told, "Go your way, Daniel, for the words are shut up and sealed until the time of the end" (12:9). The implication is that the meaning of Daniel cannot be understood until the time of the events they foretell. Given the numerous allusions to Daniel in this discourse, "let the reader understand" therefore likely refers not the reader of Mark but to the reader of Daniel.

According to Pitre, the fate of the elect "is clearly the overarching concern that drives both the warning and the promises contained in Mark 13:14–27."[48] In Mark, ἐκλεκτός occurs only in these verses. The days of tribulation are cut short for the sake of the elect (13:20), who may be led astray by false Christs and false prophets (13:22) and, after the Son of Man comes, will be gathered from the four winds (13:27). But who are the elect?

The concept of Israel as a chosen people is well known, but "some later OT works develop the idea that most of the people have defaulted on their vocation, so that a winnowing of the nation will be necessary."[49] This conception of "the elect" is particularly prominent in 1 Enoch and the DSS, where the elect are the righteous remnant of Israel who will survive the eschatological judgment.[50] But in Mark the elect are not the

[48] Pitre, *Tribulation*, 300. Contrary to most modern scholarship, Pitre treats Mark 13:14–27 as a single block of tradition (*Tribulation*, 294–301). Most commentators divide 13:14–27 into three sections: 14–20, 21–23, and 24–27 (C. E. B. Cranfield, *The Gospel According to St. Mark*, CGTC [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1959], 401–7; Taylor, *St. Mark*, 511–19; Pesch, *Das Markusevangelium*, 2 vols., HThKNT [Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 1976–1977], 2:289-305; Hooker, *According to Saint Mark*, 313–19; Beasley-Murray, *Last Days*, 407–34; Gundry, *Mark*, 741–45; Francis J. Moloney, *The Gospel of Mark: A Commentary* [Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2002], 358–67; Collins, *Mark*, 607–15; Marcus, *Mark 9-16*, 889–909). A smaller number of commentators identify two sections: 13:14–23, 24–27 (D. E. Nineham, *Saint Mark*, PNTC [Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1963], 350–57; Joachim Gnilka, *Das Evangelium nach Markus*, 2 vols., EKKNT [Zurich: Benzinger, 1979], 2:193-202; Evans, *Mark 8:27–16:20*, 316–27; France, *Mark*, 519–40).

[49] Marcus, *Mark 9-16*, 897.

[50] So Pitre, *Tribulation*, 322–25; Collins, *Mark*, 611–12; Marcus, *Mark 9-16*, 897.

righteous remnant of Israel but the disciples of Jesus.[51] Once again, as Mark tells the end of Israel's story, he has recast the roles.

One last comment must be made before turning to 13:24–27. Many English translations of 13:20 read similarly to the ESV: "if the Lord had not cut short the days, no human being (πᾶσα σάρξ) would be saved." Like the unprecedented tribulation, this is often read as suggesting a world-ending judgment. France takes πᾶσα σάρξ to refer specifically to those caught up in the θλῖψις that comes upon Jerusalem on account of the abomination of desolation.[52] This is possible. But πᾶσα σάρξ does not normally have a localized meaning, and it is more likely an allusion to the destruction of πᾶσα σάρξ in Genesis 6–9.[53] Whatever the case here, Mark's point is explicitly that the judgment *does not* bring about the end of "all flesh." Rather than suggest the end of the world, Mark states that the judgment is divinely limited for the sake of the elect so as *not* to bring about the end of everything.

4.6 Mark 13:24–27

Contrary to the consensus view, Jesus does not change the topic of the discourse starting at 13:24.[54] His concern is still the Jerusalem Temple, as it has been since he

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[51] France suggests that by Mark's time, "the elect" would have been familiar as a self-description of the Christian community (*Mark*, 528).

[52] France, *Mark*, 528.

[53] See Gen 6:12, 13, 17, 19; 7:15, 16, 21; 8:17; 9:11, 15 (twice), 16, 17; cf. Sir 44:17–18.

[54] These verses are most often read as referring to a final eschatological event at the consummation of history; so, e.g., Cranfield, *St. Mark*, 404; Lane, *Mark*, 474–77; Hooker, "Trial and Tribulation in Mark 13," *BJRL* 65 (1982): 93; Gundry, *Mark*, 745;

predicted its destruction.[55] The interpretation of those who read these verses otherwise regularly begins with a discussion of the temporal relationship of the events in 13:24–27 with what precedes. That is, ἀλλά in 13:24 is interpreted as a strong adversative that indicates a change of subject.[56] On the contrary, as Gray observes, ἀλλά occurs forty-five times in Mark, "none of which serves to separate a literary unit or mark the beginning of an altogether new section."[57]

Rather than marking a new section, however, ἀλλά at the beginning of 13:24 indicates a contrast with what precedes: between the false messiahs and prophets (13:22) and the Son of Man (13:24) The false messiahs and prophets will *arise*, perform *signs and wonders*, and deceive even *the elect*. The Son of Man will *come* with *power and glory* and send out τοὺς ἀγγέλους to gather *the elect*.

In addition to ἀλλά, 13:24 is connected to the preceding verses by two phrases: ἐν ἐκείναις ταῖς ἡμέραις, "in those days," and μετὰ τὴν θλῖψιν ἐκείνην, "after that tribulation." Some who read 13:24–27 as a reference to the parousia assign interpretive weight only to the second phrase, at the expense of the first.[58] But in the preceding

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Beasley-Murray, *Last Days*, 422–27; Collins, *Mark*, 614–15; Stein, *Mark*, BECNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), 610–20; Marcus, *Mark 9-16*, 903–9; Sloan, *Mark 13*, 190–205.

[55] Hatina: "While the motif of opposition against the temple establishment is evident in Mark 11–12, most scholars do not allow the motif to play a strong role in chapter 13, especially not so in vv. 24–27" (*Search*, 346).

[56] So Lane, *Mark*, 473; Pesch, *Markusevangelium*, 2:302; Gnilka, *Markus*, 2:200; Moloney, *Mark*, 264; Ben Witherington III, *The Gospel of Mark: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001), 347.

[57] Gray, *Temple*, 137.

verses, ἡμέρα occurs four times after the abomination of desolation in 13:14 and never before it (13:17, 19, 20 [2x]). In ch. 13, ἡμέρα refers to that period of unparalleled tribulation that begins when τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως is set up.[59] So when Jesus says that the events of 13:24–27 will occur "in those days," he is connecting the cosmic language, the coming of the Son of Man, and the ingathering of the elect with the same temporal period as the desolating sacrilege. These events will take place in the days of unprecedented tribulation but after the specific tribulation of the previous verses.[60] Taken together, the two temporal phrases do not allow for a large chronological gap between 13:5–23 and 13:24–27; they suggest the opposite.[61]

What follows the two prepositional phrases is a conflation of at least five OT allusions. The way in which the various passages are combined without a clear indication as to where one begins and another ends is reminiscent of Mark's opening quotation (1:2–3). And as in those initial verses, identifying the source of these allusion is imperative for my interpretation. Mark does not merely have language evocative of

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[58] For example, Stein: "'But ... after that [tribulation]' indicates that 13:24–27 is not simply a repetition of the destruction of Jerusalem described in 13:5–23 using metaphorical, cosmic language! It involves a different event!" (*Mark*, 106; emphasis original).

[59] Pitre, *Tribulation*, 331.

[60] Similarly Gray: "v. 24 introduces a *new moment* in the *same series* of events" (*Temple*, 139).

[61] Pitre, *Tribulation*, 332. As Pitre observes, if Mark intended to indicate a large temporal divide between the events of the previous verses and 13:24–27, then Matthew has missed the point: "Immediately after the tribulation of those days ..." (24:29; cf. Luke 21:25–27).

mainstream prophetic tradition broadly understood. Rather he alludes to specific OT passages, which are intended to inform the reading of these four verses.[62]

4.6.1 Isa 13:10 and 34:4 in Mark 13:24–25

Isa 13:10 LXX	Mark 13:24–25
οἱ γὰρ ἀστέρες τοῦ οὐρανοῦ καὶ ὁ Ὡρίων καὶ πᾶς ὁ κόσμος τοῦ οὐρανοῦ τὸ φῶς οὐ δώσουσι,	ἀλλ᾽ ἐν ἐκείναις ταῖς ἡμέραις μετὰ τὴν θλῖψιν ἐκείνην
καὶ σκοτισθήσεται τοῦ ἡλίου ἀνατέλλοντος,	ὁ ἥλιος σκοτισθήσεται,
καὶ ἡ σελήνη οὐ δώσει τὸ φῶς αὐτῆς.	καὶ ἡ σελήνη οὐ δώσει τὸ φέγγος αὐτῆς,
Isa 34:4 LXX B	
καὶ τακήσονται [σαλευθησονται 403΄] πᾶσαι αἱ δυνάμεις τῶν οὐρανῶν, καὶ ἑλιγήσεται ὁ οὐρανὸς ὡς βιβλίον, καὶ πάντα τὰ ἄστρα πεσεῖται ὡς φύλλα ἐξ ἀμπέλου καὶ ὡς πίπτει φύλλα ἀπὸ συκῆς.	καὶ οἱ ἀστέρες ἔσονται ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ πίπτοντες, καὶ αἱ δυνάμεις αἱ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς σαλευθήσονται.

Mark 13:24–25 is a conflation of Isa 13:10 and 34:4.[63] The former is part of an oracle against Babylon; the latter an oracle against "all nations," but with special

[62] Hatina: "Allusions tend to be reminders of what is held in common between narrator and audience" (*Search*, 325); Caird is stronger: "A quotation may be the basis of an appeal to authority, but an allusion is always a reminder of what is held in common" (*The Language and Imagery of the Bible*, Studies in Theology [Philadelphia: Westminster, 1980], 33).

[63] Mark's reading of Isa 13:10 is similar to the LXX. Mark does not have ἀνατέλλοντος, which is part of a genitive absolute, and as a result he has ὁ ἥλιος, not τοῦ ἡλίου. Mark also has τὸ φέγγος, not τὸ φῶς. This is perhaps under the influence of Joel 2:10 (Joseph Verheyden, "Describing the Parousia: The Cosmic Phenonema in Mk 13:24–25," in *The Scriptures in the Gospels*, ed. C. M. Tuckett, BETL 131 [Leuven: Peeters, 1997], 539; Hatina, *Search*, 329). Mark's reading of Isa 34:4, however, does not go back to the LXX but to Hexaplaric readings. The LXX reading leaves out the opening of the verse according to the MT and begins instead with καὶ ἑλιγήσεται ὁ οὐρανὸς ὡς βιβλίον, which is absent from Mark 13:24–25. According to Frederick Field, who refers to Eusebius's commentary on Isaiah, at Isa 34:4 Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion

reference to Edom. Isaiah 13 describes the judgment that will befall Babylon before the restoration of Israel, but much of its language sounds like the end of the world, e.g, "to destroy the whole earth" (13:4); "to make the earth a desolation and to destroy its sinners from it" (13:9); the cosmological scope of 13:10.

But Isaiah is not predicting the end of everything. After judgment on the city comes restoration for the people of God in their own land (14:1). The end of the world language is therefore not flatly literal, but neither is it merely metaphorical. It is preferrable to say that it is symbolic:

> It is helpful here to keep in mind the distinction between metaphor and symbol. We need not choose between flat-footed literalism and metaphor, for there is a whole realm of real events that are symbolic. "When it was noon, darkness came over the whole land until it was three in the afternoon" (Mk 15:33). The darkness is richly symbolic, but presumably Mark nonetheless thought it historical, not metaphorical.[64]

The prophet very well may have intended literal cosmological signs in 13:10, but those signs did not portend the end of everything. Rather, they signal the catastrophic, world-

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have καὶ τακήσονται πᾶσαι αἱ δυνάμεις τῶν οὐρανῶν under an obelus (*Origenis Hexaplorum quae supersunt; sive veterum interpretum graecorum in totum Vetus Testamentum fragmenta*, 2 vols. [1875; repr., Hildesheim: Olms, 1964], 2:497). This is also the reading of LXX B. While Field refers to Eusebius's initial comment, which harmonizes the three together, shortly thereafter Eusebius notes differences between them: καὶ τακήσονται πᾶσα στρατιὰ τῶν οὐρανῶν (Aquila) καὶ τακήσεται πᾶσα ἡ δύναμις τοῦ οὐρανῶν (Symmachus); and καὶ τακήσονται πᾶσαι αἱ δυνάμεις τῶν οὐρανῶν (Theodotion). Mark 13:25 therefore agrees most closely with Theodotion and LXX B. So also France, *Mark*, 532 n. 7; Verheyden, "Describing the Parousia," 536–38. σαλευθησονται in 403′ is likely an assimilation to Matt 24:29//Mark 13:25.

[64] Allison, "Jesus and the Victory of Apocalyptic," in *Jesus and the Restoration of Israel: A Critical Assessment of N. T. Wright's* Jesus and the Victory of God, ed. Carey C. Newman (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1999), 132.

changing judgment that occurs "when YHWH acts to judge the Babylons of this world."[65]

The sequence that emerges in Isa 13–14 is this: (1) the judgment of Israel's enemy is described with cosmological, world-ending imagery (ch. 13); and (2) this judgment leads to the end of the exile (14:1–2). Isaiah 34–35 follows this same sequence. The opening four verses depict universal judgment against all nations that climaxes in cosmological imagery. But then in 34:5 the judgment turns out not to be universal but particularized on Edom.[66] As in Isa 13, the predicted judgment is followed by the end of the exile: "And a highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Holy Way.... And the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with singing" (34:8, 10).

Mark 13:24–27 has the same sequence as Isa 13 and 34. Mark describes the judgment of Jerusalem with cosmological, world-ending imagery (13:24–25), and this judgment is followed by the end of the exile (13:27). As before, the imagery is neither flatly literal nor merely metaphorical. It is symbolic. Mark may well have expected cosmological signs to accompany the destruction of Jerusalem and its temple, but he seems not to have expected the end of the world in any literal sense. He is, however, telling a familiar story: before the end of the exile, which the opening verses of his

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[65] Wright, *Victory*, 356; drawing on Caird, *Language*, 110–17, 201–71.

[66] Paul R. Raabe cites Isa 13 and 34 as examples of what he calls particularization: "In some speeches of prophetic judgment, the prophet announces impending doom against a particular nation, city, or group of people on the basis of a universal judgment. These texts do not universalize and generalize from a particular judgment, but they presuppose the universal judgment and then particularize it and apply it to specific targets" ("The Particularizing of Universal Judgment in Prophetic Discourse," *CBQ* 64 [2002]: 653).

Gospel have announced, the wicked city that oppresses the people of God will be judged. The story is the same; the roles have been recast, however. God's eschatological wrath is to be poured out not upon Babylon and Edom but upon Jerusalem.

4.6.2 Dan 7:13 in Mark 13:26

Daniel 7:13 Theodotion	Mark 13:26
ἐθεώρουν ἐν ὁράματι τῆς νυκτὸς καὶ ἰδοὺ μετὰ τῶν νεφελῶν τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ὡς υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου ἐρχόμενος καὶ ἕως τοῦ παλαιοῦ τῶν ἡμερῶν ἔφθασε καὶ προσήχθη αὐτῷ.	καὶ τότε ὄψονται τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐρχόμενον ἐν νεφέλαις μετὰ δυνάμεως πολλῆς καὶ δόξης.

Like the cosmological imagery in the preceding two verses, the coming of the Son of Man symbolizes judgment upon Jerusalem and its temple.[67] Several observations accompany this conclusion: (1) those who see the Son of Man coming are not the disciples; (2) the coming of the Son of Man is said to happen within "this generation" (13:30); (3) there is a parallel between this scene and 8:38–9:1, which also indicates judgment; (4) the next reference of the coming of the Son of Man (14:62) connects the imagery with judgment; and (5) nothing in ch. 13 necessitates that Mark has moved beyond the disciples' question.

Throughout ch. 13, Jesus has been speaking to his disciples about what "you" will see and hear. But now in 13:26 it is "they"—others—who will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds. Mark has repeatedly employed second person plural pronouns and

[67] The secondary literature on the origin and the identity of the Son of Man is vast. I intend to limit my discussion to the allusion to Dan 7:13 in Mark 13:26 and thematically related passages within the Gospel.

verbs up to this point. Nothing in the context of 13:26 unambiguously indicates who "they" are. But in this case too, other allusions to Dan 7:13 in Mark show what he has in mind.[68]

First, in ch. 14, after Jesus is arrested he is taken before "all the chief priests and the elders and the scribes" (14:53). In this scene, the temple once again features prominently. False witnesses claim that Jesus said, "I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and in three days I will build another, not made with hands" (14:58). Jesus has not said that *he* would destroy the temple but that the temple would be destroyed (13:2).[69] He will suffer the same fate as the Jerusalem Temple: destruction, that is, death, at the hand of the Romans.

Near the end of the scene, the high priest asks Jesus if he is the Messiah (14:61). Jesus's answer is a conflation of Dan 7:13 and Ps 110:1 (109:1 LXX). He answers, "I am, and you will see the Son of man seated at the right hand of Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven" (14:62). The allusion to Ps 110:1 ("seated at the right hand") is in the middle of the allusion to Dan 7:13, which makes Jesus's answer an intercalation. The

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[68] O. J. F. Seitz claims that the subject of ὄψονται is αἱ δυνάμεις αἱ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς ("The Future Coming of the Son of Man: Three Midrashic Formulations in the Gospel of Mark," *SE* 6 [1973]: 489–90). Likewise Bas van Iersel, "The Sun, Moon and Stars of Mark 13,24–25 in a Greco-Roman Reading," *Bib* 77 (1996): 84–92. Whether or not this is correct, the disciples clearly are not αἱ δυνάμεις αἱ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς and presumably they would like to see the parousia.

[69] Hatina wonders why Mark considers the accusation false since it is similar to early Christian testimonies which depict it as true (John 2:19): "I suspect that the scene is deliberately ironic. For unknown to the accusers who fabricated the story, their testimony is accurate" (*Search*, 354). This is possible. But in Mark, Jesus's agency in the temple's destruction is not expressed or even implied. More likely, Mark wishes to distance Jesus from the actual destruction: Jesus may have predicted it, but he did not cause it.

coming of the Son of Man frames Ps 110:1, and, as is well known, in an intercalation the middle section "nearly always provides the key to the theological purpose of the sandwich."[70]

Mark's readers are already aware of how he interprets Ps 110:1. In ch. 12, after Jesus silences the temple authorities he goes on the offensive. Now he is the one who will question them, and the dispute concerns Ps 110:1: "How can the scribes say that the Christ is the son of David? David himself, in the Holy Spirit, declared, 'The Lord said to my Lord, "Sit at my right hand, until I put your enemies under your feet."' David himself calls him Lord. So how is he his son?"" (Mark 12:35–37, quoting Ps 110:1).

"Seated at the right hand," which Mark makes the center of the intercalation with Dan 7:13 in 14:63, is explicitly connected with the Lord putting the messiah's enemies under his feet. Just as Mark expects the temple incident and the two fig tree scenes to be mutually interpretive, so now he expects of the coming of the Son of Man and being seated at the right hand of God. That is to say, the coming of the Son of Man is an act of judgment whereby God is placing Jesus's enemies under his feet, and those who will see it, the "they" of 13:26, are the enemies of Jesus, namely, the high priest and his entourage (ὄψεσθε; 14:62).[71]

This interpretation aligns with another allusion to Dan 7:13 in Mark 8:38–9:1. As Gray has seen, there are many points of contact between this passage and Mark 13, especially 13:26.[72] If 9:1 is read with what precedes rather than with what follows, Mark

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[70] Edwards, "Sandwiches," 196.

[71] Similarly Pesch, *Naherwartungen*, 166–72; Hatina, *Search*, 355; France, *Mark*, 534–35.

8:38–9:1 is remarkably similar to the interpretation proposed for 13:26. Within the lifetime of those present (9:1; 13:30), the kingdom of God/the Son of Man will come in power (8:38; 13:26), and the enemies of Jesus will be judged/destroyed (8:38; 13:2).[73]

The flipside of this judgment is vindication. Jesus's enemies will be judged; he will be vindicated—a reversal shaped by Dan 7. Just as the four beasts represent kings and kingdoms, so the one like a son of man signifies the saints of the Most High. The vision ends in 7:13–14; the interpretation in 7:26–27. In the latter verses, the angel tells Daniel that "the court shall sit in judgment" and the dominion of the fourth beast and his horn "shall be taken away, to be consumed and destroyed to the end. And the kingdom and the dominion and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High (i.e., the one like a son of man); his kingdom shall be an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him." (Dan 7:26–27).

Similar to Dan 2, Dan 7 is a prediction of the end of Israel's story. The vision and interpretation reach their climax in a transfer of power from the enemies of the people of God to the saints of the Most High/one like a son of man. Again, Mark is telling this story but has recast the roles. Jesus is now the Son of Man—a collective figure—who will be

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[72] Gray lists the following: "(1) both texts combine 'glory' and 'power' when speaking of the coming of the Son of Man; (2) both texts speak of the 'coming' of the Son of Man and thus evoke Dan 7; (3) 'seeing' (ὁράω) is prominent in both texts—some will 'see' the kingdom coming with power (9:1) and 'they will see' the Son of Man's coming (8:38 and 13:27); (5) both accounts follow instruction in discipleship that must endure suffering (8:34–38 and 13:9–13; and (6) Jesus denounces the 'adulterous and sinful generation' (γενεά) in 8:38, and in 13:30 he speaks of the generation (γενεά) that is under judgment" (*Temple*, 143).

[73] Likewise Gray, *Temple*, 143.

given over (δοθήσεται, 7:25 Theod) to the fourth beast but ultimately vindicated when he comes on the clouds/is seated at the right hand of God (Mark 14:62) and his enemies are "consumed and destroyed to the end" (Dan 7:26).[74]

4.6.3 Zech 2:6 and Deut 30:4 in Mark 13:27

Zech 2:6 LXX	Mark 13:27
διότι ἐκ τῶν τεσσάρων ἀνέμων τοῦ οὐρανοῦ συνάξω ὑμᾶς	καὶ τότε ἀποστελεῖ τοὺς ἀγγέλους καὶ ἐπισυνάξει τοὺς ἐκλεκτοὺς [αὐτοῦ] ἐκ τῶν τεσσάρων ἀνέμων
Deut 30:4 LXX ἐὰν ᾖ ἡ διασπορά σου ἀπ᾽ ἄκρου τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ἕως ἄκρου τοῦ οὐρανοῦ, ἐκεῖθεν συνάξει σε κύριος ὁ θεός σου, καὶ ἐκεῖθεν λήμψεταί σε.	ἀπ᾽ ἄκρου γῆς ἕως ἄκρου οὐρανοῦ.

The sequence we observed in Isa 13 and 34 is repeated in Mark 13:24–27: the judgment and destruction of the enemy of the people of God brings about the end of the exile. The imagery of gathering the elect from four winds of heaven recalls Zech 2:6 LXX, which warns the people to "flee from the land of the north ... for I will gather you from the four winds of heaven (ἐκ τῶν τεσσάρων ἀνέμων τοῦ οὐρανοῦ), says the Lord."[75] The ingathering, however, is not only from the four winds but "from the ends of the earth

[74] Similarly Marcus, *Way*, 164–67. Concerning the connection between Ps 110:1 and Dan 7:13 in Mark 14:63, Marcus writes: "although the phrase 'sitting at the right hand' in 14:62 is most directly an allusion to Ps. 110:1, it is also consonant with the picture in Dan. 7:13–14 of the humanlike figure being presented to the Ancient of Days and made his co-regent."

[75] NETS has "from the four winds of the sky."

to the ends of heaven" (ἀπ' ἄκρου γῆς ἕως ἄκρου οὐρανοῦ).[76] Mark now alludes to Deut 30:4 but has the whole context in mind. Deuteronomy 30 is where the Deuteronomistic pattern of sin-exile-restoration is established. This is how Israel's story is supposed to end. But in Mark's retelling, it is not the chosen people of God who are gathered from "the uttermost parts of heaven" but τοὺς ἐκλεκτούς, the followers of Jesus.

Nearly every word in Mark 13:24–27 is part of Mark's network of allusions to the OT. The exceptions are the opening temporal phrases and the beginning of 13:27: καὶ τότε ἀποστελεῖ τοὺς ἀγγέλους, "and then he will send his angels." Most frequently, ἄγγελος in the NT refers a supernatural being, but it can also refer to a human messenger.[77] A few commentators seize on this opportunity to suggest that 13:27 refers to "the work of Christian missionaries, sent out by the enthroned Son of Man to bring in the true people of God from all nations."[78] What is not regularly noticed is the similarity to Mark's introductory allusion to Mal 3:1: ἰδοὺ ἀποστέλλω τὸν ἄγγελόν μου (1:2).[79] This messenger is clearly a human, John the Baptist. In light of this precedent, ἀποστελεῖ

[76] The MT has קצה השמים, "the ends of the heavens"; the LXX ἀπ' ἄκρου τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ἕως ἄκρου τοῦ οὐρανοῦ, "from the end of heaven to the end of heaven." Mark has ἀπ' ἄκρου γῆς ἕως ἄκρου οὐρανοῦ, "from the end of the earth to the end of heaven." According to Wright, γῆς instead of οὐρανοῦ "strongly suggests that the Mk. passage refers, not to a 'supernatural' or 'heavenly' event, but to this-worldly activity" (*Victory*, 363).

[77] ἄγγελος unambiguously refers to a human messenger in Luke 7:24; 9:52; Jas 2:25.

[78] France, *Mark*, 536; similarly Wright, *Victory*, 363.

[79] An allusion in 13:27 is probable not only because Mal 3:1 is hermeneutically influential on Mark 11–13 but also because Mark alludes to the verse again in the Parable of the Porter (13:34–37).

τοὺς ἀγγέλους in 13:27 refers likewise to human messengers sent out by the Son of Man. They will bring the exile to an end by gathering τοὺς ἐκλεκτούς into a new community formed around Jesus the Messiah.

4.7 Mark 13:28–37

As we have seen, a withered fig tree in 11:12–24 prefigures the temple's destruction. Now the disciples are to consider a fig tree again; its tender branches and early leaves indicate that summer is near (11:28). Jesus tell them, "So also, when you see these things (ταῦτα) taking place, you know that he is near (ἐγγύς ἐστιν), at the very gates (ἐπὶ θύραις). Truly, I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things (ταῦτα πάντα) take place" (13:29–30).

ταῦτα and ταῦτα πάντα recall the disciples' question in 13:4. Jesus has finished answering their questions. Now it is up to them respond as he has instructed them. When they see these things happening, they will know that "he" is near. Mark only has ἐγγύς ἐστιν. He does not explain who "he" is. This of course could refer to the Son of Man, or even the kingdom of God as in Luke 21:31.

More probably, however, the implied subject of ἐστιν is Yahweh. θύραις is translated "gates" in the ESV, but more commonly "doors." [80] This will readily connect the saying with θυρωρός, "doorkeeper," in the Parable of the Porter (13:34). There the master returning to his house is Yawheh. But regardless of whether the subject of ἐστιν is

[80] BDAG, s.v. "θύρα": "he is near, at your very door." Perhaps Mark intends the reader to be struck by the alliterative quality of ἐγγύς ἐπὶ θύραις following ἐγγὺς τὸ θέρος.

the Son of Man, the kingdom of God, or Yahweh, Mark is clear that he expects ταῦτα πάντα to take place within a generation.

In the next verse Jesus seemingly states what I am attempting to disprove, that "Heaven and earth will pass away" (13:31). According to Crispin H. T. Fletcher-Louis, this is the verse upon which the interpretation of the so-called Oxford *Schule* runs aground.[81] Wright tries to solve this problem by appealing to Isa 51:6 and Jer 31:36 LXX. He claims that Mark 13:31 is "another typical Jewish metaphor such as those in Isaiah or Jeremiah: even though heaven and earth, the things which YHWH created in the beginning, should pass away, unmaking the very word of creation of the sovereign god, yet these words would remain true."[82]

But Fletcher-Louis finds Wright's claims unconvincing: "Mark 13.31 ... is most naturally read as an unequivocal statement that something would happen that could be called the passing away of heaven and earth."[83] That "something" is the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple because temples are "a miniature version of the whole universe—a microcosm of heaven and earth."[84] Within this temple cosmology, to describe the

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[81] Fletcher-Louis, "Jesus, the Temple and the Dissolution of Heaven and Earth," in *Apocalyptic in History and Tradition*, ed. Christopher Rowland and John Barton, JSPSup 43 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 2002), 119. Fletcher-Louis labels "the Oxford *Schule*" those who maintain that "all of Mk 13 is concerned with the destruction of Jerusalem which did take place in 70 CE."

[82] Wright, *Victory*, 364; similarly France, *Mark*, 540.

[83] Fletcher-Louis, "Dissolution," 121.

[84] Fletcher-Louis, "Dissolution," 123. He continues: "That temples are cosmic centres and, in Jon D. Levenson's words, the 'epitome of the world, a concentrated form of its essence, a miniature of the cosmos,' is an axiomatic element within the religious *lingua franca* of the ancient Near East, as important to Mesopotamian as it is to Egyptian religion" ("Dissolution," 124; quoting Levenson, *Sinai and Zion: An Entry into the*

destruction of a temple, as in Mark, is to describe metaphorically the end of heaven and earth. Verse 31 is therefore to be read as a contrast between Jesus and the temple: his words will endure, the temple will not.

In fact, Jesus's disciples have asked when the destruction of the temple will occur and what signs there will be that precede its judgment. Jesus has predicted the birth pangs, warned them to flee when they see the abomination of desolation, and described the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple with cosmic and apocalyptic symbolism. They may want him to be more specific, i.e., to tell them the day or the hour, but he cannot tell them more. No one knows when these things will take place except the Father (13:32). Instead, what they must do is "take heed (βλέπετε), watch (ἀγρυπνεῖτε)" (13:33).

The concluding parable tells the story of the master of a house who has gone on a long journey and placed his servants in charge. He instructs one of the servants to be the doorkeeper (θυρωρῷ) and commands him to keep watch (ἐνετείλατο ἵνα γρηγορῇ; 11:34). Jesus then addresses the disciples again: γρηγορεῖτε οὖν· οὐκ οἴδατε γὰρ πότε ὁ κύριος τῆς οἰκίας ἔρχεται (11:35a). There is a clear parallel between this verse and 13:33: βλέπετε, ἀγρυπνεῖτε· <u>οὐκ οἴδατε γὰρ πότε ὁ καιρός ἐστιν</u>. The command discloses that the man who went on a long journey is the Lord of the House, and the disciples must always be watching for his arrival: μὴ ἐλθὼν ἐξαίφνης εὕρῃ ὑμᾶς καθεύδοντας, "lest he come suddenly and find you asleep" (11:35c).

Jewish Bible, New Voices in Biblical Studies [Minneapolis: Winston, 1985], 138). This idea was popularized by Mircea Eliade, *The Myth of the Eternal Return*, Fr. orig. 1949, trans. Willard R. Trask (repr., New York: Harper & Brothers, 1959).

Again, then, terminology from Mal 3:1—κύριος, ἔρχεται, ἐξαίφνης— along with the master's house understood as the temple, ties the end of ch. 13 back to Mark's introductory quotation. From Mark's perspective, soon the Lord will come suddenly to his temple just as Malachi predicted, and the temple will be destroyed. And while in Mark, Jesus is still speaking privately to Peter, James, John, and Andrew (13:3), the command to watch is not for these four disciples alone. For "what I say to you I say to all: Stay awake (γρηγορεῖτε)" (13:37).

Conclusion

> The one who endures to the end will be saved.
>
> Mark 13:13

In the Introduction, I set up a comparison between Mark and Josephus. Both wrote in the context of the Jewish War with Rome; both understood events in first century to be drawing Israel's story to a close; both identify one individual as the fulfillment of Israel's prophetic tradition. For Mark, that individual is Jesus of Nazareth; for Josephus, Vespasian—or at least, so he writes. One died on a Roman cross; the other became the Roman emperor. Yet in both Mark and Josephus, the ascent of these men to power, albeit in different ways, is related to the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple.

We commonly speak of "the parting of the ways," but at the time that Mark is writing, there is only one way, the way of the Lord.[1] As he tells the story, the God of Abraham has not gone over to Israel's enemies nor does he hover over Italy (*B.J.* 5.367, 412). He has come to his people and his temple, just as Israel's prophets had promised and even threatened. Unlike Josephus, Mark does not transfer the promise that Israel's God would rule the world through a descendant of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to a Roman general. His story remains the story of Israel and Israel's God, told in the

[1] The metaphor of "the parting of the ways" is anticipated in F. J. Foakes Jackson, ed., *The Parting of the Roads: Studies in the Development of Judaism and Early Christianity* (London: Arnold, 1912). The first book published under that title was the first edition (1991) of James D. G. Dunn, *The Parting of the Ways: Between Christianity and Judaism and Their Significance for the Character of Christianity*, 2nd ed. (London: SCM, 2006); a year later James D. G. Dunn, ed., *Jews and Christians: The Parting of the Ways AD 70 to 135*, WUNT 66 (Tübingen: Mohr, 1992).

language and imagery of Israel's Scriptures: its fulfillment brought about by God's servant, indeed, truly God's Son.

The goal of this study has been to show that reading Mark as an attempt to narrate and rewrite the end, that is, both goal and fulfillment, of Israel's story is exegetically and theologically fruitful. By his opening quotation, so I have argued, Mark signals to his readers that he expects this type of reading. He attributes 1:2–3 to the prophet Isaiah, but as many have noticed there is more going on here than meets the eye. To put this another way, Mark expects his readers to have eyes that see (Mark 4:10–11).

From the start, Mark draws on the language of Mal 3:1; Exod 23:20; and Isa 40:3 to relate the gospel of Jesus Christ to the fuller narratives implicit in these verses. The God who delivered his people at the exodus from Egypt had promised to do so again at the end of exile. When those promises seemed to have failed and the people indicted Yahweh for covenantal faithfulness, Yahweh had replied that he would send a messenger to prepare his way; then he would come suddenly to his temple.

In Chapter One, I explored these opening verses (1:1–3). While Mark attributes the quotation to Isaiah, his quotation develops an intertextuality already present in Mal 3:1. Even before Mark brought these three passages together into one quotation, Mal 3:1 alluded to Exod 23:20 and Isa 40:3 in its threat that the Lord would come suddenly to his temple. So in drawing these verses together, Mark is not *creating* a connection between them; he is *amplifying* the connection already present in Mal 3:1. This suggests that despite the single attribution to Isaiah, Mal 3 is at least as important for Mark as Isa 40, if not more so: the way of the Lord (8:22–10:52) leads directly to the Jerusalem Temple (11:1–13:37).

But Mark does not quote all of Mal 3:1 in 1:2–3; he has only the first half of it. The temple features prominently in chs. 11–12, and regardless of how the discourse is interpreted, at the start of ch. 13 Jesus unambiguously predicts the temple's destruction. The way that Mark tells the story of Jesus and the temple therefore appears to cohere so naturally with Mal 3:1b that commentators sometimes note surprise that he refers only to the first half of the verse and that he seems to make no reference to second half either there or anywhere else. In Chapter Two, I sought to show that that is in fact not the case.

The argument went as follows: Jesus concludes the discourse in ch. 13 with the parable about a man who goes on a journey and leaves his servants in charge of his house. The man is the Lord; his house is the temple; and he is coming suddenly (13:35–36). Here at last Mark alludes to Mal 3:1b. In doing so, he closes the *inclusio* that he opened in the introductory quotation.

Several implications of this *inclusio* are possible avenues for future research. First, it gives new energy to Trocmé's hypothesis that Mark 1–13 once existed independently of the passion narrative that follows. Admittedly, in the form that we know Mark today there are numerous connections between chs. 1–13 and the passion narrative. In the Parable of the Porter, for example, the hours of the watch likely point forward to significant events in chs. 14–15. But the last verse of ch. 13 does read like an ending: "And what I say to you I say to all: Stay awake." Up to this point Jesus has been addressing Peter, James, John, and Andrew privately (13:3). Now he addresses "all"—Mark's readers and those of "this generation."

The disciples must stay awake, be on guard, watch out—Mark uses several different verbs to say this—so that when they see the abomination of desolation set up,

they may escape the judgment coming upon the city and the temple. On this reading, chs. 1–13 could well have existed apart from the passion narrative, as a theological anticipation and warning about events soon to take place in 70 CE. That is to say, the coming destruction of the temple is the fulfillment of Malachi's threat, and those who seek to be spared will need to be attentive and respond accordingly.

Second, the *inclusio* indicates that Mal 3:1 has a greater role in Mark than merely introducing John the Baptist or setting the stage for Jesus. Watts and Marcus have both made the case that Mark's quotation of Isa 40:3 is hermeneutically influential on at least 8:22–10:52, Mark's so-called Way section. I have proposed that Mal 3:1 is likewise hermeneutically influential on Mark 11:1–13:37. The claim that these chapters oppose the temple cult and institutional apparatus is of course not new, but to relate this scene to an allusion and echoes of Mal 3:1b is, I believe, a fresh contribution. It remains to be seen if future research will uncover further hitherto undetected echoes of Malachi in chs. 1–10.

In Chapter Three, I examined the ways in which chs. 11–12 articulate Malachi's threat. At the beginning of ch. 11, when Jesus, as Son of David, enters the Holy City, it is the Lord coming to his temple. Immediately following this, Mark has framed the temple incident with the account of a withered fig tree. The two parts of this scene not only help Mark's readers interpret the temple incident but also suggests a chronological divide between the announcement of judgment and the consequent physical destruction. Jesus's words and actions both announce and prefigure the judgment of the Jerusalem Temple.

While many have noted this theme in chs. 11–12, I maintain that the logic of these chapters comes from Mal 3:1b. Jesus arrives at the city and temple as "he who comes in the name of the Lord"; pronounces and enacts the temple's judgment; and then engages

in disputes with the temple authorities. All of these recall Mal 3:1, which is part of a disputation oracle in which Yahweh threatens that he will come to his temple.

One of the clearest indicators that this interpretation is on the right track is Jesus's response to the question of his authority. His reply points to John the Baptist, whom Mark has identified with Malachi's "messenger." In Mal 3, the messenger is identified as Elijah, and he prepares the way of the Lord. John is that messenger, and he has prepared the way for Jesus. Mark weaves this theological thread through the Gospel, and it comes to fruition in ch. 11 when Jesus is questioned about his authority.

This theme continues into ch. 13, which begins with Jesus's prediction of the temple's destruction. In Chapter Four, I gave a guided reading of this difficult chapter, but there is much more work to be done here. My interpretation is an attempt to read Mark 13 through the lens of the anti-temple polemic of chs. 11–12 and the allusion to Mal 3:1b at the end of the discourse. I also give hermeneutical priority to references to the OT. This way of reading ch. 13 is not only fruitful but necessary. Mark's allusions to the OT in ch. 13 are not random nor haphazard. As I hope I have shown, there is a motif that occurs repeatedly: Mark consistently refers to passages in the OT that predict judgment upon Israel's enemies as the precursor of the end of the exile, and he applies these verses to the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple.

This is indeed a shocking reversal. The outline form of the ending is the same as that envisioned by the prophets: judgment on Israel's enemies followed by Israel's salvation. But in his rewriting, Mark has recast the actors in the drama. Now the Jerusalem Temple has become the enemy, and Jesus and all who follow him have become the elect who will be saved.

Mark is concerned not only with narrating the life of Jesus but also with making theological sense of the events unfolding in his own day. Whether he writes on the eve of the destruction of the temple or in the aftermath of this catastrophic event, through the language of the OT Mark interprets the events of 70 CE. This was not the ending many readers of Israel's scriptural tradition had hoped for, nor what they thought they had been promised.

Yet Mark shows through his development of the intertextuality already present in Mal 3:1 that his rewriting was not foreign to the tradition. Malachi had warned that if the people would not listen to the messenger, the Lord would come and "strike the land with a decree of utter destruction" (3:23). In Mark's rewriting of the end of the story, this is what is happening—or indeed may already have happened. As Jesus enacts the temple's judgment and in the events of 70 CE, the Lord has come suddenly to his temple.

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