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Apocalyptic Imagination in the Gospel of Mark:
The Literary and Theological Role of Mark 3:22-30

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2009

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Abstract

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The thesis of this study is that Mark 3:22-30 constructs a symbolic world that shapes the literary and theological logic of the rest of the Gospel. Specifically, Mark engages in apocalyptic discourse, presenting Jesus as the Spirit-filled one who establishes the kingdom of God by struggling against Satan to liberate people and form a community that does God's will. This apocalyptic discourse expands throughout the narrative, with the rhetorical function of persuading the reader to testify and suffer for Jesus' and the gospel's sake. This dissertation finds its place among literary studies that focus on Mark as a unified narrative and rhetorical composition. While narrative approaches to Mark generally offer non-apocalyptic readings, this study seeks to clarify 3:22-30 by comparing its themes with those in Jewish apocalyptic literature, and then to use that discourse as an interpretive lens for the rest of the Gospel.

Chapter one discusses the history of interpretation of Mark 3:22-30 and explains the approach of the dissertation. Chapter two analyzes the literary context, structure and content of Mark 3:22-30. It argues that Mark both affirms that Satan is powerful and that Jesus is powerfully invading Satan's kingdom, thereby portraying a power struggle. Chapter three compares Jewish compositions that appropriate similar *topoi* that appear in Mark 3:22-30. Chapter four demonstrates that the vertical-spatial dimensions of an apocalyptic symbolic world are woven throughout Mark by tracing the characterization of those figures in 3:22-30 – Jesus, the scribes, Satan, and the Holy Spirit – throughout the narrative. Chapter five demonstrates how 5:1-20 and 13:5-37 illustrate the apocalyptic discourse displayed in 3:22-30. Chapter six discusses the nature and manifestation of Jesus' power vis-à-vis Satan's power to illuminate how Jesus overpowers the strong man, focusing on the section where Mark has Jesus teach about power, 8:27-10:45, and on the empty tomb account, 16:1-8. Chapter seven offers a conclusion and implications. Mark's apocalyptic discourse communicates that appearances deceive, because God's power is at work. That is, what appears to be subjugation, weakness and death is, in fact, God's power for overcoming Satanic forces to establish God's kingdom.

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Chapter One

The Shape of the Question

1.1 Introduction

In Mark 3:22-30, the evangelist reveals a world in which cosmic and earthly conflicts intersect. Mark introduces cosmic intrusion at the opening of the Gospel, when the Spirit descends upon Jesus from an open heaven and drives him into the wilderness to struggle against Satan. But that intrusion is brief, unexplained, and unfinished.¹ In 3:22-30, Mark takes up again the cosmic characters from the prologue and dramatizes their conflict. Following a series of mostly human conflicts in the opening chapters, the imagery in Jesus' words to the scribes is striking. Using symbols available to him from Jewish tradition and apocalyptic thought, Mark imagines a world in which Satan is the strong ruler over a united kingdom of demons that fights against the Spirit. According to Mark, this cosmic battle is carried out in the ministry of Jesus.

¹ At this point, the reader does not know the full significance of the Spirit's presence, the content of the temptation, nor the outcome.

Not only is Mark 3:22-30 striking for its cosmic imagery, it also stands out as a passage of firsts. It is Jesus' first discourse in the gospel, the first time he is said to speak in parables, and the first time he delivers a solemn declaration introduced by ἀμήν. Mark's distinct placement and characterization of this discourse in comparison with the parallel passages in Matthew and Luke highlights its importance for the narrative. Unlike Matthew and Luke, Mark explicitly identifies the discourse as παραβολή, and places it at the beginning of Jesus' ministry, before any other teaching block, and just before the parables of the sower and seed. In addition, it is one of two places that the Markan Jesus explains the purpose of his mission (cf. 10:45). For these reasons, Mark 3:22-30 is a key passage for understanding Mark's Gospel.

My thesis is that Mark 3:22-30 constructs a symbolic world² that shapes the literary and theological logic of the rest of the narrative. Specifically, Mark engages in apocalyptic discourse, presenting Jesus as the Spirit-filled one who struggles against Satan to liberate people in order to form a new community that does God's will. This apocalyptic discourse expands throughout the Gospel narrative, with the rhetorical function of persuading the reader to testify and suffer for the sake of Jesus and the gospel.

² I use Luke Timothy Johnson's definition of symbolic worlds as a point of departure: "the social structures in which people live, and the symbols attached to and supporting those structures." Johnson, *The Writings of the New Testament* (2nd enlarged ed.; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1999), 21. I discuss this phrase further, below.

1.2 History of Interpretation

Though the features and literary placement of Mark 3:22-30 beg for an investigation into its significance and function within the narrative, such a full-scale study is lacking. Three distinct but overlapping areas of interpretation are pertinent to my central thesis. First, I look at how the concerns of parables scholarship have impacted the interpretation of Mark 3:22-30. Second, I discuss various approaches to Mark 3:22-30. Third, I address scholarly views of the apocalyptic character of Mark's Gospel in general and of Mark 3:22-30 in particular.

1.2.1 The Interpretation of the Parables in Mark 3:22-30

Adolf Jülicher inaugurated modern parables scholarship with his *Die Gleichnisreden Jesu* in 1886.³ In this work, he set the modern scholarly definition of the "parable" as narrative speech. Ancient literature uses παραβολή, however, to represent a variety of speech-modes. The LXX uses παραβολή to translate the Hebrew מִשְׁלָּה for several literary genres:⁴ proverbial sayings (1 Sam 10:12; 24:13 [LXX 24:14]; Prov. 1:1-7; Ezek 16:44); riddles (Judges 14:10-18); taunts (Mic 2:4;

³ Adolf Jülicher, *Die Gleichnisreden Jesu*: I. *Die Gleichnisreden Jesu im Allgemeinen*; II. *Auslegung der Gleichnisreden der drei ersten Evangelien* (Tübingen: Mohr; I, 2nd ed., 1899 [1st ed., 1886]; II, 2nd ed., 1910 [1st ed., 1899]).

⁴ I assume that the most relevant background for παραβολή, is the Hebrew מִשְׁלָּה. T. W. Manson developed this background in, *The Teaching of Jesus: Studies of Its Form and Content*, 57-81. See also Bernard Brandon Scott, *Hear Then the Parable: A Commentary on the Parables of Jesus* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1989), 8-35; John Donahue and Daniel J. Harrington, *The Gospel of Mark* (Sacra Pagina; Collegeville, MN.: Liturgical Press, 2002), 130; Madeleine Boucher, *The Mysterious Parable: A Literary Study* (CBQMS 6; Washington: Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1977) 11-13. John Drury, *The Parables in the Gospels: History and Allegory* (New York: Crossroad, 1985), 8. This approach contrasts Jülicher's work, in which he used classical rhetoric (Aristotle) as the starting point for understanding the use of παραβολή in the synoptic Gospels. Jülicher, *Gleichnisreden*, 1:69, 98.

Hab 2:6); wisdom sayings (Prov 6:27-29; 26:20; Sir 22:16); similitudes (Ezek 31:2-6); and extended narratives (2 Sam 12:1-7; 14:4-13; Judg 9:7-15). The use of παραβολή in Mark reflects this variety: the word is used to denote analogies and metaphors (3:23-27), extended narratives (4:1-9; 12:1-9); similitudes (4:30-32), wisdom sayings (7:15); and riddles (4:10-11; 7:17). In the face of this variety, Jülicher sought to distinguish among the similitude,⁵ the parable⁶ and the exemplary story in order to aid interpretation.⁷ Scholars have generally followed Jülicher by defining “parable” precisely as narrative in form.⁸

In addition, since the advent of modern parables scholarship, scholars have focused on employing parables for reconstructing the message of the historical Jesus. Scholars such as Joachim Jeremias,⁹ A. T. Cadoux,¹⁰ and C. H. Dodd,¹¹ employed a historical approach that sought to distinguish the parables as the historical Jesus spoke them in the context of his ministry, from the parables as the early church transformed them. In their major works on the parables of Jesus, Jeremias, Cadoux, and Dodd begin their indices of the synoptic parables with the parable of the sower (Mark 4 and its parallels), guided by the axiomatic

⁵ Jülicher, *Die Gleichnisreden Jesu*, I:58-80

⁶ Jülicher, *Die Gleichnisreden Jesu*, I: 92-111.

⁷ Jülicher, *Die Gleichnisreden Jesu*, I:112-15.

⁸ For example, Madeleine Boucher observes the imprecision of the ancient use of παραβολή and מִשְׁלָּה, and comments, “In modern scholarship such terms should, however, be defined as sharply as possible. If the definition is more precise in contemporary scientific writings than in ancient sources, that should create no difficulty; it means only that the words are used differently in antiquity and in the present, which in itself is not a problem....The term *parable* (in the broad sense) should be reserved for those speeches which are narrative in form, that is, which tell a story.” Boucher, *Mysterious Parable*, 13.

⁹ Jeremias, *The Parables of Jesus* (rev. ed.; New York: SCM Press, 1963).

¹⁰ Arthur T. Cadoux, *The Parables of Jesus: Their Art and Use* (New York: Macmillan, 1931).

¹¹ Charles H. Dodd, *The Parables of the Kingdom* (rev. ed.; Glasgow: Collins, 1961).

definition of the parable as narrative. Although they do not ignore Mark 3:23-27, they analyze its discrete elements only briefly along with its synoptic parallels, rather than as a unit in its own literary context. For example, in a discussion of the message of Jesus, Jeremias comments on the parable of the strong man apart from the other elements in the discourse: "The strong man is bound, his plunder is wrested from him (Mark 3.27 par. Matt 12.29; Gospel of Thomas 35), since he the Coming One is here who shall 'despoil the strong of their prey', the Servant of the Lord, the conqueror. The binding of the strong man is evidently to be understood as referring to an actual experience, hence clearly, to the temptation of Jesus."¹²

Interdisciplinary interests in the late 20th century changed the direction of parables research towards literary methods. As a result of Amos Wilder's recovery of metaphor for the interpretation of parables,¹³ scholars such as John Dominic Crossan and Bernard Brandon Scott began to give attention to the metaphorical aspects of parables while continuing to distinguish the teaching of

¹² Joachim Jeremias, *Parables of Jesus*, 122. Similarly, Dodd discusses only the parable of the strong man (Mark 3:27) as it demonstrates his overall thesis: it is a parable of the kingdom of God demonstrating that Jesus' exorcisms brought about the end of Satan's kingdom. Dodd, *Parables of the Kingdom*, 95. See also Cadoux, *Parables of Jesus*, 119-120. Similarly, Eta Linnemann studied the parables to reconstruct Jesus' understanding of human existence, reflecting the existential interests of Rudolf Bultmann, but did not discuss Mark 3:23-29 at all. Eta Linnemann, *Parables of Jesus: Introduction and Exposition* (London: SPCK, 1966). See esp. the discussion of "The Parables as Language Event" for her existential approach, pp. 30-33.

¹³ Amos Wilder, in *The Language of the Gospel: Early Christian Rhetoric* (rev. ed.; New York: Harper & Row, 1971), bridged historical and literary approaches by viewing parables as literary works of art and recovering the importance of metaphor for their interpretation; but also by viewing the parables as the way the historical Jesus communicated imaginatively to his disciples. See esp. pp. 1-39, 71-88, 118-28.

the historical Jesus.¹⁴ Others, such as Robert Funk, Dan Via, Jr., and Mary Ann Tolbert employed literary methods without focusing on historical concerns.¹⁵ Though these scholars approached the parables as texts in their own right rather than as windows into history, they continued to interpret them apart from their Gospel contexts. In addition, these scholars produced major studies of the parables that left Mark 3:23-29 untouched.¹⁶

Several recent monographs that focus on the parables of Jesus omit Mark 3:23-27 and its synoptic parallels due to their conception of “parable.” For example, Madeleine Boucher in *The Parables* and Bernard Brandon Scott in *Hear Then the Parable* both define “parable” as narrative in form, and so focus on Mark 4 and 12.¹⁷ Some scholars add other forms to the narrative parable. For example, Simon J. Kistemaker, in *The Parables: Understanding the Stories Jesus Told*, identifies 3 forms: true parables (illustration from real life); stories (narratives); and illustrations (examples).¹⁸ Arland J. Hultgren identifies two forms of parables in

¹⁴ John Dominic Crossan, *In Parables: The Challenge of the Historical Jesus* (New York: Harper and Row, 1973), see esp. pp. 10-36; Bernard Brandon Scott, *Hear Then the Parable: A Commentary on the Parables of Jesus* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1989), see esp. pp. 42-62.

¹⁵ Robert W. Funk, *Language, Hermeneutic and the Word of God* (New York: Harper & Row, 1966); and *Parables and Presence: Forms of the New Testament Tradition* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1982), see esp. 1-18; Dan O. Via, Jr. *The Parables: Their Literary and Existential Dimension* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1967), see esp. pp. 70-107; Mary Ann Tolbert, *Perspectives on the Parables: An Approach to Multiple Interpretations* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979), see esp. 51-91.

¹⁶ Via, *Parables*; Crossan, *In Parables*; Scott, *Hear Then the Parable*, Tolbert, *Perspectives*. Tolbert’s book does not treat a collection of parables, however, but offers a guide for interpreting parables. She uses the parable of the prodigal son in Luke 15:11-32 as a test case.

¹⁷ Madeleine Boucher, *The Parables* (Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, 1981), 19-23; 63-9; 146-52. Scott, *Hear Then the Parable*, 35-42; 237-53; 343-87. Scott also includes discussions of other parables that tell stories, those of the man going on a journey in Mark 13:34-36/Luke 12:36-38 and the fig tree in Matt 24:32/Mark 13:28/Luke 21:29-30.

¹⁸ Simon J. Kistemaker, *The Parables: Understanding the Stories Jesus Told* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1980), 9-10.

The Parables of Jesus: A Commentary: narrative parables and similitudes.¹⁹ Klyne Snodgrass, in *Stories with Intent*, defines a parable as, “an expanded analogy used to convince and persuade,”²⁰ and suggests five classifications: aphoristic sayings, similitudes, interrogative parables, narrative parables, and “how much more” parables.²¹ Luise Schottroff, in *Die Gleichnisse Jesu*, follows a social-historical method for interpreting the parables, incorporating recent interpretive methods.²² She develops the parable theory from Mark 4²³ and defines “parable” as narrative in form.²⁴ Although these scholars expand the definition of “parable,” Mark 3:22-30 continues to remain outside their scope and they omit it from their work.²⁵

In most commentaries, interest in the parables of Mark 4 has overshadowed the interpretation of 3:23-29 as parabolic discourse. While commentators rarely overlook the use of παραβολή in 3:23 altogether,²⁶ few suggest the possible foundational significance of this parabolic discourse for Mark’s Gospel. Most commentators note the use of παραβολή in 3:23 to point up the rhetorical devices or the figurative language in Jesus’ speech (vv. 23-27).²⁷

¹⁹ Arland J. Hultgren, *The Parables of Jesus: A Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 3.

²⁰ Klyne Snodgrass, *Stories with Intent: A Comprehensive Guide to the Parables of Jesus* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), 9.

²¹ Snodgrass, *Stories with Intent*, 11.

²² L. Schottroff, *Die Gleichnisse Jesu* (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlaghaus, 2005), 11.

²³ Schottroff, *Die Gleichnisse Jesu*, 17, 89-105.

²⁴ Schottroff, *Die Gleichnisse Jesu*, 135.

²⁵ Snodgrass classifies the question, “how can Satan cast out Satan?” as a riddle, and does not include the Beelzebul controversy in his *Comprehensive Guide*. See Snodgrass, *Stories with Intent*, 10.

²⁶ William Barclay does not mention Mark’s use of the term in 3:23. William Barclay, *The Gospel of Mark*. (2nd ed.; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1956), 77-81.

²⁷ C. E. B. Cranfield, *The Gospel According to Saint Mark* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1966), 137; Pesch, Rudolf. *Das Markusevangelium: I. Teil. Kommentar zu Kap. 1:1-8:26; II. Teil. Kommentar zu Kap. 8:27 – 16:20* (4th ed.; HTKNT; 2 vols. Freiburg: Herder, 1984), 1:214;

Donahue and Harrington are among the few who comment that, “though Mark 4 is often called ‘the parables chapter,’ Jesus’ teaching in parables begins in 3:23. The use of ‘parable’ in this conflict situation prepares for 4:10-12, 34 where parabolic teaching distinguishes outsiders and insiders.”²⁸ Most commentators begin their discussions of Mark’s parable theory with chapter 4.²⁹

These interpretive choices – defining “parable” as a narrative, and employing the parables to investigate the message of the historical Jesus – have had two significant impacts on the study of Mark 3:22-30. First, modern parable scholarship has overlooked the study of Mark 3:22-30, because the modern scholarly definition of “parable” excludes it. In contrast, Mark himself

Robert A. Guelich, *Mark 1-8:26* (WBC 34A; Dallas: Word, 1989), 175-6; Robert H. Gundry, *Mark: A Commentary on His Apology for the Cross* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993), 172-5; John Paul Heil, *The Gospel of Mark as model for action: a reader-response commentary* (New York : Paulist Press, 1992), 88; Bas M. F. van Iersel, *Mark: A Reader-Response Commentary* (trans. W. H. Bisscheroux; JSNTSS 164; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1998), 170-71; Morna Hooker, *The Gospel According to Saint Mark* (London: A & C Black, 1991; repr., Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1992), 116; Donald Juel, *The Gospel of Mark* (IBT; Nashville: Abingdon, 1999), 62-3; William Lane, *The Gospel According to Mark* (NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974), 142, n. 89; C. S. Mann, *Mark: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB 27; New York: Doubleday, 1986), 254; Francis J. Moloney, *The Gospel of Mark: A Commentary* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2002), 7, fn 42; M. Eugene Boring, *Mark: A Commentary* (Louisville and London: Westminster John Knox Press, 2006), 107; Pheme Perkins, “Introduction, Commentary, and Reflections on Mark,” in *The New Interpreter’s Bible 8* (ed. L. Keck; Nashville: Abingdon, 1995), 564; Sharyn Dowd, *Reading Mark: A Literary and Theological Commentary on the Second Gospel* (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys, 2000), 35-6; John Painter, *Mark’s Gospel: Worlds in Conflict. New Testament Readings*. London: Routledge, 1997, 72; Ben Witherington, *The Gospel of Mark: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001), 157-8; Adela Yarbro Collins, *Mark: A Commentary* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis, MN : Fortress Press, 2007), 231; Robert H. Stein, *Mark* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008), 182-3. All abbreviations are according to the *SBL Handbook of Style*, and are written out in full in the bibliography.

²⁸ Donahue and Harrington, *Mark*, 130-31. Cf. Dennis Eric Nineham, *The Gospel of St. Mark*. (Pelican Gospel Commentary; Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1963, 119-20; Joachim Gnllka, *Das Evangelium nach Markus* (EKKNT; 2 vols.; Zurich: Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1978-79), 149; Eugene LaVerdiere, *The Beginning of the Gospel: Introducing the Gospel according to Mark* (2 vols.; Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 1999), 1: 109.

²⁹ E.g., Cranfield, *Saint Mark*; Boring, *Mark*; Donahue and Harrington, *Mark*; Lane, *Mark*; Marcus, *Mark 1-8*; Hooker, *Saint Mark*; Gundry, *Mark*; Juel, *Gospel of Mark*; Witherington, *Gospel of Mark*; van Iersel, *Mark*; Moloney, *Gospel of Mark*; Vincent Taylor, *Mark*; A. Y. Collins, *Mark*; Stein, *Mark*.

introduces the entire speech of Jesus in 3:23-30 as ἐν παραβολαῖς.³⁰ Attention to Mark's cues illuminates Mark's understanding of parabolic language. In addition, the specific use of this introductory phrase invites the reader to make narrative connections with other contexts in which the phrase appears (4:2, 11; 12:1). Furthermore, that the Markan Jesus' first speech is ἐν παραβολαῖς (and first speech at all) is in 3:22-30 suggests that the interpreter of Mark should give foundational attention to this parabolic passage.³¹ Second, Markan scholars have generally failed to interpret Mark 3:22-30 in its own context, interpreting it instead in light of its synoptic parallels. Reading 3:22-30 in the context of Mark's narrative allows the reader to understand Mark's distinctive version and his theological reflection on the person of Jesus.

In *Sowing the Gospel*, Mary Ann Tolbert engages in a literary interpretation of Mark's whole Gospel, and interprets 3:22-30 in its narrative context. She does not note, however, that Mark introduces the discourse as ἐν παραβολαῖς, and she gives it only a cursory reading.³² In her interpretation of Mark's Gospel, the parables of the sower and of the vineyard in Mark 4 and 12, respectively, are the programmatic passages for the whole narrative. In her study, these narrative

³⁰ The author's parenthetical comment in v. 30 ("they were saying that he has an unclean spirit"), functions as an *inclusio* with the accusation by the scribes in v. 22 ("they were saying that he has Beelzebul"), suggesting that the parts of the enclosed discourse should be read as a literary whole.

³¹ John Drury aims to pay attention to Mark's cues (and the cues of each respective evangelist), rather than to modern meanings of parables in *Parables in the Gospels*. See, for example, his comments about the Gospel of Mark, 40-41.

³² Mary Ann Tolbert, *Sowing the Gospel: Mark's World in Literary-Critical Perspective*. (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991), 147. In her introduction to the book, Tolbert does discuss Mark 3:27, where she suggests that Jesus is the "strong man" whose house is plundered when he is bound, foreshadowing the time when Jesus will be bound and those in his "house," that is, his disciples will flee (p. 100).

parables overshadow those in 3:22-30. In my study, on the other hand, I contend that the parables in Mark 3:22-30 are foundational for understanding Mark's Gospel, and that this passage has programmatic significance. It is not my purpose to argue that attention to the parables of Mark 4 or 12 is unwarranted, but to argue that 3:22-30 provides a better *starting point* for understanding the literary and theological character of Mark's Gospel. Through the parabolic discourse in 3:22-30, Mark opens up a symbolic world. This starting point suggests that Mark envisions rather a world of cosmic conflict than a world of sowing seeds. The purpose of this study is not to look at parables in Mark's Gospel, but to look at the particular parabolic discourse in 3:22-30 as an interpretive lens for the rest of the Gospel.

1.2.2 Approaches to Mark 3:22-30

Although parables research as such has tended to overlook Mark 3:22-30, several scholars have produced significant analyses of the Beelzebul discourse, using a variety of critical methods. Below, I consider their approaches.

1.2.2.1 *Form Critical Analysis*

Most efforts to interpret Mark 3:22-30 in journal articles have been exercises in form criticism. Because Mark 3:22-30 is a composite discourse, a number of scholars have investigated the history of tradition in an attempt to uncover its pre-literary form.³³ For the same reason, others have focused their

³³ James G. Williams, "Note on the Unforgivable Sin Logion," *NTS* 12 (1965): 75-77; Philip Sellew, "Beelzebul in Mark 3: Dialogue, Story, or Sayings Cluster?" *Forum* 4 (1988): 93-108; M.

interpretive work on certain discrete elements of the discourse by way of synoptic comparison, rather than on the discourse as a whole in its own literary context.³⁴ An interpreter may give attention to a particular component part (the unforgivable sin logion, for example) without addressing its relationship to the other parts of the discourse, or to the larger narrative.

David Lyon Bartlett, in his dissertation, *Exorcism Stories in the Gospel of Mark*, examines the form, origin and development of the exorcism accounts in Mark.³⁵ His thesis is that it is possible to discover an early, Galilean, pre-Easter faith tradition about the ministry of Jesus behind Mark's exorcism stories.³⁶ In his analysis of the Beelzebul controversy, Bartlett reconstructs the Q material and compares it to Mark's version, in order to determine the form of the original story.³⁷ He suggests the traditions that Mark joined, how the material must have read in Q, what portions must have circulated originally as independent elements, and posits a *Sitz im Leben* for each element of the passage.³⁸ Bartlett believes that most of the material may be attributed to the historical Jesus or at least considered to be very old. He concludes that, "Jesus performed exorcisms,

Eugene Boring, "The Unforgivable Sin Logion, Mark 3:28-29/Matt 12:31-32/Luke 12:10: Formal Analysis and History of the Tradition," *NovT* 18 (1976): 258-79.

³⁴ W. W. Combs, "The Blasphemy Against the Holy Spirit," *Detroit Baptist Seminary Journal* 9 (2004): 57-96; Augustine Stock, "'All sins will be forgiven...but...'", *Emmanuel* 92 (1986): 18-21; Robert Holst, "Reexamining Mk 3:28f and its parallels," *ZNW* 63 (1972): 122-24. See also M. Eugene Boring, "The Synoptic Problem, "Minor" Agreements and the Beelzebul Pericope", in *The Four Gospels 1992: Festschrift Frans Neirynck*, 3 vols. (ed. Frans van Segbroeck; Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1992), 1: 587-619.

³⁵ David Lyon Bartlett, "Exorcism Stories in the Gospel of Mark" (Ph.D. diss., Yale University, 1972), 1.

³⁶ Bartlett, "Exorcism Stories," 2.

³⁷ Bartlett, "Exorcism Stories," 173-86; see esp. 184-5.

³⁸ Bartlett, "Exorcism Stories," 186-90.

that he saw himself as an exorcist, and that he was seen by his contemporaries as an exorcist and sometimes challenged on that account.”³⁹

1.2.2.2 Redaction-Critical Analysis

Estevan Frederico Kirschner, in his dissertation, *The Place of the Exorcism Motif in Mark's Christology with Special Reference to Mark 3.22-30* looks at 3:20-35 for redactional clues in order to determine what in the passage is Markan. He considers the use of distinctive vocabulary, stylistic devices, the historic present, parataxis, and interpolation.⁴⁰ Kirschner identifies the Markan characteristics mainly at the introduction and conclusion to the passage. He deduces that Mark constructed the intercalation, and that he preserved traditional material in 3:22-29 without much alteration.⁴¹ After this broad examination, Kirschner performs detailed redactional and exegetical analyses of 3:22-30.⁴² He concludes that the main purpose of the passage is to confirm the source of Jesus' authority and power through his exorcisms. He rejects the idea that Mark is concerned with Jewish apocalyptic ideas in this passage.⁴³ In particular, he argues that the parable of the strong man functions only to demonstrate Jesus' greater authority over Satan (3:27), and that any connections with Jewish apocalyptic, such as the term δέω, should not be pressed.⁴⁴

³⁹ Bartlett, "Exorcism Stories," 190.

⁴⁰ Estevan Frederico Kirschner, "The Place of the Exorcism Motif in Mark's Christology with Special Reference to Mark 3:22-30" (Ph.D. diss., Council for National Academic Awards [United Kingdom], 1988), 30-37.

⁴¹ Kirschner, "Place of the Exorcism Motif," 37.

⁴² Kirschner, "Place of the Exorcism Motif," 37-83.

⁴³ Kirschner, "Place of the Exorcism Motif," 69, 82.

⁴⁴ Kirschner, "Place of the Exorcism Motif," 67-9.

Michael Lawren Humphries, in his dissertation, *The Language of the Kingdom of God in the Beelzebul Discourse*, challenges the notion that the phrase βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ is an apocalyptic concept.⁴⁵ He distinguishes the Q version from the Markan version of the Beelzebul discourse in order to understand the meaning of the kingdom of God in these traditions. He argues that in the Q version, the phrase βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ is not an apocalyptic expression, but a “social marker for the Jewish ethos.”⁴⁶ The function of the Beelzebul controversy in Q is to demonstrate that the accused and the accuser are on the same side, as sons of Israel.⁴⁷ In the Markan version, on the other hand, which does not contain the phrase, the point is to create dissociation between Jesus and his accusers.⁴⁸ The Markan Jesus forms a new ethos that is to take the place of both Greek and Jewish culture. Jesus’ power over the strong man brings a new *paideia*, or new ethos, that supplants the old. According to Humphries, Mark’s understanding of the establishment of the βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ is that Jesus has come to take people beyond the bounds of the current culture. Thus, the conflict of the kingdom of God in Mark is not an apocalyptic conflict, but a conflict of cultures.⁴⁹ Humphries bases his argument against reading the Beelzebul controversy as an apocalyptic discourse on the lack of the concept of the

⁴⁵ Michael Lawren Humphries, “The Language of the Kingdom of God in the Beelzebul Discourse” (Ph.D. diss., The Claremont Graduate University, 1990).

⁴⁶ Humphries, “Language of the Kingdom,” 361.

⁴⁷ Humphries, “Language of the Kingdom,” 310-11.

⁴⁸ Humphries, “Language of the Kingdom,” 351.

⁴⁹ Humphries, “Language of the Kingdom,” 341.

kingdom of God in apocalyptic literature. He does not consider, however, the themes of Jewish apocalyptic thought that are present in Mark's version.

1.2.2.3 *Synoptic Comparison and Historical Analysis*

David Wenham, in *The Parables of Jesus*, views the parables as vehicles for Jesus' announcement of God's coming reign, and designates his work as a historical study.⁵⁰ He uses the Gospel of Mark as the basis for his analysis of Jesus' parables, including synoptic parallels as they occur. He states that he will include in his analysis both those that are commonly designated parables, and some that are not, like Mark 3:23-27. Wenham begins with the parabolic sayings in 2:18-22 and works through all the parables of the synoptic tradition, guided by Mark's arrangement. In his discussion of the Beelzebul account, he compares the parallel versions in Matt 12 and Luke 11.⁵¹ Wenham concludes with a discussion about the historical Jesus' belief in Satan and the implications for modern Christians.⁵²

Joel Marcus, in "The Beelzebul Controversy and the Eschatologies of Jesus," identifies a contradiction between the parables of the divided kingdom and house, which portray a strong Satanic rule (Mark 3:23-26), and the parable of the strong man (v. 27).⁵³ Marcus considers the synoptic parallels, and explains the contradiction by appealing to a development in the historical Jesus' thinking:

⁵⁰ David Wenham, *The Parables of Jesus* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1989), 25.

⁵¹ Wenham, *Parables of Jesus*, 36-38.

⁵² Wenham, *Parables of Jesus*, 39-40.

⁵³ Joel Marcus, "The Beelzebul Controversy and the Eschatologies of Jesus," in *Authenticating the Activities of Jesus* (ed. B. Chilton and C. E. Evans; Leiden: Brill, 1998), 248-50, 259.

the parables of the kingdom and house represent an earlier stage of Jesus' ministry during which he did not yet see his exorcisms as the overthrow of Satan's rule; the parable of the strong man represents a later stage in Jesus' ministry when he began to view his exorcisms as a definitive overthrow of Satan. While Wenham seeks to understand Jesus' thought in light of the tradition, Marcus seeks to understand the tradition in light of a hypothesis about Jesus' thought.⁵⁴

1.2.2.4 Structural Analysis

Jan Lambrecht, in *Once More Astonished: The Parables of Jesus*, identifies the structural patterns of Mark 3:20-35 and bases an interpretation upon them.⁵⁵ He identifies a chiasmic pattern, and sees it as evidence of Mark's purposeful construction.⁵⁶ According to Lambrecht, vv. 23-29 comprises the center of the chiasm: "Jesus' self defense, the central section C, is thus embedded within two inclusive circles A, A' (appearance of the relatives) and B, B' (accusation of the scribes)."⁵⁷ The center of the chiasm signals the main idea of the unit.⁵⁸

⁵⁴ Raoul A. S. Syx compares the Beelzebul account with the accounts in Matthew and Luke, and makes a hypothetical reconstruction of a written Q source. He argues that Mark depended on and reworked such a written Q source in composing the Beelzebul controversy. Raoul A. S. Syx, "Gebruike Marcus de Q-bron? Een onderzoek van de Beelzebulcontroverse (Mc 3,20-30 en par)" (Ph. D. diss., Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, 1994).

⁵⁵ Lambrecht defines the parables according to the narrative definition, and excludes 3:23b-27 from his list of synoptic parables. He discusses the Beelzebul discourse, however, in a chapter about Mark's use of παραβολή elsewhere in the Gospel. Jan Lambrecht, *Once More Astonished: The Parables of Jesus* (New York: Crossroad, 1981), 17-18, 110-12.

⁵⁶ Lambrecht, *Once More Astonished*, 114-15.

⁵⁷ Lambrecht, *Once More Astonished*, 115. The full concentric pattern is as follows:

- | | |
|---|---|
| A | Jesus' busy activity and the setting out of the relatives (vv. 20-21) |
| B | Accusation by the scribes (v. 22) |
| C | Jesus' self-defense (vv. 23-29) |
| a | refutation (vv. 23b-26) |

According to Lambrecht's analysis, the main idea of vv. 20-35 is Jesus' refutation, in which he clarifies the nature of his exorcisms (vv. 23b-27). Lambrecht also shows how the other parts of the pattern work together with the central idea. According to Lambrecht, the B B' parts simply state and repeat the accusation of the scribes, and frame Jesus' refutation that ends with the scribes' exclusion. The A A' framework that begins and ends the controversy, on the other hand, casts the episode in a positive light, as it shows Jesus bringing together a new family that does God's will.⁵⁹

1.2.2.5 Rhetorical and Socio-cultural Analyses

Vernon K. Robbins performs rhetorical socio-cultural analyses of the Mark 3:20-35 and its parallel in Luke, using data from Hellenistic handbooks.⁶⁰ He describes Jesus' response to the accusation that he is in league with Beelzebul as a type of logical argument that contains negative epideictic rhetoric. Robbins explains that epideictic rhetoric proceeds by developing a series of topics.⁶¹ His rhetorical analyses of Mark 3:20-35 and Luke 11:14-36 display the development

b	need of exorcism (plundering, v. 27)
a'	judgment logion (vv. 28-29)
B'	Repetition of the scribes' accusation (v. 30)
A'	Arrival of the relatives; true kinship (vv. 31-35)

See p. 114. In addition, Lambrecht identifies concentric 1 2 2' 1' patterns in vv. 23b-26 and vv. 28-29. See p. 115.

⁵⁸ Lambrecht, *Once More Astonished*, 116.

⁵⁹ Lambrecht, *Once More Astonished*, 116-17.

⁶⁰ Vernon Robbins, "Beelzebul Controversy in Mark and Luke: Rhetorical and Social Analysis" *Forum* 7 (1991): 261-277. Joel Marcus also discusses the rhetorical purpose of the parable of the divided dominion in Mark 3:23-26 = Q 11:17-18 in his essay, "The Beelzebul Controversy and the Eschatologies of Jesus," 247-77. Also, in his dissertation, *Whoever has ears to hear: the discourses of Jesus in Mark as primary rhetoric of the Greco-Roman Period* (Ph.D. diss., Vanderbilt University, 1994), David Michael Young makes an extensive study of parables as tools of Greco-Roman rhetoric.

⁶¹ Robbins, "Beelzebul Controversy in Mark and Luke," 263.

of the topics in a situation-response scenario: the situation is created by the accusation that Jesus is in league with Beelzebul,⁶² and the response is created by Jesus' series of arguments that disprove the accusation.⁶³ In his socio-cultural analysis, Robbins argues that the Markan and Lukan discourses both have centric movement.⁶⁴ In the Markan version, the flow of movement is towards the house and towards Jesus, the center, around whom people do the will of God (3:35). In the Lukan version, however, the flow of movement is both towards Jesus, the center, and then outward again. This outward movement occurs when Jesus casts the demon out of the dumb man (Luke 11:14) when Jesus is represented as the one who gives wisdom (v. 31), and when the stronger one who overcomes the strong man is portrayed as distributing the spoil (11:22). Robbins concludes that the Markan version functions to persuade people to make loyal commitment to Jesus and the community associated with him, while the Lukan version functions to persuade people of the power of God's kingdom that distributes possessions to them so that they can redistribute those possessions to others.⁶⁵

1.2.2.6 *Literary Analysis*

The recent interest in literary methods has not only revived attention to text and metaphor for parables interpretation, but also has resulted in the view

⁶² In Mark's version, scribes from Jerusalem make the accusation; in Luke's version, some among the crowd make the accusation.

⁶³ Robbins, "Beelzebul Controversy in Mark and Luke," 263-67.

⁶⁴ Robbins, "Beelzebul Controversy in Mark and Luke," 276-9.

⁶⁵ Robbins, "Beelzebul Controversy in Mark and Luke," 273-6.

that the Gospels are unified narratives.⁶⁶ As a result, some have contended that the Gospel contexts are the most secure ones for interpreting the parables.⁶⁷ John Donahue⁶⁸ and John Drury⁶⁹ have both produced books on the parables that interpret them in their narrative and theological contexts, giving attention to each of the synoptic Gospels on their own terms. In *The Gospel in Parable*, Donahue, however, focuses only on the parables in Mark 4, 12 and 13. Although he ties the “parable theory” in Mark 4:10-12 to 3:23 he does not discuss the parabolic discourse in 3:22-30.⁷⁰ In his narrative analysis, Donahue only focuses on the contrast of characters in this section—the contrast between the crowds as the “insiders” and the relatives and scribes as “outsiders” — to conclude that being on the inside or outside is a matter of understanding true discipleship. According to Donahue, “‘Inside and ‘outside’ are existential, religious categories, determined by the kind of response one makes to the commands of Jesus.”⁷¹

⁶⁶ Rhoads, David, Joanna Dewey and Donald Michie, *Mark as Story: An Introduction to the Narrative of a Gospel* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress, 1982), esp. pp. 1-7; Elizabeth Struthers Malbon, *Narrative Space and Mythic Meaning in Mark* (New Voices in Biblical Studies; San Francisco, Harper & Row, 1986); Malbon, “Narrative Criticism: How Does the Story Mean?,” in *Mark and Method: New Approaches in Biblical Studies* (J. C. Anderson and S. D. Moore, eds.; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1992), 24-49; Jack Dean Kingsbury, *Matthew as Story* (2nd ed.; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1988). Robert G. Tannehill, *The Narrative Unity of Luke-Acts: A Literary Interpretation* (2 vols.; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986); Alan R. Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A Study in Literary Design* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983).

⁶⁷ Robert Tannehill, *The Narrative Unity of Luke-Acts*. Warren Carter and John Paul Heil, *Matthew’s Parables: Audience-Oriented Perspectives* (The Catholic Biblical Quarterly Monograph Series 30; Washington, DC: The Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1998).

⁶⁸ John R. Donahue, *The Gospel as Parable: Metaphor, Narrative, and Theology in the Synoptic Gospels* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1988).

⁶⁹ John Drury, *The Parables in the Gospels*.

⁷⁰ Donahue, *Gospel as Parable*, 44.

⁷¹ Donahue, *Gospel as Parable*, 44.

John Drury, on the other hand, in *The Parables in the Gospels*, does treat each of the parables in turn as they appear in Mark, beginning with 2:17.⁷² He opens his interpretation of 3:23-27 by describing the plot of the narrative up to that point, in order to place the passage in its literary context. Drury explains that Jesus speaks in parables to point up the absurdity of the charges that he is in league with Beelzebul.⁷³ In his analysis, Drury does not discuss the relationship of 3:23-27 to the unforgivable sin logion in vv. 28-29. In addition, he does not place the parables in the context of the family controversy that precedes and follows them (vv. 20-21, 30-31), and he does not explore their significance for the continuing plot of the narrative. As is customary among parables scholars, he gives most of his attention to the parable of the sower in Mark 4, and secondarily to the parable of the vineyard in Mark 12. At the end of his analysis of Mark's parables, Drury concludes that, "the *sower* gives the key to what is really going on in the ministry of Jesus, the *vineyard* gives the key to what is really going on in salvation history at large."⁷⁴

Two dissertations focusing on Markan intercalations have employed literary methods to interpret Mark 3:22-30 in its Gospel context. George Al

⁷² In *Parables in the Gospels*, Drury rejects the modern definition of the word "parable" and establishes evidence for various categories of parable in the OT that he sees providing the background for the synoptic parables. Based on this evidence, he considers 2:17 to be the first parable in Mark: "those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners." Indeed, this passage uses metaphors in order to make a comparison. Although Mark has Jesus use parabolic language in 2:17 (and in 2:19-21, with the bridegroom, the patched cloth and the wineskin), Mark uses 3:22-30 in order to establish Jesus as the one who speaks ἐν παραβολαῖς. Many scholars consider 2:17, 19-21 to be proverbs. E.g., Scott, *Hear Then the Parable*, 27, fn. 1.

⁷³ Drury, *Parables in the Gospel*, 48.

⁷⁴ Drury, *Parables in the Gospels*, 68.

Wright, Jr., in his dissertation, *Markan Intercalations: A Study in the Plot of the Gospel*, argues that the plot of Mark is driven by a series of scenes that employ intercalation.⁷⁵ He analyzes each of the intercalated scenes he identifies in three respects: the relationships between the characters in each intercalation, the relationships between the intercalated stories, and the relationship of each intercalation to the larger narrative.⁷⁶ Similarly, Tom Shepherd, in *Markan Sandwich Stories*, interprets intercalated passages in order to illuminate their function in Mark's storytelling and in the interpretation of Mark.⁷⁷ He engages in a broader literary analysis than Wright, including settings, characters, actions and plot, time, narrator and implied reader, and style.⁷⁸ Both Wright and Shepherd interpret Mark's intercalation of the Beelzebul account within the account of the response of Jesus' family to his ministry in 3:20-35.⁷⁹ Both scholars read the Beelzebul discourse in its own literary context, seeking to illuminate Mark's perspective of Jesus and discipleship. Shepherd does not, however, interpret the unit in light of the larger narrative. Wright aims to do this, but in his discussion of the relationship of the intercalation to Mark's narrative world, he extends the boundaries of that world not to the whole Gospel, but only to the choosing and sending of the Twelve (3:13-19; 6:7).⁸⁰

⁷⁵ George Al Wright, Jr. "Markan Intercalations: A Study in the Plot of the Gospel" (Ph.D. diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1985).

⁷⁶ Wright, "Markan Intercalations," 17-25.

⁷⁷ Tom Shepherd, *Markan Sandwich Stories: narration, definition, and function* (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 1993), 63.

⁷⁸ Shepherd, *Markan Sandwich Stories*, 109-110.

⁷⁹ Wright, "Markan Intercalations," 92-103; Shepherd, *Markan Sandwich Stories*, 111-138.

⁸⁰ Wright, "Markan Intercalations," 102-103.

1.2.2.7 Summary

While each of the above approaches has its legitimacy, my interest for this project is not in historical reconstruction. Accordingly, I do not use form critical or redaction critical analyses in this study. I employ synoptic comparisons for the purpose of highlighting Mark's distinctive version. In addition, I employ elements of structural and rhetorical analysis for the exegesis of 3:22-30, exhibited in the work of Lambrecht and Robbins. With the exception of Joel Marcus, none of the scholars I discuss above interprets 3:22-30 as apocalyptic discourse, and some explicitly deny its apocalyptic character. By contrast, I attend to the symbolic and apocalyptic language of 3:22-30. In addition, I seek to understand 3:22-30 in its larger narrative context. Accordingly, the chief approach that is beneficial to my project is literary analysis. Scholars who have employed literary methods for interpreting Mark, however, have offered non-apocalyptic ways of reading the Gospel.⁸¹ In this study, I interpret Mark as an apocalyptic narrative, using 3:22-30 as an interpretive lens.

1.3 The Apocalyptic Character of Mark 3:22-30

Mark labels the whole discourse that he constructs out of similes, metaphors and a logion, ἐν παραβολαῖς. When we read vv. 23-30 as a parabolic discourse, not only does the figurative language refute the charge of the scribes,

⁸¹ Donahue, *Gospel as Parable*; Drury, *Parables in the Gospels*; Shepherd, *Markan Sandwich Stories*; Wright, "Markan Intercalations;" Tolbert, *Sowing the Gospel*. See also David M. Rhoads, *Reading Mark, Engaging the Gospel* (Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress, 2004); Robert Fowler, *Let the Reader Understand: Reader Response Criticism and the Gospel of Mark* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 2001).

but it also imaginatively displays a symbolic world that indicates Mark's assumptions about how the world works in the presence of Jesus. In short, the ministry of Jesus is the stage for a dualistic cosmic battle between Satan and his demons on one side, and the Spirit who empowers Jesus on the other. Mark 3:22-30 evokes distinctive themes of apocalyptic discourse. Because these themes are found in ancient Jewish apocalyptic thought, part of my study includes an exploration of how Mark's symbolic world relates to that context.

Although Johann Weiss and Albert Schweitzer argued for the influence of Jewish apocalyptic thought upon the historical Jesus,⁸² the subsequent view of Mark as a narrative written by a creative author led later scholars to view the evangelist himself as an apocalyptic thinker and the Gospel itself as an apocalyptic narrative.⁸³ Most who take this view adduce the Beelzebul discourse in Mark 3:22-30 in their discussions. One of the goals of this study is to build on and extend this view. The approach to the gospel of Mark as "apocalyptic narrative," however, requires clarification. A close reading of those scholars who

⁸² Johannes Weiss, *Jesus' Proclamation of the Kingdom of God* (trans. and ed. R. H. Hiers and d. L. Holland; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1971), 74-9; 101-5, 131; trans. of *Die Predigt Jesu von Reiche Gottes* (1st ed.; Göttingen Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1892). Albert Schweitzer, *The Quest for the Historical Jesus: A Critical Study of Its Progress from Reimarus to Wrede* (trans. by W. Montgomery; New York: Macmillan, 1968; repr. of 1910), 330-97.

⁸³ For example, Norman Perrin describes the Gospel of Mark as an "apocalyptic drama" in which past, present and future merge in the narrative in, *The New Testament: An Introduction* (2nd ed.; New York: Harcourt Brace Janovich, 1982), 237-39. Adela Yarbro Collins identifies Mark as an "apocalyptic historical monograph" in *The Beginning of the Gospel: Probing of Mark in Context* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992), 27-38; and as an "eschatological historical narrative" in her commentary for the Hermeneia series, *Mark*, 42-44. Luke Timothy Johnson calls Mark an "apocalypse in narrative form" in, *The Writings of the New Testament: An Interpretation* (rev. ed.; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1999), 167. Howard Clark Kee calls Mark an "apocalyptic writing" that exhibits an "apocalyptic philosophy of history" in, *Community of the New Age: Studies in Mark's Gospel* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1983), 69. Ched Myers argues that Jewish apocalyptic literary tradition provided Mark's narrative strategy in, *Binding the Strong Man: A Political Reading of Mark's Story of Jesus* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis, 1988), 101-4.

have identified Mark as in some way “apocalyptic” reveals that they do not all mean the same thing by the word.

1.3.1 Defining Mark as “Apocalyptic”

I begin with the assumption that Jewish apocalypses as a literary genre share a characteristic outlook that includes both a vertical-spatial dimension (cosmic forces involved on the earth) and a temporal dimension (movement towards imminent eschatological salvation).⁸⁴ The adjective, “apocalyptic,” then, describes the world-view or presuppositions that are typical of the genre “apocalypse,”⁸⁵ and may be applied to literature that lies outside the genre while exhibiting its characteristics.⁸⁶ Though the Gospel of Mark is not an apocalypse by genre, it manifests the characteristics of an apocalyptic outlook. The scholars who have identified Mark as “apocalyptic” emphasize different characteristics to make their case.

⁸⁴ This assumption reflects the definition of “apocalypse” published by the Society of Biblical Literature Genre Project in the 1979 issue of *Semeia* 14: “a genre of revelatory literature with a narrative framework, in which a revelation is mediated by an otherworldly being to a human recipient, disclosing a transcendent reality which is both temporal, insofar as it envisages eschatological salvation, and spatial insofar as it involves another supernatural world.” John J. Collins, “Introduction: Towards the Morphology of a Genre,” in *Apocalypse: The Morphology of a Genre* (ed. J. J. Collins; *Semeia* 14 [1979]): 9. See also, John J. Collins, *The Apocalyptic Imagination: An Introduction to Jewish Apocalyptic Literature* (2nd ed. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 5.

⁸⁵ For instance, “apocalyptic eschatology” describes the kind of eschatology in the apocalypses. Collins, 11-12.

⁸⁶ Collins comments, “The literary genre apocalypse is not a self-contained isolated entity. The conceptual structure indicated by the genre, which emphasized the supernatural world and the judgment to come, can also be found in works that are not revelation accounts, and so are not technically apocalypses. So, for example, the Qumran *War Scroll* is widely and rightly regarded as ‘apocalyptic’ in the extended sense, although it is not presented as a revelation.” J. J. Collins, *Apocalyptic Imagination*, 9.

1.3.1.1 James M. Robinson

In *The Problem of History in Mark* (1957), James M. Robinson does not explicitly characterize the gospel of Mark as an apocalyptic writing; however, he clearly perceives its affinity with both the vertical-spatial and the temporal dimensions of the apocalyptic world-view. According to Robinson, Mark opens with a cosmic moment that initiates a struggle between Satan and the Spirit in which Jesus stands between two worlds: the earthly and the cosmic. The rest of the Gospel is a historical narrative that continues the cosmic struggle begun at the baptism and temptation on the earthly plane, manifest in Jesus' exorcisms and debates with opponents.⁸⁷ According to Robinson, Mark sees the history of Jesus from an eschatological perspective; that is, God's end-time power has intervened in history with Jesus to drive the whole course of history to its imminent end.⁸⁸

1.3.1.2 Norman Perrin

In *The New Testament: An Introduction* (1974), Norman Perrin describes the Gospel of Mark as an apocalyptic drama. He argues that the evangelist is a typical apocalyptic thinker who joins past, present and future in his narrative. Accordingly, the Gospel is an apocalyptic drama in three acts: John the Baptist preaches and is delivered up; Jesus preaches and is delivered up; Christians preach and are to be delivered up. When the third act is complete, Jesus will

⁸⁷ James M. Robinson, *The Problem of History in Mark and Other Marcan Studies* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1982), 33-53.

⁸⁸ See especially Robinson, *Problem of History in Mark*, 34-35, 52.

return as the Son of Man.⁸⁹ Perrin's focus is primarily on Mark's apocalyptic eschatology, that is, the temporal dimension of apocalyptic thought. Unlike Robinson, he does not develop the vertical-spatial dimension, or the outworking of the cosmic struggle on the earthly plane.

1.3.1.3 Howard Clark Kee

In *Community of the New Age: Studies in Mark's Gospel* (1977), Howard Clark Kee interrelates literary form with social and cultural issues in order to understand the community to which the evangelist wrote.⁹⁰ Like Perrin, Kee compares Mark to a "beginning-middle-end" progression typical of apocalyptic literature that puts a present crisis in the context of the past and of imminent eschatological resolution. Kee, however, also identifies an "apocalyptic philosophy of history" that delivers an exhortation to stand firm against demonic powers fighting against God's world and particularly against the writer's own community in light of the imminent judgment of the wicked and vindication of the saints.⁹¹ Thus, Kee identifies both temporal and vertical-spatial elements in his characterization of Mark as an apocalyptic writing. In addition to these apocalyptic elements, Kee identifies certain apocalyptic themes in Mark, which he calls "conceptual presuppositions," including the rule of God, the certainty of its triumph, the redefinition of community, and the exhortation to stand firm.⁹² Kee focuses, however, not on the narrative expression of these themes, but on the

⁸⁹ Perrin and Duling, *New Testament*, 237-39.

⁹⁰ Howard Clark Kee, *Community of the New Age*, 13.

⁹¹ Kee, *Community of the New Age*, 66.

⁹² Kee, *Community of the New Age*, 70-74.

Sitz im Leben of the Gospel, or what social and cultural factors may have given rise to the production of this particular apocalyptic document.

1.3.1.4 Adela Yarbro Collins

Adela Yarbro Collins wrote *The Beginning of the Gospel: Probing of Mark in Context* (1992) in order to prepare for her subsequent commentary on *Mark* (2007). In *The Beginning of the Gospel*, she views Mark as a particular kind of historical narrative that relates the unfolding of eschatological events, and so identifies it as an “apocalyptic historical monograph.”⁹³ Similar to Perrin and Kee, Collins perceives Mark to be akin to Jewish Apocalyptic literature in that it recounts history with imminent eschatological expectation. At the same time, she identifies an apocalyptic view of history in which earthly events are controlled by supernatural powers. Thus, in *The Beginning of the Gospel*, Collins characterizes Mark as “apocalyptic” according to both temporal and vertical-spatial features that she perceived in the narrative. In her recent commentary on Mark, however, Collins calls the Gospel an “eschatological historical narrative.” This change in adjective from “apocalyptic” to “eschatological” represents a shift in emphasis: in her commentary, she drops the vertical-spatial dimension to emphasize the temporal.⁹⁴ Collins characterizes the Gospel of Mark as “eschatological” because its foremost concern is with the fulfillment of the divine plan in the realization of the kingdom of God through Jesus. The prologue (chap. 1) and the Olivet discourse (chap. 13) are the key texts for Collins’ view.

⁹³ Adela Yarbro Collins, *The Beginning of the Gospel*, 27-38.

⁹⁴ See Collins’ discussion of the genre of the Gospel, *Mark*, 42-44.

According to Collins, the prologue marks out the starting point (“the beginning,” v. 1) and content (“the gospel,” v. 1) of this divine plan, and the Olivet Discourse tells how it unfolds in history.

1.3.1.5 Joel Marcus

Two works by Joel Marcus are relevant to this discussion. First, in his dissertation, *The Mystery of the Kingdom* (1986), Marcus reads Mark 4:1-34 in an apocalyptic context in order to understand Mark’s particular type of apocalyptic thinking.⁹⁵ According to Marcus, the point of this parables chapter is to communicate that the Markan community is on the winning side of a battle between the kingdom of Satan and the kingdom of God in spite of opposition to and mixed results of the preaching of the gospel. Although the power of the gospel is presently hidden, it will be openly revealed in the future. Marcus concludes that Mark 4:1-34 “ensures that the events described in the rest of the book will be interpreted *apocalyptically*” (his emphasis).⁹⁶ This apocalyptic viewpoint prepares the reader to interpret the crucifixion and resurrection – what appears to be failure – as the arrival of God’s new age. Second, in his commentary, *Mark 1-8 (AB, 2000)*, Marcus characterizes Mark as an apocalyptic thinker both because the narrative “is set within the context of the approaching end of the world” and because the world and humanity are oppressed by

⁹⁵ Joel Marcus, *The Mystery of the Kingdom of God* (SBLDS 90; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1986), 8-11.

⁹⁶ Marcus, *Mystery of the Kingdom of God*, 229.

demonic powers from which only an act of God can free them.⁹⁷ He views the focus of Jesus' mission to be the release of human beings from destructive cosmic powers. In his works, Marcus stresses both the vertical-spatial dimension and the temporal dimension as what characterizes the evangelist as an apocalyptic thinker.⁹⁸

1.3.1.6 Ched Myers

In *Binding the Strong Man* (1988), Ched Myers performs a political reading of Mark. He argues that the Gospel employs an apocalyptic ideology to engage a "war of myths with the dominant social order" represented by the Jerusalem scribes.⁹⁹ Myers identifies the apocalyptic dualism in Mark as a battle between the ideology of the scribes and the new order of Jesus, rather than as a cosmic battle. He equates apocalyptic with political discourse, and takes apocalyptic symbolism to represent earthly, political entities rather than cosmic ones. Although Myers highlights the importance of Jewish apocalyptic for his reading, he does not address the cosmic world-view depicted in apocalyptic literature.¹⁰⁰ His political reading refers to the struggles in the concrete economic,

governmental and cultural relationships of the social world of 1st century

⁹⁷ Marcus, *Mark 1-8*, 71-73.

⁹⁸ Other scholars who emphasize the vertical-spatial dimension in Mark's Gospel in terms of Jesus' struggle against cosmic powers include Rikki E. Watts, *Isaiah's New Exodus in Mark* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1997), 140-69; Graham H. Twelftree, *In the Name of Jesus: Exorcism Among Early Christians* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007), 108; Luke Johnson, *Writings of the New Testament*, 167.

⁹⁹ Myers, *Binding the Strong Man*, 31.

¹⁰⁰ Myers devotes an entire chapter of *Binding the Strong Man* to the cultural, social, economic, and political landscape of Mark's world (pp. 39-87), but includes only a brief discussion of the narrative strategy and social function of apocalyptic as a discourse of political protest (pp. 101-4).

Palestine.¹⁰¹ By reducing apocalyptic to this kind of political discourse only, he overlooks its theological character.¹⁰² The difficulty is not that Myers stresses the political elements, but that he eliminates cosmic elements and divine activity. When Myers calls the Gospel of Mark an “apocalyptic narrative,” he means that it is an “ideological narrative.”

1.3.1.7 Summary

By calling the Gospel of Mark an apocalyptic narrative, a scholar could mean that it exhibits *apocalyptic eschatology* only; that it exhibits *apocalyptic eschatology and cosmic conflict* (with differing emphases); or that it encodes an *ideology*. Although each of these characterizations highlights important features of Mark’s narrative, the most comprehensive reflection of all the features of the Gospel is that characterization which includes both temporal and vertical-spatial viewpoints. Such a characterization allows, for example, not only for the expectation of Jesus’ return as the Son of Man, but also for the display of Jesus’ power to free those held captive by a world of demonic powers. Thus, I characterize Mark as an apocalyptic narrative in that it displays both cosmic conflict and an apocalyptic eschatology. In this study, I focus on the cosmic conflict between Satan and the Spirit-filled Jesus. I seek to determine Mark’s apocalyptic character beginning with an analysis of Mark 3:22-30. I build a picture of Mark’s symbolic world out of Mark 3:22-30, allowing Mark’s particular

¹⁰¹ Myers, 16.

¹⁰² A. Y. Collins argues that, “the overt political interest in Mark is limited” (*The Beginning of the Gospel*, 35).

view to arise out of that discourse. Then, I compare it with roughly contemporary Jewish literature that employs similar themes, in order to illuminate its apocalyptic character and emphasis. Finally, I see how the apocalyptic discourse in Mark 3:22-30 is displayed in the rest of the Gospel.

1.3.2 Approaches to Mark 3:22-30 as Apocalyptic

Most commentaries and monographs that discuss Mark 3:22-30 overlook its cosmic imagery altogether.¹⁰³ Only a few commentators discuss it. For example, R. Pesch, M. Eugene Boring and C. S. Mann connect the binding of the strong man/Satan with eschatological ideas of binding evil spirits in Jewish apocalyptic tradition.¹⁰⁴ Ben Witherington argues that the language in 3:23-27 should be read in light of apocalyptic literature that envisions cosmic combat.¹⁰⁵ Nineham maintains that Jesus' parables are concerned with the "eschatological battle on behalf of the kingdom."¹⁰⁶ Finally, Joel Marcus argues that the Beelzebul controversy in Mark reflects Jewish apocalyptic ideas: Jesus is an eschatological figure who invades a world under Satan's power in order to bind

¹⁰³ Commentators who overlook the cosmic imagery in Mark 3:23-29 include Cranfield, *Mark*, 135-39; Barclay, *Mark*, 77-79; Lane, *Gospel According to Mark*, 142-6; Gnilka, *Markus*, 148-52; LaVerdiere, *Mark*, 109-110; Juel, *Gospel of Mark*, 63-4; Iersel, *Mark*, 170-73; Heil, *Mark*, 88-90; Hooker, *Mark*, 116-17; Guelich, *Mark*, 175-79; Gundry, *Mark*, 172-77; Taylor, *Mark*; Schweizer, *Mark*, 82-88; Painter, *Mark*, 71-73; Perkins, "Mark," 563-65; Dowd, *Mark*, 34-6; Donahue and Harrington, *Mark*, 130-32; Stein, *Mark*, 185. Monographs that do not discuss the cosmic symbols in Mark 3:22-30 include Donahue, *Gospel as Parable*; Drury, *Parables in the Gospels*, Mary Ann Tolbert, *Sowing the Gospel*.

¹⁰⁴ Pesch, *Markusevangelium*, 1:215-16; Boring, *Mark*, 108. Mann, *Mark*, 255.

¹⁰⁵ Witherington, *Mark*, 157.

¹⁰⁶ Nineham, *Mark*, 120.

Satan and usher in God's new age.¹⁰⁷ These scholars place Mark's Gospel in the context of a symbolic world, shared with contemporary texts, that shapes its character.¹⁰⁸ A few scholars have discussed the apocalyptic character of Mark 3:22-30 in the context of larger studies. Below, I discuss their work.

1.3.2.1 Jennifer Ann Glancy

In her dissertation, *Satan in the Synoptic Gospels*, Jennifer Ann Glancy describes Mark's distinctive perspective on Satan as the one who is Jesus' main adversary in a cosmic battle, noting parallels with Jewish apocalyptic literature.¹⁰⁹ She connects Jesus' exorcisms with the overthrow of Satan's kingdom in 3:22-30, and sees "parables and their interpretation as weapons in the cosmic struggle."¹¹⁰ She comments that, "The Beelzebul controversy establishes demonic possession of humanity as Satan's military base of operations, and Jesus' (and the disciples') exorcistic activities as an offensive against Satan's forces."¹¹¹ Jesus' exorcisms represent a battle between the kingdom of God and the kingdom of Satan.¹¹² Like Glancy, I recognize that Mark 3:22-30 discloses a cosmic battle in the ministry of Jesus. While Glancy seeks to illuminate the figure of Satan in Mark vis-à-vis apocalyptic writings, I seek to illuminate Mark's symbolic world vis-à-vis those writings. In addition, I recognize, as Glancy does, that the Beelzebul controversy

¹⁰⁷ Marcus, *Mark 1-8*, 272-75.

¹⁰⁸ A. Y. Collins draws attention to analogous ideas about Satan as the leader of evil spirits in Jubilees, and a "dominion of Belial" in the Dead Sea Scrolls, but does not develop the idea of a cosmic struggle. Collins, *Mark*, 231-33.

¹⁰⁹ Jennifer Ann Glancy, "Satan in the Synoptic Gospels" (Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 1990).

¹¹⁰ Glancy, "Satan in the Synoptic Gospels," 59.

¹¹¹ Glancy, "Satan in the Synoptic Gospels," 56.

¹¹² Glancy, "Satan in the Synoptic Gospels," 59.

is significant for reading the whole Gospel. Glancy only points up the significance of the cosmic battle established in 3:22-30, however, for interpreting the other exorcisms in Mark.¹¹³ In this study, I trace the significance of this discourse through the fabric of the narrative in a more thoroughgoing way, through an analysis of Mark's characters and plot.

1.3.2.2 Rikki Watts

In *Isaiah's New Exodus in Mark*, Rikki E. Watts argues that Mark presents Jesus as Israel's healer and deliver in fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy to restore Zion, particularly exhibited in Isa 40-55. Watts sees Jesus as engaged in eschatological conflict with Satan, and cites the Beelzebul controversy as a significant example.¹¹⁴ He notes the congruence of the imagery in 3:22-30 with the eschatological imagery of contemporary Jewish compositions (the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs* and 11QMelch) and draws attention to their use of Isaianic themes.¹¹⁵ In particular, he discusses possible allusions to Isa 49:25 and 53:12 in Mark 3:27 to explain the significance of Jesus as the Isaianic Warrior who has come to deliver people and establish God's reign.¹¹⁶ Furthermore, Watts argues that Mark's literary placement of the Beelzebul controversy as Jesus' first "mighty act" indicates the importance of exorcisms and eschatological conflict.¹¹⁷ In my study, I develop these ideas by looking at how Mark shapes Isaianic

¹¹³ Glancy, "Satan in the Synoptic Gospels," 64.

¹¹⁴ Watts, *Isaiah's New Exodus*, 144-56.

¹¹⁵ Watts, *Isaiah's New Exodus*, 147-8.

¹¹⁶ Watts, *Isaiah's New Exodus*, 148-50.

¹¹⁷ Watts, *Isaiah's New Exodus*, 154.

themes in light of an apocalyptic symbolic world in order to present his perception of Jesus.

1.3.2.3 *Ched Myers*

As I noted above, Ched Myers identifies the Gospel of Mark as an apocalyptic narrative, but characterizes its apocalyptic dualism as a battle between the ideology of the scribes and the new order of Jesus, rather than as a cosmic battle. Myers interprets 3:20-35 in particular as a declaration of ideological war. According to Myers, the tropes in this passage do not refer to cosmic ideas, but to 1st century Palestinian social relationships. In Mark 3:24-26, Myers identifies the kingdom metaphor as a reference to the Davidic state, and the house metaphor as a reference to the Jerusalem temple. In v. 27, the strong man represents the scribal establishment from which the oppressed must be liberated. The unforgivable sin in v. 28-29 is the refusal to recognize human liberation because of captivity to the way things are and refusal to accept criticism and change.

Although the title of Myers' book, *Binding the Strong Man*, is from Mark 3:27, Myers does not use this verse or its context as the foundational element upon which to build his argument. He relies instead on the parable of the sower in Mark 4 and the Olivet discourse in Mark 13 to establish Mark's rationale for building an opposition in an ideological war. In his study, Mark 3:27 functions

as a slogan for his political reading of Mark.¹¹⁸ Myers further assumes, rather than demonstrates, that all Jewish apocalyptic literature is engaged in a particular kind of ideological warfare. In contrast, I begin with an analysis of Mark 3:22-30 in order to show how it shapes the literary and theological logic of Mark's Gospel. In addition, I investigate the particular aims of various Jewish apocalyptic compositions in order to illuminate the distinctive aims of their apocalyptic discourse and the symbolic world in which Mark participates.

1.4 The Approach of the Dissertation

1.4.1 Reading Mark 3:22-30 as the Construction of a Symbolic World

I argue that in Mark 3:22-30, Mark displays a symbolic world by which he enlarges the reader's imagination about the person and work of Jesus. As a point of departure, I use Luke Timothy Johnson's definition of symbolic worlds as, "the social structures in which people live, and the symbols attached to and supporting those structures."¹¹⁹ Johnson's definition is derived from the theoretical work of Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann.¹²⁰ Although more recent sociological studies have raised concerns about their argument that all

¹¹⁸ This translation of Mark 3:27 appears on the title page of Myers's book. Myers changes the singulars, "unless *he* first binds (δήση) the strong man" and "*he* may plunder (διαρπάσει) his house" to the plural, "they." This change reflects his reading of Mark as a "manifesto for radical discipleship" (*Binding the Strong Man*, 11) that induces discipleship communities to follow Jesus by deposing the "structures of domination in our world" (xxix) by nonviolent action.

¹¹⁹ Johnson, *The Writings of the New Testament*, 21.

¹²⁰ Berger and Luckmann refer to "symbolic universes" as "bodies of theoretical tradition that integrate different provinces of meaning and encompass the institutional order in a symbolic totality," Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge* (New York: Doubleday, 1966), 88. According to Berger, religion is the symbolic universe that transcends and gives meaning to all of reality. Peter Berger, *The Sacred Canopy: Elements of a Sociological Theory of Religion* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1967).

reality is subjective, Berger's and Luckmann's insight that human beings use symbols to make meaning out of their experience provides a helpful basis for approaching Mark's narrative.¹²¹ I connect their work to metaphor theory in order to develop their basic insight.

In *Metaphors we Live By*, George Lakoff and Mark Johnson argue against the traditional view that metaphor simply belongs to the domain of language. Rather, they demonstrate that metaphor is the means by which people and cultures structure what they perceive, experience, and do.¹²² They define metaphor as "understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another."¹²³ According to their argument, we understand what we perceive, experience, and do, in part, in terms of other perceptions, experiences and actions.¹²⁴ That is, we define concepts not according to inherent properties, but according to interactional properties.¹²⁵

Lakoff and Johnson use the example of the metaphor, "Argument is war." Argument is not a form of war; rather, "argument" and "war" are two different ideas. The metaphor, "argument is war," conceives of conversation in terms of physical combat. Lakoff and Johnson observe "many of the things we *do* in arguing are partially structured by the concepts of war. Though there is no

¹²¹ According to Berger and Luckman, "reality" does not exist independently. Individuals construct reality by means of symbols to make meaning. Berger and Luckman, *Social Construction*, (88-90). For a discussion of the limitations of this approach, see Wuthnow, *Meaning and Moral Order: Explorations in Cultural Analysis* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), 47-50.

¹²² George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), 3, 145-46.

¹²³ Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors*, 5.

¹²⁴ Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors*, 117-25, esp. 119.

¹²⁵ Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors*, 125.

physical battle, there is a verbal battle, and the structure of an argument – attack, defense, counterattack, etc. – reflects this.”¹²⁶ For instance, the participants of an argument assume opposing positions, plan a strategy, and engage one another in a conflict of opinions, until one party surrenders.¹²⁷ This example demonstrates the notion of an argument in terms of a whole “conceptual network of battle.”¹²⁸ That is, it demonstrates that metaphorical entailments construct coherent conceptual systems. Because metaphors are based on experience, the metaphorical structures of a culture reflect its fundamental values. Thus, one culture may view “argument as war” with participants as combatants, and another culture may view “argument as a dance” with participants as performers.¹²⁹

Lakoff and Johnson distinguish among various kinds of metaphors. Two kinds are pertinent to this study. First, “structural metaphors” are those which build one concept in terms of another. Second, “orientational metaphors” are those which organize a system of concepts in terms of another. Lakoff and Johnson argue that orientational metaphors are usually spatial, for example, up/down; in/out.¹³⁰ A physical and social basis grounds these metaphors. The physical basis arises from the fact that we have physical bodies that function in a spatial setting. The social basis differs according to the experience of culture. That is, cultures define differently what is up or down, and what is in or out.

¹²⁶ Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors*, 4.

¹²⁷ Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors*, 4; 77-83

¹²⁸ Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors*, 9.

¹²⁹ Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors*, 4-5.

¹³⁰ Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors*, 14.

In addition, Lakoff and Johnson argue that while we use metaphors in order to structure our conceptual systems, we also use metaphors imaginatively to create and convey new meaning.¹³¹ “New metaphors have the power to create a new reality. This can begin to happen when we start to comprehend our experience in terms of a metaphor, and it becomes a deeper reality when we begin to act in terms of it. If a new metaphor enters the conceptual system that we base our actions on, it will alter that conceptual system and the perceptions and actions that the system gives rise to.”¹³² A change in the way we perceive the world gives new meaning to the past, to our present activity, to what we believe, and to what is real, and we express it in metaphor.¹³³

I apply Lakoff’s and Johnson’s metaphor theory to Mark’s presentation of the person and work of Jesus. Mark explains his perception, experience and response to Jesus according to the religious symbols of Judaism, particularly the Old Testament and Jewish apocalyptic thought. Mark employs Israel’s familiar symbols to evoke memory and promote hope, and creates new entailments by applying them to Jesus. By interpreting Jesus in terms of OT and Jewish apocalyptic thought, Mark imaginatively conveys new meaning for the past, present and future of God’s people. I argue that the Beelzebul discourse in Mark 3:22-30 is foundational for establishing the symbolic world by which Mark structures his perception of Jesus. Moreover, Mark uses spatial metaphors in order to convey his understanding of Jesus. For example, at the outset of the

¹³¹ Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors*, 144.

¹³² Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors*, 145.

¹³³ Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors*, 139, 145-46.

Gospel, Mark communicates that Jesus has come to preach and cast out demons (e.g., 1:23-26, 38-39). Soon afterwards, Mark has Jesus go up (ἀναβαίνει) a mountain to give his followers authority to preach and cast out demons (3:13-14). Then, the scribes come down (καταβάντες) from Jerusalem to deny Jesus' authority to cast out demons (3:22-23). The scribes are "outside" the house where Jesus sits, along with Jesus' blood family, which has also denied his exorcising ministry. Mark uses spatial metaphors to contrast participation in and denial of Jesus' ministry. Jesus is beginning to form a social group, marked by certain behavior and values that Mark expresses through a particular metaphorical structure.

While Lakoff's and Johnson's metaphor theory is helpful for approaching Mark's use of symbols, it does not help explain how he structures those symbols. Similar to Lakoff and Johnson, Robert Wuthnow argues that people make sense of their experience through metaphors, conveying meaning about God and reality.¹³⁴ In addition, he argues that narratives are more complex ways that people organize information: "Narratives impose meaning on behavior and experiences by identifying a relevant starting point, describing an interim event, and depicting an end state that differs from the initial state and is in some way explained by what happens in between."¹³⁵ Mark constructs his metaphorical/symbolic structure by means of narrative. Mark presents Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God, who has come to liberate people from the powers that

¹³⁴ Robert Wuthnow, "Cognition and Religion," *Sociology of Religion* 68 (2007): 349.

¹³⁵ Wuthnow, "Cognition and Religion," 341.

oppress them. Half way through the story, however, this divinely appointed liberator turns towards the cross. The reader learns that even those followers Jesus had given authority to preach and cast out demons deny him and his ministry. In the end, God's power is manifest only after Jesus' yields his life as a ransom for many. The entire story, not simply its discrete elements, is essential for making meaning.

I approach the Gospel of Mark in light of this discussion about symbols, metaphor and narrative. I argue that Mark conveys meaning and order through the symbols of Judaism by means of a story, in order to elicit a response from his readers.

1.4.2 Reading Mark 3:22-30 in its Literary Context

This dissertation finds its place among literary studies that focus on the Gospel of Mark as a unified narrative and rhetorical composition. Although the core of this study is literary, I seek to understand Mark's perception of the person and work of Jesus, and his persuasive aims towards the reader. Thus, I seek to clarify the symbols, metaphors and themes of Mark 3:22-30 in light of the religious and social context in which it was produced. Many literary approaches treat Mark's gospel as a piece of literature apart from such aims. For instance, Mary Ann Tolbert, *Sowing the Gospel*, approaches Mark as a fictional narrative and provides controls for her literary analysis from Greco-Roman rhetoric. While she uses these literary controls in order to interpret Mark in light of the shared expectations of the authorial audience regarding genre, she does not

consider the shared expectations of that audience's symbolic world. Thus, she interprets the parable of the sower (Mark 4) simply as a literary device, that is, a synopsis of what is about to unfold in the Gospel.¹³⁶ Her failure to engage its cosmic and social elements flattens her reading not only of the parable of the sower, but also of the whole Gospel.

Following Vernon Robbins, I prefer to think of the Markan text using the metaphor of "thick tapestries" rather than only those of "windows" (historical approaches) or "mirrors" (literary approaches).¹³⁷ Robbins approaches the Gospel of Mark as a thick tapestry of multiple textures that includes the warp of the *inner texture* – the arena within the story world, where narrative criticism is effectively employed – and the woof of three other textures: the *intertexture* – the relation of verbal signs in or worlds evoked by the text to verbal signs in or worlds evoked by other texts; the *social and cultural texture*; and the *ideological texture*.¹³⁸ In this study, I investigate the inner texture of Mark's narrative, and the intertexture, that is, the relationship of Mark's narrative to other texts, in order to illuminate its religious and social context.¹³⁹

¹³⁶ See also Mary Ann Beavis, who views the dramatic structure of Mark as a five-act Hellenistic play, with motifs dependent on Mark 4:11-12. Mary Ann Beavis, *Mark's Audience: The Literary and Social Setting of Mark 4.11-12* (JSNTSup 33; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1989), see esp. 157-66.

¹³⁷ Vernon Robbins, *The Tapestry of Early Christian Discourse: Rhetoric, Society and Ideology* (London and New York: Routledge, 1996), 18-24.

¹³⁸ Robbins, *Tapestry*, 24.

¹³⁹ Literary critics often refer to these two textures as *intratextuality* and *intertextuality*. See, for example, the introductory discussion in the commentary by Donahue and Harrington, *Mark*, 1-3. Mark 3:22-30 could be investigated fruitfully with regard to all three intertextures, and properly should be in order to honor Robbins' interdisciplinary aim of relating all the methods to one another without privileging one. It is beyond the scope of this particular study to do so.

I analyze the *inner* texture of Mark 3:22-30 by means of literary methods. It is my aim to understand the relationship of its constituent parts by interpreting them in the contexts respectively of Mark's whole discourse and of his entire narrative. I approach this study as an exercise in narrative criticism. Accordingly, my approach includes a particular assumption and a particular focus.

First, like most narrative critics, I assume that the Gospel of Mark is a unified literary composition. Rather than fragmenting a narrative or interpreting its parts as isolated units, narrative critics approach a narrative as a coherent story, with movement of plot and rhetorical power that engages the reader.¹⁴⁰ Following this approach, I give attention to the present form of Mark 3:22-30 with a view to the determination of its function in Mark's whole Gospel. I explore the role of Mark 3:22-30 in shaping the literary and theological logic of the Gospel. That is, I interpret Mark 3:22-30 in light of the rest of Mark's narrative, and interpret the rest of the narrative in light of it. Luke Timothy Johnson's analysis of the parable in Luke 19:11-27 in his article, "The Lukan Kingship Parable" provides an example of this approach. Johnson argues that this parable has a key interpretive function in the narrative of Luke-Acts because, "Luke has a literary-theological goal which is connected to the way the story is told as a whole" so that "the exegete needs to look first to the role that passage

¹⁴⁰ See Robert C. Tannehill, "Narrative Criticism," in *The Dictionary of Biblical Interpretation* (ed. R. J. Coggins and J. L. Houlden; London: SCM Press; Philadelphia: Trinity Press International, 1990), 488-89; Norman R. Petersen, *Literary Criticism for New Testament Critics* (Guides to Biblical Scholarship; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1978). Rhoads, Dewey, and Michie, *Mark as Story*.

plays in the literary composition as a whole.”¹⁴¹ Similarly, I argue that Mark has a unified literary-theological goal and that Mark 3:22-30 has a pivotal interpretive function in the narrative pertaining to it.

Second, I focus not only on *what* Mark narrates, but also on *how* he narrates it.¹⁴² Narrative critics investigate how the implied author directs the implied, or ideal, reader¹⁴³ to comprehend a story through the use of such elements as point of view, plot, characters, setting, rhetoric, and style.¹⁴⁴ In keeping with a literary approach, I assume that the implied author, whom I call “Mark,” constructed 3:22-30 not only to report Jesus’ response to the scribes, but also to communicate the purpose of Jesus’ ministry to the reader. Guided by clues in the text, I seek to be an “ideal reader” and give particular attention to three narrative features in my analysis of 3:22-30 and the larger story. First, I analyze Mark’s rhetoric, or art of persuasion,¹⁴⁵ by attending to such elements as verbal threads, intercalation, and framing episodes. Second, I attend to the plot of the Gospel, which is driven by conflict between Jesus and others (Satan,

¹⁴¹ Johnson, “The Lukan Kingship Parable (Lk. 19:11-27),” in *The Composition of Luke’s Gospel*. (compiled by David E. Orton; Leiden/Boston/Köln: Brill, 1999), 73.

¹⁴² Seymour Chatman made the distinction between “story” (*what* is told in a narrative) and “discourse” (*how* the narrative is told). Seymour Chatman, *Story and Discourse: Narrative Structure in Fiction and Film* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1978). See David Rhoads’ appropriation of narrative criticism for the Gospel of Mark in, “Narrative Criticism and the Gospel of Mark,” in *JAAR* 50 (1982B): 411-34.

¹⁴³ Seymour Chatman explains the “implied author” as a version of the author reconstructed from the narrative by the reader. The “implied reader” corresponds to the “implied author,” as the reader assumed by the narrative. Chatman explains the difference between the implied author and the narrator: While the implied author is silent and communicates to the implied reader through the design, tone, and norms of the narrative, the implied author creates the narrator who tells the story. Chatman, *Story and Discourse*, 148-50.

¹⁴⁴ See Rhoads, Dewey and Michie, *Mark as Story*, esp. 6-7.

¹⁴⁵ Elizabeth Struthers Malbon, “Narrative Criticism: How does the Story Mean?” in *Mark and Method: New Approaches to Biblical Studies* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992), 34.

demons, religious leaders, family, disciples, and God).¹⁴⁶ In my analysis, I explore the relationship between Jesus' cosmic and human conflicts. Third, I give attention to the characters. If the plot of Mark's Gospel centers around conflict and struggle, then it is profitable to examine the characters both because, "characters are agents in a plot" and "the actions of the plot are expressions of the characters."¹⁴⁷

I analyze the *intertexture* of Mark 3:22-30 in two ways. First, I read it in light of its textual tradition. The prologue establishes that the Old Testament has an authoritative role for Mark (Mark 1:2-3), and the author subsequently weaves OT texts throughout the fabric of the narrative.¹⁴⁸ Accordingly, my narrative analysis includes a study of Mark's intertextuality in order to understand Mark's literary and theological aims. In this study, I presume that Mark often uses citations and allusions to point to their larger contexts.¹⁴⁹ Several scholars have

¹⁴⁶ Elizabeth Struthers Malbon comments, "Conflict is the key to the Markan plot." Malbon, "Narrative Criticism," 33. See also Rhoads, Dewey and Michie, *Mark as Story*, 73-74, 77-78.

¹⁴⁷ Rhoads, Dewey and Michie, *Mark as Story*, 98. See also Malbon, "Narrative Criticism," 28.

¹⁴⁸ Scholars who note the foundational role of the OT for the Gospel of Mark include Willard M. Swartley, *Israel's Scripture Traditions and the Synoptic Gospels: Story Shaping Story* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1994); Howard Clark Kee, *Community of the New Age: Studies in Mark's Gospel* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1977), 46-49; Watts, *Isaiah's New Exodus*, see esp. 29-52; Joel Marcus, *The Way of the Lord: Christological Exegesis of the Old Testament in the Gospel of Mark* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 1992), see esp. 1-2, 17-21; Thomas Hatina, *In Search of a Context: The Function of Scripture in Mark's Narrative* (London: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002), 1-4; W. S. Vorster, "The Function of the Use of the Old Testament in Mark," *Neot* 14 (1981): 62-72; 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. J. M. Efrid; Durham: Duke University Press, 1972), 280-306; R. Schneck, *Isaiah in the Gospel of Mark 1-8* (BIBALDS 1; Vallejo, CA: BIBAL, 1994).

¹⁴⁹ C. H. Dodd argued that New Testament citations of the Old Testament refer to the larger Old Testament contexts. C. H. Dodd, *According to the Scriptures: The Sub-structure of New Testament Theology* (London: Nisbet, 1952). Those scholars who oppose Dodd's contention include A. C. Sundberg, "On Testimonies," *NovT* 3 (1959): 268-81; D. M. Smith, "The Use of the Old

demonstrated the significance of the wider contexts of Mark's citations and allusions for illuminating their use in the narrative.¹⁵⁰

Richard Hays' work on the occurrence of intertextual echo in Paul's writings is instructive for interpreting Mark's intertextuality.¹⁵¹ Hays identifies the allusive echo of OT texts as the literary trope metalepsis, and comments, "Allusive echo functions to suggest to the reader that text B should be understood in light of a broad interplay with text A, encompassing aspects of A beyond those explicitly echoed."¹⁵² Mark does not proof-text; rather, he enlarges the readers' imaginations about the person and work of Jesus by suggesting associations with traditional themes and events, and by recontextualizing them with apocalyptic symbols. For example, Mark's opening citation echoes Isa 40:3 (Mark 1:2-3), inviting the reader to imagine Jesus in light of the larger context of Isa 40, as the divine Warrior who comes to ransom God's people from the nations. In Mark's story, however, Jesus struggles not against a human enemy, but against a cosmic enemy, Satan. Echoes from the larger context of Isa 40:3 continue as the narrative develops, expanding the reader's imagination. Jesus'

Testament in the New," in *The Use of the Old Testament in the New and Other Essays: Studies in Honor of William Franklin Stinespring*, ed. J. M. Efird (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1972), 29-30; Donald Juel, *Messianic Exegesis: Christological Interpretation of the Old Testament in Early Christianity* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1988), 19-22..

¹⁵⁰ Marcus, *Way of the Lord*, 21; Hatina, *In Search of a Context*; Timothy C. Gray, *The Temple in the Gospel of Mark: A Study in its Narrative Role* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008), 5-6 and throughout; Watts, *Isaiah's New Exodus*, 111. Watts' foundational argument, however, is that Mark uses the OT to evoke not simply the larger context as such, but images and motifs, particularly regarding Israel's founding moment of the Exodus, 47-52.

¹⁵¹ Richard B. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989). Those scholars who have cited Hays' work for their intertextual readings of the Gospel of Mark include Joel Marcus, *Way of the Lord*, 21; Swartley, *Israel's Scripture Traditions*, 260-1; Gray, *Temple in the Gospel of Mark*, 5.

¹⁵² Hays, *Echoes of Scripture*, 20.

exorcisms demonstrate that he has come to plunder the strong man's house, ransoming those held in Satan's captivity (Isa 49:24 in Mark 3:27). In my analysis, I explore how Mark develops OT echoes narratively in order to communicate about the person and work of Jesus. Hays also suggests criteria for identifying intertextual echoes for a safeguard against arbitrary interpretations. Applying his criteria to Mark, they include the repetition of words, syntactical patterns, and themes from the OT text in the Markan text, the use of the OT text elsewhere in Mark, and the fit of the proposed intertextual reading into and its illumination of Mark's story and themes.¹⁵³

Second, I analyze the intertexture of Mark by placing Mark 3:22-30 in comparison with Jewish apocalyptic literature. While the intertextual elements of Mark's Gospel exist in the form of citations and allusions to the OT, they also exist in the form of metaphors and symbols of Jewish apocalyptic thought. For example, Mark 3:27 contains an allusion to Isa 49:24, and also contains the apocalyptic *topos* of the binding of evil spirits. In *The Mysterious Parable*, M. Boucher argues that "the *discrimen* of the parable... is its rhetorical purpose,"¹⁵⁴ and that which allows a parable to function as rhetorical discourse, moving the hearer or reader to decision, action or understanding, is its social location.¹⁵⁵ This study assumes that the social/symbolic context out of which the gospel of Mark was produced has much to do with Jewish apocalyptic thought. Accordingly, I

¹⁵³ For the full list of criteria, see Hays, *Echoes of Scripture*, 29-32.

¹⁵⁴ Boucher, *Mysterious Parable*, 21.

¹⁵⁵ Boucher, *Mysterious Parable*, 16.

seek to clarify the world evoked by the 3:22-30 by comparing its themes with those in Jewish apocalyptic literature.

1.4.3 Reading Mark 3:22-30 as Apocalyptic Discourse

In this study, I use “apocalyptic” broadly to refer to the world-view typical of the Jewish apocalypses, including the vertical-spatial and temporal dimensions referred to above, as well as a range of recurring topics and literary conventions characteristic of the genre.¹⁵⁶ The scholars who identify Mark as “apocalyptic narrative” (see my discussion above) all identify authentic apocalyptic characteristics in the Gospel of Mark. Because they emphasize different characteristics when applying the term “apocalyptic” to Mark, the word “apocalyptic” may not *by itself* best communicate Mark’s literary and theological purpose. Though admittedly working at the task from both ends, I bracket the term “apocalyptic” in my initial approach to Mark 3:22-30 in order to allow the evangelist’s particular view to arise out of the discourse. Rather than Mark’s apocalyptic world, I will begin my approach by focusing on Mark’s symbolic world. That is, I give attention to how Mark appropriates the symbols available to him out of his first century Jewish context in order to interpret the presence and activity of Jesus.¹⁵⁷ After I analyze Mark 3:22-30 to understand the symbolic

¹⁵⁶ For example, apocalyptic topics include heavenly intermediaries, cosmic dualism, cosmic battle, and judgment. See Greg Carey, *Ultimate Things: An Introduction to Jewish and Christian Apocalyptic Literature* (St. Louis: Chalice Press, 2005), 6-8.

¹⁵⁷ Most scholars I have discussed above who identify Mark as apocalyptic narrative look at Jewish apocalyptic literature to determine its genre, finding the closest literary analogy with that literature. By contrast, I look at Jewish apocalyptic literature to understand how Mark appropriates available symbols to interpret the activity of Jesus.

world it exhibits, I compare it to contemporary Jewish literature that uses the same symbols in order to determine its particular apocalyptic character.

In order to understand the apocalyptic character of Mark, it is necessary to approach the genre of apocalypse not only in terms of its definition and characteristics, but also in terms of its function. In other words, I want to understand how apocalyptic topics function in Mark vis-à-vis how they function in other Jewish apocalyptic compositions. Simply noting parallels among compositions does not reveal *how* Mark may be an apocalyptic thinker. Recent approaches to the genre of Jewish apocalypse have attempted to account for its function. In order to bring more precision and at the same time more flexibility to the SBL Genres Project definition of “apocalypse,” Greg Carey has added the phrase “apocalyptic discourse” to refer to, “the constellation of apocalyptic topics as they function in larger early Jewish and Christian literary and social contexts. Thus, apocalyptic discourse should be treated as a flexible set of resources that early Jews and Christians could employ for a variety of persuasive tasks.”¹⁵⁸ Building on the work of scholars such as Abraham Malherbe, who identified common topics, or *topoi* in the writings of Hellenistic moralists,¹⁵⁹ Carey and others have recognized that Jewish apocalyptic literature has characteristic *topoi* and modes of address.¹⁶⁰ The same topic or sets of topics may appear in a

¹⁵⁸ Carey, *Ultimate Things*, 5.

¹⁵⁹ Malherbe, “Hellenistic Moralists and the New Testament,” *ANRW* 26.1:320-25.

¹⁶⁰ Vernon K. Robbins, “The Intertexture of Apocalyptic Discourse in the Gospel of Mark,” in *The Intertexture of Apocalyptic Discourse in the New Testament* (ed. Duane F. Watson; Atlanta: SBL, 2002), 11-44. Cf. J. J. Collins, “Towards the Morphology of a Genre,” 5-10; J. J. Collins, *Apocalyptic Imagination*, 7-9.

particular type of literature, but function differently in each respective composition, according to the writer's aim.¹⁶¹

My approach is to use a taxonomy like Carey's in order to recognize that Mark 3:22-30 employs apocalyptic *topoi*, such as heavenly intermediaries and cosmic battle, in order to place it in a dialogical exchange with Jewish apocalyptic texts. This move, however, does not indicate the contours of Mark's apocalyptic discourse, nor does it indicate those of the other texts. Carey's point that "apocalyptic discourse should be treated as a flexible set of resources...for a variety of persuasive tasks" is key. After analyzing Mark 3:22-30, and describing its symbolic world, I look at Jewish apocalyptic literature that recontextualizes the characteristic *topoi* that have emerged in the description of Mark's symbolic world. In my analysis, I give attention to the literary and theological function of the apocalyptic discourse within each respective composition. Finally, I turn back to Mark in order to see how the evangelist appropriates the symbols available to him by comparison and contrast. My goal is to understand Mark's perception of Jesus and the particular function of his apocalyptic discourse.

¹⁶¹ Greg Carey gives examples of how apocalyptic discourse functions serves different aims in various ancient texts in, "How To Do Things with (Apocalyptic) Words: Rhetorical Dimensions of Apocalyptic Discourse," *LTQ* 33 (1998): 85-101. He concludes that apocalyptic motifs "are the means to the end of understanding apocalyptic, not the end itself. Moreover, we need to develop thoroughly rhetorical studies of particular instances of apocalyptic discourse before drawing universal conclusions as to its function. Indeed, it is likely that such clearly focused studies will reveal the remarkable variety of ends to which early Jews and Christians applied the resources of apocalyptic argumentation," 95. For a rhetorical analysis of apocalyptic discourse in Mark, see Robbins, "Intertexture of Apocalyptic Discourse."

1.5 The Plan of the Dissertation

In Chapter 2, I analyze the literary context, structure and content of Mark 3:22-30. In chapter 3, I discuss the Jewish Apocalyptic literary context. I identify apocalyptic *topoi* and place Jewish apocalyptic literature roughly contemporary to Mark in a dialogical exchange. I highlight how Mark 3:22-30 both shares in the symbolic world of these Jewish compositions and engages in apocalyptic discourse for particular literary and theological aims. In chapters 4 through 6, I move from Mark 3:22-30 into the larger narrative in order to demonstrate how Mark displays an apocalyptic symbolic world and engages in apocalyptic discourse. In Chapter 4, I look at the characterization throughout the narrative of those figures that appear in Mark 3:22-30: Jesus, the scribes, Satan, and the Holy Spirit. In chapter 5, I connect the symbolic world and the apocalyptic discourse displayed in Mark 3:22-30 to two portions of the Gospel, a story and a speech. In chapter 6, I look at the *nature* and *manifestation* of Satan's power vis-à-vis the *nature* and *manifestation* of Jesus power in the teaching cycle that spans the three passion predictions, 8:27-10:45. This section is an important teaching block that reinterprets Jesus' ministry, leading up to Jesus' only statement about its purpose apart from that in 3:27, namely, "the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many" (10:45). Finally, I discuss the conclusions and implications of my study in Chapter 7.

Chapter 2

Analysis of Mark 3:22-30

2.1 Introduction

The thesis of this study is that Mark 3:22-30 shapes the literary and theological logic of the rest of the narrative. Specifically, I argue that this passage depicts a cosmic struggle between two opposing powers that continues throughout the Gospel. My interpretation depends on reading 3:22-30 as apocalyptic discourse, and on reading its parables in the contexts respectively of the entire passage and of the whole narrative. In the following chapter, I interpret 3:22-30 in light of contemporary literature that engages in apocalyptic discourse in order to sharpen my understanding of Mark's symbolic world. In the subsequent two chapters, I read 3:22-30 in the context of the larger narrative. Before moving into these larger literary worlds, the present chapter focuses on an exegetical analysis of the passage at hand in order to understand the composite discourse Mark has constructed.

The plan of this chapter is three-fold. First, I examine the literary context of Mark 3:22-30 in order to demonstrate its strategic placement in the narrative

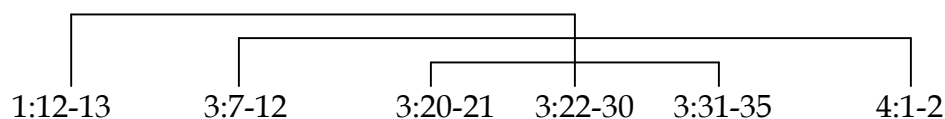
and to draw out the implications of that placement for its interpretation. Second, I look at the structure of Mark 3:22-30 itself in order to establish that it is a coherent discourse; that is, the discourse is a logically consistent Markan composition that holds together as a harmonious whole. Third, I examine the content of the passage according to Mark's own cues in order to understand his comment on the nature and purpose of Jesus' ministry and the symbolic world he imagines.

2.2 Literary Context of Mark 3:22-30

Elizabeth Struthers Malbon has noted that, "Mark's rhetoric is one of juxtaposition – placing scene over against scene in order to elicit comparison, contrast, insight."¹⁶⁶ In particular, Mark 3:22-30 is strategically placed, and I identify three cases of juxtaposition that are significant for its interpretation. First, this passage about Jesus' conflict with the scribes is intercalated within a passage about Jesus' conflict with his family (3:20-21, vv. 31-35). By means of such intercalation, Mark invites the reader to interpret these conflicts in light of one another. Second, the entire unit of 3:20-35 fits within a still larger section framed by descriptions of the preparation and launch of Jesus' boat when large

¹⁶⁶ Malbon, "Narrative Criticism," 34. See also James R. Edwards, "Markan Sandwiches: The Significance of Interpolations in Markan Narratives," *NovT* 31 (1989): 193-216.

crowds gather to hear his teaching (3:7-12; 4:1-2). These boat episodes not only function to delimit the material they frame, but the frame also bids the reader to interpret the stories in light of one another. In this case, the reader considers Jesus' calling of the twelve to participate in his ministry of preaching and exorcisms, in comparison to the rejection of that ministry by Jesus' blood and religious families. Third, the Beelzebul discourse recalls the characters involved in the temptation narrative – Jesus, Satan, and the Holy Spirit – and expands upon their conflict. As a result, these two similar passages, 1:12-13 and 3:22-30, also function as a frame. Thus, the reader can understand one episode in relation to the other and compare them to the material within. That is, the reader can compare the cosmic conflict (1:12-13; 3:22-30) with the human conflicts (2:1-3:6). A diagram of these three overlapping cases of juxtaposition might look like this:



I discuss these three units below, beginning with the largest frame and moving inward towards the smallest.

2.2.1 The First Frame, 1:12-13 and 3:22-30

Mark's deliberate literary linking of the temptation narrative and the Beelzebul discourse is illuminated by comparing his version with Matthew's and Luke's. Mark initially introduces Jesus not with an account of his birth, but with an account of his indwelling by the Holy Spirit that results in a struggle with Satan. Both Matthew and Luke place birth narratives at the forefront of their

accounts, followed by Jesus' teaching. Luke places the preaching of Jesus in the synagogue at Nazareth (Luke 4:16-30) and the sermon on the plain (6:17-49) at the front of his narrative, while Matthew places the Sermon on the Mount (Matt 5-7) at the front of his. In contrast, the Beelzebul discourse is Jesus' first teaching in Mark's Gospel. Mark places the Beelzebul controversy towards the beginning of his story about Jesus, just before and related to the parables of the kingdom, where it functions to make a climactic statement about the purpose of Jesus' ministry. Mark ties the Beelzebul account to the opening of his Gospel and the introduction of Jesus' teaching and exorcising ministry, conceiving it in a uniquely foundational way.

Also unlike Matthew and Luke, Mark identifies Jesus' opponent in the wilderness as σατανᾶς. Mark's use of this term, rather than the διαβόλος used in the parallel accounts of Matthew and Luke (Matt 4:1, 5, 8; Luke 4:2, 3, 13), ties his temptation narrative to the Beelzebul discourse that appears soon after. Neither Matthew nor Luke connect the opponent in the temptation narrative and the Beelzebul discourse by using the same term, nor do they place the Beelzebul discourse in close narrative proximity to the temptation account so as to suggest that the accounts might be mutually interpretive. Both place the Beelzebul account well into their stories. Mark, on the other hand, has Jesus, Satan and the Holy Spirit reappear in Mark 3:22-30 after the temptation account, suggesting that the symbolic world evoked by Jesus' speech creates a fuller picture of a

cosmic battle begun in the wilderness from which Jesus has emerged to proclaim the Kingdom of God.

Mark also uniquely introduces his Gospel with a citation that suggests he views the conflict between the Spirit-filled Jesus and Satan as part of the fulfillment of Israel's prophetic hope. Mark announces his story as "the beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, Son of God," and follows it immediately with a mixed citation from Isa 40:3, Exod 23:20//Mal 3:1. While Matthew and Luke both cite Isa 40:3 in the parallel passages, neither alludes to Exod 23:20//Mal 3:1.¹⁶⁷ By contrast, Mark's combination of Isa 40:3, Exod 23:20//Mal 3:1 as an interpretive comment in the introductory position of the Gospel suggests that these texts play an important role in his overall literary and theological aims.¹⁶⁸ A look at the original literary contexts of the OT texts joined in 1:2-3 illuminates the significance of Mark's use.

2.2.1.1 *The Literary Context of Isaiah 40:3*

Mark ascribes the entire citation to the prophet Isaiah, which may reflect a Jewish custom of attributing a composite quotation to one author.¹⁶⁹ On the other hand, Mark's ascription of the citation to Isaiah may indicate that, "the 'gospel' of Jesus Christ is that gospel about which Isaiah wrote."¹⁷⁰ In fact, the larger

¹⁶⁷ Matthew and Luke cite this composite text in a different context than Mark: Jesus, speaking to the crowds, applies Malachi's prophecy to John (Matt 11:9; Luke 7:27).

¹⁶⁸ Scholars who argue that the opening citation is programmatic for the rest of the gospel include Marcus, *Way of the Lord*, 12-22; Watts, *Isaiah's New Exodus*, 53-90. See also Lane, *Mark*, 45-47; Schweizer, *Mark*, 29-30; Anderson, "Old Testament in Mark's Gospel," 280-306.

¹⁶⁹ See Gundry, *Mark*, 35.

¹⁷⁰ Watts, *Isaiah's New Exodus*, 56. The introductory phrase, καθὼς γέγραπται (v. 2), may be taken as an explanation of v. 1. Watts, *Isaiah's New Exodus*, 56; Marcus, *Way of the Lord*, 20.

literary context of Isa 40:3 announces the good news of salvation to God's people: "Get up to a high mountain, you who announces good news (ὁ εὐαγγελιζόμενος, LXX) to Zion; lift up your voice with strength, you who announces good news (ὁ εὐαγγελιζόμενος) to Jerusalem" (Isa 40:9; cf. 52:7).¹⁷¹ Isaiah issues a call to prepare a way for Yahweh (40:3). This is God's way of salvation, by which God will appear with strength (ἰδοὺ κύριος μετὰ ἰσχύος ἔρχεται, v. 10) to gather God's people after they have been scattered among the nations (vv. 9-10).

Chapters 40-55 of Isaiah provide the context of the announcement of this "good news."¹⁷² Isaiah describes the result of Israel's refusal to walk in God's ways and follow God's law (42:24): God had given them over to captivity to Babylon so that they have "become plunder with none to rescue, spoil with none to say, 'Restore!'" (v. 22). But now, God is changing the state of affairs. The Lord comes to wage war against the nations that have oppressed God's people (41:1-7; 11-16; 42:13-15; 48:14). The Lord, "your Savior, and your Redeemer, the Mighty One (ὁ ἰσχύος) of Jacob" (49:26) comes to struggle against those who struggle against Israel, and to rescue the captives of the mighty (vv. 24-26). Isaiah compares the redemption from Babylon to the redemption from Egypt, but calls it a "new thing" and an everlasting salvation, that far exceeds the first Exodus

¹⁷¹ Joseph Blenkinsopp discusses the possible influence of Isa 52:3 on the use of εὐαγγέλιον in Mark 1:1. Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 40-55* (AB 19A; New York: Doubleday, 2002), 344.

¹⁷² Scholarship generally takes Isa 40-55 as a coherent unit. See, for example, Klaus Baltzer, *Deutero-Isaiah: A Commentary on Isaiah 40-55* (Hermeneia; trans. M. Kohl; ed. P. Machinist; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2001), 1-2; Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 40-55*, 41-81; John Goldingay and David Payne, *Isaiah 40-55* (2 vols.; ICC; London and New York: T & T Clark, 2006), 1:4-8.

(43:16-21; 45:17; 48:20-21; 51:9-11).¹⁷³ The movement in chaps. 40-55 is towards Zion and the temple (44:28; 46:13), where the Lord is enthroned and reigns with the restored people (52:1-10). The result of this redemption is that the Lord rebuilds and repopulates the city superabundantly, creating a new, worshipping family (chap. 54).¹⁷⁴

2.2.1.2 *The Literary Contexts of Exodus 23:20 and Malachi 3:1*

Mark 1:2 echoes both Exod 23:20 and Mal 3:1. Jewish tradition had apparently joined these texts,¹⁷⁵ perhaps because both speak of preparatory messengers who go before Israel in the context of maintaining the covenant. In fact, Beth Glazier-MacDonald has suggested that Malachi reworks Exod 23:20 in order to draw attention to Israel's faithlessness to the covenant.¹⁷⁶ While the messenger in Exod 23:20 goes before Israel so that the Lord will fight against the Caananites to remove them from the land, Malachi warns that his messenger prepares the way of the Lord, who fights against the unfaithful among Israel to remove them from the covenant community.

Malachi addresses a crisis of unfaithfulness in the community. Mal 3:1 belongs to the fourth disputation speech that the prophet makes against the people (Mal 2:17-3:5). Earlier, Malachi had leveled charges against the priests for their polluted offerings (1:6-2:9) and against the people for their faithlessness to

¹⁷³ Rikki Watts has argued that the theme of the New Exodus in Isa 40-55 is paradigmatic for Mark's Gospel. Watts, *Isaiah's New Exodus in Mark*, 53-121.

¹⁷⁴ See the discussion of Isa 54:1-17 in Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 40-55*, 359-66.

¹⁷⁵ Marcus, *Way of the Lord*, 13.

¹⁷⁶ Beth Glazier-McDonald, *Malachi: The Divine Messenger* (SBLDS 98; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1987), 130-31.

the covenant (2:10-16). In the fourth oracle, Malachi recounts that the people themselves have leveled a charge against the Lord for failing to come and exercise justice among the community (2:17). He promises that the Lord whom they seek will indeed come among them, but not with the result they expect. Malachi says that a preparatory messenger will appear (3:1; whom Malachi later identifies as Elijah, v. 23) after which the Lord will come suddenly to the temple to perform a judgment of purification. This judgment is symbolized by the purification of metal, and by the cleansing of linens (3:2-5). Just as a smelter removes impurities from precious metals, and a fuller removes stains from fabric, the Lord will remove impurities from the community. The Lord will remove or bring to repentance the Levites who have committed cultic sins (v. 3), and the people who have committed social and economic sins against others (v. 5).¹⁷⁷ When offenders are removed or purified, the reconstituted community will gather once again in the temple and offer the Lord proper worship (3:3d-4).¹⁷⁸ The goal of God's judgment is to reconstitute Israel as a community of right worshipers.

¹⁷⁷ Beth Glazier-MacDonald interprets the metallurgy imagery in terms of the separation of the impure from the pure, i.e., the separation of the wicked from the righteous. Thus, the offenders among the priesthood and people are eliminated from the community. She does, however, read vv. 3-4 as suggesting spiritual renewal among the priesthood (p. 144, n. 67), and the call in v. 7, "return to me, and I will return to you," as indicating that the purification of 3:2, "does not necessarily involve an irrevocable elimination of the wicked." Glazier-MacDonald, *Malachi*, 144-45, 149. Andrew E. Hill, on the other hand, interprets metallurgy imagery entirely in terms of a spiritual cleansing. Hill, *Malachi* (AB 25B; New York: Doubleday, 1998), 276, 290.

¹⁷⁸ See also Glazier-MacDonald, *Malachi*, 149.

2.2.1.3 *The Juxtaposition of Isaiah 40:3 and Malachi 3:1 in Mark 1:2-3*

The context of Mal 3:1 has similar themes to that of Isa 40:3. Just as Isaiah issues a call to prepare the way of the Lord (פְּנֵי דֶרֶךְ יְהוָה), Malachi announces on behalf of the Lord that the messenger will appear to “prepare the way before me” (פְּנֵה־דֶרֶךְ לְפָנָי).¹⁷⁹ The way of the Lord in Isa 40-55 is a new manifestation of God’s power through which God’s people return from Babylon to Zion. Isaiah imagines the Lord executing judgment against Babylon in order to redeem Israel and bring them to Jerusalem. There, the Lord will be enthroned as king in the palace-temple and gather a great community of worshipers. Malachi also imagines the Lord coming to the temple, but to perform a judgment of purification against a faithless community, in order to produce a community of right worshipers. Mark’s conflation of texts in 1:2-3 joins themes of redemption and judgment with a view to the reconstitution of the family of God.¹⁸⁰ Mark announces the Lord’s redemption coupled with a warning for God’s people to be prepared.

If Mark envisions the gospel of Jesus Christ as the fulfillment of the gospel of Isaiah, then he envisions Jesus as the Mighty One of Jacob (cf. Isa 49:26, ἰσχυρός Ιακωβ) who comes to wage war against the opponent of God’s people who holds them captive. Mark recontextualizes the prophet’s themes, however, by using

¹⁷⁹ For a discussion of the parallel themes in these texts, see Glazier-MacDonald, *Malachi*, 136-7.

¹⁸⁰ Rikki Watts makes a similar observations pertaining to promise and threat contained in the juxtaposition of Isa 40:3 and Mal. 3:1 in the opening citation, in *Isaiah’s New Exodus*, p.90. I make the additional emphasis that the goal of God’s action in both OT contexts is the reconstitution of the worshipping community around the temple.

apocalyptic *topoi*. The prologue establishes that the opponent is not Babylon, but Satan; and the battle is not simply human, but cosmic. God is, indeed, doing a new thing. John the Baptist announces that one is coming who is stronger than he (ἔρχεται ὁ ἰσχυρότερος μου, 1:7). Jesus appears and is strengthened by the Holy Spirit to engage in conflict with Satan (vv. 10, 11-12). Mark expands upon the prologue with the parable of τὸν ἰσχυρὸν (3:27) by illustrating that Jesus is the stronger one who has come to overpower the strong man who has held people captive, in order to set them free. In this parable, Mark continues to echo the Isaianic redemption of the opening citation by alluding to the promise that the Lord, the strong one of Jacob (ὁ ἰσχυρὸς Ἰακωβ) will rescue the captives taken by the strong man (λαμβάνων...παρὰ ἰσχύοντος, Isa 49: 24, 25). Mark's opening chapters suggest that the purpose of Jesus' ministry is to establish the reign of God by waging war against Satan in order to rescue people held captive by Satan's power.¹⁸¹

Furthermore, if Mark envisions the gospel of Jesus Christ as the fulfillment of this OT prophetic hope, then Mark envisions Jesus as the one who gathers those he has rescued from Satan's power into a worshipping community around the temple. Mark will predict the destruction of the Jerusalem temple, however, and the construction of a community around Jesus. Because the worship of the Jerusalem temple becomes corrupt and its leadership rejects Jesus' authority (11:15-19, 27-33), Jesus will become the cornerstone of a new temple

¹⁸¹ See also Watts, *Isaiah's New Exodus*, 156-69; Twelftree, *In the Name of Jesus*, 108.

community (12:10-11; 14:58). Mark gives a first look at this work of dissolution and reconstitution in 3:20-35, revealing its cosmic dimensions: Jesus plunders Satan's household to rescue those held captive (3:27), and begins to establish a new household composed of those who do God's will (3:35).

Mark locates the controversy over Jesus' authority in the material framed by the temptation narrative and the Beelzebul discourse. Whereas the temptation narrative portrays Jesus' involvement in the cosmic conflict just before he begins his public ministry, the material that immediately follows it portrays Jesus' involvement in mostly human conflicts, beginning when the crowd that witnesses his teaching and exorcism in the Capernaum synagogue exclaims that his authority surpasses that of the scribes (1:21-28). This episode functions not only to tie exorcisms and preaching together as the center of Jesus' ministry, but also to establish exorcisms as the public confirmation of his authority. The ensuing narrative unfolds a series of conflicts between Jesus and the religious leaders over the forgiveness of sin and the interpretation of the law (2:1-3:6). At the same time, the narrative continues to depict Jesus' involvement in conflicts against demons (1:12-13, 23-26, 39; 3:11-12, 14-15). Thus, Mark portrays Jesus engaged in two kinds of battles from the start, one against demonic forces, and the other against the religious establishment. Once the reader has witnessed the series of escalating human conflicts surrounding Jesus, Mark joins cosmic and human opponents in the Beelzebul discourse. The scribes who have come down from Jerusalem seek to invalidate Jesus' authority by

ascribing his exorcisms – that activity which has served publicly to confirm his authority – to demonic powers (3:22-30). The Markan Jesus responds with the first of his two statements in the Gospel about the purpose of his ministry (cf. 10:45): he performs exorcisms by the power of the Spirit in order to rescue people from Satan’s power. By rejecting Jesus’ ministry of exorcism, the scribes reject Jesus’ role as the one who has appeared in fulfillment of OT prophetic hope to redeem those held captive by a cosmic enemy.

2.2.2 The Second Frame, 3:7-12 and 4:1-2

In addition to its relationship with the temptation narrative, Mark 3:22-30 is part of a unit framed by 3:7-12 and 4:1-2. The structure of this unit may be displayed as follows:

3:7-12 – Jesus goes to the sea, asks his disciples to prepare a boat

3:13-19 – Jesus goes up (ἀναβαίνει) a mountain and calls together (προσκαλείται) the Twelve, forming a group/family of followers

vv. 20-21 – family conflict

vv. 22-30 – Jesus calls together (προσκαλεσάμενος) the scribes who have come down (καταβάντες) from Jerusalem and have charged him with being in league with Satan

vv. 31-35 – family conflict and redefinition of family

4:1-2 – Jesus gets on the boat that had been prepared for him

Joanna Dewey has identified 2:1-3:6 as a unit set into a frame according to a criterion of a break and resumption of action, arguing that 3:7 picks up the action where 1:45 left off.¹⁸² According to the same criterion, 3:7-12 functions with 4:1-2

¹⁸² Joanna Dewey, “The Literary Structure of the Controversy Stories in Mark 2:1-3:6,” *JBL* 92 (1973): 394-401. Dewey also lists content, form and repetition of vocabulary as criteria.

as a frame. In 3:9 Jesus instructs his disciples to make a boat ready because of the crushing crowd. In the next scene, Jesus does not get in the boat but goes up a mountain (v. 13). Mark 4:1 resumes the narrative begun in 3:7-12, with Jesus getting in the boat to teach the crowd.¹⁸³ Moreover, Bas van Iersel has pointed out that the repetition of specific vocabulary and synonyms in 3:7-12 and 4:1 indicates that these two segments frame the material in between (τὴν θάλασσαν, πολὺ πλῆθος/ὄχλος πλείστος; τὸν ὄχλον/ἢ ὄχλος, πλοιάριον/πλοῖον).¹⁸⁴ Van Iersel concludes that 3:7-4:1 is a major segment or chapter in Mark's gospel, and maintains that this and other concentric structures in Mark function to provide a structural aid for reading. While van Iersel may be correct, I suggest that this concentric structure is also a device of the narrator to aid in the process of interpretation.

The framed unit, 3:13-35, is divided into two parts, separated by a change in scene (v. 20). In the first part, people move towards Jesus on a mountain, and in the second people move towards Jesus in a house. Jesus goes up (ἀναβαίνει) the mountain and calls together (προσκαλεῖται) his followers (3:13) from whom he selects twelve to be with him and to give authority to preach and cast out demons, an extension of his own mission. By contrast, the scribes come down (καταβάντες) from Jerusalem to deny Jesus' authority to cast out demons, which is

¹⁸³ The teaching ends with a summary statement in 4:34. Jesus' movements in relation to the crowd frame units in the first four chapters of the gospel. After 4:35, though the crowds are still present, the framing devices shift to Jesus' interaction with his disciples in boats (4:35-41; 6:45-52; 8:14-21) with a crowd-feeding just before the second two framing elements (6:30-44; 8:1-10).

¹⁸⁴ Bas M. F. van Iersel, "Concentric Structures in Mark 2,1-3,6 and 3,7-4,1: A Case Study," in *Synoptic Gospels* (Louvain: Leuven Univ. Press; Peeters, 1993), 524-25.

a denial of that mission. Jesus calls the scribes together (προσκαλεσάμενος) to speak to them in parables (3:22-23). Mark uses the verb προσκαλέομαι nine times, eight of which introduce the teaching of Jesus.¹⁸⁵ Of these eight uses, the one in 3:23 is the only occurrence in which Jesus calls together his opponents to refute them; in all other instances, he calls together followers to teach them. Mark's first three uses of the word juxtapose Jesus' calling of the disciples with the calling of the scribes: Jesus calls together the Twelve to give them authority and a mission (3:13), then calls together the scribes to speak to them in parables (3:23), and later calls together the Twelve to send them out to accomplish their mission (6:7). The proximity of the first two uses of the verb in the context of the framed unit suggests that the atypical use of προσκαλέομαι in 3:23 is ironic.¹⁸⁶ In other words, Mark contrasts the setting apart of the Twelve with the setting aside of the scribes. Jesus rejects those in the religious community who have rejected him, having begun the process of gathering a new community when he calls the Twelve to be with him (ἵνα ὦσιν μετ' αὐτοῦ, 3:13).

2.2.3 The Third Frame, 3:20-21, 31-35

Finally, the Beelzebul controversy is inserted within the account of Jesus' conflict with his family (vv. 20-21; 31-35).¹⁸⁷ Some scholars, however, reject the

¹⁸⁵Mark 3:13, 23; 6:7; 7:14; 8:1; 8:34; 10:42; 12:43; 15:44.

¹⁸⁶ Contra Austin Busch, who argues that Mark's uncharacteristic use of this word is a friendly invitation to the scribes that indicates Mark's sympathy with their charge. Busch, "Double-voiced Discourse in Mark 3:22-30," *JBL* 125 (2006): 479, 492.

¹⁸⁷ Commentators commonly identify the Beelzebul controversy as an intercalated unit within the family conflict of 3:20-21, 31-35. Boring, *Mark*, 103; Donahue and Harrington, *Gospel of Mark*, 133; Dowd, *Reading Mark*, 33-34; Geulich, *Mark 1-8:26*, 171; La Verdere, *Beginning of the*

view that Mark 3:20-21 and vv. 31-35 function as a frame for the enclosed discourse for various reasons. Some argue that the ambiguity of the phrase οἱ παρ' αὐτοῦ in v. 21 makes it unclear or unlikely that the phrase refers to Jesus' family.¹⁸⁸ John Dominic Crossan argues on redaction-critical grounds that 3:20 is connected with what precedes, and that Mark added 3:21 to 3:22-35, which he received as a pre-existing unit.¹⁸⁹ Others argue against Mark's use of intercalation on literary grounds. For example, van Iersel argues that vv. 20-21 function simply as a preparation for vv. 31-35 rather than the first part of a frame.¹⁹⁰ Using criteria of similarity of form and repetition of key words, he identifies 3:7-12 and 4:1 as a more recognizable frame for a larger unit than 3:20-21 and vv. 31-35. Stephen Ahearne-Kroll suggests that 3:22-35 should be viewed as "one episode split into two parts," rather than as a concentric pattern framed by vv. 20-21 and vv. 31-35.¹⁹¹ That is, vv. 20-22 set the scene by introducing Jesus' conflict with his blood family and with the scribes. Following this introduction, Jesus responds first to the scribes (vv. 23-29 + v. 30), and then to his family (vv. 31-35). Ahearne-Kroll is concerned that viewing the passage as a concentric pattern associates Jesus' family with a group set against him, and

Gospel, 105; Moloney, *Gospel of Mark*, 80-81; Witherington, *Gospel of Mark*, 153; Perkins, "Mark," 563.

¹⁸⁸ The Western manuscript tradition (D, W, and the Old Latin version) reflects difficulty with the referent of οἱ παρ' αὐτοῦ and substitutes the phrase, οἱ γραμματεῖς καὶ οἱ λοιποί. Scholars who argue that οἱ παρ' αὐτοῦ refers not to Jesus' family, but to the Twelve include Henry Wansbrough, "Mark 3:21: Was Jesus Out of His Mind?" *NTS* 18 (1972): 233-235; David Wenham, "The Meaning of Mark 3:21," *NTS* 21 (1975): 296-97; Painter, *Mark's Gospel*, 72-73.

¹⁸⁹ John Dominic Crossan, "Mark and the Relatives of Jesus," *NovT* 15 (1973): 81-113.

¹⁹⁰ Van Iersel, "Concentric Structures in Mark," 521-530.

¹⁹¹ Stephen P. Ahearne-Kroll, "'Who Are My Mother and My Brothers?' Family Relations and Family Language in the Gospel of Mark," *JR* 81 (2001): 11-15.

leads to the view that Mark is speaking to 1st century church politics. Even if a parallel structure is granted, such a structure still associates Jesus' blood family with his religious family through juxtaposition. These groups may not be alike in every way, but they are alike in their efforts to subvert Jesus' exorcising ministry. The benefit of Ahearne-Kroll's structural analysis is unclear, because he ends up joining these two groups in his conclusion: Jesus distances himself from both his blood and religious families because both oppose him.

Four elements of Mark's account support the view that vv. 20-21 and 31-35 are a frame into which the Beelzebul account is intercalated. First, although van Iersel may be correct to identify 3:7-12 and 4:1 as a larger frame, this does not preclude 3:20-21 and vv. 31-35 functioning as a smaller one. The phrase οἱ παρ' αὐτοῦ, literally "those from beside him," in v. 20 can refer to followers or to relatives; however, the context indicates "relatives." Mark demonstrates this in his use of a different phrase in proximity, to refer to Jesus' followers, οἱ περὶ αὐτὸν (3:34; 4:10).¹⁹² Second, Mark uses the pronoun αὐτοῦς in v. 21 likely includes the Twelve whom Jesus had just called to be with him (ἵνα ὦσιν μετ' αὐτοῦ, 3:14) and who are now with him in the house. On the other hand, οἱ παρ' αὐτοῦ (v. 21) are not in the house, but come from somewhere else (ἐξῆλθον) to seize him. Likewise, the scribes have come from Jerusalem, so that both groups move from the outside towards Jesus. Third, Mark has the action in v. 31 completes the action begun in v. 21: οἱ παρ' αὐτοῦ depart (ἐξῆλθον) to seize Jesus (v. 21) and later

¹⁹²Witherington also makes this point in *Mark*, 154.

ἡ μήτηρ αὐτοῦ καὶ οἱ ἀδελφοὶ αὐτοῦ arrive outside the house (ἐρχεται, v. 31).

Fourth, to identify the Twelve as those who come out to seize Jesus is to work against the shape of Mark's narrative. Though there are hints of their shift from "insider" to "outsider" status early in the story (e.g., 3:19; 4:13), the disciples are largely characterized in a positive way up through 6:13. Not only does Jesus set apart the Twelve to participate in the very activity that prompts οἱ παρ' αὐτοῦ to seize him (3:13-15), but they also soon have success carrying out that controversial activity themselves (6:7-13, 30). As I have demonstrated in the previous section, Mark contrasts Jesus' gathering of the disciples to participate in his preaching and exorcising ministry, with Jesus' parabolic rejection of the scribes who have rejected his exorcising ministry. The narrator invites the reader to identify οἱ παρ' αὐτοῦ not as the Twelve, but as ἡ μήτηρ αὐτοῦ καὶ οἱ ἀδελφοὶ αὐτοῦ, though this precise identification is not clear until vv. 31-35.

Perhaps the best explanation for the relationship between vv. 20-21 and vv. 31-35 is the narrator's rhetorical strategy, which is to leave vv. 20-21 ambiguous until vv. 31-35. Οἱ παρ' αὐτοῦ accuse Jesus of standing "outside himself." Even before any technique of intercalation becomes apparent, the narrator gives cues that the reader should understand vv. 20-21 in light of what follows in vv. 22-30. These include the parallelism between the accusations in v. 22 (ἐλεγον ὅτι ἐξέστη) and v. 23 (ἐλεγον ὅτι Βεελζεβοὺλ ἔχει), the parallel movement of these two groups towards Jesus, and the play on words between ἐξίστημι in v. 21 and ἴστημι in vv. 23-26. Both Jesus' immediate family and his religious family

attempt to stop him from carrying out his mission to struggle against Satan.¹⁹³

The parallelism between the two groups suggests that Jesus' refutation of the scribes' charge is also an indirect refutation to the charge made by οἱ παρ' αὐτοῦ. After reading the refutation in vv. 23-29, the reader is surprised to confirm that οἱ παρ' αὐτοῦ refers specifically to Jesus' family, and the entire episode appears in a new light.¹⁹⁴ Jesus separates himself from both his religious and his immediate family in order to create a new one.

If 3:31-35 is the counterpart of vv. 20-21, then the family arrives at the house where they stand outside, calling Jesus (καλοῦντες αὐτόν) to seize him from his ministry. Their call to Jesus to forsake his ministry of exorcism suggests a contrast with Jesus' earlier call of those whom he wished (προσκαλεῖται ὅς ἤθελεν) to join him in that same ministry (3:13). The larger context sharpens the depiction of Jesus' creation of a new family, one not determined by birth or by religion, but by doing the will of God (3:35). My examination of the literary context of Mark 3:22-30 establishes that Mark envisions Jesus as the one who fulfills OT prophetic hope by coming to struggle against Satan in order to liberate

¹⁹³ See also Ahearn-Kroll, "Who Are My Mother and My Brothers?," 13.

¹⁹⁴ Robert M. Fowler also reads 3:31-35 as a "revelatory moment" that clarifies the ambiguous οἱ παρ' αὐτοῦ of v. 21. Fowler, *Let the Reader Understand* (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Trinity, 1996), 201. In his essay, "The Rhetoric of Direction and Indirection in the Gospel of Mark" (1989), Fowler discusses the rhetorical strategies by which the narrator directs the reading experience on the level of discourse (the way a story is told), versus the level of story (the elements or "what" of the story). He notes that while most Bibles title the account in Mark 10:17-22 as "The Rich Man," Mark does not mention the man's wealth until the very end, with the parenthetical comment, "for he had great possessions" (v. 22). In reading the story as it unfolds, rather than being directed by the title, the reader is surprised to learn that the man has great wealth and this clarification compels the reader to look again at the account and understand it in a new light. Robert Fowler, "The Rhetoric of Direction and Indirection in the Gospel of Mark," in *Semeia* 48 (1989): 115-34.

those held captive by Satan's power. Early in the Gospel, Mark suggests that the result of Jesus' ministry is the dissolution and reconstitution of family.¹⁹⁵ I turn now to an analysis of Mark 3:22-30 itself.

2.3 The Structure of Mark 3:22-30

The accusation that Jesus casts out demons by the prince of demons, to which he responds with the parables of the divided kingdom and house, is central to each of the synoptic accounts of the Beelzebul controversy. In his analysis of the tradition history, Rudolf Bultmann identifies Mark 3:22-26//Matt 12:22-26//Luke 11:14-15, 17-18 as the original apophthegm to which other sayings were added.¹⁹⁶ Mark reports a two-part accusation that Jesus is both possessed by and in alliance with Beelzebul. Matthew and Luke only include an accusation of Jesus' alliance with Beelzebul. To the parable of the divided dominion, Mark adds the parable of the strong man and the saying on the unforgivable sin. Matthew and Luke also include the parable of the strong man, but insert two sayings before it, on the activity of the Jewish exorcists and on the activity of Jesus as a sign of the presence of the kingdom of God. After the parable of the strong man, Matthew and Luke insert a saying on those who are with or against Jesus. Matthew completes his version with the saying on the

¹⁹⁵ In her dissertation, Katrina M. Poetker analyzes Mark's comment on the dissolution and reconstitution of family with a different approach. She compares Mark with a Greco-Roman text, Chariton of Aphrodisias' *Callirhoe*, and a Jewish text, Tobit, which develop the theme of family. In addition, she employs anthropological models for her analysis. Poetker argues that Jesus upsets the natural kinship system in order to create a new family around himself that does the will of God. Katrina M. Poetker, *"You are my Mother, my Brothers, and my Sisters": A Literary-Anthropological Investigation of Family in the Gospel of Mark* (Ph.D. diss., Emory University, 2001).

¹⁹⁶ Rudolf Bultmann, *History of the Synoptic Tradition* (trans. J. Marsh; New York: Harper & Row, 1963), 13-14.

unforgivable sin, while Luke leaves the saying out of his version. Luke places this saying later, in the context of warnings about the failure to acknowledge the Son of Man publicly (Luke 12:10). In addition, the unforgivable sin logion appears in Gospel of Thomas, Logion 44, attached to no context. This suggests that the connection of the parables of Mark 3:23-27 with the saying on the unforgivable sin (v. 28) is a Markan fusion.¹⁹⁷

Though Mark 3:22-30 can be viewed analytically as a composite discourse, the literary features indicate that Mark intentionally crafted it as a unified discourse.¹⁹⁸ Its first feature is the author's parenthetical comment in v. 30, which functions as an *inclusio* together with the accusations by the scribes in v. 22. This indicates that the parts of the enclosed discourse should be read as a literary whole. The reader could logically continue uninterrupted from v. 22 to v. 30, "And he called them and spoke to them in parables (v. 22), because they were saying 'he has an unclean spirit' (v. 30)." Jesus' speech within puts the parables of the divided dominion in relationship with both the parable of the strong man and the saying on the unforgivable sin. Mark labels this entire unit, ἐν παραβολαῖς.¹⁹⁹ The second feature is the repetition of vocabulary. For instance, the

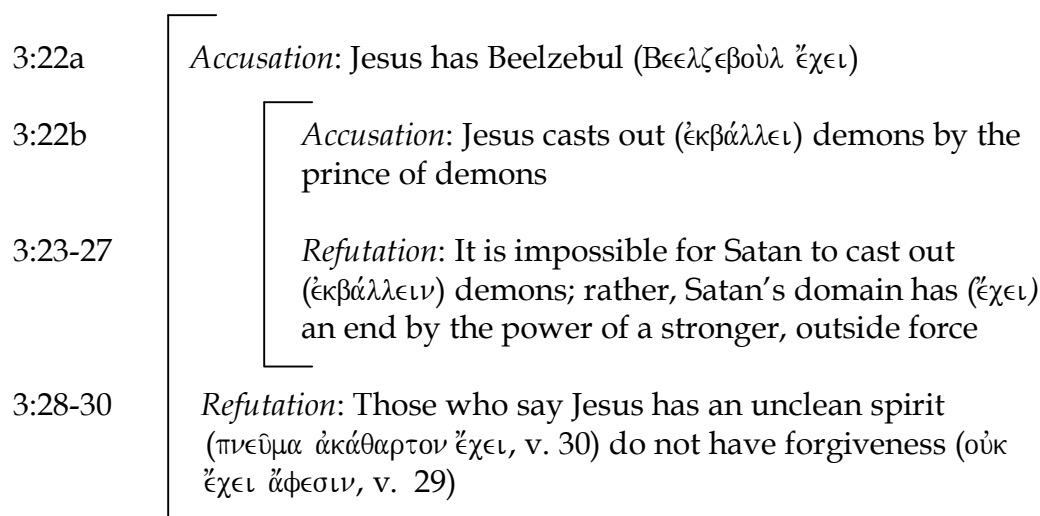
¹⁹⁷ For a discussion of the tradition history of the elements of Mark 3:22-30 and its synoptic parallels, see M. Eugene Boring, "The Unforgivable Sin Logion Mark 3:28-29 / Matt 12:31-32 / Luke 12:10: Formal Analysis and History of the Tradition, *Nov T* 17 (1976): 258-79, and Boring, "The Synoptic Problem, 'Minor' Agreements and the Beelzebul Pericope," in *The Four Gospels 1992 - Festschrift Frans Neirynck* (ed. Frans van Segbroeck et al.; 3 vols.; Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1992), 1:587-619.

¹⁹⁸ Schweizer introduces his commentary on this passage with the comment, "There is scarcely any other passage where Mark's pen is as evident as it is here." Schweizer, *Mark*, 83.

¹⁹⁹ As I have discussed above, Markan scholarship commonly recognizes the Mark's use of framing devices to indicate that the enclosed elements should be read in relationship to one

five-fold repetition of δύναμαι throughout the discourse ties the parables together (vv. 23-27).

The third feature that indicates the unity of the discourse is the arrangement of its elements. The entire unit in Mark 3:22-30 has a chiasmic structure as follows:²⁰⁰



The scribes make a double accusation against Jesus (v. 22), to which Jesus makes a double refutation in reverse order (vv. 23-29). First, the scribes accuse Jesus of being possessed by Beelzebul; second, they accuse him of casting out demons by the prince of demons (v. 22). Jesus responds first to the accusation about the

another. See also Rhoads, Dewey, and Michie, *Mark as Story*, 52. I will discuss the significance of the phrase, ἐν παραβολαῖς below.

²⁰⁰ With the chiasmic structure proposed here, I attempt to reflect the repetition of vocabulary and to demonstrate how the parables and the saying on the unforgivable sin function together to refute Jesus' opponents. Scholars who propose a similar chiasmic structure include Vernon Robbins, "The Beelzebul Controversy in Mark and Luke: Rhetorical and Social Analysis," in *Forum* 7 (1991): 261-77; *Mary in the New Testament*, (ed. Raymond E. Brown; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1978), 54; Dowd, *Reading Mark*, 33. Robbins also notes the repeated vocabulary throughout the passage. Joel Marcus and Jan Lambrecht propose different structural outlines that do not, in my opinion, offer the best demonstration of the way the parts of the discourse relate to the whole. Marcus, *Mark 1-8*, 278. Lambrecht, *Once Astonished*, 114.

power by which he casts out demons (vv. 23-27), and then to the accusation that he is possessed (vv. 28-30). The word ἐκβάλλειν links the accusation and refutation about the power by which Jesus casts out demons (v. 22b, v. 23), and the word ἔχει links the accusation and refutation that Jesus is possessed (v. 22a, vv. 28-30). Concurrent with the chiasm, the course of Jesus' speech follows a linear progression. The stress on the phrase, ἀλλὰ τέλος ἔχει at the end of v. 26 anticipates the parable of the strong man in v. 27. Jesus' answer moves from the refutation that Satan's kingdom could be destroyed from within, to the statement that Satan's kingdom is actually destroyed from without, to the pronouncement that those who wrongly name that power by which Satan's kingdom is destroyed face eternal "unforgiveness" (vv. 28-29). The movement of the passage culminates in Jesus' solemn pronouncement, introduced with ἀμήν (v. 29).

The coherent construction of Mark 3:22-30 suggests that the soundest starting point for its interpretation is to read the text as it stands, rather than to isolate hypothetical units of tradition. In addition, it suggests that a proper interpretation should read vv. 23-29 together as a single refutation of the scribes' charge. If the literary features indicate that Mark constructed a coherent discourse, the reader gains confidence that there is coherence not only in structure but also in meaning. So far, my analysis only demonstrates that the elements of the Markan discourse hang together; now I will demonstrate how they make meaning.

2.4 The Content of Mark 3:22-30²¹⁴

Jesus uses the analogies of a kingdom and a house to depict the power of Satan. A divided kingdom, house, or Satan is not able to stand (vv. 24-26). The words βασιλεία and οἰκία signify the two dominant social spheres of people living in Jewish Palestine within the Roman Empire: politics and kinship.²¹⁵ Both οἰκία and βασιλεία reflect an organized community under the power of a single ruler, and both entities had a power structure that was essential to their proper function, so that division in either sphere would signify that their ruler had lost his power.²¹⁶ Mark's use of these analogies evokes the image of Satan as the one,

²¹⁴ The following discussion is an expansion of material in a previous article. E. Shively, "The Story Matters: Solving the Problem of the Parables in Mark 3:22-30," in *Between Author and Audience in Mark: Narration, Characterization, Interpretation* (ed. E. S. Malbon; Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2009), 122-44.

²¹⁵ Halvor Moxnes, "What is Family? Problems in Constructing Early Christian Families," in *Constructing Early Christian Families: Family as Social Reality and Metaphor* (ed. H. Moxnes; London and New York: Routledge, 1997), 19. Van Aarde, "Jesus as Fatherless Child," in *The Social Setting of Jesus and the Gospels* (ed. Stegemann, Malina, Theissen; Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress, 2002), 73. Religion and economics are the other aspects commonly seen as part of a social description, but these are set within kinship and politics

²¹⁶ In the NT, the term οἰκία can signify an edifice like a house, but, according to the 1st century Mediterranean conception, it often refers to the social unit and material goods of a household, that is, a group of people bound by kinship who live and work together (see Mark 6:4; 13:35; Matt 13:57). The Latin *familia* reflects the concept of the NT οἰκία, in which all people, slaves, animals, land, houses, and material goods were under the legal authority (*patria potestas*) of the *paterfamilias*, or male head. The early Jewish and Christian household reflected the same structure as its larger culture. The power and authority of the *paterfamilias* and the importance of proper roles for maintaining order is expressed in Virgil, *Aeneid* 9.448-49, and in Aristotle, *Politics* 1253b. For the household under the power of the *paterfamilias*, the key values tied to its proper operation were the unity and loyalty of its members. The use of the household as an image in Mark 3:23 would evoke the self-evident necessity of these values for its function as a social institution, and the self-evident result of ruin if divided. The force of Jesus' analogy is to portray Satan as the powerful head of a unified and loyal household of demons. See Sarah Pomeroy, "Some Greek Families: Production and Reproduction," in *The Jewish Family in Antiquity* (ed. By S.J. Cohen; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1993), 155; C. Osiek and D. L. Balch, *Families in the New Testament World: Households and House Churches* (Louisville, KY: WJK, 1997), 6; Poetker, 114-120.

Like οἰκία, the word βασιλεία in the context of Mark 3:23 refers to a group organized under the power of a head. The dominant political model for the 1st century Jew was the βασιλεία. Under Persian, Ptolemaic, Seleucid and even Hasmonean rule, Palestine was a kingdom ruled by

all-powerful head over a horde of demons that requires unity and loyalty to rule properly. The presence of division in the demonic kingdom would indicate that the head is impotent and the entity no longer functions. Obviously, Satan remains powerful with a kingdom/household intact, because his demonic minions continue to seek the destruction of human life.

2.4.1 The Apparent Contradiction between vv. 23-26 and v. 27

The portrayal of Satan's kingdom as powerful and intact in the parables of the divided kingdom and house (vv. 23-26) creates an apparent contradiction with the portrayal of Satan's kingdom as powerless and crumbling in the parable of the strong man (v. 27).

2.4.1.1 *Proposals for Resolving the Contradiction*

Most commentators read the parable of the strong man in Mark 3:27 as a metaphor for Jesus' defeat of Satan and resolve a contradiction with the preceding parables (vv. 23-26) by harmonizing them with that portrayal. One

an all-powerful king who had the people, the land, and its produce as his possession. Though Rome had a history of republican government, it conquered a Mediterranean world with a legacy of Hellenistic kingdoms. Under Roman rule, the Jewish state became a client kingdom under Herod, who had unlimited power with regard to internal affairs. The emperor Augustus (from 30 BCE on) shifted the power structure of the empire as a whole from a republican model with a distribution of power, to one that resembled a monarchy under a single ruler. Because the Senate still operated and there was a measure of autonomy in the principates, the Roman Empire after Augustus should not be flatly equated with a monarchy. The head of state came to be viewed in household terms: the emperor was the head of the household of the empire, and received the honorable title of the *pater patriae* ("father of the fatherland"). That ruler's power was communicated throughout the empire, for example, by means of coins on which the image of the emperor and the abbreviation "PP" (*pater patriae*) had been stamped. See Peter Schäfer, *The History of the Jews in the Greco-Roman World* (London and New York: Routledge, 2003), 13, 87; Fergus Millar, *The Roman Republic and the Augustan Revolution* (vol. 1 of *Rome, The Greek World, and the East*; ed. H. M. Cotton and G. M. Rogers; Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 2002), 1:298-300.

line of interpretation argues that the Markan Jesus first answers the scribes with metaphors for Satan using unreal terms (ἐάν + aorist subjunctive) in vv. 24-25 and then shifts to a premise he accepts using real terms (εἰ + aorist indicative) in v. 26 to make his point.²¹⁷ That is, in v. 26 Jesus grants that even according to the scribes' own view of the matter, his ministry marks the fall of Satan's kingdom. This interpretation is unlikely because Jesus begins his argument by rejecting the scribes' view that Satan could be cast out by Satan's power (v. 23b).

A more likely line of interpretation is that the parables of the divided kingdom and house are part of a *reductio ad absurdum*, used to demonstrate the absurdity of the idea that Satan casts out Satan.²¹⁸ Jesus does not explicitly state the basis upon which the conclusion, Satan cannot cast out Satan, is absurd. The reader must supply it based on the context. A number of scholars argue that the basis of the conclusion is the implausibility that Satan would act self-destructively: because of the self-evident fate of divided dominions, it is absurd

²¹⁷ For example, Boring, *Mark*, 107-08; Gnllka, *Markus*, 1: 150. Robert Gundry's interpretation also seems to fit here: "The subjunctive mood of 'should be divided' sets out a weak hypothesis. In v. 26 Mark strengthens the hypothesis by switching to the indicative mood. We may paraphrase as follows: if, as you scribes say, Satan really has risen up in rebellion against himself and suffered a split, he cannot survive but is now coming to the end of his career. This time the present tense is not gnomic, but progressive; i.e., Satan is suffering disability and demise right now. The conclusion that he 'is having an end [in the sense "is at his end"]' is true even though the supposition in the preceding 'if'-clause is absurd." Thus, Gundry interprets the parables of 3:23-26 as portraying Satan's downfall (though wrongly) so that they anticipate v. 27 without contradicting it. Gundry, *Mark*, 173.

²¹⁸ Bultmann identifies Jesus' argument as a *reductio ad absurdum* and gives examples from rabbinic texts in the *History of the Synoptic Tradition*, 45-47. Joel Marcus follows Bultmann's classification in "The Beelzebul Controversy", 248-9. Within a Greco-Roman context, Vernon Robbins classifies the logic of 3:23-26 as an argument for implausibility, 'Rhetorical Composition and the Beelzebul Controversy', in *Patterns of Persuasion in the Gospels* (ed. Burton L. Mack and Vernon K. Robbins; Sonoma, CA: Polebridge Press, 1989), 165. Both classifications get at the same point of logic: Jesus argues for the absurdity or implausibility of the view that Satan casts out Satan.

to think that Satan would purposely become divided against himself.²¹⁹ Like the previous line of interpretation, this interpretation also provides a way of preventing the parables from contradicting one another. Mark's use of analogies from 1st century political and family structures, however, suggests that the basis of the conclusion that Satan cannot cast out Satan is the obvious continued strength of Satan's kingdom. The grammar of the parables also supports this interpretation.

The parables of the divided kingdom and house are third-class conditional statements that represent present general situations, or universal truths: "if it ever were the case that a kingdom or a house became divided against itself, that kingdom or house would not be able to stand." The conditional statement that applies the analogies to Satan (v. 26) has a different form, indicating a shift from universal premises to the singular premise that Jesus seeks to establish. Verse 26 is in the form of a first-class conditional statement that assumes a truth for the sake of argument,²²⁰ and may be phrased: "If it were the case (as you say) that

²¹⁹For example, Perkins, "Mark," 564; Robbins, "Rhetorical Composition," 165; Pesch, *Markusevangelium*, 1: 214-15; Nineham, *St. Mark*, 120. Though Gundry's analysis may fit under the first line of interpretation (see note 5 above), he also argues against the interpretation that the basis of the absurdity of Jesus' argument is that Satan would be too foolish to work against himself. He then asserts, however, apart from the grammar or logic of the text that the basis of the absurdity is the definition of the word "casting out": "The impossibility has to do with Satan's action, not with our thinking. Satan is one with his demons, and he cannot cast himself out. By definition of casting out, somebody else would have to do that." Gundry, *Mark*, 173.

²²⁰εἰ and an aorist indicative in the protasis + a present indicative in the apodosis. Herbert Weir Smyth, *Greek Grammar* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1984), §2298. Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 692-93. On the other hand, Joel Marcus has argued that this statement is a second-class, or past unreal condition, without the classic form. Marcus, "Beelzebul Controversy," 258-59. The past unreal condition is normally expressed by εἰ + the aorist indicative in the protasis, and ἄν + the aorist indicative in the apodosis. The statement in Mark 3:26 has neither ἄν nor the aorist indicative in the apodosis. In a second-class condition, the apodosis states what would have been the outcome

Satan has risen up against himself and become divided; then consider the implications: in that case he cannot stand.” The appearance of this conditional sentence in the context of a dispute indicates that it is a *modus tollens* argument, a rule of inference “used to argue that the antecedent is false by denying the consequent.”²²¹ In the case of Mark 3:26, the falsity of the consequent (Satan cannot stand), proves the falsity of the antecedent (Satan has risen up against himself and become divided). The implication is that Satan clearly has not fallen and, therefore, cannot be divided. The grammar of vv. 23-27 suggests that the parables of the kingdom and house depict a powerful, intact Satanic kingdom.²²²

A few commentators take this third and most probable line of interpretation, reading the parables in vv. 23-26 as part of a *reductio ad absurdum* that depict Satan’s powerful rule, and the parable in v. 27 as a depiction of Satan’s overthrow by Jesus.²²³ In their interpretations, however, most do not

if the condition had been fulfilled. On Marcus’ reading, then, the sense is, “If Satan had risen against himself and become divided (and he hasn’t), then he would have (now) come to an end.” Because the second-class condition is more emphatic than the first-class condition, this interpretation lends support to Marcus’ argument that the parable of the divided dominion portrays a strong, intact Satanic realm. However, such an interpretation is not necessary to make the point. Furthermore, Jan Lambrecht has raised questions regarding the identification of second-class conditions without the form in “Unreal Conditions in the Letters of Paul: A Clarification,” in *Ephemerides theologicae Lovanienses* 63 no. 1 (1987): 153-56.

²²¹ Richard A. Young, “A Classification of Conditional Sentences Based on Speech Acts Theory,” in *Grace Theological Journal* 10.1 (1989), 41. The other possible rule of inference is *modus ponens*, which is “used to argue that the consequent is true by affirming its antecedent.” Since the context does not allow for Jesus to be affirming the antecedent (i.e., Satan has risen up against himself and become divided), this cannot be the rule of inference employed in the argument.

²²² See also Marcus, “Beelzebul Controversy,” 248-49.

²²³ For example, Cranfield, *Saint Mark*, 137; Lane, *Mark*, 142-43; Donahue and Harrington, *Mark*, 131; Stein, *Mark*, 184. Morna Hooker states both that the argument rests on the absurdity that Satan would use his power to cast out demons and that Satan’s rule still appears to be strong, confusing the issue. Hooker, *Saint Mark*, 116.

relate the parables of the divided dominions and the parable of the strong man to each other, leaving the reader with a sense of discrepancy.

2.4.1.2 *The Solutions of Joel Marcus and Austin Busch*

Two scholars in particular have expressed their dissatisfaction with previous interpretations of the relationship between the parables, and have attempted to deal with the discrepancy between a depiction of a powerful Satanic rule in vv. 23-26 and a depiction of a powerful Jesus in v. 27. In “The Beelzebul Controversy and the Eschatologies of Jesus,”²²⁴ Joel Marcus offers an interpretation through tradition criticism, while in “Questioning and Conviction: Double-Voiced Discourse in Mark 3:22-30,”²²⁵ Austin Busch offers an interpretation through literary criticism. Though differing in their conclusions, both scholars affirm a contradiction in 3:23-27 that arises from the portrayal of a powerful Satanic realm in the first set of parables (vv. 23-26). According to these scholars, this portrayal contradicts Mark’s requirement of the reader to understand Satan’s kingdom as fallen. Though I agree with Busch that the resolution to the conundrum lies in literary analysis rather than in the history of tradition, I argue that fuller attention to Mark’s composition produces an interpretation that more satisfactorily recognizes its fit in the larger story.

In his essay, Joel Marcus has offered the most extended argument for a

²²⁴ Marcus, “Beelzebul Controversy,” 247-77.

²²⁵ Austin Busch, “Questioning and Conviction,” 477-505.

contradiction between Mark 3:23-26 and v. 27.²²⁶ Marcus argues that the parables of the divided kingdom and house in vv. 23-26 soundly refute Jesus' opponents according to what they themselves can observe: a powerful Satanic realm.²²⁷ Since a kingdom or a house divided against itself cannot stand, it is absurd to think that Satan has become divided against himself, because Satan obviously has not fallen. The contradiction enters with the parable of the strong man (v. 27). Marcus assumes that this parable portrays the end of Satan's power.²²⁸ Citing parallels in Jewish and Christian apocalyptic literature where binding evil spirits signifies their end, he assumes that the binding of Satan in Mark must carry the same meaning.²²⁹ Marcus explains the contradiction between the parables of the divided kingdom and house and the parable of the strong man by appealing to a development in the historical Jesus' thinking. According to Marcus, the first set of parables (vv. 23-26) represent an earlier stage of Jesus' ministry during which he did not yet see his exorcisms as the overthrow of Satan's rule; the parable of the strong man (v. 27) represents a later stage in Jesus' ministry when he began to view his exorcisms as a definitive overthrow of Satan. Marcus finds the solution to the contradiction in the developing consciousness of Jesus, rather than in the fabric of Mark's Gospel.

²²⁶ Marcus, "Beelzebul Controversy," 247-77. Marcus addresses the purpose of the parable of the divided kingdom in Mark and the synoptic parallels. My summary of his argument highlights his interpretation of Mark's account and its relation to his thesis.

²²⁷ Marcus, "Beelzebul Controversy," 248-49, 259.

²²⁸ Marcus, "Beelzebul Controversy," 249-50.

²²⁹ For example, *1 En.* 10:4; *Jub.* 5:6; 10:7-11; *T. Levi* 18:12; *Rev* 20:1-3. Marcus, "Beelzebul Controversy," 251.

In his commentary on the Gospel of Mark, Marcus shifts from Jesus' mind to Markan redaction, but his interpretation only sharpens a contradiction that makes Jesus' reply to the scribes nonsensical at the level of Mark's story.²³⁰ According to Marcus, the parable of the strong man is the focal point of the discourse, and the parables of vv. 23-26 are "subordinated" to it in the evangelist's redaction.²³¹ At first the parables of the divided kingdom and house soundly refute the charge of the scribes by establishing that Satan's kingdom cannot have fallen; but when the reader gets to v. 27, "the meaning shifts" so that the parables now establish "not *whether or not* Satan's dominion has fallen, but *in what manner* it has been devastated."²³² Has the kingdom of Satan fallen, or not? On the level of the Markan redaction, Marcus answers, "yes": the parable of the strong man necessitates a fallen and impotent Satanic realm. However, this interpretation renders senseless the Markan Jesus' refutation of the scribal charge, which depends on a negative answer to that question.²³³

Austin Busch's essay identifies the crux of the contradiction as the relation of the divided dominion parables to the larger context of Mark's story.²³⁴ Busch argues that Mark's prior story requires the reader of 3:23-27 to understand that Satan's kingdom has fallen.²³⁵ Thus, because the parables of vv. 23-26 portray a

²³⁰ Marcus, *Mark 1-8*, 282.

²³¹ Marcus, *Mark 1-8*, p. 282.

²³² Marcus, *Mark 1-8*, p. 282.

²³³ In his dissertation, *Mystery of the Kingdom of God*, Marcus does see a battle between the kingdom of Satan and the kingdom of God communicated in Mark's Gospel, and argues that Mark 4 teaches the Markan community that they are on the winning side of the battle despite appearances to the contrary.

²³⁴ Busch, "Questioning and Conviction," pp. 477-505.

²³⁵ Busch, "Questioning and Conviction," pp. 483-84.

strong, intact Satanic kingdom, they cannot function as a sound refutation to the scribes' charge. He concludes that Mark must be using these parables for some other purpose. Building on the work of Mikhail Bakhtin,²³⁶ Busch identifies Mark 3:23-27 as double-voiced discourse that contains two voices, that of Jesus who speaks and that of the author who enigmatically articulates his own doubts about the integrity of Jesus' ministry. According to Busch, Jesus' parables only give the appearance of refuting the scribes' accusation. Mark uses the parables to affirm, rather than refute, the scribes' accusation in order to voice his own unsettled question about whether or not Jesus is in league with Satan. Busch solves the contradiction he has identified by reading Jesus' response to the scribes as an ironic statement that Satan has indeed fallen by civil war. Likewise, the fall of the house in v. 27 suggests that Jesus' binding and plundering is an inside job. When read as double-voiced discourse, Jesus' answer to the scribes becomes an empathetic statement that allows the reader to entertain their accusation. Busch then reads the saying on the unforgivable sin (vv. 28-29) not as directed towards the scribes or anyone else in the story world, but as directed towards the author himself, articulating the limits to which skeptical questioning of Jesus' ministry can go.²³⁷

According to the interpretations of both Marcus and Busch, Jesus' answer in Mark 3:22-30 cannot work coherently to refute the charge of the scribes.

²³⁶ Mikhail Bakhtin, "Discourse in the Novel," in *The Dialogic Imagination* (ed. Michael Holquist; trans. Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist; University of Texas Press Slavic Series 1; Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981).

²³⁷ Busch, "Questioning and Conviction," 503-505.

Neither offers an interpretation that unifies all the elements of the discourse – the parables of the divided dominion, the parable of the strong man, and the unforgivable sin logion – as a refutation of the scribes’ accusation. Furthermore, though Busch makes Mark’s story the starting point of his analysis, neither he nor Marcus offers an interpretation consistent with the characterizations of Jesus or Satan in the rest of the narrative. For both, the crux of the contradiction lies with the depiction of a powerful Satanic realm in vv. 23-26, which stands against the parable of the strong man or the narrative itself. Mark’s story, however, neither depicts an impotent Satanic realm nor a patently powerful Jesus.

2.4.1.3 Using the Narrative as a Resource

An essential but overlooked resource for solving this apparent contradiction is Mark’s larger narrative. Satan retains a measure of power throughout the story. For example, Satan uproots the word of God sown among people (4:15), and struggles against Jesus through Peter’s rebuke (8:33). Demon possession also indicates the power of their leader. Furthermore, the visibly powerful appearances of God’s kingdom and the Son of Man belong to the future Parousia according to Mark (8:38; 13:24-27; 14:62). In the meantime, the story follows Jesus to the cross. Once Jesus enters Jerusalem and begins to succumb to his earthly opponents, he ceases to exercise power over his supernatural opponent through exorcisms (chapters 11-16). Finally, Jesus is seized in the place called Gethsemane, tried, and crucified. At the cross, Jesus does not resemble overtly powerful one who plunders the strong man’s house.

Rather than seeming to bind the strong man, Jesus himself is bound. Rather than exhibiting power, Jesus loses it. Satan is not fallen; Satan continues to fight throughout Mark's story. One commentator, C. E. B. Cranfield, recognizes paradox and tension in the juxtaposition of the parables in 3:23-27.²³⁸ Like Cranfield, I focus on tension in this discourse in my own analysis. My thesis is that the meaning of these parables is tied to the meaning of Mark's whole story. Therefore, after interpreting the discourse itself in the remainder of the present chapter, I interpret the rest of Mark's narrative through the lens of the Beelzebul discourse.²³⁹

2.4.2 Interpreting 3:22-30, Following Mark's Own Cues

The construction of 3:22-30 itself signals how Mark views the relationship of its parts to one another. The rhetorical question, "How is Satan able (δύναται) to cast out Satan?" (v. 23), introduces the controlling concept of the discourse: ability, or power.²⁴⁰ The word δύναμαι is repeated five times throughout the discourse, and links the parables together (vv. 23-27). The question, "How is Satan able to cast out Satan?" (3:23) can be rephrased, "Satan is not able cast out Satan, is he?" The answer is, "no, only one more powerful than Satan is able to cast out Satan," that is, the Spirit-empowered Jesus. A look at the discourse

²³⁸ Cranfield, *Mark*, 137-38.

²³⁹ See Chaps. 4 and 5, below.

²⁴⁰ The discourse in Mark 3:23-30 focuses specifically on the power of Jesus and its source. In Matthew and Luke, on the other hand, the Beelzebul discourse demonstrates the failure of various groups to recognize the presence of God's Kingdom in the activity of both Jesus and his followers. For instance, Matthew uses the Beelzebul material in three places to indicate the solidarity between Jesus and his followers (Matt 9:34; 10:25; 12:22-32).

shows, however, that the power of Satan is not finished. The Markan Jesus portrays the power by which he himself performs exorcisms, and depicts a cosmic power struggle between two opposing sides.

Mark joins the parables of the kingdom and house in an adversative relationship with the parable of the strong man (*ἀλλά*, v. 27), indicating that this parable offers an opposing point of view to that of the preceding parables about the nature of Jesus' exorcisms. No one is able (*οὐ δύναται οὐδεὶς*, v. 27) to plunder the strong man's house without binding him first. The opposing point of view, however, is not in the characterization of Satan as *τὸν ἰσχυρὸν*. In fact, the nature of the "strong man" in v. 27 corresponds with the portrayal of a powerful Satanic kingdom in vv. 23-26.

The repeated use of the adjective *ἰσχυρός* in Jewish writings to describe mighty nations and their mightiest warriors and leaders provides an important context for this analogy. Throughout Jewish literature, the adjective *ἰσχυρός* describes formidable opponents,²⁴¹ the best warriors²⁴² and kings.²⁴³ The word appears as a representation for the leader and for the whole group of the enemy in war.²⁴⁴ God promises to dispossess nations before the people of Israel who are great and stronger than they (*ἔθνη μεγάλη καὶ ἰσχυρότερα σου*, Deut 4:38)²⁴⁵ in order to make Israel into a greater and stronger nation (*ποιήσω σὲ εἰς ἔθνος μέγα καὶ ἰσχυρὸν*, Deut 9:14). It is the Lord, however, who is truly great and strong

²⁴¹ Num 20:20; 22:6; Deut 2:10; Joel 1:6.

²⁴² 2 Kings 24:14-15; Isa 43:17; Jer 46 [LXX 26]:5-6; 49 [LXX29]:22; 48 [LXX 31]:14; Lam 1:15.

²⁴³ Wis 6:8

²⁴⁴ Judg 5:13; Jer 30 [LXX 37]:21.

²⁴⁵ cf. Deut 7:1; 9:1; 11:23; Josh 23:9.

(μεγὰς καὶ ἰσχυρότερὰ), because the Lord is the one who drives those nations out (ὁ θεὸς ὁ μέγας καὶ ἰσχυρὸς, Deut 10:17).²⁴⁶ Cities with strong men are threatening,²⁴⁷ and the prophets warn about the nation the Lord will bring against Israel, which is full of ἰσχυροὶ (Jer 5:17).²⁴⁸ In addition, heads of houses are described as strong men.²⁴⁹ To summarize, ὁ ἰσχυρὸς is the formidable military leader or warrior of a nation, or even the leader of a household.

Specifically, Mark 3:27 echoes Isa 49:24, in which Isaiah promises that the Lord, the strong one of Jacob (ἰσχύος Ἰακωβ) will rescue the captives taken by the strong man (λαμβάνων...παρὰ ἰσχύοντος) (v. 24, 25).²⁵⁰ This allusion expands upon Mark's opening presentation of Jesus as the one who appears to battle against Satan in fulfillment of Isaiah's promise of redemption (1:3). Mark evokes a picture of Jesus as the divine warrior who overcomes the strong man of war in order to rescue those held captive by him. The larger context in Isaiah reveals that the Lord has allowed the people of Israel to become the plunder of the surrounding nations with no one to rescue them, because they have failed to hear and see (Isa 42:22-24; note Mark's emphasis on hearing and seeing, e.g., 4:3, 9, 12, 24; 7:31-35; 8:22-26; 10:46-52). Subsequently, Isaiah portrays the Lord as Israel's only Savior and Redeemer, who turns to forgive the peoples' sins and lead them out from the nations that oppress them (chaps. 43-49). Still, the question in Isa

²⁴⁶ Cf. Jer. 27[LXX 50]:34.

²⁴⁷ Josh. 10:2; Judges 5:13; Isa 21:17.

²⁴⁸ Cf. Joel 2:5, 11; cf. Isa 8:7; 28:2; Isa 43:17.

²⁴⁹ 2 Chron. 7:2, 4, 5, 7, 9, 40; 8:40; 9:13; 12:8.

²⁵⁰ See also Twelftree, *In the Name of Jesus*, 107; Watts, *Isaiah's New Exodus*, 148-50; Morna D. Hooker, *Jesus and the Servant*, 73; Gnllka, *Markus*, 150; Lane, *Mark*, 143, n. 93; Pesch, *Markusevangelium*, 215-16; Mann, *Mark*, 255; Cranfield, *Mark*, 138.

49:24 expresses the peoples' seemingly hopeless situation as they continue to be held captive by formidable opponents who are stronger than they: "Can the prey be taken from the strong man, or the captives of a tyrant be rescued?" Although this rhetorical question suggests a negative answer, Isaiah's answer is positive. The Lord will struggle against those who struggle against Israel: "Even the captives of the strong man will be taken, and the prey of the tyrant be rescued" (v. 25a). This Strong One of Jacob (ἰσχυρός Ἰακωβ, 49:26) will prove to be stronger than the strong man, and rescue Israel from what seems to be a hopeless captivity.

In the parable of the strong man (Mark 3:27), Mark recontextualizes Israel's captivity and rescue using apocalyptic *topoi*. While the power of ὁ ἰσχυρός in Jewish tradition is human, Mark's use of ὁ ἰσχυρός as a trope for Satan recasts this figure as a cosmic military power. People have become the goods, or plunder, of the strong man through demonic oppression. The setting for the parable of 3:27 is the domain of this strong man, and the use of the genitive case and pronouns emphasize his ownership: it is τὴν οἰκίαν τοῦ ἰσχυροῦ, τὰ σκεύη αὐτοῦ, and τὴν οἰκίαν αὐτοῦ. The activity of the one who enters to bind him and plunder his house, then, is the activity of a robber. The point of the imagery in v. 27 is not to depict something illicit about Jesus' activity, but to stress the antagonistic relationship between him and Satan in light of the scribes' charge of collusion between them.²⁵¹ That is, Jesus has appeared to struggle against the

²⁵¹ The analogy of a robber does not imply something illicit or scandalous about Jesus' exorcising activity, contra Austin Busch, "Questioning and Conviction," 485-486. Similar to 3:27,

enemy who struggles against God's people. While Mark recasts the human ὁ ἰσχυρός as a cosmic enemy, he recasts the Strong One of Jacob as the man Jesus. Yet Jesus is divinely empowered. Jesus struggles against the strong man by binding him in order to plunder his goods, or take back those held captive. In Jewish apocalyptic literature, God appoints angels or other exalted beings to bind evil spirits in order to restrain their power and influence over human beings and secure them for judgment.²⁵² In addition, the logion in v. 29 suggests that Jesus overcomes the strong man by the power of the Holy Spirit, who has descended upon him from an open heaven (1:10). Thus, Mark portrays a dualistic cosmic battle, with the Spirit-empowered Jesus struggling against Satan and his kingdom of demons in order to free people from demonic captivity. By recontextualizing Isaianic themes with apocalyptic *topoi*, Mark envisions Jesus bringing the redemption of God's people by means of a cosmic struggle.²⁵³

Mark's use of ὁ ἰσχυρός in 3:27 ties this metaphor to the analogies of βασιλεία and οἰκία in the preceding parables. The parables of vv. 23-26 focus on the community-level operation of the kingdom or house, while the parable of ὁ ἰσχυρός focuses on the power of the one who leads those social groups. While βασιλεία and οἰκία are neutral images, the Jewish tradition stresses the

Jesus implicitly identifies himself with a robber in Matthew's and Luke's gospels when he likens the return of the Son of Man to the coming of a thief (Matt 24:43; Luke 12:38-40; cf. 1 Thess 5:2; 2 Pet 3:10; Rev 16:5), even though theft and thieves are viewed in a thoroughgoing negative light throughout scripture (10 Commandments, Exod 20:15; Mark 10:19; Matt 19:18; 1 Cor 6:10). The point of the metaphor is to highlight the unexpectedness or threat that the coming of the Son of Man poses to those who are not ready. In Mark 3:27, we must also discern what the point of the metaphor is, and how far to push the details.

²⁵² E.g., 1 En. 10; Jub. 5:6, 10; 48; T. Levi 18.

²⁵³ See also Watts, *Isaiah's New Exodus*, 164; Twelftree, *In the Name of Jesus*, 107-08.

threatening power attributed to the one called ὁ ἰσχυρός. In addition, the contexts of this phrase in Jewish literature highlight a theme of battle. The point is, quite directly, the strong man is a *strong* man.²⁵⁴ The traditional image of the strong man and the juxtaposition of v. 27 with vv. 23-26 infuse Mark's concept of power with ambiguity and conflict. In other words, Mark means for the juxtaposition of a powerful Satan and a Spirit-empowered Jesus to stand in tension. The cosmic drama in Mark 3:22-30 portrays an authentic power struggle.

The opposing point of view between vv. 23-26 and v. 27 does not concern the characterization of Satan, but the way and power by which Jesus does in fact cast out demons. Mark breaks the parallelism between the kingdom and house analogies with the phrase ἀλλὰ τέλος ἔχει at the end of v. 26, which emphasizes the end of Satan's kingdom and provides a segue to v. 27. Satan's very real power makes it absurd that Jesus' exorcisms are, as the scribes assert, the result of a divided Satanic kingdom; nevertheless, Satan's kingdom *is* in the process of coming to an end at the hand of one even more powerful. The parable of the strong man metaphorically depicts *how* Satan τέλος ἔχει. Grammar is significant here: the word ἔχει, a present active indicative, suggests that Satan's binding is the continuing effect of Jesus' ministry, rather than simply a past event.²⁵⁵ In

²⁵⁴ Cranfield also makes this point: "There is a paradox in this argument, the paradox of the strong man bound by a stronger, yet still strong"; and "But this does not mean that Satan's power is finished; on the contrary, the point of vv. 23b-26 is precisely that it is still strong." Cranfield, *Mark*, 137-38.

²⁵⁵ Scholars have debated about the locus and extent of this binding. Ernest Best has argued that Jesus bound and therefore defeated Satan in the wilderness at the outset of the story (1:12-13), effectively removing Satan as a powerful antagonist in the rest of the narrative. Ernest Best, *The Temptation and the Passion: The Markan Soteriology* (SNTSMS 2; Cambridge: University Press, 1965), 13-15. Similarly, in "The Beelzebul Controversy and the Eschatologies of Jesus," Joel

other words, v. 27 does not denote *that* Satan's power has been overcome, but depicts the way in which Satan's power is, in fact, being overcome.

The repetition of ἀλλά at the beginning of v. 27 after its appearance at the end of v. 26 strengthens its adversative sense,²⁵⁶ signaling that Jesus is taking up the point of view he seeks to oppose in v. 23b. His answer to the question, how can Satan cast out Satan? (v. 23b), is as follows: not through internal division by Satan's own power (vv. 24-26), but through external attack by one more powerful (v. 27). This external attack does not negate the power of Satan; rather, it creates a power struggle between Satan and the Spirit that is manifested in the ministry of Jesus.

The logion in vv. 28-29 continues the controlling concept of the discourse by indicating that power by which Jesus battles against Satan and the consequences of naming it wrongly. The appearance of the Holy Spirit in 3:29 recalls the descent of the Spirit into Jesus at his baptism (1:9-10) and confirms this figure as the controlling power of Jesus. The logion in vv. 28-29 comes at the climax of Jesus' argument that he does not cast out demons by the power of Satan, evoking the conflict between Satan and the Holy Spirit in the wilderness.

Marcus maintains that because "binding" in Jewish apocalyptic literature only ever refers to an absolute restraint of power, the binding of Satan in Mark 3:27 must refer to a complete loss of power and influence, even though elsewhere Marcus argues that Jesus is engaged in warfare with Satan in his ministry. Marcus, "The Beelzebul Controversy," 250-51. See also Marcus, *Mystery of the Kingdom; Mark 1-8*, 71-73. On the other hand, J.M. Robinson views the binding of Satan not as a single event, but as a conflict that begins in the wilderness and continues throughout Mark's narrative and, potentially, in the life of the church. Robinson, *The Problem of History in Mark and Other Marcan Studies* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1982), 22-42. The relationship of the elements in 3:22-30 and the shape of Mark's larger narrative lend support to Robinson's view. Mark recontextualizes the *topos* of "binding" to refer to the continuing effect of the ministry of Jesus, rather than to Satan's past, total power loss.

²⁵⁶ See also Gundry, *Mark*, 174.

The saying in vv. 28-29 adds an image to the metaphors in the parable of the strong man in v. 27. Jesus is able to overpower the strong man, or able to cast out Satan (δύναται, 3:23, 27), because his power derives not from Satan, but from the Holy Spirit. Jesus' exorcisms are a manifestation of the power of the Holy Spirit over the rule of Satan.

What one says about Jesus and his activity places one inside or outside the realm of that power.²⁵⁷ The repetition of ἔλεγον in the verses that frame the discourse (3:21-22, 30) indicates that blasphemy of which Jesus speaks is tied to the slanderous talk of those who accuse him.²⁵⁸ Moreover, what people say about Jesus places them inside or outside the realm of forgiveness. Jesus' pronouncement of unforgiveness takes the reader by surprise in the context of the emphasis on forgiveness in the opening chapters. Repentance and forgiveness are central to the preaching of John the Baptist (1:4) and of Jesus (1:15). Because the call to repent is central to the presence of the Kingdom of God, forgiveness is central to the one who announces its coming. One of Jesus' first acts is to forgive the sins of the paralytic (2:1-12). In that episode, Mark prepares the reader for Jesus' conflict with the scribes in 3:22-30, by associating blasphemy with forgiveness. There, the scribes accuse Jesus of blasphemy for

²⁵⁷ Mark emphasizes the importance of what a person says about Jesus. Later, Jesus asks his disciples, "but who do you say that I am?" (ὕμεις δὲ τίνα με λέγετε εἶναι)?" (Mark 8:29).

²⁵⁸So Donahue and Harrington, *Mark*, 131-32. Gundry highlights that slander is the key offense, by referring to the slander of the Holy Spirit, rather than "blasphemy of the Holy Spirit." Gundry, *Mark*, 176-77.

words they recognize as a divine prerogative,²⁵⁹ and refuse to acknowledge his authority to forgive sins. In 3:22-30, Jesus exposes the scribes as the true blasphemers. Only now, Jesus manifests the authority not only to forgive sins, but also to deny forgiveness. Because the scribes say that Jesus “has” an unclean spirit (ἐλεγον πνεῦμα ἀκάθαρτον ἔχει), they “have” unforgiveness (οὐκ ἔχει ἄφεσιν).²⁶⁰

The logion in vv. 28-29 sharpens the relationship between forgiveness/unforgiveness and the kingdom of God. This saying not only indicates the power by which Jesus is able to overcome Satan but also the consequences of naming it wrongly. Those who acknowledge the presence and power of the kingdom of God in Jesus experience forgiveness (1:4, 15; 2:5). Later in the narrative, forgiveness is the particular experience and practice of the community of faith (11:24-25). By contrast, those who misunderstand and misname the power at work in Jesus experience unforgiveness. One’s experience of forgiveness or unforgiveness relates directly to one’s position inside or outside the kingdom of God, a point Jesus makes in the parables of the kingdom that follow (cf. 4:12). The discourse in 3:22-30 indicates an association between misnaming, outsiders and unforgiveness; and between correct naming, insiders

²⁵⁹ Throughout the OT, the forgiveness of sin is a divine action towards human beings (Exod 34:6-9). Psalm 130 associates the hope of Israel with God’s redemption and forgiveness, “but with you there is forgiveness, that you may be feared...O Israel, hope in the Lord! For with the Lord there is steadfast love, and with the Lord there is plentiful redemption. And he will redeem Israel from all his iniquities” (vv. 4, 7-8).

²⁶⁰ Matthew and Luke both change the awkward wording of Mark 3:29 (Matt 12:32; Luke 12:10).

and forgiveness.²⁶¹ That is, those who refuse to recognize Jesus' role and power in the struggle against Satan both deny the mission for which he was sent and place themselves outside his redemptive work. Mark includes the logion with parables of vv. 24-27 and names the entire unit, ἐν παραβολαῖς, designating this saying to be part of Jesus' parabolic discourse. He lets the reader know that Jesus "began speaking to them in parables" (v. 23) ... "because they were saying that he has an unclean spirit" (v. 30). These features suggest that the Markan Jesus' parabolic discourse functions not as a teaching tool, but as a judgment.²⁶²

Mark's explicit introduction of Jesus' reply to the scribes as a discourse ἐν παραβολαῖς invites narrative connections with the other contexts where the phrase appears. Mark uses the phrase, ἐν παραβολαῖς, three other times, twice in connection with the parables of the kingdom (4:2, 11), and once more to introduce the parable of the tenants (12:1). This phrase is unique to Mark's Gospel at these points in the story. It is absent from the Beelzebul discourse in the synoptic parallels.²⁶³ Matthew does have the phrase ἐν παραβολαῖς in the introduction to the parable of the sower, but Luke alters it.²⁶⁴ While Matthew and Luke both use ἐν παραβολαῖς in the explanation of the purpose of parables, the Markan Jesus connects speaking ἐν παραβολαῖς with unforgiveness in a way

²⁶¹ Contra Austin Busch, "Questioning and Conviction," 500-03. Joel Marcus makes a similar point in, *The Mystery of the Kingdom of God*, 117.

²⁶² See also Guelich, *Mark*, 175; Gnllka, *Markus*, 1:149; Marcus, *Mystery of the Kingdom of God*, 223; Rikki Watts, *Isaiah's New Exodus*, 194-210.

²⁶³ See my discussion above. Neither Matthew nor Luke uses the phrase, ἐν παραβολαῖς to introduce the parable of the tenants. Instead, Matthew uses ἄλλην παραβολὴν (Matt 21:33), and Luke uses τὴν παραβολὴν ταύτην (Luke 20:9).

²⁶⁴ Luke writes that Jesus spoke διὰ παραβολῆς (Luke 8:4); Matthew has ἐν παραβολαῖς (13:3).

that neither Matthew nor Luke do. Neither Matthew nor Luke uses the phrase to introduce the parable of the wicked tenants.²⁶⁵

Mark introduces the parable of the sower, καὶ ἐδίδασκεν αὐτοῦς ἐν παραβολαῖς πολλὰ (4:2). When Jesus has finished speaking, οἱ περὶ αὐτὸν σὺν τοῖς δώδεκα ask Jesus about the parables. Jesus responds, ὑμῖν τὸ μυστήριον δέδοται τῆς βασιλείας τοῦ θεοῦ ἐκεῖνοί δὲ τοῖς ἔξω ἐν παραβολαῖς τὰ πάντα γίνεται (v. 11), and quotes Isa 6:9-10 as the basis for his speaking ἐν παραβολαῖς (v. 12). The end of this quotation reads, however, μήποτε ἐπιστρέψωσιν καὶ ἀφεθῆ αὐτοῖς, rather than following the LXX, μήποτε... ἐπιστρέψωσιν καὶ ἰάσομαι αὐτοῖς. Mark's use of this altered text connects this passage with the unforgivable sin logion that precedes it (compare the use of ἀφίημι in 3:28-29).²⁶⁶ In addition, Mark 3:20-35 and 4:1-12 share other vocabulary: οἱ περὶ αὐτὸν, 3:32-33 and 4:10; οἱ ἔξω, 3:31 and 4:11; ἐν παραβολαῖς, 3:23 and 4:11. The shared vocabulary and the proximity of these two passages indicate that they should be interpreted in light of one another. While the Markan Jesus embeds a judgment within a parabolic discourse in 3:23-29, he explicates that judgment in 4:11-12. Those who have refused to see and hear Jesus' mission find themselves on the outside of God's kingdom, and outside of the community that Jesus has come to gather. Later, Jesus tells the parable of the vineyard when the scribes, along with the elders and chief priests, again question the source of Jesus' authority (12:1-11). This parable dramatizes the judgment of

²⁶⁵ Matthew has, ἄλλην παραβολὴν (Matt 21:33), and Luke has, τὴν παραβολὴν (Luke 20:9).

²⁶⁶ The fact that Matthew follows the LXX, καὶ ἐπιστρέψωσιν καὶ ἰάσομαι αὐτούς (Matt 13:15), suggests that Mark intentionally substitutes ἀφεθῆ αὐτοῖς in Mark 4:12. Luke leaves out the line altogether (Luke 8:10). Mark agrees with the Targum of Isa 6:10, which has ἀφεθῆ αὐτοῖς rather than ἰάσομαι αὐτούς.

unforgiveness indicated in the earlier parabolic speech. The end of this parable describes the owner coming and giving the vineyard to others, which is the climactic outcome of the “parable” of the Beelzebul discourse: those who have rejected Jesus are left outside while Jesus gathers a new community that does God’s will (3:31-35).

2.5 The Symbolic World that Mark Constructs in Mark 3:22-30

Not only has Mark constructed a discourse that refutes the scribes, but he has also imaginatively constructed a symbolic world that reveals his perspective on the way the world works in the presence of Jesus. The accusation of the scribes about Jesus' exorcisms links human and cosmic conflict. The figurative language of Mark 3:22-30 functions to stage a cosmic drama that intersects with human conflict. Jesus appears on the scene and invites conflict everywhere he goes. Mark interprets the human-level conflict that Jesus provokes according to available symbols.

Mark joins human and cosmic figures that appear in the opening chapters of the Gospel (Jesus and the scribes, Satan, the Holy Spirit) and dramatizes their conflicts by echoing OT themes of God the divine Warrior and by recontextualizing apocalyptic *topoi*. Mark interprets Jesus' exorcisms as the enactment of a dualistic cosmic battle in which the Spirit-empowered Jesus wages war against Satan to rescue those held captive in Satan's household. The effect of the figurative language is to depict Jesus' exorcisms as the manifestation of a dualistic cosmic battle between Satan and the Holy Spirit. In other words, a

cosmic battle is enacted in Jesus' earthly ministry. The scribes, members of the religious establishment who should promote relief from the physical and spiritual oppression of demonic rule, participate in the cosmic drama when they accuse Jesus of being in league with Satan (vv. 22, 30). The irony of the Beelzebul controversy is that it suggests that *the scribes*, and not Jesus, participate in the enactment of Satan's side of the battle, because their false charge places them outside the realm of the Holy Spirit's power (vv. 28-29). Not only exorcisms, but also conflict between Jesus and his human opponents reflects the cosmic battle.²⁶⁷ The power struggle that Mark portrays by juxtaposing the parables of the divided dominions with the parable of the strong man has both cosmic and human dimensions. That is, the cosmic and earthly worlds do not simply operate parallel to each other, but intersect in the ministry of Jesus.

Mark's placement of the discourse indicates that the overarching goal of Jesus' ministry is more than a rescue operation. As I have argued above, Mark's insertion of the Beelzebul controversy (3:22-30) within Jesus' family controversy (vv. 20-21, 31-35) suggests that the two accounts are mutually interpretive. Both blood family and religious family oppose Jesus' exorcisms, the main offensive in Jesus' struggle against the kingdom of Satan. By this, they unwittingly place themselves on the opposing side of the cosmic battle. The refusal to recognize Jesus as the divinely appointed redeemer prevents people from participating in the liberating and reconstructive work of the Kingdom of God. The parable of

²⁶⁷ A classic study that views Jesus' conflict with his opponents as a manifestation of cosmic conflict is Robinson, *The Problem of History in Mark*. Robinson focuses on the debates between Jesus and his opponents. See especially pp. 31-37.

the strong man (v. 27) portrays Jesus overpowering the strong man to rescue people from Satan's household. Juxtaposed to this is the portrayal of Jesus establishing a new household consisting of people who are not characterized by blood or religion, but by doing God's will (vv. 34-35). Jesus has come to liberate people from the household of Satan for the purpose of gathering them into a new household of God.

2.6 Conclusion

Mark's unique placement of the Beelzebul discourse indicates its pivotal role in the Gospel. The forward position of the discourse and verbal threads connect it to the prologue, so that it recapitulates and dramatizes the battle between Jesus and Satan in the wilderness. Mark establishes that the heart of Jesus' ministry is to struggle against the power of Satan.

I have argued that power is the controlling concept of Mark 3:22-30. Mark depicts a power struggle between two opposing sides by juxtaposing the parables of the kingdom and house (vv. 23-26), which portray a powerful Satanic rule, with the parable of the strong man (v. 27), which portrays a powerful Jesus overcoming that rule, and joining them with a logion that signals the Holy Spirit as Jesus' power source. This discourse does not negate Satan's power; it assumes the continued strength of that power. Mark establishes the ministry of Jesus as the offense in a dualistic cosmic battle between the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of Satan, by which he liberates people from Satan's household in order to gather them into a new family.

If the strong man remains strong, yet Jesus overcomes the strong man, then this raises questions about the *nature* and *manifestation* of Satan's power *vis-à-vis* the nature and manifestation of Jesus' power. That is, how is the reader to understand the power by which Jesus overcomes the strong man? In order to answer this question, I interpret the rest of Mark's narrative in light of 3:22-30. Before turning to this task, however, Mark's use of apocalyptic *topoi* in 3:22-30 calls for a comparison with contemporary Jewish apocalyptic compositions in order to illuminate his symbolic world. This comparative work will clarify Mark's particular literary and theological aims pertaining to Jesus' power struggle.

Chapter 3

Apocalyptic Discourse in Jewish Compositions Contemporary to Mark

3.1 Introduction

In Mark 3:22-30, Mark juxtaposes the parables of the kingdom and house (vv. 23-26) with the parable of the strong man (v. 27) and joins them with a logion that signals the Holy Spirit as Jesus' source of power (vv. 28-29). I have argued that Mark reports Jesus' answer to the scribes as a contrast between the way and the power by which he does *not* cast out demons with the way and the power by which he *does*.²⁶⁸ In the process, Mark both affirms that Satan is powerful and that Jesus is powerfully invading Satan's kingdom, thereby portraying a power struggle. This parabolic discourse not only refutes the charge of the scribes, but also imaginatively constructs a symbolic world that indicates Mark's assumptions about how the world works in the presence of Jesus. Mark employs apocalyptic *topoi* to interpret Jesus' exorcisms as a skirmish in a dualistic cosmic contest in which the Spirit-empowered Jesus wages war against Satan to rescue people held captive by demonic powers.

²⁶⁸ See Chap. 2.

In this chapter I compare Mark with compositions contemporary to it that also engage in apocalyptic discourse, in order to sharpen my understanding of Mark's symbolic world. I have chosen Jewish compositions that appropriate the same *topoi* that appear in Mark 3:22-30 to address power struggles, particularly with Satan or the equivalent, binding evil spirits, cosmic battle, and the interconnection of heavenly and human powers. Several texts that fit these criteria are the book of Daniel, *1 Enoch*, *Jubilees*, the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*, the *Testament of Solomon*, the *War Scroll (1QM)*, and *Melchizedek (11QMelch)*. I approach each piece of literature as a distinct composition and discuss how it employs apocalyptic discourse to address the problem of the powerlessness of God's people in the face of oppressive human and spiritual opponents.

The book of Daniel serves as the appropriate point of departure for my discussion because it provides a template of apocalyptic *topoi*. Daniel contains the earliest fully developed apocalypse in the Hebrew Bible and exerts a clear influence on the Gospel of Mark.²⁶⁹ The Son of Man sayings are the clearest

²⁶⁹ Many, however, consider the Book of the Watchers and the Astronomical Book of the *1 Enoch* corpus to be the earliest apocalypses. See George W. E. Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch 1: A Commentary on the Book of 1 Enoch* (Hermeneia; ed. Klaus Baltzer; Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2001), 169-71, 230, 293; J. J. Collins, *Apocalyptic Imagination*, 25, 43-84, 177-93; Cary, *Ultimate Things*, 20. Scholars have also recognized antecedents of apocalyptic thought in prophetic literature, for example, in Isa 59:14-18; 63:1-6; 65:17-25; Ezek 40; and Zech 1-6. See Paul D. Hanson *The Dawn of Apocalyptic* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1975); "Apocalypse, Genre" and "Apocalypticism," in *IDBSup*, 27-34; and "Jewish Apocalyptic against Its Near Eastern Environment," *RB* 78 (1971): 31-58; Klaus Koch, "Vom profetischen zum apokalyptischen Visionsbericht," in *Apocalypticism in the Mediterranean World and the Near East: Proceedings of the International Colloquium on Apocalypticism, Uppsala, August 12-17, 1979* (ed. D. Hellholm; Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1983), 413-46; Susan Niditch, *The Symbolic Vision in the Biblical Tradition* (HSM 30; Chico: Scholars Press, 1983). On the other hand, Gerhard von Rad argued that wisdom literature was the forerunner of apocalyptic literature. For example, the questions of Job required

example. Jesus uses this self-designation to declare his authority on earth (2:10, 28), to predict his suffering and death (8:31; 9:31; 10:33-34), and to tell of his return (8:38; 13:26; 14:62).²⁷⁰ Mark uses the Son of Man sayings to help form Jesus' identity. In addition, the Olivet Discourse in chapter 13 contains apocalyptic *topoi*, including the revelation of divine mysteries, the persecution of the elect, the salvation of those who persevere, and the coming of the Son of Man: "At that time men will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory" (Mark 13:26). This Son of Man saying is, in fact, an allusion to Daniel 7:13, "As I watched in the night visions, I saw one like a son of man coming with the clouds of heaven." The apocalyptic *topoi* in Mark 13 appear throughout the Gospel, making Daniel important for the whole. I will analyze Daniel and the other Jewish compositions in their turn, and then place these texts in comparison with Mark to further elucidate Mark's symbolic world and conception of power.

3.2 Approaching the Literature: Genre and Apocalyptic Discourse

Among the compositions I have chosen to examine, only Daniel and 1 *Enoch* display the characteristic literary conventions and outlook of the genre apocalypse. John J. Collins defines an apocalypse as,

answers obtained only from divine revelation, a characteristic feature of apocalyptic thought (Job 19:25-27; 38-41; 42:5-6). Gerhard von Rad, *Theologie des Alten Testaments* (2 vols.; 4th ed.; Munich: Kaiser, 1965), 2: 306-7. While these scholars only point to the Jewish literary precursors to the apocalypses, John J. Collins is among those who point to the origin of apocalyptic literature in terms of "the matrix of the genre," including post-exilic prophecy, Babylonian and Persian parallels, and the appropriation of Hellenistic motifs in a Jewish context. See Collins, *Apocalyptic Imagination*, 23-37.

²⁷⁰ See the discussion of Adela Yarbro Collins, "The Influence of Daniel on the New Testament," in *Daniel: A Commentary on the Book of Daniel*, by John J. Collins (Hermeneia; ed. F. M. Cross; Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1993), 97-98.

a genre of revelatory literature with a narrative framework, in which a revelation is mediated by an otherworldly being to a human recipient disclosing a transcendent reality which is both temporal, insofar as it envisages eschatological salvation, and spatial insofar as it involves another, supernatural world.²⁷¹

The other texts I discuss, including the Gospel of Mark, are related to the genre apocalypse because they employ apocalyptic *topoi* as “a flexible set of resources...for a variety of persuasive tasks.”²⁷² In other words, these texts engage in apocalyptic discourse. Rather than belonging to the genre apocalypse, we may think of these compositions as “participating in... invoking... gesturing to...” the genre.²⁷³ The apocalyptic *topoi* these compositions employ are effective because typical features make them recognizable. A cluster of terms may appear in a mutual relationship so that hearing one triggers others, creating rhetorical power.²⁷⁴ For instance, hearing the term “Satan” triggers apocalyptic ideas, and along with “binding” and “angels” evokes a picture of a dualistic cosmic battle.

²⁷¹ J. J. Collins, *Apocalyptic Imagination*, 5.

²⁷² This is an excerpt of Greg Carey’s definition of apocalyptic discourse: “the constellation of apocalyptic topics as they function in larger early Jewish and Christian literary and social contexts. Thus, apocalyptic discourse should be treated as a flexible set of resources that early Jews and Christians could employ for a variety of persuasive tasks.” Carey, *Ultimate Things*, 5.

²⁷³ Carol Newsom, “Spying out the Land: A Report from Genology,” in *Bakhtin and Genre Theory in Biblical Studies* (ed. R. Boer; Atlanta: SBL, 2007), 21. The full quotation is, “Rather than referring to texts as belonging to genres one might think of texts as participating in them, invoking them, gesturing to them, playing in and out of them, and in so doing, continually changing them.” Newsom refers to Jaques Derrida’s theory that texts participate in rather than belong to genre. See Jaques Derrida, “The Law of Genre,” in *Modern Genre Theory* (ed. David Duff; Harlow, UK: Longman, 2000), 224, 230.

²⁷⁴ See Robbins, “Intertexture of Apocalyptic discourse.” Cf. also L. T. Johnson, *The Letter of James* (AB; New York: Doubleday, 1995), 27-29, where Johnson discusses how *topoi* serve as a flexible set of resources for moral instruction and function to create connections in the mind.

Though bearing typical features that make them recognizable, these *topoi* function differently in each composition depending on the writer's aim.²⁷⁵ That is, simply identifying apocalyptic *topoi* does not indicate the contours of a particular composition's apocalyptic discourse.

The discussion regarding apocalyptic discourse becomes clearer when applied to a common cultural genre. The classic Western film has recognizable *topoi*, such as conflict between good guys and bad guys; boots, hats and denim; sheriffs, gunslingers, and bandits; pioneers, settlers, and natives; gun fights, robberies, and barroom shoot-outs; horses, dusty frontier towns, and wide open spaces.²⁷⁶ Filmmakers have employed these *topoi*, however, within other genres. For example, a science fiction film may recontextualize Western *topoi* in order to portray the universe as a frontier into which outlaws ride on their trusted cargo ship.²⁷⁷ Also, a comedy may recontextualize Western *topoi* in order to achieve parody.²⁷⁸ Although identical *topoi* may appear in the classic Western, the science fiction film, and the comedy, these *topoi* are employed for different purposes in the respective films and so take on different layers of meaning. The filmmakers

²⁷⁵ See also Carey, "How to do things with (Apocalyptic) Words."

²⁷⁶ For discussions of the Western genre and its development, see *The Western Reader* (ed. J. Kitses and G. Rickman; New York: Limelight Editions, 1998); David Lusted, *The Western* (Harlow, England: Pearson, 2003); P. C. Rollins and J. E. O'Connor, eds., *Hollywood's West: The American Frontier in Film, Television, and History* (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 2005).

²⁷⁷ The 2005 film *Serenity* employs themes of the classic Western in a science fiction film. Cf. Lusted, *The Western*, 5-6, 27, 174-5.

²⁷⁸ The 1974 film *Blazing Saddles* is a comedy Western, a subgenre of the Western film. See Matthew R. Turner, "Cowboys and Comedy: The Simultaneous Deconstruction and Reinforcement of Generic Conventions in the Western Parody," in *Hollywood's West: The American Frontier in Film, Television, and History*, 218-235.

depend on viewers both to recognize the characteristic Western *topoi* and to reinterpret those *topoi* in the new context in order to make meaning.

In a similar way, Mark depends on readers both to recognize characteristic apocalyptic *topoi* and to reinterpret them in the Gospel context. For example, I do not understand the binding of the strong man in Mark 3:27 simply by collecting a set of citations from contemporary compositions that also refer to the binding of Satan or evil spirits. Such a collection of citations only recognizes the typical features of the *topoi*; it does not demonstrate *how* Mark or the compositions cited may have employed the *topos* of “binding” for a particular persuasive task. My aim, therefore, is not simply to draw parallels between Mark 3:22-30 and Jewish apocalyptic literature, but to understand how each composition recontextualizes apocalyptic *topoi* in their respective literary contexts. In other words, my aim is to understand how these compositions engage in apocalyptic discourse.

3.2.1 The Book of Daniel²⁷⁹

As I discussed above, the second half of Daniel (chaps. 7-12) contains the earliest fully developed apocalypse in the Hebrew Bible. The whole book, however, conveys a consistent message:²⁸⁰ unlike human rulers, God is sovereign and powerful; unlike human kingdoms, God’s kingdom is everlasting; and

²⁷⁹ I use *Biblica Hebraica Stuttgartensia* and Ralphs’ *Septuaginta*, but provide translations from the New Revised Standard Version.

²⁸⁰ Although most scholars believe that Dan. 2-6 comprises a group of tales that came from different authors than the material of chaps. 7-12, the deliberate union of particular stories with these visions conveys a coherent message. See also Carey, *Ultimate Things*, 38, 44. For a discussion of the unity and authorship of Daniel, see J. J. Collins, *Daniel*, 24-38.

despite the best efforts of oppressors to persecute the righteous, God rescues and delivers the wise and faithful. The stories of chapters 1-6 give a narrative depiction of both what happens to those in power who fail to honor God and persecute God's people, and what happens for those who are persecuted. The apocalyptic visions of chapters 7-12 confirm these themes through the revelation of divine judgment and deliverance. When readers encounter the visions that repeat the rise and fall of human kingdoms leading up to the point of crisis surrounding the arrogant human king who fails to honor God and persecutes God's people (chaps. 7, 8, 10-12), they remember the stories' refrain: God is sovereign over human kingdoms; God's kingdom is everlasting; God delivers and rescues the righteous. The visions, particularly the third (in chap. 11), point to a historical context of war and persecution under the reign of Antiochus Epiphanes, the last Seleucid king.²⁸¹ The climax of these visions is God's judgment of the oppressor, through which the righteous are delivered.

²⁸¹ A majority of scholars place the composition of Daniel between 167-163 B.C.E. See J. J. Collins, *Daniel*, 24-38, 61-67; John Goldingay, *Daniel* WBC (Dallas, TX: Word, 1989); L. F. Hartman and A. A. Di Lella, *The Book of Daniel*, (AB; Garden City, NY: Double Day, 1978); Carey, *Ultimate Things*. Pre-critical scholarship, however, placed Daniel in the 6th century B.C.E. and some scholars still hold that view, e.g., K. A. Kitchen, "The Aramaic of Daniel," in *Notes on Some Problems in the Book of Daniel* (London: Tyndale, 1970), 43; Bruce K. Waltke, "The Date of the Book of Daniel," *BSac* 133 (1976): 319-29; Joyce Baldwin, *Daniel* (TOTC; ed. D. J. Wiseman; Downers Grove: Intervarsity, 1978), 17-46; Stephen R. Miller, *Daniel* (NAC; Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 1994), 22-43. Ernest Lucas considers the evidence and concludes that there are reasonable arguments both for a late 6th c./early 5th c. B.C.E. date, or for a 2nd c. B.C.E. date. See Ernest Lucas, *Daniel* (Apollos Old Testament Commentary; ed. D. W. Baker and G. J. Wenham; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2002), 306-312. For the purposes of this project, a particular date doesn't affect my reading, since the final form of Daniel in the second temple period is my primary concern.

3.2.2 *1 Enoch*²⁸²

1 Enoch consists of five separate books composed over a range of five centuries.²⁸³ Its texts and traditions were deliberately collected and shaped over time, however, resulting in common characteristics, recurring themes, and emphases.²⁸⁴ For example, the story of the Watchers, the problem of sin, violence and oppression, and the theme of God's imminent judgment recur throughout the composition. As a corpus, *1 Enoch* is a witness to the divine wisdom that Enoch receives and with which he exhorts his children and the righteous to obey in light of that coming judgment.²⁸⁵ Within this composition, a variety of literary genres function to communicate Enoch's message and, in particular, literary subgenres characteristic of apocalypses function to authorize it.²⁸⁶ Enoch receives divine revelation about the certainty of God's judgment based on patterns of the past (85-90), he goes on heavenly journeys to see the places of punishment and blessing (17-19; 21-36; 40; 52-54; 60-61), and he has dream visions that confirm the authenticity of his prophetic call (13:7-16:4; 83-84; 85-90).

²⁸² Unless otherwise indicated, I use the translation of E. Isaac in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* (2 vols.; ed. James H. Charlesworth; New York: Doubleday, 1983, 1985), 1: 13-89.

²⁸³ The Book of the Watchers (*1 En.* 1-36; by the mid-2nd c. B.C.E.); the Similitudes of Enoch (*1 En.* 37-71; 1st c. B.C.E. or 1st c. C.E.); the Astronomical Book (*1 En.* 72-82; 3rd-2nd c. B.C.E.); the Book of Dreams (*1 En.* 83-90; 170-163 B.C.E.); the Epistle of Enoch (*1 En.* 91-105; 2nd c. B.C.E.). See J. J. Collins, *Apocalyptic Imagination*, 47, 59, 66-7, 177-8; Carey, *Ultimate Things*, 19-20.

²⁸⁴ Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch* 1, 37. Nickelsburg traces the development of the tradition on pp. 25-26. See also Carey, *Ultimate Things*, 21-37.

²⁸⁵ Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch* 1, 22-25.

²⁸⁶ For example, the story of the Watchers (*1 En.* 6-11) belongs to the genre Rewritten Bible, as it retells Gen 6:1-4 with an interpretive purpose, and the fifth book of the corpus (chaps. 92-105) is an epistle. Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch* 1, 29, 33-34, 416. For a discussion of other subgenres within *1 En.* see Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch* 1, 28-36.

3.2.3 *Jubilees*²⁸⁷

The book of *Jubilees* belongs to a genre designated as “Rewritten Bible.”²⁸⁸ It retells the substance of the book of Genesis and the first half of Exodus, using these books as base texts from which to form a new composition.²⁸⁹ *Jubilees* rewrites the storyline of Genesis-Exodus and interprets it for specific purposes, emphasizing particular themes that are not prominent in those books. Throughout the composition, the author emphasizes the chronology of the 364-day solar calendar; the law (especially purity laws); the righteousness of Israel’s ancestors; and eschatological salvation after Israel’s future abandonment of the covenant.²⁹⁰ Though *Jubilees* is not an apocalypse, the author places apocalyptic discourse in service to these emphases. For example, *Jubilees* envisions a world in which evil spirits seek to mislead human beings away from God’s commands and into impurity, in which God protects the righteous, and in which God promises an eschatological future devoid of satans or evil spirits that deceive and destroy.

²⁸⁷ I use the translation by O. S. Wintermute in *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 2:52-142.

²⁸⁸ Geza Vermes originally coined the term, “Rewritten Bible” in 1961 to describe an interpretive practice in late Second Temple literature; see Geza Vermes, *Scripture and Tradition in Judaism* (StPB 4, Leiden: Brill, 1961); and Vermes, “Bible Interpretation at Qumran,” *Erlsr* 20 (1989): 185-88. Cf. Sidnie White Crawford, *Rewriting Scripture in Second Temple Times* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), 1-15, 62; James C. VanderKam, *The Book of Jubilees* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), 11-13.

²⁸⁹ Scholars place the date of composition of *Jubilees* somewhere between 170-150 B.C.E. VanderKam, *Jubilees*, 17-21; Crawford, *Rewriting Scripture*, 61-62.

²⁹⁰ For a similar list, see Crawford, *Rewriting Scripture*, 67-80.

3.2.4 *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*²⁹¹

In its present form, the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs* is a Christian composition reflecting Jewish tradition that later underwent a Christian redaction.²⁹² Though the compositional history of *Testaments* remains uncertain,²⁹³ it contains tradition parallel to Qumran literature and Jewish apocalyptic literature, particularly in the eschatological sections, suggesting that it developed in Jewish circles before being redacted by a Christian writer or

²⁹¹ I use the translation by H. C. Kee in *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 1:782-838.

²⁹² There are three main approaches to the provenance and compositional history of the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*. The dominant approach is that it was originally composed by Jews and interpolated by Christians, a view followed by the majority of scholars, including Robert H. Charles, *The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament in English*, (2 vols.; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1913), 2: 282-367; Jacob Jervell, "Ein Interpolator interpretiert: Zu der christlichen Bearbeitung der Testamente der zwölf Patriarchen," in *Studien zu den Testamenten der zwölf Patriarchen* (BZNW 36; ed. W. Eltester; Berlin: A. Töpelmann, 1969, 30-61; Anders Hultgård, *L'eschatologie des Testaments des Douze Patriarches*, I. *Interpretation des textes*, II. *Composition de l'ouvrage; textes et traductions* (Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis, Historia Religionum 6-7; Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1977, 1982); Jarl Henning Ulrichsen, *Die Gruundschrift der Testamente der Zwölf Patriarchen: Eine Untersuchung zu Umfang, Inhalt und Eigenart der ursprünglichen Schrift* (Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis, Historia Religionum, 10; Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1991); and the edition of the *Testaments* in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* edited by Charlesworth. A second approach is that the *Testaments* was written specifically by the Qumran Community. Those who hold this view approach the interpolations not as Christian, but as Essene. The main proponents of this approach are André Dupont-Sommer, *Nouveaux aperçus sur les manuscrits de la mer morte* (Paris: Maisonneuve, 1953); and Marc Philonenko, *Les interpolations chrétiennes des Testaments des Douze Patriarches et les manuscrits de Qumrân* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1960). A third approach sees the *Testaments* as essentially a Christian composition based on Jewish sources. Marinus de Jonge has been the main advocate for this position. See his article, "Christian Influence in the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs," *NovT* 4 (1960):182-235 and Harm H. Hollander and Marinus de Jonge, *The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs* (SVTP, 8; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1985). More recently, Robert Kugler has adopted this position in *The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001). For discussion of the history of research on the *Testaments*, see M. de Jonge, "The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs: Christian and Jewish: A Hundred Years after Friedrich Schnapp," in *Jewish Eschatology, Early Christian Christology and the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs: Collected Essays of Marinus de Jonge* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1991) 233-43; H. Dixon Slingerland, *The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs: A Critical History of Research* (SBL Monograph Series 21; Missoula, 1977).

²⁹³ The earliest extant Greek manuscript of the *Testaments* dates to the 9th c. C.E., and de Jonge has indicated the problems with attempting to make a definitive statement about the compositional history of the text through textual criticism. See de Jonge. "Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs," 233-43.

writers.²⁹⁴ This parallelism does not indicate literary dependence, but the appropriation of tradition drawn from the same socio-religious context. The *Testaments* is a collection of farewell speeches of the patriarchs to their children that incorporates Jewish, Christian, and Hellenistic elements.²⁹⁵ Its main rhetorical purpose is ethical exhortation²⁹⁶ that reflects both the Mosaic Law and Greco-Roman moral standards.²⁹⁷ In order to serve that purpose, it appropriates apocalyptic *topoi*. For example, the composition portrays a world of evil spirits at work to lead people astray from God's commands and virtuous living.

3.2.5 *Testament of Solomon*²⁹⁸

Similar to *The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*, the *Testament of Solomon* is the result of a compositional process that likely underwent Christian redaction in its final stages.²⁹⁹ In its full form, the *Testament of Solomon* is built on the story of

²⁹⁴ Collins, *Apocalyptic Imagination*, 134-6; de Jonge, "Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs," 241.

²⁹⁵ In general, the individual testaments include introductory passages in which the patriarchs assemble their children, followed by biographical passages, exhortations, predictions of the future, and then closing passages. For a discussion of the structure and content of the individual testaments, see Hollander and de Jonge *Testaments*, pp. 29-41.

²⁹⁶ Hollander and de Jonge argue that the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs* must be regarded as "a collection of exhortatory writings," Hollander and de Jonge, *Testaments*, pp. 31-32.

²⁹⁷ Hollander and de Jonge, *Testaments*, 41-7; Kugler, *Testaments*, 17-19.

²⁹⁸ I use the translation by D. C. Duling in *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 960-87.

²⁹⁹ Christian ideas are found in *T. Sol.* 6:8; 11:6; 12:3; 15:10-11; 17:14; and 22:20. D. C. Duling suggests either that these were later Christian additions, or that author was also Christian. Duling, "Solomon, Testament of," *ABD* 6: 118. On the other hand, Todd Klutz maintains that a Christian redactor is responsible for these portions. He argues that the material in *T. Sol.* 18 was composed first (by the mid 1st c. C. E.), followed by an early form of chaps. 1-15 (between ca 75-125 C.E.). According to Klutz's theory, these portions circulated independently and showed no signs of Christian themes. Between ca 125-175, a Christian redactor began to revise *T. Sol.* 1-15 and 18 and to use it as the basis for the composition of new material in chaps. 19-26, for the purpose of undermining Solomon's reputation. Todd E. Klutz, *Rewriting the Testament of Solomon: Tradition, Conflict and Identity in a Late Antique Pseudepigraphon* (Library of Second Temple Studies 53; London: T & T Clark, 2005), 95-110. Scholars generally date the *Testament of Solomon* between 1st-3rd c. C.E.

how Solomon constructs the temple of Jerusalem.³⁰⁰ Dennis C. Duling observes that the *Testament* conforms to the genre “testament” with regard to three characteristic features: it presents itself as the final words of Solomon to the sons of Israel, it is narrated in the first person, and it contains instructions for overpowering demons.³⁰¹ Moreover, it identifies itself as a “testament” (in the title; 15:14; 26:8).³⁰² Although the *Testament* contains these features of the genre “testament,” it also combines other genres. It opens and closes with narratives (chaps. 1-3; 19-26), and employs ancient motifs about magic, astrology, medicine, angels and demons.³⁰³ The *Testament* engages in apocalyptic discourse by disclosing a world in which heavenly beings interfere in human affairs. It communicates that the cause of disease, death, catastrophe, dissention and war is due to the nefarious activity of evil heavenly beings, and that the means of overcoming them is by recognizing the demons and knowing the names of the angels that remove their power.

³⁰⁰ C. C. McCown produced the standard edition of the Greek text of the *Testament of Solomon* (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1922), based on two recensions called A and B. He discusses 14 mss., divides 10 mss. into three recensions (rec. A, B and C), and forms an eclectic text from recs. A and B. In his translation for *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, Duling uses McCown’s text. Recently, some scholars have questioned McCown’s text-critical conclusions. See the discussion by Todd Klutz, “The Archer and the Cross,” in *Magic in the Biblical World: From the Rod of Aaron to the Ring of Solomon* (ed. T. Klutz; JSNTSup 245; London: T&T Clark, 2003), 222-38. Klutz, *Testament of Solomon*, 1-37.

³⁰¹ Duling, “Solomon, Testament of,” 117. For a more nuanced discussion of the genre of the *Testament of Solomon*, see Klutz, *Testament of Solomon*, 14-19.

³⁰² Duling does not, however, include the introduction in his analysis.

³⁰³ Dennis Duling comments, “The *Testament of Solomon* does not completely conform to this description of the genre “testament” ...it reads more like a haggadic folktale combined with medico-magical lore.” Duling, “Solomon, Testament of,” 117.

3.2.6 The War Scroll (1QM)³⁰⁴

1QM may be characterized as a “rule,” or *serek*, for the Qumran community, composed from an eschatological perspective.³⁰⁵ It foretells the attack of the Sons of Light against the Sons of Darkness. It outlines the phases of the war and gives various instructions for waging it, including instructions for the formation of troops, the priestly direction of battle, the inscription of weapons, ritual purity, and the recitation of prayers. The writer of 1QM possibly drew on Greco-Roman military manuals for the purpose of composing a “utopian tactical treatise” for conducting a war.³⁰⁶ Ultimately, however, 1QM subsumes military strategy within its religious concerns. The goal of the war is to annihilate Belial and his forces, that is, all the spiritual and human powers that have perpetrated evil against the Sons of Light. Although 1QM does not have the formal literary characteristics of an apocalypse, it exhibits an apocalyptic outlook.³⁰⁷

³⁰⁴ I use the text and translation by M. Wise, M. Abegg, and E. Cook with N. Gordon in D. W. Parry and E. Tov, eds., *Texts Concerned with Religious Law* (DSSR 1; Leiden: Brill, 2004), 208-42.

³⁰⁵ Yigael Yadin, *The Scroll of the War of the Sons of Light Against the Sons of Darkness* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1962), 5; Jean Duhaime, *The War Texts: 1QM and Related Manuscripts* (London: T&T Clark, 2004), 53.

³⁰⁶ Duhaime, *War Texts*, 60. Duhaime identifies parallels between 1QM and Greco-Roman tactical treatises. Duhaime, 57-60. Yigael Yadin argues that 1QM was a military manual, and compares it to contemporary military manuals throughout his commentary. See especially Yadin, *Scroll of the War*, 3-17. K. M. T. Atkinson also compares 1QM to Greek military manuals. K. M. T. Atkinson, “The Historical Setting of the War of the Sons of Light and the Sons of Darkness,” *BJRL* 40 (1957-58): 272-97.

³⁰⁷ It is not “a genre of revelatory literature with a narrative framework, in which revelation is mediated by an otherworldly being to a human recipient,” but it does exhibit an outlook that imagines a “transcendent reality which is both temporal, insofar as it envisages eschatological salvation, and spatial insofar as it involves another, supernatural world.” Collins, *Apocalyptic Imagination*, 9. See my discussion above.

3.2.7 Melchizedek (11QMelch)³⁰⁸

11QMelch is a fragmentary text from Qumran, with only 25 readable lines in its extant second column.³⁰⁹ While the poor state of its preservation makes a definitive interpretation impossible, enough of a running text can be reconstructed in the second column to offer a measured one. 11QMelch is an example of non-continuous or thematic pesher that is in the style of midrash particularly associated with the Qumran community.³¹⁰ The writer of 11QMelch assembles several OT passages and introduces their interpretation with the word *pesher* (2:4, 12, 17). Rather than quoting a whole biblical text and giving a continuous interpretation of it, the writer takes passages from their OT contexts and weaves them together in order to illustrate particular ideas about eschatological judgment and liberation.³¹¹ The central texts it quotes and alludes

³⁰⁸ I use the text and translation by F. García Martínez, E. J.C. Tigchelaar, and A.S. van der Woude in D. W. Parry & E. Tov, eds., *Exegetical Texts* (DSSR 2; Leiden: Brill, 2004), 24-29.

³⁰⁹ Adam S. van der Woude, the original editor, identified thirteen fragments and three columns. See A. S. van der Woude, "Melchizedek als himmlische Erlösergestalt in den neugefundenen eschatologischen Midraschim aus Qumran Höhle XI," *OTS* 14 (1965): 354-73. Others have identified a fourteenth fragment. See Paul Kobelski, *Melchizedek and Melchireša'* (CBQMS 10; Washington, DC: Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1981), 85.

³¹⁰ Jean Carmignac coined the terms "continuous pesher" ("*pëshèr* 'continu'") and "non-continuous" or "thematic pesher" ("*pëshèr* 'discontinu' ou 'thématique'). J. Carmignac, "Le document de Qumran sur Melkisedeq" *RevQ* 7 (1970): 360-61. The commentary on Habakkuk (1QpHab) is an example of continuous pesher, as it quotes Hab 1-2 and gives a continuous interpretation of it. 4QFlorilegium is an example of thematic pesher, as it assembles various passages from the OT in order to interpret them for a particular purpose. Hartmut Stegemann uses the term "midrash" synonymously with thematic pesher in his treatment of 4Q252. H. Stegemann, "Weitere Stücke von 4QpPsalm 37, von 4QPatriarchal Blessings und Hinweis auf eine unedierte Handschrift aus Höhle 4Q mit Exzerpten aus dem Deuteronomium," *RevQ* 6 (1967): 193-227, esp. 213-17. Accordingly, van Der Woude identifies 11QMelch as an "eschatological midrash" in "Melchizedek als himmlische Erlösergestalt in den neugefundenen eschatologischen Midraschim aus Qumran Höhle XI," *Oudtestamentische Studiën*, 14 (1965): 354-73, esp. p. 357. See also J. A. Fitzmyer, "Further Light on Melchizedek from Qumran Cave 11," *JBL* 86 (1967), 26.

³¹¹ On this point, see also A. Aschim, "The Genre of 11QMelchizedek," in *Qumran Between the Old and New Testaments* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998), 29. Since the text is

to are Lev. 25:13, regarding the return of Israelites to their own property in the year of jubilee, and Isa. 61:1-2, regarding the liberation of exiled captives by God's anointed one. 11QMelch engages in apocalyptic discourse by interpreting these texts in terms of God's end-time judgment and in terms of the supernatural world. The captives do not need liberation only from foreign nations, but also from evil spirits. Liberation will come through the heavenly figure Melchizedek, who will appear with a host of angels to execute judgment on Belial and his evil spirits, and to set free those who had been held captive by Belial's power.

3.3 The Book of Daniel as a Template

Now that I have described the particular emphases of each respective composition, I turn to Daniel in order to establish a template of apocalyptic *topoi*. Rather than identifying particular *topoi* in order to draw parallels between Daniel and the other compositions, I identify *topoi* in order to place Daniel in dialogical relationship with *1 Enoch*, *Jubilees*, the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*, the *Testament of Solomon*, 1QM, 11QMelch, and finally with Mark. I investigate the way these compositions engage in apocalyptic discourse to elucidate both their shared symbolic world and their distinctive rhetorical aims.

I use the work of John Collins as a point of departure in order to build the taxonomy for my discussion. In *The Apocalyptic Imagination*, he notes that "within the common framework of the definition," apocalypses emphasize the vertical-spatial and temporal dimensions of the apocalyptic outlook differently,

fragmentary, it is also possible that 11QMelch could be a *peshet* on a biblical text, e.g., Isa 61:1-2 or Lev 25:13, the central texts of the composition.

and may be distinguished into types according to the exhibition of visions and otherworldly journeys, or the review of history.³¹² Among the differences, Collins notes two elements that all apocalypses share: “the revelation of a supernatural world and the activity of supernatural beings are essential to all the apocalypses. In all there are also a final judgment and a destruction of the wicked.”³¹³ I use these two themes, the activity of heavenly beings and final judgment, as overarching *topoi* with which to frame my discussion.

In his discussion of the characteristics of the genre apocalypse, Collins identifies various temporal and eschatological elements that appear in the compositions. These include an interest in cosmogony, an interest in primordial events, a recollection of the past, *ex eventu* prophecy, persecution, eschatological upheavals, judgment, cosmic transformation, resurrection, and other forms of afterlife.³¹⁴ We may consider these to be *topoi* of apocalyptic discourse.³¹⁵ I am particularly interested in Collins’ observation that persecution is an element in several apocalypses, including Daniel. Because the Beelzebul discourse in Mark portrays Jesus’ ministry as a rescue operation from oppressive powers, I include

³¹² Collins, *Apocalyptic Imagination*, 6.

³¹³ Collins, *Apocalyptic Imagination*, 6.

³¹⁴ Collins, *Apocalyptic Imagination*, 7.

³¹⁵ Greg Carey identifies eleven of the most common *topoi* of apocalyptic discourse, which he considers to be a starting point rather than an exhaustive list: an interest in an alternative reality that includes temporal and spatial dimensions; revelation through visions or auditions; the presence of heavenly intermediaries to explain revelation; powerful symbolism; pseudonymity; cosmic catastrophe that precedes the deliverance of the faithful; dualism (i.e., between the righteous and the wicked, and between the present evil age and the age to come); belief that God has set the course of history; final judgment and afterlife; *ex eventu* prophecy; and cosmic speculation. Carey, *Ultimate Things*, 6-10

persecution in my taxonomy in addition to the activity of heavenly beings and final judgment.

Below, I establish that three key themes throughout Daniel are the persecution of the righteous, the activity of heavenly beings, and God's judgment. As I have stated, these themes are recognizable *topoi* in apocalyptic discourse, and provide the basis of my discussion. Within these three overarching *topoi*, I discuss other *topoi* as they appear in each respective composition. For instance, the binding of evil spirits does not appear in Daniel, but it does appear as a significant element of the activity of heavenly beings and of judgment in other compositions.

The second half of Daniel contains three parallel visions that describe the same course of events with different symbols and slightly different emphases (chaps. 7, 8, 10-12). All three visions, however, lead up to the same point of crisis, judgment and deliverance: A powerful kingdom rises with an arrogant king who fails to honor God and persecutes God's people; but at the appointed time God intervenes to bring this enemy to an end and deliver the righteous.

3.3.1 Persecution

The book of Daniel addresses a situation in which oppressive human powers dominate the righteous. These holy ones are unable to deliver themselves and must trust in the God who saves them. The tales in the first half of the book introduce the theme of persecution, in which Daniel and his friends respond to various oppressive situations by remaining obedient to the Law.

Then, the visions (chaps. 7, 8, 10-12) depict a larger community of faith experiencing persecution by enemy nations. In both the tales and the visions, the holy ones wait for God's intervention on their behalf. While they wait, their proper response to oppression and persecution is faithful obedience to God, even to the point of laying down their lives. The stories about the fiery furnace and the lion's den illustrate this point (3:1-30, esp. v. 18; 6:1-28), though Daniel and his friends finally escape death because of their faithfulness. In fact, the story of the furnace emphasizes that "the fire had not had any power over the bodies of those men; the hair of their heads was not singed, their tunics were not harmed, and not even the smell of fire came from them" (3:27). These stories reiterate the idea that the righteous obey God's Law and trust God to save them.

The visions escalate the situation beyond the stories to portray the harsh reality of martyrdom, perhaps because these visions also include divine revelation regarding the future of the oppressors and the righteous. In his first vision, Daniel sees that the "little horn" "made war with the holy ones and prevailed over them, until the Ancient One came" (7:21) and that he will "wear out the holy ones of the Most High" (v. 25). In the third vision, Daniel sees a group dying under persecution: "The wise among the people shall give understanding to many; for some days, however, they shall fall by sword and flame, and suffer captivity and plunder...Some of the wise shall fall, so that they may be refined, purified, and cleansed, until the time of the end" (11:33, 35). Unlike the endings of the tales in the first half of the book, God does not save the

righteous from death; rather, death at the hands of the oppressor becomes the means of their purification and glory. In both the first and third visions, the righteous suffer persecution at the hands of their oppressors right up until the end, when God appears in judgment.

3.3.2 Heavenly Beings

Daniel reveals that there is a supernatural dimension to human activity in the world. From a human perspective, God's holy ones struggle against the persecution of ungodly nations. Daniel's apocalyptic discourse, however, discloses a realm in which powers invisible to the human eye are at work. The human beings in Daniel inhabit a world in which spiritual powers, and not just people, are involved in a struggle between two contrasting sides of good and evil. When God's people suffer, angels appear as God's agents to deliver them in both the tales (chaps. 1-6) and the visions (chaps. 7-12). For example, an angel delivers the men from the fiery furnace (3:25, 28), and another delivers Daniel from the mouths of the lions (6:22). Later, (chaps. 7-12), angels appear both to interpret Daniel's visions³¹⁶ and to act as God's agents of deliverance within those visions (12:1-3).

³¹⁶ The angel Gabriel appears to take this role, revealing the divine mysteries that Daniel has seen. Daniel approaches "one of the attendants" to ask for an interpretation of his first vision (7:15), and Gabriel is named as the interpreting angel in his second vision (8:15). In chapter 9, Daniel mentions "the man Gabriel, whom I had seen before in a vision" (9:21). The third vision does not explicitly name Gabriel as the interpreting angel (10:5). The appearance of Gabriel in 8:15 and 9:21 and the parallel nature of the visions leads to the supposition that Gabriel is the interpreting angel in all three. See also J. J. Collins, *Daniel*, 373.

Daniel's third vision most clearly exhibits the struggle between two contrasting sides with an earthly and heavenly counterpart (chaps. 10-12). This vision begins with a long introduction in which an angel, presumably Gabriel, describes his and the angel Michael's involvement in a heavenly struggle behind the earthly wars of the Persian and Greek Empires (10:2-11:1, esp. v. 13, 20-21, 11:1). Then, the angel continues with a description of the Hellenistic wars from an earthly perspective, through the reign of Antiochus IV and his profanation of the Temple and persecution of God's people (chap. 11). Ultimately, this king "shall come to his end, with no one to help him" (11:45). At that time, Michael arises to deliver the righteous (12:1-3). The explanation of Michael's involvement in the heavenly struggle behind the earthly wars suggests that Michael also has been responsible for the downfall of the final evil king, on behalf of God's people. The long introduction with its description of the heavenly battle sets the scene for these wars by suggesting that their outcome does not depend on human power, but on supernatural power.

A heavenly being also appears in Daniel's first vision (chap. 7). When the "little horn" that arises from the fourth beast begins to speak arrogantly, Daniel sees the Ancient of Days appear at the appointed time to sit on his throne in judgment. When the Ancient of Days sits on the throne, the court sits in judgment; the books are open and the scene moves straight to the destruction of the fourth beast, or the fourth kingdom (7:9-11). The destruction of this kingdom also means the destruction of the arrogant "little horn" that had emerged from it.

Judgment of the oppressor now makes way for deliverance of the holy ones who had been oppressed. In contrast to the beasts that have emerged from the sea as transitory kingdoms, “one like a son of man” comes with the clouds to receive an everlasting kingdom and the service of all other nations (vv. 13-14).³¹⁷ In the interpretation of Daniel’s vision, the people of the holy ones of the Most High are those who receive the everlasting kingdom and the service of all other nations after the court sits in judgment and destroys the last human kingdom (vv. 26-27). This interpretation indicates a connection between the one like a son of man and the holy ones of the Most High.³¹⁸ That is, the one like a son of man appears to be a symbolic figure that represents the holy ones of the Most High in their triumph over their oppressors.³¹⁹ Just as this figure receives an everlasting kingdom, so

³¹⁷ Elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible, the sea is a place opposed to God, as in Ps 74:13-15; Isa 17:12-14; 51:9-10; Jer 46:7-8. The coming of the “one like a son of man” with the clouds of heaven indicates emergence from a divine locale, portraying a stark contrast.

³¹⁸ I take the phrase “holy ones” in 7:18 to refer to human beings, and “holy ones of the Most High” in 7:27 to be exegetical, referring to persecuted Jews. In contrast, J. J. Collins argues that “holy ones” in 7:18, 22, 25, 27 refers to angels, on the basis of the frequent use of the term in the HB and Qumran literature to refer to angels. J. J. Collins, *Daniel*, 312-18. In this case, the vision of 7:15-28 would describe a heavenly battle scene, in which God pronounces judgment against angelic offenders. The context of Daniel 7, however, most naturally refers to the earthly conflict between Antiochus IV and faithful Jews. Those who hold that “holy ones” refers to human beings, not angels, include Hartman and Di Lella, *Daniel*, 89-102; Maurice Casey, *Son of Man: The Interpretation and Influence of Daniel 7* (London: SPCK, 1979), 40-48; Goldingay, *Daniel*, 146; Lucas, *Daniel*, 162-3, 191-4.

³¹⁹ My view follows the line of interpretation that understands the “one like a son of man” as a representative figure for the holy ones, or righteous Jews (7:18, 27). Another line of interpretation takes the “one like a son of man” to be an angel who is the leader of the heavenly hosts who are the “holy ones of the Most High” (7:27). Those who hold this interpretation argue that elsewhere in Daniel angels have the appearance and the voice of human beings (3:25; 8:15; 9:21; 10:5; 12:5-7), and that the parallelism with the third vision suggests that the “one like a son of man” is Michael (12:1-3). Scholars who hold this view include J. J. Collins, *Daniel*, 304-10; and Christopher C. Rowland, *The Open Heaven: A Study of Apocalyptic in Judaism and Early Christianity* (London: SPCK, 1982), 178-89. I take the phrase “holy ones” to refer to human beings rather than angels (see above footnote), and the “one like a son of man” as representative for this group. I view the point of the text as a contrast between the beasts and the “one like a son of man,” and also a contrast between the establishment of two very different kinds of kingdoms, one kind set up by those who thwart God and one kind set up by God for God’s people (the pinnacle of God’s

also the holy ones of the Most High will receive it, but only after a time of persecution and suffering (7:21, 25). The heavenly arrival of the one like a son of man emphasizes the power of God exercised through God's creatures, the people of Israel. The vision of the one like a son of man gives a persecuted community eyes to see their true status and their imminent future.

3.3.3 Judgment

According to Daniel's view of history, oppressive human powers continue to dominate the righteous until God appears in judgment. Until that time, the righteous are unable to deliver themselves from oppression but must trust in the God who saves them. The expectation of final judgment is a key *topos* in Daniel, because it is the time when God punishes oppressors and delivers the holy ones.

The tales in the first half of the book introduce the idea that only divine intervention can deliver the righteous from an oppressive king's power. In each tale, Daniel and his friends respond to a situation of persecution by remaining obedient to the Law. They receive a death sentence and are powerless to save themselves. Because of their faithfulness God intervenes to save them from execution by revealing the king's dream and its interpretation,³²⁰ and from the fiery furnace and the lions' jaws by sending a delivering angel (chaps. 2, 3, 6).

creation, cf. Ps. 8). Furthermore, the "one like a son of man" possesses characteristics that Michael and the other angels do not. Unlike the angels, this figure receives "dominion, glory and kingship, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him" (7:14), and his kingdom and kingship are everlasting. Scholars who view the "one like a son of man" as either a symbolic or representative figure include Baldwin, *Daniel*, 148-54; Casey, *Son of Man*, 24-7; Goldingay, *Daniel*, 169-172; Hartman and Di Lella, *Daniel*; Lucas, *Daniel*, 185-7.

³²⁰ Daniel praises God saying, "Blessed be the name of God from age to age, for wisdom and power are his....To you, O God of my ancestors, I give thanks and praise, for you have given me

The visions (chaps. 7, 8, 10-12) depict a larger community of faith experiencing persecution right up until God delivers them. In Daniel's first vision he sees the "Little Horn," the king who arises from the fourth beast, make war with the holy ones (7:21) and wear them out (v. 25) right up until the time that the Ancient One appears. In his third vision, Daniel sees the wise fall by the sword and flame until the time of the end (11:33-35). At the height of the persecution of the righteous, when the arrogant king seems most powerful, God appears in judgment to destroy the oppressor and deliver the righteous. The first vision portrays the decisiveness of God's judgment. Daniel watches the Little Horn speaking arrogantly, when his gaze lifts to the establishment of heavenly thrones and God's appearance in judgment, but he is soon distracted by the noise of the Little Horn's arrogant words again (7:8-11; cf. 8:25; 11:36-39). The Little Horn's noisy display both before and after the Ancient One's appearance in judgment is ironic. Immediately, the Little Horn's kingdom is destroyed, as if while he is still speaking (7:11). Evil human powers may appear invincible, but their display of power only amounts to conceit because God has appointed the time of their end. The book of Daniel provides wisdom for interpreting a present experience of persecution, to give assurance that God will finally triumph over the forces of evil, so that Jews can remain faithful in crisis.³²¹

The hope of the holy ones comes to fruition in the final chapter of the book. Daniel reveals that the people of Israel have a heavenly protector, the

wisdom and power, and have now revealed to me what we have asked of you, for you have revealed to us what the king ordered" (Dan. 2:20, 23, NRSV, my emphasis).

³²¹ See also J. J. Collins, *Apocalyptic Imagination*, 114.

angel Michael, or “the great prince,” who will arise to deliver them from the invasion of the final evil king (12:1-3; cf. 11:45). He has communicated that God will destroy all human kingdoms so that the elect may receive an everlasting kingdom (2:44; 7:14). Now Daniel has a vision that shifts from the earthly realm to the heavenly realm, indicating that the scope of this deliverance transcends the physical world. Those who sleep will awake and the wise – those who had given up their lives (11:33-35) – will shine like stars in the sky forever (12:2-3). The deliverance of the righteous happens at the resurrection of the dead when the wise experience some measure of everlasting life and their wicked counterparts experience everlasting shame (12:1-3). The vision of this future hope provides an imaginative basis for a non-violent response to persecution when there is no other solution for it in the present. The righteous must continue to persevere and, if necessary, give up their lives; but the wisdom they have through these revelations allows them to understand the goal of their present experience.³²²

3.4 Applying the Template

Having discussed how three *topoi* of persecution, heavenly beings, and judgment function in the context of Daniel, I now take each *topos* and discuss it in the contexts of *1 En.*, *Jub.*, *T. 12 Patr.*, *1QM*, and *11QMelch.* This approach allows me to compare these compositions, in order to illuminate both their shared symbolic world and the distinctive aims of their apocalyptic discourse.

³²² See also J. J. Collins, *Apocalyptic Imagination*, 111.

3.4.1 Persecution

While Daniel addresses the persecution of the righteous by ungodly people and nations in a political context, the compositions I consider below emphasize various forms of persecution or victimization. God's people variously experience war, violence, injustice, oppression, temptation, and sin. Whatever the emphasis in the respective compositions, they share the perspective that the current state of the world is awry because the righteous are victimized. Each composition offers a perspective on how the righteous should live and hope in the face of different forms of oppression.

3.4.1.1 1 Enoch

1 Enoch describes various ways that human beings have perpetrated violence, injustice and oppression against the righteous. The Animal Vision in the Book of Dreams displays human violence in its recital of history (chaps. 85-90). Cain murders Abel (85:4), setting in motion the violence that brings about the judgment at the flood (chap. 89).³²³ After the flood, the Gentiles begin to terrorize Israel (89:10-27). The narrative continues to tell Israel's history of being deceived, going astray, and suffering oppression and violence by Gentile enemies. The Similitudes condemns kings, governors and landowners ("the mighty") for misusing their power and wealth to oppress people (46:4-8). Enoch hears the righteous pray for God to execute judgment on their behalf, and sees their blood ascending into heaven to God's throne (47:1-4). The three-fold

³²³ Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch* 1, 47.

repetition of “the blood of the righteous” at the beginning, middle and end of the section (47:1, 2, 4) highlights the violence involved in their oppression. The Epistle of Enoch focuses on social violence, and pronounces a series of woes upon sinners for persecuting the righteous, condemning them for hoarding bread, water, and wine, and using their money to exploit the weak (96:4-8).

Though human beings are responsible for sin, deception, injustice, and violence, *1 Enoch* also envisions them as the victims of heavenly beings who have rebelled against God.³²⁴ It opens with the story of how the Watchers have been responsible for the moral and physical defilement of the earth and its people, by leaving their proper place in heaven both to impregnate women who have given birth to giants that terrorize and oppress people (7:2-6; 9:6, 9), and to teach people improper knowledge that leads to sin (8:1-4; 9:6). The Book of Dreams repeats the story of the Watchers in its recital of history, portraying the heavenly rebels as fallen stars whose offspring terrorize people until the earth cries out (86:1-87:1). The Similitudes also appears to draw on the tradition of the Watchers, indicating a demonic source for the violence and oppression that kings and strong ones perpetrate against the righteous. According to the Book of the Watchers, Azazel is the leader of the fallen angels who teaches the art of war, among other improper secrets (8:1). The Similitudes names the kings and the strong ones of the earth “the armies of Azazel” and “messengers of Satan” (54:5,

³²⁴ An ontological dualism between heavenly beings and human beings shapes the conception of persecution in *1 En*. The tradition in the story of the Watchers makes a distinction between flesh and spirit, and the Watchers violated this distinction in their rebellion. As a result of this violation of the spirit and flesh distinction, human beings learn improper heavenly secrets and suffer from the offspring of forbidden sexual unions. See Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch 1*, 40-41.

6), indicating that this heavenly rebel has led the human oppressors in their offending actions. Because of this correspondence in criminality, the human offenders receive the same punishment as their heavenly instigators (10:14; 90:26-27).³²⁵ Both human beings and heavenly beings persecute the righteous, through such means as deception, violence, injustice, and economic exploitation.

3.4.1.2 Jubilees

Jubilees addresses the harsh realities of sin, injustice, and disease on the earth both before and after the flood. The writer reveals that these calamities are due to the activity of evil spirits and their leader, who victimize human beings by ensnaring them in sin and by causing all kinds of evil on the earth. Evil angels that descend to the earth and impregnate women bring about the human injustice and corruption that results in the judgment of the flood (*Jub.* 5:1-2). After the flood, demons lead Noah's descendents astray and seek to destroy them (10:1-3). Noah prays that God would bind all the demons until the day of judgment in order to keep them from having power over the righteous (v. 6). The leader of the demons, here called Mastema, asks God to leave one tenth of the demons under his authority to continue to corrupt and lead people astray until the day of his judgment (vv. 7-14). God grants this request and sends one of the angels of the presence to teach Noah healing arts (v. 10), indicating that the

³²⁵ In the Book of the Watchers and the Book of Dreams, the heavenly offenders are bound with chains and cast into an abyss while the human offenders are set against one another to annihilate each other in a human battle. The judgment scene in the Similitudes collapses the judgment of the heavenly and human offenders, as the kings and strong ones are bound and thrown into an abyss.

evil spirits not only cause sin and injustice, but also all kinds of diseases.³²⁶

Throughout the rest of the composition, evil spirits compel people to sin and lead them to their own destruction (11:1-6; 16:31). The righteous, that is, Moses, Noah, and Abraham, pray that God would save them and their descendents from the influence of evil spirits that seek to rule over peoples' hearts and keep them from following God (1:20-21; 10:1-6; 12:20; 20:28). The writer of *Jubilees* communicates that human beings are the victims of evil spirits who seek to harm the righteous in body, mind and spirit.

3.4.1.3. The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs

Apart from their narrative role in the Joseph story, particularly the Levite's vengeance on Shechem (*T. Levi* 5-6), the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs* does not feature human beings as the perpetrators of oppression and violence. Instead, demonic powers victimize human beings by drawing them into moral failure. From a human perspective, people struggle to remain upright with regard to God's law, or with regard to Greco-Roman moral standards. The composition envisions this not only as a human struggle, but also as a supernatural struggle. The archangel Beliar seeks opportunity to overpower people who fall into sin and to rule over them (*T. Reu.* 4:11; *T. Dan* 4:7; *T. Ash.* 1:8-9). Dan describes how one of Beliar's evil spirits enticed him to sin against Joseph (*T. Dan* 1:6-9) and warns his sons to guard themselves constantly against Satan and his spirits, and the efforts of these spirits to cause their downfall (6:2-

³²⁶ VanderKam, *Jubilees*, 128.

6). In particular, the evil spirits are closely associated with the sins or vices that the patriarchs exhort their sons to avoid. Simeon warns his sons against envy, but also against the spirit of envy (*T. Sim.* chaps. 3-4). If a person does not avoid envy, the spirit of envy takes over and destroys the whole body and mind (*T. Sim.* 4:7-9). Likewise, Dan warns his sons against anger, but also against the spirit of anger (*T. Dan* chaps. 1-4). Dan depicts anger and lying as Satan's helpers to commit acts of cruelty (*T. Dan* 3:6). These evil spirits are the external powers that lay hold of a person's own disposition towards sin to hold him captive to it (*T. Reu.* 2:1-2; *T. Sim.* 3:1-3; *T. Levi* 9:9; *T. Jud.* 14:8; 16:1; *T. Dan* 1:6-9; 2:4-5; 3:6; 4:7; 6:1; *T. Ash.* 1:8-9).

Though Beliar and his spirits victimize people, the *Testaments* asserts that the righteous are by no means powerless, but are able to remain free from that victimization by means of their choices. If a person does the will of God, the spirits of error, such as envy, malice, and avarice will have no power over him (*T. Iss.* 4:1-6; cf. *T. Naph.* 3:1). Asher tells his sons that God has given people a choice between two ways, two dispositions, two kinds of actions, two ways of living, and two ends (*T. Ash.* 1:3). The person who chooses the evil way will be overpowered by Beliar (*T. Ash.* 1:8-9), while the person who chooses the good way will destroy the devil with good works (3:2). Other patriarchs affirm that the devil will flee from those who persist in doing what is good, but inhabits as his instrument those who fail (*T. Naph.* 8:4-6; cf. *T. Sim.* 3:5; *T. Benj.* 3:1-5; 6:1).³²⁷

³²⁷ For example, the temperate wine drinker is in no moral danger; but the one who is intemperate gives an opening to the spirit of error (*T. Jud.* 14:8). Practicing sexual promiscuity

The patriarchs use the example of Joseph to confirm that a person can live a virtuous life. For example, Reuben tells his sons that Joseph did not allow sexual impurity to get a hold of him, and as a result received God's protection. He concludes that if his sons likewise do not allow sexual impurity to overcome them, then neither will Beliar overcome them (*T. Reu.* 4:8-11; cf. *T. Ben.* 3:3-4).

The entire *Testament of Joseph* demonstrates that Joseph is able to avoid the vices and uphold the virtues contained in the patriarchs exhortations. Human beings are able to resist the victimization of demonic powers by avoiding sin, thereby receiving God's protection.

In the future, however, the patriarchs predict that their sons will ultimately fail to choose what is good and succumb to Beliar's oppression and captivity. Several of the patriarchs foresee that in the last days their descendents will not follow their teaching, but abandon God and God's commands (*T. Levi* 14; 16:1-2; *T. Jud.* 23:1-2; *T. Iss.* 6:1-2; *T. Zeb.* 9:5; *T. Dan* 5:4; *T. Naph.* 4:1; *T. Ash.* 7:2, 5; *T. Benj.* 9:1). Issachar warns his sons that in the last days their children will abandon God's commands and embrace Beliar (*T. Iss.* 6:1). Likewise, Zebulon predicts that in the last days his descendents will abandon the Lord, having been led astray in all their actions by the spirits of deceit (*T. Zeb.* 9:5-7). Because of the sin of Israel, the Lord must arise and liberate these captives from Beliar, so that they may trample down every spirit of error and have mastery over them (*T. Sim.* 6:6; *T. Levi* 18:12; *T. Zeb.* 9:8; *T. Dan* 5:10-11). The Lord will free Israel from

leads a person to Beliar (*T. Reu.* 4:7; *T. Sim.* 5:3) while refraining from it keeps a person from Beliar's power (*T. Reu.* 4:11).

captivity to Beliar and his evil spirits so that they may no longer be led astray in their beliefs and actions. The victimization is moral and ethical, and so is the deliverance.

3.4.1.4. Testament of Solomon

Similar to *Jubilees* and the *Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs*, demons take center stage throughout the *Testament of Solomon*. Twice, Solomon states that he writes his testament in order to communicate the powers of the demons against human beings (*T. Sol.* 1:1; 15:14). The *Testament* begins with the evil activity of the demon Ornias, who victimizes a little boy that inspires the artisans working on the temple (1:1-4). Solomon prays that God would give him authority over the demon, and God grants his request. With the help of a magic ring, Solomon binds the demon Ornias and gains control over him by learning his name and his work (1:5-7; 2:1-4). He demands that Ornias bring him Beelzeboul, the Prince of demons (2:9). When Beelzeboul appears, Solomon commands him to explain the work of all the unclean spirits, and Beelzeboul promises to bring them to Solomon so that he can likewise ascertain their names and their work (3:6). Through Solomon's inquisition of the demons, the reader learns about the source of countless forms of suffering on the earth (chaps. 1-18).

The *Testament* reveals that demons that are responsible for inciting violence and inflicting pain upon human beings and causing natural disasters. Particular demons aim to kill and murder (*T. Sol.* 4:5; 9:1-2; 17:1-3). Others cause all kinds of illness and disease, including headaches, sore throats, tumors,

paralysis, colic, fever, gas, and insomnia (11:2; 12:2; 13:3-4; 18:5-11, 13-14, 17-21, 23-37). Like *Jubilees*, the *Testament* draws a correlation between demonic influence and disease.³²⁸ In addition, various demons make it their aim to destroy love, marriage and the well-being of households through dissention and coldness of heart (5:7; 7:5; 18:15, 22, 38). Beelzeboul entices people to worship demons, stimulates desire in holy men and priests, and the demon Belbel perverts peoples' hearts and minds (6:4; 18:12). Demons create factions and enemies, raise and depose tyrants, and cause violence and war (6:4; 8:5-11; 18:16). Some demons stimulate sexual perversion (2:3; 14:4), and others cause shipwrecks and seasickness (16:1-5). From a human perspective, people suffer various ills because of their human opponents, their weak desires and their weak bodies. The *Testament* exposes the demons that persecute human beings and are truly responsible for their problems.

3.4.1.5. *The War Scroll* (1QM)

The *War Scroll* addresses the persecution of the righteous community indirectly. The Sons of Light are those who have been exiled into the wilderness, namely the Qumran community that has separated itself from the Jerusalem establishment (1QM 1.2).³²⁹ Opposed to them are biblical Israel's traditional enemies, the Kittim, or foreign nations, and those who have violated the

³²⁸ Craig Evans notes the close association between demonic activity and illness in late antiquity that is evident in compositions such as the *Testament of Solomon*, and also in the Gospels. C. Evans, "Jesus' Exorcisms and Proclamation of the Kingdom of God in Light of the Testaments," in *The Changing Face of Judaism, Christianity, and Other Greco-Roman Religions in Antiquity* (ed. by I. H. Henderson and G. S. Oegema; Gütersloh: Gütersloher, 2006), 213.

³²⁹ See Yadin, *Scroll of the War*, 38, 257.

covenant, against whom they will make an attack (cf. Dan 11:32). The prayers for battle express how the Sons of Light see themselves in relation to their enemies. The first prayer (1QM 10.1-11.12) invokes God's intervention in the present war on the basis of God's past assistance. The prayer describes how God helped David defeat Goliath, and helped Israel defeat the Philistines. In both cases, the weak defeated the strong. In the same way, the prayer invokes God to help the weak defeat the strong in the present war, by delivering the mighty men of the arrogant nations into the hands of the oppressed (11.8-9; cf. 13-14). Another prayer envisions all the unbelieving nations that had oppressed the righteous bowing down to them instead (12.14). The Sons of Light view themselves as those who are oppressed by unbelieving nations and the apostate Jews that support them.

Just as in the compositions I have examined above, 1QM also imagines human beings to be victimized by a host of evil spirits. The archangel Belial has an army of evil spirits under his command, and rules over the present time, until a day appointed for his destruction (14.9).³³⁰ Belial and his minions victimize the Sons of Darkness – the enemies of the Sons of Light – by destroying and convicting them (1QM 13.10-11; 12.2-5). These evil hordes also seek to lead astray the Sons of Light from following the covenant, in order to bring them into

³³⁰ The Community Rule envisions the present as the time of Belial's rule. Membership in the *Yahad* gives initiates knowledge and strength so that they can keep God's commands and not backslide due to fear and persecution during this time of Belial's rule (1QS 1.11-12). During the initiation of new members, the priests recite God's gracious acts for Israel, and the Levites recite all Israel's sins during Belial's rule (21-22; cf. 4Q256, 2.12). Throughout the days of Belial's rule, all the people are to pass through an annual review to confirm their holy standing in the community (1QS 2.19-26). Furthermore, 4Q510-511 and 11QApPs^a (11Q11) contain incantations for God to destroy the demons because of their efforts to lead the righteous astray.

the dominion of darkness (14.9-10). The writer of 1QM gives the reader eyes to see human struggles as a spiritual battle.

3.4.1.6. Melchizedek (*11QMelch*)

11QMelch presupposes that the righteous are oppressed by Belial and his spirits, and imagines the solution to that oppression in the form of eschatological judgment. Like 1QM, 11QMelch imagines the present time as the time of Belial's rule, when Belial and his spirits victimize human beings by seeking to draw them away from God's covenant and imprison them in sin (1QM 14.9; cf. 1QS 2.19; 3.21-25; CD 12.23; 15.7).³³¹ Belial and his spirits have held captive the Sons of Light, and Melchizedek will appear to carry out God's vengeance against them (2.15). The destruction of Belial and his forces results in the liberation of the captives (2.6, 13, 25).

In addition, 11QMelch presupposes that the righteous are oppressed by the nations and by those who perpetrate evil and injustice. The quotation and interpretation of Ps 82:2 (11QMelch 2.11-12) indicates that Belial and his spirits stand behind this oppression. The writer quotes Ps 82:2 to affirm the coming judgment of God through the divine agent Melchizedek, "How long will you judge unjustly, and be partial to the wicked," suggesting that God has allowed the wicked to flourish and triumph during the present time. The writer follows with, "the interpretation of it concerns Belial and the spirits of his lot wh[o], in [the]ir tur[ning] away from God's commandments to [commit evil]" (11QMelch

³³¹ See also Kobelski, *Melchizedek*, 62-3.

2.11-12). The use of the Psalm in this text suggests that the wicked have prospered against the righteous for a time, and that Belial and his spirits are the heavenly powers behind the earthly oppressors of the righteous.³³² The solution to this victimization is that in the last days Melchizedek will appear to make atonement for the peoples' sins and free them from the hand of Belial. This day of freedom is the day of salvation for the people of God, when they will experience justice, peace and comfort (2.14-25).³³³

3.4.2 Heavenly Beings

Throughout these compositions the righteous struggle against Gentile nations, corrupt landowners, wealthy neighbors, disease, and their own sinful tendencies. As I discussed above, apocalyptic discourse reveals that these struggles are not simply against people, but against an array of malevolent spirits. In fact, these compositions envision a supernatural struggle between evil spirits and God's holy angels that correlates to human struggles.

3.4.2.1 1 Enoch

1 Enoch exhibits a dualism between the fallen angels who rebel against God and the holy angels who obey.³³⁴ When people cry out for justice against the

³³² See also Kobelski, *Melchizedek*, 17-18; 62-63; van der Woude, "Melchisedek," 365.

³³³ For 11QMelch 2.15, Kobelski suggests the reading, "This is the day of [salvation]," while in their translation, Martinez, Tigchelaar and van der Woude suggest, "This is the day of [peace]. Both are picking up on language from Isa 52:7 quoted in v. 16, which speaks of the messenger who announces peace and salvation. Kobelski argues for the restoration of the word "salvation" on linguistic and thematic grounds. For example, the concern of the entire piece is with the liberation of captives from Belial's rule, making this the time of salvation. Kobelski, *Melchizedek*, 20.

³³⁴ Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch I*, 37-41.

rebel angels and their offspring (8:4; 9:3, 10), four holy angels intercede to God on their behalf and then enact God's punishment. God commissions these holy ones who have retained their proper function in the heavenly court to execute judgment upon those who have not.³³⁵ Raphael is to imprison Asael, the leader of the Watchers who had taught improper secrets that led to human deception and sin (10:4-8; cf. 8:1-4; 10:9-10; cf. 7:2-5). Michael is to imprison Shemihazah for leading the Watchers to descend and impregnate human women,³³⁶ to destroy the giants, and ultimately to cleanse the earth from its impurity for the righteous to dwell (10:11-11:2). Like Raphael, Michael will bind the fallen angels until the judgment day, when he will throw them into a fiery abyss. Enoch's heavenly journeys (chaps. 17-36) display the cosmic setting of the judgment pronounced against the Watchers in chapter 10, and thereby add to its force.³³⁷ Throughout these journeys, Enoch sees God punish fallen stars for their failure to function according to their nature, by binding them until the time of final judgment, when they are cast into an eternal prison house (17:16; 21:1-3, 6; 22:11). This judgment and act of binding corresponds to God's commission of the holy ones to bind the Watchers in chapter 10. *1 Enoch* reveals a world of heavenly beings in which fallen angels are responsible for the suffering of the righteous and holy angels are at work to rectify their circumstances.

³³⁵ Judgment is not the only role of the holy angels. For their various roles, see Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch* 1, 43-45.

³³⁶ God gives Semyaz power to rule over the other angels (9:7). Asael is also depicted as chief of these angels (e.g., 10:8). In his commentary on *1 Enoch*, Nickelsburg attributes this discrepancy to at least three versions of the myth of the descent of the Watchers (194-6). The angels are judged for teaching oppression by revealing improper heavenly secrets, and for revealing every kind of sin to people by impregnating the women (9:6-9; chaps. 15-16).

³³⁷ See also Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch* 1, 278.

The Son of Man, also called the Righteous One, Chosen One, and Elect One, appears in the Similitudes as a heavenly being that surpasses the rest of the heavenly host in function.³³⁸ Unlike the four holy ones, the Son of Man himself sits on the throne of God's glory to execute judgment (61:8; 63:5).³³⁹ The second parable introduces a heavenly being with the appearance of a man and the expression of an angel accompanying the "Head of Days" (46:1). Enoch's interpreting angel identifies this figure as the Son of Man, whom God has chosen to triumph eternally in righteousness (v. 3).³⁴⁰ He will reveal what is hidden (v. 3), and remove kings and mighty ones from their powerful positions (vv. 4-6). Though the Son of Man remains concealed to the world, Enoch's vision reveals his existence to the elect (vv. 6-7). The Son of Man, then, reveals wisdom about his future salvation in order to reinforce the elects' opposition to the sins of this present time (48:6-10). In Enoch's third parable, he sees the Son of Man finally revealed publicly, in all his glory to kings, governors, rulers and landowners who have oppressed the elect (62:1-7). The oppressors will panic at this revelation of the Son of Man (vv. 3-5), and beg for mercy from him in vain (v. 9, 11). He delivers them over to punishing angels, who take vengeance upon them (v. 11). On the other hand, because the Son of Man has revealed wisdom to the

³³⁸ This figure is an amalgam of Daniel's son of man (Dan 7), the Davidic king (Isa 11 and Ps 2) and Isaiah's Servant of the Lord (Isa 42; 52-53). The judgment in Dan 7 removes the power of oppressive kings and attributes divine prerogatives to the son of man (glory, power, worship). Ps 2 and Isa 11 feature the "royal function of judgment." The Servant of the Lord is God's chosen agent of justice on behalf of the weak (Isa 42), and "will be exalted in the presence of kings and rulers" (Isa 52). See Nickelsburg's discussion of these traditions in, "Son of Man," *ABD* 6: 138.

³³⁹ Elsewhere in *1 En*, God sits on a throne (14:18-25; 18:8; 24:3; 25:3; 84:2-3; 90:20).

³⁴⁰ This is the same figure as the "Righteous One" of 38:3 and "Elect One" of 40:5. See also J. J. Collins, *Apocalyptic Imagination*, 184.

elect, they will stand firm before him (vv. 7-8; cf. 48:6). When their oppressors are removed, the elect will eat, rest and rise with the Son of Man forever (v. 15). Up until now, the reality of their glory has been concealed by the victimization of their oppressors. The revelation of the glory of this Elect One (vv. 1-3) coincides with the revelation of the glory of the elect ones (v. 15b). The Son of Man functions as the heavenly defender of the human community of the elect, sharing in their concealment and in their future revelation. The Son of Man does not share, however, in the community's suffering.³⁴¹ The Son of Man holds a distinct and higher place than the rest of the angelic host who are set over various human concerns, acting as the community's representative (40:9-10).³⁴² Also, the Son of Man plays a different role in the Similitudes than in Daniel, acting as the community's deliverer.

3.4.2.2 Jubilees

As I discussed above, *Jubilees* imagines a world of angels and evil spirits at work behind all human activity. The angels are agents of God, while the evil spirits and demons are the agents of their leader, variously called Mastema, Belial, or Satan, who seeks to lead people astray from God's commands and hold them captive to sin. Yet, the opposition between God and God's agents on the

³⁴¹ John Collins comments, "the fact that he is preserved from their sufferings makes him a figure of pure power and glory and an ideal embodiment of the hopes of the persecuted righteous. The efficaciousness of the 'Son of Man' figure requires that he be conceived as other than the community, since he must possess the power and exaltation which they lack." J. J. Collins, *Apocalyptic Imagination*, 187.

³⁴² See, e.g., 40:4-10, where the Elect One is named distinctly apart from the four archangels Michael, Gabriel, Raphael, and Phanuel.

one hand, and Mastema and his agents on the other is not equal. God, the “God of the spirits” (10:3), is sovereign over all heavenly beings in *Jubilees* because God is Creator of all. Abraham pleads that God would save him from evil spirits on the basis that God has created everything, and so has the power to stay their hand (12:19-20).

On the first day of creation, God creates the angels, including the angels of the presence and the angels of sanctification, along with the angels that oversee various parts of the created world (2:2). Throughout *Jubilees*, these angels serve God in various ways on behalf of Israel. Angels assist God in creating and ministering to human beings (3:1, 4-5, 12, 15), and inform God what sins happen in heaven and on earth (4:6). As in *1 En.*, God commissions the holy angels to bind evil angels or spirits when they perpetrate corruption and injustice among people in order to restrain their power. When fallen angels take human wives and cause sin and injustice on the earth, God commands holy angels to bind them in order to remove them from their dominion (5:6). When demons begin to corrupt and destroy Noah’s descendents after the flood, God sends angels to bind these demons so that they will not have power over Noah’s sons (10:7, 10-14). When Mastema attempts to thwart God’s plan to use Moses as an agent of judgment against the Egyptians, angels variously bind and release Mastema and his spirits so that the Israelites can escape with the Egyptian army close behind according to God’s will (48:15-19). Angels bind Mastema and his spirits in order

remove their power over human beings, and to lock them up for future judgment.

Mastema acknowledges God's authority over him on the basis of creation. This leader of the evil spirits addresses God with the invocation, "O Lord, Creator," (10:7-14) when he approaches to ask God's permission to continue to exercise power over people through one tenth of his demons after the flood. These spirits under Mastema's power do his will by leading people into sin, injustice and corruption (1:20; 5:1-2; 7:20-33; 10:1-5; 11:1-6; 12:20), by killing people (10:2, 5; 49:2; 11:5), and causing diseases (10:12-13).³⁴³ Furthermore, Mastema knows that any power God grants him is limited because his judgment is imminent (10:8). God limits both the extent and the time of Mastema's power. God's sovereignty over Mastema is apparent also in the interpretation of Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac, where Mastema asks God to test Abraham by commanding him to offer up his son Isaac. God grants this request, and then appoints an angel of the presence to protect Abraham against Mastema's evil intentions. Mastema is shamed when Abraham passes the test (17:15-18:12). Mastema exercises authority over the evil spirits in order to corrupt and destroy human beings, but he is not an autonomous power. Although the righteous are victimized by evil spirits, *Jub.* gives the assurance that God is sovereign over all that activity and sends divine troops for protection.

³⁴³ For a similar list, see VanderKam, *Jubilees*, 131.

3.4.2.3 Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs

Similar to *Jubilees*, the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs* presents God as the sovereign ruler over an array of angelic powers. Levi opens his testament with a vision of God seated in the highest of seven heavens (*T. Levi* 3:4). This vision shows the arrangement of these seven heavens and the tasks of the heavenly hosts who dwell there as they wait for the judgment God has appointed for a sinful world (2:3-4; 3:2). The first three heavens concern the sins and punishment of human beings, evil spirits, and Beliar (vv. 1b-3c). God has commissioned heavenly beings to execute vengeance on Beliar and the spirits of deceit. This judgment appears as a heavenly battle with God's army of angels executing vengeance on Beliar and his spirits. The interpreting angel calls the fourth through the seventh heavens, "holy" (3:b), because God dwells in the seventh, and angels who serve God and minister to the righteous inhabit the fourth through sixth. Angels in the sixth heaven offer sacrifices for the sins of the righteous (vv. 5-6); angels in the fifth heaven bring the deeds and prayers of people before God (v. 7); and angels in the fourth heaven praise and worship God (v. 8). Although the *Testaments* as a whole does not portray a consistent system of the heavenly world,³⁴⁴ the angelic activity throughout the composition reflects the general categories of the heavenly vision in *T. Levi* 3, that is, God deploys angels to fight and punish Beliar and his spirits, as well as to guide and protect the righteous.

³⁴⁴ See Hollander and de Jonge, *Testaments*, 48.

Throughout the *Testaments*, God leads the array of holy angels primarily in the struggle against Beliar and his army of evil spirits.³⁴⁵ The rhetorical purpose of ethical exhortation provides the necessary context for understanding this struggle. The patriarchs urge their sons to choose between God and Beliar (e.g., *T. Levi* 19:1; *T. Naph.* 2:6, 10; cf. *T. Ben.* 5:3; 6:7). Choosing God means obeying the law and heeding the patriarch's instruction to avoid sin. Beliar's main aim is to lead people astray and bring them under his rule by conquering those who turn away from good and to embrace an evil disposition (*T. Reu.* 4:11; *T. Dan* 4:7; *T. Ash.* 1:8-9; cf. *T. Benj.* 3:3; 6:1). To accomplish this aim, Beliar employs spirits of deceit, just as God employs holy angels (e.g., *T. Dan.* 1:6-9). The evil spirits have various characteristics throughout the *Testaments*, appearing as one or more personified sins or vices.³⁴⁶ The sins that the evil spirits personify are equivalent to Hellenistic vices, cohering the ethical instruction of the patriarchs and Greco-Roman moral standards.³⁴⁷ Judah warns that four evil spirits – those of desire, heated passion, debauchery, and greed – may result from drinking wine (*T. Jud.* 16:1). Reuben explains that the seven spirits of deceit are established against human beings to lead them into sin (*T. Reu.* 2:1-2; 3:2).³⁴⁸ Elsewhere, individual spirits correspond to specific sins.³⁴⁹ Evil spirits appear to

³⁴⁵ Beliar appears 29 times throughout the *T. 12 Patr.*, and is also called Satan in *T. Gad* 4:7; *T. Ash.* 6:4; *T. Dan* 3:6; 5:6; 6:1, and the devil in *T. Naph.* 3:1; 8:4, 6; *T. Ash.* 3:2.

³⁴⁶ Hollander and de Jonge comment about the evil spirits in the *Testaments*, "No attempts at systemization are made." (50).

³⁴⁷ Kugler, *Testaments*, 12, 17-18, 86. See also Hollander and de Jonge, *Testaments*, 42-44.

³⁴⁸ The enumeration of the seven spirits here echoes the Stoic idea of the seven-fold division of the soul. Hollander and de Jonge, *Testaments*, 50; Kugler, *Testaments*, 42.

³⁴⁹ For example, Simeon warns his children against the spirits of deceit, jealousy, and envy (*T. Sim.* 3:1, 7), and Judah warns against the spirit of sexual impurity, or πορνεία (*T. Jud.*

be Beliar's agents that overpower human beings, offering a theology for the human struggle against sins and vices by revealing external, demonic influences. The exhortations that run throughout the *Testaments* also stress the internal, individual struggle to choose God so that the evil spirits will flee (*T. Sim.* 3:5; *T. Iss.* 7:7; *T. Dan.* 5:1; *T. Naph.* 8:4; *T. Ben.* 5:2).

God employs angels in various ways to protect those who choose God. Through angels, God delivers the righteous from death (*T. Sim.* 2:8; *T. Reub.* 4:10; *T. Gad* 2:5; *T. Jos.* 1:7; 4:3, 8; 6:7; 10:3).³⁵⁰ God sends angels to instruct people about righteous living and to help them remember the Law so that they might not sin (*T. Reub.* 3:15; 5:3; *T. Levi* 9:6; *T. Jud.* 15:5). Angels intercede for Israel and accompany individuals and tribes to protect them in battle (*T. Levi* 5:6-7; *T. Jud.* 3:10; *T. Dan* 5:4). In particular, angels act on behalf of both Israel and individuals against the kingdom of Beliar. An angel who appears to Levi intercedes for Israel so that evil spirits might not conquer them (*T. Levi* 5:3-6). Dan warns his sons against Satan and his spirits, and tells them to draw near to God and "to the angel who intercedes for you" (6:2). This angel is "the mediator between God and men for the peace of Israel" and "shall stand in opposition to the kingdom of the enemy" (v. 2). The "angel of peace" strengthens Israel against Beliar's kingdom (v. 5; cf. *T. Ash.* 6:1-6). Angels intercede for the righteous, strengthening

14:2). Dan tells his sons that Beliar's spirits of jealousy and anger tried to persuade him to kill Joseph, and only God's protection of Joseph prevented him from carrying out the murder (*T. Dan* 1:6-9).

³⁵⁰ Not all the passages cited explicitly refer to an angel or messenger from God. Hollander and de Jonge discuss the stereotyped phrase "to deliver out of someone's hands" as referring to angelic deliverance in *Testaments*, 101, 113.

them against demonic influence. By linking the struggle between the spirits of Beliar and the angels of God with the course of peoples' minds and actions, the *Testaments* imagines the human struggle to keep the law/follow ethical instruction as a cosmic battle.

3.4.2.4 Testament of Solomon

As I discussed above, the *Testament of Solomon* discloses the host of demons responsible for human suffering and catastrophes on the earth. In its conception of demonic beings, the *Testament* combines Jewish themes and astrological phenomena. For instance, it depicts the demons as fallen angels or their children, reflecting the story of the Watchers in *1 Enoch* and *Jubilees* (*T. Sol.* 5:3; 6:2; 7:5; cf. Gen. 6:1-4). In addition, it portrays demonic beings as seven heavenly bodies, which are the seven vices that cause various evils in the world – Deception, Strife, Fate, Distress, Error, Power, The Worst (chap. 8). For each one, a corresponding angel renders it powerless. Also, thirty-six heavenly bodies presented in chap. 18 are called “the world rulers of the darkness of this age” (18:2). The first one identifies itself as “the first decan of the zodiac,” (v. 5), that is, the first of thirty-six deities that each rule over 10° of the 360° zodiac.³⁵¹

The main role of these demonic heavenly beings is to cause various forms of dissension, perversion, disease, death, destruction, and war on the earth.

³⁵¹ D. C. Duling, “Testament of Solomon: New Translation and Introduction,” in *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 1: 952.

Conversely, the main role of angels is to make them powerless.³⁵² Almighty God destroys the power of the prince of demons, Beelzeboul (6:8). God sends angels from heaven to help Solomon overcome the power of demons (1:6-7; 2:8-9).

When Solomon implores God for authority to control the demons, God grants his request, and through a magic ring delivered by the archangel Michael, he is able to seal/bind demons and consign them to work on the temple (1:8-2:7). The archangels Michael, Ouriel, Raphael and Gabriel render powerless and imprison several heavenly beings and demons. The opposition between angels and demons casts the resolution to human suffering in terms of a heavenly conflict.

The main emphasis throughout *Testament*, however, is on human knowledge of the name of the angel that overcomes each demon. Twice, Solomon states that he writes his testament in order to communicate what powers demons have over human beings and the names of the angels that thwart them (1:1; 15:14-15). The first eighteen chapters of the *Testament* depicts Solomon displaying authority over demons by learning their names, activities, and the angels that render them powerless.³⁵³ The demon Asmodeus warns Solomon, however, that a time will come when people will worship demons as gods because they will not know the names of their thwarting angels (5:5). With the warning comes the prediction that Solomon will lose his kingdom and his glory.

³⁵² καταργέω is the Greek verb used throughout the *Testament* for the angelic action that stops the demons. Duling translates it "I thwart," but it has a semantic range of "I exhaust, make powerless; abolish." See BDAG, 525-6.

³⁵³ The QL reflects similar tradition. The dead Sea fragments of 4Q510-511 and 11QApPsa (11Q11) preserve Maskil songs that feature incantations for protection against demons. 11QApPsa appears to promise that Solomon will invoke divine action against the demons (2:2), and that the Lord will send a powerful angel to destroy the demon and carry him to the great abyss (4:4-9).

The prediction of the demon Asmodeus is fulfilled in the final chapters of the *Testament*. Whereas chaps. 1-18 portray Solomon in a positive light, exercising power and authority over the demons and employing them to work on the temple for God, chaps. 19-26 portray his shameful descent into imprudence, perversion, and idolatry. Solomon is enticed by his desire for a Shummanite woman and sacrifices to idols in order to have her, so that the composition ends with the glory of God departing from him. The preceding text suggests that Solomon falls into idolatry because he fails to recognize and overpower the demons that entice him and so succumbs to their deceit, even though he himself has learned how to master them. In the end, even Solomon the divinely empowered exorcist becomes a “laughingstock” of the idols and demons (26:7-8).

Solomon gives a final reason for writing the composition: “For this reason I have written out this, my testament, in order that those who hear might pray about, and pay attention to, the last things and not to the first things, in order that they might finally find grace forever. Amen” (26:8). I take the phrase “the last things” (τοῖς ἐσχάτοις) to refer to the final portion of the *Testament* (chaps. 19-26) rather than to some eschatological subject matter. Todd Klutz observes that nothing in the larger context of the *Testament* suggests an eschatological understanding for the word τοῖς ἐσχάτοις in this verse. Furthermore, he argues that the phrase, “for this reason,” at the beginning of the verse connects the basis for writing the testament with Solomon’s shame as told in the preceding narrative. He concludes that, “the last things” and “the first things” refer to what

is within the text, rather than what is outside the text, for example, eschatological deliverance. In other words, Solomon exhorts his readers to pay more attention to the ending than to the beginning, to his decent into perversion and shame (chaps. 19-26) than to his enjoyment of power and glory (chaps. 1-18). Moreover, Klutz suggests that Solomon's emphasis on "the last things" is "a redactional effort to recontextualize and subvert the predominantly positive images of Solomon in chs. 1-18," and to put all Solomon's previous achievements in a negative light.³⁵⁴ The reader, he surmises, is invited to adopt the "mocking posture" of the demons as they laugh at him.³⁵⁵ Though I agree with Klutz's interpretation of "the last things," I do not follow his ultimate conclusion. My conjecture is that Solomon functions as a negative example for the hearer, much as the patriarchs function in the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*, so that the sons of Israel will know by what means they may overcome demonic power and remain in God's favor.³⁵⁶ Although angels overcome the demons, the *Testament* exhorts human beings that they must be necessary participants in the combat by recognizing the powers that oppress them and invoking the power that saves. Solomon himself provides the example of what happens when human beings fail to be diligent in this cosmic battle.

³⁵⁴ Klutz, *Testament of Solomon*, 12.

³⁵⁵ Klutz, *Testament of Solomon*, 139.

³⁵⁶ The only patriarchs who do not serve as negative examples in the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs* are Joseph and Benjamin, who are portrayed blamelessly in the OT. Solomon has a record more like the flawed patriarchs than like Joseph (see, e.g., 1 Kgs 11:1-13). Klutz need not put the blame on a Christian redactor for tarnishing the reputation of Solomon, because much of the information for the story in *T. Sol.* 19-26 already existed in the biblical account.

3.4.2.5 *The War Scroll (1QM)*

The *War Scroll* envisions a conflict between light and darkness in which angelic powers are allied with human beings. Similar to *Jubilees*, God is sovereign over these angelic powers, and has appointed them to particular tasks until the day fixed for the destruction of darkness (1QM 13.10-11). On the one hand, God has commissioned the Prince of Light, or Michael, to assist the people who have been cast into the “lot of light” (9) as they struggle against the forces of darkness.³⁵⁷ All the other angels are under the rule of this archangel. By contrast, God has commissioned the archangel Belial and all the spirits under his rule to destroy, condemn and convict the people who belong to the lot of darkness until the day appointed for their destruction (cf. 12.2-5). God also protects the righteous remnant from the efforts of Belial and his spirits to lead them astray from the covenant (14.9-10).

The struggle between light and darkness culminates in the eschatological war fought by a coalition of the head angel Michael, the holy angels, and the human beings they support on one side, and a coalition of the head angel Belial, the angels of destruction, and the human beings under their rule on the other. The opening overview of the war (Col. I) portrays the angelic involvement in the war that recurs throughout the document. It describes the attack of the Sons of Light against the Sons of Darkness, “Belial’s army,” (1.1, 5; cf. 4.1-2; 11.8; 15.2-3;

³⁵⁷ In 1QM 17:6-7, Michael is the primary archangel God sends to support Israel against Belial’s forces, and his assistance is characterized in terms of light. Furthermore, Michael is the prince of the people of Israel in Dan 10:21; 12:1-3; *1 En.* 20:5. For a more extended argument in favor of identifying the “Prince of Light” as Michael, against the views of those who have offered other interpretations, see Yadin, *Scroll of the War*, 235-6.

13.3), and depicts angels fighting alongside men (9-10; cf. 12.1-5; 15.14; 17.5-8).

The writer imagines a human war with a heavenly counterpart that occurs under the sovereignty of God, with Belial and his angels leading the Sons of Darkness and Michael and his angels supporting the Sons of Light.

The particular task of the holy angels is to support and protect the Sons of Light in their struggle against Belial's forces. Instructions are given for the formation of four "towers," or units of 300 soldiers each with long shields that are to surround the advancing troops on three sides and protect them against the enemy (9.10-16).³⁵⁸ The shields of the soldiers who compose the towers are to have the names of the four archangels inscribed on them – Michael, Sariel, Raphael, and Gabriel – as a sign that the angels are present to give them heavenly protection. One of the prayers to be said in battle affirms the angelic and human coalition from a heavenly perspective. The writer envisions the chosen ones of the holy people and the hosts of angels together in God's holy dwelling place, where they receive their divine commission to go into battle and win (11.1-5). Not only does this scene depict the holy people in heaven with the angels, but also it depicts them *like* the angels, assembled in thousands and ten thousands.³⁵⁹ The prayer that follows returns to an earthly perspective, and conveys the belief that the Sons of Light will triumph over their enemies because of their heavenly assistance, repeating three times that God and the company of

³⁵⁸ Yadin, *Scroll of the War*, 187-190; 237-40; Duhaime, *War Texts*, 17.

³⁵⁹ See also Yadin, *Scroll of the War*, 241.

God's holy angels is with Israel's army for eternal support (11.7-9).³⁶⁰ The holy people are commissioned in heaven alongside the angels, and the angels fight alongside the holy people in a tightly knit collaboration. Together, the holy angels and the holy people belong to the same "lot" of light, and form a coalition against the forces of darkness.³⁶¹

In particular, God will send the archangel Michael at a key moment in the battle when the Sons of Darkness are overcoming the Sons of Light. One of the prayers for the battlefield, discussed above, expresses the belief that God appointed the Prince of Light long ago to assist the Sons of Light against Belial and his forces (13.7-13a). The description of the second engagement of the war portrays this heavenly assistance (16.11-17.9). The Sons of Darkness receive assistance in battle, presumably by Belial,³⁶² and the Sons of Light experience extreme casualties "by God's mysteries" (16.11). The priests exhort the people to take courage, because this is God's appointed time to bring down the "prince of the realm of wickedness (16.5)." Against Belial and his forces, God sends the

³⁶⁰ "And You, O God, are [] in the glory of Your dominion, *and the company of Your holy ones is in our midst for etern[al] support.* [] contempt at kings, derision and disdain at mighty men. For the Lord is holy, *and the King of Glory is with us together with the holy ones.* Migh[ty men] *a host of angels are with our commissioned forces. The Hero of Wa[r] is with our company, and the host of His spirits is with our steps.* Our horsemen are [as] the clouds and as the mist covering the earth, and as a steady downpour shedding judgment on all her offspring" (12:7-9, my emphasis). Other passages also indicate the presence of angels with the human army. For example, in the rules for inclusion in the camp and participation in battle, no one ritually unclean may go into battle, "for holy angels are present with their army" (7:6).

³⁶¹ Michael is the "Prince of Light" (13: 10) and the people are the "Sons of Light" (1: 1). See also Yadin, *Scroll of the War*, 241-2.

³⁶² The text is damaged, and reads, "When [] prepares himself to assist the Sons of Darkness, and the slain among the infantry begin to fall by God's mysteries..." (16.11). As the text continues, we learn that this is the day appointed "to subdue and to humiliate the prince of the realm of wickedness" (17.5), who is clearly Belial. I assume that in 16.11, the writer envisions Belial assisting the Sons of Darkness, just as Michael will come to assist the Sons of Light (17.6-7). See also Yadin, *Scroll of the War*, 336.

archangel Michael to assist the Sons of Light. Just as Michael rules over the angels, so they will rule over all people (17.4-9).³⁶³ The company of holy angels fights alongside the Sons of Light in the struggle against the forces of darkness, but Michael has an exalted and authoritative role.

3.4.2.6 Melchizedek (11QMelch)

11QMelch portrays Belial and Melchizedek as heavenly opponents. The confrontation between Melchizedek and Belial primarily concerns the fate of the Sons of Light. These righteous ones belong to Melchizedek's lot (11QMelch 2.8; cf. 4-5); however, Belial and the spirits of his lot rule the earth during the present time both by instigating human evil and injustice (2.11-12) and by holding the Sons of Light captive to sin and oppression (2.4, 11-13). Melchizedek is identified as *Elohim* (2.10) and is exalted among the other angels to execute God's judgment against Belial and his spirits from the midst of the divine assembly (2.7-13).³⁶⁴ When Melchizedek appears to judge Belial and his spirits, he will supplant their rule in order to rescue the Sons of Light and return them to their rightful place. The writer of 11QMelch connects human conflict and its resolution with heavenly conflict and its resolution. In other words, human freedom from sin and oppression is won through the triumph of the heavenly being Melchizedek over the archangel Belial.

³⁶³ Duhaime, *War Texts*, 19.

³⁶⁴ The text presents Melchizedek as a heavenly being. See also van der Woude, "Melchisedek," 364, 367-68; Kobelski, *Melchizedek*, 59-62.

Some scholars consider Melchizedek to be the archangel Michael, on the basis of J. T. Milik's suggestion that the Visions of Amram (4Q544) names both Michael and Melchizedek as the angel of light,³⁶⁵ and also on the basis of a medieval Hebrew text that identifies these two figures.³⁶⁶ Indeed, many similarities between the two figures suggest such a correspondence. Melchizedek is a heavenly figure exalted above the rest of the angelic hosts in order to execute God's judgment from the midst of the divine court (11QMelch 2:8-13). Melchizedek is appointed to take vengeance on Belial and his spirits, and to free the Sons of Light from their captivity. Though Melchizedek is the sole agent of God's judgment, other angels serve him in this commission (2:9, 14). In addition, Melchizedek is the leader of the Sons of Light (2:5, 8). The archangel Michael exhibits these characteristics and roles in 1QM where God appoints him as the Prince of Light to lead the other holy angels in support of the sons of light against Belial and his forces (1QM 13:9-12; 17:6-7). Michael is also the prince of God's people in Daniel and the agent of God's judgment against Beliar in *1 Enoch* (Dan 12:1-3; *1 En.* 10). In spite of these similarities, the role of Melchizedek differs from that of Michael in significant ways, particularly in 1QM. First, Melchizedek has a priestly role that is foreign to the figure of Michael, making atonement for the sons of light in the tenth jubilee to free them from their iniquities (11QMelch 2.4-8).³⁶⁷ Second, these figures have different roles in the

³⁶⁵ J. T. Milik, "4QVisions de Amram et une citation d'Origène," *RB* 79 (1972): 77-97.

³⁶⁶ See van der Woude, "Melchisedek," 372; Kobelski, *Melchizedek*, 24-36.

³⁶⁷ Kobelski speculates that the writer substituted the name Melchizedek for Michael specifically in order to emphasize the priestly role in the text. Kobelski, *Melchizedek*, 71.

execution of God's judgment. In 1QM, God, and not Michael, is the "Hero of War" who liberates the captives (1QM 12.9-11). The Prince of Light/Michael plays a supporting role, giving assistance to the Sons of Light in battle. Neither the angels nor Michael himself triumphs over Belial and his spirits; rather, God intervenes to end the war and executes judgment (1QM 18.1-5). By contrast, Melchizedek in 11QMelch does not simply assist the Sons of Light, he himself rises up to execute judgment and liberates the captives. Perhaps a more satisfying conclusion is that the QL represents diverse, rather than homogeneous, ideas about exalted heavenly beings and their roles in the end-time conflict between the forces of darkness and light.

3.4.3 Judgment

In each composition I consider, the righteous face some sort of oppression from which they are unable to rescue themselves. Each composition portrays a world in which the oppression of the righteous is not only the result of human conflict, but also the result of supernatural conflict. In view of powerlessness of the righteous before their human and heavenly opponents, these compositions imagine God's imminent judgment as the event that overturns the oppressive state of affairs in their favor.

3.4.3.1 1 Enoch

The main motif that runs throughout *1 En.* is God's imminent judgment in response to the dominance of sin, oppression and violence in the world. Four

out of the five books begin with visions or oracles of final judgment that set the tenor for what follows. The Book of the Watchers opens with a vision of God coming from heaven upon Mt. Sinai accompanied by 10 million holy ones to execute judgment whereby the wicked are destroyed and the elect are preserved (1 *En.* 1:4, 9). All people quake with fear, explicitly the Watchers (v. 4). This judgment oracle, along with the following series of exhortations that culminates in curses for the wicked and eschatological blessings for the righteous, provides the backdrop for the story of rebellion of the Watchers and their judgment (chaps. 6-16).³⁶⁸ The Similitudes opens with the appearance of the Righteous One to judge and remove from power those who have ruled the earth (38:1-6). The first vision in the Book of Dreams depicts the destruction of the cosmos on the great day of judgment (chaps. 83-84). The Epistle of Enoch begins with Enoch's gathering of his children to instruct them to live righteously on the basis of his knowledge of God's future judgment of the wickedness that thrives at the present time (91:1-10; 18-19). As a whole, 1 *En.* promotes the hope that God's coming judgment will put an end to sin and oppression on behalf of the righteous elect. In this way, 1 *En.* shares a similar hope with Daniel.

Throughout 1 *Enoch*, the agents of judgment vary. God appears directly to execute universal judgment on the wicked and righteous in the oracle that opens

³⁶⁸ A rationale for the preservation of the elect and destruction of the wicked follows the oracle in a form that approximates wisdom (2:1-5:3). Enoch invites sinners to examine all that God has created. While everything in the natural world functions according to the way God has ordered it, the wicked do not because they fail to obey God's commands (5:4). Enoch pronounces a curse upon the wicked for their sin, but for the elect, "light, joy, peace, and they will inherit the earth" (v. 7). In addition, God will give wisdom to the elect so that they will not sin again.

the Book of the Watchers (chaps. 1-5). God also intervenes directly to bring a catastrophic judgment against the Gentile enemies of God's people in a military battle in the Book of Dreams (90:17-19). Elsewhere, God commissions agents in the execution of judgment. In the story of the Watchers, God commissions the four archangels to punish the fallen angels and their human counterparts by binding them with chains and casting them into darkness until judgment day (chap. 10). This tradition reappears in the Book of Dreams, where in Enoch's vision of human history, four heavenly beings come forth to punish the fallen stars, who represent the Watchers (chaps. 85-90). The Son of Man, also called the Chosen One, Elect One, and Righteous One, is God's agent of judgment in the Similitudes (chaps. 37-71). This figure sits on God's throne (61:8; 62:2) to execute judgment against oppressors in favor of the righteous elect (chap. 62). The Son of Man delivers over oppressors to punishing angels. As in the Book of the Watchers and the Book of Dreams, these punishing angels take vengeance on both human offenders and their heavenly counterparts (53:3-5; 54:1-6; 62:11; 63:1).³⁶⁹ Finally, God empowers the righteous themselves to participate in the judgment of their human oppressors. When the Son of Man appears in judgment, the rulers and mighty ones are delivered into the hands of the elect and their lives are annihilated (38:5-6; cf. 48:9). At the climactic point of Enoch's vision of human history in the Book of Dreams, God intervenes directly in battle against the Gentile enemy and authorizes the righteous to participate in a

³⁶⁹ The four archangels are named explicitly in the judgment scene in 54:6, and join the punishing angels to cast the armies of Azaz'el into the fire.

military judgment against them (90:15-19).³⁷⁰ The Epistle of Enoch likewise portrays the righteous as participants in the Lord's judgment against those who have exploited them. Enoch envisions the Lord delivering oppressors into the hands of the righteous, who will slay them without compassion (95:3; 98:12; cf. 94:7; 99:16). The oppressed become the dominant ones, punishing those who had victimized them. This response to persecution contrasts with Daniel, which envisions the righteous strengthened for a non-violent response to persecution, so that martyrdom might be a means to purification and eternal exaltation into the heavenly realm.

Judgment in *1 Enoch* involves both the execution of punishment against the wicked and the bestowal of blessings upon the righteous. In other words, judgment is a reversal of the present state of affairs. In the view of *1 Enoch*, like that of Daniel, the current state of the world is not right because the wicked prevail against the righteous. When God appears in judgment, God will set the world right by destroying and removing all that is wicked in order to make way for an abundant supply of blessing for the righteous. The Book of Dreams culminates in a vision of the deliverance of national Israel from Gentile enemies through God's judgment. When God has judged and removed all human and heavenly offenders, God renews Jerusalem and the Temple (90:28-36), and ultimately renews all of humanity (vv. 36-37). The book of the Watchers, on the other hand, depicts judgment as the destruction of all sin, deception, and

³⁷⁰ See also Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch* 1, 401.

injustice along with the fallen Watchers and the giants responsible (10:1-15), in order to make way for an extraordinary renewal of the earth for the righteous (10:16-11:2).

The appearance of the Son of Man in the Similitudes marks a change in the state of affairs for the holy and righteous ones, because they receive back glory and honor while sinners receive nothing but evil (50:1-2). This removal of oppression clears the way for the resurrection of the righteous to a heavenly resting place (51:1-5). The judgment in the Epistle of Enoch is directed against those who commit social injustices, that is, those who hoard bread, wine and water while abusing those who are weak (96:4-8). God's judgment will bring about a great reversal: sinners will be destroyed (103:5-15), and those they formerly oppressed will now shine like stars in the heavenly realm (104:1-7; cf. Dan. 12:1-3). The goal of God's judgment is to overturn the present moral and social order decisively in favor of the righteous elect.

3.4.3.2 Jubilees

Jubilees does not focus primarily on God's judgment in the last days like Daniel or *1 Enoch*, largely because it follows the Genesis-Exodus story line.³⁷¹ Two passages, however, display the writer's interest in God's judgment and restoration of Israel in the last days. At the opening of the book, God calls Moses to the top of Mount Sinai to form the covenant (1:1-6), and then predicts that the people of Israel will forsake it after they enter the land (vv. 7-11). As a result,

³⁷¹ See Crawford, *Rewriting Scripture*, 79-80; and VanderKam, *Jubilees*, 132-34.

God will execute a temporal judgment upon them by delivering them over to the surrounding nations who will hold them in captivity (vv. 12-14). While in exile, the people will turn back to the Lord. At that time, God will gather them from the nations and build the temple in which to dwell with the people in a perfected covenant relationship (vv. 15-18, 22-25).³⁷² At this future time, God will both renew the people by cutting off the foreskin of their heart, and create a holy spirit for them that will supplant the spirit of Beliar that had ruled over them, leading them into sin and destruction (1:20-25). God's temporal judgment of Israel will be the means by which the people will obtain this perfected covenantal relationship with God, in which they are free from sin and the influence of evil powers. A similar pattern appears in *Jub.* 23:14-31. The angel of presence predicts that a future evil generation of Israel will abandon the covenant (vv. 14-21), resulting in God's judgment through surrounding nations who will terrorize them and take them captive (vv. 22-25). When the people seek out the commandments again and do what is right, God will heal them (23:26-31). At that time of blessing, peace and healing, there will be no more Satan or evil one to destroy them (v. 20; cf. 50:4-5). *Jubilees* anticipates a judgment when God will remove not only Israel's human enemies, but also their spiritual enemies so that they may live in righteousness, peace and blessing before God. The writer of *Jubilees* provides a solution to the struggles of the righteous by assuring them of God's future sovereignty over the evil spirits that cause them.

³⁷² VanderKam, *Jubilees*, 133.

The law of circumcision, however, raises an exception to the possibility of forgiveness and restoration for Israelites (15:25-34). Those who are not circumcised on the eighth day are considered to be from the children of destruction, rather than from the children of the covenant, and they are destined to be destroyed (v. 26). The angel of presence predicts that certain sons of Israel will forsake the command to circumcise their children in the future, revealing them to be, in fact, the sons of Beliar (v. 33). God's wrath rests on them, and they will receive no forgiveness since they have committed an eternal sin (v. 34). For the writer of *Jubilees*, failure to keep circumcision laws is the unforgivable sin that marks an alliance with Satan (cf. Mark 3:29-30).

3.4.3.3 Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs

The *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs* portrays God's judgment in relation to its emphasis on ethics. The predictions of God's judgment convey the consequences of failing to heed the patriarchs' exhortations to choose God and righteous living. The *Testaments* looks forward to an appointed day in the future when God will execute righteous judgment, both against sinful humankind in general, and against the wayward sons of the patriarchs in particular. The opening of the *T. Levi* features both perpetrators. Its introduction states that it is about all Levi's sons' future deeds that will determine their fate on the day of judgment (1:1). In the biographical section that follows, Levi receives a spirit of understanding from the Lord to see the wickedness of all humankind. Levi then ascends to the heavens in a vision and sees the elements of nature and the angelic

armies of God standing by to judge both human and heavenly offenders (*T. Levi* 3:1-3). The display of the glory of God in the heavens causes the heavenly hosts, heaven and earth to tremble; but human beings are not moved and continue to sin (3:9-10), which confirms their future judgment (4:1).³⁷³ Levi receives this vision of judgment in order to warn his sons. In spite of his warnings, Levi predicts a time when his sons will go astray (chaps. 10 and 14-17).

Throughout, the *Testaments* envisions the future judgment that consists of the separation of the righteous and the wicked and culminates in the destruction of the latter, akin to what Daniel and *1 Enoch* exhibit (*T. Levi* 4:6; *T. Sim.* 6:3-5; *T. Jud.* 25:5; *T. Zeb.* 10:1-3; *T. Ben.* 10:8). Concerning the patriarch's sons, however, punishment and destruction are not the final word, but repentance and salvation. Not only do the predictions of judgment convey the consequences of failing to choose God and righteous living; but also these predictions offer hope that Israel can receive salvation even after failing to follow the exhortations of the patriarchs. Predictions of the future actions of the patriarch's sons follow the biographical and ethical sections in most of the testaments, generally falling into a pattern of sin – exile – return (S.E.R.).³⁷⁴ The patriarch predicts that his sons will break the divine commands to love God and neighbor (*T. Levi* 14:5-8; *T. Jud.* 23:1-2; *T. Iss.* 6:1-2; *T. Zeb.* 9:5; *T. Naph.* 4:1; *T. Ash.* 7:5; *T. Ben.* 9:1) or, in the final

³⁷³ In the present redaction, the peoples' persistent sin probably refers to the rejection of Jesus at his crucifixion. *T. Levi* 4:1 speaks about the refusal of people to believe even when experiencing cosmic upheaval at "the sufferance of the Most High," which is likely a reference to the crucifixion of Jesus. See Hollander and de Jonge, *Testaments*, 137.

³⁷⁴ Hollander and de Jonge identify the S.E.R. passages as *T. Levi* 10; 14-15; 16; *T. Jud.* 18:1; 23; *T. Iss.* 6; *T. Zeb.* 9:5-7, 9; *T. Dan.* 5:4a, 6-9; *T. Naph.* 4:1-3, 5; *T. Gad* 8:2; *T. Ash.* 7:2-3, 5-7; *T. Benj.* 9:1-2. See Hollander and de Jonge, *Testaments*, 39-41, 53-56.

redaction, reject Jesus Christ whose life and teaching exemplified those commands (*T. Levi* 4:2-6; 10:2; 16:3; *T. Zeb.* 9:8-9; *T. Ash.* 7:2-5).³⁷⁵ As a result, they will go into exile and, in some cases, the temple will be destroyed (*T. Levi* 15:1; 16:4-5; *T. Jud.* 23:3; *T. Ash.* 7:2).

In the viewpoint of the *Testaments*, the current state of the world is not right because Israel inevitably goes astray. The patriarchs predict that God will redeem the tribes out of compassion for them and commitment to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (*T. Levi* 15:4; *T. Ash.* 7:7). As in Daniel and *1 Enoch*, the *Testaments* expects God to intervene in judgment to set the world right by destroying and removing what is wicked in order to make way for an abundant supply of blessing for the righteous. In the *Testaments*, this means that God will intervene not only to bring them out of exile, but ultimately to destroy and remove Beliar and the spirits of error in order to free the righteous from their spiritual captivity so that God can take pleasure in them forever. When God intervenes in judgment, people will have mastery over the evil spirits that had enticed them, their hearts will turn to the Lord, and sin will come to an end (*T. Sim.* 6:6; *T. Levi* 18:9, 12, 14; *T. Dan* 5:11; *T. Zeb.* 9:8). God's intervention in judgment coincides with the resurrection of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, of the twelve patriarchs, Seth, Enoch and Noah, and all the righteous in Israel (*T. Sim.* 6:7; *T. Levi* 18:14; *T. Jud.* 25; *T. Zeb.* 10:1-4; *T. Benj.* 10:6-10). The resurrection passages portray the twelve

³⁷⁵ See Kugler, *Testaments*, 15, 17.

tribes and their leaders in a righteous, joyful and glorious existence before God, which contrasts the shame of disobedient living.

Although *T. Levi* depicts an army of angels standing by to execute judgment on Belial and his evil spirits (*T. Levi* 3), angels do not appear to destroy the power of Belial and his evil spirits in the predictions of the future judgment. Instead, the patriarchs predict that an ideal priest-king figure will overcome Belial and the evil spirits, and free their captives.³⁷⁶ The patriarchs exhort their sons to respect and obey Levi and Judah, because out of their tribes God will raise up this savior for Israel and all the nations (*T. Sim.* 7:1-2; *T. Levi* 2:10-11; *T. Dan* 5:10; *T. Naph.* 8:2-3; *T. Gad* 8:1).³⁷⁷ Levi predicts that when the old priesthood from his descendants becomes utterly debased (*T. Levi* 17), the Lord will raise up a new priest who will bind Beliar and give the children of the Lord the authority to trample on evil spirits (*T. Levi* 18:1-2, 10-12; cf. *T. Zeb.* 9:8; cf. *T. Sim.* 5:5-6). Judah predicts that after his kingship comes to an end with the exile, a new king – a Star from Jacob – will arise to secure his kingdom forever, and as a result Beliar will be thrown into the eternal fire (*T. Jud.* 22:1-3; 24:1; 25:3). Dan envisions the savior from the tribe of Judah and the tribe of Levi making war against Beliar and saving captives from him, and turning disobedient hearts to the Lord (*T. Dan* 5:10-11). In the final redaction, this savior is evidently Jesus Christ, whose return allows Israel a chance to repent and receive mercy from the

³⁷⁶ Hollander and de Jonge make a case against “double messianism” in the *Testaments*. In other words, there is one figure who is both the ideal high priest and ideal king, associated with the tribes of Levi and Judah respectively. Hollander and de Jonge, *Testaments*, 60-61.

³⁷⁷ Hollander and de Jonge, *Testaments*, 40-41.

Lord.³⁷⁸ An ideal savior, and not angels, finally binds and destroys Belial and his spirits at the judgment, so that the righteous can dwell virtuously before God.

3.4.3.4. Testament of Solomon

There is no warning or promise of eschatological judgment in the *Testament of Solomon*, nor is there a judgment scene by which God finally intervenes to end the victimization of the demonic world upon human beings. Rather, the *Testament* ends with the idols and demons in a position of power, laughing at Solomon, the king who once had the authority to bind and control them. This ending portrays a temporal judgment upon Solomon, however, that serves as a warning to the sons of Israel. God pronounces a judgment upon Solomon's perversion and idolatry when God's glory withdraws from him, and causes Solomon's spirit to darken (*T. Sol.* 26:7). Solomon claims he has written his testament in order that his hearers might pay more attention to his shameful downfall than to his former glory,³⁷⁹ and "find grace forever" (v. 8). That is, the judgment upon Solomon functions as an admonition for hearers to make their own future with God secure.

3.4.3.5 *The War Scroll (1QM)*

The *War Scroll* establishes the *topos* of judgment by envisioning the war between the Sons of Light and the Sons of Darkness as God's appointed time to

³⁷⁸ Several of the predictions of the future are followed by exhortations to choose the Law of the Lord over the works of Beliar based on that revelation (*T. Levi* 19:1; *T. Jud.* 26:1; *T. Dan* 6:1-10; *T. Jos.* 10:11)

³⁷⁹ See my discussion on "the last things" vs. "the first things" above, under the heading, "Heavenly Beings."

destroy the forces of darkness and establish salvation for God's people. The war comes to a climax in the seventh lot, when God intervenes with a mighty hand to overcome and annihilate the forces of darkness decisively (1:14; 18:1-4). This intervention becomes the means of redemption for the Sons of Light: it is "a time of salvation for the People of God, and a time of dominion for all the men of His forces, and eternal annihilation for all the forces of Belial" (1:5). The result of the war for God's people is the enjoyment of eschatological blessings, including eternal redemption, the restoration of peace and glory to the land, an abundance of material blessings and long life, and eternal rule over enemies and oppressors (1:8-9, 12; 12:9-18; 17:6-7; 18:6-8, 10-11; 19:4-8). The War Scroll depicts the judgment of the enemies of the Sons of Light through a war with divine support from angels and decisive intervention from God in the last days.

The instructions for the organization of the congregation develop the judgment theme. In particular, inscriptions on the banners, trumpets, and darts of the congregation indicate that this conflict is God's war. The congregation is organized into groups, each with banners that are inscribed to identify their military and tribal units, and their actions in the war.³⁸⁰ The inscriptions that identify the actions of each group change according to the phase of the war to express that this is God's war at each of three stages: when they go to war, when they approach the enemy in battle, and when they return. The inscriptions for approaching the enemy portray the battle as God's judgment against the enemy:

³⁸⁰ Yadin, *Scroll of the War*, 40-46; Duhaime, *War Texts*, 16.

“The Anger of God is loosed against Belial and all the men of his forces without remnant” (1QM 4.1-2); “Hundred of God, the power of war against all sinful flesh” (4.3); “Ended is the stand of the wicked [by] the might of God” (4.4); and “The annihilation of God of all the vainglorious nations” (4.12). The inscriptions on the battle trumpets that are used to signal the troops in battle similarly express what God will do through a group at a particular phase in the fighting:³⁸¹ “Formations of the divisions of God to avenge His anger on all Sons of Darkness” (3.5-6); “The hand of the might of God in battle so as to bring down all the slain because of unfaithfulness” (3.8); and, “God has struck all Sons of Darkness, He shall not abate His anger until they are annihilated” (3.9). Finally, the soldiers are to inscribe phrases on the darts they heave into the enemy lines that express this is God’s war.³⁸² On the first blade they must write, “Flash of a spear for the strength of God,” on the second blade, “Missiles of blood to fell the slain by the wrath of God,” and on the third blade, “The blade of a sword devours the slain of wickedness by the judgment of God” (6.2-3). All of these inscriptions envision the war between light and darkness as the means by which God executes judgment against the Belial-led alliance of foreign nations and covenant-breakers. The prayers for the time of war confirm this conception of the war as God’s judgment (Cols. 10-14). After recalling the consummate power of God to whom the battle belongs (10.1-11), the writer predicts that God will

³⁸¹ Yadin, *Scroll of the War*, 104-106; Duhaine, *War Texts*, 15-16.

³⁸² Yadin, *Scroll of the War*, 134-5.

deliver the enemies from all nations (i.e., the allies of Belial) into the hands of the oppressed in order to pronounce a just judgment (11.3-12, 5; cf. 12.9-12; 14.4-6).

The war between light and darkness is cast as God's war, but God employs both human and heavenly agents in the conflict. God has cast the righteous into the "lot of light" and appointed the "Prince of Light" and all angels of his dominion to assist them in the struggle against the rule of darkness (1QM 13:9-10). The war at the time that God has appointed for the annihilation of the forces of darkness begins when the Sons of Light launch an attack against the Sons of Darkness. (1.1-3). Angels fight alongside the human armies, providing heavenly support (1.10-11). The inscriptions on the banners identifying the battalions indicate that the Sons of Light are God's agents in this war. One identifies its group as "The army of God" (4.11), in contrast to the Sons of Darkness, who are the army of Belial (1:1). When other groups draw near to the battle, they are to inscribe on their banners the phrases, "The right hand of God," "The appointed time of God" (4.7), "The power of God," "The retribution of God," and "The might of God" (4.12). These phrases envision God as the one who truly fights through them. In addition, inscriptions on the shields of certain soldiers express the presence of the archangels Michael, Sariel, Raphael, and Gabriel with the army (9.15-16). Though God employs human and heavenly agents, they are not able to overcome the enemy decisively. The Sons of Light win three battles and the Sons of Darkness win three battles, each with the support of their angelic hosts.

Although Michael has an exalted and authoritative role in the struggle against Belial and his forces, neither Michael nor anyone else belonging to the lot of light secures the victory against darkness. The prayers for battle affirm that God is the one who is the judge and final victor. One prayer expresses the belief that God and God's angels are present with the people for eternal support, but then extols God as the "Hero of War," who takes his captives and plunder from the enemy and crushes the nations (12.7-11). Another prayer expresses hope in the assistance of the "Prince of Light" and then exalts God higher when it asks, "what angel or prince is like you?" because God is the one who appointed this day for battle to destroy iniquity and darkness (13.14). Moreover, in the descriptions of the battle at the beginning and the end of the composition, only the intervention of God finally brings the war to an end. In the first description, the holy angels are able to support and strengthen the Sons of Light so that they do not fall to the Sons of Darkness; but they are not able finally to prevail. God must intervene directly in the seventh lot to end the war, and then Belial and the forces of darkness cannot stand (1.14). The description of the battle at the end of the document portrays the same events. God sends Michael to strengthen the troops after they have many casualties (16.6-7), but this does not end the war. In the last encounter between the forces of light and darkness, God raises a hand against Belial and all his forces "for an eternal slaughter" (17:1-5). The chief priests, priests and Levites respond by praising God for bringing eternal redemption to God's people, and complete destruction to the enemy (17.7-16).

While the angels and Michael serve God in the struggle against darkness by supporting the Sons of Light, God is the one who finally fights on behalf of the people and overcomes the enemy (18:1-6). The result of divine judgment on the Sons of Darkness is salvation, blessing and peace for the Sons of Light. The apocalyptic discourse in 1QM conveys a solution to oppression by means of God's annihilation of the forces of darkness, which will result in peace, blessing, glory, joy, and long life for all the Sons of Light (1.8-9; 18.6-11; 19.4-7).

3.4.3.6. Melchizedek (*11QMelch*)

While 1QM imagines the end of Belial's dominion by means of the war between the Sons of Light and the Sons of Darkness, 11QMelch imagines its end from a different perspective. In 1QM, the judgment against Belial and his forces takes place on the earth, as human armies fight with heavenly support until God finally intervenes decisively to end the war. 1QM assures a sectarian community that their end-time war against evil will be, in fact, God's war, and that they will receive heavenly aid to annihilate Belial and his forces. God is the "Hero of War" who liberates the captives (1QM 12.9-11), and all heavenly beings assist God for this purpose. On the other hand, the judgment in 11QMelch takes place in the divine assembly as the figure Melchizedek is exalted among the heavenly beings in order to execute God's vengeance against Belial and his spirits, and against the nations these powers have led to perpetrate evil and injustice (2.9-13). By means of this judgment, Melchizedek liberates the Sons of Light from their captivity to sin and spiritual oppression (2.2-6, 13). 11QMelch focuses on the role of

Melchizedek in the execution of God's judgment and in the liberation of God's people in the last days.

Melchizedek is the sole agent of God's judgment, with an array of holy angels to assist him (11QMelch 2.9, 14). The text begins with a citation of Lev 25:13 and Deut 15:2, which relates the release of the sabbatical year to the release and return of captives to their own property in the year of jubilee (2:3-4). It gives an interpretation of these texts for the last days, in which those who are captive to Belial and his spirits will be liberated in the tenth and final jubilee year.

Melchizedek will appear to proclaim freedom to these captives and to make them return to their rightful lot.³⁸³ He will free them from their sins by making atonement for them, and free them from Belial and his spirits by executing God's judgment (2.6, 13, 25). In this judgment, the writer associates Melchizedek intimately with God. The tenth jubilee year is "the year of Melchizedek's favor," an allusion Isa 61:2 that substitutes Melchizedek for Yahweh. Melchizedek is distinct from God, however. The writer applies Ps 82:1 to Melchizedek: "Elohim shall stand in the assembly [of God]; in the midst of the gods he shall judge" (11QMelch 2.10), and goes on to state that Melchizedek carries out the judgment of God (2.13, 23). Melchizedek is a heavenly being exalted in the divine assembly

³⁸³ I have argued above that 1QM envisions the Sons of Light and the holy angels together the "lot of Light" with Michael as the Prince of Light. See especially 1QM 13, which envisions the Sons of Light together with the angels in heaven commissioned by God for their task. 11QMelch reflects a similar view, tying the heavenly figure Melchizedek closely with the human beings he rescues. These captives are called "the inheritance of Melchizedek," "the sons of light" and "the men of the lot of Melchizedek" (2:5, 8). The Sons of Light belong with their heavenly counterparts, and Melchizedek comes to secure their return.

to execute judgment.³⁸⁴ His close association with Yahweh emphasizes his power and authority to act as God's agent.

Just as in the other compositions I have examined, divine judgment includes negative consequences for the wicked and positive results for the righteous. In the case of 11QMelch, God's agent liberates God's people from their sins and from the supernatural and human opponents that have oppressed them. The time that Melchizedek appears to make atonement for the peoples' sins and to free them from the hand of Belial is the day of salvation when they experience justice, peace and comfort (2:14-25). The language echoes that of Isa 52:7, which announces the peace and salvation of Israel upon their restoration from the nations.³⁸⁵

3.5 Comparison of Compositions

Each of the compositions I have examined employs apocalyptic discourse in order to address the problem of the **persecution** of the righteous, whether that persecution takes the form of political, physical, social, economic, or moral oppression. Each composition explains such ills vis-à-vis the activity of **heavenly beings**, and finds a solution for the righteous in the activity of God, both in God's present protection and God's future **judgment**. Below I discuss the apocalyptic symbolic world that these compositions share. Then, I discuss how they employ apocalyptic discourse to serve their particular rhetorical aims.

³⁸⁴ See also Kobelski, *Melchizedek*, 59-62.

³⁸⁵ See Kobelski, *Melchizedek*, 20.

3.5.1 The Shared Symbolic World

The compositions I have discussed provide an imaginative lens for viewing the problem presented by the **persecution** of God's people. From a human perspective, the righteous struggle against the oppression of other nations, the injustice of corrupt leaders, the greed of wealthy neighbors, the diseases that afflict their bodies, and the temptations of their own flesh. These compositions reveal a world in which powers are at work that readers might not otherwise see. The powers that oppress them are not simply other human beings, but are also evil spirits that have introduced sin, injustice and suffering to the world and that continually work to provoke oppression and violence or to deceive human beings so that they stray from God's commands. In other words, persecution is not simply a matter of humans perpetrating offenses against righteousness, but is also a matter of evil spirits overpowering human passions. Human beings are unable overcome these oppressive powers and must seek divine help.³⁸⁶ These compositions provide a way of understanding the present human experience of suffering and crisis by explaining it through the activity of evil spirits and their leader.

The compositions I have examined reveal the dimensions of the activity of these **heavenly beings** involved in human struggles. The current state of affairs is awry because a cosmic struggle is underway between two contrasting sides of

³⁸⁶ The exception to this powerlessness is the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*, which assumes that human beings are able to resist captivity to evil spirits and their leader at the present time. The patriarchs predict, however, that in the future even the righteous will become captive to evil spirits and need divine intervention to bind Beliar and his evil spirits.

good and evil, or light and darkness. From a heavenly perspective, Satan (or the equivalent) leads an army of evil spirits to lead the righteous astray and empower those who perpetrate sin and injustice. On the opposing side, God or the archangel Michael leads an army of holy angels to guide and protect the righteous from their efforts. The righteous join the holy angels to take God's side, opposing sin, law-breakers, or oppressive foreign nations. When the righteous experience perseverance or victory against various forms of evil, they may interpret it as the intervention of holy angels who serve God. God is sovereign over all spirits, so God can protect the righteous from the efforts of evil spirits and their leader to destroy and deceive them. By envisioning a correspondence between heavenly skirmishes and human encounters, these compositions cast various human struggles as a cosmic battle.

Not only do these compositions reveal that God protects the righteous from oppressive powers that dominate at the present time; but they also reveal that the end of the struggle against these powers is fixed because God has determined a day of **judgment** when the evil spirits and their leader, and the human beings they empower, will be removed. With the exception of the *Testament of Solomon*, all the compositions I examined envision a decisive solution for the oppression of the righteous at future judgment in which God will intervene in human affairs to separate the righteous from the wicked. End-time judgment is the means by which oppressors will be removed so that the righteous may receive God's salvation, life and peace. In other words, judgment

involves a negative aspect and a positive aspect: the removal of oppressors and the bestowal of blessing upon the righteous. God's judgment reverses the state of affairs so that those who perpetrated oppression and injustice are removed from power, and God's people finally have it. The judgment provides assurance and hope that the present victimization and powerlessness is only temporary, and provides grounds for exhortations to take action under the current state of affairs, such as remaining faithful to the covenant.

3.5.2 Different Aims in Apocalyptic Discourse

While these compositions share a symbolic world, they employ apocalyptic discourse for different aims depending on their literary and theological purpose. Accordingly, each one recontextualizes apocalyptic *topoi* in slightly different ways.

Daniel focuses on political persecution in order to address a particular historical crisis. Daniel employs apocalyptic discourse in order to bring assurance of God's sovereign intervention, and to encourage steadfast obedience to the law even if it results in martyrdom. Similar to Daniel, the apocalyptic discourse in *1 Enoch* functions to affirm in that in the presence of violence, oppression, and a bad state of affairs for the righteous, God will execute judgment to bring about salvation in the future, so that the righteous may have confidence to obey God's commands in the present.

Jubilees engages in apocalyptic discourse as it rewrites the Genesis-Exodus storyline, in order to connect evil spirits to the fact of human sin and

Israel's future apostasy. It gives assurance of God's sovereignty over evil spirits in the present and the future, giving the ground for the exhortation that God's people obey the law. Similar to *Jubilees*, the main rhetorical purpose of the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs* is ethical exhortation. It engages in apocalyptic discourse in order to envision a world of evil spirits at work to lead people astray from God's commands and virtuous living. In addition, the patriarchs look ahead to the future and predict that their descendents will ultimately succumb to evil supernatural powers. These evil supernatural powers will be overcome in the eschatological future, so that God's people will be free for a righteous existence. The *Testament of Solomon* also employs apocalyptic discourse in order to disclose the demonic beings that cause disease, sin, suffering on the earth, as well as the angelic counterparts that overpower them. The function of the apocalyptic discourse is to exhort human beings to combat the powers that assail them, so that they will secure God's grace.

The apocalyptic discourse that runs throughout the *War Scroll (1QM)* portrays an end-time, holy war as a struggle not between human beings alone, but between a coalition of human beings and their heavenly counterparts. It functions to assure those in a powerless, sectarian community that they will soon receive divine help to defeat what they perceive to be the forces of evil and receive God's salvation and blessing.³⁸⁷ Similar to 1QM, the apocalyptic discourse in **11QMelch** functions to link the oppression of God's people with

³⁸⁷ See also Duhaime, *War Texts*, 60.

supernatural powers and to give them assurance that they will soon receive a heavenly liberator.

3.5.2.1 *Binding of Evil Spirits*

Throughout the literature I have examined, one primary way God's agents act against evil spirits is to bind them. Generally, God appoints angels or other exalted beings to bind evil spirits or their leader and cast them into an abyss of darkness or of fire in order to remove their power and influence over human beings and secure them for judgment. Not all acts of binding are the same, however, depending on the aim of the composition. Variations appear with regard to the agents of binding, the time of binding, and the purpose of binding.

First, the agents of binding differ. In *1 Enoch* and *Jubilees*, angels bind evil spirits. In the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*, however, the ideal priest-king binds Belial and his evil spirits, and in the *Testament of Solomon*, Solomon binds or seals the demons through God-given authority. Though differing in the form of the agent, each of these compositions portrays God exalting and commissioning figures other than God to bind evil spirits and their leader.

Second, these compositions differ with regard to the time of binding. Some acts of binding are the means of divine protection of the righteous against the corrupting or physically harmful influence of evil spirits in the present (*Jub.* 48; *T. Sol.*), while also holding the evil spirits for final judgment (*1 En.* 10; *Jub.* 5:6, 10). Other acts of binding are the means of punishment and removal at the final judgment (*Dream Vision, Similitudes; T. Levi* 18).

Third, these compositions differ with regard to the purpose of binding. The binding of evil spirits removes their power and influence over human being in each composition; however, the type of power and influence differs in each composition depending on its emphasis. In the *Similitudes* and *Dream Visions*, the binding of the oppressors and the evil spirits removes their power and influence over human beings with regard to military campaigns, and human injustice and oppression. In the story of the *Watchers*, the binding of evil angels removes their power and influence to perpetuate corruption and injustice on the earth. In *Jub. 48*, angels control the actions of evil spirits by repeatedly binding and releasing them in order to ensure that God's will is accomplished at the Exodus. In the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*, the binding of Beliar and his evil spirits removes their power and influence over the righteous with regard to morality and ethics. In the *Testament of Solomon*, Solomon seals or binds demons with the divinely-given magical ring, by which he removes their evil power but controls their activity by putting them to work on the temple. The binding in the *Testament* is not associated with eschatological judgment. Because these compositions share a symbolic world, they cast human struggles against the backdrop of supernatural activity; but because they address different human struggles, the binding of the supernatural powers that generate those struggles varies. The conclusion I draw from these variations is that "binding" has typical features that make it an identifiable apocalyptic *topos*. It is not uniform idea,

however, and these writers recontextualize it to fit the aims of their apocalyptic discourse.

3.5.2.2 *Agents of Judgment*

In some cases God executes judgment, and in others God exalts particular heavenly beings above the rest and commissions them for judicial tasks. In Daniel, the one like a human being participates in God's judgment when he triumphs over the oppressors and their crushed kingdoms to receive an everlasting one (Dan. 7:13), and the archangel Michael delivers God's people from their enemies (12:1-3); however, these figures are not given explicit judicial roles. The book of Daniel stresses God's sovereignty throughout the tales and the visions. It is the Ancient of Days who appears on the throne to execute judgment against the enemies of God's people (chap. 7). 1QM also emphasizes God's sovereignty in the outcome of the war and also in judgment. Although God employs angelic agents and even exalts the angel Michael to support the Sons of Light in the war against their enemies, God is finally the "Hero of War" who liberates the captives.

In *1 Enoch* and 11QMelch, however, God exalts heavenly beings to execute judgment and gives them a share in divine characteristics. These heavenly beings, rather than God, execute judgment and then liberate God's people. In *1 Enoch*, the Son of Man sits on God's throne and gives over oppressors to angels of punishment. In 11QMelch, Melchizedek executes judgment from among the heavenly court and liberates the captives. The *T. Levi*, like 11QMelch, presents an

ideal priest and king who defeats Belial and his powers and liberates captives in order to bring salvation for God's people (*T. Levi* 18). Whereas Melchizedek executes judgment in the heavenly court, the ideal priest-king in *T. Levi* will execute a righteous judgment on the earth (18:2-3). To summarize, some compositions envision God as the executor of judgment and liberator of God's people, while others envision a heavenly being or other exalted figure as the one who fulfills that role, according to their rhetorical purpose.

3.5.2.3 *Negative Examples*

The *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*, *Jubilees*, and the *Testament of Solomon* use negative examples pertaining to temporal judgment in order to exhort their hearers to positive action in the present. The *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs* employs the negative examples of the patriarchs and their enticement by various evil spirits. In addition, they predict that their sons will eventually succumb to those evil spirits too and face the judgment of exile. Not only the patriarchs, but also Israel functions as a negative example for the exhortation to choose the good so that Beliar and his spirits will not overpower a person. Similarly, *Jubilees* depicts Israel facing the judgment of exile because they succumb to evil spirits and stray from the covenant. The *Testament of Solomon* ends with the glory of God departing from Solomon because he has fallen into perversion and idolatry. The hearer is exhorted to recognize the powers of the demons behind the sins that entice them, and to invoke the angels that destroy their influence. Through the use of negative examples, descriptions of temporal

judgments are a means of exhorting the hearer to prepare for the future by choosing God's way now.

3.5.2.4 *The Response of the Righteous to Oppressors*

While the compositions generally portray human beings as powerless before their oppressors, they vary in their treatment of the role that the righteous take at the time God intervenes in judgment. Daniel calls for a non-violent response to the persecution that escalates at the time of judgment. In fact, laying down one's life is the means to the glorification of the righteous. God is the one who delivers judgment on behalf of the righteous, who are not themselves involved in judicial activity. In *1 Enoch*, on the other hand, God empowers the righteous elect to take militant or judicial action against their oppressors and delivers those oppressors into their hands. Similarly, *1QM* portrays the sons of light launching an offensive war to annihilate the sons of darkness as an instrument of God's judgment. Thus, apocalyptic discourse functions to encourage oppressed people to stand firm as they await God's imminent judgment in two divergent ways. In the case of *1 Enoch* and *1QM*, apocalyptic discourse functions to help readers imagine their powerful participation in divine judgment against their oppressors, while in the case of Daniel it helps them envision their martyrdom as the path to future rewards at the time of judgment.

3.5.2.5 *The Salvation of the Righteous at the Judgment*

As I have noted, judgment includes both the removal of the wicked and the salvation of the righteous. The form that salvation takes differs in each respective composition, depending on the issues it addresses and its aim. In Daniel, oppressive human kingdoms persecute the holy ones, so the blessing Daniel imagines for the righteous at the judgment is an everlasting kingdom in the heavenly places in which even those who have been martyred are transformed when they awake to shine like stars. *1 Enoch* depicts various blessings for the righteous. For, where human and heavenly offenders attack the nation, the blessing of salvation is the renewal of Jerusalem, the temple, and all of humanity; where offenders misuse their wealth and power to exploit the weak, God intervenes in judgment to reverse the state of affairs so that the righteous now will receive glory, honor, and resurrection to a heavenly resting place.

Jubilees is concerned with the presence of sin and Israel's faithfulness to the covenant, and employs apocalyptic discourse to portray those malevolent spirits who attempt to lead them astray in the present and who succeed at it in the future. Accordingly, the blessing for God's people at the judgment is the renewal of their hearts, in which God creates a holy spirit to unseat the spirit of Beliar that had ruled over them. At that time, they will be free from the influence of evil powers, and therefore, from sin, so that they can experience an ideal covenant relationship with God. Similarly, the main rhetorical purpose of the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs* is ethical exhortation. It, too, envisions a world

of evil spirits that seek to lead the righteous away from God's commands, and a future time when Israel will be overcome by those spirits. Thus, at the judgment the righteous are freed from their captivity to Beliar and his spirits of error so that they can have mastery over them and their hearts can turn to the Lord. The blessing for the righteous is the turn from shameful, disobedient living to a righteous existence with God.

1QM depicts the struggle of a sectarian community that engages in a holy war against those human and spiritual powers that oppress them. Thus, the result of the war reverses power relationships in favor of the Sons of Light: peace and glory will be restored to the land, they will experience long life and an abundance of material blessings, and rule eternally over their enemies and oppressors. 11QMelch addresses Israel's need for national and spiritual liberation. Viewing Israel's true captivity as captivity to Belial and his spirits, the blessings for the Sons of Light at the judgment will be liberation from those spirits for an existence free from both human and spiritual oppression so that God's people can experience salvation characterized by justice and peace.

I summarize the results of my analysis in the following table:

	Persecution	Heavenly Beings	Judgment
Daniel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kings/nations oppress • war • Righteous are powerless • martyrdom is means of purification/glory 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Battle between angels of nations corresponds to human wars • Angels deliver from harm, interpret visions • “one like a son of man” represents holy ones in triumph over enemies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God is agent • Human kingdoms destroyed • Holy ones receive everlasting kingdom: awake to everlasting life and shine like stars
<i>1 Enoch</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • humans, fallen angels oppress • social violence, war, sin, deception • Righteous are powerless 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Battles between holy and fallen angels • Satan’s activity corresponds to activity of rulers of earth • Holy angels bind evil angels to protect the righteous and to hold them for judgment • Son of Man represents elect at time of salvation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agents: God, angels, Son of Man, righteous humans • Sinners and oppressors destroyed; Holy angels bind fallen angels to punish • Righteous receive renewal of Jerusalem & earth; glory, honor, resurrection
<i>T. 12 Patr.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beliar and spirits oppress • Moral/ethical enticement • Righteous have power to choose good, but eventually succumb to Beliar 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holy angels battle and punish Beliar and spirits • Correspondence between evil spirits and human sin/vice • Holy angels protect the righteous • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agents: angels, ideal priest/king • Ideal priest/king binds Beliar and spirits to end their captivity • Righteous receive freedom to exist righteously with God

	Persecution	Heavenly Beings	Judgment
<i>T. Sol.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demons oppress • Disease, death, strife, sexual perversion, natural disasters • Sons of Israel are powerless without knowledge of demons and the angels that overcome them. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Correspondence between demonic activity and human suffering • God gives Solomon authority to bind demons, to render them powerless and force them to work. • Angels overpower demons when human beings invoke their names. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No eschatological judgment • Temporal judgment against Solomon • Hearers exhorted to “find grace forever”
<i>War Scroll</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unbelieving nations and apostate Jews oppress • Enticement to covenant unfaithfulness • Righteous are powerless 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • War in heaven corresponds to war on earth • Michael and hosts assist Sons of Light • Belial and hosts assist Sons of Darkness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Righteous human and angelic agents, but God is sole victor. • Belial and Sons of Darkness destroyed • Sons of Light receive restoration of land, material blessings, rule over enemies
11QMelch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Belial and spirits; the nations oppress • Enticement to covenant unfaithfulness • Righteous are powerless 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Melchizedek and Belial are heavenly opponents. • Efforts of Belial and spirits correspond to captivity by nations and by sin • Melch leads Sons of Light 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Melchizedek is agent like God • Belial and hosts destroyed • Sons of Light receive salvation, justice and peace

3.6 Mark 3:22-30

I return to Mark 3:22-30 in order to see this passage in light of the compositions I have discussed above. Mark both shares their symbolic world and engages in apocalyptic discourse for particular literary and theological aims.

3.6.1 The Shared Symbolic World

Like the compositions I have discussed, Mark imaginatively constructs a lens through which to view human oppression by revealing the operations of supernatural powers. Primarily, Jesus' exorcisms open up a world beyond that which is visible to the human eye. The characters in the story inhabit a world in which the agents of **persecution** are not simply bodily or human, but supernatural (1:34; 3:10-11). Satan rules the earth with his army of demons and holds its people captive like a strong man who has possession of a house and its inhabitants. Mark 3:22-30 reveals that people cannot free themselves from such adversity because these supernatural oppressors have overpowered them. Only the one empowered by God's Spirit, who is stronger than the evil spirits and their leader, can liberate people. The explanation of human oppression through the idea that Satan and his army of demons rule the earth at the present time, and hold people in a captivity from which they are unable to free themselves is also expressed in the literature I have examined above.

In addition, Mark reveals the nature of a cosmic battle between **heavenly beings**. The characters inhabit a world in which the human struggles of the righteous correspond to a supernatural struggle between two opposing sides of good and evil. The scribes try to place Jesus on Satan's side of the struggle with their accusation against him, but Jesus rejects their charge and places himself on the Holy Spirit's side. By exposing the scribes' false charge as blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, Jesus suggests that the scribes are the ones caught up on Satan's

side of the struggle. Mark's discourse reveals a conflict between two opposing sides, both with human actors and heavenly counterparts. That is, the conflict between the scribes and Jesus corresponds to a heavenly conflict between Satan and the Holy Spirit. Like the Jewish apocalyptic compositions I examined, Mark 3:22-30 associates human and heavenly struggles.

Finally, Mark reveals Jesus' exorcisms as the beginning of God's intervention to end the oppression of human beings. Mark 3:22-30 is not a judgment scene; it does not bring history to a close. It does, however, contain *topoi* that echo **judgment**. The discourse dramatizes a battle between Satan and his kingdom of demons on the one side and the Holy Spirit-led Jesus on the other. Through this battle Jesus, the stronger one, binds Satan in order to free those held captive by Satan and his evil spirits. The heavenly battle, the binding of evil spirits, and the liberation of captives are typical of divine judgment scenes in the apocalyptic literature I have discussed above. Jesus, the divinely appointed figure, inaugurates a heavenly battle by his exorcisms that will culminate in the end of Satan and his emissaries.

3.6.2 The Distinctive Aims of Mark's Apocalyptic Discourse

A significant result of comparing Jewish apocalyptic compositions is the recognition that they share a symbolic world, but that they recontextualize apocalyptic *topoi* for particular literary and theological aims. Although it is profitable to read Mark alongside these compositions in order to understand Mark's symbolic world, it is also important to read his apocalyptic discourse in

its Gospel context in order to understand how it functions. Like the compositions I have discussed, Mark engages in apocalyptic discourse in order to interpret and offer solutions for the oppression of the righteous. Specifically, Mark employs apocalyptic discourse to interpret the ministry, suffering and death of Jesus; and, to call people to follow him. Below, I discuss several distinctive features of Mark's apocalyptic discourse.

First, the one whom God appoints to bind the evil spirits is not an angel or other heavenly being, but the man Jesus. The tradition of Solomon in the *Testament of Solomon* (see also 11QApPs^a) indicates that there are other exorcists in Jewish tradition known for their authority over the demonic world. In the *Testament*, Solomon, the son of David (*T. Sol.* 1:00), tortures the demons for a while by exercising God-given power (*T. Sol.* 5:5), but in the end the demons overpower him and he becomes their laughingstock (26:7-8). In the Gospel of Mark, Jesus, also the son of David (Mark 10:47), demonstrates that he has greater authority than any religious leader through the success of his exorcisms (1:21-28). Moreover, he establishes the imminence of the kingdom of God as he overpowers evil spirits through exorcisms (1:39; 3:14-15). For Mark, Jesus' exorcisms most clearly communicate the battle between the kingdom of God and the kingdom of Satan.³⁸⁸ For a while, Jesus destroys and tortures the demons (1:21; 5:7), but in the end the demons seem to overpower him when he goes to the cross. Exorcisms are not the final line of attack in the Gospel of Mark.

³⁸⁸ See also the discussion in Craig A. Evans, "Jesus' Exorcisms and Proclamation of the Kingdom of God," 213-15.

Rather, Mark communicates that Jesus overcomes Satanic power by submitting to death.

Second, the binding of the strong man in 3:27 does not refer to the complete removal of Satan's power and influence among human beings in the present. Rather, it refers to the inauguration of a task of judgment that continues through the course of Jesus' ministry and culminates in the future. In Mark 3:22-30, the binding of the strong man has both present and future elements, reflecting ideas in Jewish apocalyptic literature. In the compositions I have discussed, heavenly beings bind evil spirits either to protect the righteous from the activity of evil spirits at the present time or to execute judgment against the evil spirits at the end-time. Mark looks ahead to the sure end of Satan's kingdom and metaphorically depicts the process by which Jesus works towards that end in the present, through his exorcisms (*ἀλλὰ τέλος ἔχει*, Mark 3:26, with the parable of the strong man, v. 27).³⁸⁹ According to Mark, Satan's binding refers to the continuing effect of Jesus' ministry that culminates in the end of Satan's kingdom in the future, rather than a past event by which Satan was rendered powerless. At the present time, Satan continues to exercise a measure of power. In support of this conclusion, my exegesis of Mark 3:22-30 suggests that the powerful Satan and the Spirit-empowered Jesus are engaged in a struggle, so that the binding of the strong man (v. 27) does not obliterate his present power.

³⁸⁹ See my exegesis in Chap. 2.

Third, the judgment in Mark reflects both negative consequences for oppressors and a positive outcome for God's people, to fit Mark's purpose. Mark 3:22-30 suggests that Jesus' main judicial task is the overpowering of Satan's kingdom. Likewise, those who align themselves with Satan's kingdom by rejecting Jesus' ministry face the judgment of becoming outsiders, consigning themselves beyond the realm of the Holy Spirit's power. The placement of Mark 3:22-30 suggests that the climactic blessing for the righteous is liberation from Satan's household (3:27) to become part of the new household, or kingdom, that Jesus has come to establish (3:31-35).

Fourth, the one that God has appointed to liberate captives succumbs to oppressors. While Mark 3:22-30 portrays Jesus as the divinely appointed liberator, the larger narrative reveals that this liberator is crucified. None of the divinely appointed liberators in the compositions I have discussed above experiences oppression. An exception could be seen in the *Testament of Solomon*. Solomon, the one who has overcome the demons, is finally enticed by them into idolatry so that the glory of God departs from him. His downfall, however, is due to his own moral failing. By contrast, when, at the cross, Jesus cries, "my God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (Mark 15:34), that abandonment is precisely because he has remained faithful to God.

Mark's presentation of Jesus as liberator is also distinctive when compared to *1 Enoch* and Daniel. Although the Son of Man in *1 Enoch* and the one like a human being in Daniel represent the righteous, neither shares in their

suffering. As Mark's story unfolds, Jesus does not emerge as the patently powerful person plundering the strong man's house, but as one who progressively loses power until his opponents nail him to a cross. The contemporary Jewish apocalyptic context suggests that the cosmic battle evoked in Mark 3:22-30 ultimately results in God's decisive victory over evil spiritual powers. Mark does not allude to a public and glorious victory, however, until the return of the Son of Man (8:38; 13:26-27; 14:62). A tension exists between that future manifestation of power, and the present enactment of power in Jesus' humble, earthly ministry. When put in its Gospel context, the power struggle in Mark 3:22-30 raises questions about the nature and manifestation of Jesus' power *vis à vis* Satan's power.

Fifth, liberated captives are called to imitate the one who liberates them. The concept of imitation is present in *1 Enoch* and Daniel. *1 Enoch* displays a strong sense of solidarity between the righteous ones and the Son of Man. The former are variously called the elect ones, chosen ones, or righteous ones, and their representative is variously called the Elect One or Chosen One or Righteous One in order to highlight the correspondence. The Son of Man remains hidden while they remain hidden in their oppression, and he is revealed when they are revealed in glory. In this way, they imitate him. In Daniel, the holy ones also imitate the "one like a son of man" in that they receive an everlasting kingdom as he does. This figure represents the holy ones in their victory over their enemies. In both *1 Enoch* and Daniel, the people of God imitate their representatives in

victory. In Mark, however, the people of God are called to imitate Jesus in *his* suffering. Identification with Jesus' suffering becomes a means of interpreting persecution.

In the last chapter, I argued that Mark 3:22-30 portrays a power struggle between two opposing sides with human and heavenly counterparts. Jesus and Satan are engaged in an authentic power struggle in which Satan's power is not obliterated, and in which the nature and manifestation of Jesus' type of power is not straightforward. My discussion above indicates that Mark recontextualizes apocalyptic *topoi* in order to interpret the mission of Jesus. Because Mark develops these themes in the rest of the Gospel narrative, I cannot determine the dimensions of the power struggle from Mark 3:22-30 alone. In other words, the meaning of this passage is tied to the meaning of Mark's whole story. In the next chapter, I use the characters of Mark 3:22-30 as a lens through which to explore the contours of Mark's symbolic world and apocalyptic discourse through the rest of the Gospel.

Chapter 4

Mark's Apocalyptic Discourse in Character, Plot and Narrative

4.1 Introduction

In the last chapter, I argued that the Gospel of Mark both shares the symbolic world of Jewish apocalyptic compositions roughly contemporary to it, and that Mark engages in apocalyptic discourse for particular literary and theological aims. In the present chapter, I argue that a tracing of the characters from Mark 3:22-30 through the rest of the narrative – Jesus, the scribes, Satan, and the Holy Spirit – further delineates that symbolic world and apocalyptic discourse. Mark introduces all of them at the start of the Gospel. First, the Holy Spirit casts Jesus into the wilderness to engage in conflict with Satan. Then, Jesus emerges to engage in conflict with human beings, particularly the scribes and other religious leaders (1:22, 27; 2:1-3:6). Mark 3:22-30 serves to join these human and cosmic figures in a single construal, cosmic conflict. Cosmic and human worlds do not simply operate parallel to each other, but intersect in Jesus' ministry. Mark's construal provides a perspective on the further development of each character in his narrative. Following this analysis, I offer further

observations pertaining to the symbolic world Mark shares with the compositions I analyzed in the last chapter, and to the particular aims for which Mark engages in apocalyptic discourse.

4.2 A Character Study³⁹⁰

Jesus is locked in a cosmic battle against Satan, and this conflict is at the heart of Jesus' ministry. Mark's development of the characters in the Beelzebul account illuminates the symbolic world of the Gospel and the aims of his apocalyptic discourse.

4.2.1 Mark's Characterization of Jesus

Mark opens the Gospel by establishing Jesus as the one who preaches the Kingdom of God and who exorcises demons. In particular, the brevity of the prologue (1:1-13) fixes the reader's attention on Mark's characterization of Jesus as God's Spirit-empowered Son who fights against Satan. The narrator's summary of John's message is that someone stronger than he will come and baptize people in the Holy Spirit (vv. 7-8). Jesus appears and is himself baptized in the Holy Spirit, who thrusts him into the wilderness to face Satan's testing (vv. 9-13). Mark introduces Jesus in the context of a cosmic battle.

After Jesus begins his public ministry by announcing the presence of the Kingdom of God, his first public activity builds upon the wilderness conflict. He enters the synagogue at Capernaum where he teaches and casts out an unclean

³⁹⁰ The following discussion is an expansion of material in a previous article. Shively, "The Story Matters."

spirit (vv. 21-28). The exorcism that accompanies his teaching both confirms his authority and demonstrates the purpose of his mission. The demons ask, “Have you come (ἦλθες) to destroy us?” (v. 24). Jesus’ rebuke, “be silent, and come out of him!” (v. 25), displays a positive answer to their question, and the unfolding narrative confirms it. When a search party finds Jesus after he has gone off to pray, he responds, “Let us go on to the next towns, so that I may preach there also, for that is why I came out (ἔξῆλθον, v. 38).” Mark follows with the summary statement that Jesus then went throughout Galilee, preaching and casting out demons (v. 39). Indeed, Jesus has come to destroy demonic power as he preaches the Kingdom of God.³⁹¹

Soon afterwards Jesus expands his ministry, through the twelve, when he gives *them* authority to preach and cast out demons (3:14-15). Mark opens his Gospel by linking preaching and exorcisms as the central components of Jesus’ authoritative activity. In the Beelzebul controversy, therefore, the Markan Jesus comments not only about how he accomplishes exorcisms, but also about the very character and purpose of his ministry: He has come to rescue those held captive to Satan’s power (3:27). Jesus has come to liberate people from the household of Satan, to make them part of a new family composed of those who do God’s will (vv. 31-35).

³⁹¹ T. A. Burkill also connects the demons’ question, ἦλθες (“have you come?”) in v. 24, with Jesus’ statement, ἔξῆλθον (“I came out”) in v. 38, and emphasizes Jesus’ divine purpose to come into the world to preach the gospel, pointing ahead to 2:17 as well. See T. A. Burkill, *Mysterious Revelation: An Examination of the Philosophy of St. Mark’s Gospel* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1963), p. 37.

Mark's emphasis on Jesus as exorcist is unique when compared to Matthew and Luke. In those Gospels, Jesus' healing ministry is the key counterpart to his teaching, not exorcisms. For both, exorcisms are portrayed as a subset of healing. Matthew frames his initial description of Jesus' ministry with two identical summary statements: Jesus went around "teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction" (Matt 4:23; 9:35).³⁹² The material between these summaries depicts Jesus as teacher (chs. 5-7) and healer (chs. 8-9). At the close of the Sermon on the Mount, Matthew appropriates a summary statement from Mark 1:22, "And when Jesus finished these sayings, the crowds were astonished at his teaching, for he was teaching them as one who had authority, and not as their scribes" (Matt 7:28-29). But Matthew connects the authority of Jesus solely with his teaching rather than also with his exorcisms as Mark does.

Luke introduces Jesus' ministry with a summary statement that emphasizes his teaching ministry: after appearing in the power of the Spirit, "he taught in their synagogues, being glorified by all" (Luke 4:14-15; cf. v. 44). Jesus' first activity in Luke's Gospel is to teach in the synagogue at Nazareth that the prophecy of Isa 61:1-2 has been fulfilled in the hearing of those present. Luke is preeminently concerned with the Spirit-filled authority of Jesus' word to teach, heal, and set free the oppressed (Luke 4:18-19, 32, 36, 39; 5:5, 9-11). Neither Matthew nor Luke pairs Jesus' teaching with his exorcisms in their summary

³⁹² Both verses read, διδάσκων ἐν ταῖς συναγωγαῖς αὐτῶν καὶ κηρύσσων τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τῆς βασιλείας καὶ θεραπεύων πᾶσαν νόσον καὶ πᾶσαν μαλακίαν.

statements of his ministry the way Mark does (cf. Mark 1:39). Furthermore, while Mark places Jesus' conflict with Satan in the wilderness at the front of his Gospel and the Beelzebul discourse as Jesus' first speech, Matthew and Luke both place birth narratives at the front of their Gospels. Matthew has the Sermon on the Mount as Jesus first speech, and Luke has the synagogue speech in Luke 4 and the Sermon on the Plain as Jesus' first speeches. Mark uniquely portrays Jesus as the one whom God has sent to engage in a conflict with Satan. His focus on Jesus' exorcisms highlights the battle he has come to fight.

The language that John the Baptist uses to describe Jesus expands the dimensions of this conflict. John declares that, "the one who is stronger (ὁ ἰσχυρότερός) than I is coming after me" (Mark 1:7). In what capacity is Jesus stronger than John, or what can he do that John cannot? The reader perceives that Jesus is stronger by the power of the Holy Spirit to engage in conflict with Satan. While John baptizes with water, this stronger one will baptize with the Holy Spirit (v. 8). Jesus appears and is baptized with the Holy Spirit, who enters into him (εἰς αὐτόν, v. 10) and casts him into the wilderness for a struggle with Satan (vv. 12-13). The Holy Spirit is a power that John does not have, that equips Jesus for this conflict. The Holy Spirit makes Jesus the one who is stronger than John for a battle against a cosmic enemy. This suggests that the Holy Spirit and Satan engage in a heavenly struggle enacted in the ministry of Jesus.³⁹³

³⁹³ Mark shares a similar outlook to those Jewish apocalyptic compositions roughly contemporary to it, that display heavenly battles enacted on the earth, through which God's appointed agents fight evil spirits and their leader in behalf of the righteous. In Daniel, the battle between the angels of the nations corresponds to human wars. 1 Enoch associates Satan or evil

The portrait of Jesus as strong warrior is supported by Mark's other uses of ἰσχυρός. For example, the ones who are strong (οἱ ἰσχύοντες) do not need a physician (Mark 2:17), but those who are sick. Jesus is the stronger one who is able to heal people from the oppression of disease and sin. No one is strong enough (οὐδεὶς ἴσχυειν, 5:4) to subdue the Gerasene man who lives in the tombs, possessed by a demon. Jesus, the one who possesses the Spirit, is the stronger one who frees the man from demonic activity so that he no longer bruises himself and returns to his right mind (v. 15). Mark gives the reader eyes to see that sin, disease, and the destruction of human life is the result of demonic activity in the world, from which people are unable to free themselves.³⁹⁴ Jesus is the divinely appointed liberator.

Jesus also gives the twelve the authority to engage in this conflict, calling them to preach and cast out demons (3:14-15). Early on, they have a measure of success (6:7-13). As they grow in their misunderstanding of Jesus, however, they also grow in their ineffectiveness in the combative ministry to which Jesus has called them.³⁹⁵ When Jesus comes down the mountain where he had been transfigured, he finds that his disciples are not strong enough (οὐκ ἴσχυσαν, 9:18)

angels with kings and rulers of the nations that act against the righteous and depicts the holy angels that protect them. *T. Levi* portrays God as the commander of angelic army that executes punishment on Beliar and his spirits of deceit. The *War Scroll* describes an eschatological war fought in heaven and on earth between the Sons of Light and the Sons of Darkness and their angelic counterparts. See my discussion above, in chap. 3.

³⁹⁴ The connection of demonic activity with sin, disease and injustice fits with an apocalyptic symbolic world. See my discussion in chap. 3, above.

³⁹⁵ In the *Testament of Solomon*, Solomon has authority and to invoke angelic power over the demons, but he becomes ineffective when he gives in to his desires.

to cast a demon out of a boy. Only Jesus, the stronger one, is able to free him (vv. 25-27).

Finally, the place called Gethsemane becomes for Jesus and the twelve a place of testing, which is implicitly an act of Satan (cf. 1:13). Jesus warns Peter to stand for this test when he asks, “are you not strong (ἰσχυραὶς) to watch one hour?” (14:37). Peter and the rest prove not to be strong enough to watch and pray and avoid the test, and so flee when Jesus is seized. Jesus is the stronger one, however, who submits to God’s will, yields his life and goes to the cross. Here, being the stronger one pertains to the test to save one’s life rather than lose it (cf. 8:35), that is, the temptation to choose a worldly way of gaining power rather than God’s way of gaining power.

My discussion thus far suggests many points of congruence between Mark and Jewish apocalyptic compositions roughly contemporary to it. Like these compositions, Mark understands human suffering in light of demonic activity, and portrays a heavenly battle that corresponds to human conflict. Unlike these compositions, Mark presents Jesus as God’s divinely appointed liberator. Although the first half of the Gospel has Jesus manifesting the power of the Spirit over Satan by casting out demons and preaching, by healing, and prevailing over the forces of nature, the narrative does not suggest a total triumph. Indeed, the plot shifts in the second half of the gospel when Jesus predicts his death and resurrection (8:31; 9:31; 10:32-34). Once Jesus enters Jerusalem and succumbs to his human opponents, he ceases to exercise power

over his cosmic opponent through exorcisms (chapters 11-16). Jesus is seized in the place called Gethsemane, tried, and crucified, falling to the power of the religious establishment. At the cross, Jesus does not resemble the stronger one who plunders the strong man's house. Rather than binding the strong man, Jesus himself is bound. Rather than exhibiting power, Jesus yields it. Rather than being saved from death, Jesus is killed.

This loss of power, however, leads to a display of power in God's economy. Appearances of worldly power deceive, because God is at work in weakness. After each prediction of his impending death and resurrection, Jesus had taught his disciples that the one who wishes to save his life must lose it (8:35), that whoever wants to be first must be last of all (9:35), and that whoever would be great must rather be like a servant than like one who lords authority over others (10:42-45). Jesus offers himself as an example of power in the Kingdom of God: the Son of Man has not come to be served, but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many (10:45). When he is raised, Jesus' view of power receives divine confirmation (16:6).³⁹⁶ This view of power reflected in Mark, that what is hidden as weakness will be publicly revealed as glory and power, reflects apocalyptic thought. For example, in the Similitudes, the reality of the glory of the elect is concealed by their oppression. When the glory of the

³⁹⁶ The expansion after Mark 16:14 describes the signs that will be done by those the ones who believe, including exorcisms, speaking in tongues and picking up serpents without harm, and healing the sick. This expansion represents the kind of interpretation I am offering: Jesus' humble loss of power will ultimately be triumphant. Mark 16:14-20 can be dismissed as unoriginal due to its lack of attestation in the manuscript tradition, but the longer ending represents an interpretation that is not inconsistent with Mark's rhetoric. That is, it goes on to say that there is a community filled with God's power.

Elect One, or Son of Man, is revealed, the glory of the elect ones will also be revealed, and they will all rise.³⁹⁷ The expression of power in Mark also resembles that in the book of Daniel, where martyrdom is the means to purification and glory for the righteous in the heavenly realm (Dan 12:1-3).

4.2.2 Mark's Characterization of Satan

Apart from Mark 3:27, Satan appears in Mark's narrative only three times (1:12-13; 4:15; 8:33). In the temptation narrative (1:12-13), Mark establishes Satan as Jesus' first and foremost adversary. Mark's brief description portrays the Spirit-empowered Jesus and Satan engaged in a cosmic battle. The Holy Spirit is a cosmic figure that has come down from heaven to dwell in Jesus (v. 10), and thrusts Jesus into a conflict with Satan by casting him into the wilderness (v. 12). Satan's primary activity is to test Jesus (πειραζόμενος ὑπὸ τοῦ σατανᾶ, v. 13), similar to the activity of Satan and evil spirits in contemporary apocalyptic compositions.³⁹⁸ In addition, Jesus is with the wild beasts (v. 13), which are associated with demons in Jewish apocalyptic texts.³⁹⁹ The appearance of Satan and the wild beasts in Mark's account evokes a picture of Satan with a pack of

³⁹⁷ 1 En. 46, 62.

³⁹⁸ For instance, 1 Enoch portrays the Watchers leading human beings into sin, deception and violence. In Jubilees, Mastema/Belial/Satan and his evil spirits seek to lead people into sin and to destroy them. In the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs and the Testament of Solomon, demonic powers draw human beings into moral failure, by drawing them into sin and ruling over them. The Qumran literature portrays human beings as victimized by Belial and his spirits, who seek to draw them away from God's covenant and imprison them in sin. See my discussion above, in chap. 3.

³⁹⁹ T. Iss. 7:7; T. Benj. 5:2; Isa 13:20-22; 34:13-14; Bar. 4:35.

demons.⁴⁰⁰ When Jesus faces such opposition, angels appear and minister to him (Mark 1:13). Several of Jewish apocalyptic texts depict angels coming to the aid of those engaged in conflict with dangerous spiritual enemies.⁴⁰¹ This background suggests that Jesus struggles against a Satan and his demonic host with heavenly help. The dualistic struggle is evocative of a battle scene with earthly and cosmic dimensions.

Finally, Mark's use of the term σατανᾶς to describe Jesus' opponent, rather than διαβόλος like the parallel accounts of Matthew and Luke (Matt 4:1, 5, 8; Luke 4:2, 3, 13), ties his temptation narrative to the Beelzebul discourse that appears soon after.⁴⁰² Neither Matthew nor Luke makes this connection. The reappearance of Satan, Jesus and the Holy Spirit in Mark 3:22-30 creates a fuller picture of a cosmic battle begun in the wilderness. By linking the temptation account to the Beelzebul discourse, Mark gives it a distinctive apocalyptic character.

In contrast to Matthew and Luke, Mark does not explicitly state the content or outcome of the wilderness testing. In their accounts, Jesus is tempted by the devil (πειραζόμενος ὑπὸ τοῦ διαβόλου, Matt 4:1; Luke 4:2), who leaves after

⁴⁰⁰ Commentators associate the beasts with evil powers or demons (Donahue and Harrington, *Mark*, 66; A. Y. Collins, *Mark*, 153); or view the wild beasts as completing Mark's portrayal of the wilderness as a hostile setting (Stein, *Mark*, 64).

⁴⁰¹ For example, in *1 Enoch*, four holy angels intercede on behalf of the people who cry out for justice against the rebel angels and their offspring, and execute judgment against them. In *Jubilees*, God sends angels minister to human beings by binding demons so that they will not have power over human beings to lead them astray. Similarly, in the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*, God sends angels to protect the righteous from sin and to accompany them in battle, and to fight and punish Beliar and his spirits, and angels punish the demons in the *Testament of Solomon*. In addition, in 1QM angels come alongside the Sons of Light to aid them in their conflict against the sons of darkness. See my discussion in chap. 3, above.

⁴⁰² Cf. Pesch, *Markusevangelium*, 1:214.

Jesus has bested him (Matt 4:11; Luke 4:13). Jesus emerges from the wilderness victorious and begins his public ministry (Matt 4:12-17; Luke 4:14-19). In Mark, Jesus' emergence from the wilderness, where he survives Satan and the wild beasts to proclaim the presence of the Kingdom of God indicates that he is not defeated. But it is not a clear statement of victory. The temptation narrative does not tell the reader what Jesus' testing consists of, that or how he overcame Satan, or even that Satan left. Rather, it depicts a struggle, indicating that Jesus' ministry will be marked by conflict.⁴⁰³ Mark does not need to repeat Satan's name continually throughout the Gospel to demonstrate that Jesus' struggle with Satan continues.⁴⁰⁴ Mark's concentration on the power struggle between Satan and the Spirit-filled Jesus at the beginning of the Gospel, both in the temptation account and in Jesus own explanation of the purpose of his ministry in the Beelzebul discourse (1:12-13; 3:22-30), establishes the presence of Satanic activity for the whole Gospel. Through the rest of the narrative, the activity of Satan appears both explicitly and implicitly.

⁴⁰³ This is similar to the view of James M. Robinson, who views Jesus' conflict with Satan in the wilderness as continuing in the exorcisms throughout the narrative, and contra the view of Ernest Best, who argues that Jesus' decisive defeat of Satan in the wilderness removes Satan as a powerful antagonist in the rest of the narrative. Robinson, *Problem of History in Mark*, 28-42; Best, *Temptation and the Passion*, 10-30.

⁴⁰⁴ I base my understanding of Mark's presentation of Satan on characterization rather than on statistics. This contrasts with the approach of Ernest Best, who views Satan as immobilized at the temptation account, so that there is no cosmic struggle throughout the Gospel. He comments that at Gethsemane, "Jesus also undergoes temptation in the Garden of Gethsemane (xiv. 32-42)... Jesus sees opposed two wills, his own and God's. Satan is not even mentioned. The temptation now definitely comes from within Jesus himself. There is here no cosmic conflict (the strengthening angel of the Lukan account might imply such) but the simple struggle of human will against divine will." Best, *Temptation and the Passion*, 30.

The most obvious implicit evidence of Satanic activity in Mark's Gospel is demonic possession. Satan's army of demons enters and controls human lives throughout the Gospel, indicating that Satan retains a measure of strength. Mark records four exorcisms (1:21-28; 5:1-20; 7:24-30; 9:14-29), as well as summary statements about Jesus' exorcisms (1:32-34, 39; cf. 3:11-12). Jesus gives authority also to the twelve to perform exorcisms, and they travel around and cast out many demons (6:13). Mark's emphasis on demonic activity implies the strength of demons and their ruler. As I argued in the last chapter, Jesus' exorcisms depict the vanguard of the battle between the kingdom of God and the kingdom of Satan.

In a world where Satan rules, however, Satan's power extends to other affairs. Mark describes Jesus' other conflicts in terms of exorcisms. For example, Mark uses the language of exorcism to describe Jesus' calming of the storm in 4:39 (ἐπιτιμάω, πεφίμωσο, cf. 1:25; 3:12; 9:25). When he overcomes the sea, Jesus demonstrates his power over demonic forces. Also, Mark's description of Jesus' prophetic action in the temple (11:15-19) suggests that it is a manifestation of the cosmic struggle in which he is engaged. Mark depicts Jesus casting out (ἐκβάλλω, v. 15) what has corrupted the temple worship, and the language throughout 11:15-19 recalls the opening actions of Jesus' ministry in the Capernaum synagogue, where he has cast out a demon (1:21-28).⁴⁰⁵ The similarity in language and theme suggests that Mark envisions Jesus' conflict in the temple as

⁴⁰⁵ See my discussion in Chap. 3, above.

an extension of his struggle against Satan and his battle to rescue what is held captive by Satanic power. Satan disrupts the natural world and corrupts human worship.⁴⁰⁶

After the Beelzebul discourse, the interpretation of the parable of the sower explicitly names Satan as the one who takes away (αἶρει) the Word of God that is sown along the path (4:15). Jesus' interpretation places the blame, in part, with Satan for the response people have to his person and message. Right after the interpretation of the parable of the sower, Jesus calls out to the crowd, "if anyone has ears to hear, let him hear," and instructs them to pay attention to what they hear, because "to the one who has, more will be given, and from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away (ὁ ἔχει ἀρθήσεται, future passive of αἶρω, 4:25; cf. 4:15). The use of αἶρω recalls v. 15, which describes Satan taking away the word people have heard. The passive voice in v. 25 implies the Satanic activity explicitly named in v. 15. That is, from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away *by Satan*. Throughout the Gospel, hearing is an important theme and is associated with receiving and understanding Jesus' word (e.g., 7:14, cf. v. 18; 8:18; 8:38 with 9:7). Not only Jesus' opponents, but also his own disciples have a hearing problem. Since Mark has had Jesus explain the problem of hearing and reception in terms of Satanic activity, concrete examples of it may be viewed as Satan's work, even though

⁴⁰⁶ Both the destruction of the natural world and the corruption of worship are attributed to demonic activity in Jewish apocalyptic literature. See my discussion in Chap. 3, above.

Satan is not explicitly named.⁴⁰⁷ Satan seeks to keep people from hearing and receiving the word of God, similar to the ideas expressed in contemporary apocalyptic literature.⁴⁰⁸

Satanic activity is implicit in Jesus' conflict with human opponents. If Satan is responsible for the failure to hear and receive Jesus' word, then the religious leaders who fail to respond to Jesus with understanding may be among those from whom Satan has taken what was sown.⁴⁰⁹ Mark uses the same language to describe the actions of Jesus' opponents that he has used to describe the actions of Satan and his demons. Satan had tested Jesus in the wilderness (πειράζω, 1:13). Similarly, the Pharisees test Jesus by seeking a sign from him (8:11), and by attempting to entrap him with their questions (πειράζω, 10:2; 12:15).⁴¹⁰ Also, the goal of the demons in Mark's Gospel is to destroy the lives of those whom they possess (ἀπόλλυμι, 9:22; cf. 5:3-5). When Jesus challenges the authority of the religious leaders, they seek to destroy him (ἀπόλλυμι, 3:6; 11:18). This portrayal of the leaders expresses an apocalyptic world, in which human events intersect with heavenly ones.⁴¹¹

⁴⁰⁷ Mary Ann Tolbert develops this point in *Sowing the Gospel*, 85-230.

⁴⁰⁸ In the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*, Beliar and his evil spirits seek to lead people into moral and ethical failure; in *Jubilees*, Mastema and his evil angels seek to lead people into sin and covenant failure. In *1 Enoch*, fallen angels deceive people, corrupt them, and lead them into sin. In the QL, Belial and his spirits draw people away from the covenant and lead them into sin. See my discussion in chap. 3, above.

⁴⁰⁹ Susan Garrett also makes this point in *The Temptations of Jesus in Mark's Gospel* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 63-6.

⁴¹⁰ J. M. Robinson argued that the debates between Jesus and his opponents extend the exorcisms and thereby the cosmic struggle begun at Jesus' baptism and temptation. J. M. Robinson, *The Problem of History in Mark*, 43-53.

⁴¹¹ See my discussion in chap. 3, above.

Satan tests Jesus through his own disciples. As Satan tested Jesus before he began his public ministry (1:12-13), Satan likewise tests Jesus explicitly at the mid-point of the narrative. Now, Satan's threat even penetrates Jesus' inner circle. One of the twelve is the agent of Satan's testing.⁴¹² When Jesus predicts his suffering and death Peter rebukes him, charging him to deny that mission (v. 32). Peter rejects the way of suffering and death. Because he acts as an agent of Satan, Jesus rebukes him accordingly: "Get behind me, Satan! For you are not thinking according to God's ways, but according to human ways" (v. 33).⁴¹³ Satan is active not only among Jesus' opponents, but also among Jesus' closest followers. This activity indeed confirms Satan as a strong man.

Satan's testing intensifies as Jesus draws nearer to the cross. The narrator implies Satan's activity at the place called Gethsemane (14:32-42). Jesus' excruciating conflict there (vv. 33-36) recalls Peter's earlier rebuke. At Gethsemane, Jesus faces the test to deny his mission again when he himself asks God, "take this cup from me" (14:36).⁴¹⁴ The test does not come through the agency of another human being. Mark depicts the distress and trouble of Jesus'

⁴¹² See Susan Garrett's discussion of the disciples as agents of testing in *Temptations of Jesus*, 69-87. She argues that the disciples test Jesus in that they "not only fail to urge Jesus forward on the path [of suffering] he must follow, but they even act to lead him astray from that path" so that they are a "satanic obstacle in his path" (p. 81).

⁴¹³ See also Garrett, *Temptations of Jesus*, 78-9.

⁴¹⁴ Garrett argues that Jesus' prayer is only preparation for a test he will later face, and is not itself a test. The similarity in subject matter between this prayer and Peter's rebuke, i.e., the denial of suffering and death, and Mark's depiction of the distress and trouble of Jesus' soul suggests that Mark does portray Jesus facing a test as he prays. See Garrett, *Temptations of Jesus*, 93.

soul so as to suggest that the struggle comes from within Jesus' own being.⁴¹⁵ Though Jesus prays that "the hour" and "the cup" would pass from him, he overcomes that struggle and commits his future to the will of God (14:36). That this is a test is confirmed by Jesus' exhortation to his disciples to imitate him by watching and pray lest they themselves enter into a test (εἰς πειρασμόν, v. 38). Jesus' language recalls that of wilderness test (πειραζόμενος ὑπὸ τοῦ σατανᾶ, 1:13). Jesus resolutely shows that he has not denied, but has committed himself to the will of God when the hour of his suffering and death comes (14:36b, 41). Though Mark does not explicitly name Satan in the Gethsemane account, he clearly implies Satanic activity.

Though Satan and his demons yield to the power of Jesus throughout the story, Satan is an active power throughout Mark's narrative, engaging both Jesus and those who follow him in conflict. Satan remains active to exert a measure of power over demons and people (through demon possession and the uprooting of God's Word) and to engage Jesus in conflict (in the wilderness, at Caesarea Philippi, and at Gethsemane). Satan is not fallen; Satan continues to fight. Mark 3:22-30 suggests that the goal of Jesus' struggle against Satan is to free human beings from demonic oppression. In addition, my analysis above demonstrates that Satan's captivity includes demonic efforts to destroy human life and to lead

⁴¹⁵ Jesus' struggle in Gethsemane is evocative of those depicted in the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*. The patriarchs warn that evil spirits seek to overpower human beings to lead them astray from following God's will, and also make exhortations to overcome the internal, individual struggles to choose God so that the evil spirits will flee. *T. Sim.* 3:5; *T. Iss.* 7:7; *T. Dan.* 5:1; *T. Naph.* 8:4; *T. Benj.* 5:2. Of all the patriarchs, Joseph is the only one able to resist demonic threat in order to choose God and obey. In the Christian interpolation, Joseph becomes a type of Christ.

people astray. In fact, my analysis suggests that apart from demonic possession, most demonic efforts throughout Mark are aimed at enticing human beings to reject the will of God due to faulty hearing or understanding. Jewish leaders, disciples, the crowd, and Jesus himself are subject to such demonic activity. Jesus' mission is to create a new household composed of those who do God's will, and he will struggle against Satan for the hearts and minds of human beings to do it.⁴¹⁶

4.2.3 Mark's Characterization of the Holy Spirit

Though the Holy Spirit appears infrequently in Mark (only in 1:8, 10, 12; 3:29; and 13:11), Mark's concentration on the Spirit in the prologue establishes this figure as the controlling power at work in Jesus through the rest of the narrative.⁴¹⁷ John the Baptist speaks of the coming one who is stronger than he. The reader perceives that Jesus is strengthened by the power of the Holy Spirit to engage in conflict with Satan. While John baptizes with water, this stronger one will baptize with the Holy Spirit (1:8). Jesus appears and is himself baptized with the Holy Spirit, who enters into him (εἰς αὐτόν, v. 10). The rending of the heavens at the descent of the Spirit (σχίζομένους τοὺς οὐρανοὺς, v. 10) broadens the

⁴¹⁶ Similarly, John Riches comments that, "Mark's primary focus...is on the struggle for the human will: Jesus' true brothers and sisters are those who do the will of God (Mk 3.35), and explores how Jesus, the stronger one has "the power to overcome the dark forces that radically undermine the human will." John Riches, "Conflicting Mythologies: Mythical Narrative in the Gospel of Mark," *JSNT* 84 (2001): 47.

⁴¹⁷ Robinson discusses the identification of the Holy Spirit with power in the Markan introduction and its background in biblical tradition in *Problem of History in Mark*, p. 29.

scope of the event to cosmic proportions.⁴¹⁸ This cosmic Spirit manifests power by driving Jesus into the wilderness (ἐκβάλλει v. 12) to struggle against Satan. As the story continues, Mark applies the same vocabulary when Jesus drives out demons (ἐκβάλλει, e.g., 1:34; 3:22; 7:26), inviting the reader to imagine the Spirit as the power by which Jesus performs exorcisms, even though the Spirit is not explicitly named.⁴¹⁹ Mark does name the Holy Spirit in 3:29, confirming this figure as Jesus' power source for exorcisms.

The Holy Spirit appears once more after 3:29, in the context of the Olivet discourse. Jesus speaks to four of his disciples about a time beyond the scope of the narrative when his followers will be delivered over to councils, beaten in synagogues, and stand as witnesses before governors and kings for his sake (13:9-13). He tells them not to worry about what they will say when they are delivered over to trial because the Holy Spirit will give them their words "in that hour" (ἐν ἐκείνῃ τῇ ὥρᾳ, v. 11). The narrator is preparing the reader for what will soon happen to Jesus himself, though he speaks about the future of his followers. The three-fold prediction that Jesus' followers will be delivered over to their enemies and to death (παραδίδωμι, 13:9, 11, 12), recalls Jesus' threefold prediction that he himself will be delivered over to his enemies and to death (παραδίδωμι, 9:31; 10:33; see also 8:31). After the Olivet discourse, Jesus himself is delivered over to a council (14:53-65) and a governor (15:1-5). He is beaten, not in a synagogue, but in the precinct of the high priest (v. 65). In the place called

⁴¹⁸This recalls the plea of the prophet Isaiah that God would rend the heavens and come down to earth (Isa 64:1).

⁴¹⁹ See also Robinson on this point, *Problem of History in Mark*, p. 29.

Gethsemane, Jesus had prayed that “the hour” (ἡ ὥρα, 14:35) might pass from him, but then submits himself to God’s will. When those who will betray and arrest him are coming, he says, “the hour has come” (ἦλθεν ἡ ὥρα v. 41). That is, the eschatological time of Jesus’ suffering and death have come, and Jesus faces it resolutely.

Although the Holy Spirit is not explicitly named, these connections imply that when Jesus stands as a witness before the high priest, what he says is given to him in “that hour,” by the Spirit. When the high priest asks him, “Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One?” (14:61), the reader imagines that it is not Jesus who speaks but the Holy Spirit when he breaks his silence and 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” (v. 62; cf. 13:11). The direct result of these words is not that Jesus is rescued. Rather, the result is that the high priest tears his clothes, the entire Council condemns Jesus to be killed, and those present beat and mock him (vv. 63-65). The Holy Spirit, Jesus’ source of power, brings him a loss of worldly power that ultimately leads to his death.

Though 3:27 depicts Jesus as the stronger one, who overpowers the strong man to plunder his house, the reader subsequently learns that Jesus neither gains nor displays the power by which he overcomes the strong man through expected means. Those whom God appoints to deliver the righteous in contemporary Jewish apocalyptic compositions – the archangel Michael, the ideal priest-king, the Son of Man, Melchizedek – appear with strong manifestations of power. By

contrast, Mark employs apocalyptic discourse for different aims. Mark's narrative suggests that the Holy Spirit, Jesus' source of power, leads Jesus to his own death. Mark's understanding of power involves tension and irony, so that the reader cannot interpret Jesus' position of power in the parable of the strong man as an obvious state of affairs.

4.2.4 Mark's Characterization of the Scribes

The scribes play a more prominent role in Mark's Gospel than any of the other Jewish leaders.⁴²⁰ Only the scribes are part of the drama from Jesus' first public ministry at the Capernaum synagogue (1:28) to the final mocking of Jesus at the cross (15:31). Throughout the Gospel, Mark emphasizes their position as teachers of Israel. Specifically, the crowds in the Capernaum synagogue recognize their role as teachers (1:22), and Jesus uses their teaching as a point of departure for his own (9:11; 12:35). In addition, Mark emphasizes their position as custodians of Israel's righteousness. During Jesus' Galilean ministry, the scribes join the Pharisees to oppose Jesus' view of sin, ritual purity and the law (2:6-3:6; 7:1-23). Mark has Jesus constantly trump the scribes' teaching and authority in order to demonstrate that Jesus is the one God has sent to fulfill those purposes and inaugurate God's kingdom (1:22-28; 2:6-12; 9:11-13; 12:35-37; cf. 27-33).

⁴²⁰ The scribes appear 21 times in Mark. By contrast, the Pharisees only appear 13 times, four of them alongside the scribes, and do not take part in the seizure or trial of Jesus even though they earlier plot to destroy him. Although the chief priests are also mentioned 21 times, this group only appears twice outside of the seizing and trial of Jesus (chaps. 14-15) and both times with the scribes.

Not all scribes in Mark's Gospel, however, appear in a negative light. Mark portrays the lone scribe who approaches Jesus in the temple as a sympathetic figure (12:28). Mark's juxtaposition of Jesus' commendation of the lone scribe in 12:28-34 with his condemnation of the scribes in vv. 35-37 makes this point. The scribe's encounter with Jesus is not polemical like those with the religious leaders leading up to this story.⁴²¹ The chief priests, scribes and elders challenge Jesus' authority (11:27-33); the Pharisees and Herodians seek to trap him (12:13-17); and the Sadducees ask him a trick question (vv. 18-27). By contrast, the lone scribe is moved to question Jesus because he hears his response to the Sadducees (vv. 18-27) and sees that he has answered them well (v. 28). Whereas the scribes as a group are characterized as teachers, this scribe seeks to be taught – by Jesus! After the various groups of religious leaders test Jesus, the scribe genuinely engages him about the Law, and Jesus affirms that he is not far from the Kingdom of God. Unlike in Mark, the parallel passages in Matthew and Luke present a legal expert questioning Jesus in order to test him (Matt 22:34-40; Luke 10:25-28). This difference suggests that Mark has a particular literary and theological aim. The positive characterization of individual Jewish leaders like this scribe, Jairus (Mark 5:22-23), and Joseph of Arimathea (15:43), make them stand out in Mark's narrative, showing that Mark excludes no one from becoming a follower of Jesus who responds to him in faith.⁴²²

⁴²¹ See also A. Y. Collins, *Mark*, 565.

⁴²² Elizabeth Struthers Malbon, *In the Company of Jesus: Characters in Mark's Gospel* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2000), 195-96.

Nevertheless, Mark depicts the scribes *as a group* in a negative light. Mark alone among the Gospels portrays the scribes who have come down from Jerusalem as the opponents of Jesus in the Beelzebul controversy. From one perspective, the narrator lumps all the Jewish leadership groups together to represent the opposition to Jesus.⁴²³ As a group, they continually question Jesus' authority, teaching, and actions, and finally plot and carry out his destruction. In Jerusalem the scribes plot with the chief priests and elders to carry out Jesus' death (11:18; 14:1; 43, 53; 15:1, 31). These groups are flat characters, or one-dimensional with consistent and predictable traits, words, and actions.⁴²⁴

From another perspective, however, Mark develops the scribes as a particular character group. The uniqueness of the scribes' characterization is found in those parts of the story where they appear alone. In particular, out of all the Jewish leadership groups, only the scribes appear in conflicts with Jesus over his exorcisms. During his first public teaching in the synagogue at Capernaum (1:21-28), the people marvel that Jesus teaches them as one with authority, and not as the scribes (1:22). Their wonder increases when Jesus casts out a demon: "What is this? A new teaching with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him" (v. 27). Jesus' exorcisms elevate and

⁴²³ I assume that Mark's depiction of the Jewish leaders reflects the first-century historical and social context, but also that Mark develops their characterization in the narrative for theological aims. See also Malbon, *In the Company of Jesus*, 131-65, especially p. 156; Anthony J. Saldarini, *Pharisees, Scribes and Sadducees in Palestinian Society: A Sociological Approach* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988, 2001), 144, 241-76.

⁴²⁴ Opposed to flat characters, round characters are complex characters who exhibit both good and bad traits. Whereas the Jewish leaders as a group are flat characters, the disciples are round characters. For an explanation of the use of "flat" and "round" characterization to analyze Mark's Gospel, see Rhoads, Dewey, and Michie, *Mark as Story*, 116-117; Elizabeth Struthers Malbon, "Narrative Criticism" in *Mark and Method*, 35.

confirm the new and authoritative nature of his teaching. This episode in the Capernaum synagogue functions not only to tie exorcisms and preaching together as the center of Jesus' ministry, but also to establish exorcisms as the public confirmation of his authority. Because Jesus' authority threatens that of the scribes, they seek to discredit him publicly by ascribing his exorcisms to demonic powers (3:22-30). From Mark's perspective, the scribes seek to preserve their authority and power at the expense of choosing God's side in a cosmic battle. By exposing the scribes' false charge as blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, Jesus suggests that the scribes are the ones caught up on Satan's side of the struggle. As I discussed in the previous chapter, Mark 22-30 discloses a conflict between two opposing sides, both with human and heavenly counterparts, reflecting Jewish apocalyptic thought.

The scribes challenge the authority of Jesus to perform exorcisms again later in the Gospel, this time when Jesus' followers try to exercise that authority. When Jesus descends the mountain after being transfigured, he encounters a controversy over an exorcism that involves the scribes and his disciples (9:14). This scene recalls the Beelzebul controversy. At that time, Jesus had descended a mountain after setting apart the twelve (3:13-19), to engage in a general controversy over exorcisms with the scribes (3:22-30).

The similar setting of 9:14-29, the appearance of the scribes, and similar vocabulary (the use of *ισχύω* in 9:18; cf. *ισχυρός*, 3:27; the repetition of *δύναμαι* in vv. 22, 23, 28, 29; cf. 3:23, 24, 25, 26, 27) evokes 3:22-30 and suggests that the

controversy is the same. Although the argument in 9:14-16 is not explicit, it is likely a controversy about the authority to cast out demons. Jesus had given the twelve the authority to preach and cast out demons (3:13-15), in imitation of his own mission. He sent them out to perform these tasks, and they had a measure of success (6:7-13). Now, they are not strong enough (οὐκ ἴσχυσαν, v. 18) because of their lack of faith (v. 19).⁴²⁵ Only Jesus proves to be the stronger one who is able to rescue the boy from Satan's captivity. Mark portrays this exorcism as a rescue from death. When Jesus casts the demon out, the boy looks as if he is dead, but Jesus raises him (ἤγειρεν αὐτόν, 9:27).⁴²⁶ The challenge to Jesus' authority and power over Satan and the demonic world, amounts to a challenge to his authority and power over death.

When Jesus hangs on the cross, the scribes finally exert their authority over Jesus. Mark singles out the scribes among those who mock him and say, "he saved others; he is not able (οὐ δύναται) to save himself" (15:31). The one who is able to cast out Satan, who is able to enter the strong man's house and bind him (δύναται, 3:27), who is able to save the boy with the unclean spirit (δύναμαι, 9:22-27), is declared to be unable to save himself. The scribes, who had come down from Jerusalem to challenge the source of Jesus' power (3:22) are chief among the opponents who make this final pronouncement about Jesus' loss of power. They are looking for a straightforward display of conventional, lording-it-over-others power when they add, "Let the Christ, the King of Israel, now

⁴²⁵ I discuss 9:14-29 in greater detail below.

⁴²⁶ At the end of the Gospel, the young man at the tomb announces that Jesus has been raised, using the same language (ἐγήθη, 16:6).

come down from the cross, so that we may see and believe" (15:32a). They cannot believe because they do not understand that Jesus' form of power will not be exhibited by coming down from the cross, but by staying on it. Rather than lording power over others, Jesus resolutely serves others, to the point of giving his life as a ransom for many (10:42-45; cf. 8:35; 9:35). He appears to be defeated and destroyed by those who have wielded worldly power. Yet, things are not as they seem. The young man at the tomb announces that Jesus' form of power has not led to death and destruction, but to its opposite. Confirming that God has displayed power in Jesus, the young man at the tomb announces that this Jesus who was crucified is risen (16:6).

The scribes, like others, exhibit the failure to hear and receive Jesus' word with understanding, and so may be among those from whom Satan has taken what was sown. Throughout the Gospel, the scribes as a group challenge Jesus' authority in his struggle against Satan and, therefore, reject Jesus' mission. In the end, the scribes are among those who manifest the Satanic, worldly power that leads Jesus to the cross. According to the apocalyptic symbolic world established in 3:22-30, these human opponents reflect cosmic forces, and are caught up in the cosmic conflict between the kingdom of Satan and the kingdom of God.

4.3 Conclusion

I have argued that in Mark 3:22-30, Mark constructs a symbolic world which displays Jesus' ministry primarily as a struggle against Satan by the power of the Holy Spirit, for the purpose of liberating those held captive by demonic

power for participation in a new community. I have also argued that Satan remains a strong opponent, and that Mark connects heavenly and human conflict. My character study expands the dimensions of the symbolic world and apocalyptic discourse of Mark 3:22-30 in two ways. First, Mark indicates that the persecution human beings experience is a result of Satanic activity. The extent of Satan's work against Jesus includes struggles against human opponents, including the scribes, other Jewish leaders, his own disciples, and even his own flesh. Moreover, human beings in the Gospel struggle against inclinations to abandon the word they have heard preached, to conduct improper worship, and to deny Jesus. Through these struggles, and not only through demon-possession, Mark portrays Satan as a continuing power throughout the Gospel.

Second, Mark suggests the involvement of heavenly beings in human struggles through the activity of Satan and his demons against people and through the activity of the Holy Spirit on behalf of Jesus and his followers. My analysis suggests, however, that the activity of the Holy Spirit does not lead Jesus and his followers to positions of power over their oppressors, but to the loss of power, and even to death as they testify to the gospel. Mark's apocalyptic discourse fits his literary and theological aim, to explain a crucified Messiah and call disciples to follow him. Jesus has come to free people from Satan's captivity and power, ironically, by losing power to the point of losing his own life. Provisionally, we may state that the function of Mark's apocalyptic discourse is

to communicate that what appears to be subjugation, weakness and death is, in fact, God's power for overcoming Satanic forces to establish God's kingdom.

In addition, this character study supports the conclusions of my exegetical analysis. The way Mark develops the characters that appear in the Beelzebul controversy makes it impossible to interpret the parables in 3:23-27 as depicting a straightforward loss or display of power, whether Satan's or Jesus'. It is only through a look at the whole narrative that the reader comes to see that the stronger one overpowers the strong man by yielding worldly power. That is, the meaning of the parables is tied to the meaning of Mark's whole story.

Chapter 5

Mark's Apocalyptic Discourse in a Story (5:1-20) and a Speech (13:1-35)

5.1 Introduction

The Jewish apocalyptic compositions I examined in chapter 3 generally exhibit a hope that God will end the oppression of the righteous through a final judgment that removes human and supernatural oppressors in order to rescue and bless God's people. Similar to these compositions, Mark portrays a world in which Satan and his army of demons are responsible for human oppression, in which a cosmic struggle between Satan and the Spirit-empowered Jesus corresponds to human struggles, and in which Jesus struggles against Satan to free the oppressed from their captivity. Also, like each of the compositions I examined, Mark engages in apocalyptic discourse to fit his own literary and theological aims.

The relationship between the last chapter and this one may be compared to the relationship between a state map and an inset map of a city within its borders. The larger map provides an overview of the topography of the whole state, while the inset map provides a close-up examination of a city that allows

for a look at particular streets, buildings and landmarks. In the present chapter, I connect the symbolic world and the apocalyptic discourse displayed in Mark 3:22-30 and the larger narrative to two portions of the Gospel, a story and a speech. I demonstrate how these features appear in the story of the Gerasene demoniac (5:1-20) and in the Olivet discourse (13:5-37). These sections are important to Mark's Gospel because Mark 5:1-20 is the longest miracle story, and 13:5-7 is Jesus' longest speech. I show that these two parts of the narrative develop key themes about Jesus' mission and about Jesus' followers first established in 3:22-30.

5.2 The Gerasene Demoniac (5:1-20)⁴²⁷

5.2.1 Introduction

The account of the Gerasene demoniac (Mark 5:1-20) shows what Jesus' parabolic discourse (3:22-30) has earlier told. In 3:22-30, Jesus spoke in parables about the true nature of the cosmic struggle enacted in his own ministry. In that

⁴²⁷ The reading Γερασηνῶν has the strongest external evidence (Ⲣ* B D it vg cop^{sa}). Coins and inscriptions associate the name "Gerasenes" with the modern city of Jerash, which is more than 30 miles from the Sea of Galilee, making this location problematic. The variant reading that has Γαδαρηνῶν, (A C K f¹³ "M" syr^{p,h}) could be a scribal assimilation to Matt 8:28. Gadara, modern Um Qeis, is also an awkward location for the miracle because it is 5 miles from the shore and there are no steep cliffs close by. A third variant reading, Γεργεσηνῶν (Ⲣ² L Δ Θ f¹ cop^{bo}) follows Origen's proposal in his commentary on John (*In Ioan.* vi. 41) that Gergasa is a more suitable setting for the miracle since it is right on the lake, in order to resolve the geographical problems posed by the readings Γερασηνῶν and Γαδαρηνῶν. The reading Γερασηνῶν has the strongest external evidence and is the most difficult, indicating that it is the preferred reading. The textual and geographical problems are difficult to resolve, and any proposals are speculative. Robert Stein comments, "It is probably best to interpret the present form of the story using the designation 'Gerasa' for the city and territory. Apart from the geographical problem, the meaning of the Markan text is clear, but the historical evaluation of the actual site, which is dependent on the original textual designation of Mark, is best held in abeyance due to the textual confusion." Stein, *Mark*, 250. For a discussion of the issues, see J. McRay, "Gerasenes," *ABD* 2:991-2; and J. F. Craghan, "The Gerasene Demoniac," *CBQ* 30 (1968): 522-36.

struggle, he is not in league with Satan as the scribes have accused, but is in the process of overcoming Satan by the power of the Holy Spirit to rescue those under demonic oppression. Now in 5:1-20, Mark illustrates that symbolic world and cosmic struggle through a specific event in the ministry of Jesus.

The story of the Gerasene demoniac is the first account of an exorcism since the scribes' accusation. The ἄνθρωπος ἐν πνεύματι ἀκαθάρτῳ in 5:2 echoes 3:30, where the narrator indicates that Jesus had called the scribes to speak to them in parables, ὅτι ἔλεγον πνεῦμα ἀκάθαρτον ἔχει. Mark had earlier established (in 1:22-28) that Jesus is an exorcist with authority over the unclean spirit. But on what basis does Jesus have this authority? The scribes claim it is because he himself has an unclean spirit and Jesus rejects that claim. The account of the Gerasene demoniac confirms what Jesus has taught through parable, that he is not a man ἐν πνεύματι ἀκαθάρτῳ (3:30; 5:2, 8, 13) but is ὁ ἰσχυρότερός (1:7; cf. 3:27) than the unclean spirits and their leader, the one able to free those whom the spirits oppress. As an illustration of 3:22-30, the story of the Gerasene demoniac can be considered an apocalyptic narrative.

In *History of the Synoptic Tradition*, Rudolf Bultmann classifies Mark 5:1-21 as an exorcism that is a subset of the miracle story.⁴²⁸ Similarly, Gerd Theissen labels it an exorcism.⁴²⁹ Martin Dibelius, on the other hand, calls the passage a “tale,” as distinct from a “paradigm.” Whereas a “paradigm” is a brief, simple,

⁴²⁸ R. Bultmann, *History of the Synoptic Tradition*, 210-11. Martin Dibelius, *From Tradition to Gospel* (trans. B. L. Woolf; Cambridge: James Clarke, 1971), 70.

⁴²⁹ G. Theissen, *The Miracle Stories of the Early Christian Tradition* (trans. Francis McDonagh; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983), 321.

independent episode that focuses on Jesus' act (presumably a creation for the purpose of preaching), a "tale" is a broad and colorful narrative (presumably a development of the tradition by the storyteller).⁴³⁰ Although Dibelius' assumptions about the tradition history of the text are speculative, his observations about Markan style are significant. Dibelius categorizes nine Markan miracles, healings, or exorcisms as "tales," including Mark 5:1-21. He comments, "There is found here exactly that descriptiveness which we missed in the Paradigms, that breadth, which a paradigmatic application makes impossible; that technique, which reveals a certain pleasure in the narrative itself...." In other words, Mark 5:1-20 reports an exorcism, but the passage functions to do more than just that. This long story functions to illustrate and develop themes that Mark has previously established.

5.2.2 Narrative Context

The story of the Gerasene demoniac does not immediately follow the report of Jesus' skirmish with the scribes. The material between 3:22-30 and 5:1-20 develops themes about peoples' perception of Jesus and the cosmic struggle manifested in his ministry that appear in these outlying accounts. In 3:31-35, Jesus redefines his true family as comprised of those who do God's will (v. 35), leaving outside members of both his blood family and his religious family who have failed to perceive the true nature of his exorcisms. The parables of the kingdom in 4:1-34 heighten the contrast between the many outside who do not

⁴³⁰ M. Dibelius, *From Tradition to Gospel*, 37-69, and 70-103.

perceive Jesus' mission and message and the few who do, and casts their reception at least partly in terms of a cosmic struggle: the sower sows the word among human beings, but Satan snatches it up (4:15). Finally, Jesus calms a storm using the words of an exorcism, thereby casting the event as a struggle against a cosmic opponent (4:35-41). Jesus rebukes the wind (ἐπετίμησεν τῷ ἀνέμῳ) and tells the sea to be silent (καὶ εἶπεν τῇ θαλάσῃ σιώπα), just as he commands the unclean spirits in (4:39; cf. 1:25; 9:25). Now, not even Jesus' disciples perceive his role in this struggle against Satan's kingdom. Out of fear, they respond with a question, τίς ἄρα οὗτος ἐστίν ὅτι καὶ ὁ ἄνεμος καὶ ἡ θάλασσα ὑπακούει αὐτῷ; (4:41).⁴³¹

When Jesus heals the man with the legion, the multitude likewise will fail to understand Jesus' struggle against Satan's kingdom and send Jesus away. Like the disciples, they respond to Jesus' display of power with fear, and reject his exorcising ministry. By contrast, the lone restored man will understand and beg to be with Jesus as a disciple. The phrase ἵνα μετ' αὐτοῦ ᾦ (v. 18) unmistakably recalls 3:14, when Jesus had called the Twelve first and foremost to be with him (ἵνα ὦσιν μετ' αὐτοῦ). The language of discipleship shows that this Gentile comes to an understanding of Jesus' mission that surpasses that of the fearful disciples. Mark shows by the way he interweaves these elements that the cosmic struggle is not only manifest in the exorcism of the legion (5:1-13), but also in the human responses to it (vv. 14-20; cf. 4:15).

⁴³¹ The unclean spirits in the following story will answer that question, in 5:7.

5.1.3 Analysis of 5:1-20

The action of the story begins as Jesus gets out of the boat in Gentile territory and a demoniac approaches him (5:1-2), but Mark instantly interrupts it to describe this man ἐν πνεύματι ἀκαθάρτῳ (vv. 3-5). Morna Hooker considers the description of the man to have “an embarrassing amount of detail” and to be “somewhat intrusive.”⁴³² To the contrary, verses 3-5 provide the reader with the essential lens for reading the entire story. Throughout this extensive description Mark uses the same language he had deployed in 3:22-30, in order to depict the strength of the spiritual force that now oppresses the man and that shortly will struggle against Jesus. Mark asserts that no human being has the power to restrain the man ἐν πνεύματι ἀκαθάρτῳ (5:3b; cf. 3:30). No one is able (ἐδύνατο, 5:3, cf. 3:23, 24, 25, 26, 27) any longer to bind (δῆσαι, 5:3, cf. 3:27) him with chains, and no one is strong enough (ἰσχυεῖν, 5:4; cf. 3:27) to subdue him. The man is able to exert enormous physical strength to tear off the shackles and chains used to restrain him, so that he now continually wanders the tombs and mountains screaming and cutting himself with rocks. The strong man holds him captive and seeks his destruction, and there is no one to rescue him.

The synoptic parallels (Luke 8:26-39; Matt 8:28-34) do not contain Mark’s combination of vocabulary, nor do they connect their versions to the Beelzebul discourse. Mark’s first interpreters did not follow or even seem to grasp the point of his distinctive version. Matthew 8:28 uses ἰσχύω to describe the strength

⁴³² Hooker, *Mark*, 141.

of the demon-possessed men, but otherwise neither Luke nor Matthew use *δέω*, *δύναμαι*, or *ισχύω* in their accounts. Instead, Matthew and Luke place the Beelzebul account after the story of the Gerasene demoniac, so that it does not function as its interpretive key. Indeed, the stories parallel to the exorcism of the Gerasene demoniac perform different functions in Matthew and Luke than in Mark.

Matthew's version falls within a section that highlights Jesus' healing ministry (8:1-9:34).⁴³³ Matthew adds a second demon-possessed man, and shortens the story to a great extent so that it omits the contrast between the man's oppressed and healed condition, the dispute between Jesus and the unclean spirit, and the response of the people. Matthew focuses on Jesus' great power over the demons, which matches his power over the storm (Matt 8:23-27). It is by this great power that Jesus casts out spirits and heals diseases, fulfilling Isaiah's prophecy, "he took our illnesses and bore our diseases" (8:17).

Luke follows Mark's order more closely, placing the story of the Gerasene demoniac between the calming of the storm (Luke 8:22-25), and the healing of the hemorrhaging woman and Jairus's daughter (vv. 40-56). In addition, Luke retains the details of the Markan account that Matthew omits, except for the unique vocabulary I have noted above. Because Luke places the Beelzebul account later, however, the story of the Gerasene demoniac functions together

⁴³³ At the end of the section on healing, Matthew briefly uses material parallel to Mark 3:22 to report the Pharisees accusation that Jesus casts out demons by the prince of demons (Matt 9:34; cf. 10:25), but the Beelzebul material that is parallel to Mark 3:22-30 does not appear until Matt 12:22-32.

with the stories framing it as a statement about the recognition of Jesus' identity and the human response of fear or faith. This statement is also present in Mark's account, but the connection between the Beelzebul discourse and the Geresene demoniac story in the Markan version highlights its distinctive function. For Mark, this story is a skirmish in Jesus' battle against the kingdom of Satan.

The battle against the kingdom of Satan in this story is a battle against death. Mark emphasizes the location of the tombs, suggesting that the intention of the unclean spirit is the man's death: he repeats that the man has run from the tombs (μνημείων, v. 2; μνήμα, vv. 3, 5), makes his dwelling in the tombs, and mutilates himself in the tombs (μνημείων, v. 2; μνήμα, vv. 3, 5).⁴³⁴ The unclean spirit has come to dominate the man so that he has been given over to his own destruction with no one to rescue him (v. 5). In other words, no one has been able to bind this strong man, evidence that Satan's kingdom remains powerful and intent on human destruction. If we were to use the parabolic language of 3:22-30, we would suggest that Mark depicts the man as the goods held in the strong man's house until a stronger one can come to set him free. No one had yet appeared able or strong enough to overpower the strong man and plunder his goods (cf. 3:27); but now Jesus has arrived. Jesus will cast out the unclean spirit not because he himself has one, but because he is the stronger one by the power of God.

⁴³⁴ Some manuscripts (1355 *pc* *vg*^{ms} *sy*^s) omit the phrase ἐκ τῶν μνημείων from 5:2, probably to avoid repetition. The words μνημείον and μνήμα are synonymns, and appear together again in variant readings of Mark 15:46.

Recalling the narrator's aside in 3:30, that the scribes were saying Jesus has an unclean spirit (πνεῦμα ἀκάθαρτον ἔχει), the reader can now make a comparison. Mark had earlier rejected the notion that Jesus had an unclean spirit; now the reader can see the characteristics of someone who *does* have an unclean spirit in order to remove all doubt about Jesus. A man ἐν πνεύματι ἀκαθάρτῳ is under the domination and destruction of an unclean spirit, not in partnership with it. Mark's extended description urges the reader to interpret the exorcism as an illustration of Jesus' role in the battle between the kingdom of God and the kingdom of Satan. That is, Jesus' mission in the combat is to show himself stronger than death.⁴³⁵

Mark continues in v. 6 with the struggle between two powers, Jesus and the unclean spirit.⁴³⁶ Because the description of the man ἐν πνεύματι ἀκαθάρτῳ recalls the apocalyptic symbolic world of 3:22-30, the clash between Jesus and the unclean spirit that follows evokes a cosmic conflict. Verses 6-9 describe the struggle between Jesus and the unclean spirit in terms of a war of words. The back-and-forth dialogue between the man and Jesus in these verses is a verbal skirmish that suggests a battle scene. The man has been crying out in the tombs and cries out to Jesus, demonic behavior that indicates the unclean spirit is the one who controls the man (cf. 1:24; 3:11). The unclean spirit evidently construes

⁴³⁵ See also Gundry on v. 2, "According to word order, some emphasis falls on the demoniac's dwelling in the tombs and thus makes the ensuing contest one of Jesus versus the power of death." Gundry, *Mark*, 248.

⁴³⁶ In v. 6, Mark repeats the action of v. 2 in order to indicate to the reader that he is returning to storyline after the aside in vv. 3-5. See also A. Y. Collins, *Mark*, 267. One does not need to conclude, as Hooker does, that "either Mark has pieced two stories together, or he has forgotten what he wrote" in v. 2. Hooker, *Mark*, 143.

Jesus' arrival as a confrontational act, and seeks the upper hand in the combat when the man runs up to Jesus from afar to bow before him, perhaps mockingly.⁴³⁷ The evil spirit declares who Jesus is in an effort to control him (Ἰησοῦ υἱὲ τοῦ Θεοῦ τοῦ ὑψίστου, v. 7; cf. 1:24).⁴³⁸ This declaration functions, ironically, to answer the charge of the scribes in 3:22 and 30. Whereas the religious leaders have declared that Jesus has an unclean spirit (πνεῦμα ἀκάθαρτον ἔχει, 3:30), the unclean spirit declares that Jesus is the Son of God.

The spirit begs Jesus not to torture him, swearing by God: ὀρκίζω σε τὸν θεόν. In contemporary texts, exorcists use this language to drive demons out; here the unclean spirit seeks to drive Jesus away with an offensive move.⁴³⁹ The reason for the unclean spirit's entreaty (γάρ) is that Jesus has commanded it to come out of the man (v. 8).⁴⁴⁰ Jesus and the unclean spirit are engaged in a struggle, and the demon is trying to gain the upper hand.⁴⁴¹ Finally, Jesus makes a counterattack, proving his control over the unclean spirit by asking, "what is your name?" (v. 9). Similar to what we observed in the *Testament of Solomon*,

⁴³⁷ Apart from 5:6, the only other place in Mark's Gospel where προσκυνέω appears is 15:19, where the soldiers bow down before Jesus and mock him before his crucifixion.

⁴³⁸ As the *Testament of Solomon*, commanding a demon to reveal its name was a common way ancient exorcists sought to control them. E.g., *T. Sol.* 2:1; 3:6; 5:2-3; cf. 11QP^sAp^a 5:5-6; 4Q511 35:6-7; PGM IV. 2251-53; 2343-45. In the present text, the unclean spirit resists Jesus and seeks to gain control over him first by naming him (cf. *T. Sol.* 10:1-2).

⁴³⁹ E.g., in 4Q560, the *Hymn against Demons*, the exorcist addresses demons that take over the human body using the words, "I adjure (ἵνα) you by the name of the YHWH..." (i.4; cf. i.3; ii.5-6). Cf. PGM IV. 2258, 2265, part of a spell over the moon, which uses ἐνεύχομαι, a synonym for ὀρκίζω. See also J. Schneider, "ὀρκίζω," *TDNT* 5:462-53.

⁴⁴⁰ If the γάρ in v. 8 introduces the reason for the unclean spirit's plea that Jesus not torture him, then the imperfect verb ἔλεγεν in v. 8 has a pluperfect sense. This underscores the struggle between the two powers before Jesus' climactic command that would finally send the legion out. See D. B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 549. See also Gundry, *Mark*, 251; Cranfield, *Mark*, 177-78.

⁴⁴¹ See also Collins, *Mark*, 268; Theissen, *Miracle Stories*, 57, 88-89.

Jesus thwarts the demon upon learning his name. Unlike the *Testament*, however, Jesus does not invoke the power of an angel; he himself possesses the power to overcome the demonic world. The unclean spirit surrenders to Jesus and reveals that it is not simply one spirit, but many. The struggle between two powers is between Jesus and an army of demons, presumably under the leadership of Satan.

The name that the unclean spirit utters reveals the dimensions of this power struggle: λεγιῶν ὄνομά μοι, ὅτι πολλοί ἐσμεν. The Latin loanword λεγιῶν is a military term that refers to the organization of the Roman army. The Roman legion in the 1st century C.E. consisted of 5,000-6,000 men, so that this name evokes a picture of thousands of demons organized for battle.⁴⁴² If, as some have suggested, Mark uses this term to express an anti-Roman polemic, this is difficult to demonstrate because such a polemic is foreign to the rest of the Gospel.⁴⁴³ An explanation more consistent with the larger narrative is that λεγιῶν metaphorically develops the depiction of the struggle between Jesus and the demonic powers, as in Mark 3:22-30. In the context of Mark's unfolding narrative, λεγιῶν is best taken to refer to the army of demons under the control of

⁴⁴² D. Kennedy, "Roman Army," *ABD* 5:789.

⁴⁴³ Jesus has harsh words to say about Greco-Roman ideals of rulership in general (e.g., 10:42-45), rather than about the Roman state in particular. Furthermore, Mark singles out the Roman centurion as the only human being to confess that Jesus is the "Son of God" (15:39). See also Collins, *Mark*, 269-70, 498-500; Lane, *Mark*, 184-5, fn 17. For arguments that Mark uses λεγιῶν to express an anti-Roman polemic, see Christopher Burdon, "'To the Other Side': Construction of Evil and Fear of Liberation in Mark 5.1-20," *JSNT* 27 (2004): 149-67; Myers, *Binding the Strong Man*, 191-192. Theissen, *Miracle Stories*, 254-5. Theissen sees the unclean spirit's desire to remain in the country as an allusion to Roman occupation, and the activity of the exorcist as a sign of future political liberation. To the contrary, Jesus' overall concern seems to have more to do with liberating people from Satan's power to gather a new community marked by forgiveness, faith, and prayer (cf. 11:22-25). Cf. Twelftree, *In the Name of Jesus*, 108-111.

Satan, their military king.⁴⁴⁴ When the unclean spirit reveals this name, Jesus exerts the upper hand in the battle. The turning point of the struggle comes in v. 10, when the man begins to beg Jesus not to send the unclean spirits (αὐτὰ, v. 10, now plural) outside the country.⁴⁴⁵ These spirits now know they are defeated and that it is inevitable Jesus will cast them out, so they are trying to set the terms of their departure.⁴⁴⁶ They do not want to leave the Gentile region, so they ask Jesus to send them into animals associated with that place. Jesus grants what they ask for, but not what they want.

The pigs rush into the sea so that these new hosts are destroyed, and the unclean spirits are sent to a place that prevents their influence over human beings and points to their future judgment. The sea has cosmic overtones. In the OT, the sea is an element out of which God created the universe, and is a threatening power over which God shows control.⁴⁴⁷ In addition, the OT and Jewish apocalyptic literature describes the sea or the abyss as the place where

⁴⁴⁴ See also Matt 26:53, where Jesus responds to those who would draw swords to fight for him that he could ask God to send more than twelve legions (λεγιῶνας) of angels if he wanted. This text also employs battle imagery, with angelic armies portrayed under the command of God.

⁴⁴⁵ The use of the neuter plural pronoun, αὐτὰ, is concurrent with the revelation that that Jesus is now dealing with many spirits (πνεύματα, cf. vv. 2, 8). Some witnesses have αὐτούς, which seems to take πολλοί (v. 9) as its antecedent (D^{f3} A^f 579. 1241. l 2211 *al it*). Other witnesses have αὐτόν, which matches the use of the third person singular pronoun earlier in v. 10 (⊗ L 2427 *pc lat sy^p bo K W 892 al*).

⁴⁴⁶ This part of the story is evocative of *Jub.* 10:7-14. When the demons that have corrupted and ruled over human beings face the binding of their power, Mastema (chief of spirits) acknowledges the power and authority of God and begs for a tenth not to be cast into the place of judgment.

⁴⁴⁷ Water is one of the elements out of which God creates the universe (Gen 1:9-10), and the Hebrews saw a three-storied universe with the heaven above, the earth below, and the waters underneath. The waters were conceived of as a cosmic ocean, or abyss, that encircled the universe. God shows power over the sea, particularly in the Exodus account (Exod 15). The OT speaks of the sea and its monsters as a dangerous threat, which cannot be overcome except by divine intervention (Isa 27:1; 48:18; Job 11:9; 26:12; Pss 93:3; 104:25; Jer 6:23). E. R. Follis, "Sea," *ABD* 5: 1058.

demons dwell or experience punishment.⁴⁴⁸ Just before the account of the Gerasene demoniac, Jesus shows control over the sea by calming a storm (4:35-41). He uses language of exorcism in v. 39 when he rebukes the wind (ἐπετίμησεν τῷ ἀνέμῳ) and commands the sea to be silent (σιώπα, πεφίμωσο), which underscores theme of cosmic battle. When the herd of pigs rushes into the sea after the legion possesses them, it demonstrates Jesus' control over threatening Satanic power.

Jesus has cast out the legion, thereby plundering the strong man's house to free the one held captive by demonic power. Mark now contrasts two responses to this exorcism and exhibits the man's restored condition (vv. 14-20). On the one hand, the herdsmen flee and report (ἔφυγον καὶ ἀπήγγειλαν) what has happened to the man and the pigs so that a multitude fears and begs Jesus to separate from them (vv. 14-17). On the other hand, the restored man begs Jesus that he might be with him so that Jesus sends him to report (ἀπάγγελον) what has happened to him (vv. 18-20). The only description of the restored man approximates what may have come from the mouths of those who arrive from the surrounding area and stare in disbelief: "they saw the demon-possessed one, sitting, clothed, and in his right mind, the one who had been possessed by a legion" (v. 15). This description introduces the man in terms of his former

⁴⁴⁸ Job 26:12-13; Pss 74:13-15; 89:8-10; Isa 27:1; 51:9-11. Analogous to the sea, the abyss is a dwelling place for demons in the *Testament of Solomon* (*T. Sol.* 6:3, 5). It is a place of punishment in QL. 11QPsAp^a 4:5-6 is part of an incantation that warns the demon that YHWH will send a powerful angel to bring it down to the great abyss and the deepest Sheol (cf. 11QPsAp^a 5:8-9). Likewise, the *1 Enoch* and the *Testament of Solomon* portray the abyss or the sea as the place of punishment for the demons (*1 En.* 10:13; 54:5; 88:1, 3; *T. Sol.* 5:11).

state.⁴⁴⁹ The sequence of participles that describe the his present condition come in quick succession (καθήμενον ἱματισμένον καὶ σωφρονοῦντα) and sharply contrast that former state according to which the man had wandered in the tombs and mountains, cut at his body (likely tearing his clothes), and exhibited unhinged and anti-social behavior. The people are astounded because what they now see in the man had been beyond human power to achieve (vv. 3-4). Those who saw how this happened to the man and to the pigs (οἱ ἰδόντες πῶς ἐγένετο) told them all about it.⁴⁵⁰ They had an eye-witness account, and evidence of the living man, restored from the tombs standing before them. In the face divine power, the people respond in fear (καὶ ἐφοβήθησαν, v. 15).⁴⁵¹ Their fear does not lead to belief and discipleship, but to rejection. They ask Jesus to leave them.

Whereas the multitude separates from Jesus, the man who had been possessed by the legion⁴⁵² requests the closest available connection to Jesus. In the preceding narrative, Mark has made it clear that Jesus' true family is determined by neither religion nor blood, but by doing God's will. Jesus had begun to set apart his true family on the mountain (3:13-15), calling together (προσκαλεῖται) those whom he wished and appointing the twelve to be with him (ἵνα ὄσιν μετ' αὐτοῦ) and to have authority to preach and cast out demons.

⁴⁴⁹ δαμονιζόμενον is a present passive participle, perhaps reflecting the perspective of the townspeople who are coming to Jesus to see the demon-possessed man.

⁴⁵⁰ The singling out of the report about the pigs could indicate anger about the loss of livelihood, or it could simply indicate fear about Jesus' power. The story does not indicate which.

⁴⁵¹ Similarly, fear had been the response of the disciples to Jesus' display of divine power when he had calmed the storm (4:41).

⁴⁵² Whereas in v. 15 Mark uses a present participle (τὸν δαμονιζόμενον), perhaps reflecting the talk of the townspeople, here he uses an aorist passive participle, ὁ δαμονισθεὶς, emphasizing the man's former state.

When Jesus had first gotten out of the boat, the legion-possessed man had approached him and cried out in a loud voice to challenge him. Now the freed man calls out to Jesus (παρακάλει) as he gets back in the boat and begs “that he might be with him,” (ἵνα μετ’ αὐτοῦ ᾦ, v. 18). The call to apostleship is inverted. On the mountain, Jesus called and invited certain ones to be with him; here, the man calls and asks to be with Jesus. The disciples whom Jesus had called are nowhere in sight. The last time we spied them they responded to Jesus’ display of divine power with fear comparable to that expressed by the multitude that asks Jesus to leave.

Although Jesus does not allow the restored man to remain with him like one of the twelve, he does commission this man to do what an apostle does: to proclaim the divine power of the kingdom of God and to serve as living evidence of a life restored through Jesus’ exorcism. In this way, the man participates with Jesus in the struggle against Satan’s kingdom, doing the will of God and thereby becoming part of Jesus’ true family (cf. 3:35). Indeed, Jesus extends that true family by telling the man to go to his own household, to his own (ὑπάγε εἰς τὸν οἶκόν σου πρὸς τοὺς σοὺς, v. 19), and tell them how much the Lord has done for him (ὅσα ὁ κύριός σοι πεποίηκεν, v. 19).⁴⁵³ The man goes to the Decapolis and reports what Jesus has done for him (ὅσα ἐποίησεν αὐτῷ Ἰησοῦς, v. 20). Some have

⁴⁵³ Jesus uses κύριος to refer to God elsewhere in Mark’s Gospel (Mark 12:29, 30; 13:20). Luke interprets ὁ κύριος as God (ὁ θεός) in the parallel account, Luke 8:39. See also Hooker, *Mark*, 145.

taken this to be a report of the man's disobedience.⁴⁵⁴ It is not. The phrases describing Jesus' command and the man's action are the same, except for the subjects of the verbs. By substituting Ἰησοῦς for ὁ κύριός Mark makes the final point that Jesus has acted as God's agent, and not as Satan's, when he cast out the legion of unclean spirits.

5.2.4 Conclusion

The story of the Gerasene Demoniac engages in apocalyptic discourse directly reminiscent of Mark 3:22-30. In this passage, Mark portrays a power struggle between two opposing sides. Depicting this power struggle, Mark recontextualizes the *topoi* of apocalyptic discourse characteristic of the Jewish compositions I discussed in chapter 3: persecution, interference of heavenly beings, and judgment. Evil spirits victimize the Gerasene man, so that he is unable to rescue himself. Jesus appears and performs a judgment when the demons possess the pigs and run into the sea. This story demonstrates that Jesus' defeat of the evils spirits amounts to a defeat of the power of death. As a result, the man experiences restored life and the blessing of community. He asks to belong to Jesus' community, but instead Jesus sends him to his own. Not only does Jesus restore the man, but he also commissions him to preach the gospel. The man's proclamation in the Gentile region of what God has done in Jesus

⁴⁵⁴ For example, Gerd Theissen considers 5:19 to be "in the style of a dismissal conclusion" in which Jesus sends the man home. According to Theissen, then, v. 20 is a Markan redaction that introduces the secrecy theme and exposes the man's disobedience to Jesus' command. Instead of going home and giving thanks to God for his healing (v. 19), the man proclaims what *Jesus* had done (v. 20). Theissen, *Miracle Stories*, 53.

anticipates Jesus' speech to his disciples on the eve of his arrest, trial, and crucifixion (13:5-37), that it is necessary for the gospel to be preached to all nations before the End (v. 10).

5.3 The Olivet Discourse (13:5-37)

5.3.1 Introduction

Until recently, scholars have regarded Mark 13:5-37 as an intrusion into Mark's narrative that otherwise would run smoothly from the end of chapter 12 to the beginning of chapter 14.⁴⁵⁵ To the contrary, Jesus' speech serves as an important hinge connecting what precedes and what follows. It both develops key themes of the Gospel and prepares the reader for the account of Jesus' arrest, trial and crucifixion. Though Mark evidently brought together material for this

⁴⁵⁵ R. Pesch, for example, maintained that Mark inserted Jesus' eschatological speech into a pre-Markan passion story. In his earlier work, he argued that chap. 13 reflected a heavily redacted Jewish apocalyptic tract dating to 40 C.E. In his later work, however, he changed his mind under the influence of F. Hahn and argued that Mark 13 reflected a conservatively redacted Christian apocalyptic prophecy dating to the Jewish war of 66-70 CE. R. Pesch, *Naherwartungen. Tradition und Redaktion in Mk 13* (Düsseldorf: Patmos-Verlag, 1968), 65, 203-15; "Markus 13," in Jan Lambrecht, et. al., *l'Apocalypse johannique et l'Apocalyptique dans le Nouveau Testament* (Leuven: University Press, 1980), 355-68; and *Das Markusevangelium II. Teil. Kommentar zu Kap. 8:27 – 16:20*. Although scholars have reached various conclusions, most have been more interested in the analysis of the sources behind the speech, in Mark's redaction of those sources, and its particular *Sitz im Leben* than in its fit in the Gospel as a whole. See also the work of W. Marxsen, *Mark the Evangelist: Studies on the Redaction History of the Gospel* (trans. R. A. Harrisville; Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1969), 161-89; Ferdinand Hahn, "Die Rede von der Parusie des Menschensohnes Markus 13," in Pesch and Schnackenburg, *Jesus und der Menschensohn* (Freiburg: Herder & Herder, 1975), 240-66; E. Boring, *The Continuing Voice of Jesus: Christian Prophecy and the Gospel Tradition* (Westminster: John Knox Press, 1991), 183-203. More recently, scholars who interpret Mark 13 in its narrative context include Tolbert, *Sowing the Gospel* (Minneapolis, Fortress, 1989), 257-70; Timothy J. Geddert, *Watchwords: Mark 13 in Markan Eschatology* (JSNTSup 26, Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1989); Gray, *Temple*, 94-155. For a discussion and critique of the various approaches to Mark 13, see Keith Dyer, *The Prophecy on the Mount: Mark 13 and the Gathering of the New Community* (International Theological Studies 2; Berne: Peter Lang, 1998).

speech, I consider Mark 13:5-37 to be a coherent discourse in its final form, and my aim is to focus on its narrative unity and function within the Gospel.⁴⁵⁶

In addition, scholars have debated the relationship between the Markan Jesus' speech and Jewish apocalypticism. For example, Willi Marxsen and Rudolph Pesch argue that Mark redacted a Jewish apocalypse in order to redirect misplaced apocalyptic fervor.⁴⁵⁷ These scholars and those who have adopted

⁴⁵⁶ Scholars have long debated the sources and composition of the speech in Mark 13:5-37. Many have argued for a written source behind Mark 13, either in the form of a Jewish apocalyptic tract originating around 40 C.E., or a Jewish Christian apocalyptic prophecy dating to the Jewish war in 66-70 C.E. Timothy Colani first published the theory that a pre-Markan Jewish apocalypse was the source for material in Jesus' speech in *Jésus Christ et les croyances messianiques de son Temps* (1864). Those who followed Colani's theory include R. Bultmann *History of the Synoptic Tradition*, pp. 122; Kümmel, *Promise and Fulfilment: The Eschatological Message of Jesus* (trans. D. M. Barton; 3rd ed.; London: SCM Press, 1966), 98. Those who see a Christian source behind material in chap. 13 include A. F. Hahn, "Die Rede"; R. Pesch, *Das Markus-Evangelium II* (1977), 264-318; Boring, *Continuing Voice of Jesus*, 183-203, endnotes 281-86. There is little evidence for a written Jewish or Christian apocalypse. See the discussion of A. Y. Collins in *Mark*, 594-8. Contrary to the "Little Apocalypse" theory, G. R. Beasley-Murray aimed to demonstrate that the source for Mk. 13 was not a Jewish apocalypse, but the teaching of the historical Jesus. G. R. Beasley-Murray, *Jesus and the Future: An Examination of the Criticism of the Eschatological Discourse, Mark 13, with Special Reference to the Little Apocalypse Theory* (London: Mac Millan, 1954). In his more recent work, Beasley-Murray has highlighted that Mk. 13 is a composite discourse that shows the hand of its author. Beasley-Murray, "Second Thoughts on the Composition of Mark 13," *NTS* 29 (1983), 415-29; *Jesus and the Last Days: The Interpretation of the Olivet Discourse* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1993), 350-475. Taking a form-critical approach, Lloyd Gaston has approached Mark 13 with the goal of tracing its history of transmission back to its origin, if possible, to the teaching of Jesus. In contrast to Beasley-Murray, Gaston discerns three levels of the text: the teaching of Jesus; theology/meaning of the Gospel texts; the transformation of the tradition in the intervening period. Gaston concludes that it is not the function of the Messiah to destroy or rebuild the Jerusalem temple, and that Jesus was indifferent to the cult of the Jerusalem temple because he had come to found a new temple in the community around him. Lloyd Gaston, *No Stone on Another: Studies in the Significance of the Fall of Jerusalem in the Synoptic Gospels* (Leiden: Brill, 1970), 154, 240.

⁴⁵⁷ Marxsen argues that the Markan community experiences the wars of 66-70 C.E., and that Mark constructs chap. 13 in order to persuade them that they are not experiencing the end ("the end is not yet," v. 7). Rather, Mark exhorts them that now is the time to persevere in tribulation and preach the Gospel to the Gentiles. W. Marxsen, *Mark the Evangelist*, 171-76. On the basis of a detailed structural analysis of Mark 13, Jan Lambrecht concludes that Mark 13 is the product of the evangelist's creative work, and that the emphasis of the chapter falls on the central part, vv. 9-13. That is, Mark emphasizes the persecution for which Jesus gives encouraging words in the speech, in order to promote vigilance. J. Lambrecht, *Die Redaktion der Markus-Apokalypse literarische analyse und strukturuntersuchung* (Rome: Päpstliches Bibelinstitut, 1967), 293-94. Pesch maintains that Mark inserts chap. 13 in order to combat an imminent expectation of the end in the community. R. Pesch, *Das Markus-Evangelium*, 2:264-67. Both Lambrecht and Pesch

their arguments identify certain verses within chap. 13 as the apocalyptic material that underwent Christian editing, commonly vv. 7-8, 12, 14-22, and 24-27.⁴⁵⁸ Generally, they regard the Olivet discourse to be anti-apocalyptic, particularly in what they identify as a statement against apocalyptic zeal.

Egon Brandenburger disputes the scholarly consensus that Mark 13 is not apocalyptic.⁴⁵⁹ He demonstrates that the Olivet discourse shares essential characteristics with Jewish apocalypses. By comparing Mark 13 to the *Assumption of Moses* and *4 Ezra*, Brandenburger identifies apocalyptic thought patterns and formal structural elements that were present in both what he surmises was a Christian apocalyptic source and the Markan redaction in chap. 13. He argues that, typical of apocalypses, the entire scene is introduced as an esoteric teacher-student conversation, in which Jesus reveals eschatological secrets to his disciples (13:3-5a).⁴⁶⁰ At the end of the scene, v. 37 forms a frame with the introduction, referring to the teacher's whole revelation to his students. In addition, v. 37 distinguishes between "you" and "all," that is, between those who have been initiated into mysteries and the community at large.⁴⁶¹ Moreover, Brandenburger observes that Mark 13 exhibits apocalyptic thought patterns in its

identify as Markan redactions the phrases that enjoin readers to "watch" (vv. 5, 9, 23, 33) and proclaim the "gospel" to the "nations" (v. 10) because the end is "not yet" (v. 7), but will happen "after that tribulation" (v. 24). Pesch, *Das Markus-Evangelium*, 2:278, 280, 285, 302. Lambrecht, *Redaktion*, 113-14, 142, 192.

⁴⁵⁸ See, e.g. Bultmann, *History of the Synoptic Tradition*, 122-3, 400-01; Marxsen, *Mark the Evangelist*, 161. Marxsen adds, however, "possibly 13b, but not 21-22." Those who see a Christian prophecy as the source behind chap. 13 have added other verses to this list. For example, F. Hahn adds vv. 9b, 11-13, and 28-31. Hahn, "Die Rede," 241.

⁴⁵⁹ Egon Brandenburger, *Markus 13 und die Apokalyptik*, (Göttingen : Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1984).

⁴⁶⁰ Brandenburger, *Markus*, 15.

⁴⁶¹ Brandenburger, *Markus*, 16.

concern with the turning of the ages, when evil will end and a new era of healing will begin, and in its concern for the salvation of the elect.⁴⁶² Based on these features, Brandenburger argues that Mark 13 is, in fact, an apocalypse.⁴⁶³ What he does not do, however, is interpret Mark 13 in relation to what apocalyptic discourse⁴⁶⁴ or symbolic world may be established in Mark's own Gospel.⁴⁶⁵ It is through this kind of contextual analysis that I hope to determine the apocalyptic character of Jesus' speech.

Though Mark 13 may share some essential characteristics of Jewish apocalypses, as Brandenburger has demonstrated, I do not consider it to be an apocalypse. It does not share the formal literary features of the genre,⁴⁶⁶ and it shares characteristics with several other genres, including parenesis, testament, and prophecy.⁴⁶⁷ Mark presents a teaching of Jesus to his disciples, which includes instructions for his followers after his death and resurrection and prophecies about various disturbances leading up to the End. Thus, Mark 13

⁴⁶² Brandenburger, *Markus 13*, 18.

⁴⁶³ Brandenburger, *Markus 13*, 13, 15-16.

⁴⁶⁴ I use "apocalyptic discourse" here to refer to "the constellation of apocalyptic topics as they function in larger early Jewish and Christian literary and social contexts. Thus, apocalyptic discourse should be treated as a flexible set of resources that early Jews and Christians could employ for a variety of persuasive tasks." Carey, *Ultimate Things*, 5

⁴⁶⁵ Keith Dyer makes a comparable point: "The many parallels to Mark 13 found in the apocalyptic literature by Brandenburger...have helped to provide a balance to the perception of the relationship between Mk 13 and apocalyptic thinking. That this balance has been established by a corresponding over-emphasis on the connections between the Gospel of Mark and apocalyptic literature was perhaps inevitable, even to the point where Mk 13 is interpreted by Brandenburger more in the context of the Assumption of Moses and 4 Ezra than the Gospel of Mark itself." Dyer, *The Prophecy on the Mount*, 191.

⁴⁶⁶ John J. Collins defines an apocalypse as, "a genre of revelatory literature with a narrative framework, in which a revelation is mediated by an otherworldly being to a human recipient." John J. Collins, *Apocalyptic Imagination*, 5.

⁴⁶⁷ Brandenburger recognizes various generic elements in Mark 13. Nevertheless, he argues that the revelation of eschatological secrets is an overarching feature that determines its genre, and maintains that, "Insofern kann, ja muß man Markus 13 durchaus eine Apokalypse nennen." Brandenburger, *Markus 13*, 13.

participates in multiple genres and engages in a multi-layered persuasive discourse.⁴⁶⁸ The result is that Mark 13 defies strict genre classification.⁴⁶⁹ I recall Carol Newsom's comment that I quoted in the previous chapter, which applies to Mark 13: "Rather than referring to texts as belonging to genres one might think of texts as participating in them, invoking them, gesturing to them, playing in and out of them, and in so doing, continually changing them."⁴⁷⁰

Rather than viewing apocalyptic characteristics as discrete elements of the Markan Jesus' speech, such as particular verses or a particular eschatology, I consider the possibility that Mark composes the whole speech out of an apocalyptic imagination, just as he composes the whole Gospel.⁴⁷¹ In other words, Mark not only says something about the End, but, out of an apocalyptic imagination, engages in a constructive theology that presents both a view of the world now and a view of what will be for Jesus' followers.⁴⁷² That apocalyptic imagination is established earlier in Mark's own Gospel. I have argued that the Beelzebul controversy (3:22-30) portrays Jesus' ministry as the enactment of a cosmic struggle. In that struggle, Jesus appears as God's warrior to overcome

⁴⁶⁸ Vernon Robbins discusses the way the Gospel of Mark interweaves various kinds of *topoi*. (including apocalyptic, wisdom, miracle, prophetic), and so various kinds of discourse, through the narrative in "Intertexture of the Gospel of Mark," 11-44. Robbins warns that, "Interpreters who focus on one of these discourses in a manner that excludes the others give a skewed view of the internal nature of Christian discourse during the first century, and after it to the present" (p. 44). I acknowledge my own emphasis on apocalyptic discourse in this study, and see it as a means of recovering what I perceive as a neglected element of the study of Mark 3:22-30 and the Gospel of Mark as a whole. For a discussion of the interweaving of various *topoi* in Mark 13, see Robbins' discussion on pp. 35-40.

⁴⁶⁹ For example, A. Y. Collins characterizes the genre of Mark 13 as a "rhetorically shaped esoteric instruction of a prophetic and apocalyptic nature." Collins, *Mark*, 594.

⁴⁷⁰ Newsom, "Spying out the Land," 21.

⁴⁷¹ By this statement, I do not imply that Jesus did not speak or that Mark had no sources for this speech, but to recognize Mark's hand in its composition.

⁴⁷² The phrase, "constructive theology" comes from Carey, *Ultimate Things*, 12.

both supernatural and human opponents, and to rescue those held captive by them with the goal of forming a new community that does God's will (3:22-30, cf. vv. 31-35). Like the Jewish compositions roughly contemporary to it, Mark engages in apocalyptic discourse in order to interpret and offer a solution for suffering and persecution. Specifically, Mark interprets Jesus' suffering and death, and that of his followers who imitate him. The speech in Mark 13:5-37 expands on that apocalyptic discourse by exhorting Jesus' followers to persevere in the struggle to the End. In addition, the speech looks towards the coming of the Son of Man to end that struggle by overcoming hostile powers and gathering the elect to form an eschatological community. In the discussion that follows, I look at Mark 13 in light of the preceding narrative, particularly 3:22-30, in order to see the extent of Mark's apocalyptic discourse in that chapter.

5.3.2 Narrative Context

In Jesus' speech, Mark weaves together two story lines. The first pertains to the demand that true disciples take up their crosses and follow Jesus (Mark 8:34-38; cf. 10:38-45). The second pertains the rejection of Jesus by the Jewish leaders (2:6; 11:18; 12:18). In order to understand how these two story lines converge in chap. 13, I consider both below.

5.3.2.1 *Followers must not reject Jesus (Mark 8:34-38)*

Jesus predicts the coming of the Son of Man in the Olivet discourse (13:24-27). He also speaks of the coming of the Son of Man once before this, in the

context of the first prediction of his passion (8:38). When Jesus tells his disciples plainly that he will suffer, die and rise, Peter takes him aside and rebukes him (8:33). According to Peter, we surmise, such suffering should not be part of the messianic mission. Jesus responds by teaching his followers that not only will he suffer and die, but that they also must imitate his way (vv. 34-38). Jesus enjoins them, “whoever would lose his life for my sake and the gospel’s will save it” (8:35). He warns that those who are ashamed of him and his words in the midst of a hostile environment, the Son of Man will likewise be ashamed of when he comes “in the glory of his Father” with the holy angels (v. 38). Mark presents the coming of the Son of Man as the eschatological judgment that includes the rejection of those who deny Jesus and the salvation of those who follow him. Jesus’ followers must endure until he comes as the Son of Man in judgment, continuing to be faithful witnesses while imitating his suffering.

Jesus’ speech in chap. 13 recalls this earlier teaching. In 13:9-13, Jesus tells his followers that they will have to testify before governors and kings “for my sake” (13:9, cf. 8:35) in a hostile environment (see esp. vv. 12-13), showing that they are unashamed of him and his words. On account of their testimony, the gospel will be preached to all nations (cf. 8:35). Although their testimony engenders hatred and division, the one who endures to the End will be saved (13:13, cf. 8:35). The End is when Jesus will come as the Son of Man in power and glory with an army of angels to gather the elect (13:24-27; cf. 8:38). In chap. 8, Jesus exhorts his followers that they must be prepared for his coming as the Son

of Man. To be prepared means not to reject Jesus when facing suffering and hostility from others. In chap. 13, endurance until the End through suffering and hostility for the sake of Jesus prepares one for salvation (v. 13). If the coming of the Son of Man is taken to refer to eschatological judgment in 8:34-8, then the verbal connections between 8:34-8 and 13:24-27 suggest that the coming of the Son of Man in the latter passage refers to the same event, and that its primary purview is faithful/faithless followers.⁴⁷³

Between the times that Jesus says, “whoever is ashamed of me and my words, of him will the Son of Man also be ashamed when he comes,” (8:38); and “they will see the Son of Man coming...and he will send out the angels and gather his elect” (13:26-27), the disciples do not demonstrate that they have understood what it means to take up their cross and follow Jesus. Jesus repeats the passion prediction twice more (9:31; 10:32-34). After the second prediction the twelve fight over who is the greatest (9:34). After the third prediction, James and John vie for status in a future kingdom (10:35-37). The other disciples are indignant when they hear about what James and John have asked, perhaps because they want that status too (v. 41). This jockeying for power does not reflect an attitude of readiness to deny oneself, or to lose one's life for the sake of Jesus or the gospel (8:34-35). When James and John ask to sit next to Jesus in his

⁴⁷³ Geddert, who interprets Mark 13 in the context of Mark's whole Gospel, notes that the appearance of the Son of Man is associated with judgment elsewhere in Mark (8:38; 14:62), but does not see this as an important factor in determining whether judgment is in view with the appearance of the Son of Man in Mark 13! Geddert, *Watchwords*, 227. Similarly, A. Y. Collins sees the Son of Man's rejection of those who refuse to associate with Jesus as the primary interpretation of 8:38, and connects it with the gathering of the elect in 13:27; but then interprets the appearance of the Son of Man in 13:24-27 as including no judgment and only salvation. A. Y. Collins, *Mark*, 410-411, 614-615.

glory (10:37), Jesus responds that they do not know what they ask (v. 38), because they do not yet grasp that the way to glory is through suffering. Jesus affirms that they will indeed imitate his suffering: “the cup that I drink, you will drink, and with the baptism with which I am baptized, you will be baptized” (10:39). In light of the Gospel’s narrative progression, it makes sense that when the Markan Jesus teaches on the coming of the Son of Man in chap. 13, in a context that recalls the teaching in 8:34-37, he would be addressing the preparation of Jesus’ followers for that appearance.

5.3.2.2 The Jewish leaders reject Jesus (11-12)

My discussion of this story line is more extensive than the previous one for two reasons. First, an analysis of Jesus’ conflict with the Jewish leaders in the temple in chaps. 11-12 is foundational for understanding the speech in chap. 13. Second, chaps. 11-12 develop motifs from the Beelzebul discourse (3:22-30), which I address in order to contribute to the demonstration of its literary and theological role for Mark’s Gospel.

Most immediately, Jesus’ speech in Mark 13:5-37 is the response to a question posed by one of his disciples about the temple. When Jesus leaves the temple area, one of his disciples expresses awe over its buildings and structure. Jesus responds by predicting that not one stone will be left on another, using two double negatives, οὐ μὴ ἀφῆθῆ ... οὐ μὴ καταλυθῆ, that emphasize the utter destruction of the temple and seriousness of his prophecy (13:2). This interaction comes on the heels of Jesus’ arrival in Jerusalem and activity in the temple

precinct (11:1-12:44), which provides its immediate context.

When Jesus made his way into the city the crowd welcomed him as a king (11:1-10), but when he enters the temple, no one welcomes him at all (11:11). The juxtaposition of the temple leaders' silence with the crowd's cries leaves an ominous tone. Jesus' arrival in Jerusalem and entrance into the temple recalls the opening citation of the Gospel. In 1:1-3, Mark introduces the beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ as that which was spoken by Isaiah, and cites Isa 40:3 and Exod 23:20//Mal 3:1. As I discussed in chap. 2, the larger contexts of these texts envision the Lord coming to his temple.⁴⁷⁴ While Isaiah envisions the Lord coming to the purified Zion as the climactic moment of redemption for God's people (Isa 52:7-10), Malachi envisions the Lord coming to the temple as a moment of judgment for those, particularly the priests, who are unprepared for the divine presence because of their polluted worship (Mal 3:1-2). The silence that greets the Lord Jesus when he comes to his temple confirms the religious leaders' rejection of him, which Mark has already indicated throughout the narrative (cf. 3:6, 22; 8:31; 10:33).

Jesus' prophetic, symbolic action in overturning the money tables, driving out the traders, and preventing the transport of vessels through the temple (11:15-17) could be interpreted as an act of cleansing. Jesus does indeed cast out what has prevented the proper function of the temple. In light of the juxtaposition of Isa 40:3 with Mal 3:1 at the opening of the Gospel and the

⁴⁷⁴ See Chap. 2, above.

subsequent movement of Mark's narrative, however, Jesus' action may be better interpreted as a judgment against the temple and its leaders. Presumably, the religious leaders have permitted the traders to use the temple as they do, and are those whom Jesus addresses when he says, ὑμεῖς δὲ πεποιθήκατε αὐτὸν σπήλαιον ληστῶν (v. 17).⁴⁷⁵ The chief priests and scribes seem to receive Jesus' words as spoken against them, as a challenge to their authority (cf. vv. 27-33), because they respond by hatching a plot to kill him (11:18; cf. 12:12).

According to the Markan Jesus, the temple authorities have allowed the traders to keep the temple from its divine purpose, "to become a house of prayer for all nations." (11:17). Instead, they have made it "a den of robbers" (σπήλαιον ληστῶν) which is an allusion to Jer 7:11. These words come from an oracle in which Jeremiah addresses Israel's misplaced confidence in the temple (Jer 7:2-15). The people repeat a slogan to claim God's presence and protection, "this is the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord" (v. 4); but Jeremiah says that this is an empty claim because of their behavior towards God and one another. Jeremiah gives positive exhortations (vv. 3-7), and then makes accusations (vv. 8-11a) followed by an announcement of disaster (vv. 13-15).⁴⁷⁶ He promises that if the people will once again practice justice, if they will turn from oppressing orphans and widows, from murder, and idolatry, then they will dwell in the temple and in the land (vv. 5-7). But, if they refuse to listen and continue in their impure ways while coming confidently to the temple to

⁴⁷⁵ So also Donahue and Harrington, *Mark*, 328; A. Y. Collins, *Mark*, 531-2.

⁴⁷⁶ See Leslie C. Allen, *Jeremiah: A Commentary* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2008), 93-7.

worship (vv. 8-11a), then God will both destroy the temple and cast them out of sight (vv. 14-15).⁴⁷⁷ Upon announcing the impending disaster on the people and the temple, Jeremiah adds that they have refused to listen to the prophetic messages that God had sent (v. 13). In Mark's context, the chief priests and scribes have not listened to John the Baptist, Mark's divinely sent messenger (e.g., 9:13), nor do they listen to Jesus. Instead, they plot to kill Jesus and then question his authority (11:18, 17-33), securing the temple's and their own judgment.

Jesus' final teaching in the temple (12:38-44) confirms the complicity of the Jewish leaders in the misuse of the temple, particularly with regard to economic injustices that keep the temple from its divine purpose. Jesus warns those listening to watch out for the scribes because of their self-importance and greed. He says that these who devour widow's houses and offer long prayers will receive greater condemnation (12:40). The word *κατεσθίω* denotes robbing or appropriating widows' property in an unethical way.⁴⁷⁸ In addition, the grammar of 12:40 suggests that the scribes' devouring of widows houses is connected with their offering of long prayers. One article governs the two participles that function as substantives to describe the scribes' behavior: *οἱ*

⁴⁷⁷ Morna Hooker emphasizes that Jeremiah offers the possibility for the Israelites to amend their ways in this passage, and uses this background in her argument that Jesus' actions in the temple are not to be construed as a judgment. Hooker, *Mark*, 264, 268. By contrast, L. Allen notes that, "In light of the offenses listed in [Jer.] vv. 8-11a, the exhortations have a hypothetical role, setting up positive possibilities that the oracle recognizes were not realized and broaching negative possibilities that must eventually be realized instead because of the people's wrong choice (vv. 14-15)." Allen, *Jeremiah*, 95. Even if Hooker's interpretation of Jeremiah is correct, the leaders of Israel in Mark's context do not amend their ways, and so they fix their own judgment.

⁴⁷⁸ "κατεσθίω/κατέσθω" BDAG, 531-2.

κατεσθιόντες τὰς οἰκίας τῶν χηρῶν καὶ προφάσει μακρὰ προσευχόμενοι, “those who devour widows houses and offer long prayers.” The demonstrative pronoun οὗτοι refers back to this entire compound phrase to indicate that “*these* will receive greater condemnation: οὗτοι λήψονται περισσότερον κρίμα. That is, the scribes exploit the most vulnerable members of the community,⁴⁷⁹ while they themselves make an ostentatious display of worship; for this hypocritical behavior, they will receive greater condemnation. Their practice describes the situation about which Jeremiah 7, and also Malachi 3, warns: God’s people will face judgment if they continue to come confidently to the temple while behaving shamefully towards God and towards each other.

Another look at Jesus’ action in the temple (11:15-19) suggests that it may be seen as part of the cosmic struggle in which he is engaged. In his temple demonstration, Jesus casts out (ἐκβάλλειν, v. 15) what is corrupting its worship and he teaches authoritatively about the temple’s proper function (καὶ ἐδίδασκεν, v. 17), resulting in the astonishment of the crowd at his teaching (πᾶς γὰρ ὁ ὄχλος ἐξεπλήσσετο ἐπὶ τῇ διδαχῇ αὐτοῦ, v. 18) and the desire of the religious leaders to destroy him (ἐζήτουν πῶς αὐτὸν ἀπολέσωσιν, v. 18). This demonstration echoes the opening actions of Jesus’ ministry in the Capernaum synagogue (1:21-28). Then, he had exorcised demons from a man and taught authoritatively, resulting in the astonishment of the crowd (ἐξεπλήσσαντο ἐπὶ τῇ διδαχῇ αὐτοῦ, 1:22; cf. vv. 27-28), and a series of conflicts with the religious leaders that ended in their conspiracy

⁴⁷⁹ The OT frequently teaches particular care for foreigners, orphans and widows (Exod 22:21-24; Deut 24:19-21; Jer 22:3; Zech 7:10; cf. Isa 1:23).

to destroy him (συμβούλιον ἐδίδουν κατ' αὐτοῦ ὅπως αὐτὸν ἀπολέσωσιν, 3:6). Then, Jesus had cast out what had corrupted a human body. Now, Jesus casts out what has corrupted the temple and its worship. The similarity in language and theme suggests that Mark envisions Jesus' conflict in the temple as an extension of his struggle against Satan and his battle to rescue what is held captive by Satanic, worldly power. Jesus' temple judgment is the figurative removal of the Satanic worldliness that has infiltrated God's people and their worship. This outlook fits the symbolic world of 3:22-30, in which Mark has connected human and supernatural conflicts of Jesus' ministry in a dualistic power struggle.⁴⁸⁰

Mark interprets Jesus' action in the temple as a prophetic act of judgment by framing it with the cursing and withering of the fig tree (11:12-14, 20-21).⁴⁸¹ The narrator provides two comments: it was not the time for figs (v. 13); and, the disciples heard Jesus' words (v. 14). The narrator's comments suggest that Jesus was not genuinely looking for figs, but that the fig tree provided a prophetic object lesson for him. Jesus acts and speaks symbolically for others to see and hear.⁴⁸² In the OT, the fig tree is a metaphor for Israel.⁴⁸³ In the Markan context,

⁴⁸⁰ See Chap. 2, above.

⁴⁸¹ Only Mark frames the temple incident with the cursing and withering of the fig tree, suggesting that the episodes are mutually interpretive. Matthew joins the cursing and withering of the fig tree, and places the account after the temple incident (Matt 21:18-20). The cursing and withering of the fig tree is absent from Luke's Gospel. William Telford has argued that Mark intends the temple incident to be interpreted in light of the cursing and withering of the fig tree. William R. 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* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1980).

⁴⁸² Mark has already begun to portray Jesus as a prophet in the second half of the Gospel. Jesus foretells his passion three times (8:31; 9:30-31; 10:32-34). Just before entering Jerusalem, he predicts that his disciples will find a colt and a man will ask them about it, and it happens just as he said it would (11:2-6). Jesus' use of the fig tree for a prophetic sign is consistent with the

the fig tree becomes a metaphor for the temple, Israel's locus of worship, and its leaders.⁴⁸⁴ The fruitlessness of the fig tree is like the fruitlessness of the temple and its leadership. Just as the leaves on the fig tree give it the appearance of having fruit underneath, so the business of the temple gives it the appearance of fruitfulness within.⁴⁸⁵ When Jesus enters, however, he finds that the temple is not all it appears to be: its leaders have both failed in its stewardship and have refused to recognize Jesus' authority as its Lord. Like the fig tree Jesus curses, the temple will become barren.⁴⁸⁶

When the disciples discover that the cursed fig tree has withered, Jesus speaks of faith that can move "this mountain" (τω ὄρει τούτῳ) and throw it into the sea (vv. 22-23). These words are certainly a teaching about faith in God and the power of prayer.⁴⁸⁷ In its narrative context, however, the Markan Jesus may also be reinforcing the lesson of the fig tree by teaching his disciples about a new community of prayer, faith and forgiveness that differs from the community associated with the barren temple (11:22-25). The definite τῷ ὄρει τούτῳ suggests that a particular mountain is in mind, and the context suggests that it is the

practice of OT prophets, who perform symbolic acts accompanied by prophetic announcements, that signify coming judgment (Isa 20:1-6; Jer 13:1-11; 19:1-13; Ezek 4:1-15).

⁴⁸³ Jer 8:13; Isa 28:3-4; Hos 9:10, 16; Mic 7:1; Joel 1:7, 12. See Telford, *Barren Temple*, 142-56.

⁴⁸⁴ It may be that Mark recontextualizes this metaphor for his literary and theological purposes. Rikki Watts argues, "Granted the importance of the Temple for Jerusalem, and Jerusalem for Israel – Jerusalem being something of a synecdoche for the nation – it is difficult to see why the fig-tree as a symbol for Israel could not also be used to symbolize the Temple and its establishment." Watts, *New Exodus*, 313.

⁴⁸⁵ See also Lane, *Mark*, 400-01. Collins makes a similar argument, that the leaders should have borne fruit by welcoming him when he entered the temple. She sees the leaders only, and not the temple, as the recipients of judgment. Collins, *Mark*, 526.

⁴⁸⁶ William Telford, *The Barren Temple and the Withered Tree* (see esp. pp. 128-63). Telford demonstrates that in OT usage, a fruitful fig tree signifies eschatological blessing, while a withering tree signifies divine curse or judgment.

⁴⁸⁷ See Sharyn Dowd, *Prayer, Power, and the Problem of Suffering*, esp. pp. 121-2.

temple mount.⁴⁸⁸ If this is the case, then the portrayal of the temple mount as lifted and cast into the sea portends its judgment and removal. The cosmic imagery of the sea underscores the theme of judgment.⁴⁸⁹ The present temple system is a threat to proper worship and the divine purpose that “my house will be called a house of prayer for all the nations” (11:17). “This mountain” stands parallel to the withered fig tree as a parable for the prophetic end of the temple in its present form. Juxtaposed to the prophecy of this temple’s end, Jesus teaches his disciples how they are to function as a community marked by prayer, faith and forgiveness, embodying the qualities that the temple lacks (vv. 24-25).

The parable of the stewards (12:1-12) confirms that Mark envisions Jesus as the cornerstone of a new temple community that will replace the present, fruitless one. This parable alludes to Isa 5:1-7, the Song of the Vineyard. God plants a vineyard in optimal conditions and looks for it to yield grapes. Because it yields only wild grapes, God destroys it. At the end of the parable, Isaiah

⁴⁸⁸ τῷ ὄρει is definite and refers to a specific mountain, which, in the context of the Gospel, could be the Mount of Olives or the Temple mount. In the narrative context, the Temple mount makes the most sense. People come down from Jerusalem (Mark 3:22), and Jesus makes his way up to Jerusalem (10:32, 33), setting the image of Jerusalem on a hill. Once Jesus arrives in Jerusalem and enters the temple, his actions and conflicts there leave a negative tone. Jesus leaves the temple, and sits on the Mount of Olives, opposite the temple, to deliver his teaching about the temple’s destruction (13:3). Timothy Gray demonstrates a geographical contrast between Jerusalem/temple mount and Bethany/Mount of Olives, and comments that, “The Mount of Olives represents the positive pole over and against the negative pole of the temple mount. This polarization between the Mount of Olives and the temple mount represents the conflict between Jesus and the temple.” Gray, *Temple*, 51. William Telford also suggests that τῷ ὄρει refers to the temple mount on the basis of the use of mountain-moving sayings in Jewish tradition. W. Telford, *Barren Temple*, 95-119. See also Watts, *Isaiah’s New Exodus*, 334; Hooker, “Traditions About the Temple in the Sayings of Jesus,” *BJRL* 70 (1988): 8.

⁴⁸⁹ See my discussion above about the cosmic imagery of the sea in the section on the Gerasene demoniac account. Earlier in the narrative, Jesus has shown control over threatening powers by calming the storm on the sea (4:35-41), and by casting out the legion of unclean spirits that possess a herd of pigs and flee into the sea (5:13).

identifies the vineyard as Israel (v. 7). In Mark's parable, however, it is not the vineyard that is destroyed, but its stewards who have failed to produce fruit (Mark 12:9). This fruitlessness recalls the fruitless fig tree that Jesus cursed. As a result, the owner takes the vineyard and gives it to others. Not only have the stewards fail to make the vineyard fruitful, but they also reject the messengers that the owner sends and, finally, they reject and kill the owner's beloved son (ὁ υἱὸν ἀγαπητόν, v. 6, 7-8). Mark's description of the son as "beloved" evokes earlier points in the narrative when God called Jesus "my beloved son" (ὁ υἱός μου ὁ ἀγαπητός) at his baptism and transfiguration (1:11, 9:7). For Mark, the owner's son, whom the stewards reject and kill, represents Jesus. Jesus applies Ps 118:22-23 to himself, suggesting that although these stewards reject him, God will vindicate him and make him like the essential piece of a new building (12:10-11). The present temple will be removed in order to make way for the formation of a new temple, that is, a new, fruitful community of those who follow Jesus.

The judgment that Jesus pronounces against the temple and its leadership is not the goal of Mark's story. Isaiah's vision evoked in the opening of the Gospel (1:2-3), that is, the vision of the Lord enthroned in Zion in the midst of the redeemed people of God is Mark's goal. Indeed, Malachi's prophecy of the Lord coming to the temple looks through judgment to purified worship (Mal 3:3-4). Mark envisions the formation of a new temple, a new community of God marked by faith, prayer and forgiveness (11:22-25; cf. 12:10). This theme has been established at the outset of the Gospel. The discourse in 3:22-30 ties the human

conflicts of Jesus' ministry to a cosmic struggle, in which Jesus rescues people from Satan's household and begins to form a new family not on the basis of religion or blood, but upon doing the will of God (3:31-35). The temple conflict in chaps. 11-12 predicts the removal of a fruitless temple, and foreshadows another temple community consisting of those who follow Jesus (including, perhaps, even scribes, cf. 12:28-34). The Olivet discourse foresees the conflicts of Jesus' followers beyond his death and resurrection, as well as their culmination and resolution in a cosmic display that ends with the gathering of the eschatological community. Jesus' speech in 13:5-37 develops the themes from chaps. 11-12, namely, the rejection of Jesus' followers as they imitate him, the destruction of the temple, and the gathering of a new community around Jesus.

5.3.2.3 *Summary*

At the outset of this section, I stated that the speech in Mark 13 weaves together two story lines. These two story lines pertain to two groups, one that has rejected Jesus and one that is exhorted not to. The leaders of Israel have rejected Jesus' authority and are unprepared when he comes to the temple so that they receive judgment. Jesus has exhorted his followers not to be ashamed of him; rather, they are to take up their crosses and follow him, so that they are prepared when he appears as the Son of Man in judgment. The convergence of these two story lines, the rejection of Israel's leaders and Jesus' warnings that his followers not reject him, shapes the Markan version of Jesus' speech.

5.3.3 Analysis of 13:5-37

The lack of understanding exhibited by the disciples' awe-struck comments about the temple buildings is conspicuous after examining Jesus' actions in the temple. The disciples had come and gone to the temple with Jesus, watching and hearing him teach (12:14, 15, 20, 27, 43). Now, when one of the disciple addresses Jesus as διδάσκαλε (13:1) and praises the temple buildings, he shows that he understands neither Jesus' prophetic role nor the temple's fate.⁴⁹⁰ The speech in 13:5-37 confirms Jesus' prophetic, judicial action in the temple that this disciple fails (and, presumably, all the disciples fail) to understand.

5.3.3.1 *The subject matter of the speech: The faithfulness of Jesus' followers*

Mark presents Jesus' speech as an answer to the private inquiry of Peter, James, John and Andrew about when (πότε) his prediction about the temple will happen and what (τί) will be the signs of its fulfillment (v. 4). Jesus' answer, however, seems to address the end of the age rather than the end of the temple. Although Jesus does not explicitly name the temple during the course of the speech, two features indicate that the speech is constructed as an answer to the disciples' two-fold question.

First, the reference to τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως in v. 14 points to the destruction of the temple. This phrase appears in Dan 9:27; 11:31; 12:11, where it refers to the desolating sacrilege set up in the temple that brings the end of its sacrifices and offerings, and ultimately, its destruction. The desolating sacrilege

⁴⁹⁰ See also Gray, *Temple*, 106.

initiates a time of tribulation, persecution and suffering for the people of God that requires their endurance until the time of the end (see esp. Dan 11:31-35; cf. Mark 13:13). Mark may add the parenthetical, “let the reader understand” (v. 14), in order to confirm the intertextual relationship with Daniel, but also to alert the reader to recognize the desolating sacrilege. In Mark’s narrative context, nothing is more of a sacrilege than the rejection of God’s own Son (cf. 3:28-29; 12:8-10, where Jesus is likened to the rejected cornerstone of the temple). In the context of Daniel, the desolating sacrilege is associated with the destruction of the temple. Similarly, at the end of the passion narrative, Mark associates the crucifixion with the destruction of the temple.⁴⁹¹ Upon Jesus’ death, the veil of the temple is torn in two from top to bottom, portraying its symbolic destruction (15:37-38).⁴⁹² Concurrent with this partial and symbolic destruction of the temple, the Gentile centurion declares that, “truly, this man was the Son of God” (v. 39). The splitting of the veil at Jesus’ death not only indicates judgment by which the temple made with hands is destroyed, but also points to the way by which the temple not made with hands will be established (cf. 14:58).⁴⁹³ If the death of Jesus

⁴⁹¹ See also the discussion in Gaston, *No Stone Another*, 480-81.

⁴⁹² In the immediate context, Mark prepares the reader to interpret the rending of the veil as representing the destruction of the temple, and, therefore, symbolic of judgment. At Jesus’ trial, false witnesses report that Jesus had 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). When Jesus is hanging on the cross, those who mock him say, “You who would destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, save yourself, and come down from the cross” (15:30). Then, when Jesus’ death is imminent, darkness covers the earth during broad daylight, a sign of judgment.

⁴⁹³ Scholars offer two main interpretations for the tearing of the temple veil in Mark 15:38. One interpretation is that it represents judgment on the temple and the nation of Israel. See Gray, *Temple*, 185-88; Donahue and Harrington, *Mark*, 452; Geddert, *Watchwords*, 146. The other view is that the tearing of the veil represents the direct access followers now have to the Father through Jesus (cf. (Heb 6:19-20; 9:3-14, 24-28; 10:19-20). See Lightfoot, *The Gospel Message of St. Mark* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1950), 55-56; Hooker, *Mark*, 378. Perhaps both are in view.

is the desolating sacrilege, then this is the event that calls for the faithful endurance of his followers as they imitate his sufferings, bear witness for his sake and proclaim the gospel to all the nations (13:9-10).

The second feature is the repeated vocabulary from the disciples' opening question throughout the speech, demonstrating that it provides an answer. The disciples ask, πότε ταῦτα ἔσται καὶ τί τὸ σημεῖον ὅταν μέλλῃ ταῦτα συντελεῖσθαι πάντα; (v. 4). Jesus opens his speech describing "these things" (ταῦτα) that mark the beginning of the birth pangs (vv. 7-8). Then, in the final description of the tribulations preceding the coming of the Son of Man, Jesus warns that false prophets and false Christs will lead people astray with false signs (σημεῖα, v. 22). In light of this perfidy, Jesus warns his disciples to be watchful because he has told them all things (πάντα) beforehand (v. 23), presumably about the true signs of impending judgment (cf. v. 4). The parables at the end of the speech reiterate the language from the disciples' questions. The parable of the fig tree illustrates an answer to the second question: *what* (τί) will be the signs when all these things are about to take place (ὅταν ... ταῦτα, v. 4)? When the fig tree has become fertile summer is near; so also when the disciples see these things happen (ὅταν ... ταῦτα, v. 29), they are to know that "he is near."⁴⁹⁴ The parable of the householder illustrates the answer to the first question: *when* (πότε) will all these things will happen (v. 4)? Jesus warns his disciples to watch because they do not know when (πότε, vv. 33, 35) the time is that the Lord of the house is coming. This

⁴⁹⁴ I discuss this phrase below.

repeated vocabulary suggests that Mark constructed Jesus' speech in vv. 5-37 as an answer to the disciples' questions in v. 4, and, therefore, that it in some respect addresses their subject matter, the end of the temple.

The disciples' question in v. 4 does not, however, determine the plan for Jesus' speech. The *subject matter* that pertains to the temple only makes up a portion of the speech, through the allusion to the desolating sacrilege. The greater part of the subject matter of the speech pertains to Jesus' followers and how they are to behave in light of the coming days, particularly in light of the appearance of the Son of Man. Specifically, Jesus is concerned about how his followers act in light of his death and his imminent return.

Mark sets off the portion about the appearance of the Son of Man (vv. 24-27) from the preceding narrative, indicating that these verses describe a new event from the preceding verses.⁴⁹⁵ First, vv. 5-23 are framed by warnings for his followers to watch (βλέπετε) and beware of false Christs who would lead people astray (vv. 5-6; vv. 21-23). Within this frame, Jesus describes war and natural disasters (vv. 7-8), persecution and Christian mission (vv. 9-13), and the desecration of the temple (vv. 14-17). Giving attention to the flow of the speech, the Markan Jesus' emphasis is on the warnings about false teachers and prophets who would keep disciples from their mission; the desolating sacrilege that implies the fate of the temple is one part in the succession of adversities. A series of imperatives appear throughout vv. 5-23, as Jesus instructs his followers how to

⁴⁹⁵ My reading contrasts with that of Timothy Gray, who takes Mark 13:21-27 as a unit. Gray, *Temple*, 141.

live in light of the worldly upheaval.⁴⁹⁶ By contrast, vv. 24-27 focuses on cosmic upheaval and contains no imperatives.

A second feature that suggests vv. 24-27 are set off from the preceding verses is that v. 24 indicates vague chronological progression. The Son of Man comes “in those days, after that tribulation” (ἐν ἐκείναις ταῖς ἡμέραις μετὰ τὴν θλίψιν ἐκείνην, v. 24). The phrase “in those days” associates the coming of the Son of Man with the escalated tribulations that must precede it (“there will be tribulation in those days,” v. 19) but does not indicate when or for how long those tribulations will occur.⁴⁹⁷ Though the coming of the Son of Man is associated with the general time of the tribulation, it clearly comes after that tribulation (μετὰ τὴν θλίψιν ἐκείνην). Throughout this speech, Jesus focuses on his followers, the elect who endure steadfastly to the end through suffering and tribulation for his sake and the gospel’s. The coming of the Son of Man will bring a new state of affairs for them.⁴⁹⁸ Timothy Gray comments about chap. 13, “What in the narrative leads one to believe that vv. 24-27 are about the judgment of the world? Everything else in the narrative, especially given the antitemple polemic that runs through Mark 11-12, points to the temple as the object of Jesus’ judgment.” To the contrary, the only subject matter in the speech about the temple is an inference through the desolating sacrilege. Most of the speech is

⁴⁹⁶ βλέπετε (v. 5); μὴ θροεῖσθε (v. 7); βλέπετε (v. 9); μὴ προμεριμνᾶτε (v. 11); τοῦτο λαλεῖτε (v. 11); φευγέτωσαν (v. 14); μὴ καταβάτω μηδὲ εἰσελθάτω (v. 15); μὴ ἐπεστρεψάτω (v. 16); προσεύχεσθε (v. 18); μὴ πιστεύετε (v. 21); βλέπετε (v. 23).

⁴⁹⁷ In OT prophetic usage, the phrase “in those days” often has eschatological rather than temporal meaning. In other words, the phrase does not give information about the temporal value of events, but about the kind of time in which they occur (Jer 3:16, 18; 31:29; 33:15f; Joel 2:28 [MT 3:1]; Zech 8:23). See Lane, *Mark*, 474.

⁴⁹⁸ Gray, *Temple*, 141.

about the elect and their faithfulness in light of that sacrilege. The faithlessness of the temple leadership in chaps. 11-12 provides a marked contrast to the faithfulness expected of Jesus' followers in chap. 13.

Jesus' answer to the disciples' question enlarges his followers' vision of the end of all things, for it includes more than the destruction of the temple. Jesus' point seems to be that the destruction of the temple is *not* the End of all things, as his disciples might expect. Rather, a desolating sacrilege will initiate a time of tribulation for Jesus' followers that will continue until the coming of the Son of Man. The point of the Olivet discourse is that the disciples' view of the End is shortsighted, particularly with regard to their view of suffering. The preceding narrative prepares the reader to understand the coming of the Son of Man in 13:24-27 as the end-time judgment that includes the rejection of those who deny Jesus and the salvation of those who endure public suffering for his sake (see 8:34-38). The impending judgment on the temple, then, may be a harbinger of the End, but that judgment itself is not the End. The desolating sacrilege will introduce a time of tribulation that impinges upon one's readiness for the return of the Son of Man, because it requires faithful witness and endurance until the End (v. 8). Below I look at two portions of the speech that address the present struggle of Jesus' followers and their future victory.

5.3.3.1 *The suffering and endurance of Jesus' followers, vv. 9-13*

In 13:9-13, Jesus provides a teaching to his followers that contrasts with the false teaching of others (vv. 5-8). He warns that many will come "in my

name” and lead many astray (v. 6), in conjunction with reports of wars, earthquakes and famines (vv. 7-8); “*but you watch yourselves*” (βλέπετε δε ὑμεῖς ἑαυτούς, (v. 9a). Much of the language in vv. 7-8 echoes the OT prophets’ descriptions of the circumstances that accompany judgment and the last days.⁴⁹⁹ The prophet Jeremiah had been particularly concerned with those who prophesied falsely in the name of the Lord (4:10; 5:30-31; 6:14; 23:21; 27:10, 15; 29:9), and one passage in particular associates their treachery with two of the three calamities of Mark 13:7-8.⁵⁰⁰ Jeremiah complains to God that false prophets say to the people, “You shall not see the sword, nor shall you have famine, but I will give you assured peace in this place. And the Lord said to me: The prophets are prophesying lies *in my name*” (Jer 14:13-14a). As a result, the people are unrepentant and unprepared for God’s judgment (“the prophets prophesy falsely...my people love to have it so, but what will you do when the end comes?” Jer 5:31). The false prophets invoke the name of the Lord to preach peace when judgment is imminent.

Jesus’ warning about those who will come “in my name,” saying, “I am he,” is directed against those who will invoke Jesus’ name and authority in order to preach peace when there is no peace. Jesus warns that judgment is imminent (δεῖ γένεσθαι, v. 7). The distress associated with the destruction of the temple,

⁴⁹⁹ See Lars Hartman, *Prophecy Interpreted: The formation of some Jewish apocalyptic texts and of the eschatological discourse in Mark 13 par.* (Lund: Gleerup, 1966), 149-150. He lists Deut 28:20ff; Isa 13:4ff; Jer 4:19ff; 6:22ff; 49:20ff; 50:41ff; Ezek 7:5ff; Joel 2:1ff. *Wars*: Jer 51:45-47; *Earthquakes*: Jer 4:24; Mic 1:3-4; Hab 3:6, 10; Zech 14:5; Isa 29:6; Ezek 38:19-20; Joel 2:10-11; *Famines*: Jer 5:11-12; Ezek 5:16; 6:11-12; 7:15; 12:16; 14:13, 21; Isa 5:13-14; Amos 4:6-9; Isa 14:30.

⁵⁰⁰ Lars Hartman gives Jer 29:8, 9 as a primary echo in Mark 13:5b, and Jer 14:14 as a secondary echo. Hartman, *Prophecy Interpreted*, 147. Timothy Gray also sees Jer 14:14 as an echo in this passage.

however, is not itself the End (*ἀλλ' οὐπω τὸ τέλος*, v. 7), but only a prelude to it. Therefore, those who preach “peace” to Jesus’ followers before the End comes, that is, those who preach a life of discipleship apart from taking up the cross and following Jesus (8:34-38) are false prophets who may lead many astray. To the contrary, Jesus tells his followers that they must endure suffering.

The affliction Jesus’ followers can expect (vv. 9-13) is patterned after the same affliction that he himself experiences. Jesus repeats the imperative, *βλέπετε*, in v. 9 (cf. v. 5), which restates the warning that his followers not be led astray into a false conception of the End as one that excludes distress. This warning has its foundation earlier in the narrative. Peter had rebuked Jesus for speaking plainly of his imminent suffering and death (8:31-32), after which Jesus warned his disciples that they also must be ready to take up their own cross to follow him, to die for his sake and the gospel’s, and be unashamed of him and his words, in order to be ready for the coming of the Son of Man (vv. 34-37). The disciples’ responses to Jesus’ subsequent passion predictions betray that they neither understand nor are they prepared to drink the cup that he drinks or be baptized with his baptism (9:33-37; 10:35-45).

Now Jesus speaks to these four disciples about a time beyond the scope of the narrative when his followers will be delivered over to councils, beaten in synagogues, and stand as witnesses before governors and kings for his sake so

that the gospel will be preached to all the nations (13:9-13; cf. 8:35).⁵⁰¹ Jesus says three times that they will be delivered over to their enemies and to death (παραδίδωμι, 13:9, 11, 12), reminding the reader of his earlier threefold prediction that he himself will be delivered over to his enemies and to death (παραδίδωμι, 9:31; 10:33; see also 8:31). Although Jesus here speaks about the future of his followers, the narrator prepares the reader for what will soon happen to Jesus himself.⁵⁰² After the Olivet discourse, Jesus is delivered over to a council (14:53-65) and a governor (15:1-5). He is beaten, not in a synagogue, but in the precinct of the high priest (v. 65).

Jesus also tells his followers not to worry about what they will say when they are delivered over to trial because the Holy Spirit will give them their words “in that hour” (ἐν ἐκείνῃ τῇ ὥρᾳ, v. 11). “That hour” does not denote a particular occasion, but connects Jesus’ followers to the eschatological time of his suffering. In the place called Gethsemane, Jesus prays that the hour might pass from him (14:35), and after an excruciating night of prayer he yields to God’s will and says, “the hour has come (ἦλθεν ἡ ὥρα), the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners” (v. 41). “The hour” is the time when Jesus and his followers are delivered over to their enemies. In his instructions to his disciples (13:9-13), Jesus envisions his followers imitating the struggle of his own ministry. Read in the context of the preceding narrative, that struggle has two opposing sides with

⁵⁰¹ The Greek text has καὶ at the beginning of v. 10. I take v. 10 as a link between vv. 9 and 11. That is, vv. 9 and 11 state how the gospel will be preached to all the nations, that is, through the testimony of those who stand as witnesses.

⁵⁰² R. H. Lightfoot demonstrates ways that chap. 13 is parallel to the passion narrative in, *St. Mark*, 48-59.

human and heavenly counterparts.

When Jesus' followers stand as witnesses before their enemies, the promised intervention of the Holy Spirit (13:11) expands the reader's line of vision to see the supernatural dimension to the human struggle. Jesus tells his followers not to be anxious about what they will say, but to say whatever the Holy Spirit gives them in that hour (v. 11). If this passage is read in the context of the whole Gospel, then the appearance of the Holy Spirit evokes the role of the Holy Spirit that Mark has previously established in the narrative. Apart from 13:11, the Holy Spirit appears several times at the opening of the Gospel as the one who has come from heaven to empower Jesus in his struggle against Satan (1:8, 9-11, 12; 3:29). John the Baptist preaches that a stronger one is coming after him who will "baptize you with the Holy Spirit" (1:8). Jesus himself is baptized with the Holy Spirit, however, and the Holy Spirit strengthens Jesus to struggle against Satan (vv. 9-11). After a series of human conflicts (1:21-3:6), scribes accuse Jesus of being in league with Satan and find themselves ironically opposed to the Holy Spirit and on Satan's side of the conflict with Jesus. Mark 3:22-30 gives the reader eyes to see Jesus' ministry as a power struggle between two opposing sides with human and heavenly counterparts. In particular, 3:29 suggests that the Holy Spirit is the power that strengthens Jesus in the conflict with his opponents. In a similar way, 13:11 suggests that the Holy Spirit strengthens Jesus' followers for conflict with their opponents.

In establishing the role of the Holy Spirit in Jesus' ministry, Mark seems to

have forgotten the Baptist's prediction that Jesus would institute a new Spirit baptism for his followers. It becomes evident, however, that Jesus' whole ministry is directed towards that baptism. When his disciples still do not understand his third prediction of his suffering and death, he asks them, "are you able to be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized?" and then assures them that they will indeed imitate him (10:38). Mark 13:9-13, in turn, describes the time when the John's prediction will have been fulfilled, when they indeed imitate Jesus, and the Holy Spirit strengthens them as they join his struggle "in that hour" against human and, by implication, cosmic opponents. The intervention of the Holy Spirit in 13:11 suggests that the struggle of Jesus' followers, like the struggle of Jesus himself established in 3:22-30, will not simply be a human one, but a supernatural one.⁵⁰³

In their struggle to proclaim the gospel, Jesus' followers will be beaten in synagogues (13:9), and will be delivered to death by their own family members (v. 11). Just as Jesus' exorcisms brought him into conflict with his religious and blood family (3:21-22), his follower's faithful testimony will likewise bring them into conflict with their religious and blood family. During this time of conflict, the Holy Spirit provides divine help, but God does not remove their affliction. In fact, the words that the Holy Spirit gives them to say in the hour of their need do not rescue them from death. The main message for Jesus' followers is that the one who endures to the End will be saved (v. 13). The message in Mark 13

⁵⁰³ Mark exhibits apocalyptic thought reflected in compositions such as the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*, the *Testament of Solomon*, and the Qumran literature in which those who struggle against various opponents receive divine help. See my discussion in Chap. 3, above.

echoes the book of Daniel, to which it alludes throughout.⁵⁰⁴ Although Jesus calls his followers to endure to the End, even if it means martyrdom, Mark envisions a resolution to their conflict. The Beelzebul discourse points to that resolution. Jesus has come to rescue people from Satan's household (3:27) in order to form a new household composed of those who do God's will (3:31-35). That is, Jesus is in the process of dissolving existing, destructive religious and blood connections, and is reconstituting a new community around himself. Mark 13 displays the end of the conflict. The Son of Man will appear finally to overcome all hostile powers and gather the elect to himself.

5.3.3.2. *The coming of the Son of Man, vv. 24-27*

The Son of Man will usher in a new state of affairs for the elect through a final judgment of the powers in heavens and on the earth. When he comes, he will overcome all hostile powers in order to gather the elect. The tribulation escalates right before the end (Mark 13:19; Dan 12:1), at which time a divine deliverer rescues God's people from their affliction (Mark 13:24-27; Dan 12:1-3). According to Mark 13:21-23, Jesus warns his followers not to be led astray by false Christs and false prophets who perform signs and wonders that appear to authenticate a different message than what he has taught;⁵⁰⁵ rather, God's people must endure through suffering.⁵⁰⁶ Not only do the thought patterns of Mark 13

⁵⁰⁴ Dan 2:28 in Mark 13:7; Dan 12:12 in Mark 13:13; Dan 9:27; 11:31; 12:11 in Mark 13:14; Dan 12:1 in Mark 13:19.

⁵⁰⁵ See Deut 13:1-3

⁵⁰⁶ In Daniel, the suffering and even martyrdom of the holy ones is the means of their purification (see Dan 12:1-3). Mark 13 exhibits a similar theme.

echo those in Daniel, but they also echo those in the other apocalyptic compositions I have examined in this study.⁵⁰⁷

Just as Mark portrays the confrontation between Jesus and Satan in 3:22-30 as a cosmic battle, Mark portrays the Son of Man's judgment of the powers in heaven and earth in 13:24-27 as heavenly warfare. He does this by quoting and alluding to a group of Old Testament texts associated in their cosmic depiction of the destruction of those hostile to God, Isa 13:10; Isa 34:4; Joel 2:10-22; and Dan 7:13.

5.3.3.3.1 *Isa 13:10 and Isa 34:4*

I begin my discussion with the texts from which Mark 13:24-25 most plausibly takes its language, Isa 13:10 and 34:4. The larger literary contexts of these texts are strikingly similar. Isaiah 13 and 34 both describe the cataclysmic Day of the Lord as a preface for the judgment of Babylon (13:1-22) and of Edom (34:1-15). Both descriptions end with the ravaging and desolation of the land so that it is turned over to wild animals (13:20-22; 34:11-15).⁵⁰⁸

Isaiah 13 begins with a call to battle from a cosmic perspective. The Lord consecrates and commands an eschatological army that comes from the end of heaven to serve as God's instrument to destroy the whole world: "The Lord is mustering a host (צבא) for war" (13:4). The divine judgment becomes a cataclysmic event that reaches up to heaven so that the stars, sun and moon fail to give their

⁵⁰⁷ See chap. 3, above.

⁵⁰⁸ See also Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 1-39*, 451.

light (v. 10) and the earth and heaven shake (v. 13).⁵⁰⁹ Not until v. 17 do we learn that the Medes are instruments of vengeance against Babylon.⁵¹⁰ In Isa 13, the wrath of God extends from human beings (v. 7-8, 11-12), to the land (v. 9, 19-22), and up to heaven (vv. 10, 13). The failure of the stars, moon, and sun to shine (13:10) does not simply signal a theophany, but also that the wrath of God extends to the entire cosmos.

Similarly, Isaiah 34 places the destruction of the powers hostile to the Lord in a cosmic context. A comparison of Mark 13:25 with Isa 34:4 in the LXX and MT provides the foundation for my discussion of this passage:

Mark 13:25	Isaiah 34:4 LXX B ⁵¹¹	Isaiah 34:4 MT
	και τακησονται <u>πασαι αι δυναμεις</u> <u>των ουρανων</u>	ונמקו כל צבא השמים
	και ἐλιγήσεται ὁ οὐρονὸς ὡς βιβλίον	ונגלו כספי השמים
καὶ οἱ ἀστέρες ἔσονται	καὶ πάντα τὰ ἄστρα	וכל צבאם
ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ <u>πίπτοντες</u>	<u>πεσεῖται</u> ὡς φύλλα ἐξ ἀμπέλου	יבול כנבל עלה מנפץ
	καὶ ὡς πίπτει φύλλα ἀπὸ συχῆς	וכנבלת מתאנה
καὶ αἱ <u>δυνάμεις</u>		
<u>αἱ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς</u> σαλευθήσονται		

Isa 34 describes the cataclysmic day of judgment and the destruction of hostile powers, with Edom, rather than Babylon, marked for judgment.⁵¹² And in contrast to Isa 13, the Lord is the direct agent of annihilation.⁵¹³ The Lord is

⁵⁰⁹ Brevard S. Childs, *Isaiah* (Louisville: WJKP, 2001), 125.

⁵¹⁰ Childs, *Isaiah*, 123.

⁵¹¹ Codex Vaticanus of the LXX matches the MT. The LXX is missing the first line.

⁵¹² In chap. 34, "Edom has taken the place of Assyria and Babylon as personifying forces hostile to God's purposes," Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 1-39*, 451. See also Childs, *Isaiah*, 256-7.

⁵¹³ "Edom is destroyed without the intervention of any human agency." Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 1-39*, 450.

angry at the nations of the world and all their host (שׂצ, v. 2).⁵¹⁴ When the Lord aims his anger at the nations (vv. 2-3), all the host (שׂצ, v. 4) of heaven rot and fall (v. 4). The Lord wields a sword first in the sky (v. 5) before descending with it upon Edom in judgment (vv. 6-7). Isaiah portrays both cosmic and terrestrial warfare, with the destruction of the celestial bodies concomitant with destruction on the earth. Isaiah 34 seems to depict an all-encompassing scene of divine judgment upon the human and heavenly powers opposed to God.⁵¹⁵ This suggests that the darkening of celestial bodies signals not merely the divine presence, but God's judgment itself, that is, judgment in the heavens.⁵¹⁶

⁵¹⁴ The LXX does not follow the MT in 34:2 here, but reads, διότι θυμὸς κυρίου ἐπὶ πάντα τὰ ἔθνη καὶ ὀργὴ ἐπὶ τὸν ἀριθμὸν αὐτῶν τοῦ ἀπολέσαι αὐτοὺς καὶ παραδοῦναι αὐτοὺς εἰς σφαγήν.

⁵¹⁵ Blenkinsopp describes opening verses of Isa 34 as a "scene of general devastation on earth and in heaven" and sees in it the appropriation of a mythological *topos* of "warfare in the heavens," similar to Dan 10:12-14. Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 1-39*, 452.

⁵¹⁶ Similar imagery appears in Isa 24. In the surrounding context, Isa 24 describes a similar judgment of the whole earth that reaches even up to the heavens:

on that day the Lord will punish the host (שׂצ) of heaven, in heaven, and the kings of the earth, on the earth. They will be gathered together as prisoners in a pit; they will be shut up in a prison, and after many days they will be punished. Then the moon will be confounded and the sun ashamed, for the Lord of hosts reigns on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem, and his glory will be before his elders. (Isa 24:21-23).

The day of the Lord brings punishment upon both heavenly host and human powers hostile to God. These powers are tied together in their punishment as they have been in their offense. The host of heaven are the "celestial bodies understood as animate, intelligent, angelic beings whose movements determine human destiny," presumably, that the kings of the earth have come to worship. The heavenly host will be put to shame when the Lord appears in glory (v. 23), because the Lord's glory will outshine theirs. Several OT texts suggests that human beings make the heavenly host objects of worship in place of the one true God: Deut 4:19; 17:3; 2 Chron 33:5; Jer 8:2; Zeph 1:5. For a discussion, see Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 1-39*, 356-7; R. E. Clements, *Isaiah 1-39* (NCBC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980), 205-6; John N. Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah 1-39* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986), 454-455.

5.3.3.3.2 *Joel 2:10-11*

Joel 2:10-11 shares common vocabulary with Isa 13:10 and 34:4, and may provide some of the background for Mark 13:24-25.⁵¹⁷ In Joel, Jerusalem is the object of divine judgment, rather than pagan nations like Babylon or Edom. Joel 2 begins with the call to sound an alarm warning of the approach of an enemy army together with the warning of the approach of the Day of the Lord. The approaching army is the Lord's army (v. 11), and there are three statements about what happens "before it," that is, before this army:⁵¹⁸ fire devours the land before it (v. 3a), people writhe before it (v. 6a), and the earth and heavens shake before it (v. 10a). In other words, through this army, the Lord's wrath reaches the entire cosmos, including human beings, the land, and the heavens. Human beings tremble (2:1), and the earth and heavens tremble and quake (v. 10) at the coming of the army of the Lord in judgment. Just as in Isa 13, Joel 2 imagines the approach of a heavenly army that brings judgment both on earth and in heaven.

5.3.3.3.3 *Daniel 7:13*

Finally, Mark alludes to Daniel 7:13 in the portrayal of the coming of the Son of Man with the clouds. The larger context of Daniel portrays angelic beings fighting a heavenly battle in league with human armies (Dan 10:13, 20-21).

⁵¹⁷ Hans Walter Wolff argues that the traditions exhibited in Isa 13 determined the composition of Joel 2:1-11, and not the locust material in Joel 1. Wolff argues that a human army is in view. See Wolff, *Joel and Amos* (Hermeneia; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1977) 47; cf. Duane Garrett, *Hosea, Joel* (NAC; Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 1997), 298-301; Lars Hartman, *Prophecy Interpreted*, 157. James Crenshaw, on the other hand, argues that a locust plague is in view. While he maintains that Joel and Isaiah share a common vocabulary and tradition, he believes that Joel 2 develops the material about the locusts in chap. 1. James L. Crenshaw, *Joel: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB 24C; New York: Doubleday, 1995), 236.

⁵¹⁸ Wolff, *Joel and Amos*, 40; Crenshaw, *Joel*, 120.

Michael, the prince of God's people, delivers the holy ones (12:1-3), but not before engaging in the heavenly battle against the princes of God's enemies. This depiction contextualizes the *topos* of cosmic warfare also found in Isa 34.⁵¹⁹ The use of Dan 7:13 (in combination with the Isaianic texts) to describe the coming of the Son of Man in Mark 13:26 suggests that Mark's Son of Man also takes the role of Daniel's Ancient of Days in judgment. In Dan 7:9 the Ancient of Days is seated (κάθηναι) in judgment and the heavenly court likewise sits in judgment over human kingdoms. One like a son of man then appears to receive dominion, glory, and a kingdom. In Mark's depiction, however, the Ancient of Days is absent. Instead, theophanic-judgment language describes the Son of Man's appearance when he himself comes to gather the elect. The implication is that the Son of Man appears in the role of God as judge.

Such an interpretation concurs with the preceding context of Mark's narrative, which prepares the reader to understand the coming of the Son of Man as an eschatological judgment.⁵²⁰ Jesus has warned his followers that when the Son of Man appears in the glory of his Father with his holy angels, he will disassociate from those who had been ashamed of Jesus, that is, those who have rejected him. By implication, he will gather those unashamed of him out of a wicked and sinful generation (8:38). Later in the Gospel, Jesus also alludes to his role as judge when he says to the high priest: "you will see the Son of Man seated (καθήμενον) at the right hand of Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven"

⁵¹⁹ See Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 1-39*, 452.

⁵²⁰ See also T. C. Gray, *Temple in the Gospel of Mark*, 141. Gray, however, sees this as judgment upon the temple, rather than judgment at the Parousia.

(14:62). The appearance of the Son of Man is an eschatological judgment in which Jesus will be vindicated before those in Israel who have rejected him, but also in which Jesus will call to account those followers who have been ashamed of him.

5.3.3.3.4 *Echoes in Mark*

The texts upon which Mark draws to describe the coming of the Son of Man portray divine judgment against powers on earth and in heaven that are hostile to God. These malevolent earthly and heavenly powers are connected, and the judgment takes the form of cosmic warfare. These prophetic passages depict apocalyptic armies as divine instruments that overwhelm the entire cosmos. In Mark's depiction, it is the Son of Man with his army of angels who overwhelms the cosmos. In light of this background and Mark's narrative context, it is likely that the appearance of the Son of Man refers to more than just the judgment of the temple.⁵²¹ Mark evokes cosmic warfare through which the Son of Man executes a sweeping judgment of all powers in heaven and on earth. In the OT texts, apocalyptic armies or the Lord appear causing distress on the earth and in the heavens. In Mark 13:24-27, the Son of Man appears as judge with an army of angels to the same effect.

⁵²¹ Some scholars argue that Mark employs cosmic symbolism here in order to represent the temple cosmology and signify its destruction. The temple was designed as a microcosm of heaven and earth. Thus, it is thought that Mark's description of the dissolution of the cosmos (13:24-25) and the passing away of heaven and earth (v. 31) is a symbolic reference to the destruction of the temple. Gray, *Temple*, 148-49; Crispin H. T. Fletcher-Lois, "Jesus, the Temple and the Dissolution of Heaven and Earth," in *Apocalyptic in History and Tradition* (ed. C. Rowland and J. Barton; JSPSup 43; London: Sheffield, 2002), 117-141.

In 13:25, Mark reverses the order of the phrases from Isa 34:4 (see the textual comparison above), so that the position of the heavenly powers is juxtaposed with the position of the Son of Man. The powers (αἱ δυνάμεις, מַלְאָכָיִם MT, v. 25b) shake when the Son of Man comes with great power and glory (μετὰ δυνάμειος πολλῆς καὶ δόξης, v. 26). The word σαλευθήσονται does not appear in the LXX B or MT of Isa 34:4, but is a Markan addition. In prophetic literature, people, nature, or the cosmos may shake at the appearance of God's judgment.⁵²² When the Son of Man appears in judgment, his greater power overwhelms the heavenly powers. In this way Mark 13:24-27 develops the symbolic world constructed in 3:22-30, where Jesus battles against the kingdom of Satan. I have argued that, in 3:22-30, Mark metaphorically depicts Jesus' exorcisms as the vanguard through which Jesus is in the process of bringing Satan's kingdom to an end. Nevertheless, Satan remains a strong opponent to engage Jesus and others in conflict throughout the narrative. Now, in chap. 13, Mark portrays Jesus' final victory.

The counterpart to the quaking heavenly powers are the human beings on earth who will see the Son of Man coming in the clouds with great power and glory (v. 26). The subject of the verb ὄψονται ("they will see," v. 26) is unclear, but the presence of the verb indicates that the appearance of the Son of Man is a public event. The verb suggests that it is a negative event for those who have rejected Jesus and a positive event for those who have remained faithful for his

⁵²² Amos 8:12; 9:5; Mic 1:4; Hab 2:16; 3:6; Zech 12:2; Isa 33:20; 40:20; Jer 23:9; 28[51]:7.

sake. After his first passion prediction, Jesus contrasts a warning that those who are ashamed of the Son of Man now will find that the Son of Man is ashamed of them when he appears, with a promise that some (presumably those who are not ashamed) will not taste death until they “see” (ἰδωσιν) the powerful coming of the kingdom of God.⁵²³ In other words, when the Son of Man appears, those who endure suffering for Jesus’ sake will “see” him and be vindicated. In contrast, at his trial, Jesus tells the high priest that “you will see (ὄψεσθε) the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of power and coming with the clouds of heaven” (14:62). When the Son of Man appears, those who have rejected Jesus will “see” him and receive judgment.⁵²⁴ The echoes from the OT texts evoke a picture of judgment that extends from the powers in heaven to those on earth who “see.”

The Son of Man overcomes all hostile powers in heaven and on earth, and sends his army of angels to gather the elect from the ends of the earth (13:7), ending the suffering and persecution Jesus has called them to endure for his sake. Until the appearance of the Son of Man, the elect can expect suffering and persecution to escalate. Verses 5-23 focused on the need to be watchful so as not to be led astray by those who would use Christ’s authority to claim that suffering

⁵²³ The coming of the kingdom of God in 9:1 is synonymous with the coming of the Son of Man in 8:38. I discuss 8:38-9:1 in chap. 6, below.

⁵²⁴ A passage in the Similitudes of *1 Enoch* is also illuminating. Enoch envisions the Son of Man sitting on God’s throne of glory to execute judgment (*1 En.* 61:8; 63:5). The Son of Man has been hidden while the elect have suffered at the hands of their oppressors, but he is finally revealed in all his glory so that the oppressors “see” him and panic (62:1-7). The Son of Man sends angels to punish and remove the oppressors, so that he can gather the elect to eat, rest, and rise with him (vv. 11-15). Similarly, Mark depicts the Son of Man coming after a period of hiddenness, after his followers have endured suffering and persecution. Now the Son of Man appears publicly, presumably so that those who have rejected Jesus and the suffering he requires will see him in all his power and glory.

is no longer necessary (vv. 5, 21). On the contrary, it is through the endurance of suffering to the End that the gospel will be preached to all nations (v. 13). Similar to Daniel (see Dan 12:1-3), Mark envisions glorification as the culmination of endurance. The outcome and climax of the Son of Man's judgment is the gathering of an eschatological community. This new community has been the goal of Jesus' mission from the beginning of the Gospel. Jesus calls the twelve to be with him, then to cast out demons and preach. In 3:22-30, Jesus' ministry produced division with his religious family and his blood family over his exorcisms, resulting in the formation of a new family composed of those who do God's will (vv. 31-35). The return of the Son of Man is the consummate conquest of hostile powers when the angels gather the elect from the four corners of the earth to form the eschatological community of God.

This eschatological judgment includes both negative and positive aspects that are characteristic of judgment scenes in the Jewish apocalyptic literature I examined in chap. 3. In the viewpoint of this literature, the current state of the world is not right because the wicked prevail against the righteous. When God appears in judgment, God sets the world right by separating the righteous from the wicked, and by destroying and removing all that is awry in order to make way for an abundant supply of blessing for the righteous. Generally, the surety of future judgment is the basis for exhortation. The hope of future judgment is contextualized differently in the respective compositions depending on their rhetorical purposes (i.e., what evils are removed and how they are removed;

what blessings are bestowed and how they are bestowed). The coming of the Son of Man in Mark 13:24-27 conforms to this pattern.

In Mark's view, the current state of the world is not right because the Jewish leaders have rejected Jesus, the one whom God has sent. The state of the world will continue out of alignment as Jesus' followers experience the same rejection from religious, political, and family circles. The desolating sacrilege that portends the destruction of the Jerusalem temple is a temporal judgment that functions as a warning for Jesus' followers. As they continue to suffer for Jesus' name after his death, they must not likewise reject Jesus and experience the shame of the Son of Man when he appears to judge the world. In *Jubilees* and the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*, Israel and the patriarchs function as negative examples for the purpose of exhorting the hearer to follow particular commands. Also, I argued that in the *Testament of Solomon*, Solomon likewise functions as a negative example for the purpose of exhorting the hearer to be diligent in discerning and combating demonic activity and fleeing sin. Perhaps Mark uses the judgment of the temple leadership, in part, as a negative example for the purpose of exhorting Jesus' followers not to reject him in light of the coming eschatological judgment. Mark differs from the Jewish apocalyptic compositions in that he portrays the dissolution of the corrupt community and the formation of a new one around Jesus. Like the corrupt temple community, the new community that Jesus gathers also faces temptations, warnings and consequences for rejecting him. Mark's Gospel addresses how Jesus overcomes

the hostile powers that would lead the community astray. When the Son of Man appears, he sets the world right by overcoming those hostile powers in heaven and earth, in order to gather the elect from the whole earth into an eschatological family. Nevertheless, Mark means for his readers to give attention to Jesus' exhortations that his followers remain watchful.

5.3.3.4 *Final Exhortations for Jesus' Followers*

The parables at the end of the discourse give a summary perspective for the whole speech. In particular, they pertain to the appearance of the Son of Man in vv. 24-27 and the preparedness of the elect.

5.3.3.4.1 *The parable of the fig tree (vv. 28-31)*

In the parable of Mark 13:28-29, the Markan Jesus uses a fig tree as an analogy for recognizing the signs of the times. When a fig tree produces leaves, it is a sign that summer, or harvest, (τὸ θέρος) is near. By analogy, when his followers see "these things" (ταῦτα) happening, they know ὅτι ἐγγύς ἐστιν ἐπὶ θύραις (v. 29). The language in this parable recalls the language of the disciple's opening question about when "these things" will happen (vv. ὅταν, 28; ὅταν ἴδητε ταῦτα, 29; cf. ὅταν μέλλῃ ταῦτα συντελεῖσθαι πάντα, v. 4). In addition, the language reflects Jesus' final exhortation to his followers in v. 23, "but you, watch, I have told you all things (πάντα) beforehand" (cf. πάντα in v. 4). Presumably, "these things" that Jesus' followers will see happening is what he describes in vv. 5-23, that is, those events that lead up to the coming of the Son of Man (vv. 24-27).

Those events include the destruction of the temple (vv. 14-17), but more than just that.

The metaphor of the fig tree that produces leaves without fruit recalls Jesus' cursing and withering of the fig tree in chap. 11, and the fruitless Jerusalem temple.⁵²⁵ I am not persuaded, however, that the allusion functions to make the parable primarily about the impending judgment of the temple.⁵²⁶ First, if the phrase, "these things" in v. 29 refers to what is described in vv. 5-23, then "these things" includes the destruction of the temple alluded to in vv. 14-17, as well as the work of the false teachers, the suffering and persecution of Jesus' followers, and the escalated tribulation. Second, the point of the parable suggests that the gathering of the elect at the appearance of the Son of Man is its focus, rather than the temple's judgment. The Markan Jesus says, just as you know that the harvest τὸ θέρος is near, in the same way you know that ἐγγύς ἐστίν. The term, τὸ θέρος evokes OT imagery of the restoration of God's people at the time of judgment,⁵²⁷ and points back to the gathering of the elect in v. 27. In addition, the most natural antecedent for ἐγγύς ἐστίν is the Son of Man in vv. 26-27.⁵²⁸ Third,

⁵²⁵ Telford suggests that the connection between Mark 13:28-29 and 11:12-14 is redactional in *Barren Temple*, 216-217. He argues that Mark intends the withering of the fig tree in 11:12-24 to be a sign of judgment on the temple, and for the blossoming of the fig tree in 13:28-29 to be a sign of eschatological blessing for Christians. In 13:28, however, the fig tree seems only to be producing leaves without fruit and to be in the same condition as the fig tree before Jesus has cursed it in 11:13. More recently, Gray interprets the cursing of the fig tree in 11:12-24 and the parable of the fig tree in 13:28-29 as "a Markan *inclusio* that is set up to make the reader ponder the narrative meaning of the fig tree and the end of the temple." Gray, *Temple*, 146.

⁵²⁶ Contra Gray, who states, "vv. 28-37 take up the issue of 'when' the temple will come to an end." Gray, *Temple*, 145.

⁵²⁷ Jer 51:24-33, esp. v. 33; Hos 6:11-7:7; Joel 3:13-18. See also Telford, *Barren Fig Tree*, 212.

⁵²⁸ Lane translates the phrase, ἐγγύς ἐστίν as "it is near," and takes the antecedent to be the desolating sacrilege and tribulation of vv. 14-20. These verses are too far from the phrase, however, reasonably to be the antecedent. Lane, *Mark*, 478, fn. 99.

the word θύραις, “doors,” (v. 29) anticipates the next parable (vv. 33-37), in which the lord of the house gives orders to the doorkeeper (τῷ θυρωρῷ) to watch for his coming, so that his household will be prepared when he comes. Mark is unique in connecting the parable of the fig tree (ending with θύραις) with the parable of the doorkeeper (using τῷ θυρωρῷ), immediately following the description of Son of Man’s appearance.⁵²⁹ As I will argue in detail below, Jesus is the lord of the house who will return as the Son of Man to the family he has formed and entrusted to do his work until he returns. The phrase, “he is near, at the doors,” suggests that the fig tree parable is about the Son of Man returning to his own household, which has become the new temple of the Lord.

I suggest that the function of the fig tree image is evocative, to serve as an exhortation for the new temple community that will supersede the present one. The judgment that comes upon the Jerusalem temple anticipates the judgment of the Son of Man. The leaders of the present temple community are not prepared when Jesus comes to the temple, and come under a preliminary judgment (chaps. 11-12). The image of the fig tree is a reminder of that judgment. How will the new temple community fare when Jesus comes to it as the Son of Man? The new temple, or household, that Jesus has formed prepares for the coming of the Lord by enduring suffering for the sake of his name (13:9-13). The preceding narrative, however, shows that its founding leaders resist the path of suffering

⁵²⁹ Matthew follows the description of the appearance of the Son of Man with the parable of the fig tree, using θύραις (Mt. 24:32-3); however, he does not use the parable of the doorkeeper. Luke uses the parable of the fig tree following the description of the Son of Man’s appearance (Luke 21:29-31, with the conclusion, γινώσκετε ὅτι ἐγγύς ἐστιν ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ (v. 31). Luke does not follow this parable with any other.

and self-denial that Jesus calls them to. When Peter first shows such signs of resistance (8:31-33), Jesus responds that those who are ashamed of the Son of Man now, he will be ashamed of when he comes in power and glory (vv. 34-38). The recognition of signs (v. 29) is not intended to provide a way for Jesus' followers to calculate the time of the Son of Man's coming, but to be an exhortation for faithful endurance in light of the certainty of his coming.⁵³⁰

5.3.3.4.2 *The parable of the householder (13:32-37)*

The parable of the householder focuses on the coming of the Lord Jesus as the Son of Man to his own household. Mark's distinctive purpose in this parable is highlighted when compared to the synoptic parallels. Luke follows the parable of the fig tree with a non-parabolic exhortation to watch and stay awake (Luke 21:34-36). Matthew follows the parable of the fig tree with a series of analogies for the unexpectedness of the Son of Man's appearance, including the flood that comes upon people the days of Noah, a thief who comes upon the master of a house, and a master who returns to a servant whom he had left in charge of his household (Matt 24: 36-51). Matthew's analogies describe different recipients of various threats. In the first analogy, the people of the world must be prepared for the flood; in the second, the master of the house must be prepared for a thief; in the third, the servant of a house must be prepared for his master. Matthew's point pertains to the threat each party is under if they are unprepared

⁵³⁰ I take the solemn saying, "truly I say to you that this generation will by no means pass away until all these things (ταῦτα πάντα) happen" (v. 30) to refer to what is described in vv. 5-23. While Jesus' followers can identify the signs leading up to the appearance of the Son of Man (v. 23; vv. 28-31), no one knows when that appearance will be (vv. 32, 33).

when the event or person arrives. This is like the threat that the coming of the Son of Man poses to all those who are unprepared. The Markan parable similarly emphasizes the suddenness of the Son of Man's coming, but has particular implications for Jesus' followers that are unique to its context.

Jesus uses household imagery in order to describe the situation and tasks of his followers between the time of his death and resurrection, and the time of his sudden appearance as the Son of Man. Jesus is analogous to the man who leaves his house on a journey, giving his followers responsibilities to fulfill in his absence. The man in the parable is the "lord of the house" (ὁ κύριος τῆς οἰκίας, v. 35), and the parable portrays *his* house (τὴν οἰκίαν αὐτοῦ, v. 34), and *his* servants (τοῖς δοῦλοις αὐτοῦ, v. 34). This is the household of Jesus. Earlier in the speech, Jesus spoke of a time when his followers' families will have rejected them for their testimony to him (v. 12). By contrast, the parable in vv. 33-37 portrays the new household they have joined, consisting of the family of Jesus' that does God's will (cf. 3:31-35). The household imagery in this parable evokes that of 3:22-30. There, Satan is portrayed as lord of a house (3:22, 25, 27).⁵³¹ In contrast to the parable of the householder in 13:33-37, the parable of the strong man portrays *Satan's* house (τὴν οἰκίαν τοῦ ἰσχυροῦ, τὴν οἰκίαν αὐτοῦ, 3:27), and *his* goods (τὰ σκεύη αὐτοῦ, v. 27), that is, the people whom Satan holds captive there. Mark portrays Jesus as the stronger one who comes to rescue those held captive in Satan's household. By contrast, Jesus sits in a house and begins to form a new

⁵³¹ Though the name Beelzebul is not attested in any extant Jewish writings, it is associated with the Aramaic name meaning "Lord of the house." For a discussion of the etymology, see Marcus, *Mark 1-8*, 272.

family that does God's will (vv. 31-35). The parable of the householder in 13:33-37 reflects a development of the formation Jesus' family begun in 3:22-35. Jesus has come to rescue those held captive in Satan's household, in order to gather them into a new household consisting of those who do God's will. In 13:33-37, Jesus envisions his followers as part of that new household with work to do faithfully until he appears.

Jesus' appearance is threatening to hostile powers, as the parable of the strong man anticipates, and the previous section of Jesus' speech demonstrates (13:24-27). While the parable of the strong man depicts Jesus' sudden coming to Satan's household, the parable of the householder depicts Jesus' sudden coming to his own household. The focus of this parable is the threat to Jesus' own followers when the lord of the house appears to gather the eschatological community. Jesus has given his followers the assurance that the Son of Man will overcome all hostile powers in order to rescue the elect. The existence of those powers right up until the end, however, requires Jesus' followers to endure suffering for his sake. Living in Jesus' household requires a certain way of life (9:10-13; cf. 8:34-38).

In this parable, Jesus repeats his injunction to watch (cf. vv. 5, 9, 23), adding emphasis with the word, "be alert" (βλέπετε ἀγρυπνεῖτε, v. 33).⁵³² Having just described the appearance of the Son of Man (vv. 24-27), Jesus warns that no one knows the time of his coming (vv. 32-33). The parable of the householder

⁵³² See Geddert's discussion of βλέπω in Mark 13 in light of its use in the rest of the Gospel. Geddert, *Watchwords*, 59-87.

emphasizes what Jesus' followers must do after his death in order to prepare for the coming of the Son of Man. Mainly, Jesus exhorts his followers to watch. The parable moves towards the description of the doorkeeper – the one who controls access to the house and guards its entrance – who has the specific task of keeping watch (ἵνα γρηγορή, v. 34). Immediately, Jesus applies the parable to his followers, saying, “therefore, you watch” (γρηγορεῖτε οὖν, v. 35). Finally, the parable ends with a third exhortation to watch (γρηγορεῖτε, v. 37). Watchfulness, a key element of Jesus' speech, receives a superabundant emphasis.

The parable has, however, more than one level of correspondence.⁵³³

Jesus' followers are to fulfill the role of the watchful doorkeeper because they do not know when the lord of the house will return.⁵³⁴ They are also the servants of the household. In his absence, the lord of the house gives his servants responsibility for work (v. 34). He could appear at any time, emphasizing the necessity of continued faithfulness in that work until the time of his return (v. 35). This parable recalls a situation that follows an injunction to “watch” (βλέπετε,

⁵³³ See also A. Y. Collins, *Mark*, 618.

⁵³⁴ Geddert argues that the parable does not specifically indicate that the doorkeeper is to watch for the return of the master. Instead, he suggests that the doorkeeper is to watch on behalf of the master while he is away. Geddert, *Watchwords*, 105. To the contrary, the parable is specifically about the return of the Son of Man: about that day or hour, “be on guard, *stay awake*, for you do not know when the time will come” (v. 33). In the analogy, the parable says that the man “commands the doorkeeper to *stay awake*” (v. 34). This correspondence in vocabulary suggests that while the servants are about their tasks, the doorkeeper is staying awake to watch for the return of the master, that is, for the return of the Son of Man. Watching, though, does not mean to calculate the time, but to remain faithful to carry out the tasks that the master has given the servants to do. To watch for the master's return *is precisely* to remain a faithful watchman on the master's behalf. Thus, Geddert's statement misses the point: “The Markan parable seems to speak its message most clearly if the primary call is to be a faithful watchman *on the master's behalf* because he is away, rather than to be a faithful watchman *for his appearance* because he is returning. To be a watchman, as the parable itself makes clear, is to exercise authority (13:34) along with all the other servants, carrying out a specific responsibility during the time that the householder is away.” Geddert, *Watchwords*, 105.

v. 9) earlier in the speech. Jesus calls his followers to endure suffering and persecution as they continue to testify to Jesus and preach the gospel to the ends of the earth (vv. 9-13). He exhorts them that, “the one who endures to the end will be saved” (v. 13), underscoring the demand for faithfulness in the work that he calls his them to do. The parable’s place in the context of this speech suggests that the lord of the house leaves his servants with the work of enduring persecution and suffering as they testify for the sake of Jesus and preach the gospel to the ends of the earth (vv. 9-13).

Throughout the speech, the Markan Jesus has used the word βλέπετε to exhort his followers to watch. In this parable, he shifts from βλέπετε (v. 33) to the word γρηγορείτε (vv. 35, 37). The only other time this word appears is in the Gethsemane scene, when Jesus tells his disciples to watch (γρηγορείτε, 14:34; cf. 37, 38) while he goes to pray that “the hour” might pass from him (ἡ ὥρα, v. 35; cf. 13:11).⁵³⁵ He returns three times and finds them sleeping (έρχεται καὶ εὕρισκει αὐτοὺς καθεύδοντας, v. 37, and 40, 41; cf. μὴ ἐλθῶν ἐξαίφνης εὔρη ὑμᾶς καθεύδοντας, 13:36). Mark presents the first members of Jesus’ new temple community as failures before his story is even finished. If they will not reject Jesus and the way of suffering to which he has called them, then they need forgiveness and restoration. Indeed, Mark holds together the demands of following Jesus with forgiveness and restoration through the rest of the Gospel. I develop this theme in the next chapter.

⁵³⁵ See Geddert, *Watchwords*, 89-111, for a discussion of the association between the parable of the doorkeeper and the Gethsemane account.

5.3.4 Conclusion

My analysis demonstrates that Mark 13:5-37 engages in apocalyptic discourse, though it is decidedly not an apocalypse. The speech builds upon the apocalyptic discourse and symbolic world established in 3:22-30. In that context, the Markan Jesus indicates that he performs a judicial task against Satan's kingdom through his exorcisms by overcoming demonic powers and rescuing the people held captive who are unable to rescue themselves. He also indicates that the Holy Spirit is the source of his power in this struggle, and makes a judicial pronouncement against human beings who oppose him (3:29). In chap. 13, Mark describes the conflicts of those who follow Jesus, who have the Holy Spirit as the source of their power. They do not rescue themselves, but are called to persevere to the end. Mark predicts a judicial act against the temple, which points to the judicial appearance of the Son of Man, who will overcome all powers hostile to Jesus in order to rescue the elect. The stronger one will overpower the Strong Man once for all. In this way, this speech displays the elements of apocalyptic discourse I have identified in the Jewish compositions analyzed in the previous chapter: persecution, the involvement of heavenly beings, and a final judgment that includes both negative and positive features. Mark's apocalyptic discourse fits his particular literary and theological aims.

5.4 Closing Remarks

The story in Mark 5:1-20 and the speech in 13:5-37 develop the apocalyptic discourse and symbolic world established in 3:22-30. These passages exhibit the struggle between the oppressed and their opponents, the activity of heavenly beings, and the appearance of God's warrior to rescue the oppressed in order to establish a new community. In the story of the Gerasene demoniac, Jesus appears as the one engaged in the process of binding and overcoming the strong man to raid his house and plunder his goods, setting free a man held captive by demonic oppressors. In the Olivet discourse, Jesus looks forward to the time that he will appear as the Son of Man to overcome hostile powers and gather the elect from the four corners of the earth, rescuing them from the suffering and persecution they have endured at the hands of oppressors for his sake.

While Mark 5:1-20 and 13:5-37 point to God's decisive victory over hostile spiritual and human powers, the narrative progression of Mark's Gospel presents Jesus as increasingly powerless before human and spiritual opponents. Eventually, he is crucified. Jesus does not execute punishment against those who offend him, nor does he call his followers to act as agents of judgment.⁵³⁶ Rather than displaying such worldly power, Jesus calls his followers to be slaves of all, and says of himself that, "the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many" (10:45). This narrative progression raises questions about the nature and manifestation of Jesus' power *vis à vis* Satan's

⁵³⁶ The *War Scroll* and *1 Enoch* both envision God empowering human beings to act as agents of divine judgment. See chap. 3 above.

power. In the end, the Son of Man overcomes all hostile powers to rescue the elect; but what relationship does that appearance have to Jesus' mission and struggle against his opponents as his ministry moves towards the cross? In other words, what is the nature and manifestation of the power by which Jesus overcomes the strong man? I address this question in the next chapter.

Chapter 6

Overcoming the Strong Man: The Nature and Manifestation of Power in Mark

6.1 Introduction

I have argued that Mark 3:22-30 portrays an authentic struggle between two powerful opponents, Satan and the Spirit-filled Jesus. I have shown how, in the story of the Gerasene Demoniac, Mark portrays Jesus overcoming the power of the legion to restore a possessed man to community, and how, in the Olivet Discourse, Mark envisions Jesus appearing as the Son of Man to triumph over hostile powers, freeing the elect and gathering them into an eschatological community. In these accounts, Jesus brings life from death, in the present and at the end of age. Despite these two success stories, however, the primary tropism in Mark's narrative is towards the cross, underscoring the point that Jesus' victory over Satanic power is not a straightforward matter.

The present chapter examines how Mark portrays the power struggle between Jesus and the strong man. My aim is to explore the *nature* and *manifestation* of Satan's power vis-à-vis the *nature* and *manifestation* of Jesus'

power. Mark's view of power is most clearly exhibited in the section that runs from 8:27-10:45, where Jesus contrasts power and greatness in the kingdom of God with worldly power and greatness. This teaching moment appears at the central part of the Gospel.⁵³⁷ A three-fold pattern unifies this section. Three times, Jesus repeats a prediction of the suffering, death and resurrection (8:31; 9:31; 10:32-34). After each prediction, the disciples express misunderstanding of Jesus' mission (8:32-33; 9:32; 10:35-41), and Jesus gives them remedial teaching on what it means to follow him (8:34-37; 9:33-37; 10:42-45). Its pedagogical purpose is to instruct disciples about the most important elements of following Jesus. In addition, this section concludes with 10:45, the only place besides 3:22-30 in which Jesus explains the purpose of his mission. In both passages, Mark uses language pertaining to the release of captives, suggesting that they may be mutually interpretive. In 3:27, Jesus is the stronger one who plunders Satan's house to free those who have become plunder. In 10:45 Jesus is the Son of Man who frees many by giving up his life as a ransom. I will argue that both texts point to a power struggle between Jesus and Satan, but 10:45 indicates that the

⁵³⁷ This unit is introduced by Peter's confession that Jesus is the Christ as Caesarea Philippi, the first time a human being has recognized his identity (8:27-29). Norman Perrin calls 8:27-9:1 "the watershed of Mark's literary composition." N. Perrin, "The Christology of Mark: A Study in Methodology," in *The Interpretation of Mark* (ed. W. R. Telford; Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1995), 128. Moreover, Vernon Robbins has demonstrated that each passion prediction is in the framework of a three-step progression that highlights its function as a teaching on discipleship. He shows that with each prediction, Jesus moves to a new place with his disciples (first step), interacts with them (second step), and then calls them to a particular purpose (third step). Robbins comments, "By lengthening the scene to three repetitive units, the narrator sets the stage for an emphatic conclusion." Vernon K. Robbins, *Jesus the Teacher: A Socio-rhetorical Interpretation of Mark* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984), 22-25.

power by which the stronger one overpowers the strong man will not be gained by wielding it, but, ironically, by giving it up.

6.2 Power in the Kingdom of God

The passion predictions function to challenge the disciples' implicit understanding about power in the kingdom. The three predictions follow a similar pattern: Jesus states that the Son of Man will be delivered over to human beings who will kill him, and then he will rise after three days. The image of the Son of Man comes from Dan 7:13. There, one like a son of man is a glorious, heavenly figure who appears when God has judged the enemies of God's suffering and oppressed people, to receive an everlasting kingdom for them. Likewise, Mark sees the Son of Man as a glorious, heavenly figure that will appear at the eschatological judgment (8:38; 13:24-27; 14:62).⁵³⁸ Daniel does not

⁵³⁸ Mark uses the phrase, ὁ υἱὸς ὁ ἀνθρώπου for the first time in 2:10, when Jesus states that the Son of Man has authority to forgive sins on the earth. The origin of the "Son of Man" title is a disputed area of scholarship. Rudolph Bultmann deduces that the historical Jesus spoke some "Son of Man" sayings in the Gospels in *History of the Synoptic Tradition*, 112, 122, 128, 151-52. Norman Perrin, however, concludes that the title was a creation of the early Church to explain Jesus' death and convey his vindication. N. Perrin, *Christology and a Modern Pilgrimage: A Discussion with Norman Perrin* (ed., Hans Dieter Betz; Missoula, Mont.: SBL, 1971), 10-22; repr. from "Mark XIV.62: The End Product of a Christian Peshet Tradition?," *NTS* 12 (1965-66): 150-55; Perrin, *Pilgrimage*, 23-40; repr. from "The Son of Man in Ancient Judaism and Primitive Christianity: A Suggestion," *BR* 11 (1966): 17-28; Perrin, *Pilgrimage*, 57-83; repr. from "The Son of Man in the Synoptic Tradition," in *BR* 13 (1968): 3-25; Perrin, *Pilgrimage*, 84-93; repr. from "The Creative Use of the Son of Man Traditions by Mark," *USQR* 23 (1967-68): 357-65; Perrin, *Rediscovering the Teaching of Jesus*, 154-206. For the view that the title is a Markan redaction, see Darrell J. Doughty, "The Authority of the Son of Man (Mk 2₁₋₃)," *ZNW* 74(1983):164-69; A. Y. Collins, *Mark*, 189. By contrast, Robert H. Stein argues that the "Son of Man" saying is likely authentic. He notes that the title occurs in the Gospels eighty-two times, compared with only four times in the rest of the NT, and argues that the early church would have chosen a title like "Christ" or "Lord," found more frequently in other NT writings, rather than create a mysterious title like "Son of Man." Robert Stein, *Mark*, 121. Morna Hooker has analyzed the background of the expression, ὁ υἱὸς ὁ ἀνθρώπου in Jewish tradition and its thirteen uses in Mark, and demonstrated the clear influence of Daniel on Mark's use of the title, "Son of Man." Morna

portray the one like a human being, however, as one who suffers.⁵³⁹ The Markan Jesus challenges expectations by teaching that the Son of Man must suffer, be rejected and killed.

Mark emphasizes the necessity of the suffering of the Son of Man in two ways. First, the Markan Jesus teaches that *δεῖ τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου πολλὰ παθεῖν* (8:31), indicating that divine agency directs the fate of the Son of Man. Second, Jesus teaches that *γέγραπται ἐπὶ τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἵνα πολλὰ πάθῃ* (9:12), indicating that a scriptural warrant necessitates the fate of the Son of Man. In that context, Jesus has just come down from a mountain after being transfigured, revealing to some of his disciples a glimpse of his glory. He tells them to keep secret what they have seen until after the Son of Man has risen from the dead (9:9). These disciples do not understand what “rising from the dead” means because a dead Son of Man is an anomaly to them (v. 10). When Jesus asks them how it is written that the Son of Man should suffer many things, he does not

Hooker, *The Son of Man in Mark: A Study of the Background of the Term: “Son of Man” and its Use in St. Mark’s Gospel* (Montreal: McGill University Press, 1967), see esp. 190.

The meaning of the phrase *ὁ υἱὸς ὁ ἀνθρώπου* is also a contested area of scholarship. Scholars recognize that the phrase is not a Greek idiom, but a translation of a Semitic phrase, *בְּרַ נְשָׂא* or *בְּרַ נְשָׂא* in Aramaic. See Joseph A. Fitzmyer, “The New Testament Title ‘Son of Man’ Philologically Considered,” in *A Wandering Aramean: Collected Aramaic Essays* (SBLMS 25; ed. J. A. Fitzmyer; Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1979), 143-60. Geza Vermes, “The Use of *בְּרַ נְשָׂא/בְּרַ נְשָׂא* in Jewish Aramaic,” Appendix E in *An Aramaic Approach to the Gospels and Acts* by Matthew Black (3rd ed.; Oxford: Clarendon, 1967), 310. Vermes argues that Jesus uses the “Son of Man” expression as a circumlocution for “I,” that is, he simply uses it as an idiomatic expression to refer to himself in the first person singular. Vermes, “The Use of *בְּרַ נְשָׂא/בְּרַ נְשָׂא*,” 310-28. In a response, M. Black affirms Vermes’ basic argument, but rejects his conclusion that the expression *ὁ υἱὸς ὁ ἀνθρώπου* “is not suitable for messianic use.” Black argues that the expression is ambiguous, able to be construed as “a man” or as the title “Son of Man” with primary reference to Dan 7. Thus, he concludes that Jesus used the expression to refer to himself as the Danielic Son of Man. Black, *Aramaic Approach to the Gospels*, 328-30. Others who challenge Vermes’ argument include Joseph A. Fitzmyer, “Another View of the Son of Man Debate,” *JSNT* 4 (1979): 58-65; and Maurice Casey, “The Son of Man Problem,” *ZNW* 67 (1976): 147-54.

⁵³⁹ See my discussion on Daniel in Chap. 3, above.

quote a specific scripture. The rest of the Gospel, however, suggests what texts Mark may have in mind.

In 12:10-11, the Markan Jesus quotes Ps 118:22 and applies the stone the builders have rejected (*ἀπεδοκίμασαν*, 12:10) to himself. In the first passion prediction, Jesus says that the Son of Man will be rejected (*ἀποδοκιμασθῆναι*, 8:31) by the elders, chief priests and scribes, echoing Ps 118:22. In addition, Mark has Jesus quote Ps 22:1 at the cross, when he cries out, “my God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” (Mark 15:34). This Psalmist speaks of those who mock and wag their heads at him (Ps 22:7), which is echoed in the mocking of the Gentiles in the second passion prediction, (Mark 10:34). Finally, the themes of suffering and rejection echo the suffering and rejection of God’s servant in Isa 53.

Particularly, in v. 3 Isaiah speaks of the servant who is despised and rejected by human beings. Mark’s use of portions of Isa 40-55 elsewhere in the Gospel (e.g., Isa 40:3 in Mark 1:3; Isa 49:24 in Mark 3:27) increases the likelihood of such an allusion. Mark uses Dan 7 together with other OT texts in order to interpret the mission of Jesus as one in which suffering precedes glory and power. This idea reflects the movement of the book of Daniel, in which suffering is a means to glory for the holy ones who have experienced persecution.⁵⁴⁰ Like Daniel, Mark affirms a glorious and powerful Son of Man. Mark’s Son of Man, however, rises to a position of glory and power after suffering and dying at the hands of fellow human beings.

⁵⁴⁰ See my discussion of Daniel above, in Chap. 3.

The material that Mark places after each passion prediction further elucidates the nature and manifestation of the Son of Man's power. I approach this material, using Mark 8:33 as an interpretive lens. According to Jesus' rebuke of Peter in 8:33, the one who sets his mind on τὰ τῶν ἀνθρώπων seeks to retain power, and is provoked by Satan. By contrast, the one who has his mind set on τὰ τοῦ θεοῦ yields worldly power. Ironically, Mark establishes in 8:27-10:45 that only the one who yields power will attain it in the end. This struggle between the mind set on τὰ τῶν ἀνθρώπων and the mind set on τὰ τοῦ θεοῦ reflects an apocalyptic symbolic world in which Satan seeks to lead people astray from the will of God.⁵⁴¹ I argued in chap. 4 that apart from demonic possession, demonic activity in Mark aims to entice human beings away from God's will due to faulty hearing or understanding. Mark 8:27-10:45 provides a prime example. Below, I discuss the nature and manifestation of power according to τὰ τοῦ θεοῦ.

6.3 The Nature of Power according to τὰ τοῦ θεοῦ

After Jesus' first prediction, Peter rebukes him because suffering and death are not part of Peter's conception of messiahship (8:31-32). Jesus replies by rebuking Peter as Satan (8:33). He contrasts two ways of setting one's mind: on the ways of God (τὰ τοῦ θεοῦ) or on the ways of human beings (τὰ τῶν ἀνθρώπων). By naming Satan as the enemy behind thought that is according to τὰ τῶν ἀνθρώπων, the Markan Jesus expands the reader's line of vision in the opposition

⁵⁴¹ See my discussion in Chap. 3.

between τὰ τῶν ἀνθρώπων and τὰ τοῦ θεοῦ. Such opposition reflects a cosmic conflict. This passage exhibits the same symbolic world of the Beelzebul discourse, which links human and cosmic forces. There, the scribes enter a cosmic conflict through their charges about Jesus' exorcisms. By placing the scribes outside the realm of the Holy Spirit's power (3:29), Mark suggests that it is they, and not Jesus as they had charged, who are on Satan's side of the battle. Now, one of Jesus' own disciples is caught up in this cosmic conflict.

The phrase τὰ τῶν ἀνθρώπων does not indicate that everything human is bad. Rather, the phrase has particular reference to Peter's rebuke. The context suggests that a mindset according to τὰ τῶν ἀνθρώπων is a particular attitude that refuses the endurance of suffering according to the will of God (cf. δεῖ τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου πολλὰ παθεῖν, v. 31). Because Jesus' passion prediction indicates that suffering precedes resurrection and the glorification of the Son of Man, the contrast between τὰ τοῦ θεοῦ and τὰ τῶν ἀνθρώπων suggests two different principles of power. The realm in which τὰ τῶν ἀνθρώπων operates denies suffering and relies on human resources; by contrast, the realm in which τὰ τοῦ θεοῦ operates submits to suffering and relies on divine resources.

6.3.1 Examples Elucidating the Nature of Power

One way Mark elucidates the contrast between τὰ τῶν ἀνθρώπων and τὰ τοῦ θεοῦ is by placing a misunderstanding of the disciples and a teaching of Jesus after each passion prediction. He had called people to come after him from the beginning of his ministry, and they willingly left everything to follow him (1:18,

2:14; 6:1). In 8:34, Jesus defines more explicitly what “following” means: To follow him means to deny oneself and take up one’s cross. The ground (γὰρ) for this statement is that, “whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel’s will save it” (8:35). Those who think according to human ways seek to seize life and power (v. 35a, 36). Those who think according to God’s ways, however, yield their lives for the sake of Jesus and the gospel. Ironically, operating according to τὰ τοῦ θεοῦ is the only way to gain salvation and life in the end (v. 35, 36). Jesus makes a final warning against being ashamed of him and his words in light of the appearance of the Son of Man (v. 38). Not only does this warning reflect Peter’s offense at his earlier words about his impending suffering and death, but it also gives a glimpse of the power and glory that this suffering and dying Son of Man will have on the other side of the predicted resurrection. In this teaching, Jesus expands upon the contrast between τὰ τῶν ἀνθρώπων and τὰ τοῦ θεοῦ by establishing the principle that to seize one’s life results in losing it; and to yield one’s life results in saving it. According to τὰ τοῦ θεοῦ, the nature of power is such that one only attains it by giving up one’s life.

The teachings after the second and third passion predictions follow the same pattern. The disciples have not yet understood the principle of τὰ τοῦ θεοῦ, that is, the principle of yielding rather than seizing life and power. After the second passion prediction, they discuss who among them is the greatest. Jesus teaches them again about what constitutes true greatness: whoever wants to be

first must be last and a servant of all (9:35). He uses the example of a child, one of the most vulnerable members of that society, and equates serving a child with serving himself and even God. Opposed to the disciples' self-serving interest in their own positions of greatness, Jesus calls them to yield themselves for the sake of others and for his sake (cf. 8:35). Ironically, yielding human greatness will make a person "first". The path to greatness and power is different according to τὰ τοῦ θεοῦ than according to τὰ τῶν ἀνθρώπων.

Mark confirms this principle of power in the teaching that follows the third passion prediction. When Jesus and his disciples are about to enter Jerusalem (10:32-33), James and John ask to be seated to his right and left "in your glory" (ἐν τῇ δόξῃ σου, v. 37). The phrase, ἐν τῇ δόξῃ σου recalls Jesus' description, following the first passion prediction, of the Son of Man coming in glory. Each of the three passion predictions has reiterated that the Son of Man must suffer, be killed and then rise on the third day. By this point, it becomes clear to the reader that Jesus' coming as the Son of Man in glory must come through yielding power to the point of yielding life itself. The request of James and John reveals, however, that they still have their minds set on τὰ τῶν ἀνθρώπων. Rather than yield power, they seek to seize it in the kingdom they imagine Jesus will establish when he enters the city. Jesus responds that James and John do not know what they are asking, and makes the point by asking these two disciples if they are able to share in his cup and in his baptism (v. 38). In the context of Mark's narrative, τὸ ποτήριον and τὸ βάπτισμα most likely refer to the

content of the passion predictions.⁵⁴² In other words, are they able to share in Jesus' suffering and death? In the economy of the kingdom of God, suffering and death necessarily precede the acquisition of power.

Jesus uses an example from the Gentile world to demonstrate that the nature of power in the kingdom he has come to establish is different than the nature of power in human kingdoms. Not only James and John, but all the disciples have their minds set on τὰ τῶν ἀνθρώπων. The remaining ten become indignant when they hear of James' and John's power play, perhaps because of their own aspirations of status in the kingdom they imagine Jesus will bring. To expose the attitude of his followers, Jesus contrasts the way Gentile rulers seek greatness and power, with the way his followers must seek greatness and power. Those who rule the Gentiles lord it over them and their great ones (οἱ μεγάλοι αὐτῶν) hold authority over them. Jesus says it is not to be this way ἐν ὑμῖν (10:43a); rather, if anyone wishes to become great among Jesus' followers (μέγας ... ἐν ὑμῖν), that one must be a servant of the others, and the one who wishes to be first must be a slave of all (10:42-44). This contrast between attaining power by seizing it and attaining power by yielding it exhibits the contrast between a mindset that is according to τὰ τῶν ἀνθρώπων and one that is according to τὰ τοῦ θεοῦ. The disciples expect the power of the kingdom of God to operate just like any other human kingdom, in which they would acquire greatness by human

⁵⁴² Throughout the Old Testament, the cup is often a metaphor for the devastating wrath of God against Israel (Isa 51:17-23; Ezek 23:31-34) or against the nations (Ps 75:8; Jer 25:15-29; 49:12; 51:7; Lam 4:21-22; Hab 2:15-16). Water also can represent judgment (Gen 6-8; Isa 30:27-28; Jonah 2:3-6), and in the Markan context, baptism is a parallel idea to that of the cup.

devices, or by seizing and lording authority over others. Jesus teaches them that the kingdom of God does not operate like any other human kingdom, but that it is radically different.

In order to underscore the radically different nature of the kingdom of God, the Markan Jesus uses the Son of Man as the quintessential example of his teaching: “Whoever wishes to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wishes to become first among you must be slave of all, *for* (γὰρ) even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many” (10:43b-45). The Son of Man, the glorious, heavenly figure who evokes the one like a human being in Dan 7, is expected to be great and first, and perhaps to be served by all. In order to become great and first, however, he becomes a servant of all. He does this by giving his life as a ransom for many (δοῦναι τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ λύτρον ἀντὶ πολλῶν, v. 45b). The phrase, δοῦναι τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ most naturally refers to the content of the passion predictions, specifically, the suffering and death of Jesus. The giving of one’s life suggests an active submission to death, reflecting the earlier exhortation Jesus made to his followers to deny themselves to take up their cross because the one who loses his life will save it (8:34, 35). Even the Son of Man attains power only by giving up his life, demonstrating the nature of power according to τὰ τοῦ θεοῦ.

6.3.2 The Purpose of Jesus’ Mission (10:45)

The life-giving service of the Son of Man, however, is more than an example for Jesus’ followers. The Markan Jesus also explicitly states the purpose

of his mission. In the context of Jesus' exhortation to his followers, he had called them to give up their lives for the sake of him and the gospel (8:35b). In 10:45, however, the Son of Man has come to give up his life for a different reason. The Son of Man has come *δοῦναι τὴν ψυχὴ αὐτοῦ λύτρον ἀντὶ πολλῶν* (v. 45). Through the phrase, *λύτρον ἀντὶ πολλῶν*, Mark interprets Jesus' death as a vicarious act of suffering that frees many from captivity.⁵⁴³

The word *λύτρον* is used in biblical and non-biblical contexts to denote the price of freedom, that is, the ransom paid to liberate, for example, a prisoner of war or a slave.⁵⁴⁴ In the LXX, the language (*λύτρον, λύτρον*) is used to translate the Hebrew words *לָאָה* (45 times) and *פָּדָה* (43 times). The verb *λύτρον* translates *פָּדָה* pertaining to the ransom of things or persons outside the context of family relationships.⁵⁴⁵ The verb *λύτρον*, also translates *לָאָה* in the contexts of family relationships, for example, when someone buys back a family member who had become a slave or stands as a kinsman redeemer.⁵⁴⁶ The main idea of the verb *לָאָה* is that of "doing one's duty within the family group by recovering what has been lost."⁵⁴⁷ This same word is used to represent God in the ransom of Israel from

⁵⁴³ David Hill comments, "It is not possible to find the meaning of *λύτρον* in this verse without taking it in conjunction with *ἀντὶ πολλῶν*: these words give to the term a definite substitutionary content." D. Hill, *Greek Words and Hebrew Meanings: Studies in the Semantics of Soteriological Terms* (SNTSMS 5; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967), 78.

⁵⁴⁴ LSJ, "λύτρον, τό," 1067. Hill, *Greek Words*, 78. *λύτρον* occurs in the NT only here and in the parallel passage, Matt 20:28.

⁵⁴⁵ Hill, *Greek Words*, 55.

⁵⁴⁶ It is also used for the redemption of property, slaves, and tithe (Lev 19:20; 25:24, 26, 51, 52; 27:31).

⁵⁴⁷ Hill, *Greek Words*, 53.

slavery in Egypt,⁵⁴⁸ suggesting that the Exodus was a divine liberation that recovered what belonged to God, restoring the people for a relationship as a “treasured possession” (Exod 19:5).⁵⁴⁹ By extension, the language of ransom, or redemption, in prophetic literature expresses Israel’s hope that God will once again free them from their captivity from the nations, just like God freed them from the Egyptians.⁵⁵⁰ In particular, Isa 40-55, which promises that God will rescue Israel from Babylon, frequently portrays God as Redeemer (לְיִשְׁרָאֵל/λύτρον, e.g., Isa 43:1-7; 48:20-21; 51:9-11; 52:3-4).

I have already shown how Mark echoes portions from Isa 40-55 elsewhere in the Gospel. For example, Mark uses Isa 40:3 in the prologue to introduce Jesus as the mighty warrior who comes to wage war against the oppressor of God’s people. Only according to Mark, the oppressor is not a nation, as in Isa 40-55, but Satan. Jesus is the stronger one who comes to establish the reign of God by waging war against Satan. In addition, the allusion to Isa 49:24 in Mark 3:27 evokes a picture of Jesus as the divine warrior who overcomes the strong man of war (ἰσχύοντος, Isa 49:24, LXX), in this case a cosmic enemy, in order to rescue those held captive (λαμβάνων...παρὰ ἰσχύοντος; Isa 49:24, 25). In Mark 10:45, the themes and language about Jesus’ mission as the Son of Man echo the themes

⁵⁴⁸ Exod 6:6; 15:13, 16; Deut 7:8; 9:26; 13:5[6]; 15:15; 21:8; 24:18. The ransom of the first-born sons and animals is tied to the memory of the Exodus (Exod 34:18-20; Num 18:15-17).

⁵⁴⁹ For a discussion of לְיִשְׁרָאֵל expressing the concept of “relationship and recovery,” see Hill, *Greek Words*, 56-7.

⁵⁵⁰ Isa 43:1-7; 48:20-21; 51:9-11; Jer 15:21; cf. 16:14-15; 27[50]:33-34; 38[31]:11; cf. vv. 31-34; Mic 4:10; 6:4; Zech 10:8-12.

and language about the servant's mission in Isa 52:13-53:12, which tells how God the Redeemer (לְנִיחַ/λύτρου) will ransom and restore God's people.⁵⁵¹

According to Isa 52:13-53:12, Israel has suffered in captivity among the nations because of their sin and rebellion; but now they have become the beneficiaries of the servant's mission. At first, the speaker believes the servant has suffered because of his own sin (53:2-3). But a shift takes place, ("yet," v. 4), and the speaker comes to recognize that the servant undeservingly bears the community's sin (vv. 4-5, 9b). The servant submits himself to death, being stricken by God, and functions vicariously as a sin offering (זֶשֶׁן) for the people (vv. 8, 10a). As a result, the servant will receive many offspring and a new type of life (v. 10b), and the people will be restored (chap. 54).⁵⁵² This tradition is developed in the books of the Maccabees, which convey the idea of a representative who atones for the sins of others in the martyrdom of the seven brothers who give their lives as a ransom for the sins of the Israel, resulting in the

⁵⁵¹ Some scholars have argued against finding the background of Mark 10:45 in Isa 52:13-53:12. C. K. Barrett and M. Hooker make the strongest case against it on linguistic grounds. C. K. Barrett, "The Background of Mark 10:45," in *New Testament Essays: Studies in Memory of T. W. Manson* (ed. A. J. B. Higgins; Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1959) 1-18; Hooker, *Jesus and the Servant* (London, 1959), 74. More recently, Sharyn Dowd and Elizabeth Struthers Malbon have argued against the background of Isa 52:13-53:12 in 10:45 based on the literary context. They maintain that since forgiveness does not appear in the narrative in conjunction with Jesus' death, and does not appear frequently in the narrative at all, it cannot be a primary concern of Mark's. Rather, they argue that the Son of Man has come to ransom many from the tyranny of the elite (human beings). Sharyn Dowd and Elizabeth Struthers Malbon, "The Significance of Jesus' Death in Mark: Narrative Context and Authorial Audience," *JBL* 125 (2006): 271-297. Several other scholars have argued that although the word λύτρον does not appear in 10:45, its ideas and themes do indeed reflect those in Is. 52:13-53:12, particularly the idea of vicarious suffering. David Hill comments, "It would be unwise to claim that there is nothing common to the Servant song and Mark 10:45 because the words used are not the same." Hill *Greek Words*, 79. See also Watts, *Isaiah's New Exodus*, 270-87; "Jesus' Death, Isaiah 53, and Mark 10:45: A Cruc Revisited," in *Jesus and the Suffering Servant: Isaiah 53 and Christian Origins* (W. H. Bellinger, Jr. and W. R. Farmer, eds.; Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 1998), 125-51; A. Y. Collins, *Mark*, 500-04.

⁵⁵² Blenkinsop, *Isaiah*, 349-51; Goldingay, *Isaiah*, 503, 511-13.

liberation of nation (2 Macc 7:37 and 4 Macc 6:28; 17:21-22). Similarly, Mark portrays the idea of vicarious suffering in 10:45, echoing Isa 52:13-53:12.

Moreover, verbal links between the larger context of Mark 10:45 and Isa 52:13-53:12 suggest that Mark has Isaiah in mind. Jesus is the Son of Man who comes to serve by giving his life as a ransom in behalf of many (δοῦναι τὴν ψυχὴ αὐτοῦ λύτρον ἀντὶ πολλῶν, v. 45). He will be delivered over (παραδίδωμι, 9:31; 10:33) to authorities who will have him killed, yet he suffers by God's will (δεῖ, 8:31). He will be vindicated and exalted after his humiliation (μετὰ τρεῖς ἡμέρας ἀναστῆναι, 8:31; cf. 9:31; 10:34; 8:38; 14:62), and will gather a new community that will likewise be vindicated and exalted one day (3:31-35; 10:30; 13:27). Similarly, Isaiah's servant serves many well (δίκαιον εἶ δουλεύοντα πολλοῖς), by bearing their sins (53:10b; τὰς ἀμαρτίας πολλῶν ἀνήνεγκεν καὶ διὰ τὰς ἀμαρτίας αὐτῶν παρεδόθη, v. 12). He is delivered over to death (παρεδόθη εἰς θάνατον ἡ ψυχὴ αὐτοῦ,) and suffers at the hands of people (vv. 4-7), yet suffers by God's will (v. 4, 6, 10). After his humiliation, he will be highly exalted (52:13-14a; 53:11b-12), and he will see many offspring (53:10-11a; cf. 41:8; 43:5; 44:3; 45:19, 25; 48:19).⁵⁵³

If Mark has Isaiah in mind, it suggests that he sees Jesus as the Son of Man who has come to ransom many by undeservingly sharing their suffering and bearing their sin so that they may be restored. Every group in the Gospel, from Jesus' opponents to his closest followers, has rejected τὰ τοῦ θεοῦ and stands in need of restoration. The larger literary context and Mark's symbolic world,

⁵⁵³ See also A. Y. Collins, *Mark*, 500.

however, suggests that at another level the Son of Man has come to ransom many from captivity to Satan, who inspires people to think according to τὰ τῶν ἀνθρώπων. This suggestion is strengthened when I compare Mark 10:45 with the only other passage in the Gospel in which the Markan Jesus explicitly explains the purpose of his own mission, 3:22-30. In both passages, Jesus envisions his mission in terms rescuing captives. Similar to the word-picture of λύτρον in 10:45, the discourse in 3:22-30 portrays Jesus as the one who rescues people who are held captive. Mark had opened the Gospel by citing Isa 40:3, pointing to the context in which the Lord, Israel's Redeemer and the Strong One (ἰσχύος) of Jacob (49:26) comes to wage war against the nations that have oppressed God's people (41:1-7; 11-16; 42:13-15; 48:14). Mark, however, casts Jesus as the stronger one (ὁ ἰσχυρότερός) who comes to wage war against Satan. In other words, Mark recontextualizes prophetic themes with apocalyptic *topoi* to portray a cosmic war.⁵⁵⁴ In 3:22-30, Mark builds upon the prologue to construct a symbolic world in which the kingdom of Satan oppresses human beings who are held captive by his power. Mark 3:27 echoes Isa 42:22 and 49:24 by portraying human beings as the plunder in the strong man's house with no one to rescue them until a stronger one appears to overpower the strong man. As I have argued earlier, these opening chapters establish Satan as Jesus' main opponent.

In 3:27, the Markan Jesus explains that his mission is to bind the strong man in order to plunder his house, that is, the people under Satan's power. As

⁵⁵⁴ See Chap. 2, above.

the Gospel narrative unfolds, the reader sees that Satanic power manifests itself in a variety of ways in a world where Satan rules. In line with an apocalyptic worldview, Satan controls the world (his house) and Satan's power is reflected not only in demonic possession, but also in sin, illness, peoples' rejection of Jesus, and the misuse of the temple. At the outset of the unit 8:27-10:45, Mark establishes Satan as the force behind the mindset according to τὰ τῶν ἀνθρώπων and opposed to τὰ τοῦ θεοῦ. In 10:45, the Markan Jesus explains that his mission is to give his life as a ransom for many. In the context of the preceding narrative, I suggest that Mark envisions the Son of Man as having come to ransom many from captivity to the power of Satan, from the one who has darkened their minds and is intent on their destruction. Jesus ransoms the people who have become lost and corrupt, to recover and restore what belongs to God in order to establish a new community around himself. Mark 10:45 reveals that the stronger one will overpower the strong man not by exerting worldly power, but by yielding his very life. What appears to be weakness and defeat will be manifest as divine power.

6.4 The *Manifestation of Power* according to τὰ τοῦ θεοῦ

The passion predictions and accompanying teaching clarify the nature of power according to τὰ τοῦ θεοῦ. This power is not like that exercised in human kingdoms, by which people seek to secure their own lives by seizing authority and lording it over others. Instead, this power is gained by yielding authority,

self, and even life. A look at other elements within 8:27-10:45 provides further insight into the manifestation of power according to τὰ τοῦ θεοῦ.

6.4.1 The Manifestation of Power at the Transfiguration (9:1-8)

I begin my discussion with the account of Jesus' transfiguration. In 9:1, Jesus promises that "some who are standing here will not taste death until they see the kingdom of God, having come with power (ἐν δυνάμει)."⁵⁵⁵ This verse belongs to and completes the previous teaching (8:34-9:1). The phrase, καὶ ἔλεγεν αὐτοῖς introduces 9:1 and indicates that Jesus continues to speak to the group he was addressing in the previous pericope. On the other hand, 9:2 introduces a change in time, καὶ μετὰ ἡμέρας ἕξ . In addition, the powerful coming of the Kingdom of God in 9:1 is likely a restatement of the appearance of the Son of Man in 8:38, using different language. Upon beginning his public ministry, Jesus had announced that the kingdom of God had drawn near (ἤγγικεν ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ, 1:15), but not that it had come with power. In 9:1, he looks to a time when the kingdom of God will have come with power (τὴν βασιλείαν ἐν δυνάμει, 9:1). The first announcement refers to the inauguration of the kingdom in Jesus' ministry, while the latter refers to the consummation of the kingdom at the return of the Son of Man. This is suggested by the language that Mark uses later in the Olivet discourse to describe the coming of the Son of Man: he will appear with "power" and "glory" at the end of the age (μετὰ δυνάμεως πολλῆς καὶ δόξης,

⁵⁵⁵ The perfect participle (ἐληλυθυῖαν) suggests the completion of the action from the point of view of the action of the main verb. Smyth, §1872. The promise looks to the consummation of God's Kingdom.

13:26; cf. ἐν τῇ δοξῇ, 8:38; ἴδωσιν ... ἐν δυνάμει, 9:1). In addition, those who will not taste death are those who will see (ἴδωσιν) this manifestation of power, similar to those human beings who “will see” (ὄψονται), the eschatological appearance of the Son of Man (14:62). It is most likely that 9:1 continues the subject matter of 8:38, and describes consummation of the age. Therefore, Mark 8:38 describes the negative consequences for some human beings at the end, and 9:1 describes the positive effects for others.⁵⁵⁶ I focus on the manifestation of power for those who have followed Jesus at the consummation of the kingdom of God (9:1).

This manifestation of power is exhibited for τινες ὧδε τῶν ἔσθηκόντων οἵτινες οὐ μὴ γεύσονται θανάτου (9:1). The phrase, “not to taste death” is a Semitic expression used in Jewish apocalyptic thought to refer to those who are taken from the earth without dying.⁵⁵⁷ For example, 4 *Ezra* 6:25-26 describes those who remain at the end of the age to see salvation. Human beings are taken up who have “not tasted death,” and the hearts of those who live on the earth are changed to a different spirit. This transformation takes place with the

⁵⁵⁶ Norman Perrin has also argued that 9:1 is the climactic end to the pericope of 8:27-9:1. He maintains that 8:38 and 9:1 are two parallel and contrasting statements regarding the consummation of the Kingdom. He comments, “the two statements, of the coming of the Son of man [in 8:38] and of the coming of the Kingdom in power [in 9:1], clearly refer to different aspects of the eschaton, the one to it as a threat and the other to it as promise.” N. Perrin, *Rediscovering the Teaching of Jesus*, (London: SCM Press, 1967), 199; see also 199-201. Perrin also argues that that Mark built the saying in 9:1 upon the saying in 13:30.” This argument is difficult to sustain. According to my interpretation of the Olivet discourse above, (see chap. 4), in its context, 13:30 refers to the signs that will be fulfilled before the end, rather than the end itself, and “this generation” refers to all, not some. Several scholars have leveled arguments against the likelihood that 13:30 served as a model for 9:1, because the themes and vocabulary are tied to the context. See Lambrecht, *Redaktion*, 203; Pesch, *Markusevangelium* 2:308; A. Y. Collins *Mark*, 412.

⁵⁵⁷ Str-B 1:751-52.

appearance of the Messiah (7:26-28). This phrase also appears in rabbinic literature to portray, for example, Moses, Elijah, Jeremiah, Ezra, and Enoch as deathless, like the angels.⁵⁵⁸ The phrase, γεύσονται θανάτου does not appear in the LXX. The eschatological context of Mark 8:27-9:1, however, may suggest that it participates in the same symbolic world as those texts in which the phrase does occur.⁵⁵⁹ That is, Mark's use of the phrase, οἵτινες οὐ μὴ γεύσονται θανάτου may not simply refer to the prevention of physical death, but point to a changed existence at the powerful appearance of the Kingdom of God.⁵⁶⁰ Indeed, it is not necessary to assume that the action in the principal clause ceases (i.e., some will die) when the action of the verb in the clause introduced by ἕως ἄν takes place (i.e., the Kingdom of God has come in power).⁵⁶¹ Thus, the experience of "not

⁵⁵⁸ *Gen. Rab.* 21:5; *Lev. Rab.* 18:1; *Midr. Qoh.* 12:5; cf. *Gen. Rab.* 9:6B. Bruce D. Chilton, *God in Strength: Jesus' Announcement of the Kingdom* (SNTSU; Freistadt : F. Plöchl, 1979), 268-69.

⁵⁵⁹ See also N. Perrin, *Rediscovering*, 19; Chilton, *God in Strength*, 269-70; Chilton, "The Transfiguration: Dominical Assurance and Apostolic Vision," *NTS* 27 (1980): 115-24.

⁵⁶⁰ If the phrase is metaphorical, then it is not necessary to conclude that the phrase οἵτινες οὐ μὴ γεύσονται θανάτους "requires an interpretation that implies that the end of the world is expected to come during the lifetime of a few of Jesus' contemporaries" (Schweizer, *Mark*, 178). In her commentary, A. Y. Collins oddly comments, "The perfect participle 'has come' (ἐληλυθυῖαν, lit., "having come") implies that the kingdom of God will arrive fully, that is, be fully manifested, before all those listening to the Markan Jesus have died" (my emphasis). A. Y. Collins, *Mark*, 413. The text says, however, that some (τινες), not all, will not "taste death" before they see the kingdom of God having come with power. The use of "some" implies a contrast with a group of "other." I argue that the contrast is with the group represented in 8:38. Alternatively, C. H. Dodd held that Jesus taught the Kingdom of God had come in his ministry ("realized eschatology"), and accordingly interpreted 9:1 as indicating that some of those who heard Jesus teaching would realize before they died that the Kingdom of God had already come with power in his ministry. Dodd, *Parables of the Kingdom*, 37; cf. 54-56. N. Perrin critiques Dodd's position in *Jesus and the Language of the Kingdom: Symbol and Metaphor in New Testament Interpretation* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1976), pp. 37-38.

⁵⁶¹ Klaus Beyer demonstrates that the construction οὐ μὴ - ἕως ἄν represents the Semitic construction 𐤒𐤁 - 𐤍𐤕 ("not - until"). He shows that at times this construction only indicates the sequence of two events without expressing that the main action in the first event has changed. He gives Gen. 28:15 as an example from the OT, "I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you;" and Mark 9:1 (= Matt 16:28; Luke 9:27) as an example from the NT. K. Beyer, *Semitische Syntax im Neuen Testament*, vol. 1: *Satzlehre, Teil 1* (2nd rev. ed; StUNT 1; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1968), 132-33, n. 1. See also Chilton, *God in Strength*, 272.

tasting death” may continue with the revelation of power at the coming of the Son of Man. This reading of 9:1 suggests that, unlike those who are ashamed of Jesus (8:38), those who suffer shame for Jesus’ sake will be vindicated by a new kind of life at the manifestation of power with the coming of God’s Kingdom.

Bruce D. Chilton concludes that because Jewish apocalyptic thought uses the phrase, “not to taste death” to refer to immortal heavenly beings like Moses and Elijah and angelic beings, the logion in 9:1 (i.e., *τινες ὧδε τῶν ἑστηκότων οἴτινες...*) must refer to Moses and Elijah who appear in the following transfiguration account (v. 4), rather than to some among Jesus’ hearers who have appeared in the preceding account (8:34-38).⁵⁶² In the narrative context, however, the Markan Jesus has not yet referred to these figures, and will not until after the change in time and location in 9:2. Furthermore, if 9:1 is the counterpart to 8:38,⁵⁶³ then the most natural referent to the phrase, *τινες ὧδε τῶν ἑστηκότων*, is some of those among the crowd Jesus is addressing. That is, 8:38 refers to the negative consequences at the end of the age for some human beings, while 9:1 refers to the positive consequences at the end of the age for other human beings. The Markan Jesus is pointing to a changed existence at the consummation of God’s rule. By this, those who have not been ashamed of Jesus or his words will experience the power of the Kingdom of God. This promise may provide a challenge and encouragement to Jesus’ followers to overcome the

⁵⁶² Chilton, *God in Strength*, 269.

⁵⁶³ A point I have argued above, that Chilton himself also argues. Chilton, *God in Strength*, 264.

shame of his person and teaching in the face of what appears to be defeat and contradiction (8:31, 34-37).

Furthermore, such a change in the state of affairs at the end of the age for faithful people reflects apocalyptic ideas. People who have suffered for faithfully keeping God's ways, experience a new kind of life and are thereby vindicated.⁵⁶⁴ For example, *1 Enoch* describes a change in the state of affairs for the persecuted elect, in which they will rise from the earth, light will shine on them and they will wear garments of glory (*1 En.* 38:4; 58:3; 62: 15-16). Similarly, Daniel writes that the wise who have persevered through suffering to the end will shine like stars forever in the heavenly places (Dan 12:3). The description of Jesus' transfiguration that follows (Mark 9:2-6) exhibits similar qualities of luminescence and a change from human to divine form. Though the account of the transfiguration focuses on the transformation of Jesus, Mark has established a pattern of imitation between Jesus and his followers in this very context. Jesus will suffer, die, and rise (8:31), and he expects his followers to do the same (8:34-9:1). The promise in 9:1 likely reflects apocalyptic ideas that offer the hope of a changed existence for human beings who suffer for their faithfulness to God.

The narrative placement of 9:1 suggests that the transfiguration functions to illustrate that changed existence by exhibiting its power in Jesus. The transfiguration account thereby provides a proleptic manifestation of the power

⁵⁶⁴ See Chap. 3, above.

of the kingdom of God.⁵⁶⁵ What is hidden is, for the moment, revealed. Mark gives only a brief description of the transfiguration, but each element indicates a change from human to supernatural existence. First, the passive voice verb, μεταμορφώθη (v. 2), indicates that God is the agent of Jesus' transformation. The transfiguration is accomplished by divine power, not by human power. Second, the alteration of Jesus' garments demonstrates that he is divinely transformed from an earthly to a heavenly appearance. Mark describes Jesus' garments as glistening (ἐγένετο στίλβοντα) and white (λεικὰ λίαν), a color impossible to achieve on earth (v. 3). The description of the white garments echoes the description of the garments of the Ancient of Days in Dan 7.9, which are white as snow, underscoring their supernatural quality.⁵⁶⁶ Third, the appearance of Moses and Elijah confirms a changed existence after suffering.⁵⁶⁷ According to tradition, both Moses and Elijah suffer because of their faithfulness to God, and later

⁵⁶⁵ Some scholars interpret the transfiguration account as the fulfillment or partial fulfillment of the prophecy in 9:1. See Lane, *Mark*; Gundry, *Mark*, 460, 466. Those who reject this interpretation generally regard the prophecy in 9:1 a prediction of the Parousia by which the kingdom of God will be fully manifested before those present have died. See A. Y. Collins, *Mark*, 412-13.

⁵⁶⁶ This text echoes Dan. 7 due to the repeated use of the phrase, "Son of Man." In addition, some scholars see an allusion to Exod 24 and 40. See Lane, *Mark*, 320; Chilton, "The Transfiguration," 115-24; Johannes M. Nützel, *Die Verklärungserzählung im Markusevangelium : eine redaktionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung* (Würzburg: Echter Verlag, 1973), 154. For an argument against such an allusion, see Gundry, *Mark*, 476-7.

⁵⁶⁷ In the view of the early church, the appearance of Moses and Elijah at the transfiguration represents the Law and the Prophets, and Jesus represented the final revelation of God. A. Y. Collins notes that while this interpretation may be suitable for Matthew's and Luke's version of the transfiguration, where Moses is named before Elijah, it is not suitable for Mark's version (Mark names "Elijah with Moses," 9:4). Mark emphasizes the association between Jesus, and Moses and Elijah in such a way that the portrayal of their heavenly presence functions as a forecast of Jesus' heavenly glory. See A. Y. Collins, *Mark*, 422-34; John Paul Heil, *The transfiguration of Jesus: narrative meaning and function of Mark 9:2-8, Matt 17:1-8 and Luke 9:28-36* (Roma : Editrice Pontificio istituto biblico, 2000), 98-100.

experience a changed existence as those who do not “taste death.”⁵⁶⁸ These two appear, presumably in a state that has been transformed from human to heavenly existence to confirm Jesus’ future transformation, but also the promise of 9:1.

The transfiguration account confirms both Jesus’ future power and glory and his words about suffering and death. Earlier, Peter had rebuked Jesus for his plain words pertaining to the fate of the Son of Man. In his subsequent teaching, Jesus says that the Son of Man will be ashamed of the one who is ashamed of him and his words. On the mountain, Peter mistakenly believes he is witnessing the consummation of the kingdom of God, and offers to build three booths for Jesus, Moses, and Elijah. He evidently seeks the fulfillment of God’s kingdom without the prerequisite suffering of which Jesus had spoken. By this, the reader knows that Peter has not heeded Jesus’ words. The divine voice from heaven intervenes, “This is my beloved Son, *listen* to him!” (v. 7). The phrase, οὗτους ἐστιν ὁ υἱός μου ὁ ἀγαπητός recalls Jesus’ baptism (1:11), where God proclaimed favor upon Jesus at the inception of his ministry. Now, at the turning point of his ministry, when Jesus embraces suffering and death, God again announces favor upon him. In the wake of Jesus’ teaching about his own suffering and death, and his teaching that disciples must deny themselves, take up their cross and follow him, Mark gives the reader a vision of Jesus’ changed existence and a

⁵⁶⁸ In 2 Kgs 2:11-12, Elijah ascends in a whirlwind up into heaven. According to Jewish tradition, both Moses and Elijah were translated to heaven and became immortal (Sir 48:9; Josephus, *Ant.* 4.8.48 §§325-26; 9.2.2 §28). See Christopher Begg, “Josephus’ portrayal of the Disappearances of Enoch, Elijah and Moses: Some Observations,” *JBL* 109 (1990): 691-93.

confirmation that he is God's beloved Son *simultaneous with* a reminder of that teaching and a command to heed it. This vision also gives a glimpse of what lay ahead – a changed existence – for those who listen (9:1). This changed existence is a manifestation of power according to τὰ τοῦ θεοῦ.

Immediately after God's declaration, Jesus only is left with the disciples (v. 8). The transfiguration of Jesus is not the fulfillment of the powerful coming of the kingdom of God, but is a momentary event that has confirmed that he is Messiah, the beloved of God, even in the context of his impending suffering. Though Jesus will be treated with contempt and die, the glory to come is not nullified. Through the transfiguration account, the Mark teaches the reader about the manifestation of power according to τὰ τοῦ θεοῦ. God's power will effect a change in the state of affairs for those who suffer and die, or who expose themselves to death. Ironically, suffering and death is the catalyst for the divine transformation to a new existence by the power of God. The manifestation of the power of according to τὰ τοῦ θεοῦ belongs to the future, which creates the need for faith in the present.

After confirming the manifestation of power and glory in God's kingdom, the Markan Jesus connects that manifestation with his resurrection. Jesus enjoins his disciples not to tell anyone what they have seen until after the Son of Man rises from the dead (9:9). These events are connected because the resurrection of the Son of Man will be a display of power that exhibits the μεταμορφώσις of the one who has suffered and died. The display of divine power in the resurrection

of the Son of Man will provide the categories for understanding the display of divine power these disciples have witnessed upon the mountain. The disciples ask what rising from the dead might mean (9:10), because a dead Son of Man remains beyond their understanding.

6.4.2 The Manifestation of Power in Impossible Situations

After the transfiguration scene, Mark relates several episodes in which God accomplishes what seems impossible according to human understanding. These episodes illuminate the manifestation of power according to τὰ τοῦ θεοῦ. Upon coming down the mountain of transfiguration, Jesus encounters a controversy over an exorcism that involves the scribes and his disciples (9:14). As I discussed previously, Mark invites the reader to recall the Beelzebul discourse with the similar setting, the appearance of the scribes, the use of ἰσχυρός, and the repetition of δύναμαι. A man tells Jesus that he asked his disciples to cast a demon out of his son, but that they were not strong enough (οὐκ ἴσχυσαν, 9:18, cf. 3:27) to do it. The demon is destroying the boy, and the father pleads with Jesus to do anything to help if he is able (εἴ τι δύνει, 9:22). Jesus answers, "If you are able (εἰ δύνει)! All things are possible (πάντα δυνατὰ) for the one who believes" (v. 23). In this episode, Jesus proves to be the only one strong enough to cast the demon out of this boy (v. 25). When he does, it looks as if the boy is dead, that the demon has indeed destroyed him (v. 26). Yet, circumstances are not as they seem. Jesus takes the boy by the hand and lifts him up, alive (v. 27). In an impossible situation, Jesus proves to be the stronger one

who restores to life one as good as dead, thereby overcoming Satanic efforts to destroy him. This story provides an answer to the disciples' question about what this "rising from the dead" might mean (9:10). "Rising from the dead" is a manifestation of divine power that brings a new existence out of destruction and death when hope has failed.

Mark invites the reader to consider Jesus' imminent death in light of this exorcism. Immediately following it, Jesus predicts his death and resurrection for the second time (9:30-32). Seizure by authorities, suffering, and death will make Jesus seem powerless, just like the lifeless boy. The reader knows from the exorcism of the boy that all things are possible for the one who believes. Just as the boy appeared to be dead and destroyed by the demon, the Son of Man will appear to be defeated and destroyed when he is killed (9:31). Just as the boy is raised after he appears to be dead, Jesus has predicted that the Son of Man, after he is killed, will be raised after three days.

Mark reiterates the power of God in an impossible situation before the third passion prediction. When a rich man is unable to heed Jesus' call to sell all he has and follow him, Jesus teaches about how difficult it is for those who are rich to enter the kingdom of God. The disciples are amazed, and respond, "who, then, can be saved?" (10:26). Jesus replies, "With human beings it is impossible (παρὰ ἀνθρώποις ἀδύνατον), but not with God. For all things are possible with God (πάντα γὰρ δυνατὰ παρὰ τῷ θεῷ)" (v. 27). In the story of the boy with the demon, the impossible situation is due to the inability of human beings to combat Satanic

forces. In the story of the rich man, the impossible situation is due to the inability of a man to count the cost of discipleship. Read in the context of Mark's apocalyptic symbolic world, we may suggest that Satan has come and taken away the word sown in this man (4:15), and led him to think after τὰ τῶν ἀνθρώπων (8:33). This story recalls the connection in 8:34-38 between the denial of self and life with salvation. As the rich man walks away from Jesus, unable to count the cost for gaining eternal life (10:17-22), the reader may remember Jesus words, "for what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his life? For what can a man give in return for his life?" (8:36-37). When Jesus affirms the difficulty involved in entering the kingdom of God, the disciples ask, "who, then, can be saved?" In Mark 10:27, the Markan Jesus attributes the faithful following that leads to salvation, to the power of God: "with human beings it is impossible, but not with God. For all things are possible with God."

Later, in the place called Gethsemane, Jesus affirms the power of God when he says, "Abba, Father, all things are possible (πάντα δυνατά) for you. Remove this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will." (14:36). According to Mark, God can do what is impossible, and save people from the destructive power of Satan. It is not God's will, however, to do the impossible for Jesus. Jesus has saved others; he himself will not be saved. Instead, Jesus is bound (δήσαντες) and delivered over to Pilate to be crucified (15:1), and he is beaten, bruised and mocked (vv. 16-20). On the cross, Jesus cries out to God with a loud voice (ἐβόησεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς θωνῆ μεγάλῃ, 15:34), evoking the cries of the

demon-possessed people who had cried out to him throughout his earthly ministry (1:23; 3:11; 5:7; 9:26).⁵⁶⁹ In this case, Jesus cries out, “my God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” Whereas Jesus had liberated others, God does not liberate Jesus, but abandons him to death, the destructive force that Mark has portrayed as the realm of Satan.

The reader may wonder whether Satan has finally defeated Jesus, when God has forsaken him and he lies dead in a tomb. The reader may recall another one who was as good as dead among the tombs, earlier in the Gospel. The Gerasene demoniac lived among the dead, overpowered by a legion of demons. He was forsaken by human society and no one was able to rescue him. The man wandered the tombs, crying out and cutting himself. The intent of Satan and his demons against the man, as elsewhere in Mark’s Gospel, was the destruction of human life (5:3-5; cf. 9:22). In this story, Jesus showed himself stronger than death when he rescued the possessed man from demon possession and brought him out of the tombs, clothing him and restoring him to his right mind and to new life. At the end of the Gospel, now Jesus himself has been destroyed and is consigned to a tomb. Has Satan overpowered Jesus at last?

Just as with the healing of the demon-possessed boy in 9:14-19, things are not what they seem. Through the narrative, Mark has shown that Jesus will overcome the strong man, ironically, by rejecting worldly power rather than by wielding it. In his death he may seem to fall to Satanic power, but he will show

⁵⁶⁹ The Greek words used in these cases are ἀνακράζω or κρᾶζω.

himself stronger than death and Satanic efforts at human destruction.⁵⁷⁰ The young man at the tomb announces the resulting manifestation of power according to τὰ τοῦ θεοῦ when he says that the crucifixion has not led to death and destruction, but to its opposite: this Jesus who was crucified is risen (16:6).⁵⁷¹

6.4.3 The Manifestation of Power at the Empty Tomb

If the women's flight at 16:8 is the true ending of Mark's Gospel, its rhetorical effect is to invite the reader to participate in and continue this story.⁵⁷²

⁵⁷⁰ In *Jesus' Defeat of Death*, Peter Bolt argues that Jesus overcomes the power of death. Rather than Satan, however, he maintains that mortality is the main opponent that Jesus battles. Jesus' healings and exorcisms, and ultimately Jesus' empty tomb shows that he has defeated death. The empty tomb points to the resurrection of the physical body, which would bring hope to the Greco-Roman reader, he argues, who would have lived "under the shadow of death" (*xi*). P. Bolt, *Jesus' Defeat of Death: Persuading Mark's Early Readers* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

⁵⁷¹ Mark emphasizes the announcement of the empty tomb in 16:1-5. In typical Markan style, he uses the conjunction καὶ to move the narrative along: "And when the Sabbath had passed...(they) bought spices to go and anoint him. And very early on the first day of the week they went to the tomb...and they were saying to one another, 'who will roll away the stone...?' and they looked up and noticed that the stone had been rolled away...and when they entered the tomb they saw a young man...dressed in a white robe, and they were astonished." This narrative style, along with the use of the historical present in vv. 2 and 4 (ἐρχονται and θεωροῦσιν cf. λέγει in v. 6) relate the unfolding action of the story in a dynamic way. Mark brings the lively action to a halting climax in vv. 6-7 (introduced by the post-positive δὲ rather than καὶ), when the women – and the reader – stop in their astonishment to listen to the words of the young man sitting in the tomb. He tells them that they are looking for Jesus, the man from Nazareth whom they had seen crucified (Ἰησοῦν τὸν Ναζαρηθὸν τὸν ἐσταυρωμένον). He is not dead as the women (and perhaps the reader) have assumed, but is risen. The height of the narrative is the announcement of the manifestation of divine power in the resurrection of Jesus. For a discussion of Mark's style, see Carl Holladay, *Critical Introduction to the New Testament: Interpreting the Message and Meaning of Jesus Christ* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2005), 107-8.

⁵⁷² The manuscript tradition attests to a "shorter" ending (an inclusion between vv. 8-9) and a "longer" ending (vv. 9-20). The "shorter" ending is attested in the uncial Greek mss. of the 7th – 9th centuries (L, Ψ, 0112, 099), the margin of the Harclean Syriac ms., the Sahidic and Boharic mss. In addition, some Ethiopic mss. include it after 16:8 and then continue with vv. 9-12. The Old Latin codex Bobiensis (k) includes it, but then omits vv. 9-20. There is more manuscript support for the "longer ending" (A C D K W X Δ Θ Π Ψ f¹³) though the oldest Greek mss. omit vv. 9-12. Internal evidence, however, argues heavily against it. First, the beginning of v. 9, "Now after he rose early on the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene..." does not flow smoothly from v. 8, "and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid." Furthermore, only Mary Magdalene is mentioned in v. 9, and the other women who have been part of the narrative since 15:40 are left out. Second, the vocabulary and style of vv. 9-20 does not

In fact, most literary approaches interpret the open ending in 16:8 as a rhetorical device that demands the reader to finish the story. Norman Petersen and J. David Hester interpret v. 8 as a use of dramatic irony that has the rhetorical effect of requiring the real reader's involvement in rescuing the story from failure. According to Petersen, "our narrator leads us readers to expect something other than what we find in 16:8 and finding 16:8 to disbelieve that he means it."⁵⁷³ Thus realizing that a literal reading of 16:8 is nonsense in light of the expectations built by the narrator in the preceding narrative, the reader's disbelief upon reading v. 8 forces him or her to return to v. 7 to complete its meaning. Hester also interprets v. 8 ironically, but contrary to Petersen concludes that, "the author *did* mean what is not said, because it brings about closure *only* by forcing actual readers to finish it in their own interpretive way."⁵⁷⁴ Thomas Boomershine and G. L. Bartholomew take v. 8 as a veiled apostolic commission. The reader realizes that the response of the women is wrong, and is compelled to continue the proclamation.⁵⁷⁵ Robert Tannehill also argues that the

match that of the rest of Mark's gospel. For instance, sixteen words present in the longer ending do not appear in the rest of the Gospel. For a list of these words and discussion of the grammatical discontinuities between 1:1-16:8 and 16:9-20, see Paul L. Danove, *Linguistics and Exegesis in the Gospel of Mark: Applications of a Case Frame Analysis and Lexicon* (JSNTSup; London: Sheffield, 2001). Third, neither Matt nor Luke make use of the material in vv. 9-20. Fourth, v. 8 is the shorter and more difficult reading, as is apparent by the additions by Matt and Luke and in the manuscript tradition. The difficulty of the ending at v. 8 best explains the rise of the longer ending and the inclusion and expansions discussed above. The question of whether Mark intended to end the gospel at 16:8, or whether the true ending was lost or never finished should be considered on literary and theological grounds.

⁵⁷³ N. R. Petersen, "When is the End not the End? Literary Reflections on the Ending of Mark's Narrative," *Interpretation* 34 (1980): 156.

⁵⁷⁴ D. J. Hester, "Dramatic Inconclusion: Irony and the Narrative Rhetoric of the Ending of Mark," *JSNT* 57 (1995): 83.

⁵⁷⁵ T. E. Boomershine and G. L. Bartholomew, "Mark 16:8 and the Apostolic Commission," *JBL* 100 (1981): 225-39.

negative portrayal of the disciples in Mark's gospel is a rhetorical device that encourages the reader to participate in the story by imagining an alternative.⁵⁷⁶ Likewise, Paul Danove sees the failure of the story as an invitation to the real reader to hear and heed Jesus' call to proclaim the gospel. The failure of the women to deliver the message removes narrative closure, so that the reader must take up the actions required for such closure.⁵⁷⁷ In all of these interpretations, any promise of restoration is replaced by the initiative of the reader as a solution to the failure in v. 8.

Mary Ann Tolbert succinctly expresses the interpretive results of many of these literary approaches. She notes that the narrator builds the expectation in the reader that some character will finally succeed in his or her relationship to Jesus, and that the introduction of the women in the narrative offers hope that someone finally will.⁵⁷⁸ However, they fail also. Tolbert comments,

If the women frustrate the hopes of the authorial audience for individuals to prove faithful to the courageous example of Jesus and follow his way by going out and sowing the word abroad, is there anyone else available to fulfill that task? Is there anyone else who has heard Jesus' teaching in Galilee, seen his miraculous feedings, witnessed his transfiguration,

⁵⁷⁶ Robert C. Tannehill, "The Disciples in Mark: The Function of a Narrative Role," *The Interpretation of Mark* (ed. W. R. Telford; Edinburgh, T&T Clark, 1995): 169-95. Tannehill argues that the evangelist invites readers to identify with the disciples at the beginning of the narrative by portraying them positively through 6:30. As the story continues, the disciples are portrayed more and more negatively, causing the reader to distance him- or herself from them, creating a tension between identification and distancing that can lead to self-criticism and repentance.

⁵⁷⁷ P. L. Danove, "The Characterization and Narrative Function of the Women at the Tomb," in *Biblica*, 77 no. 3 (1996): 397.

⁵⁷⁸ Tolbert, *Sowing*, 296.

understood his conception of discipleship, listened to his predictions concerning the coming of the Son of man, remained awake at Gethsemane, followed him through the trial by the Jerusalem council and Pilate's interrogation, stood by him on the cross, watched his burial, and received the joyous confirmation of his resurrection? Of course there is: the audience itself...Mark has created in the role of the authorial audience the perfect disciple.⁵⁷⁹

Tolbert compares the disciples and then the women to the rocky ground in Jesus' parable of the sower.⁵⁸⁰ If all the human beings close to Jesus have failed, however, what guarantee does the authorial audience have that they, too, will not end up as rocky soil? Rephrased in the terms of Mark's symbolic world, what guarantee does the reader have that Satan will not come and take away the word that has been sown among them? According to Mark, people have a cosmic enemy who seeks their destruction, from whom they must be rescued if they are to follow Jesus. The Gospel of Mark encourages readers not to trust in their own resources, but to trust in God's.

Perhaps the sense of incompleteness upon arriving at Mark 16:8 invites us to reread the whole Gospel anew. The Markan Jesus promises to meet his disciples in Galilee (16:7). The reader, on the other hand, returns to the Galilee of the text, where the story began.⁵⁸¹ Through the lens of the empty tomb account,

⁵⁷⁹ Tolbert, *Sowing*, 297.

⁵⁸⁰ Tolbert, *Sowing*, 296.

⁵⁸¹ L. T. Johnson views the ending at 16:8 as an invitation for the reader to reread and reconsider the whole Gospel, and also sees the Gerasene demoniac in chap. 5 as an interpretive

the reader may pause at the story of the Gerasene demoniac. Above, I considered this episode from the standpoint of a crucified Son of Man, who had seemed defeated by death. Now I consider this story from the standpoint of its themes of life, fear, faith and the commission to announce what the Lord has done.

In 5:1-20, Jesus frees a possessed man and brings him out of the tombs. When the herdsmen witness this divine manifestation of power, they flee (ἐφυγον, v. 14) to announce what they have seen. The man sits clothed and in his right mind as a witness to the power of God (5:15). His transformation seems impossible, because it has been beyond human power to achieve (cf. 5:3-5). This manifestation of divine power leads the townspeople to fear (ἐφοβήθησαν, v. 15) rather than believe, and they essentially ask Jesus to flee (v. 17). On the other hand, the man who had been possessed by the legion has an encounter with Jesus by which he is rescued from Satan's power and put in his right mind. He seeks the closest possible relationship with Jesus, and obeys Jesus' call to go and tell all that the Lord has done. As we read this story again, we see it anew as a resurrection account, by which a person is brought new life through the divine power of one who has overcome Satan and conquered death.⁵⁸²

The account of the empty tomb (16:1-8) is reminiscent of the account of the Gerasene demoniac. A group of women learn that Jesus has been freed from the

key. Luke Timothy Johnson, *The Writings of the New Testament*, 178-9. Alternatively, Geddert sees the call to discipleship in 16:7 echoed in 13:33-37, and considers it to be a parallel ending for the Gospel. In chap. 13, he argues, followers continue to encounter the call to suffer, serve and preach the gospel. Geddert, *Watchwords*, 194-97.

⁵⁸² Bolt comments, "The story is cast as a contest between Jesus and the power(s) of death. The man leaves the tombs and once again enters ordinary life. Once again, Mark has presented the story of this suppliant as a resurrection paradigm. The 'dead' has come to life again." Bolt, *Jesus' Defeat of Death*, 153.

tomb. A young man appears to announce what the Lord has done: “he has risen; he is not here” (16:6). This manifestation of divine power in the resurrection leads the women to fear (ἐφοβοῦντο, 16:8), rather than to believe, and they flee (ἔφυγον, v. 8). What they have heard seems impossible, beyond human ability to achieve. The women’s flight recalls the flight of the disciples at the arrest of Jesus. The word ἔφυγον, “they fled,” in 16:8 is used previously only in 14:50, 52 to describe the flight of the disciples at Gethsemane. This verbal association suggests the disgrace of the women’s action.⁵⁸³ The Markan Jesus has called disciples to faithful followership, giving warnings to those who fail and promises to those who endure (8:34-9:1; 13:9-13, 24-36). Earlier in the narrative, Peter had told Jesus that he and the other disciples had left everything to follow Jesus (10:28). Now, he and all the other disciples have left Jesus and fled. In light of Jesus’ warnings that true disciples forfeit their lives, remain unashamed of him and persevere to the end (8:34-38; 13:9-13), the conclusion of the Gospel may seem to place the first members of Jesus’ new community under judgment. The

⁵⁸³ Even though the women end up in a position of failure, they are not without positive characteristics. The previous description of their loyalty and service to Jesus makes them sympathetic figures. Furthermore, Mark’s final explanatory comment, ἐφοβοῦντο γάρ gives the reason for flight and the many instances of fear expressed by characters in the preceding narrative, not all of which have negative connotations. Negatively, the words φοβέομαι and φόβος are used as a contrast with faith. When Jesus calms the storm he says to the disciples, “Why are you afraid? Have you still no faith?” (4:40). To Jairus who had just heard a report that his daughter had died, Jesus says, “Do not fear, only believe” (5:36). Fear in response to Jesus’ miraculous activity expresses both awe and lack of understanding (4:41; 5:15, 33; 6:50; 9:32; 10:32). Awe and lack of understanding can be negative (e.g., 5:15), but can also have a sympathetic quality, as in the case of the woman with the flow of blood who falls down before Jesus φοβηθεῖσα καὶ τρέμουσα (“in fear and trembling.” 5:33). Mark’s explanatory comments in v. 8 contribute to a sympathetic assessment of the women as characters, while not playing down the fault of their flight and silence.

reader may ask, “who, then, can be saved?” (Mark 10:26). Is restoration possible for those who have failed?

The narrative function of the young man and his message in 16:5-7 is to surmount the failure of the women, and the earlier failure of the disciples. Even though Matthew and Luke evidently take the young man to be a heavenly messenger (Matt 28:3; Luke 24:23), the reader must resist interpreting Mark through the lens of these accounts in order to understand this man unambiguously as an angel.⁵⁸⁴ Reading the account within *Mark's* narrative world, the reader will recall the white garments worn by Jesus at the Transfiguration (9:3), and perceive that the man's seated position on the right side connotes divine authority (cf. 10:37, 40; 12:36; 14:62). In spite of these numinous qualities, Mark invites the reader to imagine a relationship between the young man at the tomb and the young man who fled from Gethsemane.⁵⁸⁵ The word νεανίσκου (“young man”), used only in Mark's resurrection account, recalls the νεανίσκος who fled and left his garment at the arrest of Jesus (14:51-52).

⁵⁸⁴ Matthew reports that an angel of the Lord descends to open the tomb, and Luke reports that two men in dazzling clothes appear to the women (Matt 28:3; Luke 24:23). Mark's use of νεανίσκου in 16:5 is probably editorial, in view of its use also in 14:51-52. Cranfield, Hooker, Lane, Nineham, Schweizer and Taylor all take the “young man” in Mark 16:5 to be an angel, citing the use of νεανίσκου as a designation for an angel in 2 Macc 3:26, 33; *Jos. Ant.* V, 8, 2; and the association of white garments with heavenly beings in Mark 9:3 and Rev 6:11; 7:9, 13. Cranfield, “Mark 16:1-8,” *Scottish Journal of Theology*, 5 (1952): 284. Hooker, *Mark*, 384; Lane, *Mark*, 587; Nineham, *Mark*, 444; Schweizer, *Mark*, 372; Taylor, *Mark*, 606-7. By contrast, John H. McIndoe argues that the young man in the garden and at the tomb is Mark himself, appearing Hitchcock-fashion. McIndoe, “Young Man at the Tomb,” *Expository Times*, 80 (1969): 125. Danove takes the νεανίσκου to be human, and argues that his white robe symbolizes martyrdom and signifies a call to Jesus' followers not to flee, but to stand firm in the face of death. Danove, “The Characterization and Narrative Function of the Women at the Tomb,” *Biblica*, 77 (1996): 374-97. Gundry notes both the angelic characteristics of the young man and his association with the young man of 14:51-52. Gundry, *Mark*, 990.

⁵⁸⁵ Donald H. Juel, *Mark* (Augsburg Commentary on the New Testament. Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1990), 170.

The association of this young man with the one who fled in disgrace reminds the reader of the flight the disciples and foreshadows the flight of the women. Moreover, the robed young man sitting at the tomb is also evocative of the Gerasene demoniac. Jesus restores that man to his right mind, so that he sits at the tombs clothed as one who has received new life from the dead (5:15). He is a living witness to what the Lord has done, causing people to flee at the sight of him, and he goes to proclaim what the Lord had done. The juxtaposition of the naked, shameful young man who runs away and the clothed young man who sits in a divinely empowered, authoritative position, bearing witness to the risen Christ suggests that even the most disgraceful failure can be reversed.

Not only does the evocative presence of the young man suggest restored discipleship, but also his message assures it. Mark 16:7 (“just as he told you”) points back to 14:28-30, where Peter’s denial and Jesus’ presence in Galilee were both predicted in the same breath. The words προάγει ὑμᾶς in 16:7 could simply mean “he will go before you,” in the sense that Jesus will arrive in Galilee ahead of his disciples and wait for them there; however, the word προάγω can also mean “lead the way,” or “lead forward.”⁵⁸⁶ The use of the word in the context of 14:28 suggests the latter connotation.⁵⁸⁷ There, Jesus says, “You will all fall away, for it is written ‘I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered’ [Zech 13:7].

⁵⁸⁶ “προάγω,” BDAG, 864.

⁵⁸⁷ This interpretation is contrary to the one offered by Gundry, who defines the verb only according to the context in chap. 16: “The reference to seeing him in Galilee has the side-effect of defining ‘is going ahead of you’ as ‘preceding you’ rather than as ‘leading you’; for leading the disciples would entail their seeing the bodily resurrected Jesus all along the way to Galilee, not just on arrival there.” Gundry, *Mark*, 993. The “leading” by Jesus, however, does not need to be taken literally; rather, it may also signify a call to renewed discipleship.

But after I am raised up, I will go before you (προάξω ὑμᾶς) to Galilee" (14:27-28).

The obvious reference in 16:7 to this earlier passage suggests that after the disciples' failure, they will be reconstituted as a flock once more to be led by their shepherd, Jesus. This promise that Jesus will go before his disciples to Galilee signifies a renewed call for them to follow him.⁵⁸⁸ The immediacy of this call is highlighted with the change from the future tense in 14:28 (προάξω) to the present tense in 16:7 (προάγει). Morna Hooker comments,

On the way to Jerusalem, Jesus had gone ahead (10:32 - ἦν προάγων), and the disciples had seen him and followed. Now they are called to follow him, even though they cannot see him. What looks like an inconsistency in Mark may be a deliberate attempt on his part to underline that this is what discipleship means, now that Jesus has been raised from the dead."⁵⁸⁹

⁵⁸⁸ The significance of "Galilee" throughout Mark and as the designated place of Jesus' post-resurrection appearance to his disciples has been variously interpreted. Willi Marxsen, for example, interprets the opposition of Galilee and Jerusalem in Mark's narrative according to historical concerns, as an opposition between differing eschatological views. Marxsen, *Mark the Evangelist*, 54-116, esp. 102-116. By contrast, Elizabeth Struthers Malbon interprets the opposition of Galilee and Jerusalem according to Mark's literary world rather than according to a reconstructed historical world. She associates the opposition of Galilee and Judea with order and chaos. Galilee is the center of order to which Jesus always returns, and Judea is marked by chaos. Elisabeth Struthers Malbon, "Galilee and Jerusalem: History and Literature in Marcan Interpretation," in *The Interpretation of Mark* (ed. W.R. Telford; Edinburg: T&T Clark, 1995), 253-268. W.R. Telford interprets the opposition as carrying a theological significance rather than a historical one, seeing the opposition of Jerusalem and Galilee as an opposition between Jew and Gentile. He interprets the location of Jesus' appearance in Galilee (Mark 16:7) as signifying an orientation towards a Gentile mission and away from the Jerusalem church. The silence of the women shows that "his original Jewish disciples didn't get the message!" Telford, *The Theology of the Gospel of Mark* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 150. An interpretation of the significance of Galilee that takes its cues from the text (such as Malbon's) or that allows for its presence in traditional material used by Mark seems more likely than those which depend on a hypothetical reconstruction of the historical situation.

⁵⁸⁹ Hooker, *Mark*, 386.

Moreover, the explicit mention of Peter's name along with the disciples in 16:7 recalls not only Peter's denial, but also Jesus' *prediction* of Peter's denial and the scattering of the disciples.⁵⁹⁰ Mark leads the reader to expect that just as the prediction of Peter's denial and the disciples' flight had come to pass, so will Jesus' promise to be with them in Galilee come to pass.⁵⁹¹ Ironically, their restored status as Jesus' disciples is just as sure as their abandonment had been. Jesus' aim is to reconstitute a community that does God's will.

After Jesus' disciples have fled and denied him, the reader shouldn't expect them to have a place in the rest of the story. But Jesus gives them a place. He has not been concerned with how they can serve him, but how he can serve them (10:42-45); and he is not concerned with giving them what they deserve, but

⁵⁹⁰ Mark is the only one of the synoptic gospels to mention Peter in the message that Jesus will meet his disciples in Galilee (16:7). In fact, 16:7 along with 14:28 is generally regarded as redactional. Marxsen, *Mark the Evangelist*, 75-95; W. R. Telford, *Theology of the Gospel of Mark*, 149. Luke does not record any instructions from the two men who appear at the tomb; rather, the women simply go to tell their news. Matthew, on the other hand, follows Mark's account almost word-for-word (compare Matt 28:7 / Mark 16:7). Both Matthew and Mark record Jesus' promise to see his disciples in Galilee after he has risen from the dead immediately before his prediction of Peter's denial (Matt 26:30-35 / Mark 14:26-31). Matthew probably omits Peter's name from the material he receives from Mark in the resurrection account because it does not serve his purpose to recall the disciples' failure. Matthew's narrative is moving positively towards the commissioning of all the disciples to make even more disciples from all nations.

⁵⁹¹ Andrew T. Lincoln argues that even though the promise of v. 7 is followed by failure in v. 8, Jesus' promise overcomes that failure since the reader knows historically that the promise of v. 7 has been fulfilled. Lincoln, "The Promise and the Failure: Mark 16:7, 8," in *The Interpretation of Mark* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1995), 229-51. I would argue that the reader is assured *narratively* that this promise is as good as fulfilled. From his entry to Jerusalem (11:1) to the end of the narrative, Mark portrays Jesus as a prophet and stresses the fulfillment of his word. Jesus sends two disciples to get a colt and everything happens the way he has said (11:1-7); he curses the fig tree and it withers (11:12-14, 20-22); he sends two disciples to prepare the Passover meal and they find the details just as he had said (14:12-16); he predicts that Judas will betray him and he does (14:18-20); he foretells Jesus' denial and it happens (14:30, 72). Ironically, Jesus' prediction of Peter's denial is fulfilled just as Jesus is being taunted for being a false prophet. In the center of these predictions that are fulfilled in the sequence of the story, is the discourse in chap. 13, which is not fulfilled in the sequence of the story. The reader is left to assume that just as these other predictions have been fulfilled in time and space, so will the coming of the Son of Man described in chap. 13 come to pass.

with bringing them out of disgrace. As with his original call to them (3:14), so at the end of the gospel Jesus' first desire is that his followers should *be with him* (16:7), giving them the possibility of a new future.⁵⁹² It is through an encounter with the resurrected Jesus, the one in whom God has manifested power, that followers are restored and brought into the community of those who do God's will once again (cf. 3:31-35). As with the Gerasene demoniac, this Jesus in whom God has manifested power will rescue them from Satan's grasp to put them in their right mind so that they can proclaim what the Lord has done. Jesus reconstitutes the family of God into a worshiping and witnessing community, both now and for the future. Through the resurrected Jesus, those who have been held captive by Satan find restoration and community, and learn that "nothing is impossible with God."

6.5 Conclusion

In the end, we find that the power struggle between Satan and the Spirit-led Jesus in Mark 3:22-30 reflects two different kinds of power. On the one hand, Satanic power is manifested in human deception and destruction, and a worldly power exhibited by those who reject Jesus and seek his destruction. On the other hand, God's power is manifested through weakness and death. In Mark's Gospel, these two kinds of power coexist and are intrinsic to the story. Through

⁵⁹² See also Robert P. Meye, *Jesus and the Twelve: Discipleship and Revelation in Mark's Gospel* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1968). He argues that "being with Jesus" is "the primary characterization of discipleship," so that a follower both sees and hears, and then imitates or becomes witness to the ministry of Jesus. He comments that "such following and presence with Jesus is understood as bringing the disciples into further conformity with the 'way' and 'mind' of Jesus." (103; see also 108).

the narrative, the reader comes to see that the stronger one overpowers the strong man by rejecting worldly power. Jesus overpowers the strong man not by engaging in the customary warfare, but by redefining the rules of engagement. Rather than lording power over others, Jesus resolutely serves others, to the point of giving his life as a ransom for many, so that the power of God may be manifest in him, in the resurrection. The strong man exerts power, yet Jesus powerfully overcomes the strong man.

Chapter 7

Epilogue

7.1 Introduction

In this study, I have explored the *apocalyptic character* of Mark's Gospel while taking seriously its *genre as narrative*. I have read Mark's presentation of Jesus as a unified series of events, interpreting its parts in light of the whole, and the whole in light of its parts. Though I focused on Mark 3:22-30 in order to establish the symbolic world and apocalyptic discourse, I connected it with the rest of the Gospel. I made associations among episodes throughout the narrative and identified recurring themes and a developing purpose that ties the story together. I argued that Mark presents Jesus as the Spirit-filled one who establishes the kingdom of God by struggling against Satan. Through his exorcisms and, ultimately, through his vicarious suffering and death, Jesus liberates people from the Satanic power that seeks to deceive and destroy them, in order to gather them into a community that does God's will. The liberated community does God's will by following Jesus, that is, by testifying and suffering for his sake and the gospel's. When Jesus returns as the Son of Man, he

will finally overcome all hostile powers in heaven and on earth to gather the eschatological community. Until then, followers experience restoration and power through the resurrected Jesus. Below I offer some conclusions and implications from my study.

7.2 The Nature of Apocalyptic Discourse

My narrative approach to the Gospel has shaped my understanding of its apocalyptic character. That is, I have not looked for Mark's apocalyptic character in an isolated passage or section, but I have looked for it from the perspective of the whole Gospel. Below, I review two ways this study has demonstrated how a narrative approach illuminates the apocalyptic character of Mark's Gospel.

7.2.1 The Resolution of the Parables in Mark 3:22-30

I have shown how the resolution of the parables in Mark 3:22-30 is tied to the development of Mark's whole story. In the second chapter, I demonstrated that Mark uniquely places the Beelzebul controversy towards the front of the Gospel where it confirms and develops themes established at the beginning of the narrative. Mark establishes Satan as Jesus' main adversary, and also introduces human adversaries who oppose Jesus. After a series of conflicts involving cosmic and human realms in the opening chapters, these two realms intersect in Mark 3:22-30.

I argued that Mark communicates a power struggle by juxtaposing the parables of the kingdom and house (vv. 23-26) with the parable of the strong

man (v. 27) and joining them with a logion (vv. 28-29) that signals the Holy Spirit as Jesus' source of power. Satan authorizes and empowers his demons; conversely, the Holy Spirit empowers Jesus. The scribes (and, by implication, Jesus' family members) participate in the conflict, exposing their side by the way they name Jesus. According to Mark's symbolic world, human beings who reject Jesus and his redemptive ministry are on the opposing side of the cosmic battle. They reject Jesus' role as the one who wages war to liberate human beings held captive in Satan's household. Thus, those who reject Jesus' redemptive ministry place themselves outside of Jesus' redemptive work of gathering a new household composed of those who do God's will. Though Jesus is in the process of overcoming Satan to liberate and gather a community, I argued that the juxtaposition of the parables in 3:22-30 communicates an authentic power struggle between Jesus and Satan. Mark's presentation raises questions about the nature and manifestation of the power by which Jesus will defeat the strong man and gather his community, and invites us to look at the rest of the Gospel for answers.

Before looking to the rest of the Gospel, I established in chap. 3 that the symbolic world Mark constructs in 3:22-30 corresponds to the apocalyptic symbolic world of Jewish compositions roughly contemporary to it. Like these compositions, Mark 3:22-30 reveals that Satan and his army of demons are responsible for human oppression. Jesus' ministry enacts a cosmic battle that will bring the end of Satan and his horde. Also like these compositions, I showed

how Mark employs apocalyptic discourse for particular literary and theological aims. Mark's main aim is to explain a crucified Messiah, and to call disciples to follow him. Unlike the presentations of divine liberators in the Jewish apocalyptic compositions I looked at, Mark's divine liberator overcomes Satan by giving up power and calling his followers to do the same.

In chap. 4, I sought to illuminate Mark's apocalyptic discourse in the rest of the Gospel, by tracing the characterization through the narrative of those figures that appear in 3:22-30 – Jesus, the scribes, Satan, and the Holy Spirit. My analysis confirmed that Satan remains an active power, and that the vertical-spatial dimensions of an apocalyptic symbolic world are woven throughout the narrative. Mark reveals that Satan is the chief opponent both of Jesus and of human beings. The conflict between Jesus and Satan is manifest in Jesus' struggles against the scribes, other Jewish leaders, his own disciples, and even his own flesh. The conflict between people and Satan is manifest not only in demon possession, but in the corruption of their wills as they abandon the word they have heard preached, conduct improper worship, and deny Jesus. Mark presents Jesus as the one God has empowered with the Holy Spirit to overcome Satan and liberate people from Satan's captivity. The end of the narrative suggests, however, that the Holy Spirit directs Jesus to his death. Although Jesus appears to be defeated and destroyed, the young man at the tomb announces that Jesus' form of power has led instead to life from the dead (16:6).

In chapter 5, I looked at 5:1-20 and 13:5-37 in order to show that Mark's symbolic world and apocalyptic discourse are not isolated to 3:22-30. First, I showed how the account of the Gerasene demoniac illustrates the apocalyptic discourse established in 3:22-30 by enacting the cosmic conflict in a specific event in Jesus' ministry. In this account, Mark presents Jesus' struggle against the evil spirits as a struggle against death, so that the exorcism exemplifies Jesus' role in the battle between the kingdom of God and the kingdom of Satan. Jesus brings the man from the tomb, restoring him to new life, a right mind, and community. Specifically, Mark enlarges his apocalyptic discourse by depicting the struggle against the demonic realm as a struggle against death. Second, I argued that the Olivet discourse expands upon 3:22-30 by extending the implications of the cosmic conflict to the lives of Jesus' followers and imagining its resolution. In this speech, Mark presents the follower's struggle to endure to the end in faithful testimony to the gospel in the face of deception, persecution, and even death. Jesus ultimately appears as the Son of Man to overcome all hostile powers and gather the eschatological community.

I argued that both 5:1-20 and 13:5-37 develop the apocalyptic rhetoric of 3:22-30 by portraying the intersection of human and cosmic conflict. Nevertheless, my analysis did not resolve the tension of its parables. While a synchronic analysis of the Gerasene demoniac account and the Olivet discourse shows that Jesus displays power in the cosmic conflict to rescue people and form

a new community, a diachronic analysis of Mark's narrative reveals that Jesus loses power as he makes his way towards the cross.

In chap. 6, I explored the nature and manifestation of Jesus' power vis-à-vis the nature and manifestation of Satan's power in the section of the Gospel where Mark has Jesus teach specifically about power, 8:27-10:45. I interpreted this section as a contrast between those who, under Satan's rule, have their minds set on τὰ τῶν ἀνθρώπων and those who have their minds set on τὰ τοῦ θεοῦ. Those who have their minds set on human ways seek to retain power and life, while those who have their minds set on God's ways give up power and life. Jesus is the only one who demonstrates a mind that is set on τὰ τοῦ θεοῦ, by giving up his life as a ransom for many.

Jesus provides not only an example, but also becomes a vicarious offering of redemption. I argued that both 3:22-30 and 10:45 point to the power struggle between Jesus and Satan, but that 10:45 makes clear that the power by which Jesus overcomes the strong man is manifested not by wielding it, but, ironically, by giving it up. Jesus yields to the power of Satan by yielding to the power of death, laying down his life so that the power of God may be manifest in him. God displays power in Jesus by raising him from the dead. The end of the Gospel suggests that the basis of the restoration for failed disciples who have set their minds on τὰ τῶν ἀνθρώπων is a relationship with the resurrected Jesus, in whom God has manifested power. Jesus has struggled against Satan to liberate

people who are free to set their minds on the things of God, free for a new existence as they look forward to his return as the Son of Man.

Mark narrates the power struggle between Satan and the Holy Spirit-empowered Jesus throughout the Gospel as the plot unfolds and the characters act. Indeed, the reader does not know in the first half of the Gospel how Jesus will defeat the strong man, because the plot turns half way through (Mark 8:27). Although the one who overcomes the strong man appears overtly powerful in parable of 3:27, the reader learns through the course of the narrative that God will display power in Jesus only after he concedes power, rather than wields it. Mark's Gospel shows us that the power of Satan and the power of Jesus coexist, because they are of two different kinds. The strong man exerts power, even the worldly, Satanic power that leads to the crucifixion; yet Jesus overcomes the strong man by conceding power and giving up his life as a ransom for many. Interpretations that allow the inevitability of Jesus' victory to remove Satan's power and influence from the story obscure the manifestation of the cosmic conflict in his ministry. I have demonstrated that Mark's larger narrative is a necessary resource for resolving the power struggle displayed in the parables of 3:22-30. Conversely, my analysis of the larger narrative suggests that Mark 3:22-30 is an important interpretive lens for the rest of the Gospel. The meaning of the parables in 3:22-30 is tied to the meaning of Mark's whole story, and, accordingly, so is Mark's apocalyptic character.

7.2.2 The Rhetorical Function of Mark's Apocalyptic Discourse

I have shown that Mark shares a symbolic world with contemporary Jewish compositions that employ apocalyptic *topoi* for rhetorical aims. I recall Greg Carey's definition of apocalyptic discourse as "a flexible set of resources that early Jews and Christians could employ for a variety of persuasive tasks."⁵⁹³ Although we cannot always ascertain the particular social setting of a composition,⁵⁹⁴ the literary context suggests the theological function and rhetorical dimensions of apocalyptic discourse. In the third chapter, I showed how several Jewish compositions contemporary to Mark employ apocalyptic discourse in order to address various forms of the oppression of the righteous for particular persuasive aims. For example, Daniel persuades a persecuted community to persevere in light of the assurance of divine judgment and deliverance; *1 Enoch* encourages the reader obey God's commands by envisioning a future judgment of punishment for the wicked and blessing for the righteous; the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs* exhorts the reader to ethical living by envisioning of a world of evil spirits that seeks to lead them astray and by promising a future in which God will overcome those evil spirits; and the *War Scroll* helps a sectarian community envision their struggle against human enemies as a cosmic battle in which they will receive divine help, and ultimately,

⁵⁹³ Carey, *Ultimate Things*, 5. See also, Carey, "How to Do Things with (Apocalyptic) Words," 86.

⁵⁹⁴ Carey points out that "though the results of archaeological and historical research continue to deepen our understanding of the people who produced these literatures, their specific social settings largely remain a matter of conjecture" Carey, *Ultimate Things*, 5.

salvation and blessing. Similarly, Mark employs apocalyptic discourse as persuasive rhetoric.

The Gospel of Mark addresses critical issues pertaining to the proclamation of the gospel. Mark proclaims Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God. Nevertheless, his disciples misunderstand him and abandon him. His own family disowns him. The Jewish leaders reject him and hand him over to the civil authorities to be crucified. Readers may wonder how rejection, suffering and death could be “good news.” The main rhetorical function of Mark’s apocalyptic discourse is to persuade readers that it is precisely out of this rejection, suffering and death that God manifests redemptive power. Properly persuaded, readers may testify to such a gospel and suffer for the sake of such a Messiah.

Through apocalyptic rhetoric, Mark places the rejection, suffering and death of Jesus, and of those who follow him, in cosmic perspective. The temptation narrative shows that Jesus is not merely engaged in conflicts with human beings, but with a supernatural opponent. The Beelzebul discourse develops this idea, revealing that human beings, too, are engaged in the conflict. Satan holds human beings captive, and Jesus has come to liberate them. I argued that the juxtaposition of the parables suggests an authentic struggle between Jesus and Satan that continues throughout the Gospel. The reader learns the dimensions of this struggle and its resolution only as the narrative continues. Satan actively seeks to destroy life and darken minds. As a result, most

characters in the Gospel exhibit a mind that is set on human ways, inspired by Satan. The Jewish leaders reject Jesus and hand him over to Gentile authorities to be killed, and Jesus' own followers reject the call to imitate his mission of suffering service, and desert him.

Nevertheless, Mark reveals that Jesus' rejection, suffering, and death is God's purpose. Mark redefines the concept of power by contrasting those who, under Satan's rule, have their minds set on τὰ τῶν ἀνθρώπων with those who have their minds set on τὰ τοῦ θεοῦ. Jesus will overpower the strong man, ironically, by exhibiting a mind that is set on τὰ τοῦ θεοῦ, giving up his life as a ransom for many. When Jesus gives up power, God manifests power in Jesus by raising him from the dead. By this manifestation of power, Jesus liberates people from Satan's grip, so that he may renew their minds and restore them to do the will of God. The stronger one overpowers the strong man, by unexpected means. The rhetorical function of Mark's apocalyptic discourse is to persuade his readers of the necessity of Jesus' suffering and death at the hands of human oppressors, and so also of their own. Just as God manifested power in Jesus, so God will manifest power in them, only as they imitate him.

The Markan Jesus struggles for the minds of human beings, to produce a family that does God's will, just as he determined to do God's will at the place called Gethsemane. Jesus endured to the end, choosing to lose his life in order to save it. Mark aims to persuade his readers to be ready to suffer for the sake of Jesus and the gospel, even to the point of their own death. In several ways, Mark

points the readers to persevere in the present cosmic struggle in light of the future. The passion predictions teach that the Son of Man receives glory and power only after suffering and dying first. Jesus' disciples are to take up their cross and follow him. Those who, like Jesus, give up their lives for Jesus' sake and the gospel's will not taste death at the coming of the kingdom of God. The Olivet discourse imagines that those who testify faithfully, enduring suffering, persecution and false teaching, will be saved when the Son of Man returns to gather the eschatological community. Jesus will have ultimate victory over the strong man on that future day. Mark holds the call to endure to the end in tension with the reality of failure, which the resurrected Jesus overcomes in the lives of those who follow him. In the end, Mark exhorts readers to testify to a gospel looks botched and broken, patiently waiting for their glory when the Son of Man appears in the future, but experiencing power through the resurrected Jesus now.

Just as Mark's apocalyptic character is not fully understood apart from the entire narrative, neither is the function of the apocalyptic discourse. The reader cannot grasp the function of Mark's apocalyptic discourse by giving attention to a single passage. It takes the whole story. Through a narrative rhetoric of apocalyptic discourse, Mark exhorts the reader to testify and suffer for the sake of Jesus and the gospel.

7.3 The Social Dimensions of Mark 3:22-30

As I discussed above, Mark's apocalyptic discourse functions as persuasive rhetoric. One main rhetorical function is to persuade the reader to testify and suffer for the sake of Jesus and the gospel. The other human conflicts throughout the Gospel, however, suggest that Mark's apocalyptic discourse has additional social dimensions. I showed how the Markan Jesus liberates people through exorcism, signaling how he liberates them from Satan's destructive power through his vicarious death and resurrection. Mark 3:27 and 10:45 designate how Jesus frees people from the strong man, to restore them to new life. Yet I have also demonstrated that, according to an apocalyptic symbolic world, the Gospel of Mark exhibits a correspondence between heaven and earth, so that cosmic and human conflicts intersect in the ministry of Jesus. Mark engages in apocalyptic discourse as an imaginative act not only to portray Jesus' conflict with the demonic world, but also to portray his conflicts with human opponents over various social issues, like purity and poverty, and with his followers over the way they should live.

Several scholars have taken seriously the social dimensions of Mark's apocalyptic discourse.⁵⁹⁵ In particular, I reconsider the approach of Ched Myers, which I discussed in my introduction. He interprets Satan as a metaphor for the religious authorities. In his interpretation of 3:27, the realm of the strong man is

⁵⁹⁵ Myers, *Binding the Strong Man*. Paul W. Hollenbach, "Jesus, Demoniacs, and Public Authorities: A Socio-Historical Study," *JAAR* 49 (1981): 567-88; Santiago Guijarro, "The Politics of Exorcism," in *The Social Setting of Jesus and the Gospels* (ed. Wolfgang Stegemann, Bruce J. Malina, and Gerd Theissen; Minneapolis: Fortress, 2002), 165-67, 171-72; Waetjen, *Reordering*.

the scribal establishment that Jesus has come to overthrow. He argues that Jesus rescues people from the strong man by liberating them from the religious elite that has oppressed them.⁵⁹⁶ Myers claims that apocalyptic discourse functions to “fire the socio-political imagination of the oppressed.” His sociological analysis of the text against its 1st c. background is enlightening, and the resulting social, economic and political critique he presents in Mark is valuable and challenging. Based on my study, I affirm that apocalyptic discourse does indeed fire the imagination of the oppressed. Every apocalyptic composition, however, does not aim to fire the *socio-political* imagination. Though many of the compositions I looked at did aim for the socio-political imagination, many also aimed to fire, for example, the moral imagination.

Furthermore, apocalyptic symbolism does not simply function metaphorically for earthly entities. Myers’ characterization of apocalyptic and the imagination it fires is missing the divine. Apocalyptic discourse functions to fire the imagination of the oppressed by helping them imagine a world where spiritual forces are at work beyond what is visible to the human eye, with God and divine agents on their side for victory. In light of such a context, the reduction of Satan to a metaphor for the scribal establishment flattens Mark’s symbolic world. The demonic realm does not stand for the human realm; it

⁵⁹⁶ Myers, *Binding the Strong Man*, 164-7. Elizabeth Struthers Malbon and Sharyn Dowd read 10:45 with similar socio-political implications, but from a narrative approach rather than apocalyptic symbolism. According to their interpretation, the Markan Jesus has come to serve and give his life to ransom the many from the tyranny of the elite, and calls his followers to imitate him. E. S. Malbon and S. Dowd, “The Significance of Jesus’ Death in Mark: Narrative Context and Authorial Audience,” *JBL* 125, no. 2 (2006): 287, 292

intersects with that realm. Mark reveals that Satanic power is behind human oppression, seeking to destroy human minds and lives, and that God liberates people from Satan's captivity, mysteriously, through the suffering, death, and resurrection of Jesus.

Though I do not find Myers' interpretation persuasive, I affirm his intention to take seriously the social dimensions of Mark's Gospel. Building my argument from Mark 3:22-30, I maintain that the primary concern of Mark's Gospel is to present Jesus as the Spirit-filled one who struggles against Satan in order to rescue and gather a people to do God's will. Mark's apocalyptic discourse has social implications. The social agenda of Mark's Gospel is to form a group of people who act a certain way. Apocalyptic discourse functions as social discourse, for example, in 8:27-10:45. Jesus is forming a group of those who follow him, by setting their mind on the things of God. By contrast, Satan is behind the mind that is set on human things. Such a mindset is associated with the rejection of suffering for Jesus and the gospel, with lording authority over others, with putting oneself first, with rebuking little children, and seeking positions of glory. These are social issues that Mark rejects, the social behavior that Satan instigates. The apocalyptic discourse functions as social discourse by suggesting that those who do these things have Satan as a master. On the contrary, those who are servants of all, who sell all they have to give to the poor, who receive little children, and who give a cup of water to those in need, and, above all, who are unashamed of Jesus and his words have their minds set on the

things of God. I have not fully explored the social dimensions of the cosmic battle in the Gospel of Mark, and this may be an area profitable for further study.

7.4 The Intertextual Character of Mark's Narrative

Above I argue that Mark has a social agenda. Specifically, he presents Jesus as dissolving the existing temple community and reconstituting a new temple community that does God's will. This agenda inhabits the world of Torah more extensively than is sometimes supposed. Specifically, the Old Testament shapes Mark's rhetoric. I recall the metaphor theory of Lakoff and Johnson, by which they argue that concepts are defined according to interactional properties, not inherent properties.⁵⁹⁷ In other words, we understand what we perceive and experience, in part, in terms of other perceptions and experiences. I have argued that Mark understands Jesus in terms of the OT and Jewish apocalyptic thought. Mark uses texts and symbols familiar to Israel in service of his presentation of Jesus and discipleship, creating new meaning that awakens the imagination of the reader. For example, the opening verses of the Gospel echo Isaiah, Exodus and Malachi (1:1-3), evoking Israel's memory of the Exodus and Isaiah's promises of a new Exodus. Mark recontextualizes these themes by juxtaposing God's deliverance from the nations with Jesus' deliverance from Satan. The Beelzebul discourse (3:22-30) expands upon the opening presentation by disclosing a cosmic battle in which the Spirit-empowered Jesus struggles against Satan and his army of demons in order to

⁵⁹⁷ Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, 125. See my discussion in Chap. 1, above.

free people from captivity. It also discloses that human beings participate in the battle by the way they name Jesus: Using the concepts of Lakoff and Johnson, those who oppose Jesus and his mission are “out” while those who do God’s will are “in.” Through his presentation, Mark conveys a change in the way of perceiving the world, giving new meaning to Israel’s past, to present activity, and to what is real. That is, Mark communicates a new reality for the people of God: they are engaged in a battle with a cosmic enemy, and Jesus is their liberator. To be part of God’s community is to follow Jesus.

We cannot understand Mark’s intertextuality simply by looking at discrete OT citations and allusions, but by looking at how Mark interweaves citations, allusions and themes throughout the narrative to present his account of Jesus. Through his use of the OT, Mark awakens the reader’s memory, and through the progression of the story Mark applies new relationships to expand the reader’s mind. Mark does not simply proof-text, but narratively develops texts as he interweaves them through the Gospel. For example, the citation of Isa 40:3 at the opening establishes the theme of salvation for God’s people, and the progression of the story develops the nature of that salvation. Throughout the Gospel, various citations and allusions from Isaiah and other OT texts come into play. After Mark establishes that Satan is Jesus’ main opponent, he affirms that Jesus has come to set people free from Satan’s captivity (Isa 42:22 and 49:24 in 3:27). Through the narrative, the reader learns that Jesus overcomes this strong man by giving up power, even by giving up his own life (Is. 52:13-53:12 in 10:45

and the passion predictions). Mark interweaves Isaianic citations with Jesus' reference to himself as the Danielic Son of Man, recontextualizing this figure as one who suffers before receiving heavenly glory. The Markan Jesus warns that followers must not be ashamed of this suffering Isaianic/Danielic figure, and Mark echoes judgment scenes from Jeremiah, Isaiah, Joel, and Daniel to function as warnings for God's people. Mark's recontextualization of OT and Jewish apocalyptic thought is the basis for his redefinition of what is "up" and what is "in" pertaining to Jesus' mission and participation in the kingdom of God. Specifically, Mark presents Jesus as the Isaianic warrior and the suffering Son of Man who overcomes Satan, ironically, by submitting to death on a cross. Those who follow Jesus must likewise take up their cross, demonstrating that they are unashamed of the Son of Man (Mark 8:34-38). Loss of power is "up," and those who yield their lives to follow Jesus are "in." The formation of a social group around Jesus, the kingdom community that does God's will, is embedded in the Torah and developed through narrative.

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