The Motif of Jesus’ Rejection in the Gospel of Mark:
A Socio-rhetorical Interpretation of the Gospel

A thesis submitted to The University of Manchester for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
in the Faculty of Humanities

2013

Namgyu Lee

School of Arts, Languages and Cultures
# Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contents</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of diagrams</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abbreviations</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Declaration and Copyright Statement</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dedication</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledgements</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter I. Introduction</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. The problem of Jesus’ opponents</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Statement of hypothesis</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. History of interpretation for Jesus’ rejection</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Form critical analysis</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) Martin Dibelius</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Rudolf Bultmann</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) Vincent Taylor</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d) Arland J. Hultgren</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Source critical approach</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Redactional approach</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Review of the criticisms</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Statement of Current Methodology: socio-rhetorical Interpretation</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter II. Internal Structure of Argumentation on the rejection motif</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. The references to the Jewish leaders</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) The verses of the chapters referenced to the scribes</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) The conspirators of the scribes</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) The issues raised by the scribes</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The Pharisees (Mark 2:16, 18 (2x), 24; 3:6; 7:1, 3, 5; 8:11, 15; 10:2; 12:13)</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) The verses of the chapters referenced to the Pharisees</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) The conspirators of the Pharisees</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) The issues raised by the Pharisees</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. The Herodians (Mark 3:6, 8:15)</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) The verses of the chapters referenced to the Herodians</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
b) The conspirators of the Herodians --------------- 66

c) The issues raised by the Herodians --------------- 67

4. The Chief priests (Mark 1:44; 2:26 (x 2); 8:31, 10:33;
11:18, 27; 14:1, 10, 43, 53 (x2), 54, 55, 60, 61, 63, 66; 15:1,
3, 10, 11, 31) --------------------------------------- 69
   a) The verses of the chapters referenced the chief priests -- 69
   b) The conspirators of the chief priests --------------- 72
   c) The issues raised by the chief priests ---------- 74

5. The Elders (Mark 7:3, 5; 8:31; 11:27; 14:43, 53; 15:1) -- 76
   a) The verses of the chapters referenced to the elders -- 76
   b) The conspirators of the elders ------------------- 77
   c) The issues raised by the elders ------------------ 78

6. The Sadducees (Mark 12:13) ------------------------ 79
   a) The verses of the chapters referenced to the Sadducees 79
   b) The conspirators of the Sadducees --------------- 80
   c) The issues raised by the Sadducees ------------- 80

7. Sanhedrin (Mark 14:55; 15:1) ---------------------- 81
   a) The verses of the chapters referenced to the Sanhedrin -- 81
   b) The conspirators of the Sanhedrin --------------- 81
   c) The issues raised by the Sanhedrin ------------- 82

8. Summary ------------------------------------------- 83

B. Language device for rejection theme --------------- 85

1. παραδιδωμι. ------------------------------------ 87
   a) Using παραδιδωμι in the passive --------------- 88
   b) Using παραδιδωμι in the active --------------- 89
      (1) παραδιδωμι combination with Judas ------- 89
      (2) παραδιδωμι combination with the Jewish leaders - 90
      (3) παραδιδωμι combination with others ------- 90

2. βλασφημια (Mark 2:7; 3:28-29; 7:22; 14:64; 15:29) ---- 92
   a) Mark 2:7 ----------------------------------- 92
   b) Mark 3: 28-29 ------------------------------- 93
   c) Mark 7: 22 ---------------------------------- 95
   d) Mark 14: 64 ---------------------------------- 96
   e) Mark 15: 29 ---------------------------------- 97

3. πωροσις and σκληροκαρδια (Mark 3:5; 6:52; 8:17; 10:5) - 99
   a) Mark 3:5 ------------------------------------ 100
   b) Mark 6:52; 8:17 ------------------------------- 101
   c) Mark 10:5 ------------------------------------ 104
4. ἀποκτείνω (Mark 3:4; 6:19; 8:31; 9:31; 10:34; 12: 5, 7, 8; 14:1) -----------------------------------------------106
   a) Mark 3:4 --------------------------------------------106
   b) Mark 6:19 ------------------------------------------107
   c) Mark 8:31; 9:31; 10:34 -------------------------------109
   d) Mark 12: 5, 7, 8 ------------------------------------111
   e) Mark 14:1 ------------------------------------------112
C. Conclusion -----------------------------------------------114

Chapter III. The Analysis of Social and Cultural Texture to the Rejection Motif -- 118
A. The Reference to ἐξοικεῖον in Mark --------------------------------119
1. Mark 1:21-28; 2:1-12; and 11:28-33 ------------------------119
   a) Mark 1:21-28 ---------------------------------------120
   b) Mark 2:1-12 ----------------------------------------122
   c) Mark 11:27-33 ---------------------------------------124
   a) Mark 3:13-19 ---------------------------------------128
   b) Mark 6:7-13 ----------------------------------------129
4. Summary -----------------------------------------------133
B. The reference to νόμος in Mark --------------------------------135
1. The Sabbath --------------------------------------------136
   a) Mark 1:21-28; 6:1-6a; 16:1-8, 9-20 -------------------137
      (1) Mark 1:21-28 -----------------------------------139
      (2) Mark 6:1-6a -------------------------------------141
      (3) Mark 16:1-8, 9-20 ------------------------------144
   b) Mark 2:23-28 ---------------------------------------146
   c) Mark 3:1-6 -----------------------------------------150
2 Purity laws ---------------------------------------------153
   a) Mark 2:13-17 ---------------------------------------155
   b) Mark 7:1-23 ----------------------------------------157
3. Divorce (Mark 10:2-12) ---------------------------------160
4. The commandment (Mark 12: 28-34) -----------------------164
5 Summary -----------------------------------------------167
C. The references to the Temple in Mark ---------------------169
1. The terminology between Mark 11:11-14:49 and
   Mark 14:58-15:38 ---------------------------------------170
2. Mark 11:11-14:49 ---------------------------------------172
   a) Mark 11:11-17 --------------------------------------172
Chapter IV. The contribution of intertextuality to the rejection motif

A. Rejection motif in the Old Testament

1. Rejection motif in the prophets
   a) Isaiah
   b) Jeremiah
   c) Zechariah 9-14

2. The Psalms of the righteous sufferer

3. “Fool” language in Wisdom literature

4. Summary

B. Rejection motif in the Jewish literature

1. Intertestamental literature
   a) Assumption of Moses
   b) 4 Ezra
   c) 1 Enoch
   d) The Psalms of Solomon

2. Josephus

3. Qumran literature

4. Summary

C. Conclusion

Chapter V. The Ideological texture to the rejection motif

A. The Eschatological message

1. The prophetic judgment

2. General warnings of judgment on Israel

3. Warnings of judgment on the religious leaders as representative of Israel

4. Warnings of the destruction of the Temple

5. Summary

B. The kingdom and Israel

1. The new covenant family

2. All the nations for Israel
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>270</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. To follow Jesus in the way of faith</td>
<td>271</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. God’s grace and judgment</td>
<td>272</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter VI. Conclusion</td>
<td>275</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. The rejection motif in the Gospel as whole</td>
<td>275</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Suggestions for further research</td>
<td>278</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibliography</td>
<td>281</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
List of Diagrams

Diagram II-1: Repetitive references of the Jewish leaders 57
Diagram II-2: The reference of the elders in Mark 77
Diagram II-3: The reference of Sadducees in Mark 79
Diagram II-4: Repetitive reference of rejection languages in Marcan Gospel 87
Diagram II-5: The reference of παραδίδωμι in Mark 88
Diagram II-6: The reference of πώρωσις and σκληροκαρδία in Mark 99
Diagram II-7: The conflict structure of Laws in Mark 167
Diagram III-1: The lament Psalms in Mark 213
### Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ag. Ap</td>
<td>Josephus' Against Apion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ant.</td>
<td>Josephus' Antiquities of the Jews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APOT</td>
<td>Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assumption.</td>
<td>Assumption of Moses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BASOR</td>
<td>Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BBR</td>
<td>Bulletin for Biblical Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BETL</td>
<td>Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BI</td>
<td>Biblical Interpretation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bib.</td>
<td>Biblica</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIS</td>
<td>Biblical Interpretation Series</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BJRL</td>
<td>Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BNTEC</td>
<td>Black’s New Testament Commentaries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBQ</td>
<td>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CD</td>
<td>the Cairo Damascus document</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CDNT</td>
<td>Coniectanea Biblica New Testament Series</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cf.</td>
<td>compare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ch.</td>
<td>Chapter (plural, Chs.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>diss.</td>
<td>Dissertation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ed.</td>
<td>editor (plural, eds.), edition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EKT</td>
<td>Evangelisch-Katholischer Kommentar Zum Neuen Testament</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ExpTim.</td>
<td>Expository Times</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e.g.</td>
<td>Exempli gratia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>etc.</td>
<td>et cetera, and so forth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FB</td>
<td>Forschung Zur Bibel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ff.</td>
<td>and following</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FFF</td>
<td>Foundations &amp; Facets Forum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GNT</td>
<td>The Greek New Testament</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HTR</td>
<td>Harvard Theological Review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HTS</td>
<td>Harvard Theological Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ibid.</td>
<td>in the same place</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICC</td>
<td>International Critical Commentary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i.e.</td>
<td>that is</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abbreviation</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inter.</td>
<td>Interpretation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1QS</td>
<td>Cave 1/ Qumran/ “Serekh”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JAAR</td>
<td>Journal of the American Academy of Religion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JBL</td>
<td>Journal of Biblical Literature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JBLMS</td>
<td>Journal of Biblical Literature Monograph Series</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JR</td>
<td>The Journal of Religion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JSNT</td>
<td>Journal for the Study of the New Testament</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JSOT</td>
<td>Journal for the Study of the Old Testament</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JSS</td>
<td>Journal of Semitic Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JTS</td>
<td>Journal of Theological Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n.</td>
<td>note</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NCBC</td>
<td>New Century Bible Commentary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nf.</td>
<td>Neue folge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NIBC</td>
<td>New International Biblical Commentary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NICNT</td>
<td>New International Commentary on the New Testament</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NIGTC</td>
<td>The New International Greek Testament Commentary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NIV</td>
<td>New International Version</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NovT</td>
<td>Novum Testamentum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NTA</td>
<td>New Testament Abstracts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NTAbh</td>
<td>Neutestamentliche Abhandlungen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NTS</td>
<td>New Testament Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NTSup.</td>
<td>Novum Testamentum Supplement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>op. cit.</td>
<td>Opera citato (in the work cited)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PhD</td>
<td>Doctor of Philosophy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pl.</td>
<td>plate; plural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PNTC</td>
<td>Pelican New Testament Commentaries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LTQ</td>
<td>Lexington Theological Quarterly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pss. Sol.</td>
<td>The Psalms of Solomon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBL</td>
<td>Society of Biblical Literature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBLDS</td>
<td>Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEA</td>
<td>Svensk Exegetisk arsbok</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abbreviation</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SNTSMS</td>
<td>Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sup.</td>
<td>Supplement (plural, Sups.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>s.v.</td>
<td>under the word</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THKNT</td>
<td>Theologischer Handkommentar zum Neuen Testament</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ThZ</td>
<td><em>Theologisches Zeitschrift</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>trans. and ed.</td>
<td>translation and edition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v.</td>
<td>verse (plural, vv.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VC</td>
<td><em>Vigiliae Christianae</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vita</td>
<td>In Life of Josephus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vol.</td>
<td>volume (plural, vols.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vs.</td>
<td>verses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VT</td>
<td><em>Vetus Testamentum</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VTSup.</td>
<td><em>Vetus Testamentum Supplements</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WBC</td>
<td>Word Biblical Commentary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W.J.</td>
<td>Josephus’ War of the Jews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZAW</td>
<td><em>Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W.J.</td>
<td>Josephus’ War of the Jews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZNW</td>
<td><em>Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Abstract

This thesis describes investigations into the language of rejection used in the Gospel of Mark, employing the methodology of socio-rhetorical interpretation. After describing the history of interpretation of Jesus’ rejection in Chapter I, Chapter II examines how the internal structure of Mark shows the references that relate to the rejection theme and are repeated in sequence. Chapter III explores the conflict issues debated between Jesus and his opponents as the social and cultural texture, in which Mark was written. The three components, Authority, the Law, and Temple, are the main issues in the Gospel. Chapter IV deals with the data of intertexture, a significant influence for the Gospel. Mark borrows rejection language from the Old Testament and ancient Jewish literature as well. In Chapter V, the ideological texture analyzes Mark’s intent responding to his opponents. Mark uses rejection language to warn that those who refuse Jesus as the Son of God cannot avoid the final judgment.
Declaration and Copyright Statement

Declaration

No portion of the work referred to in the thesis has been submitted in support of an application for another degree or qualification of this or any other university or other institute of learning.

Copyright Statement

i. The author of this thesis (including any appendices and/or schedules to this thesis) owns certain copyright or related rights in it (the “Copyright”) and s/he has given The University of Manchester certain rights to use such Copyright, including for administrative purposes.

ii. Copies of this thesis, either in full or in extracts and whether in hard or electronic copy, may be made only in accordance with the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 (as amended) and regulations issued under it or, where appropriate, in accordance with licensing agreements which the University has from time to time. This page must form part of any such copies made.

iii. The ownership of certain Copyright, patents, designs, trade marks and other intellectual property (the “Intellectual Property”) and any reproductions of copyright works in the thesis, for example graphs and tables (“Reproduction”), which may be described in this thesis, may not be owned by the author and may be owned by third parties. Such Intellectual Property and Reproductions cannot and must not be made available for use without the prior written permission of the owner(s) of the relevant Intellectual Property and/or Reproductions.

iv. Further information on the conditions under which disclosure, publication and commercialisation of this thesis, the Copyright and any Intellectual Property and/or Reproductions described in it may take place is available in the University IP Policy (see http://documents.manchester.ac.uk/DocuInfo.aspx?DocID=487), in any relevant Thesis restriction declarations deposited in the University Library, The University Library’s regulations (see http://www.manchester.ac.uk/library/aboutus/regulations) and in The University’s policy on Presentation of Theses.
Dedication

To my wife, Heejoung, and our four children,
Uytae, Uyseok, Beulah, and Daniel,
Who have done the great project
Together.
Acknowledgements

This thesis is a work that has taken me over ten years of research alongside running my own church ministry. I am very grateful to the University of Manchester and especially Dr. George Brooke for granting me an extension of four years to this research. The completion of this thesis would have not been possible without the help and support of several individuals. My supervisor, Dr. Todd Klutz was an essential contributor to the writing of this thesis as both a guiding mentor and a supporting friend. He was both encouraging and motivating as he reviewed my work and alerted me of deadlines.

Dr. Larry Perkins originally gave me the thoughts that form the foundations of this thesis and contributed several more ideas through our discussions. I would like to thank Dr. Craig A. Evans, when he was Trinity Western University, for his lectures on the exegesis of the Gospel of Mark and advice for this study, which enabled me to investigate and contrast the Markan language with rejection language in the Old Testament and first century Judaism. I should also thank Mrs. Pat Brawner for her hospitality in providing a peaceful and quiet place in her home for me to focus on research. My heart gives special thanks to Dr. John Auxier, who is Dean of Trinity Western Seminary, not only for his inspiring me to greater efforts, but also his offering a research room at ACTS (Associated Canadian Theological Schools) seminary.

I received much support from my church congregation throughout all these years and I thank them for their patience and prayers. My wife Heejoung, and our four children, Uytae, Uyseok, Beulah, and Daniel are my constant joy. This thesis is dedicated to the five of them, most especially to Heejoung, who has contributed significantly to it with her patience, loving encouragement, and prayer.

To God goes the ultimate glory for working through me. I can only hope to remain a willing and obedient vessel, by continuing to do the tasks that He assigns.
Chapter I. Introduction

A. The Problem of Jesus’ Opponents

Throughout the whole Gospel of Mark, Jesus is questioned, criticized, and rejected by various Jewish leaders. Jesus’ adversaries oppose him for a variety of reasons - most notably for his attitude toward the Law, toward the tradition of the elders, and toward the authority of the Jewish establishment. Conversely, using hostile language, Jesus warns them against committing blasphemy in their evaluation of his ministry (3:29). These polemical exchanges, expressed both on the lips of Jesus and in the words of his opponents, outline the general nature of Mark’s narrative character and provoke religious conflict as well in the Gospel of Mark.¹ The conflict between Jesus and his adversaries is sometimes represented in a literary form that scholars have called “conflict stories,”² “pronouncement stories,” and other terms. Throughout Mark, however, the religious debate emerges in diverse verbal forms and in other activities such as the questions of the opponents against Jesus and the passion action. Therefore, the Marcan conflict story in the present study includes all verbal forms and literary styles creating conflict between Jesus and his opponents.

¹Larry Perkins, “Mark’s Language of Religious Conflict as Rhetorical Device” BBR 11 (2001), 44.
²“Conflict stories” is a term not universal in English usage, but among the Synoptic scholars is understood as a literary genre. The form of “conflict stories” is composed of three parts: the first step, opening of the story with a narrated scene in which Jesus and his disciples are acting; the second step, Jesus’ opponents throw questions and the activity provokes conflict, and the third step, Jesus replies with a statement which justifies his conduct. These conflict stories have been noticed as a particular form of the Synoptic tradition by the form critic scholars such as Martin Dibelius, Rudolf Bultmann, and Vincent Taylor, whose terminology and description on the form will be reviewed in the next section of this chapter.
B. Statement of Hypothesis

To analyze the Marcan conflict stories in their larger narrative contexts, the hypothesis of the present work finds four components in the Marcan Gospel:

a) Mark's Gospel includes the various stylistic features of the polemical language which coheres as a semantic unit and portrays the rejection of Jesus. Whether the author of Mark has collected, copied, or freely composed the conflict sources, he himself has performed acts of selection, arrangement, revision, and composition that have created a literary document revealing his theological intent within the context of Mediterranean culture.

b) The semantic features of hostility in the Marcan narrative appear not only as types of minor form, but also in the language itself. These features fit into progressive sequences which begin early in the Gospel (1:14) and continue to its end (the passion story). The meaningful unity of the conflict materials, which are organized geographically, reveals the author’s theological intention. The conflict in Galilee (1:1-
8:26) concerns Jesus and authority, while the Jerusalem conflict (8:27-16:20) involves the temple. The common issue in both places is conflict about the law. The semantic unity of the conflict narrative develops through progressive form, repetitive form, and conventional form.

c) Both Jewish and Greco-Roman social, religious, and literary conventions are exhibited in the Marcan Gospel. Mark follows these patterns and then reverses them with references to the Hebrew Scriptures in order to indicate that the Marcan community is the only true expression of what God promised Abraham and Moses. Comparative analysis of the motif of Jesus’ rejection in Mark shows that the use of animosity language against opponents is inherited from the Old Testament, which distinguishes the Marcan tradition from Mediterranean society and culture as a whole. In other words, comparative study makes clear canonical boundaries of the Marcan account of Jesus’ rejection.

---


7 For example, 7:1-23 is constructed around chreia, Greco-Roman rhetoric, in vv. 6b-7 with a quotation of Isa. 29:13: “as it is written, ‘This people honors me with their lips, but their heart they take away from me; in vain they are devout, teaching as doctrines human instruction.’” For detail analysis of 7:1-23 as a chreia, see Mary Ann Beavis, Mark (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2011), 112-13; Gregory Salyer, “Rhetoric, Purity, and Play Aspects of Mark 7:1-23,” Semeia 64 (1993), 139-69.
d) The hostility of Jewish leaders towards Jesus reflects the conflict between early Christian claims about Jesus as Messiah and other messianic hopes circulating among Jewish groups. The Marcan author uses rhetorical and theological designs to construct his claim that rejecting Jesus is rejecting God's salvation and thus incurs God's judgment. So Mark, the implied author of the second Gospel, uses that kind of style rhetorically in his narrative to persuade his reader to accept Jesus as the true Messiah and to reject the counterclaims of Jesus’ opponents who do not have authority. Hence, the conflict stories in the Gospel show two theological aspects: Mark’s Christology and his eschatological intent. The relationship between Christology and eschatology in the Gospel reflects Mark’s intention to convey how the essential feature in the Gospel is the new covenant family which has access to the secret of the Kingdom of God.

C. History of Interpretation of Jesus’ Rejection

Looking at language about Jesus’ rejection in the Marcan Gospel, Burkill examines βλασφημία (blasphemy), which is referred to in 2:7; 3:28-29; 7:22; 14:64; and 15:29. He defines the term as a defamatory pronouncement or any utterance meant to damage or denigrate the reputation of some individual or group. Burkill also regards ἀπιστία (unbelief, lack of faith, or distrustfulness) of Jesus’ family in Mark 6:6a as blasphemy, like

---


the high priest uses the word βλασφημία at 14:64 against Jesus. Accordingly, any expression of damnation of Jesus or unbelief in him as Messiah, the Son of God and the Son of Man, constitutes an instance of rejection of Jesus. In addition, anyone who disbelieves in Jesus and enters into conflict with him is Jesus’ opponent who rejects him as the Son of God. As a result, some scholars have argued that the disciples are described as Jesus’ adversaries, because of their unbelieving response to Jesus’ walking on the sea (5:45-52), their lack of faith (16:14), their hardness of heart (3:5; 10:5), their difficulties in comprehending Jesus’ mission (9:30-32), and ultimate flight from his side in the face of his crucifixion (14:50). While the argumentation recognizes the severity of Mark’s portrait of the disciples, it cannot account for the positive attitude that the disciples have shown: their faithful response to Jesus’ call (e.g., 1:16-20), their obedience to missionary journey at Jesus’ command (6:6-13, 30), and a future role of the disciples in the post resurrection church (13:9-23). However, the religious leaders of the first century Judaism are portrayed as Jesus’ opponents in a nearly unremittingly negative light, leading to the rejection of their point of view on Jesus and ultimately to his death. They are named in Mark: the scribes, Pharisees, chief priests, elders, Herodians, Sadducees, and the Sanhedrin. Their names will be concerned in chapter II by examining the places where they are referred to.

\[11\] Ibid, 53-54. Another noteworthy article on “unbelief” of Jesus’ family as the same sense of “blasphemy” of Jesus is that of Erich Grässer, “Jesus in Nazareth (Mark VI. 1-6a): Note on the Redaction and Theology of St. Mark” NTS 16 (1969-70), 1ff., esp. 21. The German version of the article is presented in Jesus in Nazareth, ZNW supplement 40, eds. Erich Gräßer, August Strobel, Bobert C. Tannehill, Walther Eltester (Berlin/New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1972), 1-37.


in Mark and the other groups whom they are allied with against Jesus.

The Synoptic criticisms - especially form, source, and redaction criticism - have dealt with the Marcan material concerning the Jewish leadership groups in various critical ways according to their methodological domains. In comparison, the purpose of this present treatment of the material is to examine the Jewish leaders from a socio-rhetorical point of view. To do this study, two steps are required as necessary prerequisites. The first step is to survey previous debates on Jesus’ rejection in order to see how various critics of Mark have dealt with the material of the Mediterranean world, and how they have interpreted the issues. The second step is to examine how various scholars understand Jesus’ rejection within the whole Marcan context as a coherent unit in Mark. Upon completion of this examination, not only will the main problems of Jesus’ rejection be clearly discovered, but only then also the second step to a study of the narrative will emerge. These two steps will show a detailed statement on the methodology of socio-rhetorical criticism and its mode of application to the present task. Therefore, the function of the present chapter is to delimit the rejection theme, to examine the successes and inadequacies of previous works, and to suggest that socio-rhetorical methodology will interpret this material further than previous works.
1. Form Critical Analysis

a) Martin Dibelius

Of all the studies done on the motif of Jesus’ rejection in the Synoptic Gospels, Dibelius’ work is significant, not only because it came first, but also because it points out that the passion narrative is formed as a sociological result. Dibelius is well-known as one of the founders of the form critical method (Formgeschichtliche Methode); he seeks the origin of the passion narrative and to make clear the intention and real interest of its pre-literary tradition. Dibelius begins with the religious situation in the early church and discusses what form is proper for this situation in order to find its function and setting.

According to Dibelius, the situation which explains the origin of the passion story is the message of the early Christian preaching which has come down from the Old Testament.

The aim of such preaching is to present the story of the Passion as the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies for salvation. As Dibelius says, the death of Jesus was “according
to the scripture” by God’s will:

The truly Christian understanding of the story of the Passion, the knowledge that even
the ignominious was willed by God, becomes comprehensible for the Christians of that
time only by reference to their Bible, the Old Testament, which predicts these happenings.
The conviction “this was done by the will of God,” soon converted itself into the
conviction “this came to pass according to the scriptures.”

To Dibelius, therefore, the Old Testament passages on suffering that are quoted and
alluded to in the Synoptic Gospels are a primary concept in understanding Jesus’
rejection. In Dibelius’ view, the use of the Old Testament in the New Testament serves a
double function. On the one hand, it provides an apology for the death of Jesus; on the
other hand, it preserves the formation of the tradition of salvation for the early Christian
communities. For Dibelius, the events of the passion story are not a matter of the history
of man, but rather of the history of salvation.

Dibelius asks a question about the historicity of the suffering of Jesus: what is the
relationship between the history of salvation and the Jews’ rejection of Jesus in men’s
history? “For only this obduracy of the Jews, this hardness of heart, explains the
circumstance that salvation passed them by.” Dibelius answers that the recorded earthly
life of Jesus highlights above all other topics his passion. In the case of the conflict stories,

Dibelius demonstrates that the opposition between Jesus and the Jews consists of three

---

19Dibelius, Gospel Criticism, 58.
20Dibelius, From Tradition to Gospel, 188.
21Dibelius, Gospel Criticism, 21. To Dibelius the fact that Jesus was a man is not important, but
decisive for faith. Dibelius argues that the first Christians had no interest in reporting the life and passion of
Jesus objectively to mankind. They wanted nothing else than to win as many as possible to salvation, which
had been revealed in Jesus, and any morsel of information about Jesus was full of meaning for them only
when it pertained to salvation.
22Ibid., 23.
issues. Jesus devalued the claims of Jewish duties, including the ritualistic, the legalistic, and the nationalistic. The devaluation of these duties through the principle that “one thing is necessary” must have appeared to Jewish leaders as threatening to undermine and ruin the whole system of piety. Second, Jesus denied the Jewish hope that the coming Messiah would renew the nation’s splendor. Rather, Jesus “knows otherwise about the fate of this nation. It is like the servant to whom much treasure was entrusted, but who did nothing with, only buried it.” The more clearly Jesus foresees this fate, the greater the hostility between him and his opponents becomes. Third, the decisive reason for hostility is that Jesus refuted the scribes’ interpretation of the Scriptures; for the scribes, everything had to be derived from the Scriptures, everything had to be proved by them, but Jesus did not derive his own message from the Bible. He spoke as one who possessed authority and power, not like scribes. Consequently, the authority that Jesus exercised—no matter what name one gives to it—was looked upon by the scribes as blasphemy, and thus his adversaries attempted to kill him.

Regarding faith and the preaching of the early Church, the suffering of Jesus happened within the framework of Judaism, according to Dibelius. In Dibelius’ concept, history regarding the Jews’ hostility towards Jesus rests on what the first communities handed down from the life of their Master, and is limited by the special nature of this

---

23Ibid., 125.
24Ibid., 126.
25Ibid., 126-27.
transmitted material.\textsuperscript{26} The importance of Dibelius’ observation for the present research, even though he does not deal further with Jesus’ rejection by the Jewish leaders, is his assumption that Jesus was rejected because of his devaluation of Judaism.

When he examines the Old Testament texts relating to the Marcan passion story, Dibelius does not simply handle the matter of the quoting of and alluding to these texts, but also examines the Marcan author’s intention that the entire passion narrative of Mark illustrate the Old Testament texts.\textsuperscript{27} To show how Mark composed the Marcan passion narrative as a whole from the traditional texts, Dibelius attempts to distinguish between Mark and the pre-Marcan elements in the passion narrative; he discusses the status of individual units which are considered the Marcan Gospel and comments on the meaning of the Marcan passion story in the final account. The first evidence which Dibelius offers to account for the difference between an older Passion story and Mark’s own conception is the two chronological indications of 14:1 f. and 14:10 f.\textsuperscript{28} Dibelius argues that these are the pre-Marcan elements and they have concluded something different from Mark.\textsuperscript{29} According to the description in the old Passion story, the arrest of Jesus took place before

\textsuperscript{26}Dibelius, \textit{Jesus}, 17, 34, argues that the sources of the history of Jesus are limited in three reasons: first, we have no direct report of the opinions of Jesus’ opponents; for but little of the non-Christian testimony about Jesus has been preserved to us. Second, among the Christian sources the New Testament Gospels stand in the forefront; of the Christian reports of Jesus outside the Bible we have only fragments. Third, it consists in the fact that what we have here is not consecutive narrative, but simply individual stories. This material, partly oral, partly written, was already in circulation in the communities before the composition of the Gospels.

\textsuperscript{27}Dibelius, \textit{From Tradition to Gospel}, 217-19.

\textsuperscript{28}Ibid., 180-81; Dibelius, \textit{Jesus}, 128.

\textsuperscript{29}Dibelius, \textit{From Tradition to Gospel}, 181. With this evidence Dibelius argues that thus Mark cannot have been the author of this passion narrative and, therefore, also not the originator of the connected narrative. So the composition of the Passion story is earlier than Mark.
the Passover evening. However, in Mark’s narrative, Jesus and also the Jews celebrated
the Passover that evening. Therefore, it is clear that Mark is not the author of the old
Passion story.\textsuperscript{30} To solve this contradictory chronology, Dibelius explains that Mark
brings out the connection between Old Testament rite and Christian sacrament.\textsuperscript{31} The
second literary evidence for the differentiation of the two is the remark in 14: 28, “I will
go ahead of you into Galilee.” However, Mark does not tell of such an appearance; rather,
he ends with the record of the empty grave in Mark 16:8. Thus a different ending is
demanded for the passion.\textsuperscript{32} The purpose of the insertion of 14:28 and 16:8, Dibelius
explains, is to verify the resurrection by the fact of the empty grave, which was already
accepted in the early church.\textsuperscript{33} Finally, Dibelius claims that the eyewitnesses of the
Passion story appearing in 14:51 and 15:21 are pre-Marcan records because these reports
do not fit very well with the Marcan style which lacks such a personal moment.\textsuperscript{34} Dibelius
asserts that the evangelist puts forward the story of salvation, not individual happenings;
thus these two references are older than the Gospel.\textsuperscript{35} The reason the evangelist
intervened in these references, in Dibelius’ view, is to link the events to the early church.\textsuperscript{36}

According to Dibelius, the Marcan account has only one purpose: to describe the

\textsuperscript{30}Ibid., 181-82.
\textsuperscript{31}Ibid., 189; Dibelius, Jesus, 128-29.
\textsuperscript{32}Dibelius, \textit{From Tradition to Gospel}, 181-82. Dibelius also comments on 16:8, “they said nothing to
anyone, because they were afraid” that the narrative of the empty grave was still unknown in wide areas. Thus
Dibelius concludes that Mark did not create the story of the empty grave.
\textsuperscript{33}Ibid., 190-92.
\textsuperscript{34}Dibelius, \textit{op. cit.}, 183, supposes that the readers know both the unnamed young man in 14:51 and
the sons of Simon in 16:21. In this case these remarks would draw the readers’ attention to the actual
eyewitness of the events.
\textsuperscript{35}Ibid., 183, 204.
\textsuperscript{36}Ibid. Another a unified narrative that the evangelist intervened is the scene before the Sanhedrin,
“Yet even then their testimony did not agree” (14:59) which shows at least an incongruity.
meaning of the events, that is founded in the faith of the early Christian. The rejection of Jesus had taken place in accordance with God’s will, which was to be found in the Old Testament passages (e.g., Ps. 22:31; 69; Isa. 53), and which is also the main concern of the Marcan passion scene: “To exhibit God’s will in the Passion of Jesus is its original intention.” The significance of this observation is that it initiates one of the aspects of redaction criticism as well as the discovery of the Marcan author’s intention through the way in which he transforms the pre-Marcan accounts. Thus, Dibelius’ accounts of Jesus’ suffering and death can now be seen in light of his view of the Marcan theology of “secret epiphanies.” As Dibelius says;

> It is also to emphasize those characteristics in the tradition which disclose Jesus as Messiah, but at the same time to show why He was not recognized as Messiah by the people and why He was opposed, despised, and finally sent to the cross. In this way the gospel of Mark was written as a book of secret epiphanies.

b) Rudolf Bultmann

Although Bultmann’s work, *The History of the Synoptic Tradition* (first edition, 1921), appeared after that of Dibelius’ (first edition, 1919), it still stands as the standard work produced during this period, and it can be used to describe the first judgment made about the passion narrative within the paradigm of Form critical methods. Bultmann employs the analytic and inductive method to analyze the passion story in the Synoptic

---

37Dibelius, *Jesus*, 131.
38Dibelius, *From Tradition to Gospel*, 230.
41Bultmann, *The History of the Synoptic Tradition*, 5.
Gospels, rather than the constructive and deductive method of Dibelius.\textsuperscript{42} Bultmann begins with the text rather than the situation of the early Christian community,\textsuperscript{43} and by careful literary analysis of the forms and the laws of the development of tradition, he considers the situation which produced or transmitted the materials. He cites Wellhausen: “In any event, the most important thing is to recognize that unquestionably secondary material has found its way into the tradition. . . . The first thing we must do is to stop looking for the pure Ur-Markus and fixing the various stages of its redaction.”\textsuperscript{44} This kind of study, Bultmann asserts, involves discovering the original units of the Synoptic Gospels, establishing their historical setting, discovering whether they belonged to a primary or secondary tradition or if they were the product of editorial activity.\textsuperscript{45} In principle, Bultmann deals with the motif of Jesus’ rejection in two ways: controversy dialogues, and the Passion story.\textsuperscript{46}

Bultmann begins his analysis with the observation that the Passion narrative in the Synoptic gospels cannot be considered an organic unity, but consists of separate pieces.\textsuperscript{47}

\textsuperscript{42}E.g., Dibelius reconstructs the pre-Marcan sources from a study of the early Christian community and its needs, and concludes the sources of the Passion story are collections from the tradition to establish the message of the community.

\textsuperscript{43}To explain the literary form of the passion narrative, Dibelius lays supreme emphasis on the importance of early Christian preaching. On the contrary, Bultmann, \textit{The History of the Synoptic Tradition}, 5, accentuates the life situation of the early Church (\textit{Sitz im Leben}); “The forms of the literary tradition must be used to establish the influences operating in the life of the community, and the life of the community must be used to render the forms themselves intelligible.”

\textsuperscript{44}Bultmann, \textit{op. cit.}, 2.

\textsuperscript{45}Ibid., 2, 3.

\textsuperscript{46}The major principle in Bultmann’ system of the classification of the Synaptic materials is the difference between the saying of Jesus on the one hand, and the stories about him on the one hand. Controversy dialogues belong to the Saying of Jesus and the Passion narrative belongs to the stories on him.

\textsuperscript{47}Ibid., 275.
Most of the stories are isolated elements that do not depend on their context in the Passion narratives although they were joined together into a whole (e.g., the stories of the anointing, of the prophecy of the betrayal, of the Last Supper, of Gethsemane, of Peter’s Denial). Others stories consist of supplementary embellishments of individual moments in a narrative that had already been knit together (e.g., the stories of the Preparation of the Passover, the Hearing before the Sanhedrin, and of Herod and Pilate).\(^{48}\) Moreover, Bultmann asserts that Mark was not the first to make a continuous narrative from the individual stories available to him, but he had already before him a continuous narrative of the Passion story.\(^{49}\) As for what led to the connected and early coherent narrative, Bultmann points to the Kerygma which was found in the prophecies of the Passion and Resurrection in Mark 8:31; 9:31; 10:33f and in the speeches in Acts, and suggests a four stage development of the Passion narrative: (a) the kerygmatic tradition of the Passion and death of Jesus, (b) a short historical narrative of the arrest, condemnation and execution of Jesus, (c) the independent stories in the Passion narrative such as the anointing and the Last Supper, and (d) the supplementary embellishment stories.\(^{50}\)

In his discussion of the Passion narrative, Bultmann notes that the most important

\(^{48}\)Ibid.

\(^{49}\)Ibid., 277. To demonstrate that Mark had a passion narrative before him and expanded it by additions, Bultmann discern what can be validly accepted as a more original draught from such a analysis of Mark: (a) No doubt 14:3-9 is an insertion and contains a story specially made to fit the context. (b) The institution of the Lord’s Supper in 14:22-25 is a secondary cult legend inserted into an older context and has displaced an older account. (c) The scene in Gethsemane in 14:32-42 marks itself off from its context. (d) The detailed report of the trial before the Sanhedrin in 14:55-64 breaks into the story of Peter. (e) The Barabbas episode in 15:6-15a is distinct from the trial before Pilate. (f) The mocking of Jesus in 15:16-20a is an insertion.

\(^{50}\)Ibid.
motifs making up the narrative are the imaginative propaganda about Jesus of the early Christian community. He explains the various influences on the formation of these motifs.

First, there is the proof from Old Testament prophecy. It helps the Church to solve the problem of a crucified Messiah and to fashion the telling of the Passion story. A second motif, building on the Old Testament motif, is an apologetic for the Jewish Christian Church. Dogmatic motifs are of particular importance for the faith of the Christian Church, since they bring the whole Passion under the regulative idea that Jesus suffered and died as the Messiah. The dogmatic stands in close relationship to the cult motif which came out of the Jewish Christian Church, using the story of the Last Supper. In addition to these motifs, Bultmann adds pure novelistic motifs, which come from Judaism itself.

Bultmann’s analysis of the Passion narrative shows that the apologetic and polemic of the Jewish Christian Church constitute the main pattern of the controversy dialogues.

Bultmann understands the controversy dialogues as a devised literary form, opposing

---

51 Ibid., 281. Bultmann quotes the most important instances of the OT. The story of the betrayal has been enriched from Zech. 11:12. The announcement of the betrayal in Mk. 14:18 has been affected by Ps. 40:10. Judas’ kiss in Mk. 14:45 originates from 2 Sam. 20:9; Prov. 27:6. The statement that Jesus was crucified between two criminals in Mk. 15:27 has been derived from Isa. 53:12. The lottery for the garments in Mk. 15:24 has been derived from Ps. 21:19; the mockery of the passers-by in Mk. 15:29 from Ps. 21:8; the interpretation of Jesus’ last cry in Mk. 15:34 from Ps. 21:2; and the drinking of vinegar in Mk. 15:36 from Ps. 68:22.

52 Ibid., 280.
53 Ibid., 281-82.
54 Ibid., 283-84.
55 Ibid., 284.
56 Ibid., 282. Bultmann argues that even though many parallels to the Synoptic miracle stories, esp., Jesus’ death in Mk. 15:33, 38 and Matt. 27:51b-53, have frequently been quoted from Hellenism, the Jewish literature itself told of miraculous happenings at the death of Rabbis.
57 Ibid., 39-41. The form consists of three parts: first, there is an action or a description of an attitude of Jesus or his disciples; second, this is seized upon by an opponent and used in an attack by accusation or question; and third, Jesus replies to the attack as a counter-question or a metaphor. To find the controversy stories in the Marcan Gospel, see Bultmann, op. cit., 47-53.
Dibelius’ position that the motif of Jesus’ rejection comes from the tradition.\textsuperscript{58} It is, therefore, natural for Bultmann that the \textit{Sitz im Leben} should be not concerned with the origin of a particular report of a particular historical happening, but with the origin of and affinity for a certain literary form that embodies typical situations and attitudes of a community.\textsuperscript{59} The story of Jesus’ life in the Synoptic Gospels, Bultmann argues, is not a historical report of particular incidents. Rather, the general character of his life is rightly portrayed in the individual controversy dialogues, on the basis of historical recollection.\textsuperscript{60} Thus, for Bultmann, Pharisees, Scribes, Sadducees, and High Priests are not conceived as historical elements exclusively opposed to Jesus and the Early Church, but are conceived as prototypical opponents of Jesus.\textsuperscript{61} Even though Bultmann does not dismiss the study of Jesus and his adversaries in historical phenomena, as a Form critic, he hypothesizes that the author shaped these stories into a common genre within the early church experience. Bultmann’s conclusion is that the disputes as portrayed in the stories are typically Rabbinic. Therefore, their \textit{Sitz im Leben} is in the discussion which the Church had with its opponents outside the Church (Palestinian Jews) and among its own members on questions of law.\textsuperscript{62}

\textsuperscript{58}Ibid., 60-61.
\textsuperscript{59}Ibid., 40.
\textsuperscript{60}Ibid., 50.
\textsuperscript{61}Ibid., 53. It is rather the great mass of the people who must be thought of as the opponent of the Church, as for example in the demand for a sign or the controversy about Beelzebub.
\textsuperscript{62}Ibid., 41, 53.
c) Vincent Taylor

Influenced by German scholarship, especially Bultmann, the British scholar Vincent Taylor gave a lecture in 1932 on the formation of the Gospel tradition and introduced Form Criticism to American scholars. Taylor’s Form critical method, however, is different from that of Dibelius and Bultmann in his affirming that the personal testimony of eyewitnesses in the formative process of Gospel traditions must be taken much more seriously.63 “More vividly than ever, we realize how much life and worship must have contributed to the formation of oral tradition.”64 Taylor attempts to classify the conflict stories according to two forms: sayings, and narratives that have stories among them.65 Taylor argues that the main characteristic of these stories is that they quickly reach their climax in a saying of Jesus which was of interest to the first Christians because it bore directly upon questions of faith and practice.66 While Taylor admits that traditions about Jesus were applied to the needs of the primitive church, he does not agree with the concept of the former Form critics that the Old Testament is the main source. Rather, he says that every consideration bearing on the life of the first Christians must be taken into account: the practical demands arising from daily life, the need to explain the new faith to themselves and to others, and the necessity of defending against objections and slander.

65Taylor, Formation, 22. Taylor’s basic idea of the narratives and sayings is that they first were existed as single isolated elements (e.g. the stories of the Paralytic in Mk. 2:1 ff., the Blessing of the Children in Mk. 10:13 ff., and the Question about Tribute-money in Mk. 12:13 ff.), and were not the work of practiced writers, but of unknown and unliterary men; The Gospels, 14.
from unfriendly and hostile neighbors.\textsuperscript{67} When Taylor uses the term “pronouncement stories,” he emphasizes the main element - a pronouncement, or word of Jesus - and a term bearing on some aspect of life, belief, or conduct of the early Christians. For Taylor, the advantages of pronouncement stories are the insights they shed on the origins of the Gospel tradition.\textsuperscript{68} Therefore, Taylor seeks the Sitz im Leben in the life-situation in the Rabbinic tradition, which influences stylistic features of the pronouncement stories.\textsuperscript{69}

Analyzing the construction of the Marcan Passion narrative, Taylor attempts to classify two independent narratives through which the evangelist reveals his theological situation. By using the criteria of the connected stories and the presence or absence of Semitisms, Taylor isolates a basic narrative A, from the recollections of Peter, narrative B.\textsuperscript{70} Account A is the straightforward narrative of the suffering of Jesus which was written by Mark to provide an apology for the suffering and death of Jesus for the needs of the Christian community at Rome. A is non-Semitic and serves as a summary.\textsuperscript{71} “B contains the narratives and shorter passages which appear to be intercalated or appended.

These, at the same time, are full of possible Semitisms,\textsuperscript{72} e.g. the Anointing (Mk. 14:3-9),

\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\begin{tabular}{llll}
A. & xiv. 1 f. & 10 f. (12-16), (17-21.) & 26-31. \\
B. & xiv. 3-9. & 22-5. & \\
A. & 43-6. & (53, 55-64.) & xv. 1, 3-5, 15 \\
B. & 25. & 27. & 31 f., 33. & 38. & 40 f. & 47. \\
\end{tabular}
\end{table}

\textsuperscript{67}Ibid., 36-37.  
\textsuperscript{68}Ibid., 30. Dibelius and Bultmann find the origins of the materials in the message and preaching of the primitive church, which received it from the Old Testament as tradition.  
\textsuperscript{69}Ibid., 26, 29. Even though Taylor does not analyze analogies of Jewish and Hellenistic literature of the period in comparing to the pronouncement stories, he gives an example of Jewish disputation from the Talmud.  
\textsuperscript{71}Ibid., 658.  
\textsuperscript{72}Ibid. The table made by Taylor for distinguishing A (non-Semitic) and B (Semitism) is the following:
the story of Gethsemane (Mk. 14:32-42), the Trial before the Priests (Mk. 14:55-64), the Denial (14:54, 66-72), and the Mockery by the Soldiers (Mk. 15:16-20). Following Bultmann’s idea for the origin of the Marcan Passion-sayings, Taylor argues that the sayings reflect the influence of the Old Testament and are designed to give an expression of belief for the primitive Christian community. Through examining the Passion narrative, Taylor concludes that “all is determined by the needs, practical, religious, and apologetic of the first Christians.” Taylor’s work contributes to the theme of Jesus’ rejection not only in suggesting that the conflict stories grew out of the historical situation of the Marcan community, but also that Mark is here using a literary device evident in other parts of his Gospel.

d) Arland J. Hultgren

This is the first study examining the whole Gospel of Mark specifically for the materials that recount the conflict between Jesus and his adversaries. Hultgren’s work is clearly informed by the works of the pioneers in Form criticism, whose celebrated studies of the Synoptic conflict stories were done some sixty years prior. Hultgren claims to

74Taylor argues at the Baptism and Transfiguration (Mk. 1:11; 9:7 ) recall Psalm 2:7; Isaiah 42:2, 4; and Genesis 22:2, the day of Judgment (Mk. 2:22) recalls Isaiah 53:8, the debt of Mark 8:31; 9:12, 31; 10:33 f., 45 refers to suffering, rejection, rejection, death, and exaltation in Isaiah 53, and Christ’s blood of the covenant (Mk. 14:24) recalls Isaiah 53:12.
76Taylor, *Formation*, 62.
move beyond them, not only in making use of subsequent studies, but also in attempting
“to reassess former assumptions and prior Form critical conclusions; and, to describe the
form and function of the conflict stories in new ways.”

Contrary to Dibelius and Bultmann, who argue that the conflict stories were formulated in a Rabbinic and
Hellenistic milieu, Hultgren begins with a comparative study of the conflict stories within
the context of ancient dialogue forms. Hultgren concludes that “the conflict stories
formulated in the Palestinian church have a *Sitz im Leben* in apologetics (except for the
Beelzebub Controversy); the community appeals to the attitude, conduct, and sometimes
authentic words of Jesus in response to Jewish criticism.”

Regarding conflict stories as a narrative form, Hultgren finds eighteen such
passages in the Synoptic Gospels and defines the structure of the form, which consists
of (1) introductory narrative, (2) an opponent’s questions or attacks, and (3) a dominical
saying. Hultgren distinguishes between “unitary” conflict stories in which the saying
is inseparable from the first two elements, and “non-unitary” conflict stories in which

---

79 Ibid., 32-36.
80 Ibid., 197.
81 Ibid., 25-27. From a source-critical standpoint, Hultgren considers the form of conflict stories and argues that “they originate in only three (Mark, Q, and L) of the four (M is excluded) major Synoptic
sources and streams of tradition.”
82 Ibid., 52-53.
83 The formation of the unitary conflict stories are: the Question about Authority (Mk. 11:27-33; Mt. 21:23-27; Lk. 20:1-8), Paying Taxes to Caesar (Mk. 12:13-17; Mt. 22:15-22; Lk. 20:20:20-26), the Question about Fasting (Mk. 12:18-20; Mt. 9:15-15; Lk. 5:33-35); the Question about the Sabbath (Mk. 3:1-5; Mt. 12:9-13; Lk. 6:6-10), and the Sinful Woman at a Pharisee’s House (Lk. 7:36-50).
84 The formation of the non-unitary conflict stories are: the Beelzebul controversy (Mk. 3:22-30; Mt. 12:22-32; Lk. 11:14-15, 17-23), the Healing of the Paralytic (Mk. 2:1-12; Mt. 8:1-8; Lk. 5:17-26), Eating with Tax Collectors and Sinners (Mk. 2:15-17; Mt. 9:10-13; Lk. 5:29b-32), Plucking Grain on the Sabbath (Mk. 2:23-28; Mt. 12:1-8; Lk. 6:1-5), the Tradition of the Elders (Mk. 7:1-8; Mt. 15:1-9), on Divorce (Mk. 10:2-9; Mt. 19:3-9), and on the Resurrection (Mk. 12:18-29; Mt. 22:23-33; Lk. 20:27-40).
the saying probably circulated independently of its present narrative framework. The more primitive stories, designated as “unitary,” were composed in a Palestinian milieu for apologetic purposes. They offered a justification of beliefs and practices for the primitive congregations in response to Jewish criticism. “They are the result of the church working out its own patterns of beliefs and practices by drawing upon reminiscences of Jesus, and formulating stories upon them in which the Master is set in bold and victorious relief against his adversaries.” Conflict stories classified as “non-unitary” were artificially constructed of independent sayings, questions and narrative material. Although they did not arise out of a common life situation, they generally served a catechetical function as teaching devices for churches of the Diaspora (the Hellenistic church). In the non-unitary stories, the function of Jesus’ opponents is to state a position from which Christian teaching departs. In comparing these two kinds of conflict stories with suggested parallels in both Rabbinic and Greco-Roman literature, Hultgren finds they are unique in their defense of early Christians within the larger environment, both Jewish and Gentile.

Concerning the historical trustworthiness of the conflict stories, Hultgren disagrees with the judgment of M. Albertz that all the Synoptic conflict stories contain within themselves reports of actual conflicts in the ministry of Jesus. Rather, Hultgren argues that the conflict stories have been composed at various periods in the history of the

---

85Ibid., 67-148. The distinction has been made by R. Bultmann, Synoptic Tradition, 47. Bultmann does not, however, speak of “unitary” and “non-unitary” conflict stories. Bultmann’s contrast is between stories of “unitary composition” and those of “secondary construction.”
86Hultgren, Jesus and His Adversaries, 88.
87Albertz, Streitgespräche, 57-80.
tradition for differing functions. However, even Hultgren is sure that all of the conflict stories are Christian compositions; at the same time he claims that what is common to them is their vivid portrayal of Jesus’ relationship to current thought and practice. The conflict between Jesus and his opponents in Mark 2:1-3:6 is not Mark’s design, but originated in Galilee within the Galilean ministry of Jesus. For Hultgren, therefore, it cannot be said that the creative impulse for the conflict story form of presentation originated purely in the conflicts of church and synagogue. After all, the form and function of conflict stories refer to literary form, social function, and the historically verifiable perception of social conflict portrayed in the stories.

An important contribution of Hultgren is his claim that the conflict stories represent a new form of composition created by the early Church. Neither the unitary type nor the composite conflict stories conform to existing patterns of Rabbinic disputations or of Greek antecedents. Hultgren has also made a single contribution to this area of New Testament research by arranging the conflict stories in terms of the redactional functions they served in the Gospel writing process. Nevertheless, Hultgren’s work has flaws that derive from his unquestioning acceptance of Form criticism as a dogmatic explanation of the origin of the Gospel material by locating its origin solely in a Sitz im Leben of the early Church. Form criticism emphasizes the fragmentation of the tradition, the compositeness of the Gospel, and the diversity of the various materials incorporated in it. Hultgren’s

---

88 Hultgren, Jesus and His Adversaries, 19, 198.
89 Ibid., 159.
90 Ibid.
approach results in a refusal to recognize a continuous reference between the origin of the material in the ministry of Jesus and its ultimate written expression in the Gospels. A main fault of form critics is that they see the authors as compilers rather than composers, as principally collectors, vehicles of tradition, and editors.91 “This preoccupation of form criticism with the individual pre-Gospel units has tended to blind it to what the editorial framework and activity manifest in the text itself might tell us about the Gospel’s overall purpose and theological motivation.”92

2. Source Critical Approach

Source-critical analysis has, on the other hand, focused on the controversy stories, exploring whether pericopae in such sections of the Gospel of Mark as 2:1-3:6; 7:1-23; 11-12; 14-16 display sufficient positive and negative distinguishing features to suggest they derive from a non-Marcan source or sources.93 M. J. Cook’s work addresses historical questions of how familiar Mark was with Jewish leadership groups, what Mark’s sources were, and how historically reliable Mark’s portrayal is.94 Cook concludes that:

The author himself knows very little about the Jewish leadership groups he presumes were active in Jesus’ time; that he depends very heavily on three written sources which he incorporates into his gospel and with great resourcefulness accommodates to one another; that the resulting portrayal of Jewish authorities—while reflecting considerable redactional skill—is nevertheless artificial, and not a reliable index for the historian of Jesus’ ministry, especially because Mark’s sources and his editorial treatment of them

91Dibelius, From Tradition to Gospel, 3.
93Ibid., 19.

3 7
reflect concerns of a context far later than Jesus’ ministry itself. \(^95\) Cook’s greater interest is with the second issue, the intra-Marcan relationship between the various groups. His thesis is that Mark’s portrayal of Jewish leadership groups reflects the redactional combination of three written sources: 1) an early Passion source, furnishing Mark with chief priests, scribes and elders, based in Jerusalem; 2) a source focusing on scribes only, setting them in Jerusalem; and 3) a source focusing on the Pharisees and Herodians, possibly set in a Galilean context. \(^96\)

The core of his study is Chapters 3 and 4 where, in dialogue with Albertz, Easton and Winter, Cook evolves his three source theory. \(^97\) The oldest source arises from the pre-Marcan Passion Narrative which is “the Jerusalem conspiratorial triad early in the Gospel.” \(^98\) While not offering a complete picture of the pre-Marcan Passion Narrative, Cook attributes 14:1-2, 43; 15:1, 3-5, and 15b to the tradition Mark received. \(^99\) All other such references in the Passion Narrative and in the first 13 chapters of the Gospel (8:31; 10:32ff; 11:18, 27) are redactional and represent Marcan retrojections to unify the Galilean and Jerusalem setting of the ministry of Jesus. \(^100\) This source is the oldest and was used in early Christian apologetics which attributed the death of Jesus to those religious leaders whose association with the temple made them the geographical and spiritual core of resistance to Rome. \(^101\) Accordingly, the contents and sequence of some episodes in

\(^{95}\) Ibid.

\(^{96}\) Ibid., 4-5.


\(^{98}\) Cook, *Mark’s Treatment of The Jewish Leaders*, 62.

\(^{99}\) Ibid., 52-54.

\(^{100}\) Ibid., 55-56.

\(^{101}\) Ibid., 56.
Chapters 1-13, which were composed to provide what might be termed a prerequisite knowledge to a suitably adapted form of the traditional passion narrative, reflect literary needs rather than historical realities:

It is of crucial importance . . . that we should recognize the nature of the purpose behind evangelical presentations of the order of various events in Jesus’ life. The setting forth of earlier stages of this life was controlled by the notion of them as phase in the development of a literary plan which finds its culmination in the crucifixion. . . Hence no historical or biographical information can be gleaned from the order of the items used concerning the chronological sequence of events in the life of Jesus. 102

Cook, therefore, argues that if we accept the theory of a pre-Marcan Passion narrative, clearly the responsibility for Jesus’ capture and execution was assigned by that source to three Jewish authority groups: chief priests + scribes + elders. 103 The second source, which Cook labels the scribe source, appears in Mark 12:18-27; 12:28-34a; 9:11-12a, 13a; 12:35-37; and 12:38-40. In this source, the scribes are pharisaic and active in contrast to their choral passivity in the Passion Narrative (Chaps. 14, 15). 104 The issue in their debates with Jesus is not the observance of the law, but different aspects of messianic expectations in relation to Jesus (e.g., coming of Elijah, Son of David expectations). Mark puts this source in Chapter 12 to anticipate the role of the scribes in the Passion Narrative and displaces 9:11-12a, 13ab from the source because of a catchword link with Elijah in the Transfiguration scene (9:4-5). 105 Thus, Cook concludes that all of the scribes’

102Ibid., 52-53.
103Ibid., 53.
104Ibid., 51. Cook does not explain why the portrayal of scribes in Chapters 14, 15 is passive, but claims, in scribe collection, underlying most of Chapter 12, that the identity and societal role of the scribes are far more sharply defined; they loom up as major authorities in their own right.
105Ibid.
pericopae present a consistent image which contrasts with the image of the scribes in the Passion Narrative. The reason for these two varying images of the scribes is because of Mark’s reliance on differing sources for his information, rather than from Mark himself.\(^{106}\)

The third and latest source is the Pharisee and Herodian source identified in 7:1ff; 2:15-3:5; and 12:13-17. This source arises after the Pauline teaching about the law became an issue for the early church and presents Jesus as a paradigm of response for the church in its disputes with Pharisees of a later day.\(^{107}\) Though this source is associated with the early and Galilean phase of Jesus’ ministry, Mark highlights the dispute over taxes to Caesar (12:13-17) in Jerusalem to associate the Pharisees, albeit remotely, with the final events in Jerusalem.\(^{108}\)

Regarding the theme of Jesus’ rejection in the Gospel of Mark, Cook responds that the author of Mark edits the sources considering the theological stance of his whole Gospel and the hostility between Jesus and Jewish leaders. Accordingly, for Cook, Mark’s literary feature is no longer the collecting and arranging of traditions,\(^{109}\) but the author’s creative, constructive, and unique way of speaking with relevance and power to his own situation. However, the greatest danger of Cook’s thesis is the potential to overlook the narrative effect of these differences for the Marcan Gospel as a whole. Furthermore, the extreme focus on the redaction of the sources misleads the reader about Jesus’ historical

\(^{106}\) Ibid.
\(^{107}\) Ibid., 70.
\(^{108}\) Ibid., 75.
\(^{109}\) Dibelius presents a striking contrast to the perspective of Cook: “The literary understanding of the Synoptic begins with the recognition that they are collections of material. The composers are only to the smallest extent authors. They are principally collectors, vehicles of tradition, editors. Before all else their labour consists in handing down, grouping, and working over the material which has come to them. . . It can be estimated in how lowly a degree after all St. Mark and St. Matthew may pass as authors. These matters are no longer in doubt. . .”; From Tradition to Gospel, 3.
ministry. Even the accurate historical information the author of Mark may have bequeathed to his readers is incidental to the author’s theological interests and is tailored to accommodate them.

3. Redactional Approach

Mulholland’s dissertation,\(^\text{110}\) which appeared in 1977, suggests another method to explore the field of Jesus’ rejection in the Gospel of Mark. Mulholland’s approach is Redaction critical and his focus is historical—the Marcan \textit{Sitz im Leben}; however, he gives attention to a broader literary pattern in Mark. Mulholland starts his work with the following questions: is it possible to ascertain from the interplay between Jesus and his Jewish opponents in Mark’s Gospel where the Marcan community stood in its own relationship with the Jewish community? Was the Marcan community still “a distinct and vigorous sect within Judaism?” Had it lost its “Jewish context and identification?” Or did it stand at some point along the continuum between these two poles?\(^\text{111}\) Then Mulholland postulates that “the conflict between Jesus and his Jewish opponents may reflect the location of the Marcan community on the trajectory which carried the Christian movement from a position inside, to a position outside of Judaism.”\(^\text{112}\)

Mulholland examines the role of the opponents of Jesus, who appear as the only opponents in Mark 1:1-8:26 and appear intermingled with the Passion Narrative opponents


\(^{111}\)Ibid., i-ii.

\(^{112}\)Ibid., i.
in 8:27-13:37.\(^{113}\) Analyzing the passages in three chapters, Mulholland seeks to determine the extent and significance of Marcan editorial involvement in the employment of the particular set of opponents. Mulholland investigates four passages in the first chapter\(^{114}\) and argues that they explicitly or implicitly contain the element of rejection; he then examines the element of rejection and the relationship between Jesus and the synagogue. After he studies 4:17, Mulholland argues that the verse was editorially embellished in ways which reflect the varying *Sitz im Leben* in which it was utilized in the Gospel.\(^{115}\) Analyzing 8:34-9-1, Mulholland argues that Mark not only places discipleship in the shadow of the cross, but by his editorial reworking, Mark implies that followers of Jesus experience rejection as a result of their loyalty to Jesus and their commitment to the Gospel.\(^{116}\) Mulholland, in examining 10:17-31 and 13:9-13, argues that the interworking of many Marcan elements in this pericopae suggests a *Sitz im Leben* within the Jewish community where followers of Jesus were finding themselves alienated and rejected from

\(^{113}\)Ibid., 1, in the abstract. Mulholland summarizes the role of the opponents in a chart:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scribes and Pharisees</th>
<th>Scribes</th>
<th>Pharisees</th>
<th>Herodians</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2:1-12 Jesus’ nature And activity (healing)</td>
<td>3:22-30 Jesus’ nature and activity (exorcism)</td>
<td>9:11, 14 Jesus’ nature and activity (exorcism)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:13-17 Ritual cleanliness in eating</td>
<td>7:1-23 Ritual cleanliness in eating</td>
<td>(lacking in the third appearance of the opponent cycle)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:18-28 Fasting and Lawful activity</td>
<td>8:11-12 Seek a sign</td>
<td>10:1-12 Lawful activity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:1-6 And Plot to destroy Jesus</td>
<td>8:15 Jesus warns followers</td>
<td>12:13-17 Seek to entrap Jesus</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


\(^{116}\)Ibid., 23-40.
their Jewish community of faith due to their allegiance to Jesus. Thus, in Chapter I, Mulholland suggests that the Marcan perspective of rejection reflects the situation of a group of Jesus’ followers who are experiencing discipline at the hands of the Jewish community due to their proclamation of the Gospel (the Word) and their commitment to Jesus as Messiah. 

In Chapter II, Mulholland examines seven passages which reflect the relationship between Jesus and the synagogue, suggesting that Mark’s use of the synagogue parallels and supports his use of the element of rejection. Mulholland makes four points in his study of the role of the synagogues. (1) Mark is responsible for the reworking of a variety of traditional material which is either placed in or infers a synagogue setting. (2) The nature of this editorial activity focuses upon the relationship between Jesus and the synagogue, and clearly involves the followers of Jesus in the situation depicted. (3) The Marcan editorial activity exhibits a development of the relationship between Jesus (and his followers), and the synagogue. (4) The center of this developing hostility of the synagogue and/or its leaders against Jesus (and his followers) is found in Jesus’ authority (1:21-28), his breaking of Sabbath traditions (3:1-6),

---

117 Ibid., 41-68., 2-3, in the abstract.
118 Ibid., 3, in the abstract.
120 Mulholland, “The Markan Opponents of Jesus,” 130.
122 Ibid. Mulholland suggests the development in three steps: “(a) Jesus begins and regularly continues his teaching ministry in synagogues. There is an immediate amazement and acceptance, coupled with a recognition of the superiority of Jesus’ authority (substantiated by acts of power) over that of the leaders of the synagogue (Scribes)—1:21-28, 39; (b) subsequently, in the synagogue, there develops a conflict between Jesus and the religious leaders which results in conspiracy against Jesus (3:1-6), as well as the rejection of Jesus by his own synagogue (6:1-6a; and related to this 12:28-37); (c) finally, Jesus warns his followers about the leadership of the synagogue (12:38-40), a warning which is actualized in the expulsion of his followers from the synagogue (13:9-13).”
and his teaching and the nature of his being (6:1-6a; 12:28-40; 13:9-13). Accordingly, Mulholland concludes that the development of the rejection of Jesus’ followers reflects the growing hostility which came about within the synagogue as individuals accepted Jesus as the Messiah, proclaimed him to their fellow Jews, promulgated his teaching, and began to act with new and different authority on the basis of Jesus’ teaching and activities. Thus, for Mulholland, Chapter II strengthens the hypothesis that Mark’s editorial activity reflects the experience of his own community of Jesus’ disciples.

Examining the three appearances of the Marcan cycle of opponents of Jesus in Chapter III, Mulholland deals with nine passages. The first appearance of the cycle of opposition is found in 2:1-3:6, a literary unit created by Mark from a variety of traditional materials. “Within this unit, the Marcan editorial activity consistently focuses upon the opponents of Jesus and employs them in a progressive manner to move the opponents of Jesus from the leaders of the synagogue—the scribes, to the major party within Judaism—the Pharisees, and then to an involvement of secular authorities outside the Jewish community—the Herodians.” The second appearance of the cycle depicts the only opponents of Jesus (and the disciples) in the section 3:7-8:26, and confirms the cycle of opposition set forth in 2:1-3:6. “These two parallel presentations thus form a standard which facilitates the delineation of the same group of opponents once again in 8:27-14:1.

---

123Ibid., 130.
124Ibid., 4, in the abstract.
126Mulholland, “The Markan Opponents of Jesus,” 3-4 in the abstract. The progression of the opposition to Jesus starts from the leaders of the synagogue—the Scribes to the major party within Judaism—the Pharisees, and then to an involvement of secular authorities outside the Jewish community—the Herodians.
where they appear intermingled with the opponents of the Passion Narrative."  

The final appearance of the opponent cycle retains the same Marcan editorial activities which depict the opponents of Jesus involved in controversies and progresses the development of opposition. This development takes place on two fronts: (1) there is progression among the opponents as they are presented by Mark. The scribes, the basic group of opponents, appear in the introductory passage (1:22) and concluding passage (12:28–40), and are also included as opponents in the Passion Narrative; (2) there is also a shift between the first, second, and third presentation of the opponent cycle. In the first presentation, the opponents consistently place Jesus on the defensive with their charges. In the second presentation, Jesus consistently turns back the charges of the opponents against him and places them on the defensive. In the third cycle, the opposition moves from Galilee to Judea to Jerusalem.  

Mulholland notes that the opposition within Judaism grew to the point where secular/political authorities were involved. Mulholland concludes that the Marcan editorial use of the opponents reflects a Sitz im Leben in which the followers of Jesus were in conflict with a Jewish community which rejected the Christian claims about Jesus and debated the heteropraxis of Jesus’ followers from a position of Jewish orthopraxis.  

Mulholland’s contribution to the research of Jesus’ rejection in the Marcan Gospel is that the hostility to Jesus reflects a Sitz im Leben in which Jesus and his followers have experienced historical opposition from the religious and political situation in the first

---

127 Ibid., 247-48.  
128 Ibid., 248-49.  
129 Ibid., 241-44, 248-49.  
130 Ibid., 6, 249.
century era. Even though he does not demonstrate the opponent pericopae in the larger narrative contexts in order to interpret their significance in the Gospel as a whole, Mulholland describes Mark’s editing of literary structure through the development of opposition from the Jewish religion (Scribes and Pharisees) to the political establishment (Herodians). Mulholland’s method, however, lacks the explanation of the background of the opponent pericopae, e.g., the Old Testament which had influenced the Marcan Gospel, and needs to explain the *Sitz im Leben* which has parallels both in Jewish and in Greco-Roman circles during the first century. While he emphasizes the reworking of the Marcan elements of the opponent pericopae for the Jewish community, Mulholland also ignores the fact that the Marcan narrative was written in the context of literature that lies both within and outside Jewish and Christian circles of influence.

4. Review of the Criticisms

To understand and interpret the Marcan conflict, New Testament scholars dedicated to the Synoptic Gospels have long employed effective methodologies. Applying technical terminology to the Marcan conflict, Form Criticism has been concerned with describing the form and function of the conflict stories in their pre-literary stages of formation and

---

transmission. Conventions, the social function of the discourse, and the historically verifiable perception of social conflict portrayed in the stories. In contrast, Source-critical Analysis takes up the question of whether pericopae of controversy stories in the Marcan Gospel display sufficient distinguishing features to suggest they derive from a non-Marcan source or sources. Source-critical scholars postulate that the Gospel of Mark may be a compilation of sources edited by the author. A third major platform for criticism is Redaction–critical interpretation of the conflict stories which focuses on the Marcan editorial use of the opponents to reflect a Sitz im Leben, a shared condition in which the followers of Jesus have experienced opposition from the Jewish community. From this perspective, the editorial elements in the conflict materials in the Gospel of Mark are unified for the Marcan author’s intent regarding historical setting.

Although these scholarly viewpoints have provided significant insights into the Marcan conflict theme, current scholarship does not adequately address the conflict stories in light of the Marcan motif of Jesus’ rejection in a historical and literary setting. If we understand the motif of Jesus’ rejection as formed by a set of integrated strategies unified for one overall goal, the existing scholarship on the controversy stories in the Synoptic tradition is not yet apt.


134 Hultgren defines the term, Sitz im Leben, as a technical term meaning “setting in life,” but more appropriately the term signifies those aspects of early Christian practice—worship, preaching, catechetical instruction, or apologetics—within which units of tradition were formed and put to use; Jesus and His Adversaries, 19.


Furthermore, if these passages are encoded with the social and cultural meaning of the Mediterranean world, a new investigation may not only decode the contexts of hostility in each specific situation, but also view these passages as a form of an overall semantic unit in the Gospel. Therefore, research needs to focus on interpreting the conflict stories in their larger narrative contexts in Mark and on its social context: cultural and religious beliefs and practices in first century Palestine.

D. Statement of Current Methodology: Socio-Rhetorical Interpretation

Tolbert’s multiple interpretation approach to Mark clarifies both the necessary historical condition and the very nature of narrative itself, which are closely related to the historical and cultural environment out of which the Marcan Gospel comes. Tolbert’s interpretive methodology has suggested that New Testament scholars should focus on examining the literary model by which the author may have been influenced in the overall conception of his work.

To reinvent and redraw Form, Source, and Redaction criticism of the Gospel of

---


138 Mary Ann Tolbert, Sowing the Gospel: Mark’s world in literary-historical perspective, 7-15. Tolbert views the Marcan Gospel as more akin to the ancient novel of Mediterranean world, which often combined Greek drama and historiography. Tolbert draws a parallel between Mark and such novels as Chariton’s Chaereas and Callirhoe and Xenophon of Ephesus’s An Ephesian Tale. However, the Marcan narrative is clearly not romantic story upon which the ancient novels depend.

139 Three main positions have emerged. One view is that Mark’s Gospel is not a nouveau genre but one with parallels in Jewish literature or the wider Hellenistic world. A second view is that Mark’s Gospel, on the other hand, is a nouveau genre and would argue for its uniqueness. A third view is that Mark’s Gospel represents a new type of “evolved” literature; Telford, “Introduction,” 15-17. For the data of the three views, see Telford, “Introduction,” 15-17, 51-52.
Mark, Vernon K. Robbins introduced in 1984 the term “Socio-Rhetorical Criticism”. 140

Robbins observed that the aforementioned three critics have failed to comprehend the basic social and cultural phenomena in the Mediterranean world, which created the environment in which Christianity lived, moved, and had its being.141 Rather than traditional methods of Source, Form and Redaction criticism, Robbins locates Mark’s distinctiveness in the intermingling and mutual adaptation of the two traditions, Judaism, and the Greco-Roman world.142 To explicate the undercurrent of social, religious, and literary traditions and conventions in the Gospel of Mark, Robbins gives attention to on the rhetorical dimensions of form, patterns of communication, that change attitudes and


141 Robbins, Jesus the Teacher, 1.

142 Ibid., 17 n. 52. Robbins introduces the term, “comparative socio-rhetorical analysis,” after compares with the term, “comparative analysis,” which David L. Barr uses in his dissertation, “Toward a Definition of the Gospel Genre: A Generic Analysis and Comparison of the Synoptic Gospels and the Socratic Dialogues by Means of Aristotle’s Theory of Tragedy” (Ph.D. diss., Florida State University, 1974); Barr’ using the term, “comparative analysis” is to describe his generic comparison of Plato’s Crito, Phaedo, and Apology with the Synoptic gospels in “Toward a Definition of the Gospel Genre.” Barr compares both bodies of literature with “a known genre that has been adequately described, tragedy as defined by Aristotle in his Poetics” (p. iii). By contrast, Robbins attempts to encourage “comparative socio-rhetorical analysis” whereby specific passages in the gospels are analyzed in the setting of specific passages in both the biblical-Jewish and Greco-Roman literature. Such a form of exegesis moves beyond analysis of specific literary and cognitive influences (historical perpetuation of tradition) into analysis of sociocultural patterns and conventions known to us from extant literature.
induce actions. Robbins introduced a definite methodology of socio-rhetorical criticism, which practices interdisciplinary exegesis, reinvents traditional steps of analysis, and redraws traditional boundaries of interpretation. To interpret actual passages with socio-rhetorical criticism, Robbins introduced a “four-texture” approach. (1) Inner texture: the inner texture of a text refers to the various ways the text employs language to communicate. This includes various types of linguistic patterns within a text, structural elements of a text, the specific manner a text attempts to persuade its reader, and the way the language of a text evokes feelings, emotions, or senses located in different parts of the body. (2) Intertexture: intertexture is a “text’s representation of, reference to, and use of phenomena in the world outside the text being interpreted. This includes other texts (other cultures, social roles institutions, codes and relationships, and historical events or places). (3) Social and cultural texture: social and cultural texture of a text refers to the social and cultural nature of a text as a text. A text is part of society and culture by the way it views the world by sharing in the general social and cultural attitudes, norms, and modes of interaction which are known by everyone in a society, and by establishing itself vis-à-vis the dominant cultural system as either sharing in its attitudes, values, and dispositions.

143Ibid., 7.
145Robbins, “Socio-Rhetorical Criticism,”171-79; The Tapestry of Early Christian Discourse, 44-95. To analyze and interpret inner texture, Robbins presents five kinds of inner texture in texts: (1) repetitive-progressive; (2) opening—middle—closing; (3) narrational; (4) argumentative; and (5) aesthetic.
146Robbins, “Socio-Rhetorical Criticism,”179-85; The Tapestry of Early Christian Discourse, 96-143. Robbins suggests that intertexture in a text covers a spectrum that includes: (1) oral-scribal intertexture; (2) historical intertexture; (3) social intertexture; and (4) cultural intertexture.
at some level or by rejecting these attitudes, values, and dispositions. Ideological texture: ideological texture is concerned with the particular alliances and conflicts nurtured and evoked by the language of the text and the language of the interpretation, as well as the way the text itself and interpreters of the text position themselves in relation to other individuals and groups. The four sub-textures of ideological texture are: the individual locations of writers and readers (i.e., their presuppositions, dispositions, and values); the relation to groups, membership in which influences readings and writers; modes of intellectual discourse, which is the particular perspective a reader subscribes to that sets boundaries around his or her reading; and spheres of ideology, which concerns the ideology inscribed in the text and how one may analyze it.

Robbins’ texture framework can be applied to an analysis of the motif of Jesus’ rejection. First, the inner texture of the conflict stories will examine the narrator’s patterns of repetition in Mark’s narrative design: what kind of verbal forms, activities, and language styles are involved in the controversy between Jesus and Jewish leaders? How does malicious language in Mark cohere throughout the whole Gospel? How is the Marcan narrative as a whole unified through hostile features? This layer will focus on the Marcan text itself, especially on language relationships—word-phrase and narrative

---

patterns that produce argumentative patterns in the Gospel.

Robbin’s second layer, intertexture, will ask from where these hostile passages adopted their language. With what texts and textual traditions are these conflict texts in dialogue? These issues are brought into analysis and interpretation of reference, recitation, recontextualization, reconfiguration and echo of opponent materials in the Marcan Gospel. Robbins’ intertexture will provide a tool to compare the Marcan text with extracanonical Jewish texts and other Mediterranean literature to establish the Marcan canonical boundaries.

When applying Robbins’ social and cultural texture to the conflict stories in Mark, it raises questions about the Mediterranean social and cultural systems and institutions, cultural alliances and conflicts. Interpretation of social and cultural texture applies to topics argued by Jesus and his opponents in Mark. Specifically, the following questions concerning Jesus’ rejection arise: how do “the law,” “the tradition of elders,” and “the temple” function in Jewish and Greco-Roman culture? How does “authority” operate in the culture? What goals do these subjects accomplish for the author of Mark?

In 1975, John Gager raised the issue of ideology in the interpretation of early

---


Christian texts. Asserting that conflict reaches its most intense level when it involves competing ideologies or competing views of the same ideology, he presented three critical moments in the history of early Christianity: “the conflict with Judaism over the claim to represent the true Israel; the conflict with paganism over the claim to possess true wisdom; and the conflict among Christian groups over the claim to embody the authentic faith of Jesus and the apostles.”

Gager uses the term “ideology” as an essential element in group formation which establishes one’s own identity and causes conflict with other groups’ in the Greco-Roman world. For the purpose of this present work, Gager’s proposition on ideology suggests several questions: who is benefiting by the conflicts between Jesus and Jewish leaders? If the dominant voices in conflict stories persuade people to act according to their premises, who will gain and who will lose? What will be gained and what will be lost by conflict stories? Whose ideology is being advanced, for whose benefit, by the polemic between Jesus and his opponents? To approach the issues three angles must be analyzed: (a) the voices of the narrator, (b) the dialogue between Jesus and Jewish religious leaders, and (c) a rhetorical interpretation of the first century Jewish and Greco-Roman literature. This analysis of the multiple levels of rejection discourse in the Marcan text will not only make clear how the language relationships cohere to create the rejection motif through the Gospel, but also how the author’s intention is revealed through the first century social and cultural phenomena.

---

153 Gager, Kingdom, 82.
Chapter II. Internal Structure of Argumentation on the Rejection Motif

In the Gospel of Mark, the reference to the rejection of Jesus by Jewish religious leaders is frequently indicated. It appears in the beginning of Mark and reaches a climax in the end of the Gospel.\textsuperscript{154} It takes various forms, which are integrally related to each other by the repetition of the same or similar terms, phrases, or other elements.\textsuperscript{155} According to Rhoads, the Marcan literary style is a unified narrative text, which coheres Mark’s narrative.

The Markan episodes are intertwined with each other by the repetition of words and phrases, the occurrence of foreshadowings and retrospections, similarities of scenes and situations, and the clustering of episodes in concentric or parallel pattern . . . The rich variety in repetition serves also to develop character, advance the plot, and amplify themes in Mark’s narrative design.\textsuperscript{156}

As shown in this passage, the language intertwined in repetition is not something incidental to the content of the Gospel, but determines the way in which the author communicates and so the nature of what is communicated.\textsuperscript{157} As a form of communication, a text is a meaningful


\textsuperscript{156}Rhoads, \textit{Mark As Story}, 47. The text is a particular linguistic concretion that a particular writer expresses according to his linguistic competence. The author chooses applicable language (words, phrases, clauses, sentences, patterns, semantic contents, and etc.) to bind a text together. The linguistic fundamental position leads us to an important critique of Marcan language, especially obdurate expression. In other words, hostile language verbalized for Jesus’ rejection through the Gospel is arbitrarily not selected and combined, but a result of linguistic competence provided by the author of Mark and an innate linguistic phenomenon within his historical context as well.

configuration of language and becomes coherent through its subject, and through the repetitive expression of the author’s intent to produce a unified effect on the reader. Different from Robbins, who defines the relationship of the language forms as inner texture, Malbon compares inner texture with external context. Malbon explains that a text’s internal context relates to the text itself—its words and sentences, its characters and setting, its plot and action, its rhetoric and imagery—for the text’s meaning and significance. In contrast with inner texture, external context of a text relates its situation in some larger world: cultural, political, religious, or literary situation. Malbon also parallels inner texture in the literary context of a text in comparing it with historical context. The literary context concentrates more on how the text is read than on why it was written, more on function than on intention. Accordingly, the internal structure of the Marcan Gospel limits the historical, social and cultural nature of the Gospel of Mark. Rather it focuses on the prominent use of the repetition of key-words in order to bind these elements together. The goal of inner textual analysis is to attain

---

161 Ibid.
162 Ibid., Malbon argues that the historical context of a text is to investigate its place in societal/cultural processes of continuity and change. Crossing the internal/external distinction with the literary/historical distinction results in four contextual foci of interpreters of texts:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>“literary context”</th>
<th>“internal context”</th>
<th>“external context”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“historical context”</td>
<td>the interrelations of the elements of the text</td>
<td>the interrelations of the text with other texts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The immediate societal/cultural situation of the text (esp. its origin or preservation)</td>
<td>The broader societal/cultural situation of the text</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Arrows reflect relationships. See Malbon, *the Company Characters*, 102-106 for the explanation of the diagram.
initial insight into the argumentation of Jesus’ rejection in Mark’s Gospel.^{163}

To move toward the goal of internal structure, this chapter identifies two kinds of inner patterns: (A) references to the Jewish religious leaders, which create the conflict against Jesus, and (B) language relationship, which coheres the rejection theme.

A. The References to the Jewish Leaders

In the Marcan Gospel, the opponents of Jesus are the Jewish religious leaders.\(^ {164} \)

There are seven groups of the Jewish religious establishment, which consists of scribes, Pharisees, elders, chief priests, Herodians, Sadducees, and Sanhedrin. Each group has its own sphere in which they respond against Jesus. For this reason, the references to their names in the Marcan episodes can be appropriately mentioned.\(^ {165} \)

To identify repetitive references to the Jewish leaders, the Diagram II-1 displays references to the opponents’ names in each chapter throughout the text. The numbers in the vertical column of the utmost left side in the diagram are the chapters of Mark and the numbers below the names of the opponents are the verses of each chapter. The bottom line displays the times of repetition of that word in Mark.

---

164Theodore J. Weeden, Mark-Traditions in Conflict (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1971), insists that Mark’s portrayal of the disciples is as a literary device in the service of polemic, regarding them as Jesus’ opponents in Mark (p. 25).
165Robert A. Guelich, “Anti-Semitism and/ or Anti-Judaism in Mark?” in Craig A. Evans and Donald A. Hagner, ed., Anti-Semitism and Early Christianity: Issues of polemic and Faith (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993), 85. However, Michael J. Cook, Mark’s treatment of the Jewish leaders (Bill:Leiden, 1978), argues that the scribe and Pharisees were the same element of society, but Mark, unfamiliar with who “scribes” had been, fails to detect the synonymity of the usage, and therefore presents us with two groups rather than one. (p.5).
Based on the Diagram II-1, the section A show the high and low frequency of the chapters where each group is referred to. This section will also explore how each group works together to oppose Jesus. In other words, it will demonstrate the relationships between various groups. Lastly, the issues with which each opponent raged against Jesus will be exhibited. Throughout the display of the references of the Jewish leaders, it will be investigated that the Gospel of Mark is the one unit for the conflict between Jesus and the Jewish religious leaders.

Diagram II-1: repetitive references to the Jewish leaders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leaders</th>
<th>Chapters</th>
<th>Scribes</th>
<th>Pharisees</th>
<th>Elders</th>
<th>Chief priests</th>
<th>Herodians</th>
<th>Sadducees</th>
<th>Sanhedrin</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>22</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>44 the priest</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>26 high priest</td>
<td>26 the priests</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>31</td>
<td></td>
<td>15 Herod</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>31</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>33</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>33</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>27</td>
<td></td>
<td>27</td>
<td>18</td>
<td></td>
<td>27</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>38</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


   a) The Verses of the Chapters Referenced to the Scribes

   The Diagram II -1 shows that the scribes appear in almost all the chapters, except chapters 4 to 6, 13, and 16 throughout the whole story of Mark. They are the first of the opponents to be mentioned in 1:22 and the last reference to the opponents in 15:31, which means that they are the beginning and the end of Jesus’ opponents. As shown in the Diagram II-1, they are referred to twenty one times (1:22; 2:6, 16; 3:22; 7:1,5; 8:31; 9:11, 14; 10:33; 11:18, 27; 12:28, 32, 35, 38; 14:1, 43, 53; 15:1, 31), which is the most reference to an opponent among the other groups of opponents in the Marcan gospel. It draws a picture for the Marcan readers to see the scribes as a dominant group that takes an active
part against Jesus in the whole story of Mark.\textsuperscript{167}

As the diagram displays, the rejection by the scribes of Jesus takes place in three stages.\textsuperscript{168} The first stage is from chapter 1 to 7 in which the scribes attack Jesus directly (1:22; 2:6, 16; 3:22; 7:1). The second stage is from chapter 8 to 10, in which there is little direct conflict between Jesus and the scribes. Nevertheless, Jesus draws the scribes to the impending clash with other Jewish leaders, prophesying that “the Son of man must undergo great suffering, be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed. . .” (8:31; 9:31;\textsuperscript{169} 10:33). The two further references, 9:11 and 9:14, to the scribes are not direct controversies between Jesus and them, but between the scribes and Jesus’ disciples. The third stage is from Chapter 11 to 15, in which the conflict between Jesus and his opponents intensifies in the last part of Mark’s story. In this stage, the scribes are mentioned in each chapter (11:18, 27; 12:28, 32, 35, 38; 14:1, 43, 53; 15:1, 31). They are involved in immediate rejection of Jesus, except 12:28 and 32 for a scribe agrees with Jesus and the reference in 12: 35 in which Jesus uses the name for his teaching on conflict.

\textsuperscript{167}Cf. Anthony J. Saldarini, \textit{Pharisees, Scribes and Sadducees in Palestinian Society: A Sociological Approach} (Grand Rapids/Cambridge: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1998), 146. Saldarini observes that the Pharisees along with the scribes are the chief opponents of Jesus in Galilee; the chief priests, scribes and elders are his opponents in Jerusalem.

\textsuperscript{168}Traditionally most interpreters of Mark divide the conflict story into three parts geographically: the first division is from 1 to 9 for the setting of Galilee, the second division is chapter 10 for the journey to Jerusalem, “on the way,” and the third one is from 11 to 16 for the setting of Jerusalem. For more information on the geographical setting of Mark, see Elizabeth Struthers Malbon, “Galilee and Jerusalem: History and Literature in Marcan Interpretation,” \textit{CBQ} \textbf{44} (1982), 242-255; Rhoads, \textit{Mark as Story}, 84-87; and Karl Kertelge, “The Epiphany of Jesus in the Gospel (Mark)” in \textit{The Interpretation of Mark}, 2\textsuperscript{nd} ed. by William R. Telford by (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1995), 118-19.

\textsuperscript{169}Instead of referring the name of the scribes which is the one of the three prophecies of the passion, 9:31 gives brief information on the clash with the phrase, “The Son of Man is to be betrayed into human hands, and they will bill him.” Of course the references of the “human hand” and “they” include the scribes.
b) The Conspirators of the Scribes

The Diagram II-1 shows that the scribes basically act against Jesus without other conspirators. The references to the scribes without other groups are 1:22; 2:6; 3:22; 9:11, 14; 12:28, 32, 35, 38. The scribes have four different co-conspirators. The first group associated with the scribes is the Pharisees (2:16; 7:1, 5).\textsuperscript{170} In the spatial setting in Mark, the scribes could conspire with the Pharisees, the chief opponents in the Galilean context.\textsuperscript{171}

In the final half (8-16), there are three groups who conspire against Jesus with the scribes; the first group are the elders and the chief priests in 8:31; 11:27; 14:43; 15:1, the second group are the chief priests in 10:33; 11:18; 14:1; 15:1, and the last group comprises the chief priests, the high priest, and the elders in 14:53. In the Jerusalem context, the diagram presents that the main opponents who associate with the scribes are the chief priests, who are involved in not only the first group (the scribes, the elders and the chief priests), but also the last group (the scribes, the high priest, the chief priests, and the elders).\textsuperscript{172}

\textsuperscript{170}To investigates the intra-Marcan relationship of the various groups, Michael J. Cook, \textit{Mark's Treatment of the Jewish Leaders} (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1979), takes the redactional combination of three written sources: “1) an early Passion source, furnishing him with chief priests, scribes and elders, based in Jerusalem; 2) a source focusing on scribes only, setting them in Jerusalem; and 3) a source focusing on Pharisees and Herodians, possibly set in a Galilean context” (pp, 4-5). As the result of the sources, Cook argues that the scribes in 2:16 and 7:1 are the synonymity of usage of the Pharisees and the appearance of “scribes” in the verses is redactional and inserted by Mark in the interest of a literary accommodation of his three sources to one another (p. 5).

\textsuperscript{171}In the first half of Mark’s story, the dominant opponents among the Jewish leaders are the two groups, scribes and Pharisees. See, Malbon, “The Jewish leaders in the Gospel of Mark,” 272-73 and Saldarini, \textit{Pharisees, Scribes and Sadducees}, 146.

\textsuperscript{172}Even though the elders, the scribes, the priests take an active part in Jerusalem against Jesus, the chief opponent group in Jerusalem context is the high priest. As the diagram shows, the chief priests appear by an overwhelming majority comparing other groups, who associate with the chief priests to reject Jesus. Cf. Malbon, “The Jewish Leaders in the Gospel of Mark,” 273. She asserts that “in the final half his primary opposition comes from the chief priests, scribes, and elders.
c) The Issues Raised by the Scribes

From the references to the scribes in Mark, four issues are raised by the scribes for controversy with Jesus; Jesus’ teaching, his authority, the laws, and the temple.

First, Jesus’ teaching stands in contrast to the scribes’ in three places (1:22; 9:11; 12:35). In Capernaum the people are astonished at Jesus’ teaching because he “taught them as one who had authority and not as the scribes” (1:22). Jesus’ disciples ask about the teaching of the scribes on the coming of Elijah (9:11) and Jesus, who accepts their teaching explains that it has already been fulfilled (9:12-13). Jesus quotes the teaching of the scribes that the Messiah must be the son of David (12:35) and denies this contention by scriptural interpretation (12:36-37).


---

probably concerned the disciples’ claim to authority and power to do works which are beyond human capability."  

The reference to the scribes in 11:27 clearly points out the issue of authority. They say, “By what authority are you doing these things? Who gave you this authority to do them?” (11:28). In these cases (14:1, 43, 53; 15:1, 31) the scribes are associated with the chief priests, the high priest, and the elders who are part of the Jewish authority structure and seek the death of Jesus.

Third, the scribes conflict with Jesus five times on the Law in the Gospel of Mark (2:16; 7:1, 5; 12:28, 32). The scribes of the Pharisees criticize Jesus because he failed to observe the essential component of their Law by eating with tax collectors and sinners (2:16). In 7:1-2 the scribes are not described as against Jesus directly, but his disciples who are eating with defiled hands, which is against the Law of purification. The question of a scribe, who is impressed and agrees with Jesus’ word in 12: 28 and 12:32, is about the Law. The reference to the scribe in the pericope coheres with the Law, even though he did not conflict with Jesus.

The last, two places (11:18; 12:38) in Mark are related with the Temple issue concerning which the scribes conflicted with Jesus. Even though there is reference to “teaching” two times (11:17, 18) in the story of Cleansing the Temple in 11:15-19, “the scribes” are only connected with the Temple issue. Jesus drove out those who were selling and those who were buying in the temple, and he overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold doves because of the authorities’ misuse of the

---

Temple. In 12:38 there is no direct conflict between Jesus and his opponents. Nevertheless, here we have Jesus’ warning his disciples of false piety and worship in the Temple.  

2. The Pharisees (Mark 2:16, 18 (2x), 24; 3:6; 7:1, 3, 5; 8:11, 15; 10:2; 12:13)

   a) The Verses of the Chapters Referenced to the Pharisees

The Diagram II-1 shows that reference to the Pharisees in Mark appears twelve times (2:16, 18 (2x), 24; 3:6; 7:1, 3, 5; 8:11, 15; 10:2; 12:13), and displays them as always antagonistic. Not one reference exhibits them in a positive light in the Marcan story. All the references to the Pharisees are placed in the Galilean context (2:16, 18 (2x), 24; 7:1, 3, 5; 8:15), except 10:2 which is the first intimation of Jerusalem in Mark’s Gospel and 12:13. There is no repetitive reference to the Pharisees in the final half of Mark, except 10:2 and 12:13. The diagram shows that the main sphere of the Pharisees is Galilee in spite of the fact that they appear two times in Jerusalem.

In ten references (2:16, 18 (2x), 24; 3:6; 7:1, 7:3, 5; 8:11; 10:2; 12:13), the

---

177Larry Perkins, “Mark’s Language of Religious Conflict as Rhetorical Device,” BBR 11 vol.1 (2001), 55, n.39, argues that “Most interpreters of Mark’s Gospel consider the geographical notation about Caesarea Philippi in 8:27 as the signal for Jesus’ inauguration of his final journey to Jerusalem. However, there is no indication at this time that Jesus intends to venture outside of Galilee. At 9:33 Jesus still is in Capernaum. So the note in 10:1 that Jesus “having arisen went into the regions of Judea and beyond the Jordan” is the first intimation of his journey to Jerusalem in Mark’s Gospel.”
178Saldarini, Pharisees, Scribes and Sadducees, asserts that the Pharisees are in Galilee and involves the two references, 10:2 and 12:13, which appears in the Jerusalem context. He insists that the two references may be due to the literary arrangement of Mark (p. 147). See ibid, 147, n. 12 for more detail explanation on 12:13.
179In 10:2 a significant manuscript omits the name, Pharisees; D itb, d, k, r1 (copcorr) Syr. Because of the omission, Joseph C. Weber, Jr., “Jesus’ Opponents in the Gospel of Mark,” JBR 34 (1966), suggests that in 10:2, “the Pharisees” probably did not belong to the original version of the debate (p. 217).
180M. Smith, Jesus the Magician (New York: Harper & Row, 1978), argues that “There is strong evidence that there were practically no Pharisees in Galilee during Jesus’ lifetime” (p.69). Josephus shows the Pharisees as closely linked with the leadership in Jerusalem (Ant. 18.15).
Pharisees directly dispute with Jesus. The two references in 7:3 and 8:15 are indirect opposition against Jesus; in 7:3 the narrator alludes to the conflict between the Pharisees and Jesus, in 8:15 Jesus implies their dissension.

b) The co-conspirators of the Pharisees

The references to the Pharisees not only appear with no other groups, but also with alliances. They are mentioned individually five times (2:18 (2x), 24; 8:11; 10:2), with scribes three times (2:16; 7:1, 5), with elders (7:3, 5),\(^{181}\) and with Herodians three times (3:6; 8:15; 12:13).

c) The Issues Raised by the Pharisees

The main issue, which Pharisees take against Jesus, is on the observation of the Law. They dispute against him over fasting (2:18), Sabbath observance (2:24), and divorce (10:2). Without companions, they also dispute Jesus’ authority by demanding a sign (8:11). With the scribes they contradict Jesus over purification of hands (7:1), and the scribes of the Pharisees examine Jesus’ meals that were eaten with sinners and tax collectors (2:16). The Pharisees combine with the Herodians and try to trap (12:13) and destroy Jesus (3:6) in a political matter.

It is therefore found that the issues raised by the Pharisees are different from those

---

\(^{181}\)Here “the elders” are not the elders of the religious leaders of the Jews, who take an active part in the first century Palestine. It describes honored Jewish teachers of the Law whose judgments were handed down and were considered as binding by the scribes and Pharisees. See Taylor, *Mark*, 336; Guelich, *Mark1-8:26*, 365.
whom the Pharisees conspired with. That is, while the scribes point out that the issue is the Law, for the Herodians, the issue is Jesus’ authority.

3. The Herodians (Mark 3:6, 8:15)

a) The Verses of the Chapters Referenced to the Herodians

Even though the Herodians are the enigmatic group, the Herodians are unclear about who they are and are thought of as agents of Herod Antipas in the Marcan Gospel; however, they function in effect as “religious authorities” because of their close association with the Pharisees. The reference to the Herodians in Mark’s Gospel appears three times in 3:6, 8:15, and 12:13. All the references are negative functions against Jesus.

The Herodians are referred to in the story where Jesus healed a man with a withered hand on the Sabbath (3:1-5). Seeing it, “The Pharisees went out and immediately conspired with the Herodians against him, how to destroy him” (3:6). Dewy argues that from 3:6 the opposition to Jesus has escalated to the point where some—the Pharisees and

---

182 The precise definition of the group, “Herodian,” has long been the subject. To the question of who the Herodians were, various answers have been given, but in modern times there has been a wide consensus of opinion that they were political supporters of the Herodian dynasty, rather than a religious party or sect. Other view is that they were rather members of the household of Herod. Other scholars define them as responsible officials. For more detail on the definition of the Herodian, see H. H. Rowley, “The Herodians in the Gospels,” JTS 41 (1940), 14-27; W. J. Bennett, Jr., “The Herodians of Mark’s Gospel,” NovT 17 (1975), 9-14; and B. W. Bacon, “Pharisees and Herodians in Mark,” JBL 39 (1920), 102-12.

183 Jack Dean Kingsbury, Conflict in Mark: Jesus, Authorities, Disciples (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1989), 123 n. 45; Guelich, Mark, 138-39; cf. A. Hultgren, Jesus and His Adversaries: The Formation and Function of the Conflict Stories in the Synoptic Tradition (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1979), 92 n. 36.

184 Some few manuscripts have “Herodians” rather than Herod: P46 G W Θ εικ 28 205 565 168 176 1673 1813 11223 it k vg vtm cop arm geo (GNT fourth edition, UBS).
Herodians—wish to kill him.\textsuperscript{185}

From now on in the gospel narrative, Jesus stands under threat of death. Jesus’ healing act has become a step on the way to the cross. And the Jewish leaders’ rejection of Jesus and his message is a step on the way to their own destruction (12:1-12).\textsuperscript{186}

The reference to the Herodians appears again in 8:15,\textsuperscript{187} which is still in the Galilean setting. They do not conflict with Jesus directly, but Jesus referred to their name in saying to his disciples, “Watch out—beware of the yeast of the Pharisees and the yeast of Herod.” Yeast is a familiar metaphor in the New Testament and Rabbinic literature, and it usually stands for a destructive evil inclination.\textsuperscript{188} The reference to the Herodians in 8:15 is therefore hostility against Jesus.

Finally, the plot to kill Jesus in 3:6 by the Pharisees and the Herodians appears in 12:13 where they are sent to him to trap him. The second mention of the plot by Pharisees and the Herodians in 12:13 functions as a rhetorical cue to the reader to recall the early controversies of Mark 2:1-3:6.\textsuperscript{189} The later reference 12:13 supports an impression of the geographical location of the Herodians from Galilee to Jerusalem.

b) The Conspirators of the Herodians

In their opposition to Jesus, the Herodians are always associated with the Pharisees.


\textsuperscript{186}Ibid., 105.

\textsuperscript{187}Caesarean texts refer to the yeast of the “Herodians,” but not the yeast of “Herod,” a correction influenced by Mark 3:6 and 12:13. See footnote no. 20.


\textsuperscript{189}Dewy, \textit{Markan Public Debate}, 10, 47.
3:6 The Pharisees . . . conspired with the Herodians against him.
8:15 Watch out – beware of the yeast of the Pharisees and the yeast of Herod
12:13 They sent to him some Pharisees and some Herodians to trap him.

In 3:6 at the climax of a series of controversies with Jesus in 2:1-3:6, they plotted with the Pharisees to get rid of him. The same remarkable alliance is referred to in 12:13, where again the Pharisees and the Herodians join together in trying to trap Jesus. When Jesus cautioned his disciples in 8:15, he mentioned “the Pharisees and Herod.”

The geographical location in both settings, Galilee (3:6; 8:15) and Jerusalem, (12:13) shows the role of the Herodians in the opposition to Jesus. In Galilee the Herodians were one of the chief opponents of Jesus along with the scribes and the Pharisees.

Furthermore, in Jerusalem they were one of the main adversaries of Jesus. 190

c) The Issues Raised by the Herodians

The two references to the Herodians in 3:6 and 12:13 are related to Jesus’ authority.

First, at the climax of the conflict with Jesus in 2:1-3:6 where Jesus bases his answer on his own authority, 191 it is demonstrated that the Herodians (associated with the Pharisees)

---

190 In his dissertation, Mulholland “examines the role of the opponents of Jesus (Scribes, Pharisees, Herodians) who appear as the only opponents in Mark 1:1-8:26, and appear intermingled with the Passion Narrative opponents (Chief Priests, Elders, Scribes) in 8:27-13:37” (abstract, p.1); Moston Robert Mulholland Jr., “The Markan Opponents of Jesus” (Ph.D. diss., University of Harvard, 1977). His approach is redaction-critical and his focus is historical—Sitz im Leben, abstract, 6. For the different view of the role of the opponents of Jesus in geographical settings, see Elizabeth Struthers Malbon, “The Jewish Leaders in the Gospel of Mark: A Literary study of Marcan Characterization,” _JBL_ 108/2 (1989), 259-281. Malbon asserts that in the first half of Mark’s story, Jesus’ chief opponents among the Jewish leaders are scribes and Pharisees; in the final half his primary opposition comes from the chief priests, scribes, and elders, 272-73.

191 Dewey observes the issue in 3:6 as Jesus’ authority and that of 12:13 as Jesus’ teaching. “Unlike 2:1-3:3 in which Jesus bases his answer on his own authority/or his ability to heal, the Jesus of Mark 12:13-34 agues on grounds that he Jews would accept. . . . In all three, Jesus addressed as “teacher” (12:14, 19, 32). In all three stories, Jesus appears as a successful and skilled debater, a teacher of wisdom;” _Markan Public Debate_, 157.
attack his authority.

Moreover, at 12:13, Mark uses the name Herodians to demonstrate the political consequences of the question in 12:14-15, which speaks about the religious and political issue of taxes to the Roman authority Caesar. The question, “Is it lawful to pay taxes to the emperor, or not? Should we pay them, or should we not?” (12:14b-15a), was skillfully designed to thrust on Jesus a dilemma. At Jesus’ answer, “Give to the emperor the things that are the emperor’s, and to God the things that are God’s” (12:16), the people are “utterly amazed at him” (12:17b). The final comment in 12:17b suggests that it reminds the Marcan readers of “A new teaching—with authority!” (1:28).

On the other hand, Jesus cautioned his disciples, “Watch out—beware of the yeast of the Pharisees and the yeast of Herod,” is a teaching issue. Jesus questions them, “Why are you talking about having no bread? Do you still not perceive or understand? Are your hearts hardened? Do you have eyes, and fail to see? Do you have ears, and fail to hear? And do you not remember?” (8:17-18), shows their failure to understand the teaching of Jesus.

According to A. Negoiţă and C. Daniel, Jesus says קֶפֶנ which in first-century Aramaic means “word, teaching,” but his disciples mistake it for the similarly pronounced קֶפֶנה “leaven, yeast”; Matthew identifies the yeast as teaching (Matthew 16:12).

Gundry argues that in 8:15 Mark omits “teaching” because he assumes his audience’s

---

knowledge of the Aramaic homonyms. Consequently, the issue that the Herodians raised in 8:15 could mean “teaching” in Mark’s Gospel.

4. The Chief priests (Mark 1:44; 2:26 (x 2); 8:31, 10:33; 11:18, 27; 14:1, 10, 43, 53 (x2), 54, 55, 60, 61, 63, 66; 15:1, 3, 10, 11, 31)

   a) The Verses of the Chapters Referenced to the Chief Priests

As the diagram II-1 shows, through the whole Gospel of Mark there are twenty four references to priests (1:44; 2:26 (x 2); 8:31, 10:33; 11:18, 27; 14:1, 10, 43, 53 (x2), 54, 55, 60, 61, 63, 66; 15:1, 3, 10, 11, 31). Except three that are mentioned (“the priest” (1:44), “high priest” (2:26), and “the priests” (2:26)), all references in Mark to the priest participate in controversy with Jesus. The eight references in the singular are the current high priest, who might be considered the leader of the chief priests (1:44; 14:47, 53, 54, 60, 61, 63, 66). In the two references in the passion predictions (8:31; 10:33), the chief priests are not involved directly in conflict with Jesus, but Jesus suggested their opposition against him.

---

194 Gundry, Mark, 414.
195 The reference to “the priest” in 1:44 is used for the Mosaic Law that the priests alone could declare the healed leper clean (Lev. 14:2-31). Even though it does not function as Jesus’ opponent in the context, the priest stands for the entire group. See Hooker, Mark, 82 and Witherington III, Mark, 104.
196 The references of “the high priest” and “priests” in Mark 2:26 are not the same group of the Jewish religious establishment in opposition to Jesus in the first century, but are the priests in the day of David in 1 Sam. 21:21:1-6. The Marcan Jesus refers to them in telling the story of how David and his companions ate the consecrated bread, which is lawful only for priests (Mark 2:26). In neither cases are the priests involved as Jesus’ opponents in the Marcan story.
197 Malbon, “The Jewish Leaders in the Gospel of Mark,” 269. The high priest was not only the head of the Jewish state, but also took the chief position in the High Council in the first century Palestine. See Bo Reicke, The New Testament Era: The world of the Bible from 500 B.C. to A.D. 100, trans. David E. Green (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1968), 141-49.
Even though the first reference to the priests appears in the early part of Mark in 1:44, it does not anticipate direct conflict between Jesus and his opponents. Their practical participation for conflict with him appears from 11:18, and is mentioned twelve times (11:18, 27; 14:1, 10, 43, 53, 55, 15:1, 3, 10, 11, 31). Their appearance mostly comes much later in Mark and is obviously related exclusively to Jerusalem. They plot with the scribes about how to put Jesus to death (11:18) when Jesus begins to clean the temple (11:15). While Jesus walks in the temple (11:27), they ask with what authority does Jesus act like this (11:28)? In 14:1 which opens the passion narrative with a new note of time, they are looking for how to accomplish the plot to arrest and kill Jesus.

The action of Judas Iscariot, “Then Judas Iscariot, who was one of the twelve, went to the chief priests,” is introduced in 14:10, and at this point the chief priests develop the plot progressively. Hooker insists that the paragraph (14:10-11) takes up the theme of 14:1-2, and Mark uses the paragraph as a framework in the real drama. With the other members of the Sanhedrin, the scribes and the elders, the mention of the chief priests in 14:43 makes the primitive passion narrative move in a rapid sequence. The reference of “the slave of the high priest” who had his ear cut off by the anonymous bystander in 14:47 intensifies the tension of conflict. Eventually they arrest Jesus (14:46), take him to the high priest (14:53), and look for testimony against Jesus to put him to death (14:55). The high priest asked the question that leads to the charge of blasphemy (14:60-64).

198 Guelich, “Anti-Semitism,” 86.
199 Hooker, Mark, 330.
Logically, the reference to the high priest with Peter in 14:66 could follow immediately after 14:54, which is not a direct conflict between Jesus and the opponent.\(^{200}\)

Lane states that even though 14:54 would seem more appropriate in connection with verses 66-72, he employs a literary device characteristic of his style.\(^{201}\) Dewey suggests the following:

Mk has created these verses in order to reestablish the setting of the denial story following Jesus’ hearing. Peter’s location is repeated as is the reference to his warming himself. Here Mk appears to be using a basic pattern of repetition, a doubling or extension technique, by reusing words and phrases found in previous verses (in some cases traditional material), incorporating them into the narrative and thereby expanding it. This technique has gone unnoticed, although Mk makes good use of it, as, for example, in the denial story.\(^{202}\)

Although the mentions of Peter in 14:54 and 66 do not indicate the opposition between Jesus and his enemies, the references to the high priest along with Peter cohere with Jesus’ rejection in the passion narrative.

In 15:1, 3, 10, 11, and 31 as the main leader of Jesus’ opponents, the high priest holds a consultation with other opponents (15:1), hands him over to Pilate (15:1, 10), accuses him of many things (15:3), stirs up the crowd (15:11), and mocks him along with the scribes (15:31).

\(^{200}\)Eduard Schweizer, *The Good News According to Mark*, trans. Donald H. Madvig, (Richmond: John Knox Press, 1970), 328, insists that by placing the one story within the other Mark has made his message to the reader very clear.

\(^{201}\)Lane, *Mark*, 532.

b) The Conspirators of the Chief Priests

The chief priests are mentioned on four occasions without reference to other groups (14:10; 15:3, 10, 11). The high priest is mentioned alone six times (14:47, 53, 55, 60, 63, 66), including two references in combination with Peter (14:53, 66).

The first groups with which the chief priests conspired are the scribes and the elders in opposition to Jesus. This tripartite group is mentioned five times in Mark (8:31; 11:27; 14:43; 14:53; 15:1). In the Marcan passion narrative, which begins with the entry into Jerusalem in 11:1, the tripartite group is the core group of Jesus’ opponents. Except the passion prediction (8:31), the chief priests always precede the other groups (11:27; 14:43; 14:53; 15:1). The tripartite group in 15:1 is expanded by the additional reference to “the whole council.”

8:31 . . . the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes
11:27 . . . the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders
14:43 . . . the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders
14:53 . . . the high priest; and all the chief priests, the elders, and the scribes
15:1 . . . the chief priests . . . the elders and scribes and the whole council

The chief priests with the elders and scribes question Jesus about his authority (11:27), send “a crowd with swords and clubs” to arrest him (14:43), assemble to examine him (14:53), “hold a consultation . . . bind him, lead him away, and hand him over to Pilate” (15:1).

The second group with which the chief priests act in consort is the scribes. As they are mentioned four times in Mark (10:33; 11:18; 14:1; 15:31), the chief priests are

203 For the references to “high priest” and “the priests” in 2:26, see note 31.
regularly referred to before the scribes.

10:33 . . . the chief priests and the scribes
11:18 . . . the chief priests and the scribes
14:1 . . . the chief priests and the scribes
15:31 . . . the chief priests, along with the scribes

The chief priests plot with the scribes about how to put Jesus to death (11:18; 14:1) as Jesus predicted he would be handed over by them (10:33). They also mock Jesus as he hangs on the cross (15:31).

The third group with which the chief priests combined is the whole council. The references to these groups are mentioned two times, including the tripartite group in 15:1.

14:55 . . . the chief priests and the whole council
15:1 . . . the chief priests . . . the elders and scribes and the whole council

The actions of the chief priests with the whole council do not differ from the actions of the tripartite group (the chief priest, the scribes, and the elders). They are looking for testimony against Jesus to put Jesus to death (14:55) and deliver him to Pilate (15:1).

The Marcan readers regard the chief priests as the main leaders of the opposition to Jesus in Jerusalem, because they are one of the tripartite core groups and active on their own in the passion narrative.\(^\text{205}\) Their precedence of the chief priests over other groups in order of listing in the passion narrative explains their position as the dominant opponents among their alliances.

\(^{205}\)Ibid., 268.
c) The Issues Raised by the Chief Priests

In the Marcan conflict story, concerns raised by the chief priests are mainly political. In these interests the chief priests combine with the elders, the scribes, and the whole council, who form the real power in Jewish politics. In the light of their political concern, the main issue raised by the chief priests joined with the political power is authority. In the passion predictions (8:31; 10:33), Jesus mentioned they will reject, hand over, and kill him. The reason that they want Jesus’ death is “because they see him as an ally of Satan who threatens their position and authority...”

From the reference to the chief priests in 11:27, their intent against Jesus is clarified with the questions: “By what authority are you doing these things? Who gave you this authority to do them?” (11:28). They interrogated him about the source of his authority. Jesus counterattacks “I will ask you one question; answer me, and I will tell you by what authority I do these things” (11:29). The issue of authority stands out prominently in their questions.

At the pericope of Jesus’ trial before the whole council (Sanhedrin) (14:53-65), the chief priests with their conspirators are looking for testimony against Jesus to put him to death; but they find none (14:55-56). Then the high priest asks Jesus whether or not he is the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed One (15:61), who is the one sent by God and who is uniquely endowed with his authority. In reply, Jesus affirms, “I am!” (14:62). At this point, the conflict is intensified by the chief priests. The high priest’s question leads to the

---

206 Craig A. Evans, *Mark*, 443.
207 Kingsbury, *Conflict in Mark*, 50.
208 Ibid., 84.
charge of blasphemy (14:60-64), consults with the scribes and the elders, and even invites the whole council (15:1).

The issue of the authority raised by the chief priests is repeated in the following references to the chief priests (15:1, 3, 10, 11, 31). The chief priests along with Jesus’ opponents hand Jesus over to Pilate (15:1), who questions his authority in 15:2 “Are you the King of the Jews?” Pilate, who asks about his authority in 15:9, “Do you want me to release for you the King of the Jews?,” knows that out of jealousy the chief priests have handed him over (15:10-11). As Jesus hangs on the cross, the chief priests along with the scribes mock him, saying, “He saved others; he cannot save himself. Let the Messiah, the King of Israel, come down from the cross now . . .” (15:31-32).

One reference to the chief priests in 11:18 is related to the Temple issue. The chief priests, along with the scribes keep looking for a way to kill Jesus when they hear about Jesus’ action and teaching what he did in the Temple. After cursing the fig tree, Jesus enters the temple, drives out the sellers and buyers, overturns the tables of the moneychangers, and teaches “Is it not written, ‘My house shall be called a house of prayer for all the nations’? But you have made it a den of robbers” (11:17). Through his action and teaching in the temple, Jesus warns the Jewish leaders that they have profaned the temple by perverting the purpose of God’s intent for the temple to be a place of prayer for

---

209 Jesus curses a barren fig tree that subsequently withers and dies (11:14, 21). Kingsbury argues that cursing the fig tree is symbolic of the fact that the temple is barren of true worship and will one day destroyed, Ibid, 77. Evans, Mark, 158, explains the relationship between the fig tree and the destruction of the temple; “The prophecy of the coming destruction of the temple in Jer. 7 stands in close proximity to Jer. 8:13, which announces God’s Judgment on Israel: “there are no grapes on the vine, nor figs on the fig tree” (emphasis added). Mark, or more likely a pre-Markan trident, may well have combined the stories about the fig tree and the temple demonstration to highlight the significance of Jesus’ person and work (cf. 14:58; 15:29, 38) in place of the temple in God’s redemptive plan.”
the gentiles.\textsuperscript{210}

The chief priests are the dominant group especially in dealing with political and social issues of the Jewish community because they could not only be combined with the Jewish leadership groups (the elders, the scribes, and the whole council), but also go to Pilate, the Roman governor. Their concerns are mainly political authority, but religious authority is not ignored in their society as well.

5. The Elders (Mark 7:3, 5; 8:31; 11:27; 14:43, 53; 15:1)

a) The Verses of the Chapters Referring to the elders

The elders appear seven times in the Diagram II-1 (7:3, 5; 8:31; 11:27; 14:43, 53; 15:1). As shown in the Diagram II-2, the first two references to the elders in 7:3, 5 are not used as Jesus’ opponents, but as a mortified word for “the tradition of the elders.” Nevertheless, the two references work for a systematic relation as an initial view of the elders throughout the Marcan Gospel.\textsuperscript{211} The mention of the elders in 8:31 appears again in the passion prediction. The elders do not directly participate in the opposition to Jesus, but indirectly take part in hostility to Jesus. This reference to the elders functions as the middle portion that coheres the word in Mark.

The mention of the elders is repeated in the passion narrative, from which

\textsuperscript{210}Kingsbury, \textit{Conflict in Mark}, 78; Evans \textit{Mark}, 182.

\textsuperscript{211}Robbins, \textit{Early Christian Discourse}, 48, argues that at inner texture, the interpreter assigns only basic lexical meanings to the words in the text. This procedure withholding fuller meanings to allow signs and sound patterns to emerge. In other words, the emphasis is on relations of the signs and sounds rather than content and meanings, 48.
primarily their activity of conflict with Jesus is started (11:27; 14:43, 53; 15:1). They participate in the question about Jesus’ authority (11:27-28), send a crowd with swords and clubs to arrest him (14:43), assemble to examine him (14:53), join a consultation, bind Jesus, and hand him over to Pilate (15:1).

Diagram II-2: the references to the elders in Mark
7:3 the tradition of the elders
7:5 the tradition of the elders
8:31 the elders, the chief priests, the scribes
11:27 the chief priests, the scribes, the elders
14:43 the chief priests, the scribes, the elders
14:53 the chief priests, the elders, the scribes
15:1 the chief priests, the elders, scribes, the whole council

The reference to the elders appears in the Galilean context as a beginning portion (7:3, 5). Mark probably uses the term, “the elders,” with the intent to create a systematic relation of the elders as a group of Jesus’ opponents in the Marcan narrative. The reference to the elders is repeated in the passion prediction (8:31) as a middle texture, and reproduced in the passion narrative as the ending texture (14:43, 53; 15:1). The repetition of the elders in the beginning, middle, and ending creates an outer frame for their existence in the Marcan conflict story.

b) The Conspirators of the Elders

The elders are always combined with the chief priest and the scribes as the

---

212 According to Robbins, *The Tapestry of Early Christian Discourse*, 48, at the stage of inner texture the interpreter assigns only form and structured movement to the words in the text, but not content and meaning of the words. For the study of inner texture, “the elders” (7:3, 5) is here concerned as a reference that produces argumentative pattern in Mark, but not the honored Jewish teachers of the Law in the oral tradition that the Pharisees in particular held.
tripartite group in the Marcan Gospel (8:31; 11:27; 14:43, 53; 15:1) except two references to the mortified word, “the tradition of the elders” (7:3, 5). It is referred once to the chief priests and scribes, including the whole council (15:1). The order of listing the three groups is not invariable: once the elders precede the chief priests and scribes (8:31); twice the elders follow the chief priests but precede the scribes (13:53; 15:1); and twice the elders follow both the chief priests and the scribes (11:27; 14:43).

c) The Issues Raised by the Elders

In their rejection and deadly opposition to Jesus, the elders, who were probably...
the traditional leaders of the community,²¹⁵ combine with the scribes and chief priests who have political power in the Jewish community. Their concern is mainly political authority. As we observed in the above section on the issues raised by the chief priests, the references to the elders with the chief priests and the scribes relate to issues of authority (8:31; 11:27; 14:43, 53; 15:1).

6. The Sadducees (Mark 12:13)

a) The Verses of the Chapters Referenced to the Sadducees

The Sadducees are mentioned only once in 12:18 after the previous antagonistic groups of Jewish authorities, the chief priests, the scribes and the elders (11:27) as well as the Pharisees and Herodians (12:13), and then the reference to the scribes appears right after Jesus’ dispute with the Sadducees (12:28). In the question on the levirate marriage (12:18-23), “In the resurrection whose wife will she be? For the seven had married her” (12:23), the Sadducees reject resurrection. Here their location in the context of the Marcan story and the content of the question indicate that their appearance is controversial with Jesus.

Diagram II-3: The reference of Sadducees in Mark

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>11:27 the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12:13</td>
<td>some Pharisees and some Herodians</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:18</td>
<td>some Pharisees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:28</td>
<td>the scribe</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

b) The Conspirators of the Sadducees

Even though reference to the Sadducees in the Jerusalem context is placed among the opponents, they are not said to be members of the governing class\textsuperscript{216} and do not participate in any groups to conspire against Jesus.

c) The Issues Raised by the Sadducees

With the question that the Sadducees referred to the practice of levirate marriage which “Moses wrote for us” in Scripture (12:19), they raise the issue of the Law.\textsuperscript{217} That the question appears in a context of similar questions that challenge Jesus and his teaching in 11:27-12:38, suggests that the Sadducees have come to likewise challenge his authoritative teaching.\textsuperscript{218} That they address Jesus as “teacher”, the echoed address of the deceitful Pharisees and Herodians (12:14), further indicates the Sadducees are challenging the “teaching” of Jesus.\textsuperscript{219}

Furthermore, the Sadducees dispute over Jesus’ authority. Jesus’ response to their question in 12:24, suggests that the Sadducees are ignorant of both the content of the scriptures and the power of God, which overcomes death and summons the dead back to life.

\textsuperscript{216}Ibid. It is commonly assumed that The Sadducees could connect with other groups because of their social and political situation in Jerusalem. They were an aristocratic party consisting of the high priestly and other leading families of Jerusalem. According to Josephus, the Sadducees clearly appear as a group in association with the patricians, the Pharisees, and the wealthy parvenus (Josephus Ant. Xiii. 288-98). However, in the Marcan Gospel, they did not join any groups.

\textsuperscript{217}They brought the law in Deut. 25:5-6; Gen 38:8, which Moses wrote that if someone’s brother dies childless, he must take the widow as wife and raise up descendants for his dead brother in order to continue his name (12:19).


\textsuperscript{219}Ibid.
The one reference to the Sadducees with their question about resurrection in Mark indicates that they are Jesus’ adversaries. Without any conspirators, they attack not only Jesus’ authority and his teaching ability, but also challenge the Law.

7. Sanhedrin (Mark 14:55; 15:1)

a) The Verses of the Chapters Referenced to the Sanhedrin

The reference to the whole council (the Sanhedrin) is mentioned twice in the Passion Narrative in the Marcan Gospel (14:55; 15:1). The Sanhedrin is referred to sequentially with the previous antagonists, the high priest, all the chief priests, the elders, and the scribes (14:53), looking for testimony against Jesus to put him to death (14:55). The Sanhedrin is mentioned repetitively with the tripartite group (the chief priests, the elders, and scribes), and “they bound Jesus, led him away and handed him over to Pilate” (15:1).

b) The conspirators of the Sanhedrin

The Sanhedrin always combines with the tripartite groups, “the chief priests, the

---

220 The Sadducees advocated the sovereign’s authority over the judiciary, in opposition to the concept of a separation of powers which would assign to a self-perpetuating establishment of ordained scribes absolute authority in questions of Jewish law; Lane, *Mark*, 426-27.
elders, and the elders,” in the Marcan Gospel. Mark 14:55, which has the only mention “the chief priests,” is the same context in which the tripartite groups are mentioned (14:53). The apparent repetition of the enumeration of the members of whom the Sanhedrin is constituted proves that a writer who knew them well wrote the Marcan narrative.

Moreover, the repetition of the enumeration of the groups notifies to the Marcan readers that the conspirators of the Sanhedrin are the tripartite groups in Mark.

c) The Issues Raised by the Sanhedrin

As the highest organ of domestic authority under the Roman procuratorial administration, the Sanhedrin enjoys autonomous rights over a wide range of internal affairs, which certainly conflicts with Jesus’ authority. Each reference to the Sanhedrin in Mark has similar inquiries that question Jesus’ authority. As the following text exhibits, “the Messiah” in the question (14:61) gives relevance to the authority for the reference in 14:55. In addition, “The King of the Jews” in the question (15:2) repeats the authority function for the reference in 15:1.

---

221 In addition to the high priest, the whole council comprised seventy members, so that the whole assembly consisted of seventy-one councilors. “The seventy-one Jewish senators of the New Testament period were divided into three groups, which the Gospels and Acts regularly distinguish (see, for example, Mark 11:27 and Acts 4:5). These groups were: (1) the “high priests (“chief priests”) or the “rulers;” (2) the elders; (3) the scribes;” Reicke, The New Testament Era, 146.


223 When the high priest uses “the Messiah” for Jesus in his question, it is clear that he is talking about the anointed king who is empowered by God, as opposed to an anointed prophet or anointed priest. See Evans, Mark, 448. Morna D. 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), argues that the issue raised by the question, which the high priest does to know Jesus’ identity in 14:61, is authority. “The first is this theme of authority, which determines both the audience and the content of the saying: all are expression of this authority, whether it is an authority which is exercised now, which is denied and so leads to suffering, or which will be acknowledged and vindicated in the future,” 180.
Through the apparent repetitions of the questions, which follow after the references to the Sanhedrin, it is proven that the issue raised by the Sanhedrin in the Marcan story is Jesus’ authority.

8. Summary

To study the inner texture, the references to the opponents of Jesus are observed as a part of the inner texture. The references appear repetitively from the beginning of the Marcan narrative to the end of it. As a result, this repetition serves to advance the plot and enhance the theme of the conflict between Jesus and the opponents in Mark’s narrative.

Based on the Diagram II-1, it is proven that seven Jewish leadership groups are involved in the conflict story in the Marcan story; the scribes, the Pharisees, the chief priests, the Herodians, the Sadducees, and the Sanhedrin. They play consistently an adversarial role against Jesus through the whole Marcan narrative and are identified as his opponents.

Next, the analysis of the reference displays that the main opponents in the Galilean context are the scribes, the elders, and the Herodians. In the Jerusalem context, the scribes, the chief priests, the high priest, the elders, the Sadducees, and the Sanhedrin are the most active parties. The scribes and the elders appear in both places, but the scribes are the dominant opponent group in the Marcan Gospel. 

224

From this study of the references on the Jewish groups, another element found in the Marcan conflict story is that the references which start with three groups (the scribes, the Pharisees, and the priests) in the beginning enlarge to five groups (the scribes, the Pharisees, the elders, the chief priests, and the Herodians) by chapter 8, which is the point of the divergence of Mark. From the starting place of Jesus’ trial (14:1), the Pharisees whose sphere is Galilee, disappear but the appearances of the chief priests suddenly increase as if they are the dominant group in Jerusalem.225

Lastly, the repetitive reference to Jesus’ opponents in the Marcan conflict story coheres and amplifies the theme of rejection that flows through the story. For example, their mention shows the conspirators of each group and explains the issues raised by each group. The associated opponent groups in Galilee practically are the scribes, the Pharisees, and the Herodians226 and the conspirators in Jerusalem are the scribes, the Pharisees, the elders, the high priest, the chief priests, the Herodians, and the Sanhedrin.

In terms of the issues that the opponents raise in the conflict, they are divided into four categories. The first issue is the Law and the opponents who challenge Jesus are the scribes, the Pharisees, and the Sadducees. The second issue is Jesus’ teaching over which the scribes and the Sadducees dispute. The third issue is Jesus’ authority, which is the only concept that all the groups pose against Jesus. The last issue is the Temple in which the scribes and the chief priests argue with Jesus. Each opponent rejects Jesus with different issues according to their own position in the Jewish society, but they all join together to reject his authority.

225 According to Cook’s source analysis of the opponents, the Pharisees is the central adversary of Jesus in Galilee; Cook, Mark’s Treatment of the Jewish Leaders, 4-5. However, Josephus shows the Pharisees as closely linked with the leadership in Jerusalem; Saldarini, Pharisees, Scribes and Sadducees, 147.

226 However, the elders (7:3,5) and the priests (2:26 (x 2)) who are used as qualifiers than a distinct sociopolitical group, and the priest (1:44) who does not anticipate direct conflict with Jesus are not excluded as an element in the inner context.
B. Language Device for Rejection Theme

The meaning of the term, “rejection language,” for this present study is basically found in the concept of the word, βλασφημέω (blasphemy). According to Beyer, the meaning of blasphemy in the New Testament is controlled throughout by the thought of violation of the power and majesty of God; blasphemy may be directed immediately against God, against the name of God, and against the word of God.227 The hostile language, which the Jewish leaders use against Jesus, is rejection language. The language for describing the leaders’ action against Jesus and the words for portraying events against Jesus are rejection languages in the study. On the contrary, the language for charges or warnings of blasphemy used by Jesus to reject the counterclaims of his opponents is rejection language.228 The language is not only consistently selected and combined, but it is also the result of linguistic competence provided by the author of Mark; this linguistic competence binds the text together for the rejection theme. Thus, any polemical elements that form the conflict stories are included in the category of rejection language.229

As Dewey noticed, the Gospel of Mark is an interwoven tapestry made up of multiple overlapping structures and numerous retrospective and prospective references found throughout

---


229 Rejection language in this study does not mean the forms, “paradigm” (M. Dibelius), “controversy dialogues” (R. Bultmann), and “pronouncement stories” (V. Taylor), categorized by the traditional critics. Rather it functions as a meaning of rejection in a situation in which Mark uses the language and activity of religious conflict.
the Gospel.\footnote{Joanna Dewey, “Mark as Intertwoven Tapestry: Forecasts and Echoes for a Listening Audience,” CBQ 53 (1991), 224. For repetitive references in Matthew, see Janice Capel Anderson, Matthew’s Narrative Web: Over, and Over, and Over Again (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994), and Charles H. Lohr, S.J., ”Oral techniques in the Gospel of Matthew,” CBQ 23 (1961), 403-435.} The diverse words of rejection language are repeated throughout the Marcan conflict story. Boomershine suggests ten major criteria of negative meaning which occur throughout the Marcan Gospel as follows: 1) treachery and conspiracy, 2) betrayal, 3) scandalization and fleeing, 4) denial, 5) false testimony and perjury, 6) blasphemy and slander, 7) murder, 8) envy, 9) spitting and mocking, and 10) crucifixion.\footnote{Thomas Eugene Boomershine, “Mark, The Storyteller: A Rhetorical-Critical Investigation of Mark’s Passion and Resurrection Narrative” (Ph. D. diss., Union Theological Seminary, 1974), 276-77. For the language of rejection, Boomershine focuses his study on Mark’s passion and resurrection narrative, but not whole story of Mark.}


For this part of the study, however, four major criteria of rejection vocabulary will be explored as representative of the word groups in the Gospel: παραδέδωμι, βλασφημέω, πωρώ, ἀποκτείνω. The diagram II-4 shows the reference to the languages throughout the Marcan Gospel; the numbers in the vertical column of the utmost left side are the chapters of Mark, and the numbers below the Greek words are the verses of each chapter. The bottom line displays the total times of repetition of that word in Mark.
1. παραδίδωμι

In the Marcan Gospel, the verb παραδίδωμι is always used with a negative meaning and employed in the controversy. As shown in the diagram II-4, the verb παραδίδωμι appears throughout the book of Mark, being referred to nineteen times starting...
from 1:14. As the diagram II-5 displays, the word can be listed in two groups depending on the use of the verb:\(^\text{233}\) a) using παραδιδόμενον in the passive, b) using παραδίδομεν in the active. Especially, it is found that there are three groups in the usage of the active relying on the characters: 1) παραδίδομεν combination with Judas, 2) παραδίδομεν combination with the Jewish leaders, and 3) παραδίδομεν combination with others.

Diagram II-5: The reference to παραδίδομεν in Mark

| 1:14 | John was arrested (παραδοθήκην) |
| 3:19 | Judas Iscariot... betrayed him (παρέδωκεν) |
| 4:29 | the grain is ripe (παραδόοι) |
| 7:13 | you have handed on (παρεδόκατε) |
| 9:31 | The Son of Man is to be betrayed (παραδίδοται) |
| 10:33 | the Son of Man will be handed over (παραδοθήκεται) |
| 13:9 | they will hand you over (παραδώσουσιν) |
| 13:11 | they hand you over (παραδώσουσι) |
| 13:12 | Brother will betray (παραδώσει) brother |
| 14:10 | Judas Iscariot... betray him (παραδοθείσης) |
| 14:11 | he... betray him (παραδοθείσης) |
| 14:18 | one of you will betray me (παραδώσει) |
| 14:21 | the Son of Man is betrayed (παραδίδοται) |
| 14:41 | the Son of Man is betrayed (παραδίδοται) |
| 14:42 | my betrayer is at hand (παραδιδόντες) |
| 14:44 | the betrayer had given them a sign (παραδιδότων) |
| 15:1 | the chief priests, the elders, and scribes handed him over (παρεδωκέσαν) |
| 15:10 | the chief priest had handed him over (παρεδδότας) |
| 15:15 | Pilate handed him over (παρέδωκεν) |

\(^a\) Using παραδιδόμεν in the Passive

The word παραδίδομεν in the passive is first used at the arrest of John the Baptist in 1:14. “Its use here, at the very beginning of the gospel, is an early pointer to the fact that John is the forerunner of Jesus in death as well as in life, a theme that will be taken up

---

\(^{233}\) To prove evidence of the existence of traditions using (para)didonai of the passion in the New Testament, Norman Perrin lists the verb in three groups: (1) using (para)didonai in the active; (2) using (para)didonai in the passive; and (3) using (para)didonai in the active with a reflexive object; A Modern Pilgrimage in New Testament Christology (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1974), 94-96.
later in the gospel.” The verb in the passive appears in Jesus’ own passion predictions (9:31; 10:33), and it is used again by Jesus in the last part of Mark (14: 21, 41).

b) Using παράδιωμι in the Active

(1) παράδιωμι in Combination with Judas

The use of the verb in the active is used in combination with Judas Iscariot when he is first introduced in the Marcan story as the betrayer who hands Jesus over to the opponent (3:19). The verb παράδιωμι with him appears when he goes to the chief priests in order to betray Jesus (14:10, 11). The verb in the active is again used by Jesus (14:18) and used in the participle present active two times (14:42, 44).

(2) παράδιωμι in Combination with the Jewish leaders

The verb in combination with the Jewish leaders is used when Jesus conflicts with the Pharisees and the scribes over the tradition of the elders (7:13). The word is referred to in the passion prediction (10:33). Jesus repeatedly uses the verb in the active with the opponents when he warns his disciples concerning suffering; “they will hand you over to councils, . . . when they bring you to trial and hand you over” (13:9, 11). Its use repeatedly

234 Morna D. Hooker, The Gospel According To Saint Mark (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 1991), 54. Hooker argues that the story of the beheading of John the Baptist in 6:14-29 is no exception to the figure of Jesus. “If he pauses to tell us about how John died, it is only because in his death, as in his preaching, John is the forerunner of Jesus himself: John has been handed over into the power of men-as Jesus himself will be; he has been put to death-as Jesus will be;” Not Ashamed of the Gospel: New Testament Interpretations of the Death of Christ (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1995), 49-50; Rhoads, Mark as Story, 48.

235 Perrin, op. cit., 95, suggests that “there are two further texts which have to be brought into the discussion here because of their obvious relationship to Mark 9:31 and 10:33. Mark 8:31 ‘. . . the Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected . . .’ and Mark 9:12 ‘. . . how is it written of the Son of Man, that he should suffer many things and be treated with contempt?’.”
appears when the opponents hand over Jesus practically; “. . . they bound Jesus, led him away, and handed him over to Pilate” (15:1). “. . . the chief priests had handed him over” (15:10).

(3) \(\pi\rho\alpha\rho\alpha\iota\delta\omega\mu\iota\) in Combination with Others

The reference to \(\pi\rho\alpha\rho\alpha\iota\delta\omega\mu\iota\) in combination with others in the active appears three times in the Marcan Gospel. The first reference is not for a person, but for the grain; “But when the grain is ripe (\(\pi\rho\alpha\rho\alpha\iota\delta\omega\mu\iota\)), at once he goes in with his sickle because the harvest has come” (4:29). As the study show, this verb \(\pi\rho\alpha\rho\alpha\iota\delta\omega\mu\iota\) is used elsewhere in the Gospel: for the handing over of John the Baptist (1:14); Jesus (9:13; 10:33; 14:10, 11, 18, 21, 41, 42, 44; 15:1, 10); and Jesus’ disciples (13:9, 11, 12). The verb here may imply that the Marcan author uses it as a technical term in connection with Jesus’ death.\(^{236}\)

In 13:12, the reference to the verb is combined with family, but not Jesus’ opponents; “Brother will betray (\(\pi\rho\alpha\rho\alpha\iota\delta\omega\mu\iota\)) brother to death, and a father his child, and children will rise against parents and have them put to death.” It is obvious that the Marcan readers would have been able to connect this verb with Judas’ betrayal of Jesus. As Jesus is handed over by one of his own, so are the disciples likewise handed over by their own.\(^{237}\) For the whole Gospel of Mark, the verb \(\pi\rho\alpha\rho\alpha\iota\delta\omega\mu\iota\) in 13:12, as Gundry


\(^{237}\)Werner H. Kelber argues that the very term used in 13:12 to describe the act of betrayal integrates the betrayal into a purposeful scheme of passion; “Conclusion: From Passion Narrative to Gospel” in The Passion in Mark: Studies on Mark 14-16, ed., Werner H. Kelber (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1976), 173.
observes, runs like a red thread from the imprisonment of John the Baptist (1:14) through the betrayal, arrest trial, and crucifixion of Jesus, to the persecution of the disciples. The verb \( \pi \alpha \rho \alpha \delta \iota \delta \omega \mu \) in the active associated with Pilate in 15:15 is used as the final handing over of Jesus to death. Pilate hands Jesus over to the Roman troops, who will carry out the crucifixion. The reference to \( \pi \alpha \rho \alpha \delta \iota \delta \omega \mu \) in 15:15 is retrospective on the arrest of John the baptizer (1:14) and his death (6:14-29).

The word \( \pi \alpha \rho \alpha \delta \iota \delta \omega \mu \) in the passive, referred to in the arrest of John the Baptist (1:14), is the very word used by Jesus’ own passion predictions in 9:31; 10:33a, and of his deliverance by his own disciple in 14:21; 41. So its use in the statement about John’s fate clearly anticipates its use in connection with the fate of Jesus. The term is further used in the active to hand over Jesus by Judas (3:19; 14:10, 11, 18), the opponents (7:13; 10:33; 13:9, 11; 15:1, 10), and others (4:29; 13:12; 15:15). The verb \( \pi \alpha \rho \alpha \delta \iota \delta \omega \mu \) is used elsewhere in the Gospel for the handing over of John as a technical term in connection with Jesus’ death by his opponents. As a result, the word is foreshadowed and retrospected repeatedly through the whole Gospel. Thus, the Marcan readers who are familiar with the verb would find the word ringing a bell.

\[^{239}\text{Hooker, The Gospel According to Saint Mark, 15.}\]
\[^{242}\text{Hooker, Not Ashamed of the Gospel, 49.}\]
2. βλασφημία (Mark 2:7; 3:28-29; 7:22; 14:64; 15:29)

The term “blasphemy” appears seven times in Mark, four in verb form βλασφημεῖν (2:7; 3:28; 3:29; 15:29) and three in noun form (3:28; 7:22; 14:64). Mark does not indicate any conceptual distinction between the two forms. In the Marcan passages where the verb βλασφημέω or the noun βλασφημία is expressly referred to the word is used in a bad sense. Burkill defines the concept of the noun as any defamatory pronunciation, or any utterance meant to damage or denigrate the reputation of some individual or group. This word is expressed by not only the lips of Jesus to charge his opponent with blasphemy (3:28-29; 7:22), but also in the words of the Jewish leaders to accuse Jesus as a blasphemer (2:7; 14:64).

a) Mark 2:7

In 2:7 the verb βλασφημεῖν is referred to in the first story of a group of five controversy stories in 2:1-3:6, which the author of Mark has gathered together in order to show how the authority of Jesus was rejected by the Jewish authorities. The conflict story begins when Jesus says, “Son, your sins are forgiven” (2:5). The scribes accuse Jesus, saying “Why does this fellow speak in this way? It is blasphemy! Who can forgive sins

244Burkill, “Blasphemy,” 53.
245Ibid., 51. In foot note 1 of the same page, He explains the origin of the word. “While it is agreed that the phēmia in blasphēmia is cognate with phēmē (“speech”), the etymology of the blas is uncertain. One suggestion is that it derives from the same root as blapsis (“injury,” “damage,” “harm,” or “harming”), but in this case would not have expected to form blapsphēma.
246Hooker, Mark, 83.
but God alone?” (2:7). The scribes charges Jesus with blasphemy because he claims to do what God alone could do. In other words, they thought he declared himself as God and has the authority of God to forgive sin, so they reject his authority.

Outward blasphemy is the first charge made directly against Jesus by his opponents in Mark, even though the word παραδίπωμι is used at the arrest of John the Baptist in 1:14. From the first conflict story (2:1-12) with blasphemy, the conflict between Jesus and his adversaries progresses and develops towards its climax. Andersen observes well this fact, when he investigates Mark’s understanding of the blasphemy charge.

Further, as the first member of the conflict stories, it stands in special relation to the last member, where Jesus’ death is plotted. The association of blasphemy and conspiracy is thus established in that early portion of the gospel where the opposing responses to Jesus are also laid out. What is forgiveness of sins to the one is blasphemy to the other. Finally, the series—opposition, charge of blasphemy, conspiracy to kill Jesus—points forward to the trial.247

For the story of Jesus’ rejection in Mark, the reference to blasphemy introduced in 2:7 not only provides the conflict theme but also ties it together through the whole Gospel.

b) Mark 3: 28-29

The second reference to blasphemy in Mark is also mentioned in a polemical conflict context (3:20-30) where the opponents criticize the source of Jesus authority and power. Hooker argues that in this section we move back into the atmosphere of conflict which characterized the narrative in 2:1-3:6 but move another step forward in the

---

development of the controversy between Jesus and his opponents.²⁴⁸

In response to the opponents’ accusation that Jesus exorcises by the power of Beelzebub (3:22), by whom he is possessed, Jesus says three sayings concerning divisions:

If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. And if a house is divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand. And if Satan has risen up against himself and … is divided, he cannot stand, but his end has come (3:24-26).

In this argument, Jesus exposes the fallacy of their charge. That is, if their accusation is factual, then Satan has become divided in his allegiance. Yet this is clearly not so. Satan remains strong.²⁴⁹ To this point Jesus states that his authority and power is through the Holy Spirit, but not through the ruler of demons.

Then Jesus introduces a solemn warning with blasphemy: “Truly I tell you, people will be forgiven for their sins and whatever blasphemies (βλασφημία) they utter (βλασφημέω); but whoever blasphemes (βλασφημέω) against the Holy Spirit can never have forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin” (3:28-29). Similar to 2:7 in which the word βλασφημέω is used in the controversy story by the opponents, the word is also used in the polemical context by Jesus in 3:28-29. Considering the fact that the subject of conflict is the forgiveness of sins in both contexts 2:7 and 3:28-29, the word blasphemy, therefore, leads Marcan readers, to recall the conflict between Jesus and his opponents; it thereby serves to connect the Marcan narrative both forwards and backwards.

²⁴⁸Hooker, Mark, 114.
²⁴⁹Lane, Mark, 143.
c) Mark 7: 22

The word blasphemy is again referred to in the controversy narrative in 7:1-23 when Jesus enumerates a list of evil thoughts (7:21-22). In 7:22, the Greek form of “slander” translated in NRSV is “blasphēma.” In this context, the Pharisees and the scribes are linked together as Jesus opponents (7:1, 5). Here, the subject of the conflict between Jesus and the opponents is about the tradition of elders. The opponents ask why Jesus’ disciples eat food with unclean hands against the tradition of the elders (7:5). This question has a negative meaning against Jesus himself, but not his disciples.

In response to the opponents’ question, Jesus cites Isaiah 29:13: “This people honors me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me; in vain do they worship me, teaching human precepts as doctrines” (7:6b-7). Jesus rejects the very premise of the charge by dismissing the tradition of the elders as human ordinances with no binding authority (7:9-13). Then Jesus interprets the disciples’ hand washing as stated in 7:15, “there is nothing outside a person that by going in can defile, but the things that come out are what defile.”

To countercharge his opponents, Jesus concludes that the source of true defilement in people is the human heart, but not food (7:20). Criticizing the Jewish religious and their characters, Jesus enumerates the sinful acts and dispositions, which flow from the heart,
in 7:21, 22: “fornication, theft, murder, adultery, avarice, wickedness, deceit, licentiousness, envy, slander, pride, folly.” These terms as rejection language functions to bind firmly the conflict story as a unit in Mark.

d) Mark 14: 64

The charge of blasphemy found in 2:7 is repeated in the tale of the trial of Jesus before the Sanhedrin (14:53-65). However, it is not just about Jesus’ claim to forgive sins, but it is portrayed unmistakably as the official Jewish assessment. The opponents took Jesus to the high priest. Then the high priest asked Jesus a question, but Jesus responded to the opponents’ question with silence. The high priest asked him again, “Are you the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed One?” Jesus said, “I am; and ‘you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of the Power,’ and ‘coming with the clouds of heaven’” (14:61-62).

In the end, the opponents used the word blasphemy, “Why do we still need witness? You have heard his blasphemy!”, and condemned him as deserving death (14:63b-64).

In connection with the word translated “deserving (ἐνοχος)” in 14:64b, it is also used in 3:39 for those who are guilty of blaspheming against the Holy Spirit: the context there forms an interesting parallel to the present scene. That is, the scribes from Jerusalem who accused Jesus of working by the power of Beelzebub were condemned, whereas in the present story they counter-condemn Jesus as deserving death. Growing out of the conflict between Jesus and his opponents through previous stories, in 14:64 the

---

255 Hooker, Mark, 363.
author of Mark brings to a climax his treatment of the conflict narrative.

At this point, retrospecting the accusation of blasphemy mentioned in the previous conflict stories (2:1-12; 3:20-29; 7:1-23), the Marcan readers understand two things with no doubt; (1) Jesus’ death is due to a plot by the Jewish leaders, who are involved in the first conflict story, (2) the author of Mark skillfully employs the word, blasphemy, so as to establish a link with the stories for the motif of Jesus’ rejection throughout the Gospel.  

e) Mark 15: 29

In 15:29 the word, blasphemy, appears when anonymous passers-by mock Jesus who was crucified. Interpreters generally understand the word here in its weaker sense and decode it as “they derided him” because the subject of the verb βλασφημεῖο is not Jewish religious leaders, but some unidentified observers. Accordingly, Anderson argues that blasphemy in 15:29 is not a rejection of God or the Holy Spirit, but a ridiculing of a person, Jesus.

In contrast, advocating Robbins’ view of inner texture pattern that the interpreter assigns only basic lexical meanings to the words in the text, the readers of the Marcan Gospel are reminded of the accusations brought against Jesus by his opponents (2:7; 3:28;

---

256 Rhoads, *Mark as Story*, 48, asserts that “verbal threads also invite readers to make connections between one part of the narrative and another.”

257 The verb βλασφημεῖο is translated as “deride” in NRSV, “insult” in NIV, “rail” in KJV, and “abuse” in NASB.


259 Robbins, *Early Christian Discourse*, 48. He explains that for the inner texture, the interpreter should withhold fuller meanings to allow sign and sound patterns to emerge, but emphasizes on relation of the signs and sounds rather than content and meanings.
14:64). Here, Juel observes right away that Mark chooses βλασφημεῖν (blasphemy), instead of ἐκμυκτῆριζεῖν (ridicule), to suggest this term be understood as meaning more than just “slander” or “deride.” Therefore, Gundry asserts that with the term Mark implies not just that the passers-by were slandering Jesus, but that those who condemned him for a blasphemy that he never uttered were themselves uttering blasphemy.

Along with “shaking their heads”, the term blasphemy is repeated in 15:29, and it significantly leads readers to recall (retrospect) the conflict story between Jesus and his opponents as followed: “In the same way the chief priests, along with the scribes were mocking him, . . . ” (15:31-32). The opponents with whom the Marcan readers are familiar in the previous controversy stories are referred to right after the term. Eventually, “blasphemy” in 15:29 is clearly understood to have been deliberately chosen by the author of Mark for the conflict narrative.

In the Marcan Gospel the term, “blasphemy,” is first used to introduce the hostility of the opponents to Jesus (2:7) as the key charge in the conflict story, and in the last part of the Gospel. Furthermore, it is employed to bring a climax of the conflict for Jesus’ death (14:64). It is therefore revealed that the repetitive references to the term “blasphemy” in the developing of the story (3:28-29; 7:22) gives the fabric of the conflict story as an intricate design and unity.

260Donald Juel, Messiah and Temple: The Trial of Jesus in the Gospel of Mark, Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series number 31 (Missoula: Scholars Press, 1977), explains that “It is interesting to note, however, that the verb Mark chooses to describe the mockery is not ἐκμυκτῆριζεῖν from LXX, but βλασφημεῖν. Luke (23:35) does use the verb ἐξεμυκτῆριζον, though it is not certain that it is intended as a conscious allusion to the Psalm,” 103.

261Robert H. Gundry, Mark, 960.
3. πώρωσις and σκληροκαρδία (Mark 3:5; 6:52; 8:17; 10:5)

The terms, “the hardness of their hearts” (τῇ πωρώσει τῆς καρδιάς αὐτῶν) in 3:5 and “the hardness of your heart” (τὴν σκληροκαρδίαν ἵματον) in 10:5, are used in the conflict narrative against the Jewish religious leaders. The two words πώρωσις which is only used figuratively in the NT, and σκληροκαρδία which is used in its metaphorical sense of things in the NT, denote the same idea - reluctance of people to respond to God.²⁶²

Considering the similar signification of the two words, Evans argues that the language of obduracy, the hardness of heart, is used to describe the hostile opponents of Jesus.²⁶³

Based on the Diagram II-6 demonstrating the fact that the form “hardness of heart” is referred to four times in Mark: the first three times as πώρωσις and later one time as σκληροκαρδία, the two words for the obduracy of heart are therefore investigated within the same category in this section.

Diagram II-6: The reference of πώρωσις and σκληροκαρδία in Mark

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>3:5</th>
<th>6:52</th>
<th>8:17</th>
<th>10:5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>their hardness of heart</td>
<td>their hearts were hardened</td>
<td>Are your hearts hardened</td>
<td>Because of your hardness of heart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(πωρώσει)</td>
<td>(πεπωρωμένη)</td>
<td>(πεπωρωμένην)</td>
<td>(σκληροκαρδίαν)²⁶⁴</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

²⁶⁴ σκληροκαρδία appears one more time in the larger ending of Mark (16:14). Even though a minority of scholars maintains that the original ending of the Gospel of Mark is 16:20, most scholars of the Marcan Gospel today hold that Mark 16:8 is the last authentic verse of the Gospel. Danove’s work is an excellent source on the subject; Paul L. Danove, The End of Mark’s Story: A Methodological Study (New York/Köln/Brill: E.J. Brill, 1993).
The first appearance of the form “hardness of heart” in the Marcan Gospel is in the
healing story (3:1-6), which is the last story among five controversial narratives (2:1-3:6).

Marcus rightly does not analyze the controversy stories in a circular pattern, but rather
uses a linear development of opposition within the section toward greater tension between
Jesus and his opponents; the opponents first question Jesus silently (2:7), then question his
disciples about him (2:16), then question Jesus about his disciples’ behavior (2:18, 24),
than seek a legal reason for condemning him (3:2), then finally plot his murder (3:6).

Mark probably uses this collection “to show how the authority of Jesus was rejected by the
Jewish authorities . . . it is this refusal to accept Jesus’ authority which leads to his
rejection and ultimately to his death.” From the first to the fifth controversial stories
(2:1-3:6), the opponents’ incomprehension, stemming from hardness of their hearts,
appears as hostility toward Jesus, which gradually escalates and intensifies to a climax in
the final story.

The term πρόωσης is used to describe the opponents’ hostility towards Jesus.
The language in particular Mark 3:5, which is not used in other gospels (Matt. 12:12-13 and Lk. 6:7-9), alerts the Marcan readers that there will be conflict between the Jewish leaders and Jesus, as well as the fact that Jesus stands under the threat of death (3:6). It can therefore be concluded that the readers retrospect on Israel’s response with its stubborn heart to the prophets’ message (e.g. Jer. 3:17; 7:24; 9:13; 11:18; 13:10; 16:12; Ps. 81:13), and know that the opponents who refuse Jesus with obduracy will now deliver Jesus to an eventual death.

b) Mark 6:52; 8:17

The language of obduracy appears in Mark 6:52. Here, Mark uses πψρόω for hardness of their hearts, not πψροωςις that he used for the opponents in 3:5. The usage of that here is not for the conflict story between Jesus and his opponents, but for the disciples. Jesus rebukes his disciples for failing to grasp lessons arising out of his ministry in general.

Two noteworthy episodes that relate to this theme come shortly after the feeding miracles. When they saw Jesus walking on the sea, the disciples were utterly astonished “for they did not understand about the loaves, but their hearts were hardened” (6:49-52).

The term πψρόω is referred to 8:17 again, when Jesus rebukes them because of

---

270 The hardness of heart is a characteristic phrase in Mark, which may indicate that it is Marcan redaction. That fact is easily observed in the parallel:

| Mat.12:13 | He said to the man | Stretch out |
| Mk.3:5   | He looked around   | The hardness of heart |
| Lk. 6:10 | Looking around    | He said to him       |

Only the Marcan author uses “the hardness of heart.”

271 Dewey, Markan Public Debate, 188.

272 Guelich, Mark 1-8:26, 137,
their confused discussion with regard to the significance of bread (8:14-16) as he asks the following question:

“Why are you talking about having no bread? Do you still not perceive or understand? Are your hearts hardened? Do you have eyes, and fail to see? Do you have ears, and fail to hear? And do you not remember? When I broke the five loaves for the five thousand, how many baskets full of broken pieces did you collect” (8:17b-19b).

According to Evans, these indignant questions by Jesus concerning the hardened heart, unseeing eyes and unhearing ears, recall the description of Israel in the prophetic literature (Isa. 6:9-10; Jer. 5:21, 23; Ezek. 12:2).273 On the other hand, in Mark’s Gospel the language of obduracy of heart is used to describe the hostile opponents of Jesus, even though the two terms πνώμων and πωρόω are used for different characters.274 Related to this salient point, Evans explains the difference of hostility against Jesus between the opponents and the disciples: “There is a difference, of course in that whereas the Pharisees openly oppose Jesus (as in 3:1-6 and elsewhere), the disciples do not, at least not intentionally (see 8:31-33).”275

Another notion suggested by Brown is that the term πωρόω is used for the rejection of Jesus. Affirming that the term is used metaphorically in all five passages where it occurs, he articulates the usage of the word in NT:

In Mk. 6:52 the word is used of the hardening of Jesus’ disciples. “Their hearts were hardened,” so that they still did not understand who the Lord was (cf. 8:17). In Jn. 12: 40 it refers to the Jews again at whose hand Jesus met with rejection. . . The two Pauline passages also refer to the Jews: “the rest [i.e. the non-elect] were hardened” (Rom. 11:7); and “their

---

274Ibid., 119-11.
275Ibid., 102.
minds were hardened” (2 Cor. 3:13).  

Again the response of disciples to Jesus’ actions throughout Mark’s Gospel is characterized by non-understanding. In tracing this lack of understanding to a “hardness of heart,” Mark indicates that the disciples are in fact not essentially different from the opponents of Jesus, who also exhibit obduracy by failing to recognize Jesus’ unique character (cf. chs. 3:5; 10:5).  

In the questions (8:17b-19b), the Marcan readers retrospect to the narrator’s comment in 6:52: “they did not understand about the loaves; but their hearts were hardened.” Scholars like Quesnell and Beavis have argued this similarity in terminology and theme between 8:17 and 6:52. Quesnell asserts that “Mark 8:17-21 is clearly a more complete statement of the message of 6:52.” Therefore, for Marcan readers, the hardened heart of the disciples (6:52; 8:17) parallels the response of Jesus’ adversaries (3:5).

---


277 Lane, *Mark*, 238. The disciples have the privilege of Jesus’ company (3:14; cf. 5:37), of special instruction (4:13-20, 33-34; 7:17-23; 8:27-13:37), and of sharing in Jesus’ ministry as observers and as participants (6:7-13; 6:30-44; 8:1-9). They, in contrast to the “people,” know who he is (8:27-29). Despite the privilege, the disciples are frequently shown to be uncomprehending (e.g., 6:37; 8:31-33; 9:38-40). At times they are described with terms applicable to Jesus’ adversaries and outsider; they are “hard of heart”, blind and deaf (8:18; cf. 4:14), and a “faithless generation” (9:19; cf. 6:6). Peter is called “Satan” and accused of “thinking not divine but human thoughts” about Jesus’ mission (8:33) and eventually denies even knowing him (14:71); Guelich, “Anti-Semitism and/or Anti-Judaism,” 83-84. Cf. Joseph B. Tyson, “The Blindness of the disciple in Mark” *JBL* 80 (1961), 262.


c) Mark 10:5

In 10:5, Mark uses the language “hardness of heart” within the context of Jesus counter-question against his opponents’ test (πελακτω) of him. Some Pharisees asked “Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife?” (10:2). This question was oppositional and intended as a trap. If Jesus said no, he would seem to speak against the Law of Moses. If he said yes, he would apparently contradict his own commitment to a permanent relationship. The question of the lawfulness of divorce had been the immediate occasion for John the Baptist’s condemnation for Herod Antipas’ divorce and remarriage to Herodias (cf. 6:14-29). And it had led to his violent death. The Pharisees hoped that as Jesus said something on the subject of divorce that it would reflect unfavorably upon divorce and remarriage, he would meet the same fate at the hands of Herod as John did. Thus, their question is hostile by intending to trap Jesus.

When the Pharisees ask whether divorce is lawful, instead of providing a direct answer, Jesus asks a counter-question: “What did Moses command?” (v. 3). With their answer (v. 4), Jesus shifts the ground of discussion from what Moses wrote to what God made and meant (vv. 6-7), and emphasizes the phrase, πρὸς τὴν σκληροκαρδίαν ἤμων (v. 5). Jesus’ question is not about the Law, but rather gives a new turn to the discussion by declaring that Moses wrote this particular commandment to address their hardness of

---

280Lane, Mark, 354; James A. Brooks, Mark (Nashville: Broadman, 1991), 157; L. W. Hurtado, Mark (Peabody: Hendrickson Publisher Inc, 1983),160; Evans, Mark, 82. Perhaps due to the cooperation between the Herodians and the Pharisees, the Pharisees have known that Herod wants to kill Jesus (cf. Luke 19:11-27) and fears that Jesus might actually be John raised from the dead (Mark 6:16).
heart. From this perspective, it is evident that Jesus views Moses’ permission not as a reflection of God’s will, but rather as a reflection of the Israelites’ hardness of heart (πρὸς τὴν σκληροκαρδίαν ύμών). According to Heil, the language “hardness of heart” reflects the sinfulness of the Pharisees. Especially, he argues that Jesus acknowledges the Law written by Moses but relativizes it as the proclamation, because of the issue of a hardness of heart, and the obstinate refusal and rebellion against the salvific ways of God. The Pharisees continue to manifest in their opposition of Jesus (see 3:5) that Moses permitted divorce (10:5). Therefore, with the concept of the hardness of heart from the Law, Jesus’ retort is an assertion of the Pharisees’ sinfulness, and the hardness of heart is the essence of their rejection of Jesus.

The hardness of heart in 10:5 is related to 3:5 that attributes it to Jesus’ opponents, while 6:52 and 8:17 are referring to the disciples whose heart is a culpable failure to understand the kingdom occurring in Jesus. Via argues that the disciples are in effect no less hostile than the opponents to the real meaning of Jesus’ mission. However, whether the language “the hardness of heart” is used for the opponents or the disciples, the language eventually signifies the rejection of Jesus in the Gospel of Mark.

---

282 In LXX the term, σκληροκαρδία, is used in Deut. 10:16, Jer 4:4, and Ezek 3:7, where he prophets rebuke the Israelites for their refusal to listen to God’s commands. Jesus’ use of the language implies that he intentionally connects the current religious leaders and their Jewish ancestors in the rebellious attitude to God.  
284 In 7:1-20, Mark provokes the readers of the Gospel to consider that the opponents reject the commandment of God in order to keep their tradition; “You abandon the commandment of God and hold to human tradition” (7:8).  
4. \( \text{ἀποκτείνω} \) (Mark 3:4; 6:19; 8:31; 9:31; 10:34; 12:5, 7, 8; 14:1)

In the Greek New Testament, the word \( \text{ἀποκτείνω} \) is used to describe violent death, “murder, execution, and killing.”\(^{286}\) Detzler argues that the emphasis of the word falls on the result of conflict and violent death.\(^{287}\) Similarly, it is found that this term appears nine times in the Gospel of Mark (3:4; 6:19; 8:31; 9:31; 10:34; 12:5, 7, 8; 14:1).

When it comes to the Marcan Gospel, the Marcan scholars employ two Greek terms, \( \text{ἀπόλλυμι} \) and \( \text{ἀποκτείνω} \) for “kill.”\(^{288}\) Boomershine classifies “kill” as one of the negative words, grouping major criteria of sin or wrongdoing either explicitly stated or implied in the Marcan Gospel.\(^{289}\) In general, \( \text{ἀπόλλυμι} \), is always used in a conflict situation, but in many cases, \( \text{ἀποκτείνω} \), simply means die even though it is sometimes used in dispute (3:6; 9:22; 11:18; 12:9). Taking into consideration the theme of the conflict between Jesus and his opponents, \( \text{ἀποκτείνω} \) is studied in this section.

a) Mark 3:4

The term \( \text{ἀποκτείνω} \) in 3:4 is used in the healing story of the man with the withered hand (3:1-6), which is a continuation of the debate over the Sabbath observance begun in Pharisees’ question on the plucking of the grain on the Sabbath (2:24). Discerning the

---


\(^{287}\) Ibid.

\(^{288}\) In NIV, all the term, \( \text{ἀποκτείνω} \), is translated into “kill” (3:4; 6:19; 8:31; 9:31; 10:34; 12:5, 7, 8; 14:1). In Mark \( \text{ἀπόλλυμι} \) is appeared 9 times, and four (3:6; 9:22; 11:18; 12:9) of them are translated into “kill.” In NRSV, all of \( \text{ἀποκτείνω} \), is translated into “kill,” and one of \( \text{ἀπόλλυμι} \) is “kill” (11:18). Cf. 14:12 in NKJV.

unspoken objection of the Pharisees, Jesus responds with the two counter-questions: “Is it lawful to do good or to do harm on the Sabbath, to save life or to kill?” (3:4). It was illegal to kill, according to the Law, on the Sabbath even on any day of the week. Thus there is no fault with a definition of doing good based on the saving of a life. Even more certain is the illegality of the antithesis, to kill. The opponents remain silent and later took counsel to destroy him (3:6).

For the silence of the adversaries, Guelich suggests “The opponents’ reaction, however, makes clear that much more was involved than scribal casuistry.” Pointing to the meaning of “to do harm and kill,” Gundry answers the implication of the silence of them:

Furthermore, Jesus doubtless knows that a violation of the Pharisees’ earlier warning is liable to prompt capital proceeding against him. Therefore, doing harm and killing do not refer to neglect of the man’s need for healing, but set out the alternative of killing Jesus, if possible. The Pharisees will try to take this illegal alternative as a result of Jesus’ talking the legal alternative of saving life.”

The term, “to kill,” in this context alludes to the reader of the Marcan Gospel, Jesus’ death in the last stage of the conflict story. The role of ἀποκτείνω in 3:4 foreshadows Jesus’ death in Mark’s narrative.

b) Mark 6:19

---

291 Guelich, Mark 1-8:26, 135; Gundry, Mark, 151.
292 Gundry, Mark, ibid.
293 Ibid.
The word, ἀποκτείνω, is again mentioned in the story of the death of John the Baptist (6:14-29), which contains two parts: first, the public opinion concerning Jesus (6:14-16), and second the story of the Baptist’s death (6:17-29). There seems to be no logical connection between the two themes, but the somewhat artificial insertion provides an interlude for the Marcan audience to distinguish between the two men:294 Considering the fact that John is a forerunner of Jesus and John’s death foreshadows Jesus’ death, Hooker argues that the idea that John’s death points forward to Jesus’ own will be underlined.295

Asserting that the Gospel of Mark contains two “passion narratives,” the first of which reports the imprisonment and death of John the Baptist, Lane proves the similarities of both John and Jesus:

Between Ch. 6:17-29 and Ch. 15:1-47 there are points of parallelism worth noting: Herod’s respect for John as a righteous and holy man (Ch. 6:20) anticipates Pilate’s attitude toward Jesus (Ch. 15:5, 14); Herodias’ hatred for John and scheming to achieve his death finds its counterpart in the implacable hatred of the Jewish leaders towards Jesus; Herod’s yielding to the pressure imposed by the circumstances (Ch. 6:25 f.) is the prelude to Pilate’s yielding to the demands of the people (Ch. 15:15); the note of burial in a tomb with which the present narrative concludes (Ch. 6:29) anticipates the request for the body of Jesus and his burial (Ch. 15:43-46).296

The story of John the Baptist’s death in 6:14-29 belongs as a foretaste of the passion just as chapters 1-13 contain foretastes of the cross.297 The language, ἀποκτείνω, which is the key word of the passion, provides a certain foreboding to the Marcan readers.

294Witherington III, Mark, 212.
295Hooker, Mark 158-59; Hooker, Not Ashamed of the Gospel, 49; Kingsbury, Conflict in Mark, 41.
296Lane, op. cit., 215, n. 61; cf. Hooker, op. cit., 162.
c) Mark 8:31; 9:31; 10:34

The word, ἀποκτείνω, which is used for foreshadowing Jesus’ passion in 3:4 and 6:19 is also referred to in the three passion predictions (8:31; 9:31; 10:33-34). The death of John the Baptist is foreshadowed for death of Jesus in the predictions. Rhoads argues that “the most obvious technique of foreshadowing in Mark may be that of prophecy, as when Jesus three times prophesies his coming death and resurrection.”

In 8:31 the author of Mark introduces the first of three similar prophecies, which will be first displayed in a comparative chart and then analyzed in detail.

### The Passion Predictions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>8:31</th>
<th>9:31</th>
<th>10:33-34</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Son of Man must suffer, be rejected by elders, chief priests, scribes</td>
<td>Son of man to be betrayed into human hands</td>
<td>Son of Man will be handed over to chief priests, scribes, who will condemn him to death, hand him over to the Gentiles who will mock, spit upon, flog, kill him after three days rise again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>be killed after three days rise again</td>
<td>they will kill him after three days rise again</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---


299 Witherington III, *Mark*, 242. Mulholland, *The Markan Opponents of Jesus*, 227-28, makes a chart that the three passion predictions are consistent in showing the references, the death (ἀποκτείνω) and resurrection (ἀναστηρέται) of the Son of Man:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>8:31</th>
<th>9:31</th>
<th>10:33-34</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου παθεῖν ἀποδοκιμασθῆναι</td>
<td>οὐς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου παραδίδοσιν</td>
<td>οὐς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου παραδοθῆται κατεκρίμασιν αὐτῶν θεατῶ καταβίβασιν ἐμπέπτωσιν ἐμπτωτισμῷ μαστιγώσισιν αὐτὸν qanatw</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The comparative chart shows that various words and forms are repeated. Robbins argues that the most well known example is the triple repetition of the passion predictions in Mark. Based on this chart, it is discovered that the Marcan readers understand at least five elements: the first, the Son of man will be rejected; the second one is the fullest and most specific of the three predictions; the third, there are variations among the three predictions (8:31; 9:31; 10:33, 34), but we always have “be rejected, be killed, three days, rise again”; the fourth, the final part of the passion predictions is the death of Jesus; and the fifth, it will be probably suggested that conflict narrative will be concluded with Jesus’ death and resurrection.

Further, Perrin asserts that the object of ἀποκτεῖναι is ultimately Jesus, but there is a strong emphasis upon the previous fate of “the prophets,” and of the link between the fate of Jesus and that of the prophets. With the term, the Marcan reader anticipates the real death of Jesus, and recognizes that the death of Jesus is developed as far as the narrative is progressed to the end of Mark.

---

300 Robbins, Jesus the Teacher, 22-23, observes that the first two passion predictions contain twenty-five and seventeen Greek words respectively as they rehearse the basic events of the passion. The third unit contains forty Greek words as it brings Jesus’ description of the passion events to its most emphatic and full expression.

301 Witherington III, op. cit., 242.


303 Ibid. Perrin argues that the reference to the death and resurrection is the most stereotyped part of the whole.

304 Ibid. He adds that “so the use of the general ‘to kill’ rather than the specific ‘to crucify’ in the passion predictions is due to a link with this strand of early Christian passion apologetic.”
While most interpreters read the parable of the wicked tenants as an allegory and understand it as a representation of Israel’s continual rejection of God, some scholars have refused to see the parable as allegory. Even though the author of Mark does not specify who this group, αὐτοῖς, is in the introduction of the parable (12:1), it is clear from ch. 11 that he mentions Jesus’ opponents, the religious authorities in Jerusalem (11:27; cf. 12:12). The vineyard is a well-known metaphor for Israel and here it again symbolizes it (cf. Ps. 80:8-16; Isa. 5:7; Jer. 2:21). Thus the term, γεωργός, (12:1) in the parable can be interpreted as the representative of Israel who rejected the servants whom God sent (Jer. 7:25-26; 26:4-6; Amos 3:7; Zech 1:6). Therefore, Taylor observes well that the servants in the parable are considered as the forerunners of Jesus. Thus the Marcan author portrays the establishments of Israel, which reject and kill the servants in the parable (12:8), as the opponents who will put Jesus to death.

---

307 The term, δοῦλος, used here a servant is used of Moses (Jos. 14:7, Psa. 104:26), Joshua (Jos. 24:29), David (2 Kgs. 3:18), and regularly of the prophets (1 Kgs. 14:18; 15:29; 2 Kgs. 9:7, 36; 10:10; 14:24; 17:13, 23; 21:10; 24:2; Ezr. 9:11; Isa. 20:3; 44:26; 50:10; Jer. 7:25; 25:4; 26:5; 29:19; 35:15; 44:4; Eze. 38:17; Dan. 9:6, 10; Amo. 3:7; and Zec. 1:6). Snodgrass argues that the killing of the prophets in the Old Testament is a frequent New Testament theme (Mat. 23:31 f.; Act. 7:52; Heb. 11:36-38; 1 Thes. 2:15); Snodgrass, op. cit., 79. He adds that the view of the prophet’s fate was that of the early Church and it is sometimes suggested that this feature is an argument for the origin of the parable in the early Church. Even though he views that at least the origin of the parable in 12:1-12 is from the OT background, this reasoning does not take into account that the view that the Jews killed their own prophets was widespread in pre-Christian Judaism.
308 Taylor, Mark, 474.
In literary structure, the parable of the vineyard tenants forms a bridge between Jesus action in the Temple (11:15-19) and his pronouncement against the Temple (13:1-2).

309 As Hooker argues, throughout the whole of the parable “there runs a note of hostility and tension: the underlying theme is the authority of Jesus, already challenged in 11:27-33.”310 This series of conflict stories from 11:15-13:8 is in many ways similar to the earlier collection in 2:1-3:6.311 However, the conflict between Jesus and the opponents in the parable is symbolized as a practical performance to kill Jesus, rather than a plan to kill him in the future. Unlike the last stage of the conflict in the earlier collection (2:1-3:6) which is in relation to “how to kill Jesus” (3:6), the final step here in the conflict stories is that “they killed him” (12: 5, 7, 8). For this reason, Kee argues that in Mark 12:1-12 the Marcan author intensifies the hostility of the religious leaders against Jesus.312 Therefore, due to the word ἀποκτείνω in 12: 5, 7, and 8, which is used to make an allusion to Jesus’ death (3:6; 6:9; 8:31; 9:31; 10:34), the Marcan readers are able to anticipate the real death of Jesus as the result of the controversy between Jesus and his opponents.

e) Mark 14:1

A feature of the Gospel of Mark, as Perrin asserts, is that at key points in the

---

309 Hooker, Mark, 273.
310 Ibid.
311 Ibid.
narrative we have passages which serve a retrospective and prospective function: they summarize and interpret what has happened before, and they anticipate and interpret what is to come after.\textsuperscript{313} The passion story in Mark demonstrates this structure, which coheres from the beginning to the end of the Gospel. Nor is it a section of the Gospel, which can be considered in isolation from other sections of the Gospel.\textsuperscript{314} Lane argues that the account of Jesus’ betrayal, arrest, condemnation and execution furnishes a climax to the Gospel and brings together motifs and themes as a matter of record already in 2:1-3:6, culminating in the decision to seek Jesus’ death (3:6), and this determination was only reinforced by the developments of the Jerusalem ministry (11:18; 12:12).\textsuperscript{315}

In an important sense, therefore, the first thirteen chapters of St. Mark’s book are a preparation for the passion-narrative.\textsuperscript{316} Thus the death of Jesus is already plotted in the healing story of the withered hand (3:1-6), in which the opponents conspired to destroy Jesus (3:6) and the term $\alpha\pi\kappa\tau\epsilon\nu\omicron$ is mentioned for the first time (3:4). Here in the Passion Narrative the Marcan narrator tells the reader the climax of the plot; “The chief priests and the scribes were looking for a way to arrest Jesus by stealth and kill him” (14:1b). In 14:1 the language of $\alpha\pi\kappa\tau\epsilon\nu\omicron$ is no more used as foreshowing (3:4; 6:19) or

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{315}Lane, \textit{Mark}, 485.
\end{flushright}
prophecy (8:31; 9:31; 10:34), rather it is used for a final stage of the plot.

With the word ἀποκτείνω, the author of Mark has carefully prepared the reader for recognizing Jesus’ death as a result of the conflict narrative, which is systematically developed from foreshowing Jesus’ death in the conspiracy of the opponents to its logical climax for his death in the passion section. The reference to the word, ἀποκτείνω, in Mark makes a parallel structure and a dramatic culmination as follow:

A. Jesus uses the word and foreshows his death (3:4)
   B. The death of Jesus is a logical fulfillment of the Baptist’s death (6:19)
   A’. Jesus uses the word and prophesies his death (8:31; 9:31; 10:34)
   B’. The death of Jesus is a logical fulfillment of the servants’ death (12:5, 7, 8)
   C. The opponents, the chief priests and the scribes arrest Jesus to kill him (14:1).

From the early stage of the conflict story to the end stage of that, the usage of the word, ἀποκτείνω, unifies the Marcan text as a whole and shows the Marcan reader the coherence of the conflict theme throughout the Gospel of Mark.

C. Conclusion

The conflict theme in Mark is constituted by several tightly interconnected episodes. The episodes which, at first glance, look like a series of disparate stories, are mutually connected by words, phrases, and incidents. The interconnection of various episodes serves to develop the plot of the Marcan conflict and to amplify the theme of the Marcan narrative design. The conflict narrative in Mark is unified around one overall

---

Rhoads, Mark as Story, 47.
goal; to restore the Kingdom of God, which is stressed by the Marcan author. He portrays Jesus in his narrative as God’s agent, who will establish the Kingdom. Consequently Jesus meets conflicts with the religious leaders, who have already governed Israel. The conflict is the core of the narrative to reveal the goal of the author of Mark.

In the story line, Jesus, who has been related to God and has God’s authority, is the protagonist, while the religious leaders, who are characterized with authority, are the antagonists. The conflict between Jesus and his opponents is an extended clash over authority. Instead of accepting Jesus as God, they oppose him with harsh language throughout his ministry. The repetition of the reference to the opponents, the words of rejection that are used, and the issues that cause the conflict between the religious leaders and Jesus heightens the conflict narrative in Mark.

The vocabularies that the Marcan author employs for the rejection theme are four; παραδίδωμι, ὄρνο, ἀποκτείνω, which are consistently selected and combined throughout Mark. The word παραδίδωμι for the passive form, used in the narrative of the arrest of John the Baptist (1:14), is the same word used in the passion predictions (9:31; 10:33a) and in the beginning chapter of the passion (14:21, 41). The active form of παραδίδωμι is used by Judas, the opponents, and others (4:29; 13:12; 15:15). παραδίδωμι

---

318 Kee, *Community of the new age*, 107, argues that in Mark’s Gospel God will accomplish through his chosen agent the renewal, the vindication, and blessing of his people, as well as the defeat of all their enemies. Cf. the reference to “the Kingdom of God” in Mark (1:15; 4:11, 26, 30; 9:1, 47; 10:14, 15, 23, 24, 25; 12:34; 14:25; 15:43).
319 Rhoads, *Mark as Story*, 77, asserts that the driving goal in Mark’s narrative is for God to establish rulership over the world.
320 Ibid.
is linked to Jesus’ death elsewhere in Mark. \( \beta \lambda \alpha \sigma \phi \eta \mu \epsilon \omega \), first used by the scribes (2:7),
functions as the key word in the conflict story, being repeated in the development of the
theme (3:28-29; 7:22), and serving to bring the conflict to its climax with Jesus’ death
(14:64). The reference to \( \pi \omega \rho \omega \) (the hardness of heart), used for the opponent and Jesus’
disciples as well, implicitly explains the rejection of Jesus and is thus related to it.\(^{322}\) The
word \( \epsilon \pi \omega \kappa \tau \epsilon \iota \nu \omega \), denoting “murder, execution, and killing,”\(^{323}\) is emphasized Jesus’ death
as the result of conflict. The word develops from foreshowing Jesus’ death and prepares
for, the climax of his death in the passion section. From the beginning to the end of the
Marcan narrative, the language of conflict contributes to the coherence and unity of the
Gospel text as a whole.

The numerous groups of the religious leaders appear repeatedly throughout the
Marcan narrative. Their names are seven in all: the scribes, the Pharisees, the chief priests,
the Herodians, the Sadducees, and the Sanhedrin as Diagram II-1 in chapter II shows.
They are consistently depicted as Jesus’ adversaries throughout the whole Marcan
narrative. In the early stage of the conflict story located in a Galilean context (1:1-9:50),
the main references to the opponents are, the scribes, the elders, and the Herodians. At the
stage that alludes to Jesus’ death by Jesus’ passion prophecy, the groups of the opponents
are enlarged to five groups: the scribes, the Pharisees, the elders, the chief priests, and the
Herodians. From 14:1, which is the starting place of Jesus’ trial, the reference to the chief

\(^{322}\) Kingsbury, Conflict in Mark, 95-103; Heil, John Paul, The Gospel of Mark as Model for Action: A
Reader-Response Commentary (New York/Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1992), 204.

priests is increased as if they are the dominant group in Jerusalem, while the Galilean opponents - the Pharisees - disappear.

The issues over which the opponents raise conflicts with Jesus are divided into three categories at the surface. The first issue is Jesus’ authority on his teaching and ministry which all the religious leaders oppose, and which is mentioned through the whole Marcan narrative. The second is the Law: most notably, observance of the Sabbath, the purity issues, the concerns regarding divorce, and the tax, “Is it lawful to pay taxes to the emperor?” (12:14). The main opponents in the conflict over the Law are the scribes, the Pharisees, and the Sadducees. The third issue is the Temple. Its authorities are the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders, who try to strip Jesus of his authority. Although each opponent raises different issues to reject Jesus according to their own position in Jewish society, all of them are united in rejecting his authority. All the issues and conflicts between Jesus and his opponents revolve, in one way or another, around Jesus’ Authority.

---

324 Kingsbury, Conflict Story in Mark, 86, argues that “At the root of Jesus’ conflict with the religious authorities is the issue of authority.”
Chapter III. The Analysis of Social and Cultural Texture of the Rejection Motif

Employing the method of Robbins’ social and cultural texture, the Marcan scholars suggest that the conflict between Jesus and his opponents in the Marcan Gospel reflects the religious life and circumstance of first century Mediterranean society during which the Gospel was written. According to Robbins, texts with religious texture contain specific ways of talking about the world and the topics of the texts reveal the religious response to it.

In Mark’s narrative the debated topics between Jesus and his opponent are Authority (ἐξουσία), the Law (νόμος), and the Temple (ἱερὸν and ναός). The three issues not only emerge from the beginning to the end of the Gospel, but they also provide the cause of the controversy between Jesus and the Jewish religious leaders. At this point, the assignment of the study is to decode the function of “Authority,” “the Law,” and “the Temple” in the Jewish and Greco-Roman world of the first century. What is the difference between the view point of Jesus on the topics from that of the religious establishments

---


328 Marcan scholars has agreed that the main issues of conflict between Jesus and the Jewish leaders are three categories, Authority, the Law, and the Temple; Guelich, “Anti-Semitism,” 88; Kingsbury, *Conflict*, 63-88; Malbon, “The Jewish Leaders,” 266-67; and Saladarini, *Palestinian Society*, 149-154.
who lead the Jewish society and culture? Another investigation for the three issues is to explore how Mark shapes and develops them through his writing.

A. The Reference to ἐξουσία in Mark

ἐξουσία is one of the main issues disputed between Jesus and the Jewish leaders in Mark. In the first chapter (1:21-22), Mark raises conflict with them over authority. As this conflict is unfolded, it becomes progressively more intensive, until it finally ends in Jesus’ death. The reference to ἐξουσία in Mark appears as a coherent narrative unit for a conflict story. It emerges from three categories: (a) ἐξουσία is employed from the direct confrontation with Jesus (1:21-28; 2:1-13; and 11:28-33), (b) the indirect confrontations with his disciples (3:13-19; 6:7-13), and (c) from the illustration of the parable (13:32-37). The task here is to explore the social and cultural world contained in each episode and literary coherence.

1. Mark 1:21-28; 2:1-12; and 11:28-33

Mark’s narrative gives reference to ἐξουσία in three places which directly reflects the authority of Jesus; Jesus drives out an evil spirit (1:21-28), Jesus heals a paralytic (2:1-12), and the authority of Jesus is questioned by the religious leaders (11:27-33).

---

329 In the Gospel of Mark, the word ἐξουσία is referred to 10 times. In seven references, it refers to the authority which Jesus exercises directly (1:22, 27; 2:10; 11:28; 11:28, 29, 33); in two cases, it refers to the authority which Jesus delegates to the twelve (3:15; 6:7); and in one case, it refers to the authority which Jesus gives the disciples the parable about a journeying master who delegated authority to his servants (13:34).

330 Kingsbury, Conflict, 67. Saldarini argues that the issues of conflict between Jesus and his opponents center more on authority; Palestinian Society, 152.
a) Mark 1:21-28

Mark opens Jesus’ public ministry in 1:21-28 where the term, ἐξομολόγησις first appears. Attention will be given to which motif is employed in his inauguration of public ministry.

The introduction of the story begins with the social setting of a day in the life of Jesus including the synagogue, and the people teaching in it on the Sabbath.

Jesus begins to teach in the synagogue (1:21). The people are amazed at Jesus’ teaching, because he “taught them as one who had authority and not as the scribes” (1:22). “The scribes” in 1:22 is a reference to the ordinary teachers, with whom people are familiar, and whose authority is based on their knowledge of the Law. They also obtain their authority from the Roman overlords, whom they are dependent upon and accountable to. On the other hand, Jesus is like a prophet, who has received authority from God.

Marcus evaluates well both authorities; that of the scribes is linked with their role as the custodians of traditional interpretation, whereas the authority of Jesus is associated with the dominion of God. It is natural, then, that an exorcism demonstrating Jesus’ authority immediately follows a comparison between Jesus and the scribes.

Jesus sternly commands an unclean spirit, “Be quiet! Come out of him!” (1:25).

The unclean spirit obeys the order of Jesus and comes out of him (1:26). Jesus’ exercise of

---

31Saldarini, op. cit., 152.
32David, Mark as a Story, 117.
33Ben Witherington III, Mark, 90. Jesus refers himself as a prophet (6:1-6), and sometimes prophesies the future: the Judgment against those who blaspheme the holy spirit (3:28, 29), his death and resurrection (8:31; 9:31; 10:33, 34), to receive eternal life for those who leave family and follow Jesus (10:28-30), to obtain a donkey (11:1-3), the signs of the end of the age (13), destruction of the Temple (13:2), Judas’ betrayal (14:18), the denial of the disciples and Peter (14:27-30).
34Marcus, Mark 1-8, 191-92; cf. David, Mark as a Story, 116-17.
the power of his authority not only introduces a new social order, but also implies conflict with the religious leaders and Roman rulers who govern the contemporary social system. Jesus’ action in the sanctuary for the ritually unclean person in the culture generates conflict with the authorities. According to David, there are three reasons that provoke controversy between Jesus and the opponents: Jesus’ exercise of power initiates a transformation of the natural and social orders, it invades the territory of uncleanness as configured in the culture of Mark’s story, and it ruptures the conventional conception of God and shows people a new understanding of God.

Mark then concludes the story with the amazement of the people and their question: “What is this? A new teaching-and with authority (ἐξουσια)!, He even gives orders to evil spirits and they obey him” (1:27b). William R. Telford argues that Jesus’ powerful authority, which exorcizes demons, restores people, and works miracles, is evidence of the rule of God with Kingdom authority. Spreading the news about Jesus’ authority over the whole region (1:28), Mark introduces a new social system under Jesus’ authority but not that of the contemporary religious leaders who have authority over the country.

---

335 David, Mark as a Story, 78. I agree with David’s notion on a new social order under Jesus’ powerful authority that God restores humans to their proper role in the natural order. However, the social order under the religious authority in time of Mark’s writing is awry: “Demons dominate people, illnesses make them less than whole, nature threatens to destroy, and humans oppress other humans.”


337 Ibid. 78-79.

b) Mark 2:1-12

The story of Jesus’ healing a paralytic begins with his entrance to Capernaum, and his preaching (2:1-2). This geographical and temporal setting recalls the social surrounding of the previous story in 1:21-28, and initiates the plot action of 2:1-12. Jesus’ teaching in 2:2b recalls the previous teaching activity “as one who had authority, not as the teachers of the law” in 1:21-22. Jesus’ action and the presentation of some of the scribes in the body of the story allude to the conflict over authority between Jesus and the religious leaders.

At this point, to develop the conflict motif, Mark disposes the same social and cultural situation used in the previous story. Jesus’ declaration to the paralytic, “Son, your sins are forgiven,” provokes deeper controversy within the religious leaders. Jewish thought at the time of Jesus’ life on earth held on to the belief that the authority of the forgiveness of sins belonged only to God. Irenaeus rightly refers to the belief of Jewish people, saying “Therefore, by remitting sins, He did indeed heal man, while He also manifested Himself who He was. For if no one can forgive sins, but God alone, while the Lord remitted them and healed men, it is plain that He was Himself the Word of God.”

It is natural that in 2:6-7 the legal experts react harshly against Jesus, “He’s blaspheming!

339 In 2:1-12, Mark parallels the preceding story (1:21-28) with social and cultural setting and vocabularies as well: the same location, Capernaum (1:21; 2:1), the gathering people around Jesus (1:22a; 2:2a), Jesus’ teaching to them (1:21b; 2:2b), a disease person (1:23; 2:3), the word ἐξολοθρεῖα (1:22, 27; 2:10), Jesus’ command (1:25; 2:11), healing (1:26; 2:12), people’s amazement (1:22a, 27; 2:12b), and a new teaching (1:27b; 2:12b).
340 Broadhead, op. cit., 75-76.
341 Targum Isaiah53:5b; 1QS 9-11; 1QS 2:9; CD 3:18.
342 Irenaeus, Against Heresies, Book V, Chapter 17.3.
Who can forgive sins but God alone?” (2:7). Jesus’ word is something entirely beyond the social and cultural belief in the Jewish world.

It is clear that the crucial issue in which the scribes are, in their hearts, furious against Jesus, is his authority. The Jewish leaders sense in Jesus’ declaration of forgiveness, an affront to the majesty and authority of God, which is the essence of blasphemy. According to Jewish belief, no man -- not even a messiah—would have the authority to forgive sins. Nevertheless, that Jesus forgives sins is to turn from his authority that has been given to him on earth. The passive expression ἀφίεται (are forgiven) in 2:5 and 2:9 is customary in Jewish tradition to make a pronouncement about God’s action while avoiding the divine name. Accordingly, Jesus’ word breaks the social practice of the first century Jewish world, and generates conflict with his opponents who keep social and cultural order in Israel on behalf of God. Using the phrase “Son of Man” (2:10), Mark suggests Jesus’ authority is from God whereas Jesus’ opponents believe his authority is from Satan (3:22; cf. 3:30). Thus, Mark induces the Jews to

---

343 Gundry, Mark, 113; Hooker, Mark, 10; Lane, Mark, 95; Taylor, St. Mark. However, on the stir of their hearts against Jesus, Marcus suggests that Jesus’ usurpation of priestly prerogatives generates the opposition of the Jewish leaders. He also that the scribes may have been priests or of the priestly line, who have the authority to declare divine forgiveness; Marcus, Mark 1-8, 216, 524.
344 Hooker, Mark, 88, remarks that “there is nothing in Jewish literature to suggest that any man — not even a messiah – would have the authority to forgive sins. It is also true that nothing is said in Jewish literature about such authority being given to the Son of Man.”
345 Lane, Mark, 94, n. 9; James G. Crossley, The Date of Mark’s Gospel: Insight from the Law in Earliest Christianity (London/New York: T & T Clark International, 2004), 96-97. II Samuel 2:13 gives an example: “David said to Nathan, ‘I have sinned against the Lord.’ And Nathan said to David, ‘The Lord has pardoned your sin.’” When it is transposed to the passive in keeping with first century usage, Nathan’s statement becomes: “your sin is pardoned.”
346 Evans, Mark, 202-03, observes that the linkage of “son of man” and “authority” is to be traced to Dan. 7:13-14. He argues that “When Jesus says the ‘son of man’ has authority on earth to forgive sins, he implies that having received authority as ‘son of man’ from heaven itself (as in the vision of Dan 7:13-14).”
347 James, The Date of Mark’s Gospel, 97.
decide the true authority in these two authorities; Jesus’ authority, which is God-given and the opponents’ authority, which is people-given. With the declaration of the crowd, “We have never seen anything like this” (2:12b), Mark suggests that his readers shift their ethos on authority from the contemporary religious leaders to Jesus.

c) Mark 11:27-33

The conflict narrative in 11:27-33 begins with Jesus’ coming to Jerusalem and walking in the temple (11:27a). Jesus is immediately confronted by representatives of social and cultural leaders in Jerusalem. It is not an accident that the three groups are mentioned in 11:27b; the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders, who signify the authority of the Jerusalem Sanhedrin. According to Jeremias:

“The Sanhedrin was in origin and effect the first authority in the land, and so its competence extended throughout world Jewry. . . Furthermore, the Sanhedrin was at that time the first communal court of justice in the province, and finally it was the highest Jewish court of law in all Judea.”

In Mark this coalition dominates its social, cultural, and political realm in Judea as an agency after Judea became a Roman province in AD 6. They challenge Jesus with questions concerning his authority by which he is doing these things (11:28a), presumably

---

350 Ibid.
including his action in the temple (11:15-19). Then they ask again who has given him the authority (ἐξουσία) to act in this way (11:28b). Hooker asserts that the religious authorities in Jerusalem raise the ultimate question regarding the source of Jesus’ authority. However, the following context after their question shows that Mark alludes to the crucial issue on the source of the Temple authority.

Posing a counterquestion (11:29), Jesus challenges the questioners, whose members see themselves as the authority on earth representing the Temple which is legitimated from heaven, to state the source of the baptism of John; whether it is from heaven or from men (11:30). The opponents are forced to admit only one possible conclusion based on what they think of John. By the way, for social and cultural context, one critical question is raised in Jesus’ question; whose authority does Jesus try to bring out with the baptism? Does Jesus try to make clear that his authentic authority is traced directly to God? Or Does Jesus try to clarify that the opponents’ authority is from men, comparing with the Baptist? As Hooker affirms that John is introduced in 1:2 with a quote of Mal. 3:1 as the forerunner of Jesus, and that the source of their authorities must be the same, most Marcan scholars connect the authority of Jesus entirely with that of the

---

351 The question on “these things” refer to Jesus’ action in the Temple and the popular response to his ministry as well (11:18; cf. 12:12).
352 Hookers, Mark, 271.
354 Hooker, Mark, 271.
Baptist,\textsuperscript{355} and claim the authority of Jesus is the mightier one that John foretold in 1:7.

However, Jesus may probably introduce “John’s baptism” in his question (11:30) to compare the source of John’s authority and that of the opponents.\textsuperscript{356} In 11:32 Mark contrasts John, who is regarded as an authentic prophet (cf. 1:1-5), with the Temple authorities, whose members have “fear of the crowd” (11:32). Accordingly, the people and the Marcan readers recognize that the power of the Temple authority is of human origin, whereas the authority of John is from God.

Mark’s purpose in the narrative is that the authority of Sanhedrin is socially and culturally isolated.\textsuperscript{357} The people in the land presume that Jesus is the authentic authority of the Temple. However, the reason why Mark could not publicly pronounce the authenticity of Jesus’ authority is probably out of fear of the power of Sanhedrin, the Temple authorities, who are much feared by all.


In Mark two references to ἐξουσία appear in the passages (3:13-19; 6:7-12), in

\textsuperscript{355}Evans, \textit{Mark}, 204-05; Hooker, \textit{Mark}, 271; Lane, \textit{Mark}, 413; Taylor, \textit{Mark}, 470.

\textsuperscript{356}Marcan scholars have only investigated the baptism of John, which Jesus introduces into his counterquestion answering to the Temple authorities in 11:30, regarding forerunner of Jesus. Consequently, the authentic of the baptism of John could not have been researched comparing with the source of the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders. According to the Marcan intention, if we understand that the authentic authority of the Temple is Jesus, the question in 11:28 could be used by Jesus to the Temple authorities: “By what authority are you doing these things? Who gave you this authority to do them?” (cf. 11:17). Then, to make sure the source of the authority, Jesus could ask in 11:30: “Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin? Answer me.”

\textsuperscript{357}Myers, \textit{Binding The Strong Man}, 307.
which Jesus delegates authority to the twelve disciples.\textsuperscript{358} For the portrayal of the
disciples in Mark, Weeden observes that the disciples are representatives of Mark’s
historical opponents, and thus values them in a negative way.\textsuperscript{359} On the other hand, Tannehill
considers that the disciples are representatives of Mark’s potential models for his readers, and so
are basically positive in value.\textsuperscript{360} The Marcan portrayal of the disciples’ stories in 3:13-19 and
6:7-12 can be well explained by Tannehill’s view only. In these stories, Jesus calls the disciples
and appoints them to share in his work and authority. The task of the study for this section is to

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{358} In his distinction between the twelve and the disciples in Mark’s Gospel, Ernest Best, “Mark’s
Use of the Twelve,” ZNW 69 (1978), 32, confuses. He explains Mark distinguishes to some extent between
the twelve and the disciples, the latter being the wider group. . . Yet Mark makes little distinction in the way
in which he uses the twelve and the disciples. He also argues that Mark is not deliberately drawing attention
to the Twelve and that he is not concerned to identify the Twelve and the disciples in such a way that when
the disciples are mentioned we are to understand him to mean the Twelve and only the Twelve. He argues
that “It is, rather, the other way round: the Twelve is normally to be understood as signifying the wider group,
the ‘disciples’,” “The Role of the Disciples in Mark,” NTS 23 (1977), 380; cf. Following Jesus: Discipleship

However, Marcan scholars are widely agreed that Mark identifies the terms ‘disciple’ and the ‘Twelve’
with one another. M. J. Wilkins argues that “The four Gospels unanimously testify to the core of Twelve who
were called by Jesus into a special relationship with him. Although the Twelve are disciples, examples of
what it means to be a believer in Jesus, they are also designated as ‘apostles’”; “Disciples” in Dictionary of
Jesus and the Gospels, eds., Joel B. Green, Scot McKnight, and I. Howard Marshall (Downers
Grove/Leicester: InterVarsity Press, 1992), 178. Agreeing with Wilkin’s view, I judge that the twelve and the
disciples (and the apostles) refer to the same group of characters. Cf. Edward Lynn Taylor, Jr., The Disciples
of Jesus in the Gospel of Mark (Ph.D. diss., Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1979), 91-93; and
Elizabeth Struthers Malbon, In the Company of Jesus: Characters in Mark’s Gospel (Louisville: Westminster

For more information on Mark’s portrayal of the disciples in recent decades, see James S. Hanson, The
Endangered Promises Conflict in Mark, SBL Dissertation Series 171 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature,
2000), 211 n. 3.

Tannehill explains the reason why Mark uses negative terms for the disciple: “He composed his story so as
to make use of this initial tendency to identify with the disciples in order to speak indirectly to the reader
through the disciples’ story. In doing so, he first reinforces the positive view of the disciples which he
anticipates from his readers, thus strengthens the tendency to identify with them. Then he reveals the
inadequacy of the disciples’ response to Jesus, presents the disciples in conflict with Jesus on important
issues, and finally shows the disciples as disastrous failures. The surprisingly negative development of the
disciples’ story requires the reader to distance himself from them and their behavior. . . The composition of
Mark strongly suggests that the author, by the way in which he tells the disciples’ story, intended to awaken
his readers to their failures as disciples and call them to repentance;” ibid., 392-393.}
explore the purpose of Jesus’ transfer of his authority to the disciples, and the meaning of the authority of the disciples in the Jewish country.

a) Mark 3:13-19

In 3:13-19 Jesus selects twelve disciples to whom he will transfer his abilities. The twelve receive their special calling by Jesus (3:13). The calling involves being with Jesus in close association (3:14), sharing in the work of preaching (3:14), and exorcism which Jesus himself had been doing with authority (3:15). Structurally, 3:13-19 retrospects on the first ‘conflict story’ (1:21-28) between Jesus and his opponent over his authority:

“They were all amazed, and they kept on asking one another, ‘What is this? A new teaching-- with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him’” (1:27). Broadhead argues that the authority, that Jesus casts out demons and proclaims the new message in 1:21-28, is transferred to the disciples (3:13-19). As the research has shown in 1:21-22, Mark pronounces that a new social structure is opened under Jesus’ authority.

Then, for the social and cultural context of Mark, one question is raised here. What does the transfer of authority mean in the context? Why does Jesus deliver his authority to his disciples? Robbins explains that Jesus transfers his abilities to the disciples to keep his

---

361Ibid., 397; Ernest Best, Mark: The Gospel as Story (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1983), 49. Best, “The Role of the Disciples in Mark,” 380, suggests that the disciples receive five elements; (1) They are recipients of private instruction, (2) They are implicitly rebuked for their failure to understand, (3) They are with Jesus in the events of his last few days, (4) They are to be with Jesus, and (5) They are given authority to exorcize and to preach.
362Broadhead, Teaching with Authority, 91-92; Shiner, FOLLOW ME!, 188-189; and Tannehill, “The Disciples in Mark,” 397.
social identity as a teacher-healer. Ben Witherington interprets the transfer as Jesus’ own desire: “They are appointed for fellowship as well as for witness, being sent to teach and cast out demons.”

However, Robbins and Ben Witherington do not consider here the authority regarding a new social system, God’s kingdom, which Jesus extends with his authority. Mark insinuates that the new society will not be ruled by the religious establishment, but opened to the twelve disciples (3:14), to whom Jesus transfers his authority. As Hooker observes, the twelve disciples are represented to the whole nation. For the new social system, Hooker explains that “Jesus appointed twelve men in addition to himself: in other words, Jesus is seen, in some sense, as standing against the nation.” Consequently, for Mark Jesus’ calling the disciples and delegating authority to them declares a new community, which is governed by the authority of Jesus.

b) Mark 6:7-13

In 6:7-13, Mark repeats the similar literary pattern, εξουσία formula, which is

---

363 Robbins, Jesus the Teacher, 32, 33.
364 Witherington, Mark, 151, views Jesus’ calling and appointing his disciples on social and human life, and explains that “this is part and parcel of the portrait of the fully human Jesus in this Gospel—in this case he needed a support group. . . He lives as a person in community, not as an isolated prophet. These were not merely to be Jesus’ pupils, but his friends and coworkers.
365 Hooker, Mark, 111, affirms that “The number twelve is clearly symbolic . . . The Twelve represent the whole nation, since Israel consisted of twelve tribes. Cf. Rhoads, Mark as Story, 123, asserts that “the twelve” represents everyone who follows Jesus, explaining “Mark’s twelve disciples—fishermen, tax collectors—are from among the common folk of the village of Capernaum and the surrounding area. They have limited honor and no social power, and they are not connected to any authority group.”
366 Ibid.
367 In 3:13-19, Mark employs three items that are used for the controversy story over Jesus’ authority in 1:21-28, which refers to “A new teaching,” “with authority,” and “the unclean spirits” (1:27). For the sake of convenience, a story or a unit, which has the three elements (teaching, authority, unclean spirits) with εξουσία, will be called ‘εξουσία formula’ in this dissertation.
by Jesus’ summoning the twelve, sending them out, and giving them authority over
unclean spirits (6:7). The three ἐξουσία formula passages are parallel to each other and are
noted in tabular form:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>A new teaching</td>
<td>to proclaim the message (3:13)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>With authority!</td>
<td>to have authority (3:15)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c</td>
<td>order to evil spirits</td>
<td>to cast out demons (3:15)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

With the technique of the ἐξουσία formula, Mark emphasizes that the disciples’ ministry is
an extension of Jesus’, and they do in their lives exactly as he has done while they journey
through Israel. Establishing the ἐξουσία formula in 1:21-28, Mark equips the twelve in
3:13-19 and begins a new society, over which the twelve govern within the authority:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“He began to send them out” (6:7).</td>
<td>“They proclaimed that” (6:12).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“They cast out many demons” (6:13).</td>
<td>“He appointed twelve” (3:13).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“To be sent out to proclaim the message” (3:14).</td>
<td>“A new teaching —with authority” (1:27).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As Robbins observes a new dimension in their activities, the twelve disciples proclaim

---

368 Tannehill, “The Disciples in Mark,” 397; Kingsbury, Conflict, 95.
369 Robbins, Jesus the Teacher, 36, argues that “Since the new dimension in the identity of Jesus means
new dimensions in discipleship, Jesus now sends the disciples out equipped with instructions for action.”
the message of repentance, cast out demons, anoint sick people with oil, and cure them
with power (6:13). For social welfare, their activity shows a new authority, which is
different from the Jewish leadership. They stand out as Jesus’ messengers, or ambassadors
in the new community.\textsuperscript{370} Mark perhaps uses the symbolic action, “shake off the dust that
is on your feet” (6:11), for the new community. Taylor, for the assignment of the disciples
in the new social system, clarifies the symbolic action well as the following:

“The significance of the ritual of wiping the feet before leaving the city is that the city is
reckoned as heathen and its inhabitants as no part of the true Israel, even though it is a city of
Israel and its people Jews by birth.”\textsuperscript{371}

Taylor here makes a distinction between the true Israel ruled by Jesus’ authority and the Israel
ruled by the Jewish religious leaders. It seems that Bultmann misunderstands whether the
twelve belong to Jesus or the opponents when he interprets 6:8-11. He explains the mission of
the disciples is for the Hellenistic world, but not the Jewish world: “As a Hellenistic evangelist
he well knew that these instructions no longer applied to the mission in the оικουμενή.\textsuperscript{372} It is
clear that the disciples as ambassadors, who are appointed with the authority of Jesus, work
for a new social world in a different way than the opponents do in Israel.

\textsuperscript{370}Kingsbury, Conflict, 95.
\textsuperscript{371}Taylor, Mark, 305. Cf. Lane, Mark, 209; Robbins, Jesus the Teacher, 37; Kee, Community, 89;
Schweizer, Mark, 131.
seems that the ministry of the disciples is not for the new community, but for the Jewish nation. She explains
the symbolic action as the following: “Such an action on the part of the disciples was clearly meant to indicate
that the village or town which had rejected them was no longer to be regarded as part of the Jewish nation.” My
understanding the village or town in Jesus’ time is already in Jewish nation (cf. 1:38; 6:36; 8:27; 10:5, 6; 11:1, 2,
12; 14:3). As already seen, Mark shows the conflict between the authority of Jesus and that of the Jewish
religious leadership. Jesus says “Prophets are not without honor, except in their hometown, and among their
own kin, and in their own house” (6:4).

Mark’s final reference to ἐξονοίᾳ is mentioned in the parable of a man, going on a journey, leaving his slaves (τοῖς δοῦλοις) in charge (ἐξονοίᾳ), and commanding the doorkeeper to be on watch (13:34). This parable closely relates to the eschatological discourse. The householder left on a long trip will come home at an unexpected time. Nobody knows when the master will come. Then Mark suggests three times that the disciples “keep awake” (γρηγορεῖτε) (13:33, 35, 37). Therefore, the slaves, who receive the authority of the lord of the house, must keep watch. The slaves in the parable probably point to the disciples themselves, to whom Jesus first addressed the parable. 373 In the context, the disciples are Peter, James, John, and Andrew, who talked with Jesus (13:3). Mark repeats the word, “γρηγορεῖτε,” which is used for the slaves, with regard to the disciples in 11:37.

In 13:37, Mark changes his audiences, who should keep awake, from the second person plural “you” (ὑμῖν) to the masculine plural “all” (πᾶσιν, which is derived from πᾶς). Decoding the plural “all,” most Marcan scholars agree that the change is the explicit extension of a wider circle from the disciple. Lane argues that the extension is Jesus’ intention to transcend any distinction between the disciples, to whom he delegated his authority, and the Church at large. 374 However, the term “πᾶς” (13:37) explained as “all”

---

373 Evans, Mark, 341. However, some scholars explain that the plural “the slaves” are only related to Mark’s community, but not to the wider world. Best, Mark, 90, argues that the reason why “slaves” are only limited for the community is that the early Christians, who believe the Messiah, have the eschatological hope; Cf. E. Lohmeyer, Das Evangelium des Markus, 11th ed., (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1951), 285.

374 Lane, Mark, 484; cf. Evans, Mark, 341; Gundry, Mark, 800.
or “everyone” in the Marcan Gospel is very limited in depicting the Marcan community.

Instead it points more outward to the crowd and even to the opponents. Malbon well observes that the “πᾶς” serves in Mark to open outward to the larger group—“whoever has ears to hear or eyes to read the Gospel.” She includes all people for whom Mark wrote the Gospel in Israel:

“The Markan Jesus addresses the disciples, but the words he employs—many and all—are open—ended. The disciples are surely among the many for whom Jesus gives his life; the crowd is also among the many; but the many embraces as well the hearers/readers of the Markan narrative. Whoever—disciples, crowds, hearers/readers—would be first of all, must be servant of all. What the Markan Jesus says to the four disciples he says to all (13:37, pas).”

Accordingly, the change of the audiences from the second person plural “you” (ὑμῖν) to the masculine plural “all” (πᾶς) is a redactional inclusion to embrace the whole community for which Mark is writing. Naturally the delegated authority to the disciples (13:34) will be shared to the all (13:37).

4. Summary

The reference to ἐξουσία in Mark is alluded to coherently throughout the whole

---

375Mark refers to the term, “πᾶς,” sixty eight times including the one in the shorter ending (16:8) in Mark, and uses it in two ways: for people and for non-people. For people he mentions it sixty four times, and uses it in four ways: twenty seven times for “the crowd/people” (1:5, 37; 2:12, 13; 3:28; 4:1; 5:20, 40; 6:39, 41, 42, 50; 7:3, 14; 9:15, 35x2, 49; 10:44; 11:18; 12:22, 43, 44; 13:13, 20, 37), three times for “all nations” (11:17; 13:10; 16:15), five time for “the disciples” (14:23, 27, 29, 31, 50), and two times for “the opponents” (14:53, 64). For non-people Mark repeats twenty six times, and uses it in three ways: nineteen times for “all” (4:13, 31, 32; 5:33; 6:30, 33; 7:18, 19, 23; 9:12, 23; 10:20, 27; 11:24; 12:28, 33; 13:4, 30; 14:36), six times for “everything” (4:11, 34; 7:37; 11:11; 12:44; 13:23), and one for “always” (5:5). The term, “πᾶς,” is used only five times for the disciples in sixty eight times. On the contrary, it is used twenty seven times for people.


377Malbon, Ibid., 99.

Gospel. As a conflicting issue in the Marcan narrative, ἐξουσία has always related to Jesus’ authority. Whether the term is used in conflicting stories related directly to Jesus (1:21-28; 2:1-12; 11:27-33) or indirectly in stories related to Jesus’ disciples (3:13-19; 6:7-13), it is devised to refer to Jesus’ authority. Even in the parable in 13:32-37, which is not related to Jesus externally, the reference is implied to the authority of Jesus. As a result, the language of ἐξουσία adheres to Mark’s plan in his conflict story.

Mark introduces Jesus as a teacher with authority, whose instruction is different from the contemporary social leaders (1:21). The beginning of Jesus’ ministry with authority introduces the beginning of conflict between Jesus and the Jewish establishment, who has authority to govern the society. The power of Jesus’ authority is depicted as to forgive sins that God alone can do in the cultural ethos (2:7). For his readers, Mark alludes the source of Jesus’ authority is from God. In the first direct controversy in 2:1-12 the social leaders bear a grudge against Jesus. The dramatic conflict between Jesus and his opponents bursts out (11:27), after Jesus cleans the Temple (11:15-17). From the conflict with the Temple authority, Mark suggests that the authority of Jesus is higher than that of the Sanhedrin. Jesus challenges the contemporary national readership with the authority of teaching, of forgiving sins, and of the Temple, which are the crucial authority to keep the Jewish social system. Accordingly, the controversy on the authority is a vital matter shaking the Jewish social and cultural system at the time of Jesus.

379 Tat-Siong Benny, Politics of Parousia: Reading Mark Inter (con) textually, BIS 42 (Leiden/Boston/Köln: Brill, 1999), 65, 66, argues that the controversy (2:1-12), as a result of Jesus pronouncing forgiveness of the paralytic, centers on the “authority.”
The subject of εξουσία in Mark is developed when Jesus delegates his authority to the disciples (3:13-19; 6:7-12). The discerned ministry of the disciples from the contemporary leadership, which controls the Jewish society, permeates into the spirit of the people (6:12, 13). The authority of Jesus is enlarged on the society through the disciples’ ministry. It is suggested by the parable (13:32-37) that Jesus’ authority is even intensified and widened in the whole land through the people (13:37).

B. The reference to νόμος in Mark

In Mark’s narrative, one of the issues debated between Jesus and the Jewish religious leaders is the Law. Jesus’ response concerning the Law runs into conflict with his opponents, expands into much of Jewish Law, and challenges the boundary of Jewish identity in Mark. However, the occurrence of the term, νόμος, is never used in the Marcan Gospel. In comparison with Matthew and Luke, Mark seems to display little interest in the issue of the Law. Nevertheless, many of those incidents that are related to the Law in Matthew and Luke are taken from Mark. Thus, to observe the reference of

---

380 Kingsbury, Conflict, 94, explains that the ministry of the disciples is clearly an extension of Jesus, for as they journey through Israel they do exactly as Jesus has done: the proclaim the message of repentance (cf. 6:12 with 1:14, 15), teach (cf. 6:30 with 1:21, 22; 6:6b), heal (6:13 with 1:34; 3:10), and cast out demons (6:13 with 1:34, 39).

381 Guelich, “Anti-Semitism,” 88; Saldarini, Palestinian Society, 150.


383 D. J. Moo, “Law” in Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels, 459. The parallels: Mark 2:23-28 (Mt. 12:1-8; Lk. 6:1-5), Mark 3:1-6 (Mt. 12:9-14; Lk. 6:6-11), Mark 7:1-23 (Mt. 15:1-20; Lk. 11:37-41), Mark 10:2-12 (Mt. 19:3-12; Lk. 16:18), Mark 10:17-22 (Mt. 19:16-22; Lk. 18:18-23), and Mark 12:28-34 (Mt. 22:34-40; Lk. 10:25-28). In Mark there are three incidents not found in Matthew or Luke: “the Sabbath was made for humankind” (2:27), the editorial application of Jesus’ teaching about defilement (7:19), and the conversation between Jesus and a scribe after Jesus’ identification of the greatest commandment, in which the scribe, with Jesus’ approval, asserts that loving ones’ neighbor is “more than all the burnt offerings and sacrifices” (12:33); Moo, “Law,” 459-60.
the Law one has to take into account stories in which the term “νόμος” does not occur.\(^{384}\)

Mark has four main areas of Jewish Law dealing with the question of Jesus and the Law: the two Sabbath conflicts (Mark 2:23-28; 3:1-6), the two episodes dealing with purity laws (2:13-17; 7:1-23), the pericopae concerned with divorce (10:2-10), and the commandments (12:28-34).\(^{385}\) Even though νόμος is absent in Mark, these issues of the Law in Mark are central to the conflict motif which dominates the conflict story\(^{386}\) and are integrated to Jesus’ authority in Mark. It is the task of the present section to exhibit Jesus’ perspective toward Jewish customs and social laws. This study focuses more narrowly on one particular aspect of the debate:

what is the purpose of Mark through the debate on the Law? How does Mark advance the narrative about the conflict and amplify the theme in the Marcan Gospel?

1. The Sabbath

In the Marcan Gospel, the Sabbath is one of the main areas of conflict between Jesus and his opponents. The reference to οἶκος is mentioned twelve times throughout the whole of Mark\(^{387}\) (1:21; 2:23, 24, 27\(^{2}\); 28; 3:2; 3; 6:2; 16:1, 2, 9); seven of them are

\(^{384}\) Gutbrod, “νόμος,” in *TDNT* IV, 1059.


\(^{387}\) Yong Eui Yang, *Jesus and the Sabbath in Matthew’s Gospel*, JSNT Supplement Series 139 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), 244, counts thirteen times for the reference of οἶκος in Mark, when he investigates the Synoptic Sabbath-related passages in Mark and Luke. The reason is that he considers προοιμίων in 15:42 as οἶκος (p. 138, n. 1). The term, προοιμίων is not a confound word προ-οιμίων, but an original noun translated in “the day before the Sabbath, Friday.”
used in stories of conflict that debate the Sabbath law between Jesus and his opponents (2:23, 24, 27, 28; 3:2, 3), and five of them are not explicitly involved in the disputes about the Law, despite the references setting them on the Sabbath (1:21; 6:2; 16:1, 2, 9).

Robbins argues that the repetitive reference setting establishes a familiar pattern of expectation and fulfillment for Jesus’ distinctive role through the Marcan narrative.  

Then, through a repetitive form, the term ἄρῳτον brings forth a Sabbath controversy for people and readers in the time of Jesus. Therefore, the task of the investigation of this part is to analyze the pericopae that contains the reference ἄρῳτον; how is each unit formed as a Sabbath controversy? How are all the pericopae related to each other and familiar with the conventional Sabbath conflict?

a) Mark 1:21-28; 6:1-6a; 16:1-8, 9-20

Most scholars attribute Mark 1:21-28, 6:1-6a, 16:1-8, 16:9-20 to tradition, and set them out as to form critical conclusions, excluding them from the Sabbath

388Robbins, Jesus, 198, argues that through repetition, the distinctive quality of Jesus’ activity is teaching (1:21-22; 2:12; 4:1-2; 6:2, 6, 34; 8:31; 9:31; 10:1; 11:17; 12:14, 35; 14:49). “His activity brings forth the title “Teacher” on the lips of people who either address Jesus (4:38; 9:17, 38; 10:17, 20, 35; 12:14, 19, 32; 13:1) or speak about him (5:35).” For further studies on the new ideas formed through repetition of words in the Gospel of Mark, see Robbins, Jesus, 197-209.


debate because of no references to controversy over the issue. Examining the pericopae in the internal literary structure, one can find their cohesion within the larger literary context in the Marcan Gospel. The first reference to the term is mentioned (1:21) within the story of Jesus’ driving out an evil spirit on the Sabbath. Marcan scholars do not concern themselves here with the Sabbath law, because the text contains no hint of Sabbath law explicitly (1:21-28).393

However, in the view of social and cultural interpretation, the pericopae are disclosed as being concerned with the Sabbath conflicts; the key words appearing in 2:23-28 and 3:1-6, which are mainly dealing with the Sabbath conflicts in Mark,394 are introduced from 1:21-28. Furthermore, ὁδὸς διαμαρίσμου (1:21-28; 6:1-6a; 16:1-8, 9-20) is used in each context regarding social customs; 1:21-28 with teaching and healing the man possessed of the devil, 6:1-6a with healing the sick, and 16:1-8, 9-20 with burial. The research should explore the term regarding each social custom in the pericopae for the purpose of Mark.

393H. Riesenfeld, “The Sabbath and the Lord’s Day in Judaism, the Preaching of Jesus and Early Christianity” in The Gospel Tradition (Oxford: Blackwell, 1970), 118, argues that the mention of the term takes its significance from its eschatological relation to the overthrow of darkness and the introduction of messianic authority—authority both in teaching (1:22) and in respect of demon forces (1:27). Focusing on date and time, S. Westerholm, “Sabbath,” in Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospel, 717, insists that instances of Sabbath observance may be noted in 1:32 (the people wait until Sabbath is over to carry the sick to Jesus) and 16:1 (the women wait until Sabbath has passed before attending to the body of Jesus).

394We can see how Mark uses and repeats the same terms skillfully to form a Controversy pericope. See “The repetitive words are noticed in a visible table,” which I compare 1:21-28 with the two Sabbath conflicts (2:23-28; 3:1-6a).
In 1:21-28, Jesus is depicted as a person who is active in synagogue services on the Sabbath. Jesus’ activities on the Sabbath include not only teaching, which is different from the scribes (1:21-22), but also exorcism in which a man with an unclean spirit is healed (1:23-27). The term “σαββατον” appears first in 1:21-28 (1:21), and is repeated five times in 2:23-28 (2:23, 24, 27×2, 28), and reiterated two times in 3:1-6 (3:2, 4). Mulholland insists that the plural τοις σαββατον in 1:21 with the imperfect tense ἐδώκεκεν refers to the repetitive observance of the Sabbath.  

Mark follows this distinction in 2:24, which indicates that Jesus’ disciples repeatedly break the Sabbath, and in 3:2, 4 which refers to the Sabbatical controversy, “Is it lawful to do good or to do harm on the Sabbath, to save life or to kill?” (3:4). The reference to “the Sabbath” in 1:21 may imply the Sabbath law as the initial locus for the conflict debated between Jesus and his opponents over the law.

Jesus’ opponents (scribes) appear once in 1:21-28 (1:22), and once again (Pharisees) in 2:23-28 (2:24), and repeated twice (Pharisees, Herodians) in 3:1-6 (3:6).

The synagogue, which is the setting where Jesus and his opponents debate the Sabbath

---

Mulholland, Jr., *The Markan opponents of Jesus*, 77, n. 13, proves the differentiation between the singular and plural use of σαββατον. He analyzes that the plural clearly refers to the repetitive observance of the Sabbath, whereas the singular refers to the institution of “Sabbath” which is observed repeatedly. With one apparent exception (2:23), Mark follows this distinction: 2:24 indicates that the disciples of Jesus repeatedly break the Sabbath (n. b. the force of the imperfect ἐλεγον in 24 and 27), 3:2 and 4 refer to continuing conditions which apply to more than one Sabbath (n. b. again the imperfect παρετίρησον), and here 1:21b the imperfect ἐδώκεκεν again concludes the force of the plural τοις σαββατον. T. A. Burkill, *Mysterious Revelation: An Examination of the Philosophy of St. Mark’s Gospel* (Ithaca, N. Y.: Cornell University Press, 1963), 34, points to the plural form τοις σαββατον and the imperfect tenses of the verbs and suggests that in 1:21-22 and 27-28 Mark characterizes Jesus’ activity in a habitual way on the Sabbath. For more data on the differentiation between the singular and plural use of σαββατον, see Mulholland, *The Markan opponents*, 77-78, n. 13.
Law in 3:1-6, is referred to twice in 1:21-28 (1:21, 23). Jesus’ healing activity of the man possessed by an evil spirit on the Sabbath in 1:21-28 parallels Jesus’ healing incident of the man with shriveled hand on the Sabbath in 3:1-6. The repetitive words are noticed in a visible table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1:21-28</th>
<th>Sabbath (v. 21)</th>
<th>Scribes (v. 22)</th>
<th>synagogue (v. 21)</th>
<th>(healing)(^{396}) (v. 26)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sabbath (v. 24)</td>
<td></td>
<td>synagogue (v. 23)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:23-28</td>
<td>Sabbath (v. 23)</td>
<td>Pharisees (v. 24)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sabbath (v. 24)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sabbath (v. 27)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sabbath (v. 27)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sabbath (v. 28)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:1-6</td>
<td>Sabbath (v. 2)</td>
<td>Pharisees (v. 6),</td>
<td>synagogue (v. 1)</td>
<td>heal (v. 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sabbath (v. 4)</td>
<td>Herodians (v. 6)</td>
<td></td>
<td>restored (v. 6)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

With these repetitive languages, the basic pattern of the Sabbath conflict is established.\(^{397}\)

The rest of the Marcan narrative, 1:21-28 not only sustains the Sabbath controversy, but it is also the initial locus of the conflict of νόμος in all the laws debated between Jesus and his opponents.

On the face of it, one crucial point in 1:21-28 with regard to social and cultural context is the substantial matter of the exorcism on the Sabbath (1:23-25). Since exorcism is classified as work, it is not normally permissible to expel on the Sabbath. Witherington observes that “it is a paradox that Jesus encounters evil not merely on the Sabbath but in

\(^{396}\)Even though the term “healing” is not used in 1:26, the sentence, “The evil spirit shook the man violently and came out of him with a shriek” gives the meaning, “healing.” In 1:27c, “He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him” gives the same sense, “healing.” Dorothy M. Slusser, “The Healing Narrative in Mark,” *Christian Century* 87 (1970), 597-98, regards 1:21-28 as the initial healing narrative among 13.

\(^{397}\)Robins, *Jesus*, 198.
the synagogue right at the beginning of his ministry." If 1:21 is the work of Mark’s editing, as Bultmann argues, Twelftree understands in the right way the Marcan exorcism; “Through the exorcisms (1:24, 27) and confrontation with the demons (1:34; 3:11-12, 23-27; 5:7) and the demonic (4:41) the Jesus of Mark is shown to be the Son of God (3:11; 5:7).” Consequently, Mark probably alludes to two key elements regarding the Sabbath law in 1:21-28 as the first stage of Jesus’ ministry; the genuine spirit of the Sabbath law is to do good and to save life (3:4), and the authentic authority on the Sabbath is Jesus, the Son Man (2:10).

(2) Mark 6:1-6a

The form of 6:1-6a parallels the initial pericope of the Sabbath controversy in 1:21-28. The following table shows the visible parallelism:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1:21-28</th>
<th>6:1-6a</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>21b</td>
<td>2a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On the Sabbath he began to teach in the synagogue</td>
<td>when the Sabbath came, he entered the synagogue and taught</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22b</td>
<td>3c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribe</td>
<td>And they took offense at him</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27c</td>
<td>5b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him.</td>
<td>he laid his hands on a few sick people and cured them.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Jesus’ teaching in the synagogue on the Sabbath in 6:1-6a is a reiteration of 1:21-28,

---

398Witherington, Mark, 90.
399Bultmann, Tradition, 209, asserts that Mark introduces the story of the healing in the synagogue on the Sabbath in the context of 1:16-39, which is plainly meant to give a paradigmatic illustration of the ministry of Jesus. The beginning in v. 21 Καὶ ἐλεήμονας εἰς Καφ. Could well be a Marcan formulation.
which is the initial progression for the Sabbath controversy in the narrative. The key words that build the Sabbath controversy in 1:21-28 are repeated in 6:1-6a. The parallel words are as follows: “the Sabbath” (6:2a and 1:21b), “the synagogue” (6:2a and 1:21b), “they” who take offence at Jesus (6:3c) and “the scribe” who is one of Jesus’ opponents (1:22b), and “cured them” which is healing (6:5b) and “they obey him” which is healing (1:27c). Instead of the exact reference of the opponents “the scribe” in 1:22b, “they” in 6:3c who are the people of the hometown, is used as a metaphor of the opponents for the Marcan readers who remember the Sabbath controversy in 1:21-28.\(^\text{401}\) For the meaning of healing, Mark uses different language: “cured them (ἐθεράπευσεν)” in 6:5b and “they obey him (ὑπάκουσαν)” in 1:27c. Tannehill argues that the repetition with various words and phrases in 6:1-6a gives the text unity of 1:21-28 and combines the two texts.\(^\text{402}\)

As the previous section shows the Sabbath controversy, 6:1-5b raises the same question on the Sabbath law that 1:21-28 is faced with for the social and cultural situation. On the Sabbath in the synagogue, Jesus performs mighty works (6:2), which are healing sick people (6:5a). Through the familiar pattern, Mark establishes Jesus’ distinctive social role on the Sabbath through the Gospel: the Sabbath is not to maintain statutes, but to do good and


\(^\text{402}\) Cf. Robert C. Tannehill, The Sword of His Mouth (Philadelphia: Fortress Press/Missoula: Scholars Press, 197), 39-58; “Repetitive pattern also gives to a text unity and particularity. The Pattern makes clear what belongs to the text and what does not. For it makes the text stand out as something unique, something unified in itself and distinct from all words that do not fit this pattern. . . Repetition without variety would be boring. It is repetitive pattern combined with significant variation which gives richness and interest to language,” 43-51.
to save life (3:4), and Jesus has the authentic authority over the Sabbath (2:10). However, the pericope (6:1-5a) in which Jesus is rejected by the townspeople, is distinct from 1:22-28 in that Jesus begins his ministry of the Sabbath. It looks that, to his readers, Mark requires their own answer of Jesus’ authority on the Sabbath through the questions:

“Where did this man get all this? What is this wisdom that has been given to him? What deeds of power are being done by his hands! Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary and brother of James and Joseph and Judas and Simon, and are not his sisters here with us?” (6:2-3)

Their questions demand an affirmative answer of Jesus’ identity. Gundry well notices that “they also raise the issue of identity and suggest a possible origin of Jesus’ wisdom and power.” He points out their mistakes that “Identifying him as Mary’s son misses his identity as God’s Son (1:1, 11; 3:11; 5:7; 9:7; 12:6; 13:32; 14:61-62; 15:39). . . All in all, the third and fourth questions miss the point that Jesus has a new family over whom he presides (3:31-35)” As Gundry observes the reason for the rejection in Jesus’ response, Mark depicts that the social and cultural prejudice cannot permit Jesus as God’s Son “Prophets are not without honor, except in their hometown, and among their own kin, and in their own house” (6:4). In addition to that, the rejection of Jesus in his hometown (6:3) is a stage of development of the Marcan conflict narrative.

---

403 I agree Sanders’ view on Jesus’ attitude towards the law. He asserts that we must consider the position that although Jesus opposed parts of the law, he did not intend to oppose it in principle; *Judaism*, 246-47. In fact, Sanders assimilates Westerholm’s view on Jesus’ attitude toward the law that the learned of Israel thought of Scripture as essentially containing statutes, while Jesus did not.


405 Ibid.

406 Ibid. For Mark Gundry argues that their prejudice against Jesus is because of familiarity with him and his family. There seem to be a narrowing down and a climactic order in the progression from home town (fellow townspeople) to relatives (extended family) to house (immediate family living in the same building).

16:1-2, 9 are the last references to σαββατον in Mark. There are different views on the references to σαββατον on the Sabbath controversy among the Marcan scholars. Some of them espouse that the references provide little evidence of the Sabbath controversy.408 There are three reasons: first, no theological connection is related in the references;409 secondly, they are used in the meaning of the “week” rather than the “Sabbath”;410 and finally, they lack historicity.411 They do not combine the references into a narrative device in the whole of Mark. Others, who view that the references may be connected with the Sabbath controversy,412 do not give a detailed explanation of the alliance. However, in the viewpoint of rhetorical composition, the references are analyzed as the Sabbath controversy. According to Rhoads, Mark’s story has a beginning, a middle, and an end with one overall goal.413 As a prologue, 1:21-28 begins the Sabbath controversy. The reference, “the Sabbath came” in 1:21b, gives information on the beginning of the controversy.


413 Rhoads, Mark, 73-74.
controversy. As a middle, 6:1-6a recalls 1:21-28 and continues the theme as it develops the Sabbath controversy, while not directly addressing the issue of the theme.\textsuperscript{414} The reference, “the Sabbath was over” in 16:1a provides the end of the story. The reference, σάββατον, in 16: 1, 2, and 9, functions as the epilogue of the Sabbath controversy.\textsuperscript{415}

Except σάββατον (16:1a), the references of the components of the story of Jesus resurrection (16:1-20) are different from the first Sabbath controversy (1:21-28). For this reason, Robbins argues, that the opening and closing may have very different kinds of texture.\textsuperscript{416}

“One of the possibilities, for example, is that some endings really are simply new beginnings. In other words, some endings are really not endings at all. They do not really bring anything to a final conclusion. Rather, some endings simply introduce topics and events that provide resources for a new beginning when everything seemed to be coming to a dramatic, final end.”\textsuperscript{417}

As the closing section of the Sabbath controversy, 16:1 with σάββατον begins the new story of the resurrection of Jesus. It seems that Mark implies a new world with the resurrection that Jewish society does not know before. Even though the three women (16:1) heard the prediction of Jesus’ resurrection (8:31; 9:31; 10:34), they cannot believe it because of no experience in the land. Accordingly, the power of Jesus’ authority overcomes the ethos of Jewish social system. The σάββατον mentioned in 1:21; 6:2; 16:1-2,

\textsuperscript{414} Loader, Jesus’ Attitude, 64.
\textsuperscript{415} Westerholm, “Sabbath,” 717.
\textsuperscript{417} Ibid.
which is not referred to the Sabbath law, contributes to the overall development of the theme of the Sabbath controversy.

b) Mark 2:23-28

The literary form of 2:23-38, unlike the preceding pericopes (1:21-28; 6:1-6a; 16:1-8, 9-20), employs the explicit components that create the Sabbath conflict story. Comparing the preceding stories, which has minimal reference for the Sabbath controversy form with the controversy over plucking grain, reveals the elements required for the real conflict over the issue of the Sabbath law between Jesus and his opponents. Jesus and the disciples are walking through fields on the Sabbath, and the disciples are plucking grain (2:23). The Pharisees query Jesus about the behavior of the disciples, who are breaking the Sabbath law (2:24). Jesus first replies with the example of David’s unlawful action of eating and sharing the shewbread with his followers (2:25-26). Then he replies that the Sabbath was made for man, so that the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath (2:27-28).

2:23-28 has long been understood as a coherent literary unit within the five controversial stories 2:1-3:6: the healing of the paralytic (2:1-12), the eating with tax collectors and sinners (2:15-17), the question about fasting (2:18-20), plucking grain on the Sabbath (2:23-28), and the man with the withered hand (3:1-6). Because the five stories share a common topic, the conflict between Jesus and the religious leaders, Marcan
scholars believe that Mark drew upon an earlier written collection of conflict stories for this portion of this work. Analyzing the pericope in the view of inner language relationship running through the whole of Mark, 2:23-28, however, coheres with 1:21-28, that is the part of the introduction of the Sabbath controversy. The basic elements constructed for the Sabbath story in 1:21-28 are repeated in 2:23-28. The following visible table shows the coherence between two pericopae:

| 1:21-28  | Sabbath (v. 21) | Scribes (v. 22) | synagogue (v. 21) |
| 2:23-28  | Sabbath (v. 23) | Pharisees (v. 24) | House of God (v. 26) |
|          | Sabbath (v. 24) |                | synagogue (v. 23) |
|          | Sabbath (v. 24) |                |                    |
|          | Sabbath (v. 27x2) |                |                    |
|          | Sabbath (v. 28) |                |                    |

The references on the table may be explained not only as the primary factors in the Sabbath controversy, but also in word repetition that makes connections between 1:21-28 and 2:23-28. The structure of 2:23-28 contains three basic factors which are paralleled in 1:23-28; “Sabbath” on which the conflict occurred (vv. 23, 24, 27x2, 28), the opponents

---


“Pharisees” who debated against Jesus (v. 24), and “house of God”\textsuperscript{419} in which is the spatial source for the conflict (v. 26).

Moreover, to see the social and cultural setting of the time in the structure of 2:23-28 is the new word, $\varepsilon x\epsilon\sigma\tau\nu$, twice (2:24, 26), which relates to the conflict about the Sabbath law explicitly. Seeing the behavior of the disciples (2:23), the Pharisees question, “Look, why are they doing what is not lawful on the Sabbath?” (2:24). Jesus answers of the inquiry with David’s example (1 Sam. 21:1-6), “. . . it is not lawful (οὐκ $\varepsilon x\epsilon\sigma\tau\nu$) . . .” (2:26). Jesus vindicates the disciples’ grain plucking through a comparison of himself with David. It seems that Jesus abrogates the Sabbath law. At this point, numerous Sabbath disputes are recorded. One of the crucial questions to understand the context (2:23-28) is “Does Jesus abrogate the Sabbath law?

Associating with Bultmann to answer the question, Sanders argues that it is likely that the entirety of the pericope on plucking grain on the Sabbath (Matt. 12:1-8; Mark 2:23-28; Luke 6:1-5) is the creation of the church. Bultmann long argued that the disciples (that is, the church) are criticized, not Jesus, and the passage represents a Christian response to Jewish criticism.\textsuperscript{420} Thus “Surely stories such as these should not be read as describing actual debates between Jesus and others.”\textsuperscript{421} Sanders’ view on Jesus’ attitude

\textsuperscript{419} Joanna Dewey, “The Literary Structure of the Controversy Stories in Mark 2:1-3:6,” \textit{JBL} 92 (1973), 399, argues that the “house of God” (2:26) is not necessary ideal setting for the pericope, but may in part be the invention of the evangelist creating a literary whole out of separate incidents. The “house of God” in 2:23-28 and “synagogue” in 1:21-28 are used as elements which correlate spatial function in the two pericopae.

\textsuperscript{420} Sanders, \textit{Jesus and Judaism}, 266.

\textsuperscript{421} Ibid., 265; Sanders, while explaining Matt. 15:1-20 and Mark 7:1-20, argues that even if we accept all the stories as depicting things that really happened, it must still be noted that there is no actual transgression of the law on the part of Jesus. In the passage on handwashing (7:1-20), it is the disciples who are accused by the opponents.
toward the Sabbath that “he had no attitude towards the law other than that of the normally observant Jew.”\(^4\) In opposition to Sanders, Crossley argues that “The Pharisees could quite plausibly have decided to walk in a field without expecting to engage in a Sabbath dispute, stayed within the Sabbath limit naturally, and then seen Jesus’ disciples plucking grain, or they may have deliberately been investigating Jesus’ Sabbath practices and not simply checking on people generally.”\(^5\) Thus, he insists that “Mark does, however, clearly portray Jesus conflicting with the Pharisees over that is lawful/permitted (\(\xi\sigma\tau\iota\nu\)) on the Sabbath. Although there is no direct evidence from around the New Testament period that the Pharisees believed plucking grain was illegal on the Sabbath it probably was assumed by certain groups.”\(^6\) Crossley states that, although Jesus was in conflict with the Pharisees, he does not abrogate the Sabbath. Even though consorting with Crossley, this study is needed to solve the parallel drawn between Jesus and David.

Comparing the parallel between Jesus and David, Myers argues that Mark has added something to his rendition of the Old Testament story: David and his men were hungry (1 Sam 21:1-6). He points out that Mark’s point on the parallel is the issues of “mercy, not sacrifice:” the hunger of the poor is explained in a symbolic way as setting Israel its central religious task, one taking precedence even over the duty of observing the

\(^4\)Ibid., 246.
\(^6\)Ibid., 161. For further study on the Sabbath dispute of Mark 2:23-28, see Crossley, The Date of Mark’s Gospel, 159-172.
As Myers observes Jesus’ interpretation on the Old Testament, Jesus’ priority of the Sabbath is to keep the spirit of the Sabbath for humankind, but not to contain statutes. Under exceptional circumstances, human need might rightly be regarded as taking precedence over the law. Mark clarifies it in 2:27: Then he said to them, “The Sabbath was made for humankind, and not humankind for the Sabbath.” Moo comments that “Here Jesus claims superiority over the Sabbath, including the right to interpret, transform or even abrogate this central Mosaic institution.” Through all the Sabbath pericopae, Mark always defines Jesus’ position as the authentic authority over the Sabbath. Moo rightly explains that Jesus claims the Father’s own right to continue “working” on the Sabbath (John 5:17-18). And in a succinct and clear statement of his position vis-à-vis the Sabbath, he claims “the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath” (Matt. 12:8 par. Mark 2:28, and Luke 6:5). Consequently, through the parallel between Jesus and David, Mark discloses two things; Jesus’ priority of the Sabbath to do good and to save life (3:4), and his legitimate authority.

c) Mark 3:1-6

Similarly to 2:23-28, the healing on the Sabbath pericope in 3:1-6, is a conflict
story concerning Jesus’ activity on the Sabbath. The formation of this pericope begins with Jesus’ entering the synagogue (3:1a) and moves to the conflict between Jesus and his opponents as Jesus cures the man’s crippled hand on the Sabbath (3:2). The verb παρετίρουν (they watched) in 3:2, is not impersonal, and means that everyone watched; the enemies who watched Jesus’ activity, and conspired with the Herodians, were the Pharisees (cf. 3:6).429 In 3:4 Jesus’ question to the unspoken objection of the Pharisees, “Is it lawful to do good or to do harm on the Sabbath, to save life or to kill?” reminds the Marcan readers of the conflict which occurs between Jesus and the opponents in 2:24 and 26c.430 The reference, ἔξεστιν, (3:4) which is introduced in 2:26 as a heightening and developing factor of the Sabbath conflict, is repeated. Then Jesus commands the man to stretch out his hand and heals the hand (does good on the Sabbath) and breaks the law (3:5).431 3:6 reports the opponents’ reaction that they begin plotting how to kill Jesus (6:5).

As it is studied in 2:23-28, the reference σάββατον (vv. 2, 3) in 3:1-6 harks back to 1:21.432 Observing the healing of the man with the withered hand in 3:1-6, is a continuation of the debate over Sabbath observance begun in the story of the plucking of the grain in 2:23-28.

Thus, the scholars’ interest in the pericope is the same issue that 2:23-28 has:

“Does Jesus attempt to change or avoid the Sabbath law by interpretation? Sanders argues

---

that the story of healing of the Sabbath (3:1-6) also reveals no instance in which Jesus transgressed the Sabbath. He explains that the matter is quite simple: no work was performed. However, the contents in the rhetorical question, “Is it lawful to do good or to do harm on the Sabbath, to save life or to kill?” (3:4), is not Sanders’ interest, but the decree of the Sabbath. Crossley observes it rightly: “the Sabbath dispute in Mk 3.1-6 can hardly be seen as abrogating or rejecting the biblical Torah as healing on the Sabbath is not prohibited in biblical law. The portrayal of Jesus shows that Jesus does not believe that he is questioning the Sabbath, because he does not question the validity of the Sabbath as an institution but rather the emphasis is on what can and cannot be done on the Sabbath.” Thus it has been rightly argued that Jesus is extending the dictum that saving life overrules the Sabbath (m. Yoma 8:6; cf. 1 Macc. 2.32-41; 2 Macc. 6.11) to include his healing ministry in Mk 3.4 Pronouncing the decree of the Sabbath, in fact, Jesus points out the to the social and cultural leaders of the Jewish establishment, who interpret the Sabbath in incorrect ways. Sanders attends it and explains the following:

These interpretations, even though the result is to oppose the obvious meaning of a scriptural law, were not considered by those who practiced them to be denials of the law, nor to call into question its adequacy. The Pharisaic/Rabbinic concept of ‘oral law’ shows that they wanted to assert that the law given to Moses was adequate in all respects—even when they were in fact adding it, deleting from it, and otherwise altering it.

The Jewish religious leaders, who take charge of interpretation, apply the law for their

---

433 Sanders, Jesus and Judaism, 266.
434 Crossley, The Date of Mark’s Gospel, 85.
435 Sanders, Jesus and Judaism, 249.
own adequate purpose. With the rhetorical question, Jesus challenges their interpretation of the law that they need a major or sole criterion to decode the Sabbath.

Mark portrays Jesus as the primary agent to interpret the Sabbath to keep the society and culture. In result, Jesus’ challenge makes the provocation to the authority on the law at that time. Heil argues that here the opposition against Jesus is broadened to include not only the Jewish religious authorities of scribes and Pharisees, but also the political groups known as the Herodians (3:6). 3:1-6 suggests to the Marcan readers that Jesus does not contradict the Sabbath law, but he is the authentic authority of the law.

2. Purity laws

Neyrey, in The Idea of Purity in Mark’s Gospel, argues that “purity” is a map of a social system which coordinates and classifies things according to their appropriate place in the Judaism of Jesus’ time. Things such as, places, persons, and times, can all be mapped. He suggests that the following three items are mapped as unclean persons and things: a) people who are not physically whole in body or family lines, b) people who either experience emissions from bodily margins or who come in contact with these emissions or with the emitter, and c) foods and animals which do not fit clearly within

---

436 Ibid.; Sanders argues that in 1Q a distinction is made between the ‘hidden things’ in the law, which are known only to the sect, and the rest (1QS 5.11f.). Entrants to the community pledge to keep ‘every commandment of Law of Moses in accordance with all that has been revealed of it to the son of Zadok’ (1QS 4.8f). Thus the sect’s special rules were formally considered to be in ‘the law of Moses,’ though from our point of view they are additions and modifications.

437 John Paul Heil, Mark: As A Model for Action, 76.

Thus he observes a map of unclean Israelites in the New Testament, and offers it in detail: morally unclean Israelites are tax collectors & sinners (Luke 15:1-2; Matthew 9:10-13); and bodily unclean Israelites are lepers (Mark 1:4-45; Luke 17:11-14), poor, lame, maimed, blind (Luke 14:13; see Lev 21:18-21), and menstruants (Mark 5:24-34).

According to Neyrey’s map of unclean persons and things, the two stories of conflict: on Jesus’ eating with tax collators and sinners (2:13-17) and his disciples’ eating with defiled hands (7:1-23), are possibly dealt with in the issue of purity law. It is assumed that each pericope is coherent in structure, and interrelated to other pericopae, containing the controversy between Jesus and his opponents over the purity law. The investigation of this part is to display not only their inner relationship devised by literary design for a theme of purity law, but also Jesus’ attitude toward the law.

---

439 Ibid., 104. Cf. Jacob Neusner, “The Idea of Purity In Ancient Judaism” Semeia 35 (1986), 21. The Mishnah and Tosefta offer a map of persons that classifies and ranks the people of Israel according to a purity system (M. Kelim 1.3-5).

440 Ibid., 101. See Meyrey’s “Idea of Purity in Mark’s Gospel,” 101, for more information of the map of people in the New Testament as an illustration of how Israelites are internally ranked according to a purity system.

441 The term in 7:2, κοινομός which is translated into “defiled” in NRSV and “unclean” in NIV, means “ritually unclean” as in 1 Maccabees 1:47 and 62. For more information about the function of the term in the Jewish context, see Lane, Mark, 242, n. 2; Witherington III, Mark, 224-45.

442 Guelich, “Anti-Semitism,” 89-90; Loader, Jesus’ attitude, 30-31, 71-79; Hultgren, Jesus and His Adversaries, 109-111, 115-19. Cf. Witherington III, Mark, 121-22. He argues that the Pharisees offends against Jesus (2:16) because of the notoriously immoral action of Jesus, but not merely the ritually negligent. Marcus, Mark 1-8, 230, asserts that the Pharisaic objection probably went beyond purity issue, for sinners were not only people who were careless about ritual matters but also people who were actively involved in breaking the laws of God and human beings by fraud, treachery, prostitution, etc. Thus, they collaborated with the Romans in fleecing their own people, and reflected in destructive ways the societal breakdown.
a) Mark 2:13-17

The conflict over the purity law in 2:13-17\(^{443}\) comes into play when Jesus eats with tax collectors and sinners (2:15). This is evident when the “scribes of the Pharisees” pose the question about Jesus’ table fellowship; “Why does he eat with tax collectors and sinners?” (2:16). The Marcan scholars here try to uncover the motive of the Pharisaic offense against Jesus. Asserting that Jesus’ ritual purity might be compromised, Marcus suggests the possible views on the problem with Jesus’ table fellowship with tax collectors and sinners: Jesus might be offered non-kosher food or food that had not been properly tithed, or he might be defiled by contact with the clothes of ritually unclean people in the close quarters of a meal situation or by contact with their dishes or furniture.\(^{444}\) However, the more crucial question for this section should be whether Jesus tries to abrogate the purity law that preserves the holiness of Israel.

Rhoads argues that the Marcan Jesus is depicted as a destroyer against the system of purity rules and regulations whereas Jewish authorities support the system. “They maintain boundaries and guard them to protect God’s holiness and to protect the

\(^{443}\)The Marcan scholars have not been persuaded by the unity or coherence of this pericope. Charles E. Carlson, *The Parables of the Triple Tradition* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1975), 113, for example, affirms that it is “fruitless to seek a literary or catechetical unity in vv. 13-17, since the connections are unclear and since some of the material probably comes from a pre-Markan collection in any case.” However, Joanna Dewey, *Markan Public Debate*, 80-81, claims that the narrative is rather disjointed and also shows careful intertwining of the elements of the pericope. ... Awareness of these rhetorical features helps to give unity or focus to the narrative as a whole.

Judean culture from assimilation. However, in Mark’s portrayal, Jesus does not reinforce the purity system of the authorities. He crosses boundaries, redraws them, or eliminates them.” Thus, “he has contact with all types of unclean people and objects. He goes to places that are out of bounds. He violates holy times.” As a result, Rhoads considers that Jesus counters the purity rules that preserve the society and culture of the land. This approach, however, causes the confusion between the purity system of Jewish society and the biblical purity law. The Marcan Jesus is not criticized for overriding the biblical purity law in the pericope (2:13-17), but for challenging the boundary of the map of persons from which the social structure of Jewish society prohibits eating. The Marcan Jesus causes offence for associating with the people categorized into the unclean Israelites, “ἀμαρτωλῶν καὶ τέλωνῶν,” by the Pharisees (2:16). However, “this is not against biblical laws and nor is there any precise criticism of Jesus questioning or overriding any law.” Moreover, the answer of Jesus in 12:17 seems that the Marcan Jesus is portrayed as an authorized one for crossing the forbidden purity boundaries and coming into contact with sinners to bring them back to the membership of God’s covenant.

Although Jesus looks as if he disregards the purity law of Judaism, Jesus does not

---


446 Crossley, The Date of Mark’s Gospel, 93.
abrogate the principle of purity as the structuring value of Israel. On the contrary, Mark depicts him as revising the purity system of the land according to a new principle, which is God’s mercy with inclusive tendency.\textsuperscript{447} Through Jesus’ table fellowship, Mark makes the same point on the Sabbath controversy (2:23-28) that the Sabbath is not just about statues, but human life (2:27).\textsuperscript{448} Thus one important function of the change of purity rules in 2:13-17 is not only the issue of inclusive membership for all peoples in God’s covenant,\textsuperscript{449} but also Jesus’ authority on the purity law: like a doctor dealing with the sick, he is God’s “physician (ἰατρὸς)” (2:17).

b) Mark 7:1-23

The conflict is begun by the disciples’ eating with unwashed hands (7:2). The Pharisees and some of the scribes from Jerusalem, seeing the disciples’ eating, ask Jesus “Why do your disciples not live according to the tradition of the elders, but eat with defiled hands” (7:5).

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{447}Neyrey, “Idea of Purity in Mark’s Gospel,” 118, reviews well the ways in which Jesus reforms the system of purity according to new rules:
\begin{tabular}{|l|l|l|}
\hline
core value & Pharisees & Jesus & Followers \\
\hline
God’s holiness & (Lev 11:44) & God’s mercy & (Exod 33:19) \\
\hline
symbolized in & creation-as-ordering & election and grace & \\
\hline
structural implications & strong purity system, with particularistic tendency & weaker purity system, with inclusive tendency & \\
\hline
Strategy & Defense & mission, hospitality & \\
legitimating in Scripture & Pentateuch & pre-Mosaic as well as prophetic criticisms & \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\end{itemize}

\textsuperscript{448}Mary Ann Tolbert, \textit{Sowing the Gospel}, 133, rightly explains the principle of the laws that “In each case, Jesus seems to be making the same point, that the distinct needs of human beings in every special moment in time always take precedence over the established rules, rituals, and customs dictated by tradition.”

\textsuperscript{449}Neyrey, “Idea of Purity in Mark’s Gospel,” 121.
Jesus is here seen as rejecting the ritual purity and dietary laws of the Torah adopted by the Pharisees (cf. Josephus Ant. 13. 10.6 §297). This classic view, advocated by Bultmann, Käsemann, Schweizer, Merkel, Hübner, Haenchen, Kümmel, Lambrecht and Stauffer, is continually upheld in the Marcan Scholars. As Gundry argues that “In vv 6-13 Jesus equated the Mosaic law with God’s Word and scolded the Pharisees for nullifying God’s Word with their tradition,” the classic interpretation links “the tradition of the elders” (την παράδοσιν των πρεσβυτέρων) in 7:3, 5 to the dietary laws in Leviticus 11-15 (esp. Lev. 11:32; 15:12).

Mark, however, is careful to point out that Jesus’ disciples do not break the ritual purity and dietary laws of the Torah, but “the tradition of the elders” (7:3, 5). The Torah does not require people to wash their hands, but priests to enter the temple (Exod. 30:17-21). The most widespread laws concerning ritual purity are corpse uncleanness (Num. 19), menstruation, intercourse, and childbirth (Lev. 12:1-8; 15:16-24). Moreover DSS literature confirms that purity laws related to food were integral to the sectarian lifestyle (1QS 5:12-16; 6:13-23; CD 10:10-13; 12:12-22), but not a biblical law. Sanders notes it very well: ‘the Jews’ washed their hands before eating (7:3), but in Jesus’ day it would have been a small number of them.

---


452 Rudolph, “Jesus and the Food Laws,” 294; M. Bockmuehl, Jewish Law in Gentile Churches: Halakhah and the Beginning Christian Public Ethics (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 2000), 4, argues that in 7:1-5 the argument concerns the authoritative place of Pharisaic tradition in a matter of purity not explicitly legislated in the Torah, viz. that of ritual handwashing to cleanse any acquired contamination before each meal. Jesus’ interlocutors appeal to a well-known Pharisaic principle of halakhah that is not based on the Torah.

453 Rudolph, “Jesus and the Food Laws,” 293.
The Rabbis eventually made handwashing “normative,” and it is worth nothing that it is one of the very few practices of ritual purity which have continued. However, before 70 the common person did not accept the practice. Thus, eating with unclean hands can hardly be considered a rescinding of biblical law, and Jesus does not reject the Torah as well.

What then is the socio-halakhic background of the handwashing debate in Mark 7?

Mark probably discloses the social and cultural environment through Jesus’ countercharge that Jesus quotes Isa. 29:13 (7:7-9). They place the tradition of humans (παράδοσιν τῶν ἀνθρώπων) on a higher pedestal than the Torah (7:7-8) and circumvent weightier commandments by prioritizing lighter ones. As a result, they are rebuked to “abandon the commandment of God” (7: 8) and are in a state of “rejecting the commandment” (7: 9). Then, for his reader, Mark suggests the principles of the Torah’s ritual purity system (7:15): “there is nothing outside a person that by going in can defile, but the things that come out are what defile” (7:15, 19). Accordingly the biblical ritual purity concerns heart inside (7:6), but not outside as handwashing and many things like this (7:13).

As Crossley well observed, the pericope is, therefore, an argument based on the immediate Marcan literary context that Mark always portrays Jesus’ attitude toward the laws as observing biblical law, and declares all foods that are permitted for consumption in the Torah to be clean thereby denying the role of the handwashing. Mark’s point here is to

---

454 Sanders, Jesus and Judaism, 186.
457 Crossley, The Date of Mark’s Gospel, 192.
restore the principle of the Torah’s purity laws, which is not external but internal defilement, as the social implications of the observance in the time of Jesus. Another point through the pericope, for Mark, is Jesus’ authority upon the laws. Hooker argues this issue rightly that, since Jesus is depicted here as challenging not only scribal interpretation of the Torah but the Torah itself, it must be because he is teaching with an authority given to him by God: he is not a scribe who debates the meaning of the Torah, but one who—like Moses—is entrusted by God to declare his commandments directly. This is Mark’s understanding of Jesus’ role. He portrays Jesus as the ultimate authority beside and beyond Torah for the society.

3. Divorce (Mark 10:2-12)

The major issue of the pericope in 10:2-12 is about divorce debated between Jesus and his opponents. The question of the Pharisees about the appropriate guidelines of divorce is characterized as a “testing him” (πειράζωντες αὐτόν) in 10:2, which is an express attack upon Jesus in Mark (1:13; 8:11; 12:15). Jesus counters by asking what Moses commanded (10:3-4), when the Pharisees question him about the legality of divorcing a wife (10:2a). Jesus’ counter question leads them to a response that reflects the

---

458 Eyal Regev, “Moral Impurity and the Temple in Early Christianity in Light of Ancient Greek Practice and Qumranic Ideology,” HTR 97:4 (2004), 389, argues that it is possible that Jesus or his followers protested against the phenomenon precisely because some Pharisaic or early rabbinic sages boasted of their strict adherence to purity practices (as in Mark 7:5) in order to demonstrate their religious piety and to establish their reputation as religious leaders.

459 Hooker, Mark, 180.

460 The term πειράζω is also used when the Pharisees request Jesus to do a sign. It is recurred in 12:15 when Jesus accuses the opponent of “testing him” in the matter of paying taxes to Caesar; Perkins, “Mark’s Language,” 55, n. 40.
law on divorce found in Deut. 24:1-4. Jesus attributes that to “hardness of heart” (10:5) and cites from Genesis. 1:27 and 2:24 (cf. 10:7-8) regarding God’s intent on the marital relationship as expressed originally in Genesis 2. He concludes by declaring: “What God has joined, let no one separate” (10:9). Subsequently, the closing portion (10:10-12) functions to record an after effect of the preceding debate (10:2-9) that Jesus prohibits divorce. Jesus is here seen to be one who abolishes the Mosaic Law, which is practiced, everyday in the Jewish life.

Thus, most Marcan scholars traditionally argue that he prohibits divorce absolutely. If so, an exegetical problem is raised in the pericope for social and cultural context: for what purpose does Jesus try to annul divorce? Solving the problem in the equality of man and woman, Myers argues that Jesus refuses the already established social practice of divorce. Thus the problem in the society is that the legal issue is “totally androcentric,” and “presupposes patriarchal marriage as a given.” He has quoted Fiorenza’s idea to verify his exegesis on 10:2-12:

Divorce is necessary because of the male’s hardness of heart, that is, because of men’s patriarchal mind-set and reality . . . However, Jesus insists, God did not intend patriarchy but created persons as male and female human beings. It is not woman who is given into the power of man in order to continue “his” house and family line, but it is man who shall sever connections with his own patriarchal family and “the two persons shall become one sarx” . . .

The [Genesis] passage is best translated as “the two persons—man and woman—enter into a

\[461\] Moeser, The Anecdote in Mark, 223.

\[462\] There are many other issues debated about divorce in Mark 10:2-12: the form-critical analysis of the passage; the examination of Rabbinic views on divorce; the harmony of Matthew and Mark on divorce; and the earliest form of the prohibition. See Sanders, Jesus and Judaism, 256-260, for more information on the issues.

\[463\] Myers, Binding The Strong Man, 265.
Thus, Myers does not understand 12:9 “let no one separate” as an absolute prohibition upon divorce, rather he regards it as a protest against the way, in which patriarchal practice drives a wedge into the unity and equality originally articulated in the marriage covenant. As a result, he asserts what Mark introduces in 10:12, which directly contradicts the Jewish law that only men can initiate divorce, to expand the rights of the female partner to divorce. Myers’ argument on the pericope is that Jesus extends the right of divorce from men to women. Even though the opinion could contribute to restore and to protect women’s right in the Jewish society, it exceedingly focuses one point on women.

Mark, however, as Hooker has noticed, points to the true fulfillment of the Torah, which is God’s original purpose of marriage. Comparing the Mosaic Law (10:4) and the Genesis covenant (10:6-9), Hooker argues that it is perhaps the contrast between the concessions allowed by the Law (Deut. 24:1-4) and its basic rigorous demand that led Mark to place this incident in a context concerned with the demands of discipleship: those who are under Jesus’ authority should follow the will of God (Gen. 1:27; 2:24), but not

---

466 Josephus says “For it is (only) the man who is permitted by us to do this, and not even divorced woman may marry again on her own initiative unless her former husband consents” (Ant. 15.259).
467 Ibid., 266. It is widely argued that the reference to women divorcing husbands in Mark 10:12 is a later addition because in the Roman world it was possible for a woman to divorce a man, since Jewish women traditionally did not have the power or legal permission to divorce their husbands. For more information on the rights of wives to divorce in Roman law, see Crossley, The Date of Mark’s Gospel, 175-776; William A. Heth and Gordon J. Wenham, Jesus and Divorce: The Problem With The Evangelical Consensus (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, Inc., Publishers, 1984), 123-24.
look for concessions. Thus the climax of the pericope for Mark is found in the
pronouncements of Jesus (10:9, 11f.), rather than in the Mosaic Law: Jesus is here seen
to be the one who restores the fundamental order, which is faded in the Jewish social and
cultural situation.

There is no suggestion here of scripture being pitted against scripture: Moses
commanded one thing and God another. All the passages (Deut. 24:1; Gen. 1:27; 2:24)
quoted in 10:4, 6-9 would have been understood as part of the teaching given by God
through Moses. However, the Genesis Law, which is the order of creation, is for Jesus
on divorce. The verb “χωρίζω” (divide) in 10:9 is used in Greek papyri with the special
meaning of “be separated of divorce” (1 Cor. 7:10f.). Thus the saying of Jesus, “let no
one separate” (10:9), is understood as the argument that Jesus in essence refuses divorce.
Therefore, Jesus could conclude that whoever divorces his wife/her husband and marries
another commits adultery against her/him (10:11-12). In the society of the new community
which is led by the authority of Jesus, unlike in Jewish social and cultural situation,
divorce and remarriage are clearly forbidden for both, men and women. However, in
forbidding divorce Jesus did not directly reject the Mosaic Law. Jesus does not dispute
with the Pharisees their insistence on the validity of the Deuteronomistic Law, but sees it as a

468 Hooker, Mark, 234.
469 Ibid.
470 Ibid., 236.
472 Loader, Jesus’ Attitude toward the Law, 90.
merciful concession for the sake of the woman.\textsuperscript{473} The primary function of concession, as Lane has explained, is to provide a degree of protection for the woman who has been repudiated by her husband whose heart is hardness (10:5).\textsuperscript{474} Consequently Mark portrays Jesus as one who restores the Genesis Law in Jewish society, permitting the Mosaic Law in a very limited case. For the reader of the Marcan Gospel, Mark also depicts Jesus as one who has the power to delete and to revise Law on his own authority.

4. The commandment (Mark 12: 28-34)

In 12:28-34 Mark introduces another dialogical narrative on the Law, which is formed by Jesus’ reply to the query of a teacher of the law concerning the fundamental commandment.\textsuperscript{475} One of the scribes, who is portrayed as Jesus’ opponent in Mark, asks Jesus about the foremost commandment in agreement with Jesus (12:28, 32). Although the scribe here is portrayed as an exceptional one in the pericope, most Marcan scholars agree that he functions as “one of the scribes,” who are in conflict with Jesus in the narrative line of Mark.\textsuperscript{476} Keerankeri, observing the fact in the Greek sentence in 12:28, argues that the

\textsuperscript{473}Lane, Mark, 355; Hooker, Mark, 236. Jewish men were free to divorce their wives, but wives could not exercise a similar prerogative against their husband. W. Corswant, “Divorce,” in \textit{A Dictionary of Life in Bible Times}, trans. Arthur Heathcote (New York: Oxford University Press, 1969), 100, observes that as the woman in Israel was to some degree the property of her husband. . . , he can repudiate her if she happens to displease him because he has found “some indecency in her”; but the wife has no means of separation from her husband other than by trying to make herself heated and be dismissed.

\textsuperscript{474}Lane, Mark, 354; cf. D. Daub, “Repudium in Deuteronomy,” in \textit{Neotestamentica et Semitica} (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1969), 236-39. There is murder in human society, even though the constitutions of all nations prohibit it. However, there are two kinds of murder: one is prohibition, another is concession. The former is applied as a crime, if it is with intention. The latter is not considered as a crime, if it is a case of self defense. That principle could be utilized for divorce in Mark 10:2-12. Divorce is reality in human society, even though it is prohibited in the Genesis Law. However, divorce which is driven by hardness of hart (12:5) is adultery, whereas the separation to protect a partner in marriage is permitted according to the Mosaic Law.

\textsuperscript{475}This study will not discuss Mark 10:17-22, which has reference to “the commandments,” because there is no reference to the opponents in the pericope, granting the idea of Bultmann, \textit{The Synoptic Tradition}, 67: “In the controversy dialogues we can see that originally the questioners were for the most part unspecified persons, but that as the tradition developed they were characterized as opponents, Pharisees or Scribes.”

\textsuperscript{476}In contrast of the Marcan narrative, both Matthean and Lukan one say that the question of the scribe is to put Jesus in order to test him (Matt. 22:35; Luke 10:25).
scribe is presented with an array of three participles (προσέλθὼν . . . ἀκούως αὐτῶν συζητοῦντος, ἰδὼν ὅτι καλῶς ἀπεκρίθη αὐτός . . ., v. 28a), all of which point the pericope’s connection to the foregoing (11:27-33; 12:13-17, 18-27). Mulholland concludes that 12:28a is constructed by Mark to join the pericope to the preceding conflict stories by use of ἀκούως αὐτῶν συζητοῦντος, and that the scribe is representative of scribes in general. Then, as for the general controversy stories in Mark, a problem arises from the pericope: in the social and cultural context, what is the essential issue debated in 12:28-34?

The issue is not which of the commandments is the most important because the scribe who makes the enquiry (12:28) has knowledge on the Law and judges Jesus’ reply to be correct and true as well (12:32). Rather, it is the field of the scribes’ authority and expertise, perhaps the issue with what law Jesus singles out as “first.” To answer the inquiry of the scribe, Jesus quotes Deut. 6:4-5, that Jews keep in their daily life. In 12:30, as Story notes, Jesus emphasizes the heart as the essential principle of the first commandment. Story argues that “the first commandment highlights four aspects of the human person, the whole heart, the entire soul, one’s complete mind, and one’s entire strength.” Jesus has earlier cited the heart as the source from which issue all the evils which defiles a person (7:21; 10:5). Thus the heart, the component part of the inner person, is

---


478 Mulholland, *Markan Opponents*, 116. In contrast to Mark which is lacking conflict, both Matthew and Luke that have the story in a different context say that the question of one of the scribes is put to Jesus in order to test him and proposed a distinctly hostile purpose (Mathew 22:35; Luke 10:25). There is a further different for the characters: Matthew and Luke use the questioner “a lawyer (νομικός) who is intended to highlight opposition to Jesus,” but not one of scribes (ἐξ τερτῶν γραμματέων) who has been impressed with Jesus’ teaching. Cf. Robert Banks, *Jesus and the Law in the Synoptic Tradition* (London, New York and Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 1975), 165.

479 Cullen I. K. Story, “Marcan Love Commandment ‘The greatest of these is love’ (1 Corinthians 13:13),” *LTQ* 34 (1999), 152, introduces Jewish precepts that the Jew should keep in their daily life. Jewish scholars, after careful calculation, found that there were 613 commandments and precepts in the Torah, 248 of them positive commands and 365 prohibitions.

480 Ibid., 155.
now viewed as the source out of which there may issue the love for God. Moreover, with the repeated emphatic modifiers "ἐξ ὅλης" Mark calls for a complete response of love from the inner person and the daily life as well.

In 12:31a Jesus adds a summary of the remaining injunctions of the Decalogue by quoting Leviticus 19:18, which is not asked: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” Bringing together the two Laws (Deut. 6:4-5 and Lev. 19:18), Jesus probably tries a new interpretation of the Law which is different from the scribes, or recovers the essence of the Law which is ignored in Jewish culture. Taylor observes the implication of combining the two:

“Jesus has brought them together as the two regulative principles which sum up man’s duty. Even in Gal., Rom., and Jas. the second stands alone, but as Jesus presents them they form an indissoluble unity: love for man arises out of love for God.”

Accordingly Jesus’ interpretation of the greatest commandment is to love God and the neighbor more than all burnt offerings and sacrifices (12:33), which is the essential teaching of the commandment. Jesus affirms that “There is no other commandment greater than these” (12:31). Furthermore, the expertise of Jesus’ explanation of the Law in 32 “Well said, teacher” and in 33 “more than all the whole burnt offerings and sacrifices” perhaps implies Jesus’ authority, which “could pronounce upon the question of the fundamental requirements of the Law in so decisive and radical a fashion.”

For Jewish people, Mark portrays Jesus as one who has the most superior authority, that enunciates the uniqueness of the social and ethical order (12:30, 31) and, that silences the social and religious leaders (12:34c).

---

481 Ibid. The difference between Mark 7:12 and 12:30 is the difference between sin and Grace. The heart in 7:12 is the source to commit adultery, whereas the heart 12:30 is the source to obey the Law.
482 Taylor, Mark, 488, argues that it does not seem that in any extant Rabbinic text, outside the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, the Shema and the love of one’s neighbor are associated.
483 Bank, Jesus and the Law, 172; Kingsbury, Conflict in Mark, 82, on Jesus’ interpretation of the Law, explains that the scribe who is from among the religious authorities attests Jesus, who possesses a superior knowledge of the will of God. On the other hand, had the religious authorities not denied the divine authority on which Jesus acts and found in him God’s agent, they would not now entangled in conspiracy to kill Jesus.
5 Summary

The issues of the Law debated between Jesus and his opponents are central to the conflict motif which dominates the Marcan gospel. The reference to the Law is coherent from the beginning (1:21-28) to the end (16:9-20) in the gospel. In Mark there are four fields of the Law, the Sabbath law, the purity law, the divorce law, and the commandment, which continue the controversy between Jesus and the Jewish religious leaders. As seen in the visible table below, the pericopae including the four laws have similar structures, common theme, the involvement of the same characters, and the repetition of a similar setting.\(^{484}\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Law</th>
<th>Pericope</th>
<th>The opponents</th>
<th>The issue</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Purity law</td>
<td>2:13-17</td>
<td>Pharisees and the scribes</td>
<td>Table-fellowship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7:1-23</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ritual uncleanness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divorce</td>
<td>10:1-12</td>
<td>Pharisees</td>
<td>Marriage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The commandment</td>
<td>12:28-34</td>
<td>The scribes</td>
<td>The greatest commandment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The setting of the pericopae has a similar pattern.\(^{485}\) All the pericopae have a law-based

---

\(^{484}\)Rhoads, *Mark as Story*, 54. Rhoads asserts that the most recognizable pattern of repetition in Mark is the progressive series of episodes, identified by the similarity in narrative structure, the presence of verbal threads, common themes, the continuation of a conflict, the involvement of the same characters, and the repetition of a similar setting. See also Vernon K. Robbins, “Summons and Outline in Mark: The Three Step Progression,” in *New Boundaries in Old Territory: Form and Social Rhetoric in Mark* (New York: Peter Lang, 1994), 119-36.

\(^{485}\)Burton L. Mack, *A Myth of Innocence: Mark and Christian Origins* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1988), 184, argues that the setting of the pericopae might be understood as the Marcan author’s manipulation of traditional material in the interest of his larger narrative themes. He asserts that the pattern of elaboration serve rhetorical functions and contains conflict and argumentation. If Mack’s perspective is correct, the materials of Law are functioned as the following levels. First, the similar pattern of the pericopae of concerning the Law serves to amplify the conflict theme on the Law and intensifies the theme in Mark’s narrative design. Second, the continuity of the setting of the pericopae makes the conflict of Law as the core of in the Gospel of Mark. Third, through the similarity of their structural formula of the pericopae, Marcan readers look back from the pattern and understand more clearly the issues involved in the conflict of the laws. Forth, the repetitive reference of the characters gives information on the main opponents, Pharisees and he scribes, in the conflict of the Law.
conflict between Jesus and his opponents; the Sabbatical law (1:21-28; 2:23-28; 6:1-6a; 16:1-8, 9-20), Purity law (2:13-17; 7:1-23), divorce law (10:1-12), and the commandment (12:28-34). The main characters of the settings are Pharisees and the scribes. That these two groups should be referred to in the pericopae shows that they were the interpreters and teachers of the Law.\footnote{486 Guelich, “Anti-Semitism,” 88.} There are also peculiar issues that raise controversy in each setting; plucking grain and healing the crippled man on Sabbath for the Sabbatical Law, Table-fellowship with sinners and eating with unwashed hands for purity Law, marriage for the divorce Law, and the question of the greatest commandment for the commandment Law.

For Jesus’ attitude toward the Laws, Mark portrays Jesus as one who has superiority over the Law, including the right to interpret, transform, or even abrogate the Mosaic institution. Nevertheless, Jesus never actually uses his authority to abolish the Laws. For the Marcan readers, audiences, and the crowds who lived in the time of conflict between Jesus and his opponents, through the debating of the Laws, Mark shows social and cultural movement from Jewish ethos to a new community under Jesus’ authority.\footnote{487 Brenda Deen Schildgen, Crisis and Continuity: Time in the Gospel of Mark, JSNT Supp. Series 159 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press Ltd., 1998), 79.} On the contrary, when the social leaders repeat the inherited laws from human tradition, Jesus dismisses the value of them and restates them in their essence: to do good and to save life (3:4) for the Sabbath Law, to keep internal purity (7:6; cf. 10:5) for purity Law, to protect wife and husband as well (10:5) for divorce Law, and to love God and love your
neighbor (12:30, 31) for the commandments. Mark’s idea on Laws is first “mercy, but not sacrifice” and “human life, but not just the statutes.”

C. The references to the Temple in Mark

In composing the framework of the Marcan narrative, one of the dominant issues debated between Jesus and the Jewish establishment is the Temple. Jesus’ action in the Jerusalem Temple (11:15-17), his prophecy of the Temple’s destruction (13:2, 3), and his words concerning the destruction and rebuilding of the Temple (14:57, 58; 15:29-30) provokes conflict between himself and his opponents over the Temple.⁴⁸⁸ Although the description of the Temple in Mark’s storyline is a critical role, the reference to the Temple is not mentioned before chapter 11. From 11:11 on, it appears prominent in the preceding chapters of Mark (11:15x2, 16, 27; 12:35; 13:1, 3; 14:49, 58; 15:29, 38). The task here is to examine these references to the Temple regarding Jesus’ attitude toward the Temple. It will also investigate the function of the Temple in Jewish society, and the interrelation to each pericope as well.

1. The terminology between Mark 11:11-14:49 and Mark 14:58-15:38

Interestingly, two different terms are used to depict the Temple in Marcan Gospel: “ἱερόν” is associated with the outer court of the Temple, whereas “ναός” has the connotation of the divine dwelling place. The former appears in earlier chapters 11-14:49, and the latter is employed in the passion story. Hooker suggests that it is possible that the choice of the term ναός refers more specifically to the inner sanctuary containing the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies but not the Temple precincts. The change of the terms from ἱερόν to ναός is clear when the context of each statement is examined. Donald Juel compares the two terms in each context well.

11:11, 15, 16 – Jesus visits the temple (ἱερόν), where he casts out merchants. The action obviously takes place in the temple courts. The term chosen to describe the temple site is ἱερόν. 11:27; 12:35; 14:49 – In each of these verses, reference is made to Jesus’ teaching in the temple. Again the term chosen is ἱερόν. The setting for the teaching would certainly be the temple courts. Mark’s usage is thus far consistent. 13:2 – Jesus predicts the destruction the temple buildings (plural!) after leaving the ἱερόν. The prediction refers to the coming destruction of the whole temple area, which would make the term ἱερόν, appropriate.

As D. Juel points out, this would seem to suggest that the creative work of the author of Mark should be located in the ἱερόν passages. In Mark’s narrative the term ἱερόν is more constantly used because in most cases Mark refers to the Temple precinct.

On the other hand, the charge in 14:58, the mockery in 15:29, and the report of the tearing of the veil in 15:38 focuses on the particular Temple building, ναός. It is only

---

referred to within the passion narrative.\textsuperscript{493}

14:58 – Jesus is charged with having made a statement according to which he would destroy “this temple made with hands” and in three days build “another not made with hands.”
15:29 – The charge is repeated in a taunt by passers-by as Jesus hangs on the cross.
15:38 – At the moment of Jesus’ death, the temple curtain is torn from top to bottom.

The ναός, which uses the specific charge that Jesus threatened to destroy the Temple in 14:58 and 15:29, is not clear whether it is “a temple made with hands” or “another not made with hands.”\textsuperscript{494} The ναός in 15:38 clearly refers to the Temple building, which has a curtain. The curtain is torn at the moment of Jesus’ death. Mark does not use here the ἱερόν in the context of rending the curtain, whereas the word ἱερόν is used to refer the whole Temple complex, but not the sanctuary.\textsuperscript{495} Although there is no obvious link between the two terms, ἱερόν and ναός, the statements about the Temple are certainly related to the purpose of the Marcan’s narrative for his readers and audiences.\textsuperscript{496} Mark probably uses each of them suitably for the occasion in the contemporary state.

2. Mark 11:11-14:49

As we examined previously, the ἱερόν passages,\textsuperscript{497} which are set in the Temple

\textsuperscript{493}Ibid., 129.
\textsuperscript{495}Mack, \textit{op. cit.}, 128.
\textsuperscript{497}There is no consistency among Marcan scholars regarding the passages that set Jesus’ action in the temple. Most scholars range the passage of Jesus’ action in the temple in arbitrary. For example, M. O. Wise sets it in 11:15-15:30, “Temple” in \textit{Dictionary of Jesus and Gospel}, 816; for Guelich it is in 11:11-15:38, “Anti-Semitism,” 92-94; for Mack it is in 11:15-18, \textit{A Myth of Innocence}, 291. In this study the range of the temple description is divided into two parts according to the terms, ἱερόν (11:15x2, 16, 27; 12:35; 13:1, 3, 14:49) and ναός (14:58; 15:29, 38).
complex, have three critical pericopae: (1) Jesus’ cleansing of the Temple (11:15-17), (2) his prophecy of the Temple’s destruction (13:1-3), and (3) his arrest in the Temple (14:43-52). Our concern here is to investigate Mark’s portrayal of Jesus relating to the Temple and Jewish authorities.

a) Mark 11:11-17

Mark begins the incident in the Temple with Jesus’ arrival in Jerusalem (11:11). Upon entering Jerusalem, Jesus proceeds directly into the Temple to look around (11:11). As Hooker argues, the inspection of the temple by Jesus is of great importance for Mark, because it leads to its subsequent condemnation.\textsuperscript{498} The reference ἱερόν in 11:11 creates a new pericope, the so-called Jesus’ cleansing of the Temple in 11:15-17. The pericope is framed by the surrounding story of the fig tree in 11:12-14, 20-27, the mixed citation of 11:17, and the opposition of the chief priests and scribes in 11:18-19. Most Marcan scholars explain that Mark is employing his intercalation technique by sandwiching the story of the cleansing of the Temple between the two parts of the fig tree episode.\textsuperscript{499} By this literary device, Mark establishes a mutually interpretative framework between the dovetailed episodes and brings the meaning of the cleansing of the Temple into connection

\textsuperscript{498} Hooker, \textit{Mark}, 260; cf. Lane, \textit{Mark}, 398.

with the whole complex. Watching Jesus’ cleansing of the Temple (11:15) and hearing Jesus’ teaching (11:17), his opponents keep looking for a way to kill him (11:18). At this point a query occurs on the cause of the rage of the opponents against Jesus. On the other hand, Jesus’ attitude toward the Temple is vague and problematic for scholars to understand the historical Jesus. Even though all agree that Jesus’ activity in the Temple is caused by the corruption of the present cultus, scholars view the meaning of the act in the social and cultural situation from different angles.

If the precise language of cursing the fig tree (11:12-14, 20-25) suggests an element of condemnation, as Guelich explains, Jesus’ action in the Temple symbolizes destruction. Guelich argues that his actions in the Temple (11:15-16) clearly represent a statement of divine judgment against the Temple-like the fig tree that had failed to bring forth figs; the Temple had failed to be God’s ‘house of prayer for all nations.’

However, in 11:17a Jesus quotes Isaiah 56:7 whose larger context contains positive meanings. Isaiah 56:3-8 announces that the two groups, eunuchs and foreigners who are forbidden entrance into the assembly (Deut. 23:1-4), are not excluded from the worship of God in “My house.” God welcomes into the temple people from all nations (Isa. 56:5, 7),

---

500 Marshall, op. cit.
who keep Sabbaths, choose the things that please God, and hold fast God’s covenant (Isa. 56:4). The key point of the larger context of Isa.56:7, which Jesus quotes, is that God’s house is for all peoples (Isa. 56:7). Thus, interpreting 11:17 together with Isa. 56, Chance argues that perhaps it is not sacrifices per se that Jesus opposes in 11:15-19, but rather the exclusion of all people from participating in the “house of prayer” that God has declared should be for all nations. Jesus probably suggests with the quotation (Isa. 56) that the Jerusalem Temple will be destroyed, but a new temple will be built for all nations to worship God.

Interestingly, in 11:17b Jesus quotes Jeremiah 7:11, whose larger context refers to those who lead the temple of the Lord. Jeremiah demonstrates the leaders’ characters: they steal, murder, commit adultery, swear falsely, make offering to Baal, and go after other gods (Jer. 7:9). They made the temple of the Lord “a den of robbers” (Jer. 7:11). For the disqualified leaders of the temple, he concludes that “therefore I will do to the house . . . just what I did to Shiloh. And I will cast you out of my sight, just as I cast out all your kinsfolk, all the offspring of Ephraim” (Jer. 9:14, 15). Both Mark and Jeremiah clearly are speaking of those who make the temple a den of robbers. “You” (Jer. 7:11 and Mar. 11:17b) are not the larger crowd participating in its cultic commerce, but the temple caretakers, the leaders of the temple. That is probably why Mark inserts the names of the Temple leaders right after the quotation: the chief priests and the scribes (11:18). With

Jeremiah’s idea, Jesus predicts the authorities of the Jerusalem Temple will be cast out because they have failed to act justly the Temple practices. At this point, for his readers and audiences, Mark probably implies that the leadership of the Temple will be changed. Thus, the view of Wise on Jesus’ action on the Temple is right. He argues:

It is undeniable that contemporaries might well have believed that Jesus was seeking to inaugurate the eschaton by his action. In apocalyptic writings renewal of the Temple is often a messianic act, or is at least connected with the rise of the messiah.  

As a result of changing leadership of the Temple, Mark has, for his readers and audiences, linked the issue of Jesus’ authority with the replacement of the Temple authorities by the new temple for all the nations. Mark maybe emphasizes Jesus’ authority with the language “the whole crowd was spellbound” (δυχλος ἐξεπλήσσετο) over Jesus’ teaching (11:18b), which is used in the context of authority (1:22; 6:2; cf. 7:37; 10:28).

Consequently, the pericope of Jesus’ cleansing of the Temple with the citations (Isa. 56:7; Jer. 7:11) serves a prophetic judgment upon the Jerusalem Temple and its authorities, which do not fill the role of God’s promised place of dwelling with God’s people. Certainly Jesus does not try to abolish the practice and authority of the Temple, rather replaces the Temple for all nations under Jesus’ authority. This is suggested in the pericope, although Mark does not say it explicitly.

---

507 Loader, Jesus’ Attitude, 116.  
509 Sanders, Jesus and Judaism, thus concludes, I agree with his view, that Jesus publicly predicted or threatened the destruction of the temple, that the statement was shaped by his expectation of the arrival of the eschaton, that he probably also expected a new temple to be given by God from heaven, and that he made a demonstration which prophetically symbolized the coming event.
b) Mark 13: 1-3

The discourse on the destruction of the Temple (ιερόν) uttered by Jesus responds to his disciples’ expression of awe at the magnificence of the Temple, which is operated by the religious leaders. It seems to bring closure to this period of temple activity which began with Jesus’ act to “drive out those who were buying and selling there” (11:15). This continues with Jesus’ controversial debates with the various religious leaders (11:27-33), and includes the parable of the tenant farmers (12:1-12). J. Dewey thus argues that Jesus’ saying in 13:1ff. on the coming destruction of the Temple confirms the theme of the prophetic destruction of the temple, the destruction of the wicked tenants, and the giving of the vineyard to others found in Mark 11-12.

For the narrative setting, the material here serves as a narrative frame for the public ministry in the Temple and points ahead to the apocalyptic discourse. Given the narrative frame, the Marcan reader assumes that such judgment comes because of the opposition to Jesus and the failure by the religious leaders to accept Jesus’ authority. The reference to ιερόν in 13:3 alludes to the theme of the Temple: judgment to destroy and the promise to rebuild. Jesus’ answer even in private to Peter, James, John, and Andrew

---

511 Jesus immediately proceeds to tell the parable of the wicked tenants, in which the owner of the vineyard will come and destroy the tenants, and give the vineyard to other (12:9). The Temple authorities, who are the priests, scribes, and elders, recognize that the parable is told against them (12:12). As usually understood, the parable represents the continual rejection of the Temple authorities of Jesus’ authority. The cleaning of the Temple and the parable against them constitute a thematic unity.
513 There is much conversation last decade on whether “apocalyptic” is an appropriate description of the genre of Mark 13. For the data of the discussion on the issue, see Evans, *Mark*, 289-292; Telford, *Writing on the Gospel of Mark*, 204-08; R. T. France, *The Gospel of Mark: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, NIGTC (Grand Rapids/Cambridge: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2002), 498-503. Despite debates as to genre, there is no confusion to Mark 13 as an apocalyptic text because of the presence of apocalyptic elements in the text.
provides the theme continually and elaborates how and when this judgment will occur (13:3ff.).

The prophetic saying of Jesus on the destruction of the Temple is problematic for its relationship to the Marcan Gospel as a whole. Most of the Marcan scholars regard the charge at the trial scene (14:57f.) as a repetition of the prediction in 13:2. M. O. Wise explains that “This prediction is strikingly reminiscent of the charge made against Jesus in the trial before the Sanhedrin.”

Some stood up and gave false testimony against him, saying, “We heard him say, ‘I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and in three days I will build another, not made with hands.’” But even on this point their testimony did not agree (14:57-59).

Jesus is charged with a statement, that he would destroy “this temple made with hands” and in three days build “another not made with hands.” The report of what was said at the trial scene was false and contradictory. However, it does not transpire in Mark that the charge was substantively false. Thus most scholars today believe that 14:58 represents something that Jesus actually said or at least something close to what he said, because Jesus says something similar in John 2:19: Jesus answered them, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.” Moreover Mark continues the idea of “destruction and replacement” in 15:29:

Those who passed by derided him, shaking their heads and saying, “Aha! You who would destroy the temple and build it in three days.” The bystanders’ statement is probably

---

515 Evans, Mark, 445-46; Sanders, Jesus and Judaism, 71-76.
Mark’s redaction to emphasize the idea for his readers and audiences: the Jerusalem Temple, which is under Jewish authorities, will be destroyed, and a new temple will be built. Thus Jesus’ saying and action in the Temple are not concerned with the maintenance of the purity of the present Temple. Rather, as Sanders notices, Jesus does not wish to purify the Temple, but intends that it would be destroyed and a new one be built (13:1, cf. 14:58; 15:29).

If Sanders’ view is right, for Mark the actual affair of the destruction and replacement of the Temple is raised as a critical problematic. To solve the issue Chance suggests giving special attention to the “desolating sacrilege” (13:14), whose background is Daniel (Dan. 9:27; 11:31; 12:11), and argues that the imagery of the phrase is the Romans. As a result the actual or imminent destruction of the Jerusalem Temple will be made by the Romans: the temple will actually meet its destruction through the response of the Romans to the rebels who incite conflict with Rome. Chances connects a den of “ληστή” (robber) (11:17; cf. 14:48; 15:27) with the Temple’s destruction with the kind of “den,” and exegeses “the reader” (13:14), who understands how the temple’s status as a “den of ληστή” contributes to its destruction. This view contributes to the

---

516 Wahlen, “The Temple in mark,” 254; Clinton Wahlen, Jesus and the Impurity of Spirits in the Synoptic Gospels, WUNT (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004), 69-86, has inferred the purity of the Temple with Jesus’ action and saying. He suggests that Mark’s Gospel manifests a remarkably sensitive handling of purity issues. Thus he believes that Jesus’ action and saying on the destruction of the Temple is not directed toward the Temple itself, but they are things used in it. However, Mark clearly indicates that the Temple would be destroyed (13:1).
517 Sanders, Jesus and Judaism, 75.
519 Chances, ibid.
interpretation of Mark 13 regarding it to be the political situation in the written time of the Gospel.

However, as Gundry notices, Dan 11:31 and especially Dan 12:11, to whose phraseology Mark 13:14 comes closest, speak only of stopping the regular sacrifices and setting up a profanatory object, but nothing about the destruction of the temple.\(^{520}\) Rather Daniel’s prophecy points out the main subject that profanes the temple and causes desolation of the temple in a historical situation (Dan 11:31). Then the subject should be the main issue regarding Jesus’ prophecy about the destruction of the Temple.\(^{521}\) In other words, Jesus’ saying in 13:12 for the social and cultural situation in the time of Jesus is related to Jewish establishment, which has influenced the society and managed the Temple as the center of their religion and ethos. If it is so, “these great buildings” (13:2a) are probably symbolic of Jewish establishment related with “the temple made with hands” (14:58; 15:29).\(^{522}\) As a result, as an accomplishment of Jesus’ prediction, the fall of the Temple (13:2b) is Jewish religion, which has its center in the Temple.

---

\(^{520}\) Gundary, *Mark*, 741.

\(^{521}\) For the data of Mark’s Gospel, many scholars have considered Mark 13:14 to reflect the crisis of the Roman emperor Caligula in the Temple in Jerusalem AD 40 regarding to the destruction of the Jerusalem. Consequently, they have dated the Markan Gospel to AC 40 or shortly after. For more detail discussion on the issue, see Crossley, *the Data of Mark’s Gospel*, 19-43, especially, 41-43; G. R. Beasley-Murray, *Jesus and the Last Days: the interpretation of the Olivet discourse* (Peabody: Hendrickson Publisher, 1993), 19-43.

c) Mark 14:49

The last reference to ἵερόν appears in the pericope of the arrest of Jesus in 14:43-52: “Day after day I was with you in the temple (ἱερόν) teaching, and you did not arrest me. But let the Scriptures be fulfilled” (14:49). The pericope of Jesus’ arrest consists of Judas’ coming with the crowd from the chief priests, scribes, and elders (14:43); Judas’ leadership to the secluded spot and his betrayal (14:44-45); the seizure and brief scuffle (14:46-47); Jesus’ rebuke of those arresting him (14:48-49); the flight of the disciples including the naked young man (14:50-52). We here with the final reference to ἵερόν are faced with a critical issue: the location of the pericope in the Marcan Gospel as a whole; how does the pericope function in the narrative of Mark? How does it connect with the preceding event and following story?

If we view the pericope at the point of development in the conflict story, it is a natural stream that Jesus’ arrest follows the temple act (11:15). At this stage Mark probably makes an intersection with the Temple theme. As Heil notices, in 14a Mark summarizes all of his previous teachings through acts and instructions about the Temple (11:15-18; 12:14, 19, 35, 38; 13:1-3). Mark also begins the transition from his teaching about the temple, to his death and resurrection, by which he will build a new temple to replace the temple he condemned to destruction in that teaching (11:15-18; 13:1-2). Thus Mack explains the

---

incident of the arrest of Jesus as a new introduction in the total dramatic sequence. He argues that it is a critical moment in the plot, for Jesus must be placed into the hands of his persecutors and the sonship motif is now introduced for the first time under the sign of humiliation instead of exaltation.\textsuperscript{524} Mack’s interpretation on 14:49b is right, because the scriptures (γραφαι) that Jesus refers to in 14:49b remind the Marcan readers of the Son of Man. When Mark refers to the death and resurrection of the Son of Man (9:9),\textsuperscript{525} he probably refers to this moment: “How then is it written (γεγραμμένος) about the Son of man, that he is to go through many sufferings and be treated with contempt?” (9:12).\textsuperscript{526} That he should suffer many things; or the more recent prediction of betrayal in 14:21: “For the Son of Man goes as it is written (γεγραμμένος) of him” refers to the arrest of Jesus and his death.\textsuperscript{527} Beside, one of the scriptures (γραφαι) to be also fulfilled for Mark is the scripture (12:10): “Have you not read this scripture (γραφή): ‘The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone’.\textsuperscript{528} Mark here uses the idea of “the cornerstone” for a new temple, which implies a new social and cultural sphere.

\textsuperscript{524}Mark, A Myth of Innocence, 292, explains that four narrative themes in Mark are touched upon in the arrest story. The four themes are: (1) Jesus as Son of man, (2) the journey of Jesus to Jerusalem, (3) the events of the passion narrative, and (4) the use of prediction/fulfillment. For detail, see op. cit., 288-92.

\textsuperscript{525}I. H. Marshall, “Son of Man,” in Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels, 776, argues that the Son of man in the Marcan Gospel is clearly linked to Jesus’ role as the suffering servant. Jesus speaks of the impending suffering, death and resurrection of the Son of man in a series of predictions (8:31; 9:9, 12, 31; 10:33, 45; 14:21, 41) which emphasize that this must happen in accordance with the Scriptures.”

\textsuperscript{526}Mark does not refer to what Scriptures is in view, when Jesus says, “But let the scriptures be fulfilled” in 14:49b. However, in 27 Jesus paraphrases Zech. 13:7: “for it is written, ‘I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered’.” Jesus may also have in mind Psa. 41:9, which has been alluded to earlier in 14:18, and Isa. 53, which is echoed here.

\textsuperscript{527}As Evans, Mark, 43, argues, it is almost universally assumed that “Son of Man” refers to Jesus, even though there is no direct prophecy of suffering for the Son of Man in the Old Testament.

\textsuperscript{528}Mark probably quotes the text from Psa. 118:22: “The stone that the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone.”
Referring to the contemporary authorities of the Temple; the high priest, all the chief priests, the elders, and the scribes (14:53) in the arrest of Jesus, Mark concludes the conflict on the Temple and alludes to the beginning of a new temple with Jesus’ sayings: Scriptures to be fulfilled by his death and resurrection (9:12; 12:10; 14:21, 49). Mark never uses ναὸς to describe the Temple which will be destroyed, but chooses always ἱερόν which is made by hand. On the other hand he uses ναὸς with regard to Jesus’ death. Thus the Marcan readers and audiences who lived in the society expect a new community, which will be opened after Jesus’ death and resurrection.

3. Mark 14:58, 15:29, and 15:38

As we observed earlier, the reference ναὸς only appears for the Temple during the Passion Narrative (14:58; 15:29, 38) whereas the word ἱερόν is used more commonly for the Temple. We have examined that the term ναὸς refers more specifically to the inner sanctuary, but not the Temple precincts. We assume that the switch of the term from ἱερόν to ναὸς is deliberate and designed for one overall goal of the Marcan narrative.

What we investigate here is the function of the ναὸς in context: for what purpose is the term ναὸς employed in the Passion Narrative? Another issue with the term is the connection of ναὸς with the controversy between Jesus and the religious leaders: what link does this term provide between the Temple and the conflict story?

---

Hooker, Mark, 358; Taylor, Mark, 566.
a) Mark 14:58; 15:29

In 14:58, when Jesus was tried before the Sanhedrin, he is charged with having threatened to destroy the Temple made with hands and in three days build another not made with hands: “We heard him say, ‘I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and in three days I will build another, not made with hands.’” In 15:29, the reference to the same charge is repeated in a mockery by the passers-by as Jesus hangs on the cross:

“Those who passed by derided him, shaking their heads and saying, ‘Aha! You who would destroy the temple and build it in three days,’”

One of the differences between the charge at the trial in 14:58 and the version of the charge in the mockery in 15:29 is the different temples: in 14:58, Jesus will destroy the Temple and replace it by a new reality, “a temple not made with hands,” while, in 15:29, he will destroy the Temple and rebuild the same one. The Marcan author, however, makes clear that any connection of Jesus’ personal involvement with destroying the Temple is unjust. Despite Jesus’ explicit declaration of the total destruction of the Temple in 13:2, nothing specific is mentioned suggesting his own role in it. Furthermore, the two temples are absent in the charge (15:29), except the reference, “made with hands” and “not made with hands” in 14:58. Consequently, the two temples are problematic among the Marcan scholars.

Most of the Marcan scholars suggest that the Temple, “not made with hands,”

---

530 Guelich, “Anti-Semitism,” 93.
refers to the Christian community. Juel points out that there are hints in 14:58 that the temple not made with hands in three days is the Christian community as a replacement of the Temple establishment. With incisive criticism, Juel has informed a representative selection of scholars who assent to his view. He suggests two clues that sustain “the Temple not made with hands” as a new Christian community; (1) the reference to “three days” in the temple charge (14:58, 15:29) can be understood as the resurrection stated by Jesus in 8:31, 9:31, 10:33. The Christian reader understands that the reference is to the resurrection, when Jesus will be vindicated as the Christ, and the “Temple not made with hands” will be built. (2) The reference to \( \chi e i r o p o i \eta t o n \) the Temple “made with hands” (14:58) refers to the Jerusalem Temple, “while the reference to \( \acute{\chi} e i r o p o i \eta t o n \) the Temple “not made with hands” (15:48) refers to the Christian community. Following Lohse’s article on \( \chi e i r o p o i \eta t o \) in TDNT, Juel quotes Lohse’s view on the reference to

\( \)

\footnote{Juel, \textit{Messiah and Temple}, 139.}

\footnote{Ibid., 145. The following is the representative selection of the scholars and their views: E. Lohmeyer, \textit{Mark}, 566, suggest that the saying in 14:58 points forward to the “eschatologische Gottesgemeinde.” O. Michel, “\( \nu \alpha \delta \)”, in \textit{TDNT}, vol. 4, 833; Mark distinguished between the temple made with hands and the wonderful new structure of the eschatological community, which is not made with hands. V. Taylor, \textit{Mark}, 566, points out that the term “made with hand” is usually employed to translate “idol” in the LXX and in the papyri. The second half of the saying, he argues, points to a “new spiritual system or community. The saying promises the destruction of the old building but also the erection of a new religious order.” E. Klostermann, \textit{Mark}, 155: the saying means “in kürzester Frist wird die Christengemeinde an Stelle des Tempels treten.” P. Benoit, \textit{The Passion and Resurrection of Jesus Christ}, 101: the statement must reflect a “common belief.” In Mark it must refer to the replacement of the temple institution with a new religion, “a Temple ‘not made by human hands,’ that is to say a new worship and a new age of religion.” E. Schweizer, \textit{Mark}, 329. The “temple not made with hands” refers to the Christian community, a concept familiar from Matt 16:18, I Cor 3:17, II Cor 6:16, Eph 2:22, and perhaps Rev 3:12. J. Schreiber, \textit{Theologie des Vertrauens}, 41, “Die Gegner müssen mit ihren falschen Anklagen (14:57) und ihrem Spott (15:29) das von Jesus prophezeite (13:1-3) Gericht über den alten Tempel (15:38) und die Gründung des neuen, nicht mit Händen gebauten Tempels (14:58), d. h. die Gründung der christlichen Gemeinde (15:39-41), vorhersagen.” Jeul has informed the counterarguments by which Eta Linnemann has offered. For the data, see Juel, \textit{Mesiah and Temple}, 145-46.}

\footnote{Ibid., 143-44.}

\footnote{Ibid., 144.}

\footnote{Ibid.}

\footnote{E. Lohse, “\( \chi e i r o p o i \eta t o \),” in \textit{TDNT}, vol. 9, 424-26, believes that the meaning of the opposite, \( \chi e i r o p o i \eta t o \), is appropriate for what is built by God. This is the meaning of the term in Mk 14:58: Das Logion Mk 15:58 stellt den \( \nu \alpha \delta \) \( \tau \eta \) \( \tau \) \( \chi e i r o p o i \eta t o \) dem nicht mit Händen gemachten Tempels gegenüber. . . der binne kürzester Frist errichtet werden soll.}
Lohse goes on to cite the uses of the term χειροποίητος, assuming in each case that the use conforms to his distinction between what is accomplished by men and what is accomplished by God. He apparently believes that the use of the term in Acts, where the statement is made twice that God does not dwell ἐν χειροποίητος (ναοῖς) and the use of the term in Hebrews, where the earthly sanctuary (σκηνή) χειροποίητος or χειροποίητα ἑγέρα is opposed to the heavenly (οὗ χειροποίητα σκηνή) in 9:11 and 24, are all equivalent to the usage in Mark.537

He affirms from Lohse’s definition of χειροποίητος that the term χειροποίητος in Mark 14:58 should be understood in light of the passages in Acts, and may reflect the scriptural notion (Isa 66) that God, as creator, inhabits all of creation and does not require buildings.” 538 As Hooker well notices, the temple not made with hands, in which God dwells of all places, will belong to the age to come. On the other hand, the temple made with hands, which belongs to this age, is the Jerusalem one.539 Hooker argues that the idea of a heavenly Jerusalem, which will finally be established on earth, is a feature of apocalyptic (2 Bar. 4:2-6 and 4 Ezra 10, and cf. Gal. 4:26) that reflects the views of the Hellenistic Church and of those Christians who desired the value of worship,540 but not a peculiar building. At this point, the problem is the occasion when the change will happen.

Assenting to Seeley’s view, Crossley points to Jesus’ trial, particularly the suggestion that Jesus would replace the Temple (14:58).541 That is understood from the interpretation of the phrase “in three days” in 14:58, which would inevitably have been linked with Jesus’

537Juel, Messiah and Temple, 148.
538Ibid., 149.
539Hooker, Mark, 359.
540Ibid.
crucifixion and resurrection. In result, the inauguration of the temple “not made by hands” will begin with Jesus’ resurrection, whereas the Jerusalem Temple “made by hands” will end at the same time.

Consequently Mark, for his readers, marks a boundary between the old temple governed by Jewish authorities and the new one reigned over by God. Moreover Mark indicates those who reject Jesus will be rejected in the temple not made by hands.

b) Mark 15: 38

In 15:38, the curtain of the Temple (ναός) was torn in two from top to bottom, when Jesus died. According to both the Old Testament and to post-biblical sources, the term “καταπέτασμα” could be used for either of two veils: the inner veil separating the Holy of Holies from the Holy Place, or the outer veil at the doorway of the Holy Place itself. The inner door through which the high priest alone was permitted to pass is important, while the outer door lacks significance. There is no clear allusion to which one in 15:38. The question for the Marcan scholars is, therefore, which of these two veils is meant in Mark 15:38. Some scholars have argued that the veil here is the outer veil, for the existence of Jewish traditions about miraculous portents signaling the impending doom of the temple. Other interpreters have argued that the reference must be to the inner veil

---

542 Hooker, op. cit.
543 Josephus, Antiquities, VIII. 3.3; LXX Exod. 26:33, 37; 27:21; 30:6; Lev. 16:2, 12-15, 21, 23; 24:3.
544 Hooker, Mark, 377; Juel, Messiah and Temple, 140.
separating the holy of holies from the rest of the sanctuary.\textsuperscript{546}

In fact, this problem is dependent upon understanding whether the torn veil is positive or negative at the moment of Jesus’ death. Scholars are divided into three categories: first one is “negative” interpretation of the veil that the Jerusalem temple is destroyed as judgment by the tearing the veil; second is “positive” that the tearing of the temple curtain addresses the universal availability of God’s activity; and third is “positive and negative” a similar combination of the negative and positive interpretation.\textsuperscript{547} If the tearing of the veil is a partial fulfillment of the earlier prediction of the destruction of the Temple (13:1-2, 14:58; 15:29,\textsuperscript{548} and is used as a symbolic function,\textsuperscript{549} it could be understood as the combination of “positive” and “negative.” As Moloney notices, once the Temple was sacred, penetrated only by the High Priest, the privileged representative of the people of Israel, but now the veil hiding the inner sanctum of the temple from public gaze is completely torn apart, and the temple is open to all who might look.\textsuperscript{550} Thus, the tearing

\textsuperscript{546}Evans, \textit{Mark}, 510; Hooker, \textit{Mark}, 377-78; C. Schneider “κατατήρησεν” in \textit{TDNT}, vol. 3; Taylor, \textit{Mark}, 596. For the demonstration of her view, Hooker has informed that “A similar idea was used later in he Gospel of the Nazarenes, according to which the lintel of the temple fell down in pieces (Fragments 21 and 36). We find a similar story also in Josephus (Wars, VI. 5.3 who tells how the gate of the inner court one night opened of its own accord),” \textit{Mark}, 378. Other scholars, who have argued that the reference to veil in Mark 15:38 is the outside veil, are the following: E. Lohmeyer, \textit{Lord of the Temple}, trans., S. Todd (Richmond: John Knox Press, 1962), 52; E. Klostermann, \textit{Das Markusevangelium}, HNT 3 (Tübingen: Mohr, 1950), 167; H. M. Jackson, “The Death of Jesus in Mark and the Miracle from the Cross,” \textit{NTS} 33 (1987), 16-37; D. Ulansey, “The Heavenly Veil Torn: Mark’s Cosmic Inclusio,” \textit{JBL} 110 (1991), 123-25.


\textsuperscript{548}Juel, \textit{Messiah and Temple}, 140-42.

\textsuperscript{549}Hooker, \textit{Mark}, 377-38; Iverson, \textit{Gentiles in the Gospel of Mark}, 151.

\textsuperscript{550}Moloney, \textit{Mark}, 329.
of the veil (15:38) is not only understood as inner one, but also replacement from the old Temple to a new temple not made with hands. According to Juel’s view, with Jesus’ death the old religious order comes to an end, and the old temple made with hands has now been replaced by a new temple not made with hands.

Through the pericope of the tearing the temple veil, Mark probably for his readers and audiences announces that the time of the Temple controlled by Jewish establishment is gone, but the dawn of a new temple era (12:10) governed by Jesus’ spirit is come. Just as the descent of the Holy Spirit upon Jesus at his baptism tore the heavens (1:10), so now the loud exhalation of Jesus’ spirit has torn the veil of the temple.

4. Summary

With the employment of the two references to ἱερὸν and ναός for the Temple, the Marcan author has proved that the new Temple under Jesus’ authority will replace the old Temple under the religious leaders. The purpose of the replacement of the Temple is clearly expressed in the incident of Jesus’ cleansing of the Temple; Jesus states “... Is it not written, ‘My house shall be called a house of prayer for all the nations?’ But you have

---

551 This view has been understood as Christian tradition, and supported by some biblical texts (esp. Heb. 6:19; 9:3; cf. 10:20). Some scholars raise a question in the view. Quoting Aus’ view, Corssley argues that Mark 15:38, which symbolizes the end of the Temple service or the destruction of Jerusalem, parallels from Josephus, Philo, and a well-know tradition of tearing garments for mourning. Thus he suggests that Jewish people or people familiar with Jewish traditions would have picked up the references to God’s mourning for his son Jesus in Mk 15:38; The Date of Mark’s Gospel; cf. R. D. Aus, Samuel, Saul and Jesus: Three Early Palestinian Jewish Christian Gospel Haggadoth (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1994), 149.
552 Ibid., 206.
553 Evans, Mark, 509.
554 In 15:58, there are two types temples; the Temple “made with hands (χειροποιητὸν) and the Temple “not made with hands” (ἀχειροποιητὸν). The former probably belongs to this age, while the latter belongs to the age to come, when God himself would rebuild the Temple;” Hooker, Mark, 359.
made it a den of robbers” (11:17). In this verse, Jesus alludes that this Temple will be destroyed, but another Temple, “not made with hands,” will be rebuilt. Jesus plans for the new Temple, because the Temple establishment has lost the purpose that God intends the Temple to be “a house of prayer for all nations.” Jesus quotes “a den of robbers” from Jeremiah 7:11, which refers to the Temple as facing destruction by them. By throwing out the sellers and buyers, and overturning the tables of the money changers and dove sellers in the Temple, Jesus challenges the authorities and strikes at the foundation of their position: privilege, and power in the Temple. Jesus’ act provokes conflict with the Temple authorities, the chief priests and the scribes, who react by plotting to find some way to kill him (11:18).

The development of Jesus’ plan, the replacing of the Temple, is again demonstrated in the prophecy of the destruction of the Temple (13:1ff.); “Then Jesus asked him, ‘Do you see these great buildings? Not one stone will be left here upon another; all will be thrown down.’” In the Marcan narrative, Jesus’ saying on the coming destruction of the Temple functions as the bridge between Jesus’ cleaning act in the Temple (11:11-27) and the Passion Narrative, where the Temple is destroyed at the moment of Jesus’ death. By itself, the prophecy does not necessarily suggest a critical stance toward Temple destruction, but it contributes significantly to the conflict’s motif.

Introducing the new reference to ναός for the Temple in the Passion Narrative

---

555 Kingsbury, Conflict in Mark, 78.
(14:58; 15:29, 38), the Marcan author implies that the prophecy of the destruction of the Temple will be fulfilled with Jesus’ death, and the new Temple will be rebuilt. However, the new Temple is not the “ἱερόν,” the Temple’s precinct, but the Temple “not made with hands.” The reference to ναός is first introduced in the charge that Jesus will destroy the Temple made with hands and in three days, build another not made with hands (14:58). That Jesus will destroy the Temple and build another in three days is repeated by those who passed by (15:29). As we interpreted in 14:58, the new Temple is the Christian community. Taylor points out that the term “not made with hands” (ἀχειροποίητον) is a creation of a new spiritual system or community. For the Marcan reader, the replacement of the new Temple intensifies the conflict between Jesus and the contemporary social leaders. Eventually with the reference to ναός, it is apparent that the conflict climaxes with the plot to kill Jesus(15:29). The social authorities are convinced that Jesus has been stripped of all authority and that the victory in their conflict with him has gone to them.

However, with the rending the veil of the Temple, the issue of the replacement of the Temple reaches a critical phase. The incident of the rending of the curtain of the Temple is the fulfillment of the prophecy made in 13:2, 14:58, and 15:29. Guelich argues that “For Mark, the rending of the curtain also declares that the divine judgment (11:17) had indeed come to the Temple in Jesus’ actions in the Temple scene (11:15-16; cf. 11:12-

557 Taylor, Mark, 566.
558 Kingsbury, Conflict in Mark, 88.
14) because of its failure to be God’s “house of prayer for all nation” as illustrated both by the rejection of God’s Messiah by the Temple establishment (15:29-32; cf. 11:18).”

With Jesus’ death, the old religious order under the authority of the opponents comes to end; those who have rejected Jesus, the religious leaders, have now been rejected. The old Temple “made with hands,” which was controlled by the religious leaders, has now been replaced by a new Temple not made with hands, which is governed by God.

D. Conclusion

The analysis of social and cultural interpretation has displayed the context of the religious and political conflicts in first century Palestine. The appearance and ministry of Jesus attracts people and provokes Jewish religious leaders to create tension in power. Jesus’ ministry, teaching with authority, interpreting Laws that are different from the scribes, and cleaning the Temple, could not escape controversy from the social and cultural authorities. As the interpretation of social and cultural context shows, centripetal forces of Jewish society in the time of Jesus are the Laws and the Temples under Jewish religious authorities. Jesus’ ministry, however, has shaken the whole community of the Jewish nation. Then Jewish authorities, who lead and protect the social and cultural order, are faced with serious controversy on Jesus. The key issues that make conflict are

560 Juel, Messiah and Temple, 206.
561 Saldarini, Palestinian Society, 5, argues that radical conversion to another religion and rejection of one’s inherited beliefs and behavior meant separation and alienation from family and hereditary social group. Mark uses the term “πολλοί,” who, converting their inherited beliefs, follows Jesus (2:2, 15; 6:2, 31, 33; 11:18). For his readers, Mark maybe implies social agitation with the “many,” who gather around Jesus.
the three components: Jesus’ authority which is not as the scribes (1:22); his interpretation of the Laws, which are deeply sunken into the nation, looks to abolish them (for example 10:21); and Jesus’ prophecy of the Temple (13:2) and his action in the Temple (11:15). The author of Mark portrays Jesus as one who breaks Jewish society and establishes a new community.

As the study reveals, Mark has shown a coherent element through the conflicting stories. Through the element, Mark attempts to portray God’s plan to establish a new nation: the kingdom of God. Yet, Mark does not elaborate clearly on the location of this new kingdom. Instead, Mark simply emphasizes that the kingdom of God is at hand (1:15) and that entry into this kingdom requires specific qualifications (9:47; 10:14-15; 23-25; 12:34). Furthermore, Jesus prophesies that the construction of socio-cultural order in the kingdom will be based on the renewal of Jewish heritage and tradition. Therefore, the Law and the Temple will remain as the fundamental principles that drive the society. The main authority in the society will no longer be Jewish religious authorities but Jesus himself. The primary intent of the laws in this society will be to worship God (12:30). Mark presents the notion that laws should be “first mercy, but not sacrifice (12:31), and human life, but not just the statutes” (3:4). The new temple will not be made with human hands but constructed without human hands (14:58), which will be a house of prayer for all nations (11:17). Hence, the temple as a place of worship for God is no longer limited to the Jerusalem Temple but open for expansion to all nations.
Mark utilizes a literary constructive element, the conflict between Jesus Christ, the Son of God (1:1) and Jewish religious leaders, the contemporary authority, to ultimately proclaim the inevitable restoration of God’s kingdom. The three issues derived from historical incidents serve to symbolize the imminent establishment of a new community through the death and resurrection of Jesus.
Chapter IV. The Contribution of Intertextuality to the Rejection Motif

It is generally recognized that, in producing sentences, any author of the New Testament creates a fabric which points to prior data. In New Testament scholarship, all texts can be regarded as something that has developed into written documents and also as interaction of language to a text.\textsuperscript{562} The scholars, who contributed to the book entitled Intertextuality in Biblical Writings\textsuperscript{563}, have brought a new focus to this field of texture in New Testament texts. They have been of great interest concerning the relationship between early Christian writings and contemporary ancient writings in the study of the New Testament, and define the modern concept of intertextuality as a literary device. Vorster describes intertextuality as concerned with the relationship between texts; literary references to precursor texts, allusions to other texts, and citations and contemporary texts in producing new texts.\textsuperscript{564} Therefore, what these allusions and quotations can do is to recall intertexts as codes of reference and meaning.\textsuperscript{565} To determine what motives and which factors influenced texts to be interacted is a crucial matter in the research of the New Testament, especially for the theme of the rejection motif in Mark.

Marcan scholars therefore have attempted to identify the basic structure of the

\textsuperscript{562}Vernon K. Robbins, Exploring the Texture of texts, 40.
\textsuperscript{564}Willem S. Vorster, “Intertextuality and Redaktionsgeschichte,” in Intertextuality in Biblical Writing, 15-26. Robbins, Exploring the Texture of texts, 40-70, proposes five basic ways in which language in a text uses language that exists in another text: recitation, recontextualization, reconfiguration, narrative amplification, and thematic elaboration.
\textsuperscript{565}Vorster, “Intertextuality,” 21.
Gospel and ask how the overall arrangement of the material may allude to the evangelist’s literary and theological intent. As a result, a number of Marcan scholars have highlighted that the text of Mark not only reflects what was believed by the author who was influenced by the traditions and conventions of early Christian society, but also contains the creative work of the author who formulated a literary account somehow different from the contemporary Jewish literature available to him.

With this perspective, I will investigate how the rejection motif in Mark’s Gospel reflects contemporary strategies used within Jewish religious and political debates to attack and reject the religious pronouncements of opposing parties. In this chapter, however, I will deal with examples of religious conflict which appear in the Old Testament, and intertestamental literature that may influence the conflict language found in first century Judaism and its literature. I will especially consider language, ritual actions, and prophetic actions, which were used within Judaism to mark inappropriate religious ideas. It will become the basis for the comparison in the next chapter with the devices of Jesus that Mark records, and perhaps will be amplified through editorial means. Of course the aim of this chapter is to show the historical appropriateness of Mark's narrative.

A. Rejection Motif in the Old Testament

It is important to note the rejection motif in the Old Testament as a possible

---

567 Kee, Community, 3; Robbins, Jesus the Teacher, 4.
background for Mark’s language. Thus this study will provide a foundation for understanding this aspect of the composition pattern in the Marcan narrative. To be more specific, I will pay attention to the following questions. Why were the prophets rejected, and what was the result of the rejection for the prophets and the people who rejected them? What were the various methods used to show this rejection in the Old Testament? Does the rejection motif relate to the future? If so, how is it represented in the Marcan passages?

1. Rejection Motif in the Prophets

   a) Isaiah

   The prophet, Isaiah, describes rejection scenes several times. He uses the parable of the vineyard in Isaiah 5:1-7. He employs harsh terms to denounce the “inhabitants of Jerusalem and the people of Judah” (Isa. 5:3) and to warn them about judgment in verse 5: “I will remove its hedge,” “it shall be devoured,” “I will break down its wall,” and “it shall be trampled down.” His warning about judgment continues in verses 6-7. The reason why Isaiah prophesies the judgment with violent language alludes to the rhetorical questions in verse 4: “What more was there to do for my vineyard that I have not done in

---

it? When I expected it to yield grapes, why did it yield wild grapes?"

In Mark 12:1-12 the Marcan author brings the parable closer to the vineyard oracle of Isaiah 5:1-7, where Jesus’ parable self-consciously echoes by adding in verse 9 the question of the vineyard owner about Israel’s unfruitfulness. Mark also shows more concretely the correspondence between the “inhabitants of Jerusalem and the people of Judah” (Isa. 5:3) and the Jewish leaders (Mk. 12:12), who reject “a beloved son,” Jesus. In verse 8, Mark changes and elucidates the two words, “bloodshed (παροιμία)” and “outcry (παροιμία)” in Isa. 5:7c, as “So they seized him, killed him, and threw him out of the vineyard.”

Isaiah warns about their inner being, the heart of people of Israel that worship in vain, in 29:13; “These people come near to me with their mouth and honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. Their worship of me is made up only of rules taught by men.” In 34:4 Isaiah describes God’s judgment and destruction of his opponents “like withered leaves from the vine, like shriveled figs from the fig tree.” In the parable of the vineyard, Mark interprets the warning and judgment of Isaiah, when he answers the question of the owner of the vineyard. “He will come and destroy the tenants and give the vineyard to others” (Mk. 12:9). The idea of the coming of the vineyard suggests that the

---

569 John S. KloppenborgVerbin, “Egyptian Viticultural Practices and The Citation of Isa 5:1-7 in Mark 12:1-9” NovT 44 (2002), 155, hypothesizes that Mark’s parable extrapolates developments in the LXX, reconfiguring the addresses of Isa. 5:3 LXX (the person of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem) or those of 5:7 (house of Israel, person of Judah) as the rebellious tenants of the vineyard.

570 Craig A. Evans, “How Septuagintal is Isa. 5:1-7 in Mark 12:1-9?” NovT 45 (2003), 107. Evans argues that Mark’s “let us kill” (v. 7) may cohere with the Hebrew’s παροιμία (bloodshed) and “he will destroy” may cohere with the Hebrew’s παροιμία (it shall be devoured) and παροιμία (I shall make it a waste). For the Marcan form drawn from Isaiah 5:1-7 and compared to their counterparts in the LXX and MT, see Evans, Mark, 224-25.
idea of the owner brings judgment. The return of the owner to his vineyard suggests judgment. Through the parable, Mark warns the Sanhedrin that rejecting the final messenger will bring transformation to leadership in Israel and will ultimately change the destiny of the government.

Closely related to the Psalms of the Righteous Sufferer is the picture of Yahweh’s Suffering Servant in Isa. 50:4-9 and 53. Isaiah 50:6 shows a scene of mockery by using the terms, הָנַשֶּׁת (beat) and גֶּזֶס (spit): language that demonstrates a great deal of similarity to the figure used in the Marcan narratives (Mark 14:65). It is possible that the description of the righteous suffering in Isaiah’s passages has influenced Mark’s vocabulary but similarity stops with the use of individual words. That Isaiah 50:6 influenced the mockery motif in Mark 14-15 is suggested by the use of familiar terms that linked this verse with the mockery of Christ. The term, ράπτομα, (slap) occurs only in Isa. 50:6 in the LXX and only in contexts related to the mockery of Christ in the New Testament (Mk. 14:65; Mt. 26:67; Jn. 18:22; 19:3). The word, εὐμπτυνμένων, (spit) in Isa. 50:6 is used in the New Testament when Jesus is mocked, especially, in Mark (Mk. 10:34; 14:65; 15:19; cf. Mt. 26:67; 27:30; Lk. 18:32). The mockery that the servant had

---

573 Douglas J. Moo, *The Old Testament in the Gospel Passion Narratives* (Sheffield: The Almond Press, 1983), 139. Mark 14:65; “Then some began to spit at him; they blindfolded him, struck him with their fists, and said ‘Prophecy! And the guards took him and beat him.’”
576 Ibid., 88. Moo, *The Old Testament in the Gospel Passion Narratives*, 139, argues that εὐμπτύνω is used in the NT only in predictions of, or description of, Jesus’ mockery.
experienced hostility, attack, and abuse on his person, can be used to foreshadow the mockery of Jesus in Mark:

29. The people passing by shouted abuse, shaking their heads in mockery. “Ha! Look at you now!” they yelled at him. “You said you were going to destroy the Temple and rebuild it in three days.

30. Well then, save yourself and come down from the cross!” 31. The leading priests and teachers of religious law also mocked Jesus. “He saved others,” they scoffed, “but he can't save himself!

32. Let this Messiah, this King of Israel, come down from the cross so we can see it and believe him!” Even the men who were crucified with Jesus ridiculed him (Mk. 15:29-32).

In Mark the silence of Jesus responding to the mockery echoes Isa. 50:4-6, which alludes to the task of the servant suffering: “I gave my back to those who struck me, and my cheeks to those who pulled out the beard; I did not hide my face from insult and spitting.” This appears to be one of the reasons why the servant was rejected. The servant was rejected because he carried out his prophetic role. If Jesus’ goal is to save others in Mark, then it is true that he must face some consequences. He must give up his own life. He is unable to save himself and do God’s will. The suffering servant was not disobedient nor did he shrink back from his task of prophesying. This contrasts with Israel’s disobedience to God and announces God’s judgment to Israel.

In Isaiah 53 the servant’s suffering is portrayed in detail. His rejection followed: men would reject his message (v. 1), his person (v. 2), and his mission (v. 3). However, his vicarious suffering would effect atonement between God and man (vv. 4-6); and though he would submit to suffering (v. 7), death (v. 8), and burial (v. 9), he would subsequently be

---

577 Witherington III, Mark, 397.
exalted and richly rewarded (vv. 10-12).  

Concerning the reason for the rejection of the suffering servant in Isa. 53, Isaiah tells three things: Israel’s sin (vs. 5, 8, 11), God’s plan (vs. 10a, 6, 12a), and Israel’s salvation (vs. 4a, 5, 11c, 12c). Israel’s transgressions (5a) and especially their iniquities (5b), refer to Israel’s disobedience and rejection of God’s will. We, however, do not need to miss one of the rejection themes in the passage. In other words, “the servant’s sufferings are not only vicarious, but redemptive.”  

Isa. 53 describes several features of the rejection motif: being despised and rejected (v. 3), being stricken, smitten, and afflicted (v. 4), being pierced, crushed, and chastised (vs. 5, 10), being tortured (v. 7), being carried off from prisons and Judgment and being cut off from the land of the living (v. 8), and pouring out life unto death (v. 12). This suffering and rejection involves physical and spiritual agony. The suffering came to the servant as the result of his prophesying. In the final words (v. 12) of this section, the suffering occurs because he functions as an intercessor for the transgressors. “The hip’il of the verb, הִפָּל, ‘to light upon someone,’ means ‘to cause to light upon,’ as in Isa. 53:3; and with ב (in a request) ‘to make entreaty,’ as in Jer. 36:25. Used absolutely, it means ‘to intervene,’ as in Isa. 59:16. This elucidates the meaning here, ‘he interceded for the transgressors.’”  

This does not mean that he made prayers of intercession for them but, with his suffering and rejection, he took their place and

---

582 Ibid., 347-48.
underwent punishment in their stead. 584

Consequently, the suffering servant in Isaiah foreshadows “a beloved son” in Mark 12:1-12 and Jesus in the passion narrative. The mocking in Mark 15 is the same kind of rejection represented in several ways, especially physical and verbal rejection: referring to the experience of the suffering servant in Isaiah. One irony of the mockery is that it is the exact fulfillment of what Jesus predicted in the passion predictions in Mark. Thus, we can probably conclude that the mocking event is a device employed by Mark to demonstrate that Jesus’ rejection linked with Isaiah will be fulfilled in judgment on the opponents who reject Jesus.

b) Jeremiah

The message of Jeremiah’s oral ministry is that God will replant his people in the land after uprooting them in judgment 585 and the two halves of the book relate to the judgment (Chaps. 1-25).586 He announces divine judgment against his own people, city, and the whole land: “. . . says the Lord . . . today I appoint you over nations and over kingdoms, to pluck up and to pull down, to destroy and to overthrow, to build and to plant” (Jer. 1:9, 10). However, the prophet is judged and rejected by his people: “. . . I have become a laughing-stock all day long; everyone mocks me” (Jer. 20:7c). This pattern

---

584 Ibid.
585 In Jeremiah these are the judgment passages: 1:10; 12:14-17; 18:7, 9; 24:6; 31:28, 40; 42:10; and 45:4.
of “attack and counter-attack” between the prophet and the people of the land (Jer. 1:18-19) foreshadows the controversy between Jesus and the Jewish establishment in the Marcan Gospel.

Jeremiah 12:10-13 refers to Israel’s leaders as unfaithful shepherds who destroy the Lord’s vineyard, stating that the Lord warns them about judgment. The vocabularies in v. 10, ἐνέφεραν (vineyard), ἠτρέψαν (have destroyed), ἔστησαν (have trampled) and ἐπέφερεν ἡ θάνατος (a desolate wilderness) echo rejection words in the parable of the vineyard tenants in Mark 12:1-12. Even though Mark takes the meaning and the situation between God and his people from Jeremiah 12:10-13, he creates a story for the parable with similar words. Mark changes the words; from “Many shepherds” in Jer. to “tenants” in Mk., from “desolate” in Jer. to “beat/insult” in Mk, and from “have destroyed” in Jer. to “killed” in Mk. A more important subject regarding correlation between Jeremiah and Mark is the coherence with the interpretive and thematic tendencies. The theme of warning on judgment is referred to in Jer. 12:12-13: “Upon all the bare heights in the desert spoilers have come; for the word of the Lord devours from one end of the land to the other; on one shall be safe. . . They shall be ashamed of their harvests. . .” Mark keeps the theme in changed words: “. . . He will come and destroy the tenants and give the vineyard to others” (Mk. 12:9b).

The vocabularies of the phrase, “Pashhur struck the prophet Jeremiah, and put him
in the stocks,” in Jeremiah 20:2 suggests one of the styles of the rejection motif in Jeremiah. It may be significant as a pattern of the rejection motif that Jeremiah is the only OT prophet who was actually beaten by his own people (cf. Jer. 37:15 also tells that the prophet was imprisoned). The harsh expression and treatment echo the passion event in Mark 14:55: “Now the chief priests and the whole council were looking for testimony against Jesus to put him to death.” Jeremiah describes himself as a suffering prophet who is opposed politically, rejected by his own people and nation, denounced by false witnesses, and condemned to death for anti-Temple utterances that ultimately prove true. The rejection language used by his opponents includes the religious leaders as well as his own family (Jer. 12:6). Jeremiah is rejected as a prophet, beaten (Jer. 20:2), mocked (Jer. 20:7), insulted and reproached (Jer. 20:8), slandered (Jer. 20:10), and sentenced to death by the religious leaders (Jer. 11:21; 26:8, 11). Jeremiah’s response against the opponents was a warning of their final judgment.

The verbal expression of “the prophet beaten, rejected, and put him in the stocks” foreshadows Jesus’ rejection in Mark. Jesus is rejected by his family (Mk. 6:1-6), slandered (Mk. 15:15), mocked (Mk. 15:16-20), insulted (Mk. 15:29-30), beaten (Mk. 15:65), and sentenced (Mk. 15:24). The expression of “the prophet beaten, rejected, and put him in the stocks” is repeated, while Jesus predicts his passion (Mk. 8:31; 9:31; 10:33-

---

587 Feinberg explains well the Hebrew word, נַפְתָּל, “stock” as a meaning of rejection: “the 'stocks,' where the prophet was confined, were intended not only for restraint but also for torture. The stocks, which were used for false prophets (cf. 2 Chron 16:10), held the feet, hands, and neck so that the body was almost doubled up (cf. 29:26)”; Charles L. Feinberg, Jeremiah: A Commentary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1982), 144.

The verb ἔφη σοι, “Prophesy!” (imperative aorist active form), in acting the mockery event (Mk. 14:65), would connect Jesus to Jeremiah, the prophet (Jer. 1:5). The prediction of Jerusalem’s destruction in Jeremiah consistently appears throughout the book. As a series, the prediction is associated with the judgment upon the people of Israel. On the other hand, Jeremiah is accused of having prophesied against the city and the house of the Lord: “Why do you prophesy in the Lord’s name that this house will be like Shiloh and this city will be desolate and deserted?” (Jer. 26:9). The priests and ἑσφραγισθηκαί (the false prophets) pronounce judgment against him: “This man should be sentenced to death because he has prophesied against this city. You have heard it with your own ears!” (Jer. 26:11). The false prophets accurately relate Jeremiah’s word (Jer. 26:6) against the Temple. As a response against his opponents, Jeremiah predicts the result of his death as ‘innocent blood.’ “If you put me to death, you will bring the guilt of innocent blood on yourselves and on this city and on those who live in it” (Jer. 26:15). He inveighs against the impious in the Temple’s sanctity (Jer. 7:4). The purpose of

589 Most scholars are divided into two views concerning Jesus as a prophet in the mockery in Mark 14:65. First group, who respects the tradition of the Marcan data, asserts that the mockery of Jesus as a prophet may reflect Isa. 50:6; Bultmann, The Synoptic Tradition, 281; Evans, Mark, 458; Lane, Mark, 539. The second group, who concerns the mockery itself, asserts that the mockery of Jesus as a prophet is reproduced from the passages referred to false prophets (e.g., Deut. 18:20); Hooker, Mark, 363. However, Jesus as a prophet in the mockery is probably reflected from Jeremiah’s prophet, who is only practically beaten, mocked, and insulted.
591 Knowles, Jeremiah in Matthew’s Gospel, 199, argues that Jeremiah 26 is a new literary form as a composition of the traditionalists who preserved the Jeremiah materials in a book; “Chap. 26 is a new unit, clearly distinguished from the poetry at the end of chap. 25 by the compound heading in v. 1. The almost identical heading in 27:1 sets the end boundary for this set of narratives. The lack of a connecting verb at the beginning of the chapter also suggests the relative independence of this unit... The language of accusation in vv. 8b-9a and 11 belongs to a trial and indicates the genre of the next part of the chapter.”
592 “False prophets” are mentioned in the LXX (e.g., Jer. 6:13; 33:7, 8, 11, 16; 34:9; 35:1; 36:1).
the prediction of Jeremiah is to warn them to repent and obey God: “Now reform your ways and your actions and obey the Lord your God. Then the Lord will relent and not bring the disaster he has pronounced against you” (Jer. 26:13).

Jesus draws on the vocabulary and meaning of Jeremiah’s prediction of Jerusalem, while he is teaching in the Temple in Mark 11:17. In Mk. 11:17a, the quotation, “My house shall be called a house of prayer for all the nations,” is drawn from the last part of Isa. 56:7, probably following the LXX, which Mark’s audience may have known. The quotation of Mk 11:7b, “but you have made it a den of robbers,” alludes to the first part of Jer. 7:11, in which Jeremiah prophesies the destruction of the Temple (cf. 7:14 ff.). The prediction of the Temple destruction in Jer. 7:20 also foreshadows Jesus’ prophecy of the destruction of the Temple (13:1ff.).

“Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: My anger and my wrath shall be poured out on this place, on human beings and animals, on the trees of the field and the fruit of the ground; it will burn and not be quenched” (Jer. 7:20).

“Then Jesus asked him, ‘Do you see these great buildings? Not one stone will be left here upon another; all will be thrown down’” (Mk. 13:2).

The destruction of the Temple is caused by the false prophets “making it a den of robbers.” The subject and words used by Jeremiah in the prophecy coheres to the Marcan conflict in the passion event and the Temple.

---

593 Witherington III, Mark, 316; Lane, Mark, 406. Evans, Mark, 174, compares the two documents, LXX and MT, for the quotation. The LXX reads: ὁ γάρ ὁ οἶκος μου οἶκος προσευχῆς κληθήσεται πάσιν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν, For my house shall be called a house of prayer for all the Gentiles [or nations]. The Hebrew reads: בֶּן רע מֵעַל כָּל הָעָם. For my house shall be called a house of prayer for all the peoples. He argues that “It is therefore difficult to tell whether the Markan form of the quotation is directly dependent upon the LXX, or if the represents an independent translation of the Hebrew.”
c) Zechariah 9-14

It is generally agreed among scholars that Zechariah 9-14 gives an important background both for Jesus’ thoughts and words especially at the time of the passion and also for the Evangelists’ presentation of the passion narrative.

This section introduces four figures: “the king riding on an ass (Zech. 9:9-10), the good shepherd (Zech. 11:4-14), the one ‘whom they have pierced’ (Zech. 12:10), and the smitten shepherd (Zech. 13:7).”

The figures described in these four chapters are identified as representatives of God, whose sufferings and death can be spoken of as God’s.

These individuals are so characterized by Zechariah that it seems legitimate to regard them as different descriptions of figure. “My (i.e., God’s) Shepherd” in 13:7 is probably to be compared with the prophet’s assumption of the role of shepherd in 11:4-15; in both passages Yahweh is closely identified with the individual represented. A similar intimate relationship to Yahweh characterizes the pierced one of 12:10, and the fact that both this figure and the shepherd of 13:7 are conceived of as suffering is persuasive evidence for their identification.

Moo argues that the characterization of all four figures is the theme of rejection of divine leadership, the prophet’s rejection: “A similar intimate relationship to Yahweh characterizes the pierced one of Zech. 12:10, and the fact that both this figure and the shepherd of Zech. 13:7 are conceived of as suffering is persuasive evidence for their identification.”

---


595France, Jesus and the Old Testament, 104; France, Jesus, 153.

596Moo, The Old Testament in the Gospel Passion Narrative, 212.

597Ibid., 173-74.

598Ibid., 174. n.1.
piercing of Yahweh’s representative in Zech. 9-14, with the piercing of the Suffering Servant in Isaiah 53:5. Lamarche concludes that the pierced one, the smitten shepherd, and the Servant are all in their respective ways presentations of Israel’s Messianic king who endures suffering and death in his people’s place. If Lamarche is right, Zech. 9-9-10 is composed for a figure of Messianic king in Zechariah’s intent, and “the one whom they have pierced” in Zech. 12:10 is probably to be identified with the Messiah. Lamarche’s interpretation of these passages helps to explain the difficult conception the pierced God as the shepherd of Israel. Bruce explains that “it is not difficult to think of Yahweh as pierced in the person of His anointed representative.” Accordingly the shepherd, implied as God’s equal, is configured in Zechariah 9-14 as a rejected king. Israel gives a hostile reaction to the shepherd, involving contemptuous words and actions as well.

The terms, “the pierced one (Zech. 12:10) and the smitten shepherd (Zech. 13:7),” which are used in Isaiah (Isa. 53:4, 5, 10) and Jeremiah (Jer. 20:2, 7), form part of the rejection language used in Zechariah. God himself was rejected by Israel (Zech. 11:8). “It is

---

599 He has tried to demonstrate that Zechariah 9-14 unites into one concept which is the Messianic scene; “the Shepherd-King,” presenting successive phases of his coming and the reaction of the people. Therefore, he concentrates on the issue of the rejection, suffering and death of the Messiah; P. Lamarche, Zechariah IX-XIV: Structure Litte raetmessianisme. EBib. (Paris: Gabalda, 1961), 110-15.


603 God Himself is frequently called a Shepherd and Israel as His flock in the Old Testament (cf. Psalms 23; 78:52; 80:1; 75:7).
probable, then, that Zechariah 13:7 was applied to the persecution of the Teacher of Righteousness and his community, the persecutions in which he (probably) died.604 Israel rejected (Zech. 11:4-14) and killed him (Zech. 12:10; 13:7). Zechariah 11:12b, “they weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver” (LXX), could also be one element of the rejection motif. One method of rejection is to sell the shepherd for money. Moo argues that the narrative of the payment of the betrayal money to Judas in the NT is certainly “colored” by language from Zech. 11:12.605 We observe in Zechariah that the rejection was caused by God’s purpose (Zech. 13:7) for Israel’s salvation after her repentance (Zech. 12:7, 10a).

As the response to the rejection of Israel, Zechariah predicts in 11:17 that Israel will be judged by the worthless shepherd: “Woe to the worthless shepherd, who deserts the flock! May the sword strike his arm and his right eye! May his arm be completely withered, his right eye totally blinded!” (NIV). The first person singular in Zech. 11:17 indicates Israel who rejected God’s will. God, as a response to the rejection, also warns Israel that he will reject Israel (Zech. 11:4-14).

The shepherd concept of Zechariah 9-14 is unquestionably foreshadowed in the Marcan narrative. The last part of Mark 14:27, “. . . I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered,” is a quotation from the last part of Zech. 13:7: “. . . says the LORD of hosts.

604 Ibid., 177.
605 Moo, The Old Testament in the Gospel Passion Narrative, 188.
Strike the shepherd, that the sheep may be scattered; I will turn my hand against the little ones.” Mark may have added this quotation at some stage to predict that the disciples will fall away on the occasion of the arrest of Jesus (Mk. 14:43-51). The prediction from Zechariah may originally have been used by the Christian community as a proof-text for the death of Jesus, but in this context it serves to show that the light of the disciples (v. 50) was also part of God’s plan.  

Mark changes the imperative πατάξατε (Strike!) in Zech. 13:7 into first person singular Πατάξω (I will strike) in Mk. 14:27. With this change, Mark emphasizes, “I will strike,” a point which is by now familiar in Mark’s conflict story.

2. The Psalms of the Righteous Sufferer

In one group of Psalms, the speaker laments the persecution that he suffers from his enemies, protests his innocence, and calls upon God to deliver him. The Psalms of the Righteous Sufferer correspond to the genre “lament of the individual” in H. Gunkel’s Form-critical classification, a category that depicts the response of pious Israelites to adversity and persecution. Even though, for example, Psalm 118 begins with a national thanksgiving for all Israel, the speaker who has suffered is expressed in the singular. The

---

606 Hooker, Mark, 350.
607 H. C. Kee argues that the majority of the Psalms are in the category of (1) personal lament, which is wholly appropriate for the passion scenes, or (2) royal psalms, which are interpreted eschatologically, pointing to the present and impending fulfillment of the messianic expectations; “The Function of Scriptural Quotations and Allusions in Mark 11-16,” in Jesus und Paulus. Festschrift für Werner Georg Kümmel. Zum 70. Geburtstag, ed. E. E. Ellis and E. Grässer (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck&Ruprecht, 1975), 183.
608 Moo, The Old Testament, 225.
“I” in these psalms simply means the type of the “Pious One.”

The form of individual lament concerns the rejection motif and needs to be studied for this section.

The function of these psalms can be described as the following: the betrayal by close friends (Ps. 38:11; 41:9; 55:12-14), the mockery of enemies (Ps. 22:6-7; 109:25), the false witnesses (Ps. 27:12; 35:11; 109:2), physical suffering (Ps. 22:16-18), and the conspiracy of enemies (Ps. 31:4, 13; 35:4; 38:12; 71:10). Echoes of these lament psalms extend throughout Mark’s Passion Narrative.

Psalms 38:11, 41:9, and 55:12-14 describe the betrayal by friends: “It is not enemies who taunt me...it is not adversaries who deal insolently with me. But it is you, my equal, my companion, my familiar friend.” (Ps. 55:12-13).” For the Marcan rejection, these passages foreshadow the rejection of Jesus’ disciples in Mark: “Now the betrayer (Judas, one of the twelve) had given them a sign.” Then they laid hands on him and arrested him” (Mk 14:44, 46); “But again he (Peter) denied it. But he began to curse

---

609 Sigmund Mowinckel, Psalmenstudien, 2 vols. (Amsterdam: P. Schippers, 1966), 1, 137.
610 Some scholars argue that the Psalms of the righteous sufferer may be regarded as “national psalms of lamentation in the I-form.” For example, France, Jesus and the Old Testament; C. A. Briggs, The Book of Psalms, vol. 2 (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1906-1907), 402 ff.
611 Marcus, The Way of the Lord, 174, makes the following chart of allusions to the Psalms of the Righteous Sufferer in Mark’s passion narrative:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mark</th>
<th>Psalms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14:1</td>
<td>by cunning, to kill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14:18</td>
<td>the one eating with me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14:34</td>
<td>very sad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14:41</td>
<td>delivered to the hands of sinners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14:55</td>
<td>sought to put him to death</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14:57</td>
<td>false witnesses rising up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14:61; 15:4-5</td>
<td>silence before accusers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15:24</td>
<td>division of garments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15:29</td>
<td>mockery, head shaking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15:30-31</td>
<td>save yourself!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15:32</td>
<td>reviling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15:34</td>
<td>cry of dereliction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15:36</td>
<td>gave him vinegar to drink</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15:40</td>
<td>looking on at a distance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
and he swore an oath, ‘I don’t know this man.’” (Mk. 14:70, 71). Among the sufferings inflicted on the psalmist, the most painful is the treachery of a “bosom friend” (Ps. 41:9), not “an enemy” or “a foe”:

The enemy is none other than his friend (Ps. 55:12-13). His pain is more intense because of his personal relationship with those who have betrayed him. . . The psalmist builds up to the climactic point until an emphatic and contrastive “but it is you” (Ps. 55:13) identifies the betrayer as one equal in status, “a man like myself,” a “companion,” a “close friend.” He has been betrayed by one with whom he has enjoyed “sweet fellowship” (Ps. 55:14; דִּיוֹן ידידים “circle of confidants” or “council” as in Gen. 49:6; Ps. 89:7) within a circle of like-minded people. He reflects on the pleasant memories of spiritual unity they had among the throngs of pilgrims in the temple.  

Certainly rejection and betrayal are connoted by the figure of speech among friends of the righteous sufferer. “Shaking the head” is a relatively common OT metaphor for mockery (See II Kings 19:21; Job 16:4; Sir 13:7; Ps. 109:25). The act of mocking was a form of ridicule (cf. Neh 2:19; 4:1), explained further by two verbal phrases: הָעַלְפָּה הָעָלָה עַל, “they hurl insults”; lit., “they open lip” and נַעֲנוּ עָלָה, “shaking their heads”; lit., “they shake head.” The first phrase occurs only here and speaks of one facial expression. It is not the insult itself (NIV), but the insulting facial expression. Suggested translations are “they wag the head (in mocking), “gape,” and “make mouths at me.” 

This act may signify rejection: “I am an object of scorn to my accusers; when they see me, they shake their heads” (Ps. 109:25). Another kind of mockery of the righteous sufferer used is the offer of a drink: “They gave me poison for food and vinegar to drink” (Ps. 109:25).”

---

612 Briggs, The Book of Psalms, 238.
614 Moo, The Old Testament, 238.
615 Taylor, Mark, 591.
616 VanGemeren, Psalms, 203.
69:21). The significance of “shaking heads” and “the offer of drink” is that they represent the action of the mockery. The mockery used in Psalms is repeated in the mockery action of Mark: “someone ran, filled a sponge with sour wine, put it on a stick, and gave it to him to drink” (Mk. 15:36); “Those who passed by derided him shaking their heads saying, ‘Aha! You who would destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself, and come down from the cross!’ in the same way the chief priests, along with the scribes, were also mocking him” (Mk. 15:29-31). The false witness (Ps. 27:12; 35:11; 109:2) rises against the righteous sufferer and breathes out violence. “It is more likely that the accused was charged with crimes of which he had no knowledge.” The false witness is untrustworthy (Ps. 109:2). However, the psalmist maintains the righteous sufferer’s absolute innocence.

The Psalmist describes his rejected situation by using the rejection language in 22:6-8: “But I am a worm, and not human; scorned by others, and despised by the people. All who see me mock at me; they make mouths at me, they shake their heads; Commit your cause to the LORD; let him deliver -- let him rescue the one in whom he delights!” He accounts for the sufferer’s physical affliction that is made by the mockery from his opponents, who are most likely intended to be regarded as the ungodly in general. After mocking the sufferer, the opponents divide his garments (22:18). The widespread

---

618 Ibid., 765.
custom of dividing the condemned criminal’s clothes would suggest the possibility that an execution scene is here envisaged and that the sufferer sees his enemies already distributing his clothes in anticipation of his death.\textsuperscript{619} The execution scene that the opponents divide his garments in 22:18 is echoed in Jesus’ crucifixion as follows: “And they crucified him, and divided his clothes among them” (Mk. 15:24).

The following chart of allusions to the passages of the Psalms in the Marcan portrayal of rejection may thus be compiled. The matching references between the two books harmonize not only words, but also the meaning of the verses.

Diagram III-1: the lament Psalms in Mark

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Psalms</th>
<th>Rejection</th>
<th>Mark</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10:7-8</td>
<td>looking for a way to arrest Jesus by stealth and kill him</td>
<td>14:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22:6-7, 109:25</td>
<td>all who see me mock at me and shake their heads</td>
<td>15:29-31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22:18</td>
<td>they divide my clothes among themselves</td>
<td>15:22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27:12, 109:2, 35:11</td>
<td>for false witnesses have risen against me</td>
<td>14:56-59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31:11-14</td>
<td>they plot to take my life</td>
<td>3:6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38:11</td>
<td>my friends stand aloof from my affliction</td>
<td>15:40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38:12-14</td>
<td>they seek to hurt me speak of ruin, but I cannot speak</td>
<td>14:60-61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41:9</td>
<td>my bosom friend has lifted the heed against me</td>
<td>14:18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55:12-14; 69:21</td>
<td>it is not enemies, but my familiar friend; they gave me poison for food and vinegar to drink</td>
<td>14:14, 70-71, 15:36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>71:10-11, 35:4</td>
<td>my enemies speak for my life consult together</td>
<td>12:7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>118:22</td>
<td>the stone that the builders rejected</td>
<td>12:10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{619} Anderson, \textit{Psalms}, 191.
3. “Fool” Language in Wisdom Literature

Rhetoric of rejection motif in the Wisdom literature surfaces in the use of the frequently used words “fool” and “folly.” As we can see in Proverbs 1:7; “the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and discipline,” the “fool” language is best seen in contrast with “wisdom,” which is the outcome of careful observation and much pondering on actual life in the light of religion and divine revelation. In other words, “Wisdom had its seat in God and was imparted to those who feared Him (1:7). Such wisdom was the essence of life, and to be without it was to walk in the way of death and destruction. Therefore, the way of folly that despises wisdom is the rejection of God’s will and disregards the revealed moral and spiritual values on which

---

620 Hebrew terms for “fool” are نيְֵלֵי, נְֵלֵל, נְֵלִה, נְֵלִי, נְֵלִה, and the related terms for “folly” are נֵֶליִֵה, נֵֶלָּה, נֵֶלִֵי, נֵֶלִֵל. Most of these terms use in the wisdom literature to describe persons lacking wisdom and the senseless behavior of such persons; George Arthur Buttrick, ed., The Interpreter’s Dictionary of the Bible: An Illustrated Encyclopedia, vol. 4 (New York: Abingdon Press, 1962, 303, s. v. “Folly,” by S. H. Blank. I summarize the definition of “fool” from the International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, rendered “foolishly” or “foolishness” by the RSV, and its cognates generally denote “thickheadedness.” Though its use in 2 Sam. 15:31 does not imply moral condemnation (perhaps also in Gen. 31:28), usually implies sin and error (2 Sam. 24:10; 1 Sam. 26:21) or a lack of trust in God (2 Chr. 16:7-9; cf. Deut. 32:6, 21), denotes one who rejects instruction (Prov. 12:15; 15:5); is ready to speak and act without thinking (Prov. 10:14); is quick to get angry, quarrel, and cause strife (Prov. 12:16; 20:3; 29:9); is unrestrained in his anger (Job 5:2). He is associated with transgression (Ps. 107:17) and sin (Prov. 24:9). “stupid person,” denotes one who is self-confident (Prov. 14:12; 28:26); ignorant (Eccl. 2:14); hates instruction (prov. 1.22; 18:2); is thoughtless (10:23; 17:24); is angry and contentious (Prov. 18:6; 19:1; Eccl. 7:9); rages (Prov. 17:12); is indolent (Eccl. 4:5; Prov. 21:20); and engages in silly merriment (Eccl. 7:4-6). and its derivatives occur in Ecclesiastes (e.g., 2:12; 7:25), but not in Proverbs. In Eccl. 7:25 is related to madness. Less frequent are הבּ (Prov. 17:7; 21; cf. Ps.14:1; 53:1; Job 2:10),_make a fool of_ (Job 42:8), “make a fool of” in Job 12:17; Geoffrey W. Bromiley, The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, vol. 2 E-J (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1982), s. v. “Fool; Foolish(ly); Folly,” W. L. Walker 331; c.f. Merrill C. Tenney, The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible, 581; Willem A. VanGemeren, ed., New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis, vol. 1, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1997), 306-308, s. v. “ופל” by Chou-Wee Pan; R. F. Horton, The book of Proverbs (Mccadox: Hodder and Stoughton, 1899), 338-341; and Claus Westermann, Roots of Wisdom: The Oldest proverbs of Israel and Other Peoples (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1995), 52-54.

621 Virtually all of the proverbs of antithesis dealing with the foolish and the wise are found in the collection of Proverbs 10:1-22 and 15. In Proverbs numerous sayings that are the same language device are presented as a Hebrew poetic technique. The literary device of parallelism found in these sayings serves the purpose of a straightforward complement to the characterization of the one type or the other.


623 Ibid.
life is based. The reason why the fool abhors is the hardness of his heart, which walks in its own ways (11:20; 14:14). The nature of fools is described as the following; “fools were thoughtless, careless, conceited, self-sufficient, indifferent to God and His will, and might even oppose and scoff at religion and wise instruction.” Kingsbury interprets this diction as the hardened heart of Jesus’ disciples causes them to misunderstand the will of Jesus and causes conflict to erupt between them and Jesus. In the Marcan Gospel, the vocabulary, “hardness of heart,” is used not only by the disciples (Mk. 10:5; 6:52; 8:17; 16:4), but also the Jewish leaders who always play as Jesus’ opponents (Mk. 3:5; 10:5; 16:4). Accordingly, the fool in Proverbs is connected to the conflict between Jesus and his disciples in Mark.

The literature also contains a number of clues as to the specific nature of folly and the behavior of fools. The fool is always compelled to speak his mind immediately: “Fools show their anger at once, but the prudent ignore an insult” (Prov. 12:16. cf. Prov. 14:17, 29; Eccl. 7:9). He is quarrelsome (Prov. 20:3), and gives full vent to his anger (Prov. 12:16; 29:11). The mouth of the fool speaks slander, gossip, and spite (Prov. 10:18; 29:11).

---


626 Kingsbury, Conflict in Mark, 96-103, explains that “To be with Jesus is to learn of him, to “think the things of God, not of human. The disciples, however, show themselves prone to regard reality from a human point of view. . . Regardless of their participation, however, Mark lets it be known that the disciples are still unable to view the miracle in divine terms and view it only in human terms: They still have no grasp of Jesus’ divine authority or that he revealed himself through the miracle to be God’s Son and Israel’s Shepherd-king; and neither do they grasp that they could have done the same thing.”

627 A fool shows his annoyance at once . . . ” (Prov. 12:16); “A quick-tempered man does foolish things . . . ” (Prov. 14:17).

628 “very fool is quick to quarrel.”

629 “A fool gives full vent to his anger” (29:11).
11:12; 20:19); and stirs up strife (Prov. 18:6). The features of the fool’s character are portrayed in Jesus’ opponents in the Marcan Gospel. After listening to Jesus’ answer, the high priest immediately tears his clothes and gives full vent of his anger against Jesus:

“Why do we still need witnesses? You have heard his blasphemy! What is your decision?”

All members of the Sanhedrin condemned Jesus as deserving death (Mk. 14:63-64). The rage feature of the high priest echoes the character of the fool in Proverbs.

A fool talks loosely and too much. A proverb in his mouth is lame (Prov. 26:7). Whereas if he kept his mouth shut he might be thought intelligent (Prov. 17:28), he talks without listening (Prov. 18:18), babbles, and “flaunts his folly” (Prov. 10:14; 13:16). The actions of the fool destroy his own household (Prov. 11:29), stir up a city (Prov. 29:8), and kill the upright (Prov. 29:10). These proverbs are thematically parallel to the plot to kill Jesus in Mark 3:6 and 11:18. The action of the fool to kill the upright in the proverb foreshadows the conspiracy of the Jewish leaders in Mark. The fool engages thoughtlessly in what is wicked (Prov. 14:16) and, as a result, will not listen to anyone:

“The mocker does not like being corrected” (Prov. 12:1; 15:12). The results of the fool’s ways are the following: making trouble (Prov. 22:8; 24:1-2), falling (6:12-15; 10:8, 25; 12:3, 7; 14:11, 32; 28:18), punishment and death (10:16, 21; 11:19). William Beardslee argues that these proverbs have been often combined with prophetic-apocalyptic sayings and

---

630. He who conceals his hatred has lying lips, and whoever spreads slander is a fool” (10:18).
631. A fool’s lips bring him strife, and his mouth invites a beating.”
632. He who brings trouble on his family will inherit only wind.”
633. Mocker stirs up a city. . . ”
634. Bloodthirsty men hate a man of integrity and seek to kill the upright.”
have shifted from a wisdom framework to an eschatological one in Mark. These thematic parallels show the close connection between the proverb and the story in Mark: “Whoever is steadfast in righteousness will live, but whoever pursues evil will die (θάνατον in LXX)” (Prov. 11:19); and “Brother will betray brother to death (θανατον), and a father his child, and children will rise against parents and have them put to death (θανατώσωσιν) (Mk. 13:12).”

In Wisdom literature, the rejection language characterizes the fool who rejects God and God’s will with his mouth and action and goes to meet a bitter fate (Eccl. 10:12b). This character of the fool in Proverbs is connected to Jesus’ opponents and his disciples as well in Mark. The result of the fool’s rejection is death in Wisdom literature (LXX Prov. 5:4-6), in the Marcan Gospel, the opponents are warned about judgment (Mk. 8:34-37; 12:9).

4. Summary

We have traced the rejection language in selected Old Testament passages. In summary we find rejection language by which the prophets describe their personal experiences of rejection as well as the rejection of a future eschatological figure. The prophets, who foreshadow Jesus in Mark (14:65), suffer at the hands of their own people by being described as the opponents and ungodly (Isa. 5:7b; Jer. 12:6); and are vilified by false witnesses (Isa. 41:29; Jer. 14:14). The prophets’ personality and mission are rejected

---

635 William A. Beardslee, “Uses of the Proverb in the Synoptic Gospel,” Interpretation 24 (1970), 64.
636 Translation is based on Sir Lancelot C. L. Brenton, The Septuagint with Apocrypha: Greek and English (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 1997).
by the words and actions of their opponents (Isa. 50:4-6; 53:1-3), who are connected to Jewish leaders and Jesus’ disciples as well (Mk. 10:5; 6:52; 8:17; 16:4). They would continue the rejection even till death and burial. The results of their rejection are the prophecies that the Temple will be destroyed (Jer. 7:20; 26:6), and Israel will be judged (Isa. 5:5; Jer. 12:10-13; Zech. 11:17). As a response to the rejection, the prophets continuously predict the final judgment of the religious leaders who reject them (Jer. 7:4; 26:15). In Psalms, the righteous’ rejection is described as “the betrayal by close friends (Ps. 38:11; 41:9; 55:12-14),” “the mockery of enemies (Ps. 22:6-7; 109:25),” “the false witnesses (Ps. 27:12; 35:11; 109:2),” “physical suffering (Ps. 22:16-18),” and “the conspiracy of enemies (Ps. 31:4, 13; 35:4; 38:12; 71:10).” In the passion event of Mark, Jesus is betrayed (Mk. 14:10; 15:40), rejected (Mk. 14:10), and mocked (Mk. 15:29). In the Wisdom literature, the languages, “fool’ and “folly,” indicate the rejection of God’s will. The intent of the fool with language is hostility against the righteous. Bultmann connects Jesus as the teacher of wisdom in Mark, who echoes the righteous in Wisdom literature. Thus the rejection language in the Wisdom literature is the language of the fool who denies God and his plan in Mark. This rejection language motif in the Old Testament is used in Mark to describe the significance of Jesus’ rejection.

B. Rejection Motif in the Jewish Literature

What I want to show from the Jewish literature is that this kind of rhetoric of

rejection has a long history of development and usage in Judaism. Thus, the focus is not so much on the exegesis of Jewish literature. Rather I will show that the rejection language situation occurs in the context of religious and inner-Jewish conflict, that the language or rhetorical devices are somewhat similar, e.g. imagery, strong pejorative statements, and that such language, etc., and attitudes show continuity with that found in OT contexts of rejection.

Among the sources and authors examined will be the Assumption of Moses, 4 Ezra, 1 Enoch, and the Psalms of Solomon in the intertestamental literature and Josephus, and selected Qumran literature in the first-century Jewish writings.638

1. Intertestamental literature

a) Assumption of Moses

This pseudepigraphal book was written before the destruction of Jerusalem A. D. 70, because the temple was to stand till the establishment of the theocratic kingdom (Assumption. 1:17). As for the earliest possible date, the book must have been composed by B. C. 3, for Herod is already dead (6:6), and the War of Varus already past (Assumption. 6:9). Thus the time of composition may be placed between B. C. 3 and A. D. 70.639 The

---

638 The reason why I selected the sources is that these sources, which were written in the contemporary time of the Gospel of Mark, give the key point of reference for us to understand Mark.

book probably was written by a Pharisaic Quietist and was designed by its author as a protest against the growing secularization of the Pharisaic party through its fusion with political ideas and popular Messianic beliefs.  

In this book the writer reveals to his successor prophecies that he is instructed to record but hide until the appointed time concerning the Hebrew nation. A panorama of the history of the Jews up to the author’s time is described. He tells how one tribe shall say to another: “For what nation or what region or what people of those who are impious towards the Lord, who have done many abominations, have suffered as great calamities as have befallen us? Now, therefore, my sons, hear me: for observe and know that neither did the fathers nor their forefathers tempt God, so as to transgress His commands. And yet know that this is our strength, and thus we will do” (Assumption. 9:3-5). The main content of the book is with Moses’ prophecy to Joshua of the coming vicissitudes of the Hebrew people. J. Klausner describes the purpose of the book as follows: “It is intended to prove that the woes which come upon Judea in the time of the author are in reality ‘the birth pangs of Messiah,’ the prelude of the Messianic Age.”

The author tells the cause of the destruction of the first Temple in chapters 1-5. The main reason why the author of the book uses this language is to criticize the opponents’

640 R. H. Charles, ed., The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament in English: with Introductions and Critical and Explanatory Notes to the several Books, vol. II Pseudepigrapha (Oxford: At The Clarendon Press, 1913), 411. He argues for the evidence that: (1) he was not a Sadducee, for he attacked the Sadducean party in the most bitter term. (2) He was not a Zealot. Ch. 10 is wholly against the idea of Zealot. (3) He was not an Essene. For the entire book is interpenetrated with national hopes and aspirations. The ideal of the Essene was individualistic and ethical, and not national. (4) From the preceding facts it follows that the author was neither Sadducee, Zealot, nor Essene, but a Pharisaic Quietist.

641 Charles, The Apocrypha, 421.


worship in the temple and their leadership of God’s people (Assumption. 5:1-4). They shall establish kingdoms for themselves according to their own ordinances and transgress the covenant of the Lord, and profane the oath which the Lord made with them (Assumption. 2:6-7). They shall sacrifice their sons to strange gods, they shall set up idols in the sanctuary, to worship them (Assumption. 2:8), and they shall defile with pollutions the house of their worship (Assumption. 5:3).

But He was not pleased to manifest this purpose of creation from the foundation of the world, in order that the Gentiles might thereby be convicted, yea to their own humiliation might by (their) arguments convict one another (Assumption. 1:13-14). But the ten tribes shall establish kingdoms for themselves according to their own ordinances. . . but four shall transgress the covenant of the Lord, and profane the oath which the Lord made with them. And they shall sacrifice their sons to strange gods, and they shall set up idols in the sanctuary, to worship them. And in the house of the Lord they shall work impiety and engrave every form of beast, even many abominations (Assumption. 2:5-8).^644^ And when the times of chastisement draw nigh and vengeance arises through the kings who share their guilt and punish them. . . They shall turn aside from righteousness and approach iniquity, and they shall defile with pollution the house of their worship . . . they offer to Lord, who are not priests but slaves, sons of slaves . . . those who wickedly depart from the Lord shall be judged . . . for money as each may wish (Assumption. 5:1-6).

The languages, “their own humiliation,”“their own ordinances,” and “profane the oath which the Lord made,” appear in thematic similarity within the Marcan Gospel: “the tradition of the elders” (Mk. 7:3, 5), “in order to keep your tradition” (Mk. 7:9), and “rejecting the commandment of God” (Mk. 7:9). It seems that Mark interprets the phrases of the book in Mark 7:8: “You abandon the commandment of God and hold to human tradition.” The paragraph of the Assumption of Moses, “they shall set up idols in the

---

sanctuary, to worship them,” is probably repeated in Mark 7:6b, 7a: “This people honours me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me.”

In Chapters 6-7, the author of the book describes the wicked kings, who shall work iniquity in the Temple, and call themselves “priests of the Most High God” (Assumption.6:1). These self-appointed “priests,” however, will not bear rule for long, because an “insolent king shall succeed them, who will not be of their race of the priests, a man bold and shameless, and he shall judge them as they shall deserve . . . for thirty-four years” (Assumption.6:2-6). Charles insists that the insolent king is Herod who ruled from 39 to 4 B.C. as King of the Jews. “He will be followed by a ‘powerful king of the west’ (Varus), who will lead some captive, burn part of the Temple, and crucify some (Assumption.6:8-9).”

In chapters 7, the author explains the characters the wicked kings, “the poison of their minds,” “treacherous man”, and devourers of the goods of the poor.”

The author describes that they are preoccupied with lawlessness, deceit, selfishness, gluttony, and uncleanness on the part of the priests and rulers:

And, in the time of these, destructive and impious men shall rule, saying that they are just. And these shall stir up the poison of their minds, being treacherous men, self-pleasers, dissemblers in all their own affairs and lovers of banquets at every hour of the day, gluttons, gourmands. . . Devourers of the goods of the <poor> saying that they do so on the ground of their justice, but in reality to destroy them, complainers, deceitful, concealing themselves lest they should be recognized, impious, filled with lawlessness and iniquity from sunrise to sunset (Assumption. 7:3-7).

Charles asserts that the wicked leaders are identified with the Sadducees. In the Marcan
Gospel, the Sadducees appear one time, and are introduced with “who say that there is no resurrection” (Mk. 12:18). They ask Jesus the question in Mark 12:19-23, “In the resurrection, when they rise again, which one’s wife will she be?” Jesus’ answer to the question (Mk. 12:24) implies who they are: “Is this not the reason you are mistaken, that you do not understand the Scriptures, or the power of God?” They are one of the opponents, who have their source in a heart which is in open rebellion against God, whose characters are immorality, deceit, selfishness, gluttony, slander, murders, deeds of avarice, and uncleanness (cf. Mk. 7:21-23).

In chapter 8-10, the author describes the destiny of the wicked rulers to ultimately being punished: “And others amongst them shall be punished by tortures and fire and sword, and they shall be forced to bear in public their idols, polluted as they are like those who keep them. And they shall likewise be forced by those who torture them to enter their inmost sanctuary, and they shall be forced by goads to blaspheme” (Assumption. 8:4-5). The kingdom of God will appear throughout “all his creation.” God and his angels will go forth to destroy the enemies of the Jews: “And then His kingdom shall appear throughout all His creation and then Satan shall be no more, and sorrow shall depart with him. Then the hands of the angel shall be filled who has been appointed chief. And he shall forthwith avenge them of their enemies” (Assumption.10:1-3). These prophetic styled oracles speak of the enemies of Israel. The enemies will be destroyed at the arrival of God and his angels. The prophetic oracle echoes the Marcan Gospel: “What have you to do with us, Jesus of

---

647 Lane, Mark, 257.
Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us?” (Mk. 1:24) and “He will come and destroy the tenants” (Mk 12:9). The judgment of the wicked kings in the Assumption of Moses is a similar feature to the opponents of Jesus in Mark.

b) 4 Ezra

For the date of the book, the constant reference to the Romans, the destruction of the temple, as well as the acquaintance of the author with the Roman emperors, all point to the close of the first century A. D. The verse in the book of 3:1, “in the thirtieth year of the downfall of the city,” most likely refers to the date of the original publication of the book and points to the year A. D. 100 (i.e. thirty years after the destruction of Jerusalem in A. D. 70). About the author, scholars assume that the present form of the book was made by the hand of a compiler or redactor who has used, as a source, an originally independent Salathiel apocalypse, was sympathetic to the distress expressed in S concerning the hope of personal and national salvation, and found the solution to these matters in the age to come, when the wicked would be judged. The community to which 4 Ezra is addressed was a rather small, tightly-knit factional group within the umbrella of Judaism, whose members had close ties with each other but was somewhat

---

650 G. H. Box argues that the author of 4 Ezra made use of five pre-existing sources, which Box labelled S (the Salathiel apocalypse), E (the Ezra apocalypse), A (the eagle vision), M (the Son of Man vision), and E2 (more Ezra material). See Bruce W. Longenecker, *2 Esdras* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995), 22.  
alienated from the more mainstream forms of Judaism. The author considered the community as the faithful remnant of Israel, while the rest of the people had fallen away from God’s law.

We will deal only with Chapters 3-14, written by a Jewish author. The main theme of the book is the question of why Israel was forced to suffer so greatly, although it was God’s elected people (4 Ezra 5:27; cf. the whole passage v. 23-30; 6:56-58; 8:16), identified as God’s people “whom you have called your first-born, only begotten, zealous for you,” and was no worse than other nations and certainly not as bad as Babylon. Ezra complains about the bitter fate of Israel. In the first dialogue with God (4 Ezra3:1-5:19) Ezra discusses Israel’s suffering while the evildoers flourish.

But you did not take away their wicked heart and enable your law to bear fruit in them. . . Although your law was in your people’s hearts, a rooted wickedness was there too; so that the good came to nothing, what was bad persisted. . . They had the same wicked heart. . . . You gave your city over into the hands of your enemies. I said to myself: ‘Perhaps those in Babylon lead better lives.’ I have seen many evil-doers with my own eyes. My heart sank, because I saw how you tolerate sinners and spare the wicked doers; how you have destroyed your own people, but protected your enemies (4 Ezra3:20-30).

Ezra states that God is at fault for failing to enable his law to bear fruit in His people. As a result, sinners, whose hearts are wicked, rule Israel by doing evil instead of obeying God’s commandments. Ezra mentions that the evil-doers are rooted in a wicked heart. The concept of the evil-doers is combined with the idea, “hardness of heart,” in Mark. The

---

652 Longenecker, 2 Ezra, 101.
653 Ibid.
654 Chapter 1 and 2 are considered a Christian introduction.
opponents reject Jesus as the Messiah, because of their hardness of heart (Mk. 10:5). The disciples have failed to comprehend that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, regardless of their participation in Jesus’ life.655“For they did not understand about the loaves, but their hearts were hardened” (Mk. 6:52; cf. 8:16; 16:4).

In the third vision (4 Ezra:35-9:25), Ezra discusses the problem of Israel’s suffering in its final form: “If the world has indeed been created for our sakes why do we not enter into possession of our world? How long shall this endure?” (4 Ezra:59). Ezra wonders why God’s people who God has called as his firstborn and his beloved are given to the wicked (4 Ezra:58). The author also despises other people of the Jewish community that he or she does not belong to while using a language of animosity and hostility (4 Ezra:7:22-25):

All this have I spoken before thee, O Lord, because thou hast said that for our sakes thou hast created this world. But as for the other nations, which are descended from Adam, thou hast said that they are nothing, and that they are like unto spittle; and thou hast likened the abundance of them to a drop on a bucket. And now, O Lord, behold these nations which are reputed as nothing lord it over us and crush us. But we, thy people whom thou hast called thy first-born, thy only-begotten, thy beloved [most dear], are given up into their hands. If the world has indeed been created for our sakes why do we not enter into possession of our world? How long shall this endure? (4 Ezra:55-59).

The ungodly have refused to obey him; they have set up their own empty ideas, and planned deceit and wickedness; they have even denied the existence of the Most High and have not acknowledged his ways. They have rejected his law and refused his promises, have neither put faith in his decrees nor done what he commands. Therefore, Ezra, emptiness for the empty, fullness for the full! Listen! The time shall come when the signs I have foretold will be seen; the city which is now invisible shall appear and the country now concealed be made visible. Everyone who has been delivered from the evils I have foretold shall see for himself

---

655Kingsbury, Conflict in Mark, 95-103.
my marvelous acts. My son the Messiah shall appear with his companions and bring four hundred years of happiness to all who survive. At the end of that time, my son the Messiah shall die, and so shall all mankind who draw breath. Then the Most High shall be seen on the judgment-seat, and there shall be an end of all pity and patience. Judgment alone shall remain. . . . (4 Ezra7:22-34).

In the above quotations, three elements are connected with the theme of the Marcan rejection. The first, the plan of the ungodly with their empty idea, is linked to the plot of the opponents of Jesus in Mark. “Then the Pharisees went out and began to plot with the Herodians how they might kill Jesus” (Mk. 3:6; cf. 15:1). The second, the scene, “the first-born, only-begotten, beloved [most dear]” who is delivered into the wicked hands in 6:58, echoes the Marcan passion predictions: “The Son of Man is to be delivered into the hands of men” (Mk. 9:31; cf. 15:1). The third, the prediction in 7:26a and 33, “Behold, the time shall come. . . . Then the Most High shall be seen on the judgment-seat” echoes Jesus’ prediction in the parable of the tenants: “What then will the owner of the vineyard do? He will come and destroy the tenants” (Mk. 12:9). Consequently, the figure of the Most High and the vocabularies used in 4 Ezra cohere with the Marcan terms used for the rejection of Jesus, who will come to judge the opponents.

c) 1 Enoch.

This book is a collection of writings of various dates from the last two centuries.

---

657 Michael E. Stone, “Coherence and Inconsistency in the Apocalypses: the Case of ‘THE END’ in 4 Ezra,” JBL 102 (1983), 230, argues on the day of judgment that “the author of 4 Ezra had a clear eschatological scheme, as is evident from the systematic exposition in 7:26-44. In it, the present age is followed by the Messianic Kingdom, then by a new creation, the day of judgment and the future age.
BCE, written by different authors at different times. It comes from many writers and almost as many periods. It touches upon every subject that could have arisen in the ancient schools of the prophets. Nearly every religious idea appears in a variety of forms. Craig A. Evans argues that “the materials in 1 Enoch range in date from 200 B. C. E. to 50 C. E.” The authentic authors of the book are thought to belong to the Chasids or their successors the Pharisees. “Conflicting views are advanced on the Messiah, the Messianic kingdom, the origin of sin, Sheol, the final judgment, the resurrection, and the nature of the future life.” Concerning the four terms of the Messiah, “the Anointed One” (1 Enoch 48:10; 52:4), “the Righteous One” (1 Enoch 38:2-3; 46:3; 53:6-7), “the Elect One” (1 Enoch 40:5-7; 45:3-4; 49:2-4; 51:3-5), and “the Son of Man” (1 Enoch 46:2-3) are used in contrast to sinners who are among God’s people:

And when the Righteous One shall appear before the eyes of the righteous, Whose elect works hang upon the Lord of Spirits, And light shall appear to the righteous and the elect who dwell on the earth, Where then will be the dwelling of the sinners, And where the resting-place of those who have denied the Lord of Spirits? It had been good for them if they had not been born. When the secrets of the righteous shall be revealed and the sinners judged, And the godless driven from the presence of the righteous and elect, From that time those that possess the earth shall no longer be powerful and exalted: And they shall not be able to

---

658 Charles divides the 1 Book of Enoch into the following parts: chapters 1-36 (before 170 B. C.); chapters 37-71 (94-64 B. C.); chapters 72-82 (about 110 B. C.); chapters 83-90 (166-161 B. C.); chapters 91-105 (104-95 B. C.) in The Apocrypha, 168-171.
659 Ibid., 163.
661 Charles, The Apocrypha, 164.
662 Ibid.
663 This title, found repeatedly in earlier writings but always in reference to actual contemporary kings or priests applied to the ideal Messianic king that is to come. See Charles, The Apocrypha, 185.
664 This title, which occurs in Acts 3:14; 7:52; 22:14 first appears in 1 Enoch as a Messianic designation. Righteousness is one of the leading characteristics of the Messiah, see 46:3. See Charles, The Apocrypha, 185.
665 This definite title is found in 1 Enoch for the first time in Jewish literature, and is, historically, the source of the New Testament designation, and contributes to it some of its most characteristic contents. See Charles, The Apocrypha, 185.
behold the face of the holy, For the Lord of Spirits has caused His light to appear On the Face of the holy, righteous, and elect. (1 Enoch 38:2-4)

And I will cause Mine elect ones to dwell upon it: But the sinners and evil-doers shall not set foot thereon. For I have provided and satisfied with peace My righteous ones But for the sinners there is judgment impending with Me, So that I shall destroy them from the face of the earth (1 Enoch 45:5-6).

The messianic figure in the materials is described as the executor of divine judgment against the sinners. The name of the executor is called “the Righteous,” that the author calls it as “the Son of man” in 46:2-3. These names are identified with Jesus, who will come with great power and judge the betrayed: “Jesus said, ‘I am; and you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of the Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven’” (Mk. 14:62; cf. 13:26; 14:21). The author of Mark, however, uses the name “the Son of Man” in Mark 9:12 and 10:45 and in the crucifixion narrative. The alteration of the use of the name suggests that the Son of man in Mark has to undergo the experiences of the “righteous sufferer” and the “rejected stone,” which echo the Old Testament (Psalms 22; 69; Isa. 53). Mark draws the name from 1 Enoch as well as the Old Testament for this purpose.

The writer of chapter 94 bitterly attacks the sinners with sayings of animosity because of their unrighteous, oppressive, and deceitful life. The reasons that the sinners are cursed are that fact that “they have not remembered the Most High in the days of their riches” (1 Enoch 94:8), “they work unrighteousness and deceit and blasphemy” (1 Enoch 96:7), and “they rejected the righteous” (1 Enoch 96:8). Much of the hostile

---

language of the prophetic tradition is invoked in this book:

Woe to those who build unrighteousness and oppression and lay deceit as a foundation; for they shall be suddenly overthrown, and they shall have no peace. Woe to those who build their houses with sin; for from all their foundations shall they be overthrown, and by the sword shall they fall. Woe to you, ye rich, for ye have trusted in your riches, and from your riches shall ye depart, because ye have not remembered the Most High in the days of your riches. Ye have committed blasphemy and unrighteousness, and have become ready for the day of slaughter, and the day of darkness and the day of the great judgment. Thus I speak and declare unto you: He who hath created you will overthrow you, and for your fall there shall be no compassion, and your Creator will rejoice at your destruction, and your righteous ones in those days shall be a reproach to the sinners and the godless (1 Enoch 94:6-11).  

The unrighteous who commit blasphemy against the Most High will not only be tormented, but also overthrown on the day of Judgment. The Marcan author probably designed the Son of Man (Mk. 14:62; 13:26; 14:21) with the idea of the executor of divine judgment that the book of 1 Enoch illustrates.

d) The Psalms of Solomon.

Insofar as the Psalms of Solomon refer to the coming of Pompey and his death in Egypt in 48 B. C. and to other events prior to the conquest of Palestine in 63 B. C., a date written in the Psalms is assigned to around B. C. 50. Traditionally it has been believed that the psalms were composed by a Pharisee or pharisaic group who were the “righteous” while the “sinners” were the Sadducees. However, the collection of 18 Psalms is the

\[\text{Trans. based on Charles, The Apocrypha, 188-277.}\]
\[\text{Surburg, The Intertestamental Period, 146; Evans, Noncanonical Writings, 38.}\]
\[\text{Evans, Noncanonical Writings, 38.}\]
work of a writer or writers who, in common with the authors of many of the canonical
Psalms, held firmly to the belief in the relative righteousness of Israel as compared with
the nations of the world; alien nations are as such “sinners” (Pss. Sol. 1:1; 2:1 f., 24 ff.).

Throughout the Psalms, Israel appears divided into sections or parties; the one
section, or party consists of the righteous, or pious, or those that fear the Lord, or the poor, or the guileless; the other section consists of the unrighteous, or sinners, or transgressors, or profane, or, as they are termed in the fourth Psalm, the men-pleasers (ἀνθρωπόμενοι). In this division of the people into two different parties, some are regarded as morally or religiously opposed. In the use of the terms employed to describe the opponents, these books, by writers who identify themselves with the section of the righteous or the pious, do not differ essentially from a large group of the canonical Psalms. J. Jeremias takes the Psalms of Solomon as evidence for the bitter dispute between Pharisees and Sadducees.

By reading the Psalms of Solomon, we may judge that the bitterness of the conflict

---

671 ἄγιοι, see Pss. Sol. 2:38; 3:3-8; 14; 4:9; 10:3; 13:5-8; 14:6; 15:8; 16:15.
672 ἄκακοι, see Pss. Sol. 3:1; 4:1, 7, 9; 8:28, 40; 9:6; 10:7; 12:5, 8; 13:9, 11; 14:2, 7; 15:9; 17:18.
674 παράνοια, see Pss. Sol. 5:2, 13; (also πένης); 5:7; 15:2; 18:3.
675 ἀκάκος, see Pss. Sol. 5:25; 12:4.
676 ἄθικο, see Pss. Sol. 7:6; 15:6.
678 παράνοια, see Pss. Sol. 5:21; 7:1, 4; 14:6.
679 ἀθρόπατος, see Pss. Sol. 4:1.
681 Ibid.
was the profound religious revolution of Judaism.\footnote{Ibid.} The sinners whom the writers are against are chiefly the inhabitants of Jerusalem (Pss. Sol. 2:2). Many of the polemical passages in the Psalms vilify the sinners (their opponents) by using hostile language.\footnote{Johnson argues that the Pharisee vilified the Sadducees in chapter 4 of Psalms of Solomon; Johnson, “Anti-Jewish slander,” 439. From this fact we can suggest that the Sadducees (the sinner) were imprecated because they rejected the messianic hope which each specific group within intertestamental had; J. Julius Scott, Jr., Customs and Controversies: Intertestamental Jewish Backgrounds of the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1995), 310.} The writers of the Psalms call the sinners “mockers” (Pss. Sol. 2:11, 12), “iniquitous people” (Pss. Sol. 2:12; 15:11), “they had defiled with unnatural intercourse” (Pss. Sol. 2:15), “wicked people” (Pss. Sol. 2:16; 4:10), “hypocrite” (Pss. Sol. 4:6, 22), “serpent” (Pss. Sol. 4:9), “the flesh of the men-pleasers, the bones of the lawless” 94:190, “ravens peck” (Pss. Sol. 4:20), “adulterous people” (8:10), “plunder” (Pss. Sol. 8:11), “darkness and destruction” (Pss. Sol. 14:9; 15:10), and “lawlessness” (Pss. Sol. 15:8).\footnote{Trans. and the order of verses based on Charles, The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha, 631-652.} These vocabularies of the Psalms and similar terms connected thematically are repeated in the Marcan passages: “blasphemy” (Mk. 2:7; 14:64), “They struck his head with a reed, spat upon him” (Mk. 15:19; cf. 12:4), “mocking” (Mk. 15:20, 31), “adulterous” (Mk. 16:26).

The opponents of the Psalms are not explicitly the Gentiles, i. e. the Romans, but the inhabitants of Jerusalem who “had defiled the holy things of the Lord, Had profaned with iniquities” (Pss. Sol. 2:2-3). The inhabitants of Jerusalem are also derided for their lawless actions by the Romans (Pss. Sol. 2:11). This presumably implies that the sinners are Jews who lived in the Jewish community. They are, in any case, fellow Jews, for they
“live in hypocrisy in the company of the pious” (Pss. Sol. 4:7). Thus the polemic in the Psalms of Solomon is a conflict among religious groups in Jerusalem to identify each other as the true Israel; the section of the righteous or the pious keeps the Law and expects the Messiah (Pss. Sol. 4:17). The Davidic Messiah is expected to rise up for the righteous as their king (Pss. Sol. 17:21), and is anticipated to “purge Jerusalem” and drive out the sinners (Pss. Sol. 17:29, 33, 36).

As the Psalms refer definitely to the opponents as Jewish people who live in Jerusalem, Mark discloses the specific names of each opponent and pinpoints the places where conflict appears. From the beginning of his writing, Mark keeps consistent with the principle: “people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem” (Mk. 1:5), “not as the scribes” (Mk. 1:22). The opponents, inhabitants of Jerusalem, in the Psalms (Pss. Sol. 2:3:13), are connected to Jesus’ opponents and reveal their identity in Mark. Mark introduces the inhabitants of Jerusalem of the Psalms as Jewish religious leaders (Mk. 15:1). The reference of the Davidic Messiah in Psalms appears in Mark 12:35, and the role of the Messiah in the Psalms is combined with Jesus’ mission to judge the opponents in Mark (Mk. 12:9, 40).

---

686 It does not mean that the writers were anti-Semitic because they were Jews too, but any religious people who rejected against their opponents in Jerusalem.
687 For more detail references that the Marcan exposes the names of the opponents, see Diagram 2-1: repetitive references of the Jewish leaders in Chapter 11. Internal Structure of Argumentation on the rejection motif.
688 Evans, Mark, 272, 79.
2. Josephus

Josephus brings important data for us to understand the history and literature of the first-century Jewish people in Palestine. His works provide data for us to understand the way that Mark responded for his writing in the context. In Antiquities of the Jews (Ant.) he mentions three sects of the Jews in the beginning of the Christian Era: the Pharisees, Sadducees, and the Essenes. He gives us much evidence not only about how Jews talked about each other when they disagreed (inner-Jewish conflict), but also how Jews and Gentiles slandered each other (Jewish-Gentile religious conflict). In Life of Josephus (Vita), he shows inner-Jewish conflict:

This harangue had its effect on the mob; for he was a clever demagogue and by a charlatan’s tricks of oratory more than a match for opponents with saner counsels. Indeed he was not unversed in Greek culture, and presuming on these attainments even undertook to write a history of these events, hoping by his presentation of the facts to disguise the truth. But of this man’s general depravity and of the fact that to him and his brother our ruin was almost entirely due, I shall adduce proof in the course of this narrative.(8 40-41). 689

He castigates the Jewish reviewer of his book “The Jewish War (J.W.),” Justus of Tiberias, as “a clever demagogue and by a charlatan’s tricks of oratory more than a match for opponents with saner counsels” and depraved person. The reason is “he not only maligned me but failed to tell the truth about his native place” (J.W. 65§338). He was full of “knavish tricks,” “fraudulent practice,” and “impudence” (J.W. 65 §354-356). Other examples of polemic are represented in his same book:

The Galilæans, many more of whom had again come up in arms from the whole district, knowing the man to be a perjured villain, pressed me to lead them against him, undertaking to exterminate both him and Gischala (J.W. 21§102).

And it was Jesus, the son of Sapphias, who principally set them on. He was ruler in Tiberias, a wicked man, and naturally disposed to make disturbances in matters of consequence; a seditious person he was indeed, and an innovator beyond everybody else. He then took the laws of Moses into his hands, and came into the midst of the people (J.W. 27§134).

I returned post haste, and found the whole of the council and populace in conclave, and Jonathan and his associates making a violent tirade against me, as one who lived in luxury and neglected to alleviate their share of the burden of the war (J.W. 55§284).

He describes John of Gischala as “a perjured villain” and Jesus as “a wicked man,” “maker of disturbance,” and “a seditious person.” This harsh language spoken by a Jew to Jews reflects the polemical idiom of an in-house debate. In Mark’s Gospel, Jesus offends the scribes by the declaration: “Son, your sins are forgiven” (Mk. 2:5; cf. 14:64). They sensed within Jesus’ declaration of forgiveness an affront to their God. They counter-offend Jesus by the saying: “It is blasphemy!” (Mk. 2:7; cf. 12:15, 40), whose punishment is death by stoning in the context. The verbal attack of Jesus and the counter-attack of his opponents in Mark is evidence that the writing of the Marcan Gospel is based in inner-Jewish conflict.

Josephus attacks his opponents in The Jewish War. His special targets are the Zealots and Sicarii, whom he considered responsible for the war against Rome and ultimately for the destruction of the Temple. Judas the Galilean is a teacher of a peculiar...
sect of his own and was not like the rest of those their leaders (The Jewish War 2.8.1 §118). Josephus says, “every dictate of religion is ridiculed by these men who scoffed at the prophets’ oracles as impostor's fables” (J.W.4.6.3§385), yet “their behavior brought these prophecies to fulfillment” (J.W 4.6.3 §387-88). Josephus harangues the Zealots in the city: “What have you done that is blessed by the lawgiver, what deed that he has cursed have you left undone? . . . In rapine and murder you vie with one another . . . the Temple has been destroyed by fire, and native hands have polluted those divine precincts . . .” (J.W. 5.9.4 §400-402). They are “impostors and brigands” (J.W. 2.8.6§264), “slaves, the dregs of society, and the bastard scum of the nation” (J.W 5.8.5§443-44). “They outdo each other in acts of impiety toward God and injustice to their neighbors . . . oppressing the masses . . . bent on tyranny . . . violence . . . plundering . . . lawlessness and cruelty . . . no word unspoken to insult, no deed untried to ruin” (J.W. 7.8.1 §260-62). Among them were “charlatans and false prophets” (J.W 6.5.3 §288).

Of particular interest in light of Mark’s statements is Josephus’ view of the Temple. If we focus upon the reaction of Jesus in the temple, then it becomes clear that the closest parallel is between Josephus’ view and Mark’s. The parallel is displayed in the following table:

They profane the Temple, so that it is no longer the dwelling place of God (J.W. 5.1.3 §419). “you have made it (the Temple) ‘a den of robbers’”(Mk. 11:17c)

---

God turned from the sanctuary because of their deeds (J.W. 2.19.6 §539).
“he overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold doves”
(Mk. 11:15)

God had long ago sentenced the Temple to flames (J.W. 6.4.5 §250),
deciding to “condemn the city and purge the sanctuary by fire” (J.W. 4.5.2 §323).
“Then Jesus asked him, ‘Do you see these great buildings? Not one stone will be
left here upon another; all will be thrown down.’” (Mk. 13:2)

No vessel whatever might be carried into the temple (Ag. Ap. 2.8 §§106, 109).
“he would not allow anyone to carry anything through the temple” (Mk. 11:16).696

The destruction of the city is a punishment from God (J.W. 6.2.1 §110),
a vengeance from heaven for the guilt of the Zealots (J.W. 2.17.10 §455).
“They will see ‘the Son of Man coming in clouds’ with great power and glory” (Mk. 13:26)

We can recognize several elements by the comparison. First, the destruction of the Temple
in Mark may primarily have been eschatological (Mk. 12:9), even though Josephus
understands its temporal element. The second, in the scene of the Temple destruction in
Mark, the executor of divine judgment is “the Son of Man,” instead of the Zealots in
Josephus’s work. The third, both Mark and Josephus agree that the cause of the destruction
is profanation of the Temple.

The hostile language used by the Gentiles against the Jews is amply demonstrated
in a writing by Josephus entitled Against Apion (Ag. Ap.).698

696The Greek text is translated into the following: οὐκ ἤφιεν ἵνα τι ζωσθεῖσθαι σκέπης διὰ τοῦ ἱεροῦ.
“he would not permit anyone to carry a vessel through the temple.”
697The word “κρίμα (judgment)” in Mark 12:40 shows clearly that the time is future.
698Apion was born in upper Egypt (Ag. Ap. ii. 29), studied at Alexandria, and taught rhetoric in Rome
under Tiberius, Caligula and Claudius. Under Caligula he headed the anti Jewish deputation sent from
Alexandria to the Emperor, when he was opposed to Philo, the spokesman of the Alexandrian Jews (Ag. Ap.
xvii. 257 ff.). He also wrote a History of Egypt in five books, which included references to the Jews: whether
he wrote a separate work on the Jews is doubtful (Ag. Ap. 2.1 n. a §2 ). He is on the Egyptian origin of the
Jewish race (Ag. Ap. 2.3 §28); H. St. J. Thackeray, Josephus with an English Translation, vol. 1 in vols. 9
I confess I have had a doubt upon me about Apion the grammarian, whether I ought to take the trouble of confuting him or not; for some of his writings contain much the same accusations which the others have laid against us, some things that he hath added are very frigid and contemptible, and for the greatest part of what he says, it is very scurrilous, and, to speak no more than the plain truth, it shows him to be a very unlearned person, and what he lays together, looks like the work of a man of very bad morals, and of one no better in his whole life than a mountebank (Ag. Ap.2.1 §1-3). 699

Apion ought to have had a regard to these facts, unless he had himself had either an ass’ heart or dog’s impudence; of such a dog I mean as they worship; for he had no other external reason for the lies he tells of us (Ag. Ap.2.7 §80). 700

He (Apion) accuses us for sacrificing animals, and for abstaining from swine’s flesh, and laughs at us for the circumcision of our privy members. . . Apion is hereby justly punished for his casting such reproaches on the laws of his own country; for he was circumcised himself of necessity, on account of an ulcer in his privy member; and when he receive no benefit by such circumcision, but his member became putrid, he died in great torment (Ag. Ap.2.13 §141-143). 701

Josephus confutes Apion, who attacks him in very contemptible ways: “scurrilous,” “morally bad,” “foolish,” “a mountebank,” “an ass’ heart or dog’s impudence,” and “putrid member.” Apion charged that Jews were seditious, worshipped the head of an ass, committed human sacrifice, were atheists and misanthropes. He continues the motif against Apion himself, who has “the mind of an ass and the impudence of a dog, which his countrymen are wont to worship. An outsider can make no sense of his lies” (Ag. Ap.2.7 §86). This is stated again and again (Ag. Ap.2.2 §12; 2.2 §14; 2.7 §86; 2.9 §115; 2.13 §143-44). He engages in “malicious slander” (Ag. Ap.2.8 §89), which befits his

700 Ibid., 486.
701 Ibid., 495-496.
“mendacious character” (Ag. Ap. 2.2 §12). He is a “low charlatan to the end of his days” (Ag. Ap. 2.1 §3), and “a charlatan whose life is as dissolute as his language” (Ag. Ap. 2.12 §136). He is ignorant (Ag. Ap. 2.2 §26; 2.11 §130), an “ignorant fool” (Ag. Ap. 2.4 §37), and “stupid” (Ag. Ap. 2.13 §142). Apion’s mind is “blinded” (Ag. Ap. 2.13 §142).

Josephus uses the same kind of curse language in Apion against the Gentiles. He says in hostility to his opponents (Ag. Ap. 1.25 §225-26), “they [Greeks] should be so conceited” (Ag. Ap. 1.3. §15), and they report things which show “the utter absurdity of the calumnies” (Ag. Ap. 2.11 §59). He warns that the noble Apion’s calumny upon the Jews will be vilified by him (Ag. Ap. 2.3 §15; 2.6 §70). He declares that “We refuse to call you . . . collectively men because you worship and breed with so much care animals that are hostile to humanity” (Ag. Ap. 2.6 §67). On the ass slander, Josephus notes, “An Egyptian should be the last person to reproach us, for an ass is no worse than the cats, the he-goats, and other creatures which, in this country, rank as god” (Ag. Ap. 2.7 §81-82).

Through all of his writing, Josephus shows that Jewish polemic against the pagans was quite common in ancient times, and that Christians used some of the very same language against the Jews. The writing of Mark could not be an exception in this context. The language used by each group to slander and to reject their opponents in their writings are a kind of blasphemy (Mk. 2:7; cf. 12:15, 40). Luke T. Johnson argues that the

---

polemic is primarily conventional expression in first-century Judaism.\textsuperscript{703} In comparison
with Josephus, the original setting of the hostile language in Mark’s writing is prophetic
and eschatological.

3. Qumran literature

The community of Qumran which drew upon the Old Testament for their faith (i.e.,
who they are and what they believe) and for their polemic (i.e., where they disagree with
others and on what basis) maintained an extreme hostility towards all outsiders.\textsuperscript{704} The
author of the Hymns of Thanksgiving describes his enemies in these following terms:

And they, they [have led] Thy people [astray].
[Prophets of falsehood] have flattered [them with their words]
and interpreters of deceit [have caused] them [to stray];
and they have fallen to their destruction
for lack of understanding for all their works are in folly (1 QH 4:6-8).

And they, interpreters of falsehood and seers of deceit,
devised plans of Belial against me,
bartering Thy Law which Thou hast graven in my heart
for flattering words (which they speak) to Thy people.
And they stopped the thirsty from drinking the liquor of knowledge (1QH 4:9-11)

As for them, they are hypocrites;
the schemes are of Belial which they conceive
and they seek Thee with a double heart
and are not firm in Thy truth (1AH 4:13-14).\textsuperscript{705}

\textsuperscript{703} Johnson, “Anti-Jewish Slander,” 441.
\textsuperscript{704} Craig A. Evans, “Faith and Polemic: The New Testament and First-century Judaism,” in Anti-
Semitism and Early Christianity: Issues of Polemic and Faith, eds. Craig A. Evans & Donald A. Hagner
\textsuperscript{705} Trans. based on A. Dupont-Sommer, The Essene Writings from Qumran (Gloucester, Mass.: Peter
Smith, 1973), 211-12.
The Qumranians call their opponents “astray people,” “prophets of falsehood,” “flatterers,” “interpreters of deceit,” “fool,” “seers of deceit,” “hypocrites,” and “they have double heart.” The opponents of the author are the teachers and authorities of the Jerusalem establishment. The vocabulary and theme of these Qumranians are used in Mark, while Jesus warns the false prophets with eschatological features: “False messiahs and false prophets will appear and produce signs and omens to lead astray, if possible, the elect” (Mk. 13:22). The words, “hypocrites” and “a double heart” (1AH 4:13-14), connect with Mark 7:6 where Jesus counter-attacks the Pharisees and the scribes: “Isaiah prophesied rightly about you hypocrites, as it is written, ‘These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me’” (cf. LXX Isa. 29:13). This idea of the group is also expressed in the community’s Manual of Discipline:

And let him undertake by the Covenant to be separated from all perverse men
who walk in the way of wickedness.
For they are not counted in His Covenant:
For they have not inquired nor sought Him concerning His precepts
in order to know the hidden matters in which they have guiltily strayed;
and they have treated with insolence matters revealed that Wrath might rise unto judgment
and vengeance be exercised by the Covenant,
and solemn judgment be fulfilled against them unto eternal destruction,
leaving no remnant (1QS 5:10-13).

The author calls his enemies “sons of the pit” (see 1QS 9:16; CD 6:15; 13:14), “sons of darkness” (1QS 1:10; 1QM 1:7) who have “devised plans of Belial [i.e., Satan] against” God’s true teacher (1QH 4: 13-14). This polemic obviously runs parallel to that which is

707 Trans. based on Dupont-Sommer, The Essene Writings from Qumran, 83.
found in the Marcan Gospels, where Jesus calls the Pharisees hypocrites (Mk. 7:6; cf. Mt. 15:7; 22:18; 23:13, 15, 23, 25, 27, 29). The Qumran view also connects with the prophetic saying on judgment in Mark 12:40: “They will receive κρίμα (the greater Judgment).” The basis of the prophetic judgment in the Qumran, “walk in the way of wickedness” (1QS 5:10), parallels with the false piety of the scribe and their sinful lifestyle (Mk. 12:40a). Hooker argues that the word, “προφασεί (translated “for show”),” in Mk. 12:40b implies an ulterior motive, rather than a false pretext.\(^{708}\) The Qumran community rule characterizes the life-style of outsiders in this way:

> greed and slackness in the search of righteousness, wickedness and lies, haughtiness and pride, falseness and deceit, cruelty and abundant evil, ill-temper and much folly and brazen insolence, abominable deeds committed in a spirit of lust, and ways of lewdness in the service of uncleanness, a blaspheming tongue, blindness of eye and dullness of ear, stiffness of neck and heaviness of heart, so that a man walks in all the ways of darkness and guile (1QS 4:9-14).\(^{709}\)

The author of the Qumran text explains the reason why a man walks in all the ways of darkness. This Qumran echoes the vocabularies which are mentioned, when Jesus explains “cleaning all meats” in Mark 7:15-23:

\(^{15}\)there is nothing outside a person that by going in can defile, but the things that come out are what defile. \(^{17}\)When he had left the crowd and entered the house, his disciples asked him about the parable. \(^{18}\)He said to them, “Then do you also fail to understand? Do you not see that whatever goes into a person from outside cannot defile, \(^{19}\)since it enters, not the heart but the stomach, and goes out into the sewer?” (Thus he declared all foods clean.) \(^{20}\)And he said, “It is what comes out of a person that defiles. \(^{21}\)For it is from within, from the human heart, that evil

\(^{708}\)Hooker, Mark, 295; Francis, Mark, 246.
\(^{709}\)For other polemical statements, see CD 1:18:2:1; 5:10-19; 8:4-8; 1QM 13:4, 11; 4QpNah 3-4 ii 2, 5-6.
intentions come: fornication, theft, murder, adultery, avarice, wickedness, deceit, licentiousness, envy, slander, pride, folly. All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person.”

Mark emphasizes the heart as the center of the whole inner life and source of human action. The phrase in the Qumran, “heaviness of heart,” connects with “heart hardened” in Mark (6:52; 7:6; 8:17; 10:5; 16:14). The opponents reject Jesus because of the hardness of their heart (10:5), and Jesus’ disciples refuse him because “their hearts were hardened” (6:52; 8:17; 16:14). The Qumran author most likely anticipates the Marcan “heart hardened;” the heart causes “all man walks in all the ways of darkness” and evil-doing.

One of the rituals of the people of Qumran involved shouting curses against their enemies, such as the “men of the lot of Satan,” that might never be forgiven:

And the Levies shall curse the men of the lot of Belial, and shall speak and say: Be thou cursed in all the works of thy guilty ungodliness! May God make of thee an object of dread by the hand of all the avengers of vengeance! May He hurl extermination after thee by the hand of all the executioners of punishment! Cursed be thou, without mercy, according to the darkness of thy deeds! Be thou damned in the night of eternal fire! May God not favor thee when thou callest upon Him, and may He be without forgiveness to expiate thy sins! May He lift His angry face to revenge Himself upon thee, and may there be for thee no (word) of peace on the lips of all who cling (to the Covenant) of the Fathers! (1QS 2:4-9). (May there be) everlasting hatred for all the men of the Pit (1QS 9:21-22).  

It must be emphasized that all of this rejection language in Qumran is directed at other Jews who do not match the Qumranites’ ideas of purity: those whom the War Scroll calls

---

710 Lane, Mark, 256
711 Trans. based on Dupont-Sommer, The Essene Writings from Qumran, 75, 96.
They particularly attack the leader of other groups. The high priest of other groups in Qumran literature is regularly referred to as the “Wicked Priest” (1QpHab 8:8; 9:9; 11:4; 12:2, 8; 4QpSac 30 I 3; 4 QpPsa -10 IV 8), and also as the “Man of Lies” (1QpHab 2:1-2; 5:11) or “Preacher of Lies” (1QpHab 10:9). The teachers of the religious establishment are called the “builders of the (white washed) wall” (CD 4:19; 8:12, 18). The Pharisees are referred to as the “seekers of smooth things” (4QpSac 23 ii 10; 4QpNah 1-2 ii 7; 3-4 I 7; 3-4 ii 4).

The idea, that the Qumranites give a title to a group leader, echoes the mocking words “Hail, king of the Jews!” (Mk. 15:18), and the written notice of the charge against Jesus “THE KING OF THE JEWS” (Mk. 15:26). The title given to Jesus for the Jews is a mockery and a criminal charge. “For Mark, however, the title is probably true: it is through crucifixion that Jesus is proclaimed as Messiah, and as the King of the Jews.”

Mark may be mentioning the title repeatedly to emphasize the truth of the statement (Mk. 15:2, 9, 12, 18-20; cf. 15:32).

4. Summary

The three data of Jewish literature, Intertestamental literature, Josephus, and

---

713 Hooker, Mark, 373.
714 L. W. Hurtado, “Christ,” in Dictionary of Jesus, 111, insists the title “THE KING OF JEWS” is one of many examples of Marcan irony on the question of whether Jesus is the king of Israel or king of the Jews. “The Markan irony in the mockery of Jesus as ‘the Christ’ in 15:32 is that, contrary to the mockers, Jesus is ‘the Christ, the king of Israel,’ though his ultimate vindication lies by way of his crucifixion and apparent failure. The pagan form of the mockery, in the title attached to the cross (“the King of Jews”), gives the charge for which Jesus was executed, but is also an ironic truth: Jesus really is the rightful ‘king,’ rejected both by pagan and Jewish leaders.”
Qumran writings alike, deal with the rejection motif. The authors of the books employ harsh vocabularies and thematic events related with the motif. The data foreshadow the Marcan Gospel and echo throughout the Gospel itself. The author of Mark quotes the same forms from the data or uses them in changed forms. For the rejection theme, the three major elements in the Intertestamental writings are “wickedness,” “the Messiah,” and “judgment.” The wicked kings, who work iniquity in the Temple, will be judged (Assumption. 8:4-5). Those whose hearts are wicked and disobey God’s commandments (4 Ezra 3:20-30) will be judged by the Most High (4 Ezra 7:24). 1 Enoch describes that the Son of Man (1 Enoch 46:2-3) will appear as the executor of divine judgment to destroy the sinners and the wicked (1 Enoch 45:5-6). The wicked who has been defiled with unnatural intercourse (Ps. So. 2:15-16), and who live in Jerusalem (Ps. So. 2:2-3) will be driven out (Ps. So. 17:29, 33, 36) by the Messiah (Ps. So. 4:17). The feature of the executor of judgment in the Intertestamental data connects with the Son of Man, Jesus, in Mark (Mk. 13:26; cf. 12:9, 40). The Marcan author, however, employs the name “the Son of Man” in the passion narrative (Mk. 8:31; 9:31; 10:33), which echoes the “Righteous Sufferer” in the OT (Psalms 22; 69; Isa. 53).

Regarding the rejection motif in the Gospel of Mark, Josephus deals with the destruction of the Temple. Mark 11 and 13 are related with Josephus’ work (J.W. and Ag. Ap.). Josephus understands that the destruction of the Temple collapsed by fire is God’s judgment and a temporal element (J.W. 4.5.2 §323; J.W. 6.2.1 §110). However, the time
of judgment in Mark is an eschatological feature (Mk. 13:26; 12:9). Mark makes clear that the Son of Man as the executor of judgment will come in the future (Mk. 26:14:62; cf. 12:9). In Qumran data, the feature of the judgment upon the wicked is eschatological. The ambiguous titles, which the Qumranites use to attack the leaders of other groups, reflect the title that Jews give Jesus (Mk. 15:18; 26). The title “KING OF THE JEWS ” repeated in the Gospel (Mk. 15:2, 9, 12, 18-20; cf. 15:32) will be Mark’s intent to highlight Jesus as the true Messiah.

C. Conclusion

The materials of the OT and the Intertestamental literature that we have explored above are connected with the rejection theme displayed in the Marcan Gospel. The authors of each book use vocabularies and peculiar issues that consist of the rejection motif. There are four common areas that cohere with and foreshadow in Mark’s writing for his rejection motif: the Messiah (Mk. 8:29; 12:35; 13:21; 15:32), the opponent (the Jewish leaders), the Law (Mk. 7:8, 9; 10:5; 12:28, 31), and the Temple (Mk. 11:15, 16; 13:1,2; 14:49; 15:29, 38) according to Mark’s term.

The Messiah in the OT is described as “the Suffering servant” (cf. Isa. 50:1-7; 50; Jer. 20:7-10) or “The Righteous Sufferer” (cf. Ps. 22; 38:11; 109:25; Prov. 29:10), comparing with the Intertestamental data that portray as several terms: “the Righteous One” (1 Enoch 38:2-3; 46:3; 53:6-7; Ps. So. 17:21) or “the Most High” (1 Enoch 94:6-11), “the Elect
One”(*I Enoch* 40:5-7; 45:3-4; 49:2-4; 51:3-5), “the Messiah” (*Ps. So.* 4:17), “the Son of Man” (*I Enoch* 46:2-3), “the Anointed One” (*I Enoch* 48:10; 52:4), and etc. In the data, the messiah is rejected by the false prophets (cf. Ps. 27:12; 35:11; 109:2), the wicked (cf. 4 Ezra 3:20-30), “close friends” (cf. Ps. 38:11; 41:9; 55:12-14), and the Jews’ groups (cf. *Ps. So.* 2:2-3; 4:7; *J.W.* 27§134; *Ag. Ap.* 2.1 §1-3). The feature of the Messiah is divided for two functions in the OT: “the Suffering Servant” who undergoes crucifixion to fill his mission, and will come to judge the opponents. On the contrary the character of the Messiah in the Intertestamental literature is depicted as God who will judge the opponents. The Marcan writing in the passion narrative (Mk. 8:31; 9:31; 10:33) echoes the “Righteous Sufferer” of the OT, but in the parable of the wicked echoes the Intertestamental literature (Mk. 12:9; 13:26; 14:62). Thus, the Marcan narrative is inherited from the OT tradition.

The two pivotal matters that the opponents reject the Messiah in both the OT and the Intertestamental literature are about the Law and the Temple. The Messiah in the data is symbolized as an executor of divine judgment to destroy opponents, who are Israelite, and the Temple. The cause of the judgment of the Messiah against the wicked is their false witness and wickedness. The attack of the opponents against the Messiah or other Jewish groups is motivated for protection of their kinship of Israel, which is reserved through the Temple. This concept of Israel’s election is connected with the Marcan rejection. The prophecy of Jesus on judgment in Mk. 12:9 is motivated by their hardened heart (Mk. 3:5;

---

7:6), which is related to the wickedness in the OT (Isa. 41:29; Jer. 14:14) and the Intertestamental data (I Enoch 45:5-6). The prophetic saying of Jesus in Mk. 12:9 is related with Isa. 56:7-8: “7b for my house shall be called a house (or the Temple) of prayer for all peoples (or nations). 8 I will gather others to them besides those already gathered.” Mark does not mean that the kinship will totally be changed from Jews to the others but to all people whose hearts are close to the Messiah, the Son of God. Jesus’ action of cleansing the Temple “prophetically symbolized the coming event” that Jesus will build a new Temple (Mk. 14:58); and that through Jesus, the new Temple, people can keep the kinship of Israel. The Marcan narrative regarding the Law and the Temple in the author’s intent is again influenced from the OT prophetic tradition but not the Intertestamental data.

---

716 Sanders, Jesus and Judaism, 75.
Chapter V. The Ideological Texture of the Rejection Motif

To explore the motif of conflict between Jesus and his opponents in the Gospel of Mark, biblical scholars have asked what the *Sitz im Leben* of the gospel was. To answer that question Koch insists that critical work can be done in biblical interpretation only where the texts are illuminated by the complete political, economic, religious, and linguistic sweep of the biblical world.  

His opinion is that the genesis of the biblical statements on the motif is only assumed with concrete social and cultural texture of the text. To understand the social and cultural locations of the text naturally leads to questions of ideology, whose primary subject is people. Robbins introduces “ideological texture” as one of methods of socio-rhetorical criticism, and defines ideology as “an integrated system of beliefs, assumption and values, not necessarily true or false, which reflects the needs and interests of a group or class at a particular time in history.” The task of ideological analysis of a text is not merely a set of beliefs and values which encode the interests of particular social groups, classes, or sectors, but also serves the power interests of those who hold and promote them.  

---

720 Ibid., 139.
in relation to forms of social and political power in the context of conflict.\footnote{Ibid. Kloppenburg considers ideology as “power relationship between dominant group and a subordinate people. Each group rationalizes and legitimizes certain arrangements of their power, delegitimizing others.”}

Thus to analyze the motif of conflict in Mark, the system of differentiations, which makes the opponents conflict with Jesus in the context,\footnote{Without exception the various Jewish groups that are identified in Mark consistently play an adversarial role against Jesus in the narrative. Jesus is opposed for a variety of reasons, most notably his attitude toward the Law, toward legal traditions, and toward the sanctity of the Jewish nation. And, the last few scenes are peppered with Jewish and Roman rejection of Jesus: the rejecters include various kinds of leaders, both Jewish (2:6-7; 3:6, 22; 8:11; 11:27-33; 12:1-12; 14:63-64) and Roman (14:16); the Jewish crowd (14:65; 15:13-14; ); as well as Jesus’ disciples (6:52; 8:17-18; 8:33; 9:19; 14:71) and his family (3:21; 6:1-6). Thus, the rejection of Jesus comprises more than one group of people and more than one race. It includes Jewish leaders, Jewish people, Jewish disciples, as well as Roman leaders and, if we can presume to think of soldiers, Roman military personnel. It is simply wrong to argue that Mark’s desire is to put the blame solely on the Jews, especially the entirety of the Jewish populace. It can be fairly said that Mark’s Christology has a significant suffering (i.e., rejected) servant overlay.} should be examined. What are the particular beliefs and values that the opponents held against Jesus? On the contrary, how does Jesus maintain his needs and interests in the particular situation? How does the author of Mark encode ideology presented in the context?

To answer the questions on the ideological interpretations of the rejection motif, at least three issues should be investigated in this chapter: (1) the eschatological message, which appears in Jesus’ response to the opponents with the issue of prophetic judgment. (2) The kingdom and Israel; if Jesus’ message represents the best way for Israel to work together with God in achieving God’s Kingdom plans, then what happens to those who oppose these plans? (3) The message for Mark’s readers; Jesus uses rejection language in the narrative to warn the people in the story and by extension Mark’s readers, about the consequences of not listening to his message.
A. The Eschatological Message

We find several warnings of coming judgment in Mark and all point in one direction:

No one pours new wine into old wineskins (2:22); If any of one is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son Man will be ashamed (8:38); It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than to have two eyes and be thrown into hell (9:43-48); But many who are first will be last, and the last first (10:31); I will destroy this man-made temple and in three days will build another (14:58, cf. 13:2; 15:29).

These warnings of judgment are to be taken in an eschatological sense as spoken to Israel and in particular to the religious leaders who reject Jesus. Mark implies four things concerning the opponents and their rejection of Jesus: (1) the prophetic judgment; (2) warnings of judgment on Israel; (3) warnings of judgment on religious leaders; (4) warnings of the destruction of the Temple.

---

724 The message of warning on judgment is found in the two other gospels, Matthew and Luke: Leave the dead to bury the dead (Mt. 8:22/Lk. 9:26); Do not put the new wine into old wineskins (Mt. 9:17/Lk. 5:37-8); Those who do not repent will soon reach a time when it will be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah than for them (Mt. 10:15/Lk. 10:12, cf. Mt. 11:20-24/Lk. 5:37-8); Abraham, Isaac and Jacob will welcome Gentiles into the kingdom, while the sons of the kingdom will be cast out (Mt. 8:11-12/Lk. 13:28-29); Israel is like salt which has lost its savour, and is now good for nothing but to be cast out and trodden underfoot (Mt. 5:13/Lk. 14:34-35); Whoever denies or is ashamed of the Son of Man, of him will the Son of Man be ashamed (Lk. 9:26); It is better to sacrifice precious parts of the body than to go whole into Gehenna (Mt. 5:29-30); There is a narrow gate that leads to life, and there are few that find it, but the gate to destruction is broad and well-travelled (Mt. 7:13-14/Lk. 13:24); Israel at present is like a field with wheat and weeds mixed, but there will come a day of separation and judgment (Mt. 24-30, 36-43); Israel is like fish in a drag-net, good and bad together, and soon the net will be on shore and the bad fish thrown away (Mt. 13:47-50); The master of the house will come and punish those servants who were not faithful (Mt. 24:45-51/Lk. 12:42-6); The first will be last, and the last first (Mt. 19:30/Lk. 13:30); Nineveh will condemn this generation, because it repented at the preaching of Jonah, and a greater than Jonah is here (Mt. 12:39-41; Lk. 11:29-32); This generation will be like an exorcised man reoccupied by worse demons than before (Mt. 12:43-5/ Lk. 11:24-6); Those to whom tragedies had occurred were not greater sinners than the rest; unless Israel repents, all will likewise perish, mown down by Roman guards or crushed under falling buildings (Lk. 13:1-5); Unless the tree bears fruit this year, it will be cut down (Lk. 13:6-9); In the messianic banquet, those who insist on the best places will be humiliated (Lk. 14:7-11); In the coming great wedding feast, those invited were not worthy (Mt. 22:1-14/Lk. 14:15-25); Jerusalem will end up like chickens without a mother hen, unprotected in the farm-yard fire (Mt. 23:37/Lk. 13:34); The Temple has been abandoned by YHWH, and faces its fate unprotected (Mt. 23:38/Lk. 13:35 ); Just as the flood swept Noah’s contemporaries way, so will this generation be destroyed (Mt. 24:27-9/Lk. 17:26-7); Just as Lot’s wife was overtaken by sudden judgment, so will this generation be (Lk. 17:32); There will be foolish maidens unprepared when the bridegroom comes (Mt. 25:1-13); There will be foolish servants who hide their talent in the earth, or bury their pound in a napkin (Mt. 25:14-30/Lk. 19:11-27); There will be unwilling subjects who will pay the price when the rightful king comes to reign (Lk. 19:14); There will be goats as well as sheep (Mt. 25:31-46); Upon this generation will come all the righteous blood shed on earth, from Abel to Zechariah; it will all come on this generation (Mt. 23:35/Lk. 11:51); The Temple will be destroyed, and (perhaps) rebuilt (Mt. 26:61; cf. Mt. 24:2/Lk. 21:6); If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they believe even if one should rise from the dead (Lk. 16:31).
1. The Prophetic Judgment

We need to observe that Mark logically connects the rejection of Jesus’ followers with rejection of God and then rejection by God. Jesus tells the disciples to shake the dust off their feet against the city or house that rejects the message of the Twelve (6:11). This removal of dust from the feet conveys by symbolic realism that there will be no further contact and communication with the place and denies any further opportunity to hear the message of salvation or experience the ministry of healing and deliverance. This is supported by the custom that the Jews had of shaking off the dust from their sandals and clothes when they returned to the Holy Land from a Gentile region. Thus it might be a prophetic “sign” (translated here as “warning”) against the opponents in the final judgment. To the statement about the gesture is added “an intolerable word,” “Truly I tell you, no sign will be given to this generation (NRSV) [which rejects my messengers and message]” (8:11-13). The strongest word in Mark in this regard must be 8:38, “If anyone is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes in his Father’s glory with the holy angels.” Jesus’ statement in 8:38 refers to the final judgment which has been committed

---

727 Guelich, Mark, 323; Schweizer, Mark, 131.
728 Cf. Mt. 10:15, “Truly I tell you, it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah on the day of judgment than for that town” (also see Mt. 11:20-24).
729 Cf. Mt. 10:33, “But whoever denies me before men, I will also deny before my Father who is in heaven.”
to the Son of Man. Lane argues that the phrase, “adulterous and sinful generation,” is colored by the strictures of the prophets against idolatry (cf. Isa. 1:4, 21; Ezek. 16:32; Hos. 2:4). Denial confirms the world in its idolatrous character and proves its unfaithfulness to God expressed in its rejection of Jesus. For Mark the saying of Jesus against the opponents is a prophetic judgment and Jesus is understood as a prophet. Hawthorne argues that the extraordinary formula, Ἄμήν λέγω Ἰδοὺ νῦν, proves that Jesus thought of himself as a prophet:

Jesus consciously identifies himself, his words and his works with the prophets (Lk. 4:24; cf. Mt. 13:57; Mk. 6:4). Thus, by using the amen-formula initially as an introduction to Jesus’ saying that “no prophet is ever welcome in his native place”—a saying by which Jesus set himself among those prophets who were rejected by their own people—Luke seems to understand the formula as a pattern of speech characteristic of the prophets.

Mark presents Jesus as a prophet whose words and works are self-authenticating in the controversy stories and rejection events (6:1-6; 11:27-77). Thus, we understand that the prophetic functions of Jesus in Mark, as well as his associations with the prophetic figures of John the Baptist, Moses and Elijah, place him fully within the tradition of eschatological prophet (1:2f; 9:2-9, 11-13). Mark portrays Jesus as a prophet, who warns the opponents about their judgment: whoever rejects Jesus will be judged on the day of judgment. “What then will the owner of the vineyard do? He will come and destroy the tenants and give the vineyard to others” (12:9).

---

731 Ibid., 310.
2. General Warnings of the Judgment of Israel

In Mark’s gospel there are explicit passages where Israel is warned of judgment and urged to respond to the eschatological message of Jesus. Jesus’ teaching ministry about “the good news of God” (1:14) and “the Kingdom of God” was intended to bring Israel to repent and believe the gospel.\(^735\) Mark uses the allegorical story of the vineyard as Israel (12:1-12).\(^736\) Even though the religious leaders in the parable were being warned about individual judgment, the parable means that Jesus warns of the judgment of Israel generally. The term, “\(\gamma\varepsilon\omega\rho\gamma\omicron\nu\)" (12:1, 2\(^X2\), 7, 9), is used to represent Israel in the parable.\(^737\) The quotation of the OT (Ps. 118: 22-23) in 12:10-11 also describes Israel’s rejection of God. Thus the warning of judgment in the parable is toward Israel.\(^738\) The same theme appears in Jesus’ action against the fig tree (11:12-14, 20-25):

The next day as they were leaving Bethany, Jesus was hungry. Seeing in the distance a fig tree in leaf, he went to find out if it had any fruit. When he reached it, he found nothing but leaves, because it was not the season for figs. Then he said to the tree, “May no one ever eat fruit from you again.” And his disciples heard him say it (NIV 11:12-14).

“The unexpected and incongruous character of Jesus’ action in looking for figs at a season when no fruit could be found would stimulate curiosity and point beyond the incident to its deeper significance.”\(^739\) His action represents a warning of judgment.

---


\(^736\) Gundry, Mark, 689; Lane, Mark, 416; Schweizer, Mark, 239; Taylor, Mark, 472; Wright, Jesus, 328.


\(^738\) Schweizer, Mark, 241.

\(^739\) Lane, Mark, 400.
against Israel just as the symbolic action of the OT prophets did centuries before.\textsuperscript{740} The prophets frequently used the fig tree in referring to Israel’s status before God,\textsuperscript{741} while the destruction of the fig tree is associated with judgment.\textsuperscript{742} Thus this context of the fig tree symbolizes Israel’s judgment in Jesus’ day. In 13:1-4 the destruction of the temple and Jerusalem as prophesied by Jesus warns that the totality of Israel, both the institutions and claims which they were trusting, soon would disappear and be changed beyond their imagination because God was doing a new thing, which included all peoples (13:10).

The warning of judgment was coming upon Israel because they rejected the final messenger, the Son of God (12:8-9) and failed to produce the appropriate fruit when the Messiah looked for it (11:12-14).\textsuperscript{743}

3. Warnings of Judgment on the Religious Leaders as Representative of Israel

Mark presents the general warning of judgment on Israel as we studied in the previous section and also the warning of judgment on the Jewish leadership in the conflict stories through the Gospel. In these stories the consistent theme of Mark is the criticism of Jewish groups\textsuperscript{744} for rejecting Jesus. Jesus uses the term, \textit{υποκριτης} (hypocrisy), which means both contradiction of inner reality and outward appearance as well as didactic abuse

\textsuperscript{741}E.g., Jer. 8:13; 29:17; Hos. 9:10, 16; Joel 1:7; Micah 7:1-6.
\textsuperscript{742}Lane, \textit{Mark}, 400. See Hos. 2:12; Isa. 34:4; cf. Lk. 13:6-9.
\textsuperscript{743}Hooker, \textit{Mark}, 261.
\textsuperscript{744}The two groups, the Pharisees (2:18; 3:3, 6; 8:11, 15) and the scribes (1:12; 9:11-13; 12:28-37), are the main actors as the opponents. Other groups include the chief priests (11:18, 27; 14:1, 43, 53, 55; 15:1-3, 11, 31), the elders who are the members of the Sanhedrin (11:27; 14:53-55, 60-63; 15:1), the Herodians (3:6; 12:13), and the Sadducees (12:18).
through false teaching (3:1-4; 7:6-7; 12:15). Jesus turns against the Pharisees and
scribes for their stubborn hearts (3:5; 10:15), for their ostentatious religiosity (12:38-40),
for their misguided and misguiding traditional exegesis (7:1-13; 18-27), and for their
blindness and deafness (4:12).

In each case Mark’s persistent warning of judgment is upon some special group. In
other words the most that can be said is that this judgment is reserved by Mark for the
leaders who reject Jesus among the nation as a special, privileged body, not for individual
Jews. Mark describes the same theme in the parable of the wicked tenants. The present
hierarchy had decided to try to keep the vineyard, i.e. Israel, the people of God, for
themselves, but it was now to be given to others. Their rejection of Jesus means that their
right of heirs to vineyard would be now lost, and they would be excluded as the tenants of
the vineyard as well. Those who rejected the heaven-sent messengers would find the
kingdom of God taken away from them and apportioned elsewhere; but the stone which
had been rejected would become the head of the corner (12:9-12). In the parable Mark
warns about the destruction of the religious leaders who rejected Jesus, but not the Jewish
race.

The same theme appears in other parabolic settings within the two other Synoptic

746Jesus’ blame, however, is not limited to the Pharisees and scribes, but those who are close to him
are also blamed (6:52; 8:17-18; 16:14; cf. 3:33-34; 6:4), when they act in the same ways.
748Craig A. Evans, “Jesus’ Action in the Temple: Cleansing or Portent of Destruction?,” *CBQ* 51
(1989), 240, 245. N. T. Wright, *Jesus*, 323, who stands on the opposite side, argues that “Israel’s regular
stock of imagery, used traditionally to assert that when her god acted she, Israel, would be vindicated while
the pagan nations received their just deserts, is here reused by the prophet from Nazareth to say: when
Israel’s god acts, it will be upon Israel herself that the judgment will fall.”
gospels. Those who refused the invitation would be like murderers who killed the
messengers sent to them with invitations to a wedding feast: the king would send his
troops and deal severely with them (Mt. 22:7). At the banquet, those who insisted on the
best seats would be humiliated; those who refused the invitation would be replaced with
others; those who were not ready, or worthy, would be excluded (Mt. 22:1-14; 25:1-13; cf.
Mk. 13:35-7; Lk. 12:35-6; 13:24-30; 14:7-11, 5-24). When the king came to his people,
those who failed to do his bidding would incur judgment (Mt. 25:14-30/Lk. 19:11-27).

Jesus’ warning of judgment in the parable of the vineyard is primarily toward
Israel and its leaders, because the vineyard symbolizes Israel as the OT background,
Isaiah 5:1-7, of this story proves; “The vineyard of the Lord Almighty is the house of
Israel . . .” (Isa. 5:7a). The tenant farmers are the leaders of Israel, who had made an
agreement with the Lord (landowner) to share the fruit at the harvest time (Mt. 21:41c),
but now reject him. Thus the general warning of the judgment in the parable is toward
Israel including the religious leaders and any of Israel who agree with the leaders and
reject Jesus. In 12:12b the religious leaders who reject Jesus knew that Jesus had spoken
the parable against themselves. It is clear that Jesus warns of the judgment on the religious
leaders who are merely representatives of the people. Mark describes the wicked

---

749 Taylor, Mark, 472. Some scholars argue that the warning of the judgment is towards the tenants who are Jewish leaders. See Snodgrass, The Parable, 77.

750 The terms ‘vine’ and ‘vineyard’ at times appear to refer to the nation as an entity (Jer. 2:21; Hosea 10:1). The basic image, however, is to the people as the possession of God, and often this is limited to the remnant (Psalm 80:9-24; II Kings 19:30; Isaiah 3:14; 27:2 f.; 37:31; Jer. 6:9; Hosea 14:14:6-9);” Snodgrass, The Parable, 75.

tenants as official Judea. Therefore, the rejection of the religious leaders against Jesus is the rejection of Israel against Jesus. Thus Jesus’ warning to them is the warning to Israel.

There are passages that castigate the people (e.g., 7:6, 14, 17; 11:15-18), but there are also texts where Jesus limited his attack to the religious leaders (e.g., 7:8-9; 8:12, 13, 16; 12:38-40). If Mark wanted to direct the parable of the wicked tenants against the Jewish people, why did he write to contrast the crowd with the tenant farmers by saying that the religious authorities knew that Jesus spoke about them but could not seize him for fear of the people (12:12b; cf. 11:32; 12:27f; 14:2)? For Mark, therefore, Jewish religious leaders are simply people who lived in the contemporary time with Jesus in the first-century, rejected Jesus, and like Gentiles needed to find final salvation in Jesus. In the context of the warning of judgment to Israel, Mark instructs by example with the tenants (special people, individual status) the Marcan readers that whoever rejects Jesus will be judged.

Gundry interprets the parable of the wicked tenants in connection with leadership (the Sanhedrin):

The vineyard represents Israel all the way through; only the leadership shift. Against a limitation to leaders even in the first part of the parable, Carlston objects that in the OT all the people, not just a few leaders, maltreated the prophets and that nothing in the parable suggests such a limitation. But since the borrowing from Isaiah 5 suggests that the vineyard represents the Jewish people, the importation of tenant farmers does suggest that they represent only leaders of the Jewish people. And though in the OT and Jewish tradition all the people often rejected the message of the prophets, it was their leaders who maltreated them.752

The judgment thus is clear: “those who have rejected God’s messengers will themselves be rejected; others will inherit the promises.” Even though the religious leaders who reject Jesus are judged, others who are not following Jesus will be subject to judgment as the leaders are of the covenant of Israel. The Israel over which Jesus reigns as the highest King is not changed. Therefore, Jesus’ authority is declared in response to the scribes (2:1-12), is restated (2:23-28), is questioned by the Pharisees (8:11-13), and finally is questioned by the chief priests, elders, and scribes (11:27-33). The Jewish authorities’ failure to recognize Jesus’ authority caused them to be warned of the judgment. Only in this sense is Israel judged: as a people that follows false shepherds, as a people that does not follow Jesus. From the parable of the wicked tenants Jesus clearly implies that the Jewish leaders as representative of Israel have rejected God’s final messenger and that disaster will ensue. The sacred trust of the chosen people will be transferred to the new Israel of God (12:9b), who shares the fruit with the Lord (Mt. 21:41c).

4. Warnings of the destruction of the Temple

In Mark’s narrative Jesus also engenders and encounters conflict over the Temple. Prefigured in the cursing of the fig tree (11:11-14) and expressed in the parable of the tenant farmers (12:1-12), the destruction of the Temple (13:1-3) is predicted by Jesus. “This disturbing prophecy must be understood in the context of Jesus’ teaching concerning

---

753 Hooker, Mark, 274.
754 Guelich, “Anti-Semitism,” 100.
755 Lane, Mark, 419.
the Temple on an earlier occasion. It actually forms the expected sequel to Ch. 11:17.

There, in a pronouncement of judgment upon the misuse of the Temple, Jesus cited Jer. 7:11

His actions there (11:15-17), his sayings about the destruction of the Temple (13:2), and the rending of the Temple curtain (15:38) stand out. These references to the Temple stand in the light of the Temple scene in 11:15-17. Many scholars have argued that 11:15-17 is the so-called cleansing of the Temple. This episode is qualified in Mark by the surrounding story of the fig tree (11:12-14, 20-22) and the mixed citation of 11:17 that is drawn from Isa. 56:7 and Jer. 7:11. Jesus’ action (11:15-16) and the OT passages (Isa. 56:7; Jer. 7:11) clearly represent a statement of divine judgment against the Temple-like the fig tree that had failed to bring forth figs. The judgment of the Temple by destruction, implied in Jesus’ action, is caused by its failure to be God’s “house of prayer for all nations” as illustrated by Jesus’ rejection of the Temple establishment.

The Temple, under the Jewish leaders, in particular the chief priests (i.e. Sadducees), stands now under God’s judgment through Jesus’ prophecy (11:17c; cf. 11:12-

---

756 Ibid., 452.
758 In Isaiah 56:1-8, there refers the salvation of the Gentiles, especially vv. 3, 6, 7, “Let no foreigner who has bound himself to the Lord say, ‘The Lord will surely exclude me from his people.’ And let not any eunuch complain, ‘I am only a dry tree’ ” (v. 3). “And foreigners who bind themselves to the Lord to serve him, to love the name of the Lord, and to worship him, all who keep the Sabbath without desecrating it and who hold fast to my covenant-these I will bring to my holy mountain and give them joy in my house of prayer. Their burnt offering and sacrifices will be accepted on my altar; for my house will be called a house of prayer for all nations” (vv. 6-7).
14, 20). This judgment motif becomes explicit in Jesus’ statement in 13:2. Gaston combines 13:2 with 14:58 and 15:29 and considers that Jesus did predict the destruction of the temple. Even Jesus saw his words of judgment as ultimately leading to the actual destruction of the Temple (when Jerusalem was razed by the legions of Rome in A.D. 70).

The rending of the Temple curtain (15:38) could hardly be equated with the actual physical destruction of the Temple. For Mark the rending of the curtain at the time of Jesus’ death is a public sign that the rejection of the Messiah by the leaders of the people discloses a failure in sensitivity to the divine purpose. In Mark’s intent the centurion’s confession that surely Jesus is the Son of God (15:39) emphasizes that it was Jesus who was rejected by the religious leaders is the true Messiah.

With the rhetorical question; “My house will be called a house of prayer for all nations?” (11:17, NIV), “Jesus’ proclamation can be heard by the reader not only as an expression of God’s intention of what the temple should be but also as a future promise for a ‘temple’ that can truly be a place of genuine prayer to God for all human beings.” The phrase, πᾶσιν τοῖς ἔθεσιν (all nations), hints at the ultimate outcome: though this temple will be destroyed, another temple would be raised (cf. 14:58; 15:38f.) for his people Israel.

---

760 Lane, Mark, 452-3; Taylor, Mark, argues that in prophesying the destruction of the Temple Jesus stands in line with the prophets, 501; Wright, Jesus, says that Mark 13:2 is the necessary and predictable focal point of Jesus’ whole prophetic ministry, 344.

761 Lloyd Gaston, No Stone on Another: Studies in the Significance of the Fall of Jerusalem in the Synoptic Gospels NovT Suppl. 23 (1970), 12 f., 65, 244, 424 f. He proposes that the prophecy of destruction is found in its original form in Luke 19:44, where it refers to the destruction of Jerusalem.

762 Guelich, “Anti-Semitism,” 93, argues that Mark does provide a link between the Temple scene and Jesus’ death for the reader by nothing that the curtain of the Temple was rent (15:38), at the time of Jesus’ death.

763 Ibid.

764 Lane, Mark, 475.

765 Heil, Mark, 227.
and for all nations. Thus Jesus’ powerful prediction of the utter destruction of the magnificent temple of Jerusalem not only demonstrates that God’s salvation is for all people of the world, but warns the opponents who reject Jesus that they will be judged in the eschatological scene.

5. Summary

Mark’s narrative has described the rejection of Jesus by the Jewish leaders and by extension the Jewish people in the first-century in Palestine. It is devised in three senses. First, the rejection of Jesus demonstrates not only the rejection of the Messiah, the Son of God as the OT citation (Ps. 118:22) in Mark 12:10-11 indicates, but it also brings the judgment that Jesus announced as a prophet. Second, even though the target of the prophetic warning is all the people of Israel, in particular it is the religious leaders who rejected Jesus in the historical context. Third, the warning of the destruction of the Temple prompted by the rejection presents the religious authorities as representatives of the people who have mismanaged the vineyard. In other words Israel will be led under the direction of other (Jewish and Gentile) leadership. Thus, Mark warns with rejection language that Israel must respond to the eschatological message of Jesus, the Messiah.

766 In rabbinic literature the rejected stone Ps. 118:22 was understood with reference to Abraham, David or the Messiah; Lane, Mark, 420.
B. The Kingdom and Israel

In the previous section, the eschatological message, we have concentrated on the issue of the prophetic judgment against the religious leaders who rejected Jesus as the Messiah, the Son of God. In this section our focus will be to study the rejection language used against Israel, the vineyard (12:1-12). In other words, if Jesus’ message represents that God’s Kingdom plan is for those who obey Jesus, the Messiah, how will the Kingdom plan advance as a consequence of this rejection of Jesus by his own people?

1. The New Covenant Family

Mark emphasizes the rejection of Jesus by his own family throughout the Gospel of Mark (3:21, 31-35; 6:1-6; 10:28-31). In the story of the rejection at Nazareth (6:1-6), Jesus said, “Only in his hometown, among his relatives and in his own house is a prophet without honor” (6:4). Mark uses the terms συγγενεύος (relative) and οἶκος (house), and intends to anticipate Jesus’ ultimate rejection by Israel. Mark, however, does mention some limited response, because in 6:5 “Jesus laid his hands upon a few sick people and healed them.” The term, ὀλίγοι (few), in 6:5 links them to the new family who are true believers, if Jesus’ miracles work with their faith for redemption. In the

---

767 There are numerous parallels. See Luke 4:24; John 4:44; the Gospel of Thomas 31; and the Oxyrhynchus papyri 1:5.
768 None of the other sayings about the “prophet” contains any mention of συγγενεύος (relative); Guelich, Mark, 311. Lk. 4:24 and Jn. 4:44 only use πατρίδι (country). Mt. 13:57 uses οἶκος and πατρίδι, but still does not use συγγενεύος (relative).
769 Guelich, Mark, 311; Lane, Mark, 203.
770 Hendriksen, Mark, 224.
771 Guelich, Mark, 311; Hendriksen, Mark, 224-225; Hooker, Mark, 154.
family story Jesus answers the rhetorical question, “who is my mother and [who are] my brothers?” by starting that “whoever does God’s will is my brother and sister and mother” (3:31-35; 10:28-31; cf. 3:20-21). Jesus suggests a new model of his own family and proposes a new definition of God’s family. Kee uses the term, “the eschatological family”\textsuperscript{772} and explains it:

The corollary of the new family identity is ruptured with the actual family, as the narrative of the coming of Jesus’ mother and brothers to take him away clearly implies (3:31f.). Mark is explicit that the scene occurs at the home of Jesus (3:20) and his family (3:21). The pattern of a break with family that was to characterize the disciples was set by Jesus himself, though the result was to join them in a new group identity rather than to cut them loose as isolated individuals. The rewards of life in the new community are set out in hyperbolic form in 10:30—one hundred times as many houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands—to show that the deprivations suffered by those who devote themselves to the gospel, and are thus uprooted, will be more than made up for by the fellowship and fulfillment provided in the new community.\textsuperscript{773}

Mark describes God’s new family that consists of those who do the will of God (3:35) and give up their possessions now in order to receive a reward later (10:29-31). Rejected by his own relatives and family, Jesus is nevertheless accepted by a nucleus of those who are obedient to God and prepared for the coming of the Kingdom. Isa. 56:1-8, the OT background of 11:17, which describes God’s people Israel (the new covenant family), explains that the family includes all people who keep God’s covenant. The parallel saying to Mark 3:35 into the Gospel of Thomas 99 makes the link, “Those here who do the will of my Father are my brothers and my mother; these are they who will enter the kingdom

\textsuperscript{772}Kee, Community of the New Age, 109.
\textsuperscript{773}Ibid., 100-110.
of my Father.” Through Jesus’ rejection of his own family, he emphasizes that God’s true family, Israel, is composed of those who believe and obey him as the Son of God and the Messiah. However anyone who rejects him as the son of God, even members of his own family, is excluded from the new family.

2. All the Nations for Israel

It is clear that in 12:1-12 the Sanhedrin has rejected God’s final messenger and that disaster will ensue. The current Jewish religious leaders have been disqualified as the vineyard tenants and their place will be taken by the others (v. 9). Most scholars agree that there is the shifting of the vineyard from the Jewish leaders to others. There are, however, as least two different ways to interpret the term, ἄλλοι (the others). Some scholars understand ἄλλοι as the Gentiles who are included in salvation, but others argue that the term includes all people not only the Gentiles, but also Jewish people for a new community. To understand Mark’s idea from this term we need to go to the background of the parable of the wicked tenants based upon Isa. 5:1-7, which indicates that the “man”

---


775 Taylor, Mark, 472; Gundry, Mark, argues “the ‘others’ to whom the owner will give the vineyard cannot represent Gentile Christians (and so need not reflect the later influx of Gentiles into the church); for just as the tenant farmers represented leadership (the Sanhedrin), so also must the others represent leadership (Jesus and the Twelve; cf. the foregoing comments). For the same reason, the others do not represent the whole church, Jewish as well as Gentile Christians. Since Gentiles do not come into the picture, “to others” does not give evidence that Mark inserts this parable to interpret the Sanhedrin’s rejection of Jesus in the light of the Gentile mission,” 688-89; Kee, Community of the New Age, 133; Jack Dean Kingsbury, Conflict in Mark: Jesus, Authorities, Disciples (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1989), 5; McKnight, A Loyal Critic, 76; S. McKnight, “Gentiles,” in Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospel, 261.
who planted the vineyard represents God, and that the “vineyard” represents the “house of
Israel” (Isa. 5:7; Ps. 80:9-10, 15-16; Jer. 2:21; Hos. 10:1). In this way Mark 12:1-12 is
interpreted allegorically: the “many” servants refer to the many prophets of Israel, the
“dear son” is a direct reference to Jesus as the Son of God, and the “tenant farmers” would
then represent the Jewish leaders responsible for guiding and enabling the chosen people
of Israel to fulfill their purpose by “producing the fruit” God expects (12:1). However,
with the rhetorical question and the answer in 12:9 Jesus warns of their failure in their
responsibility by killing not only the prophets, but also his beloved Son. Consequently the
vineyard will be given to the others, the community of God’s people. Thus the parable
recorded in Mark 12:1-12 implies the destruction of any of Israel and the religious
establishment who reject Jesus, if not of the temple itself.

Mark also quotes Ps 118:22 which talks about a new foundation which is laid. He
may imply a new temple centered upon Jesus but not made with hands (14:57-58) as
opposed to the old one (Jewish establishment). This parable not only follows immediately
after the authority question (11:27-33), but precedes the prediction of the destruction of
the temple (13:2). The word, “the others,” therefore, can be interpreted as the new
covenant people. At this point we need to answer the question: who are the new covenant
people, the Gentiles who believe in Jesus or both Jewish people and the Gentiles who
believe in Jesus?

776 Heil, Mark, 235.
777 Ibid.
778 Ibid. “. . . the parable is based upon Isa. 5:1-7, a passage which threatens Israel, particularly the
‘inhabitants of Jerusalem’ (v. 3), with destruction.”
The Marcan author gives the answers through the Gospel of Mark in his citations of the Old Testament. When Jesus clears the Temple, he says “My house will be called a house of prayer for all nations” (11:17). The background of the verse is Isaiah 56:1-8, a passage which tells of the salvation of all people: “And foreigners who bind themselves to the Lord to serve him to love the name of the Lord, and to worship him, all who keep the Sabbath without desecrating it and who hold fast to my covenant—these I will bring to my holy mountain and give them joy in my house of prayer... my house will be called a house of prayer for all nations” (v. 6-7). The MT and its variants show the same idea about the salvation of all nations as Isaiah 56:1-8 does. MT of the variant in v. 6:

And the sons of foreigners who bind themselves to the Lord to serve him to love the name of the Lord. And to worship him all who keep the Sabbath without desecrating it and who hold fast to my covenant.

The MT and its variants to the wicked tenants’ story do not limit God’s people by any particular group or race. Rather they imply that the people of the covenant involve (the sons of foreigners), all nations. Kee explains the fact:

The fact that a central portion of this passage is directly quoted in Mark 11:17, in the setting of Jesus’ authoritative action in cleansing the Temple of the commercial aspects of the cultic system (11:15f.), shows that for Mark the inclusiveness of the community as exemplified by free access to the sanctuary of God is a pivotal concern. But throughout Mark, the point is made in both subtle and overt ways that there are no social or ethnic prerequisites for
admission to the covenant community: it is indeed the ‘outcasts of Israel’ who are welcomed into membership.779

In the immediate saying of Jesus after the parable, Jesus prophesies the destruction of the Temple, “Not one stone here will be left on another; everyone will be thrown down” (13:2). Lane argues that this should be understood in the context of Jesus’ teaching concerning the Temple on an earlier occasion (11:17),780 which foretells the new covenant people from all nations and Jesus as the highest authority who rules them.781 The proclamation of the Gospel to all nations for the formation of a new covenant people is the core theme in Mark 13 in God’s eschatological purpose: “And the gospel must first be preached to all nations” (v. 10); “And he will send his angels and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the end of the heavens” (v. 27); and “What I say to you, I say to everyone . . .” (v. 37).

Regarding a new covenant community after the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple, Flückiger argues that the original form of Jesus’ words in Mark 13:2 contains the double prophecy of the destruction of the Temple and the building of a new sanctuary.782

“On this understanding, the announcement of the destruction of the Temple is not simply a

779Kee, *Community of the New Age*, 115.
780Lane, *Mark*, 450.
781Ibid., 453. He explains this idea in connecting to the OT passages: “Jesus’ word of judgment marks a continuation of ancient prophecy, along the lines of Micah 3:12 and Jer. 26:18. As the Lord of the Temple, Jesus announces its destruction in close connection with the establishment of his sovereign dignity (see on 11:11-21). Mal. 3:1-6 had described the coming of the Lord to his Temple in the context of judgment for the refining and purifying of his people.”
judgment oracle but is at the same time a prophecy of messianic redemption.”

The judgment of the Temple is a continuation of ancient prophecy, along the lines of Micah 3:12 and Jer. 26:18. As the Lord of the Temple, Jesus predicts its destruction in close connection with the establishment of his sovereign dignity (see on Ch. 11:11-21).

Therefore, Jesus’ prophecy of the destruction of the Temple in 13:2 refers to the destruction of the Temple, and at the same time states that a new Temple for the covenant people who are from all nations will be raised up.

Another passage which may concern the salvation of all the nations is Mark 14:27, where Jesus quotes part of Zech. 13:7-9:

7 “Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, against a man who is close to me!” declares the Lord Almighty. “Strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered, and I will turn my hand against the little ones.
8 In the whole land,” declares the Lord, “two-thirds will be struck down and perish; yet one-third will be left in it.
9 This third I will bring into the fire; I will refine them like silver and test them like gold. They will call on my name and I will answer them; I will say, ‘They are my people,’ and they will say, ‘The Lord is our God’.”

The prophet declares that the judgment will fall on the nation because of its apostasy (Zech.13:1-4). The shepherd who stands close to God (Zech. 13:7) will be struck down for the whole land, and only a remnant of them [from the whole land] will be left in the

---

783 Lane, Mark, n. 21, 452.
785 Ibid., n. 18 and 21, 450-52. He cites D W it Cyprian: “there will not be left stone upon stone that will not be thrown down, and in three days another will be erected without hand.”
786 The translation is NIV.
nation (Zech. 13:8). The survivors from all the nations will join in the nation that will be under God’s leadership (Zech. 14:16 ff.). They will be the new covenant people (Zech. 13:9). In somewhat altered form, all those features are expounded by Jesus in Mark.\textsuperscript{787}

In a general way, then, the destruction (13:2) and renewal (14:58; cf. Jn. 2:19) of the Temple associated with the inauguration of a new era includes all nations within the new covenant family.\textsuperscript{788} Making sure of Mark’s intent for all nations from the OT background, we discover that “the gospel must first be preached to all nations” (13:10) and “he [God] will send his angels and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of the heavens” (10:27).

C. The Message for Marcan Readers

As we have explored Mark’s highlights of the issue about Jesus’ rejection, the two passages, 6:1-6 where Jesus’ neighbors and family reject him and 12:1-12 where Israel rejects Jesus with the OT quotation, expand the theme. So I will consider the message for Marcan readers from these basic passages. The two passages instruct readers that the best way they can follow Jesus as Israel is in the way of faith, and they teach two perspectives: there is grace for those in the nation of Israel who walk in faith, and there is also at the same time judgment for those who reject the way of faith.

\textsuperscript{787}Kee, \textit{Community of the New Age}, 110-11.
1. To Follow Jesus in the Way of Faith

In Mark’s gospel those who “got it wrong” (which means most of the people in the story) did so because they based their decision on their false standards of judgment by which they estimate greatness. Mark as a whole shows this same false criterion for judgment in almost everyone whom Jesus meets. The people of Jesus’ own area reach conclusions based only on his home and family background (6:3). His family tests him by ordinary standards of behavior and fear for his sanity (3:21). The disciples are well-founded enough to follow him when they are called (3:13-14), but not enough to perceive the meaning of his teaching (4:10), nor to believe that to be with him was to be safe (4:38). Even the demons who know who he is are not able to adopt the proper response. The desperate who are healed come nearest to understanding but do not yet grasp all that he is. The essential elements which caused, especially the religious leaders, to reject Jesus, originated from wrong knowledge, and expectations about tradition and law.

The religious leaders are right to be led by their knowledge of traditions and laws from their past, but wrong to interpret it too narrowly and to be unwilling to open the new things God is doing among them now. Jesus’ family is right in their concern for his health and reputation, but wrong to have forgotten the likely implications of his actions and their attendant circumstances. The disciples are right to be bold enough to follow him, but

---

wrong not to see that he was the secret to everything God is doing to establish his kingdom. The evil spirits are right to perceive who Jesus is, but wrong not to bow down and worship. The real pathos of the story in 6:1-6 is expressed in the words which follow the proverb, “He could there do no mighty work” in his hometown for his friends, relatives, and family (6:5a). Jesus’ own experience of rejection by his hometown defines the new covenant family: “Whoever does God’s will is my brother and sister and mother” (3:35). “In the new family which Jesus calls into being there is demanded the radical obedience to God which he demonstrated in his submission to the Father and which the disciples manifested in their response to his call.”

Finally all of them who reject Jesus as the Messiah are taken far from Jesus’ family, the new covenant family (3:35), and meet disaster (12:9a). Jesus says also “He will give the vineyard to the others” (12:9b). The wrong knowledge and judgment of the opponents against Jesus make them blind to faith (4:10-12). Their unbelief cause them to remain outside the new family Jesus is creating.

2. God’s Grace and Judgment

In Jesus’ story, the vineyard (12:1-12) like the vineyard in the OT (Isa. 5:1-7) is the symbol for Israel; the tenants are the rulers to whom God has entrusted the spiritual care of his people; the servants are the prophets, even including John the Baptist, whom the rulers

---

793 Lane, Mark, 148. Guelich, Mark, 184, interprets 3:35 as a model for discipleship that Mark uses this material “homiletically” to encourage his readers who find themselves victims of a similar family situation as Jesus, since “his family came to believe in him, so may theirs.” Cf. Schweizer, Mark, 88.
of Israel had rejected and wounded or killed; the son and heir is Jesus, whom the chief
priests and elders and scribes are now conspiring to slay; but judgment is sure to come;
these faithless keepers of the vineyard are to be destroyed. Thus solemnly does Jesus
arraign his enemies. He clearly predicts his death at their hands, but closes his parable
with a prophecy of his certain triumph. So death will not mean defeat, rather he is to be
Victor and King as the quotation of Ps. 118:22, 23 declares, “The stone the builders
rejected has become the capstone” (12:10). Thus Jesus reveals his divine foreknowledge
and claims to be superior to all prophets as the very Son of God. He declares also the
solemn responsibility of the religious leaders (12:2) and warns them of the dread
consequences of rejecting his claims (12:9). “The ‘tenant farmers’ would then represent
the Jewish leaders responsible for guiding and enabling the chosen people of Israel to
fulfill their purpose by ‘producing the fruit’ God expects (12:2; cf. Mt. 21:41).”794 In the
parable Jesus warns that the owner of the vineyard (God) will come and put the tenants to
death, if they do not fulfill their responsibility.

The rejection of Jesus by his opponents, especially, the religious leaders, and their
refusal to repent and accept Jesus as the Son of God warns the readers of Mark to respond
positively to Jesus by obedience and faith, because he or she can be within the “others”
entrusted with the “vineyard” of God’s people (12:9). They should fulfill their
responsibility, achieving the purpose of God. The readers are invited to marvel and rejoice
in God’s triumphant establishment in Jesus, but at the same time their life should respond

794Heil, Mark, 235.
in faith to the discipleship Jesus wants from them.

Warning his readers with the story of unbelief (6:6) and irresponsibility (12:1-8) of the Jewish people, Mark, however, gives hope to his readers with the terms, “few” (6:5b) and “others” (12:9b). The salvation of all the nations, including the Jewish people, is Mark’s goal (13:10, 27).
Chapter VI. Conclusion

A. The Rejection Motif in the Gospel as a Whole

This comprehensive rhetorical analysis of the Gospel of Mark reveals that the rejection motif in Mark is not only designed by the variety of stylistic patterns through the Gospel, but also proved by the social and cultural context of first century Palestine. The argument of the motif is unified around one overall goal that Mark places Jesus as the true Messiah, the Son of Man, who will establish a new community for God’s people.

Consequently the conflict between Jesus and the contemporary religious leaders, who have already governed Israel, is predestined. The unity of the argument of the motif is detected and identified by the four textures in this research; the inner texture in the Chapter II, the intertexture in the Chapter III, the social and cultural texture in the Chapter IV, and the ideological texture in the Chapter V.

In the analysis of the internal structure of argumentation in Chapter II, we see how the components of conflict stories are mutually related for the motif. The repeated references to the opponents, the major vocabularies of rejection, and the conflict issues serve to bind the Marcan text as a whole and show the coherence of the rejection motif throughout the Gospel of Mark. Mark employs the usage of the rejection language carefully to make coherence of the conflict stories through the Gospel, and logically to develop the stories from foreshadowing Jesus’ death at the early stage to its climax in the
passion narrative for his death. The beginning term of rejection παραδίσωμεν foreshadows Jesus’ death (1:14), and is used for its climax in Jesus’ death (14:42, 44). The first word used by the opponents βλασφημήσαμεν (2:7) is used to introduce the conflict between the opponents and Jesus, and employed to bring the climax of the conflict at Jesus’ death (14:64). The reference to πωρόω used for the hardness of heart of the opponents as hostility toward Jesus appears in the five conflict stories (2:1-3:6), and gradually escalates and intensifies to a climax in the Passion Narrative (10:5). The word αποκτεῖνω describes violent death and execution is referred to the plot that the opponents conspired to destroy Jesus (3:6). The term in 14:1 is used for a final stage for the plot. The four language devices cohere of conflict stories from the beginning to the end of the Marcan narrative, and create the unity of the Gospel text as a whole.

The seven Jewish leadership groups are involved in the conflict stories as Jesus’ opponents. Each group meets conflict with Jesus on different issues according to their own position in the Jewish society. The three groups (the scribes, the Pharisees, the Herodians) are associated to oppose Jesus’ authority in the Galilean context (1:1-9:50). In league with the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders, they are included for the Temple conflict. The three opponent groups, the scribes, the Pharisees, and the Sadducees, are involved with the issue of the Law.⁷⁹⁵ However, all the issues debated between Jesus and his opponents are condensed into Jesus’ authority.

⁷⁹⁵Cook, *Mark’s Treatment of the Jewish Leaders*, argues that Mark utilizes a controversy collection (Mark 7:ff; 2:15-17, 18-22, 23-28; 3:1-5; 12:13-17, 34b; 3:6) concerning Pharisees and Herodians as opponents, dealing mainly with the Law.
Mark draws his ideas using intertexture of data for the three issues dealt within the Marcan Gospel for the presentation of conflict. The characters (e.g., Messiah, the Suffering servant, the Most High) in the Old Testament and the intertestamental data symbolize Jesus in the Marcan Gospel. The opponents of the characters represent the close friends (cf. Ps. 38:11; 41:9; 55:12-14) and the Jews’ groups (cf. Ps. So. 2:2-3; 4:7; J.W. 27 §134; Ag. Ap.2.1 §1-3). Jesus’ opponents in the Marcan Gospel are the Jewish religious leaders who represent the Jews. They are described as false prophets (cf. Ps. 38:11; 41:9; 55:12-14) and the wicked (Isa. 41:29; Jer. 14:14; 1 Enoch 45:5-6) in the data of intertexture literature. Mark changes this idea into πόρος υἱς and σκληροκαρδία (a hardness of heart) for his context (Mk. 3:5; 6:52; 8:17; 10:5).

The motivation behind the opponents’ attacks against the characters in the intertexture data is protection of the kinship of Israel, which is preserved through the Law and Temple. These ideas significantly influence Mark’s writing in his story. The Marcan writing style’s resemblance to the method of the intertexture data indicates that Mark closely follows traditional material.

However, Mark formats this material to insist in the conflict story that Jesus Christ as Son of God (Mk. 1:1) has the authentic authority over the society and culture based on the Old Testament. Thus Mark portrays Jesus as one who reforms the Jewish society under the contemporary religious authorities, who are disqualified to interpret the Laws and to lead the Temple. Through Jesus’ sayings and acts Mark warns his readers and audiences
that Judgment will be upon those whose heart are hardness. He also gives them hope with
the terms, “few” (6:5b) and “others” (12:9b). A socio rhetorical approach displays the goal
of Mark that all nations including the Jewish people can come to the new community that
Jesus reigns over.

B. Suggestions for Further Research

Even though the idea about the new covenant family, God’s people, in this thesis is
not limited to physical Israel (by race), we have two questions raised by this study for
further research about Israel. First, we need a clearer answer to the question, “Does the
Marcan author reflect an anti-Judaic bias and evoke anti-Judaism in the readers of Mark?”
because the major characters in the narrative who are involved in the rejection are Jewish
people, e.g., Jesus’ family, the disciples, the Jewish leaders, the crowds. In other words are
the Jewish people removed from God’s people as several scholars argue?796 If so, there
arises another question about Israel.

How can the restoration to blessings promised to Israel in the OT be understood on the basis
of Mark’s theological position? Predicting the coming destruction and exile, Jeremiah
prophesies: “‘For behold, days are coming,’ declares the Lord, ‘when I will restore the
fortunes of My people Israel and Judah.’ The Lord says, ‘I will also bring them back to the
land that I gave to their forefathers, and they shall possess it.’ ” Ezekiel also explains the
destruction and exile of the nation as a judgment in keeping with the terms of the Mosaic
covenant, but like Jeremiah he predicts a future restoration to blessings promised to the
patriarchs (Ezek. 20:1-44; 36:17-38).797

796 Schweizer, Mark, 241; John Meier, The Vision of Matthew (New York: Paulist Press, 1979), 150;
Scott, Hear Then the Parable, 241-42; Hooker, Mark, 276; Wolfgang Trilling, Das Wahre Israel (Munich:
Kösel-Verlag, 1964), 219; Crossan, “The Parable of the Wicked Husbandmen,” 454; C. E. Carlston, The
797 Craig A. Blaising & Darrell L. Bock, Progressive Dispensationalism (Wheaton: A Bridgeponit
Book, 1993), 145.
Again, if the Jewish people or Jewish religious leaders who reject Jesus will experience judgment, what then is the future for Israel based on the OT according to Mark?

The perspective of theodicy is one of the interesting elements in Mark’s presentation. In Jesus’ prophecies about his suffering and rejection by the elders, chief priests and the scribes (8:8:31; 9:14; 10:33; cf. 14: 21; 10:45; 14:27), the reality of rejection fits into God’s purpose (14:36, 49). Jesus’ prophecies are exactly fulfilled in 14:61-65. In other words, according to Mark it seems to be God’s plan that the religious leaders rejected Jesus. Even though they use rejection language against Jesus and display hostile action, the reality of rejection is not based on their own will, but God’s. Thus one could see a relationship between Mark’s presentation and that of Paul’s in Romans 9-11, as both wrestle with this question. Where and how we deal with this issue is a more foundational question than the issue of this thesis for the study of the rejection theme in the Gospel.

There is another implication that is important in the rejection motif for modern Christian life. In focusing on the hardened heart one should not neglect the message of warning of judgment which, indeed, is the message of much of Mark’s gospel and the Bible as well. The stubborn refusal of Jesus’ family, his disciples, and the religious leaders to repent and accept Jesus as the true Messiah, the Son of God warns today’s Christian to

---

798E.g., God’s blessing (Isa. 49:9-10; Jer. 32:42-44; Ezek. 34:26-29; 36:8-9, 29-36); the promise of the land (Isa. 49:8; 54:3; Jer. 32:37, 41; Ezek. 11:17; 34:27; 36:24, 28; 37:12, 14, 21, 25-26); blessing for descendants (Jer. 31:27; Ezek. 36:10-12, 37-38; 37:26); the promise to be great nation (Jer. 31:36); the promise that Israel will be God’s people and God will be their God (Jer. 31:33; 32:38; Ezek. 11:20; 34:24, 30-31; 36:28; 37:23, 27).

2 7 9
obey and to walk by faith in Jesus as the one authorized by God. The privilege of being Israel, the new covenant family belongs only to those who obey the Word of God and produce its fruit (12:1-12).


Liew, Tat-Siong B. *Politics of Parousia: Reading Mark Inter (con) textually*. BIS 42. Leiden/ Boston/ Köln: Brill, 1999.


______. “Picking Up the Fragments: From Crossan’s Analysis to Rhetorical Analysis.” *FFF* 1.2 (1985), 31-64.

______. “Pragmatic Relations as a Criterion for Authentic Sayings.” *FFF* 1.3 (1985), 35-63;


_____. “The Gospel of Mark as Narrative Christology.” *Semeia* 16 (1979), 57-89.


Vorster, W. S. “Intertextuality and Redaktionsgeschichte.” In *Intertextuality in Biblical Writing: Essays in honour of Bas van Iersel*, ed. Sipke Draisma,

_____.”The Function of the Use of the Old Testament in Mark.”


Walker, W. L. “Fool; Foolish(ly); Folly.” In The International Standard Bible


_____ Roots of Wisdom: The Oldest proverbs of Israel and Other

Wink, W. John the Baptist in the Gospel Tradition. Cambridge: Cambridge

Wise, M. O. “Temple.” In Dictionary of Jesus and The Gospel, eds. Joel B. Green,


Yates, G. E. “Jeremiah’s Message of Judgment and Hope for God’s Unfaithful

Young, B. H. Jesus and His Jewish Parables: Rediscovering the Roots of Jesus’