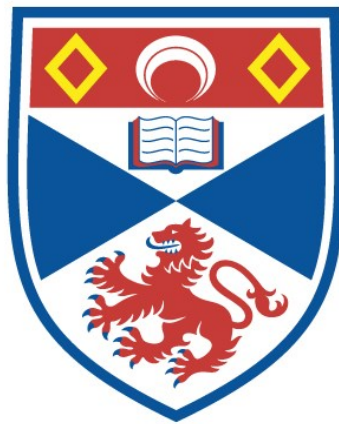


**Τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώδ εὼν in Mark 13:14;  
its historical reference and its impact in Mark 13  
and in the context of Mark's gospel**

W. A. Such

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Τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως in Mark 13:14; its historical reference and its impact in Mark 13 and in the context of Mark's gospel

by

W.A. Such in submission for the Ph.D. at the  
University of St. Andrews

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## ABSTRACT

In spite of the wealth of material on Mark 13:14 the phrase τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως has not been syntactically exegeted sufficiently in respect to chapter 13, nor its place assessed in the formation of Mark's gospel. Our study demonstrates the fundamental significance of v.14 as the syntactical focal point of vv.5-13, that content, temporal indicators and link words are shaped syntactically in vv.5-13 to peak at v.14, and that τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως is uniquely τὸ σημεῖον of v.4. A realization of this connection is the single indispensable clue unlocking eschatological notions in chapter 13. Further, by positing that v.14, coupled with vv.26-27, produces a double focus in the chapter, we demonstrate its importance for vv.15-37. The advent of τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως is the sign launching the end-time setting in motion an imminent parousia. This sign is connected with the Jerusalem temple's destruction by the Roman commander Titus in September 70 C.E. Titus is the referent in 13:14, though our contention is that originally in pre-Markan material in v.14, the reference was to the crisis in 39-41 C.E. when the emperor Gaius Caligula attempted to erect an image of himself in the temple in Jerusalem. Mark obtained material from this episode and adapted it to indicate not the deified image of a Roman emperor but an individual abominator, Titus, who was τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως. An examination of Josephus' War demonstrates that Judaeans inhabiting the region after September 70 C.E. were in a position to flee according to 13:14b. Mark's Jewish Gentile community, located in Syria or one of the Transjordanian Hellenistic cities, must brace itself for a worsening period of turmoil in the light of the operational end-time sign in the temple in Jerusalem. The task of the community is to proclaim the gospel among the nations (13:10). Their final vindication will occur with the parousia of the Son of Man.

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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

The enigmatic phrase in Mark 13:14, τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως, long a source of contention among scholars, is tantalizing on account of its coupling with "the 'most direct' Markan address of the entire gospel. In no other passage are the readers spoken to so directly -- 'Let the reader understand!'"<sup>1</sup> The intrusive injunction ὁ ἀναγινώσκων νοεῖτω breaks the developing story-form. Further, 13:14 is the most direct hint of a whole chapter which appears orientated towards Mark's audience and not the gospel's story-world.<sup>2</sup> First, the presence of the four disciples (13:3) immediately disappears and the lengthy address following appears to bypass the disciples in favour of the audience. The abundant second-person pronouns peppered throughout the discourse seem to overload the four disciples' perception and engage primarily Mark's audience, something confirmed by the direct address of v.37 (ὁ δὲ ὑμῖν λέγω πᾶσιν λέγω, γρηγορεῖτε). Second, because the discourse is aimed at the future beyond the situation

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<sup>1</sup> Willi Marxsen, Mark the Evangelist (trans.) J. Boyce, D. Juel, W. Poehlmann, with R.A. Harrisville (Nashville: Abingdon Press), 1969 p.183. Also see Ernst Haenchen, Der Weg Jesu (Berlin: Töpelmann), 1966 p.444; Michael Glazier, The Method and Message of Mark (Wilmington: Augustine Stock), 1989 p.337; Morna Hooker, "Trials and Tribulations in Mk 13" BJRL 65 (1982-83) p.89; Adela Yarbro Collins, The Beginning of the Gospel Probing of Mark in Context (Minneapolis: Fortress Press), 1992 p.86.

<sup>2</sup> See Robert M. Fowler, Let the Reader Understand Reader-Response Criticism and the Gospel of Mark (Minneapolis: Fortress Press), 1991 pp.85-86. Cf., Burton L. Mack: "Chapter 13 is critical, therefore, for the composition and intention of the gospel as a whole" A Myth of Innocence: Mark and Christian Origins (Philadelphia: Fortress Press), 1988 p.326; also Joel Marcus: "The logical place to begin a study of the Marcan *Sitz im Leben* is the eschatological prophecies in the so-called 'apocalyptic discourse' of chap. 13" "The Jewish War and the *Sitz im Leben* of Mark" JBL 111/3 (1992-1993) p.446.



of Jesus and his disciples who are unmentioned, the implied time of the discourse may well be that of Mark's audience. The notion of τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως is at the centre of that possible correspondence,<sup>3</sup> hence Mark's unprecedented textual hint for readers to correctly surmise the cryptic phrase's import. The implication may be that whoever or whatever τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως refers to may be a crucial factor for the gospel's interpretation, leading perhaps to important observations beyond the chapter, because in no other place in the gospel has Mark so directly intruded into the text. Yet the impact of that phrase has not been examined sufficiently: to whom or what does τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως refer? Does it have a historical referent? What is its syntactical place in ch.13 i.e. is it of little import or possibly the climactic point of the chapter? Does it have any eschatological significance in and beyond ch.13 influencing such matters as Mark's attitude toward the temple, the nature of imminent expectation, and the shape of Jesus' ministry in the gospel?

We shall attempt to answer these and related questions in our study and argue that τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως affects all these matters. Our position is that the Markan injunction to cognizance in 13:14 indicates that the appearance and activity of τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως is τὸ σημεῖον of 13:4, which launches the end-time triggering the parousia's

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<sup>3</sup> Seeking such a correspondence is indispensable for Markan interpretation ("The interpretative context of the original author and his readers is surely a key to the understanding of Mark and that interpretative context must be sought" W.R. Telford, "The Pre-Markan Tradition in Recent Research" in The Four Gospels 1992 Festschrift Frans Neirynck Vol 2 [eds.] F. Van Segbroeck, C. Tuckett, G. Van Belle, J. Verheyden [Leuven: University Press], 1992 p.712). It may help provide the grounding necessary to avoid a straight substituting between literary (e.g., the narrative approach of D. Rhoads and D. Michie's Mark as Story: An Introduction to the Narrative of a Gospel [Philadelphia: Fortress Press], 1982) and historical studies without a recognition of the dangers of abstraction i.e., removing "the particular setting in which a text is communicated and read" (John K. Riches, A Century of New Testament Study [Valley Forge: Trinity Press International], 1993 p.165).

nearness (13:26-27). Our contention is that Titus, the Roman commander, is τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως, something previously undemonstrated in exegesis on 13:14 and in the wider context of ch.13. Establishing our view of 13:14 will have important eschatological implications for understanding Mark's gospel. We will argue that our view places Mark firmly in the context found in Josephus, of end-time calculators fixed by Jerusalem's demise and shows that Mark is not inimical to advocating signs.

### 1.1. Justification of the Study

Our study is necessary in view of recent attempts to demonstrate that the cryptic phrase in 13:14 lacks any specific reference and so is without substantial import for interpreting either ch.13 or Mark's gospel. For example Brandenburger<sup>4</sup> so subsumes v.14 under vv.24-26, that events mentioned in v.14 constitute only a catalogue of already accomplished events waiting the start of the end-time σημεῖον (v.4) i.e. the anticipated cosmic phenomena (vv.24-25). Geddert<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Egon Brandenburger, Markus 13 und die Apokalyptik FTLANT 134 (eds.) W. Schrage and R. Smend (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht), 1984 pp.100-102.

<sup>5</sup> Timothy Geddert, Watchwords Mark 13 in the context of Markan Eschatology JSNT Supplementary Series 26 (Sheffield: JSOT), 1989, pp.206-207. For Geddert Markan perspective external to ch.13 provides the corrective to minuscule Markan agendas gleaned from ch.13. However, Geddert ignores 13:14 as a basis for ascertaining authorial intention, or at least providing a corrective or framework for understanding the type of exegesis his study undertakes ("... it is precisely the author's conscious intentions that are the primary objects of investigation when we examine a text. We would even go so far as to say that it is misleading to speak of a *text's* meaning. Writers and speakers generate meaning; texts and speeches merely convey them. We do not look *at* texts, but *through* them" p.20). By ignoring 13:14 as a possible window into authorial intention Geddert misses a prime opportunity to peer through the text.

Geddert is hard on detailed exegesis in ch.13 which becomes the interpretative key to the gospel as a whole (p.24f.). Against Geddert: (i) The problem of ascertaining authorial purpose in one chapter (ch.13), is compounded in consideration of the fifteen other chapters constituting the gospel. (ii) No other portion of the gospel is so amenable to examining authorial intent than ch.13 in view of its story-form perspective i.e. mentioning matters beyond the range of events concerning Jesus and the four disciples, but which do concern Mark's readers (cf., 13:14) and so possibly link these events to the time of Mark's

interprets ch.13 from a secret kingdom motif gleaned from beyond the chapter, discounting signs altogether, which effectively reduces 13:14 to being an element of a pattern of intentional Markan ambiguity.<sup>6</sup> For Myers, understanding that 13:14 refers to a particular individual runs "the risk of encouraging a retreat back into historicism," instead he opts for reinterpreting

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writing. (iii) The danger of positing authorial intent without a particular *Sitz im Leben* construction dulls the interpretative edge by advocating a generalization prohibiting applicability (e.g., "Our interpretation is compatible with any date prior to the fall of the temple and also with a date *immediately* after it" p.27). (iv) Geddert's concept of Mark's supposed deliberate ambiguity may produce exegetical agnosticism which can easily prevent acute exegesis e.g., the 35 differing interpretations Geddert catalogues on the meaning of the rending of the temple veil (pp.141-143). Cataloguing many interpretations certainly cautions against exegetical dogmatism but surely not to the extent of resorting to the word "mystery" (p.145) in concluding with an open-ended interpretation on the matter. Similarly, Geddert concludes that "Mark deliberately left his readers in the dark about the chronological links that are expected between the fall of the temple and the End of the age" (p.226). Thus Jerusalem's destruction means the "End would be 'imminent' after that event, but could remain so for generations" (p.254). Deliberate ambiguity applied to the end-time in Mark leads Geddert into questionable exegesis. For example G.R. Beasley-Murray Jesus and the Last Days (Peabody: Hendrickson Pub. Inc.), 1993, rightly questions Geddert's understanding of 13:32-33: "Geddert acknowledges that v.33 shows that this ignorance includes the incalculability of the time of the end -- but also of various intermediate applications of the saying, including the end of Jesus himself; accordingly the first fulfillment of Mark 13:32 occurred within a few days (in Gethsemane), the second in his own death, the third in the passion of the disciples; presumably one could continue with other unnamed fulfillments in history until the final end" (p.313). Geddert's adoption of an exegetical base for interpreting Mk 13 means no signs are found in ch.13 advocating the approaching consummation. To facilitate this view Geddert has to posit a *double* corrective by Jesus to the disciples' exclamation over the impressive temple stones (13:1) and the sign request (13:4), and while the first corrective by Jesus follows contextually (13:2), no corrective occurs at 13:5. In short, Geddert's deliberate ambiguity at 13:1-5, surmised from outside ch.13, precludes any positive response to the disciples' question at 13:4, which is at the heart of Geddert's secret kingdom exegesis on ch.13.

<sup>6</sup> "An ambiguous phrase ('the abomination that causes desolation') is used with no clear indications as to what abominates and what is made desolate; a grammatical anomaly adds to the mystery, the location is not pinpointed at all ('where it ought not to be' ὅπου οὐ δεῖ), and with the insertion, of 'let the reader understand,' the reader is shown that something is deliberately being left unspecified" Watchwords p.218.

"apocalyptic metaphor."<sup>7</sup> Beasley-Murray<sup>8</sup> posits a connection between the city's destruction (v.2) and the advent of τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως but avoids seeking a historical referent to the phrase which he considers overly speculative. For Mack,<sup>9</sup> the temple's destruction is the final catalyst ripe for Mark to reconstruct Christian origins in a manner leaving the immediate future as a vindictory hope. This position leaves 13:14 functioning as part of an unfolding "apocalypse,"<sup>10</sup> ratifying an other-worldly perspective but without substantial import, certainly not engendering an imminent parousia expectation. While Gundry<sup>11</sup> highlights Jesus as predictor and connects parousia expectation with the abomination, he severs a link between temple destruction (v.2) and revelation of τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως, instead positing that the cryptic phrase refers to a future desolation and persecution based on failure to worship the abomination. Thus 13:14 is relatively unconnected with vv.1-13 ("And despite his prediction of destruction, he says nothing more about it and never answers the question concerning the time when it will occur and the sign that it is about to do so [v 4]").<sup>12</sup>

These examples are evidence of the relative insignificance of 13:14 in Mark's gospel in recent studies, and are part of a trend to move away from an imminent parousia setting in ch.13, and to present Mark as essentially antagonistic to sign requests (so Mann, Glazier,

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<sup>7</sup> Ched Myers, Binding the Strong Man: A Political Reading of Mark's Story of Jesus (Maryknoll: Orbis Books), 1988 p.327.

<sup>8</sup> Last Days pp.416f.

<sup>9</sup> Mack, Innocence p.330.

<sup>10</sup> Mack, Innocence p.327.

<sup>11</sup> Robert H. Gundry, Mark A Commentary on His Apology for the Cross (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Pub. Co.), 1993 p.734.

<sup>12</sup> Mark p.742.

Geddert, Myers).<sup>13</sup> For example, Waetjen<sup>14</sup> posits Mark countering any notion that human catastrophes like Jerusalem's destruction signal the consummation, while Malbon<sup>15</sup> understands parousia expectation as subservient to Markan emphasis on the way, and note Barton: "There are strong indications that Mark is trying to temper an apocalyptic fervour emphasizing imminent End-expectation."<sup>16</sup>

1.1.2. Further, previous studies designating Titus as a referent in 13:14 have been found inadequate. According to S.G.F. Brandon,<sup>17</sup> Mark's gospel was written from Rome in the immediate after-math of the Flavian Triumph of 71 C.E. where Vespasian, flanked behind him by his two sons, Titus and Domitian, followed a grandiose display of the combined Roman booty from the Palestinian campaign which included works of art, masses of precious metal,

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<sup>13</sup> C.S. Mann, Mark The Anchor Bible (New York: DoubleDay), 1986 p.522; Glazier, Method pp.336f.; Geddert, Watchwords pp.218f; Myers, Strong Man.

<sup>14</sup> Herman Waetjen, A Reordering of Power: A Socio-Political Reading of Mark's Gospel (Minneapolis: Fortress Press), 1989 pp.197-201.

<sup>15</sup> Elizabeth Struthers Malbon, Narrative Space and Mythic Meaning in Mark (San Francisco: Harper and Row), 1986 p.88.

<sup>16</sup> Stephen C. Barton, Discipleship and Family Ties in Mark and Matthew Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series 80 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 1994 p.109. Cf., also for the same view, Christopher Bryan, A Preface to Mark Notes on the Gospel in Its Literary and Cultural Settings (Oxford: Oxford University Press), 1993 p.111; Robert G. Hamerton-Kelly, The Gospel and the Sacred Poetics of Violence in Mark (Minneapolis: Fortress Press), 1994 p.37f.

<sup>17</sup> See The Fall of Jerusalem and the Christian Church A Study of the Effects of the Jewish Overthrow of A.D. 70 Christianity (London: SPCK), 1951 pp.185-205. Brandon boldly asserted: "The celebrated 'Abomination of Desolation' passage of Mark xiii. 14 has long been a cause of trouble to those who would place the Gospel before A.D. 70; for the words in parenthesis (ὁ ἀναγινώσκων νοεῖτω), which are clearly crucial for any understanding of the meaning of the passage, indicate a specific situation that cannot be identified with any known to have occurred in Judaea before the year 70" "The Date of the Markan Gospel" NTS 7 (1960-1961) pp.133 and 135, cf., Jesus and the Zealots A Study of the Political Factor in Primitive Christianity (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons), 1967.

floats portraying battle scenes, hordes of prisoners, and Jerusalem temple treasures (gold table, candlestick, and copy of the law). For Brandon, the gospel exonerates Roman culpability while castigating Jewish leaders, Jesus' disciples and family, in order to demonstrate the Jerusalem church's failure to legitimately follow Jesus, which contrasts with the Roman church's uninvolved involvement in challenging Rome's supremacy. By constructing a Jesus as essentially unconnected with the Jewish race, Mark was able to furnish a defence of Christianity palatable to Gentiles in Rome c. 71 C.E. By adopting the view that part of ch.13 consists of Mark's plagiarism of events from the crisis engendered by Caligula's failed attempt to introduce his image in the Jerusalem temple, Brandon posited the incorporation of a document in ch.13 which cast the emperor as τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως, though now covertly applied to Titus.<sup>18</sup>

Mark's placating of Rome as an apologetic motif for writing the gospel was the ground of Brandon's interpretation, with exegetical work on ch.13 regarding Titus as τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως subsidiary to that purpose. Brandon failed to explore the impact of Jerusalem's destruction in ch.13 in respect to 13:14, nor centrally focus that event in ch.13, nor sufficiently assess that event's place in the creation of Mark's gospel. Our contention is that Brandon's view of Titus as τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως is limiting; instead of writing to curtail imminent expectation in respect to Titus' ruin of the city, Mark advocates the opposite with that event as the end-time trigger leading to the Son of Man's (SM) parousia (13:26-27).<sup>19</sup> The notion that

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<sup>18</sup> "Date" p.134.

<sup>19</sup> Brandon was unable to posit a rationale for Mark curtailing imminent expectation and yet adhering to an imminent parousia. For Brandon eschatological expectations were excited for Mark's audience by the temple's destruction leading to that event being regarded "as marking the beginning of the End." Mark had to curb "the tendency to rash speculation ... while at the same time encouraging the primitive hope that the Lord would soon return

Titus is τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως needs to be grounded exegetically in ch.13, and if it can be shown that revelation of τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως as Titus triggers an impending parousia expectation, then 13:14 assumes an importance previously not surmised. Though Brandon's pro-Roman stance has been found lacking,<sup>20</sup> his view of Titus as τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως has been more ignored than refuted.

Desmond Ford's 1979 most comprehensive recent study<sup>21</sup> on τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς

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in glory ... In the expectation of the coming of these things (13:24-7) he himself firmly shared; but he was intent to control the common urge to know the exact time of their fulfillment and to replace it by concentration on spiritual preparedness" "Date" pp.136-137. By relinquishing any connection between Jerusalem's destruction (which becomes part of the beginning of the travail 13:8c) and the parousia's nearness, Titus' destruction of the city plays no part in producing parousia expectation. Brandon cannot explain why Mark would pander to the enthusiasts by telling his audience "that this signal disaster (the temple's destruction) which had befallen the Jewish nation had been foretold by their divine Lord, Jesus, and that it was one of the signs that heralded his Second Coming and the end of the present world-order" (*Zealots* p.236). On Brandon's reading of ch.13, surely Mark would have clearly distanced himself from associating the destruction of the temple with parousia expectation and highlighted spiritual preparedness alone without surmising connections between the two events. Making the destruction "one of the signs that heralded" the parousia does court the enthusiasts. On our view the destruction of the temple *is* the *one* sign heralding the parousia.

<sup>20</sup> For example, if Mark reshaped the tribute episode (12:13-17) into making paying taxes legitimate, and presented Barabbas as Mark's explanation concerning how the Jews encompassed Jesus' death (see Brandon, *The Trial of Jesus of Nazareth* [London: SCM Press], 1968 pp.94f. Ernest Best described this explanation as "fantastic" [*Mark The Gospel as Story Studies of the New Testament and its World* [ed.] John Riches [Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark], 1983 p.33), presenting the emperor Vespasian's son Titus (especially in the light of the Flavian triumph in Rome c. June 71 C.E.) even covertly as τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως must have been risky. The enigmatic phrase connotes sufficient of things despicable to cause the Gentile reader to ponder the implication of the emperor's son, so recently showcased as the conqueror of Jerusalem, being described in such (albeit cryptically) loathsome terms. On Brandon's view, surely Mark would have been more circumspect and removed the phrase from his source or made Jewish culpability more obvious.

<sup>21</sup> *The Abomination of Desolation in Biblical Eschatology* (University Press of America), 1979.

ἐρημώσεως in 13:14<sup>22</sup> surmised a connection between 13:14 and the Roman armies in Jerusalem in 70 C.E., including a manifestation of Antichrist, but failed to examine in any way Titus as τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως, after dismissing the Patristic notion of a statue erected to Titus on the desecrated temple site.<sup>23</sup> Others have advocated Titus as a referent but without substantial exegetical support from ch.13. For Paula Fredriksen<sup>24</sup> the one referential event, the temple's destruction, was the means through which Mark harnessed imminent expectation over the parousia's delay. But Fredriksen only raises the question<sup>25</sup> whether Titus could be τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως, and neither grounds 13:14 exegetically as a focal point in the chapter, nor explores how 13:14 identifies Titus. Significantly, Fredriksen posits a connection between the event mentioned in 13:14 and the creation of the Markan gospel. Thus exegetically grounding 13:14 as the focal point for τὸ σημεῖον in 13:4 and exploring Titus as a historical referent, may lead to substantial insights into the gospel's formation on the basis of Fredriksen's stimulating thesis.

The incongruity of an injunction to flight (13:14c) once τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως is in place, prevents Joel Marcus<sup>26</sup> from accepting Titus as the referent because with the Roman

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<sup>22</sup> For an overview of how 13:14 has been interpreted in Markan exegesis, see the introduction to chapter two.

<sup>23</sup> Surprisingly, though Ford's select bibliography refers to Brandon's Fall of Jerusalem, no reference appears from the book in the breadth of his study. This oversight means Ford missed the spread of Brandon's argument in Jesus and the Zealots 1967 (pp.230-235) and so was deficient in assessing Titus as referent in 13:14.

<sup>24</sup> From Jesus to Christ, The Origins of the New Testament Images of Jesus (New Haven: Yale University Press), 1988 pp. 44-52,77-86,96-125,133-137,171-189; "Jesus and the Temple, Mark and the War," SBL 1990 Seminar Papers (ed.) David J. Lull (Atlanta: Scholars Press), 1990.

<sup>25</sup> Jesus p.185.

<sup>26</sup> "The Jewish War."



commander ensconced in the temple flight was impossible, and had been for some time. Certainly if this objection can be overcome, Titus may be a less problematic referent than Marcus' own choice, Eleazar son of Simon, who occupied the temple in the winter of 67-68 C.E.

Gerd Theissen, although advocating Vespasian as τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως in 13:14, does so by association with his son Titus with the thought that worse was to come. An image representing Vespasian would soon appear in the temple signalling the impending parousia.<sup>27</sup> Instead of positing a "double" cultic defilement, with Titus' desolation supposedly somewhat anticlimactic, in view of the expected erection of a pagan temple in Jerusalem in the near future, it is less problematic to posit the simpler thesis of Titus as τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως in view of his work of destruction.<sup>28</sup> Essentially Theissen severs a connection between the destruction of the temple and the consummation by positing an intermediate stage

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<sup>27</sup> "Wer in Antiochien am Ort einer Synagoge sein Standbild aufstellt dem war zuzutrauen, dass er es auch am allerheiligsten Ort aufstellen würde -- und das um so mehr, als die siegreichen römischen Soldaten nach der Eroberung des Tempels dort schon ihren Feldzeichen geopfert und Titus zum Imperator ausgerufen hatten [bell 6,316]: Der Tempel war schon einmal vorübergehend 'kultisch' durch Heiden beschlagnahmt worden" Lokalkolorit und Zeitgeschichte in den Evangelien NT et Orbis Antiquus 8 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht), 1989 pp.276-277. Egon Brandenburger also posited Titus as a reference from the author's standpoint in a pre-Markan source (vv.14-20): "Das gegenüber dem neutrischen βδέλυγμα auffallende maskulinische ἑστηκότα -- in der Vorlage auf den im Bild gegenwärtigen Kaiser bezogen -- konnte im Rückblick auf die tatsächlichen Ereignisse ohne allzu grosse Schwierigkeit auf die römische Streitmacht oder noch besser auf die Person des Feldherrn Titus bezogen werden" (Markus 13 p.82). See also, W. Schmithals, Das Evangelium nach Markus, Kapitel 9,2-16,18 ökumenischer Taschenbuchkommentar zum Neuen Testament 22 (Gütersloh: Mohn), 1979 p.575; D. Lührmann, Das Markusevangelium HNT 3 (Tübingen: Mohr), 1987 p.222 and "Markus 14.55-64 Christologie und Zerstörung des Tempels im Markusevangelium" NIS 27 (1980-1981): "Die dem Neutrum βδέλυγμα inkongruente maskuline Form ἑστηκότα meint die Person, die den Tempel verwüstet, den römischen Feldherrn Titus, oder das römische Heer, nicht jedoch den Antichrist ..." p.473 fn.70.

<sup>28</sup> Lokalkolorit pp.136f.

culminating in the real end-time harbinger. Positing Titus as τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως would enable us to draw upon evidence Theissen deduces buttressing the significance of the temple's demise (e.g., the Markan εὐαγγέλιον contrasting with the Imperial εὐαγγέλια), and provide a more cogent explanation of 13:14 in ch.13 and the gospel's context than Theissen's work and previous studies on this verse.

In summary, if Mark's injunction to comprehension in 13:14b is built upon the notion that readers surmise a connection between v.14 and τὸ σημεῖον (13:4), then the textual intrusion may indicate the consummation's nearness for the Markan audience, which revolves around recognition of Titus as τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως. Because a majority of scholars assign the events described in Mk 13:6-22 to the period of the Jewish Roman war 66-74 C.E., and because Mk 13 is the longest monologue in Mark's gospel, rooted in the post-resurrection period and therefore connected possibly with Mark's own compositional time, an examination of 13:14 with Titus as referent is a legitimate undertaking. This is especially so considering the surprising neglect by Ford and others (e.g., Myers, Geddert, Beasley-Murray, Mack, and Gundry) because of what is known from Josephus about Roman activity in the temple in September 70 C.E., that is, the sacrifice of Titus' soldiers in the ruined temple to their commander as *Imperator*. Such a context would give us opportunity to establish a fundamental perspective from which to exegete a text, because the text is placed in a historical context.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Interestingly, Norman R. Petersen (Literary Criticism for New Testament Critics [Philadelphia: Fortress Press], 1978 pp.49f), draws from the discrepancy between the disciples' erroneous reaction to Jesus in 8:27-9:1 and their presumed orthodox stance in 13:5f. against individuals "guilty of their own previous error of pointing to someone as the Christ" (p.72), in order to posit that Mark's conceptual stance concerns whether "events surrounding the destruction of the temple signal the end" (p.72). However there is no need to revert back to 8:27-9:1 to establish this because the interplay between the disciples' presumed faithfulness in 13:5f. and the prophets of error establish this conceptual frame, which is confirmed by contexts beyond ch.13. Certainly Petersen is correct to conclude that

## 1.2. Method of our Study

Our method initially involves syntactical examination of ch.13 as a whole in order to attempt to grasp the author's emphasis in the chapter. Exploring the structural question will enable us to determine the place and significance of the phrase τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως in v.14 in relationship to the rest of the material in the chapter. This procedure will also assist us to determine other emphases in ch.13 and their relationship to τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως. For example what is the relationship of the sign request in v.4 to vv.5-37 and in particular to v.14? How is the SM's parousia in v.26 connected to v.14 and how do vv.28-37 function in respect to v.26 and v.14? How does v.14 fit with vv.1-2 and these two verses with vv.5-37? Conclusions concerning the structural question will assist us in exegeting v.14, and the goal of our study, the interpretation of τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως in that verse. Pre-Markan material in v.14 will be examined, which will take us into exploration of the wider area of the composition of ch.13. We will not attempt to define the status of all pre-Markan material in ch.13, except as the material relates to v.14. It is necessary in this case so we can explore changes Mark may have made in v.14. Thus our procedure will involve going "behind" v.14 to

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(though we would suggest without the 8:27-9:1 context) in the interaction of the relationship between Jesus, the disciples and the prophets of error "are the clues to the time of writing and the meaning of Mark's message" (p.73). But Petersen has missed the major clue, the Markan intrusion in 13:14, which he acknowledges may function "to call attention to events of which the reader (addressee) is aware, thereby linking the time of Mark's writing to these events!" (p.72). Thus the conceptual significance of the interplay between Jesus, disciples, and prophets of error, may revolve around correct interpretation of the significance of τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως which determines the interplay between disciples/prophets of error. Mark may not be evaluating competing claims based off an erroneous connection between Jerusalem's demise and the consummation, but may be advocating that connection himself, which makes the interplay between the deceiving prophets and the disciples (i.e. reader cf., 13:14b and 13:37) all the more poignant. In other words, both deceiving prophets and Mark may have understood Jerusalem's destruction to trigger the end-time in some sense.

examine the material prior to Mark's use of it.<sup>30</sup> This may be fruitful because ch.13, along with ch.4, makes up the largest block of material in the gospel, so there may be underlying material in the chapter which existed as a unit prior to Mark's gospel.<sup>31</sup> We will not seek to establish possible *Sitze im Leben* of the tradition except as such endeavour helps us exegete v.14.<sup>32</sup>

To anticipate our work on 13:14, we will examine Mark's selection, and possible alteration of material in that verse, and generally in ch.13, though our main focus will be v.14. Our work will also take us outside of ch.13, to explore issues stemming from our interpretation of v.14. For example we will show that because ch.13 prefaces the passion narrative (chs.14-16) and contains points of contact with that narrative, Mark obviously intends that the two sections are interrelated. Such themes as imminence, the nature of discipleship, the place of the temple in the gospel, as well as Mark's eschatological stance outside of ch.13, will also be considered in respect to exegesis on ch.13. Other strategies will be required to assist us in interpreting τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως in 13:14. A comparison of literature in which the phrase is found will enable us to further gauge how Mark uses it, in respect to its other

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<sup>30</sup> So John R. Donahue, Are You the Christ? The Trial Narrative in the Gospel of Mark SBL Dissertation Series 10 (1973) pp.40-41, who suggests that "general statements" can be made about pre-Markan tradition without ascertaining exact contours.

<sup>31</sup> For examples of various reconstructions of the pre-history of ch.13 see George Beasley-Murray, Jesus and the Future (London: Macmillan and Co.), 1954 pp.1-112 and Rudolf Pesch, Naherwartungen (Düsseldorf: Patmos-Verlag), 1968 pp.19-47.

<sup>32</sup> Note Marxsen: "We may not ask here what the sources once *intended* to relate, but only what Mark *wants* to say by using them" (Evangelist p.163 fn. 45). We assume ch.13 reflects Mark's conscious intent (what Geddert calls "Mark's own angle of vision" Watchwords p.22) which will focus our investigation. Thus the text's conveyance of meaning is gleaned from authorial intent or a situation once removed from the text which can be evaluated by explanation of the text's contours. The text "stands as the most ready and reliable control over all forms of interpretation" (C. Clifton Black, The Disciples according to Mark Markan Redaction in Current Debate JSNT Supplementary Series 27 [Sheffield: JSOT Press], 1989 p.338 fn.93).

occurrences in the book of Daniel, whether a standard form of the phrase exists, and how it was adapted in the book of 1Maccabees. We will also explore and assess interpretations of the phrase before presenting our own view and dealing with objections to it.

Because Mark's gospel does not exist apart from a historical context, we recognize that the interpretation of Mark is in a sense the interpretation of historical events out of which the text originated, so we will attempt to place Mark's gospel in a specific historical context. This context will provide the necessary meaning to avoid textual ambiguity inherent in methods which approach the text "in a vacuum, unrelated to concrete communities of people."<sup>33</sup> Because 13:14 presents us with the possibility of such a direct window into Mark's "time," our method includes historical enquiry. According to Petersen, Mark's "story time" or the development of the narrative sequence functions as a signifier of the conceptual "plotted time"<sup>34</sup> which provides a possible connection with events contemporaneous with Mark. We will show that these matters come together in 13:14, where the development of narrative sequence is interrupted by intrusion from the contemporaneous world in respect to the significance of the plotted narration, which from 11:1 has revolved around the Jerusalem temple. We will show that Mark's stark textual intrusion (ὁ ἀναγινώσκων νοεῖτω v.14) conflicts with the story-line (from 13:5f. no reader is envisaged by Jesus), and so is a guide-post to events experienced by Mark which will lead us to an evaluation of the place, date and purpose of the gospel. Chapter 13:14 may be the most important clue in the gospel for us to glean information about Mark and his circumstances.

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<sup>33</sup> Joel Marcus, The Mystery of the Kingdom of God SBL Dissertation Series 90 (Atlanta: Scholars Press), 1986 p.7; also Theissen, Lokalkolorit introduction.

<sup>34</sup> See Literary Criticism pp.49ff.

We shall posit a concrete historical situation out of which the Markan form of τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως originated. Following a number of scholars, we accept that ch.13 received its fundamental shape out of events in the Jewish-Roman war in Palestine 66-74 C.E.,<sup>35</sup> though we will argue that τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως existed in pre-Markan material originating out of the crisis of 39-41 C.E., when the emperor Gaius Caligula sought to erect an image of himself in the Jerusalem temple. We will use, in particular, the historian Josephus' material on the Jewish-Roman war to shed light on several events crucial for our interpretation of 13:14 and the circumstances producing Mark's gospel.<sup>36</sup> Though material in ch.13 is difficult

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<sup>35</sup> See N.H. Taylor's list of scholars in "Palestinian Christianity and the Caligula Crisis. Part 2. The Markan Eschatological Discourse" *JSNNT* 62 (1996) p.18 fn.23, also *Lokalkolorit* p.272.

<sup>36</sup> The basis of our work in the text of Josephus will be from the Loeb Classical Library of *Josephus in Nine Volumes* (London: William Heinemann Ltd), 1969 (Vols 1-4 H.St.J. Thackeray, Vol 5 H.St.J. Thackeray and R. Marcus, Vols 6 and 7 R. Marcus, Vol 8 R. Marcus and A. Wikgren, Vol 9 L.H. Feldman). The main document from Josephus on the Jewish-Roman war is *War* (bks 1-7) which was published between 75-81 C.E., see Menahem Stern, "Josephus and the Roman Empire as Reflected in The Jewish War" *Josephus Judaism and Christianity* pp.72,78 fns.8,9. Cf., also David Hill: "Nevertheless Josephus' reputation as an accurate recorder of events has been enhanced by what is now known from Masada, and the *War* (written c. A.D. 75), being much more carefully composed than the *Antiquities* (c. A.D. 95), provides an account whose substantial reliability there is no reason to doubt" ("Jesus and Josephus' 'messianic prophets'" in *Text and Interpretation Studies in the New Testament presented to Matthew Black* [eds.] Ernest Best R. McL. Wilson [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press], 1979 p.143).

Ascertaining the chronology of the Roman occupation of Palestine is difficult even though Josephus was mindful of dating all the significant events. See Pere Villialba I Verneda *The Historical Method of Flavius Josephus Arbeiten Zur Literatur Und Geschichte Hellenistischen Judentums* (Leiden: E.J. Brill), 1986: "Flavius Josephus belonged to that group of historians who forget neither the hour, nor the day, nor the month, nor the year, nor the Olympiad, nor the reign, nor the consulship in terms of which events are measured in time or which they have a simple temporal relationship" p.118. On the period up to the Judaeian campaign and the time of the destruction there is substantial agreement. See Emil Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ (175 B.C.-A.D. 135)* Vol 1 (rev. and ed.) Geza Vermes, Fergus Millar, Matthew Black (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark), 1979 pp.49ff., Brian W. Jones, *The Emperor Titus* (New York: St. Martin's Press), 1984 pp.45f., G.A. Williamson, *The World of Josephus* (London: Secker and Warburg),

to align with events in Palestine during the war (e.g., vv.7-8,9-13), 13:14 presents us with, what we will show, is Mark's interpretation of a singular event connected with the Jerusalem temple.<sup>37</sup> Essentially we will attempt to show that Mark's enigmatic statement in 13:14 is an interpretation of an event which culminated with the devastation wrought by the Roman commander Titus in September 70 C.E., when in the midst of destroying the temple, Titus' soldiers sacrificed to their standards hailing their leader as *Imperator*. Establishing the viability of this historical event with what is said in 13:14 will provide us with a fixed point from which to interpret ch.13 and other parts of the gospel.

These are our assumptions. We will presume as established Markan priority over Matthew and Luke.<sup>38</sup> Our concern will be with the Markan Jesus and not the historical Jesus.<sup>39</sup>

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1964 pp.191f., Tessa Rajak, Josephus The Historian and His Society (London: Duckworth), 1983 pp.162-166. Briefly, Vespasian arrived in Antioch in February 67 (War 3.2:4), and moving southward after being joined by Titus, the Romans from June-October 67 took Japha, Jotapata, Mt. Gezirim, Joppa, Tiberias, Tarichaeae, Gamala, Mt. Tabor, Gischala, Lydda, Jamnia, and Azotus. By the end of 67 all of northern Palestine was in Roman control. By June 68 Gadara, Jericho, and Gerasa had fallen. News of Nero's death curtailed plans to subjugate Judaea until June of 69 by which time almost all of Judaea had succumbed (see Jones, Titus p.50), but Vespasian's plans were further diverted when he was proclaimed emperor by the armies in the east on July 1st, whereupon he stayed in Alexandria until the summer of 70 and left the siege of Jerusalem to Titus. Titus reached Jerusalem just before passover in 70 (War 5.3:1) and had subjugated the city by the end of September 70 C.E.

<sup>37</sup> So e.g., Marcus, "Jewish War" p.447.

<sup>38</sup> See C.M. Tuckett, The Revival of the Griesbach Hypothesis: An Analysis and Appraisal SNTSMS 44 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 1983.

<sup>39</sup> Thus authorial intent, understood as Markan agenda, may overpower textual features in respect to its story-world (*contra* Gundry, Mark p.16; Waetjen, Reordering of Power p.2). For Gundry, "the most natural meaning" (Mark p.16) will not be overpowered by any Markan situation, while for Waetjen Mark's gospel "cannot be validated by historical inquiry" so the two contexts "merge in the story world of the Gospel: that of Roman-occupied Palestine in which Jesus conducted his ministry and that of Roman-occupied Syria in which the text originated" (Reordering of Power p.4).

We consider that ch.13 presents the clearest window in the gospel from which to reconstruct the *Sitz im Leben* of the gospel and that Mark's gospel was written for a specific community.

Our main research consists of six chapters designed to establish our thesis. Initially in chapter two we will exegete ch.13 in order to demonstrate that structurally 13:14 is rooted in the disciples' sign request in 13:4. We will show how vv.5-13 peak at v.14, so that τὸ σημεῖον in v.4 is singular and refers to the advent of τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως. From v.14 we will assess the impact of that verse in vv.14b-27 and conclude that a double climactic focus is manifest in ch.13 at v.14 and at v.26. In short, the revelation of τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως functions as the end-time trigger inaugurating the SM's imminent parousia. In chapter three we will explore the composition of Mark 13 in order to determine the nature of the Markan material in 13:14 and the impact of Markan emphases in ch.13. Chapter four will focus specifically upon interpretations of 13:14 in order to establish Titus as τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως. We will explore the phrase's background in the books of Daniel and 1Maccabees and then follow with exegesis on Mk 13:14 and examine possible referents of the phrase. Chapter five will attempt to answer the main argument against Titus being the referent in 13:14, which is the impossibility of flight for Judaeans (v.14b), once Titus is in place in Jerusalem as destroyer of the city. This focus will take us into a historical study of the period from September 70 C.E. in Judaea and the Mediterranean world in order to make our case. Chapter six will examine the impact of the loss of Jerusalem in the gospel as a whole, and chapter seven will examine the wider context of ch.13 in respect to present and future Markan expectations in vv.5-37, and posit Mark's own context in time and place of location, and especially circumstances which may have led to the gospel's creation. Our final chapter will assess our study.



## CHAPTER TWO

### THE STRUCTURE OF THE MATERIAL IN MARK 13

#### Introduction

Mark 13:14 is a *crux criticorum* for the interpretation of ch.13, constituting for some scholars the core section incorporated into the so-called Little Apocalypse,<sup>1</sup> or the heart of the Danielic nucleus found in ch.13,<sup>2</sup> or the basis of earlier Christian prophecy adopted by Mark.<sup>3</sup> For some scholars syntactical elements between vv.4 and 14 suggest the answer to the disciples' sign request in v.4 is located at v.14,<sup>4</sup> which accordingly may imply a relationship between the destruction of the temple and the parousia<sup>5</sup> or the end of Jewish hierarchies in Jerusalem.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Vincent Taylor, The Gospel According to Saint Mark (London: Macmillan), 1963 p.498; Alfred Suhl, Die Funktion der alttestamentlichen Zitate und Anspielungen im Markusevangelium (Gerd Mohn: Gütersloher), 1965 pp.152-153. For further citations see Marcus Eugene Boring, Christian Prophets and the Gospel of Mark (Ann Arbor: University Microfilms), 1970 p.168 fn.2.

<sup>2</sup> Lars Hartman, Prophecy Interpreted Coniectaneas Biblica NT Series 1 (trans.) Neil Tomkinson (Lund: Gleerup), 1966 pp.145f.; Ford, Desolation p.78; H. C. Kee, Community of the New Age: Studies in Mark's Gospel (London: SCM Press), 1977 p.45f.

<sup>3</sup> E.g. Theissen, Lokalkolorit 1989.

<sup>4</sup> Jan Lambrecht, Die Redaktion Der Markus-Apokalypse (Rom: Päpstliches Bibelinstitut), 1967 pp.86f.; Ford, Desolation p.4.

<sup>5</sup> Werner Kelber, The Kingdom in Mark (Philadelphia: Fortress Press), 1974; Lambrecht, Redaktion; Pesch, Naherwartungen pp.101-107.

<sup>6</sup> R.T. France, Jesus and the Old Testament (Grand Rapids: Dake House), 1982 pp.226ff.

Verse 14 is also understood as triggering catastrophic signs preceding the parousia,<sup>7</sup> or pinpointing the divide between historical events (vv.5-13) and failed prediction (vv.14f.),<sup>8</sup> or the one sign *par excellence* hinging the chapter,<sup>9</sup> or even the key verse of Mark's gospel.<sup>10</sup> Because v.14 is structurally paralleled with v.26,<sup>11</sup> some advocate it as the climatic point in ch.13 indicating either the parousia's nearness or the beginning of the end-time proper.<sup>12</sup>

Conversely, v.14 is regarded by some as inconsequential because the mentioned sign is simply one among many occurring before the end (vv.14-20),<sup>13</sup> or because no signs timetable or one sign heralding the parousia is given,<sup>14</sup> or because v.14 is contextually subservient to both vv. 9-13 and v.26.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Hugh Anderson, The Gospel according to Saint Mark (London: Oliphants), 1974 p.295.

<sup>8</sup> T. Colani, Jésus Christ et les croyances messianiques de son Temps. 2nd ed. (Strasbourg), 1864 p.207f.

<sup>9</sup> Ford, Desolation p.145; Lloyd Gaston, No Stone on Another Supplementary NT 23 (Leiden: E.J. Brill), 1970 p.28.

<sup>10</sup> Marxsen, Evangelist p.183.

<sup>11</sup> V. Taylor, Mark p.503.

<sup>12</sup> E.g., Hooker, "Trials and Tribulations" p.90.

<sup>13</sup> E.g., Mann, Mark p.522; Glazier, Method pp.336f.; Geddert, Watchwords pp.218f.

<sup>14</sup> C.E.B. Cranfield, "St. Mark 13" ScotJT 6 (1953) p.196; Gaston, Stone p.23; Geddert, Watchwords p.204; Kenneth Grayston, "The Study of Mark 13" BIRL 56 (1974) p.374; Myers, Strong Man p.330.

<sup>15</sup> E.g., the emphasis on suffering in vv.9-13 is intended to counter extremes of "apocalyptic enthusiasm" based on sign seeking (Charles B. Cousar, "Eschatology and Mark's Theologia Crucis" Interpr 24 [1970] p.323). Or vv.9-13 constitute the heart of the discourse (Geddert, Watchwords p.216; Glazier, Method p.336). Verse 26 is the chapter's climax detailing either the SM's appearance ("...the discourse proceeds on the assumption that the really important event is not the temple's ruin but the coming of the Son of man" Beasley-Murray, Last Days p.388; see also H. Conzelmann, "Geschichte und Eschaton nach

Disagreement exists on the nature of the event or events mentioned in v.14: Does the verse refer specifically to historical figures e.g., Eleazar son of Simon,<sup>16</sup> Titus,<sup>17</sup> Vespasian,<sup>18</sup> or originally Caligula,<sup>19</sup> the Roman armies in the Jewish-Roman war 66-70 C.E.,<sup>20</sup> or simply to events comprising the temple's destruction in 70 C.E. which, due to Mark's enigmatic language or because the events are future oriented, are unrecoverable?<sup>21</sup> For some, the Anti-Christ figure of present or later Christian tradition is in mind,<sup>22</sup> or an immensely evil person,<sup>23</sup> historical or unhistorical.<sup>24</sup> For some, v.14 is unhistorical because it is incompatible with known events of

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Mc 13" ZNW [1950] p.215; Brandenburger, Markus 13 pp.101-102), or descriptive language of the fall of Jerusalem, which in the latter instance makes v.14 only descriptive of events connected with the fall (France, Jesus p.239).

<sup>16</sup> Marcus, "The Jewish War" p.454.

<sup>17</sup> E.g. Brandon, Fall of Jerusalem, "Date" p.134; Fredriksen, Jesus, "Jesus and the Temple" p.307.

<sup>18</sup> Theissen, Lokalkolorit p.284.

<sup>19</sup> O. Pfeleiderer, Das Urchristentum, seine Schriften und Lehren (Berlin), 1887 p.403-405; G. Hölcher, "Der Ursprung der Apokalypse Mk.13" ThBl (Leipzig), July 1933 cols.199-200; Theissen, Lokalkolorit et al.

<sup>20</sup> Ford, Desolation p.163.

<sup>21</sup> Lambrecht, Redaktion pp.144-168; Pesch, Naherwartungen pp.139-147; France, Jesus p.232.

<sup>22</sup> A. Feuillet, "Le discours eschatologique sur la ruine du Temple" RB 55 (1948) p. 495; Foerster, TDNT Vol 1 (ed.) Gerhard Kittel, (trans.) Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Pub. Co.), 1964 pp.598-600; Gaston, Stone p.27; Marxsen, Evangelist p.185.

<sup>23</sup> Hooker, "Trial and Tribulation" p.90.

<sup>24</sup> Anderson, Mark p.296; Cranfield, "St. Mark 13" ScotJT 7 (1954) p.298; David Wenham, "Recent Study of Mark 13: Part 1" TSFBul 71 (1975) p.8.

the Jewish war.<sup>25</sup> Others advocate v.14 as a unhistorical, primarily symbolic cypher, on forsaking temple religion<sup>26</sup>, or Judaism in general,<sup>27</sup> or as pictorial language modelled on previous literary material (e.g., Dan, 1Mac), whose purpose was to exhort believers to persevere in situations similar to previous crises,<sup>28</sup> making v.14 unhistorical but not precluding the appearance of a historical Anti-Christ.<sup>29</sup>

Apart from Theissen and N.H. Taylor's work,<sup>30</sup> the Little Apocalypse view appears not to be moving beyond the contours established a generation ago, compounded now by the complexities of pre-Markan tradition and the failure of Mk 13 to fit into what constitutes the genre "apocalypse."<sup>31</sup> The structure question is as open as when Wenham surveyed the matter over 20 years ago,<sup>32</sup> and traditio-historical approaches are more than ever grappling with the

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<sup>25</sup> E.g., Bo Reicke, "Synoptic Prophecies on the Destruction of Jerusalem" in Studies in the New Testament and Early Christian Literature (ed.) David Edward Aune (Leiden: E.J. Brill), 1972 p.125; Mann, Mark p.522.

<sup>26</sup> E.g. Geddert, Watchwords p.219.

<sup>27</sup> Charles B. Cousar, "Eschatology and Mark's Theologia Crucis. A Critical Analysis of Mark 13" Interpr 24 (1970) p.330; Myers, Strong Man pp. 335-336.

<sup>28</sup> Glazier, Method p.337.

<sup>29</sup> E.g. Martin Hengel, Studies in the Gospel of Mark (London: SCM Press), 1985 p.20. For Ernst Lohmeyer the events are "apocalyptic" but based on the sort of events occurring in 66-70 CE, Das Evangelium des Markus K E Kom NT (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht), 1967 p.276.

<sup>30</sup> See N.H. Taylor, "Palestinian Christianity and the Caligula Crisis. Part 1. Social and Historical Reconstruction" JSNT 61 (1996) pp.101-124; "Palestinian Christianity Part 2." pp.13-41.

<sup>31</sup> See J.J. Collins, "Introduction: Towards the Morphology of a Genre," and Adela Yarbro Collins, "The Early Christian Apocalypses" Semeia 14 (1979).

<sup>32</sup> "Recent Study of Mark 13:Part 2" TSFBul 72 (1975).

issues.<sup>33</sup>

Recent studies tending to interpret ch.13 with a key gleaned from outside the chapter (e.g., Geddert, Myers) have de-emphasized either v.4 or v.14 as providing any significant structural undergirding for the chapter. While ch.13 is still posited as a group of individual Jesus' sayings referring to historical events, the nature and historical recovery of those events is increasingly problematic in spite of the proliferation of historical contexts. However, based primarily on ch.13, an immediate pre- or post-70 C.E. dating of the gospel appears established.

Our contention is that the impact of v.14 on the interpretation of ch.13 has not been exegeted thoroughly enough and especially how significant elements in ch.13, conditioned by the event in v.14, affect the meaning of the discourse. We are at one with those focusing on the link between τὸ σημεῖον in v.4 and the event in v.14, the primary focus of the verse for any interpretation of ch.13, the elevation of that sign above all others in the chapter and most importantly v.14 as the single indispensable clue unlocking ch.13's meaning. Where we differ from those we agree with is on the pivotal nature of v.14 for what contextually precedes and follows the verse. Our view is that in v.14 the appearance of τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως indicates Jerusalem's destruction so signaling the beginning of the end-time. To prove our case in this chapter we shall analyze ch.13's syntactical structure to show that the focal point occurs at v.14 which previously has not been sufficiently demonstrated. Our method is essentially simple: using v.4 as an exegetical reference point we will explore the structure of ch.13. We will

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<sup>33</sup> "Is Mark to be judged as collector, redactor, author or narrator? How far is his Gospel to be considered a pastiche of sources or a unified narrative, a window into tradition history or a reflection of Markan theology: can sources be isolated, and can tradition be separated from redaction? Does the future lie with atomistic or holistic approaches or can diachronic and synchronic approaches be successfully integrated? Are Markan studies in a state of methodological confusion or richness?" Telford, "Pre-Markan Tradition" p.696.

argue: The introduction to ch.13 (vv.1-4) is built around a key term σημεῖον which, functioning as a kind of title and catchword, points to and is fulfilled at v.14 (2.1). The temporal indicators and link words are, according to the Markan composition, shaped syntactically in vv.5-13 to peak at v.14 which subsumes these verses to v.14 (2.2-3). Temporal indicators and link words in vv.14b-27 owe their significance to the peak reached at v.14 and shape vv.14b-27 in respect to the impact of v.14. We will also examine the fit of vv.28-37 in the light of our conclusion of the place of v.14 in respect to vv.5-13,14-27. (2.4). Finally the relationship between vv.14 and 26 will be examined (2.5).

### 2.1. Τὸ σημεῖον in Verse 4

The carefully constructed Markan introduction to ch.13 (vv.1-4),<sup>34</sup> based on a saying of Jesus in v.2, alters the direction of the previous context. Conflict with the religious authorities is abandoned (11:11-12:44) though picked up later (14:43-50,53-65), and in response to a statement by the disciples (v.1), Jesus forthrightly proclaims the destruction of the temple (v.3), which draws the following response:

Εἰπὸν ἡμῖν, πότε ταῦτα ἔσται καὶ τί τὸ σημεῖον ὅταν μέλλῃ ταῦτα συντελεῖσθαι πάντα;

"Tell us, when will these things occur and what will be the sign when all these things are about to be accomplished." (v.4).

Initially, τὸ σημεῖον in v.4 functions in a titular sense, as a general heading introducing information on end-time conditions, preparing the reader to assimilate a certain kind of

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<sup>34</sup> Demonstrated by K.L. Schmidt, Der Rahmen der Geschichte Jesu: Literarkritische Untersuchungen zur ältesten Jesusüberlieferung (Berlin: Trowitsch und Sohn), 1919 p.290.

information unattainable by unaided human reason.<sup>35</sup> Set apart as an introductory word, in the sense that it heads a list of unfolding cataclysmic events (vv.5-27), σημεῖον rivets attention. This notion of σημεῖον has been frequently overlooked (e.g., Pesch, Lambrecht, Taylor, Mann). Marxsen refers to σημεῖον in v.4 as "a kind of title"<sup>36</sup> but fails to develop the point and Hartman gives it no weight in comments on 13:1-4, simply because of paucity of reference.<sup>37</sup> The placement of τὸ σημεῖον in v.4 generates an end-time focus.

2.1.2. Furthermore, τὸ σημεῖον is the interpretive key for unlocking the meaning of the saying in v.2. Strategically placed in the parallel clauses joined by the conjunction καὶ in v.4, τὸ σημεῖον stands in sharp contrast to the intentionally vague double use of ταῦτα, and bridges the two nondescript adjectival nouns, so providing a definiteness otherwise lacking in the sentence.<sup>38</sup> The linking of σημεῖον and ὅταν accomplishes this definiteness by bringing a focus into an otherwise clouded exegetical conclusion, due to surmising the meaning of the twice used ταῦτα in v.4. By failing to perceive the significance of σημεῖον for both clauses

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<sup>35</sup> Σημεῖον (v.4) evokes a certain awareness to the reader about things to come. This function appears in 4Ezra 5:1, 2Bar 25:1-2, SibOr 3:596. E.g., 4Ezra 5:1: "Now concerning the signs: Behold, the days are coming when those who dwell on earth shall be seized with great terror, and the way of truth shall be hidden and the land shall be barren of faith." 2Bar 25:2-3: "This then will be the sign: When horror seizes the inhabitants of the earth, and they fall into many tribulations and further, they fall into great torments" The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha Vol.1 (ed.) James H. Charlesworth (Garden City: Doubleday), 1983. "Narratives containing signs create an impact when read as a whole" John Sweet, Revelation (London: SCM Press), 1979 p.13.

<sup>36</sup> Evangelist p.179.

<sup>37</sup> Prophecy pp.219-222.

<sup>38</sup> Pesch, "Die Frage der Jünger zielt auf ein bestimmtes Zeichen für ein bestimmtes Ereignis" Naherwartungen p.101.

Brandenburger errs in positing a clarity only to v.4a ("ist klar und nicht umstritten").<sup>39</sup> The bridge word σημεῖον unites the temporal specificity demanded by the coordinate πότε with the indirect interrogative τί, which pinpoints a specific event and a particular location. The alignment of these two words and what they represent is accomplished through τὸ σημεῖον. Thus syntactically τὸ σημεῖον occupies a key place in v.4. Exegetes have tended to bypass τὸ σημεῖον while concentrating on the double question in the parallel clauses joined by καὶ (πότε ταῦτα ἔσται v.4a and τί τὸ σημεῖον ὅταν v.4b), and the two ταῦτα words. The particular concerns have been whether Jerusalem's destruction alone is referred to, or whether the consummation appears also, and on the meaning of the two ταῦτα words. No substantial weight in the interpretation of v.4 has been given to the term.<sup>40</sup>

In spite of the lack of specificity inherent in the demonstratives (ταῦτα/ταῦτα) with the latter combined with an indefinite term (πάντα), and the replacement of ἔσται with the more complex but still indefinite μέλλη συντελεῖσθαι, the precise τὸ σημεῖον with its equally specific interrogative τί roots the temporal specificity demanded by πότε into a focus upon one particular time or event. Our contention is that this event is the appearance of τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως in v.14.<sup>41</sup> Simply put: the striking singular use of σημεῖον, with the definite article τὸ, contrasts with the demonstrative ταῦτα's. Verse 4 sits uneasily with vv.2-

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<sup>39</sup> Markus 13 p.95. Cf., Pesch, "Die Doppelfrage der Jünger lässt eine Antwort auf das „Wann“ erwarten wie eine Antwort auf die Frage nach „dem Zeichen“; beide Frageformulierungen zielen auf ein „Wenn“ [hotan]. Die Struktur der Rede erschliesst insofern klar den Sinn der Antwort!" Naherwartungen p.106.

<sup>40</sup> E.g., Rengstorff sees it as a common denominator of "apocalyptic speculation" TDNT Vol 7 p.323, cf., also Johannes Schreiber, Theologie des Vertrauens: Eine redaktionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung des Markusevangeliums (Furche-Verlag), 1967 p.128.

<sup>41</sup> We will show that the ὅταν clause is a key clause reappearing at significant points in the discourse (see vv.7,14,28,29).



3 and vv.5-27 because of the scope of the discourse in comparison to the disciples' exclamation (v.2) and Jesus' response (v.3).

2.1.3. The double question indicates a single event and not a shift from one question to another concerning a different matter. The sign (v.4) does not exist in two senses as an event signaling the temple or city's imminent destruction, and at the same time, as the city's destruction, indicating as a sign the parousia's nearness. These are quite different events. If τὸ σημεῖον is indicative of one event then another (as though the thing signified itself becomes a signifier) -- the singularity of τὸ σημεῖον is lost. Verse 4 is orientated to the discourse reflecting the content in vv.5-37<sup>42</sup> which is something recent scholarship has continued to validate. Beasley-Murray rightly surmises how Mark crafted the discourse beyond the prophecy that called it forth, and how v.4 introduces the end of the age and does not deal with the destruction of Jerusalem alone. But he provides no grounds for this and no explanation for the singularity of τὸ σημεῖον.<sup>43</sup> Neither does Gundry, who rightly links v.4 with v.14, but by

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<sup>42</sup> Suggested by Lambrecht, Redaktion pp.85-87; Wenham "Mark 13: Part 1" p.7; Grayston, "Mark 13" p.374; A.Y. Collins, Beginning p.77. Adopted by Hengel in respect to v.14, Studies p.19.

<sup>43</sup> The deduced Danielic background of ταῦτα συντελεῖσθαι πάντα (LXX Dan 12:6-7 συντελεσθήσεται πάντα ταῦτα) is associated with the Day of the Lord in respect to Jerusalem and not the close of the age. Therefore Beasley-Murray cannot substantiate that the "form of the second clause of the disciples' question in Mark 13:4 leaves open eschatological possibilities of the circumstances surrounding the ruin of the temple and the events which are to follow it. The discourse will describe their nature" Last Days p.388, see also p.386. Neither does Glazier offer reasons to maintain his assertion that "the destruction of the temple entail that of the whole cosmos" (Method p.326; see also Cranfield, "St. Mark 13" [6] p.195). Harold Riley, The Making of Mark An Exploration (Macon: Mercer University Press), 1989, connects v.4 with the consummation by postulating that Mark followed Matthew's clear συντελείας τοῦ αἰῶνος, but he offers no reason for Mark's supposed adaptation to συντελεῖσθαι (p.152). Cousar assumes a connection of v.4 with the parousia, but with no evidence ("Eschatology" p.323; also Gaston, Stone p.12). Hooker connects the destruction of the city with the parousia on the flimsy bond of συντελεῖσθαι with its Danielic counterpart ("Trial and Tribulation" p.84; also Hartman,

grounding v.4 in respect to a question reflecting the time of the sign occurrence of the city's destruction, is forced to admit v.14 "never answers the question concerning the time when it will occur and the sign that it is about to do so (v 4) ... Instead, he (Mark) makes the abomination itself a sign, but not of the soon destruction of the temple -- rather, of a far more important event, an event the four disciples did not even have in mind when they asked their question -- the coming of the Son of man plus the unequalled tribulation immediately preceding it."<sup>44</sup> The singularity of τὸ σημεῖον requires consistency, which can only come from focusing v.4 on v.14, where the work of τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως in Jerusalem's destruction becomes a trigger sign of the parousia. Anything less than this robs τὸ σημεῖον of clarity and simplicity.

Verse 2 introduces the subject of the temple's destruction and v.4 points to vv.5-37 which place that event in a cosmic frame. The πότε (v.4a) concerns the time or more fundamentally the event indicating the destruction, and bridges to the greater issue i.e., τὸ σημεῖον (v.4b) indicates the destruction's significance in respect to the cosmic frame and Mark's perspective which is grounded in v.14. Thus the second clause (v.4b) is the key in essentially widening the perspective of v.4a and setting up vv.5-37: ταῦτα (v.4a) broadens to ταῦτα πάντα (v.4b), ἔσται (v.4a) expands to συντελεῖσθαι (v.4b) -- broadening the locale of the question.<sup>45</sup>

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Prophecy pp.145-146).

<sup>44</sup> Mark p.742.

<sup>45</sup> By reducing vv.4a and 4b to simply mirroring each other, France errs in postulating the singularity of v.4: "The disciples' question in Mark is concerned solely with the destruction of the Temple as predicted by Jesus in verse 2, which they summarize as ταῦτα ('these things') and ταῦτα πάντα ('all these things') (verse 4)" Jesus appendix A p.231. The manner v.4b elaborates on v.4a has frequently been noted e.g., Ford, Desolation p.68;

Geddert advocates that the disciples' sign request in 13:4 is a "misguided expectation"<sup>46</sup> because from 3:6 Mark is diametrically opposed to sign giving through the religious leaders' unresponsiveness to objective demonstrations of the kingdom advent (2:1-12). Thus other references to signs (8:11,13:22) are dismissed by Geddert. Against this: First, no clear repudiation of the sign request in 13:5f. occurs. Because Geddert fails to anchor the two βλέπειν words (vv.2,5) in the context of vv.1-6, (especially in vv.5-6 where no exegesis is offered),<sup>47</sup> discernment is pitted against a sign request. By associating deceivers in v.5 with false sign givers in 13:23, Geddert's exegetical base for vv.5f. is found beyond vv.4f.<sup>48</sup> But, the necessity of discernment is directed against the deceivers' activity and is not a repudiation of the sign request (see 2.2. below). Jesus' warning is a proper discernment in view of rival authority figures. Nothing in vv.5-6 indicates objective displays of authority (signs) are in view which is something incorporated from vv.22f.<sup>49</sup> In contrast to v.2 where βλέπετε signifies

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Beasley-Murray, Last Days p.388. See also J. Dupont, "La ruine du temple et la fin des temps dans le discours de Marc 13" in Apocalypses et Théologie de L'Espérance LD 95 (Paris), 1977 pp.211-212; William L. Lane, The Gospel according to Mark The English Text with Introduction, Exposition and Notes NICNT 2 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Pub. Co.), 1974 pp.447-448.

<sup>46</sup> Watchwords p.57.

<sup>47</sup> Watchwords pp.86-87.

<sup>48</sup> Gaston and Cranfield make the same mistake by setting up a false antithesis: watchfulness *or* sign seeking (Stone p.50, "St. Mark 13" [6] p.196). Cf., Geddert, Watchwords p.87, "'Watching' is not the *means* of 'sign-seeking,' it is the *alternative to it*."

<sup>49</sup> The parallel syntax in vv.5 and 6 shows this: V.5 Ἰησοῦς λέγειν πλανήσῃ V.6 πολλοὶ λέγοντες πλανήσουσιν. Jesus is pitted against the "many" being deceived by the "many". As Jesus "speaks" to the disciples, so the deceivers "will speak". Apostasy by the disciples stigmatizes them as the "many" deceived by the "many" (πολλοὶ/πολλοὺς v.6). The threat of apostasy is exacerbated syntactically by the manner the deceivers proclaim themselves ("I am he" v.6), but Jesus' superiority over them is demonstrated by Jesus prophesying their appearance.

viewing without comprehension,<sup>50</sup> in v.5 the verb, defined by a following subordinate clause, emphasizes discernment which is punctuated by the asyndeton in v.6. The response to the disciples' statement in v.4 is a warning against deception concerning specific circumstances (vv.6-8) but not a wholesale repudiation of sign giving.

Geddert's view, that the characterization of the disciples in the pre-passion narrative as always thinking in "human terms," *a priori* militates against the question in v.4 being answered affirmatively,<sup>51</sup> which is also not based exegetically on vv.1-4 but extrapolated from Mark's "hidden kingdom" view gleaned from chs.1-12,14-16:8.<sup>52</sup> That the disciples were thinking in "human terms" is true to a point: a corrective occurs in v.2 -- their misguided awe at the temple's grandeur is jolted by Jesus' shock corrective over the temple's fate, which leads to the question in v.4 where *no reprimand is given*. Geddert offers no explanation for this *and no exegesis on v.4*. The obvious emphasis given by Jesus on the temple's grandeur -- the two modifying adjectives (ταύτας/μεγάλας v.2) encompass and magnify all the temple buildings -- is virtually overwhelmed by the decisive tone of the prophecy. The twice used formulaic double negative (οὐ μὴ) ratifies the prophecy's certitude and the virtually superfluous subordinate clause (ὅς οὐ μὴ καταλυθῆ) hammers home the impact of the main clause (v.2b), which is the complete

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<sup>50</sup> The mere act of gazing at the temple betrays a disrespectful attitude showing the disciples' failure to learn from Jesus' interaction with the temple authorities. Verses 1-3 comprise a tight whole built on the chiasmic framework of repeated key words: "Mention of the temple completes a chiasm in vv 1-3 of (a) 'temple,' (b) 'stones,' (c) 'buildings,' (c1) 'buildings,' 'a stone on a stone,' and (a1) 'temple.' This chiasm highlights the stupendousness of Jesus' prediction" Gundry, Mark p.736.

<sup>51</sup> According to Geddert, the disciples' error was that "*They imagined that there would be a time when the need for discipleship/discernment would be obsolete. . .*" Watchwords p.204.

<sup>52</sup> Morna Hooker and John Muddiman's reviews of Watchwords in JTS 42 (1991) pp.200-201, and ET 102 (1990-1991) pp. 278-279, draw attention to the overly oblique nature of Geddert's view of Mark's "hidden kingdom" theology.

destruction of "all these great buildings" -- which has been set up by the preceding context (11:12-12:44).<sup>53</sup> This is the heart of the corrective. The location change from the temple to the Mount of Olives structurally divides the two exchanges between Jesus and his disciples (vv.1-2, vv.3f.). In the next exchange no comparable structural framework is found i.e., one that brings out diametrically opposed views. Geddert acknowledges this by interpreting this exchange from his kingdom perspective surmised *outside* of ch.13, which shows his view is not found in vv.1-5f.<sup>54</sup>

Therefore the disciples' "human thinking" is corrected in v.2 but not in v.5f. Geddert's

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<sup>53</sup> Summarized by Ambrozic: "The short scene in vss.1-2 thus closes the previous section of the Gospel. After fruitless controversies with his enemies in the Temple Jesus departs from it and announces its destruction" Aloysius M. Ambrozic, The Hidden Kingdom A Redaction-Critical Study of the References to the Kingdom of God in Mark's Gospel CBO Monograph (Washington:CBA), 1972 p.225.

<sup>54</sup> Furthermore, the blanket statement that in the pre-passion gospel story-line the disciples are always given to fallibility through human frailty is inaccurate. On two occasions a reply by Peter is not rejected though both occur in contexts where the disciples' defective thinking is corrected (in 8:29 Peter's insight into Jesus' status occurs in a context in which Peter is rebuked, but that does not nullify his inadequate declaration, and in 10:28 his incisive statement that the disciples have renounced everything to follow Jesus occurs after the disciples' confused response over Jesus' rigorous demands).

That Peter announced Jesus to be *ὁ Χριστός* is a decisive insight which the Markan Jesus corrects but does not reject (Jack Dean Kingsbury, Jesus, Authorities, Disciples [Minneapolis: Fortress], 1989 p.105, *contra* Myers, Strongman p.242). This insight is accepted (v.30), and reinterpreted (vv.31f. E. Schweizer, The Good News according to Mark [trans.] D.H. Madvig [London: SPCK], 1971 p.172). Similarly, Jesus rejects the disciples' implied cynical answer of 10:26 and offsets it by accentuating the power of divine grace (v.27), which Peter evidences. In contrast to the invitation to follow (*ἀκολουθεῖ* pr. act. impv. v.21), which is rejected by the rich man (10:22), the disciples have followed (*ἠκολούθηκαμὲν* pf. act. ind. v.28) by forsaking all (cf., 1:17,2:14 and note Best, regarding Mark's attitude toward Peter, " ... nothing is introduced to rebut Peter's claim that he, and the other disciples, have left all" Ernest Best, Disciples and Discipleship Studies in the Gospel according to Mark [Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark], 1986 p.165).

As in 8:31f. and 10:29f., no *specific repudiation* of the question occurs in 13:5f. -- though in all three cases misconstrued thinking is corrected. The two examples show that the disciples can be *corrected and affirmed* in the same context, which occurs in vv.1-5f.

assertion of the disciples' proclivity to obtuseness, gleaned from a framework outside ch.13, is superimposed on the question in v.4, and makes a cautionary address by Jesus into a reprimand (v.5).

Second, the lack of a clear repudiation of the sign request contrasts sharply with the unequivocal rejection of a Pharisaic sign request in 8:11 (cf., 8:12c εἰ δοθήσεται τῇ γενεᾷ ταύτῃ σημεῖον) and the *emphatic* qualifying of the substantives in 13:22 regarding the false christs/prophets i.e., the twice mentioned ψευδῆς. Signs are not rejected *per se* in 13:22,<sup>55</sup> rather the source renders σημεῖα καὶ τέρατα as instruments of deception (13:22b, cf., v.5b). Ἐγερθήσονται γὰρ ψευδόχριστοι καὶ ψευδοπροφῆται καὶ δώσουσιν σημεῖα καὶ τέρατα πρὸς τὸ ἀποπλανᾶν, εἰ δυνατόν, τοὺς ἐκλεκτούς (v.22). Mark resists the source as militant national deliverers and the type of sign associated with Exodus type deliverance miracles "... in Mark's eyes the type of `sign' that is demanded of Jesus at Mk 8:11 is cut from the same cloth as those which the `sign' workers of Mk 13:22 are wont to produce."<sup>56</sup> Gibson has demonstrated the connection in 8:11-13 between the sign request and the type of sign requested -- namely one resulting in Israel's deliverance from her oppressors.<sup>57</sup> Both the Pharisees' sign request and the signs demonstrated by the false christs/prophets are those "given" (δοθήσεται 8:12c, δώσουσιν v.22b). Mark's modification of the christs in v.22 as ψευδῆς- contrasts with his view of Jesus as the Christ (1:1) whose credentials are suffering and sacrifice (cf., 9:33-26,10:42-45; 11:15-19 especially v.17). Alternatively the ψευδόχριστοι and

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<sup>55</sup> Hooker, "Trial and Tribulation" p.84.

<sup>56</sup> Jeffrey Gibson, "Jesus' Refusal to Produce a `Sign' (Mk 8:11-13)" *JSNT* 38 (1990) p.47.

<sup>57</sup> Gibson establishes this by comparing 15:28-32 with 8:11-13 "Jesus' Refusal" pp.46-47.

ψευδοπροφήται are triumphalists, practicing lying deception by their σημεία καὶ τέρατα.<sup>58</sup> Mark connects the deceivers in v.22 with those in vv.5-6 who will come ὀνόματί μου (v.6) i.e., as the Christ (9:37,39,40), and who will "rival Jesus for recognition as the figure empowered by God to bring salvation to Israel"<sup>59</sup> while proclaiming the nearness of God's deliverance.<sup>60</sup> The signs and wonders stem from corrupt sources (13:22). In contrast, the Markan Jesus is not adverse to producing signs (13:4f.). Rather the type of request determines his response: triumphalist deliverance signs are inimical to the Markan Jesus.<sup>61</sup> Τὸ σημεῖον in 13:4 is one of destruction not deliverance, and the disciples' request is treated legitimately.<sup>62</sup>

Third, individual contexts must determine whether Jesus announces signs and not a singular epistemological paradigm.<sup>63</sup> Geddert's grid construction, whereby signs as objective

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<sup>58</sup> "Jesus' Refusal" p.48.

<sup>59</sup> "Jesus' Refusal" p.49.

<sup>60</sup> The phrase σημεία καὶ τέρατα (v.22) occurs in the LXX for great acts of deliverance in the Exodus tradition of Moses, Aaron, and Joshua and for the deceivers in v.22 it means the same thing. McCasland, "Signs and Wonders" *JBL* 76 (1957) pp.149-52.

<sup>61</sup> "Jesus' Refusal": "It would seem, then, that the reason the Marcan Jesus refuses to produce a 'sign' when the Pharisees demand one of him is not because he is, according to Mark, opposed to the enterprise of producing 'signs.' Rather, given Mark's assumptions concerning the type of 'sign' demanded in this instance and what this 'sign' would activate once manifested, it is because in producing such a 'sign' Jesus would involve himself in the sort of triumphalistic, imperious activities that throughout Mark's Gospel he condemns and sets himself against' (p.56).

<sup>62</sup> If Mark "is self-consciously criticizing the idea that the important truths of the Gospel can be objectively demonstrated with persuasive effect before unbelieving eyes," why does he allow Jesus to perform such a sign in 2:1-11 (where "Jesus takes the initiative to provide proofs and he responds affirmatively to requests for evidence" Geddert, *Watchwords* pp.34,41) -- especially considering that Mark set the tone against the religious authorities in 1:22?

<sup>63</sup> A sign is performed in 2:1-11, and yet rejected in 8:11-12 because of the Pharisees' unbelief. Yet in 12:6 when Jesus imparts information in a parable about his relationship to his Father, the Pharisees are given an opportunity to come to faith, which is rejected. If the

demonstrations are not found after 3:7, cannot be substantiated because in Mark the religious leaders are not treated as legitimate inquirers who could be persuaded to respond to Jesus' kingdom message.<sup>64</sup>

The reason no sign is given to the leaders in 8:11 is not because "only after 3:6 ... does

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leaders lack an opportunity to come to faith by signs after 3:6, why are they given one through teaching in 12:1f? Geddert advocates that in 11:27-12:44 Jesus is criticizing the leaders' actions, and does not countenance the possibility of their coming to faith in him due to their "insincerity" (Watchwords p.43). Yet on Geddert's reading of the gospel Mark criticizes the leaders' sincerity before they have done anything (see 1:22) and yet will give them the opportunity to accept Jesus in 2:1-11. Why not at 12:1-12, which of course is significant because this is Jesus' first confrontation with the *Jerusalem authorities* (11:27)?

<sup>64</sup> R.H. Lightfoot, Locality and Doctrine in the Gospels (London: Hodder and Stoughton), 1938 p.112, has shown the impact of the prologue for the rest of the gospel. The prologue introduces major motifs found in the rest of the gospel, see Frank J. Matera, "The Prologue as The Interpretive Key to Mark's Gospel" JSNT 34 (1988). Mark begins with an announcement of the necessity of embarkment of a new beginning in a new location away from the centre of religious activity in Jerusalem (v.4). The scribes cannot match Jesus' authoritative teaching (1:22) and in their first meeting with Jesus (2:1-12) reject his authority which is demonstrated before them. (Significantly οἱ γραμματεῖς are consistently found to be opposed to Jesus throughout the gospel see 1:22,2:6,14:1,43,53, 15:1,31, "for Mark, the scribes are the one group which serves to draw the story of Jesus' fatal conflict with the religious establishment into a coherent whole" Stephen H. Smith, "The Role of Jesus' Opponents in the Markan Drama" NTS 35 [1989] p.167).

Jesus' forthright rhetorical question (Vernon K. Robbins, A Socio-Rhetorical Interpretation of Mark [Philadelphia: Fortress Press], 1984 pp.112-113) penetrates their murmuring (2:8b) leaving them with a loss for words: Jesus is hardly "remarkably patient with his opponents" (Geddert, Watchwords p.41) here. What follows is a mental conundrum which Jesus sets and objectifies in the subsequent healing (2:9-11). Having witnessed the "harder" the scribes must acknowledge the "easier" -- Jesus' authority to forgive sins (v.10). By ignoring the scribes and picking up on the awestruck bystanders (v.12) Mark underscores both the scribes' hardheartedness and what has already been stated (1:22): Jesus' divine authority is *set against* that of the scribes. This healing (2:1-12) is the first in a cantena of confrontation pericopes constructed by Mark (2:1-3:6) which set the tone for the religious leaders' chilling response in 3:6, a response foreshadowing the passion. Jesus' speech in 2:17 is biting (certainly more than an "explanation" Watchwords p.42) as the negative and adversative features demonstrate, similarly in vv. 21,22,27-28. "Those who are well have *no* need of a physician, *but* those who are sick; I came *not* to call the righteous *but* sinners" Robbins, Socio-Rhetorical pp.112-113.



Jesus deny the Jewish leaders the evidence they seek (cf. 8:11-13)<sup>65</sup> but because throughout 1:1-8:11 they are portrayed as completely unresponsive to Jesus.<sup>66</sup> To erect a view of signs in the gospel on the basis of the leaders' imperviousness to objective displays after 3:6 is erroneous; Mark is opposed to the religious leaders from the start and so their unresponsiveness in 2:6-12 cannot carry the weight of a Markan approach to signs.<sup>67</sup> Individual contexts must determine

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<sup>65</sup> Geddert, Watchwords p.42.

<sup>66</sup> The difference between the debates in 2:1-3:6 and 11:27-12:44, (wherein "the former Jesus defends his own actions; in the latter Jesus criticizes theirs" Geddert, Watchwords p.43), may be due to Mark muting "the early Galilean controversies in order to avoid a premature climax" (so Smith, "Jesus' Opponents" p.166).

<sup>67</sup> Note Hooker on the religious leaders: "they are not willing even to listen to Jesus. From the very beginning of Mark's story the religious authorities are opposed to Jesus" The Message of Mark (London: Epworth Press), 1983 p.32. See also Rhoads and Michie, "Neither Jesus nor the narrator says anything favorable about them. . . Apart from attributing a few favorable attitudes to Herod and Pilate, the narrator depicts the authorities as thoroughly untrustworthy characters" Mark as Story p.117. Similarly, Myers (Strong Man p.330) mistakenly lumps the disciples with the religious leaders in their request for a sign (cf., 13:4,8:11) but from the beginning of his gospel Mark is opposed to the leaders while the disciples constitute a group responsive to Jesus' call in spite of their obtuseness (1:18,20,2:14,18-20,23-27).

In 4:10-12 τοῖς ἔξω includes the religious leaders in Jerusalem (cf., 12:12b ἔγνωσαν γὰρ πρὸς αὐτοὺς τὴν παραβολὴν εἶπεν. καὶ ἀφέντες αὐτὸν ἀπῆλθον), who cannot comprehend the mysterious kingdom of God, enigmatic "to outside recognition" (Kelber, Kingdom p.33). Therefore a Pharisaic sign request in 8:11-13 is dismissed because as outsiders they are incapable of faith. Rather, as those πειράζοντες αὐτόν (8:11), Pharisees are aligned with Satan who also tempted (πειραζόμενος 1:13) him. As outsiders, the Pharisees are not vouchsafed as legitimate enquirers whose sign request will receive favourable treatment. On the other hand the disciples, despite their obtuseness, are insiders (Ὑμῖν τὸ μυστήριον δέδοται τῆς βασιλείας τοῦ θεοῦ 4:11b) which makes it possible for us to consider whether Jesus will grant their sign request (13:4). Clearly Jesus treats insiders and outsiders differently. The issue at hand is not the sign request but the source of that request (as demonstrated in 13:22). We note that the OT background of 4:12 is Isa 9:6f. which concludes with the cry "Lord, how long?" (v.11 cf., Dan 12:6ff.; Rev 6:9f.). In Isa 9:6f. an answer is given to the insiders i.e., Isaiah, and in 13:4 the possibility of an answer is open to the disciples as insiders (4:11,13:5f.).

Therefore Mark's treatment of a sign request by the religious leaders cannot *apriori* determine his attitude to the request by the disciples in 13:4; in contrast to 8:11 no unequivocal rejection of a sign request is given by Jesus in 13:5f.

that, as we have shown in 8:11-12,13:22 and suggested in 13:4.

In conclusion, Geddert has not shown from 13:4f. that Jesus repudiates any sign request, whereas signs are rejected contextually in 8:11 and 13:22. Therefore 13:5f. must be examined to determine whether Mark himself precludes signs.

## 2.2. Τὸ σημεῖον and Verses 5-13

We intend to show that the syntactical structure in vv. 5-13 peaks at v.14 where the sign request in v.4 is answered. Verses 5-13 fail to provide the pinpoint specificity required to answer what the singular τὸ σημεῖον indicates while v.14 does. Instead vv.5-13 create tension by unfolding preliminary events which sequentially propel the narrative forward to a climactic point at v.14 where the sign request is answered.

2.2.1. In order to prove that the syntax of vv.5-13 moves climactically to v.14,<sup>68</sup> vv. 5-8 and 9-13 will be divided into separate units headed by Βλέπετε (vv.5,9).<sup>69</sup>

Prefacing both units, the imperative Βλέπετε (v.5),<sup>70</sup> tightly connected to αὐτοῖς and the emphatic ὑμᾶς, places an emphasis on discernment over deception (the subjunctive πλανήση with its indefinite subject τις warns of a future possibility of deception while Βλέπετε exhorts ongoing scrutiny so deception will not take the disciples by surprise). However in v.9, the placement side by side of the pronominals ὑμεῖς/ἑαυτούς, separated only

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<sup>68</sup> We will show why v.14 has long been recognized as a *crescendo* to vv.5-14 e.g., Marxsen, *Evangelist* p.183; Lambrecht, *Redaktion* p.148; Ford, *Desolation* p.145.

<sup>69</sup> Considering vv.5-8 as a unit has depended on whether vv.5-6 and vv.21-23 are connected. We have connected vv.5-8 on the basis that the false prophets' activity in vv.21-22 occurs in a different time frame than that activity of the deceivers of vv.6-8 (See 2.4.2.). Certainly vv.9-13 (e.g., Taylor, Hooker, Gaston, Cranfield, Cousar, Brandenburger, Geddert *et al.*) are understood as a unit.

<sup>70</sup> A key term in Mark's gospel (see 13:5,9,23,33, and outside of ch.13: 4:24,8:15,12:38. For uses of the verb other than imperatives see 4:24,8:15,12:38 4:12,5:36,8:18,23,12:14).

by the particle (δὲ) from the imperative Βλέπετε, accentuates the focus upon discernment/betrayal over discernment/deception more intensely than v.5, as the verbal contrast between the subjunctive and indicative shows (Βλέπετε ... πλάνησιν, Βλέπετε ... παραδώσουσιν). The *threat* of deception from undefined individuals (τις) contrasts with the *certitude* of betrayal by Jewish authorities and Gentile rulers (παραδώσουσιν).

(a) Vv.6-8. The possibility of the disciples' deception (πλάνησιν/πλάνησουσιν) is connected with the deception of the many (πολλοὺς v.6). Apostasy by the disciples would make them part of the πολλοὶ deceived by the πολλοὺς (hence the command to watch out for themselves Βλέπετε v.5b). Mark uses πολλοὶ 34 times in the gospel, 27 times referring to the crowds. A separation exists between outsiders (the "many") -- which includes both the crowds and the deceivers/false messiahs (vv.6,22) -- and Jesus and his disciples. Failure to heed Jesus' warning leads the disciples into becoming one of οἱ πολλοὶ. The verb ἔρχεσθαι describes the false prophets' activity (v.6a). Because the verb is used in an end-time context in Mark's gospel,<sup>71</sup> its occurrence here pits the false teachers in competition against Jesus. The certitude of their coming (fut. ind. ἐλεύσονται v.6a)<sup>72</sup> constitutes a rival claim for messiahship, as ἔρχεται ὁ Σατανᾶς (4:15) in order to deceive. Their activity is not the sign request of v.4.<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>71</sup> See Schneider, "The word belongs to the circle of ideas connected with the divine epiphany ... They derive {ἐλθων} from the Messianic self-awareness of Jesus and are to be explained thereby" TDNT Vol.2. p.668.

<sup>72</sup> Similarly, although λέγοντες (v.6) enhances the rivalry between Jesus and the deceivers (ἤρξατο λέγειν v.5a), because Jesus is speaking (vv. 5-6), their activity is circumscribed under his authority, which renders their messianic claim subservient to his warning.

<sup>73</sup> So Marxsen, Evangelist p.173, *contra* Mann, Mark p.515, nothing in the context suggests the sign is the appearance of the deceivers or the events depicted in vv.7-8 as vv.7c,8c make clear.

The temporal ὅταν clause in v.7 introduces a new threat (δέ connects two threats in vv.6 and 7-8 of equal rank both subsumed under the βλέπετε warning) by shifting the need for discernment away from possible deception by individuals to deception through erroneously interpreting reports of internecine warfare and calamities in nature as indicative of τὸ τέλος (v.7), that is, the time of the happenings in v.4 (cf., συντελεῖσθαι). Verses 7-8, in the multiplicity of events, fail to constitute the singular sign request in v.4.<sup>74</sup>

In the first occurrence of an imperative since βλέπετε, θροεῖσθε<sup>75</sup> reinforces the discernment theme because these events are predetermined (δεῖ γενέσθαι) so the disciples must remain calm. The new imperative also renews and so extends the force of the first imperative "weakened" by the change in subject matter in v.7. βλέπετε retains its impact because the second present imperative θροεῖσθε picks up the discernment theme, not to be alarmed is proper discernment. Finally, the adversative ἀλλ' with the adverbial οὐπω and the absolute τὸ τέλος, provide the interpretive summary of the two different kinds of events reported from vv. 6-7, which are excluded from an association with the climatic τὸ τέλος. Deceivers and disasters are not the sign of the end.<sup>76</sup>

In v.8 γὰρ initially connects the events of v.7 and v.8.<sup>77</sup> The divine passive ἐγερθήσεται (v.8) is a fulcrum providing a cause for the violent stirrings of people and nature

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<sup>74</sup> Marxsen, Evangelist p. 173; Hooker, "Trial and Tribulation" p.86; Mann, Mark p.515.

<sup>75</sup> Gundry, "another imperative in the emphatic present tense" Mark p.738.

<sup>76</sup> This is "eine positive Antwort auf das (V.4) was V.8abc beschrieben wird, ist der Beginn der Wehen!" Lambrecht, Redaktion p.111.

<sup>77</sup> Verse 8 is more than a "proof text" (Gaston, Stone p.14) because in giving new material it connects additional events with those of v.7 preceding the end.

(σεισμοὶ/λιμοί). However the clause introduced by γὰρ is explanatory of the reason the disciples are hearing reports of wars, and so is subservient to the focus on the addressees, which is picked up in the absolute summary at the end of v.8.

The summary (ἀρχὴ ὠδίνων ταῦτα) encompasses events described from vv.5-8: ταῦτα includes the things mentioned in vv.7-8 because of the similarity of subject-matter i.e., events among people and in nature connected by γὰρ (v.8a). The parallelism between οὐπω τὸ τέλος and ἀρχὴ ὠδίνων defines the events mentioned negatively (*emphatically* not indicating the end),<sup>78</sup> and positively (indicating the beginning of the birthpangs but precluding the end). Ταῦτα includes the deceivers mentioned in v.6 because the ὅταν clause of v.7, though indefinite, places events in vv.6-8 in a specific temporal frame.<sup>79</sup> Thus Mark tightly controls how the deceivers and reports of warfare and nature catastrophes are to be

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<sup>78</sup> Hardly does ταῦτα "point to it (the end) and are a pledge of it" (Cranfield, "St. Mark 13" [7] p.289).

<sup>79</sup> *Contra* Gundry (Mark p.763), who ignores the impact of the discernment theme throughout vv.5-8 (see above) and is forced to admit that the possibility of deception by the deceivers could not constitute suffering described as ἀρχὴ ὠδίνων (p.738). Also Lambrecht, Redaktion for whom, δέ (v.5a) divides vv.5b-6 from vv.7-8, which means ταῦτα (v.8) is uninfluential on vv.5-6 (p.112 fn.5). Lambrecht posits an indirect answer to the question of v.4, found in vv.5b-6, and something of a direct negative answer in v.7 "noch *nicht* (V.7)."

Against this: (i) the singularity of τὸ σημεῖον is lost in the answer of vv.5-6. The deceivers' threat cannot be the parousia sign because they appear before the destruction of the city (vv.5-6) and precede the parousia (vv.21-22). (ii) The deceivers' threat relatively unaffected the disciples (who stand "outside" the many deceived v.6) in comparison to the severity of what the future holds (see vv.9-13,14-20). (iii) The sign concerns the destruction of the city (vv.1-2), while the deceivers are presented as a threat to the disciples not to the city. (iv) The imperatives βλέπετε and θροεῖσθε buttress the idea of proper discernment, which is reinforced by the absolute summary statement ἀρχὴ ὠδίνων (v.8c). Limiting ταῦτα (v.8c) to vv.7-8b ignores how δέ (v.7a) connects two equal parts (vv.5b-6,7-8). (v) It appears strange that Jesus would answer the sign request so briefly (vv.5b-6) and then move on to describe other relatively inconsequential matters in respect to the sign request (vv.7-8,9-13,14f.).

understood. The plural ταῦτα contrasts with the singular τὸ σημεῖον: The Markan Jesus has predicted events that are not the end-time trigger.

(b) Vv.9-13. A unit on betrayal begins in vv.9-13 based around the thrice repeated παραδιδόναι (vv.9,11,12). Compared to vv.5-8, vv.9-13 intensify the threat against the disciples because the adversative δὲ (v.9) focuses attention upon an inescapable predicament facing them, which is reinforced by the placement next to Βλέπετε of ὑμεῖς and the emphatic ἑαυτούς. Compared to its occurrence in v.5, Βλέπετε in v.9 intensifies the need for diligence ("Watch out lest anyone deceive you ... But you be especially on your guard they will hand you over").<sup>80</sup> The change from the subjunctive (πλανήσῃ v.5) to the indicative (παραδώσουσιν, δαρήσεσθε, σταθήσεσθε v.9) likewise sharpens the threat against them, and the possibility of deception by the πολλοὶ (v.6) or something heard about (ὅταν δὲ ἀκούσητε v.7) disappears in vv.9-13 and concludes with universal betrayal ὑπὸ πάντων v.13. The disciples will follow in the footsteps of Jesus' betrayal.<sup>81</sup> The durative force of the periphrastic future ἔσεσθε μισούμενοι (v.13a) stresses the trenchant opposition and the adversative δὲ (v.13b) introduces a succinct summary statement,<sup>82</sup> soberly counselling steadfastness in the light of the

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<sup>80</sup> Hooker, "Trial and Tribulation" p.86. Myers (Strong Man p.333) has no place for the intensifying βλέπετε command in v.9 over the one in v.5. Also Mann's contrast (Mark p.516) between vv.5-8 and vv. 9-13 is astray: by ignoring the impact of the βλέπετε command in v.5 on vv. 5-8, a false contrast is set up between "mere" observance and the need to now "be on your guard". Discernment was necessary in evaluating turmoil among nations and in nature, but it does not constitute the end (hence the translation "now be especially on your guard" is to be preferred).

<sup>81</sup> Παραδίδωμι "runs like a red thread from the imprisonment of John the Baptizer (1:14) through the betrayal, arrest, trial, and crucifixion of Jesus (3:19; 9:31; 10:33[bis]; 14:10,11,18,21,41,42,44; 15:1,10,15) to the persecution of the disciples (13:9,11,12)" Gundry, Mark p.764.

<sup>82</sup> Marxsen, Evangelist p.177.

intensified opposition forces.<sup>83</sup> Similarly, προμεριμνᾶτε in v.11 parallels the imperatival warning in v.7 (both imperatives follow Βλέπετε warnings and temporal clauses): θροεῖσθε (v.7) calls for a calm response to events not affecting the disciples, while προμεριμνᾶτε (v.11) calls for calmness in the midst of betrayal.<sup>84</sup> No indication is found that events in vv.9-13 are the sign request (v.4) indicating the parousia's nearness, but rather constitute the general lot of all Christians as inescapable suffering goes hand in hand with the gospel proclamation right up to the parousia.<sup>85</sup>

If the end is delayed until the gospel is preached πρῶτον<sup>86</sup> then the sign request could be answered at this point, but nothing in v.10 suggests the brief πρῶτον is other than a passing reference to "first *before the end*" (v.7) i.e., a statement stressing that preaching happens before the end, occurring essentially in the period marked as ἀρχὴ ὠδίνων ταῦτα (v.8), which may explain Mark's brief reference (πρῶτον) since the point has already been made twice.<sup>87</sup> Further, πρῶτον cannot be the reference point of the sign request in v.4 because the context of vv.9-13 is the fact of persecution which the disciples will experience as they evangelize the nations. The emphasis is upon readiness to expect and endure persecution and not upon completion of the task of evangelization as the end-time sign. Similarly in vv.14-23, nothing is said about

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<sup>83</sup> Gundry, Mark p.740.

<sup>84</sup> This is not to suggest that vv.9-13 chronologically follow vv.5-8. Verses 9-13 have long been recognized as indicative of the general experience of early Christians (cf., 4:13f.).

<sup>85</sup> By ignoring the impact of the sign request in v.4, Glazier considers vv.9-13 the most important teaching "having been imparted" Method p.336 (also Geddert, Watchwords p.216).

<sup>86</sup> So Glazier, Method p.332.

<sup>87</sup> Lambrecht, Redaktion p.128; Haenchen, Weg p.442.

evangelization as initiating the end-time (see below). The horrors depicted in vv.14f. (especially v.19) stem from persecution not preaching. In fact, little is said overtly in ch.13 (except for v.10) about evangelization *per se* and the focus of v.10 is endurance in the midst of persecution, while mission continues. The structuring of vv.9-13 around the three-fold betrayal motif (vv.9,11,12) demonstrates this focus. Verse 10 states the necessity of preaching to all nations "first" or before the end occurs. No statement is made pinpointing the end's arrival after the nations have heard the gospel. Elsewhere, the end is preceded by reference to a period of unparalleled persecution (vv.19,24). In addition, throughout places where Paul's letters and the book of Acts circulated, the evangelization of the nations had "already achieved fulfillment (Rom 1:5,8-17;11:11-36;15:14-21,26; Eph 2:11-3:21; Col 1:6,23,27; 1Tim 3:16)."<sup>88</sup> Thus by the time Mark wrote his gospel many Christians had already accepted the notion of the gospel's universal proclamation. For Mark to have made this idea the key sign request, surely the brief "first" would have been solidified by additional elements in v.10 indicating something more than a divine injunction of the necessity of preaching. We conclude, neither preaching nor suffering is an indication of the end's nearness.<sup>89</sup>

### 2.3. Τὸ σημεῖον and Verse 14

At this juncture the subject-matter of the text changes dramatically. Far from expecting and enduring persecution (vv.9-13), or simply having external events occur which relatively do not affect them (vv.5b-8), disciples in Judaea are pointedly urged to abandon everything and flee. This direct injunction to flight, coupled with the demand to immediately recognize the significance of the statement (vv.14-20), has led scholars to posit that the sign request in v.4 is

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<sup>88</sup> Gundry, Mark p.739.

<sup>89</sup> Hooker, "Trial and Tribulation" p.89.



answered at v.14.<sup>90</sup>

ὅταν δὲ ἴδητε τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως ἐστηκότα ὅπου οὐ δεῖ, ὁ ἀναγινώσκων νοεῖτω, τότε οἱ ἐν τῇ Ἰουδαίᾳ φευγέτωσαν εἰς τὰ ὄρη "But when you see the abomination of desolation standing where he\it ought not, let the reader understand, then let those in Judaea flee into the mountains." (v.14).

The injunction φευγέτωσαν in v.14 starkly contrasts to the passivity of discerning the nature of external events (vv.5-8) and enduring persecution (vv.9-13).<sup>91</sup> The threat envisaged by the cryptic τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως warrants immediate flight. A *crescendo*, building from vv.5-13, is now reached.<sup>92</sup> From the appearance of messianic deceivers (vv.5-6) and striving among nations with natural disasters (vv.7-8) to personal betrayal and persecution (vv.9-13), the disciples' predicament now escalates. By ignoring the influence of the temporal clause in v.11 in structuring vv.5-22, Myers<sup>93</sup> fails to give v.14 its weight. By making the temporal clauses in vv.7 and 14 two equal subsections, no weight is given to the significance of the temporal clause in v.14 (with its temporal specification τότε) over that in v.7 as Myers concedes "(v.14) obviously concerns something crucial to the historical moment" (p.335).

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<sup>90</sup> E.g., Pesch, Naherwartungen p.291; Lambrecht, Redaktion pp.164-165; Hooker, "Trial and Tribulation" p.89; Ford, Desolation p.145; Glazier, Method p.336.

<sup>91</sup> Gundry wrongly limits this passivity to vv.9-13 (Mark p.741) but as we have shown it extends through vv.5-13. Wenham ("Mark 13: Part 2") agrees with the heightened significance of vv.14f ("the waiting is over, and action begins") over vv.5-13 ("a preliminary waiting period" p.7). *Contra* Cousar ("Eschatology") who, by failing to recognize that the caveat placed on vv.5-8 in respect to the onset of the end-time, does not occur in v.14, relegates events described from v.14f. to "simply ... incidents which must take place *before* the parousia of the Son of Man" p.324.

<sup>92</sup> So Marxsen, Evangelist p.183; Lambrecht, Redaktion p.147; Ford, Desolation p.145.

<sup>93</sup> Strong Man p.331.

According to his schema, the two halves of the section (vv.5-23) begin at vv. 7 and 14 so vv.9-13 find no place except subsumed under the temporal clause in v.7, which ignores the impact of **Βλέπετε** and the change in content in vv.9-14. Thus v.14 simply begins a further subsection of equal weight with the one at v.7.<sup>94</sup>

2.3.1. The conjunctive adverb **τότε** (v.14b) provides a well-defined temporal exactness which is emphasized by the specifying of the subject (**οἱ ἐν τῇ Ἰουδαίᾳ**) of the following imperative. The reader's attention is arrested because the two previous parallel temporal clauses (vv.7,11) lack this specificity as a comparison shows:

"*Whenever* .. hear .. do not be alarmed .. the end is not yet" v.7

"*Whenever* .. handed over .. do not worry .. what you will speak" v.11

"*Whenever* .. see .. let the reader understand .. *then* let (those in Judaea) flee" v.14<sup>95</sup>

Contained within the three units stemming from v.4 (vv.5-8,9-13,14-23 see below) these temporal clauses are at the centre of the framework of vv.5-14. Grayston<sup>96</sup> recognizes the importance of these temporal clauses in the narrative but fails to evaluate their relationship with each other in vv.5-23. For example, surely to state with respect to the temporal clauses in vv.7,11,14,21, that the "whole drive of this advice is that Christians are to preserve an attitude of detachment in the critical situation" is hardly true in v.14. An injunction to flight is hardly

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<sup>94</sup> Also Lambrecht Redaktion, who categorizes vv.7-8 and 14-20 as "War" subsections p.18f. ; also Glazier, Method p.327; Benoît Standaert, L'évangile selon Marc Commentaire (Paris: Les Éditions Du Cerfs), 1983 p.94.

<sup>95</sup> The impact of the temporal clause in v.14 over those in vv.7 and 11 prohibits Klostermann's view (that v.7 is the initial answer to the question of v.4a), see "Das Markusevangelium" Handbuch zum Neuen Testament (H. Lietzmann 4th ed.) Vol 3 (Tübingen: Mohr), 1950 p.167.

<sup>96</sup> "Study of Mark 13" p.376.

"detachment." Our interpretation of these three temporal clauses explains why the "pace of the discourse" (Hooker)<sup>97</sup> alters in v.14. Lambrecht<sup>98</sup> overemphasizes the relationship between the temporal clauses in vv.7 and 14 and so finds no place for the clause in v.11. These clauses are fundamental because of the following:

First, the imperatives in vv.7 and 11 pick up the discernment motif in the βλέπετε command in vv.5 and 9 (no other imperatives appear in the intervening verses of both sections) by advocating actions demonstrating discernment i.e., by refusing to be alarmed by external events and by being unworried at responding in the midst of persecution. The third temporal clause in v.14 however intensifies the discernment motif by preceding two imperatives (νοεῖτω/φευγέτωσαν) advocating a blunt injunction to take immediate flight and not reassurance to remain calm (as with the imperatives in vv.7 and 11). The placement of the two imperatives, following the temporal clause in v.14, accentuate this necessary action over the actions urged by the two previous imperatives (vv.7,11); instead of a cautious response indicating events are divinely controlled, the injunction to flight suggests the opposite. In fact God will shorten the days to remain in control (see below on vv.19-20). The only recourse for those caught in Judaea is flight. By intruding into the narrative with his parenthetical ὁ ἀναγινώσκων νοεῖτω, Mark punctuates the injunction to flight.

Specificity in v.14 is highlighted by ἴδητε which, in comparison to ἀκούσητε signifying distant external events in the temporal clause in v.7, points to something in visibly

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<sup>97</sup> "Trial and Tribulation" p.89.

<sup>98</sup> Redaktion p.148; similarly Pesch, Naherwartungen pp.125,139; Brandenburger, Markus 13 p.165.

close proximity<sup>99</sup> necessitating an immediate response.

Second, the clauses are fundamental vehicles for expressing syntactically the developing end-time frame in vv.5-14. No time reference appears in vv.5-6 but in v.7 the temporal clause provides such a point. Bunched together following the imperative *θροεῖσθε* is the explanation for calmness: events are divinely determined (*δεῖ γενέσθαι*) and do not signal the end -- *ἀλλ' οὐπω τὸ τέλος* qualifies *δεῖ γενέσθαι*. The ground of this explanation occurs in v.8: the "divine passive" *ἐγερθήσεται* further grounds the events in vv.6-8 in a controlled schema and the unit concludes with a definitive time reference affirming what is stated negatively in the parallel *ἀλλ' οὐπω τὸ τέλος*, while positively the events (*ταῦτα*) of vv.5-8 are *ἀρχὴ ὠδίνων*, the beginning of birth pangs. Similarly in v.11 the temporal clause occurs immediately after a statement explanatory of why the disciples must endure persecution -- the gospel must be preached (*δεῖ κηρυχθῆναι τὸ εὐαγγέλιον*) first (*πρῶτον*), before *τὸ τέλος* of v.7. Gundry understands *δεῖ* (v.10) as stressing "the certainty of world-wide evangelism."<sup>100</sup> But it does more than this. It places the disciples squarely in relation to the end-time frame as *πρῶτον* (i.e., before the end v.7),<sup>101</sup> and *εἰς τέλος* imply (the latter phrase indicates *τὸ τέλος* in v.7 because

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<sup>99</sup> *ὄρα*ν occurs in 9:1,4,13:26,14:62,16:7 in conjunction with the perception of weighty revelatory events. Note Lambrecht, "Auch aus einem Vergleich mit V.7 erhellt, wie V.14 ein crescendo vorliegt. Die Anzeichen dafür sind:

- "sehen" besagt mehr als nur "hören";
- der Befehl greift mehr ein als ein Verbot;
- auch ist das, was gesehen wird, erschrecken
- der als das, was gehört wird;
- das *τότε*, welches nur in V.14 steht, er höht die Spannung" Redaktion p.148.

<sup>100</sup> Mark p.739.

<sup>101</sup> Lambrecht, Redaktion p.141; Gaston, Stone pp.20-21; Hooker, "Trial and Tribulation" pp.87-88; Hengel, Studies p.25; Beasley-Murray, Last Days p.403.

the context is the events of the last generation see 2.4.4.). *Contra* Taylor,<sup>102</sup> it appears a moot point whether the end is in view or complete endurance presumably until death.<sup>103</sup> Both turmoil among nations and in nature, and proclaiming the gospel in the midst of societal rejection, go together as events which must happen before the end comes and do not constitute the sign of the beginning of the end.

Third, finally the temporal clause in v.14 pinpoints something definite, observable, a momentous event (contrasting with the anarthrous signs in vv.7-8)<sup>104</sup> signifying to the disciples an event which triggers the beginning of the end-time.<sup>105</sup>

Translating δὲ (v.14a) as an adversative anticipates the force of τότε and so has more impact structurally than the subordinate conjunctions δὲ and καὶ in vv.7 and 11. In vv.7,11 the influence of δὲ and καὶ extends to v.8 and v.12 respectively, while the adversative δὲ in v.14 introduces a distinct narrative shift in the command to flee that extends to v.19. This contrasts with the relative passivity of hearing about external events (v.7) and "enduring normal persecution"<sup>106</sup> (vv.9-13). Because δὲ in v.7 connects two threats in vv.6 and 7-8 of equal rank

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<sup>102</sup> Mark p.510.

<sup>103</sup> Julius Schniewind, Das Evangelium nach Markus (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht), 1952 p.274.

<sup>104</sup> So Ford, Desolation p.146.

<sup>105</sup> Cranfield, ("St. Mark 13" [7] p.287), by titling vv.5-23 as "The End is not yet" or "The Characteristics of the Last Times" or "The Signs of the End," fails to recognize the impact of v.14 in the narrative. Contrast Gundry, Mark p.733, who rightly differentiates vv.5-13 from v.14 on the basis of what signals the parousia's nearness i.e., the events depicted in vv.14f.

<sup>106</sup> Gundry, Mark p.741.

subsumed under βλέπετε of v.5, we translate it "and" and not as an adversative.<sup>107</sup> No sense of contrast is needed in v.7a to accentuate the need to not be alarmed because βλέπετε already has introduced the need for the disciples to be wary about future events. Further, in vv.7 and 11 δὲ and καὶ are associated with prohibitions (μὴ θροεῖσθε and μὴ προμεριμνᾶτε respectively), while in v.14 δὲ is followed by a positive instruction (φευγέτωσαν). Therefore translating δὲ in v.14 as an adversative brings out the contrast in the imperatives found in vv.5-13 and v.14f. The general tenor of the statements on international rivalry and upheavals in nature in vv.7-8, as well as the fact that knowledge of these matters comes to the disciples from afar, suggest these events are minor threats in comparison to the specific events combined with the note of urgency found in v.14.

The verb ὁρᾶν is further defined by the parenthesis ὁ ἀναγινώσκων νοεῖτω which interrupts the flow of the protasis-apodosis construction, so ἰδεῖν and νοεῖν signify a cognizance beyond simple observation, rather a realization of its import. This is emphasized syntactically by the grammatical anomaly of a neuter noun with the definite article τὸ βδέλυγμα, modified by a masculine participle ἐστηκότα. Mark has so shaped vv.5-13 that σημεῖον (v.4) is targeted to v.14<sup>108</sup> -- in particular, to the clause introduced by τότε, (which provides an unmistakable injunction to act on the appearance of τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως), stemming from τότε and the singular τὸ σημεῖον in v.4.<sup>109</sup> The saying in v.14

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<sup>107</sup> *Contra* Lambrecht for whom δὲ in v.7 signifies a change in subject-matter from "Kommenden" in vv.5-6 to a more overt answer regarding the sign request Redaktion p.105.

<sup>108</sup> "It is noticeable that the disciples do not ask for a mapping out of the events of the end-time but for a single sign in their midst that God's purpose is about to be consummated" Anderson, Mark, p.291.

<sup>109</sup> So Marxsen, Evangelist, p.162; Glazier, Method p.336.

is the specific reference point for τὸ σημεῖον in vv.5-14.<sup>110</sup>

#### 2.4. Launching the End-Time

Verses 15-27 unfold a series of events structurally dependent upon the sign triggered in v.14, which makes them subservient to that verse, because all events in those verses find their reference point in the exactitude v.14 provides in launching the end-time proper.

2.4.1. The temporal connective τότε in v.14b, predicated upon the revelation given in v.14a, introduces a series of injunctions reaching to v.19 which makes vv.15-18 dependent upon the injunction to flight in v.14. The thrice repeated δε<sup>111</sup> (vv.15,17,18)<sup>112</sup> introduces a sequence of four warnings localized<sup>113</sup> by the threat mentioned in v.14.<sup>114</sup> Similarly in contrast to vv.5-13

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<sup>110</sup> Among those seeing τὸ σημεῖον (v.4) answered at v.14: Pesch, Naherwartungen p.291; Lambrecht, Redaktion pp.164-165; Hooker, "Trial and Tribulation" p.89; Ford Desolation p.145; A.Y. Collins, Beginning p.86; Hengel, Studies p.19; John Bowman, The Gospel of Mark The New Christian Jewish Passover Haggadah Studia Post. Biblica (ed.) P.A.H. DuBoer (Leiden: E.J. Brill), 1965 pp.245; G.R. Beasley-Murray, "Second Thoughts on the Composition of Mark 13" NTS 29 (1983), p.416; Glazier, Method p.336. Cf., Riley, Making of Mark: "the discourse which follows (vv.5-37) provides no answer to the disciples' question when the temple would be destroyed" (p.153). Riley gives no reason for this statement and does not consider that the sign request in v.4 is answered at v.14. Geddert's refusal to make v.14 the particular sign of v.4 leads him to acknowledge the seriousness of the injunction to flight ("Why counsel flight when everywhere else in the entire Gospel flight indicates discipleship failure" Watchwords p.218) but without adequate reason: that Mark is simply counselling the abandonment of the Jewish temple system (p.220) fails to do justice to the injunctions to make a speedy escape.

<sup>111</sup> Gundry wrongly takes the δε's in vv.15,17,18 as adversatives (Mark p.743) which does more than "distinguish the various possibilities for the elect living in Judaea". It enhances the impact of v.14b by exploring the specific instances necessitating flight with the resultant dangers.

<sup>112</sup> The subject of γένηται in v.18 is the flight of v.14b (so Matt 24:20) and not the θλίψις of v.19 because attempting to flee from a world wide catastrophe in any of the climatic cycles is irrelevant (see below).

<sup>113</sup> Events described in vv.15-18 occur within the environs of Judaea: the strong spatial imagery connoted by the prepositions in vv.15-16 roots the danger in Judaea for οἱ ἐν τῇ Ἰουδαίᾳ -- the locative use of ἐν (v.14c) denotes individuals in a settled existence,

which contain only two imperatives excluding the **Βλέπετε** heading vv.5-8,9-13, vv.14b-18 contain five imperatives<sup>115</sup> which structurally are dependent upon the sign given in v.14 (**φευγέτωσαν** v.14b, **καταβάτω**, **εἰσελθάτω** v.15, **ἐπιστρεψάτω** v.16, **προσεύχεσθε** v.18). These imperatives continue the desperate injunction to flight in v.14b by counselling the quickest possible escape, which differs considerably from the relative passivity inherent in two imperatives in vv.5,7. The sharpness of the imperatival address is abruptly changed in v.17 to an exclamation of foreboding in the declarative mode which has the effect of "slowing down" the narrative -- from the urgency of entreaty to the cumbersome nature of lament -- the narrative *movement* goes from intense activity ("flee", "do not enter", "do not return" vv.14b-16) to a solemn lament reinforcing the dire predicament ("Woe to those pregnant or suckling infants" v.17). The lament in v.17 punctuates the danger for those in Judaea. In vv.14b-18 the immediacy and danger of encumbered flight predominates. From vv.14b-17 an ensconced spatial and temporal existence is connoted by seven prepositions in vv.14b-17: **ἐν** (vv.14c,17a,17b)<sup>116</sup> roots individuals in Judaea caught up in pregnancy and nursing in a

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ensconced in their homes (**ἐπὶ τοῦ δώματος** v.15), with their livelihood (**εἰς τὸν ἀγρὸν** v.16), unable to remove anything (**ἐκ τῆς οἰκίας αὐτοῦ** v.15/**εἰς τὰ ὀπίσω** v.16).

<sup>114</sup> **Καὶ** in v.16 co-equally connects two "mehr symmetrisch" parallel statements in vv.15-16, Lambrecht (Redaktion pp.158-159).

<sup>115</sup> The movement from the third person (vv.14b-17) to second person plural (v.18) shows that the event in v.14 continues to apply to those in Judaea. In fact **προσεύχεσθε** (v.18) is coupled with the second person **ἴδητε** (v.14) which begins the command to flee. However, the third person verbs (plural in v.14b and singular in vv.15,16) localize the flight to those living in Judaea, which means others see (v.14a) but do not take flight. But because all disciples are called to see (v.14a) then all must realize the import of the appearance of **τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως**.

<sup>116</sup> **ἐν τῇ Ἰουδαίᾳ; ἐν γαστρὶ ἐχούσαις καὶ ταῖς θηλαζούσαις; ἐν ἐκείναις ταῖς ἡμέραις.**



designated time (cf., vv.19,20a,20b,24) triggered by a particular event (v.14a); ἐπὶ and ἐκ (vv.15a,15b)<sup>117</sup> indicate those at leisure or prayer snug in their belongings; εἰς (v.16a,16b)<sup>118</sup> anchors the Judaeans in their work. However the sanctuary of settled existence is torn apart as Judaeans suddenly assume refugee status. Settled life crumbles to nought with the temple's destruction and safety is found only εἰς τὰ ὄρη (v.14b). Thus the injunctions in vv.14b-18 are dependent upon the climactic trigger event in v.14, τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως, which exists in the heart of Judaea, in the Jerusalem temple. The threat originates not from outside but from within the city uprooting settled existence and causing flight away from Jerusalem.

In summary contrary to Pesch, instead of concentricity, the discourse at this point has moved to peak at v.14 with vv.14-18 constituting "der Herz und Mittelstück" of the discourse,<sup>119</sup> exactly at v.14. From the relative inertia of cautiously watching external events (vv.5-8), to perseverance in being embroiled in unavoidable persecution (vv.9-13), the tone changes in v.14b to striking injunctions posing a danger greater than all previous threats.<sup>120</sup> In view of the dangers of vv.9-13 this is surprising and therefore all the more significant.

2.4.2. The intensifying of the turmoil in vv.19-23<sup>121</sup> only occurs because of the trigger set in

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<sup>117</sup> ἐπὶ τοῦ δώματος; ἐκ τῆς οἰκίας αὐτοῦ.

<sup>118</sup> εἰς τὸν ἀγρὸν; εἰς τὰ ὀπίσω.

<sup>119</sup> Verses 9-13 "sind der Herz und Mittelstück ihres ersten Teils. Der Struktur der Rede entsprechen finden wir hier das Schwergewicht paränetischer Aussagen, wie durch die nach drückliche Einleitung auffällig betont ist: Βλέπετε δὲ ὑμεῖς ἑαυτοῦς" Naherwartungen p.125.

<sup>120</sup> A point made in respect to vv.5-14 by Gundry who documents "a lengthy double climax in the coming of the Son of man (v 24-31, 32-37)" Mark p.756.

<sup>121</sup> Whether the language of vv.19f. is understood so that the localized Judaeian conflict is broadened ("L'horizon s'étend à toute l'histoire du monde" M. J. Lagrange, Évangile Selon Saint Marc [Paris: J. Gabalda], 1929 p.343), or metaphorically as simply descriptive of

motion in v.14.<sup>122</sup> From the series of injunctions from vv.14-18 a shift occurs in v.19, in the change from direct address to an impersonal elevated declarative announcement introduced by the explanatory γάρ, which fortifies the requirement to flee: "(For) in those days there will be such tribulation which has not happened from the beginning of creation which God created until now and never will be." The phrase αἱ ἡμέραι ἐκεῖναι (cf., τὰς ἡμέρας v.20a,b) harks back to the days mentioned in v.17 which encompass the location specified from v.14.<sup>123</sup> The article αἱ, combined with the demonstrative ἐκεῖναι, specify the days mentioned in v.17 while enlarging them from pinpointing an action (ἐν v.17) to describing a period of θλίψις (v.19), which summarizes the sundry events depicted in v.14b-18. The increase in turmoil (v.19-20), reinforced by Mark's repetitive statement that the severity of the tribulation necessitates the direct intervention of the κύριος, contrasts sharply with Mark's delimitation of the turmoil in vv.5-8 "... the prediction of an incomparably extreme tribulation ... will confirm that things have progressed beyond the `beginning of birthpangs.'"<sup>124</sup> This increase is triggered by the first and crucial event in v.14, rooted in the designated time period.

The parallelism of speech between Jesus and the deceivers of vv.5-6 (v.5 Ἰησοῦς ... λέγειν ... πλανήση ... v.6 πολλοὶ ... λέγοντες ... πλανήσουσιν), stresses their competing equality of authority. In v.21 the shift in naming the deceivers as ψευδόχριστοι καὶ

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the conflict initiated in v.14, is a moot point at this stage in our argument.

<sup>122</sup> "Most of those who hold to the "Little Apocalypse Theory" define this unit as vv.14-23" A.Y. Collins, *Beginning* p.83. That the impact of the sign given in v.14 extends to at least v.20 is testified by the *Little Apocalypse* advocates who make vv.14-20 the central core of the apocalypse (see Boring, *Prophets* p.168. fn2).

<sup>123</sup> So Ford, *Desolation* p.68; Gundry, *Mark* p.743.

<sup>124</sup> Gundry, *Mark* p.743.

ψευδοπροφήται with their σημεῖα καὶ τέρατα unequivocally marks them as competitors of Jesus (v.4). The false christs/prophets' appearance and activity loom under the parousia as the adversative Ἄλλὰ brings out in v.24, which makes them subservient to the Markan Jesus.<sup>125</sup> The deceivers/false christs/prophets function as initial elements in introducing a double *crescendo* in ch.13:5-27 (see 2.4.5.) which highlights their pervading presence in Mark's narrative. Their heightened activity in vv.21-23 is due to the narrative impact of the appearance of τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως, hence their characteristics are influenced by his appearance.

On the one hand, their activity is more pronounced over the deceivers' activity in vv.5-6, which indicates an intensification of their threat. Πλανᾶω (v.6) acquires a perfective preposition ἀπο- (v.22) which heightens the danger. In addition the τότε of v.21 fixes the false christs/prophets in the time "of those days" (vv.17,19, 20a,20b), cf., τότε in v.14b with its link to the ὅταν clause which defines the time to flee i.e., the "same time period described in vv.14-20"<sup>126</sup> which separates them from the deceivers in vv.5-6 and puts their sign activity in that

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<sup>125</sup> So Wenham ("Mark 13: Part 2" p.7). "Ἴδε (v.21) should be given its imperatival force because, stated twice, it strengthens the following temporal adverbs (ὡδε and ἐκεῖ). See Doudna, Ἴδε "tends in Mark's usage to retain its imperative force, even where it has something of the quality of an interjection, e.g. 'See! [this is] my mother!' It apparently never becomes a mere injection like ἴδοῦ in Marcan usage, with the meaning of 'lo!' or 'behold!'" John Charles Doudna, The Greek of the Gospel of Mark SBL Monograph Series 12 (Philadelphia: SBL), 1961 p.65. Also Pryke, "'ΙΔΕ and 'ΙΔΟΥ" NTS 14 (1967-8). The doublet "Ἴδε and the contrasting adverbs bracketing ὁ Ἐριστός function as directional pointers to the location where the false messiahs proclaim their identity: "Eben, dass man von diesem Messias sagen kann: 'hier ist er! dort ist er!', beweist, dass es ein falscher Messias ist. Der Messias=Weltrichter kommt so, dass dies 'hier' und 'dort' nie von ihm gelten kann" Julius Schniewind, Das Evangelium nach Markus (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht), 1952 p.173. The false prophets' origin, location and activity is earthly; in contrast Jesus will also be seen (ὄψονται 13:26, ὄψεσθε 14:62, cf. "Ἴδε/"Ἴδε v.21), but his coming (τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐρχόμενον 13:26,14:62, cf., ἐλεύσονται v.6) is from heaven (ἐν νεφέλαις, μετὰ τῶν νεφελῶν τοῦ οὐρανοῦ, 13:26,14:62).

<sup>126</sup> A.Y. Collins, Beginning: "The *tote* ("at that time") of v 21 does not refer to a new time and thus introduce a new unit. Rather, it raises a new issue with regard to the same

period marked off by the sign Jesus has given.<sup>127</sup> On the other hand, that Mark understands both sets of deceivers in vv.5-6,20-21 as cut from the same cloth is seen by the way he begins and ends the whole narrative on terrestrial upheavals with first, a command to be alert based upon the complete knowledge that Jesus has given the disciples: in v.23 προείρηκα, a pointed direct address to the disciples,<sup>128</sup> encompasses vv.4-22 ("I have told you all things beforehand" and cf., the command to watch in v.5 with that in v.23).<sup>129</sup> Second, the deceivers in vv.21-22 resemble those in vv.5-6.<sup>130</sup> Though Mark places their activity in different periods he

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time period described in vv 14-20" (p.83). So Ford, Desolation p.172; Gundry, Mark p.743.

<sup>127</sup> Brandenburger (Markus 13 p.149, also Hooker "Trial and Tribulation" p.91) connects them with the Antichrist in v.14 (τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως). But against this: if v.14 refers to the Antichrist it is anticlimactic to have false christs (v.22) in the same period. The false christs are proclaimed by others as rival christs to Jesus, whereas the appearance of the Antichrist would render their activity and that of their followers as irrelevant.

<sup>128</sup> Cf., Taylor: "This verse differs markedly from those which precede it (14-22) in that it is addressed directly to the four disciples mentioned in 3. Both ὑμεῖς and ὑμῖν are emphatic. The second person is used in 14 (ἴδητε) and in 21 (ὑμῖν), but, apart from these sayings, 14-21 is expressed in the third" (Mark p.516).

<sup>129</sup> Lambrecht, Redaktion p.171.

<sup>130</sup> The deceivers in vv.5-6 and 21-22 are similar to each other in their acts of deception. Ἐγὼ εἶμι (v.6) is the idiomatic "It's me" (cf., 6:50 in contrast to 14:62) which, combined with the proclamation of ψευδοχριστοὶ ('Ἴδε ὧδε ὁ Χριστὸς Ἴδω ἐκεῖ v.21) indicates that the deceivers' coming in vv.5b-6,21-22 is founded on the name "Christ." Cf., Gundry: "...as coming and saying that they are the Christ just as he came and said he was the Christ" (Mark p.737), *contra* W. Grundmann, Das Evangelium nach Markus (Berlin: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt), 1965 p.263; T.J. Weeden, Mark -- Traditions in Conflict (Philadelphia: Fortress Press), 1971 pp.88-89; Kelber, Kingdom p.115. These deceivers (vv.5-6,21-22) exist as outsiders as the πολλοὶ deceiving πολλοὺς (v.6) and as outside τοὺς ἐκλεκτοῦς (v.22). Jesus uses the third person when describing them (vv.6,22) which separates them as a group from the disciples. He does not say "many of you will come" Gibson, "Jesus' Refusal" pp.48-49; cf., Ernest Best, Gospel as Story p.48; Hooker, "Trial and Tribulation" p.85. Their claim directly rivals the Markan claim concerning the good news Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ. See 1:1. Jesus is later proclaimed by Peter as the true Χριστὸς 8:29, a name which Jesus accepts (ἐν ὀνόματι ὅτι Χριστοῦ ἔστε 9:41 and cf., Jesus' own

understands these individuals as essentially one in their deceptions pervading the whole end-time period, from the beginning of the birthpangs to the parousia. The plurality of deceivers in v.6 ("many will come") indicates their strength and suggests that their activity will not suddenly "stop" when the end-time sign occurs and the deceivers in vv.22-23 "start" their activity. Rather the many deceivers will continue their duplicity until the parousia. An increase in the magnitude of the tribulation (vv.19-20) involves a similar escalation in the deceivers' activity who are now referred to as false christs/prophets.

After exegeting vv.24-27 we will be in a position to see the relationship between vv.5-6, 21-22 and v.14 clearly.

2.4.3. Finally the occurrence of the events described in vv.24-27 is dependent upon the trigger event in v.14 initiating events culminating in the coming of the SM. The reappearance of ἐν ἐκείναις ταῖς ἡμέραις (v.24, see vv.17,19,20a,20b) connects events in v.24f. with the time initiated from the sign in v.14. This is because the specificity demanded by the preposition ἐν links v.24f. with the time previously mentioned and so roots vv.24b-27 in the period initiated by the sign in v.14. Geddert rightly points out the uncertainty inherent in seeing a temporal connection between vv.14-23 and vv.24f., but by failing to give weight to the appearance of τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως as a sign heralding the end-time proper, errs in postulating

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proclamation 'Εγὼ εἶμι when asked by the Jerusalem leaders Σὺ εἶ ὁ Χριστός; 14:61-62). As outsiders the deceivers proclaim the nearness of the time of deliverance. Significantly in 9:39 ἐπὶ τῷ ὀνόματι μου and reading ἐν ὀνοματί on the basis Ν Α Β C \* k l II\* Ψ v.41, we notice that followers (outside of the disciples' circle) using Jesus' name and questioned by the disciples are vouchsafed by Jesus as authentic disciples, that is, insiders, because they do not claim to be Χριστός, but out of respect for Jesus' authority, perform miracles in his name (v.39), and by offering sustenance to the select disciples are recognized as belonging Χριστοῦ (v.41). In neither case do these "followers" present a rival Christ to the disciples. In contrast those in 13:5b-6, 21-22 do and are therefore outsiders.

deliberate ambiguity by Mark.<sup>131</sup> Mark does link the tribulation period with the appearance of the SM but leaves the exact time unspecified or openended<sup>132</sup> (in contrast to the sign in v.14), though circumscribed as happening in ἡ γενεὰ αὕτη (v.30). Μετὰ occurs temporally<sup>133</sup> because the twice used ἐκείνη in v.24 recalls a specified occasion and time, namely the appearance of τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως (v.14) which begins a new time-frame (ἐν ἐκείναις ταῖς ἡμέραις v.17, cf., especially vv.19,20). In v.24 the contrast is between vv.14-23 and what is to come, hence the strong adversative Ἀλλὰ and the specification that the cosmic upheavals belong in the jurisdiction of "those days," but at the closure of the severe tribulation. The focus shifts at a point in time, hence the temporal sense of μετὰ, to different subject-matter.<sup>134</sup> Therefore vv.24-25 constitute further cosmic events<sup>135</sup> but with v.26 bringing a

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<sup>131</sup> According to Geddert, Mark is "completely uncertain" of any connection (Watchwords p.229).

<sup>132</sup> So Gundry, Mark p.782.

<sup>133</sup> *Contra* Gundry, Mark p.782.

<sup>134</sup> Gundry (Mark p.782), Lambrecht (Redaktion p.174), Lane (Mark p.473), and Beasley-Murray (Last Days p.421), attempt to posit v.23 as the closure to the answer of the question in v.4, but this ignores the connective link of the two prepositional phrases in v.24 with vv.5-23 (e.g., Beasley-Murray completely ignores the connection of ἐν ἐκείναις ταῖς ἡμέραις in v.24 with vv.17,19,20a, 20b pp.422-423) and makes the discourse disjunctive, with vv.24-27 irrelevant to the request in v.4b in respect to a sign indicating the nearness of the end. Verses 24-27 describe that end.

<sup>135</sup> Certainly vv. 24-27 are not a pictorial representation of the destruction of the city (France, Jesus p.234.). Verse 14 is descriptive of the agony of people produced by the appearance of τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως, v.24f. is the vindication of the elect. OT usage of cosmic catastrophic language (e.g., Isa 10:34:4) cannot singularly bind NT interpretation, especially considering that NT writers understood the coming of the SM in clouds as literal (Act 1:9-11; 1Thess 4:15-17). It has frequently been argued that to interpret the disruption of the heavenly bodies in an overtly literal manner is a mistake (e.g., G.C.B. Caird, The Language and Imagery of the Bible [Philadelphia: Westminster], 1980 pp.110-117). Myers (Strong Man pp.338f.) equates a literal expectation of cosmic catastrophe as a looking for signs, something expressly forbidden (13:32). Instead the

closure of a completed period of intense suffering (v.20),<sup>136</sup> or goal to which the world is moving. Verses 24f. are neither the climatic point of vv. 5-27 (Taylor, Cousar, Gundry),<sup>137</sup> nor the second of two signs (Hooker, Collins),<sup>138</sup> nor the one climactic sign

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disruption is "mythical time", "not conceived of chronologically (chronos) but archetypically (kairos)" in the sense that believers are encouraged to make the appropriate choice "in the historical struggle between fundamentally differing social visions." Myers' reduction of empirical statements into existential demands is indicative of the presuppositions of his own political reading of the gospel which is anathema to an eschatological perspective. Existential decision in ch. 13 does not preclude chronological time, but is made on the basis of it -- as the temporal connectives ὅταν vv.7,14 and τότε v.14, the mixture of terrestrial and cosmic crises (wars, earthquakes, famines, and cosmic upheavals, given without any explanation of a shift from literal to symbolic interpretation), and the blanket statement circumscribing the time of the manifestation of the empirical coming of the SM (13:30), show. The problem over the incompatibility of the earth's existence without the sun's stability suffers from the fallacy of reading the text in the light of post-Copernican reality. Probably most readers expected end-time events to happen but were without an undue consideration of the issues of science involved. Certainly, the cosmic signs "should not be treated as scientific or technological data" (Glazier, Method p.339), but neither are they to be reinterpreted symbolically to the point where they are removed from any historical connection.

<sup>136</sup> So Wenham, "Mark 13: Part 2" p.8.

<sup>137</sup> Mark p.517, "Eschatology" p.332, Mark p.756. Cousar posits that Mark took "apocalyptic material being used to arouse enthusiasm and" reinterpreted "that material to show that the end was not yet, that present events were merely preliminary to the one significant apocalyptic event, the parousia of the Son of Man, the time of whose appearance no one except the Father knew." However Cousar's interpretation places too much weight on vv.5-6,21-22. That Mark sought to place the deceivers in an end-time context is accurate (v.8) but that context (vv.5-13) peaks at the occurrence of the sign in v.14a which is not simply one of several "incidents which must take place before the parousia ..." (p.324).

<sup>138</sup> "Trial and Tribulation" p.93; Beginning p.86. It cannot be that a sign occurs in the temple heralding its destruction and a second sign occurs in the heavens heralding the parousia because the disciples ask for a single sign (v.4) which is singularly given (v.14). In contrast the cosmic upheavals are a multiplicity of events (vv.24-25) riveted in their occurrence to the preceding tribulation period, and so dependent on the tribulation period trigger for their occurrence. (Cf., Ford, "It must ever be kept in mind that v.24 which introduces the Parousia is riveted just as closely to the tribulation heralded by the coming of the βδέλυγμα against Jerusalem, and without any hint of a separating chasm of centuries" Desolation p.68; see also Beasley-Murray, A Commentary on Mark Thirteen [New York: Macmillan], 1957 p.93).

(Brandenburger).<sup>139</sup> The temporal conjunction τότε in vv.26,27 functions as specifying activity occurring at the closure of the tribulation period and not as chronological markers i.e., this will happen after that. In v.14b τότε is pivotal for the τότε in v.21 because only in v.14b does it signify a temporal connection ("when this occurs ... then flee"). The series of τότε's in vv.21,26,27, are less a movement "from one climax to another with intensifying momentum" than a drawing out of the climactic τότε in v.14b which fixes the time frame, something Ford sees as significant when he comments on the "successive events" introduced by τότε in vv.21,26,27 which "all belong to the one act, the final act. Thus is the τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως the terrifying harbinger of the End."<sup>140</sup>

2.4.4. The essence of the fig-tree lesson in 13:28 is the correspondence between the appearance of leaves signifying summer's approach and the occurrence of certain events signifying the SM's near approach. The anomaly is the sprouting tree, something positive (*contra* Isa 34:4 where the tree decays), which is used negatively. For Telford the fig-tree's "blossoming" is primarily a blessing prefiguring "the coming Age",<sup>141</sup> a solution stemming from its blossoming and not its greening which focuses on the horrendous end-time, hardly a time of blessing.<sup>142</sup> While rejecting Telford's view Geddert still understands the sprouting tree as the lesson key: "The Jewish religious leaders are disqualified (the withering of the fig tree [11:20]); Jesus and his

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<sup>139</sup> Markus 13 pp.101-102.

<sup>140</sup> Desolation p.172.

<sup>141</sup> W. R. Telford, The Barren Temple and the Withered Tree JSNT Supplementary 1 (Sheffield:JSOT), 1980 p.216.

<sup>142</sup> Telford incorporates the notion of judgment from the withering of the fig-tree in ch.11 but fails to establish the idea from ch.13 (Barren p.216).



followers replace them as leaders of God's people (the greening of the fig tree [13:28])."<sup>143</sup> But the analogy does not quite work: the withering fig-tree stands for the disqualification of Israel's leaders/rejection of temple. Corruption of the trunk makes the tree wither. If Jesus' community represents the trunk, when the disciples see the community "growing" they recognize the end is near. But far better to see the greening in 13:28 as the calamitous event in v.14 which is a trigger fixing all events in vv.5-23 in an end-time context. Because the discourse begins with the destruction of the temple the events portrayed are largely negative, especially in v.14, hence the bleak perspective in the fig-tree parable. What gives optimism in the greening is summer's approach, the nearness of the SM's appearance and so the necessity of seeing vv.24-27 not as a premonitory sign (Brandenburger), but as events indispensable to vv.5-23, in order to demonstrate a connection between a sign indicating the onset of the end-time and the end itself.

There are indications in the chapter of a connection between v.28 and the temple's destruction which is significant because in 11:12-25 the fig-tree's withering indicates the forthcoming ruin of the temple. In view of the pivotal nature of the sign given in v.14 for triggering the end-time, ταῦτα (v.29) must indicate primarily this sign (and not the events in vv.5-13 which find their placement in the end-time frame by the happening of v.14a), and the parallelisms between v.14 and v.28f. confirm this interpretation.<sup>144</sup> In both contexts the reader is pointedly addressed (13:14, ὁ ἀναγινώσκων νοεῖτω, 13:28 ' Ἀπὸ δὲ τῆς συκῆς μάθετε τὴν παραβολήν), the temporal connective ὅταν and the verb ὄραν, so significant in v.14, occur in v.29 (13:14 "But *when* you *see* the abomination taking place", 13:29 "So you also, *when*

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<sup>143</sup> Geddert, Watchwords p.251.

<sup>144</sup> See Lohmeyer, Markus p.281.

you *see* these things happening"). In both contexts a resolution of tension occurs (v.14 is a climax to vv.5-13 and vv.28-29 is the application to the reader of the overall goal of vv.5-26, the SM's appearance). Therefore ταῦτα's referent begins at v.14 and continues through v.23.<sup>145</sup> Regarding vv.30-31 Gundry correctly surmises: "In the last two sayings, the emphasis expands to include not only the nearness of Jesus' coming once the abomination of desolation takes place and the unequalled tribulation sets in, but also the certainty of the fulfillments of all his predictions. The solemn formula 'truly I say to you,' plus the double negatives οὐ μὴ, 'will by no means,' and the addition of 'all' to 'these things' intensify the emphasis."<sup>146</sup> However, by excluding vv.24-27 from ταῦτα πάντα, Gundry ignores their placement so close to vv.29-30 and to vv.31-32, which do refer to the parousia.<sup>147</sup> Gundry makes the destruction anticlimactic by failing to connect it with the parousia: no reason is given to suggest the SM's nearness in v.28b. The deciding factor for including vv.24-27 in the ταῦτα πάντα of v.30 is not v.32<sup>148</sup> but the sign in v.14, which loses potency if unconnected to vv.24-27, leading to the anomaly of postulating a definitive sign indicating the onset of the end-time, but leaving the possibility of a gap of centuries for the parousia (so Moore, Cousar, Geddert). Wenham separates vv.24-27 from v.30 on the basis of the shift in perspective from end-time signs (vv.5-23) to the question

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<sup>145</sup> *Contra* Gaston, Cranfield, Taylor, and Lambrecht, who extend the referent back to v.5. But vv.5-13 do not signal the end (v.7) and the relative passivity in these verses contrasts sharply with the incisive injunction in v.14b, based on the poignant ἴδητε (v.14a), which starts the tribulation period.

<sup>146</sup> Gundry, *Mark*, pp.746-747.

<sup>147</sup> Note Ford (*Desolation*): "But the statement in v.30 is followed by ὁ οὐρανὸς καὶ ἡ γῆ παρελεύσονται and by v.32, which on two counts cannot mean just the fall of Jerusalem. One, the expression ἡ ἡμέρα ἐκείνη is far too solemn to be limited to that event, and secondly, the expression is a technical term for the End" (p.69).

<sup>148</sup> *Contra* Wenham, "Mark 13: Part 2" p.8.

of the end itself in v.32 (notably the appearance of the demonstrative pronoun ἐκείνης).<sup>149</sup> Against this: though "that" day (v.32) indicates the parousia alone, the prepositional phrase in v.24 (ἐν ἐκείναις ταῖς ἡμέραις) roots that event in the end-time frame triggered by the temple's destruction (v.14) beginning that period (vv.17, 19,20a,22b). The specificity of τῆς ἡμέρας ἐκείνης ἢ τῆς ὥρας, (ἐκείνης modifies "hour" as well as "day") links v.32 with ταῦτα πάντα of v.30 (which includes events in vv.24-27). If Mark is writing within the generation of Jesus' contemporaries, though the time indicated by the specificity of v.32 remains unknowable, an intense near but incalculable expectation is maintained, because of the link between vv.14-27, or more properly, the connection between the temple destruction as an end-time trigger culminating in the parousia. Severing the link between v.30 and v.32 severs the link between the given sign (v.14) and the end-time proper, which makes v.14 anticlimactic, because the future remains too open-ended.<sup>150</sup> Geddert likewise fails to convince in not including vv.24-27 in ταῦτα πάντα of v.30: first, to state that Mark "doubles back" temporally in v.30 does not fit the parallels surmised from ch.13.<sup>151</sup> Verse 29 "leaps over" vv.24-27 to v.14 but v.30 is hardly mere repetition of v.29.<sup>152</sup> Second, that ὄψονται is third person plural is

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<sup>149</sup> "Mark 13" p.8.

<sup>150</sup> So Ambrozic, Hidden p.218; Kelber, Kingdom p.126; cf., Joachim Gnilka, Das Evangelium nach Markus EKKNT II/1 (Zürich: Benziger/Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag), 1978-1979 pp.203-207, who severs Jerusalem's destruction from the parousia by postulating a connection between it and the appearance of the Anti-christ, something which the destruction of the temple and city offers only a foretaste. Thus v.14 becomes a signifier of a further future signifier, the Antichrist, which disconnects vv.14-23 from the end-time frame.

<sup>151</sup> Verse 28 on v.27, v.33 on v.32, and v.37 on v.36.

<sup>152</sup> Even if v.29 "brings the End into view" Geddert fails to mention that it also "doubles back" temporally (Watchwords p.242).

insufficient to conclude that ἡ γενεὰ αὕτη is not Jesus' contemporaries living until the parousia. It is the disciples who "see" the end-time trigger initiate what will culminate in the parousia. They will not be caught unawares whereas unbelieving Jews, unaware of the significance of the end-time trigger, will finally "see" (cf., ὄψονται 14:62). Including vv.24-27 in ταῦτα πάντα of v.30<sup>153</sup> hardly conflicts with ignorance regarding the parousia's day or hour.<sup>154</sup> Verses 30-31 delimit the parousia in a general nearness (Jesus' generation) without specifying exact time.

Finally a parable about an absent master and the doorkeeper (vv.33-36) reinforces the notion of vigilance in the light of the onset of the end-time, which is recognized by the appearance of τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως. The master fails to indicate the time of his return which makes it uncertain and so incalculable (reinforced by the notion of a night arrival). Geddert<sup>155</sup> defines preparedness in respect to a *theologia crucis* but the context of expectancy stands against this,<sup>156</sup> and vv.9-13 thrust the disciples into the world arena of inevitable persecution and suffering.

## 2.5. Two Climactic Points

We have established the key reference point of v.14 in respect to the frame of vv.5-27. Verses 5-13 develop climactically to v.14 where the tone of the discourse changes. From vv.14bf. the severity of events is predicated upon the appearance of τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς

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<sup>153</sup> Lohmeyer (Markus p.281) and Dupont (L'espérance pp.217-218) include vv.24-27 in ταῦτα πάντα of v.30.

<sup>154</sup> *Contra* Glazier, Method p.343.

<sup>155</sup> Watchwords pp.89-107.

<sup>156</sup> Gundry, Mark p.799.

ἐρημώσεως. In conclusion, what remains to be explored is the relationship between vv.5-13 and 14-27 and in particular v.14 and v.26.

We have shown how common subject-matter and intensified activity are paralleled in vv.5-6,21-22. Other parallels exist between vv.7-8 and 24-25 and 9-13 and v.26.

Terrestrial upheavals (vv.7-8) parallel the cosmic upheavals (vv.24-25). While only disciples understand the significance of the earthly turmoil which forms part of the beginning of the birthpangs (vv.7,8), everyone will understand the significance of the cosmic disintegration preceding the consummation (vv.24-24,26-27). Verses 21-27 contain references to (a) false christs/prophets (vv.21-22), (b) cosmic-level upheavals (vv. 24-25), (c) the appearance of the SM (vv.26-27). In vv. 5-14 a similar pattern is found: (a) deceivers (false christs v.5b-6), (b) terrestrial upheavals (vv.7-8), (c) persecution vv. 9-13. The counterpart to vv.9-13 differs in vv.26-27 in view of the changed circumstances. Instead of enduring trial and tribulation (vv.9-13) the disciples are vindicated (vv.26-27). The severe θλίψις (vv.14b-23) introduced by the end-time trigger (v.14a) is abruptly halted with the SM's coming.

Therefore a second *crescendo* is reached in v.26 with vv.5-13 and 21-27 existing in parallel:

Vv.5b-6	vv.21-22
deceivers	false christs/prophets
Vv.7-8	vv.24-25
terrestrial upheaval	cosmic upheaval
Vv.9-13	vv.26-27
persecution of the disciples	vindication of the disciples

The hinge point is v.14 which functions as a crescendo sign launching the end-time

programme.<sup>157</sup> In the heightened parallelism of vv.21-27 over vv.5-13 a second peak is reached (v.26). The two key texts (vv.14,26) mirror each other with v.26 being the heightened parallel, that is, the accentuated overturning of all v.14 counsels: instead of only the disciples "seeing" (ἴδητε v.14a) the end-time sign trigger, everyone will "see" (ὄψονται v.26) the consummation; τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως, standing on the earth (v.14a), contrasts with τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου coming from heaven (v.26); "then" (τότε v.14b) counsels flight following recognition of the significance of τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως (v.14a), whereas "then" (τότε v.26) introduces the SM resulting in vindication (τότε v.27).<sup>158</sup>

Thus the manner the disciples proclaim Jesus and the delay of their vindication is overturned with the revelation of the SM. In 14:62 Jesus' answer to the high priest (ἔγω εἰμι) unveils his identity by defining his Sonship. But only as the enthroned (Ps 110:1) and coming SM (Dan 7:13) will his "full identity ... be apparent. This confession by Jesus is the apex of Markan christology. While his earthly ministry is a secret epiphany of the Son of Man (2:10; 2:28); it is also a call to follow him in suffering (8:31;9:31; 10:33-34). The future vindication of the Son of Man (8:38,13:26;14:62) will be a vindication of this suffering as well as a final

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<sup>157</sup> "It is noticeable that following the introduction of *to bdelugma tes eremoseos* in 13:14 the tenor of the narrative becomes more ominous than in the previous section vv.5-13; not just in terms of the immediacy of what is signified in v.14, and by Mark's 'holding back' of the end-time (vv.7,8), but by the change of tone in vv.14f. The rumours of wars that do not essentially affect the disciples give place to the direct injunction to flee and the dire warnings of consequences for those caught unawares. Similarly, the heightened tone of the extent of the end-time horrors in vv.19f. indicates that between vv.5-13 and 14-23 a great transition occurs in the focus of the narrative (Fowler, Reader-Response p.118).

<sup>158</sup> Verses 28-36 draw on vv.5-27 by counselling astute insight into a recognition of the significance of the trigger sign and its attendant circumstances and set the parameters for the developing end-time frame in the broad limits of the present generation, the point of closure being unknown. Preparedness is counselled in view of these circumstances.

revelation of Jesus.<sup>159</sup> As a vindication of Jesus' suffering the parousia will also vindicate those who by their own suffering have followed down the same path.<sup>160</sup>

## 2.6. Conclusion

We have demonstrated that v.14 occupies a significant place in ch.13 on the basis of its connection with v.4. Because τὸ σημεῖον in v.4 is targeted towards v.14, then the link between these two verses is the key structure that defines how vv.5-8,9-13,15-18,18-23,24-27,28-37 fit together, especially considering that vv.5-37 are framed in the light of v.4. Views of the structure of the chapter ignoring this relation, fail to establish how the various sections stand in tension to each other, and fail to adequately explain how vv.5-37 connect with vv.1-4.

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<sup>159</sup> Donahue, Are You the Christ? p.71. Hartman (Prophecy pp.168-169) has shown how Mic 7:7 may undergird Mk 13:13b: "But as for me, I will look to the Lord, I will wait (LXX ὑπομενῶ) for the God of my salvation" cf., v.13b ὁ δὲ ὑπομείνας which could then be translated as "vindication" on this basis. So Lane, Mark pp.462-463 fn.67.

<sup>160</sup> Pesch, Naherwartungen p.128; Breytenbach, Nachfolge pp.316-320. "Just as the trial of Jesus is paradoxically his proclamation as enthroned King, so too will the trials of Christians be the means by which the gospel of Christ is proclaimed (13:9-13). Suffering and death were not the end for Jesus, nor are they the end for the Christian" John R. Donahue, "Temple, Trial, Royal Christology" in The Passion in Markan Studies on Mk 14-16 (ed.) Werner H. Kelber (Philadelphia: Fortress Press), 1976 p.79.

## CHAPTER THREE

### THE COMPOSITION OF CHAPTER 13

#### Introduction

Now that we have shown that v.14 is the key verse launching the end-time which will culminate in the SM's parousia (v.26), we will examine the tradition history of ch.13 where it may provide insights for helping us exegete 13:14.<sup>1</sup> Our main focus will be τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως in v.14, which we will examine in chapter four. We shall argue in this chapter that Mark used pre-existing material found in vv.14-20,24-27, which he altered (3.1.) and combined with other traditions to construct ch.13 (3.2-5.).

#### 3.1. Material from the Caligula Crisis 39-41 C.E.

Our contention is that Mark adapted material, descriptive of a situation in 39-41 C.E. when the Roman emperor Gaius Caligula ordered his legate Petronius to install an image of himself in the temple in Jerusalem.<sup>2</sup> Mark expanded the material to indicate an individual instead of an image, and set these elements (vv.14-20,24-27) in the context of a prophecy on

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<sup>1</sup> On the composition of ch.13 see e.g., Lambrecht, Redaktion pp.100-148; Pesch, Markusevangelium 2 pp.264-268; Hartman, Prophecy; Beasley-Murray, Last Days pp.357-361,407-422; A.Y. Collins, Beginning ch.3.

<sup>2</sup> For a discussion of the source material on the Caligula episode see Theissen, Lokalkolorit ch.3. Scholars have argued on the feasibility of this episode for providing material from which 13:14 and other verses in ch.13 take their form, see e.g., Beasley-Murray, Last Days pp.360-364; Brandenburger, Markus 13 pp.46-51; Brandon, "Date" p.133; Dodd, "Fall of Jerusalem" pp.47-54; Gaston, Stone p.25; Joachim Gnilka, Das Evangelium nach Markus EKKNT II/1 (Zürich: Benziger/Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag), 1978-1979 pp.186-196; Marxsen, Evangelist p.179; Pesch, Naherwartungen pp.207-218; N.H. Taylor, "Palestinian Christianity Parts 1 and 2."



the temple's destruction (vv.1-4).<sup>3</sup> By material we suggest some pre-existing tradition generally known by Mark with a common content but not necessarily with a set literary form.

First, though Caligula's order came to no effect following his murder in 41 C.E., the memory of the crisis and a fear of its resurgence remained among Jews (Tacitus Ann 12.54.1).<sup>4</sup> What could well have caused recollection of the Caligula crisis was the situation in Syria and northern Galilee in 66 C.E. following the slaughter of the entire population of Jews at Caesarea and the subsequent Jewish reprisals and counter-reprisals throughout the Decapolis cities, on the Phoenician coast, and throughout Syrian cities.<sup>5</sup> From Antioch, early in 67 C.E., the forces of Vespasian, three client kings (Antiochus, Agrippa, Soaemus) and the Nabataean king

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<sup>3</sup> For Theissen, the material in ch.13 is found in vv.7-8,14-20,24-27 Lokalkolorit p.139. Theissen combines a mixture of historical events (vv.7-8), which are incorporated wholesale into a new situation in the late 60's C.E., and essentially joined with the Caligula prophecy and other material (vv.15f): "Sie nehmen in diesem Text (13:15f.) Ereignisse nicht in ihrem politischen Kontext wahr, sondern als Zeichen des ersehnten Weltendes" Lokalkolorit p.161.

In the same vein N.H. Taylor has argued that ch.13:5-27 reflect the impact of the Caligula crisis on Palestinian Christianity ("Palestinian Christianity" Parts 1 and 2). For Taylor, vv. 5-27 reflect the period before the Romans advanced to erect Caligula's image in the temple, and its aftermath, when Christians divorced Caligula's profanation from the SM's parousia, and so had to cope with a parousia delay. Also cf., Gaston, the "writer does not expect the early death of Caligula and warns that when the statue is set up, then 'they' should flee to the mountains..." This tradition was then changed by Mark and reapplied to the Anti-Christ (Stone pp.25-27).

<sup>4</sup> Quotations from Tacitus and Suetonius are from George Gilbert Ramsay, The Histories of Tacitus (London: John Murray), 1915 and The Twelve Caesars (trans.) Robert Graves (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books), 1957.

<sup>5</sup> "The news of the disaster at Caesarea infuriated the whole nation; and parties of Jews sacked the Syrian villages and the neighbouring cities, Philadelphia, Heshbon and its district, Gerasa, Pella, and Scythopolis. Next they fell upon Gadara, Hippos, and Gaulanitis, destroying or setting fire to all in their path, and advanced to Kedasa, a Tyrian village, Ptolemais, Gaba, and Caesarea. ... The Syrians on their side killed no less a number of Jews ... The whole of Syria was a scene of frightful disorder; every city was divided into two camps, and the safety of one party lay in their anticipating the other" War 2.18:1-2.

Malchus, moved to Ptolemais where they were joined by units from Caesarea and Syria as well as Titus' Egyptian legion. According to Josephus sixty thousand soldiers were ready to restore order (War 3.4:2). Significantly Ptolemais was marked as the location where the Syrian legate Petronius with his two legions arrived from Antioch to deal with the problems of installing Caligula's image in Jerusalem. Thousands of Jews streamed to Ptolemais objecting to the emperor's plan. After moving to Tiberias in Galilee, Petronius met with a further hostile united Jewish front against his orders, to the extent that he was convinced a full scale revolt was imminent. In these regions marked by revolt nearly thirty years previously, and now devastated by Jew/Gentile conflict, a far more massive Roman force was gathering to deal with any resistance in Palestine to Roman authority. The Caligula crisis could well have provided the basis for an oral tradition, which was repeated and transmitted orally, cast in prophetic/apocalyptic<sup>6</sup> notions which eventually Mark used in view of his crisis at hand.<sup>7</sup>

The catastrophe threatened by the imposition of Caligula's image would have brought to mind, among Jews and Christians, material from the books of Daniel and 1Maccabees that spoke of the desecration of the temple in terms of τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως. It was the persecution of Antiochus IV Epiphanes, who erected an abomination of desolation on the altar of burnt offering in the temple in the period 168-167 B.C.E. (1Macc 1:54-55), which would have provided a way of understanding the looming catastrophe. What caused the Caligula crisis initially was the act of incensed Jews who pulled down an altar erected to the emperor by

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<sup>6</sup> The basis of this material was the concept of τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως (N.H. Taylor surmises: "... the wording is shaped by the prophetic-apocalyptic tradition in Dan. 9:27,11.31, and 12:11 ..." "Palestinian Christianity Part 2" pp.20-21), which was combined with end-time material in v.19 from Dan 12:1 and the coming SM in v.26 from Dan 7:13.

<sup>7</sup> N.H. Taylor, "Palestinian Christianity Part 2" p.21. Our view of the Markan *Sitz im Leben* will be explained in chs. 5 and 7.

residents of Jamnia intent on stirring up hostility against Jews in the city. Similarly the Maccabean crisis was started by Judas Maccabeus' destruction of a pagan altar in Modein (1Macc 2:25), a town within 25 miles of Jamnia, so we can easily surmise how memories of the Modein incident would have been recollected by Jews in Jamnia with the setting up of a pagan altar in that place. In addition, the Assumption of Moses, dated between 7-30 C.E. in Palestine,<sup>8</sup> gives the expectation of a further persecution to come fashioned after the one initiated by Antiochus IV (AsMos 8:1-5). Palestinians familiar with this tradition would have brought this to mind when news surfaced of Caligula's intention to erect an image of himself in the Jerusalem temple.

The construction of v.14 ("when you see ... then flee ...") suggests the origin of the Caligula material would have been in the period when Petronius was taking his time in making the image and negotiating with Jews objecting to its imposition. It would be a small step to connect 1Macc 1:54 and the crisis with Dan 12:11 where the abomination of desolation was associated with the end-time.<sup>9</sup> Similarly the place where the abomination would be set up, that is, not in Caesarea the location of Augustus' statue (War 1.21:7), but rather in the temple in Jerusalem in the region of Judaea, would explain the outrage felt by Judaeans against Caligula's scheme. Therefore flight from Jerusalem would be an appropriate response, which would make

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<sup>8</sup> So J. Priest, "Testament of Moses" in OT Pseudepigrapha pp.920-921.

<sup>9</sup> Given the scale of the crisis, with "many ten thousands of the Jews" (Ant 18.8:2) unprepared to back down if the image was imposed in Jerusalem, an expectation that the event would usher in the end-time is not unreasonable (so N.H. Taylor: "Greater tribulations could therefore have been envisaged for the future" "Palestinian Christianity Part 2" p.35).

Significantly the book of Daniel was also influential for providing a rationale for the insurgents in the Jewish revolt 66-70 C.E. (see Marcus, Way pp.167f.; also "Jewish War" p.447f.).

v.14b an appeal to flight before the image was installed.<sup>10</sup> The flight was probably modelled from the Maccabean Mattathias' flight into the mountains at the killing of a Jew at the idolatrous altar in Modein: καὶ ἔφυγον αὐτὸς καὶ οἱ υἱοὶ αὐτοῦ εἰς τὰ ὄρη 1Macc.2:28, see also 2Macc 5:27 (cf., v.14b οἱ ἐν τῇ Ἰουδαίᾳ φευγέτωσαν εἰς τὰ ὄρη).<sup>11</sup> The reaction of Mattathias was based upon the imposition of τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως upon the altar in Jerusalem (1Macc 1:54). The lack of historical evidence of Jews fleeing from Jerusalem at news of Caligula's imposition does not count against our position because Caligula's death halted the proceedings. The hordes of Jews descending on Ptolemais point to the likelihood of a mass exodus from Judaea in the light of the success of Caligula's plan. In addition, that individuals are to flee when they "see" (v.14a) this event points to Judaea as the probable origin of the material. The failure of vv.15-18 to mention any kind of flight for the purpose of armed resistance indicates a detachment from those Judaeans who would use the episode as a call for armed resistance.

The two sayings depicting hurried flight in vv.15-16 are probably drawn from LXX Gen 19:17.<sup>12</sup> The lament in v.17<sup>13</sup> regarding pregnant women and suckling mothers, and the prayer

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<sup>10</sup> N.H. Taylor, "Palestinian Christianity Part 2" p.22.

<sup>11</sup> Verse 14b "is reminiscent of 1Macc 2.28" Hengel, Studies p.17, also Myers, Strong Man p.336. Beasley-Murray quotes Amos 5:19-20 to establish its primacy in respect to v.14, but the fleeing there is a prevaricating flight whereas in v.14b the flight is from a danger within to a safety outside the city Last Days p.412. In respect to Lambrecht's objection (Redaktion pp.155-156 fn.2) that the Maccabean texts do not make good parallels, see Gundry, Mark p.773.

<sup>12</sup> So Pesch, Naherwartungen p.147; Hartman, Prophecy p.154; Beasley-Murray, Last Days p.412; A.Y. Collins, Beginning p.86. Verses 15 and 16 complement each other in respect to location ("roof/field") and possessions ("house/garment"), and are more concrete than those in Lk 17:31, with ἐπὶ τοῦ δώματος and ἐκ τῆς οἰκίας αὐτοῦ in v.15 paralleling εἰς τὸν ἀγρὸν and ἄραι τὸ ἱμάτιον αὐτοῦ in v.16. In Lk 17:31 the absence of ἄραι τὸ ἱμάτιον αὐτοῦ conforms more to the LXX Gen 19:17 μὴ περιβλέψῃς εἰς τὰ

request in v.18 for the flight not to occur in winter add a sense of pathos and "continue the motif of flight in time of war in Palestine."<sup>14</sup> Thus, joined to vv.15-16, they heighten the terror for those Judaeans unprepared for armed conflict who are instead fleeing from the chaos brought on by the imposition of Caligula's image. These Judaeans are counselled not to organize armed resistance but to wait for the SM's coming in the mountains. Therefore Jewish Christians are not prepared to give their lives in armed resistance for the temple. Their expectation is that outright war would ensue (vv.19-20)<sup>15</sup> and their own solution is to look to

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ὀπίσω with its emphasis on Lot (v.28 cf., also LXX Gen 19:26 καὶ ἐπέβλεψεν ἡ γυνὴ αὐτοῦ τὰ ὀπίσω). Gundry suggests Luke's omission is "for ease of transition to Lot's wife, whose looking 'back' ... is not said to have a cloak in view" Mark p.774. These verses appear in Luke 17:31 in respect to a *Menschensohnrede* based around a comparison between Noah and Lot (Luke 17:22-37), and are shorn of any notion of flight or any connection with Jerusalem. For Gundry flight in the Lukan context is presupposed while fleeing from the SM would be an impossibility (Mark p.774). Nolland offers a better solution: Luke aims to promote a "readiness to leave things behind he no doubt thinks in terms of the teaching he has given warning against the snare of material riches" Luke 9:21-18:34 Word Bible Commentary Vol 35B (Dallas: Word Books), 1993 p.861. There is no reason to resort to independent sayings in Q Luke as the Markan source (so Gundry, Mark p.775). An easier explanation (*contra* Lambrecht, Redaktion p.158) is Luke's adaptation of Mark.

<sup>13</sup> Brandenburger, Markus 13 p.43.

<sup>14</sup> Beasley-Murray, Last Days p.417. These sayings match an anticipated historical crisis like the one concerning Caligula when considering the necessity of a hurried escape. The lack of bizarre elements involving pregnant women frequently found in end-time material on signs contrasts with the material in v.17 which suggests a historical situation, so V. Taylor: "But in such forecasts, as here (4Ezra 6:21), the emphasis falls on the bizarre, and monstrous and untimely births are described. There is nothing in 17f.; on the contrary, the pathos is restrained and the description true to the conditions of war" Mark p.513, cf., Gundry, Mark p.776. Verse 18 can be linked to the Caligula crisis when "suspense stood at its highest during the winter of A.D. 40-41, before the report of Caligula's death arrived" Gaston, Stone pp.25-26.

<sup>15</sup> Verse 19 alludes to Dan 12:1 (N.H. Taylor, "Palestinian Christianity Part 2" p.35; A.Y. Collins, Beginning p.84), which broadens the scope of the tribulation into one so severe necessitating God's intervention (v.20 cf., Beasley-Murray, "... v.20 underscores that time of trouble [v.19]" Last Days p.418). Pryke (Redactional Style in the Marcan Gospel A Study of Syntax and Vocabulary as guides to Redaction in Mark 9 Cambridge: University

the coming of the SM (v.26). This "passivity" toward the temple may have brought them trouble following the crisis, because evidence from the book of Acts at that time indicates the persecution of Christians in Jerusalem (James, son of Zebedee, was executed and Peter was imprisoned Acts 12:2-3).<sup>16</sup>

Therefore we conclude that the historical basis of the tradition employed by Mark can be found in a projected act of desecration with the placement of an object representing Caligula in the temple. "Daniel's 'sacrilege' became timely for the church, namely at the time of Caligula

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Press], 1978 p.133f.) lists γὰρ in v.19a as Markan because it is used to explain the previous verses, but in each of the comparisons cited (cf., 1:22b,5:8, 6:52,7:3,16:8) existing material is commented upon while in 13:19 the connection is slight (only ἐν ἐκείναις ταῖς ἡμέραις in v.17 cf., v.19a ἔσονται γὰρ αἱ ἡμέραι ἐκεῖναι) in comparison to the gist of the verse which is to expand the conflict. The expansion of the suffering envisaged for Judaea into unprecedented suffering stems from "one continuing historical situation which is in view ..." so Beasley-Murray, Last Days p.418; V. Taylor, Mark p. 514; Hooker, "Trial and Tribulation" p.90; Anderson, Mark p. 296.

The language in v.19f. is too powerful to be limited to a figurative description of the crisis in Jerusalem. For A.Y. Collins the "call to flee and the realistic description of the hardships involved suggest that the sacrilege was to be followed immediately by a divine intervention. This intervention was to be a judgment on Jerusalem analogous to that upon Sodom and Gomorrah. The analogy is suggested by the command to flee to the mountains and not to turn back" Beginning p.86. For Gaston v.19 continues the local crisis of vv.17-18 but the allusion to Dan 12:1 in v.19 and continuing thought in v.20 is enough to show the transition to an eschatological crisis. In v.20 καὶ links that verse with the preceding verse so that ὁ θεὸς connects with κύριος, and αἱ ἡμέραι ἐκεῖναι, prominent in v.19, is picked up from v.17 (ἐν ἐκείναις ταῖς ἡμέραις) and emphasized in v.20 through the double use of τὰς ἡμέρας. The manner the tribulation burgeons into unprecedented suffering is well brought out in the repetition of ideas ἀπ' ἀρχῆς κτίσεως ἦν ἔκτισεν ὁ θεὸς in v.19 and τοὺς ἐκλεκτοὺς οὓς ἐξελέξατο in v.20. The tradition in vv.19-20 may have been influential in the preservation of the material in vv.14-20 following the failure of the imposition of Caligula's image i.e., the failure of the end-time tribulation to occur enabled a connection with other "penultimate" events, a suggestion by J. Verheyden, "Persecution and Eschatology Mk 13,9-13" in The Four Gospels p.1145 fn.16.

<sup>16</sup> Theissen (Lokalkolorit p.175) argues that Christians who had adopted a passive attitude to Caligula's scheme would have been subject to rejection from the Jerusalem authorities (in the light of God intervening to terminate the plan through engineering Caligula's death).

...,<sup>17</sup> which provided material used by Mark.

Second, we posit that Mark adapted material in v.14 by adding ἑστηκότα to draw attention to a specific individual.<sup>18</sup> Advocates of the view that the Caligula crisis is embodied in the warning in v.14, have difficulty explaining the inclusion of the grammatical anomaly of the combination of a masculine participle (ἑστηκότα) with a neuter phrase (τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἔρημώσεως), which draws attention to a person and not an event or object as for example in 1Macc 1:54 where βωμὸς is the object associated with τὸ βδέλυγμα.<sup>19</sup> Presumably, the personal aspect of τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἔρημώσεως is understood by N.H. Taylor<sup>20</sup> to be that the emperor's image (τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἔρημώσεως) represents his person (ἑστηκότα), which is advocated by Theissen: "Die constructio ad sensum lässt hinter dem "Greuel der Verwüstung" eine Person vermuten. Die Kaiserstatue ist beides: als leblose Materie ein Neutrum (ein βδέλυγμα), als Darstellung des Kaisers eine Person. Zudem passt das Partizip 'stehend' inhaltlich ausgezeichnet zu einer Statue ..."<sup>21</sup> Note especially: "Vgl. den Befehl des Gaius Caligula in ant 18,261: ἰστᾶν αὐτοῦ ἀνδριάντα ἐν τῷ ναῷ τοῦ θεοῦ (vgl 18,264), besonders aber die Formulierung bei der Rücknahme des Befehls: νῦν οὖν εἰ μὲν φθάνεις τὸν ἀνδριάντα ἑστακῶς, ἑστάτω (ant 18,301). Hier liegt dieselbe Wendung wie in Mk 13,14 vor! Neben ἰστάναι benutzen Philo und Josephus noch andere Verben für das 'Aufstellen'

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<sup>17</sup> Gaston, Stone p.27.

<sup>18</sup> Marxsen (Evangelist p.181, also Gaston Stone pp.27-28) posited that Mark added ἑστηκότα to v.14 to make it apply to the 66-71 C.E. Jewish-Roman war.

<sup>19</sup> See 4.1.5.

<sup>20</sup> "Palestinian Christianity Part 2" p.20f. In Taylor's two articles we find no reference to ἑστηκότα and consequently no interpretation of the term.

<sup>21</sup> Lokalkolorit p.170.

einer Statue.<sup>122</sup>

What is specified as an object (ὁ ἀνδριάς) in Ant 18.8:2,8 is not so specified in Mk 13:14. The context in Josephus makes this plain: πάντων γοῦν ὁπόσοι τῇ Ῥωμαίων ἀρχῇ ὑποτελεῖς εἶεν βωμοὺς τῷ Γαίῳ καὶ νεῶς ἰδρυμένων τά τε ἄλλα πᾶσιν αὐτὸν ὥσπερ τοὺς θεοὺς δεχομένων, μόνους τούσδε ἄδοξον ἡγεῖσθαι ἀνδριάσι τιμᾶν καὶ ὄρκιον αὐτοῦ τὸ ὄνομα ποιεῖσθαι Ant 18.8:1, and cf., Πετρῶνιον μὲν οὖν μετὰ στρατιᾶς ἐπὶ Ἱεροσολύμων ἔπεμψεν ἐγκαθιδρύσοντα τῷ ναῷ τοὺς ἀνδριάντας αὐτοῦ War 2.10:1. In Ant 18.8:8, the anomaly of a singular neuter noun, combined with a masculine perfect participle, is not present.

The problem for Theissen and N.H. Taylor is to explain how 13:14 fits both the imposition of Caligula's image and in Theissen's case, the person of Vespasian<sup>23</sup> without any alteration. Theissen ignores Jerusalem's destruction and the desecration of the temple by Titus and his soldiers in September 70 C.E. as a possible referent in 13:14. He only refers to the soldiers' desecration of the temple and elevation of Titus as a sort of foreshadowing or preparatory desecration, in lieu of an expected imposition of a pagan sanctuary on the remains of the temple: "Der Tempel war schon einmal vorübergehend 'kultisch' durch Heiden beschlagnahmt worden."<sup>24</sup> What Theissen needs for his interpretation to fit, is a projected imposition of some sort of object representing Vespasian.

The Caligula material appears to stay within the tradition of the LXX Dan 9:27,11:31,12:11 and 1Macc 1:54 in the use of the grammatical form τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς

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<sup>22</sup> Lokalkolorit p.170 fn.70.

<sup>23</sup> Lokalkolorit p.284.

<sup>24</sup> Lokalkolorit p.277.



ἐρημώσεως (which is identical to the LXX Dan 12:11), designating an object. In each of the four LXX texts the place τὸ βδέλυγμα is found is the temple, something which Mark's material also makes plain (ὅπου οὐ δεῖ). However, Mark goes beyond the LXX Danielic and 1Maccabean texts (where the neuter τὸ βδέλυγμα indicates an object), and instead adopts the kind of interpretation in the Heb Dan 9:27, and possibly 11:31,<sup>25</sup> by introducing a grammatical oddity in the combination of a masculine participle with the phrase τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως. This combination keeps the connotations of idolatry inherent in the various forms of the LXX phrase and locates it in the tradition of a time of eschatological turmoil (Dan 12:1) in the temple itself. Yet by deliberately giving the neuter βδέλυγμα a masculine attribute, the cryptic phrase now refers, not to a thing (pagan statue or image) as in the material from the Caligula crisis, but to a blasphemous individual. Mark has placed the tradition with his adaptation in a context dealing with the destruction of the temple and city (13:1-4).

Further, Mark added ὁ ἀναγινώσκων νοεῖτω<sup>26</sup> to draw attention to τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως as an individual.<sup>27</sup> Theissen's supposition, that Mark included the phrase ὁ ἀναγινώσκων νοεῖτω because it appeared in pre-existing material as an appeal to individual readers who would have read the address one by one in the form of a leaflet,<sup>28</sup> is unlikely because it portrays Mark as unthinkingly incorporating a "marginal note that no longer makes

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<sup>25</sup> We will show this in chapter four.

<sup>26</sup> So Beasley-Murray, *Last Days* p.411; Hooker, *St. Mark* pp.314-315.

<sup>27</sup> So Pryke, *Redactional Style* p.170. See also Gaston, *Stone* p.28; Beasley-Murray, *Last Days* p.411.

<sup>28</sup> *Lokalkolorit* p.137.

any sense to him."<sup>29</sup> The phrase appears in the climatic verse of vv.5-14, in the middle of a sentence advocating recognition of a unique event and urging a specific course of action which is described in vv.14b-18 leading to a time of universal tribulation (vv.19ff.). It is unlikely that Mark adopted the phrase at such a crucial point in the discourse simply because it was part of a leaflet. In 13:14 the phrase is a purposeful aside, a signaling device,<sup>30</sup> and so has much import in drawing attention to the content of v.14.

For Gundry, the phrase indicates Jesus' supernatural ability "to predict the abomination,"<sup>31</sup> but the reader already accepts this on the basis of the interaction between Jesus and the disciples in 13:1-4, and the singular forms of both verbs in the phrase contrast with the plural form of verbs in vv.5-13 where Jesus *is* addressing the disciples. The phrase stands out in the narrative in the manner of Mark's parenthetical comment in 7:19c (καθαρίζων πάντα τὰ βρώματα), perhaps in an even more direct manner than 7:19c, because of the term "reader." This term cannot be a statement from Jesus on the story-level of ch.13 because no one within the story addresses "the reader" beyond the story.<sup>32</sup> The uniqueness of the phrase (it occurs nowhere else in the gospel) counts against it being Markan redaction, though the verb νοεῖν is found in the gospel.

Significantly, Mark uses νοεῖν elsewhere to indicate the need to "read between the lines" and surmise the intent of hidden teaching. The feeding narratives (6:30-44,8:1-10) and the lesson from the parable on the failure of external things to render an individual unclean

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<sup>29</sup> Hengel, Studies p.131 fn.116.

<sup>30</sup> V. Taylor, Mark pp.511-512.

<sup>31</sup> Mark p.773.

<sup>32</sup> Fowler, Reader-Response p.83.

(7:15-16) culminate in Jesus pointedly asking the disciples whether they lack understanding to perceive true teaching (8:17-18,7:18).<sup>33</sup> However neither 8:17-18 nor 7:18 have the particular form of address found in 13:14. These verses address the audience through the story-line while 13:14 suddenly leaves the story-line with a direct address to an individual "outside" the text. Yet this device does not appear in isolation in ch.13 because at the end of the discourse, Jesus, from within the narrative, addresses those "outside" the text ὁ δὲ ὑμῖν λέγω πᾶσιν λέγω (v.37).<sup>34</sup> This is significant because the address occurs at the end of the discourse and is therefore important to the author for the communication of his message. What solidifies this point is that the address occurs with a term of exhortation γρηγορεῖτε. Exhortation is a fundamentally Markan element in the discourse, occurring in association with the Βλέπετε commands ("the most characteristic term of the discourse ...")<sup>35</sup> scattered throughout the chapter at key sections, at v.5 prefacing vv.5b-8, at v.9 prefacing 9b-13, at v.23 concluding the section on tribulation on the earth, and at v.33 opening the absent householder parable (vv.33b-37). These commands, when combined with the other elements of exhortation, μὴ πιστεύετε in v.21, ἀγρυπνεῖτε in v.33, γρηγορεῖτε in v.35 and ὁ δὲ ὑμῖν λέγω πᾶσιν λέγω γρηγορεῖτε in v.37, indicate an emphasis in ch.13 on the necessity of acute discernment<sup>36</sup> and so are Markan redactional elements. Though this does not establish that ὁ ἀναγινώσκων νοεῖτω is Markan on the basis

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<sup>33</sup> Other explanations to the reader in the gospel are probably redactional according to Pryke, Redactional Style pp.132,161,171,176 regarding 3:30; 7:3-4; 7:19c; 14:9 (on this verse see also Marxsen, Evangelist p.125; Lambrecht, Redaktion p.58); 16:4b; 16:8b (on this verse see also Donahue, Are You The Christ? p.56). Cf., on all these verses V. Taylor, Mark pp.244,335,344,605,609.

<sup>34</sup> So A.Y. Collins, Beginning p.88.

<sup>35</sup> Beasley-Murray, Last Days p.389.

<sup>36</sup> Geddert, Watchwords p.60.

of vocabulary it demonstrates that Mark is using the phrase *thematically* i.e., in respect to the arrangement of the material, because it appears in the chapter in conjunction with frequent calls to discernment -- which makes it Markan. Our argument here is that the arrangement is redactional so that Mark is creating an emphasis in the manner the material, which includes ὁ ἀναγινώσκων νοεῖτω, is organized.

That ὁ ἀναγινώσκων νοεῖτω is Markan, is increased by considering that it functions as part of a pattern or overall strategy of including the gospel's audience, the Twelve, and listeners (intrigued by Jesus' teaching in the gospel story-line οἱ περὶ αὐτὸν 4:10), as "insiders".<sup>37</sup> The reader and his audience are given instruction as "insiders" about the mystery of the kingdom of God (4:11) and as individuals outside the story-form of the gospel, the information gleaned from reading the gospel is that which is withheld from the "outsiders" (ἐκείνοις ... τοῖς ἔξω).<sup>38</sup> A shift occurs in ch.13 from the Markan Jesus addressing the four disciples (v.3) to Mark addressing his readers (v.37 ὁ δὲ ὑμῖν λέγω πᾶσιν λέγω). Beavis has demonstrated how this Markan intrusion (ὁ ἀναγινώσκων νοεῖτω) is "a means of giving a

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<sup>37</sup> See Marcus (Mystery of the Kingdom p.90) on the notion of "insiders."

<sup>38</sup> Regarding Mk 4:1-34 and 13:1-37: "The similarities between the two passages are worth schematizing:

Mk 4.1-34	Mk 13:1-37
Vv. 1-9 Public teaching (Sower)	Vv.1-2 Public teaching (Temple)
Didactic terminology	Didactic terminology
Exhortation to see (v.2)	Exhortation to hear (v.3)
V.10 Private question asked by disciples	Vv.3-4 Private question asked by disciples
Vv.11-34 Parables discourse with frequent exhortations to hear	Vv.5-37 Eschatological discourse with frequent exhortations to see or to watch"

Mary Ann Beavis, Mark's Audience The Literary and Social Setting of Mark 4:11-12 JSNT Supplement Series 33 (Sheffield: JSOT Press), 1989 p.94.

narrative greater immediacy."<sup>39</sup> The verbs *ιδεῖν* and *νοεῖν* in v.14 combine with the many injunctions to watch (*βλέπετε* vv.5b,9,23,33; *γρηγορεῖτε* vv.35,37 cf., also v.28 *ἀπὸ δὲ τῆς σукῆς μάθετε τὴν παραβολήν* and v.29b *ὅταν ἴδητε ταῦτα γινόμενα, γινώσκετε ὅτι ἐγγυς ἐπι θύραις*), and especially in v.14, accentuate that verse over the *βλέπετε* commands in vv.5,9.

Moreover, *βλέπειν* and *ἀκούειν* (twice each), and *ιδεῖν* (once) occur in 4:12 where inside information is given on interpreting kingdom events. Outsiders *βλέποντες βλέπωσιν* but *μὴ ἴδωσιν, ἀκούοντες ἀκούωσιν* but *μὴ συνιῶσιν*. In contrast the insiders in ch.13 *βλέπετε* (vv.5,9) and *ἴδητε* (v.14 cf., v.28). Insiders hear (*ἀκούσητε* v.7) and understand (*νοεῖτω* v.14 cf., v.37) knowing what to do (*φευγέτωσαν* v.14b). In fact, Marcus has shown that the reader "in some ways ... is *more* of an insider than the disciples are. From the very beginning of the Gospel (1:1) he is aware of Jesus' full identity as Son of God, knowledge that is withheld from the human characters in the story until the centurion's confession in 15:39."<sup>40</sup> In 13:14 Mark describes a key event launching the end-time, so it is significant that the reader is directly addressed in that place and in a manner not found elsewhere in the gospel. This intrusion breaks the story-line but makes the point so that the event will not be missed by those most to benefit from its revelation.

The evidence we have presented makes it probable that *ὁ ἀναγινώσκων νοεῖτω* is

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<sup>39</sup> Beavis, *Mark's Audience* pp.142-143.

<sup>40</sup> Marcus, *Mystery of the Kingdom* p.92 fn.58, and see pp.87-92.

a Markan addition.<sup>41</sup> Hooker<sup>42</sup> well sums up: "... the words are Mark's own parenthesis, a typical apocalyptic aside, alerting his readers to the fact that his somewhat enigmatic language needs to be decoded." The phrase is an alert to the reader to especially ponder the significance of the object under consideration.<sup>43</sup>

Third, we accept that vv.24-27 were part of the Caligula tradition<sup>44</sup> because v.24 resumes a connection back to the tribulation of v.20<sup>45</sup> which has been disconnected from v.24f. in order to fit in the material on rival messiahs (vv.21-22) and the editorial emphasis on the need for diligence (v.23). The final tribulation (vv.14-20) is connected with material leading to the final redemption (vv.24-27).<sup>46</sup> The emphasis on the Danielic τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως (13:14, so also v.19 with Dan 12:1) is maintained in v.26, with the eschatological prophecy of the SM's

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<sup>41</sup> Alternatively if ὁ ἀναγινώσκων νοεῖτω was incorporated from his material Mark has used the phrase to full effect to draw attention to *his* interpretation of τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως (see chapter 4).

<sup>42</sup> Morna Hooker, The Gospel According to St. Mark Black's New Testament Commentaries (London: Adam and Charles Black), 1991 p.314.

<sup>43</sup> I.e., that the combination of the neuter τὸ βδέλυγμα with a masculine participle refers to an individual whose activity is the end-time sign (v.4), so Hooker, St. Mark p.314.

<sup>44</sup> So also N.H. Taylor, Theissen.

<sup>45</sup> On the cogency of material used by Mark comprising of vv.24-27 joined to vv.14-20 see Brandenburger, Markus 13 pp.41f.; G. Hölcher, "Der Ursprung der Apokalypse Mk.13" TBL 12 (1933) p.197; Pesch, Naherwartungen pp.157ff.; Theissen, Lokalkolorit p.139. For Beasley-Murray (Last Days p.307) the connection in Lk 17:23-24 between individuals claiming false messiahs and the coming of the SM is sufficient to cast doubt that at one time Mk 13:14-20 was bound with vv.24-27. But Q Lk 17:23-24 may be a parallel tradition to that in Mk 13 (see Gaston, Stone p.29; Haenchen, Weg p.448; Taylor, Mark p.515) and in Luke's redaction of Mk 13, the SM's appearance (Lk 21:25-28) is preceded by a period of the great distress (ἔσται γὰρ ἀνάγκη μεγάλη ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς Lk 21:23).

<sup>46</sup> So Gaston, Stone p.31.

coming (13:26) reflecting Dan 7:13,<sup>47</sup> though with the alteration of a "coming" to send out angels to gather the elect and not a "coming" as a theophany before God as in Dan 7:13.<sup>48</sup>

V. Taylor<sup>49</sup> understands 13:8 to be followed by vv.24b-27 because τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως is not referred to in vv.24f. But the SM's advent vindicates the elect. Their persecution was generated by the appearance of τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως, whose activity initiated the tribulation (vv.14-20).

Beasley-Murray<sup>50</sup> objects to framing vv.14-20 with vv.24-27 in the pre-Markan material because no mention is made in vv.24-27 of the tribulation of vv.14-20, nor Israel's deliverance from the catastrophe in Judaea, nor judgment executed upon the destroyer of v.14. This argument fails to consider the link between the centre piece of both groups of verses, the Danielic τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως (v.14) and the coming SM (v.26), which are drawn from the book of Daniel and that Mark may be less intent upon a presentation of the mechanics of judgment and destruction than linking the SM's appearance with vindication of the elect (vv.9-13). The one who suffers an unjust execution (14:62) is himself finally vindicated (13:26) and so are his followers who have trod in his path of suffering (vv.9-13): "... in Mark's

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<sup>47</sup> Beasley-Murray, Last Days p.427; Hartman, Prophecy p.158; V. Taylor Mark p.518.

<sup>48</sup> According to Mann (Mark p.531) and V. Taylor (Mark 518) vv. 24-26 contain non-Markan vocabulary suggesting Mark has adopted existing material and may have made alterations to suit his purpose. The introductory double temporal phrase in v.24a Ἄλλὰ ἐν ἐκείναις ταῖς ἡμέραις μετὰ τὴν θλίψιν ἐκείνην may be a Markan characteristic on the basis of texts in Mark which contain these double phrases and introduce a new section (1:30,35,10:30,14:30, 43,15:42,16:2 so Lambrecht Redaktion pp.192-193, and Pesch Naherwartungen p.157). We note that only 1:35,15:42,16:2 introduce new sections, so the paucity of evidence warrants caution that Mark has constructed the introduction in v.24.

<sup>49</sup> Mark p.517.

<sup>50</sup> Last Days p.358.

conception the glorious Son of man vindicates both the suffering Son of man and the suffering Markan community."<sup>51</sup>

In conclusion, it is plausible that a *Krisensituation* like that generated in the Caligula episode could originate vv.14-20,24-27, where the crisis was placed within the context of salvation history through drawing upon eschatological prophecies from the book of Daniel. This episode, especially during the period when Petronius had written to Caligula about Jewish protests, with the expectation that an image would be imposed in the near future, appears to fit well the words in v.14, which communicate a warning concerning an expected crisis. Based upon Dan 9:27,11:31,12:11; 1Macc 1:54, the words τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως could describe Caligula's intentions. The warning is that when an image is set up, residents of Judaea are to flee into the mountains, to escape the expected clash between Roman and Jewish forces. The text pinpoints terror for the inhabitants stemming from the object of horror and not from the fighting of the factions seeking to uphold or remove that imposition. The flight is not one of escape, so resistance could be organized, but rather escape to avoid destruction. By adding the participle ἐστηκότα and an aside to the reader ὁ ἀναγινώσκων νοεῖτω, and by placing

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<sup>51</sup> Marcus, The Way of the Lord: Christological exegesis of the Old Testament in the Gospel of Mark (Louisville: Westminster Press), 1992 p.169. Against Lambrecht's conclusion (Redaktion pp.192-193) that vv.24-27 is a Markan composition: the influence of the LXX does not negate the notion of an adoption of pre-existing material. That vv.24-27 conform to vv.14-20 may be an indication of the inner coherence of the material e.g., the reference to τοὺς ἐκλεκτοὺς in vv.20,27. The similarity between 13:26 and 8:38-9:1,14:62 is not as uniform as Lambrecht indicates (see Beasley-Murray, Last Days pp.428-429). In fact, Lambrecht's own admission that Mark may not have originated the material ("... Verfertiger jedes Bestandteils") in vv.24-27 is a caveat against Markan authorship ("... Verfasser des Ganzen" p.193).

N.H. Taylor understands Mark's tradition in vv.24-27 as already an adjustment to failed parousia expectation in the Caligula crisis ("The messiah is still expected to return, but after a hitherto unexpected delay" "Palestinian Christianity Part 2" p.37). Taylor makes no argument from the text on the basis of the combination of the temporal and prepositional phrases in v.24a which could be understood to convey the opposite of his conclusion.



the material in a context concerning Jerusalem's destruction, Mark has fundamentally altered the orientation of his material, away from an image to the significance of a person ensconced in the temple.

3.2. We will examine the rest of the material in ch.13 beginning with the introduction. The introduction to the chapter (vv.1-4), a prophecy from Jesus about the temple's destruction (v.2) and a request from the disciples about the timing of this event and a sign request (v.4), has long been evaluated as containing redactional material.<sup>52</sup> Verse 2 may stem from a saying of Jesus on the temple's destruction,<sup>53</sup> while the redaction of v.4,<sup>54</sup> functions as a bridging point between the temple prophecy of v.2 and the whole discourse of vv.5-37, which contains a mix of eschatological sayings leading to a description of the eschaton.<sup>55</sup> This link has been constructed by Mark initially to launch the reader into the future time of the church by virtue of a prophecy uttered by Jesus in his earthly ministry.<sup>56</sup> It also links a prophecy of the temple's destruction with the material from the Caligula crisis which by itself could signify the desecration of the temple alone, but when conjoined with the narrative frame of vv.1-4, is set in a context

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<sup>52</sup> Lambrecht, Redaktion pp.68-72,89-90; A.Y. Collins, Beginning p.75; Kelber, Kingdom p.111; N.H. Taylor: "That this section is redactional is beyond serious doubt" ("Palestinian Christianity Part 2" p.126). Donahue gives a good analysis of redaction in vv.1-4 (Are You the Christ? pp.128-129).

<sup>53</sup> A tradition possibly embellished in the garbled attempts of the false witnesses in 14:58 and taunts at the scene of the cross in 15:29 (so N.H. Taylor, "Palestinian Christianity Part 2" p.39).

<sup>54</sup> Lambrecht, Redaktion p.88; Marxsen, Evangelist pp.162,166; V. Taylor, Mark p.502; Beasley-Murray, Last Days p. 386; A.Y. Collins, Beginning p.77.

<sup>55</sup> Verses 3 and 4 are composed almost entirely of words found elsewhere in Mark. In v.4 only συντελεῖσθαι is not found in the gospel (see V. Taylor, Mark pp.501-502).

<sup>56</sup> See A.Y. Collins, Beginning p.77.

focusing on the temple's destruction.

3.3. We will now address why Mark included vv.5-13 between vv.1-4 and vv.14ff. and vv.21-23 before vv.24-27.

3.3.1. First, in v.5a Mark's redactional introduction ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς ἤρξατο λέγειν αὐτοῖς<sup>57</sup> is balanced<sup>58</sup> in v.23 with προεἶρηκα ὑμῖν πάντα at the outer end of the frame which rounds off the whole terrestrial upheaval material appositely<sup>59</sup> with the expanse statement of v.23.<sup>60</sup> The manner v.23 rounds off vv.5-22 suggests Mark has purposefully constructed the material with information on deceivers in vv.5-6b and 21-22 at the beginning and end of the frame.

Mark may have originally found vv.6,22 together and v.21 by itself, so he separated vv.6 and 22, joined v.22 with v.21, and placed v.6 in its present location, to accentuate his own concerns. For one thing, v.21 is found in Q Lk 17:23 within a context dealing with God's reign, and in Mt 24:26, a variant of the same saying or an adaptation of Mark. For another, Lambrecht's demonstration of the similarity between vv.6 and 22<sup>61</sup> suggests v.6 may have been formed from v.22.<sup>62</sup> Then, placed directly after a reference to a period of unparalleled

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<sup>57</sup> So Gaston, Stone p.13; Pryke, Redactional Style pp.79,81.

<sup>58</sup> The balance is seen in vv.5-6 with Ἰησοῦς ἤρξατο λέγειν ... βλέπετε ... description of the claimants, and vv.21-22 with description of claimants ... βλέπετε ... προεἶρηκα ὑμῖν πάντα.

<sup>59</sup> So Brandon, "Date" p.13. Also, the original disciples (v.3) are directly addressed, with both ὑμᾶς (v.5) and ὑμεῖς (v.23) being emphatic and βλέπετε in v.23 matching the force it has in v.5 (see V. Taylor, Mark p.516).

<sup>60</sup> For v.23 as Markan redaction see Brandenburger, Markus 13 p.41.

<sup>61</sup> Redaktion pp.172f.

<sup>62</sup> So Pesch, Das Markusevangelium II Teil Kommentar zur Kap. 8,2:1-16,20 Herders Theologischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament (Frieburg: Herder), 1977 pp.278-279.

tribulation (vv.19-20), v.21 was connected to its context with τότε.<sup>63</sup>

Certainly vv.21-22 appear to be an accentuated form of vv.5-6.<sup>64</sup> In contrast to the unnamed πολλοὶ (v.6) the opposing claimants to Jesus are further clarified and distinguished (ψευδόχριστοι καὶ ψευδοπροφήται v.22), their deceptions are described (δώσουσιν σημεῖα καὶ τέρατα v.22 cf., v.6), and they are proclaimed by others instead of proclaiming themselves (ἐάν τις ὑμῖν εἴπῃ· ἴδε ὧδε ὁ χριστός, ἴδε ἐκεῖ v.21 cf., πολλοὶ ἐλεύσονται ... λέγοντες ὅτι ἐγὼ εἰμι v.6). The object of their persuasions is the elect (πρὸς τὸ ἀποπλανᾶν, εἰ δυνατόν, τοὺς ἐκλεκτούς v.22 cf., the unspecified πολλοὺς πλανήσουσιν in v.6).<sup>65</sup>

Second, though there is a connection between vv.5-6,21-22, vv.6,7, and 8 require no necessary association so it is unlikely that these verses were connected in pre-existing material. The verb ἀκούειν occurs 43 times in Mark and so is probably redactional in v.7a.<sup>66</sup> It parallels ἰδεῖν in v.14; both verbs occur in temporal clauses and both verbs indicate activity required

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<sup>63</sup> V. Taylor, Mark p.515.

<sup>64</sup> Mark p.744.

<sup>65</sup> N.H. Taylor cites that Gaston "quite plausibly argues that the tradition preserved in Mk 13.5-6 originated at this time" i.e., 40-41 C.E. in Palestine ("Palestinian Christianity Part 2" p.26). But Gaston only posits "it is conceivable that an earlier form of these Vs 5-8 were already then connected with the Caligula affair" (Stone p.14 fn.4). He offers no evidence of false claimants at this time. The Jewish-Roman war of 66-71 C.E. is a much more plausible situation in Syria Palestine in which claimants practiced their deceptions in the period before the temple's destruction. This could lead to a future expectation of an intensification of the activity of false claimants in an expected worsening situation (vv.19-20).

<sup>66</sup> Pryke (Redactional Style p.136) lists the redactional proportion of the verb as 30 out of a total of 43.

of the audience.<sup>67</sup> Further, the end-time qualifiers ἀλλ' οὕτω τὸ τέλος in v.7 and ἀρχῆ ὠδίνων ταῦτα in v.8 are significant elements showing that the author is "backtracking" or negating something i.e., going in a direction to correct a particular interpretation. The correction is a good indication of the author's intent because it stands out against the flow of the narrative which is moving towards informing the reader about the eschaton (vv.4,7,11,13). In addition, the end-time qualifiers are probably redactional elements because they summarize disparate elements (vv.6,7 and 8) and τέλος in v.7 is found in disparate material in v.13b.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> Lambrecht, *Redaktion* p.114. Neither Theissen nor N.H. Taylor's different explanations for combining vv.7-8 with v.14f. are satisfactory. Theissen posits the Jew-Nabatean war (36-37 C.E.) behind the events mentioned in vv.7-8, which is a prelude to the Caligula material. The author of Mark's material anticipated the war would lead to the end, so when the end did not occur, he evaluated that period as not triggering the end-time. Theissen (*Lokalkolorit* pp.163-164) offers *Ant* 18.5:2 (where Herod Antipas' defeat is interpreted by some Jews as punishment for the execution of John the Baptist), as a basis for a belief in the nearness of the end. But Josephus gives no indication that Herod's defeat was anything other than a perceived punishment by some Jews with no eschatological connotations. This lack of connection suffers by comparison with the wealth of available evidence in the 66-71 C.E. war in Palestine connecting conflict with eschatological expectation. Theissen fails to find substantial evidence that the Jew-Nabatean period of war was understood by some to inaugurate the consummation.

N.H. Taylor ("Palestinian Christianity Part 2" p.29) acknowledges this by not accepting Theissen's evidence and instead advocates that the material makes a "disclaimer that this is but the beginning of the end" which "suggests the aftermath of the crisis, when it was recognized that Caligula's sacrilege would not be imposed." But a corrective to vv.7-8 would surely necessitate a further alteration in vv.14f., considering that τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως in v.14 is the "crux of the entire discourse" (p.21) therefore having more impact than vv.7-8. A natural place for the corrective would be in v.14 where the prophecy would be altered so as not to be connected with the consummation. What is corrected in vv.7-8 is the association of terrestrial upheavals with the end as Theissen recognizes.

<sup>68</sup> Mark's incorporation of "common apocalyptic expectations" (V. Taylor, *Mark* p.504; see also Pesch, *Das Markusevangelium II* p.280) in vv.7-8 is part of a strategy leading to revelation on the nature of the end-time. Both earthquakes and famines are found together and with other similar elements in end-time material (cf., 2Bar 27:1-15; 70:2-10; ApAb 30:2-8; SibOr 21:6-38; SibOr 2:156; 4Ezra 13:31; 2Bar 48:34). In 2Bar 48:34 "rumours," are associated with "tidings." In SibOr 3:635 and 4Ezra 13:32 monarchies are connected to nations. Earthquakes and famines are frequently found together (2Bar 27:6,7 70:8; ApAb 30:5,6). Therefore, the language of vv.7-8 is probably based on these traditional elements

Finally, the cautionary words μὴ θροεῖσθε· δεῖ γενέσθαι are likely redactional because they are part of the author's strategy found throughout ch.13 emphasizing the need for discernment.<sup>69</sup> These words reinforce the βλέπετε command in v.5a. Βλέπετε occurs at the beginning and end of sayings on the danger of deceivers and false christs\prophets (vv.5,23) whose claims rival that of Jesus. Hence disciples are encouraged by Mark to be acutely aware of the dangers the deceivers present. Because v.23 wraps up vv.5-22 in the sense of informing the reader that Jesus has prophesied all key events on the earth before the SM comes (vv.24-27), the βλέπετε command in v.23 is redactional because "it is one of the linchpins which holds the discourse together"<sup>70</sup> validating whatever is fulfilled and whatever is yet to come in vv.5-22.<sup>71</sup> Verse 23 clearly corresponds to the beginning of the discourse, especially the

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(πολέμους καὶ ἀκοῶς πολέμων ἐγερθήσεται γὰρ ἔθνος ἐπ' ἔθνος καὶ βασιλεία ἐπὶ βασιλείαν, ἔσονται σεισμοὶ κατὰ τόπους, ἔσονται λιμοὶ), which have been incorporated into a perspective focusing upon the necessity of alertness with an expectation curtailing the end.

<sup>69</sup> Ὁν ἀλλ' οὐπω τὸ τέλος (v.7), ἀρχὴ ὠδίνων ταῦτα (v.8), and μὴ θροεῖσθε· δεῖ γενέσθαι (v.8) as redactional elements see Barton, *Family Ties* pp.109-110; Lambrecht, *Redaktion* pp.113-114,258; Marxsen, *Evangelist* pp.174-175. Pryke (*Redactional Style* p.170) classifies δεῖ γενέσθαι, ἀλλ' οὐπω τὸ τέλος ... ἀρχὴ ὠδίνων ταῦτα as redactional.

<sup>70</sup> V. Taylor, *Mark* p.517.

<sup>71</sup> Thus Mark has constructed a movement of thought through connecting ὅταν δὲ ἀκούσητε (v.7) with Ὅταν δὲ ἴδητε in v.14 ("Dass der ὅταν-Satz in V.7 parännetisch ausmündet, ist ein weiter Hinweis auf des Redaktors Hand" Pesch, *Naherwartungen* p.119), which provides a progression from events heard at a distance to an event seen ("ὅταν nimmt nun direkten Bezug auf Frage in V.4"). Similarly, the response to both events requires an appropriate construction. In the one, a breakpoint prevents associating events in vv.7-8 with the onset of the end-time (hence ἀλλ' οὐπω τὸ τέλος ... ἀρχὴ ὠδίνων ταῦτα at the close of v.7 and v.8), which is well put by Gaston who reaches back to v.5 to make his case: "The backbone of the paragraph is provided by the exhortation to watch and yet not to anticipate the end too soon. As a basis for the exhortation reference is made to apocalyptic commonplaces, but the latter are only secondary supporting statements" *Stone* p.15. In the other, the appearance of τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως necessitates

redactional question in v.4.<sup>72</sup>

Therefore, it is probable that Mark has joined vv.5-8 to the beginning of vv.14-20 to indicate that the events in vv.5-8 are not part of the end-time in contrast to the events in vv.14ff. The point on the time line separating all these events is what occurs in the temple in v.14. The placing of vv.21-22 between this event and the consummation in vv.24-27 indicates that the deceivers of vv.5-6,21-22 exist in different time periods separated by the key event in v.14 with the deceivers in the latter verses being an accentuation of the threat of the deceivers in vv.5-6.<sup>73</sup> The author expects a worsening period of deception after the appearance of τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως in v.14 because the deceivers in vv.21-22 perform their activity in the period of unparalleled tribulation (vv.19-20) which is a prelude to the consummation (the

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immediate action. "To say that according to v 8d the end will already be starting with the predicted disasters disregards the opposite thrust in the preceding verse: 'but the end is not yet' ... Rather, these disasters will be a beginning that does not signal the end. Much worse will be the disasters that do signal it (vv 14-23)" Gundry, Mark p.760.

<sup>72</sup> "The *hymeis de blepete* of v.23a balances the first word of the discourse, *blepete* (v.5); *proeir-eka hymin*, 'I have told you beforehand,' corresponds to the request in v.4a, *eipon h-emin*, 'tell us'; and the concluding *panta*, 'all things,' of v.23 responds to the concluding *panta* of v.4" Beasley-Murray, Last Days p.420.

<sup>73</sup> E.g., Hooker surmises in considering the deceivers of vv.21-22: "The situation depicted by Mark is now quite different from that in v.6: the time to expect the Son of man is near" Saint Mark p.317. Though Theissen considers it a possibility that these verses stemmed from the Caligula episode, he argues for their inclusion by Mark, because vv.5-6 are Markan constructions in retrospect at the appearance of the multitude of deceivers, while vv.21-22 are his future expectations (Lokalkolorit pp.140,163,274). N.H. Taylor marshals little evidence to demonstrate that a number of messianic deceivers were active at the time of the Caligula crisis: "While we know of no specific messianic claimant during the period of the Caligula crisis, we do know that the situation was conducive to the emergence of such figures" ("Palestinian Christianity Part 2" p.26). It is implausible that this tradition contained vv.5-6,21-22 because Mark has so constructed these verses as boundaries around vv.5-23, indicating the seriousness of their threat. Thus it is unlikely that in the traditional material a worse crisis of false prophets/christs (vv.21-22) could be posited as a future expectation, in contrast to the deceivers' activity in the present (vv.5-6), given their paucity in the Caligula crisis.

deceivers in vv.5b-6 prelude the event in v.14). The escalation of the deceivers' threat in vv.21-22 is an urgent danger which can be seen by the way the author has placed their activity directly before the SM's theophany, so dwarfing their impact (the SM is not hidden upon the earth cf., v.21, but comes from heaven and is visible to all v.26).

3.3.2. The difficulty of placing vv.9-13 in the same traditional conjunction as vv.7-8 or 14-20 has long been recognized: the verses have no immediate reference to Jerusalem nor in particular the temple. These verses are persecution sayings concerning a variety of circumstances and are not descriptive of one event, which is a catalyst for other events (cf., vv.14,15-20). Further, they do not predict a coming disaster and vv.9,11,12 are based around the notion of betrayal and have links with the betrayal of Jesus in Mark's passion account (see 14:10,11,18,21,41,42,44, 15:1,10,15) which is something absent in vv.7-8,14-20. Their focus is upon mission in the midst of persecution (vv.7-8,14-20 warn of the impact of external events) and counsel endurance in the midst of persecution (vv.7-8,14-20 counsel caution at news of international rivalries and natural calamities and flight respectively). Lastly, they warn disciples of the cost of following Jesus (after the manner of Mk 8:34-9:1,10:28-31) as opposed to conveying end-time information. That vv.9-13 can be used in a different context (in Mt 10:17-22 the sayings warn about the treatment of Christians while pursuing their mission) points to the probability of their existence as individual sayings unconnected with vv.14-20.<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>74</sup> Hooker, "Trial" p.88. After comparing vv.9-13 with Mt 10:17-23 Gaston raises the possibility that both accounts stem from the same common source (Stone p.18). He further suggests that behind Lk 21:12-15,18-19 exists a "parallel tradition to that of Mark" (cf., also the further parallel in Q Lk 12:11-12).

Theissen (*Lokalkolorit* p.166) omits them from his Caligula source because variants of the sayings are found elsewhere (on 13:9 cf., Lk 12:11-12; 13:11 cf., Lk 21:15; 13:12 cf., Matt 10:34-35 and Lk 12:53) and as persecution sayings they probably belong more to Mark's own day than the Caligula crisis, a view we argue below. N.H. Taylor includes them in his source, because the reference to Christians before judiciaries in v.9 fits the Caligula

First, the redactional Βλέπετε δὲ ὑμεῖς ἑαυτοῦς (v.9a)<sup>75</sup> picks up vv.9-13 from vv.5-8 (cf., v.5a where a similar redactional frame occurs, the Markan ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς ἤρξατο λέγειν αὐτοῖς, Βλέπετε ...). In vv.9-13 the theme of endurance under persecution is contained within the redactional clasps of v.9a (Βλέπετε δὲ ὑμεῖς ἑαυτοῦς) and v.13b (ὁ δὲ ὑπομείνας εἰς

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crisis where Christians were still "under the disciplinary jurisdiction of recognized Jewish institutions" and would be brought to trial before "Roman and Herodian Rulers of Palestine." They would also bear the brunt of familial and societal rejection in the protest movements against the imposition of Caligula's image. Anyone resisting participation in the movement would be considered a traitor. For Taylor, v.10 is indicative of failed parousia hopes in the light of the Caligula crisis where mission among the nations is an eschatological imperative ("Palestinian Christianity Part 2" pp.30-35).

Against this: the terms in v.9 are so general it is difficult to locate a particular social setting (so A.Y. Collins, Beginning p.83; Gaston, Stone p.18). However the trial of Christians in vv.9-11 is based upon their proclamation of the gospel among the nations and not upon a refusal to participate in the protest movement, hence the link between the person of Jesus and the disciples is manifested in the key-word παραδιδόναι in vv.9,11,12. Christians are persecuted and handed over "because of me" (v.9c) and confession before judges is linked to Jesus because Christians preach because of their loyalty to him. At their trial Christians will receive divine strength to testify (v.11), presumably in respect to their betrayal to the authorities by family members on account of their preaching. In the Caligula crisis, the only direct evidence of family strife involves protesters before Petronius who are prepared to initiate a suicide pact if plans for the statue go ahead (Philo *Leg. Gai.* 234). If the persecution of Christians occurs because of their failure to participate in the protest movement, why does the author of vv.9-13 place that rejection around a direct statement on the preaching of the gospel (v.10)? In fact, rejection by one's own family stems from this preaching, especially if v.10 is an insertion interpreting εἰς μαρτύριον αὐτοῖς, as we argue below. Of course, it is difficult to be dogmatic because persecution through non-participation in the protest movement could be construed as rejection on the basis of the gospel. We grant Taylor's principle that the "necessity of proclamation to the Gentiles as a prerequisite to the parousia does not necessarily imply that the community is itself involved in such mission" ("Palestinian Christianity Part 2" p.33). But we find it difficult to argue that vv.9-13 advocate universal mission only in the light of failed parousia hopes through the failure of Caligula's image to be imposed. Persecution occurs because Christians are caught up in universal mission (cf., Hengel, Mark "wants to show that the persecution of the community from the beginning leads to confession, and represents the other side of the 'world-wide,' eschatologically motivated mission" Studies p.24).

<sup>75</sup> Pryke, Redactional Style pp.136,146,170.



τέλος οὗτος σωθήσεται).<sup>76</sup> The Βλέπετε command in v.9 ratifies our contention that Βλέπετε in v.5 is also redactional because both commands align vv.5-8,9-13 with each other.

Second, the three sayings constructed around the παραδιδόναι word probably stem from early Christian reflection on Jesus' passion<sup>77</sup> or Jesus himself<sup>78</sup> probably with Markan additions. In v.9 εἰς μαρτύριον αὐτοῖς after ἔνεκεν ἐμοῦ is a practice of the author adding a qualifying phrase after ἔνεκεν ἐμοῦ (cf., 8:35,10:29).<sup>79</sup> In v.11 the temporal clause καὶ ὅταν is likely Markan as part of the syntactical development of tension in vv.5-14, with the temporal clause corresponding to a previous clause in v.7, where a temporal clause is combined with an injunction not to be alarmed.<sup>80</sup> The injunction is a directive quelling anxiety, like the one found in v.7. Verse 12 unites the παραδιδόναι key-word with material from Mic 7:6 (cf., Q Lk 12:52f. for a variant of the Old Testament material without the παραδιδόναι motif), while

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<sup>76</sup> Pesch, *Markusevangelium* II p.283. On the redactional nature of v.13: The verse is a summary statement (Marxsen, *Evangelist* p.177) prefacing a new unit (v.14f.). It continues the author's motif of exhortation (ὁ δὲ ὑπομείνας). The verb σώζειν occurs 14 times in Mark and τέλος picks up the summary τέλος of v.8.

<sup>77</sup> See N. Perrin, "The Use of (παρα)διδόναι in Connection with the Passion of Jesus in the New Testament" in *Der Ruf Jesu und die Antwort der Gemeinde Festschrift für Joachim Jeremias zum 70 Geburtstag* (ed.) Eduard Lohse (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht), 1970 pp.208-209.

<sup>78</sup> So V. Taylor, (*Mark* p.510) who suggests that from sayings by Jesus on persecution (vv.9,11) Mark extended the material to speak of universal hatred because of Jesus' name or person (cf., 6:14 for an example of Mark's point of view).

<sup>79</sup> So Pesch, *Naherwartungen* pp.115-116. Gaston (*Stone* p.19) suggests Mark added αὐτοῖς to connect the thought with what precedes it. It is possible that the phrase goes back to Jesus (so Gundry, *Mark* p.768, see 6:11), but without v.10, the reason why standing before rulers and kings is a witness, is unexplained.

<sup>80</sup> ὅταν δὲ ἀκούσητε ... μὴ θροεῖσθε, cf., καὶ ὅταν ἄγωσιν ὑμᾶς παραδιδόντες, μὴ προμεριμνᾶτε. Note Hooker on μὴ προμεριμνᾶτε in v.11: "... and the warning is parallel to the injunction not to be alarmed in v.7" *Saint Mark* p.312.

v.13 may combine material built from Mic 6:7 along with the Markan addition of universal hatred -- which summarizes the previous verses and so depict the author's own circumstances.<sup>81</sup> In vv.12-13a traditional prophetic material has been incorporated into an exhortation based upon the παραδιδόναι motif to steadfastness in view of familial and societal rejection.<sup>82</sup>

Verses 9-13 essentially align Jesus, John the Baptist (1:14), and the disciples, in the same path of preaching and persecution.<sup>83</sup> In contrast to vv.14-20, this emphasis ensures a connection between discipleship experience and the passion account which provides the fit of ch.13 with chs.14-15, so enabling ch.13 "to function as a prophetic disclosure of the true significance of the passion."<sup>84</sup>

Third, that v.10 is an insertion is beyond serious doubt,<sup>85</sup> so the verse is important in vv.9-13 for assisting us to determine redactional elements. The verse puts persecution and the necessity of the gospel's proclamation within an end-time context.<sup>86</sup> Marxsen,<sup>87</sup> following

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<sup>81</sup> So Donahue, Are You the Christ? p.216; Mann, Mark p.519; Marxsen, Evangelist p.177.

<sup>82</sup> Barton, Family Ties p.111.

<sup>83</sup> Barton, Family Ties pp.110-111.

<sup>84</sup> So Barton (Family Ties p.109) following Robert H. Lightfoot, The Gospel Message of Saint Mark (London: Oxford University Press), 1962 pp.48-59.

<sup>85</sup> On Markan redaction in v.10 see Werner Kelber, The Kingdom in Mark (Philadelphia: Fortress Press), 1974 p.119; Lambrecht, Redaktion pp.127-130; Pryke, Redactional Style pp.53-54; V. Taylor, Mark pp.507-508.

<sup>86</sup> Kühschelm rightly declares: "führt sie zu einer Klimax, aber auch zu einer umfassenden Lösung. Unsere Stelle ist demnach die 'in nuce' realisierte Übertragung des Geschicks Jesu, wie es sich im aretalogischen Spannungsbogen des MkEv insgesamt akzentuiert findet, auf das Geschick der Jünger. Sie ist die in die 'besprochene Welt' der Zukunft gekleidete proleptische Applikation der anschließend berichteten Passions- und Ostergeschichte Jesu (als letzter Krisis und Lösung) auf das Schicksal derer, die in Jesu Nachfolge stehen." Thus the recognition of Jesus ("Akklamation") and its delay (Retardation) occur in both the disciples' and Jesus' ministry. Final vindication or "Rettung"

Lohmeyer,<sup>88</sup> is correct in surmising that v.10 follows as an interpretation of εἰς μαρτύριον αὐτοῖς at the end of v.9. Verse 10 is almost entirely composed of Markan words (τὰ ἔθνη cf., 10:33, πρῶτον cf., 3:37, δεῖ cf., 8:31, κηρύσσω cf., 1:4, κηρυχθῆναι τὸ εὐαγγέλιον cf., 1:14,14:9), does not appear in Matthew or Luke, and breaks up the link between the first two betrayal sayings in vv.9 and 11 which are "very closely connected in thought and linked together by the catchword παραδίδομι."<sup>89</sup> Verses 9 and 11 provide the basis for the subject-matter inserted in v.10. The eschatological perspective, implied by the notion of πρῶτον ("first before the end comes") is dependent upon the redactional terms indicating the eschaton at the end of vv.7,8 i.e., neither persecution nor evangelism initiates the end-time but rather continues throughout the entire period.<sup>90</sup> The beginning of the end-time is a key notion in ch.13, so time indicators like ἀλλ' οὐπω τὸ τέλος/ἀρχὴ ὠδίνων ταῦτα in vv.7 and 8 and πρῶτον in v.10

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(v.13c) occurs at the parousia "sondern also Pendant zum individuellen Geschick Jesu, der in seiner Auferweckung aus der Macht des Todes befreit wurde und damit Hoffnung bedeutet für jeden, der seinen Glauben und seine Nachfolge bis zum persönlichen Tod durchhält" Roman Kühschelm, Jüngerverfolgung und Geschick Jesu Eine exegetisch-bibeltheologische Untersuchung der synoptischen Verfolgungsankündigungen Mk 13, 9-13 par und Mt 23, 29-36 par OBS 5 (Klosterneuburg: österreichisches Katholisches Bibelwerk), 1983 p.262 (also pp. 270-271). The fate of Jesus and that of his disciples is the same. Their vindication occurs at the time of his vindication over the Jewish religious authorities (14:62), at the SM's parousia. By placing this material before the advent of τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως Mark bolsters the notion that disciples, already experiencing persecution in their evangelizing, can only brace themselves for continued universal hostility in the midst of their universal mission in the time before the parousia (vv.14-20).

<sup>87</sup> Evangelist p.175.

<sup>88</sup> Markus p.272.

<sup>89</sup> V. Taylor, Mark p.507.

<sup>90</sup> I.e., what "must" happen, so J. Verheyden, "Persecution and Eschatology Mk 13,9-13" in The Four Gospels p.1158.

are probably redactional elements shaping the whole discourse. For Gundry,<sup>91</sup> v.10 gives the reason for the disciples' appearance before judicial authorities and so is not a Markan insertion. But v.10 expands v.9 by mentioning the key notion of gospel (nothing is said in v.9 about the disciples' message) and "among all the nations" certainly includes authorities but is essentially a much wider audience, and "the nations" is not the subject-matter of v.9. Verse 11 continues the "contained" perspective in v.9 by reverting back to considering how to respond to betrayal. Only by returning to v.9 does the context of persecution by authorities become obvious. The notion of persecution, so central in vv.9,11,12,13, is absent in v.10. An eschatological perspective, missing in vv.9 and 11, is introduced in v.10 which therefore must be a key motif for the author.

For these reasons, it is probable that Mark has placed three sayings on persecution constructed around a παραδιδόναι motif (vv.9b,11a,12a<sup>92</sup> which is central in the passion account) before the appearance of τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως in v.14 in order to connect his readers' present experience of persecution<sup>93</sup> with universal missionary expansion.<sup>94</sup> Mark's construction of the sayings in vv.9-13 into a framework provided by the verb παραδιδόναι and his inclusion of v.10 with the necessity of mission, sets suffering and persecution in an

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<sup>91</sup> Mark p.768.

<sup>92</sup> See Pesch, (Naherwartungen pp.115f.) for redactional elements in these verses.

<sup>93</sup> So Marcus, "Jewish War" p.447 and Verheyden, "Persecution and Eschatology" p.1158; *contra* N.H. Taylor, "Palestinian Christianity Part 2" p.33.

<sup>94</sup> Theissen, Lokalkolorit p.166. N.H. Taylor includes these verses in his proposed Caligula tradition but he does not deal with any of the literary arguments by scholars excluding the verses, beyond rejecting Hartman's argument that, because the verses do not contain allusions to the book of Daniel, vv.9-13 are a later insertion into the existing text ("Palestinian Christianity Part 2" p.29). His main argument for inclusion is the likelihood that material on end-time turmoil would contain material on persecution of the faithful.

eschatological perspective, which aligns vv.9-13 with the whole of vv.7-20.<sup>95</sup>

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<sup>95</sup> Cf., Emil Wendling, Die Entstehung des Marcus-Evangeliums (Tübingen: Mohr), 1908 p.156: "Mc 13:12 ist augenscheinlich die ursprüngliche Fortsetzung von 13:8 ... Das ist ein zusammenhängendes Stück aus der von Mc benutzten Apokalypse. Dies wird dadurch bestätigt, dass die beiden Verse 13:8,12 zusammen die gleiche alttestamentliche Vorlage in freier Weise wiedergeben, nämlich Jes 19:2 ... Besondere Beachtung verdient, dass die zweite Hälfte der Jesaiastelle auch schon in Mc 13:8 anklingt, wo πόλις ἐπὶ πόλιν, νομὸς ἐπὶ νομόν offenbar nachgeahmt wird. Andererseits kommt die Präposition von ἐπεγεροθήσονται erst Mc 13:12 in ἐπαναστήσονται zur Geltung. Zum Anfang von Mc 13:12 ist noch Jes 19:4 καὶ παραδώσω τοὺς Αἰγυπτίους εἰς χεῖρας ἀνθρώπων zu vergleichen ..." If Wendling's view of the connection between v.12 and v.8 is accepted then Mark may have intensified the conflict by his arrangement of the material -- by forcing more of a separation between tribal and familial conflicts (which in the Isaiah passage are in a unified form). The conflict of Egyptians is widened by Mark into conflicts among the greatest and the smallest of social units: nations and families. Beasley-Murray (Last Days p.405) connects v.13a with v.12 on the basis LXX Mic 7:6 ("a man's enemies are all the men in his house") indicating that Mark is not intent on showing a "universal disintegration of the family" as part of societal anarchy. But although the distresses are different in respect to vv.7-8 and 9-13 (which deal with terrestrial upheaval and discipleship tribulation, Pesch, Markusevangelium 2 p.286) they stem from disciples cast among the nations where tribal or familial unrest originates, which does not nullify a connection in interpretation between LXX Mic 7:6 and v.13a. Chapters 14-16 confirm the sort of viability of life between cross and parousia (F. Busch, Zum Verständnis der synoptischen Eschatologie; Markus 13 neu untersucht [Gütersloh], 1938 p.157). Contrary to the Isaiah passage Mark separates familial from tribal conflict, emphasizing it by placing it at the beginning of the travail.

Further, this could structurally explain why the reference to familial divisions corresponds more to Mic 7:6 than Isa 19:2. The Micah text, through coupling related nouns together, graphically presents these divisions in a way that the Isaiah text (with its singular reference to a man fighting against his brother and his neighbour) does not.

Mic 7:6	13:12
son/father	brother/brother
daughter/mother	father/child
mother-in-law/daughter-in-law	children/parents

The use of the same parallelism of members in 13:12 as in the Micah text resonates with another Markan theme. In the lament beginning at LXX Mic 7:1, a comparison is made between the land's present state of corruption and the prophet's inability to find figs after the summer harvest. The fruitlessness of God's people means family ties are not respected: a son considers his father foolish, a daughter defies her mother, and a daughter-in-law her mother-in-law v.6. The comparison of familial strife and a fruitless fig-tree would not have been lost on Mark's readers in view of Jesus cursing a barren fig-tree in the context of a visit to the temple (Mk 11:12-26). "Judaism, we might say, has been shown to be contaminated at its source; the fig tree in spite of external appearances cannot bear the fruits of righteousness: it cannot feed those who hunger after righteousness: above all it cannot be the focal point for the worship of the nations. It must be destroyed by a

In addition, our argument shows that for the author the Gentile mission is of fundamental importance. This emphasis appears to clash with the author's injunction to flight at the appearance of τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως in v.14. On the one hand, the author describes the necessity of confidently going among the Gentiles proclaiming the gospel while on the other hand he advocates flight into the mountains which is a hideaway existence. The redactional nature of v.10 has been shown while the adoption and adaptation of material from the Caligula crisis shows the author's purpose in the additions in v.14 and the arrangement of the material in the chapter. Therefore the two situations described are concerns of the author.

Both situations in vv.10,14 express the notion of movement, the initial movement involving proclamation of the gospel among the nations and the latter movement involving flight from Jerusalem. Both situations push disciples away from Jerusalem. In fact, for a mission among the nations to occur, there must be a leaving of Judaea. However escape in the latter instance is one of seeking safety in the mountains, which cannot be equated with proclamation among the Gentiles. Both emphases involve the same and different referents. The inference in vv.9-13 is that persecution arises for the disciples (vv.3,5a) from their task of taking the gospel among the nations, a task which by implication is given to the author's audience (v.37). The referents are all disciples evangelizing the Gentiles. But in v.14 only residents of Judaea are urged to flee. However the broadening of the locale of the conflict beginning in Judaea to one

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mighty act of power in order that it may be replaced" C.H. Bird, "Some γάρ Clauses in St. Mark's Gospel" *JTS* 3-4 (1952-53) p.178. It is plausible that 13:13b, continuing the thought expressed from Mic 7:6, could "conceivably be a conscious echo of Mic 7:7 (LXX hypomen-o epi t-o the-o t-o s-ot-eri mou) ..." (Beasley-Murray, *Last Days* p.406) with the emphasis on endurance (cf., Matt 10:23 with the emphasis upon urgency). In the midst of the Gentile mission endurance is the necessary quality due to suffering and persecution. In contrast to Matt 24:13 where the saying is treated as something occurring before the end (Hooker, *Saint Mark* p.312), the saying in Mark functions as a motive to commitment within the context of suffering universal hatred (v.13a) while preaching among the nations.

enveloping the earth and culminating in the consummation shows that the conflict affects all disciples. The tension then seems to be one involving adopting both a high and a low profile at the same time. Certainly τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως is not a candidate for the gospel while the Gentiles are. Thus flight from τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως or avoidance of his presence at all costs is not inconsistent with the Gentile mission because it puts the author's audience in the place of proclaiming a message that will invite persecution (from τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως among others v.9).

3.4. Finally we will examine how vv.28-37 fit into our argument regarding Mark's adaptation of material from the Caligula crisis. In vv.28ff. no new information is given regarding the end-time; instead eschatological exhortation predominates. There are important clues showing that the author is reaching back in his exhortatory comments to the statements (vv.1-4) resulting in the end-time information.

Markan traces of redaction can be gleaned at v.37<sup>96</sup> which is a summary address making explicit what has been revealed to an audience beyond the four disciples<sup>97</sup> and in the imperatives urging vigilance.<sup>98</sup>

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<sup>96</sup> Beasley-Murray, Last Days p.357; Gaston, Stone p.41.

<sup>97</sup> Regarding v.37 Fowler concludes: "This statement is about as close as an ancient author can come to direct address by a character within the story to the audience outside the story" Reader-Response p.85.

<sup>98</sup> Βλέπετε, ἀγρυπνεῖτε opening v.33 and γρηγορεῖτε οὖν which follows the door-keeper parable and is repeated in v.37 ὃ δὲ ὑμῖν λέγω πᾶσιν λέγω, γρηγορεῖτε. The redaction of vv.33 (Pryke, Redactional Style p.171) and 37 frames the doorkeeper parable of vv.34-36 (probably a variant of a Lk 12:36-38 Beasley-Murray, Last Days p.469) with v.35a paralleling v.33 substantially ("35a is little more than a repetition of Vs 33" Gaston, Stone p.40). The whole section stresses vigilance in view of the suddenness and incalculability of the lord's return (the motif of vigilance is found in the Gethsemane episode where the disciples fail to remain awake while waiting for Jesus 14:32-42).

The fig-tree parable (vv.28-29) appears forced in its present context:<sup>99</sup> the fig-tree is mentioned without any introduction (‘ Ἀπὸ δὲ τῆς συκῆς μάθετε τὴν παραβολὴν v.28a) and is probably a Markan transitional element to introduce the parable.<sup>100</sup> Verse 30 follows on well from v.27 without the intervening verses,<sup>101</sup> and ταῦτα γινόμενα (v.29a) is awkward, lacking precision in view of the many events described in vv.5-23.<sup>102</sup> Verses 28-29 are fundamental for the interpretation of ch.13 from Mark's point of view;<sup>103</sup> the ταῦτα in v.29 harks back to the appearance of τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως in the temple and the consequences of that appearance (vv.14b.ff.). With the advent of τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως then ἐγγύς ἐστίν. Thus ὅταν ἴδητε in v.29 connects up the with the tradition in the ὅταν δὲ ἴδητε of v.14 bringing a focus to one event in the temple which launches the end-time (v.29b).<sup>104</sup>

Three independent sayings (vv.30,31,32) have likely been incorporated by Mark into a context stressing vigilance due to the imminent approach of the SM. The addition of ταῦτα πάντα to the saying in v.30<sup>105</sup> links the saying with the fig-tree parable and reaches back to

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<sup>99</sup> Gaston, Stone p.35; V. Taylor, Mark p.520. On the difficulties in the composition history of vv.28f. see Telford, Barren Temple pp.213f.

<sup>100</sup> Pesch, Naherwartungen pp.175-176; V. Taylor, Mark p.520.

<sup>101</sup> Mann, Mark p.537.

<sup>102</sup> In spite of their differences over the extent of Markan redaction in ch.13, both Lambrecht (Redaktion p.201) and Pesch (Naherwartungen p.176) take v.29 as Markan composition, also J. Dupont, "La parabole du figuier qui bourgeonne" RB 75 (1968) pp.538-539, and Hartman, Prophecy p.223.

<sup>103</sup> Marxsen, Evangelist p.187.

<sup>104</sup> Theissen, Lokalkolorit p.272; also Lane, Mark p.479; Beasley-Murray, Last Days p.437.

<sup>105</sup> Gaston, Stone p.38.



ὅταν μέλλῃ ταῦτα συντελεῖσθαι πάντα of v.4<sup>106</sup> thereby bridging the gap between story-line and Mark's readers. The sayings in vv.31,32 have probably been joined by Mark, with v.31 joined to v.32 through the παρέλθη/παρελεύσονται combination.<sup>107</sup> Verse 31 reinforces near expectation of the parousia for the generation of Mark's readers (v.30) and v.32 provides a caveat excluding calculations beyond the Markan schema.<sup>108</sup>

The author's expectations are seen in the arrangement of vv.28ff. Following on from a description of the SM's coming, vv.28-29 show that there are indications of the SM's approach. Though the exact date of the parousia is unknown it will occur within the lifetime of the contemporary generation. The "greening" of the fig-tree connects with summer as "these things" connect with the SM's coming. "These things" indicate the SM's approach. Mark has disassociated events in vv.6-8 with the approach of the eschaton and nothing in vv.9-13 suggests that persecution indicates the onset of the consummation. However the appearance of τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως begins the time of "those days" which will usher in the SM's parousia. Therefore v.14 is the referent of ταῦτα in v.29 which takes in events in vv.15-22. The destruction of the temple (v.2) is associated with the advent of τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως (v.14a) which signifies τὸ σημεῖον in v.4 "all these things are about to be accomplished" (v.4b). The coming of the SM occurs after the event mentioned in v.14.

### 3.5. Conclusion

Mark acquired material on τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως and the expected tribulation to follow culminating in the SM's cosmic arrival (vv.14-20,24-27). He altered the material to

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<sup>106</sup> So Mann, Mark p.537; V. Taylor, Mark p.521.

<sup>107</sup> So Hartman, Prophecy p.223.

<sup>108</sup> Kelber, Kingdom p.126.

indicate that τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως was an individual and set this material within the framework of an introduction on the temple's destruction. To this material he added: vv.7-8 (sundry events not launching the end-time), vv.5b-6,21-22 (warnings on false messianic figures), vv.9-13 (a warning concerning the severity of persecution built around a "betrayal" motif and including an inserted element on the world-wide proclamation of the gospel), and other assorted elements (a fig-tree and absent householder parables in vv.28-29,33-37, and three traditional sayings vv.30,31,32) in order to communicate an imminent eschatological expectation made operational by the appearance of τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### THE IDENTIFICATION OF THE SIGN IN VERSE 14

#### Introduction

We have shown the prominence of 13:14 in vv.1-37 and that the referent of τὸ σημεῖον in v.4 occurs at v.14. We have also demonstrated the probability that in v.14 Mark has adapted material from the Caligula episode of 39-41 C.E. In order to exegete v.14 further, we will examine the phrase τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως in the books of Daniel and 1Maccabees (4.1.) and then compare results with exegesis on 13:14 (4.2.). Finally, possible identifications advocated by scholars of the phrase in v.14 will be explored (4.3.).

#### 4.1. The Background of τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως

The phrase τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως<sup>1</sup> cannot be understood in Mk 13:14a without consideration of Dan 9:27b,11:31,12:11<sup>2</sup> and 1Macc 1:54.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> For a general introduction to the background of this chapter see Ford, Desolation ch.4.

<sup>2</sup> As Matthew indicates editorially (τὸ γρηθὲν διὰ Δανιήλ τοῦ προφήτου 24:15). Although admitting that τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως "derives from Daniel," Geddert posits Ezek 33:29 as the real background to Mk 13:14 because "the land will become *desolate* on account of the *abominations* of the residents" Watchwords p.210 fn.21. However, clearly in Mk 13:14 the residents of Jerusalem/Judaea are not the cause of the abomination. All residents are urged to flee away from the city because the danger lies beyond their control inside the city. Verses 15-17 give no hint of a rebellious people bent on idolatry. Rather, ensconced in their dwellings, people are taken by surprise by the appearance of τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως. Consideration of the Danielic passages and 1Macc 1:54 over other texts has long been recognized as indispensable in exegeting the phrase in v.14a (e.g., Marxsen, Pesch, Lambrecht, Taylor, Gaston, Anderson, Lane *et al*). So strong is the association of Dan 9:27,11:31,12:11 with Mk 13:14a that for Hooker the "phrase is of course a quotation from Daniel" "Trial and Tribulation" p.89.

<sup>3</sup> "Die rätselhafte Wendung 'Greuel der Verwüstung' greift ein Schlagwort aus der Religionsverfolgung unter Antiochus IV. 168/7 auf" Theissen, Lokalkolorit p.167. 1Macc

4.1.1. LXX Dan 9:27b καὶ ἐν τῷ τέλει τῆς ἐβδομάδος ἀρθήσεται ἡ θυσία καὶ ἡ σπονδή, καὶ ἐπὶ τὸ ἱερὸν βδέλυγμα τῶν ἐρημώσεων ἔσται ἕως συντελείας, καὶ συντέλεια δοθήσεται ἐπὶ τὴν ἐρήμωσιν.<sup>4</sup> "And at the end of the week the sacrifice and the drink offering shall be taken away and an abomination of desolations will be on the temple until the end, and an end will be given to the desolation."

The elements substituted for each other (ἡ θυσία καὶ ἡ σπονδή and βδέλυγμα τῶν ἐρημώσεων) surround the prepositional phrase ἐπὶ τὸ ἱερὸν, vividly emphasizing the total removal of the sacred and placement of the profane in the holiest place, the temple, at a specific time for a decreed period (ἕως συντελείας, καὶ συντέλεια δοθήσεται).

The noun βδέλυγμα is in the indefinite singular combined with a genitive plural expressing **𐤀𐤓𐤕𐤓𐤕 𐤀𐤓𐤕𐤓𐤕**,<sup>5</sup> indicating something placed on the altar of sacrifice (in a specific place, ἐπὶ τὸ ἱερὸν, that is, the temple cf., 1Macc 1:54). **𐤕𐤓𐤕** is a detestable object, usually an idol (e.g., Jer 13:27,32:35,44:22; Ezek 5:9,7:20). Though the verb **𐤀𐤓𐤕** means desolated (Ezek 33:28-29) or appalled (e.g., Jer 4:9), in LXX Dan 9:27b the adopted verb ἐρημώω<sup>6</sup> means to make desolation or ruin, which fits the context (cf., v.26). Regarding ἐπὶ τὴν ἐρήμωσιν,

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1:54 is crucial because it provides historical background regarding the connection between events depicted in Daniel and Antiochus IV Epiphanes.

<sup>4</sup> Septuaginta Id est Vetus Testamentum graece iuxta LXX interpretes edidit Alfred Rahlfs Libri poetici et prophetici editio Octava (Stuttgart: Württembergische Bibelanstalt) 1965. Th Dan 9:27b καὶ ἐν τῷ ἡμίσει τῆς ἐβδομάδος ἀρθήσεται μου θυσία καὶ σπονδή, καὶ ἐπὶ τὸ ἱερὸν βδέλυγμα τῶν ἐρημώσεων, καὶ ἕως συντελείας καιροῦ συντέλεια δοθήσεται ἐπὶ τὴν ἐρήμωσιν.

<sup>5</sup> The phrase itself **𐤀𐤓𐤕𐤓𐤕 𐤀𐤓𐤕𐤓𐤕**, a plural noun with a singular participle, is an oddity, matching LXX Theod text of an indefinite singular noun with a definite genitive plural.

<sup>6</sup> On the background of ἐρημώω in Daniel see Jer 25:8-12,29:10-14, cf., also 4:1-8, 7:30-34,44:22; Ezek 5:11-15.

J.J. Collins surmised that "there is a deliberate play on the root **שׁמם** which refers to the god worshipped, the altar dedicated to him, and here the human king who is the subject of the first part of the verse...",<sup>7</sup> i.e., the devastator (cf., Heb "until the decreed end is poured out on the desolator" **עַד כִּלְהָ וּנְחַרְצָהּ עַל שׁמם** i.e., an individual who is connected with his abominable object). But, the first translators construed the expression at the end of the verse as an object and not an individual. The noun **ἐρήμωσις**, on the basis of its antecedent (**βδέλυγμα τῶν ἐρημώσεων**), refers to the thing and not an individual. The prepositional phrase beginning with **ἐπὶ** occurs twice and, taking the accusative form, specifies **τὸ ἱερόν** as the location where **βδέλυγμα τῶν ἐρημώσεων** will be placed. This location probably paraphrases the temple-altar as Josephus (Ant 12.5:4), 1Macc 1:54 (**ἐπὶ τὸ θυσιαστήριον**), and the first part of verb (where **ἀρθήσεται ἡ θυσία καὶ ἡ σπονδή** specify the sacrificial altar),<sup>8</sup> indicate. Therefore the second occurrence of **ἐπὶ** parallels the first, with **ἐπὶ τῇ ἐρήμωσιν** locating the object of desolation, which has replaced the sacrificial altar, in the temple. **τῇ ἐρήμωσιν** is a shortened form of referring to **βδέλυγμα τῶν ἐρημώσεων**. Thus, though the Heb form of Dan 9:27 describes the originator of the desolation as a

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<sup>7</sup> John J. Collins, Daniel A Commentary on the Book of Daniel Hermeneia A Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible (Minneapolis: Fortress Press), 1993, p.358. Collins' argument depends upon equating **שׁמם שׁקנ** with **שׁמם שׁמם** "the Syrian counterpart of Zeus Olympius" (Daniel p.357 cf., 2Macc 6:2). However it does not explain why the plural **שׁקנ** is used in v.27. André Lacocque (The Book of Daniel [trans.] David Pellauer [Atlanta: John Knox Press], 1979 p.199) suggests that the plural occurs on account of a construed counterpart, the plural **אלהים**, which does not explain the relationship between **אלהים** and the singular Syrian **שׁמם** unless the term in some sense is coextensive with both terms. The singular **שׁקנ** ("detestable idol") would sufficiently substitute for the Syrian god, unless the plural is an attempt at a more obvious reference to **אלהים**. Translating **שׁמם** at the end of v.26 as an individual ("desolator") is based upon the fact that elsewhere the individual referred to is destroyed in 8:25 and 11:45, and that he is the subject of the first part of the verse.

<sup>8</sup> J.J. Collins, Daniel p.357.

desolator, the LXX form does not. Rigaux claimed the personal aspect of **DMW** is demonstrated in LXX Dan 9:27 ("le dévastateur"),<sup>9</sup> which originated from the Heb Dan 9:27 and was influenced by the active sense of ἐρήμωσις in LXX Jer e.g., 4:7,7:34.<sup>10</sup> However, none of the examples Rigaux cited connect the subject with the act of devastation in respect to a verbal form of ἐρήμωσις. In Jer 4:7 the prepositional phrase (εἰς ἐρήμωσιν) modifies τὴν γῆν, depicting an act of desolation (τοῦ θεῖναι) by an individual (λέων v.7a), but not an individual desolator, while in 7:35, εἰς ἐρήμωσιν again describes the state of desolation of Judah (πᾶσα ἡ γῆ).<sup>11</sup> Though the individual in Dan 9:27 establishes the abomination and so creates desolation, no overt connection occurs between terms descriptive of the abomination and the subject himself. In respect to the LXX Dan 9:27b, the abomination is an object and not an individual.

4.1.2. LXX Dan 11:31 καὶ βραχίονες παρ' αὐτοῦ στήσονται καὶ μιανούσι τὸ ἅγιον τοῦ φόβου καὶ ἀποστήσουσι τὴν θυσίαν καὶ δώσουσι βδέλυγμα ἐρημώσεως.<sup>12</sup> "And lesser ones from him will stand and pollute the holy place of fear and they will remove the sacrifice and set up an abomination of desolation."

The preponderance of verbs accentuate the subject who acts against the inner temple sanctuary (τὸ ἅγιον τοῦ φόβου). Παρ' αὐτοῦ exactly defines the origin of the forces as an

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<sup>9</sup> B. Rigaux, "Βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως" *Bib* 40 (1959), pp.675-683.

<sup>10</sup> "Nous estimons que la version grecque de Dan 9,27 dépend en droite ligne de Jérémie "Βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως" p.677.

<sup>11</sup> Cf., also Jer 22:5 εἰς ἐρήμωσιν ἔσται ὁ οἶκος οὗτος, and 32:18.

<sup>12</sup> Th Dan 11:31 καὶ σπέρματα ἐξ αὐτοῦ ἀναστήσονται καὶ βεβηλώσουσιν τὸ ἅγίασμα τῆς δυναστείας καὶ μεταστήσουσιν τὸν ἐνδελεχισμόν καὶ δώσουσιν βδέλυγμα ἠφανισμένον.

individual (the "contemptible man" of v.21) who profanes by the imposition of his garrison,<sup>13</sup> not by his introduction of the abomination (καὶ joins clauses of equal rank)<sup>14</sup>. However, the focus respecting the two indefinite forms of βδέλυγμα/ἐρήμωσις (cf., 9:27b) is upon an object of abomination replacing the sacrifice, and not upon an instigator(s). Again, the removed and replaced objects focus upon the temple sanctuary.

4.1.3. LXX Dan 12:11 ἀφ' οὗ ἂν ἀποσταθῇ ἡ θυσία διὰ παντὸς καὶ ἐτοιμασθῇ δοθῆναι τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως, ἡμέρας χιλίας διακοσίας ἐνενήκοντα.<sup>15</sup> "From the time<sup>16</sup> when the regular<sup>17</sup> sacrifice is abolished and the abomination of desolation is set up<sup>18</sup> there shall be an interval of 1290 days."<sup>19</sup>

Verses 11,12 juxtapose two dates for the time of the end i.e., the resurrection (cf., v.2), "the 'end of days' (יְמֵי עֵץ) when Daniel too will rise to his destiny (12:13)."<sup>20</sup> The abomination's location is in the temple and the specified object (with the definite article

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<sup>13</sup> John E. Goldingay, Daniel The Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word Books), 1989 p.302.

<sup>14</sup> I.e., "... lesser ones from him will stand and pollute the holy place of fear *and* they will remove the sacrifice and set up an abomination of desolation."

<sup>15</sup> Th Dan 12:11 καὶ ἀπὸ καιροῦ παραλλάξεως τοῦ ἐνδελειχισμοῦ καὶ τοῦ δοθῆναι βδέλυγμα ἐρημώσεως ἡμέραι χίλιαι διακόσιαι ἐνενήκοντα.

<sup>16</sup> I.e., ἀφ' οὗ ἂν denoting the time from which something happens.

<sup>17</sup> "Through all" (διὰ παντὸς) i.e., regularly.

<sup>18</sup> Lit. "is made ready to be given" (ἐτοιμασθῇ δοθῆναι).

<sup>19</sup> I.e., the notion of the duration of time (ἡμέρας χιλίας διακοσίας ἐνενήκοντα).

<sup>20</sup> J.J. Collins, "The Meaning of 'The End' in the Book of Daniel" in Of Scribes and Scrolls Studies on the Hebrew Bible, Intertestamental Judaism, and Christian Origins Resources in Religion 5 (eds.) Harold W. Attridge, John J. Collins, Thomas H. Tobin, (Lanham: University Press of America), 1990 p.96.

encapsulating the references in 9:27b,11:31) τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως, is in place of the offering. No personal aspect of the phrase appears.

4.1.4. The context for interpreting Dan 9:27b,11:31,12:11 is found in 8:13, which is a key motif of chs.7-12. Chapters 7-8 parallel each other in respect to the little horn, the great persecutor (especially cf., 7:20,25,26 with 8:9,11,14,25).<sup>21</sup> At 8:14 a transition occurs with the ending of symbolic narration. What follows afterwards is straightforward commentary or explanation. The disruption of the temple cult in 8:13 is the focus of ch.9: the introductory narrative (vv.1-3), prayer (vv.4-19 and note v.17), and angelic epiphany (vv.20-23), lead up to the revelation given Daniel concerning the cult's disruption (vv.24-27).<sup>22</sup>

Within this context, 8:13 occupies a significant place, because it opens the angelic epiphanies so fundamental to chs.9-12 and concerns the time of the cult's defilement ("How long" מַדּוּמָה).<sup>23</sup> The transgression of v.12 (שִׁבְעָה) is the activity of the little horn<sup>24</sup> which is the

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<sup>21</sup> "In both instances the little horn represents the last persecutor of history. In both instances its overwhelming triumph precipitates its own destruction. In both cases, its warfare is against the cult of Yahweh in particular" Ford (Desolation p.118). See pp.117-121 for further details of the parallelism between chs. 7 and 8.

<sup>22</sup> Chapters 10-12 continue the forms of angelic epiphany and revelation focusing upon the little horn's demise in respect to his activity involving cultic violation.

<sup>23</sup> "The ... question ... 'How long?' ... is the question *par excellence* of the apocalypse ..." (Lacocque, Daniel p.164). According to J.J. Collins: "Further, each vision includes a calculation of the 'time of the end' ... In Dan 8:13-14, an angel asks explicitly how long the period of the vision will last, and is told: 'For two thousand, three hundred evenings and mornings; then the sanctuary shall be restored.' According to Dan 9:26-27, half one week of years (3-1\2 years) will elapse between the time the temple is profaned and its restoration. Finally, in 12:5-13, we get a series of calculations ..." (The Apocalyptic Vision of the Book of Daniel Harvard Semitic Museum Harvard Semitic Monographs 16 [Scholars Press: Missoula], 1977 p.153).

<sup>24</sup> Not as punishment by the heavenly host for Jewish sinfulness (see J.J. Collins, Daniel p.335; Goldingay, Daniel p.211). In view of the sacrilege in 8:13, the establishing of the "desolating abomination" in place of the daily sacrifice (cf., 1Macc 1:59,6:7), and the fact



"desolating transgression" (והפשע שמים)<sup>25</sup> of v.13, specified in the LXX as ἡ ἀμαρτία ἐρημώσεως (cf., LXX 11:31 ἀποστήσουσι τὴν θυσίαν καὶ δώσουσι βδέλυγμα ἐρημώσεως where βδέλυγμα replaces ἀμαρτία). The "How long" asked in v.13 sets up the following exposition in chs.9-12. Following an initial answer in v.14, the vision is further explained in vv.17,19,26 and in ch.9:21,22, following the prayer (9:3-19), which is a supplication regarding the question asked in 8:13. The time element is specifically answered in 9:24-27 where משימים משמים and על שמים occur. After the long introduction of the seer's interaction with the angelic being, detailed information is given on the career of the king who will set up the "abominating desolation" (השקוף משומם 11:31). Finally the "how long" of 12:6 picks up the "how long" of 8:13 ("The question, 'How long?' is the one raised in 8:13").<sup>26</sup> The answers given in v.7 and vv.11-12 coalesce around the setting up of "desolating abomination" (שקוף שמים)

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that the little horn's activity in setting up the "desolating abomination" is a key motif in chs.7-12, we take בפשע as stemming from the little horn.

<sup>25</sup> Taking והפשע שמים as an active participle (cf., 9:26) either as "causing desolation" or descriptive of the transgression, a "desolating transgression." We would normally expect an article before the participle if an individual is in mind. If the "desolating transgression" and "sanctuary" (שקוף) are in apposition to the vision, the sense is filled out in the LXX (ἡ θυσία ἡ ἀρθείσα καὶ ἡ ἀμαρτία ἐρημώσεως ἡ δοθείσα).

<sup>26</sup> Collins, *Daniel* p.399. Note Goldingay, "The 'awesome events' (פלאר) of which he enquires are those that came to a climax in 11:29-12:3, involving Antiochus's laying his hand on the realm of God (cf., 8:24 as well as 11:36)" *Daniel* p.309. Similarities between the two accounts establish that the same question is being asked. In both accounts: (i) Two individuals (angels) appear. (ii) One asks the other before Daniel the question "How long?" (cf., 8:2 with 12:5) (iii) Both individuals stand before water (8:3,12:5). The subject-matter of both visions (8:1,10:1), after the "How long?" question, is the daily offering and the desolating transgression (8:13,12:11). (iv) The time-frame is the elapsed number of sacrifices due to the imposition of the desolating transgression. The differing figures (cf., 8:14 with 12:11,12 and v.7; see also 1Macc 1:59,4:52-53) are probably due to revised calculations (Gunkel, *Schöpfung und Chaos* p.269; James A. Montgomery, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on The Book of Daniel The International Critical Commentary* [Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark], 1927 p.477). These matters concern the end-time (8:17,11:35,12:4,13).

v.11). Ford summarizes our case: "Not only does Dan. 9:24-27 purport to explain the vision of chapter 8, but so also does the final outline of events found in chapters 10-12. This closing section is similar in literary form to chapter 9. Whereas chapters 2, 7 and 8 present a series of symbols followed by explanation, this is no longer the case in chapters 9-12. After 8:14, symbolism requiring interpretation ceases, and everything is now of the nature of explanation itself."<sup>27</sup>

Because the question asked in 8:13 is a key issue in the remaining material in the book of Daniel, and because that verse contains a reference to an act of desolation involving the overturning of the sanctuary, we will use 8:13 to help us interpret 9:27b,11:31,12:11.

The same active participle שָׁמַם (8:13) occurs in 12:11, modifying not the noun "transgression," but שְׂקוּץ "detested or abominable thing" in the absolute state, which is the subject of וְלֹא in the infinitive construct state. In 11:31 שְׂקוּץ is found with the definite article (הַשְׂקוּץ "the abominable thing"), modified by the participle מְשׂוּמָם. What prohibits the phrase from referring to an individual is the absence of an article prefixing the participle, normally we would expect "the abominator ... who is desolating," and 8:13 and 12:11, where an object is indicated. Finally in 9:27b, in place of זִבְחֵהּ וּמִנְחָה ("the total system of sacrifice and offering")<sup>28</sup> is put in their place<sup>29</sup> שְׂקוּצִים מְשׂוּמָם, that is, an alternative sacrificial object.

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<sup>27</sup> Desolation p.123. If the visions of Dan 7-12 originated between 167-163 B.C.E. (so J.J. Collins, Daniel p.61), then the historical context of the visions coalesces around Antiochus Epiphanes IV's assault on the temple and persecution of the Jews (see below). This confirms our emphasis upon the notion of the "desolating abomination" set up in the Jerusalem sanctuary as a key element in these chapters.

<sup>28</sup> Goldingay, Daniel p.263.

<sup>29</sup> Reading וְעַל כַּנֶּף not as the impossible "on a wing" but following the emendation of כַּנֶּם "upon or in their place" or כַּנּוֹ "upon or in its place" i.e., replacing the proper sacrificial elements with a repulsing substitute. This would make sense of the abhorrent

This replacement agrees with the replacement in 8:13: both 8:13 and 9:27 indicate replacements of the sacrificial system. Thus "transgression" is replaced by "abominations," modified by the following participle "desolating," from the same root (cf., 8:13 **שָׁמַם** with 9:27 **מִשְׁמָם**), which occurs at the end of v.27 (**עַל שָׁמָם**), meaning either "desolation" or "desolator"<sup>30</sup> (the instigator of the blasphemy v.26).

Therefore only the Heb Dan 9:27b,11:31 offers the possibility of an individual desolator as referent, though each text is problematic due to the inherent ambiguity associated with **שָׁמַם** **יָקַשׁ** in its forms. Finally, we add that the earliest translators kept the significance of the plural form **שָׁמָם** in 9:27b in translations into Greek (**βδέλυγμα τῶν ἐρημώσεων**). In spite of the probable inclusion of a notion of an individual desolator in Heb Dan 9:27b and 11:31, the LXX translators did not construe the Heb as indicating an individual,<sup>31</sup> hence their translation in all three passages reflecting the abomination as some sort of blasphemous object. The author of 1Maccabees, the earliest interpreter of the Danielic phrases in the LXX, also did not construe the texts as indicating an individual (see below). What stands out in comparing the LXX and Heb translations is the failure of the LXX translators to include the sort of grammatical irregularities in the Heb text that might indicate an individual desolator (cf., Dan 9:27b **βδέλυγμα τῶν ἐρημώσεων/ἐπὶ τὴν ἐρήμωσιν**; 11:31 **βδέλυγμα ἐρημώσεως**; 12:11

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alternative (**שָׁמָם** **יָקַשׁ**), being on the temple altar, according to Josephus (*Ant* 12.5:4), and 2Macc 6:5. Attempts to locate "on a wing" as referring to the temple pinnacle (e.g., Montgomery, *Daniel* p.387) specify a location running counter to Josephus and 2 Macc 6:5.

<sup>30</sup> So "desolator" Louis F. Hartman and Alexander A. Di Lella, *The Book of Daniel The Anchor Bible* 23 (New York: Doubleday and Co.), 1978 p.240, and J.J. Collins, *Daniel* p.347; "desolate one" Goldingay, *Daniel* p.226; "destroyer" Lacocque, *Daniel* p.187; "appaller" Montgomery, *Daniel* p.385.

<sup>31</sup> Though cf., Th Dan 11:31 **βδέλυγμα ἠφανισμένον**.

τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως), which leads us to conclude that only the Heb text suggests the possibility of an individual as a personal desolator, as well as an object of abomination in the forms under discussion. The LXX is silent on the matter of an individual desolator, instead interpreting the Hebrew with a variety of forms expressing a definite and indefinite object(s).

4.1.5. 1Macc 1:54 καὶ τῇ πεντεκαιδεκάτῃ ἡμέρᾳ Χασελευ τῷ πέμπτῳ καὶ τεσσαρακοστῷ καὶ ἑκατοστῷ ἔτει ᾠκοδόμησεν βδέλυγμα ἐρημώσεως ἐπὶ τὸ θυσιαστήριον καὶ ἐν πόλεσιν Ἰουδα κύκλῳ ᾠκοδόμησαν βωμούς.<sup>32</sup> "Now on the fifteenth day of Chisleu, in the one hundred and forty fifth year, he built an abomination of desolation upon the altar, and in the surrounding cities of Judah<sup>33</sup> they built idol altars."

The βδέλυγμα ἐρημώσεως, a singular indefinite object (combined with an indefinite genitive singular), placed for emphasis next to the holy object it pollutes, is probably a pagan altar (Ant 12.5:4 cf., 1Macc 4:43; 2Macc 6:5).<sup>34</sup> Ἐπὶ τὸ θυσιαστήριον specifies the place, that is, upon the altar and v.54 specifies the time, "On the fifteenth day of Chisleu, in the one hundred and forty fifth year." The location is further specified, the cities of Judah (καὶ ἐν πόλεσιν Ἰουδα). Therefore, in the earliest interpretation of the book of Daniel, no personal aspect of βδέλυγμα occurs. The designation βδέλυγμα ἐρημώσεως conforms to the LXX Dan 12:11.

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<sup>32</sup> Septuaginta Id est Vetus Testamentum graece iuxta LXX interpretes edidit Alfred Rahlfs Volumen I editio Octava (Stuttgart: Württembergische Bibelanstalt) 1965.

<sup>33</sup> Taking κύκλῳ "around, round about" with ἐν πόλεσιν Ἰουδα cf., v.47 where the instruction from the "king" to build high places, sacred groves, idols etc., was sent to Jerusalem and the cities of Judah (εἰς Ἱερουσαλημ καὶ τὰς πόλεις Ἰουδα v.44).

<sup>34</sup> J.J. Collins concludes, "that the abomination was a pagan altar, fits best with the earliest testimonies and encounters no serious objection" Daniel p.358. The view that Antiochus established a statue of Jupiter Olympius does not occur before Jerome.

In summary, the phrase τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως is a complex one found in various forms in LXX Dan 9:27;11:31;12:11 and 1Macc 1:54. The grammatical irregularities reflecting oddities, especially in the Hebrew, defy uniformity of style and resist accommodating textual adjustment, and so make translation hazardous.<sup>35</sup> In the LXX Dan 9:27b, an indefinite and a plural definite noun occur (βδέλυγμα τῶν ἐρημώσεων); in 11:31 two singular indefinite nouns (βδέλυγμα ἐρημώσεως); in 12:11 two definite singular nouns (τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως); and in 1Macc 1:54 two indefinite singular nouns (βδέλυγμα ἐρημώσεως), which conforms to the LXX Dan 11:31. While τὸ βδέλυγμα is frequently a rendering of  $\chi\eta\psi$  or  $\chi\rho\psi$ , signifying an idol abhorrent to God, it came to signify anything heathen outraging Jewish sensibilities. Finally, and significantly, all forms of τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως occur in the temple,<sup>36</sup> and none of the LXX forms refer to an individual ("desolating one").

4.1.6. The overwhelming scholarly consensus is that events depicted in LXX Dan 9:27;11:31;12:11; 1Macc 1:54 stem from a crisis period in Jewish history in the second century B.C.E., namely the establishment of a heathen altar set up by the Hellenistic ruler Antiochus

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<sup>35</sup> See Ford's discussion on this matter (Desolation pp.149-150).

<sup>36</sup> Pesch rightly puts in context the devastation recorded in Dan 11:31;12:11 on the basis of 9:26 ("the people of the ruler who will come will destroy the city and the sanctuary"). "Der Kontext legt also nahe, dass hier mit der danielischen Chiffre auf die Zerstörung des Tempels abgezielt ist" Naherwartungen p.142. Significantly, in the Danielic texts, the end is in view in some form. Seventy weeks of years will culminate in the establishment of everlasting righteousness (9:24), turmoil will occur in Jerusalem until the time of the appointed end (11:35), at the resurrection (12:1). In fact, in Dan 12:11 the "setting up of the abomination of desolation marks the beginning of the count-down to the End" (Hooker, "Trial and Tribulation" p.90). Though the figures in Dan 12:11,12 are editorial revisions (cf., Dan 8:14), the redactor/author of Daniel "did not regard the prophecy fulfilled. The promise of the angel in 12:7 was that 'all these things would be accomplished' i.e., transgression would cease, an era of righteousness would begin, the dead would be resurrected, and the 'people of the holy ones' would receive dominion over all the kingdoms under heaven" J.J. Collins, Daniel with an Introduction to Apocalyptic Literature The Forms of the OT Literature (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Pub. Co.), 1984 p.104.

IV Epiphanes in the Jerusalem temple.<sup>37</sup> In fact such is the confidence of scholars regarding the fit of most of Dan 7-12 within the Maccabean era, that dates and events are postulated most exactly with the chapters "among the most precisely datable parts of the Old Testament literature"<sup>38</sup> ... "at or about 166"<sup>39</sup> or "between 167-164."<sup>40</sup> As far back as Josephus, Dan 11 was understood to refer to Antiochus IV (Ant 10.10:1-10). From ch.7, visions from a sixth century B.C.E. Jew named Daniel, become detailed regarding one set of circumstances in a concise time period, which is found throughout the visions in chs.7-12.<sup>41</sup> Daniel documents the removal of the daily sacrifice by Antiochus in 167 B.C.E., but does not reflect the historical circumstances of Antiochus' own death in 164 B.C.E, all of which assists in the visions' dating.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Some examples among many advocating this view are: H.H. Rowley, Darius the Mede and the Four World Empires in the Book of Daniel (Cardiff: University of Wales Press Board), 1959; Eva Oswald, "Zum Problem der Vaticinia ex eventu" ZAWT 75-76 (1963-1964); Norman W. Porteous, Daniel (Philadelphia: Westminster Press), 1965; M. Hengel, Judaism and Hellenism Vol 1 (London: SCM Press), 1974; J.C.H. Lebram, "König Antiochus im Buch Daniel" VT 25 (1975); Lacocque, Daniel; K. Koch, Das Buch Daniel (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft), 1980; W. Sibley Towner, Daniel Interpretation A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching (Atlanta: John Knox Press), 1984; P.R. Davies, Daniel Old Testament Guides (Sheffield: JSOT), 1985; Goldingay, Daniel ; Hartman, Prophecy; J.J. Collins, Daniel et al.

<sup>38</sup> Davies, Daniel p.33.

<sup>39</sup> Davies, Daniel p.12.

<sup>40</sup> J.J. Collins, Daniel Apocalyptic Literature p.36. Reasons to establish this position are based upon classification of chs. 7-12 as belonging to the genre "apocalypse" (J.J. Collins, "Morphology" 1979). Under the guise of a Jew, Daniel, speaking as though living in Babylon in the sixth century, history is presented at first broadly, then more detailed in predictive form, until the time of the author's present, which becomes the decisive historical moment.

<sup>41</sup> "There is no apparent reason, however, why a prophet of the sixth century should focus minute attention on the events of the second century" J.J. Collins, Daniel p.26.

<sup>42</sup> According to Davies (Daniel p.33), Daniel's visions deviate from known history at about 11:40. It is now recognized that literary conventions found in this literature occur also in other Jewish writings of the Hellenistic period (e.g., the Apocalypse of Weeks in 1En 93:1-10,91:12-17). Pseudonymity, *ex eventu* prophecy, historical periodization, and divine

Dan 9:27 describes a situation instigated by Antiochus IV (v.26),<sup>43</sup> who makes a covenant with Hellenizing Jews (v.27a cf., 1Macc 1:11) and suppresses the sacrifice by imposing an "abomination of desolation."<sup>44</sup> In Dan 11:31 the expedition of the Mysarch (1Macc 1:29-61; 2Macc 5:24, i.e., in lieu of Antiochus, "forces from him") led to the suppression of the cult and the imposition of the desolating abomination.<sup>45</sup> In 12:11 no reference to Antiochus is found. Instead the emphasis is upon the time duration leading to the introduction of the "abomination of desolation" in the temple. Significantly 1Macc 1:54 exists as "the earliest interpretation of the phrase in Daniel."<sup>46</sup> Though the activity of Antiochus is considered, he is not the βδέλυγμα

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determinism, are all found in the visions (see J.J. Collins, Daniel Apocalyptic Literature p.102; Lacocque, Daniel p.200; Hengel, Judaism Vol 1 p.184; G.I. Davies, "Apocalyptic and Histiography" JSOT 5 [1978] pp.15-28).

<sup>43</sup> *Contra* Gaston who ignores Antiochus' intended destruction in Dan 9:26, Stone p.24, also Taylor, Mark p.511. For Gundry "Dan 9:26-27 appears to put the abomination of desolation before the destruction" Mark p.741. But v.26b is a statement of Antiochus' intent, described in detail in vv.26c-27. Events over a two year period are compressed and expressed in the language of an apocalypse to bring out the instigator, his intent, activity, and end (see 1Macc 1:19-54 for historical details i.e., Antiochus robs the temple of its sacred objects vv.21-24, two years later the Mysarch appears and attempts to destroy the city, v.31 "And when he had taken the spoil of the city, he set it on fire, and pulled down the houses and walls thereof on every side." Subsequently, Antiochus' proclamation leads to the setting up of the abomination of desolation v.54). These events are compressed in Dan 9:26-27.

<sup>44</sup> 1Macc 1:54 maintains some sort of pagan object was placed on the sacrificial altar. Cf., Ant 12.5:4 "the king also built a pagan altar upon the temple-altar and slaughtered swine thereon, thereby practicing a form of sacrifice neither lawful nor native to the religion of the Jews."

<sup>45</sup> Cf., Th βδέλυγμα ἠφανισμένον "abomination that is destroyed."

<sup>46</sup> J.J. Collins, Daniel p.357. Beasley-Murray summarizes the events: "First Maccabees provides the historical background to this statement (Dan 9:27). Antiochus Epiphanes, on returning from his conquest of Egypt, entered Jerusalem and plundered the temple. He later sent an official, who by guile attacked the Jews, plundered Jerusalem, and set it ablaze. Orders were given that sacrifices in the temple should cease and the ancestral law no longer be observed. Altars, idols, and sacred precincts were to be established, and 'swine and other unclean beast' were to be offered in sacrifice. This reached its climax on the fifteenth day of

ἐρημώσεως, which is probably a pagan altar. Thus the primary emphasis upon complex Hebrew and Greek phrases in Dan 9:27b,11:31,12:11, 1Macc 1:54 is the notion of profanation or destruction (depending upon context i.e., cf., 9:26-27 with 11:31,12:11) relating to an object polluting the temple sanctuary. The LXX translation of these texts does not characterize an individual as the primary referent, and neither does the Heb Dan 12:11 nor 1Macc 1:54. Only Heb Dan 9:27b and 11:31 leave open this possibility. We will now examine Mk 13:14.

#### 4.2. The Meaning of τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως

Mk 13:14 ὅταν δὲ ἴδητε τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως ἐστηκότα ὅπου οὐ δεῖ, ὁ ἀναγινώσκων νοεῖτω, τότε οἱ ἐν τῇ Ἰουδαίᾳ φευγέτωσαν εἰς τὰ ὄρη. "But when you see the abomination of desolation standing where he/it ought not, let the reader understand, then let those in Judaea flee into the mountains."

The irregularity between the neuter singular τὸ βδέλυγμα with its modifying genitive τῆς ἐρημώσεως and the masculine accusative singular ἐστηκότα indicate that a distinct person is in mind.<sup>47</sup> The participle cannot be a neuter accusative plural agreeing with the neuter accusative singular τὸ βδέλυγμα, providing a description of two nouns "abomination" and "desolation"; indeed the genitive τῆς ἐρημώσεως modifies the noun τὸ βδέλυγμα making the phrase into one unit. This significant clue, eliminates the anomaly of a "desolation" ἐστηκότα,<sup>48</sup> and while an idol or a statue may stand as object (as in the case of βωμούς 1Macc

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Kislev, 167 CE: 'the abomination of desolation' was set up on the altar. ... On the twenty-fifth day of the month they offered sacrifices on the pagan altar which was on top of the altar of the Lord' (1Macc 1:54,59)" Last Days p.409.

<sup>47</sup> So Bacon, Lohmeyer, Marxsen, Taylor, Pesch, Lambrecht, Hooker, Ford, Anderson, Hengel, Glazier, Brandenburger, Theissen.

<sup>48</sup> So Ford, Desolation p.169; Gundry, Mark p.772.



1:54,<sup>49</sup> which is not found in Mk 13:14), the grammatical irregularity in the participle in 13:14 identifies what stands as personal. The intransitive perfect form ἑστηκότα with a present durative focus denotes permanent continued existence (cf., ἑστηκότων in 9:1). The combination of the neuter phrase with the masculine participle rivets attention connoting authority ("standing" over the sanctuary), arrogance ("standing" and not worshipping), permanence ("standing" as firmly entrenched) and absoluteness ("standing" in place of the sanctuary). Mark's achievement lay in coalescing together two essential ideas in the same perspective: the fact of abomination and the action of an individual committing the profane act. Significantly, by coupling together ἑστηκότα with τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως in 13:14, Mark gives the phrase found in various grammatical forms in LXX Dan 9:27b,11:31,12:11, 1Macc 1:54 a personal dimension not found in these texts. Perhaps Mark was "imitating"<sup>50</sup> the sense as best he could of Heb Dan 11:31 or building upon םׁׁׁׂׂ ׁׁׁ in Dan 9:27b, or more likely, in respect to the Greek language, Mark was originating his own way of communicating the personal aspect of a Greek phrase found in LXX Dan 9:27b,11:31,12:11 and 1Macc 1:54 without that possible connotation of a personal abominator in the Heb Dan 9:27,11:31. If so, then Mark may be the first author, writing in Greek, to bring out the personal aspect of the abomination i.e., indicating an individual abominator.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> Cf., βωμοὺς τῷ Γαίῳ in Ant 18.8:1.

<sup>50</sup> David Daube, The New Testament and Rabbinic Judaism (New York: Arno Press), 1973 p.422.

<sup>51</sup> Certainly the use of a masculine participle modifying a neuter phrase suggests that Mark has a particular individual in mind in v.14a. This makes it unlikely that Mark only expects something horrific to occur in the temple, which could easily cause him to be caught out by the change of future events, or that he envisaged only the setting up of a blasphemous object in the temple.

Whatever complexity of ideas is inherent in τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως in v.14a, the notions of blasphemy and devastation are prominent because of the contexts in Daniel, 1Maccabees and Mk 13:1-2.<sup>52</sup> Mark has in view "a blasphemous event which will entail the destruction of the temple and city, and will thus be the means by which the prophecy of v.2 will be fulfilled."<sup>53</sup> Furthermore, this blasphemous event is visible. We have already established previously that ἰδεῖν and νοεῖν in v.14 mean a definite marking of what is seen which exists in sharp contrast to what is heard (ἀκουεῖν v.7). Because what is heard ("wars and rumours of wars" etc.) occurs on the referential level of mundane life, so must what is "seen" and "understood" (v.14).<sup>54</sup>

That the sanctuary is in mind (in v.14) is brought out by the phrase ὅπου οὐ δεῖ (an

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<sup>52</sup> So Lohmeyer, Markus p.17; Taylor, Mark pp.511-512; Lambrecht, Redaktion pp.149-152; Pesch, Naherwartungen pp.142-143; Hartman, Prophecy pp.151-152; Ford, Desolation pp.148-151. Gundry disassociates devastation from the phrase because the closest parallels in Daniel (11:31,12:11) omit mention of destruction. But these verses are dependent upon 9:26-27 which does mention destruction. In fact all three passages refer to the same act of profanation so the context of Dan 9:26-27 cannot be ignored unless it can be established which Danielic text Mark used, which Lambrecht has shown is impossible (Redaktion p.149). The same difficulty lies with determining which Danielic text is behind 1Macc 1:54. For Lambrecht, "All diese Gründe zusammen machen es wahrscheinlich, dass Markus nur anspielte, d.h. einen aus Dn. bekannten Ausdruck übernahm, ohne dabei eine bestimmte Stelle (wohl vielleicht die konkrete Geschichte von Antiochus) im Auge zu haben" (p.149). Thus probably all textual allusions in Daniel were inherent in Mark's use of τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως, because it already had the status of a catchword, having lost association with any single Danielic text (Theissen, Lokalkolorit p.167).

<sup>53</sup> Beasley-Murray, Last Days p.411. We shall establish the connection between destruction of the temple and city (see 4.2.1.).

<sup>54</sup> This observation may be acute, because contrary to the identification by scholars of the instigator of mayhem as the historical Antiochus IV in Dan 9:26-27,11:31,12:11; 1Macc 1:54, they frequently assert in Mk 13:14a that a blasphemous event will happen in the temple on the historical level, but shift to a "supra-historical" level to describe the instigator. Such a position is at least inconsistent with recognized usage in Daniel and 1Maccabees, though obviously still possible for Mark. Contextual arguments in ch.13 must determine the matter.

infinitive is unnecessary given the perfect participle, "where he ought not" i.e., to stand), and given that the sanctuary is in view in the focus of all forms of τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως in Daniel and 1Maccabees, the same is likely in Mk 13:14. In fact, Mark's incisive comment ὅπου οὐ δεῖ corresponds well with the precision of the LXX and Th Danielic situation of the abomination ἐπὶ τὸ ἱερόν (9:27).<sup>55</sup> In the apodosis clause of v.14b, the change in subject to third person plural (φευγέτωσαν), from an address to the disciples (second person plural ἴδητε), specifies further the location of the turmoil (οἱ ἐν τῇ Ἰουδαίᾳ). The injunction to immediate flight tightly connects the inhabitants of the region of Judaea with what has occurred in the temple/city. Such is the necessity of immediate flight that hesitation means devastation (or removal from the region of Judaea would make "suddenness so extreme" unnecessary).<sup>56</sup>

4.2.1. Because the temple in ch.13 is unmentioned after v.2 Mark appears unconcerned with

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<sup>55</sup> A point accepted by Walter, but as we shall show, does not go far enough: "Dagegen scheint mir, dass Markus es so deutlich wie möglich macht, dass er in v.14 gerade nicht vom Tempel reden will. Das zugrundeliegende Flugblatt an dieser Stelle den Tempel meinte, ist freilich gewiss; die Anspielung auf Dan 9 27 12 11 ist eindeutig" Nikolaus Walter, "Tempelzerstörung und synoptische Apokalypse" *ZNW* 57-58 (1966-1967), p.43.

<sup>56</sup> Gundry, *Mark* p.773. Likewise Matthew with the addition ἐν τόπῳ ἀγίῳ after a reference to τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως and τὸ ρηθὲν διὰ Δανιήλ τοῦ προφήτου ἐστὸς places the abomination in the temple (24:15). Interestingly Luke severs all connection with the sanctuary κυκλουμένην ὑπὸ στρατοπέδων Ἱερουσαλήμ, τότε γνῶτε ὅτι ἤγγικεν ἡ ἐρήμωσις αὐτῆς (Lk 21:20) and so a form of τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως is unacceptable, such is the tight connection between forms of τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως and the sanctuary. For Dodd, Luke "knew his Septuagint too well to fall into such an error" "Fall" p.53. By differing from Mark, dropping τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως and yet retaining the notion of "desolation" (ἡ ἐρήμωσις), and by interpreting desolation in respect to the appearance of the Roman armies around Jerusalem, Luke pinpoints events c.68-70 C.E. in the Jewish-Roman war as indicating the meaning of the cluster of Synoptic verses on the subject (Mk 13:14; Matt 24:15; Luke 21:20). By shifting his focus to the Roman armies surrounding Jerusalem, Luke has no need to mention the sanctuary.

it in vv.3f.<sup>57</sup> However our contention is that the destruction of the temple and city is integral to the chapter.<sup>58</sup> First, vv.1-2 emphatically state the complete destruction of the temple. Verse 1 appears anecdotal in a disciple's gawkish exclamation which provides a platform for the Markan Jesus to squash the notion of grandeur inherent in the temple complex (v.2).<sup>59</sup> However Gundry correctly shows a chiasmic structure extends from v.1 to v.3 built around 'temple' (a,a1), 'stones' (b,b1) and 'buildings' (c,c1).<sup>60</sup> Thus the extent of the subject-matter is not confined to vv.1-2 but is part of Jesus' interaction with the disciples, in a fresh, but related setting: not now ἐκπορευομένου αὐτοῦ ἐκ τοῦ ἱεροῦ (v.1) but καθημένου αὐτοῦ εἰς τὸ ὄρος τῶν Ἑλαιῶν κατέναντι τοῦ ἱεροῦ (v.3). Mark carefully used his genitive absolutes in v.1 and v.3: Καὶ ἐκπορευομένου αὐτοῦ (v.1) parallels Καὶ καθημένου αὐτοῦ (v.3), while ἐκ τοῦ ἱεροῦ (v.1) parallels εἰς τὸ ὄρος τῶν Ἑλαιῶν (v.3), and λέγει (v.1) parallels ἐπηρώτα (v.3). The intrusive κατέναντι breaks the parallel, but is a Markan piece,<sup>61</sup> keeping the focus on the temple despite the changed location. Similarly the change in the number of disciples speaking from an unnamed εἷς (v.1), to the four elite Πέτρος καὶ Ἰάκωβος καὶ Ἰωάννης καὶ Ἀνδρέας (v.3), accentuates the focus on Jesus' statement of

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<sup>57</sup> E.g., Gundry regarding vv.4f.: "the following verses will say nothing more about that destruction" Mark p.737.

<sup>58</sup> So Donahue: "The content of the whole discourse is occasioned by the prediction of the destruction of the temple and the city" Are You the Christ? p.129.

<sup>59</sup> Cf., A.Y. Collins, an "artificial remark launches the temple saying in v.2" Beginning p.74.

<sup>60</sup> Mark p.736.

<sup>61</sup> Pryke, Redactional Style p.146; Taylor, Mark p.502.

destruction,<sup>62</sup> as does the change from simply λέγει (v.1) to the scrutinizing ἐπηρώτα (v.3).

Verse 4 is an opening on the nature of the scrutiny. Thus Jesus' response in vv.5-37 is predicated on remarks concerning the destruction of the temple.<sup>63</sup> As well as linking vv.1-4 with vv.5-37,<sup>64</sup> v.4 launches the matter of the temple's destruction as being the request for τὸ σημεῖον which, as we established, is fulfilled in v.14. Pilgaard provides a useful summary: "So scheint es mir naheliegend, dass die Frage nach dem Zeichen (V.4b) mit V.14a beantwortet wird. Dann spielt der Prophet Daniel nicht nur für die Jünger, sondern auch für den markinischen Jesus eine wesentliche Rolle. Für den markinischen Jesus hat der danielische Ausdruck 'Greuel der Verwüstung' eine Schlüsselrolle als das Zeichen, das die von ihm vorausgesagte völlige Zerstörung des Temples signalisiert."<sup>65</sup> In the context of vv.1-14, the *Greuel der Verwüstung* in v.14 indicates the destruction of the temple. As the answer to τὸ σημεῖον in v.4, which in turn is the sign request regarding the "clear announcement in Mk.13:2 of the approaching destruction,"<sup>66</sup> v.14 is the climactic point of vv.5-14, functioning as a

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<sup>62</sup> Brought out by Malbon's structuralist interpretation: "Opposite the institution of the temple and its leaders -- chief priests, scribes, and elders -- is the community of the disciples and its leader -- 'Peter and James and John and Andrew' (13:3). Opposite the physical structure of the temple is its future destruction, when 'there will not be left here one stone upon another' (13:2). ... Thus in chapter 13 the temple itself becomes part of Jesus' past, and its desecration and destruction part of the disciples' future and, apparently (13:14) part of the readers' present" *Narrative Space* pp.123-124.

<sup>63</sup> So e.g., Pesch, *Naherwartungen* p.276; Donahue, *Are You the Christ?* p.131; Beasley-Murray, *Last Days* p.411.

<sup>64</sup> A.Y. Collins, *Beginning* p.77.

<sup>65</sup> Aage Pilgaard, "Apokalyptik als Bibeltheologisches Thema" in *New Directions in Biblical Theology Papers of the Aarhus Conference 16-19 September 1992* (ed.) Sigfred Pedersen (Leiden: E.J. Brill), 1994 p.190.

<sup>66</sup> Ford, *Desolation* p.168.

*Zeichencharakter* which "die Nähe des endzeitlichen Heils verbürgt."<sup>67</sup> Without the context of vv.1-4,5-14, τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως could simply indicate abandonment through desecration, but fixed in Mk 13 as the *Zeichen* corresponding to τὸ σημεῖον in v.4, it indicates the destruction of the temple. Therefore the absence of references to the temple in vv.5-13 is not a mitigating factor. The temple's fate is the major consideration in vv.1-14, though unmentioned in vv.5-13 for reasons we established in chapter two.

Second, the specifying clause defining the locale further (οἱ ἐν τῇ Ἰουδαίᾳ v.14b) cements our view. That the abomination occurs within the city, causing individuals to flee away from it (v.14b), specifies the locale of terror: the abomination occurs in the temple in Jerusalem, therefore the danger extends outwards from the city into the country-side<sup>68</sup> of Judaea.<sup>69</sup> The injunction to flight indicates that more than the sanctuary's desolation is in view. The warning for dwellers in the countryside or environs of Judaea to take immediate flight is too strong to denote flight at the mere profanation of the temple. Ford rightly deduces: "Why should men flee for their lives to the mountains just because of an event in the temple? Why should there

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<sup>67</sup> Ford, *Desolation* p.189. Such specificity regarding the temple edifice is found in v.2 that Theissen argues: "Das einschränkende ὡδε könnte andeuten, dass nur die Gebäude der Tempelplattform, nicht aber die Grundmauern der Plattform vernichtet wurden" *Lokalkolorit* p.271.

<sup>68</sup> We will show in chapter 5 that οἱ ἐν τῇ Ἰουδαίᾳ and the examples of flight in vv.15-18 favour a country-side location.

<sup>69</sup> Geddert appears confused here arguing there are "no real alternatives to the temple as the place where it/he will be set up" but then affirming that Mark "deliberately did not tell the reader which location was being specified." *Watchwords* (p.206 and p.207). Contrast this to the wealth of those specifying the temple: Taylor, *Mark* p.511; Cranfield, "St. Mark 13" (7) p.300; Hooker, "Trial and Tribulation" p.90; Gaston, *Stone* p.28; Pesch, *Naherwartungen* p.141f.; Lambrecht, *Redaktion* p.152; Haenchen, *Weg* p.448; Marxsen, *Evangelist* p.180; Dodd, "Fall" p.53; Hengel, *Studies* p.19; Donahue, *Are You the Christ?* p.130; Glazier, *Method* p.336; Theissen, *Lokalkolorit* p.272; Gundry, *Mark* p.741.

be so much haste as to leave behind one's clothes because of a misplaced altar?"<sup>70</sup> For Gundry an act of blasphemy does cause worshippers "to forsake the temple and which portends their coming persecution for failure to worship the abomination -- only that and nothing more satisfies the wording of Mark's text."<sup>71</sup> But nothing is said about worshipping the abomination. The agony of flight is predicated on the devastation caused by the abomination, not a requirement that all worship it. The "forsaking" does not describe the temple, but the region of Judaea. What produces fear among the fleeing residents is not persecution from a heathen ideology, but destruction of the temple and city.

Third, if the sign of v.4 is the appearance of τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως indicating the temple's destruction in the near future then Mark could have given the following causality: first, the appearance of τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως, signaling second, the temple's imminent destruction, signaling third, the arrival of a period of unparalleled tribulation and the SM's coming. This means τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως heralds the temple's destruction but is not necessarily its *agent* of destruction. The temple's destruction itself becomes an end-time sign, or the appearance of τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως is the end-time sign leading to the temple's destruction and the parousia. On this view Mark answers the disciples' question about the event indicating the temple's destruction, but provides information (in vv.14-37) *unrelated* to the question in v.4 (if τὸ σημεῖον concerns the temple's destruction alone). It is possible that the information in vv.14-37 *follows* from what happened in the temple i.e., Mark gives *extra* information on the implication of the appearance of τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως. Alternatively, that v.14 is "a blasphemous event which will entail the destruction of the temple

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<sup>70</sup> Desolation p.167.

<sup>71</sup> Mark p.742.

and the city, and will thus be the means by which the prophecy of v.2 will be fulfilled,"<sup>72</sup> provides a unified connection between desecration and destruction as the sign and gives a more likely explanation of the relation of vv.14b-27 to the prophecy in v.2 and τὸ σημεῖον in v.4. The focus of the interaction between Jesus and his disciples revolves around the matter of the temple's destruction (v.2), not its desecration.<sup>73</sup>

The view of τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως as blasphemer and destroyer, provides a comprehensive reason for the ensuing description of panic of those fleeing Judaea following the appearance of τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως, than does a reason of desecration alone, which is an insufficient stimulus to leave one's clothes behind in the field and to leave one's house immediately because of the threat of imminent death (vv.15-16). Pollution of the temple fails to provide the reason for such extreme action, in comparison to the notion of destruction, which threatens to overwhelm those in Judaea. Individuals fleeing fear destruction, not pollution. The notion of destruction provides a good explanation of the transition between v.14a and v.14b-18. The "compression" of the elements of blasphemy and destruction occurring together in these verses is a better presumption for understanding the injunction to flight, than desecration alone in v.14a, which leaves vv.14b-18 somewhat unexplained, except perhaps with the reader's inferred assumption of a subsequent destruction. We also note that Luke's parallel account in Lk 21:20 makes the connection between desolation and destruction strong with the agent of desolation being the destructive Roman forces surrounding Jerusalem (ὅταν δὲ ἴδητε κυκλουμένην ὑπὸ στρατοπέδων Ἱερουσαλήμ, τότε γινώτε ὅτι ἤγγικεν ἡ ἐρήμωσις αὐτῆς). Finally, a focus on destruction in ch.13 retains the emphasis

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<sup>72</sup> Beasley-Murray, Last Days p.411.

<sup>73</sup> Marxsen, Evangelist p.168.



found in Dan 9:27 (and by implication Dan 11:31,12:11) upon blasphemy and destruction.

Conclusion 13:1-4 and the relation of v.4 to v.14 establish the context of the temple as fundamental to ch.13. The grammatical anomaly (ἔστηκότα) and its subsequent modifying clause (ὅπου οὐ δεῖ) in v.14 also indicate a temple context, which when joined by Mark's abrupt intrusion (ὁ ἀναγινώσκων νοεῖτω), further strengthen the argument. Mark is drawing specific attention to something happening/already happened or a known prediction in the temple. A temple focus in respect to the appearance of τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως is ratified by the appearance of the same phrase in various grammatical forms in Daniel and 1Maccabees, and all occur in a temple sanctuary context.<sup>74</sup>

Significantly, the Markan anomaly ἔστηκότα has special import as Mark plainly indicated by ὁ ἀναγινώσκων νοεῖτω. The abrupt intrusion of the parenthetical ὁ ἀναγινώσκων νοεῖτω, squarely placed between the protasis-apodosis construction, is not

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<sup>74</sup> The context from Dan 9:26-27 concerning the devastation of the city in respect to the Danielic background of τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως, and the absolute obliteration of the temple anticipated by Jesus in 13:1-2 which cannot be accomplished alone by a blasphemous act in the sanctuary, entail that the city's devastation is to be inferred in v.14. In addition the injunction to flight (vv. 15-16, reminiscent of the Maccabean revolt 1Macc 2:28) and its resultant panic (vv.17-18), as well as the spread of unparalleled suffering finally leading to the consummation (vv.19-26), also testify to an event of blasphemy in the temple, involving the devastation of Jerusalem, which spreads, enveloping the elect world-wide. So Beasley-Murray: "the connection with vv.15-20 indicates that the calamity will entail dreadful sufferings for the people of God. More than that we can hardly affirm with confidence; less than that we need not say" Last Days p.416; also Dodd, "Fall" p.53; Marxsen, Evangelist pp.180-183; Pesch, Naherwartungen p.142; Taylor, Mark p.511; Hartman, Prophecy p.152; Hengel, Studies p.25; Hooker, "Trial and Tribulation" p.90; Ford, Desolation p.163; Myers, Strong Man p.335. *Contra* Theissen (Lokalkolorit p.272), who connects "the terror of devastation" with the temple and not the city, instead looking to a worse time in the future (post-70 C.E.) when the final cultic desecration of the temple would come. It is difficult to understand how the strong language of vv.14-23 describes events "connected with the siege of Jerusalem but without describing the actual fall of the city" (France, Jesus p.232), but vv.24-26, which say nothing about earthly devastation, do supposedly describe that fall.

coincidental. Mark's hand is plainly visible ("the presence of the narrator is laid bare"<sup>75</sup>). The infamy of τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως catchphrase cannot have been lost on Mark's readers.<sup>76</sup> Certainly the phrase is directed at the reader and concerns something portentous, which due to the removal of the gospel from its situational context, renders the phrase nebulous. But combined with a specific context the phrase becomes intelligible: hence suggestions in general focusing on the import of the phrase in v.14a i.e., recognize (you reader/readers) the clue given in the grammatical anomaly of v.14a, or an aside to the reader to ensure explanation of v.14, or a referent to a specific event or person on the near horizon or having recently occurred.<sup>77</sup>

What we have established from v.4 is Mark's awkward hand imposing his own agenda,<sup>78</sup> which is the nearness of the parousia, based on the temple's destruction i.e., τὸ σημεῖον in v.4. The end-time clock only ticks with the one event which guarantees the inevitability of the parousia. Far from the advent of τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως being a sign of the coming destruction, the phrase stands for the entire temple and city's destruction: A shift is manifest in a focus, not upon the city's destruction which is the context of ch.13, but upon the person of τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως -- hence the direct lack of any mention of the temple from v.5. The language of v.14 infers the temple context but only through a focus on the individual

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<sup>75</sup> Fowler, Reader-Response p.83.

<sup>76</sup> If Mark was simply drawing attention to the phrase in Daniel his other material from Daniel underlying the discourse made it surely unnecessary. So Fowler, Reader-Response p.87.

<sup>77</sup> Hardly an understanding of Jesus' power to predict the abomination (Gundry, Mark p.773), which ignores v.14 and reaches too far back contextually to the predictor.

<sup>78</sup> Cf. A.Y. Collins, "Mark seems to have composed the question of the disciples in v.4 in order to link the anecdote of vv.1-2 with the discourse of vv.5-37" Beginning p.77.

or agent of destruction. Lastly, a temple context for 13:14 is confirmed by all the occurrences in various forms of τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως in Daniel and 1Maccabees, indicating that the sanctuary is in mind as the place where the agent/object of destruction stands.<sup>79</sup>

#### 4.3. The Identity of τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως

We will now explore individuals who could fit the designation τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως.

4.3.1. The view that v.14 originally involved Pilate's setting up of the Imperial standards in Jerusalem in 19 C.E.<sup>80</sup> fails to convince: the standards were not brought into the temple, something which surely Josephus would have mentioned (Ant 18.3:1). The standards entered the city at night leading to multitudes flocking out to Caesarea, to intercede to Pilate, which militates against any notion of flight through fear (13:14), and Caesarea is a maritime city which hardly fits a flight εἰς τὰ ὄρη (v.14b). The protest was successful and led to the removal of the standards, which fails to explain how the event developed into a saying triggering the end-time. Finally, if the event in 19 C.E. lies behind ch.13, how the chapter adopted its present form is difficult to fathom, unless a reinterpretation followed from a further act of abomination.

4.3.2. The view that the desecration of the temple involved blasphemous activity by the Zealots has been advocated by Joel Marcus, who understands Eleazar son of Simon as τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως, "standing where he ought not" in the winter of 67-68 C.E. which marked a formal desecration of the temple (War 4.3:10,4.3:12, 4.6:3,6.2:1).<sup>81</sup> Marcus bases his argument on the masculine participle ἐστηκότα (v.14a) indicating a person, the historical flight

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<sup>79</sup> Ford, Desolation p.170.

<sup>80</sup> R. Eisler, The Messiah Jesus and John the Baptist (London: ET), 1931 pp.314-315.

<sup>81</sup> "The Jewish War" pp.441-462.

injunction in v.14b, "during the winter of 67-68, after Eleazar had moved into the temple but before Vespasian completely conquered the area around Jerusalem and thus isolated the city in June 68 (see J.W. 4.9.1. #486-90)."<sup>82</sup>

However the reference in Josephus (War 4.3:12,4.6:3) makes no mention of Eleazar in describing Zealot desecration (perhaps something unusual if he became known in Jewish/Christian circles as τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως, and what better way for Josephus to exonerate Titus!); it testifies to Josephus' anti-Zealot polemic. Moreover Marcus' final reference to Titus' ultimatum to John of Gischala, cloaked in the supposed righteous indignation of the Roman commander's piety ("you must stop polluting the holy place and sinning against God" War 6.2:1), when compared with 5.9:4,5.10:4, suggests Titus' underlying threat was to fire the Temple without Jewish surrender (cf., War 6.2:1). None of the texts Marcus cites explicitly mentions Eleazar as the primary desolator. With the complex infighting occurring between various Jewish factions, it would be difficult to single out one leader above others as τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως, and separating the atrocities of the revolutionary groups on a blasphemy scale with Eleazar at the top is quite tenuous.<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>82</sup> "The Jewish War" p.454.

<sup>83</sup> "In Jerusalem during this time the internal disruption had grown even worse. Instead of the two parties of John and Simon, there were now three; a new party under Eleazar, Simon's son, had split off from John's party. Simon dominated the upper city and a large part of the lower city; John, the Temple mount; and Eleazar, the inner forecourt of that Temple. All three were locked in ceaseless fighting and had turned the city into a continuous battlefield" Emil Shürer, The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ (175 B.C.-A.D. 135) Vol 1 (rev. and ed.) Geza Vermes Fergus Millar Matthew Black (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark), 1979 p.501. According to Josephus, although Eleazar initiated the advance into "the inner court of the temple," John of Gischala "would not desist" (in assaulting Eleazar and his followers), "thus there were continual sallies and showers of missiles, and the temple on every side was defiled with carnage" (5.1:2). Similarly Simon son of Gioras joined the assault so that "the missiles from the engines flew over with such force that they reached the altar and the sanctuary, lighting upon priests and sacrificers ..." The

Further, other responses to the Jewish-Roman War 66-70 C.E. make no reference to Eleazar as the prime desecrator.<sup>84</sup> In three Jewish responses to the destruction of Jerusalem Jewish revolutionaries are not blamed: in 2Bar 67:7 the "king of Babylon" is "the one who now has destroyed Zion" -- presumably the Romans (cf., 1Pet 5:13; Rev 17) and in 4Ezra 11:12f., an eagle vision is given, which is the Roman Empire. In ApAb 27:1-5 "heathens" i.e., Romans, destroy "the temple by fire."<sup>85</sup>

That Mark reapplied imagery from Daniel against Jewish leaders in 14:62 leads to the possibility of him doing the same in 13:14 according to Marcus' argument. But the parallel lacks because vindication rather than judgment is emphasized in 14:62, which puts the Jewish leaders outside of the application from Dan 7:13.<sup>86</sup>

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resultant carnage led Josephus to lament "For thou wert no longer God's place ..." (5.1:3). John "had recourse to sacrilege, melting down many of the temple-offerings and many of the vessels required for public worship, bowls and salvers and tables ..." (5.13:6). While 4.3:10 does establish Zealot pollution as an abomination, all the revolutionaries are viewed as polluters, and the question must be: why pick Eleazar as the prime abominator?

<sup>84</sup> Cf., Matt and Lk, the latter who understands not Jewish revolutionaries but the Romans as the principal desecrators (ὅταν δὲ ἴδητε κυκλουμένην ὑπὸ στρατοπέδων Ἱερουσαλήμ Lk 21:20).

<sup>85</sup> See John J. Collins, The Apocalyptic Imagination (New York: Crossroads), 1984 p.156.

<sup>86</sup> The parallel does not quite hold up. The key term "coming" does not simply involve switching members i.e., the Danielic SM and God (Dan 7:13) and Jesus as the SM and the Sanhedrin. What this parallel fails to consider is the impact of Jesus as the Danielic SM in respect to vindication received from "the Ancient of Days." Otherwise a straight "swap" is meaningless. Without vindication Jesus' coming is without substance (authority) in Mk 14:62. Gundry rightly surmises: "In view is the vindication of Jesus, not the judgment of the Sanhedrin ... 'Sitting at the right hand of power' emphasizes Jesus' exalted position ('power' is a surrogate term for 'God' cf., Acts 2:34-35 with 2:36; Rom 8:34; Eph 1:20 with 1:17)" Mark p.914. The visible sitting at the right hand of power indicates his exalted status from which his vindication follows. Marcus emphasizes the "nuance of judgment" from the context of Dan 7 in Christological Exegesis of the Old Testament in the Gospel of Mark (Louisville: John Knox Press), 1992 p.166, but the specific context of Dan 7 is vv.13-14

Marcus correctly personalizes τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως, because of the masculine participle ἐστηκότα, suggesting that v.14 can be descriptive of only two individuals, Eleazar and Titus -- "if we are to think of a person 'standing where he should not,' the only real candidate for the job beside Eleazar is Titus, who according to Josephus went into the 'holy place' of the sanctuary after it had already been set on fire (J.W. 6.4.7 #260)."<sup>87</sup> What holds Marcus from associating Titus with τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως is a lack of historical correspondence between Titus "standing where he should not" and the command for Judaeans to flee into the mountains (13:14).

4.3.3. For Gerd Theissen, the appearance of τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως is the sign of the beginning end-time.<sup>88</sup> Using the same words his source used when looking back on the Nabatean war in 36 C.E., Mark in retrospect scrutinizes the Jewish-Roman war 66-71 C.E., and by adopting formulations which once announced the forthcoming desecration of the temple

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where "one like a son of man" receives "dominion, glory, and a kingdom." Judgment belongs to "the Ancient of Days" (v.22). The Danielic SM is transformed in 14:62 into the figure of Jesus whose coming rests on divine vindication establishing the basis for Jesus' authority over the Sanhedrin. Only by negating a coming before the Ancient of Days can the parallel be appropriate, and that results in a powerless SM. The comparison between Dan 7:13 and Mk 14:62 revolves much more than a replacement of individuals around the notion of "coming." What 14:62 gives is an application of Jesus' vindication before God so the parallel does not quite fit. The "coming" of Jesus is a secondary application of coming to the Sanhedrin, powerless without the incursion of the vindictory element embodied in the notion of sitting at the right hand of the Power.

Finally, in 14:62 the context specifies the Jewish leaders while in 13:14 nothing indicates that τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως is a Jewish revolutionary figure.

<sup>87</sup> Marcus, "The Jewish War" p.454.

<sup>88</sup> "Jedoch gebe es Anzeichen. Mk schreibt: 'Wenn ihr dies geschehen seht, so erkennt, dass er vor der Tür steht' (Mk 13,29). Mit ὅταν ἴδητε ταῦτα kann nur gemeint sein, was der Evangelist 13,14 (in übernahme einer älteren Quelle) mit ὅταν δὲ ἴδητε τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως angekündigt hat" Lokalkolorit p.272.

by Caligula, he announces an incomprehensible wantonness at the place of the temple.<sup>89</sup> Basically Mark expects the same event dreaded during the Caligula crisis, the establishment of a pagan instead of a reinstated Jewish cult. Theissen posits: "Das MkEv ist in den syrischen Nachbargebieten Palästinas kurz nach der Tempelzerstörung geschrieben worden."<sup>90</sup> Syrian Jews and Christians feared because triumphant Roman soldiers had already sacrificed to their ensigns and proclaimed Titus as Emperor (War 6.6:1).<sup>91</sup> Theissen connects the false christs and persecutions during 66-76 C.E. as the lot entrapping Syrian Jews and Christians.<sup>92</sup> On the basis of εὐαγγέλιον in 13:10 other εὐαγγέλια were proclaimed, most notably Vespasian, recently crowned emperor in the east (War 4.11:3, cf., 4.11:5). Thus Vespasian's accession to the throne would have seemed "ein Evangelium" to many. Mark's counter-claim is that Jesus will be the "Weltenherrscher". Theissen marshals an array of prophecies from Josephus (War 3.8:9), Tacitus (Hist 2:78,5:13.2), and Suetonius (Vesp 5:7; De Cass 65:1.4) to the effect that the long expected *Weltenherrscher* from the East was understood by Christians in Syria/Palestine to be Vespasian, whose elevation to emperor, desecration of the temple and destruction of Jerusalem, could only mean for Mark the *Anfang der Wehen*.<sup>93</sup>

Theissen's view has much to commend it: a particular politico-historical context welds the influence of events in Syria/Palestine during the Jewish-Roman war 66-71 C.E. to the

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<sup>89</sup> Theissen, Lokalkolorit p.272.

<sup>90</sup> Lokalkolorit p.274.

<sup>91</sup> Lokalkolorit pp.275-277.

<sup>92</sup> Though no evidence exists of Christians being persecuted in Syria during this period, evidence from Josephus (who records atrocities against Jews) is surmised by Theissen to have included them Lokalkolorit p.281.

<sup>93</sup> Lokalkolorit pp.272-284.

temple's destruction in Mk.13. The contemporary historical situation would explain the urgency of Mark's instruction: the end will come with the present generation though no one knows the date. In the confusion wrought in the aftermath of the Roman decimation of populace and countryside, Mark seeks to explain and alleviate chaos. "Das MkEv ist in den syrischen Nachbargebieten Palästinas kurz nach der Tempelzerstörung geschrieben worden."<sup>94</sup> With the destruction of the temple the war was decided but not yet won. The last Sicarii fled to resist at Masada which fell in 74 C.E. (War 7.8). Others fled to Egypt (War 7.10). Syrian prophets (e.g., Jonathan) led disciples into the wilderness. Unrest prevailed. The fear was that a heathen temple would be established in Jerusalem<sup>95</sup> "als die siegreichen römischen Soldaten nach der Eroberung des Tempels dort schon ihren Feldzeichen geopfert und Titus zum Imperator ausgerufen hatten (bell 6,316). Der Tempel war schon einmal vorübergehend 'kultisch' durch Heiden beschlagnahmt worden."<sup>96</sup>

The sign Theissen correctly surmises as the end-time trigger is found in v.14, thus rooting Mark's generation in the time of the end. However, for Theissen that event, the appearance of τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως, is subservient to the "good news" of Vespasian, which stands in tension with Mark's "good news" (1:1; cf., 13:10). The desecration of the temple is only a prelude to the fear of a greater abomination, the expectation of a pagan cult

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<sup>94</sup> Lokalkolorit p.274.

<sup>95</sup> "Derartige Befürchtungen waren deshalb glaubhaft, weil Vespasian und Titus wahrscheinlich auch an andern Orten jüdische Synagogen für andere Zwecke umgewidmet hatten" Lokalkolorit p.275.

<sup>96</sup> Lokalkolorit pp.276-277.



in Jerusalem.<sup>97</sup> Thus though v.14 is extolled as a key sign, as a prelude it is part of the "beginning of the birthpangs" (13:8), which robs v.14 of being the climactic point of vv.5-13.<sup>98</sup> Clarity is lacking in respect to Mark's focus in ch.13: Vespasian is associated indirectly with τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως, which blunts the focus of v.14 as the end-time trigger and minimizes his impact as *Greuel der Verwüstung*, simply because of his absence.

4.3.4. By taking the phrase τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως to indicate the Roman armies because of the expansive meaning of ἄρμα in the OT, Ford runs two ideas together as comprising τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως: "the armies of Rome, but including later manifestations of Antichrist."<sup>99</sup> But the evidence does not fit: Idols or objects are τὰ βδέλυγματα.<sup>100</sup> The participle ἐστηκότα, combined with the phrase τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως, indicates a person and not multi-form groups like the Roman armies. Further,

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<sup>97</sup> Theissen severs the connection between vv.1-2 and v.14 by postulating only a desolation which looks to a final cultic desecration (*Lokalkolorit* p.272). But nothing in vv.14f. suggests a further desecration. In fact the severity of the language in vv.14f., contains no hint of a future worsening situation in respect to the temple. Theissen's view minimizes the connection between vv.1-2 and v.14 by implying a subordinate desolation which results in a subordinate destruction and a final desolation to be feared in the immediate future. Nothing could be worse than what had already happened. The tone of the language in v.14bf. is absolute. Making an argument as Theissen does on the basis of ὡδε in v.2, that the buildings of the temple were destroyed but not the platform (p.272), minimizes the impact of the temple's destruction in respect to v.14.

<sup>98</sup> "Der Temple war zerstört worden. Aber das konnte nur der `Anfang der Wehen' sein. Denn die endgültige kultische Entweihung des Tempels stand noch aus. Was im Jahre 40/41 irrtümlich erwartet worden war, musste jetzt in Erfüllung gehen" *Lokalkolorit* p.272.

<sup>99</sup> Ford, *Desolation* p.163.

<sup>100</sup> See also C.H. Dodd, for whom the "strangely construed" masculine participle ἐστηκότα indicates "the name of some heathen deity or other whose image is to be set up for worship -- possibly the divine emperor" "Fall" p.53. But a deity or image would require a neuter singular participle indicating a standing object or simply the cryptic phrase itself (as in Dan 9:26b,11:31,12:11; 1Macc 1:54).

the Danielic examples possibly referring to a person (Heb Dan 9:27;11:31) as instigator of the abomination indicate a historical, not a supra-historical individual.<sup>101</sup>

This argument works against Anderson who also wants to posit a supernatural referent: "it seems that an individual person is in view here, a successor in the Antiochus-Caligula line of desecration. But Mark's language is cryptic and it may be he understood the figure more symbolically" i.e., as the Antichrist.<sup>102</sup> But the "cryptic" phrase in Heb of the Danielic texts possibly designates a historical individual as Anderson notes. Why shift in Mk 13:14 to a "supra-historical" figure, particularly when ch.13 contains none of the material found elsewhere which support such a view? For example, the Son of Lawlessness in 2Thess 2:1-12 proclaims himself as divine and has his own epiphany as a "counterfeit Christ"<sup>103</sup> (vv.4,8-9). In a development

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<sup>101</sup> Those who accept that Mark had a person in view in v.14 frequently suggest the Antichrist (e.g., Marxsen, Hooker, Gaston, Taylor, Rigaux, Cranfield, Hengel, Brandenburger, Glazier).

<sup>102</sup> Mark p.296. Likewise, Marxsen acknowledges that a particular historical event may be Mark's tradition (Caligula's attempt to place his image in the temple c.39-40 C.E.), but when interpreting Mark's perspective in the 60's in Judaea, posits an unhistorical Antichrist Evangelist pp.179-181. Cranfield (who in referring to Luke's account of the destruction mingles historical and "supra-historical" matters while offering no reasons to establish such from the text), opines: "The significance of the Lord's words was not exhausted by the ruin of the Temple and Holy City. Antichrist was indeed present in the fierce nationalism of the Jews and the pride of Rome ... But there was more to come" "St. Mark 13" (6) p.300. Lohmeyer is more consistent to deny any chronological datum in v.14 which refutes correspondence with historical political matters, since "ein apokalytisches" event is mentioned. Thus a "supra-historical" Antichrist can be posited Markus p.275. However Lohmeyer dismisses the Caligula episode as a foundation of the saying because "standing" implies "er" not "es." Thus, before considering Antichrist he dismisses a historical figure (Caligula) behind the text, which indicates the possibility even on an "apokalyptik" reading of Mk 13 that historical figures must be considered. Lohmeyer does not examine whether Titus is that "menschen" (Markus pp.275-276).

<sup>103</sup> F.F. Bruce, 1 and 2 Thessalonians Word Biblical Commentary (Waco: Word Publishers), 1982 p.172. Gaston posits ἄνθρωπος τῆς ἀνομίας 2Thess 2:4 as identical to the figure in 13:14 (cf., Cranfield: "2Thess 2:3-10 strongly supports the identification of 'the abomination of desolation' with Antichrist..." "St. Mark 13" [6] p.298). Identifying τὸ

from 13:19-22 the WorldDeceiver in Did 16:4 performs signs and wonders in a time of unparalleled evil. Further developments give a supernatural Beliar cosmic powers at the consummation where he is able to make the sun rise at night and the moon appear at mid-day (AscenIs 4:5 cf., also the Son of Lawlessness ApEl 3:5-9: "He will say to the sun, Fall; and it will fall: he will say, Shine; and it will: he will say, Be darkened; and it will." v.4). These examples appear to be the transference of cosmic power from heralding the SM (13:26) to demonstrating a supernatural Evil One's supremacy over the created order having Christ's power at his disposal (cf., Did 16:4). None of this material is found in 13:14. The Danielic and Maccabean background,<sup>104</sup> text of Mk 13:14a, and context of vv.14f., all negate such an assumption. In fact, a supra-historical Antichrist figure in v.14a would leave no room for the subsequent "false christs" in v.22,<sup>105</sup> and the anti-climactic "false christs" (v.22) appear after Antichrist (v.14) in

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βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως in 13:14a with the ὁ ἄνθρωπος τῆς ἀνομίας in 2Thess 2:3f. is problematic though similar ideas are presented. The individual in 2Thess 2:4 is sitting in the sanctuary καθίσει, while in Mk 13:14 τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως is standing ἐστήκοτα, which establishes the notion of presence, something common to both accounts. The Jerusalem sanctuary appears in mind in 2Thess 2:4 (cf., 13:14). Undoubtedly out of the developing matrix of ideas concerning an Antichrist figure 13:14 may contain notions compatible with that figure. But, no evidence exists in ch.13 to equate τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως with the sort of powers the Son of Lawlessness has in 2Thess 2:1-12 though both figures share the same theological matrix, primarily in respect to the book of Daniel.

<sup>104</sup> Seeds for the development of a supra-historical incarnation of evil are found in Dan 8:10 ("It grew great up to the host of heaven, and it threw down some of the host and some of the stars to the earth and trampled on them"), and its parallel in Dan 11:36 ("The king will do as he wishes and will exalt and magnify himself against every god, and he will speak wondrous things against the God of gods, and he will succeed until the wrath is finished, for that which is decreed will happen"). J.J. Collins surmises: "The parallel to Dan 8:10 in Dan 11:36 says that the king will magnify himself 'above every god' (וַיִּגְדַּל עַל כָּל אֱלֹהִים). In Daniel 11, it is clear that this includes a reference to the pagan gods, allegedly slighted by Antiochus Epiphanes. In Daniel 8, however, the host must be identified with the 'good angels,' and the 'prince of the host' (8:11a, if indeed the reading is not corrupt) is the God of the traditional Jerusalem cult" *Daniel* p.332.

<sup>105</sup> Pesch, *Naherwartungen* p.140f.

a setting surely proper only for him.<sup>106</sup> Evidence for a supra-historical Antichrist figure in ch.13 is lacking.

4.3.5. Without endorsing S.G.F. Brandon's view that Mark's gospel has a Rome *Sitz im Leben*, or his exegetical views on 13:1-14, we accept his view that Titus is referred to in 13:14 as τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως. Brandon advocated Titus as τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως because no other comparable act occurred in Judaea.<sup>107</sup> The event which put Titus in this role was accomplished "on the tenth day of the month of Ab in the year 70, when the victorious legionaries, having stormed the Temple, erected their standards in its court, opposite the eastern gate, and sacrificed to them and acclaimed Titus, their commander, as Imperator."<sup>108</sup> 'Ρωμαῖοι δὲ ... κομίσαντες τὰς σημαίας εἰς τὸ ἱερόν καὶ θέμενοι τῆς ἀνατολικῆς πύλης ἄντικρυς ἔθυσάν τε αὐταῖς αὐτόθι καὶ τὸν Τίτον μετὰ μεγίστων εὐφημιῶν ἀπέφηναν αὐτοκράτορα (War 6.6:1). Brandon rejected Josephus' account of Titus' desire to save the magnificent temple edifice and his resultant shock at its accidental burning (War 6.4:3,6.4:5-7), and instead accepted a fifth century alternative account by Sulpicius Severus, that Titus in conference with his officers voted for its destruction because of its "source of

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<sup>106</sup> So Gundry, Mark p.773; Dodd, "Fall" p.53. Brandenburger associates the antichrist figure with the false christs of v.22 but acknowledges the difficulties: "Eine Auseinandersetzung mit der Antichrist-Hypothese zu Markus 13 ist insofern schwierig, als eine klar fassbare Darlegung der vorausgesetzten Vorstellung eher verweigert wird. Die Hypothese lebt offensichtlich von einer im dunkeln gehalten, (halb-) mythischen Figur" Markus 13 p.83. In 13:22 the false christs/prophets are neither named "Antichrist" nor appear as a singular individual.

<sup>107</sup> So Brandon, Fall of Jerusalem, "Date"; cf. also Brandenburger, Markus 13 p.82; W. Schmithals, Markus p.575; D. Lührmann, Markusevangelium p.222 and "Markus 14.55-64" p.473 fn.70. Fredriksen Jesus, "Jesus and the Temple."

<sup>108</sup> Brandon, "Date" pp.133-134.

inspiration to both Judaism and Christianity."<sup>109</sup> What confirmed Titus as the temple desecrator according to Brandon was the combination of the masculine participle ἔστηκότα which qualified the neuter noun βδέλυγμα, so indicating a man. The parenthetical ὁ ἀναγινώσκων νοεῖτω was a special Markan clue to key the emperor's son, who because of his status, could not be further identified.

Certainly, Josephus' glorification of Titus is well documented.<sup>110</sup> Titus' attempt to save

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<sup>109</sup> Fall of Jerusalem p.120.

<sup>110</sup> See E. Mary Smallwood, The Jews Under Roman Rule Studies in Judaism in Late Antiquity Vol 20 (ed.) Jacob Neusner (Leiden: E.J. Brill), 1976 p.320. Josephus' gratitude to his Flavian benefactors is manifest in particular in his glorification of Titus' exploits in the Jerusalem siege (which "to an impartial eye seem merely foolhardy in a commander" surmises Smallwood Rule p.325 fn.147; see War 5.2:2,5.6:5,5.7:3,5.8:1,5.11:6,6.1:7,6.2:5). Titus' desire not to destroy the temple according to Josephus (War 6.4:3) presents the Roman commander as an upholder of an edifice worthy of adorning the empire and victim of the uncontrollable fury of his soldiers, one of whom sets fire to the temple (War 6.4:5,7). Against this, though the war council's deliberation on the temple's fate makes sense, Josephus' presentation of Titus as a staunch upholder of culture seems farfetched in view of his commenting that Titus was completely away from the scene of the skirmish which resulted in the temple being fired. "Titus was resting in his tent after the engagement, when a messenger rushed in with the tidings. Starting up just as he was, he ran to the temple to arrest the conflagration; behind him followed his whole staff of generals ... " War 6.4:6. See Schürer's uncritical treatment of this episode in History of the Jewish People p.506. The fourth century Christian writer Sulpicius Severus' version of the event (that the temple's destruction stemmed from Titus' orders), is probably more accurate (Smallwood, Rule pp.325-326). Certainly the Roman commander had no qualms accepting his soldiers' sacrificing to their standards and offering up acclamations of their leader as *Imperator* (War 6.6:1), or about leveling the temple's enclosure walls once Jerusalem was in complete subjugation (War 7.1:1), or parading the temple's holiest objects in the joint triumph with his father Vespasian in Rome the following year. Titus' accommodation to normal procedure is seen after the end of the siege when "Caesar ordered the whole city and the temple to be razed to the ground, leaving only the loftiest of the towers, Phasaël, Hippicus, and Mariamme, and the portion of the wall enclosing the city on the west: the latter as an encampment for the garrison that was to remain, and the towers to indicate to posterity the nature of the city and of the strong defenses which had yet yielded to Roman prowess" (War 7.1:1). In fact, Titus' stamp on the city's demolition was so thorough the site appeared to have never been inhabited (War 7.1:1). Rather, the scale of Titus' destruction of the temple was an emphatic statement of the extent of Roman power. His stance in the temple, where he allowed the full weight of anti-Jewish sentiment to be expressed with himself as

the temple was uncharacteristic Roman military behaviour and Sulpicius Severus' account is credible. The events recorded by Josephus, regarding the soldiers offering sacrifice as opposed to merely venerating their standards,<sup>111</sup> does not stand alone and has been confirmed.<sup>112</sup> The event makes sense as a Roman glorification and contempt for all Jewish sensibilities. The soldiers hailing Titus as *Imperator*<sup>113</sup> was a title normally given to an emperor and not a Roman

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the centre of adulation, would communicate the brash arrogance of that might. The very centre of Jewish sacred tradition, not just the city of Jerusalem but the temple itself, had witnessed an abomination unparalleled in first century C.E. Jew-Gentile relationships.

<sup>111</sup> The eagle or *aquila* was an object of special veneration for the legions. Loss of the eagle betrayed the legion and set it up for destruction e.g., three Varus' legions in 9 C.E., and four Rhineland legions "which either surrendered to Cuvilis or lost their eagles in the revolt of AD 69-70. ... XII *Fulminata*, according to Suetonius, lost its eagle in AD 66 when fighting under Cestius Gallus in the Jewish War. ... Dio gives a short account of the eagle: "There is a small shrine, and in this there is an eagle of gold. Every legion in the army list has an eagle, and it never leaves the winter quarters unless the entire legion sets out. It is mounted on a large pole, which is tapered to a sharp point so that it may be fixed firmly in the ground, and it is carried by one man" H.H. Scullard, G.R. Watson (eds.), *The Roman Soldier Aspects of Greek and Roman Life* (London: Thames and Hudson), 1969 pp.128-129. See also, Atkinson, "Habakkuk Commentary" p.254.

<sup>112</sup> K.M.T. Atkinson, "The Historical Setting of the Habakkuk Commentary" *JSS* 43 (1959), pp.252-253. "To sum up the evidence from these Roman Republican coins, which cover the period from the late third century B.C. to the time of Cicero: first, the coins show that in the ceremony of taking the military oath among the Roman soldiers a pig was sacrificed at the foot of a military standard, while all the soldiers concerned stood by carrying their weapons, with which they appear to be making a symbolic gesture of taking part in the sacrifice. Certainly it is in the imitative coinage of the Italians in the Social War that the standard itself is actually represented in the scene ... This then was a usage in Roman armies of which the Jews must have become aware from an early stage of the Roman eastern conquests ..." (p.252). Atkinson's work only confirms Josephus' account of the Roman practice of sacrificing to their standards as a victory stance. Because Jewish literature describing Titus' atrocities makes no mention of the sacrifice of a pig, which is something that surely would have been documented, we are cautious in positing that this animal was involved in the Roman ritual in the temple precincts.

<sup>113</sup> Cf., Suetonius, *Tit* 5:2.

commander, and justifiable with Titus, heir to his father Vespasian.<sup>114</sup> What had not happened since Antiochus IV Epiphanes had occurred again. In fact, Titus' savagery surpassed that of Antiochus with the city and temple almost completely destroyed and the temple cult eradicated. The heathen Titus was the one standing where he should not.

Hengel balks at Titus being associated with the one "standing" because, "the masculine perfect participle ἑστηκότα, with its unusual construction *ad sensum*, points more to the beginning of a permanent state of affairs associated with a specific person. By contrast, Titus left the burnt-out sanctuary, which later served as a camp for prisoners, and indeed Jerusalem, soon after the final victory."<sup>115</sup> This objection assumes that for Titus to be "standing" he has to remain in Jerusalem from where, as the Antichrist (p.19), he directs his reign of terror. But Titus' "standing" indicates his arrogance and ascendance in the act of desolation and destruction.<sup>116</sup> For Jews and Christians living in the midst and after-math of his barbarous

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<sup>114</sup> Smallwood, Rule p.325 fn.142. Theissen gives little credence to Titus' role, offering no exegesis on v.14a in respect to Titus "standing where he should not." Yet in two of the texts Theissen uses to establish the belief that a prophesied world-ruler was Vespasian, Titus himself is included in the prophecies: "Some few regarded these things as betokening disaster; but the greater number put their faith in a prophecy of their ancient priestly writings, that at that very time the East would rise to power, and that men issuing from Judaea would become masters of the world. These dark sayings had reference to Vespasian and Titus" (Tac Hist 5:13.2). After Josephus was captured he proclaimed to Vespasian: "You imagine, Vespasian, that in the person of Josephus you have taken a mere captive; but I come to you as a messenger of greater destinies. Had I not been sent on this errand by God, I knew that law of the Jews and how it becomes a general to die. To Nero do you send me? Why then? Think you that (Nero and) those who before your accession succeed him will continue? You will be Caesar, Vespasian, you will be emperor, you and your son here" (War 3.8:9).

<sup>115</sup> Studies p.18.

<sup>116</sup> Note the description of Titus and especially his connection with his father in Bab.T Gittin 56b, "a wicked man, son of a wicked man, son of Esau the wicked".

According to Ford the "mad Emperor's (Caligula's) intended blasphemy" would have excited Christian communities that he was Antichrist. "The coming event would

exploits following the sack of the city and his triumphant return to Rome, Titus was the personification of evil and his present power to inflict terror could be a possible harbinger of the future.<sup>117</sup>

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inevitably have been interpreted as a sign of the end..." Desolation, pp.162-163. Ford applies this to Caligula as Antichrist without considering Titus, who actually stood in the temple and was honored as *Imperator* by the Roman soldiers sacrificing to their idolatrous standards (War 6.6:1). If Pilate's provocation of Jewish sensibilities in 26 C.E. caused thousands of Jews to stream out to Caesarea and offer their lives; if Caligula's intended deposition of his deified image in the temple in 39-41 C.E. triggered such consternation among the faithful -- then Titus' actual desecration of the sanctuary, plunder of its sacred objects, destruction of its temple and city and enslavement of its people in 70 C.E., would invoke utter condemnation as blasphemy. Titus' destructive activity had gone beyond that of Antiochus IV, the pristine τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως.

Ford quotes Swete who compares Syria (with its king Antiochus IV Epiphanes) with Rome: if "Rome takes the place of Syria" (Desolation, p.163), surely Titus takes the place of Antiochus. On the basis of the comparison between Syria and Rome, Ford agrees that τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως is Antichrist, "but an Antichrist whose work takes place in history..." Surely Titus is an obvious candidate but Ford makes no comparison. Ford's thesis is "that the βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως is a comprehensive term applying first to the armies of Rome, but including later manifestations of Antichrist" (p.163). Rather than spread the figure of the abominator into several personal manifestations without evidence, it would be better to consider coalescing them in the figure of Titus. This omission by Ford is surprising but not unusual given his failure to consider Brandon's arguments that Titus is τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως.

<sup>117</sup> Further support for this thesis is found in two other documents responding to Jerusalem's destruction in 70 C.E.

In SibOr 5:397f, dated at the close of the first century C.E. (See J.J. Collins, "Sibylline Oracles, Book 5" in OT Pseudepigrapha Vol 1 p.390), Titus is the temple destroyer whose opponents hasten his death at divine vengeance: "The desired temple has long ago been extinguished by you, When I saw the second Temple cast headlong, soaked in fire by an impious hand, ... (408) But now a certain insignificant and impious king has gone up, cast it down, and left it in ruins with a great horde and illustrious men. He himself perished at immortal hands when he left the land, and no such sign has yet been performed among men that others should think to sack a great city." J.J. Collins' observes: "Sib. Or. 5 reacts to the fall of the temple not by pondering divine justice (like 4 Ezra) or seeking to fill the gap it left in religious life (like 2 Baruch) but by venting its outrage against the heathen power that was responsible" (Imagination p.188). The focus was upon the perpetrator of destruction, the Roman commander Titus.

Similarly in 4Ezra 11-12, the image of an eagle with three heads and twelve wings appears, based on the fourth beast of Dan 7. The animal figure is reinterpreted from Dan 7 due to the different circumstances faced and one of the significant changes is the



Many scholars do not accept the writing of Mark's gospel in the post-war situation because the destruction of the temple would be mentioned more emphatically in ch.13.<sup>118</sup> Accepting a pre-70 C.E. date for the construction of Mark's gospel would give our argument less weight, by making us argue that Mark understood Titus as referent in 13:14 in expectation. Perhaps it makes Mark remarkably farsighted to have anticipated such a fit between τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως as a person standing as the desecrator and destroyer of Jerusalem, and the historical circumstances of Titus' ruin of the city. However, Mark's account in ch.13 is effective because it betrays an attitude based on rumour and general conviction regarding the fall of Jerusalem, well fitting to individuals understanding the event from beyond the city.<sup>119</sup> A post-70 dating allows the reader to comprehend the full significance of τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως "standing" in the temple i.e., the end-time countdown has begun, while a pre-70

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identification of the fourth beast with Rome (4Ezra 12:11-13) and not with the Greek kingdom as in Daniel. The fourth beast in 4Ezra appears more horrific, with the image of an eagle with three heads and twelve wings, than the corresponding beast in Dan 7. The author demonstrates that the events of 70 C.E. and the nature of the fourth beast are a worse calamity than that in Daniel. Cf., A. Lacocque, "History is moving along a downward spiral with each new loop emphasizing more the wrinkles on the faces of the human empires, until we reach a caricature of sorts like the fourth beast of Daniel 7 which has definitely left the animal kingdom for the demonic" "The Vision of the Eagle in 4Esdras, A Rereading of Daniel 7 in the First Century C.E." *SBL Seminar Papers* (1981), p.254. Collins, Knibb, and Russell all posit that one of the three heads is Titus. If 4Ezra was written c.81-96 C.E., evidence is found of a document later than Mark, yet dealing with the destruction of the temple and city, and attributing to Titus a central role in that destruction.

<sup>118</sup> On the lack of details in Mark regarding the destruction of Jerusalem and its impact on dating in a post-70 situation see Grayston, "Mark 13" p.377; Anderson, *Mark* p.291; Beasley-Murray, *Last Days* p.408; Gundry, *Mark* p.742; Dean W. Chapman, *The Orphan Gospel Mark's Perspective on Jesus* The Bible Seminar 16 (Sheffield: JSOT Press), 1993 p.145.

<sup>119</sup> Suggested by Pieter J.J. Botha, "The Historical Setting of Mark's Gospel: Problems and Possibilities" *JSNT* 51 (1993) p.35. For example ὅταν δὲ ἴδητε (v.14a) and οἱ ἐν τῇ Ἰουδαίᾳ φευγέτωσαν (14b) differentiate individuals on the basis of readers from afar and near.

date is purely anticipatory removing the certainty of the nearness of the end-time in the wake of the possible shuffle of history.

Indeed, the emphatic way the temple's destruction in 13:1-2 is described (οὐ μὴ ἀφεθῆ ὧδε λίθος ἐπὶ λίθον ὃς οὐ μὴ καταλυθῆ) points to a prophecy after the event. A far-sighted individual could foretell of the temple's destruction,<sup>120</sup> but the composition of the prophecy is exact enough to make us conclude it was written after the event.<sup>121</sup> The subject of the temple is a key motif in chs. 11-16 ("From chapter 11 to 15:38, Mark seems occupied with the temple").<sup>122</sup> The vineyard parable (12:9-12) concludes with the destruction of the tenants which in the light of the temple's destruction of September 70 C.E., probably refers in the application of that event, to the fall of the Jerusalem leaders as well as "the Jewish people in Palestine as a whole who suffered the havoc of the war."<sup>123</sup>

For Gundry, a post-70 date is inadmissible, because the nature of the abomination in v.14 fails to conform with what happened historically. Thus only an abomination leading to forsaking the temple and expecting persecution because the abomination is not worshipped "satisfies the wording of Mark's text."<sup>124</sup> This view fails to connect v.14 as the means of fulfilling the prophecy in vv.1-2, namely τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως is the instrument of destruction, not simply desolation. The participle ἐστηκότα defines the abomination as

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<sup>120</sup> Mann, Mark p.510.

<sup>121</sup> So Marcus, "Jewish War" pp.447-448 citing Theissen Lokalkolorit p.271 fn.82, and Pesch, Markusevangelium 2 p.271.

<sup>122</sup> Donald H. Juel, Messiah and Temple SBLDS 31 (ed.) Howard C Kee, Douglas A Knight (Missoula: Scholars Press), 1977 p.57.

<sup>123</sup> Marcus, Way p.128.

<sup>124</sup> Mark p.742.

existing as a state of affairs, negating any temple function (not leading people away from the temple), and not requiring worship (nothing is said about worshipping the desolator).

For Chapman, "That Mark expected the Temple to be made desolate after it had been burned; that he wrote after the setting up of the sacrilege which signalled the beginning of the tribulation; that he depicts a situation of normal living and opportunity to flee which did not exist; that he urges believers to flee Judea at least two years after they have done exactly that; that he makes no mention of the Romans, or of fire -- and yet he lived through that period of history -- stretches the limits of credulity."<sup>125</sup> The presumption is that Mk 13 must catalogue events according to a historical chronology akin to events mentioned in Josephus. Mark posits a temple destruction as the agent of defilement which fits the initial prophecy by the Markan Jesus (vv.1-2), that is, a prophecy after the event. Including a destruction by fire fails to conform v.14 to its predictive saying, and to erect a necessary historical chronology of fire, desecration, abandonment, and razing, prejudices Mark's inventiveness in the sense that he must catalogue events according to Josephus' account to remain credible.<sup>126</sup>

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<sup>125</sup> Orphan Gospel p.149.

<sup>126</sup> In texts containing veiled references to Titus (4Ezra 11:1; SibOr 5:399), 4Ezra, dated c.100 C.E. in Palestine, see B.M. Metzger, "The Fourth Book of Ezra" in OT Pseudepigrapha Vol 1 p.520), contains the type of information Chapman expects in Mark on a post-70 dating -- explicit mention of the destruction of Jerusalem regarding the plunder of holy objects from the temple, destruction through fire, and enslavement of people. 4Ezra 10:21-23: "...our sanctuary has been laid waste, our altar thrown down ... the light of our lampstand has been put out, the ark of our covenant has been plundered, our holy things have been polluted ... our priests have been burned to death, our Levites have gone into captivity ... our young men have been enslaved..." Similarly, SibOr 5, dated 80-130 C.E. in Egypt (J.J. Collins, "The Sibylline Oracles" in OT Pseudepigrapha Vol 1 p.390 fn.5.) specifically mentions destruction by fire from a heathen ruler with his armies and abandonment of a city in ruins. The information is sparse, primarily involving the mention of fire, the oppressor and his forces, plunder of holy objects, and enslavement of people. Mark mentions only the oppressor.

Obviously authorial purpose determines textual construction.<sup>127</sup> Significantly Matthew and Luke, more distanced in time to the destruction than Mark, historicise Mark to varying degrees: Matthew alters the vague ἔστηκότα ὅπου οὐ δεῖ (Mk 13:14) to the concrete ἐν τόπῳ ἁγίῳ (24:15), while Luke changes the focus of events away from the emotive theological designation τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἔρημώσεως to an interpretation of the historical event κυκλουμένην ὑπὸ στρατοπέδων Ἱερουσαλήμ (21:20).<sup>128</sup> However both testify to the matrix of events regarding the Roman destruction of the temple and city in September 70 C.E., where Titus was at the centre. Mark's account (13:14a), closer in time and location to these events, also deals with the same events though with an emphasis upon the blasphemous instigator<sup>129</sup> and so we conclude that a post-70 C.E. date for the gospel is defensible.

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<sup>127</sup> In 4Ezra elements of the destruction of the city (10:21-23) are immediately followed by a vision of the heavenly Jerusalem (10:25-28). The eagle vision of ch.11 follows (with reference to Titus) in the pattern of the animal kingdoms in Dan 7. 4Ezra deals with God's inscrutable ways. The tyranny of Rome the oppressor contrasts with the fortunes of Jerusalem the conquered city. Hence, mention of historical aspects of the destruction conforms to authorial intent in 4Ezra, which is to accentuate Roman depravity by describing their decimation of Jerusalem. In SibOr 5 the author's intent is to vent an outburst of hatred against Rome (162-178). In fact, mention of the plundered temple occurs in a context immediately following an unparalleled diatribe of Roman depravity (386-396) which explains why such historical details have been selected. Certainly, far removed geographically and temporally from Jerusalem, the Sibylline author can boldly vent his fury against Rome, while a generation after the 70 C.E. destruction, the author of 4Ezra does to a lesser extent in Palestine.

<sup>128</sup> According to Fiorenza, Luke purged Mark's emphasis on immediate expectation and instituted a set programme of periods eventually leading to the consummation, which explains Luke's historical reference. Elizabeth Fiorenza, "The Eschatology and Composition of the Apocalypse" *CBQ* 30 (1968) p.544.

<sup>129</sup> Mark p.512. Mark's focus upon an individual (v.14) as the agent of destruction (vv.1-2) defines authorial intent in respect to the impact of v.14 on ch.13. The broad stroke of prophecy needs to specify easily and be unencumbered in detail. Mark sees the arch of historical events in summarizing the destruction's significance and gives a referential clue in ἔστηκότα (v.14a), which specifies that the destroying agent is an individual and historically our contention is that Titus is the best candidate. That Mark chose to focus upon τὸ

#### 4.4. Conclusion

We have now shown that Mark had an individual in mind as the agent of desolation and destruction and that the pagan Titus is the candidate who fits the description τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως in 13:14 more than any other individual. His central role in the siege and destruction of the city, and his actual standing in the temple and being lauded by his soldiers while sacrificing to their standards in the temple precincts, are strong indications that Titus is in view in 13:14. We must now examine the most serious objection to Titus being the referent in 13:14.

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βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως as the agent of destruction and not his method of destruction is the liberty of authorial intent; certainly an emphasis upon the agent of destruction is more purposeful than an account of the mechanics of destruction. To become involved in extricating acute historical detail in respect to the issue of abomination, e.g., regarding the Zealot's desecration but not destruction, the soldiers' pillaging by fire as desecration but not destruction, the razing of the city as destruction without consequence given that desecration had already forced the abandonment of the temple, the placing of the ensigns by Titus' soldiers and sacrificing to their leader as *Imperator* as superfluous given the already desecrated temple complex, is to minimize Mark's art and play historical reductionism. For example Chapman considers that the burning of the temple indicated that God had already abandoned his sanctuary which therefore could no longer be desecrated by any person. God had performed the desecration himself by allowing it to be burned. This argument would *prohibit* Antiochus IV from being associated with the desolation in Jerusalem c.168 B.C.E.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### THE POSSIBILITY OF FLIGHT FROM JUDAEA AFTER SEPTEMBER 70 C.E.

#### Introduction

A major objection to accepting the view that the Roman commander Titus is τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως in 13:14, is that flight from Judaea following Jerusalem's destruction was not possible, because Titus had already decimated all Judaeans except the fortresses at Herodium, Machaerus and Masada, and was in complete control of Jerusalem and Judaea.<sup>1</sup> No Judaeans would be left to flee in such circumstances. For our view to be plausible individuals in Judaea must be found in a position to flee following Titus' destruction of the city. To demonstrate our position we do not have to establish that Judaeans did flee following Titus' ruin of Jerusalem, only that a sufficient number of Judaeans inhabiting the region were in a position to flee. We would also need to give a rationale explaining why Mark

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<sup>1</sup> Marcus, "Jewish War" p.454. Incompatibility between Titus' iron grip upon Judaea and the difficulty of escape is well documented. The tendency of refugees from the ravages of war in Galilee and Judaea was to take refuge in Jerusalem where escape became impossible. Ulrich Mauser, *Christ in the Wilderness Studies in Biblical Theology* (London: SCM Press), 1963 pp.57,110, links 13:14b to the Jerusalem episode when siege survivors asked Titus for permission to retreat with their families into the wilderness, but against this identification: Mauser's connecting ἔρημος with ὄρος as a group of common ideas is overly speculative and suffers from no explicit Markan connection (so Marcus, *Way* p.25 fn.49). Titus' reply confirms the impossibility of flight once τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως was positioned as conqueror: "Thereupon Titus, indignant that men in the position of captives should proffer proposals to him as victors, ordered proclamation to be made to them neither to desert nor to hope for terms any longer, for he would spare none; but to fight with all their might and save themselves as best they could, because all his actions henceforth would be governed by the laws of war. He then gave his troops permission to burn and sack the city" (*War* 6.6:3).

deemed it necessary to urge Judaeans to flee.<sup>2</sup>

We will present evidence to show that 13:14 is a call to Jews and Jewish Christians in Judaea in the immediate post-destruction period to flee in view of the threat Titus presents as destroyer of the holy city (5.1-2), and we will give Mark's rationale for urging flight (5.3).

### 5.1. The Synoptic Accounts of Flight

Initially, we will consider the Synoptic context for the flight predicated in 13:14f. The flight favours those living in the countryside and in the Judaeian towns outside of Jerusalem.<sup>3</sup> The designation τότε οἱ ἐν τῇ Ἰουδαίᾳ<sup>4</sup> specifies a locality beyond Jerusalem<sup>5</sup> which is

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<sup>2</sup> *Contra* Lührmann Markusevangelium pp.222f. For Theissen the catalyst for flight in the post-war situation would be a pagan temple in Jerusalem. But he does not explore the feasibility of escape in Judaea or how 13:14b-18 would apply in such a situation.

<sup>3</sup> So Gaston, who suggests that vv.15-16 presuppose "village life and not Jerusalem" (Stone p.28); also Kelber, (Kingdom p.120), Mann, (Mark p.523) and Taylor (Mark) p.513.

<sup>4</sup> Kelber goes too far in claiming that the four instances of Ἰουδαία testify to a "movement away from Judea" (Kingdom p.121). For example in 10:1 Jesus goes εἰς τὰ ὄρια τῆς Ἰουδαίας. Kelber interprets v.1 from the standpoint of vv.29-31 where a life of discipleship based upon the gospel of the kingdom has precedence over the manner of living in the present age (with which Judaea is connected). Only by reading the term "Judaea" figuratively can it be applied in this manner. Pesch also argues beyond the referential regarding οἱ ἐν τῇ Ἰουδαίᾳ in 13:14b: "Für Markus ist Judäa das Land der Feindschaft wider Jesus, während Galiläa das Land seiner Verkündigung und seiner Taten ist" ... "das spricht für ein symbolische Verständnis von Judäa" Naherwartungen pp.145-147. However in 1:5 and by implication 3:7, Mark's audience must have been impressed by the notion that in the first few verses of the gospel there is a movement of people away from Jerusalem. An emphasis is found upon God's new way, manifest beyond the traditional location for God's involvement with his people (Jerusalem and Judaea), in the eschatological act of a wilderness call, which is the context for the appearance of "Judaea" in 1:5.

<sup>5</sup> Gundry connects the fleeing with Jerusalemites because in the Judaeian countryside "suddenness so extreme would not be needed" (Mark p.773) which reduces the risk of harm for Judaeans living well beyond the city. But the tenor of the statement in v.14 ("When you see ... then flee ...") anticipates terror not limited to those in immediate proximity to Jerusalem but, in view of what τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως has done in the temple and city, to anyone in the region of Judaea. Remaining in Judaea and not Jerusalem is not a basis for safety. Interestingly, Theissen (Lokalkolorit p.171 fn.71) argues for the legitimacy of

confirmed by the depictions in vv.15-16 of those urged to flee: the farm worker (v.16) and not the city dweller,<sup>6</sup> and a flight εἰς τὰ ὄρη (v.14b) is descriptive of a countryside setting.<sup>7</sup> The woe oracle in v.17 for pregnant women and nursing mothers encumbered in their flight is understandable in view of a hurried lengthy flight into the mountains. Verse 18 presumes a wilderness setting where the terrain in winter is an obstacle to flight. This would not be the case in the city.<sup>8</sup> The implication in vv.14-18 is that of a rigorous, extended flight, fitting a

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flight for Judaeans following the erection of Caligula's image in the pre-Markan material because flight for Jerusalemites would probably be impossible given the ensuing full-scale carnage from enraged Jews resisting the Roman attempt to bring the image into Jerusalem. Armed resistance would have probably met Petronius throughout his journey with horrendous bloodshed in Judaea before the final imposition of the image. Then the injunction to flight would have functioned as a warning for all to flee Judaea, not Jerusalem. Our view of Mark's adaptation of the Caligula material follows the same line of argument, making it plain why Judaeans in the countryside are urged to flee and *not* Jerusalemites.

<sup>6</sup> Note that Luke carefully distinguishes between city and country dwellers (τότε οἱ ἐν τῇ Ἰουδαίᾳ φευγέτωσαν εἰς τὰ ὄρη καὶ οἱ ἐν μέσῳ αὐτῆς ἐκχωρεῖτωσαν καὶ οἱ ἐν ταῖς χώραις μὴ εἰσερχέσθωσαν εἰς αὐτήν Lk 21:21) while keeping the focus upon the city (Lk 21:21b).

<sup>7</sup> Hartman (*Prophecy* p.154) views Lot's escape from Sodom in Gen 19:15-17 as underlying vv.14b-16. The urging of the angels for Lot and his family to flee occurs in two situations: the first *in* Sodom from where they are led by the angels to safety (Gen 19:15-16) and the second *beyond* the city where they are again told to flee to the mountains (v.17) which probably underlies Mark's reference.

<sup>8</sup> Beasley-Murray understands v.17 as flight "in face of the advance of an invading army" (*Last Days* p.417), but v.14 focuses not upon the invasion of the city rather than upon the individual who stands as conqueror. The terror radiates outward from the city following the invading army's successful objective. The description of the conqueror as τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως as one "standing where he ought not" focuses upon the significance of his achievement and ominously points to what is to come, further destruction.

By positing that vv.14-23 "describe the events connected with the siege of Jerusalem but without describing the actual fall of the city," France (*Jesus* p.232) minimizes the appearance of τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως as a desolating act inferior to the SM's appearance in respect to Jerusalem's destruction. Further, to understand vv.15-23 as "events connected with the siege" is to place τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως outside the city and juxtapose flight toward the advancing Roman armies and not away from them on reading



countryside locale over that of the city, Jerusalem.

5.1.2. Interestingly, both Matthew and Luke, writing after Jerusalem's destruction in their redaction of 13:14, change the emphasis away from a personal abominator. Matthew replaces the masculine ἐστηκότα with the neuter participle ἐστὸς (Mat 24:15) and Luke removes τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως, replacing it with κυκλουμένην ὑπὸ στρατοπέδων Ἱερουσαλήμ (Lk 21:20), a reference to the approaching Roman armies encircling Jerusalem. However Luke's alteration allows the desolation to be cast in the immediate future of the storyline (τότε γνώτε ὅτι ἤγγικεν ἡ ἐρήμωσις αὐτῆς). This enables flight to be based upon an enemy approaching the city and not an enemy inside it, which is an unmistakable description of what happened in the war.<sup>9</sup> Titus enveloped the city with a circumvallation (referred to in Lk 19:43-44 according to Theissen)<sup>10</sup>, after the failure of direct attacks. Prior to this encirclement opportunities existed for flight e.g., after Cestius Gallus' failure to take Jerusalem in November 66 C.E. many from the ranks of the Jerusalemite aristocracy fled the city (War 2.20:1) or the exodus from the region of Jericho to the hill country (War 4.8:2). Luke refers to Jerusalem's desolation (Lk 21:20) and records how Jews would be killed or sold as slaves (Lk 21:24). His injunction to avoid danger covers the situation that existed before the Romans had

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the events sequentially. Flight stems from an event in the city not outside of it. Cf., also Swete, "Θλιψις is here used almost in its literal sense for the daily tightening of the meshes of the siege" Mark p.307.

<sup>9</sup> "These changes (Luke's adaptation of Mk 13 in Lk 21:20-24) can be explained in terms of the rewriting of Mk. by Luke. He will have clarified the allusion to the events of AD 66-70 in the light of history. He has removed the apocalyptic language which might make the fall of Jerusalem seem to be closely associated with the End, and he has replaced it by prophetic language, thereby bringing out more strongly the element of divine judgment upon the Jews" I. Howard Marshall, Commentary On Luke New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Pub. Co.), 1978 p.770.

<sup>10</sup> Lokalkolorit p.292.

subjugated the region: individuals in the region of Judaea are to flee to the mountains, those in Jerusalem are to get out of the city and those in the countryside are not to go into the city (Lk 21:20). There is in a sense a complete turnaround, with no flight from a danger radiating from the city, because Luke knew historically that by the time Titus took the city, flight from it had been impossible for some time.

Matthew's account is more instructive because, writing after Jerusalem's destruction,<sup>11</sup> while retaining the use of τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως (though without reference to a person), he follows Mark and also advocates flight *following* the temple's destruction. In fact by adding ἐν τόπῳ ἁγίῳ (Mt 24:15), Matthew makes it more plain than Mark that the temple is being referred to as the place where τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως stands. This means that even though Matthew did not designate τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως as a person, he still accepts that the threat stems from inside the city and so counsels flight away from it (Mt 24:16f).<sup>12</sup> Schuyler Brown, after acknowledging that Matthew was written post-70 C.E., argues that the Matthean alterations from Mk 13 and additions ἐστὸς and ἐν τόπῳ ἁγίῳ exclude a

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<sup>11</sup> So Theissen, Lokalkolorit pp.285-288, see also R.E. Brown and John P. Meier, Antioch And Rome (New York: Paulist Press), 1982 pp.15-18; Graham N. Stanton, A Gospel for a New People Studies in Matthew (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark), 1992 pp.141,192-206.

<sup>12</sup> Donald Hagner, Matthew 14-28 Word Biblical Commentary Vol 33b (Word Books: Dallas) 1995, accepts the logic of the first half of our statement but not the second. Regarding v.15: "Matthew probably means ... that the event referred to implies the end of the age brought about by the deed of a Roman (hence the importance of veiled language) invader ... Initially in view therefore is the destruction of Jerusalem and the concomitant setting up of the desolating abomination in the temple that occurred in A.D. 70. It is wrong to reject this conclusion by pressing the letter of the text (v 16) and insisting that only after the image was set up in the temple was the flight to take place (which would in fact have been too late). The meaning is more general i.e., that the disciples should flee when events indicated that the desecration of the temple was inevitable" (p.701).

reference to Titus and make plain that the desecration occurs in the temple.<sup>13</sup> But Brown ignores how such precision is lacking in Mt 24:16 by arguing the opposite of what the text states: "Vv 14-16 are therefore fulfilled prophecy; the Matthean community has fled Judea as a result of the upheaval of the Jewish War ..." (p.10). On the other hand, David C. Sim<sup>14</sup> does argue for a flight from Judaea in the post-war period on the basis of an expectation Matthew held that there would be "in the last days an unholy alliance between the Romans and the antichrist and his supernatural forces of evil." But it seems unusual that Matthew would keep the phrase τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως from Mark's gospel, while changing the personal reference ἔστηκότα to the more grammatically correct but impersonal ἔστος, if he had the Antichrist in mind. Against Theissen<sup>15</sup> it is more plausible that Mt 24:15f. is a reference to Jerusalem's destruction and not a future expectation of Matthew himself.<sup>16</sup> But this leads us to

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<sup>13</sup> "There is no doubt that Matthew is speaking of something happening in the temple" "The Matthean Apocalypse" *JSNT* 4 (1979) p.23 fn.39.

<sup>14</sup> *Apocalyptic Eschatology in the gospel of Matthew SNTS MonoSer 88* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 1996 pp.102-103.

<sup>15</sup> *Lokalkolorit* p.288 fn.91.

<sup>16</sup> First, Theissen uses Mt 24:14 ("dass schon V.14 in die Zukunft weist" *Lokalkolorit* p.288 fn.91) to argue that as this verse points to the future then so does v.15. This assumes that only with the completion of the world-wide preaching can the consummation occur which involves the revelation of τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως. The universal proclamation of the gospel is proceeding and will proceed until the consummation from Matthew's point of view but vv.15f. are a reminiscence of the conclusion to the Jewish war with the judgment that the Roman desecration of the temple was prophesied by Daniel, an event belonging to Matthew's past. That event is localized to "those in Judaea" while vv.4-14 are applied to the disciples universally. Thus all the disciples will be involved in world mission (v.14) but only those in Judaea are to flee (v.16) because Jerusalem's destruction affected Judaeans. Matthew looks back to the past and respecting his source replicates the flight away from the city whereas in v.23 he takes up future matters. Second, Theissen argues that the Matthean addition to Mk 13:18, that the flight (ἡ φυγὴ ὑμῶν) does not occur on Sabbath (μηδὲ σαββάτω) in 24:20 indicates a future flight occurring on a single day and not covering a period of time as in Mk 13:18. Stanton has shown that there is good

ask why Matthew did not alter Mk 13:14-18 making it palatable with events associated with Jerusalem's destruction as Luke appears to have done.<sup>17</sup> One reason could be that a flight following the temple's desolation was not considered to be an impossibility for Matthew. However, even if Mt 24:15f. is a future expectation of Matthew himself, this expectation is based upon a reapplication without substantial change of the Markan notion of flight after the temple's destruction in 70 C.E.

Whatever Matthew's use of Mk 13:14, either as a reference to a past event in the temple or a future expectation, clearly the notion of flight following the city's destruction was not unacceptable. Therefore we conclude that our contention for a historical reference in Mk 13:14 is worthy of consideration, which is supported by Matthew retaining the same notion of flight in the post-war situation.

## 5.2. The Possibility of Flight before September 70 C.E.

It appears that any flight of Judaeans to the mountains involving Titus could not have occurred during the period he was in charge of the Jerusalem siege, right up to the city's destruction, which of course was by then too late.<sup>18</sup> Vespasian had placed such a clamp on

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reason to think that with the addition of ὑμῶν Matthew is now addressing his audience and not recounting events having occurred among those in Judaea i.e., in comparison to *their* flight at Jerusalem's destruction (vv.15-19) *your* flight may be different. Matthew's audience may be "warned once again that they may have to flee from persecution ... In Matt 24.20 the reference to Sabbath suggests that, as in Matt 23,34, persecution from Jewish religious leaders is in mind" (New People p.203).

<sup>17</sup> It seems improbable that Matthew considered Zealot atrocities in the temple (War 4.3:1-4.6:3) the desolation (which would enable flight out of Jerusalem) because of the mention and coupling of the Danielic reference with the participle "standing" i.e., an object, not an individual or acts of atrocity.

<sup>18</sup> Any flight by Christians before April-September 70 C.E. would probably have been during 66-68/69 C.E. Marcus posits the winter of 67-68 C.E. before Vespasian had "isolated the city" ("Jewish War" p.454), based upon his notion of Eleazar's pollution of the temple as

Judaea it seems unlikely individuals would be in a position to flee to the mountains. Following Vespasian's subjugation of Jericho by June 68 C.E. Jerusalem was isolated with most of Judaea under Roman control (except eastern Judaea where rebels held the fortress at Herodium) and the city encircled with camps at Emmaus, Adida, Jericho, places in Idumaea, and probably at Khirbet Qumran.<sup>19</sup> All operations stopped with Nero's death in June 68 C.E. Vespasian waited a whole year and then resumed his campaign again in the summer of 69 C.E. after consolidating his position in Judaea. The proclamation of Vespasian as emperor on July 1st caused the war effort to be held up a second time. Titus took over Vespasian's Judaeian campaign and began the siege of Jerusalem in the spring of 70 C.E. Not only would it be virtually impossible for anyone to flee from Jerusalem into the mountains but the warring factions in Jerusalem were carefully watching to ensure that no one could desert the city: "The city being now on all sides beset by these battling conspirators and their rabble ... was torn in pieces ... Loyal citizens, for

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τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως. For Pesch (Markus 2 p.292) v.14 is a report of the flight of Jewish Christians from the Jerusalem church to Pella in the Transjordan, recorded by Eusebius (HE 3:5). See also Grundmann, Das Evangelium nach Markus (Berlin: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt), 1965 p.359. However J. Verheyden ("The Flight of the Christians to Pella, A Study of the Testimony of Eusebius and Epiphanius" ETL [1990] pp.241-244) has shown Eusebius' ideological bias in the construction of an account gleaned from Lk 21:20-24, though he fails to explain the inclusion of Pella in the account. For Gundry (Mark pp.754-755), Pella is not in the Transjordanian mountain range, which lacks correspondence with v.14b where flight is from the city εἰς τὰ ὄρη.

However, Eusebius' tradition that Christians escaped Jerusalem and settled in Pella could be an indication that Jewish Christians throughout Judaea looked for ways to leave the region once Vespasian had subjugated Galilee by late 67 C.E. and was looking to do the same in Judaea. Acts 21:20-26 is evidence that some Christians adhered to Jewish purity rituals involving the offering of sacrifices in the temple, which could indicate that Christians in Jerusalem "may have frequented the temple until shortly before its destruction" (N.H. Taylor, "Palestinian Christianity Part 1" p.118.) and so were caught out in the Roman advance. It is plausible that Jewish-Christians caught in Judaea between the forces of both Vespasian and the Jewish nationalists would have been among those seeking to escape.

<sup>19</sup> "The war having now embraced the whole region both hill and plain, all egress from Jerusalem was cut off" War 4.9:1.

their part, were in dire despondency and alarm, having no opportunity for planning any change of policy, no hope of coming to terms or of flight, if they had the will; for watch was kept everywhere, and the brigand chiefs, divided on all else, put to death as their common enemies any in favour of peace with the Romans or suspected of an intention to desert, and were unanimous only in slaughtering those deserving of deliverance" War 5.1:5. Titus, with rejuvenated and expanded forces, easily reached Jerusalem and camped nearby the city. It does not seem likely within the period Vespasian subjugated Judaea and isolated Jerusalem and Titus began his campaign (June 68 - April 70 C.E.) that it was possible for Judaeans to flee into the mountains, and once Titus began siege of the city flight could not occur.<sup>20</sup>

#### 5.2.1. The Possibility of Flight after September 70 C.E.

Evidence exists in Josephus for groups of Jews remaining in Judaea following September 70 C.E. who had previously surrendered to the advancing Romans or remained as refugees in the mountains for the war's duration. It is these individuals who are urged to flee in Mk 13:14 in the light of Titus' idolatrous stance. The majority of references involve deserters or trapped civilians in Jerusalem who had fled the Roman advance in 68 C.E. into the city (War 4.2:4,4.3:3), as well as inhabitants in south south/east Judaea at Capharabis and Herodium, a good part of the population of Jericho, and settlements of pacified people at Lydda and Jamnia (by order of Vespasian), and deserting Jerusalemites, some to Gophna and some to wherever refuge could be found (by order of Titus). The material from Josephus will be presented before

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<sup>20</sup> Cf., Hengel who after referring to Vespasian's control over Judaea in 68 surmises: "At that time an invitation to the inhabitants to flee into 'the mountains' of the wilderness of Judah must have seemed nonsensical, for the fugitives would run into the hands of either the Romans or the Sicarii in and around Masada; the latter were no less murderous. Rather, the country people fled into the city, in which a bloody civil war was raging, only ended by the advance of Titus" Studies pp.16-17.

comment on it.

Following the subjugation of Galilee Vespasian encamped at Caesarea from where before winter (67 C.E.) he proceeded "to Jamnia and Azotus, and, having reduced those towns and garrisoned them, returned with a large multitude who had surrendered under treaty" τῶν ἐπὶ δεξιᾷ προσκεχωρηκότων War 4.3:2. Meanwhile ongoing turmoil among the Jewish factions in the city was resulting in daily desertions, particularly among "the wealthy purchasing their escape" to avoid the ongoing carnage in the city with the prospect of worse to come once the Romans began a direct attack (War 4.6:3). Learning from deserters the situation in the city (War 4.7:3) Vespasian left the rebels to exhaust themselves in internal warfare. After a brief sojourn in Perea, where he subjugated the town of Gedara in early 68 C.E., Vespasian left Caesarea once again and occupied Antipatris and advanced "to Lydda and Jamnia; both these districts being already subdued, he quartered upon them an adequate number of residents from those who had surrendered ..." ἐπὶ Λύδδων καὶ Ἰαμνείας ἐχώρει καὶ προκεχειρωμέναις ἑκατέραις ἐγκαταστήσας οἰκήτορας τῶν προσκεχωρηκότων ἱκανοῦς War 4.8:1.

By the time Vespasian reached Jericho "... The mass of the population, anticipating their arrival, had fled from Jericho to the hill country over against Jerusalem ..." (War 4.8:2). Vespasian stationed a garrison at Jericho but the news of Nero's death (June 68 C.E.) stalled operations for a full year. Finally in May/June 69 C.E. Vespasian resumed operations and reached the vicinity of Jerusalem. His tribune Cerealis accepted surrender from inhabitants of an unidentified town (Capharabis) in the region of Hebron ("Cerealius, after their capitulation [people of Capharabis], advanced on Hebron, another city and one of great antiquity, situated, as I have said, in the hill country not far from Jerusalem ..." War 4.9:9).

The war resumed under Titus following Vespasian's ascendancy to the emperorship in July 69 C.E. Josephus was successful in urging some among the aristocracy in Jerusalem to desert "selling for a trifling sum, some their whole property, others their most valuable treasures ... and then escaping to the Romans, on discharging their bowels, have ample supplies for their needs. For Titus dismissed the majority into the country, whithersoever they would; a fact which induced still more to desert, as they would be relieved from the misery within and yet not be enslaved by the Romans" (War 5.10:1). Even after the cessation of the daily sacrifices in August 70 C.E., again following a plea to surrender by Josephus, a number of the aristocracy fled to the Romans, whereupon "Caesar both received them with all other courtesy, and, recognizing that they would find life distasteful amidst foreign customs, dispatched them to Gophna, advising them to remain there for the present, and promising to restore every man's property, so soon as he had leisure after the war" (War 6.2:2 and see 6.2:3). As late as September leaderless Idumaeans deserted (" ... for although multitudes were slain, a far larger number escaped" ... up to forty thousand according to Josephus War 6.8:2). Finally, after Titus' destruction of the city, the fortresses at Herodium and Masada in Judaea still remained beyond Roman control.

5.2.2. Thus a number of Jews, mountain refugees from places like Jericho, pacified town dwellers from towns like Lydda and Jamnia, Jerusalem deserters fleeing anywhere or inhabiting designated towns, and armed insurgents, dwelt in Judaea at the time Titus destroyed the city in September 70 C.E. It is plausible that Judaeans Christians refusing to take up arms against Rome and trapped in the advancing or ongoing warfare would have been among those seeking to



escape the carnage.<sup>21</sup> Naturally Josephus does not differentiate Christians from Jews. Christians in the situation of danger responding to events Josephus' records, would have been among the pacified in Lydda,<sup>23</sup> or in the mountains after fleeing from Jericho, or escaping from Jerusalem when opportunity arose. Considering that until Vespasian occupied the hill country in the north and north east of Judaea, subduing Gophna, Acrabetta, Bethela and Ephraim (War 4.9:9), these regions were unoccupied, and therefore might have presented Christians in Jerusalem with possible refuge places, once the intent of the legions' tactics was surmised. Christians escaping into these areas early in the war may have been able to evade the legions by moving into wilderness areas beyond the advancing Romans who were looking primarily for places of resistance. Christians avoiding Vespasian and later Titus in these regions could have tried to return and rebuild their homes in Judaea and the vicinity of Jerusalem by the end of 70

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<sup>21</sup> So also Brandon (Fall of Jerusalem pp.180-181) who surmises that "pacifically disposed" Jewish Christians in Judaea would have escaped death from the Romans if they inhabited surrendering towns ("Therefore the havoc of these four disastrous years [66-70 C.E.] must cruelly have thinned the numbers of the Jewish Christians in Palestine by death, slavery, and flight, while the wretched remnant which survived in their homes were reduced to extreme want").

<sup>22</sup> Theissen, Lokalkolorit p.282. Note Gedaliah Alon, The Jews in their Land in the Talmudic Age Vol 1 (trans. and ed.) Gershon Levi (Jerusalem: Magnes Press), 1980 p.297: It is a "... safe assumption that most of the Christians in Jerusalem and in Judaea at large -- were Jews."

<sup>23</sup> Joan E. Taylor lists as a reason for the demise of the Jewish church the "Christians' probable pacificism" in the Jewish-Roman war ("The Phenomenon of Early Jewish-Christianity: Reality or Scholarly Invention?" VC 44 [1990], p.316). Though Brandon does not identify Lydda as a place where Jewish Christians might have lived as refugees he does seek to portray the fate of such Christians ("Where their town or village surrendered without resistance the majority probably escaped death and slavery and suffered only the evils of military occupation, though in the ancient world, as in the modern, these could be terrible enough" Fall of Jerusalem p.180).

C.E.<sup>24</sup>

5.2.3. The majority of these inhabitants would be living in the region of Judaea and not Jerusalem.<sup>25</sup> Of particular interest is Lydda, a not unimportant Jewish town<sup>26</sup> because it was situated on the road between Jerusalem and Joppa and therefore a thoroughfare town (εἰς κώμην ... πόλεως τὸ μέγεθος οὐκ ἀποδέουσιν Ant 20.6:2) and the main centre of one of the Judaeen toparchies. Acts 9:32-35 documents Peter, the apostle to the Jews (Gal 2:7),<sup>27</sup> on a tour inspecting Jewish Christian congregations,<sup>28</sup> and while remaining with the Jewish Christian community in Lydda, engaging in missionary activity there. Luke's mention of Peter in Lydda and Joppa (Acts 9:32-35) and the previous statement about Christians in Judaea enjoying a time of stability indicates the successful evangelizing of Judaea for Luke.<sup>29</sup> The specific mention of Lydda, preparatory to the story of the first Gentile conversion (10:1-11:18),

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<sup>24</sup> Even the possibility exists that Christians returned to the remains of Jerusalem by the end of 70 C.E. according to Jerome Murphy-O'Connor, see "The Cenacle -- Topographical Setting for Acts 2:44-45" in The Book of Acts in its First Century Setting Vol 4 Palestinian Setting (ed. Richard Bauckham) (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Pub. Co.), 1995 p.317. Though Jerusalem was so devastated that visitors could not believe that it had once been inhabited (War 7.1:1) several Church Fathers name Jewish bishops of the Jerusalem church up to the Bar Kokhba Revolt and so testify to its continuance, see Alon, Land pp.297-298.

<sup>25</sup> Interestingly, in a speech of Eleazar counselling suicide to his Masada comrades he mentions those remaining in Jerusalem following Titus' destruction ("Uprooted from her base she has been swept away, and the sole memorial of her remaining is that of the slain still quartered in her ruins! Hapless old men sit beside the ashes of the shrine and a few women, reserved by the enemy for basest outrage" War 7.8:7).

<sup>26</sup> M. Hengel, "The Geography of Palestine in Acts" in Acts in its First Century Setting p.59.

<sup>27</sup> "Peter functioned principally in Judaea, as 'Apostle to the Jews'" Alon, Land p.297.

<sup>28</sup> As an "inspector" of the Jewish Christian communities in the coastal plain according to Hengel, "The Geography of Palestine in Acts" p.60 and fn.109.

<sup>29</sup> Hengel, "Geography of Palestine" p.61.

means that the existence of Christians in Lydda is indicative of the spread of Christianity throughout Judaea (cf., Acts 1:8) and therefore not unimportant for Luke. Further, a visit from Peter, spokesman for the Jerusalem church (Acts 12:17,15:7-11; Gal 2:7-9), means the two churches in Lydda and Jerusalem are closely connected (see Acts 9:31 where these churches are linked as a unified Judaeian church cf., Acts 11:1,29,21:10, 26:20).<sup>30</sup> Schwartz' speculative argument (that the tradition in m. Sanh 7:10, where a certain Ben Stada is executed for propagating in Lydda [Lod] a religion unauthorized by Jewish authorities, may be a reference to Peter),<sup>31</sup> at least indicates that Jewish Christians in Lydda suffered at the hands of their Jewish neighbours. The Ben Stada episode probably reflects the tensions between groups of differing theologies in Lydda, which could involve Christians and the Jewish community.<sup>32</sup> Lydda was in close proximity to Jamnia, the place in which the Rabbi, Johanan ben Zakkai, after escaping from Jerusalem, was given authority by the Romans to establish a rabbinic school which became influential in a reorganized Judaism existing without the sacrificial cult. In fact Lydda also established a seat of rabbinic scholarship.<sup>33</sup> Lydda, like Joppa, was a detention for

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<sup>30</sup> This is significant information because Luke having travelled from Caesarea to Jerusalem (see Acts 21:15) was familiar with the vicinity and so is a valuable source of information (see Acts 21:15, so Hengel, "Geography of Palestine" p.67): "His knowledge of conditions in Judaea during roughly the last fifteen years before the outbreak of the Judaeian war and his special concern with the destruction of Jerusalem show how he was affected by these events and stood relatively close to them."

<sup>31</sup> See Joshua Schwartz, "Peter and Ben Stada in Lydda" in Palestinian Setting pp.391-414. For example Schwartz's parallel between Peter's activity in the book of Acts and that of an accused individual, Ben Stada in Lydda, as *mesit* (beguiler) appears forced, see pp.403f.

<sup>32</sup> So Schwartz "Peter" p.413.

<sup>33</sup> "Various rabbis settled in other places than Jamnia, though not too far away. Thus Lydda had several schools (Jer. Betzah iii. 6.62a) R. Eliezer the Great was the authority (TB Sanhedrin 32b)" (W.D. Davies, The Setting of the Sermon on The Mount [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press], 1964 p.292 fn.2). Although Mark's gospel does not owe

pacified Jews, so Christians in that town, either resettled there by Vespasian (War 4.8:1), or returning after hiding out in the mountains<sup>34</sup> or after escaping from Jerusalem after being trapped there (War 5.10:1), would not have escaped hostility from Jewish authorities. In the war years Jewish Christians in Lydda must have experienced the turmoil of being caught between the warring Jewish and Romans factions. Situated roughly 25 miles from Jerusalem, Lydda was a thoroughfare witnessing the animosity between Jews and Romans. Early in the hostilities Cestius Gallus nearly lost his forces near Lydda at Beth-horon. In 66 C.E. Cestius Gallus,

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anything to the impact of a resurgent Judaism that grew in the post-70 C.E. period from places like Jamnia and Lydda, the common touch-point for both Mark and the Jewish scholars at places like Jamnia and Lydda was the implication of Jerusalem's fall on their respective communities, which is evident in the literature of the two groups. For example, as control of the calendar was fundamental for the rabbis to establish correct observance of festivals etc., so for Mark establishing Jesus' authority and the direction of discipleship under that authority was crucial for the development of the Christian community. In addition, Rabbis sought to enhance the status of the synagogue by incorporating into its structure previously established temple forms while for Mark the synagogue was a place of trial and persecution for Christians (13:9). Before any activity of the Jewish rulers had occurred in the first synagogue Jesus entered at Capernaum Mark denounced the authority of the teachers of the law while elevating Jesus' authority. Further, R. Johannon ben Zakkai legislated the correct maintenance of temple offerings without a temple which affected places like Lydda due to their proximity to Jerusalem. Davies (p.263) quotes from TP Shekalim viii.4; TP Hallah i.1; Mishnah Maaser Sheni v.2: "Fruit of a Fourth Year Vineyard was taken up to Jerusalem (from any place) one day's journey in any direction. And what was the (farthest) limit? Elath to the south, Akrabah to the north, Lydda to the west, and the Jordan to the east. When the fruits became too many it was ordained that they might be redeemed even though (the vineyard was) near to the (city) wall .... This was the understanding after the Temple was destroyed, and the understanding was that when the Temple should be rebuilt the matter would be restored as beforetime." In contrast to this, Mark's position is that the tenants of the vineyard have been removed (12:9) so they have no authority to enact legislation.

<sup>34</sup> War 4.8:2 e.g., farsighted Christians could have left Lydda after the subjugation of Galilee in late 67 C.E. when Vespasian moved south into Judaea subjugating Jamnia and Azotus and presumably Lydda, cf., also War 4.8:1 Vespasian "... moved to Lydda and Jamnia; both these districts being already subdued ...," with War 4.3:2 "... Vespasian proceeded from Caesarea to Jamnia and Azotus, and, having reduced those towns and garrisoned them ..." It is assumed that the reduction and garrison of Lydda is included in the second reference which explains the subjugation of Jamnia in the first reference.

having found Lydda largely deserted because the population had gone up to Jerusalem for the Feast of Tabernacles, burned down the town killing 50 male inhabitants (War 2.19:1), so that Lydda was already subdued upon Vespasian's arrival (War 4.8:1). Vespasian quartered pacified Jews in Lydda two years after Cestius Gallus subdued it.

In fact Christians in Lydda may have missed the initial hostilities against the town when Cestius Gallus executed fifty inhabitants because the rest of the town's population was in Jerusalem. Christians could have remained in the city or escaped into the surrounding mountainous region to wait out the war and then attempt to return to the remains of their homes.

This information suggests that shortly before the war Jewish Christian communities existing in places like Lydda would have been caught up in the brunt of the Roman advance and Jewish factionalism over supporting a militant nationalism or adopting a more conciliatory approach to the Romans. After the war, any returning Jewish Christians would have had to face the hostility of those rabbis and their followers intent on redefining Jewish identity in the light of Jerusalem's fall. Tension would have existed between the Jewish community and Jewish Christians especially if the Christians still attempted to co-exist with the Jewish community.<sup>35</sup>

The portrayal of Peter in Mark's gospel is an incentive to continue in faithful discipleship in the midst of failure and might be applicable in these circumstances. First, Mark mentions Peter (13:3) as the leading disciple who asks the sign request in v.4. Jesus' response leads to information about leaving Judaea (v.14). For Mark Peter is not only "the typical

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<sup>35</sup> See Alon, Land Vol 1 pp.294-307.

disciple,"<sup>36</sup> but also one with a leading role among the Twelve.<sup>37</sup> His missionary "patch" was based in Judaea. Any readers of the gospel located in Judaea might be impressed by a command for them to leave that region, that is, a command which had been addressed, among others, to Peter, the apostle to the Jews. Second, the link Mark establishes with Peter in ch.13, notably in the exhortations to watchfulness, is picked up in the passion narrative and might further ratify the association between a Jewish Christian audience and Peter. Mark thematically prepares for Peter's three-fold denial, climaxing in a curse with a three-fold return of Jesus disappointed at the sleeping disciples (including Peter), in the garden of Gethsemane i.e., they could not remain "awake" (γρηγορεῖτε) but were "sleeping" (καθεύδοντας cf., 13:35-37 with 14:37f.). Thus Peter represents one who had failed to remain alert (13:5,9,23, 33,35,37).<sup>38</sup> Mark's insertion of the Peter episode (14:66-72) between the two trial narratives (14:53-65,15:1-20), is obviously intended to connect in the reader's mind Jesus' trial and projected Markan discipleship experience. That 14:66-72, at an earlier stage of tradition, included v.54, and has therefore been carefully inserted within the two trials, has long been recognized.<sup>39</sup> The insertion is grounded in ch.13 where Peter (13:3) provides a discipleship model linking Jesus with the reader (see 13:37 where ὁ δὲ ὑμῖν λέγω includes Peter while πᾶσιν λέγω, γρηγορεῖτε includes Mark's audience). In the place of the reader Peter is juxtaposed with Jesus as one failing

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<sup>36</sup> So Donahue, Are You the Christ? p.62, also Schreiber, Theologie des Vertrauens p.166.

<sup>37</sup> On evidence to establish this see Paul J. Achtemeier, Mark Proclamation Commentaries (ed.) Gerhard Krodel (Philadelphia: Fortress), 1975 pp.95-96.

<sup>38</sup> So John Dominic Crossan, Who Killed Jesus? Exposing the Roots of Anti-Semitism in the Gospel Story of the Death of Jesus (San Francisco: Harper), 1995 p.103f.

<sup>39</sup> E.g., Taylor, Mark p.563; Max Wilcox, "The Denial-Sequence in Mark 14,26-31,66-72" NTS 17 (1970-1971), p.433.

the trial of faith while Jesus overcomes. That Peter denies Jesus exactly when Jesus is being sentenced to death is hardly coincidental.<sup>40</sup> Yet there is hope for Peter. Though in the passion narrative Peter and the rest of the disciples fail to follow Jesus into suffering and death, the placement of ch.13 before that narrative indicates Mark's confidence in the disciples taking Jesus' mantle of suffering and death, albeit expressed hopefully, in a projected future. Thus Peter is a model of perseverance in the midst of despair, an individual who failed on many occasions but remained a Christian in the end. Significantly, the watershed of Markan discipleship occurs with Peter's confession at Caesarea Philippi (8:29). Mark carefully crafts his narrative by a three-fold repeating announcement logia on the passion (8:31,9:31,10:33-34), disciple resistance (8:32-33,9:33-34,10:35-41), and correction by Jesus revolving around Jesus' teaching about the necessity of sacrificial suffering and boldness in mission (8:34f., 9:35f.,10:42f.).

Fredriksen's identification of Jesus' disciples as a "'faithless generation' (9:19; cf.4:13-14,39-40;6:49-52;7:18;8:17-21;9:6-10,32;14:4-7,10,50; esp. Peter's dull performance, 8:31-33;9:6;14:37,66-72) ...",<sup>41</sup> severs a possible connection between Peter and Jewish Christians among Mark's audience, by positing a generational gap of discipleship failure between Jesus' own generation of disciples and Mark's. By arguing for a sign "granted only to those of Mark's generation" who had witnessed "the abomination of desolation set up where it ought not be

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<sup>40</sup> "... sondern in der Gegenüberstellung von Jesu offenem Bekenntnis und des Petrus feiger Verleugnung, die den Jünger auffordert, Jesus bekennd nachzufolgen" G. Schneider, "Gab es eine vorsynoptische Szene 'Jesus vor dem Synedrium'?" *NT* 12 (1970) p.35.

<sup>41</sup> *Jesus* p.185.

(Titus' military standard on the ruined Temple mount? 13:16-8,14) ...",<sup>42</sup> Fredriksen errs because a sign is given to a faithless generation which *cannot* (not does not) fulfill it. No reason exists for Mark's generation to make the identification with those to whom the sign was given (13:4). Why should a sign be granted to Peter when he cannot (not *will not*) fulfill it? In fact, Peter's continuing faithfulness is a cornerstone of the Markan preaching schema, see 14:28, and cf., 16:7,<sup>43</sup> and so would be a positive encouragement for Mark's audience to continue in faithfulness.

5.2.4. Finally, that Judaea remained populated in sufficient numbers by Jews (which presumably included Jewish Christians) to constitute a resurgent military threat from the Roman point of view is confirmed by Titus leaving the considerable force of a whole legion garrisoned at Jerusalem (the tenth legion, "along with some squadrons of cavalry and companies of infantry" War 7.1:2).<sup>44</sup> This suggests the possibility of opposition beyond the city (no resistance was left in Jerusalem War 7.1:1), and sufficient Jews existed to constitute a potential

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<sup>42</sup> Jesus p.185.

<sup>43</sup> So Robert C. Tannehill, "The Disciples in Mark: The Function of a Narrative Role" JR 57 (1977) p.402f. Identifying Markan opponents with the Twelve, or a supposed Markan polemic against the Twelve, falters on these verses e.g. T.J. Weeden, Mark -- Traditions in Conflict (Philadelphia: Fortress Press), 1971; Robert M. Fowler, Loaves and Fishes The Function of the Feeding Stories in the Gospel of Mark SBL Dissertation Series 54 (Chico: Scholars Press), 1981 p.93; J.M. Robinson, The Problem of History in Mark and Other Marcan Studies (Philadelphia: Fortress Press), 1982 pp.99-100. *Contra* this view see Best, Gospel as Story ch.8; Geddert, Watchwords p.159.

<sup>44</sup> Judaeans having escaped the region before Vespasian subjugated the area now attempted to return to their homes. Lucilius Bassus' reduction of the fortress at Machaerus was necessary given that the fortress was close enough to Judaea to inspire rebels elsewhere to deduce that resistance was still possible (War 7.6:1). The Masada fortress was an enclave of Judaeans until 74 C.E. and only after Masada does Josephus report the subjugation of Judaea ("For not an enemy remained throughout the country ..." 7.10:1). All this implies some sort of Jewish residence in Judaea.



threat. Eusebius confirms our view of a Roman fear of insurgency in his documentation of Hegesippus (HE 3 19-20) as a source for Vespasian ferreting out of descendants of the family of David who owned property. The search occurred "after the capture of Jerusalem" and so could not have been initiated by Vespasian but it could "be that the search was actually ordered by Titus before his return to Rome in 71."<sup>45</sup> The search makes sense as a precaution against any potential messianic revolt (messianic hopes had contributed much to motivate the Jewish rebels from 66 C.E. and Titus had left the legion X Fretensis in Jerusalem so that no aspirations for revolt could be resuscitated). Before his trip to Rome in 71 C.E. Titus returned to Jerusalem to reassure himself that all was peaceful. This presumes that adequate numbers of Jews lived in Judaea to constitute a potential threat in the minds of the Romans.

### 5.3. Mark's Rationale for Flight after September 70 C.E.

Our contention is that in the immediate after-math of Jerusalem's destruction Mark held an expectation of a future imminent catastrophe for Christians. His remarks to Judaeans to flee and the coupling of those injunctions with an expectation of the SM's appearance means Mark probably wrote his gospel after Titus' act of destruction (Sept 70 C.E.), and sometime before all organized resistance was crushed. Within this period "Sicarii" still continued to resist at Herodium, Masada (War 7.6:1,7.8:1), at Alexandria in Egypt (War 7.10:1), and in the region of Cyrene (War 7.11:1). Theissen well states: "Die im Jüdischen Krieg entfachten Erwartungen und Energien waren zu gewesen, als dass sie mit einem Schlag beseitigt gewesen wären. Es muss damals viele Menschen gegeben haben, die in der Zerstörung des Temples nicht 'das letzte Wort' sehen konnten."<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> Smallwood, Rule p.351.

<sup>46</sup> Lokalkolorit p.275.

5.3.1. Certainly prophecies of the elevation of the Flavian dynasty in conjunction with Titus' victory in Jerusalem may have fanned an expectation for Mark that worse was to come (War 6.5:4; Tacitus Hist 2.78.3-4, 4.82; Suetonius Vesp 5.6; Dio Cassus 65.1.4). Moreover Titus' celebratory sojourn through Palestine and Syria and his processional triumph in Rome in June 71 C.E. would have confirmed Mark's association between Titus the Roman commander, destroyer of Jerusalem and τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως.<sup>47</sup> The gruesome spectacle of making Jewish prisoners fight both savage animals and each other that Titus put on at Caesarea Philippi (War 7.2:1) would have solidified the fear that worse could come (13:19f). Titus continued his brutal stamp of authority: on Domitian's birthday (October 24) at Caesarea, and on Vespasian's birthday (November 17) at Berytus (War 7.3:1), over 2,500 were similarly treated. Titus travelled throughout Syria putting on excesses of slaughter.

5.3.2. Though Titus' exploits following the decimation of the city would have enhanced his status as the principal destroyer of Jerusalem from Syrian Antioch to Alexandria in Egypt, it could be argued that they hardly count for him being intent on continuing the reign of terror

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<sup>47</sup> According to Josephus' version of a speech Titus gave on Jerusalem's fall Titus referred to himself and his father as "world rulers" (αὐτοκράτορας): καὶ οὐκ ἠδέσθητε ταρασσεῖν αὐτοκράτορας γεγεννημένους "and were not ashamed to harass those, now made emperors" (War 6.6:2).

After Jerusalem's destruction and his complete dominance of the region, Titus tramped through Judaea to coastal Caesarea. Having been forced to remain in Palestine due to the onset of winter in late 70 C.E. he camped at Caesarea Philippi after he left the Fifth and Fifteenth Legions with the spoils of war secure at coastal Caesarea (War 7.1:2). Instead of keeping the main body of Roman soldiers at Caesarea the Roman administrative capital, the Tenth Legion permanently garrisoned Jerusalem to prevent any recrudescence of Jewish revolt. The desecration of the Jerusalem sanctuary thus continued permanently with Titus absent in person but present through the defiling presence of the Tenth Legion with their cult object military standards.

Smallwood raises the question of whether the imposition in Jerusalem of X Fretensis legion with its boar head emblem which continued the affront to Jewish sensibilities was "malicious humour or pure chance" (Rule p.333).

he initiated in the Jerusalem siege. Smallwood refers to him passing "the winter pleasantly visiting Agrippa in his capital at Caesarea Philippi and travelling round the cities of Syria, winning popularity by the lavish use of Jewish prisoners in shows in the amphitheatres."<sup>48</sup> When petitioned to authorize the renewal of a pogrom against Jews which had been sanctioned on Vespasian's arrival in Syria, Titus refused to expel Jews from Antioch. After briefly visiting Zeugma (War 7.5:2) and returning to Antioch he immediately travelled south via Jerusalem to Egypt and then to Rome. Titus kept Christians under suspicion immediately after the war because rumours from their ranks about the Messiah's arrival might lead to the resurgence of Jewish nationalism. But there was no concerted pogrom against them.

However this perspective is based upon the outcome of Flavian activities in retrospect. Mark, caught up in the midst of these events, would not have had the luxury of hindsight to know that Titus did not intend to initiate universal carnage against Jews and Christians. Mark responded to events from a belief grounded in the view that Titus' act of destruction in Jerusalem had made him the personal τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως, which according to the book of Daniel, meant the launching of the end-time.

Furthermore, for Mark, the fear generated by Jerusalem's fall may have been compounded by the fact that Titus had not acted alone. Vespasian, familiar with the region and inhabitants of Judaea, was ruling as emperor at the heart of the empire, and had made stipulations on what to do with Judaea. Thus Vespasian, linked with his two sons, may have posed a combined threat to the future for Mark.<sup>49</sup> Vespasian made sure that Titus' processional

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<sup>48</sup> Rule p.328.

<sup>49</sup> Josephus' prophecy of Vespasian's elevation couples Titus with Vespasian ("Vespasian, you will be emperor, you and your son here" War 3.8:9).

triumph in June 71 C.E. was engineered as a Flavian triumph for the future where Vespasian's rule was linked with his sons Titus and Domitian. In fact, Titus appeared in the unusual place beside his father in an essentially joint triumph.<sup>50</sup> The triumph's opulence impressed Josephus (War 7.4:5) and was an attempt to enhance Titus' status in the Empire (in the procession the dress, bearing, prayers and offerings of father and son were identical War 7.4:3-7). As heir-apparent Titus received honor (proconsular *imperium*, *tribunicia potestas*)<sup>51</sup> establishing him as second most powerful person in the empire. Vespasian sought constitutional solidarity by commissioning Josephus to extol the Judaeian achievements of both himself and Titus. Though the triumph for the Flavians was an opportunity needed by Vespasian to enhance newly won prestige,<sup>52</sup> and to indicate Flavian implacability toward Jewish religious sensibilities, for Mark, these things may have been a confirmation of what he feared the future held.

Vespasian imposed on all returning Judaeans a Jewish tax (τὸ Ἰουδαικὸν τέλος) for Jupiter Capitolinus ("the god who in the Roman victory had triumphed over the God of Israel")<sup>53</sup> in place of the Jerusalem temple tax (War 7.6:6). The cult was eradicated and the *fiscus Judaicus* indicated Vespasian's intent of reminding Jews of that abolition. Confiscated property

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<sup>50</sup> Jones, Titus p.78.

<sup>51</sup> Titus' acclamation of *Imperator* by his soldiers at Jerusalem's capture was confirmed by the 13 official awards of *Imperator* he received. The first two proclamations were made in 71 C.E. Jones draws the following conclusion from this: "Unlike his predecessors, he did not regard his acclamation on June 24, 79 as meriting a salutation, presumably preferring to see his initial award in 71 as indicating that he was co-ruler with Vespasian" Titus p.81.

<sup>52</sup> Hence showcasing Jewish temple treasures in the triumph and the coin issues proclaiming *Judaea capta* with Jewish women in a state of submission or Jewish men depicted as slaves.

<sup>53</sup> Smallwood, Rule p.345.

was not returned to remaining Jewish aristocracy,<sup>54</sup> and though no foreigners were sequestered to repopulate Judaea, Vespasian had settled a number of veteran soldiers at Emmaus (War 7.6:6) ready to support the Tenth Legion in Jerusalem if needed. Vespasian's instructions to "farm out all Jewish territory ... For he founded no city there, reserving the country as his private property ..." (War 7.6:6) shows his hold on Judaea<sup>55</sup> and a plausible reason for Christians in that region to fear for the future.

5.4. Conclusion        Mark had reason to believe that Judaeans Christians, vulnerable in places like Lydda, might suffer from the continuing activity of the Romans in Judaea. After all, the Roman presence in Jerusalem indicated that the remaining Jewish ruling class would not be reinstated. With the war in Judaea over Titus would have known about the prophecy

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<sup>54</sup> Though Josephus records that "... Caesar sent instructions to Bassus and Laberius Maximus, the procurator, to farm out all Jewish territory" (7.6:6), this presumably indicates all previously confiscated land. On this see Benjamin Isaac, "Judaea after AD 70" JJS 35 (1984) p.46. The property of those condemned through their participation in the hostilities would not have been taken over by the Roman treasury, but instead sold to Jews and Gentiles according to Isaac (p.48). For a different view see "The Province of Judaea" in The Jewish People in the First Century Historical Geography, Political History, Social, Cultural and Religious Life and Institutions Vol 1 (eds.) S. Safrai, M. Stern, with D. Flusser W.C. van Unnik (Fortress Press: Philadelphia) 1974 p.335, which advocates that the sizeable amount of confiscated land in Judaea resulted in many of the inhabitants becoming tenants.

Titus commanded Jewish aristocracy who had gone over to the Romans in the Jerusalem siege to stay in Gophna and promised them property restoration after the war (War 6.2:2). However, judging from Vespasian's treatment of wealthy Jews whose land was confiscated and resold (War 7.6:6), the fact that wealthy Jews had to resettle in places like Jamnia away from their properties, means that Vespasian had decided not to reestablish them following the war (on this see Martin Goodman, The Ruling Class Of Judaea The Origins Of The Jewish Revolt Against Rome A.D. 66-70 [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press], 1987 ch.10).

<sup>55</sup> The land eventually reverted to private ownership. Talmudic sources mention Jewish ownership of Judaeans land after the war, and as we mentioned, Eusebius documents Hegesippus (HE 3 19-20) as a source for the ferreting out of descendants of Jesus who owned property in Domitian's reign.

concerning the emergence of "men issuing from Judaea" who "would become masters of the world" (Tacitus Hist 5:13; also Suetonius Nero 40:2). Any group with Jewish roots advocating any kind of extremist leader would be suspect. Titus may have been aware of the oracle from Jewish scriptures foretelling of a coming World ruler that provided stimulus for resistance against Rome (War 6.5:4). Neither Titus nor his father would allow such a possibility.<sup>56</sup> The fear of potential insurrection even in the light of the temple's destruction was well founded given the intractability of Jewish nationalism.<sup>57</sup>

Would Roman military subjugation stop at the fortresses of Herodium and Masada or would they turn their mind to the more general presence of Jews and those like Jews (Christians) elsewhere in Judaea and beyond? The level of fear of Roman destruction may not have dissipated that much in the minds of people like Mark following Jerusalem's destruction -- even four or five years later.<sup>58</sup> Immediately after the war Jews in Antioch were humiliated and would have been expelled from the city except for Titus' rejection of the Antiochene petition

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<sup>56</sup> Cf., Smallwood: "for at least thirty years (after the destruction of 70 C.E.) the Romans were on the alert to guard against incipient messianic movements and to pounce on anyone who looked like a potential trouble-maker" Rule p.352.

<sup>57</sup> Hadrian's solution shows that Titus' concern was well justified. Following the Bar Kokhba Revolt Hadrian simply deported the Jews and promised death to any Jew entering Jerusalem (Justin Martyr, I Apol 47.6). Goodman sums up the situation regarding Jewish insurgency culminating in Hadrian's solution: "In their treatment of Judaea the Romans had made a desert and called it peace (Tac. Agric. 30)" Ruling Class p.251.

<sup>58</sup> For Brandon (Jesus and the Zealots p.241), with Mark writing in Rome following the Flavian triumph of June 71 C.E., the 9 months after Jerusalem's destruction without the SM's parousia was sufficient time for Mark to become concerned about the "pause" and reassure puzzled Christians with a cautious hope, which would allow the "seeming present delay." But this fails to consider the possibility that Jerusalem's ruin was the prologue to a worse catastrophe, a universal persecution, given the mood existing at the time. Brandon assumes Christians know in advance that Titus' act will not be followed by further atrocities directed against them, a questionable assumption for Christians in Rome in 71 C.E. in the light of prevailing unrest in the east.

against them (War 7.5:2). Jews in Alexandria were massacred (War 10:1). The Jewish temple at Leontopolis was destroyed by Vespasian out of the fear of outbreak of rebellion (War 7.10:2), and synagogues in Antioch and Caesarea were destroyed with the one in Antioch replaced by a theatre of Daphne containing the inscription *Ex praeda Iudaea* and Vespasian's statue (Malal. Chron 260-261). In the region of Cyrene a prophet named Jonathan initiated a movement into the desert where most of his followers were butchered by Catullus the governor of the Libyan Pentapolis who used the incident to execute three thousand wealthy Jews (War 7.11:1-4). Such continuing after-shocks from Jerusalem's fall would have unsettled Judaeans rebuilding their synagogues and Jewish Christians trying to return to their homes and would have raised the possibility of worse to come. In this context Mark's injunction for Judaeans to flee makes sense in the light of events from Jerusalem's fall.

## CHAPTER SIX

### THE IMPACT OF THE LOSS OF JERUSALEM IN MARK'S GOSPEL

#### Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to assess, from our exegesis on 13:14, the impact of the destruction of the temple and city in Mark's gospel. We posit that a reason Mark wrote his gospel was to legitimize the change of the church centred in Judaea to one centred in the Gentile mission.<sup>1</sup> By urging Judaeans to flee into the mountains Mark is advocating that no recognized centre or power-base exists in Judaea. Mark is unconcerned which mountains Judaeans are to flee to, the point is that the future of the church lies with the Gentile mission (13:10). To establish our contention we will show that Jerusalem's destruction underlies much of Mark's emphasis on Jesus' authority. This authority establishes the base for a new community (6.-6.3), whose task is to proclaim the gospel among the nations (6.4).

#### 6.1. The Authority of the Jerusalem leaders and the Temple

Jerusalem's destruction is a centre-piece of Markan theology both before and after ch.13.<sup>2</sup> Mark provides a rationale for the usurpation of the temple cult and Jerusalem's leaders in any authoritative role and the transference of that authority away from the cultus to Jesus.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> So Pesch, Naherwartungen pp.231-232, who understands Mark as written for a community seeking self-definition over against Jewish heritage. Cf., Kelber who argues that Mark understands Jerusalem's destruction as a deposing of the city ("Thus Mark redefines his own identity in opposition to a ruined tradition of the south ..." Kingdom p.131).

<sup>2</sup> Juell, A Master of Surprise Mark Interpreted (Minneapolis: Fortress Press), 1994 p.82. Temple allusions establish the literary connections, see 11:11,15-17,12:10,33,41-44,13:1-4,14,14:58,15:38.

<sup>3</sup> So Waetjen, Reordering of Power p.182. "Der dritte Hauptteil des Ev (11,1-16,8) ist äusserlich durch den lokalen Rahmen der Stadt Jerusalem zusammengehalten. Eine



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Gliederung ist in den dargestellten Ereignissen als solchen vorgegeben. Die grosse Endzeitrede (13,1-37)- ein traditionelles Stück, das von Mk bewusst gestaltet und in das Ev aufgenommen worden ist - gibt der Passion und darüber hinaus auch dem ganzen Ev eine eschatologische Sinndeutung" Ernst, Markus p.19.

The thematic element of the cluster stories in chs.11-12 is judgment on Jerusalem (Camery-Hoggatt, Irony p.165), culminating in the destruction prophecy (13:2). Thereafter the passion peaks with the removal of the Jerusalem leaders' authority which is given to the SM (14:62,15:38). In fact, from 2:6-7 the implication has been that Jesus is targeted for destruction by the Jewish authorities. The first prediction of his death (8:31-33) runs through the second half of the gospel. Note Juel: "The Temple is the center of attention from the moment Jesus arrives in Jerusalem" Surprise p.80. When Jesus enters the temple and creates havoc by overturning the tables of the money changers and dove sellers and prevents merchants from selling their wares (11:15-16), he is, so to speak, performing a destruction of the temple in advance, because of the unfaithfulness of the Jerusalem leaders (12:9).

Cursing the fig-tree is a curse upon the nation's unfruitfulness whose exigency stems from the cult's faithfulness. The temple and the land are inter-connected as Telford has documented through exploring the figurative associations of the fig-tree in the OT with the temple (Barren chs.5,6). A correspondence exists between Israel described figuratively as a tree (vine or fig) planted by God and so belonging to him, and the nation's fertility dependent upon obedience especially regarding the cult (Isa 27:13). Blessings bestowed on the obedient nation include the land's fertility (Hag 2:19: "Since the day that the foundation of the Lord's temple was laid, consider: Is the seed yet in the barn? Do the vine, and the fig tree, the pomegranate, and the olive tree still yield nothing? From this day on I will bless you," cf., Jl 1:1,7,9,12,13; cf., Ezek 47 especially v.12; Mic 4:1,4; Joel 2:22; Zech 14). Destruction of the epi-centre of the nation's blessings leads to the disintegration of the age. The fig-tree "is an emblem of peace, prosperity and security" (Barren p.134) of the nation (Num 13:23; 1Kgs 4:25; Isa 36:16; Micah 4:4; Zech 3:10; 1Mac 14:12). The fig-tree's destruction can imply God's judgment (Jer 5:17,8:13; Hos 2:12,9:10,16; Amos 4:9), especially concerning Israel's failure to uphold covenant obligations involving the cultus (Jer 5:17-18,8:12-23; Hos 2:11-13,9:10-17; Amos 4:4-13). The fig-tree can stand for the nation or its authorities (Judg 9:7-15; Jer 24,29:17; Micah 7:1; Isa 28:4; Hos 9:16), and the idea of a "tree" is often associated in its bearing fruit or withering with blessing or reproof (Num 24:5-7; Ps 80:8-16; Isa 1:30,5:1-7,27:2ff.; Jer 2:21,11:16-17,12:10). Thus, "the fertility of the land bears a direct relationship to the spiritual fruitfulness of the people" (Barren p.138) ... because "... the spiritual fruitfulness of God's sacred plant Israel, was linked habitually in the Jewish mind with the maintenance and well-being of the Temple and its cultus" (p.141). According to Hartman (Prophecy p.146) and Lane (Mark p.458) Jer 4:19-26 is a possible background to ideas about creation's dissolution in ch.13. Of particular interest is the return of the earth to "a state of disintegration," see Robert P. Carroll, Jeremiah (London: SCM Press), 1986 p.169. Many of the elements in Jer 4:23-26 are found in 13:5-27. The earth becomes waste and void (cf., 13:2,4), the heavens give no light (cf., 13:24-25), the mountains quake and the hills rock to and fro (cf., 13:8), mankind is gone (cf., 13:20), and land once fruitful is now desert (cf., 13:8). The poem in Jer 4:23-26 conjures up an image of the return

Geddert deduces an emphasis in the pre-ch.13 temple theology on "why the Jewish leaders would be deposed"<sup>4</sup> over the destruction of the temple but balks at a connection between the destruction and the end of the age.<sup>5</sup> Geddert's evidence focuses upon the Jerusalem authorities "robbing God": the leaders stand condemned in the vineyard parable (12:1-12)<sup>6</sup> abusing their privileges by fleecing the people for their own vested interests (11:15-17,12:38-40,41-44). Though careful not to claim that the destruction of the temple finds no place in chs.11,12, Geddert offers no arguments for its place but subsumes it under the leaders' condemnation. He also fails to notice the overall context of ch.11 where the temple is central: in three days each activity is specifically temple related (11:1-11,12-19,20f. especially v.27) and not simply for confrontation with the authorities.<sup>7</sup> The ὑμεῖς of 11:17 is inclusive of the temple

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of creation to its original disorder. Carroll surmises on Jer 4:25: "It is about a catastrophe on a massive scale which undoes creation: a veritable holocaust which can only be described in broad terms but hardly understood because it is so breathtaking in its scope" (Jeremiah pp.169-170). 13:19 is a striking description in the vein of Carroll's observation. The notion of the original creation (v.19) is a yardstick to measure the severity of the final tribulation which stems from the temple's destruction (vv.2,14).

<sup>4</sup> Watchwords p.123.

<sup>5</sup> Watchwords p.127.

<sup>6</sup> "The tenants (Israel's leaders) are rejected. The vineyard (Israel) is given new tenants (new leadership) so that the good fruit produced will flow to the owner rather than to the self-serving gardeners" Watchwords p.121.

<sup>7</sup> Initially, there is a straightforward reconnoiter with no mention of the authorities (11:11), which ominously points forward to what is to come (11:15-19,13:2). Cf., Myers, regarding 11:11 (καὶ περιβλεψάμενος πάντα ... ἐξῆλθεν εἰς Βηθανίαν) "Many have puzzled over this verse, complaining that it adds nothing to the narrative; but this is precisely its power -- *nothing happens*" Strong Man p.297. Then, the temple cleansing (11:15-19) coupled with an intercalation of the fig-tree cursing (11:12-14,20-25), which connoted a "corrupt Temple cultus and sacrificial system" (so Telford, Barren p.161), leads to the final direct conflict with the temple authorities (11:27-12:40). Telford has shown how syntactically the three temple visits increase in tension and anticipation of 13:2 (p.39f.).

itself, the economic pilferers, and the temple authorities.<sup>8</sup> Jesus has not simply condemned the authorities (at this point he has had no contact with them), instead he has abrogated the whole temple edifice as corrupt. Thus separating the cultus institution from its generators is impossible.<sup>9</sup>

In 12:1-12 the issue is not between the leaders (tenants) and God (vineyard owner) while the nation (vineyard) is left inviolate. The "beloved son" (υἱὸν ἀγαπητόν v.6 cf.1,1,11,9:7) confronts the leaders in the chronological narration of the parable in the midst of their own vineyard ("the temple cult")<sup>10</sup> and the time of Jesus and Mark's audience is fused together in the light of the post-70 situation. The outcome is already known: the temple λίθοι and οἰκοδομαί (13:1-2) are replaced by another stone (λίθον), rejected by the builders

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<sup>8</sup> Cf., Anderson, Jesus "declares the final word against an inward-looking institution whose day of exclusivism is over and done with" Mark, p.267.

<sup>9</sup> Geddert attempts to obviate this by positing the impact of the authorities outside of the temple. "Robbing God can take place anywhere ... in the streets, in the market-place, in synagogues, at banquets, in financial dealings, at prayer times, and the list goes on (cf. esp. 12.38-40)" Watchwords, p.122. But their *modus operandi* stems from their cult authority. The prayer place (11:17b), robbery of pilgrims (11:15-17) and widows (12:41-44) occurs in ὁ οἶκός μου (11:17b), the temple. The authority question (11:27-33) occurs ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ περιπατοῦντος αὐτοῦ over ταῦτα ποιῆς i.e., the acts of temple teaching and cleansing (11:15-19 especially v.17), so Mary Ann Tolbert, Sowing the Gospel Mark's World in Literary-Historical Perspective (Minneapolis: Fortress Press), 1989 p.233, making the question one of legitimation of the temple. The leaders' shallow uncommitted response to Jesus' challenge (vv.29-30) exemplifies their absence of authority and singular self-preservation (seen further in 12:13-17,18-27,28-34,35-40).

<sup>10</sup> Myers, Strong Man p.309. If the vineyard corresponds to Israel why according to the parable's contours are not the leaders alone destroyed and the temple left intact? The leaders are so emphatically joined to the temple system that both fates are co-joined. Geddert's separation in the parable of the leaders from the cult leaves no reason for the cult to be destroyed, only to be handed over to new leadership cf., "The vineyard (Israel) is given new tenants (new leadership) so that the good fruit produced will flow to the owner rather than to the self-serving gardeners" and "... The parable itself features the owner coming, not to destroy the temple, but to judge and replace the tenants" Watchwords p.121.

(οἰκοδοῦντες v.10), whose parousia is sparked by the destruction of the temple. This corresponds in the story-line of the parable at the point where the destruction follows the murder of the son in vv.7-9.<sup>11</sup>

Chapter 12:9-11 stems from Ps 118 which contains strong temple imagery: "In the psalm itself, the stone is, quite literally, a stone, one initially rejected by the builders of the Jerusalem Temple but subsequently made the cornerstone of the Temple."<sup>12</sup> Clearly, the

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<sup>11</sup> Cf., 14:62 for a further occasion where Jesus speaks openly about sonship, "öffentlich spricht Jesus von sich als Sohn Gottes zum ersten Mal in der Winzerparabel (Mk 12,1ff)" Theissen, Lokalkolorit pp.298-299.

Gundry notes that the continued use of the aorist tense in vv.1-8 sharply contrasts with the change to the future tense in v.9 suggesting "we have in the owner's coming and destroying the farmers (not his destroying the vineyard, as in Isa 5:5-6) an anticipatory parallel to Jesus' predicting in chap.13 the destruction of the temple, which will entail the destruction of the Sanhedrin centered there" Mark p.662. But if the destruction of the temple (stated) entails the destruction of the Sanhedrin (unstated) it follows: destruction of tenants (stated) entails destruction of vineyard (unstated) which picks up Isa 5:5. "Die Frage nach der Reaktion des Weinbergbesitzers, die den Hörer in das Gespräch einbeziehen soll, wird in Anlehnung an das Weinberglied des Jesaja (5,5) von Jesus selbst beantwortet. Die heilsgeschichtliche Perspektive bestimmt abermals das Bild: in der Tötung der Winzer, die sich an dem Sohn vergangen haben, spiegelt sich das Gericht über das Volk der Erwählung, welches das Erbe unweigerlich verloren hat" Ernst, Markus p.342. The parable explicitly states the vineyard will be given over to others (v.9). However this does not suggest that the temple will be undisturbed, only that the "vineyard" includes but is wider than the temple cult. In addition, the creation of a new edifice built upon a rejected stone (v.10) shows that although the image has changed from organic to inorganic material, the assumption is that the temple cult is identified with the vineyard tenants (which breaks the metaphor but prohibits a separation between cult and associated hierarchy). Hence Gundry can rightly state that the handing over of the vineyard to "others" (v.9) includes Jesus and his disciples (p.663) which breaks the metaphor (nothing is said of Jesus' resurrection in the parable) but is accurate in meaning, *contra* Grundmann: "Es ist nicht nötig, die „anderen“ auf die Heidenchristenheit zu beziehen, sondern besser, es in seiner Unbestimmtheit zu belassen; sie liegt allerdings nach Einzug und Tempelaustreibung (11,17; auch 10,45 = viele) im Blickpunkt des Markus. Diese Antwort verkündet den Führenden Israels das Gericht" Markus p.324.

<sup>12</sup> Marcus, Way p.119. This association between cornerstone and temple resonates in the preceding parable, which was established by C.A. Evans in the Targums to the extent that "'tower=temple' was already current in the first century" (cited by Marcus, Way, p.120; also Juel, Temple p.57).

vineyard is given to new tenants, "others" (v.9) i.e., Jesus and the Twelve (3:13-19), and hence by implication the Christian community which includes Mark's audience (13:37). True worship for the new tenants is centred in the resurrected Christ and not the Jerusalem temple. The connection with Israel is maintained through the temple image inherent in the temple "stone" representing the resurrected Christ, which removes the parable's otherwise negative bent on the son's murder (cf., 12:8 with vv.10-11). Without a vineyard the "others" cease to receive a transfer of leadership. Similarly the implication is that the building constructed from the "head of the corner"<sup>13</sup> will be made up of Jesus' disciples<sup>14</sup>. Thus, the foundation for the new

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Further, the tenants (τοὺς γεωργούς) may well include leaders and nation (11:27,12:10). The crowd hinder "the leaders in their attempt to do away with Jesus (11.18,32)" Geddert, Watchwords p.287 fn.26, but are culpable (*contra* Geddert) for their effusive cries for crucifixion (see 15:13-15 which aptly corresponds to the tenant's role in the son's death, see also 12:8). Persecuted prophets are rejected by the populace (Marcus cites the evidence: 1Thess 2:15; Matt 5:12; Luke 13:33-34; Acts 7:52 Way p.128 fns. 47,48). Misplaced popular piety (12:41-44) does not exonerate the people at the expense of the promulgators of abuse, the cult officiators.

The destruction of the tenants only and not the vineyard does not invalidate our view, because the thrust of the Markan parable (confirmed by its context in 11:12-33, so Gundry, Mark pp.659,684), is against the failure of the (tenant) religious leaders to recognize the vineyard's divine *ownership* (v.12), which contrasts with Isa 5:1-7 (especially v.7) where the thrust is Israel's *unfruitfulness*, Hooker, St. Mark p.274. The temple cultus is the context of the tenant's mismanagement (11:12-25,27-33) and so punishment on the leaders will be focused at the temple's location, in Jerusalem (see 13:2,14). The nation will not remain intact. To remove the vineyard minimizes the emphasis on the leaders' culpability and severs continuity between God and his people, hence in Isa 5:5-6 God looks to destroying the vineyard, while in Mk 12:9 only the tenants are destroyed, and further tenant responsibility appears.

<sup>13</sup> For the meaning of εἰς κεφαλὴν γωνίας see Donahue, Are You the Christ? p.126 fn.1.

<sup>14</sup> A connection between the organic and the inorganic material may be found in "the building (ὠκοδόμησεν) of the tower (v 1)" which "may have helped lead him to the builders (οἱ οἰκοδομοῦντες) in the psalm; and the owner -- i.e. lord -- of the vineyard may have helped lead him to the Lord of the building" (Gundry, Mark p.663).

By failing to advocate a unity of destruction between leaders and cult, Geddert surmises no link between the destruction of the temple and the consummation. Crucially,

community is Jesus whose authority from the gospel's beginning exists over that of the leaders of the Jerusalem cultus.

## 6.2. The Authority of Jesus and the Way

The key to the entire gospel is introduced in the prologue's central figure: the person and office of Jesus.<sup>15</sup> Jesus' baptism and wilderness temptation are not the first acts in the onset of Jesus' ministry, rather "the foundation of his whole ministry."<sup>16</sup> In the prologue (1:1-13) the authority of Jesus is presented to lead God's people.<sup>17</sup>

Matera<sup>18</sup> has underscored how the prologue introduces major gospel motifs and the word ἔρημος occurs four times in this section. Mark documents no birth stories of Jesus but abruptly sets the scene for John's ministry by a mixed quotation from texts associated with the wilderness tradition<sup>19</sup> -- surely the reason for their selection. The prominence of the wilderness

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only because Geddert does not view the parable and indeed chs.11-12 from a Markan reader's perspective, can he posit an unequal emphasis on the leaders and cult. Without an equal emphasis upon temple/leaders as targets for destruction, Geddert can offer no rationale for the "unambiguously clear" (Watchwords p.117) prophecy in 13:2. In other words, removal of leadership should leave the temple exonerated and given over to others for viable fruit bearing. But, leaders, cult and present age (10:30) fall together, which is the logic of ch.13. The connection between leaders and temple as objects of destruction, and 13:2 with its preceding context (11:1-12:44), present a compelling argument.

<sup>15</sup> R.H. Lightfoot, Message p.17.

<sup>16</sup> Mauser, (Wilderness p.102), who also cites Robinson, Problem of History p.31.

<sup>17</sup> "First and foremost in Mark's mind was the subject of Jesus' authority" Chapman, Orphan pp.190-191.

<sup>18</sup> Matera, "Prologue." Cf., Lane who refers to the prologue as the "key to the entire gospel" (Mark p.39). Note Mauser's observation that the "wilderness" theme in 1:1-13 "serves as the string on which the beads of tradition available to Mark for the composition of the prologue were assembled" (Wilderness p.63), which makes it significant structurally in the Markan opening.

<sup>19</sup> Lane, Mark p.46. In Ex 23:20 the Israelites receive guidance while traversing the wilderness on their way to the land of Canaan. Isa 40:3 calls for a further sojourn in the

theme is brought out by Mark's citation ἐν τῷ Ἡσαΐα τῷ προφήτῃ, which, standing at the beginning of a quotation incorporating Ex 23:20, Mal 3:1, Isa 40:3, makes this theme central to his purpose of describing John and Jesus' ministry.<sup>20</sup> Mauser's judgment that the term wilderness in the prologue means much more than a straightforward designation of the place where John preached and Jesus began his ministry is correct.<sup>21</sup> This is confirmed by Mark leaving wilderness unspecified geographically and by the patchwork of OT quotations introducing the narrative vividly announcing the beginnings of a new way. Jerusalem no longer stands at the centre of the Israelite faith.<sup>22</sup> A new force is announced calling God's people into

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wilderness and the quotation of Mal 3:1 is connected with Elijah in Mal 4:5, an individual who had a wilderness ministry, hence the correlation between John the Baptist and Elijah (Mk 9:13).

<sup>20</sup> Contra Gundry, for whom mention of the Isaiah reference is "because the longest quotation comes from his book" (Mark p.35). J.D. Kingsbury (The Christology of Mark's Gospel [Philadelphia: Fortress Press], 1983 pp.56-57) understands 1:2-3 as the "epigraph" to Mark's gospel. Attention is drawn to the wilderness theme in Isa 40. The background of the passage from Isaiah involves the period following Jerusalem's destruction by the Babylonians in 587 B.C.E. Many inhabitants of the kingdom of Judah were taken to Babylon to join those exiled there in 597 B.C.E. As a prologue to chs.40-66, 40:1-11 looks to the restoration of God's people (Isa 49:8-13,51:11-16,52:7-10,66:13-14) back through the desert, to Jerusalem. Mark hones in on this theme with a reference to a section of Isaiah connoting an association of God beginning a new act and calling his people in the exodus tradition out of their predicament of anxiety, toward the desert, and into a new future. Both Isaiah and Mark faced a situation in which Jerusalem has been destroyed. Whereas in Isa 40 an exodus from Babylon back to the holy city is contemplated, the call by Mark to prepare a way in the wilderness, precludes a return to the holy city.

<sup>21</sup> Mauser, Wilderness. Gundry devalues any prominent thematic connection between vv.2f. and the wilderness notion, by suggesting John baptized in the wilderness because he believed God's rule would be manifest there or that he grew up in that place (Mark p.43).

<sup>22</sup> "Beneath the narrative lies the awareness of the existing order as a structure of sacred violence centered on the temple that must be left behind if a new start is to be made" Hammerton-Kelly, Poetics of Violence p.68.

the wilderness.<sup>23</sup>

The Isaiah quotation is followed by a purposeful exaggerated<sup>24</sup> reference to a movement of people (emphasized by repetition, *πᾶσα/πάντες*) intent on spiritual renewal away from the centre of Jewish religious activity in Judaea and Jerusalem (v.5).<sup>25</sup> The wilderness theme in its

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<sup>23</sup> Matera, "The quotation from Isaiah is the beginning of Deutero-Isaiah's prophecy announcing that God is about to redeem Israel from exile by a new exodus" "Prologue" p.7. That is, an exodus patterned after the deliverance from Egypt but orientated toward the future, even surpassing that in Egypt promising the "final delivery of God's people" (Mauser, *Wilderness* pp.51,81). "Dahinter stehen bestimmte Erwartungen in Israel: wie in der Mosezeit wird in der Wüste die Wiederherstellung des Volkes erfolgen und in einer neuen Landnahme die messianische Zeit anbrechen, eine Erwartung, die zu sektenhaften Auszügen in die Wüste geführt und in prophetischen Weissagungen ihren Grund hat" Grundmann, *Markus* p.36.

The thrust of 1:2-3 is to introduce John the Baptist as a wilderness man heralding Jesus in the wilderness, which, receiving no geographical place name ("in Mark no attempt is made to designate the precise location at all" Mauser, *Wilderness* p.82), indicates that the term is used conceptually as a motif (e.g., Guelich, *Mark 1-8:26 Word Biblical Commentary Vol 34a* [Dallas: Word Books], 1989 p.18), hence the epigraphic Deutero-Isaiah quotation. Immediately after being informed about one crying out in the wilderness (1:3), John who is preaching and baptizing ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ, is introduced (v.4). The seemingly unnecessary description of John's attire (v.6) promotes John as a wilderness man (C. H. Kraeling, *John the Baptist* [New Haven], 1961 p.13). A connection between Jesus and John's ministry occurs with dual mention of ὁδός in vv.2 and 3. John is to make ready τὴν ὁδὸν σου, the way of Jesus. That Jesus is not addressed as "lord" in the gospel does not prohibit this interpretation of identifying Jesus with "Lord" in the OT quotation (*contra* Klyne R. Snodgrass, "Streams of Tradition Emerging from Isaiah 40:1-5 and their Adaptation in the New Testament" *JSNT* 8 [1980] p.34), because the messenger, John the Baptist, is heralding Jesus' appearance, the gospel's central figure.

<sup>24</sup> So Marcus following Lohmeyer and Mauser (*Way* p.24).

<sup>25</sup> Thus Mark through John calls God's people away from the ways of the religious leaders in Jerusalem into a wilderness way, the place where one mightier than both John and the religious leaders is to begin his ministry (vv.9-13). Mark makes this plain from Jesus' baptism (where the heavens are rent and God witnesses to authenticate Jesus) and because the Spirit violently "casts" Jesus εἰς τὴν ἔρημον (v.12), an act sanctioning the wilderness as a place of testing faithfulness to God. For Gundry, Jesus' movement into the wilderness is "instant evidence of Jesus' Spirit-endued divine sonship" (*Mark* p.59). But Jesus needs no evidence of it and Mark's listeners already know it (1:1,9-11). Rather, the wilderness is a testing of that sonship. Mark reinforces this by having Jesus ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ for forty days (evoking memories of the Israelite wilderness temptation, so Gibson, "Jesus' Wilderness



Deutero-Isaian form in Mark<sup>26</sup> is a hope for a second exodus at the end of days based upon the notion of "gospel."<sup>27</sup> From the start of Mark's account a stream of Judaeans and Jerusalemites flock to hear the Deutero-Isaian call to follow Jesus (1:5).<sup>28</sup>

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Temptation according to Mark" *JSNT* 53 [1994] p.17; also Mauser, *Wilderness* p.97). The seemingly unnecessary repetition of the place of temptation with the different prepositions in vv.12-13 (εἰς τὴν ἔρημον and ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ) indicates Mark's concern to emphasize the temptation's location. Through these phrases, the connection is maintained between the OT wilderness association established in vv.3-4 and vv.12-13. Jesus follows in the wilderness way established by John. John's baptismal message stresses a conversion encompassing all, which is confirmed by Jesus' exemplary behaviour (vv.12-13). "Die Universalität der Taufe unterscheidet den Täufer grundlegend von den jüdischen Parteien." Markus sagt, dass der Ruf aus der Wüste ein grosses Echo hat, aber seine Aussage geht über einen historischen Bericht hinaus, er enthält das Urteil der Universalität seiner Taufe" Grundmann, *Markus* p.37. As God's obedient Son Jesus maintains his baptism of repentance by imitating John's call into the wilderness. The same Spirit sanctioning Jesus at his baptism as God's Son now thrusts him out into a ministry beginning in the wilderness, which sets the pattern for Jesus' respondents.

Other elements in vv.12-13 resonate with OT wilderness ideas: the forty days period recalls both Moses's abiding on Mount Sinai and Elijah's sojourn to Mount Horeb. Temptation was a prominent theme of the Israelites' wilderness wanderings. The appearance of wild animals in the wilderness is frequently found in the OT (see Mauser *Wilderness*, p.37 for details) and ministering angels are found in the exodus tradition (Ex 14:19,23:20,23,32:34,33:2).

<sup>26</sup> See Marcus, *Way* pp.21,24.

<sup>27</sup> The term "gospel" occurring (1:1) is rooted in v.3 which stems from Isa 40, "a *locus classicus* for the concept of gospel" Marcus, *Way* p.45.

<sup>28</sup> The wilderness motif is not confined to the Markan prologue. The three-fold mention of wilderness place (6:33,32,35, cf., 1:35,45,6:31-33 for wilderness as a place of retreat) in the context of the first feeding narrative, suggests a background of OT wilderness associations, in respect not simply to the manna provision in the wilderness in Exodus, but in its ramifications "as a pointer to the future" (Hooker, *St. Mark* p.164), cf., Jn 6 confirming our end-time emphasis.

Mark's mention of the people's need for a shepherd (wedged between the two wilderness references), and the heavy handed Markan comment from the disciples in 6:35 ("Ἡρημός ἐστιν ὁ τόπος), ensures the point is made. Jesus is the one following in the steps of Moses -- and so, is a wilderness leader. This point is further emphasized by the frenetic activity of οἱ ἐρχόμενοι καὶ οἱ ὑπάγοντες πολλοί (v.31f. also v.34 "a great crowd") with their "coming and going" (v.31), "running together" (v.33), "getting ahead of them" (v.33) which demonstrates their need for a shepherd. Mark's mention of the crowd's

Finally in 9:2,9 ὄρος, thematically connected with the wilderness as the description of the transfiguration (9:2-9), resonates with images of the OT wilderness tradition focusing upon future expectation<sup>29</sup> and elevating Jesus' authority over that of the venerated OT figure Moses, on whom the cultus was founded.<sup>30</sup> These are the parallels between Jesus and Moses in 9:2-9:

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lack of foresight for food requirements in a lonely place and their passion for instruction does the same thing.

In the parallel feeding account in 8:1-9 (see Anderson for details, Mark p.194), Jesus' compassion (the verb *σπλαγχνίζομαι* occurs in 6:34 and 8:2) toward the leaderless crowd is demonstrated by Jesus teaching and feeding the multitude. In 8:2f. a reinforcement of the shepherd function taken on by Jesus in 6:34f. occurs. The disciples' pointed remark about the impossibility of providing food ἐπ' ἔρημίας (v.4) provides Jesus with the opportunity to care for the sheep by satisfying their physical needs.

Thus the wilderness terminology in the feeding narratives stands out: the emphasis on ἔρημος τόπος in 6:31,32 is highlighted by the repetition of the phrase κατ' ἰδίαν εἰς ἔρημον τόπον in 6:31, which is turned round in 6:32 to εἰς ἔρημον τόπον κατ' ἰδίαν. From a discourse mode in 6:31, with Jesus as the speaker, Mark switches to narrative mode in 6:35, and then back to discourse mode with the disciples' speaking, a Markan technique to keep the wilderness place before the reader, so Fowler, Loaves and Fishes p.70.

<sup>29</sup> For example, Jesus appears with Elijah and Moses, individuals having and receiving ministries and theophanies on God's mountain in the wilderness (Horeb 1Kgs 19, Sinai Ex 25). Parallels Mauser (Wilderness p.111f.) surmises between the transfiguration narrative and the wilderness experience in Exodus seem forced: the six days reference (9:2) hardly alludes to Ex 24:16f., where the only commonality is the number of days. The time reference is best accounted for as a significant connective between 9:2 and the preceding context i.e., the emphatic statement that some will see the coming of the kingdom before death (9:1) is strengthened by the vision given to the disciples in the immediate future. The transfiguration acts as a pledge of certainty of the nearness of the kingdom for the disciples, which directly concerns Mark (13:30). Similarly, taking up the mountain the inner group of Peter, James, and John, only recalls Moses' taking of the seventy elders, Aaron, Nadab, Abihu and Joshua in Ex 24 in a general way, because in Ex 24 Moses ends up witnessing God's glory alone, contrary to the transfiguration story. Mention of the three disciples is a Markan characteristic occurring to record something of particular significance (see 9:2,9,11 and 13:3 where Andrew is included, cf., 14:33, and note 1:16-20 where Mark recounts the call of James, John, Andrew and Peter who are to follow Jesus. This draws attention to them from the first).

<sup>30</sup> See Marcus (Way pp.90f.) on traditions about Moses' elevated status, which provides a useful comparison to the way Mark presents Jesus in 8:31-9:11 (especially the title "son of God" in 9:7).

the ascent up εἰς ὄρος ὑψηλὸν a high mountain (9:2) recalls Moses' ascent up Mount Sinai (Ex 19,24). Peter's desire to erect τρεῖς σκηνάς (v.5) recalls the tent of meeting (Ex 27:21,33:7f.; Num 9:15) where God met Moses. The νεφέλη and φωνὴ ἐκ τῆς νεφέλης (v.7) guided Israelites in the wilderness (cf., Ex 24:16). God's statement οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ υἱός μου ὁ ἀγαπητός, ἀκούετε αὐτοῦ (v.7) alludes to Jesus' baptism in the wilderness (cf., 1:11) and the future Moses-like prophet who must be heeded (αὐτοῦ ἀκούσεσθε Deut 18:15). This puts Jesus in an eschatological perspective, especially considering the two-fold reference to the whiteness of Jesus' clothes (vv.3a,3b), which contrasts with Moses' shining face reflecting God's glory (Ex 34:29-35; cf. 2Cor 3).<sup>31</sup> The placement together of καὶ ὤφθη αὐτοῖς Ἡλίας σὺν Μωϋσεῖ (9:4), unexpectedly makes Elijah (previously connected with John the Baptist) more prominent than Moses. This indicates that Mark wants to establish that Jesus will suffer the same fate as John (which reinforces the contextual theme of suffering in 8:31f.,9:9-13),<sup>32</sup> and Elijah's "return", which cements the notion of the eschatological kingdom's nearness (9:1).<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> White-clad individuals appear in eschatological settings (Dan 7:9; Rev 3:4-5,4:4,6:11,7:9,13).

<sup>32</sup> "The way to the eschatological glory glimpsed on the mountain is the same for them both - the way of suffering" Morna Hooker, The Message of Mark (London: Epworth Press), 1983 p.78.

<sup>33</sup> In contrast to Jewish tradition, Moses is subservient to Elijah. The appearance of both Moses and Elijah alongside Jesus does not allow a simple correspondence of characteristics between the three: The Markan Jesus is not "Elijah returned" -- because for Mark John the Baptist functions in this role (1:2f.). By analogy Jesus is not the Moses-like prophet either (cf., 6;15,8:28). Jesus' identity is contextually forged by Mark from 8:27-9:11. Certainly Mark's depiction of Elijah elsewhere gives us the clues to solidify our interpretation of his prominence over Moses. Jesus cannot be identified with Elijah (8:28), in fact Mark identifies Elijah with John the Baptist (9:13) so heralding Jesus, as Moses does. Therefore the prominence given to Elijah over Moses, and the future orientation of this prominence (the wilderness return is not simply a repeat of deliverance from Egypt) means the appearance of the two great OT prophets cannot be primarily that they "are men of the wilderness *par excellence*" (so Mauser, Wilderness p.115), though it includes that notion.

The placement of this mountain revelation comes at a focal point of the gospel. Positioned at a juncture where, for the first time, the theme of Jesus' suffering and death is revealed, it reinforces Jesus' authority (abundantly established in 1:9-8:27), by powerfully binding a newly introduced tone of humiliation and defeat to the successes of Jesus' early ministry, which is directly applied to the disciples by Mark.<sup>34</sup> The reference to both Elijah and

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Rather Elijah signals an *end-time coming* (see Mal 3:23-24, so Gundry, Mark p.458). Elijah's prominence over Moses, and of course, that of Jesus over Elijah, explains Peter's mistake in desiring to erect *τρεις σκηνας, σοι μίαν και Μωυσει μίαν και Ηλία μίαν* (9:5). Peter still cannot comprehend the greatness of Jesus' identity and authority which surpasses the glory of Elijah and Moses (*contra* Anderson, who misses the gradation between the three figures in respect to Peter's outburst, instead positing Peter wanting "prematurely to *settle down* and enjoy the blessings of the new age. The leading disciple wants to secure the glory and the victory before they have been won" Mark p.226). Twice Peter has made announcements about the significance of Jesus' person (8:29,32,9:5) without fathoming that Jesus must remain a wilderness figure whose authority coalesces around suffering and death. Here "for the first time ... the wilderness theme in Mark is related to Jesus' passion" (Mauser, Wilderness p.118).

<sup>34</sup> "Wer diesen Herrscher als Anwarter auf irdische Macht versteht, hat ihn missverstanden (Mk 8,27ff). Erst wenn seine Nachfolger den Weg bis ans Kreuz mit ihm gehen und selber bereit sind, ihr Leben hinzugeben, wird ihnen die Hoheit dieses Herrschers aufgehen (Mk 8,34ff) -- eine Hoheit, die jede irdische Macht begrenzt" Theissen, Lokalkolorit p.300; also Pesch: "Mit der Auslieferung und Verfolgung durch Juden und Heiden ist den Jüngern das gleiche Geschick angesagt, wie es ihr Meister erdulden musste" Naherwartungen p.128.

The voice at Jesus' baptism, which authorized Jesus as God's chosen wilderness prophet (1:11), is repeated again (9:7), assuring the reader that Jesus is still on course in spite of the disclosure of his fate in Jerusalem. This is obviously a main point because apart from Jesus' baptismal experience, "this is the only time the life of Jesus is marked by divine intervention in visible and audible terms" (Kelber, Story p.53). Significantly the voice is directed in the third person (*αὐτοῖς* v.7) to the disciples, and not in the second person to Jesus (1:11); the onus is on the disciples to accept Jesus' immediate previous statements on the nature of his mission (8:31) and the voice confirms Peter's confession in 8:29 regarding Jesus' messianic identity along with the necessity of suffering, death, and resurrection: "The terms used are, of course, different, but they stand together (cf.14.61), not over against each other" Hooker, Saint Mark p.215; also Grundmann, "Jesus ist der Messias, der verheissene und erwartete Gesandte Gottes in der Endzeit" (Markus p.241). Thus the double connection of the mountain experience (recalling Moses' ascent up Mount Sinai), and Jesus' baptism (identifying him as the wilderness prophet), places the wilderness theme in 9:2-11 at the forefront of the disclosure of Jesus' authority regarding his identity and mission. The

Moses (v.4) reinforces that the wilderness is the place of the test of suffering and subsequent vindication because both men had ministries there.<sup>35</sup> Jesus' elevation over Moses establishes his authority as predominant over any other ("Jesus is the figure spoken of by the very fountainhead of Judaism, Moses, as destined to appear at the end of days to claim the obedience of the people of God ...")<sup>36</sup> and his association with Elijah means that Jesus alone has the authority to eschatologically lead God's people with a glory founded upon suffering and death.

Conclusion Mark uses Jesus' authority to present an alternative sanctuary place away from Jerusalem in the wilderness i.e., wilderness in the sense of disenfranchisement and testing by launching out on a new way. Such a stance originates from the βασιλεία message (1:15) which does not involve a location e.g., in Jerusalem, but is rather an extension of God's kingly power over the human heart which individuals "are invited to enter into."<sup>37</sup> From the first Jerusalem is not the place where God's community congregates. Instead readers are to separate

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divine voice endorses the newly introduced element of suffering in Jesus' ministry. Mark's readers can understand that following in the wilderness way means that isolation and persecution will precede glorification (especially if the transfiguration is an anticipation of the parousia, so Lohmeyer, Markus p.175; G.H. Boobyer, St. Mark and the Transfiguration Story [Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark], 1942; Hooker, Saint Mark p.215.). Most importantly, following in the way is the will of God for Jesus (9:7), and ultimately for his disciples: "... the story with its fleeting glimpses of the future eschatological dignity of Jesus is a graphic reminder that God's will and God's way of suffering, rejection, and death for Jesus and his own is the only way to ultimate victory (cf. 9:9-13)" Anderson, Mark p.223.

<sup>35</sup> On Elijah's wilderness ministry see Mauser (Wilderness p.115) who comments on 1Kgs 17:3-6, 19:4-9; 2Kgs 1:9, 2:16.

<sup>36</sup> Marcus, Way p.92.

<sup>37</sup> Marcus, Way p.33.

themselves from the edifice of the temple cult and bear the brunt of a testing<sup>38</sup> wilderness existence in the interim, guided by Jesus<sup>39</sup> -- until the new order is established at the SM's parousia. Thus from the platform of the first exodus Mark promulgates an end-time exodus way based off a prophetic notion of a wilderness return.<sup>40</sup>

### 6.3. The Elect among the Nations

The eradication of the Jerusalem cultus and the call to flight in 13:14 means Judaea does not exist as a place or centre for the Christian community. Instead, the disciples are to accept Jesus' authority by following him along the way<sup>41</sup> which, as an extension of Jesus' own path (cf.,

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<sup>38</sup> J.B. Gibson ("Jesus' Wilderness Temptation" pp.3-34) has followed Mauser by showing the implication of the wilderness in 1:12-13 in respect to Jesus' time of testing, whether he would take up the rigour of obedience necessary to suffer and die. Testing is more prominent in the wilderness motif in 1:2-13 than refuge and hope which are present, Christopher Bryan, A Preface to Mark Notes on the Gospel in Its Literary and Cultural Settings (Oxford: Oxford University Press), 1993 pp.141-142, though cf., 1:35,45 for wilderness as a place of refuge. All the inhabitants of Jerusalem and Judaea respond to John's message of obedience which is a test of repentance or character and vv.12-13 delineate the wilderness as the locale of Satanic testing. *Contra* Mauser, who labours to integrate ἔρημος τόπος in 1:35,45 into correspondence with ἔρημος in the prologue. His three-fold pattern (ministry, withdrawal and the multitudes clamouring for teaching) is not found in 1:1-13. Withdrawal occurs following Jesus' baptism, to do battle with Satan. Wilderness here is not a place of withdrawal but of confrontation while the opposite is the case in 1:35, where withdrawal after successful ministry is a time of replenishment, where Jesus can avoid the crowds and in privacy devote himself to God. In 1:12-13 he goes alone into the wilderness to confront Satan and in 1:35 to meet God. In 1:45 he is forced there and the place of retreat becomes flooded with those intent on hearing him. Another aspect to the notion of wilderness is then a place of isolation and refreshment for Jesus alone.

<sup>39</sup> Jesus functions as the guiding wilderness "cloud:" "Die Wolke ist das Zeichen der Gegenwart Gottes; so begleitet sie das Volk in der Wüste, so ist sie gegenwärtig bei der Tempelweihe, so wird sie gegenwärtig sein beim Anbruch der eschatologischen Zeit (vgl. dazu 2. Makk. 2,8)" Grundmann, Markus p.241.

<sup>40</sup> See Mauser on this theme in Hos 2:14; Eze 20:35-38; Isa 40:3,48:20-21 (Wilderness pp.45-52,58-61,107,137). The lack of wilderness in the second half of the gospel is due to the emphasis upon suffering and death in the place of the temple cult, Jerusalem.

<sup>41</sup> Mk 1:17-18,2:14,6:1,8:34,10:21,28,32,52.

1:17-18 with 7:24-37), will take them among the nations on a missionary enterprise.<sup>42</sup> Chapter 13:10 is the disciples' "eschatological task, which mimics the one established for Jesus at 1:14-15 ..." -- that is, a preaching of the kingdom of God which "is depicted as an eschatological call to arms that challenges the power brokers of Judaism."<sup>43</sup> Occurring in the section 13:9-13, mission to the nations, characterized by an eschatological compulsion through  $\delta\epsilon\iota$ , is linked with persecution both before the temple's destruction and right up to the consummation.<sup>44</sup> Jesus has announced the temple's destruction (13:2) while the disciples will proclaim the new foundation stone (12:10)<sup>45</sup> in the period before the end (13:10) and at the parousia the SM will gather "the elect who have already been eschatologically preestablished as an alternative to the doomed temple of 13:1-2 ..." <sup>46</sup> They are the "others" of 12:9, drawn in the main from the among the Gentiles, who will receive Israel's inheritance forfeited by the Jewish leaders.<sup>47</sup> Mark's modification of a traditional interpretation of Ps 118 is that God's war is not now on behalf of

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<sup>42</sup> This gives a reason for the creation of Mark's gospel ("Die Notwendigkeit [ $\delta\epsilon\iota$  im Sinne göttlichheilsgeschichtlicher Bestimmung] der universalen Evangeliumsverkündigung „bei allen Völkern“ vor dem Ende [ $\pi\rho\omega\tau\omicron\nu$ ] charakterisiert nicht nur die Situation der mk Gemeinde, sondern rechtfertigt auch die Arbeit des Markus, der seine Schrift mit dem Evangelium identifiziert [vgl. auch zu 1,1]" Pesch, Markusevangelium Teil 2 p.285).

<sup>43</sup> Blount, "Preaching" pp.46,47; also Dautzenberg, "Das Wort von der weltweiten Verkündigen des Evangeliums (Mk 13,10) und seine Vorgeschichte" in Christus bezeugen ErfTS 59 (ed.) K. Kertelge (Leipzig), 1989 pp.161-163; Pesch, Markusevangelium Teil 2 p.285. Mark follows up Jesus' preaching ministry with a demonstration of authority and power in a synagogue (1:21-28) and confrontation with Jewish authorities (2:1-3:6).

<sup>44</sup> Verheyden, "Persecution and Eschatology" p.1158; also Marxsen, Evangelist p.177.

<sup>45</sup> Blount, "Preaching" p.50.

<sup>46</sup> Blount, "Preaching" p.52.

<sup>47</sup> Thus the "tenants" constitute those destroyed in the Jewish war i.e., the priests, scribes, and elders of the Sanhedrin (so Theissen, Lokalkolorit p.274).

Israel (against the Gentiles) but against it, with the Gentiles established as the people of God.<sup>48</sup> God establishes the Gentiles, not in a flourishing Israel, centred in Jerusalem, but away from that place and its people, rather in the midst of the nations, where a new temple is being built, founded upon the one embodying the gospel (12:10-11). The stone imagery in vv.10-11 ratifies the transfer of allegiance from the faithful who are now centered around (built on) Jesus and not the Jerusalem edifice.

The similarity of the stone imagery in 12:10-12 and 13:1-2<sup>49</sup> confirm this transfer. Three times the word "stone" occurs in the context of reference to the temple and the terms "seeing" and "buildings" in 12:10-11 are paralleled in 13:1-2. Jesus is the "cornerstone of a new Temple."<sup>50</sup> The old Jerusalem based temple has been destroyed and the new eschatological temple (a supernatural edifice not made by human craftsmen in Jerusalem) is founded on Jesus' resurrection and established by the proclamation of the gospel among the nations, so replacing the Jerusalem temple. The exclusion of Israel in 12:9 is mirrored in 13:14-18 where the "tenants" are to flee from the temple's jurisdiction in Judaea.

On the interpretation of "tenants" in 12:9 Marcus concludes: "... it is unclear whether Mark restricts these tenants to the leaders of Israel or includes among them also the masses of Jewish people who have rejected the Christian message; he at least does not take pains to guard his text against the latter interpretation."<sup>51</sup> According to 13:14-18 Mark has in mind the impact of Jerusalem's loss, which was due to the unfaithfulness of the Jewish leaders, on the Judaeans

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<sup>48</sup> Marcus, Way p.116.

<sup>49</sup> Marcus, Way pp.120-121.

<sup>50</sup> Marcus, Way p.121.

<sup>51</sup> Way p.122.



populace. Whether or not these inhabitants could be called "tenants," they do suffer the fate of the leaders in the sense of exclusion from the "vineyard" which is Israel. Mark's use of Ps 118 in 12:9 is that God attacks Israel, not the Gentiles (as would be expected from a traditional interpretation of the Psalm), therefore our view of 13:14-18 adds to this interpretation because the loss of Jerusalem does not leave the nation inviolate. The inhabitants of Judaea suffer the consequences of their leaders' unfaithfulness. The vineyard then is left to others (God "does not *destroy* the Gentiles but rather *brings* them into his people")<sup>52</sup> with a future beyond the confines of the "old" vineyard.

Chapter 13:15-17, occurring after the key structural point (v.14a), is a window on the implication of lives built on a temple system now destroyed. The lamentation oracle in v.17 describes reversed conditions and values; the joy of childbirth is out of place without the basis of family existence.<sup>53</sup> In view of the devastated city the disdained condition of barrenness is a blessing.<sup>54</sup> Thus starting a family, ploughing and sowing, are not unconnected activities; they are part of a whole life-cycle formerly engendered by belief in and maintenance of the Jerusalem cultus.

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<sup>52</sup> Way p.116.

<sup>53</sup> Note Theissen, "Die synoptische Apokalypse wendet sich an Menschen, die ihrer normalen Arbeit nachgehen: Sie sollen alles stehen und liegen lassen, um zu fliehen (Mk 13,15f). Wenn die Schwangeren und Stillenden von der Drangsal besonders betroffen sind, so wird deutlich: Die Angesprochenen leben in 'normalen' Familienverhältnissen. Die Zerstörung der Familie (Mk 13,12) ist für sie eine Katastrophe" Lokalkolorit p.298.

<sup>54</sup> These opposites have OT contexts: God is the mid-wife who brings individuals (Ps 22:10-11) and groups (Gen 49:25) out of the womb and onto the mother's breasts. However, in calamitous times, God can also remove these blessings by amongst other things withholding the sustenance of nature (Hos 9:11-12a, cf., v.14 where Hosèa himself urges God to "Give them a miscarrying womb and dry breasts," see also 2:9,12,4:3, cf. 2:21-22).

The examples in vv.15-16 are based around settled home-life and the work-place which has been torn apart by Jerusalem's destruction. The connection in vv.15-16 between the maintenance of the home and the activity of work is obvious.<sup>55</sup> Work's toil in the fields brings the security for worship and rest activities in the home.<sup>56</sup> Similarly, abandoning work in the field

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<sup>55</sup> For "the inhabitants of Palestine ... depend upon the produce which could be grown from the land for their life and livelihood. Food, clothing, and shelter have been, to a great extent, the results of the tilling of the soil ..." J. Goldin, "Agriculture" IDB Vol. 1 p.57. The identification between the Israelite and the land is so strong, Jesus uses the act of sowing seed into the earth as a parable about response to that message in ch.4. In fact, interesting parallels exist between chs. 4 and 13. Both constitute the only long discourses by Jesus in Mark depicting the time of the Church (4:14-20,13:9-13). Both contain warnings to give heed to what is said (βλεπεῖν 4:12,24, cf., 13:5,9,23 and ἀκουεῖν 4:3,9,12,23,33, cf., 13:7). Both solicit a turning to either Jesus' word or the things of the present age (ἐπιστρεφεῖν in 4:24,13:16). Both warn disciples about the need to persevere through trials and persecution (θλίψεις 4:17 cf., 13:9-13,19f.). Finally, both veil meaning behind agrarian stories (4:1-9,13:16). "The Kingdom of God breaks into the world even as seed which is sown upon the ground" (Lane, Mark p.154). The kingdom originates not from the earth, but from above (1:11) bringing judgment on the existing institutions of worship, family and livelihood, once safeguarded by the Jerusalem complex.

<sup>56</sup> On the flat roof (δῶμα) individuals can sleep (1Kgs 9:25), make offerings (Jer 19:13), and be devoted to prayer (Acts 10:9). Activity in the two examples revolves around the house (οἰκία) and the field (ἀγρός). Safety is found in flight away from the destroyed city which guaranteed all previous blessings (12:9). Possessions which stopped the rich man from becoming a follower of Jesus in 10:22 must be jettisoned by those fleeing because nothing can be taken. Cf., Matthew's change of Mark's singular τι 13:15 to the neuter plural article τὰ Matt 24:17, "Auch sachlich ist τι stärker als τὰ" Adolf Schlatter, Der Evangelist Matthäus (Stuttgart: Calwer), 1948 p.705. As a place of prayer (like the temple cf., οἶκον τοῦ θεοῦ 2:26, ὁ οἶκός μου οἶκος προσευχῆς 11:17), the rooftop must be abandoned, being fit only for destruction (εἰς τὴν οἰκίαν, a redundant expression in v.15 according to Taylor on the basis of A D W O 1fam.13 28 565 579 700 1071 al. pler. a ff i l n q r1.2 aur vg sys hl aeth arm) Mark p.512. Lagrange, "L'accent est uniquement sur ce fait que la maison de Dieu est une maison de prière" Marc p.296.

Lohmeyer rightly surmises: (the temple) "eine `Stätte des Gebetes' ist, da also jeder fromme zu Gott beten kann und muss? Man spürt hier deutlich die Betrachtung des galiläischen Lrien, der fern von dem kultischen Mittelpunkt des jüdischen Glaubens wirkend und lebend, den Tempel nur als die vornehmste Synagoge verehrt; denn `Bethaus' ist ein fester Ausdruck für die Synagoge jüdischer Gemeinden" Markus p.236. The house, fitted for worship, is a microcosm of the temple; its security crumbles with the destruction of the Jerusalem edifice, and must be abandoned (cf.10:29). Alternatively pleasures of house and family are now found in the Christian community. Cf., Matt 23:38: "Behold, your house

severs the connection between Israelite and land. The worker occupied εἰς τὸν ἀγρὸν (εἰς means literally a movement "into," and so indicates the worker's solidarity with the field), μὴ ἐπιστρεψάτω to his home i.e., "to the places behind" (εἰς τὰ ὀπίσω), to get his coat. The agricultural worker leaves the land which can no longer sustain him.<sup>57</sup> We conclude with Belo's summation: "Judaea, Jerusalem, and the temple are the centre of the world for a Jew; their desolation is the worst of catastrophes according to the Jewish codes. Once the Jewish symbolic field has been destroyed, people must abandon it and flee from it, for it no longer guarantees blessing (that is why to be pregnant or to be nursing becomes a misfortune). In short, this desolation represents the disorganization of the current codes, their upheaval, and the collapse of the symbolic field and the codes that inscribe it."<sup>58</sup> Jerusalem's fall is a loss of the centre for Judaism in the injunction to leave Judaea (vv.14b-18).

For Mark, Titus' act of destruction ends the tenant's monopoly on the vineyard.<sup>59</sup> The turmoil projected for those in Judaea in the post-70 C.E. situation in 13:14-18 is part of the

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(οἶκος) is forsaken and desolate (ἔρημος)", omitted by Luke in 13:35. The saying, a combination of Jer 12:7 and Jer 22:5, alludes to the dwellings of the unbelieving Jerusalemites. "Thus, he (Jesus) identifies it with their city, the people residing there, or the Temple located there ..." Robert H. Gundry, Matthew: A Commentary on his literary and theological art (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Pub. Co.), 1982 p.473.

<sup>57</sup> Douglas E. Oakman (Jesus and the Economic Questions of His Day Studies in the Bible and Early Christianity Vol. 8 [Lewiston: Edwin Mellen Press], 1986 p.128), is convinced that trade and business in first-century Palestine revolving around the temple led to wealth creation for the pro-Roman oligarchy, "and that this wealth was at hand to loan to hard-pressed smallholders and petty artisans or to sink into any land available for purchase" p.73. The destruction of city/temple cut the Jerusalem land-based economy off at its root.

<sup>58</sup> Fernando Belo, A Materialist Reading of the Gospel of Mark (trans.) Matthew J. O'Connell (Maryknoll: Orbis Books), 1981 p.198. Myers' comment on Belo's summation is appropriate: "This has in fact been Mark's position throughout the Gospel; from its very beginning (1:5) he has been leading us 'away' from Jerusalem" Strong Man p.336.

<sup>59</sup> Marcus, Way p.122.

suffering all Jews experienced in the war years from 66 C.E. and which can be understood as God's destruction of the tenants (12:9). Further, the suffering experienced by Palestinian Jews in the war years is well paralleled by the emphasis on the legitimacy of the Gentile mission (the "others").<sup>60</sup> A whole new entity is coming forth in the period beginning from Jesus' resurrection and finishing at the time of his eagerly expected parousia. Thus Jesus in Mark's gospel demonstrates the path of preaching, suffering and faithfulness required of the "others" who have responded to the eschatological preaching of the gospel. In the face of an expected worsening situation Mark calls his community to emulate Jesus' stance of faithfulness. Therefore Jesus, through his resurrection, has become the basis of a new temple and his followers (Mark's audience, and all actual and projected disciples among the nations, the "others") constitute this temple which will be gathered from among the nations (13:24-27). This will fulfill what the Jerusalem temple could not do: belong to Jesus (in 11:17 Jesus claims it as his own house ὁ οἶκός μου) and be a house of prayer for all the nations. If the activities of the Jewish revolutionaries were part of the makeup of a pro-temple anti-Gentile emphasis<sup>61</sup>, then their culpability is linked together with the failure of the Jerusalem religious hierarchies to ensure the faithful maintenance of the temple as a house of prayer for all nations (not a place of violence full of Gentile hatred and Jewish factionalism).<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> Marcus, *Way* pp.128,129.

<sup>61</sup> Marcus, *Way* p.123.

<sup>62</sup> "My house shall be called a house of prayer for all the nations' [Isa 56:7], but you have made it 'a den of bandits' [Jer 7:11]. The Chiastic pattern of (a) beginning to throw out (b) the sellers and buyers and (b1) the tables and seats (a1) overturning (see the Greek word order) dramatizes the cleansing. The further chiastic pattern in the statement, 'My house [a] a house of prayer [b] will be called ..., but you [b1] have made it [a1] a den of bandits,' likewise adds force to Jesus' teaching, as do the strong ὑμεῖς plus an adversative δέ, 'but your,' and the associated shift from a future passive verb to a perfect active one"

6.4. Thus the Gentile mission is fundamentally an eschatological task in Mark. What we find in the gospel is a mix of Jesus' concern for Jews and Gentiles which foreshadows the proclamation of the gospel to the Gentiles. Jesus' tour of Tyre and Sidon showed Gentile receptivity (3:1-8,5:1-20,7:25f.)<sup>63</sup> and foretold of their inclusion into the fold (13:10,24-27).<sup>64</sup> In 5:1-20 the Gerasene freed from demon possession does not return with Jesus across the lake to the Jewish side. Instead he is commanded by Jesus to return to his home and proclaim the gospel, which he does also in the Decapolis, causing amazement among the residents (5:19-20). The shift in mission perspective is seen in 5:19 where the Gerasene is instructed to tell what ὁ κύριός has done for him, presumably God, whereas his missionary proclamation in the Decapolis involves him preaching about what ὁ Ἰησοῦς had done for him -- all of which reflects the changed situation "from the mission of Jesus to the mission of the church ..."<sup>65</sup>

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Gundry, Mark pp.639-640.

<sup>63</sup> Mark's interest in Gentiles surely comes to the fore in 7:24-30 where Jesus is defeated in an argument by a Gentile who is also a woman, "thus making clear Christian interest in Gentiles" (Best, "Mark's Readers: A Profile" in The Four Gospels p.850).

<sup>64</sup> So Fredriksen, Jesus: "Most strikingly, it is to a Gentile that Jesus reverses his usual policy of demanding silence after a cure. 'Go home to your friends, and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you' (5:19). The Gentile then becomes a missionary among the Decapolis (v.20). In such ways Mark argued through his gospel that the Gospel had presupposed the Gentile church -- Mark's church -- from the beginning" p.181. See also Marcus ("Jewish War" p.453) who has demonstrated the redactional nature of a number of the passages (12:9,13:10,14:9) that Best (Following Jesus JSNTSup 4 [Sheffield: JSOT Press], 1981 p.218) documents on this matter (7:24-30,8:1-9,11:17,12:9, 13:10,14:9,15:39 and note Best's conclusion in "Mark's Readers: A Profile": "We may conclude that the majority of Mark's audience were Gentiles" p.850). In addition, we note Theissen (Lokalkolorit p.255f.), who plausibly argues that geographical mistakes in the gospel may be Mark's way of drawing attention to Jesus' tour among Gentiles who may include Mark's own audience (7:31).

<sup>65</sup> Donald Senior, "The Struggle to be Universal: Mission as Vantage Point For NT Investigation CBA 46 (1984) p.77 fn.45.

6.4.1. We detect a certain ambiguity in Mark's attitude toward the Romans when we consider his emphasis upon the gospel's proclamation to the Gentiles. On the one hand, Mark urges flight from the Roman military arm in Judaea and therefore anywhere Titus is present, and on the other hand, he urges evangelization among the nations (13:10) which would include Romans. Mark's ambiguous stance towards the Romans is apparent in his warning that disciples will face trials before non-Jewish authorities -- Gentiles, which would include Romans ("governors" ἡγεμόνων 13:9),<sup>66</sup> and it is before a Roman governor that Jesus receives his trial, sentence of execution, mocking and torture by the governor's soldiers, and crucifixion (15:1-15:45).

For example, 15:16-20 demonstrate Mark's attitude towards Roman viciousness. Mark builds the Pilate trial narrative<sup>67</sup> to *peak* at the soldiers' genuflection of the humiliated Jesus

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<sup>66</sup> A term used 7 times by Matthew to designate Pilate (Matt 27:2,11,14,15,21,27;28:14).

<sup>67</sup> Mark purposely uses four terms in v.16 to rivet attention upon the Roman response to Jesus. The terms στρατιῶται (Pilate παρέδωκεν Jesus to Roman official subordinates for scourging), ἀλύης, πραιτώριον, σπεῖραν (a cohort numbering about 600) cf., the historical present tense (συγκαλοῦσιν) emphasizing not so much the "large scale on which the fulfillment of Jesus' prediction is taking place" (Gundry, Mark p.940 and see 14:55,15:1), as the complete superiority and intent of the Roman soldiers. The passivity of Jesus is portrayed through the absence of Ἰησοῦς and the designation αὐτός occurring 13 times in five verses. Similarly πορφύραν (v.17) indicates a mock purple emperor robe ("πορφύραν ist der technische Ausdruck für die einfarbig purpurne, auf der rechten Schulter gefibelte, nach makedonischer Sitte in Form eines Kreissegments, nicht rechteckig, geschnittene Chlamys des hellenistischen Fürsten [s. oben] -- so ständig im 1. Makkabäerbuch" Richard Delbrueck, "Antiquarisches zu den Verspottungen Jesu" ZNW [1941-1942], p.128), and ἀκάνθινον στέφανονα (v.17), a caricature of the radiate emperor crown. See H.St.J. Hart, "The Crown of Thorns in Jn 19:2.5" JTS (1952) pp.66-75. Also Swete, Mark p.376; Anderson, Mark p.339. Verse 18 with the mock hailing befitting an emperor confirms this interpretation of the purple robe and radiate crown: Χαῖρε, βασιλεῦ τῶν Ἰουδαίων (*Ave, Rex Judaeorum*) parodies *Ave Caesar, victor, imperator* (so Taylor, Mark p.586; Myers, Strong Man p.380; John Pobee, "The Cry of the Centurion -- A Cry of Defeat" Trial of Jesus Studies p.95; Hooker, Saint Mark p.370; Rawlinson, Mark p.230. Grayston, Dying p.234. For Gundry, Mark p.943, no homage occurs because of the absence of divine titles respecting "king of the Jews." But Jesus' emperor homage contrasts sharply with the

(v.19) as *surrogate Caesar*.<sup>68</sup> The episode culminates with the soldiers' genuflection of Jesus. Mark emphasizes this by identifying two acts constituting the genuflection, that of "bending the knees" *τιθέντες τὰ γόνατα*, and in a mock prostrate position offering "worship" *προσεκύνουν*.<sup>69</sup> The powerlessness of Jesus<sup>70</sup> contrasts with the unrestrained viciousness of

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provincial kingly designation which intensifies the irony. Jesus receives mock homage in the form of the emperor cult in respect to his humiliating circumstances.

<sup>68</sup> Matera compared vv.16-20 with the parallel account in Matt 27:27-31 and concluded that Matthew altered Mark's "awkward placement of v.19a" (Matera, *Kingship* p.23) whereby genuflection occurs before acclamation, and not after as in Mark, which betrays Markan purpose, that the soldiers pay homage (over inflicting cruelty cf. Matt). Matera (*Kingship* p.23) shows the parallels:

"Matthew	Mark
genuflection	acclamation
acclamation	cruelty
cruelty	genuflection"

Mark establishes this by first clearly identifying where the homage occurs i.e., "in Roman space" (Belo, *Materialist* p.225) not simply ἔσω the courtyard (τῆς αὐλῆς).

<sup>69</sup> Matthew softens this by adopting the singular *γονυπετήσαντες*, an act subordinate to the main verb *ἐνέπαιξαν* 27:29, so focusing on the cruelty of the mocking. In Mark cruelty is subservient to mockery in respect to Jesus' honorific status: the reed (v.19) mocks the radiate crown (*ἔτυπτον αὐτοῦ τὴν κεφαλὴν καλάμῳ*) and the spitting (*ἐνέπτυσον* which prefaces the genuflection) mocks the homager's kiss. The reed hardly "bedeutet das königliche Stabszepter" (Delbrueck, *Antiquarisches* p.129) because Jesus does not hold it. Surely Mark would have mentioned that the soldiers first gave it to Jesus and then used it against him (as with the purple robe, thorny crown, and Caesar address). The reed remains in the soldiers' jurisdiction. That the episode has now peaked is seen by the summation in v.19a (*καὶ ὅτε ἐνέπαιξαν αὐτῷ*), and the repetition of *πορφύραν* (v.19, cf., v.17) i.e., with the removal of the emperor robe and dressing Jesus with his own clothes. Thus a two part chiastic order demonstrates the focus of the episode -- the question of power: "(a) robing Jesus, (b) crowning him, (b<sup>1</sup>) hitting him on the head (where he is wearing the crown), and (a<sup>1</sup>) spitting on him (where he is wearing the robe), each side of the chiasm being capped by homage, the first one verbal, the second one gesticular" (Gundry, *Mark* p.940).

<sup>70</sup> Finally manifest on the cross where Jesus is crucified between two thieves (15:27). Cf., T.E. Schmidt, "It is probable, then, that the crucifixion of criminals on either side of Jesus is a conscious expression of the mockery of his kingship on the part of the soldiers. That is, they comprise the mock equivalent of those displayed on either side of an enthroned ruler." Schmidt compares this scene with Vespasian's celebrated triumph "over

soldiers released from constrictive military regimen<sup>71</sup> who carry the knowledge that in different circumstances their lives might have been forfeited by this adversary before them.

On the other hand if, according to Myers, "Mark is at pains to demonstrate the irreconcilable hostility between Jesus and the Roman *imperium* ...,"<sup>72</sup> then why does Mark have a Roman centurion confess Jesus as Son of God at the conclusion of the gospel (15:39)? The manner Mark peppers references to Jesus as "Son" throughout the gospel (1:1,11,3:11,5:7,9:7,13:32,14:62,15:39) suggests the title has great significance. In 1:11,9:7 at the

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the Jews with Titus beside him in the triumphal chariot and Domitian riding alongside" "Mark 15:16-32: The Crucifixion Narrative and the Roman Triumphal Procession" NTS 41 (1995) p.15.

<sup>71</sup> Roman soldiers were just as brutal at the siege of Jerusalem. Despite Josephus' attempts to present Titus prohibiting atrocities among his soldiers and respecting innocent civilians (War 5.8:1,5.10:1,5.12:4,6.4:6-7,6.5:2), he cannot omit mention of the wanton savagery that occurred. The "citizens of the poorer class" venturing out of the city looking for food were caught, "scourged and subjected to torture of every description, before being killed, and then crucified opposite the walls. Titus indeed commiserated their fate, five hundred or sometimes more being captured daily; on the other hand, he recognized the risk of dismissing prisoners of war, and that the custody of such numbers would amount to the imprisonment of their custodians; but his main reason for not stopping the crucifixions was the hope that the spectacle might perhaps induce the Jews to surrender, for fear that continued resistance would involve them in a similar fate. The soldiers out of rage and hatred amused themselves by nailing their prisoners in different postures; and so great was their number, that space could not be found for the crosses nor crosses for the bodies" (5.11:1). To torment the famine stricken inhabitants of Jerusalem the soldiers would stand near the city wall and taunt the people by showing their plentiful Syrian corn (5.12:4). Similarly at the firing of the temple nothing could restrain the legions' savagery, "when they joined the fray, neither exhortations nor threat could restrain; passion was for all the only leader. Crushed together about the entrances, many were trampled down by their companions; many, stumbling on the still hot and smoldering ruins of the porticoes, suffered the fate of the vanquished. As they drew nearer to the sanctuary they pretended not even to hear Caesar's orders and shouted to those in front of them to throw in the firebrands. The insurgents, for their part, were now powerless to help; and on all sides was carnage and flight. Most of the slain were civilians, weak and unarmed people, each butchered where he was caught (6.4:6-7).

<sup>72</sup> Strong Man p.380.



beginning and mid-point of the gospel Jesus is identified by God himself as his only Son, while a human being identifies him as υἱὸς θεοῦ at the gospel's closure, a confession which is the "final identification of Jesus' person."<sup>73</sup> This capstone follows the theophany disclosure in the ripping away of the veil (15:38 cf., σχιζομένους in 1:10 with ἐσχίσθη in 15:38). Jesus' identity is shown in his death (15:37), and a revelation of that identity is given to a *Roman* centurion. "He functions as a representative of all who confess Jesus now that he has died and the temple curtain has been torn."<sup>74</sup> In 15:38-39 ("an apocalyptic theophany" according to Marcus),<sup>75</sup> the centurion's statement encapsulates the position of Mark's audience in the light of the post-70 C.E. situation -- the temple is gone (v.38 is a "proleptic act of Temple destruction" p.57) and the future is an existence where, thrust in the midst of the nations in order to proclaim the gospel, Christians must evangelize the Gentiles (v.39), even among the Romans, the ones responsible for initiating the end-time.

Our point is that a Roman soldier mouths the content of Mark's gospel (1:1), which means among other things, that according to Mark, proclaiming the gospel leads inevitably to confrontation with Roman power (13:9) as it did with Jesus (15:1-20) which is part of his dilemma: avoid τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως but do not just hide or take up arms against the Romans, instead, stand firm<sup>76</sup> and take the good news to them.<sup>77</sup> This dual stance before

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<sup>73</sup> Matera, Kingship of Jesus p.140.

<sup>74</sup> Matera, Kingship of Jesus p.145.

<sup>75</sup> Way p.57, see especially fn.36.

<sup>76</sup> Therefore endurance is at the heart of discipleship requirements (13:13b) e.g., in respect the sower parable (on 4:16-17 see Marcus, who applies 4:13-20 to Markan discipleship experience. The real possibility exists for apostasy. By suffering the disciples recapitulate Jesus own experience so remaining faithful Way p.70). The Gethsemane episode also testifies to discipleship endurance (on 14:32-42 see Geddert who links these verses with

Roman authorities is part of the eschatological evangelization programme.

This means 13:14 is not part of an anti-Roman gospel, which perhaps explains why in the gospel Jewish culpability in the trial narrative (14:53-15:1-20) predominates over Roman ineptitude, where in contrast to the connivings of the Sanhedrin to execute Jesus, Pilate, though responsible for making the final decision to have Jesus executed, "is progressively exculpated" in the trial narrative, "emerging finally as a considerate and sympathetic figure."<sup>78</sup>

6.5. Conclusion In 13:14 ὅταν δὲ takes us back to the ὅταν v.4' where the consummation is connected with the temple's end. At the centre of the temple's demise is the personal power of a Roman commander (whose action, cast in the Danielic image, recalls the

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13:33-37 in respect to connoting "faithful discipleship, prayer, obedience, willingness to suffer" Watchwords p.99). Instead of reneging on his mission, Jesus valiantly goes forward to confront his opposers and proclaim his coming parousia (14:62). Mark's audience (cf., 13:37) is urged to do the same and boldly proclaim the gospel i.e., not to emulate the sleeping disciples who three times are caught sleeping (cf., 14:37,40,41 with 13:35-36). The expectation is that persecution will intensify (13:19f.): "The possibility of rejecting Jesus remains" P. Achtemeier (Mark, p.110). For Juel (Surprise p.142) the Markan gospel combats overconfidence (e.g., in respect to ch.13 Juel posits the main injunction is "Keep awake" and not "Remain steadfast"). Against this: (i) Staying awake (gleaned from the householder parable in 13:33-37), indicates readiness for the parousia's advent. All indications in ch.13 soliciting readiness point to a persecutory context (13:9-13,14-18,19-22), certainly not one "where the world has proved more hospitable than anticipated" (p.141). Staying awake is advocated within a context of persecution not overconfidence. If Mark manufactured the tribulation theme in ch.13 to rectify overconfidence, we would expect some mention or emphasis on overconfidence in various aspects to be present in the chapter to connect with his readers. Chapter 13 is not triumphalistic but contains much on suffering. (ii) For Juel "martyrdom is not a pervasive theme in Mark" (p.141). But the notion of arrest and betrayal is in respect to John the Baptist (1:14,6:14-29), Jesus (9:31,10:33), and his disciples (note especially the thematic connection of betrayal in 13:9-13 and its appearance in 14:1,10,11, 18,21, 41,42,44 and cf., 10:38f.) which cannot be coincidental. Finally, the concept of martyrdom includes individuals being executed for refusing to give up their faith. Certainly Jesus' death, engineered by the Sanhedrin, conforms to this notion, which is of course absolutely central in the gospel.

<sup>77</sup> Marcus, Way p.46.

<sup>78</sup> Fredriksen, Jesus p.121, see pp.120-122 for details.

desecration of the temple by Antiochus IV Epiphanes in 167 B.C.E.). For Mark this action is "the apocalyptic disaster"<sup>79</sup> which renders Jerusalem desolate and is the prologue to a universal eschatological catastrophe, to happen in his own lifetime. Because Jerusalem's destruction is the end-time trigger launched by the appearance of τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως, then Jerusalem itself looms large as a focal point or foil for Mark establishing a Christian identity.<sup>80</sup> If the SM's imminent expectation was engendered by the devastation wrought by τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως, then the temple's destruction becomes an apologetic motif freeing Mark's audience from any allegiance to the temple cult, which based on historical tradition regarding Jesus' death at the hands of the Sanhedrin, becomes an apologia on Jewish obstinacy in the face of Jesus' claims about himself. Mark faces up to the loss of Jerusalem as God's dwelling place by presenting Jesus with credentials to inaugurate a shift in religious authority away from the city. Readers are encouraged to transfer allegiance from the temple cult to Jesus by virtue of his unique authority (1:1,11). Though careful to distance Jesus from being the agent of destruction (14:58), Mark portrays the crucifixion as the decisive rejection of Jesus by the authorities (15:31-32) which explains a number of things: the (past) death of Jesus and Jewish obstinacy in receiving the gospel, the (present) destruction by Titus, and the (immediate future) nature of hope. Mark lays the blame on the temple's destruction and hence the destruction of the nation and the old order upon Jewish perfidiousness with the Romans as instruments. By so constructing that destruction as the end-time σημεῖον Mark can orient his readers to the

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<sup>79</sup> Kelber, *Kingdom* p.120.

<sup>80</sup> So G.W.H. Lampe ("A.D. 70 in Christian reflection" in *Jesus and the Politics of His Day* [eds.] Ernst Bammel, C.F.D. Moule [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press], 1984), in commenting on 13:14b concludes: "What is relevant here is the fact that if it is indeed *post eventum* this passage contains the beginnings of Christian theological reflection on the fall of Jerusalem" (p.163).

coming age.<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>81</sup> Thus crucial for Mark is that readers grasp the significance of all this: "Das ὁ ἀναγινώσκων νοεῖτω ist also für den Leser des Markusevangeliums ein sinnvoller Appell, zumal er von 13,14 über 11,15-18 auf Stellen wie 12,10; 13,1f; 14,58; 15,29.38 und damit die Tempelstellen gehören für Markus zweifellos zusammen. Die in seinem Evangelium einmalige Formulierung 'wer es liest, der merke auf!' wird Markus wohl aus einer apokalyptischen Vorlage überkommen sein. In seinem Evangelium aber wird sie durch ihre Einmaligkeit zu einem starken Ausdruck dafür, dass der Leser die Beschreibung der apokalyptischen Ereignisse als Entfaltung seiner theologia crucis verstehen soll" Schreiber, Theologie des Vertrauens p.143. Schreiber rightly extends the impact of ὁ ἀναγινώσκων νοεῖτω in respect to matters stemming from, but beyond ch.13, however not in terms of a *theologia crucis*, but of absolute vindication in the near future.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### MARK'S EXPECTATIONS IN 13:5-37

#### Introduction

It remains for us to show how vv.5-37 and Mark himself are placed within a historical context, where events in these verses correspond to concrete past events, where they are part of a projected Markan future, and what Mark's rationale may have been for including them. These questions will be answered by showing that by expanding the end of the discourse to include the SM's parousia (vv.24-27,28-37), Mark has given Jerusalem's destruction an eschatological frame, so setting the boundaries for parousia expectation (7.1). Our contention is that events in vv.6-8 are preparatory to the event triggering the end-time and so occurred before Jerusalem's fall. Establishing Mark's place in time (7.2.) will enable us to show that vv.9-13 indicate the persecution Mark's community has already and is currently experiencing and which Mark anticipates will continue in the future (7.3). Finally vv.19-23 will be explored to determine their place in the schema we propose (7.4.).

#### 7.1. The Boundaries of Parousia Expectation

For Mark, the consummation will occur within the lifetime of his own generation (v.30), so although the exact date is unknown (v.32), recognition of the significance of τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως and continual watchfulness are the required stance (vv.28-37). By rooting parousia expectation in a sign activation Mark has constructed an end-time frame, with the extremities being Jerusalem's destruction by Titus (13:14) and the SM's appearance (13:26). Within these extremities Mark further specifies the boundaries.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> So Gundry, Mark p.787.

Mark sets all the decisive happenings to occur within the lifetime of the contemporary ("existing")<sup>2</sup> generation (ἡ γενεὰ αὕτη v.30). Thus Mark fixes two reference points delineating the parousia advent: the first is the appearance of τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἔρημώσεως (v.14), the second is the lifetime of the generation contemporaneous with Jesus. Further, the contrived nature of the statement οὐ μὴ παρέλθῃ ἡ γενεὰ αὕτη<sup>4</sup> in v.30 demonstrates its intended link with v.31 where the verb occurs twice. The full capacity of the Markan Jesus as "consummator" (Lohmeyer),<sup>5</sup> "agent" (Mann),<sup>6</sup> manifesting "predictive power" (Gundry),<sup>7</sup> matches the range of his pronouncement which is the prophetic utterance in ch.13 (οἱ δὲ λόγοι μου οὐ μὴ παρελεύσονται v.31b), indicating certainty concerning prophesied events to occur in the contemporary generation.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Taylor, St.Mark p.521.

<sup>3</sup> The censorious tone frequently applied to this term in Mark (8:12a,12b,38,9:19) is absent in 13:30, so J. Jeremias, New Testament Theology The Proclamation of Jesus (New York: Scribners), 1971 p.134. For Geddert, by associating ἡ γενεὰ αὕτη with the Jewish leaders (Watchwords p.244), v.30 becomes a judgment saying on a particular group and not the posit of a specific temporal end-time closure, which leaves Geddert able to direct the disciple's gaze to the establishment of a new community "at the doors" so to speak. The solemn ἄμην formula, coupled with an emphatic double negative οὐ μὴ, brought before and coupled with the future sense of παρέλθῃ, has the ring of an oath (cf., 9:1,41,10:15,14:25). In each case γενεὰ chronologically is fixed within the time-span of Jesus' ministry which places Mark's audience within the term's limit.

<sup>4</sup> Pesch posited this after failing to find παρέρχεσθαι with human beings as subject in the LXX (Naherwartungen p.184).

<sup>5</sup> Markus p.282.

<sup>6</sup> Mark p.538.

<sup>7</sup> Mark p.747.

<sup>8</sup> Verse 31b is paralleled negatively by 31a (ὁ οὐρανὸς καὶ ἡ γῆ παρελεύσονται) which recalls vv.27 and v.30, the former in respect to the certitude of parousia expectation and the latter in respect to those individuals within the spatial reference. The view that "this generation" refers to only the "wicked" (Geddert, Watchwords p.242) is limiting. The verse

7.1.1. The broad extremities delineating the parousia (the limits of the contemporary generation and Titus' destruction of the city), are injected with the notion of imminent expectation from the application of a fig-tree παραβολή rooted in the two extremities. Syntactically vv.28-29 centre on surmising correct information:

V.28a "Learn (μάθετε) from the parable (of the fig-tree):

v.28b,c ... *when* (ὅταν) ... *know* (γινώσκετε) ... summer is near (ἐγγύς τὸ θέρος ἐστίν)

v.29 ... *when* (ὅταν) ... *know* (γινώσκετε) ... he is at the doors (ἐγγύς ἐστὶν ἐπὶ θύραις)

Initially the forward position of Ἐκ τῆς συκῆς (v.28a) points back and so overlays the already leafed fig-tree (11:12-14,20-25)<sup>9</sup> which we surmised applies to Jerusalem's destruction. Here the leafing fig-tree indicates the imminent advent of summer which is the SM's parousia (note the parallel consonants θρς producing a tight whole "summer/doors").<sup>10</sup> The focus on imminence in these verses is brought out by the forward placement of the twice used ἐγγύς and the ἤδη/ἄπαλδος combination bracketing ὁ κλάδος in the first temporal clause.<sup>11</sup> First, the nature lesson is a declarative statement on near expectation, summer immediately follows the advent of the fig-tree's greening. In v.28 the adverb ἤδη focuses on the immediate start of greening, which gives a double emphasis on imminence, because ἐγγύς

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also carries a shade of imminent expectation because of the preceding vv.28-29.

<sup>9</sup> Cf., Myers, "... the narrative relationship ... between the two 'trees' (suggests) continuity" Strong Man p.345.

<sup>10</sup> For Geddert θέρος θερισμός are "related etymologically" (Watchwords ch.9 fn.60), which begs the question of the eschatological harvest, as θέρος impregnates a nature image with a theological idea without allowing signification (ἐγγύς ἐστὶν ἐπὶ θύραις) to determine meaning (*contra* Pesch also, Naherwartungen p.179 fn.772).

<sup>11</sup> Cf., Gundry, "The resultant emphasis on nearness anticipates Jesus' interpretation of the parable" Mark p.746.

τὸ θέρος ἐστίν would be sufficient by itself to connote immediacy without ἤδη in the first part of the parable. This exactly specifies the beginning of imminent expectation i.e., *at the moment* the greening occurs, summer is at hand.<sup>12</sup> Second, the parallel application attaches summer's nearness to the SM's parousia concerning the destructive greening of the fig-tree Jerusalem produced by Titus' ruinations.<sup>13</sup> Verse 29 syntactically parallels v.14.<sup>14</sup> The emphatic ὑμεῖς links the nature lesson in the disciples' discernment<sup>15</sup> over a simple observation of nature and its relation to the seasons,<sup>16</sup> ὅταν ἴδητε reaches back through v.14 (ὅταν δὲ ἴδητε τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως) to v.4 (τί τὸ σημεῖον) and ταῦτα γινόμενα harks back to v.4

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<sup>12</sup> Gundry, Mark p.787. Cf., Gaston, "... the parable certainly means that the harvest will follow very soon" Stone p.37 fn.3.

<sup>13</sup> Telford's study of fig-trees in Graeco-Roman myth provides a useful counterpoint to the way Mark couples Titus' destructive activity as the end-time sign (13:14) with the horrendous greening of the fig-tree (13:28f.), see "More Fruit From The Withered Tree: Temple and Fig-tree in Mark From a Graeco-Roman Perspective" in Templum Amicitiae Essays on the Second Temple presented to Ernst Bammel JSNT Supplementary Series 48 (ed.) William Horbury (Sheffield: JSOT Press), 1991 pp.264-304. Instead of the bond between the emperor's son and nature (Titus and fig-tree) producing the *aureum saeculum* with its manifest profusion of nature, the dissolution of the present age is at hand. Jesus' prophecy of the temple's destruction with its graphic illustration (the cursed and withered fig-tree) ensures his "superior power and sovereignty over the Jewish Holy City and its Temple" (p.303). His prophecy of the temple's demise by Titus' hand (13:14) demonstrates his superiority over all political entities vying for power. By linking 13:14 with v.28f. Mark has turned the Imperial *aureum saeculum* on its head. Imperial power has triggered not the Golden Age but the imminent dissolution of the present order.

<sup>14</sup> See chapter two (2.4.4.).

<sup>15</sup> Therefore we take γινώσκετε as an indicative in v.28 and an imperative in v.29 (so Taylor, Mark p.520) because (i) no particular injunction is necessary to recognize the relationship between nature and the seasons, observation is sufficient. (ii) Taking the second γινώσκετε as an imperative "would balance the μάθετε of v.28 well ('learn the veiled meaning of the fig tree ... know that he is near!)" Beasley-Murray, Last Days p.437.

<sup>16</sup> Significantly, οὕτως καὶ ὑμεῖς, here linked to a key Markan verb (ὁρᾶν), occurs in 8:17 linked to another key verb (νοεῖν). Both verbs occur together in 13:14.



with special reference to v.14,<sup>17</sup> which is the syntactical peak of vv.5-23.<sup>18</sup> The clarification of ἐγγύς with ἐπὶ θύραις "at the doors" (v.29)<sup>19</sup> provides a *double* emphasis on imminence.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Lambrecht (Redaktion p.199), Pesch, (Naherwartungen p.179), Marxsen, (Evangelist p.187), Beasley-Murray (Last Days p.437), A.Y. Collins, (Beginning p.87), Glazier, (Method p.343), and Myers (Strong Man p.345), emphasize this connection with v.14. However for Myers Jerusalem's destruction is a historical event placing the disciple community "at the door" (p.346) of an established social existence, which is contrary to his idea that the "harvest" is "the apocalyptic moment of the cross" (p.345). By interpreting the parousia as cross redemption Myers dismantles imminence in respect to the SM and focuses imminence upon community existence. Anderson nullifies any lesson from the fig-tree parable by subordinating any and all signs to the "sovereign authority of the one who speaks here" (Jesus), which robs the parable's application of imminence because it cannot be in any event (Mark p.300).

<sup>18</sup> Cf., Theissen: "Der Evangelist erwartet noch in seiner Generation, dass Himmel und Erde vergehen werden. Niemand kenne das Datum. Daher könne man sich nur durch andauernde Wachsamkeit auf dies Ende einstellen (Mk 13:30-37). Jedoch gebe es Anzeichen. Mk schreibt: 'Wenn ihr dies geschehen seht, so erkennt, dass er vor der Tür steht' (Mk 13:29). Mit ὅταν ἴδητε ταῦτα kann nur gemeint sein, was der Evangelist 13,14 (in übernahme einer älteren Quelle) mit ὅταν δὲ ἴδητε τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως angekündigt hat" Lokalkolorit p.272.

<sup>19</sup> This personal figure surely refers to the SM's parousia ("Events do not come through doors, persons do" Gundry, Mark p.788). For Geddert the parable is about "awareness" which cannot guarantee causal connections over the "temporal proximity" of two events (Watchwords p.249). Thus nearness carries no impetus by connoting simply association, which leaves the possibility of a distant future for the SM's parousia. If the SM is "near before the nearness is recognized" and the "fact of its nearness" does not circumvent the possibility of waiting "perhaps for a very long time," the fig-tree parable loses force through unwarranted specification of a state of mind (a realization of the significance of the temple's destruction). It relegates objective correspondence (of the real temporal connection of the destruction and the parousia) into the symbolism of new community existence. For Geddert, ἐγγύς denotes an object "the Age" (ch.9 fn.63) which does obviate the problem of the parousia's nearness (10:30). To take 13:33-37 as pressing patience without immediacy ("just as a farmer needs it while waiting through the seasons for the expected crops" fn.64) is to exchange preparedness for patience. Contrast the immediacy of the leafing fig-tree with the necessary fast approach of one season (summer) and the farmer's perennial wait for harvest ("through the seasons"). Cf., Gundry, "The summer is bound to come soon after the fig tree blossoms; so the mere possibility of the Son of man's coming at any time (imminence without certainty) would not meet the demands of the parable" Mark p.787. Lane (Mark pp.478-479) understands a personal reference to "at the doors" applying to τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως, but the SM in v.26 is a much closer antecedent. On this reading ταῦτα γινόμενα (v.29) would be a warning of

Finally vv.30-31 ratify the preceding verses as Gundry rightly surmises: "In the last two sayings (vv.30-31), the emphasis expands to include not only the nearness of Jesus' coming once the abomination of desolation takes place and the unequaled tribulation sets in, but also the certainty of the fulfillments of all his predictions."<sup>21</sup>

Third, the fig-tree parable is a nature lesson connoting imminence -- when leaves sprout forth summer is near, so the appearance of Titus (v.29 *ὅταν ἴδητε* "recalls v.14a")<sup>22</sup> indicates the consummation's nearness. A connection exists between Mk 13:28 and the destruction of the temple/city, which is found also in 11:12-25, where the fig-tree's withering, based upon its production of leaves alone (cf., 13:28), prefigures the temple's ruin.<sup>23</sup> *Contra* Geddert,<sup>24</sup> who surmises a connection on the basis of the notion "fig-tree" but posits different emphases

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the approaching abominator, which would correspond certainly with vv.5-8 and possibly vv.5-13. But events not called the onset of the end (v.8), become harbinger events of the abominator's approach, which negates the starkness of the sudden appearance of the abominator in v.14 along with the injunction to flee.

<sup>20</sup> "At the doors" leads into the parable of the man departing his house to go on a journey (vv.32-36), who leaves one of his servants at the door (*τῷ θυρωρῷ* v.34) *to be ready* and watch and open the door at his return. For Geddert, such terms as *ἡμέρας/ῶρας* (v.32) "specify the events under discussion more than to focus on the day or hour of its arrival" (*Watchwords* ch.9 fn.49). But the event (parousia) is under discussion without the terms *ἡμέρας/ῶρας*, so the terms are appropriately used and confirm the subject-matter, namely the parousia's nearness. Hooker's judgment ("Trial and Tribulation" p.94), that since the parousia's time is unknown (vv.30-31), signs are prohibited so vigilance is the necessary requirement (vv.32-37), is not at variance with our position. The given sign (v.14) triggers the end-time without delineating the moment of the SM's incursion, hence the need for watchfulness.

<sup>21</sup> *Mark* p.746.

<sup>22</sup> Gundry, *Mark* p.746.

<sup>23</sup> So Pesch, *Markusevangelium* p.307; Hooker, "Trial and Tribulation" p.93; Myers, *Strong Man* p.345; Beasley-Murray, *Last Days* p.441.

<sup>24</sup> *Watchwords* pp.249-251.

(leaves in 11:13 and anticipated fruit in 13:28). But a double specification occurs, ensuring an association to the reader of the dual mention of "fig-tree" and "leaves." The notion of fruit can only be *inferred* from v.28. *Contra* Gundry,<sup>25</sup> who posits that the cursing and temple cleansing demonstrates Jesus' authority. This ignores the "sandwich" technique by which the fig-tree cursing indicates a cursed temple. In both 11:12-25 and 13:1-28 the fig-tree occurs in a temple setting with an emphasis on the tree's leaves (vv.11:13,13:28). This continuity is hardly coincidental. Glazier<sup>26</sup> severs the connection by positing the leafy fig-tree in 13:28 as connoting the coming summer or the SM's appearance. But this disregards how τὸ σημεῖον in v.4 is answered in v.14, providing a basis for the SM's nearness. Ignoring Mk 13:4-25 leaves the leafy fig-tree without a referent for determining the SM's nearness. The emphasis from falling to greening draws from LXX Isa 34:4 where the fig-tree's *leaves* provide the illustration. Both leaves prefigure something horrendous, a cursing and the abominator's advent destroying the temple. The first tree repudiates the temple which is actualized verbally when Jesus prophesies its destruction (13:1f.). Titus will be the instrument of destruction heralding the end-time proper: Myers well comments on Mark's logic: "If 'leafy fig tree' = 'temple to be cursed' And 'destruction of temple' = 'the end time' Then 'leafy fig tree' = 'end time to be fulfilled.' The 'when you see' of the 'desecrating sacrilege' is here correlated to the 'when you see' of 13:29. The circle of inference is complete: the reader must once and for all *learn* the lesson of the fig tree. Which was: the world of the temple-based social order must come to an end (11:20-26) in order for the new order to dawn."<sup>27</sup> Therefore the removal of the mountain (11:23) must in

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<sup>25</sup> Mark p.640.

<sup>26</sup> Method p.342.

<sup>27</sup> Strong Man p.345.

application be the temple Mount (13:3).<sup>28</sup> Gundry posits a non-eschatological reference to mountain in 11:23-25 but Jesus will follow his own advice by prophesying the temple's destruction (13:2), which will be accomplished. In fact he has already manifested his authority by verbally "cursing" the temple (11:14) which will be removed by virtue of his own dictum. Sharon Echols Dowd,<sup>29</sup> in objecting to Telford's view, ignores the context where the mountain-moving saying is located in the closing remarks of the "sandwich" directly after the temple cleansing. The ἀδύνατον cannot be missed: Jesus announces in 13:3 the curse spoken in 11:14.

By inserting between mention of the heavenly bodies (vv.24-25) and the fig-tree (vv.28f.) a reference to the coming SM, Mark has altered associations latent in the fig-tree symbolism in Isa 34:4.<sup>30</sup> There, the fig-tree illustrates the rotting of the heavenly powers, signifying the nation's approaching judgment. In Mk 13:28 the fig-tree, already associated with Israel's failure to produce fruit and thereby standing cursed (11:14), signifies the temple's destruction resulting in the end of the age. The fig-tree Jerusalem and its corrupt religious hierarchy cannot produce any sustenance (11:14). "The Lord whom they sought had suddenly come to his Temple (cf. Mal 3:1 Mk 1:2) but had condemned rather than restored it! Elijah the prophet had been sent before the great and terrible day of the Lord (Mal 4:5; cf. Mk 9:12) but they had done to him whatever they pleased (Mk 9:13)! Therefore the Lord would come and smite the land with a curse (Mal 4:6) and the blow had been struck against the barren fig-tree! For Mark and his readers the scenario had already been written in the pages of the Old

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<sup>28</sup> So Telford, Barren p.119; Myers, Strong Man p.305.

<sup>29</sup> Prayer, Power, and the Problem of Suffering Mark 11:22-25 in the Context of Markan Theology SBL Dissertation Series 105 (Atlanta: Scholars Press), 1988 pp.72-75.

<sup>30</sup> Mk 13:24b-25 probably stems from Isa 13:10c,34:4 (Gundry, Mark p.783).

Testament, and in their actual experience Jerusalem and the Temple had, in 70 CE, been utterly destroyed! ... For the Markan reader the cursing of the fig-tree was an eschatological sign prefiguring the destruction of Jerusalem and its Temple. For Mark, it was a commentary upon his own time."<sup>31</sup>

Therefore the fig-tree parable (v.28) takes up the question of τὸ σημεῖον in v.4, with the emerging leaves indicating the SM's nearness at the end-time.<sup>32</sup> With the appearance of τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως (v.14), the question regarding τὸ σημεῖον (v.4) is answered, and the one event providing a reference point to the SM's parousia occurs. The end-time begins and near expectation becomes operational. The parousia will occur in the immediate future within the span of the current generation (v.30).<sup>33</sup>

7.1.2. To support this interpretation, we contend that passages outside of ch.13 confirm that

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<sup>31</sup> Telford, Barren p.163.

<sup>32</sup> Though disagreeing with Brandenburger's view of τὸ σημεῖον as the celestial events of vv.24-25 (see 2.4.3.) we agree with his connecting the decisive sign (v.4) with the end-time ("nach dem Verständnis des Markus, das hier aus der Schülerfrage spricht, wird das Zeichen im allerletzten Moment dieses äons erscheinen, wenn ... diese Weltzeit eben jetzt zum Abschluss gebracht werden muss" Markus 13 p.101). Against Hooker, who also connects the approach of summer (and so the SM's near approach) with the onset of the celestial signs of vv.24-25 ("Trial and Tribulation" p.93): (i) Vigilance would be unnecessary in view of the expansive grandeur of the celestial signs, which would be an unmistakable pointer to the parousia. (ii) The term ταῦτα γινόμενα picks up the previous ταῦτα in v.4 which is fulfilled at v.14. Nothing in vv.24-25 suggests the fulfillment of τὸ σημεῖον in v.4. Syntactically v.14 does point to v.4. (iii) Similarly, the temporal clause ὅταν ἴδητε recalls the identical terms ὅταν δὲ ἴδητε in v.14. (iv) The fig-tree is consistently associated with the destruction of Jerusalem in 11:12-14,20-26 and 13:26 where a horrendous greening of events of destruction is posited upon the city.

<sup>33</sup> No contradiction exists between imminent expectation and ignorance regarding the "day" or "hour." Finally the absent master and doorkeeper parable counsels vigilance in view of the SM's imminent expectation. As in v.14, where Mark intrudes into the text to punctuate the need for his audience to recognize the significance of the advent of τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως, so in v.37 Mark addresses his audience as well as the four disciples.

imminent expectation is operational. Imminent expectation is placed by Mark in 9:1 at the centre of the key section of the gospel:<sup>34</sup> the revelation of Jesus as the suffering SM and the concomitant call to follow in suffering discipleship (8:27-9:13).<sup>35</sup>

Mk 9:1 Καὶ ἔλεγεν αὐτοῖς, Ἄμην λέγω ὑμῖν ὅτι εἰσὶν τινες ὧδε τῶν ἐστηκότων οἵτινες οὐ μὴ γεύσονται θανάτου ἕως ἂν ἴδωσιν τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ θεοῦ ἐληλυθυῖαν ἐν δυνάμει.

And he said to them, "Truly I say unto you, some of the ones who are standing here will not taste of death until they see the kingdom of God come with power."

Chapter 9:1 is a composite saying from an original statement by Jesus,<sup>36</sup> fashioned by Mark into a shape buttressing imminent expectation regarding the coming SM. First, though cast in the framework of Jesus' ministry the Markan Jesus speaks of the contemporary generation which will experience the SM's parousia. The parousia context of 8:38 determines

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<sup>34</sup> A strong connection exists in 9:1 between the previous SM saying (8:38) and the transfiguration incident (9:2f.). Moreover, 9:1 can only be understood with reference to the dramatic disclosure at Caesarea regarding Jesus' unique person and mission (8:27f.). From this point Jesus moves forward ready to grapple with his future, and the disciples are caught up with the knowledge that something portentous is to occur. Mark's readers are boosted to perceive suffering as an integral part and consequence of discipleship, based upon the example of the suffering SM whose vindication will become apparent only at the parousia (8:31-39). See D.E. Nineham, *St. Mark Pelican Gospel Commentaries* (Baltimore: Penguin) 1963 p.223; Perrin, "The Christology of Mark: A Study in Methodology" *JRel* 51 (1971) p.177.

<sup>35</sup> "Der mit 8,27 beginnende zweite Teil des Ev (8,27-10,52) hat eine stärkere systematisch-theologische Struktur. Neben dem leitenden Passionsgedanken, der in den Leidensankündigungen anklingt, haben Jüngerbelehrungen (8,31-9,1;9,9-13;9,33-50;10,41-45) ihre besondere Bedeutung" Ernst, *Das Evangelium nach Markus RNT* (Regensburg: Pustet), 1981 p.18.

<sup>36</sup> E.g., Donahue, Ambrozic, and Chilton: "An evangelical and critical approach to the sayings of Jesus" *Themelios* 3-4 (1977-79).

τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ θεοῦ ἐληλυθυῖαν ἐν δυνάμει indicating the same event.<sup>37</sup> The tight cluster of words bracketed by the pronominal adjectives *τινες/οἵτινες* fixes the individuals in the time of *ἡ γενεὰ αὕτη* (13:30).<sup>38</sup> What is universalized in respect to a generation in 13:30 is made particular to an assembly in 9:1.<sup>39</sup> The perfect participle (*ἑστηκότων*), preceded for emphasis by the adverb (*ὥδε*), roots the company in the contemporary generation, that is, ἐν τῇ γενεᾷ ταύτῃ τῇ μοιχαλίδι καὶ ἀμαρτωλῷ (8:38).<sup>40</sup> Preceded by the emphatic double negative (*οὐ μὴ*), the predicated Semiticism<sup>41</sup> specifying this company (*γεύσονται θανάτου*), pinpoints the company as experiencing the parousia (which is brought out by *ἕως ἄν* with the aorist subjunctive *ἴδωσιν*).<sup>42</sup> The accent falls, not on not dying, but on not dying until the

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<sup>37</sup> So Donahue, *Are You the Christ?* p.166.

<sup>38</sup> Perrin has shown the structural similarity between 9:1 and 13:30 ("The Composition of Mark ix,1" *NT* 11 [1969] pp.67-70).

<sup>39</sup> Gundry, *Mark* p.468.

<sup>40</sup> 9:1 provides a sharp antithesis to 13:14: (i) Instead of disciples' standing (*τινες ... τῶν ἑστηκότων*), an individual, Titus stands (*ἑστηκότα* 13:14). (ii) The place of standing is defined by *ὥδε*, which in 13:14 is defined as *ὅπου οὐ δεῖ*, in the temple (cf., 13:2 where *ὥδε* occurs in respect to the destruction of the temple *ὥδε λίθος ἐπὶ λίθον ὃς οὐ μὴ καταλυθῆ*). (iii) Some disciples would live to see the parousia (*οἵτινες οὐ μὴ γεύσονται θανάτου ἕως ἄν ἴδωσιν τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ θεοῦ ἐληλυθυῖαν ἐν δυνάμει* 9:1), whereas in 13:14 Mark's audience (*ὁ ἀναγινώσκων νοεῖτω*) would see the appearance of *τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως*. (iv) Disciples in 9:1 and 13:14 would see (*ἴδωσιν* 9:1/*ἴδητε* 13:14) something. (v) The object before them would be glorious (*τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ θεοῦ ἐληλυθυῖαν ἐν δυνάμει* 9:1) and horrendous (*τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως* 13:14).

<sup>41</sup> The deponent *γεύομαι* by implication signifies a future recognition by "some" of the "coming of the kingdom." The "until" and the double negative *οὐ μὴ* make the death of "some" of the disciples conditional upon a definite recognition and acknowledgement of the kingdom's appearance. The perfect active participle of *έρχομαι* indicates a spatial and temporal frame of reference for the kingdom's commencement.

<sup>42</sup> Myers (*Strong Man* p.248) argues that the reappearance of *γενεὰ* in 8:38, after its mention in 8:12 where it was linked with a rejected sign request, puts both contexts in the same conceptual frame: no sign will be given to the adulterous and sinful generation of 8:38.

parousia occurs, (the second subjunctive ἴδωσιν perfects the first γεύσονται which would otherwise be left hanging). Second, the correspondence between parousia and kingdom of God is brought out by the way ἴδωσιν τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ θεοῦ ἐληλυθυῖαν ἐν δυνάμει completes the stated ὅταν ἔλθῃ ἐν τῇ δόξῃ τοῦ πατρὸς αὐτοῦ μετὰ τῶν ἀγγέλων τῶν ἁγίων in 8:38. The verbs ἔλθῃ/ἐληλυθυῖαν<sup>43</sup> match (cf., ἐρχόμενον 13:26,14:62).<sup>44</sup> Similarly the combination δυνάμει (9:1) and δόξῃ (8:38)<sup>45</sup> is descriptive of the parousia in 13:26 (μετὰ

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But both uses of γενεᾶ indicate individuals without faith in Jesus, whereas the sign request in 13:4 stems from and is answered by those trusting in him. Therefore the appearance of a sign triggering the nearness of the SM's parousia is not inimical to the context in 9:1. Myers also interprets the parousia as a prohibited sign, which confuses an indicator with the indicated, and leaves unanswered how the SM's parousia could signify anything superior to itself.

<sup>43</sup> C.H. Dodd's interpretation of 9:1 (where he translated the perfect participle ἐληλυθυῖαν by "has come") has been refuted numerous times. See N. Perrin, The Kingdom of God in the Teaching of Jesus (Philadelphia: Westminster Press), 1963 p.67; W.G. Kümmel, Promise and Fulfillment. The Eschatological Message of Jesus SBT 23 (London: SCM Press), 1957 p.25f.; R.H. Fuller, The Mission and Achievement of Jesus SBT 1/12 (London: SCM Press), 1967 p.27f.; T.A. Burkill, Mysterious Revelation (New York: Cornell University Press), 1963 p.165f.

Dodd's view's developed considerably. In Parables of the Kingdom (New York: Scribners), 1958 p.53f., his translation "has come" signified an interpretation of the participle as a action "already complete from the standpoint of the subject of the main verb." So the disciples would come to recognize at some future date that the kingdom had already come prior to their acknowledgement of such. In The Coming of Christ (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 1951 p.13f., Dodd's view altered to the extent that he now saw 9:1 in terms of resurrection, Pentecost and the new age.

<sup>44</sup> Donahue draws a parallel between the events located in 8:27-9:1, and those at the trial of Jesus. He proposes that Mark is making a christological statement (8:29) which is repeated in ch.14. The parallels are: the mention of χριστός (8:29,14:61), the relationship of the Father to Jesus (8:38,14:61), the use of a SM saying that looks to events soon to occur (8:38,14:62), a word bringing both encouragement to believers and posing a threat to opponents (8:38,14:62), and the suffering SM, mentioned as a prediction in 8:31, is acted out in ch.14 Are You the Christ? p.162f.

<sup>45</sup> Kent Brower ("Mark 9:1 Seeing the Kingdom in Power," JSNT [1980] pp.33-34) correctly surmises that 8:27-9:9 is crucial to understanding 9:1 because 9:1 and 8:38 finish with the notion of a "coming," producing a strong dichotomy between a warning and a



δυνάμεως πολλῆς καὶ δόξης). The similarities between 8:38,9:1 and 13:26 "point to different ways of describing the event"<sup>46</sup> i.e., the parousia.<sup>47</sup>

In addition, by rooting the kingdom of God in an imminent parousia, Mark is able to place the gospel within this context from Jesus' initial imminent βασιλεία preaching in Galilee (1:14-15 cf., 9:1,13:30).

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promise. Peter has made the confession that Jesus is "the Christ" but then fails to connect messiahship with suffering. Jesus uses this to teach his followers that faithfulness involves suffering. At the SM's coming suffering will give way to "glory" (8:38) in which faithfulness will mean acceptance by the SM. Thus "coming" in 9:1 "may well be related to the coming of the SM in the judgment implied by 8:38" (p.31).

<sup>46</sup> Gundry, Mark p.468.

<sup>47</sup> Since the time of the Early Church Fathers the transfiguration (9:2-8) has been understood as a direct fulfillment of 9:1 (see Enrique Nardoni, "A Redactional Interpretation of Mark 9:1" CBO 43 [1981], p.369 fn.5). The "some" are the disciples Peter, James, and John, who witness the transfiguration (9:2 καὶ μετεμορφώθη ἔμπροσθεν αὐτῶν cf., v.4,8,9). On this view Mark understands the transfiguration as a partial fulfillment or foretaste of Jesus' glorious parousia (so Nineham, Cranfield, Lane, and Brower). Lane draws parallels between the transfiguration and the parousia: the visible nature of Jesus' manifestation (9:2,4,8-9), the cloud "reminiscent of God's self-revelation and self-veiling, the voice in confirmation of Jesus' sonship. The command to listen to him reinforces the challenge of 8:34-38" Mark p.314 fn.5. For Lane the certainty of the parousia is based upon what had already happened at the transfiguration. Against this, it appears forced for Jesus to mention dramatically the future appearance of the kingdom within the lifetime of some of the disciples and then see its attainment six days later (9:2). The phrase ἐν δυνάμει is unconnected with events in Jesus' earthly life, but rather belongs to his resurrection existence (Rom 1:4; cf., 1Cor 15:43 where the spiritual body is raised "in power") and is used in reference to the parousia (13:26,14:62). Cranfield maintains that τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ θεοῦ ἐληλυθυῖαν ἐν δυνάμει might not be an unfair description of what the three saw on the mount of Transfiguration. "Again, the mountain revelation "points forward to, and is a foretaste of, the Parousia" Cranfield, The Gospel According to Saint Mark (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 1959 p.288. But the "plain sense of the words" (Fuller, Mission p.27) in 9:1 suggests something more. The most obvious view is that the Markan Jesus expected the kingdom to arrive in the near future. Kümmel's point is well taken which we apply to the Markan Jesus; The "seeing" and "coming in power" point too obviously to a publicly visible and tangible manifestation of the reign of God ..." Kümmel, "Eschatological Expectation in the Proclamation of Jesus" in The Kingdom of God in the Teaching of Jesus (ed.) Bruce Chilton (London: SPCK), 1984.

Mk 1:14-15 Μετὰ δὲ τὸ παραδοθῆναι τὸν Ἰωάννην ἦλθεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἰς τὴν Γαλιλαίαν κηρύσσων τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ λέγων ὅτι Πεπλήρωται ὁ καιρὸς καὶ ἤγγικεν ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ· μετανοεῖτε καὶ πιστεύετε ἐν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ.

After John was arrested Jesus came into Galilee preaching the gospel of God and saying, "The time is fulfilled and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent and believe in the gospel."

Because 1:14-15 are unanimously declared to be key summary statements<sup>48</sup> consciously employed by Mark to explain Jesus' mission as a whole (Bultmann, Marxsen, Kelber, Ambrozic *et al*, e.g., Kelber, vv.14-15 are seen as "the hermeneutical key to Markan Theology"), these verses describe Jesus' Galilean ministry and are also a clarion call to Mark's audience to preach

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<sup>48</sup> Kingdom p.4. Therefore attempts to surmise the limit of Mark's introduction at 1:13 force an artificial horizon that cannot be contained (Cranfield, St.Mark p.33; Lane, Mark). Verses 14-15 "furnish the key to Mark's life and death of Jesus" (Kelber, Kingdom p.3). These verses are a caption or "manifesto" of the whole gospel, so D.E. Nineham, St.Mark p.68. Lane (Mark p.39) argues for a separation of vv.1-13 from 14-15 largely on the basis of the thematic term ἔρημος, prominent in vv.1-13 with the geographical change to Galilee (v.14) forcing the reader to abandon the "wilderness" location. But (i) vv.14-15 conclude vv.1-13 providing a compression of Mark's entire gospel *in toto*. They also act as a pivotal point explaining the "beginning" of the gospel (v.1), propelling the reader forward to focus upon the endeavours of Jesus in Galilee. The grandeur of Jesus' person and task is introduced in his elevation over the Baptist (vv.7-11) and victorious bout with the devil (vv.13-14). (ii) Connecting vv.14-15 with v.16 is artificial while joining v.14 with its antecedents provides an apt conclusion regarding the fate of the Baptist. John's demise yields to the now established ascendancy of Jesus, ominously pointing forward to Jesus' own fate and that of Mark's readers (13:9,12). Cf., Paul J. Achtemeier, "Mark as Interpreter of the Jesus Tradition," Interpr 32 (1978): "John was important to Mark as Jesus' forerunner, and part of John's activity, indeed the climax to it, was his violent death. By that use and arrangement of the traditions concerning John the Baptist, Jesus' forerunner, Mark has shown that Jesus' death was a necessary, indeed, inevitable climax to his career" p.42. John's arrest is a temporal pointer dividing previous and now fulfilled time, and the present moment which corresponds to the onset of the kingdom. Jesus' own baptism, with the divine voice proclaiming his sonship and his reception of the Spirit, emphatically provide the credentials of one who dares forthrightly to proclaim "the time is fulfilled."

the gospel.<sup>49</sup>

Though ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ is absent in ch.13 we have found its association with the SM's parousia in 8:38-9:1. However the significant connection between 1:15 and the proclaimed message of Mark's time is the term εὐαγγέλιον, which expressly occurs in 13:10 characterizing the end-time proclamation until the SM's manifestation.<sup>50</sup> Further, other εὐαγγέλιον references are strategically placed in Markan end-time contexts: in 8:35 the term is a technical designation standing absolutely, syntactically paralleling Jesus' authority (ἐνεκεν ἐμοῦ καὶ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου)<sup>51</sup> and expressly indicative of discipleship experience at the time

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<sup>49</sup> Note Marcus: "... the whole genius of Mark's Gospel is to overlay the story of Jesus' earthly ministry with the postresurrectional story of Mark's church, and this overlay implies that Jesus' 'way' continues in the time of the church" Way p.44. The blanket statement in v.14 κηρύσσω τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τοῦ θεοῦ is molded in the language of early Christian preaching, as is μετανοεῖτε καὶ πιστεῦτε ἐν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ which is the Christian message (cf., 8:35,10:29; 13:10; 14:9; Acts 5:31,11:17-18,20:21). "1:14f. not only complements the title of the book but rounds out the whole introduction in such a way that the entire fifteen verses stands as a genuine prologue to the whole subsequent text" Leander E. Keck, "The Introduction to Mark's Gospel" NTS 11-12 (1964-1966) p.357. Cf., Kelber, Story of Jesus: "There is a tight logic which controls the Markan story of 1:2-12 and sets the stage for the pivotal verses 1:14-15" p.19. This is not to suggest that Mark invented such a kingdom proclamation. (L. Arthur Baird concluded this on the basis of computer analysis of the gospels, Rediscovering the Power of the Gospel [Wooster: Iona Press], 1982 pp.17f.,42f. See also, E.P. Sanders, Jesus and Judaism [Philadelphia: Fortress Press], 1985 p.139). The thrice repeated overlay τοῦ εὐαγγελίου 'Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, (1:1), τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τοῦ θεοῦ (1:14), τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ (1:15), indicating "good news," emphatically launches ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ.

<sup>50</sup> This association was brought out by J.R. Michaels in an unpublished paper, "An Intemperate Case for an Eschatological Jesus?" referred to by Beasley-Murray, Last Days pp.254-256.

<sup>51</sup> Taking the above reading on the basis of  $\mathcal{N} A B C K L W X$ . Gundry takes this usage ("collocation of Jesus' sake and the gospel's sake" Mark p.437) as indicating the movement whereby the gospel shifts to being 'Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ υἱοῦ θεοῦ (1:1) from τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τοῦ θεοῦ (1:15). But 1:1 establishes that this has been Mark's position from the beginning. The circumlocution in 1:15 prevents Jesus preaching himself as subject (cf., Marxsen, who affirms the "Risen Lord" speaking in v.15, with Jesus as subject and object of the gospel Evangelist pp.133-134).

of the SM's parousia (8:38). Chronological narration occurs without mention of the disciples dying for the sake of Jesus and the gospel, but in the Markan *Sitz im Leben*, this was anticipated for all Christians by Mark (cf., 13:10 with 13:12-13 and see below).<sup>52</sup> In 10:29 the same thought is expressed (ἔνεκεν ἐμοῦ καὶ ἔνεκεν τοῦ εὐαγγελίου) which matches the persecution experienced by Mark's community (see μετὰ διωγμῶν and section 7.2.). Moreover, the verb παραδιδόναι "features prominently in the reference to John the Baptist's arrest in 1:14 and in the prophecies of the disciples' betrayal in 13:9,11-12"<sup>53</sup> which flank the εὐαγγέλιον reference in v.10.<sup>54</sup> Mark's readers, already rocked by fierce opposition, are to continue to face

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<sup>52</sup> For Donahue, Mark in 8:27-91 establishes "the pattern of suffering, vindication and judgment, and future coming of the kingdom ... the future Son of Man sayings perform a similar function of giving meaning to other titles and exist in a similar pattern of suffering, vindication, arrival of a new stage of God's activity" Are You the Christ? p.167.

<sup>53</sup> Marcus, Way p.193.

<sup>54</sup> For many πρῶτον (13:10) indicates a parousia delay ("the End cannot come until the Gentile mission is completed" Hooker, "Trial and Tribulation" p.88, also Lambrecht, Redaktion p.129; Gaston, Stone p.20; Anderson, Mark p.294; Glazier, Method p.332; Gnilka, Markus p.191; Brian K. Blount, "Preaching the Kingdom: Mark's Apocalyptic Call for Prophetic Engagement" PrincSemB Suppl. 3 [1994] p.52). Against this: (i) The words πάντα τὰ ἔθνη indicate something already happening (cf., the conflicts with Jewish and Gentile authorities in 13:9), without necessarily indicating the expanse of civilization covering the entire earth in a twentieth century sense (cf., Rom 15:19-24; Col 1:23). (ii) The ground of necessity manifest in δεῖ is eschatologically motivated, not as a curtailment of the end, but as a divine injunction within its context. That is, future oriented action is made a statement of intention and motivation, through injecting the portrayal of faithful discipleship at the parousia. The gospel has been and is being preached. (iii) Preaching the gospel itself assists in hastening the parousia and so is not inimical to imminence because it is an eschatologically motivated act continuing Jesus' own proclamation (Marxsen, Evangelist p.177; cf., Beasley-Murray, "it [πρῶτον] presents an urgent task to be done before it [the parousia] does happen, a task which has a vital place in God's purpose for the nations in relation to his saving sovereignty" Last Days p.403 see fn.79; also Brandenburger, Markus 13 pp.30-35), hence its association with persecution (13:9-13), an end-time trait. "It is ... what 'must' happen of all necessity to complete the course of history according to God's plan" J. Verheyden, "Persecution and Eschatology Mk 13,9-13" in The Four Gospels p.1158.

a future of being hated by all (13:13), and a period of unparalleled tribulation (13:19). From the outset they are offered no respite except the imminently expected parousia.<sup>55</sup> A line is drawn from the first among Jesus, John, and disciples contemporaneous with Mark, all of whom face arrest and betrayal.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> By positing a two-generational "stereoscopy" perspective, in respect to historical tradition and the Markan narrative, Fredriksen's view of imminent expectation lacks sharpness and remains somewhat open-ended (Jesus pp.183-185). The disciples in Jesus' generational perspective are lumped with those constituting a "faithless generation" (8:38), which prohibits them from receiving any sign (13:4, cf., 8:11-12) regarding the nearness of the end. Fredriksen posits the sign given to the persecuted faithful of Mark's generation (13:9), but having loosed the disciples of Mark's generation from those of Jesus' time, Fredriksen can offer no reason why a sign is given ostensibly to the Markan church through a request from those of a "faithless generation" (13:4,8:38). By severing any discipleship connection between the disciples of two generations, Fredriksen leaves open the issue of why Jesus would give a sign to a faithful generation of disciples, *through an unfaithful generation*. Our view, that despite their obtuseness the disciples are essentially one with Jesus, and that by Mark positing an end-time sign occurring at the extremity of the boundary of Jesus' generation he intensifies near expectation almost to breaking point, is clearer in respect to what drives the Markan disciples.

<sup>56</sup> Theissen has documented how poignant the notion of εὐαγγέλιον was in Syria in the immediate post-70 C.E. situation. Vespasian had been proclaimed and acclaimed Emperor in the East and Rome, which Josephus calls εὐαγγέλια. Against this background "schreibt der Verfasser des MkEv eine Art 'Gegenevangelium': die Botschaft von dem Gekreuzigten, der zum Weltenherrscher bestimmt ist. Nicht die Konsolidierung der politischen Lage unter Vespasian ist das 'Evangelium,' sondern die Botschaft vom Leben und Sterben Jesu von Nazareth. Die betonte Art, mit der Mk-Evangelist das Stichwort εὐαγγέλια seinem Buch voranstellt (Mk 1,1), die Predigt vom kommenden Reich nennt (1,14), den Evangeliums-Begriff mit der Leidensnachfolge verbindet (8,35;10:29), all das könnte darauf hinweisen, dass er seine Geschichte Jesu bewusst als ein Evangelium anderer Art konzipiert. Religiös überhöhte Propaganda für Vespasian gehörte für ihn zu jenem 'Greuel der Verwüstung,' mit dem er das Weltende kommen sah" Lokalkolorit pp.283-284. Though we reject Theissen's advocacy of Vespasian as τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως we see no reason to reject the notion of counter-gospel in Mark's work. In view of the filial connection between Vespasian and Titus, Titus hailed as *Imperator* under Roman standards in the temple in September 70 C.E. and with the capstone being the grandiose decadent combined procession with Vespasian at his return to Rome in June 71 C.E., no doubt any notions of Vespasian's emperorship as εὐαγγέλια could be understood as a rival gospel. This is so considering Titus' exploits as τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως, and, as Vespasian's son, next in line for the emperorship. Titus' devastation of Jerusalem was τὸ σημεῖον (13:4) triggering the end-time which energized an imminent parousia expectation and led to

Conclusion At the heart of the Markan gospel is the nearness of the end. From the εὐαγγέλιον proclamation in 1:15 the Markan Jesus is catapulted forward in an "action gospel."<sup>57</sup> Mark pushes us on breathlessly to the inevitable outcome in Jerusalem. Imminence draws up Jesus' teaching into an end-time event,<sup>58</sup> pressing the kingdom message upon the Markan audience: zero hour has arrived and the time of decision is inevitably short.<sup>59</sup> Mark is not simply intent on presenting historical biography. From the first, historical narrative is translated contextually from within an end-time framework or, whatever the reader follows in respect to chronological presentation is overlaid by an end-time perspective.<sup>60</sup> Therefore near expectation in chronological narration in 1:15,9:1,13:30 puts Mark's generation at the edge of a belief of credibility regarding the approaching parousia which Mark has connected with the devastation wrought by Titus. What gears up that belief in the parousia's imminent approach is the one end-time σημεῖον (13:4). No wonder Mark's unparalleled narrative intrusion in 13:14 (ὁ ἀναγινώσκων νοεῖτω)! Thus the condition that Jesus' generation will experience the

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the Markan εὐαγγέλιον.

<sup>57</sup> "... it begins abruptly and moves tersely on toward its abrupt ending. Euthus ('straightway') occurs nineteen times in sixteen chapters ... The narrative rarely halts for logia; the sense of a great tragic drama is maintained throughout" Albert C. Outler, "The Gospel According to St. Mark" Perk Journ 33-34 (1979-1981) p.7.

<sup>58</sup> So A.Y. Collins, "Although the Gospel of Mark is not history in the rational, empirical sense of Thucydides or in the modern critical sense, it seems to be history in an eschatological or apocalyptic sense" Beginning p.37.

<sup>59</sup> "The sparse prose and staccato cures create a mood of nervous anticipation. The times *must* be fulfilled. Who is this man, and what will he do next?" Fredriksen, Jesus p.44.

<sup>60</sup> Note that in 1:1 Χριστοῦ occurs not as a proper name but as a statement that as God's anointed, Jesus is the Messiah, something which narratively only comes to full expression in the confession before the high priest, that Jesus' messiahship will be manifest at the consummation (14:62). So A.Y. Collins, Beginning p.37.

parousia (9:1,13:28-30), is barely compatible given Mark's writing in the immediate post-war situation, which heightens imminent expectation by placing Mark's generation at the extremity of the boundary of Jesus' generation.

## 7.2. Verses 6-8

By prefacing v.14f. with the material in vv.6-8 Mark has made the events depicted in these verses preparatory to Titus' temple destruction of September 70 C.E. and so outside the operational end-time scheme.

7.2.1. The deceivers, wars, earthquakes and famines in vv.6-8 occurred before Jerusalem's fall and are documented in the Jewish-Roman war.<sup>61</sup> The unimaginable horrors recounted by Josephus testify to the impact of famine in the latter stages of the siege in Jerusalem.<sup>62</sup> Although

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<sup>61</sup> Theissen's arguments against the wars, earthquakes, and famines in vv.7-8 as referents in the period of the Jewish-Roman war 66-70 C.E. are unconvincing. He does acknowledge the horrors of famine in the Jerusalem siege but offers no reasoning for his position beyond stating that the conflicts between the warring factions vying over control of Rome are not behind the "wars" and "rumours of wars" in v.7. He argues that no major earthquakes occurred during this period otherwise they would have been mentioned by Tacitus in Hist 1.2 (Lokalkolorit p.165 fn.62). But Tacitus' depiction of the mood of his time focuses upon the horrors of civil rivalry and not natural calamities (cf., Suetonius Galba 18.1).

<sup>62</sup> "Meanwhile, the victims perishing of famine throughout the city were dropping in countless numbers and enduring sufferings indescribable. In every house, the appearance anywhere of but a shadow of food was a signal for war, and the dearest of relatives fell to blows, snatching from each other the pitiful supports of life. The very dying were not credited as in want; nay, even those expiring were searched by the brigands, lest any should be concealing food beneath a fold of his garment and feigning death. Gaping with hunger, like mad dogs, these ruffians went staggering and reeling along, battering upon the doors in the manner of drunken men, and in their perplexity bursting into the same house twice or thrice within a single hour. Necessity drove the victims to gnaw anything, and objects which even the filthiest of brute beasts would reject they condescended to collect and eat: thus in the end they abstained not from belts and shoes and stripped off and chewed the very leather of their bucklers. Others devoured tufts of withered grass ..." War 6.3:3. See also War 5.10:2,3;5.11:1.

no earthquakes were recorded in the region of Judaea,<sup>63</sup> from 66-70 C.E. several earthquakes occurred in Italy (so Pliny Nat Hist 2.199; Dio Cassius 63.28:1; Suetonius, Galba 18.1 and devastating earthquakes destroyed Pompeii and Herculaneum in 62-63 C.E.). Wars and rumours of wars occurred in the "seesaw of political events of 68-70"<sup>64</sup> in Palestine and Rome. Mark's audience "hears" about the events in vv.7-8, which does not preclude the community from having experienced its own persecution,<sup>65</sup> but places these events in a perspective preparatory to the end-time trigger (v.8c). The two part demarcation between what is heard about (v.7) and what is seen (v.14) indicates a separation of events that can only be known *after* the events themselves have happened.<sup>66</sup> Looking back in retrospect with knowledge that the events depicted in vv.6-8 did not bring the end, and knowing of Titus' decimation of the city, Mark judges the former by the latter from the belief that the temple's destruction signals the end. Therefore Mark interprets events in the period up to September 70 C.E. as preparatory to the

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<sup>63</sup> Though note Toombs on earthquakes in Palestine/Syria: "Palestine lies within the active earthquake zone bounded by the Alps, the Caucasus, and the Himalayas, in which some twenty per cent of recorded earthquakes occur. Although the incidence of earthquakes is greater in Syria to the N, Palestine experiences an average of one or two destructive earthquakes per century, and two to six light shocks each year. The geologically unstable Jordan Valley and the fault create the conditions necessary for movements of the earth's surface. Principal centers of earthquake activity are in Upper Galilee, in the Samaritan territory near Nablus (biblical Shechem), and on the W edge of the Judaeian Mountains near Lydda, with secondary centers in the Jordan Valley at Jericho and Tiberias" (IDB L.E. Toombs, "Earthquake" p.4).

<sup>64</sup> Myers, Strong Man p.334. Hengel posits that "despite its framework of traditional stereotyped apocalyptic formulae, the text in Mark refers to very specific events." Verse 7 refers to the period of intense political rivalry in which following Nero's death, Galba, Otho, and Vitellius were deposed, and great unrest appeared in Germany, Gaul, Britain, Africa, and Palestine (Studies p.22). See also Thomas M. Lindsay, The Gospel of St. Mark (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark), 1883 pp.203-204; Theissen, Lokalkolorit pp.165-166 fn.62.

<sup>65</sup> So Marxsen, Evangelist p.172.

<sup>66</sup> Theissen, Lokalkolorit p.140.



end (v.8c), which does correct the point of view that the end is connected with the siege against Jerusalem. However Mark himself associates the end-time proper by pinpointing Titus, who launches the end-time by destroying the temple and city. Thus the Jewish war up to 'Titus' ruin of the city is preparatory to the trigger event, which "minimizes" or "clears the way" so that events up to Jerusalem's fall are subsumed under the impact of one event.

The array of Jewish revolutionaries, seeking through reviving Davidic messianic hopes ('Εγώ εἶμι v.6) to bring about liberation from Roman rule and unify the country, fit the description of deceivers in 13:6.<sup>67</sup> In fact, a number of prophetic-messianic leaders both before and following the Jewish-Roman war 66-71 C.E.<sup>68</sup> preached the disestablishment of the Jerusalem cult along with an existence coalescing around the notion of wilderness, a key element of Messianic claims:<sup>69</sup> "Mark's use of the Deutero-Isaian prophecy of an eschatological

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<sup>67</sup> Surely if Grundmann's view is correct, that Mark counters claimants being the returned Jesus (Markus p.263), much more emphasis would be given to countering their false ideology. No evidence exists of prophets proclaiming themselves as the returned Jesus while much evidence exists of Jewish messianic claimants.

The presence of messianic claimants (13:6) "suggests that any Christians who made messianic claims for Jesus and who looked for his speedy return would be caught up in the maelstrom of civil strife in Jerusalem" (Donahue, Are You the Christ? p.221). What Donahue makes in respect to the war period in Jerusalem we posit applicable in the immediate Syria Palestine post-war situation (see 7.2.2.).

<sup>68</sup> E.g., Jonathan the Weaver (73 C.E.). See M. Hengel, The Zealots: Investigations into the Jewish Freedom Movement in the Period from Herod I until 70 A.D. (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark), 1961 pp.249-255. See Ant 18.4:1,20.5:1,20.8:6,20.8:10; War 2.3:5. Barnett argues for a pattern gleaned from Josephus about these individuals. The main elements are: each person was a prophet, who would perform a sign witnessed by a crowd of people in a specific locale. Barnett draws up a table of these elements and includes John the baptist and Jesus ("The Jewish Sign Prophets - A.D.40-70 Their Intentions and Origin" NTS 27 [1981] p.689).

<sup>69</sup> A "call to the wilderness is nothing less than synonymous with the claim of Messiahship" Mauser, (Wilderness p.58). E.g., the Egyptian prophet leading his followers out of the wilderness to the Mount of Olives from where he believed he could defeat the Roman garrison in the city. At his command the walls of the city would fall down (Ant

manifestation in the wilderness, therefore, does not appear in a vacuum."<sup>70</sup> These pretenders probably had their own prophets to sanction their activities. In the war, revolutionaries used prophets to buttress their anti-Roman stance and justify their activities as part of God's eschatological plan ("Numerous prophets, indeed, were at this period suborned by the tyrants

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20.8:6, cf., Acts 21:38). Another prophet in the midst of the destruction of Jerusalem told people who had fled to the outer court of the temple that deliverance would shortly occur (War 6.5:2). Linking these prophets is the impact of the exodus tradition upon them. So Jeremias: "All these Messiahs follow the example of Moses by calling for an exodus into the wilderness and promising signs and wonders and also deliverance. The series is an impressive testimony to the strength with which the idea that the Messiah would be a second Moses was anchored in popular expectation" "Μωυσής" TDNT Vol 4 p.862.

<sup>70</sup> Marcus, Way p.23. Josephus records several of these individuals proclaimed signs authenticating their status. One prophet promised σημεῖα τῆς σωτηρίας in the temple prior to the end (War 6.5:2) and Jonathan the Weaver (War 7.11:1) led people of Cyrene into the desert to show signs and portents (καὶ προήγαγεν εἰς τὴν ἔρημον σημεῖα καὶ φάσματα δεῖξιν ὑπισχνούμενος) in the immediate post-70 C.E. period, which matches the σημεῖα τῆς ἐλευθερίας many "seducers" were proclaiming at the beginning of the war, promising freedom in the wilderness (War 2.13:4). O. Betz ("Miracles in the Writings of Flavius Josephus" in Josephus, Judaism and Christianity (eds.) Louis H. Feldman and Gohei Hata [Detroit: Wayne State University Press], 1987 p.223), draws a useful distinction between signs as end-time "levers" to activate God into speedily bringing salvation or to herald salvation and epiphanies or God's supernatural activity to liberate his people. For Josephus the paradigm was based upon Moses who performed σημεῖα before Pharaoh and received an epiphany of God at the Red Sea crossing. Therefore σημεῖα were authenticating confirmations of an individual's message and divine status. As crucial authenticators or harbingers of imminent expectation, signs must be visible to everyone, engineering a cutting edge between discerners and unbelievers. To gauge the impact of σημεῖα it must be understood that even in Josephus' pro-Roman perspective (which explains his bias against the γόητες and ἀπατεῶντες War 6.4:1), Josephus himself believed in sign phenomena as portents of Jerusalem's imminent destruction (War 6.4:1f.), i.e. a star resembling a sword over the city, a comet flaring for a year, a brilliant shining light around the altar etc. Moreover, Josephus cites the activity of Jesus son of Ananias, who prophesied the temple' doom for over seven years before being killed, as an even more obvious harbinger of the coming destruction than all the portents he mentioned previously (War 6.5:3). Such preoccupation with looking for and gauging the impact of sign phenomena, not only in respect to the sign prophets' activity, but also concerning Josephus' own rationale in mentioning portents forewarning the temple's destruction (admittedly written after the event), is in keeping with our Markan perspective in ch.13: Mark was preoccupied with sign phenomena as Josephus and the rest.

to delude the people, by bidding them await help from God ..." War 6.5:2). Marcus<sup>71</sup> has demonstrated Mark's ambivalence about a Davidic messianism involving the military conquest of Israel's foes.<sup>72</sup> Figures such as Menahem son of Judas the Galilean, Eleazar son of Simon, John of Gischala, and Simon son of Gioras, all exerted influence in Judaea. These men constituted an "ad hoc leadership"<sup>73</sup> of revolutionary endeavour that could be well described as "deceivers" in 13:6 i.e., as non-Christian Jewish messianic claimants, who by their self-identity and actions, repudiated Jesus' status and claim upon his followers.<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>71</sup> "Jewish War" pp.456-460.

<sup>72</sup> Regarding the parallels between Jesus' entry into Jerusalem and the entry of such leaders as Menachen, the son of Judas the Galilean, and Simon bar Giora, Marcus surmises: "Given our understanding of the Marcan *Sitz im Leben*, these parallels suggest that Mark has fashioned the 'Davidic' section of his narrative (10:46-12:37) with the claims of figures like Simon and Menachen before his eyes" "Jewish War" p.459.

<sup>73</sup> Horsley, "Menahem in Jerusalem A Brief Messianic Episode Among the Sicarii -- Not 'Zealot Messianism'" NT 27 (1985) p.337.

<sup>74</sup> It may be that Mark purposely crafts the Barabbas episode in the trial narrative (15:6-15) as a foil in comparison to Jesus because a non-violent condemned Jesus and a murderous released brigand would be especially poignant in the 68-70 C.E. situation in Syria Palestine where bandit-groups were rife and assumed center-stage in respect to feeding off apocalyptic hopes, economic and social disenfranchisement among the poor, and military responsiveness to the Romans. If Horsley could write that individuals like Menahem and Simon bar Giora may be reflected in "warnings against false-messiahs in the 'Synoptic Apocalypse'" (Horsley, "Menahem in Jerusalem" p.347), certainly a figure like Barabbas would have many counterparts in the *Krisensituation* of Syria/Palestine. Such an association between Barabbas and the Sicarii guerrillas may be intentional (so Crossan, Who Killed Jesus? p.112), because Mark nowhere else uses such precise revolutionary language ("Mark describes Barabbas in a manner that had concrete historical signification: as a Sicarius terrorist" Myers, Strong Man p.380). The double use of στασιαστῶν (revolutionaries cf., Ant 14.1:3) and στάσει (revolt, with the article which identifies the revolt without naming it), coupled with mention of his crime (φόνον) make Mark's description very specific. Ultimately Mark unites with the insurrectionists in a belief that "God will establish his kingship through a saving act of eschatological warfare" (the parousia of the SM) while positing a non-violent commitment to the life modelled by Jesus which must be taken to the nations (13:10). The manner this victory was to be achieved was "not in a miraculous deliverance of Jerusalem from the Romans but in Jesus' divinely willed suffering and death

We conclude that such leaders led many among the Jewish community astray, so preventing their conversion to Christianity, and probably had an impact among Christians in Mark's own community.<sup>75</sup> By setting Jewish national aspirations and natural calamities in a framework constituting "the beginning of the birth-pangs" (v.8), Mark, looking back from his present, has interpreted these events eschatologically, judging them preparatory or subordinate to the real end-time trigger, the appearance of τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως. That Mark polemically curtails the deceivers/false prophets from claiming "that the end is upon the world"<sup>76</sup> is correct to a point. Because v.14 places the deceivers in different time periods (cf., v.8), their activity intensifies in the end-time period itself (cf., v.6 with vv.21-22) hence the comprehensive warning (v.23), constituting a rival claim with their *false* signs (v.22) against the *true* sign given by the Markan Jesus (vv.4,14a). These individuals are part of a larger deception including reports of international warfare. For Mark neither of these threats constitute τὸ τέλος (v.7b), that is, the transitional point, indicating the consummation's nearness. By adopting the strategy of couching deceivers/wars, earthquakes/famines (vv.5b-6,7,8,21,22) in the format of a list of signs frequently used as portents of the consummation (e.g. TMos 10:4; ApEsdr 3:11-14; 2Bar 48:34,37,70:3,5-9; 4Ezra 16:18-34) Mark does not negate "current apocalyptic excitement."<sup>77</sup> Instead he clears the way for the disciples to recognize the real end-time harbinger in v.14 i.e., clarifying the significance of *one* event over the *chaos* of events in the

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in Jerusalem" (Marcus, Way pp.197-198), and his imminent parousia. Disciples could only emulate the same model of faithfulness.

<sup>75</sup> See 7.2.2.

<sup>76</sup> Beasley-Murray, Last Days p.389.

<sup>77</sup> Anderson, Mark p.292.

period 66-70 C.E. Therefore false prophets are a lesser threat<sup>78</sup> than failing to determine the significance of Titus' act of destruction as the end-time trigger.<sup>79</sup> Verses 6-8 reflect the turmoil experienced in Palestine before and during the war. Mark encapsulates events in this period as a "beginning" i.e., connected to the end-time as a prelude and yet distanced from it. Only in v.14 with the destruction of Jerusalem and that event pinpointed in the individual designated τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως does the end-time become operational.

#### 7.2.2. Mark's Audience and Location

Our view, that Mark is writing in proximity to Jerusalem's destruction after September 70 C.E. and that he has made events in vv.6-8 preparatory to v.14, leads us to consider the audience and place where Mark's gospel could have arisen.<sup>80</sup> We posit an audience containing

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<sup>78</sup> *Contra* Beasley-Murray Last Days p.392.

<sup>79</sup> *Contra* Pesch, Naherwartungen p.122; Hamerton-Kelly, Poetics of Violence p.37. Mark's own injection into the text (v.14 ὁ ἀναγινώσκων νοεῖτω) ensures the reader will not miss this point.

<sup>80</sup> Against the recent arguments put forward by Hengel (Studies) for a Rome location: The legend of Nero *redivivus* as a basis for precisely dating the gospel in Rome (between the winters of 68/69-69/70 C.E.) can hardly have developed so quickly after Nero's death in June 68 C.E. for the late emperor to be the Antichrist in Mk 13:14. See J.J. Collins, "The Sibylline Oracles, Book 5" OT Pseudepigrapha Vol 1 p.390 on dating the Nero legend ("a date no earlier than A.D. 70 but more probably later than 80" p.390; cf., John R. Donahue, "... it is difficult to accept his (Hengel's) suggestion that within 18 months of Nero's death, Nero had emerged as the eschatological adversary and anticipated destroyer of the Jerusalem temple" "The Quest for the Community of Mark's Gospel" The Four Gospels p.832. Also, Papias' tradition of Peter's connection with Mark is implausible: Papias makes no mention of Rome as the origin of the gospel, Peter's supposed eye-witness testimony does not come to the fore in Mark: Peter receives more preeminence in Matthew and Luke (e.g., Matt 16:17f.; Lk 5:1-11) and any supposed reticence of using Peter in Mark is not distinctive, indeed supposedly Petrine sections fused with Markan compositional technique make it tenuous or even unnecessary to make Petrine connections (see Schweizer, Mark p.25). Probably Papias' claim of a connection between Mark and Peter was derived from 1Pet 5:13 ("my son Mark") or the traditional connection between both figures and Rome. Regarding Hengel's assertion that the designation Συροφοινίκισσα τῶ γένει (Mk 7:26) was a term used for a Roman audience Theissen has shown that "Syrophoenix" was used

a mix of Jewish and Gentile Christians in a place where Christians had already undergone persecution, and were engaged in missionary activity among Gentiles (13:10).

First, Mark 7:1-23 and especially vv. 3-4, 8,13,19c,23, are important evidence of Markan adaptation of primitive material for a Gentile audience. Jewish religious practices are explained for Gentile readers presumably unfamiliar with such traditions.<sup>81</sup> By delineating purity rituals in 7:3-4<sup>82</sup> as boundaries marking Jewish identity, Mark puts his community outside of that identity. Mark prepares the reader for what is to follow by going beyond the initial issue regarding unclean hands (7:2,5) and introducing a "key-word" *παράδοσις* which occurs five times in ch.7.<sup>83</sup> Verse 8 (containing Markan vocabulary: *κρατεῖν* and *παράδοσις*);<sup>84</sup> is the seam between traditional units on unwashed hands and further examples of traditions nullifying the word of God (vv.1-7, 9-13), and aptly summarizes the unit on the hypocrisy charge and the proof text from Isaiah (vv.6-7). Further, v.13 functions as a summarizing of vv.9-12 in the same

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pejoratively, not geographically ("Die ersten lateinischen Belege verwenden 'Syrophoenix' z.T. in pejorativem Sinn" *Lokalkolorit* p.257), and that the term designated southern Syrophoenicia. The Markan Latinisms are probably due to the universality of Roman military terms and do not indicate a Rome location (e.g., "Luke-Acts, unconnected with Rome has a number of Latinisms" Anderson, *Mark* p.27).

<sup>81</sup> Mark also translates Aramaic for his audience in 3:17,5:41,7:34,10:46,14:36,15:22,34, which suggests, at least, some if not most, of Mark's audience, did not know Aramaic. On the other hand, much of the gospel cannot be understood without a good knowledge of the OT (for details see Best, "Mark's Readers: A Profile" pp.847f.). For Mark the OT was authoritative, which is seen by his use of OT quotations right from the beginning of the gospel (1:2-3).

<sup>82</sup> These verses are redactional according to Pryke, (*Redactional Style*) p.161.

<sup>83</sup> So Roger P. Booth, *Jesus And The Laws of Purity Tradition History and Legal History in Mark 7* JSNT SupSer 13 (Sheffield: JSOT Press), 1986 p.35.

<sup>84</sup> See Pryke, *Redactional Style* p.143.

way as v.8 does regarding vv.6-7,<sup>85</sup> and v.13b (καὶ παρόμοια τοιαῦτα πολλὰ ποιεῖτε) clearly harks back to the generalization in vv.3-4 (especially καὶ ἄλλα πολλά ἐστὶν ἃ παρέλαβον κρατεῖν in v.4). Chapter 7:19c is a Markan commentary on what has preceded (καθαρίζων πάντα τὰ βρώματα), while v.23 offers no new argument and merely summarizes the previous verses.<sup>86</sup> Mark castigates Jewish purity rituals as human tradition nullifying the word of God to the extent that in v.15 Jesus "spiritualizes" Jewish purity laws in such a radical manner that no unclean foods exist.<sup>87</sup> The negation of Jewish purity laws would apply in the context of a Gentile/Jewish Christian community where Jewish sensibilities are both explained to Gentiles (cf., 14:12,15:42) and judged not to be a hindrance for Jewish Christians in mission/co-existence with Gentiles/Gentile Christians. (Mark uses the whole pericope as an introduction for Jesus' ministry to Gentiles in 7:24-8:10).<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>85</sup> On the parallels between the Isaiah and Korban units in vv.6-7,9-12 see Booth, Laws of Purity p.42.

<sup>86</sup> Booth calls it a "'signing-off' sentence of Mark" (Laws of Purity) p.51.

<sup>87</sup> "Mark's statements represent a much more radical break with Jewish observances than is found anywhere in Paul" J.R. Donahue, "The Community of Mark's Gospel" in The Four Gospels p.837.

<sup>88</sup> Our perspective may explain one reason why Galilee is so important for Mark. Chapters 1-8 contain mostly Jesus' active ministry in that place because Galilee provides a basis for Jesus' interaction with Gentiles. It is a place where the good news has gone beyond the confines of Israel: "Jesus' forays across the lake and into the outer reaches of Tyre and Sidon and the Decapolis symbolize the inherently universal character of his message" (Donald Senior, "Struggle to be Universal" p.77). Therefore such an emphasis on Galilee would be instructive in promoting healing on issues separating Jewish and Gentile Christians worshipping together, and at the same time, is a powerful incentive for the Markan community to persevere in its universal mission, given that Jesus himself initiated ministry among Gentiles (5:1-20,7:24-8:10) from Galilee.

Galilee is a place of more than geographical significance with the disciples' regrouping there (16:7) to witness Jesus' resurrection. Galilee, the launching pad for Jesus' ministry (1:14-15), represents proclamation of the gospel message of an imminent parousia ("*Galilee*' is the starting point for the discipleship road" Geddert, Watchwords p.167; "... Galilee

Second, Juel<sup>89</sup> has remarked on the "thoroughly Jewish character of the argument" in 7:1-13. The sophistication of the argument, whereby a deep knowledge of Jewish tradition, the OT, and the character of legal argumentation suggests,<sup>90</sup> not only that some of Mark's audience were Jewish Christians (hence their interest in the application of Israelite law in the Gentile world),<sup>91</sup> but also that Mark himself may have been a Christian from Judaea. This would explain the inclusion in the gospel of material explaining the intricacy of Jewish ritual (7:3-4), Mark's Aramaic citations and his Greek translations of that Aramaic (3:17-19,5:41,7:11,34,10:46, 11:9-10,14:1,32,36,45, 15:22,34). Clearly Mark's use of the OT<sup>92</sup> requires that some of his readers must be well steeped in the OT in order to understand the sophistication of his argument<sup>93</sup> e.g.,

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represents the time of sowing..." Tolbert, *Sowing* p.298). The *νεανίσκος* (16:5-6) directs the disciples *away* from Jerusalem which has ceased to be the centre of authoritative religion. This is confirmed because no resurrection appearances occur in Jerusalem (cf., Matt 28:9; Luke 24:36 cf., 33; Jn20:16,19,26). Jesus' only appearance to Jerusalemites will be at the parousia (13:26,14:62). The lack of resurrection appearances anywhere is part of the sense of "absence" (Crossan) of Jesus in the gospel (which does not nullify a Galilean resurrection appearance), it rather focuses upon the imminent parousia as the relevant Markan perspective in a post-resurrection period characterized by unparalleled tribulation (13:12-13,14f.,19f.). The anti-climatic *γάρ* (16:8) ending, does not end the story because "...The audience had its part to play in the events of the last days" (A.Y. Collins, "The Genre of the Passion Narrative," *StudTheol* 47 [1993] p.20). The story is incomplete without the parousia which looms on the horizon exhorting Mark's audience to remain faithful to the mission proclamation.

<sup>89</sup> *Surprise* p.135; see also M. Hengel, "Mc 7,3 πυγμή: Die Geschichte einer exegetischen Aporie und der Versuch ihrer Lösung" *ZNW* 60 (1969) pp.182-189.

<sup>90</sup> See Juel for details.

<sup>91</sup> *Surprise* p.135.

<sup>92</sup> "... the entire Old Testament is reread through the lens of the crucified Messiah" *Way* p.108.

<sup>93</sup> So Chapman: "I find no evidence to suggest that any other writer of the New Testament anticipated scriptural knowledge on the part of his readers to the degree that Mark did" *Orphan Gospel* p.192. Mark's statement *ὁ ἀναγινώσκων νοεῖτω* in v.14 would generate lively discussion among a predominantly Gentile community interacting with



the opening of the gospel with a group of OT citations, the Prologue association between John the Baptist and Elijah without mentioning the latter (see Mk 1:6; Mal 3:1), and the significance of the wilderness motif (see Mk 1:2-3 and Isa 40:3), based not on the initial exodus journey but an end-time eschatological exodus, seen in the movement of Jerusalemites and Judaeans to the Jordan to be baptized by John the Baptist. The debates between Jesus and Jewish leaders over the question of authority (1:45-3:6,10:46-12:37), the connection between the temple's fall and the closure of the age (13:4), and the whole discussion on the significance of the temple in Mark's gospel and especially its relationship to the culpability of the Jewish leaders in the death of Jesus (13:26,14:62,15:38) lead us to the probability that Mark was a Palestinian Jewish Christian writing to a community containing a mix of Jewish and Gentile Christians.

On this basis conflicts Mark is referring to in 13:9-13, are inclusive of those occurring before 70 in the period (67-68 C.E.?) where Mark and Jewish Christians with him may have escaped from Judaea and joined a predominantly Gentile community which had suffered itself in the early stages of the war in the massacres and reprisals between Jews and Gentiles.<sup>94</sup> A location outside of Judaea in a place in which Christians had already undergone hostility by Jewish neighbours in either Syria,<sup>95</sup> or one of the Transjordanian Hellenistic cities like Pella,<sup>96</sup>

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Jewish Christians, at least some of whom would have been well versed in the OT. Instruction might have occurred on various levels. Those with a deep knowledge of the OT would perhaps know the difference between the Greek and Hebrew forms behind 13:14, or at least the enigmatic nature of the phrase and its background in the book of Daniel, which they could explain to those unacquainted with the phrase.

<sup>94</sup> U. Rappaport, "Jewish-Pagan Relations and the Revolt against Rome in 66-70 C.E.," *Jerusalem Cathedra* 1 (1981) pp.81-95.

<sup>95</sup> On the cogency of Syria as a location for Mark's gospel see e.g., W.G. Kümmel, *Introduction to the New Testament* (London: SCM Press), 1975 pp.95-99; P. Vielhauer, *Geschichte der urchristlichen Literatur: Einleitung in das Neue Testament, die Apokryphen und die apostolischen Väter* (Berlin: de Gruyter), 1975 p.347; H.C. Kee, *Community of the*

would be compatible with our view of Mark's situation. Thus Mark himself may not be located in Judaea and therefore his audience may be a mix of Gentile and Jewish Christians, and so the injunction to flight in 13:14 is not primarily an instruction to them, though it reinforces the departure of those like Mark who have previously left that region. Rather, for Mark, individuals in Judaea receiving his message are to embark on an eschatological flight away from that region. The mission for Mark's own audience exists beyond Judaea among the Gentiles (13:10) in a time of an expected severe persecution (13:19).

### 7.3. Verses 9-13

Our contention is that vv.9-13 reflect the persecutions already and presently experienced<sup>97</sup> by Jewish and Gentile Christians in Mark's community pursuing missionary activity (13:10). These persecutions would include: Jewish pogroms in the early stages of the war against Gentiles,<sup>98</sup> Jewish trials in the Zealot purges in the region of Jerusalem,<sup>99</sup> and perhaps

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New Age: Studies in Mark's Gospel (London: SCM Press), 1977 pp.104-105; Mack, Innocence pp.315-318; Theissen, Lokalkolorit pp.164-166; Waetjen, Reordering of Power p.15; J.R. Donahue, "The Community of Mark's Gospel" in The Four Gospels p.835; Pieter J.J. Botha, "The Historical Setting of Mark's Gospel: Problems and Possibilities" JSNT 51 (1993) pp.28ff.; Richard L. Rohrbaugh, "The Social Location of the Markan Audience" BTB 22-23 (1992-1993), pp.114ff.

<sup>96</sup> Marcus, "Jewish War" p.462. If Pella or one of the cities in that region was the place where Mark along with a Jewish-Christian community joined Gentile Christians after leaving Judaea, those Gentile Christians may have suffered greatly from the Jewish reaction to the massacre of Jews in Caesarea at the beginning of the war (War 2.18:1).

<sup>97</sup> Both Marcus ("Jewish War" p.447) and Theissen (Lokalkolorit p.281) connect the current persecutions specifically with the spreading of the gospel in 13:10.

<sup>98</sup> By implication Gentile Christians and perhaps Jewish Christians may have been seen as aligning themselves with Gentiles (see War 2.13:6-7,2.18:1-2,2.18:5,2.18:7-8).

<sup>99</sup> See War bk 4. especially 4.3:2 cf., War 4.5:4 for purges which Mark and those with him may have been caught up in before their escape from Judaea. "Jewish Christian opposition to the temple could be conceived by groups in control as tantamount to

Gentile hostility against Mark's community, which may have been perceived as Jewish in the light of the Jew/Gentile mix in the community in the post-70 situation.<sup>100</sup> That vv.9-13 have been inserted between events preparatory to the end and the end-time trigger (vv.8,14), indicates that for Mark, the persecutions mentioned in vv.9-13 are "bridge" events "spanning" both periods, hence our view that the persecutions occurred in the war and are currently experienced by the community, with an expectation of worse to come (vv.19f.).

To support our interpretation, we posit that Mark fashioned the trial narrative in 14:53-65<sup>101</sup> to encourage Christians enduring persecution to emulate the stance of Jesus<sup>102</sup> on trial

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sedition, and bring on them the trials and persecutions similar to those in Mk 13:9-13" Donahue, *Are You the Christ?* p.220. Donahue has shown a plausible relationship between these trials and 13:9-13 (pp.217-224); see also Theissen, *Lokalkolorit* p.281; Marcus, "Jewish War" p.448.

It may be that if blaspheming the Holy Spirit is Jewish polemic against Jesus (Ernst, *Markus* p.120; Gnllka, *Markus* 1 p.150) in respect to attributing Jesus' work to Satan (Waetjen, *Reordering of Power* p.99; P. Achtemeier, *Mark* p.50) then disciples facing Jewish authorities (13:9) may have been under judicial constraint to attribute the efficacy of Jesus' work to Satan, so B.M.F. Van Iersel, "The Gospel According to St. Mark -- Written for a Persecuted Community?" *NTT* 34 (1980) pp.27-28. Significantly the Markan Jesus promises Holy Spirit leading in respect to a response appropriate to the gospel before authorities (13:11 cf., v.10). Empowerment is modelled in 14:62 where Jesus (through the Holy Spirit's power cf., 1:9-11) gives the disciple's confession. Barton connects appearance before Jewish authorities with familial enmity in 13:12: "It is striking that being handed over *εἰς θάνατον* is mentioned only in this saying about kinship enmity, a severity reinforced by the saying following, where *μισεῖν* is used for the one and only time in this gospel (v.13a). In its Marcan context, being hated *ὑπὸ πάντων* refers especially to rejection by ones' own familiars" (*Family Ties* p.112).

<sup>100</sup> So Theissen, *Lokalkolorit* pp.281-282, though Marcus, ("Jewish War" p.453 fn.57) questions this on the basis of the lack of hostility to Gentiles in the gospel.

<sup>101</sup> By purposefully preceding the passion narrative by ch.13 Mark intends his readers to understand that a connection exists between the two sections. See R. H. Lightfoot, *Message* pp.48-59; Francis Dewar, "Chapter 13 and the Passion narrative in St. Mark" *Theology* 64 (1961), pp.99-107; Donahue, *Are You the Christ?* pp.128-138,212-224; Haenchen, *Weg* p.514; Fredriksen, *Jesus* pp.177-187. Particular points of reference are easily found: the sufferings endured by disciples in their trials before *συνέδρια* and *ἡγεμόνων* (13:9) emulate Jesus' own trial before the Sanhedrin (14:55-65), the thematic *παραδιδόναι* is

before the Sanhedrin. For Mark, Jerusalem's fall is a basis for a theological ground plan in the trial narrative predicated upon the commonality of discipleship experience in the midst of suffering. Having prefaced the passion narrative with a focus upon the one event inaugurating the end-time, Mark has "removed" the distance between Jesus' and his own time, so propelling the trial sequence into reflecting discipleship experience. Hence the release of the end-time trigger makes imminent expectation bring the past "forward" to meet the present. Thus permeating chs.14-16, from the Markan audience' perspective, is the operational end-time. Through *Konfliktparänese*, events nearly a generation previous have been taken up and charged with immediacy, enabling the passion chapters to become an end-time map so arranged to assist Mark's audience appreciate the sacrifices of those Christians who have already suffered persecution. It gives them both a model of behaviour for their present experience, and helps them to face what Mark anticipates will come in the near future, the unparalleled θλίψις period (13:19f).

### 7.3.1. Verses 9-13 and The Sanhedrin Trial Narrative

We contend that the Sanhedrin trial narrative focusing upon the key question of Jesus' identity (14:61), ending in mockery, has been constructed by Mark as "a manual on how to

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predominant in both the section on the sufferings facing the disciples among the nations 13:9-11 and the trial section 15:1,14,15, the temple's destruction (13:2) becomes a key charge against Jesus (14:58), and revelation of the SM's parousia (13:26) occurs at the highpoint of the interchange between Jesus and the high priest (14:62). See Dale C. Allison Jr., The End of the Ages Has Come An Early Interpretation of the Passion and Resurrection of Jesus (Philadelphia: Fortress Press), 1985 p.37 for parallels beyond those listed by Lightfoot.

<sup>102</sup> "The Passion is the convergence point for all negative references to authority in Mark's gospel ... The warnings about the sufferings of the end time in 13:9-11 depict the arrest and trials in language that immediately recalls Jesus' own fate ... Therefore it is not surprising that Mark's most serious indictment of abusive power should be found in the passion story itself" (Donald Senior, "'With Swords and Clubs ...' -- The Setting of Mark's Community and His Critique of Abusive Power" BTB 17-18 [1987-1988] p.16).

suffer for the faith."<sup>103</sup> Drawing from a symbolical anthropological perspective of rite of passage, McVann deduced that in the trial Jesus models initiatory behaviour "in the context of a ritual of status transformation."<sup>104</sup> Using the concept of liminality-*community* (separation and isolation "in a culturally indeterminate state"<sup>105</sup> which becomes a model for the initiates' community experience), McVann traced elements in the trial which reflect Jesus modelling the required behaviour of initiates. The primary elements are: a passive state of acceptance (no attempt to escape is made cf., 13:9 where disciples are not to resist being handed over to συνέδρια nor stand before ἡγεμόνων), and a proper response (confession of the status of the coming SM cf., 13:11 where worry over how to respond in such circumstances is dissipated by reliance on the Holy Spirit, and 14:62 where a testimony is given).<sup>106</sup> Mark interprets Jesus' trial from the experience of actual trials members of his community have faced, and anticipated trials in the light of the expected worsening period of tribulation in the post-war period. Mark's

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<sup>103</sup> Mark McVann, "The Passion in Mark: Transformational Ritual" BTT 18 (1988), p.96.

<sup>104</sup> "Transformation Ritual" p.96.

<sup>105</sup> "Transformation Ritual" p.97.

<sup>106</sup> Cf., "Jesus now practices what he preached in 13:9-11" Charles P. Anderson, "The Trial of Jesus as Jewish-Christian Polarization: Blasphemy and Polemic in Mark's Gospel" in Anti-Judaism in Early Christianity Vol 1 Paul and the Gospels [ed.] Peter Richardson [Ontario: Wilfrid Laurier University Press], 1986 p.115). Thus Christians are encouraged to see their trials as replicas of "status transformation analogous to that undergone by Jesus" (p.99). Cf., Theissen, "Die Jünger müssen lernen, dass Jesus kein 'Messias' im irdischen Sinne ist, wie vom Synhedrium unterstellt (14,61) und im Prozess vor Pilate mit dem Titel 'König der Juden' umschrieben wird (15,2ff). In Wirklichkeit ist er der leidende Menschensohn, der sich denen, die ihm im Leiden nachfolgen (8,31-38), als Sohn Gottes offenbaren wird (9,2ff). öffentlich spricht Jesus von sich als Sohn Gottes zum ersten Mal in der Winzerparabel (Mk 12:1ff). öffentlich bekennt er sich vor seinen Richtern zu seiner Würde (Mk 14,62). öffentlich wird er als Sohn Gottes unter dem Kreuz anerkannt (Mk 15:39)" Lokalkolorit p.299.

intent is essentially propagandistic<sup>107</sup> in constructing the trial narrative over transmitting historical tradition.<sup>108</sup> In the post-70 C.E. situation the blasphemy charge against Jesus anticipates a possible Jewish response concerning Christians' confession of Jesus as Christ and Son of God.<sup>109</sup>

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<sup>107</sup> Fredriksen, *Jesus* p.178; cf., Paul J. Achtemeier, "a theological witness to the suffering Christ" (*Mark* p.89).

<sup>108</sup> So McVann, " ... legitimate matters of historical investigation such as questions of properly convened courts ... are remote from Mark's motives of catechesis and instruction in discipleship ... " ("Transformation Ritual" p.99). Mark's description of the entire Jewish governing body in Jerusalem, (made up of ἀρχιερείς πρεσβύτεροι γραμματεῖς v.53) along with τὸν ἀρχιερέα, repeated in v.55 (ὅλον τὸ συνέδριον), convened without due process or testimony against Jesus, emphatically demonstrates the unholy weight of the forces against him which shows Mark is less concerned to anchor the trial in historical detail as to present a view of the religious authorities as its villains. From inception, the trial is full of illegality, with the entire Sanhedrin seeking (ἐζήτουν an iterative imperfect associated in Mark with plotters of Jesus' death see 3:6,11:18,12:12,14:1) to kill Jesus. See Taylor, *Mark* p.565, P. Winter, *On the Trial of Jesus Studia Judaica* 1 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter), 1974 pp.44-45, and D. R. Catchpole, "The Problem of the Historicity of the Sanhedrin Trial" in (ed.) Ernst Bammel, *The Trial of Jesus Cambridge Studies in honour of C.F.D. Moule SBT* 13 (Naperville: Allenson Inc.), 1970 p.58, on the trial's violation of Jewish procedure based on the second century *mishnah Sanhedrin*, convening at night, on a feast day, and not admitting counter evidence. Significantly v.55 is an introduction (so Donahue, *Are You the Christ?* p.70), setting the trial's intent, reaching back through 7:1 to 3:6 in its narrative impetus. The sometimes awkward and illegal attempts to manufacture convicting testimony (οὐχ ἠὕρισκον) continually repeated (v.55,56a,56b,57,59), demonstrate the extent of the Sanhedrin's preoccupation with convicting Jesus while the customary presentation of evidence for acquittal is absent. Worse, though all the false witnesses are supplied by the authorities, a convicting testimony cannot be found (14:58), which demonstrates the deplorable character of the Sanhedrin, and introduces a key Markan theme from ch.13, on which the trial before the Sanhedrin turns (the destruction of the temple 13:2). All this creates narrative tension which peaks with the confrontation between Jesus and the high priest.

<sup>109</sup> Thus for Mark blasphemy revolves around evaluation of Jesus. In 2:7 the first charge made against Jesus, the pattern "opposition, charge of blasphemy, conspiracy to kill Jesus -- points forward to the trial, where once again, in concert, they prove to be the decisive motifs" Anderson, "The Trial of Jesus as Jewish-Christian Polarization: Blasphemy and Polemic in Mark's Gospel" in *Anti-Judaism in Early Christianity Vol 1 Paul and the Gospels* (ed.) Peter Richardson (Ontario: Wilfrid Laurier University Press), 1986 p.111. In 3:28 because Jesus possesses the Spirit (1:10) speaking against him is speaking against the

Therefore, Mark's discipleship model takes precedence in the trial narrative over and through the conflict ethos between Jesus and the authorities.<sup>110</sup> Jesus' trial contains less historical biography than instruction aimed at modelling persecutory experience for Mark's readers in the period up to the parousia.<sup>111</sup>

7.3.2. Though in the passion narrative the disciples fail to follow Jesus into suffering and death, the placement of ch.13 before that narrative indicates Markan confidence in the disciples

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Spirit. In 14:62 cf., 15:29, the deriders make fun of Jesus and so denigrate Christian preaching.

<sup>110</sup> As Theissen correctly posits: "Die den Jüngern vorausgesagten Verfolgungen haben ihr Urbild in der Geschichte Jesu. Seine Passion ist Verhaltensmodell für die mk Gemeinde. So wie sie von jüdischen und heidnischen Instanzen unter Druck gesetzt wird, wurde auch Jesus von beiden verworfen (vgl. Mk 13,9 mit 14,55ff). So wie sie auf kunstvolle Verteidigung verzichten soll, verzichtete auch Jesus auf jede Verteidigung und beschränkte sich auf das Bekenntnis zu seiner Hoheit (vgl. Mk 13,11 mit 14,62f). So wie ihre Mitglieder von ihren nächsten Verwandten verraten werden, wurde auch Jesus von seinen Jüngern verraten, verlassen und verleugnet (vgl. Mk 13,12 mit 14,43ff). Durch Kombination zweier ursprünglich selbständiger Traditionen wird die Passionsgeschichte als 'Konfliktparänese' gelesen - im Lichte eines allen Jüngern drohenden Konfliktes mit ihrer Umwelt" Lokalkolorit p.295. Malbon recognized this in respect to Jesus' opposition by Jewish authorities and their entourage. See Elizabeth Struthers Malbon, "The Jewish Leaders in the Gospel of Mark A Literary Study of Marcan Characterization" JBL 108 (1989) p.269 fn.34.

<sup>111</sup> This suggests two things. First, the lack of resurrection appearances in ch.16 implies that "the chain of eschatological events is not yet completed" (A.Y. Collins, Beginning p.138). The lack of a satisfying narrative closure or overall "absence" of Jesus (so Vernon K. Robbins, "Last Meal: Preparation, Betrayal, and Absence [Mark 14:12-25]" in Passion p.36) forces attention upon parousia expectation (cf., 14:62 with 13:26-27) which is in line with discipleship experience given the end-time operational sign in 13:14 -- which confirms Fredriksen's evaluation that, by so stressing "the proximity and clarity of Jesus imminent glorious revelation, Mark inadvertently imputes to the period between the resurrection and the Parousia ... a kind of lingering obscurity" ("Jesus and the Temple" p.307). Second, emphasizing less resurrection appearances than parousia expectation, and positing an intentional "absence" of Jesus at key places (e.g., 14:22-25f., 16:1-8), means an overall Markan purpose of glorification through suffering is a most essential component (though see Gundry, Mark pp.1024f. for a different view, and evaluation below).

taking on Jesus' mantle of suffering and death, albeit expressed in hope, in a projected future.<sup>112</sup>

The link between the story-disciples and Mark's audience is solidified in ch.13 where the Markan Jesus establishes continuity between those disciples who are expected to take the gospel world-wide (13:10) but are warned that persecution awaits.<sup>113</sup> Mark could have placed ch.13 at the end of his gospel with the resurrected Jesus speaking.<sup>114</sup>

Jesus' trial before the Sanhedrin is a Markan construction of exemplary suffering easily

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<sup>112</sup> The way Mark structured his ideas christologically on discipleship was a major factor in the creation of the gospel. In the gospel, from the beginning until Jesus' death on the cross, no human being recognizes Jesus' identity and the disciples constantly fail to understand the significance of Jesus' mission, that it involves suffering on the cross. In the Sanhedrin trial Peter acts as a foil for Jesus, who, contrary to Peter, models appropriate behaviour under persecution. This is in contrast to Mark's encouragement to his audience to identify with the disciples who frequently act as a foil for Jesus. "The decision of the author to write a Gospel, including the story of the first disciples, rests on the assumption that there are essential similarities between the situation of these disciples and the situation of the early church, so that, in telling a story about the past, the author can also speak to his present" Tannehill, "Disciples in Mark" p.393; also Ernest Best "The Role of the Disciples in Mark" *NTS* 23 (1977) p.399. Through the latter's manufactured identification with Jesus, the time-gap between both is bridged and Mark's audience is compelled to respond to Jesus.

<sup>113</sup> So Matera: "If Mark viewed the disciples as enemies, he would hardly have had Jesus predict that they would stand before governors and kings for his sake (13:9)" Frank J. Matera, *What are they saying about Mark?* (New York: Paulist Press), 1987 pp.50-51. Also Juel, "If the good news must be preached to all the nations (13:10), the role of the disciples must be presumed" *Surprise* p.85.

<sup>114</sup> See Tannehill ("Disciples in Mark" p.393) for literary techniques to accomplish this choice. By placing ch.13 before the passion narrative the reader is prepared for the future. First, for tests of faithfulness found in ch.14 i.e., the disciples' abandonment of Jesus (14:27-31,37,41,50,72) and yet an expected return to faithfulness is envisaged (14:28,16:7). Such a placement of ch.13 fits well with a Markan situation encouraging boldness. Second, because the gospel is permeated with the disciples' repeated failures and lack of understanding about the cross/resurrection, hope is offered to the disciples in the post-70 situation. Only by the reversal of fate, whereby Jesus' death on the cross is transformed by God into resurrection, can the Twelve be reconstituted as disciples and transformed from abject failures into missionaries among nations. The resurrection is the basis and motivation for commitment because all persecution inflicted upon Mark's readers can be tolerated in view of the SM's nearness predicated on the resurrection and promised final vindication.



interfacing with discipleship experience of persecution.<sup>115</sup> Mark hardly shapes material to "glorify the Passion"<sup>116</sup> as a comparison with John's gospel (where the passion is glorified) demonstrates. Jesus forthrightly proclaims that the cup is for him (Jn 18:11) whereas the Markan Jesus decries taking the cup (Mk 14:36). Jesus is anointed for burial by Mary (Jn 12:3-8), given a triumphant entry into Jerusalem (Jn 12:12-19), and proclaims the hour of the cross as glorification (Jn 12:21). Whereas in Mark the Bethany anointing by a nameless woman (Mk 14:3-9) is flanked by references to the authorities looking to arrest Jesus (Mk 14:1-2) and Judas looking to betray him (Mk 14:10-11).<sup>117</sup> A theology of glory does not overshadow the suffering

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<sup>115</sup> For Gundry, a theology of glory, not suffering, "pervades the Gospel of Mark ..." which goes against our view, by putting the onus on future vindication for Mark's community. Mark "presents us with a qualification of suffering by glory." Gundry, Mark p.1025. For example, Mark contextualizes cross-taking discipleship with "a prediction that some will not taste death till they see God's kingdom as having come with power, and then a fulfillment of that prediction in the Transfiguration (8:24-9:8)" Gundry, Mark p.1025. According to Gundry, if Mark wanted to emphasize suffering as leading to or correcting glory, he would surely have excised glory elements from Jesus' miracles, exorcisms etc., and touched up the passion narrative with graphic descriptions of suffering or martyrdom stories (e.g., Ps 22:15-19; Isa 52:14,53,2-3; 2Macc 7:1-42).

<sup>116</sup> Gundry, Mark p.12.

<sup>117</sup> The Last Supper follows, again couched in betrayal motifs, regarding Judas (Mk 14:18-21), and finally all the disciples (Mk 14:27-31). Before his arrest the Johannine Jesus offers a stirring prayer for unity among his followers (Jn 18:1-26) whereas the Markan Jesus moves into the depth of anguish over death (Mk 14:32-41). At his arrest Jesus takes charge asking who the arresting party want (Jn 18:4), seeking to protect his disciples (Jn 18:8-9), while his opponents buckle before him falling to the ground (Jn 18:6). The Markan Jesus is passive at his arrest with Judas initiating contact (Mk 14:44-45) leading to Jesus being seized and arrested (v.46). Instead of being protected from arrest the disciples flee for their lives (v.50). Before the high priest Jesus boldly argues his case (Jn 18:20-21), even questioning an attendant's right to slap him (Jn 18:23), whereas the Markan Jesus is silent before his accusers (Mk 14:61), engages in no dialogue with the high priest, instead proclaiming his identity and future coming as the SM (v.62) whereupon he is condemned and tortured (vv.64-65).

Gundry misses the point of Jesus providing a model for response under torture and exemplifying appropriate behaviour in "martyrdom" circumstances. Thus, by arguing that through the torturers asking a blindfolded Jesus who slapped him, Mark can demonstrate in

of the Markan Jesus in his passion.<sup>118</sup>

Further, the manner the παραδιδόναι theme structurally governs vv.9b,11,12a, and therefore underlies vv.9-13, demonstrates that Mark's understanding of persecution and concomitant suffering must be interpreted from the standpoint of betrayal, which combines with the *Konfliktparänese* of the Passion narrative to root the disciples in the experience of Jesus.<sup>119</sup> Significantly the preponderance of thematic παραδιδόναι sayings in chs.14-15 (14:10,11,18,21, 41,42,44, 15:1,10,15) peak in the trials before the Sanhedrin and Pilate. Betrayal is something of "a word of sinister meaning in Mark, implying the delivery of someone or something good to an evil power."<sup>120</sup> The "evil power" is paralleled in 13:9 with formal judicial action from Jewish συνέδρια/συναγωγὰς and Gentile ηγεμόνων/βασιλείων involving betrayal by the family nucleus (13:12), and with Jesus betrayed by Judas (14:10,11,18,

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14:65 that "those actions fulfil the passion predictions" (Mark p.887). Similarly the grotesque parodying of Jesus as Caesar by the Roman soldiers is seen in respect to the spitting as fulfilling "a particularly mentioned detail in his prediction of the mockery (10:34; cf., 14:65 with comments and notes)" (p.940). Yet 14:65 and especially 15:16-20 constitute the type of detail concerning adherence to faith in torture that Gundry finds in Isa 52:14,53:2-3 (on Ps 22:15-19 cf., 14:33) but not in Mark's gospel.

<sup>118</sup> For further material on this see R.E. Brown, The Death of The Messiah From Gethsemane to the Grave A Commentary on the Passion Narratives in the Four Gospels Vol 1 (New York: Doubleday), 1994 pp.77-85. Because of Gundry's attempt to present a passion of glory in Mark, exegesis is frequently forced. For example, to describe the Gethsemane episode (14:32-42) as Jesus' "flesh is strong just as his voice will be strong at the moment of his death" (Mark p.13) does the text injustice where Jesus ἤρξατο ἐκθαμβεῖσθαι καὶ ἀδημονεῖν καὶ λέγει αὐτοῖς Περίλυπός ἐστιν ἡ ψυχὴ μου ἕως θανάτου (v.33,34), or to interpret Simon's forced carrying of Jesus' cross in respect to Jesus being "a figure of dignity -- so someone else takes up his cross," or that the offer of wine to the crucified Jesus "increases his dignity, for such wine is a delicacy," or that the crucifixion's supernatural darkness is a cover to hide Jesus from the "leering" (p.13) of his accusers, is unjustifiable. See Marcus' book review on Gundry's Mark in JTS 45 (1994) pp.648-654.

<sup>119</sup> Theissen, Lokalkolorit p.295; also Gaston, Stone pp.21f.; Lightfoot, Message p.50.

<sup>120</sup> Lightfoot, Message p.52.

21,41,42,44) to the Jewish συνέδριον (14:10) and the Gentile Πιλάτος (15:1,10,15). In vv.9-13 disciples are in a sense ratified by being included in Jesus' own destiny<sup>121</sup> which has been previously prophesied in the gospel (8:31,9:31, 10:33) and which will be explained in 14:53-65. The persecutions endured by Mark's community are intertwined with that of Jesus almost a generation before.<sup>122</sup> Therefore Jesus' trial before the Sanhedrin is a "paradigm of the good confession in the face of trial."<sup>123</sup>

When the high priest mouths the essential Christian confession (e.g., 1:1,11,9:7) σὺ εἶ ὁ χριστὸς ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ εὐλογητοῦ; which Jesus answers unequivocally, breaking through Mark's own secrecy theme:<sup>124</sup> ἐγὼ εἰμι, καὶ ὄψεσθε τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐκ δεξιῶν καθήμενον τῆς δυνάμεως καὶ ἐρχόμενον μετὰ τῶν νεφελῶν τοῦ οὐρανοῦ (v.62), then

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<sup>121</sup> Marcus, Way p.193.

<sup>122</sup> Donahue rightly established the primacy of Markan community experience in 13:9-13 and the passion of Jesus (Are You the Christ? pp.212-224); also, Lohmeyer, Markus pp.270-273. By showing that Matthew and Luke lack the immediacy of persecution found in Mark, Donahue posited the Jewish-Roman War 66-70 C.E. situation (the Neronian persecution was confined to the environs of Rome) described by Josephus, as a possible *Sitz im Leben* explaining the immediacy of persecution in 13:9-13. Recently several have followed along the lines of Donahue's analysis, e.g., notably ; John Dominic Crossan, Who Killed Jesus?; Hamerton-Kelly, Poetics of Violence (1994); Marcus, Way (1992); Theissen, Lokalkolorit (1989); Myers, Strong Man (1988).

<sup>123</sup> Donahue, Are You the Christ? p.222.

<sup>124</sup> Myers (Strong Man p.376), posits a mocking answer by Jesus ["Am I?"] to match the high priest's mockery, or note Taylor's "the word is yours" (Mark p.568). But the Markan background on Jesus' christhood and divine sonship prohibits an elusive answer. The secrecy theme throughout Mark is now disclosed (Perrin, "High Priest's Question" p.82; Christian Maurer, "Das Messiasgeheimnis des Markusevangeliums" NTS 14 [1967-1968] p.519; A.Y. Collins, "Genre" p.19). The grandeur of Jesus' answer, with Jesus sharing in God's power and glory, the authoritative tone directed not just at the high priest but at the entire Sanhedrin (ὄψεσθε), elevated language depicting Jesus' exalted position (ἐρχόμενον μετὰ τῶν νεφελῶν τοῦ οὐρανοῦ), and the high priest's response, suggest a direct answer from Jesus. Note Donahue, "The second half of verse 61 and verse 62 contain a density of Christological titles found nowhere else in the gospel of Mark" Are You the Christ? p.89.

the reader's own perspective nearly a generation after the trial is brought to the fore. The terms *χριστὸς* and *ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ εὐλόγητου* (v.61) reflect the meaning inherent in the gospel perspective itself (1:1).<sup>125</sup> Whatever the historical basis of these terms in the passion narrative,<sup>126</sup> the meaning Mark's audience would have attributed to them is highly significant. Of the uses of *χριστὸς* in Mark (1:1,8:29,9:41,12:35, 14:61,15:32), the titular sense is predominant and with it the confessional element (1:1,8:29,14:62,15:32), which would have been the basis for missionary proclamation among Mark's community.<sup>127</sup> Mark has waited to 14:62 to provide the definitive meaning to *χριστὸς*, enjoining silence in 8:30 while providing a strong hint of what is to come (8:27-9:1).<sup>128</sup> Chapter 14:62 is also the vindication of the SM over the Sanhedrin,

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<sup>125</sup> Taking 1:1 as "Jesus Christ, God's Son" on the basis of the reading supported by *ℵ B D L W*.

<sup>126</sup> On this see Gundry, *Mark* pp.908f.

<sup>127</sup> So Perrin, "High Priest's Question" p.85. The parallel christological term *ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ εὐλόγητου* manifested metaphysical divine sonship, something which had already been worked out through Christian interpretative work on the death and resurrection of Jesus (see Rom 1:3-4,9:5; 2Cor 8:9; Phil 2:5-11). This is apparent in Mark where Jesus is the adopted Son of God (1:9-11) whose deification was recognized at the transfiguration (9:2-8) and surmised from parabolic allusion (12:6). The term *υἱὸς* reflects Mark's interpretative work in defining the parallel *χριστὸς* and encapsulates the entire relationship between God and Jesus reaching back to the beginning of the gospel (*υἱὸς* coupled with the surrogate phrase for God is a variation of 1:1, "a deliberate echo of the 'Son of God' in 1:1" Perrin, p.88).

<sup>128</sup> Verse 62 solidifies the suffering theme in 8:27-9:1 by again connecting *χριστὸς* (8:29) and *ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου* (8:38) in the context of Jesus' passion and reiterates predictively vindication over suffering (cf., 8:38). At the same time *ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου* connects with the christological terms in 14:61 providing the fullest disclosure of Jesus' person in the gospel. Minette De Tillesse, "La question solennelle du grand prêtre et la non moins solennelle réponse de Jésus indiquent que là se trouve, pour Marc, l'aboutissement et le terme de tout son évangile. Tout ce qui avait précédé tendait vers ce moment suprême" *Le secret messianique dans L'évangile de Marc Lectio Divina* 47 (Paris: Cerf), 1968 p.337. Thus the SM title in 14:62 is a definitive statement on the christological titles in v.61, so e.g., E. Lohse, *History of the Suffering and Death of Jesus Christ* (trans.) M.O. Dietrich (Philadelphia: Fortress Press), 1967 p.85; Schrieber, "Die Christologie des

which makes 14:62 a parousia reference. At stake is the identity and status of God's representative, and his disciples by their association with him, through their endurance of persecution as they proclaim the gospel.<sup>129</sup>

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Markusevangeliums" *ZTK* 58 (1961), p.164; Donahue, *Are You the Christ?* p.95.

Notice the links in 8:38-9:1, 13:26, and 14:62 that connect suffering and vindication.

"coming	8:38	13:26	14:62
glory	8:38	13:26	
angels	8:38	(13:27)	
seeing	(9:1)	13:26	14:62
power	(9:1)	13:26	14:62
clouds		13:26	14:62
seated			14:62

(Verses within parentheses are not a part of the Son of Man saying proper but are closely united to it)" Frank J. Matera, *The Kingship of Jesus Composition and Theology in Mark 15* *SBL Dissertation Series* 66 (Chico: Scholars Press), 1982 p.103.

<sup>129</sup> That 13:26 and 14:62 are parousia references is confirmed by common syntactical elements: ἐκ δεξιῶν and its dependent τῆς δυνάμεως flank the participle καθήμενον which placed next to ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου indicate most emphatically the SM's supreme status as God's (cf., the periphrastic δυνάμεως) representative, sitting in the highest position possible. The notion of movement is supplied by ἐρχόμενον with the prepositional phrase designating the origin of the movement (μετὰ τῶν νεφελῶν τοῦ οὐρανοῦ). In 13:26 the aspect of movement is more prominent than 14:62 with ἐρχόμενον placed immediately after τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου and governing two prepositions (ἐν and μετὰ) denoting state (ἐν νεφέλαις, as opposed to divine origin i.e., without τοῦ οὐρανοῦ 14:62) and accompaniment (μετὰ δυνάμεως πολλῆς καὶ δόξης i.e., as opposed to the encompassing title δυνάμεως 14:62) respectively. Interestingly 8:38 has several of these identical and corresponding elements: ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου has a future coming (ἔλθῃ), the verb form governs two prepositional phrases denoting divine power (ἐν τῇ δόξῃ τοῦ πατρὸς αὐτοῦ) and numerical strength (μετὰ τῶν ἀγγέλων τῶν ἁγίων cf., 13:27). Similarly disciples (τινες ὧδε τῶν ἐστηκότων 9:1) will witness (ἴδωσιν) the SM's coming as the kingdom of God ἐν δυνάμει. In 8:27-9:1 a non-suffering christhood is turned into a suffering and finally vindicated SM (see especially 8:38), whereas in 14:62 a vindicated and vindicator titular (Christ) SM appears.

Mark's anti-temple stance takes full expression with Jesus' confession of divine sonship. The theme of chs. 11-13 according to Barton is "judgment against Jerusalem, and thus against the official Judaism which resides there ...," (*Family Ties* p.165) which he well sums up: "the conquering Messiah will storm Jerusalem on a colt, his army a mob of pilgrims armed with palm-fronds, their battle-cry an ancient hallal which is over-coded with implications they cannot understand. The cleansing of the temple will draw its economy to a dramatic close. The official 'representatives of God' will behave diabolically. 'The stone which the builders rejected' will become the 'head of the corner.' The trial will run in two

Conclusion The general contours of Jesus' trial before the Jewish authorities fit what many among Mark's audience would have experienced. His audience would have recognized that "Mark himself links the Danielic prophecy of the 'abomination of desolation' (Dan. 9:27; 11:31; 12:11; cf. Mark 13:14) ... with the prophecy of the coming of the Son of man (Dan 7:13-14; cf., Mark 13:26)..."<sup>130</sup> because, with the realization that τὸ σημεῖον (13:4) has been given (v.14), the end-time proper has begun and so the SM's coming looms on the horizon.<sup>131</sup> Essentially Mark has turned a political event, that is, the disintegration of the Jewish cult and state by Titus in 70 C.E., into a rationale for the Jewish cult's rejection of Jesus, and through this, rooted that political event christologically and eschatologically. In addition Mark has made this event resonate with a motif of modelling discipleship for his community, which in preaching the gospel, will be confronted by antagonistic authorities (13:9).

The trial before the Sanhedrin is the key to the passion and one of the keys of the gospel.<sup>132</sup> The high priest's response to Jesus' confession is the formal judicial act of rejection,

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directions, and Jesus will be vindicated at the moment of his condemnation. The burlesque of a coronation which the soldiers will perform will be, in fact, exactly the counter-point for Jesus' declaration that the Messiah-King must go to Jerusalem to die" (p.166); also Perrin, "Weakness"; Juell, Messiah and Temple SBLDS 31 (ed.) Howard C. Kee, Douglas A. Knight (Missoula: Scholars Press), 1977 p.57; Geddert, Watchwords pp.207f.

<sup>130</sup> Marcus (Way p.168).

<sup>131</sup> Mark has so constructed the interaction between Jesus and the high priest that "the trial turns on *the* Christian confession of Jesus as messiah and Son of God (14:61)" ... " so that for Mark "the Jewish rejection of the Gospel foretold and indeed led to God's definitive and historical rejection of the Jews: the destruction of their nation, their city, and their Temple, all come about in Mark's own day" Fredriksen, Jesus p.183. In conjunction with this the connection between 14:62 and Dan 7:13 is sufficient to demonstrate a "nuance of judgment" (Marcus, Way p.166.) in respect to Jesus' vindication in judgment over the Jewish authorities at the parousia.

<sup>132</sup> Lührmann, "Markus 14.55-64" p.465; Hamerton-Kelly, Poetics of Violence p.53. A difficulty of our interpretation is Jesus' statement that the Sanhedrin would "see" the SM's

certifying the death penalty. Thus the symbolic representative of the temple state "repudiates the truth of the Gospel."<sup>133</sup> The utterance given the high priest by Mark encapsulates the entire truth of the person of the Markan Jesus and justifies the disciples in perseverance in the midst of suffering. The SM's vindication in 14:62, predicated upon the Danielic imagery of Dan 7:13, includes the community vindication also of all those persecuted for their allegiance to Jesus, that is, those who have suffered rejection by family members, trial and execution (13:9-13).<sup>134</sup>

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coming. How could this be if Jerusalem was in ruins and the cult leaders either dead or in captivity? Certainly France's interpretation is rejected whereby the destruction itself is the means the authorities see Jesus's coming. Such difficult symbolism would not be apparent to the high priest nor to Mark's readers. Against Perrin's interpretation that the subject of ὄψεσθε is Mark's audience ("Question" p.92): Jesus is addressing the Sanhedrin directly, not the Markan reader. And nothing in the context indicates an aside to the reader on the level of either 2:10 (ἵνα δὲ εἰδῆτε) or 13:14 (ὁ ἀναγινώσκων νοεῖτω). Myers' suggestion, that "seeing" was fulfilled at the foot of the cross (Strong Man p.376), can be dismissed because Jesus' crucifixion did not correspond to a vindictory coming. Literally neither the Sanhedrin at Jesus' time nor the Sanhedrin in 70 C.E. witnessed the parousia. But whatever Mark meant, based upon 13:26 and the nearness of the parousia due to the destruction of Jerusalem, the remaining remnants of Jewish authority would witness the parousia. The statement in v.62 is probably best understood as a specifying of 13:26, in the same vein, that the SM's coming would be witnessed by everyone, including remnants of the Sanhedrin, which makes it a vindictory statement over the oppressors of both Jesus and his followers. This is brought out by Mark, who "presents the entire Sanhedrin condemning Jesus to death and then proceeding to mock and abuse him, a direct confrontation from which even Matthew retreats (14:64-65)" Senior, "Swords" p.16. Thus 14:62 reassures Christians who themselves are called to make the same claim (cf., 13:9-11) before their opponents (so Juel, Temple p.93). The parallelisms between 13:26 and 14:62 provide the basis for interpreting ὄψεσθε as a parousia statement which would keep it within the orbit of ὄψονται in 13:26 (cf., Donahue "... the forms of the verb 'to see' in Mark are used in primary reference to the 'seeing' of Jesus at the parousia ..." Are You the Christ? p.204 and pp.93f.; also Juel, Temple, and cf. Lohmeyer, "wird dann der Widerspruch aufgehoben, der zwischen der Erscheinung des Gefangenen und Seiner Aussage besteht" Markus p.329). Finally, that Mark is making a definitive comment in 14:62 is seen by the manner of the shift from Jesus' first person ("I am") to third person language ("... the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of power and coming with the clouds of heaven").

<sup>133</sup> Fredriksen, Jesus p.118.

<sup>134</sup> Marcus, Way p.169.

#### 7.4. Verses 19-23

Finally, according to our view of vv.14-23, Mark's situation is found in the text after 13:14a where vv.14b-22 describe an unrealized future. The broad summation in v.23 separates depicted earthly events from the final cosmic closure (vv.24-27). Having previously commented upon vv.14b-18 in chapters five and six we will limit our comments to vv.19-22.

7.4.1. The manner the false christs/prophets in vv.20-21 resemble the deceivers in vv.5-6 suggests that, although for Mark these individuals exist in different time-periods,<sup>135</sup> a relationship exists between them. Their activity in vv.21-22 follows the broadening of the catastrophe in Judaea to one enveloping the whole creation (vv.14b-20).<sup>136</sup> Their threat occurs in the midst of a universal tribulation which the elect (τοὺς ἐκλεκτοὺς v.20) are embroiled in, and is directed at them (τοὺς ἐκλεκτοὺς v.22). It is from their place among the nations (13:10) that the elect are gathered (τοὺς ἐκλεκτοὺς v.27).

Thus two circumstances are portrayed: the first is the situation leading up to Titus' act

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<sup>135</sup> As Gundry (Mark p.778) correctly notes: vv.5b-6 are part of the "beginning of the birth pangs" whereas vv.21-22 are part of the period initiated by the appearance of τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἔρημώσεως and so belong to the end-time proper.

<sup>136</sup> *Contra* Gundry who limits the activities of the false christs/prophets to Judaea alone: "We have no indication, then, that vv.21-23 have left behind the Judean limitation imposed by v 14. Not till vv 24-25 will Jesus' language lift this limitation" (Mark p.778). But the broadening of the tribulation to envelop the whole creation is that indication. Gundry's limitation of "all flesh" to individuals in Judaea (p.777) makes "the days" of v.20 overly literal and neglects to consider the impact of the angels gathering the elect from throughout the earth (v.27) as significant for interpreting vv.19f.

Having widened the scope of tribulation in v.19, Mark widens its severity. It is not simply ἕως τοῦ καιροῦ ἐκεινοῦ (Dan 12:1), so Hartman Prophecy p.154, but ἕως τοῦ νῦν καὶ οὐ μὴ γένηται. D. Lührmann's view (Markusevangelium p.223), that Mark understands at least one further tribulation to come following the one in v.19, fails to consider the hyperbolic effect of the phrase καὶ οὐ μὴ γένηται regarding the tribulation in v.19. Certainly no other is envisaged (vv.24-27). The panorama of the tribulation period is given a definite closure. A further lesser tribulation is somewhat anti-climactic.



of destruction in which the first set of deceivers appear. For Mark the appearance of the first group of deceivers (vv.5b-6) is associated with Jerusalem's demise. However the group in the second situation (vv.21-22), because of the worldwide context in vv.19-20, operates not necessarily or only in Palestine, but among the nations in the period of unparalleled tribulation,<sup>137</sup> where the disciples are proclaiming the gospel. The manner in which Tacitus (Hist 5.13.2), Suetonius (Vesp 5) and Josephus (War 3.8:9,4.10:7) interpreted prophecies concerning the elevation of individuals like Vespasian to ascendancy in the East and West shows the expanse of their projected influence, with which Mark may well have concurred, though with

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<sup>137</sup> *Endzeit* chaos is reminiscent of the *Urzeit* chaos which threatened to overthrow the created order necessitating the intervention of God, so Bernard W. Anderson, "Creation versus Chaos" in The Reinterpretation of Mythical Symbolism in the Bible (New York: Association Press), 1967 p.142; Ernst W. Ehrlich, Die Kultsymbolik im Alten Testament und im nachbiblischen Judentum (Stuttgart: Anton Hiersemann), 1959 pp.12-17. Chapter 4:35-41 applies to a situation of chaos in 13:19f. In both accounts the elements are against the disciples. As Jesus intervened to save the disciples from the storm (4:39) so God will intervene to shorten the tribulation preventing the disciples from perishing. Significantly in the question asked about who has power over chaos no answer is given (4:41). The onus is put on the disciples with the question οὐπω ἔχετε πίστιν; (v.40). Tension between both the experience and the lack of salvation is the reason for the open-ended question in 4:41, so B.M.F. Van Iersel, A.J.M. Linmans, "The Storm On The Lake. Mk 4:35-41 and Matt 8:18-27 in the light of Form Criticism and "Redaktionsgeschichte" and Structural Analysis" in Miscellaneous Neotestamentica Vol.48 (eds.) T. Baarda, A.F.J. Klijn, W.C. Van Unnik (Leiden: E.J. Brill), 1978 p.23. Mark first makes plain what the future holds for Jesus, and by implication, his disciples: "Only when it is clear that the identity of the Son of Man entails first death and only then resurrection (8:31-33;9:31;10:33-34) and that this sequence is inescapable for Jesus' followers, too, (e.g. 8:34-38) can the question be answered, albeit not by words alone (8:34). Hereby the tension continues to exist between the unprotected community and the disciples in the little boat which was saved by Jesus from going under (4:40)" (p.23). The disciples, and by implication Mark's readers, must accept that maintaining faith in Jesus cannot be divorced from their own suffering in the end-time tribulation which explains the threat of the falsechrists/prophets in 13:21-22.

Characterized by great deeds of power they call for a *theologia gloria* without suffering, as the disciples did in 8:27. The false christs' identity is affirmed by their followers in the same terms Jesus used (cf., 'Εγώ εἰμι in 13:6 is the same statement made in the parallel storm-stilling incident to 4:35-42 in 6:50). The omission of response regarding Jesus' identity (4:41) is paralleled in 13:22f. where in the time of tribulation uncertainty lurks about Jesus' status. Who is the real Christ -- Jesus or the messiah pretenders?

the judgment that such individuals are false prophets. Josephus' speech on the elevation of Vespasian to becoming "ruler of the world" (ἄρξει τῆς οἰκουμένης War 6.5:4) occurred on *Jewish* soil (see also Tacitus on prophecy on Vespasian Hist 5.13.2) which shows the impact of the prophecy *beyond* Palestine, in the wider context of the civilized world. Within a decade from Nero's death in 68 C.E. rumours had fostered a Nero *redivivus* who, coming from the East in Asia would destroy the Roman Empire in the West (SibOr 4.145-147 also see Tacitus, Hist 1.2.1; and Dio Cassius 64.9.3 for an earlier claimant as a revived Nero).<sup>138</sup>

Significantly the false christs/prophets promise σημεῖα καὶ τέρατα (v.22) which contrasts with Jesus who has prophesied τὸ σημεῖον (v.4) signalling the onset of the end-time.<sup>139</sup> Signs played an important role in establishing the credibility of an individual or event.<sup>140</sup>

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<sup>138</sup> If Hartman (Prophecy pp.155,164) is correct that behind vv.21-22 lies an allusion to Dan 11:37, which has been combined with LXX Deut 13 through an association based on the prediction of the false prophets' deceptive activity of signs and wonders (see Deut 13:1-3,5,7,11,14), then the false christs/prophets in vv.21-22 may be interpreted from a historical perspective from beyond Palestine e.g., Theissen's (Lokalkolorit p.280) citing of Suetonius (Vesp 7.2-3) and Tacitus (Hist 4.81.1) concerning Vespasian's ability to perform signs and wonders.

This would mean that the impact of the SM's victorious coming (13:26) over the Jewish authorities (14:62) also includes victory over the false christs/prophets active in the world.

<sup>139</sup> Mark "interprets the present as *the* eschatological crisis" Kelber, (Kingdom p.122). For Pesch, (Naherwartungen pp.108-118,154-155) Mark seeks to reduce end-time fervour by placing vv.21-22 between an account of the city's destruction (vv.14-20) and the parousia (vv.24-27) which inculcates a false parousia near expectation following Jerusalem's ruin. But Mark's emphasis is not on the expectation of the prophets (cf.v.5-6) but on the prophets and christs (vv.21-22) as *false*. The structural proximity of the SM's parousia makes it difficult to surmise that Mark is curtailing imminent expectation which Pesch interprets in respect to the kingdom's advent in preaching (1:15). By pitting exhortations of watchfulness against near expectation Pesch manifests the divide between "apocalyptic" and exhortation (against this see Brandenburger, Markus 13 pp.15,77,91,153).

"Die Falschmessiasse und Falschpropheten werden sich die Drangsal in ihrem Sinne zunutze machen und dabei auf die Naherwartung der Gemeinde (V.20b) rechnen" Pesch, Naherwartungen p.155. Blount ("Preaching the Kingdom" p.47), well surmises that Jesus' proclamation of the temple's destruction in 13:2 is the climax of Jesus' kingdom message

By positing resurrection and parousia the Markan Jesus "outmaneuvers" the claimants fate.<sup>141</sup>  
 By having Jesus in the story-line prophesy the advent of deceivers and false prophets/christs (13:6,21-22), Mark uses the claimants to *authenticate Jesus' own claims* (13:4,14,26), that is, by circumscribing their sign activity under the guise of prophesy, so passing judgment on them. At the same time Mark advocates one sign (vv.4,14 not several cf. v.22), heralding the end-time

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(1:15) going back to the enacted fig-tree parable as an indication of what is to come (ch.11). Thus Blount follows Kelber (*Kingdom* p.67) in positing a connection between the temple's destruction and the near approach of the kingdom. But Blount misses the razor edge of Mark's dilemma. By positing that the difference between the Markan Jesus and the false prophets is that the latter associated the end with the demise of the temple, while the former only saw this destruction as "eschatological birth pangs" (p.51), Blount fails to clarify why the temple's demise should herald an imminent approach to the kingdom. "Die Tage der Drangsal nach der Zerstörung des Tempels sind eine Zeit der Parusieverführung. Gegen das Gegenwärtigverkündigen des Endes setzt sich der Evangelist zur Wehr" (Pesch, *Naherwartungen* pp.154-155), though not by disengaging near expectation enthusiasm.

The origin of the false christs/prophets is earthly. Cf., Q Matt 24:26 ἐὰν οὖν εἴπωσιν ὑμῖν, Ἴδου ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ ἐστίν, μὴ ἐξέλθητε. Ἴδου ἐν τοῖς ταμείοις, μὴ πιστεύσητε. Though it can only be shown from Q Matt 24:26 that the specific place of the deceivers is a desert location, it is significant that all references to false prophets/christs' activity in Mk 13:21-22; Matt 24:23-26; Lk 17:23 point to particular locations (Mk 13:21 ἴδε ὧδε ὁ χριστός, ἴδε ἐκεῖ; Matt 24:23, ἴδου ὧδε ὁ χριστός, ἢ ὧδε, v.26 ἴδου ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ ἐστίν, μὴ ἐξέλθητε· ἴδου ἐν τοῖς ταμείοις; Lk 17:23 ἴδου ἐκεῖ, [ἢ] ἴδου ὧδε)<sup>7</sup>. Against Gundry (*Mark* p.744), who in Mk 13:21 posits the ellipses and asyndeton emphasize the "danger" of the false prophets/christs, the central adverbs of place flanking ὁ χριστός, along with the coupling imperitivals Ἴδε, and that cosmic phenomena precede the SM's parousia (vv.24-27), suggest the emphasis is on the danger in respect to disciples being duped by location.

<sup>140</sup> By positing τὸ σημεῖον (v.4) at the end of the age, in respect to the cosmic phenomena of 13:24-25, Brandenburger releases Mark from imminent expectation because no event has occurred indicating the onset of τὸ σημεῖον. As Verheyden asks concerning Brandenburger's view: "If vv.5-22 are denied a 'sign' function, do they not lose also their eschatological significance?" ("Persecution and Eschatology" p.1153 fn.43). Our position is consistent with the significance of the impact of the city's destruction.

<sup>141</sup> Kelber is correct here to point out the Markan Jesus outprophesying "the parousia prophets" (*Kingdom* p.128). Cf., Brandenburger: "Markus hat die Tempelzerstörung durch Jesus als apokalyptischen Lehrer richtig in das Geheimnis der Zeiten einordnen lassen" *Markus 13* p.97.

and an imminent parousia.<sup>142</sup>

7.5 Conclusion        The false directions set forth by the deceivers and false prophets/christs (13:5-6,21-22) contrast with the end-time message of the Markan Jesus. The end-time is predicated upon Jesus' prophecy in 13:14 which will lead to the SM's parousia. Chapter 13:14 indicates the demise of Jerusalem which will lead to the closure of the present age and the vindication of the gospel's truthfulness. Thus ch.13 is marked by the upheavals of the war situation in the years 66-70 C.E. Mark's intent was essentially pastoral,<sup>143</sup> to urge his audience

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<sup>142</sup> Lührmann errs in disassociating the events of 13:14f. as inaugurating the end-time (similarly Walter, ["Tempelzerstörung" pp.44-45] who disconnects 13:14 from any reference to the destruction of the temple, instead positing the appearance of an Antichrist at an undefined location), and while freeing the Markan Jesus from being outstripped by events, robs Mark's gospel of immediacy by separating the temple's destruction from the parousia. Ignorance of the parousia's arrival does not curtail an imminent parousia, or the vigilance injunctions are superfluous. "Mk. setzt dabei seine Christologie gegen eine an den Kriegsereignisse entzündete Naherwartung, ohne doch selber die Eschatologie aufzugeben Auch in dieser Rede ist Jesus 'der Sohn' (13,32), auf den auch hier uns hier besonders zu hören ist (vgl. 9.7); als der in die Passion gehende Menschensohn ist der, der am Ende kommen wird (13.26), und als solche ist er der echte 'Gesalbte' gegenüber den ψευδόχριστοι und ψευδοπροφήται (13.22). Sein Wort als Wort der Nähe des Reiches Gottes (1.14f.;4.1,34) ist unüberholbar durch die Geschichte: 'ich habe euch alles vorausgesagt' (13.23), 'meine Worte werden nicht vergehen' (13.31)" Lührmann, "Markus 14.55-64" p.468. Cf., also: "Der erste Teil der Frage wird in 13.5-23 beantwortet, der zweite in 13.24-27. Das aber bedeutet, dass die Zeit der grossen θλίψις und die Zeit nach dieser θλίψις voneinander geschieden werden, die Zeit des Jüdischen Krieges einschliesslich der Zerstörung des Tempels und die Zeit des Kommens des Menschensohns. Wie in 14. 58 und 62 ist also beiden strikt voneinander zu trennen. Am Beginn und am Ende des ersten Teils der Rede steht in 13.5b, 6 und 21f. die Warnung vor Verführern, die im Namen Jesu auftreten und sagen, sie seien er, und die während all der Ereignisse sagen, hier oder dort sei 'der Gesalbte.' Offenbar handelt es sich um christliche Propheten, für Mk. freilich Pseudopropheten, die Situation des Jüdischen Krieges interpretieren als Zeit der Parusie des Gesalbten Jesus. Mk. lehnt solche Interpretation als falsch ab" (pp.466-467). Against this: we have shown the improbability of the false prophets/christs as originating in Christian circles and that τὸ σημεῖον does not indicate the cosmological upheavals of 13:24-25.

<sup>143</sup> Matera, Saying about Mark? p.55; also Guelich, Mark p. xliii.

to preach the gospel of "revolutionary engagement"<sup>144</sup> amid the chaotic remaining time and to face the prospect of rejection. Through the proclamation of the gospel among the nations Mark establishes continuity between his audience and the Christian past, and by making the contemporaneous generation part of Jesus' generation (13:31), the gap between the story-level Jesus and the coming SM is compressed so that Markan discipleship experience is tied with Jesus' own experience of suffering.

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<sup>144</sup> Aptly called by Blount, "Preaching the Kingdom" p.56.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### CONCLUSION

Initially, our study has demonstrated the pivotal nature of v.14 structurally in Mark 13 and that revelation of τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως is τὸ σημεῖον of 13:4. We have shown that the creation, maintenance, and resolution of tension throughout vv.5-13 is rooted in the sign request (v.4) which peaks at v.14, engendering imminent expectation which is resolved with the SM's appearance in vv.26-27. Therefore we have established that there is a double focus in ch.13, at vv.14 and 26. Verse 14 pinpoints something definite which demands urgent attention for inhabitants of Judaea and a realization for those living elsewhere that the end-time has become operational.

Through focus upon the advent of τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως we have shown that Mark was able to give his present time an unparalleled immediacy which harnessed discipleship obligation regarding the proclamation of the gospel. Through this means Mark connected his audience with Jesus and his disciples. Furthermore, by reducing sign activity to one event Mark simplified end-time expectation into a focus away from time-table calculation into missionary activity and sharpened the belief in a definite end concomitant with "eschatologically charged suffering"<sup>1</sup> in view of the parallel track between Jesus and his disciples regarding the gospel's proclamation -- which is manifest by the betrayal motif permeating 13:9-13 and the passion narrative. Without an imminent parousia expectation buttressed by the advent of τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως, the gospel's proclamation lacks the immediacy

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<sup>1</sup> Blount, "Preaching the Kingdom" p.55.

manifest in the story-line proclamation of the gospel. Through communicating his ideas in story-form, founded upon Jesus, Mark has merged past, present and future together by superimposing through the gospel story a projected persecutory experience in the post-70 C.E. situation, thereby duplicating in a sense Jesus' life as the suffering SM.

Our study has shown that the final form of ch.13 originated out of two severe crises: the chaotic circumstances around the attempt by Gaius Caligula to install an image of himself in Jerusalem in 39 C.E. and the Jewish-Roman war in the turbulent years 66-74 C.E. in Palestine. Specifically ch.13 owes its content and structure to events in these crises focused around the temple in Jerusalem, one an intended desecration by Caligula, the other the obliteration of the temple and city by Titus. Mark's significant achievement lay in the combination of ἑστηκότα with the phrase τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως which goes beyond the LXX Dan 9:26,11:31,12:11 where the cryptic phrase in its forms indicates an object(s). Mark personalizes the abomination through this combination after the manner of Heb Dan 9:26,11:31.

We have established that the Roman commander Titus is the most probable referent in 13:14 among all the identifications posited as τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως, and we have made a case against the most telling objection to Titus as referent by showing the possibility of flight in Judaea after September 70 C.E., and by providing a rationale for Mark's expectations in that period. By making Titus' destruction of the cult and city the end-time trigger, Mark has the one reference point from which to merge his own *Sitz im Leben* with a story-line set in the past. Through this event Mark makes his gospel acutely relevant.

The location and circumstances we have advocated for Mark's community, in Syria or one of the Transjordanian Hellenistic cities, puts that community in the context of maintaining

an identity that has a definite closure in the future. In the manner that Mark's gospel is an "action" gospel (Outler) so Mark's community is an "action" community determined to proclaim the gospel and braced for further rejection with the approaching tribulation. Therefore Mark's gospel is a document written for the end-time, not a comforting biography supporting the pursuit of a peaceful life, but a training manual for end-time existence. For Mark commitment to discipleship required faithfulness unto death -- hence the movement in the gospel story-line from a beginning of the way with preaching in Galilee to Jesus' approaching death in Jerusalem, something of such import that it finally "takes over" the gospel. Part of Mark's brilliance lay in the manner he was able to take the confusion of the times and fashion from it a sense of orderliness. A centrepiece for understanding the present was taken from a pagan commander's act of aggression which left Jerusalem with no stone upon another (13:2). Through this destruction Mark was able to weld together Jesus' time with his own so that the disciples' allegiance to Jesus on the way was a parallel course to Jesus' own journey.

Perhaps this aspect of discipleship may provide insight into the secrecy motif in the gospel. Though the reader knows Jesus' identity from the beginning (1:1,11) such information is withheld from the disciples, who only comprehend that identity through understanding the necessity of suffering. On faith's level Mark's audience know Jesus' identity but the prospect of ongoing persecution produces a cognitive dissonance which clashes with the expectation of faith. In short their own experience of suffering is incomplete. Only the parousia will bring the vindication where Jesus will be fully known. The secrecy motif may be part of the precarious nature of tested faith which in the turmoil of experience is hidden and unproved until vindication occurs.

Our study has filled the void of Ford's work and shown its limitations regarding



consideration of Titus as the referent in 13:14, extended Brandon's neglected thesis and buttressed Brandon's argument by solidifying Titus as referent in 13:14 in the light of the last twenty five years of Markan research. Establishing v.14 as the peak of vv.5-13 means we have ratified the connection between τὸ σημεῖον in v.4 and its answer in v.14 in a manner previously unattempted and shown the inadequacy of studies which find the Markan Jesus unresponsive to a sign request by the disciples. Our work means future studies on Mark 13 must consider the impact of τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως in interpretation of the gospel and keeps the eschatological questions (e.g., the nature of the end-time, the validity of a request for signs, imminent parousia expectation), at the forefront of the question of the interpretation of the gospel.

Our rationale for the gospel's creation has drawn together key gospel components (e.g., 8:27f., 14:62f., 16:8) into a pressing informative matrix charged with immediacy, in which the generational gap between story-line and Mark's circumstances is condensed into a potent unified whole. Jesus' kingdom message has been gathered up from the past in the act of reading through interpreting that story-line through the lens of fundamentally one contemporary event, and Mark's audience reads into that story-line its own tumultuous experience. Titus' act of abomination was the hinge from which Mark connected both Jerusalem's destruction and Jesus' execution in the same place, by the same political power, and endowed them with theological significance i.e. leading in the one to the resurrection, in the other to the parousia. Thus a model of the past based from an event in Jerusalem (Jesus' execution) provides an efficacious parallel for Mark's eschatology. Jerusalem's destruction triggers the onset of the end-time.<sup>2</sup> Not

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<sup>2</sup> For example, G.W.H. Lampe's argument from the literature of the century and a half after Jerusalem's destruction that this catastrophe "made a surprisingly small impact upon the Christian communities" ("A.D. 70 in Christian reflection" in Politics of His Day

only has Mark compressed Christian experience into replicating that of Jesus but elevated that experience to an edge in a manner perhaps reminiscent of 1Thessalonians, no mean achievement considering the span of years between the gospel and Paul's letter. On our view Mark's gospel (temper, colouration, content i.e. beginning and conclusion) is set by the effect of Titus' destructive act which provides the necessary ground-point to trigger parousia expectation.<sup>3</sup>

We have provided a rationale offering the possibility of substantial dialogue with current comparisons of Roman Imperial touchstones and Mark's gospel in and beyond ch.13 (e.g., after the fashion of Telford's work on the role of fig-trees in Graeco-Roman myth in respect to the emperor's *aureum saeculum* in comparison with Markan fig-tree references,<sup>4</sup> Schmidt's

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p.153), is contradicted by our study. Jacob Neusner makes a similar point. For Jews in the Diaspora, and covenanters at Qumran, and Christians Jews who had rejected the temple cult, "the year 70 cannot be said to have marked an important change" Formative Judaism: Religious, Historical and Literary Studies Third Series Torah, Pharisees, and Rabbis (Chico :Scholars Press), 1983 p.88. Lampe is accurate to a point as by 70 C.E. Jewish and Gentile Christianity had established a sense of individuality through doctrinal distinctions, geographical differences, and cultural tendencies. And the implication of Jesus' message interpreted by the earliest churches must have undercut any allegiance to the sacrificial aspect of the temple cult. But Lampe's evidence ignores the complexity of the manner groups fashion identity, and tends to read back into the earliest histories of Christians developments hammered out through the process of reflective thought on a catastrophe like Jerusalem's destruction, something which for Mark was determinative for much of his argument. Mark was intent upon the task of shaping the identity of the faith as he understood it.

<sup>3</sup> Which confirms one of Fredriksen's key insights: "Mark thus effectively recreates for his own audience the experience of the women at the tomb, leaving his reader in the same state that he had imagined for those first witnesses that first Easter morning: startled -- indeed, frightened -- but looking forward to the imminent manifestation of the glorious Son of Man" Jesus p.52.

<sup>4</sup> "More Fruit From The Withered Tree."

construction of Jesus' entrance into Jerusalem as an antithetical Imperial triumph march,<sup>5</sup> and Theissen/Myers' work contrasting the Markan "gospel" with Imperial εὐαγγέλιον).<sup>6</sup> On the basis of our work further studies in this vein may be productive for understanding Markan motifs and themes e.g. contrasting Roman sign activity heralding exalted personages with the Markan sign request (13:4) may be fruitful in exegeting other Markan portents like the three hours darkness (15:33) or tearing of the temple veil (15:38) associated with Jesus' death.

Finally, through fusing traditions about Jesus with deduction from his present/anticipated situation Mark's achievement is primarily compositional. The gospel of Mark is a clear-cut individual venture and not the final product of an essentially inherited tradition received in a coalesced form. Our interpretation of 13:14 is a good example of this point. Markan specificity in respect to the incorporation of the cryptic phrase into its context in 13:14 and vv.15f. is determined by authorial necessity, which does not prohibit the elements of v.14 existing in tradition prior to Mark, but makes Mark's contribution definitive regarding the verse's orientation. Our study raises the question of where the line is between Markan creation of material dealing with his post-70 C.E. situation and Mark as preserver of tradition about Jesus.

The questions remain: to what extent do chs.13-16, even the entire gospel, owe their poignancy to Markan brilliance in crafting past tradition? Is Mark one of the last imminence exponents or is he simply drawing off the immense depth of Jesus' kingdom preaching? Mark may be the tradition's servant even though perhaps its most brilliant expositor. Certainly our view offers an answer to the question: why, suddenly the gospel as a literary construct and why

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<sup>5</sup> "Roman Triumphal Procession."

<sup>6</sup> Lokalkolorit pp.299f.; Strong Man p.122.

the preoccupation with the temple, the constant gravitational pull towards Jerusalem.

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