Semitic Paronomasia in Mark; The Son of Man Illuminated

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I, Stephen Ballentyne, declare that I have written this thesis, that it is entirely my own work, and that it has not been submitted for any other degree or professional qualification.

Signed:

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שָׁלוֹם עֲלֵיכֶם

Abstract

Twentieth century scholarship carefully sampled the Semitic flavour of the gospels. Pioneers like Matthew Black, J.K. Elliott and Maurice Casey observed and analysed countless Semitisms of syntax, grammar, phrasing and literary device in the New Testament. In the Hebrew Bible, others identified and analysed poetic conventions such as Janus parallelism, a punning device that features with particular frequency in the Book of Job. But seldom did studies explore the emergence of poetic paronomasia in the New Testament, whether ostensibly replicated in Greek or apparent only after reconstructing a Hebrew or Aramaic Vorlage. Janus parallelism has enjoyed considerable attention among Hebrew Bible scholars since Cyrus Gordon's breakthrough work in 1978, yet hitherto no Janus research has been published with an eye on the New Testament. Name-puns have likewise been treated lightly. Further, though literature exists on Aramaic gospel reconstructions, scholars have almost universally ignored Hebrew's potential. Few scholars have attempted to engage with Carmignac, or the work of such moderate Hebraists as Kutscher, who support at least the possibility of Hebrew templates for parts of the gospels. Scholarly silence lingers over such findings, silence this thesis attempts to shatter, as I assess Carmignac's work on Hebrew paronomasia in Mark, design and implement a methodology for assessing Hebrew/Aramaic reconstructions of Janus parallelism, and analyse over a dozen newfound cases of Semitic Marcan punning, including parallelism, that I have discovered. This thesis will show that hidden layers of meaning, especially irony, often emerge when we reconstruct Semitic templates for Marcan lexemes, layers largely untapped by New Testament exegetes. We shall further address whether these meanings were likely intentional, or products of coincidence, deducing that parts of Mark's gospel must indeed have been translated from Semitic Vorlagen. I shall conclude that, in future scholarship, a place should be reinstated for Hebrew gospel reconstruction.

Conversely, Marcan titles - in particular 'Son of Man' - receive perennial attention, to the point that useful analysis demands, perhaps, a novel approach. Accordingly, my first two chapters' focus on Semitic punning and multivalency will construct a fresh lens through which to view the Son, as we explore how Mark may have deliberately vested the title with multiple meanings to subtly, gradually, and at times dramatically, paint a tableau: of righteous yet lowly mortals, model disciples, and individual exemplars (Ezekiel, Elijah, John the Baptist and Jesus). I shall additionally analyse scholarship on the Marcan Son of Man, spotlight the literature of Second Temple Judaism that cradled and developed the concept, and discuss various etymologies for the title in Hebrew and Aramaic. This will enhance our perception of how Jews in first-century Palestine, including those in Mark's audience, diversely construed the term, and illuminate how the evangelist's multivalency deliberately catered for an eclectic clientele. Most crucially, I shall outline how this detailed, multifaceted understanding of Mark's Son both amplifies the 'Danielic elect' paradigm and resolves anomalies that have divided scholars for decades, such as the quasi-oxymoron of a Gentile-inclusive Danielic elect.

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Introduction

Scholars have consistently downplayed documents like the Qumran Scrolls as evidence that “a vernacular Hebrew was spoken by more than a limited number of learned Jews; in their opinion, the Hebrew Dead Sea Scrolls are evidence for literary Hebrew.”[1] Such scepticism has continued to manifest in lack of attention paid to linguistic research. For instance, in Fitzmyer's influential ‘Languages of Palestine’, only four pages are devoted to discussing Hebrew, the same number devoted to Latin, against eleven for Aramaic and ten for Greek. There is no mention, either, of Kutscher’s 1959 book on IQIsa.[2]

One exception is Robert Lindsey, who, when translating the Greek of Mark into Hebrew, found it “full of Greek sentences and paragraphs that sound when translated word by word like Hebrew sentences and paragraphs."[3] Lindsey observed a telling parallel: “As far as we know no native Greek ever wrote Greek with Hebrew word order, but the Jews about two hundred years before Jesus translated the entire Old Testament to Greek and they made the translation bear the same word order found in Hebrew."[4] Another exception is Jean Carmignac, founder of Revue de Qumran and one of the first to translate fragments of the Dead Sea Scrolls.[5] In his ground-breaking and oddly overlooked work, ‘Birth of the Synoptic Gospels’, he argues for a Hebrew Vorlage for Mark, based on its ubiquitous Hebraisms and the ease with which the Greek translates into Qumran Hebrew. Sadly, Carmignac died before he could publish the work he was planning: a multivolume series based on twenty years’ study, where he would comprehensively justify his position.[6] This thesis will reopen the debate, by exploring Marcan wordplays that emerge in the biblical languages, especially in Hebrew reconstruction.

My prologue will explore the extent to which Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek were read, written and spoken in first-century Palestine, concluding on their widespread co-existence. This, in turn, will justify investigation into Semitic paronomasia in Mark in each of the three tongues, particularly the underrepresented Hebrew. First, though, we shall explore Semitic scripture’s use of punning, to establish how this device was employed in the cultures that birthed the gospels. Hence we might better perceive how Jews in Mark’s audience understood and appreciated the device. My thesis will proceed to explore paronomasia in Marcan pericopae in four categories: ironic names, sound-paronomasia, sense-paronomasia and Janus parallelism. We will progress to examine the relevance of these multivalences to Mark’s ‘Son of Man’, with our knowledge of Semitic paronomasia providing a touchstone to the term’s

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[1] Steven Fassberg, “Which Semitic Language Did Jesus and Other Contemporary Jews Speak?” *CBQ* 74,2 (2012): 273. N.b. Journal abbreviations in this thesis follow *The SBL Handbook of Style*, 2nd ed. (Atlanta, GA: SBL Press, 2014).
[2] Fassberg, “Which Semitic Language,” 273.
[3] Robert Lindsey, *Jesus, Rabbi and Lord* (Oak Creek: Cornerstone, 1990): 17.
[4] Lindsey, *Jesus, Rabbi and Lord*, 19.
[5] Émile Puech, “Jean Carmignac: 1914-1986,” *RevQ* 13, no.1/4 (49/52) (1988): 3
[6] Jean Carmignac, *Birth of the Synoptics* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1987): ix-x.

interpretation, especially in view of Mark's variegated use of the title throughout his gospel.

In chapter 1, I shall pinpoint the purpose of Hebrew Bible paronomasia, surveying scholarly views from Casonowicz (1893) to Kabergs and Ausloos (2012), to illustrate the variety of effects this device is perceived to achieve; from sustaining audience interest, to encouraging reflection, to linking two disparate ideas together. I shall proceed to explore instances of sound-paronomasia, before assessing different forms of sense-paronomasia. These include the riddle (as illustrated by Samson's conundrum), ironic names, prophetic allusions and multivalent expressions. Our next subsection will cover polysemous Janus parallelism in the Hebrew Bible, noting its prevalence in poetic literature and sayings. The term 'Janus parallelism' was coined by Cyrus Gordon in his 1978 article "New Directions." Gordon explains the device "hinges on the use of a single word with two entirely different meanings: one meaning paralleling what precedes, and the other meaning what follows."[7] He illustrates with Song of Songs 2:12:

"The blossoms appear in the land. The time of זמיר has come, and the sound of the turtledove is heard in our land."

זמיר can be understood in two ways. The first, 'pruning', refers back to the blossoms in the previous stich. The second, 'song', looks ahead to the turtledoves' melody in the following. Thus, in dense, dynamic manner, זמיר emphasizes two ideas at once.

Finally, we will explore the possibility of accidental wordplay, and the importance of literary context in understanding Semitic wordplay in particular, when posing the question "Do words define contexts or contexts words?" Setting these concepts as a backdrop, we will proceed to assess how seamlessly Marcan paronomasia fits this Semitic frame.

Hebraists have long scrutinised paronomasia, particularly from the late nineteenth century till the present day.[8] But the New Testament remains fertile ground for study, despite Carmignac's telling observations that scholarship largely ignored.[9] In chapter 2, we shall observe findings of Marcan paronomasia by trailblazers such as Black and Carmignac, and assess additional Marcan candidates for sound and sense-paronomasia that I have discovered, including several name-puns in Mark. The potential derivation of Πέτρος from צור will commence this section, followed by an exploration of the term conventionally translated 'Sons of Thunder' (3:17). We will proceed to dissect the names Bartimaios, Barabbas, Iscariot and Magdala, exploring how multivalent interpretations both inform and layer the texts that present them. Regarding Aramaic throughout the thesis, we will approximate the date of sources for potential Vorlage words, wherever they occur outside scribally-

[7] Gordon, "'New Directions'," 59–66.
[8] Khan, *Encyclopedia of Hebrew Language*, 25.
[9] Jean Carmignac died in 1986, a year before his slim monograph 'The Birth of the Synoptic Gospels' saw widespread publication in the English language. Here, Carmignac lists numerous Semitisms in the Greek of the synoptics and argues for a Hebrew Vorlage. Scholars have so far failed to engage, in any detail, with Carmignac's findings, and the author no longer lives to champion and pursue his discoveries.

transmitted portions of scripture (i.e. Ezra and Daniel) well-known to Mark's contemporaries.

In chapter 3, I shall argue 'Son of Man' is the crowning example of deliberate Marcan multivalency. Taking each appearance of the phrase in turn, I shall analyse key problems that scholars have noted with each, building to an explanation of how a multivalent understanding of the Son best resolves them. I shall proceed to argue why Mark might have chosen ambiguity, contending a key reason resides in the spectrum of beliefs held by Mark's audiences, which comprised Jews and Gentiles of diverse theological views. To illustrate, I shall explore the variety of afterlife beliefs in Judaism and, in this light, explain Mark's haziness on such issues and the Son's involvement in them. Next, I shall argue a Semitic parallel pre-existed Mark's Son - Jacob's multivalent assailant in Genesis 32 - hence illustrating that multivalent characters were not without precedent in Jewish literature, just as ambiguous expressions abound in it, thus a multivalent interpretation for Mark's Son is feasible. Finally, I shall inspect how Matthew and Luke evolve Mark's term, observing how 'Son of Man' sheds his multivalency to take up the crystallising theology of the early church, where Jesus ultimately subsumed the title.

To conclude, I shall list the discoveries made through my research; in Marcan sound-paronomasia, sense-paronomasia, Janus parallelism and a similarly multivalent view of Mark's Son of Man. Throughout the thesis, and in my conclusion, I shall draw from each pool of inquiry to help define what Mark most likely meant by the term, focusing on Mark's use of paronomasia and multivalency to reconcile traditional meanings of the title with evolving ones. Accordingly, I hope that ideas and innovations from the first two chapters of my thesis will be reflected, clarified and magnified in the third.

Prologue: The Language of Mark's Audience

Knowing the language of Mark's audience would reveal whether we should read Mark in Hebrew, Aramaic or Greek to discern intentional wordplay. If nobody in Mark's time spoke or wrote Hebrew, it would render our search for Hebrew wordplay redundant. Conversely, if evidence sustains all three tongues flowed throughout first-century Palestine, investigation into each should circulate.

Before the discovery of the Qumran scrolls, scholars generally viewed Aramaic as the language of Jesus and his contemporaries. Wilson notes "Not only does Mark record on occasion the original Aramaic words of Jesus, but his own Greek bears clear marks of Aramaic tradition."[10] However, Hebrew vastly predominates over Aramaic at Qumran, both in biblical and non-biblical texts, where the latter reveal "a free, living language, and attest… that in New Testament times, and for some considerable time previously, Hebrew was not confined to Rabbinical circles… but appeared as a normal vehicle of expression."[11] Of roughly 930 Qumran texts, approximately 750 are written in Hebrew, 27 in Greek, and only about 150 in Aramaic.[12] Birkeland (1954) hence argues for Hebrew as the regular language of Jesus's contemporaries, where only the educated upper classes used Aramaic, with the erudite alone well-versed in both.[13] This view is problematic, since we cannot explain the Aramaic *ipsissima verba* of Jesus in the gospels, spoken mainly to his lower class disciples, if Aramaic were confined to the educated elite. Further, Black (1967) marks it absurd to suggest the scriptures were paraphrased for the benefit of the high-born, as these same scriptures were provided with a Targum to enlighten the masses who no longer understood Hebrew. Still, Black concedes a case remains for a wider literary use of Hebrew in New Testament times. He notes that despite the unlikelihood of Hebrew being spoken outside educated circles, such as learned Pharisaic, Essene or priestly company, we should consider the possible use of Hebrew by Jesus, "especially on solemn, festive occasions; there is a high degree of probability that Jesus began his career as a Galilean rabbi who would be well-versed in the Scriptures, and able to compose (or converse) as freely in Hebrew as in Aramaic."[14] Lapide (1975) perceives a bilingual Palestine, highlighting the Aramaisms and Aramaic passages in the Hebrew Bible[15] and Mishnah, and the abundant Hebraisms in Palestinian Aramaic[16], concluding that Mishnaic Hebrew and

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[10] Robert McL. Wilson, "Mark." In *Peake's Commentary on the Bible,* edited by Matthew Black (London: Routledge, 1992): 800.
[11] Max Wilcox, *The Semitisms of Acts*, 14, cited in Matthew Black, *An Aramaic Approach to the Gospels and Acts* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1967): 47.
[12] Emanuel Tov, "The Greek Biblical Texts from the Judean Desert." In *Hebrew Bible, Greek Bible, and Qumran: Collected Essays* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008): 339.
[13] Harris Birkeland, "The Language of Jesus." *Avhandlinger Utgitt av Det Norske Videnskaps-Akademi i Oslo, II. Hist.-filos. Klasse* (1954): 39.
[14] Black, *An Aramaic Approach*, 48-9.
[15] E.g. Genesis 31:47; Jeremiah 10:11; Proverbs 31:2, Ezra 4:6-6:18; 7:12-26 and Daniel 2:4b-7:28.
[16] See : *Aramaic in Hebrew Encyclopedia* by Y. Kutscher, (Jerusalem, 1968) vol. 5, 965-6 (Pinchas Lapide's footnote in "Insights from Qumran into the Languages of Jesus." *Revue de Qumran* 8,4 (32) (1975): 485).

Palestinian Aramaic co-existed in Mark's day as mutually complementary diglossia.[17] That is, two varieties of Semitic language co-existed within the same speech community, each performing a definite role. A trilingual paradigm has also been theorised, with Milik (1959) recording the presence of Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek words on first-century ossuaries[18] and manuscripts at Murrabba'at written in each of these tongues.[19] More intriguingly, Lapide notes the discovery of a bundle of 15 letters, bound together in a cave at Nahal Hever; nine composed in Hebrew, five in Aramaic, one in defective Greek. Though all authorised by Shimon Bar Kokhba, they were signed by different scribes, "each apparently using the language most familiar to him, or, presumably, to the recipient. Since this can only mean that Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek were all spoken languages in Palestine during Jesus's time, there is no *a priori* reason for assuming that he [Jesus] used only one of the three."[20]

Josephus uses the term 'Hebrew' to describe the language of his kin. Though earlier scholars like Billerbeck (1924), arguing for Aramaic ubiquity, allege Josephus used the term to denote both Hebrew and Aramaic[21], Lapide refutes this view, stating the former's priestly lineage and religious upbringing profoundly familiarised him with Judaica, allowing him to distinguish between the tongues with remarkable precision. Lapide spotlights Antiquities 3.7.2, where Josephus describes the priestly girdle and explains that Moses named it "*Albaneth;* but we have learned from the Babylonians to call it *Emia*." Lapide observes the former term corresponds to the Hebrew in Exodus 28:4, while the latter "precisely tallies with the Aramaic « hemian » used by the Targum Onkelos to render the Biblical אבנט."[22]

Qumran Hebrew's style gives other scholars pause. Emerton (1973) notes its general reflection of Old Testament usage, suggesting their scribes adopted an archaic form owing to its perceived suitability for religious literature. He concludes the scrolls' use of Biblical Hebrew "has no more value as evidence for popular speech than the once common practice of writing academic dissertations in Latin or the fact that Latin was spoken at the Second Vatican Council."[23] Emerton, however, concedes the evidence of Chomsky[24] and Grintz[25] provides stronger evidence for some form of Hebrew as a spoken language. The latter both reference a humorous anecdote in the Babylonian Talmud (Tractate Nedarim 66b), concerning a Jew from Babylonia who marries a Palestinian wife, with whom he converses in Aramaic, and the ways she misinterprets his words. At one point, he asks her to break some candles on the head of the door (בבא). Instead, she breaks them on the head of a

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[17] Lapide, "Insights from Qumran," 485.
[18] Józef Milik. *Ten Years of Discovery in the Wilderness of Judaea* (London: SCM, 1959): 130-1.
[19] Lapide, "Insights from Qumran," 484-5.
[20] Lapide, "Insights from Qumran," 485.
[21] Paul Billerbeck, *Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrasch*, vol. 2. (Munich: Beck, 1924): 451.
[22] Lapide, "Insights from Qumran," 488.
[23] John Emerton, "The Problem of Vernacular Hebrew in the First Century A.D. and the Language of Jesus." *JTS* 24,1 (1973): 3.
[24] William Chomsky. "What was the Jewish Vernacular During the Second Commonwealth?" *Jewish Quarterly Review*, n.s. xlii (1951-2): 209.
[25] Jehoshua Grintz. "Hebrew as the Spoken and Written Language in the Last Days of the Second Temple." *JBL,* 79 (1960): 47.

rabbi named Baba (בבה) ben Buta, failing to comprehend that בבא means door because Hebrew is her vernacular, not Aramaic. Accordingly, when ben Buta confronts her in Aramaic, she responds in Hebrew, after which both proceed to converse in Hebrew.[26] Moreover, Emerton notes countless sayings and conversations in Hebrew in the rabbinical texts, not only in scholarly debate but also in mundane matters pertaining to everyday life, where rabbis and commoners, like the wife in b. Ned. 66b, are depicted speaking Hebrew. He further cites Rabbi Meir (circa 150 C.E.) in the Jerusalem Talmud (j. Sheqalim 3:3); who pronounces that all inhabitants of Israel who speak the sacred language shall have a place in the world to come; and Rabbi Judah the Prince, who later that century bemoans the use of the Syrian language in Israel, commending instead both the 'sacred language' and Greek (b. Baba Qamma 82b-83a; b. Sotah 49b). Emerton concludes this polemic against Aramaic makes no sense, save in a context where some, at least, still spoke Hebrew.[27] Lapide similarly surmises that, while Aramaic was the Middle East's lingua franca, Mishnaic Hebrew persisted as a living language at least till the defeat of Bar Kokhba in 135 C.E.[28] Thus the question arises: to what extent did Hebrew and Aramaic constitute Mark's sources, or his gospel in its original form?

Lapide observes several Hebrew words in Mark's Greek, including Sabbath (e.g. 1:1-25; 2:17), Messiah (12:35; 14:61), Satan (8:33), Hosanna (11:9), Qorban (7:11), Rabbi (9:5-21; 14:45) and, occurring no fewer than 13 times, Amen (e.g. 3:28), and records numerous such Hebraisms in the later gospels and other New Testament genres. He concludes that, since all these terms are "either theologumena, or belong to the scriptural, liturgical or homiletic registers of Jesus and his listeners, it stands to reason that he (Jesus) preached, prayed and prophesied in Hebrew."[29] Lapide obversely perceives that, in the gospels, the five most authenticated Aramaic logia; Talitha cum (Mark 5:41), Raca (Matthew 5:22), Ephphatha (Mark 7:34), Abba (Mark 14:36) and Mammona (Matthew 6:24; Luke 16:9-13); pertain to a lower register of common, secular speech. To these logia, Lapide adds the Hellenised Aramaisms σικερα//שכרא (Luke 1:15), βάτος//בת (Luke 16:6), κόρος//כור (Luke 16,7), σάτον//סאתא (Matthew 13:33), ζιζάνιον//זונייא (Matthew 13:25) and κύμινον//כמונא (Matthew 23:23). These Lapide labels "a medley of popular, common terms for « hard liquor », a Greco-Aramaic hybrid weed, a spice, and several measures for wheat and oil : a veritable glossary of the marketsquare" supporting his conclusion that "Jesus used Aramaic mainly for nonreligious purposes - a dichotomy which tallies well with the Biblical predilection for separating the Sacred from the profane. Language, as the foremost sociological phenomenon of any given society, faithfully reflects this psychosociological reality in the form of functional Diglossia."[30]

Yet evidence from Jeremias, Kutscher and Fitzmyer challenges the precision of this demarcation. Jeremias (1966) observes that *abba* appears in both Aramaic and

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[26] Emerton, "Problem of Vernacular Hebrew," 13.
[27] Emerton, "Problem of Vernacular Hebrew," 14-5.
[28] Lapide, "Insights from Qumran," 484.
[29] Lapide, "Insights from Qumran,"492-4.
[30] Lapide, "Insights from Qumran," 494-5.

Hebrew texts,[31] whereas Kutscher (1960) contends Mark 10:51's Rabboni, which Black perceives as Aramaic,[32] can also be explained as Hebrew.[33] Fitzmyer (1980) explores 4Q202, a second-century BCE manuscript which, in 1.3.14, preserves the contemporaneous Aramaic for 'our Lord' (marana). He observes this same word transliterated into Koine in 1 Corinthians 16:22:[34] "Εἴ τις οὐ φιλεῖ τὸν κύριον Ἰησοῦν χριστόν, ἤτω ἀνάθεμα. Μαρὰν ἀθά."[35] Thus evidence exists, albeit limited, both for lowbrow logia in Hebrew and sacred logia in Aramaic.

Further questions arise when pondering to what extent Hebrew and Aramaic vernaculars thrived in different parts of Palestine. Emerton records that Galilee became Judaised only after Aristobolus's conquest and annexation (104-103 BCE), which triggered a rapid influx of Jews into the region.[36] He hence considers it probable that Hebrew was more entrenched in Judea than Galilee, where Aramaic, before Aristobolus, would have endured unassailed. Emerton contends that b.Sanhedrin 11b supports this hypothesis, for it records a letter sent by Rabbi Gamaliel, possibly Gamaliel II at the end of the first century, written in Aramaic to the Jews in Galilee.[37] He further references b. Erubin 53a, which claims that "for the Judaeans, who were careful in their language, their (study of the) Law persisted; as for the Galileans, who were careless in their language, their (study of the) Law did not persist," posing whether this failure among Galilean scholars arose from an inability to communicate in Hebrew. Emerton concludes that "it is likely that Aramaic had a dominant position in Galilee" yet that its use was nonetheless widespread in Judea "even a century before the Ben Kosiba letters, a number of which are in that language. That is plain from Josephus, from texts that have survived from the period, and from rabbinical evidence, especially the Targums. What is uncertain, and is probably impossible to determine, is the precise proportions in which Hebrew and Aramaic - and, indeed, Greek - were used."[38]

The case for Greek should not lightly be dismissed since, despite its poor representation at Qumran, Koine manuscripts proliferate at other predominantly Jewish sites in ancient Palestine, ranging from approximately 23% of textual findings at Masada to 56% at Jericho.[39] As for the Qumran covenanters, who appear to

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[31] Joachim Jeremias, *Abba. Studien zur Neutestamentlichen Theologie und Zeitgeschichte* (Gottingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1966): 60-1.
[32] Black, *An Aramaic Approach*, 23-4.
[33] Edward Kutscher, "Das zur Zeit Jesu gesprochene Aramäisch." *Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der Älteren Kirche*, 51, no.1/2 (1960): 46.
[34] Joseph Fitzmyer, "The Aramaic Language and the Study of the New Testament." *JBL* 99,1 (1980): 13.
[35] "Let anyone be accursed who has no love for the Lord. Our Lord, come!"
[36] Emerton cites Josephus, *The Jewish War* 1.70-84. See also: Joseph Leibner, *Settlement and History in Hellenistic, Roman, and Byzantine Galilee* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009): 362-71.
[37] Emerton, "Problem of Vernacular Hebrew," 16-7.
[38] Emerton, "Problem of Vernacular Hebrew," 16-7.
[39] Matthew Richey, "The Use of Greek at Qumran: Manuscript and Epigraphic Evidence for a Marginalized Language." *Dead Sea Discoveries* 19,2 (2012): 180. Richey cites Emmanuel Tov's studies ("Greek Biblical Texts," 339-41), from which he gleans other percentages of Koine manuscripts at sites in the vicinity. These are Wadi Nar (2 Greek/4 Total: 50%), Wadi Ghweir (1/2 50%), Wadi Murabbaat (71/158: 45%), Wadi Sdeir (2/4: 50%), Nahal Hever (55/157: 35%), Nahal Mishmar (1/3: 33%) and Nahal Seelim (2/6: 33%). For comprehensive physical evidence of literacy in

prefer Hebrew for the preservation of literary texts and the majority of their internal affairs,[40] this penchant is reflected by Bar Kokhba's allies, whose textual legacy reveals a strong predilection for Semitic languages over Greek. However, as Richey (2012) notes, two letters addressed to Bar Kokhba at Nahal Hever were written in Koine, one concluding with an apology and excuse for using the language: "It was written in Greek because of our inability to write in Hebrew" (P.Yadin 52:11-15).[41] Despite the letter's apology, Hezser (2001) explains its use of Greek implies the recipient could either read it or easily find a translator. Indeed, the ability of two of Bar Kokhba's subordinates to write only in Koine reveals that Greek endured long after Mark's time, prevailing even over ideological concerns among the most insular Jewish groups of the first two centuries.[42]

Macfarlane (1996) relays the history of this Hellenistic legacy to the Jews from Alexander the Great. When Ptolemy I succeeded Alexander in Palestine (304 BCE), he retained Greek as the language of his administration. When the Seleucid Antiochus IV wrested Palestine from Ptolemy V's control in 200, he conspired with pro-Hellenistic elements to Hellenise Jerusalem, even dedicating its temple to Zeus. This provoked the Maccabean revolt, which fired nationalistic feelings and eventually, in 164, secured the rededication of the temple to YHWH. By this time, however, many Jews had become bilingual and Semitic texts were being both translated into Greek and composed in it.[43] Macfarlane references Eupolemos, a Hellenistically-educated Palestinian Jew, writing between 158 and 150 BCE, whose Greek account of the Judean kings harmonises Hellenism with Hasmonean desires for Jewish cultural sovereignty. He references the apocryphal Ecclesiasticus, originally composed in Hebrew around 180 BCE by Ben Sira and translated into Greek by his grandson. In the preface, "the translator admits the difficulty of translating from Hebrew to Greek - clearly favoring the former, but his effort suggests that his grandfather's book would be less widely read in Hebrew than in Greek, at least among the Jews of the Diaspora."[44] From Mark's era, Macfarlane spotlights Josephus's 'The Jewish War', noting that Josephus wrote an Aramaic version, no longer extant, for the Jews in Mesopotamia and a Greek version, presumably for all other readers. Macfarlane further cites Josephus's comment that the Jews did not encourage foreign language learning, and that multilingualism was regarded an unremarkable achievement since so many, even of the servant class, could do it (Antiquities 20.11.2). To me, this suggests the frequent intermingling of Jews with Greek-speaking Gentiles, rather than, as Macfarlane posits, tensions between conservative Jews and Jews striving to speak refined Greek.[45] For Josephus portrays the Jews united in their disregard of multilingualism, yet confesses the capability was common, which suggests the abundant presence of regionally-

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Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek during this time, see Catherine Hezser, *Jewish Literacy in Roman Palestine* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001): 251-447.
[40] Richey, "The Use of Greek," 196.
[41] Richey, "The Use of Greek," 196.
[42] Hezser, "Jewish Literacy in Palestine," 279.
[43] Roger Macfarlane, "Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek, and Latin: Languages of New Testament Judea." *BYU Studies* 36,3 (1996): 230.
[44] Macfarlane, "Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek," 231.
[45] Macfarlane, "Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek," 230.

cohabiting Gentiles who would, inevitably, have intermingled with, intermarried and influenced their Semitic neighbours.

Thus it seems the Hellenisation of Judea endured, from Seleucid to Hasmonean to Herodian times, as reflected in secular and religious matters, for the dispersion of Jews among various cultures decentralised both their political and cultural unity. Greek germinated even in the holy city, for Pesach and other festivals swamped Jerusalem with an influx of Hellenised Jews on a regular basis, leading the priestly and political elite to adopt Greek to their advantage.[46] Indeed, of all Jewish funerary inscriptions dated before 70 CE, 40% are in Greek.[47] Further, it appears Palestinian Jews used Greek for casual and mundane correspondence, as one Masada papyrus evidences, written to a man named Judah, discussing the supply of lettuces and liquids.[48] Horsley (1995) observes too that Greek was Sepphoris's official language under Herod and Antipas, just as under the Seleucid and Ptolemaic administrations, and that of Tiberias once it was founded, yet that "we cannot conclude, on the basis of their supposed contact with Sepphoris, that most Galileans had become accustomed to speaking Greek by the first century c.e."[49] Nevertheless, when tracing the passage of Jesus's ministry in Mark, through Galilee, Perea, Judea, the Decapolis, Gaulanitis and even Phoenicia, we should appreciate the variety of languages he may have encountered, and the possibility that he conversed in more than one. We should also consider the possibility that certain of Mark's sources, written or oral, would have used Hebrew or Aramaic, just as others may have used Greek, and that multivalency lost in translation might reappear once we reconstruct Marcan lexemes from the Semitic tongues.

[46] J.T. Townsend, "Education (Greco-Roman)," *The Anchor Bible Dictionary,* vol.2. Edited by David Noel Freedman (New York: Doubleday, 1992): 317.
[47] Peter Van der Horst, "Jewish Funerary Inscriptions," *Biblical Archaeology Review* 18,5 (1992): 46.
[48] Hannah Cotton and Joseph Geiger, "The Latin and Greek Documents," *Masada II: The Yigael Yadin Excavations 1963-1965, Final Reports*. Edited by Joseph Aviram, Gideon Foerster, and Ehud Netzer. (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society and Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1989): 85-88.
[49] Richard Horsley, *Galilee: History, Politics, People* (Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Publishing, 1995): 247.

Chapter 1: Paronomasia in the Hebrew Bible

1.1 What was the Point of Paronomasia?

Paronomasia, including polysemy, abounds throughout the Hebrew Bible, enlivening its poetic and, to a lesser extent, prose genres.[50] The device originates in Greek rhetoric, where it denotes the repetition of the first two consonants of one word in another. In Hebrew Bible scholarship, the term more loosely applies to the repetition of same or similar consonants (alliteration), or occasionally vowels (assonance), anywhere in two different words. However, alliteration or assonance stemming from word repetition or grammatical necessity are not considered paronomasia. In Hebrew, this would exclude cognate accusative and infinitive absolute constructions, and the repetition of the same root with a different sound (metaphony).[51] In my thesis, I shall distinguish between sound- and sense-paronomasia, using Casanowicz's definitions. In brief, sound-paronomasia contributes to rhythm and euphony in poetry, whereas sense-paronomasia embodies multiple meanings within a single lexeme. Polysemy, an offshoot of the latter, refers to *single-word* lexemes from which, in a passage's context, two or more distinct meanings can be gleaned. Thus, "the meaning of a word cannot be stated in the form of a single reductive paraphrase, but requires further specification in order to capture its full range of application."[52] All cases of sense-paronomasia we shall explore are polysemous (i.e. single words), excluding the sobriquet 'Sons of Thunder'.

Modernity has long scrutinised Hebrew Bible wordplay, from Casanowicz (1893) to Kabergs and Ausloos (2012). In Semitic poetry, Black (1967) observes that the pun "which is completely out of favour in modern literature, was regarded as an almost indispensable feature of good literary style." He adds that paronomasia features regularly and frequently in all strata of Hebrew literature, especially the prophetic genre, and illustrates this convention with Isaiah 5:7, where YHWH looks for judgement (מִשְׁפָּט) but sees oppression (מִשְׂפָּח); for righteousness (צְדָקָה) yet beholds a wailing (צְעָקָה).[53] Yet scholars find different reasons, and therefore together a range of potential reasons, for paronomasia's precise purpose.

For Casanowicz (1893), paronomasia represents several devices, including wordplay, that involve sound manipulation. He views alliteration and assonance as aural effects of paronomasia, not paronomasia *per se*, insisting that actual paronomasia must embody multiple meanings within a lexeme (sense-paronomasia) or contribute to rhythm or euphony in poetry (sound-paronomasia).[54] Casanowicz

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[50] Geoffrey Khan, *Encyclopedia of Hebrew Language and Linguistics,* vol. 1 (Leiden: Brill, 2013): 25.
[51] Khan, *Encyclopedia of Hebrew Language,* 24.
[52] Charles Goddard, "Polysemy: A Problem of Definition." In *Polysemy: Theoretical and Computational Approaches* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000): 129-151.
[53] Black, *An Aramaic Approach*, 160.
[54] Kabergs and Ausloos illustrate Casanowicz's concepts of sound- and sense-paronomasia with reference to Isaiah 29:6 and 61:3 respectively. In the former, the phrase רעם ורעש (thunder and earthquake) alliterates the resh and ayin in both words, yet no play on meanings emerges. In the latter, פאר (crown) and אפר (ash) not only sound similar via interchange of the pe and alef, but play on contrasted meanings within their literary context. The ash recalls the past period of grief, whereas the

further regards Old Testament paronomasia as an element of higher style, one of poetical and prophetical diction, since, in the historical books, except in certain poetic passages and various plays on the etymology of proper names, puns appear sparsely.[55] He explains their especial frequency in the prophets by pointing to their mordant, ironical or sarcastic force, where they adhere "closely to the living speech and aim to reach the mind and conscience of the hearer, and to bring home to him directly and vividly a truth or a fact. Next to the prophetic speech and the rhetorical passages in Job, plays upon words are most frequently found in the Proverbs, which are in general much dependent for their force and effect upon felicitous and pointed expression…"[56] Similarly, Glück (1970) understands paronomasia as pertaining to the higher style, yet as a flourish rather than a device to convey concepts such as irony, satire, humour or multivalency. For Glück, it emerges casually not purposefully and "biblical paronomasia is no pun but an integral part of the elevated diction… the word-magic, the subtle eloquence of the Bible."[57] Sasson (1976) disagrees, contending that biblical wordplay primarily functions to conjure an aura of ambiguity, meant to arouse curiosity and invite a search for meanings not superficially apparent. Hence, the clothing of paronomasia suits the nature of esoteric revelation, whilst, in simpler contexts, expresses a lighter spirit of playfulness.[58] Grossberg (1982) concurs that linguistic ambiguity in the Hebrew Bible purposefully expresses multidimensional thought, that we can read one word and accept two meanings.[59] Segert (1984) discerns a studious purpose for multivalency, that overtones "of general words and especially of names of places, persons and gods served to enhance the literary value of a narrative by providing connections simultaneously on phonological and semantic levels. The listener or reader had to find the appropriate connections from synonyms, similar words or roots, and then enjoy them."[60] We shall explore this significant motif, for it resounds within the Hebrew Bible and Mark's gospel. Divaricating from such observations, Watson (1984) contends that biblical wordplay functions eclectically; to amuse or sustain interest (e.g. through building suspense), vest its writer and thus his text's content with credibility via demonstration of literary mastery, link a poem or its parts together, denote a reversal of roles or fortunes, show that appearances can be deceptive, equate two different or contrasting things, assist memory, or even distract mourners in the context of laments.[61] Kabergs and Ausloos (2012) illustrate how such literary aims were achieved. In Psalm 74:19, חיה can mean both 'living one/animal' and 'community', and thus refers to both the devourer of a turtle dove in 19a and the afflicted poor who belong to God in 19b. The ambiguity hence relies on

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crown evokes the imminent time of salvation, where YHWH inspires Isaiah to proclaim his message of hope to the poor (Valérie Kabergs and Hans Ausloos, "Paronomasia or Wordplay? A Babel-Like Confusion Towards A Definition of Hebrew Wordplay." *Biblica* 93,1 (2012): 12).

[55] Immanuel Casanowicz, "Paronomasia in the Old Testament." *JBL* 12,2 (1893): 120.

[56] Casanowicz, "Paronomasia in Old Testament," 121.

[57] J.J. Glück, "Paronomasia in Biblical Literature," *Semitics* 1 (1970): 78.

[58] Jack Sasson, "Word Play in the O.T.," *IDB Supplement* (1976): 968.

[59] Daniel Grossberg, "Multiple Meaning: A Literary Device in the Hebrew Bible." *CLA Journal* 26,2 (1982): 205.

[60] Stanislav Segert, "Paronomasia in the Samson Narrative in Judges XIII-XVI." *VT* 34,4 (1984): 454.

[61] Wilfred Watson, "Classical Hebrew Poetry: A Guide to Its Techniques." *JSOTSup* 26. Sheffield: JSOT Press, (1984): 222-50.

an identity of sound,[62] and connecting bestial imagery with the plight of the poor generates an emotional reaction that may, in turn, stimulate reader reflection. In Judges 3:12-30, YHWH sends Ehud on a mission, apparently to pay tribute to Israel's conqueror, King Eglon of Moab, yet actually to slay the king and free the Israelites. In 3:19, Ehud addresses Eglon with ambiguity, claiming he has a secret דבר (word/thing) for the king, which Eglon interprets as 'word', for he immediately calls for silence. The reader, however, might perceive a reference to Ehud's secret weapon, for verse 16 has already mentioned this 'thing'. Ehud uses his concealed sword to slay Moab's king, his action subsequently interpreted as God's will to rescue the Israelites from Moabite suppression.[63] Here we see multivalency as a suspense-building device that simultaneously teaches how words and appearances may deceive.

[62] Kabergs, "Paronomasia or Wordplay?" 13.
[63] Kabergs, "Paronomasia or Wordplay?" 10-1.

1.2 Sound-paronomasia in the Hebrew Bible

Sound-paronomasia, though generally lost in translation, reverberates throughout Semitic scripture. By exploring its nature and purpose, we may learn how to better read Mark, who frequently employs this device, as can be seen when reconstructing his Greek from Hebrew or Aramaic. In turn, understanding the significance of Marcan sound-paronomasia underscores why we should study Koine texts of Semitic origin with Semitic literary devices in mind.

In the Hebrew Bible, Doron (1980) divides sound-paronomasia into six preponderant types. First, he illustrates wordplays on the sounds of personal names, countries and towns, with Isaiah 63:1-2: (מִי-זֶה בָּא מֵאֱדוֹם... מַדּוּעַ אָדֹם, לִלְבוּשֶׁךָ: Who is this coming from Edom… why is your garment red?") and Jeremiah 51:44: (וּפָקַדְתִּי עַל-בֵּל בְּבָבֶל, וְהֹצֵאתִי אֶת-בִּלְעוֹ מִפִּיו: And I shall pay a visit to Bel in Babylon and remove what he swallowed with his mouth).[64] Second, Doron notes Isaiah 17:2's multiple alliterations of twin consonants, where ר follows ע in four consecutive words to describe Damascus's eschatological scourging, and repetitive alliteration of single consonants in Isaiah 13:4-5; where מ has 17 iterations to mark the meltdown of Mesopotamia's Babylon; and Isaiah 23:3, 8 and 10, where ר has 15 repetitions to ramify the ruination of Tyre.[65] He further lists examples of word-pairs differing in one letter or vowel, pairs differing in addition or subtraction of one letter, usage of similar roots to form word-plays, and 'mixed types' that use two or more of the five characteristics above.[66] Doron concludes such wordplays were used to hold listeners' attentions, working on their imagination and emotions, a concept especially apparent in name-interpretations, synonyms and alliterations, for, since no special concentration is required to grasp these figures, the audience likes and easily remembers them.[67]

Waldman (1996) cites three such alliterative wordplays; רַבּוּ מֵאַרְבֶּה ("They are more numerous than locusts," Jeremiah 46:23), כָּלוּ כִלְיֹתַי בְּחֵקִי ("My heart yearns within me," Job 19:27) and רֹעֶה כְסִילִים יֵרוֹעַ ("he who consorts with fools comes to grief," Proverbs 13:20). He suggests these puns add fresh, surprising and significant word-meanings to the song or narrative, attracting listeners' attentions.[68] Waldman adds, however, that even wordplay that seems merely phonetic, that is sound- rather than sense-paronomasia, may serve to reflect central motifs of a passage, thus vesting it with deepened literary value. He illustrates with Jonah 4:6-7, where God creates a bush that branches over the prophet as a shadow (צֵל) over his head to save (הַצִּיל) him from the sun, before creating a worm (תּוֹלַעַת) at dawn's rising (בַּעֲלוֹת הַשַּׁחַר) to wither the bush. Waldman proposes all four lexemes relay Jonah's discomfort, "from which God seeks to teach him true prophetic values."[69] He further illustrates the motif-highlighting role of sound-paronomasia with the stories of Joseph, Ruth and

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[64] Pinchas Doron, "Paronomasia in the Prophecies to the Nations." *Hebrew Studies* 20/21 (1979): 38-9.
[65] Doron, "Paronomasia in the Prophecies," 39.
[66] Doron, "Paronomasia in the Prophecies," 39-41.
[67] Doron, "Paronomasia in the Prophecies," 42.
[68] Nahum Waldman, "Some Aspects of Biblical Punning." *Shofar* 14,2 (1996): 39-40.
[69] Waldman, "Aspects of Biblical Punning," 39-40.

The Fall. In Genesis 42:7, Joseph recognises (וַיַּכִּרֵם) his brothers but behaves as a stranger (וַיִּתְנַכֵּר), accentuating the recurring motif in Joseph's tale of recognising yet acting estranged. In Ruth 2:10, the alliterating phrase לְהַכִּירֵנִי וְאָנֹכִי, נָכְרִיָּה ([why are you so kind] "to single me out when I am a foreigner?") calls attention to the tale's central theme of showing kindness to sojourners or immigrants. In Genesis 2:25-3:1, the alliteration between עֲרוּמִּים (naked) and עָרוּם (sly) exposes the essential relationship between the naïve nudity of Adam and Eve and the serpent's cunning. Waldman includes puns from prophetic literature that serve similar purpose. In Amos 8:2, foreshadowing the fall of Israel, the prophet tells God he sees a basket of figs (כְּלוּב קָיִץ), to which the Lord pronounces the passage's motif "The hour of doom (הַקֵּץ) has come for My people." In Jeremiah 1:11-12, set around 150 years later, the prophet similarly beholds the branch of an almond tree (מַקֵּל שָׁקֵד), whereby God affirms "I am watchful (שֹׁקֵד) to bring My word to pass,"[70] referencing the passage's similar motif of Jerusalem's imminent destruction. Hence, sound-paronomasia not only affects listeners by highlighting, via alliteration, key textual themes and points, but by echoing similar themes from other, well-known, earlier tales, just as Amos resounds through Jeremiah. Finally, name-paronomasia, though usually expressed as sense-paronomasia via multiple meanings within the name, also presents as sound-paronomasia via alliteration between two different words. In Isaiah 65:11, one of the two idols mentioned is Destiny (מְנִי), a Babylonian goddess. Having accused sinners of filling up mingled wine unto Destiny, these idolaters are destined (מָנִיתִי = portioned out) by the prophet to death by the sword. Thus, the apostates' sacrifices to Destiny have sealed their own destinies, as the paronomasia between *Meni* and *maniti* hammers home in Hebrew. Here, we see Trito-Isaiah using wordplay, just as Amos and Jeremiah, to highlight a prophecy of impending doom. Further, we see how a single word/phrase ('destiny') may nonetheless indicate multiple referents, as shall I argue do Jacob's nocturnal assailant and Mark's 'Son of Man'.

[70] Waldman, "Aspects of Biblical Punning," 44.

1.3 Sense-paronomasia in the Hebrew Bible: Samson's Riddle, Ironic Names, Prophetic Allusions and Multivalent Expressions

Sense-paronomasia, as defined above, requires the same word or phrase to confer multiple meanings. Using Samson's famous riddle, Segert (1984) displays how this could form the basis of a conundrum. The riddle is apparently impossible to solve without special knowledge: the apprehension that Samson had recently beheld a honeycomb (דְּבָשׁ; Judges 14:9) resting in a lion's carcass. To his thirty Philistine companions, Samson poses the puzzle "מֵהָאֹכֵל יָצָא מַאֲכָל, וּמֵעַז יָצָא מָתוֹק"[71] The companions remain stumped, till they bully Samson's betrothed to persuade him to tell her the solution, which she subsequently divulges:

"מַה-מָּתוֹק מִדְּבַשׁ, וּמֶה עַז מֵאֲרִי"[72] (cf. Judges 14:14-18).

Their frustration is relatable, for without knowing Samson's experience the riddle seems unfair, even absurd, somewhat akin to Bilbo asking Gollum "What have I got in my pocket?" However, just as אַרְיֵה and אֲרִי respectively render 'lion' in Aramaic and Hebrew, Segert maintains the original word for honey in 14:14 "is to be restored as *'ᵃrî*, an equivalent of Arabic *'ary*. This word is phonologically identical with the Hebrew word for 'lion'. Thus the riddle had to be solved by finding a pair of homonyms, one of which means something strong, the other something sweet. It was unnecessary to know what Samson did with the lion while nobody saw him."[73] A considerable drawback of this argument is the lack of evidence for a cognate relationship between the Arabic and hypothesised Hebrew words. Porter (1962) similarly argues for אֲרִי as 'honey' in Ugaritic, though his reasoning is speculative and relies on a certain translation of a single phrase in the Baal Epic whose meaning, Porter admits, other scholars contest.[74] It may moreover seem speculative to assume a cognate relationship between the Ugaritic-Arabic *'ary* and Hebrew *'ᵃrî*. Wilson (1996), however, reports several hundred word pairs[75] shared between Hebrew and Ugaritic that have been subjected to intense study, and notes the striking similarity of the languages, to the point that H. L. Ginsberg confidently pronounced "The Hebrew Bible and the Ugarit texts are to be regarded as one literature."[76] Other scholars caution against over-reliance on Ugaritic-Hebrew pairs for Old Testament studies. Craigie (1971), for example, observes that, though Ugaritic word pairs always occur together in the same sequence, the Hebrew usage often reverses this sequence, suggesting the languages did not draw on resources from a common, pre-existent literary tradition. Further, a language like Hebrew, with countless phonetic and lexical similarities to Ugaritic, might incidentally generate

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[71] "From the eater came out food, and from the strong came out sweetness" (14:14).
[72] "What is sweeter than honey and what is stronger than a lion?" (14:18).
[73] Segert, "Paronomasia in Samson Narrative," 455-6.
[74] For a summary of this and other more speculative solutions, see J.R. Porter "Samson's Riddle: Judges XIV." *JTS*, XIII, 1 (1962): 106-9.
[75] A word pair refers to two words that combine to express a single concept, such as 'right' and 'hand', 'give' and 'take' or 'short' and 'sweet'.
[76] Douglas Wilson, *An Investigation into the Linguistic Evidence and Classification of Dialect Variation in Biblical Hebrew.* Ph.D. diss. (Cordova, TN: Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary, 1996): 85.

similar word pairs, including cliches, unreliant on literary interdependence.[77] Another problem persists in the complete lack of manuscript evidence for דְּבַשׁ replacing an earlier, hypothesised אֲרִי in Judges 14:14.

Nonetheless, I feel we can solve Samson's riddle without postulating an Arabic-Ugaritic synonym, by exploring linguistic and geographical clues that Hebraists have yet to analyse. I have observed that a word for 'honeycombs' (יְעָרִים) appears four times in the Hebrew Bible in singular form.[78] I notice too that Joshua 15:10 mentions Mount יְעָרִים, ostensibly named from the plural, in proximity to the Timnah of Judges 14, as part of the boundary allotted to the tribe of Judah. Hence, in Samson's riddle, the central letters of יְעָרִים, a visible mountain fewer than 10 miles east of his listeners' home,[79] whose mass defined their borders and coloured their horizon, and whose name they surely knew, are homophonous with אֲרִי ('lion'). If we expand our lion, by prefixing yod + shewa and suffixing mem, it phonetically transforms into 'honeycombs'. Thus out of the eater emerges food, and out of the strong something sweet. The riddle hence revolves around a wordplay not impossibly hard for locals to decipher. Moreover, considering the geopolitical significance of the mountain as a territory-marker, its aesthetic grandeur, the fact it was local to the narrative setting and even mentioned in scripture, one can see why the author/editor of the Samson narrative might have included a riddle involving it to enhance a story of territorial struggle against the Philistines set in its vicinity. Within the world of the tale, encounters with lion and bees may have inspired Samson's character to concoct this riddle, yet he knew his opponents could discern the answer by lateral thinking. So how did Samson know they had cheated? Part of the answer he gave in confidence must have been דְּבַשׁ, as Samson's opponents produce this same 'honey' when they confront him. Yet the answer they would have produced by solving the riddle by logic, as opposed to cheating, is the synonymous יְעָרִים. Samson thus knows they had bullied his betrothed to betray him, and unleashes his rage upon the men of Ashkelon. His seemingly random encounter with the bees' דְּבַשׁ was therefore important, for him to relay the story to his wife-to-be, for the substitute answer דְּבַשׁ to make any kind of sense, and for the reader/listener to perceive how Samson knew his opponents had swindled him. The riddle's multivalency both enhances and rationalises the narrative, as we shall see does Mark's multivalent 'riddle': the Son of Man.

Noegel (2021) further argues that the geographic setting, which the narrator places in Timnah just west of the camp of Dan, furnishes further clues. Dan rests between צָרְעָה (Tzorah), meaning "hornet, bee" (Exodus 23:28) and Eshtaol (Judges 13:25), the former associated with honey production (perhaps this accounts for the nearby mountain's name?), whereas the Danites lived in לַיִשׁ (Laish) meaning "lion," (Judges

[77] Peter Craigie, "A Note on 'Fixed Pairs' in Ugaritic and Early Hebrew Poetry." *JTS* 22,1 (1971): 141-2.

[78] Songs 5:1 aligns ya'ar with devash: אָכַלְתִּי יַעְרִי עִם-דִּבְשִׁי (I have eaten my honeycomb with my honey). Moreover יַעֲרָה, the feminine form, appears three times in 1 Samuel 14:25-27, which the NRSV likewise renders 'honeycomb'.

[79] "Mount Jearim," Bible Hub, accessed March 13, 2023, https://bibleatlas.org/full/mount_jearim.htm.

18:29).[80] Samson's riddle thus displays the use of proper nouns and geographical markers as instruments for expressing puns in the Hebrew Bible.

Such esoteric puzzles, whose content we read veiled in translation, appear throughout Hebrew scripture. A hint at these conundra's abundancy helps kickstart the book of Proverbs, which relays "that in order to obtain wisdom and insight into the proverbs one must try 'to understand parables and figures, the words of the wise and their riddles' (1:6)."[81] These range from the simple and obvious to the complex and subtle. For example, despite the Ugaritic controversy, the Hebrew Bible evidences elsewhere the kind of bilingual paranomasia[82] Segert perceives. In Jonah 3:7, the Ninevite king issues a decree (טַעַם) that his people and livestock should not taste (יִטְעֲמוּ) anything. The verb used here meaning 'taste' also produces a noun with the same meaning, one lexically identical to the word for decree. However, in Aramaic, the noun form also means 'decree', suggesting Aramaic influence on the wordplay.[83] Further, as our 'Mount Honeycombs' suggests, often such wordplay, bilingual or not, would focus on the names of people and places. Black cites an Aramaic example from The Targum of Esther (II) ii. 5, where the character of Mordecai is praised and "said to be *mera dakhya*, 'pure myrrh'."[84] Similarly, character and place names in the Hebrew Bible often function to describe their referent's nature, either transparently or ironically, and also their origin. Some such name-puns are subtle, such as 'Delilah' (meaning delicate, weak or languishing). Their meanings, and in this case irony, only emerge later in the narrative. Delilah, instead of proving a delicate damsel in distress, tricks and humbles the mighty Samson by cutting his hair, destroying his source of power, and incessantly betrays him to the Philistines. Other name-puns are more straightforward. "Unlike covert plays on names, explicit glosses tend to be formulaic, although the forms are often mixed or freely varied. Typically the naming of a child is recorded in the narrative past tense, 'and she called his name Seth' (שֵׁת), followed by a subordinate clause which echoes some feature of the name, "for she said, 'God has appointed (שָׁת) for me another child instead of Abel"' (Gen 4:25)."[85] The naming of places is more typically preceded by an account of an event occurring there, whereby an inference is drawn to its meaning. In Genesis 19:20-22, Lot successfully pleads with an angel to let him flee to a small or insignificant (מִצְעָר) city. Accordingly, verse 22 states: "Therefore the name of the city was Zoar" (צוֹעַר).[86] Occasionally, human names are likewise derived from events that inspired them, such as Moses who was rescued from the river by Pharaoh's daughter (Exodus 2:5-9). Hence she names him Moses (מֹשֶׁה), because 'she drew' (מְשִׁיתִ) him out of the water (2:10).

Often in the Hebrew Bible, such quasi-allegorical nomenclature functions, in a sense, as predictive text. In Genesis 4, "the very name of Abel - 'nothingness,' 'vanity' -

[80] Scott Noegel, *Wordplay in Ancient Near Eastern Texts* (Atlanta: GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2021): 129.
[81] Noegel, *Wordplay in Ancient Near*, 128.
[82] I.e. homonymic paronomasia combining words from different languages.
[83] Khan, *Encyclopaedia of Hebrew Language*, 26.
[84] Black, *An Aramaic Approach*, 161.
[85] Herbert Marks, "Biblical Naming and Poetic Etymology." *JBL* 114,1 (1995): 21.
[86] Marks, "Biblical Naming and Poetic," 21.

suggests Abel will die soon."[87] Genesis 5:29 notes Lamech names his son Noah נֹחַ because he shall 'comfort us' (יְנַחֲמֵנוּ), that is Lamech's people, in their toil against the cursed earth. Here, the connection between נֹחַ and the root verb נָחַם would be clear to a Hebrew audience, and Noah's characterisation as comforter foreshadows his future.[88] More complex associations, whose nuances take longer to digest during a reading, also emerge. In 1 Kings 1, Bathsheba (בַּת-שֶׁבַע) intercedes with David on behalf of her son Solomon, to ensure Solomon will succeed to the throne despite Adonijah's claim. David, who had already sworn Solomon should succeed him (1:13; 17), reaffirms his oath and makes a new one, promising to immediately ensure Solomon's succession (1:29-30). The narrative foreshadows the making of these oaths through Bathsheba's name, which means 'daughter of an oath', "the second component of which may be punningly derived from שָׁבַע (to swear) and שְׁבוּעָה (oath). It is noteworthy that similar midrashic derivations are explicitly employed in regard to the similar names of Beer-sheba (cf. Gen 21,31; 26,30-33) and Jehosheba, the daughter of King Joram (2 Kgs 11,1-4)."[89] Later, Bathsheba intercedes on behalf of Adonijah, who has failed to maintain the good conduct he promised Solomon in exchange for sparing his life (1 Kings 1:51-52), presenting Adonijah's request to marry Abishag. Solomon reprimands Bathsheba's naivety, swearing an oath that Adonijah will die for his temerity. Adonijah, whose name begins אָדוֹן (lord, master), never becomes king, nor is he referenced as lord at any time, even though the narrator ironically employs אָדוֹן twenty times in Adonijah's story; nineteen times referencing David, once Solomon; despite the narrative's emphasis on Adonijah's thirst for power.[90] Similarly, the actions of the scheming Zeruiah (צְרוּיָה), mother of Adonijah's ally Joab (יוֹאָב), are repeatedly denounced in the text, as are her son's (2 Samuel 3:34, 39; 19:23; 1 Kings 2:5-6, 31-33). Appropriately, the mother's name puns with both צַר (adversary/foe) and צָרָה (distress), and Joab is an anagram of אֹיֵב, meaning foe. Further, the pun on Zeruiah's name "may resolve the problem as to why the biblical texts offer the mother's name rather than the father's, as is customary in the Bible… These associations underpin the character of Joab, as depicted in 1 Kings 1-2 (as well as in the book of Samuel), and help to create an atmosphere which justifies David's last will and the execution of 'Joab son of Zeruiah' (2,5-6,25-34)."[91]

Perhaps the most intricate use of sense-paronomasia to illustrate a character's fate via name-pun, and also their nature and that of supporting characters, occurs in the Jacob narrative (Genesis 25-35), where even the nuances of יַעֲקֹב divide scholarly interpretation. Barnes (1937) claims "The substantive עָקֵב is a well-known word for ' heel' or ' foot-print', and the literal meaning of the verb (a denominative) is ' to follow at the heel' i.e. ' to follow closely', ' to press upon in pursuit'. But it is not necessary to adopt Esau's angry suggestion that the true meaning of the name ' Jacob ' is

[87] Karolien Vermeulen, "Mind the Gap: Ambiguity in the Story of Cain and Abel." *JBL* 133,1 (2014): 29.
[88] Kabergs, "Paronomasia or Wordplay," 11.
[89] Moshe Garsiel, "Puns upon Names as a Literary Device in 1 Kings 1-2." *Biblica* 72,3 (1991): 381.
[90] Garsiel, "Puns Upon Names," 381.
[91] Garsiel, "Puns Upon Names," 381-2.

'supplanter'…"[92] Clifford and Murphy (1996) oppose this final point, spotlighting the "play on the root 'qb (heel) found in Jacob's name: he is the 'heel-gripper'. Actually, the name of Jacob (y'qb) is a short form of the proper name y 'qb-'l, 'may God protect', which occurs in ancient Near Eastern sources… [however] the characterisations of Jacob as 'heel-gripper' and one who supplants will be sharply delineated in his life."[93] I would add though that God also protects and blesses Jacob on multiple occasions, even when Jacob acts immorally, as we shall see. Smith (1990) contends that the similarity between 'āqēb and 'āqab (to supplant) suggests more than a hint of wordplay, yet perceives another pun he feels better reflects Genesis 25-35's narrative themes, where "'qb is taken in this instance as a euphemism for genitals. Since in ancient Hebrew thought the sexual organs were regarded as the seat of a man's procreative power, the suggestion that in the story Jacob is gripping Esau not by the heel but by the genitals would aptly prefigure the narrative plot as a whole…"[94] Directly disagreeing with Smith, Malul (1996) argues for an inheritance-succession flavoured nuance for the verb עָקַב: "the meaning of 'āqab in the Jacob-Esau traditions as belonging altogether to the idea of succession, which includes notions of both status and property and inheritance. Support for this reconstructed notion of "succession" behind the root 'qb in the Jacob-Esau traditions is furnished not only by a few more biblical expressions, but also by some Akkadian expressions and legal symbolic acts. Interestingly enough, and significant in the present discussion of the root 'qb , some of these related expressions are construed with the word for "foot," which is clearly evoked by this root."[95] Then again, certain Bible translations emphasise the verb's connotations of deception or dealing craftily with others, based on its usage in Jeremiah 9:4.[96]

Hence some Semitic name-puns are less straightforward than others; יַעֲקֹב even raises the possibility of multiple wordplays on a single name. In my view, regarding which potential pun stood foremost in the author's mind, 'supplanter' has the strongest claim. More than any other, the theme of supplanting permeates the Jacob narrative, reflecting not only Jacob's personality and activity but that of many he encounters. After a turbulent pregnancy, where both brothers struggle inside Rebekah, Jacob emerges gripping Esau's heel, as though attempting to supplant him as firstborn even as they leave the womb (Genesis 25:22-26). Accordingly, when both are grown, Jacob deceives his father to supplant Esau as heir to the firstborn's blessing (27:14-28:3). Then karma overtakes Jacob when his ambition to marry Rachel is supplanted by Laban, her father, who cheats him over their marriage pact, making him marry Leah first and toil for seven additional years in his fields (29:15-30). Because Jacob does not love Leah, God supplants Rachel's status with

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[92] Emery Barnes, "A Note on the Meaning of יעקב (אלהי יעקב) in the Psalter." *JTS* 38 (1937): 406.
[93] Richard J. Clifford and Roland E Murphy, *The New Jerome Biblical Commentary*, edited by Raymond D. Brown, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, and Roland E. Murphy (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1996): 28.
[94] S. H. Smith, "'Heel' and 'Thigh': The Concept of Sexuality in the Jacob-Esau Narratives." *VT* 40,4 (1990): 465.
[95] M. Malul, "'āqēb 'Heel' and 'āqab 'To Supplant' and the Concept of Succession in the Jacob-Esau Narratives." *VT* 46,2 (1996): 193.
[96] E.g. "Beware of your friends; do not trust anyone in your clan. For every one of them is a deceiver (or a deceiving Jacob)" (NIV); "Let everyone be on guard against his neighbor, And do not trust any brother; Because every brother deals craftily" (NASB, 1995).

her husband, making her barren and Leah fertile (29:31-30:2). The sisters subsequently attempt to supplant each other, each vying to have proxy children with Jacob via their servants (30:3-15). Finally, Leah bribes Rachel with mandrakes[97] harvested by her eldest son, to allow her one night with Jacob. In so doing, she supplants Rachel by cheating on their pact, bearing Jacob three more children while Rachel remains barren (30:17-21). Jacob finally exacts revenge on Laban by scamming him over a livestock pact, where the proliferation of his own flocks and herds supplants that of Laban's, before fleeing his lands (30:25-31:20). After the two make peace, Jacob wrestles with a mysterious stranger[98] who wrenches the socket of his hip,[99] yet at daybreak, as they continue to grapple, he entreats Jacob to release him. Jacob agrees, but pressures his assailant to first give him a blessing, hence supplanting his foe's advantage (32:22-31). In reconciling with his brother, Jacob promises Esau plentiful flocks and herds. Yet, still tainted by his predilection for one-upmanship, Jacob breaks faith after Esau departs and retains his animals (33:8-20). In Canaan, when Shechem rapes Jacob's daughter Dinah, supplanting her purity, and tries to use this as leverage to secure a marriage pact (34:1-10), two of Jacob's sons supplant Shechem's ambition by cheating on the contract, slaying him and every male in his city (34:8-29). Afterwards, Jacob's family finally disposes of the foreign idols that Rachel stole from Laban, and God, no longer supplanted in worship, blesses them (35:1-15). Yet this fails to stop Reuben, Jacob's eldest son, supplanting his father by sleeping with Bilhah his concubine (35:22). Finally, Jacob returns to Esau and together they bury Isaac; each, in a sense, supplanting their father via succession (35:27-29).

Thus, we follow diverse forms of supplanting enacted by different characters, from brute force to cunning treachery to divine intervention, each adding nuance to the name-pun's meaning. As we trace Jacob's adventures, we further observe how this pun provides key information, not only on Jacob's character but on other key figures, and themes, in the tale. Often, for example, we observe close connection between the themes of supplanting and dishonest dealing and, furthermore, both themes are highlighted by their juxtaposition. Finally, I have discerned a chiastic pattern within the narrative that spotlights this theme of supplanting, linking each case to a corresponding element within the tale. Others have discerned similar chiasms in

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[97] Commonly understood to be "an aphrodisiac and fertility potion. The Hebr term dûd'āîm, 'mandrakes', is connected with dôd, 'love(r)'. It is also called 'love apple'" (Clifford and Murphy, *NJBC*, 32).

[98] Diverse interpretations of this antagonist include God, the Angel of the Lord, Esau, Jacob struggling against himself, and a guardian spirit whose power disperses at daybreak. We will explore these various possibilities, and their connection to a Semitic interpretation of the Marcan Son of Man, in 3.10.1.

[99] "both Gen. xlvi 26 and Exod. i 5 speak of Jacob's offspring as springing from his loins or thighs, so the word *yrk* is… intimately connected with the concept of procreation. From the viewpoint of the final redactor there may in fact be a sense of narrative development behind these euphemistic uses of *yrk*. By striking Jacob on the *kp hyrk* God was asserting his sovereign power over Jezreel's procreative power. But once Jacob had acknowledged God's strength as supreme, God allowed him to inherit the Abrahamic promise, so that children sprang freely from the very loins over which God had asserted his dominance" (Smith, "'Heel' and 'Thigh'," 469).

Genesis 25-35, but linked to narrative themes rather than wordplay.[100] In scrutinising the latter, we might better appreciate the importance of poetic structure to Semitic authors in crafting puns - a theme we will explore in subsequent chapters. The Jacob chiasm, as I see it, flows thus:

A Story of Supplanters

A Beginning of life; brothers struggle to supplant each other.

B In his father's chamber, Jacob (younger son) deceives Isaac for his own advantage. Isaac later finds out.

C Jacob supplants his brother to receive his father's blessing, then joins Laban's household.

D Laban cheats Jacob over a marriage pact.

E Rachel, Jacob's wife, is made barren.

F Leah cheats her sister Rachel.

G In cheating his employer Laban, Jacob's flocks breed prolifically.

G In struggling against his guardian spirit/his own cheating nature/God, Jacob's fertility is damaged.

F Jacob cheats his brother Esau.

E Dinah, Jacob's daughter, is raped.

D Jacob's sons cheat Shechem over a marriage pact.

C Jacob disposes of Laban's household gods (idols), in order to receive his heavenly father's blessing.

B In his father's chamber, Reuben (eldest son) deceives Jacob for his own advantage. Jacob later finds out.

A End of life; brothers supplant father.

Accordingly, in my analysis of Marcan paronomasia, I shall spotlight poetic structure that enhances meaning. Similarly, in inspecting 'Son of Man', I shall emphasize the recurring themes that lend the title meaning, just as the supplanting theme permeates Jacob's story, and illustrate Mark's gradual, structural progression from

[100] E.g. Bruce Waltke, *Old Testament Theology: An Exegetical, Canonical, and Thematic Approach* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2006): 313. In this instance, the chiasm's centre emphasises the relationship between the fertility of Jacob's wives and flocks.

more generalised referents (humanity) to an individual referent (Jesus), just as Genesis 25-35 introduces multiple supplanters.

Sense-paronomasia also accentuates prophetic utterances. For instance, without noticing its pun, the phrase בַּת-אֵל נֵכָר in Malachi 2:11 appears ambiguous. Commentators "are divided in their interpretation of the phrase 'daughter of a foreign god'… whether [it functions] literally as a reference to 'foreign women' ... or as a metaphor for a 'foreign goddess."[101] Is Judah, in 2:10-16, being reprimanded for worshipping a female deity, or for marrying foreign women? Ahlström (1971) notes that if the composer of Malachi "meant simply to designate foreign women, he would have used *nāsīm nokriyôt* (1 Kgs 11:1, 8; Ezra 10:2; Neh 13:26), since an ordinary woman is never called a daughter of a god."[102] So what is going on? Lear (2015) contends the phrase is, in fact, a pun on the phonetically proximate 'Bethuel, son of Nachor' (בְּתוּאֵל בֶּן-נָחוֹר). The wordplay evokes Genesis 24, where Abraham desires his son to marry a kinswoman rather than a local Canaanite. He sends a servant to his kinsmen, and the servant finds a wife for Isaac at the city of Nachor: Rebekah, daughter of Bethuel son of Nachor. Thus, Abraham is mindful to avoid racial intermarriage and to keep his covenant with God. "Genesis 17:17-21 underlines that only through the son of Sarah could the child of God's covenant be born… He (Abraham) makes his servant swear not to get a wife for his son from among the Canaanites… (quoting) the promise that God gave him, 'to your offspring I will give this land'."[103] Abraham's zeal for covenant-keeping jarringly contrasts with the lackadaisical attitudes of Malachi's audience. Malachi, therefore, creates an allusion via sense-paronomasia to make a multifaceted theological point. He berates his people for failing to offer appropriate animal sacrifices in the temple, and the priests for spreading false teachings (1:13-2:9). Then, in 2:10-11, Malachi accuses his people of desecrating the temple sanctuary by marrying 'daughters of a foreign god'. The wordplay can be interpreted literally, as rhetoric condemning interracial marriage, or figuratively, as rhetoric condemning religious corruption and syncretism (re. 1:13-2:9). Either way, the historical allusion to Bethuel, Son of Nachor, and Abraham's covenantal zeal, alerts Malachi's listeners to both possibilities. As we shall see, Mark similarly uses 'Son of Man' to invoke Danielic prophecy and the figures of Elijah and Ezekiel, in addition to contemporaneous meanings.

Scholars have frequently observed the ambiguity of Old Testament idioms. One that appears several times in the Hebrew Bible, and twice in Mark's gospel is: מַה-לִּי וָלָךְ.[104] Brown (1966) notes the idiom may express one of two shades of meaning in the former. For example, in Judges 11:12, Jephthah challenges the king of Ammon, saying "What to me and to you, that you come to me to fight against my land?" Here, as in 2 Chronicles 35:21 and 1 Kings 17:18, the sense is 'what have I done for you to treat me this way?' However, it also has a gentler usage that does not question ill-treatment. In 2 Kings 3:13, Israel's king Jehoram seeks advice from

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[101] Andrew Hill, *Malachi: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1998): 232.
[102] Gösta Ahlström, *Joel and the Temple Cult of Jerusalem* (Leiden: Brill, 1971): 49.
[103] Sheree Lear, "The Daughter of a Foreign God: Wordplay as an Interpretive Key in Malachi 2:11." *VT* 65,3 (2015): 470.
[104] Literally 'what to me and to you?' or 'what for me and for you?'

the prophet Elisha, who initially feels out-of-place consorting with a ruler who, like his mother and father, was renowned for evil works (2 Kings 3:2-3) and says: “What to me and to you? Go to the prophets of your father and… your mother.” This usage, according to Perkins, implies simple disengagement, with a sense of ‘Such things are your business; why involve me?’ (e.g. Judges 11:12; 1 Kings 17:18; 2 Kings 3:13; Hosea 14:8).[105] However, Elisha’s usage might also be construed as expressing shades of offence, as with Jephthah’s usage to Ammon’s king, thus ambiguity arises.

Another expression scholars find ambiguous is the infamous “him that pisses against the wall,” which features six times in the Hebrew Bible.[106] In 1 Kings 16:11, it appears in context of judgement: “he slew all the house of Baasha: he left him not one that pisses against the wall.” Its basic meaning is ‘male person’, females being ill-equipped to relieve themselves so. Yet additional meanings emerge, not least as each instance of the phrase involves peril and/or imminent judgement falling upon the referent: a male descendant of a house is being threatened. Smith (2010) summarises several of the phrase’s scholarly interpretations. First, it pejoratively describes men, perhaps even as the king’s guard dogs or service dogs, who presumably shared the same relationship with walls. Second, it designates an evil man destined for severance from society. Third, it simply refers to a man or boy, with no necessary negative connotation unless established by context. Smith then offers his own interpretation, derived from the *urine omina* in the Assyrian Dream Book, which interprets dreams of urination as the desire to conceive progeny. Since the expression’s context in the Hebrew Bible always refers to the elimination of progeny, Smith concludes that ‘him that pisses against the wall’ means ‘a person who hopes for progeny’.[107] Yet I feel it vital to note that each of the Hebrew Bible’s six instances, in keeping with the frequent multivalency of puns and phrases in Hebraica, may simultaneously mean more than one of Smith’s listed interpretations.

In summary, sense-paronomasia in the Hebrew Bible can function, either transparently or ironically, to clarify a character’s nature or purpose, to memorialise an event that involved them, to foreshadow their divinely ordained destiny, to illuminate a multifaceted and recurring theme within a tale, and, via historical allusion, to underline a prophetic message. It can also cast different shades of meaning within a common expression. As we shall discover, each of these characteristics - aside perhaps from memorialising an event - also ring true of Mark’s Son. I shall hence assess the possibility of Mark selecting ‘Son of Man’ precisely for its multivalency, to enhance the text’s message, to provoke reflection, to cater for different theological perspectives and levels of reader insight, and *to reference every single scriptural nuance* of the term, both canonical (e.g. Psalms/Ezekiel/Daniel) and apocryphal (1 Enoch/4 Ezra), before supplementing yet another - a descriptor for Jesus.

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[105] Pheme Perkins, “The Gospel According to John,” *NJBC*, 954.
[106] 1 Samuel 25:22, 34; 1 Kings 14:10, 16:11, 21:21; 2 Kings 9:8.
[107] Duane Smith, “‘Pisser against a Wall’: An Echo of Divination in Biblical Hebrew.” *CBQ* 72,4 (2010): 699-714.

1.4 Janus Parallelism in the Hebrew Bible

Job, more than any biblical text, abounds with Janus parallelism. In his seminal study 'Janus Parallelism in the Book of Job', Noegel (1996) lists 43 instances, as in 17:6-7:

וְתֹפֶת לְפָנִים אֶהְיֶה	I am the one in whose face men spit.
וַתֵּכַהּ מִכַּעַשׂ עֵינִי	My eyes *rebuked/dimmed* with pain
וִיצֻרַי כַּצֵּל כֻּלָּם	and all my limbs are as shadow.

Here, תֵּכַהּ as 'rebuked' aligns with Job as the one spat upon in 6a, whereas תֵּכַהּ as 'dimmed' aligns with Job's withered limbs described 'as shadow' in 6b.[108]

Yet many biblical texts boast Janus parallelism, the more poetically-styled writings with greater frequency, as Noegel demonstrates by listing seven cases in Hosea, including 4:16-17:

כִּי כְּפָרָה סֹרֵרָה, סָרַר יִשְׂרָאֵל; עַתָּה יִרְעֵם יְהוָה, כְּכֶבֶשׂ בַּמֶּרְחָב

For Israel is stubborn like a stubborn heifer, now YHWH will pasture/will associate as a lamb in a wide place.

חֲבוּר עֲצַבִּים אֶפְרָיִם, הַנַּח-לוֹ

Ephraim is joined to idols; let him alone.

In this instance, the pasture reference evokes 'heifer' in the previous stich, whereas 'associate' parallels 'joined' in the next.[109]

Rendsburg (1980) reveals the device's emergence in less poetically-styled scripture, spotlighting Genesis 49:26a:

בִּרְכֹת אָבִיךָ, גָּבְרוּ עַל-בִּרְכֹת הוֹרַי עַד

The blessings of your father surpass my *progenitors/mountains* of old,

תַּאֲוַת, גִּבְעֹת עוֹלָם

the delight of the eternal hills…

With Masoretic pointing, 'mountains' chimes with 'eternal hills' in the ensuing stich. However, with different consonantal pointing, or none at all, 'my progenitors' (הָורֵי) may be read instead of 'mountains', reflecting 'father' in the former.[110]

Such examples demonstrate how, when a rabbi would study unpointed texts, different vowel possibilities, and hence different words and meanings, might suggest themselves. When reading aloud to his audience, however, the rabbi would have to select a 'correct' meaning.

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[108] Noegel, *Janus Parallelism*, 58-9.
[109] Noegel, *Janus Parallelism*, 151-4.
[110] Gary Rendsberg, "Janus Parallelism in Gen 49:26." *JBL* 99,2 (1980): 291.

Tsumura (2013) further observes parallelism in the minor prophets, presenting Habakkuk 3:4's poetic tricolon:

וְנֹגַהּ כָּאוֹר תִּהְיֶה, קַרְנַיִם מִיָּדוֹ לוֹ

(4a) And brightness shall be as light, (4b) *rays/horns* from his hand,

וְשָׁם, חֶבְיוֹן עֻזֹּה

(4c) and there his power is hidden.

Tightly structured within a single verse, 4b's 'rays' reflect 4a's brightness and light, while 4b's 'horns' metaphorically illustrate 4c's power.[111]

Scholars have nominated less transparent candidates for the position of Janus parallelism, only to be dismissed by other scholars. Zephaniah 3:3's 'ערו' can mean both 'evening' and 'steppe' and yet, whereas 'evening' parallels 'nothing until the morning' in the following stich, "there is no referent in the first stich to which the meaning 'steppe' can be attached. One would expect to see a reference to land, hills, mountains, or some other topographical feature, but there is none. For this reason, though Zeph. 3.3 may contain a pun, I do not consider it a Janus parallel."[112] Noegel likewise rejects Hosea 2:18-19. Though its בעלי may indeed be rendered 'my husband' and 'my Ba'al', and though בעלי appears in the first stich, the referent in the third stich is merely the plural form (בעלים) of the same word. Noegel terms this antanaclasis, the difference being that referents of Janus words do not contain the same roots as the Janus word, whereas antanaclasis recycles the roots and vests them with different meanings.[113]

This example illustrates how subjective Janus interpretation can be. Hence, when we scour Mark's gospel for such candidates, we shall apply a five-point methodology to assess them (2.4.2). I feel this particularly necessary as we must first reconstruct potential Hebrew or Aramaic examples from the Greek, shrouding our findings in a further layer of doubt.

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[111] David Tsumura, "Janus Parallelism in Hab. III 4." *VT* 54,1 (2004): 116.
[112] Noegel, *Janus Parallelism*, 188-9.
[113] Noegel, *Janus Parallelism*, 187.

1.5 Do Words Define Contexts or Contexts Words?

"The scroll of the Torah is without vowels, to enable man to interpret it how he wishes… When vocalised it has but one single significance. But without vowels man may interpret it several ways, many marvellous and sublime."

- Rabbi Bahya ben Asher, *Commentary on the Pentateuch*[114]

The nature of the Semitic languages provides fertile soil for pun cultivation, yet often permits puns to emerge organically without requiring an authorial 'farmer'. Hebraica further relies on context to determine a word's meaning far more than, say, English or Greek. We shall briefly explore these aspects through the lens of linguistic structuralism, and explain their impact on this study.

In linguistic structuralism, a paradigm (the 'axis of the selection') is a universal system of precise rules and elements that forms a potential of possibilities from which selections can be made. A syntagm (the 'axis of the combination') comprises text which displays a combination of these selected elements. The relationship between the system (paradigm) and its realisation (syntagm) is like a restaurant menu and the meal it helps you select. The menu delineates the paradigm: you can choose one starter, one main course and one dessert. The rules of the paradigm determine you cannot reverse the order, or select two dishes from the same category. The combination of your selected dishes forms the actual meal: the syntagm. In brief, the paradigm supplies the rules and elements for your combination, and the syntagm applies the rules and combines the elements. If we apply this distinction to languages, "we see that a language system is the conventional paradigm containing the different categories, rules, and elements that are used to form a syntagm."[115]

Van Wolde (1994) observes that Biblical Hebrew boasts a relatively sparse number of roots, roughly ten thousand, each generally composed of a three-consonant sequence - also a relatively small number. The vowel sequence, when added to these consonants, determines a word's morphological function, so the same three consonants can form part of an adjective, noun or verb.[116] A consonantal root, therefore, can perform diverse morphological or grammatical functions. Moreover, in the Hebrew paradigm, a common consonant sequence in different words often denotes radically different meanings; sometimes words with the same root even express contradictory meanings. Due to this Semitic peculiarity, we often require more textual clarification of a sentence's syntagmatic relationships to render its meaning clear. In English, whose lexicon is larger and more specified, less specification of its syntagmatic relationships is required.[117] For example, the Hebrew root צרר can indicate distress, adversity, narrowness, restriction, scarcity, binding,

[114] Quoted in Noegel, *Janus Parallelism*, 11.
[115] Ellen Van Wolde, "A Text-Semantic Study of the Hebrew Bible, Illustrated with Noah and Job." *JBL* 113,1 (1994): 21-2.
[116] I would add that the verb-to-noun shift can also change a word's meaning. For example, as 2.4.4 explores, גָּמַל can mean 'to wean, ripen or reward', whereas גָּמָל means 'camel'.
[117] van Wolde, "A Text-Semantic Study," 27-8.

hostility, or even rock-like properties when forming the basis of a noun, and can also form the basis of their corresponding adjectives and verbs.[118] Studies of language groups worldwide show the degree of textual specification required by a language is inversely proportional to its vocabulary size. Thus, as Hebrew's root vocabulary is so limited (or economical?) and its paradigm so general, "the syntagmatic relationships in the text are necessary to specify the general, context-independent, and polysemic paradigmatic possibilities."[119]

Within the Indo-European family, linguistic systems are highly specified with myriad markers[120], based on the highly discriminating Greek-Latin logic. In other words, "their paradigms are highly differentiated and elaborated: a different word for every concept, a new lexicon for every specialism. However, languages with a less specialized paradigm, or with a less logical-conceptual structure, show a different relationship between paradigm and syntagm."[121] Hence, for facile comprehension of Hebrew, textual markers must clearly establish a syntagm's meaning. For my thesis, this particularly concerns monosemic English or Koine words that, without textual markers, remain polysemous and obscure in Hebrew. For example, we can reconstruct κάμηλος (camel) as גמל (camel, wean, benefit, compensate, ripen, rope(?))[122] in Hebrew or Aramaic. The Greek's meaning is clear without need for elaboration. The Semitic languages, however, rely heavily on context for clarification. Whereas Greek and English paradigms generally permit words to define their own meanings, Hebraistic paradigms more often rely on other members of the lexical unit to define them. Whereas Koine words often make lone wolves, Hebrew lexemes frequently belong to a flock.

Raabe (2013) observes that, when we read Psalms, we often find places where a word, phrase or sentence could be translated and understood in two or more ways. In such cases, commentaries often contradict one another, each choosing but one of multiple possibilities and vigorously defending their choice. The net result is a stalemate, with each rendition defended. But why choose one from many? First, the task of translation inevitably forces a choice, as the Semitic ambiguity can rarely be captured in the target language. Second, the need for scientific precision contributes to the pressure and, accordingly, scholars miss some of the text's multivalency.[123] Raabe contends that often a phrase or sentence can be understood in multiple ways because ambiguity was the author's intention. He further hints an ambiguity's obscurity may be deliberate, for "plurisignation is usually not immediately recognizable in a first reading. Only after several readings do different possibilities

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[118] David Clines, *The Dictionary of Classical Hebrew*, vol. 7 (Sheffield: Phoenix Press, 2010): 165-7.
[119] van Wolde, "A Text-Semantic Study," 27-8.
[120] A marker is a morpheme that indicates the grammatical function of its corresponding word or sentence. For example, in the Latin word *amo* ('I love'), the suffix *-o* marks indicative mood, active voice, first person, singular number, and present tense.
[121] van Wolde, "A Text-Semantic Study," 21-2.
[122] Clines, *Dictionary of Classical Hebrew*, vol. 2 (Sheffield: Academic Press, 1995): 363-5. See also: "Lexicon :: Strong's H1580 – gāmal," Blue Letter Bible, accessed April 26, 2022, https://www.blueletterbible.org/lexicon/h1581/rsv/wlc/0-1/; "Lexicon :: Strong's H1581 – gāmāl," Blue Letter Bible. accessed April 26, 2022, https://www.blueletterbible.org/lexicon/h1580/rsv/wlc/0-1/.
[123] Paul Raabe, "Deliberate Ambiguity in the Psalter." *JBL* 110,2 (1991): 213.

arise, with the result that the reader puzzles over it and remains uncertain how to render the text."[124]

Raabe illustrates with examples from the Psalter. Psalm 4:5 reads:

[125] רִגְזוּ, וְאַל-תֶּחֱטָאוּ: אִמְרוּ בִלְבַבְכֶם, עַל-מִשְׁכַּבְכֶם; וְדֹמּוּ

Does דֹּמּוּ derive from the tri-consonantal root דמם (1) (be still/silent) or דמם (2) (weep/wail)? Accordingly, does verse 5 threaten the psalmist's enemies from verse 3, by pronouncing: "You can tremble with anger and rage but don't sin by doing anything. You can speak your evil words in your hearts, but don't say them aloud"?[126] Or are all four verbs a positive call to repentance: "Be troubled in grief and don't sin! Meditate and reflect about it in your hearts while on your bed and weep in contrition." Or why not both? Raabe notes a similar ambiguity in Psalms 30:12-13, also based on דמם.

הָפַכְתָּ מִסְפְּדִי, לְמָחוֹל לִי: פִּתַּחְתָּ שַׂקִּי; וַתְּאַזְּרֵנִי שִׂמְחָה

לְמַעַן, יְזַמֶּרְךָ כָבוֹד וְלֹא יִדֹּם

[127] יְהוָה אֱלֹהַי, לְעוֹלָם אוֹדֶךָּ

Here, all three meanings of דמם are previously anticipated in the psalm. The psalmist was delivered from impending death (30:2,4,10) and thus responds he "will not perish" (דמם [1]). The following colon asserts this meaning: "YHWH, my God, *forever* I will praise you." The psalmist was also concerned that his descent to Sheol would silence and stop him from praising God: "Does the dust praise you? Does it declare your faithfulness?" (30:10b). God's deliverance thus prompts him to proclaim: "My glory will sing to you and not be silent" (דמם [2]), a theme likewise asserted in 30:13b. Finally, the psalmist had previously experienced weeping (30:6b), and mourning (30:12a), but God's deliverance produces the grateful vow: "my glory will sing to you and not mourn" (דמם [3]). Raabe concludes that all three concerns; perishing, being silenced and weeping; are developed through the psalm and funnelled into the final verse.[128] What are the odds of this occurring by chance, or 'organically' as Casanowicz puts it? It appears that context has vested דמם with multiple meanings, that are in some ways unique to the verses that moulded them and open to reader interpretation.

This perspective finds support in current literary theory. Contemporary reader-response critics posit that linguistic meaning can be shaped by the respondent via textual interpretation. Stanley Fish, for example, argues perception and reading are interpretive acts wholly dependent on the situational context of the reading in a

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[124] Raabe, "Deliberate Ambiguity," 213.
[125] "Be troubled/tremble and/but do not sin. Speak in your heart in your bed and/but *weep(1)/be silent(2).*"
[126] Peter Craigie, *Word Biblical Commentary* 19: Psalms 1-50 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2016): 81.
[127] "You turned my mourning into dancing for me. You have loosed my sackcloth and girded me with gladness, so that my glory will sing to you and not *perish (1)/be silent (2)/mourn (3).* YHWH, my God, forever I will praise you."
[128] Raabe, "Deliberate Ambiguity," 215-6.

community that has preconditioned the reader to see certain meanings in texts. He argues that the reader confers significance by seeing, not after it, based on the understood practices, values and norms, as well as the interests and objectives, of the culture producing the writing.[129]

In a culture whose language particularly lends itself to multivalent expression, we can appreciate how the readers would interpret words as purposefully ambiguous. Thus I feel, when translating Biblical Hebrew, which by nature often relies on context to define word-meanings, and where, at times, complex contexts deliberately delineate multiple meanings, we should consider two questions. First, is the author deliberately imbuing a text with additional meaning(s) by using a particular word, meaning(s) a synonym would fail to evoke? Second, to what extent are subtler shades of sense-paronomasia meant to be obscure, driving the reader to ponder and reflect in order to comprehend? Logically, we should also raise these questions when analysing Semitic idioms in Mark, in addition to attempting to view the text through the eyes of its intended readership.

[129] Nan Johnson, "Reader-Response and the Pathos Principle." *Rhetoric Review* 6,2 (Spring, 1988): 161.

Chapter 2: Semitic Paronomasia in Mark

2.1 Sound-paronomasia in Mark

Building on chapter 1, we shall examine how Semitic paronomasia and multivalency emerge in Mark, exploring similarities between Hebrew Bible and Marcan usage, and assess their literary and theological purpose within Mark's gospel. Many of the wordplays we shall unpack were uncovered by Carmignac, yet his slim volume "Birth of the Synoptic Gospels," intended before his untimely death to precede an expansive multivolume work, sacrifices analysis of these puns' intentionality and purpose for the sake of brevity. We shall attempt to fill in these lacunae.

Black (1967) lists several New Testament instances of sound-paronomasia, which emerge after retroverting the Greek into Hebrew or Aramaic, or by attempting to reconstruct a Semitic original based on the Greek. For example, the Aramaic for the nouns 'cheek' and 'slap' is פגא, the latter appearing in Hebrew in Exodus 21:23-25.[130] Matthew 5:38 recalls the 'eye for eye' pronouncement of Exodus 21:24, while 5:39 continues "but if anyone strikes (פגא) you on the right cheek (פגא), turn the other also." A meaningful pun thus emerges to Jewish listeners who hear Matthew's gospel in Aramaic.[131] In particular, Black specifies that when we "translate the Greek of the sayings of Jesus and of some of the non-dominical sayings back into simple Palestinian Aramaic, similar examples of this formal element in the poetry of the Gospels come to light"[132], a point he illustrates with several examples.[133]

Regarding Jesus's sayings in particular, Burney (1925) notes they "are cast in the form of Semitic poetry, with such characteristic features as parallelism of lines and clauses, rhythmic structure, and possibly even rhyme. Parallelism and rhythm are more easily discernible than rhyme, the recognition of which is almost wholly conjectural."[134] Burney notices four types of parallelism in the gospels starting with synonymous parallelism, where the second line of a couplet mirrors the sense of the first in equivalent though different terms. Antithetic parallelism contrasts the terms of the second line with those of the first. Synthetic parallelism allows the thought of the second line to supplement and complete that of the first and climactic parallelism allows the second line to add something more, to complete the sense of the distich and culminate it.[135] Hence, due to the deliberately poetic form of Jesus's sayings, it

[130] "If any harm follows, then you shall give life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burn for burn, wound for wound, stripe for stripe."
[131] Another Matthaean example: "And do not presume to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father,' for I tell you, God is able from these stones (אֲבָנִים/ebenim) to raise up children (בָּנִים/benim) for Abraham" (3:9).
[132] Black, *An Aramaic Approach*, 161-2.
[133] E.g. Mark 4:26-29: "So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed (zar'a) into the ground ('ar'a): and should sleep, and rise ('itte'ar) night and day. And the seed (zar'a) spring and grow ('arikh), he knoweth not how. For the earth ('ar'a) bringeth forth fruit (pare'a) of herself. First the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear. But when its crop is ready (kadh yehibha 'ibbah) he putteth forth the sickle, for the harvest is ripe (shallah magla dahasadha 'abbibh)" (Black, *An Aramaic Approach*, 165).
[134] Cited in: Black, *An Aramaic Approach*, 143.
[135] Black, *An Aramaic Approach*, 143.

makes sense to seriously consider puns that emerge in them. Most likely Mark employs poetic devices within poetry to emphasise a point.

2.1.1 Ahdahm-Zahra-Zera-Adahmah: Crux of a Simile

As Black states, 4:26-29 showcases one such instance, yet in 4:26 we might also discern a reflection of the אֲדָמָה/אָדָם pun in Genesis 2:7, a Jesus-saying where paronomasia presents in a chiasm:

“The kingdom of God is as if a man (אָדָם) would scatter (זָרַע) seed (זֶרַע) on the ground (אֲדָמָה).”

Black possibly errs in labelling the entire pericope Aramaic: I believe 4:26 works better in Hebrew, yet there are similarities. Though אָדָם does not appear in Biblical Aramaic,[136] it features in Palestinian Aramaic roughly contemporaneous to Mark.[137] The consonantal spelling of Hebrew’s זֶרַע also appears in several contemporaneous Aramaic documents with the same meaning,[138] as does its verbal form in Qumran and later manuscripts.[139] However, אֲדָמָה appears to endure solely as a rare Hebraism and biblicism in contemporaneous Palestinian Aramaic,[140] and, as seed and sow are clearly lexically related, their alignment alone in 4:26 would not prove an intentional pun. Further, a chiastic pun can only be demonstrated in Hebrew, where ‘seed’ and ‘sow’ are encased in ‘man’ and ‘ground’. Here, the central words and crux of the simile are encased in two lexically synophonous words, in ABBA structure. The Hebrew Bible frequently uses such chiasms, as in Isaiah 6:10, a passage that Mark’s Jesus furthermore cites (4:12):

Make the *heart* of this people fat	A
and their *ears* heavy	B
and shut their *eyes*;	C
lest they see with their *eyes*	C
and hear with their *ears*,	B

[136] Instead, אֱנָשׁ appears 25 times in Ezra and Daniel to render ‘man’, as does גְּבַר 21 times (George Wigram, *The Englishman’s Hebrew and Chaldee Concordance* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1970): 141; 292).
[137] Joseph Fitzmyer and Daniel Harrington, *A Manual of Palestinian Aramaic Texts* (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1978): 307 (cf. 204). Fitzmyer restricts this volume’s manuscripts to texts composed between the second centuries (BCE-CE).
[138] Fitzmyer, *Manual of Palestinian Aramaic*, 318.
[139] “zrʕ vb. a/a to sow,“ *The Comprehensive Aramaic Lexicon* (henceforth CAL), accessed April 12, 2023, https://cal.huc.edu/index.html. See also: Christa Müller-Kessler and Michael Sokoloff (eds.) *A Corpus of Christian Palestinian Aramaic Volume IIA* (Groningen: Styx Publications, 1998): 233. The gospel manuscripts herein date from the 5th to 8th centuries CE.
[140] “ˀdmh, ˀdmtˀ (ˀăḏāmā, ˀăḏāmṯā) n.f. earth, ground,” CAL, accessed March 24, 2023, https://cal.huc.edu/index.html. Also, the Peshitta uses ארעא for ‘ground’ and אנש for ‘man’ in 4:26 , expressing no pun (“Mark 4,” Peshitta Aramaic-English New Testament, Bible Hub, accessed March 13, 2023, https://biblehub.com/aramaic-english/mark/4.htm).

And understand with their *heart*. A

Examples of sound-paronomasia within chiasms also appear in the Hebrew Bible, as Ceresko (1978) observes in 2 Samuel 1:19-27:[141]

who clothed you	(הַמַּלְבִּשְׁכֶם)	A
in scarlet set with *jewels*	(עֲדָנִים)	B
who put gold *ornaments*	(עֲדִי)	B
on *your clothing*.	(לְבוּשְׁכֶן)	A

I have also spotted a subtler example in Job 4:4-6:

Your words have supported *the one stumbling*	(כּוֹשֵׁל)	A
and you have made firm the feeble knees.		
But now *it has come to* you, and you are impatient.	(תָּבוֹא אֵלֶ)	B
It touches you, and *you are dismayed.*	(תִּבָּהֵל)	B
Is not your fear of God your *confidence*	(כִּסְלֵ)	A
and the integrity of your ways your hope?		

As we see, the stumbling of the uncertain and fearful is punningly compared to the confidence Job has lost, and the approach of calamity is synophonically linked to Job's dismayed reaction. The wordplay highlights Eliphaz's point, that Job is as insecure as the people he used to console (As) and that his dismay at his own suffering foregrounds his hypocrisy (Bs). I feel Mark 4:26's epigrammatic wordplay achieves such attention-grabbing effect, teasing the attention of Mark's listeners whilst linking man with earth (As), perhaps because the parable symbolises the former with the latter, and centralising the importance of understanding 'sowing' (Bs) to deciphering the parable.

2.1.2 Yahshav-Esev-Shahvar-Sahva: An Orderly Banquet

When translated into Hebrew, 6:39-42 showcases another form of poetic paronomasia, this time in ABAB structure.[142] The Hebrew Bible frequently presents examples of this form, as in the "couplet made famous by Handel (where as often the music corroborates the parallelism):

The people that walked in *darkness* A

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[141] Anthony Ceresko, "The Function of Chiasmus in Hebrew Poetry." *CBQ* 40,1 (1978): 4.

[142] "Then he ordered them to get all the people to sit down (יָשַׁב/yashav) in groups on the green grass (עֵשֶׂב/esev). So they sat down in groups of hundreds and of fifties. Taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven, and blessed and broke (שָׁבַר/shavar) the loaves, and gave them to his disciples to set before the people; and he divided the two fish among them all. And all ate and were filled (שָׂבַע/sahva)."

have seen a great *light*. B

They that dwell in the land of the *shadow of death*, A

upon them hath the *light* shined… B

(Isa. ix.2)."[143]

However, whereas this example utilises ABAB parallelism alone, simply repeating similar concepts (As) and same words (Bs), Mark echoes the initial יָשַׁב and עֵשֶׂב with similar sounding words of different meanings, creating a poetically structured pun. I have not found any such usage of the ABAB structure in the Hebrew Bible, merely non-punning examples where similar concepts and same words are repeated.[144] However, the ABBA structure (see above) is used to deliver metrical puns, as is AABB, in the more poetic texts of the Hebrew Bible. Waldman notes an example of the latter in Jonah 4:6-7.[145] I have noticed a further example from Job 3:3-7:

Let the day perish in which I was born,

and the night that said, 'A male is *conceived*.' (הֹרָה) A

Let that day be darkness!

May God above not seek it or a *light-ray* shine on it. (נְהָרָה) A

Let gloom and deep darkness claim it.

Let a *cloud* settle upon it, (עֲנָנָה) B

let the blackness of the day terrify it.

That night - let thick darkness seize it!

Let it not rejoice among the days of the year,

let it not come into the number of the months.

Yes, let that night be barren.

Let no *joyful cry* enter it. (רְנָנָה) B

Here, the notion of conception, coupled with the image of light ray, juxtaposes with the cloud that Job wishes upon it, that, along with darkness and oblivion, muffles any joyful cry of celebration. The wordplay hammers home Job's despair. Nonetheless, the ABAB structural punning of Mark 6:39-42 seems alien to Biblical Hebrew. In this pericope, I feel its effect serves to emphasise a certain orderliness to the proceedings of the feeding of the five thousand, an event that ought to have been complex and chaotic by its very nature. This orderliness is accentuated by the orderly repetition of two further words in the pericope: "συμπόσια συμπόσια"[146]

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[143] Ruth Aproberts, "Old Testament Poetry: The Translatable Structure." *PMLA* 92,5 (1977): 988. Aproberts notes a similar example in Psalm 127:1b and c, where 'YHWH' and 'in vain' are repeated.
[144] E.g. Psalm 19:12-14; 89:1-2.
[145] Waldman, "Aspects of Biblical Punning," 42.
[146] "dining party (by) dining party."

(6:39) and "πρασιαὶ πρασιαὶ"[147] (6:40), creating a surreal parallel between a well-regulated, sumptuous banquet and the feeding of thousands of hungry, lower-class Jews by twelve lone attendants distributing staple food in the wilderness. Perhaps Mark employs this irony to express that a genuine feast does not require fine food or opulent surroundings, but a community that looks after the basic needs of its members. Further attesting to the pun's intentionality, it seems extraneous and atypical of Mark's generally terse style (cf. page 137, footnote 576) to detail that diners sat down *on the green grass*, rather than simply state they sat down, save to forge a wordplay.

A similar wordplay presents in Aramaic, with a word for 'seat' (יתיבת)[148] occurring in Aramaic contemporaneous to Mark, presumably related to the verb (יְתֵב) that appears five times in Daniel and Ezra.[149] This word mirrors תְּבַר, the Aramaic variant of Hebrew's שָׁבַר.[150] Further, the Aramaic עֶשֶׂב (grass)[151] chimes with the Qumran Aramaic סְבַע (sated),[152] suggesting possible Aramaic or dual-Semitic origin.

We shall further explore this pericope's socio-theological message, and how Mark's wordplay serves to drive it, in the following example.

2.1.3 Lahem-Lechem-Lahkem-Lekou: Expedient Charity

A simpler, non-metrical, fourfold pun emerges in the preceding verse (6:38), once we phrase it in Hebrew:

And he said *to them*,	(לָהֶם)
"How many *loaves*	(לֶחֶם)
do *you have* (lit. (are there) *to you*)?	(לָכֶם)
Go and see."	(לְכוּ)[153]

The pun resounds in Aramaic, with לְכוֹן (to them), לַחְמָא (loaves), לָכֶם (to you) and לְכוּ (go).[154] But again the question arises: could the pun be coincidental? Regarding the first two words this is likely, for how else could Mark have referenced Jesus addressing his disciples without saying he spoke 'to them', and what other common

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[147] "(in groups like) garden beds (by) garden beds."
[148] Fitzmyer, *Manual of Palestinian Aramaic*, 322 (cf. 184-187; 248).
[149] Wigram, *Englishman's Hebrew and Chaldee*, 579.
[150] Gustaf Dalman, *Aramäisches-neuhebräisches Handwörterbuch zu Targum, Talmud und Midrasch* (Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1967): 438.
[151] E.g. Daniel 4:22, 4QEnGiantsc02.5, Peshitta Genesis 3:18 ("ʿsb, ʿsbʾ (ʿeseḇ, ʿesbā) n.m. grass, plant," CAL, accessed March 24, 2023, https://cal.huc.edu/index.html).
[152] "sbʿ vb. a/a to be sated," CAL, accessed April 14, 2023, https://cal.huc.edu/index.html.
[153] Carmignac, *Birth of the Synoptics*, 29.
[154] These four Aramaic lexemes appear similar or identical to the Hebrew in, for example, Daniel 3:4 (לְכוֹן); Berakhot 35b (לַחְמָא), Daniel 5:1 (לְחֶם); Eichah Rabbah, Petichta 2 (לָכֶם); Daniel 3:25, 4:29, 4:37 (the verb 'to go', in participle form, mirrors the Hebrew in these verses).

word for bread was there in the Semitic tongues?[155] However, Jesus might well have used the verb ‘to have’, instead of the Semitism ‘are there to you’,[156] when asking about the bread. He might also have said ‘are there to us’, which would likewise have marred the pun, and could certainly have foregone the dual imperative (Go and see), which is highly atypical of Mark’s Jesus’s mode of speech after posing a question. The Marcan Jesus rarely employs imperatives to exhort people right after querying them;[157] he generally continues talking (thus rendering the question rhetorical)[158] or awaits their response.[159] ‘Go and see’ is also unnecessary, for Jesus’s question already demands investigation, and Mark’s laconic style typically omits superfluous questions, save for rhetorical effect.[160]

So why alliterate in 6:38? I feel the repetition of short, sharp syllables serves to exemplify the sense of urgency that permeates Mark’s gospel,[161] here the exigency for vicarious love within the community, exemplified by Jesus’s on-the-spot decision to feed five thousand of his followers. Moreover, the sense of self-controlled orderliness among the diners and the upmarket language of the feasting hall that follows (see 6:39-42 above) grandly accentuates the miracle’s significance: a lesson on the transformative power of communal sharing, as we later review.

2.1.4 Shahlach-Shahret-Shelot-Shelik: Establishing the Disciples’ Mission

When reconstructed in Hebrew, another triple wordplay appears in Mark 3:14-15, as Carmignac (1987) notes: Jesus sends (שָׁלַח) the apostles to preach (שָׁרֵת) and to have power (שְׁלוֹט) to cast out (שְׁלֵיךְ) demons.[162] I observe this wordplay works nearly as well in Aramaic, with שְׁלַח for ‘sent’,[163] a slightly discordant שְׁמַשׁ for ‘preach’,[164] שְׁלֵט for ‘to be empowered’[165] and שְׁלַח again to render ‘cast out’. One might however wonder whether the punning is coincidental: how else could Mark have described Jesus sending out and empowering his disciples? All the Hebrew and Aramaic words, with the exception of שְׁמַשׁ, are frequently attested,[166] rendering their selection perfectly natural. One might say the same of 6:39-42, where the words ‘sit down’, ‘grass’, ‘break’ and ‘filled’ are similarly commonplace. The reason I doubt this explanation is the inclusion of what might be deemed unnecessary, or

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[155] לֶחֶם is by far the most common word for bread in the Hebrew Bible, appearing 296 times (Gerhard Lisowsky, *Konkordanz Zum Hebräischen Alten Testament* (Stuttgart: Württembergische Bibelanstalt, 1958): 722-4).
[156] This idiom appears frequently throughout the Hebrew Bible, as in Genesis 43:7 and 44:19.
[157] 11:30 presents the sole exception.
[158] E.g. 2:9, 2:19, 2:25, 3:33, 4:13, 4:21, 5:39, 7:18, 8:17-18, 8:36-37, 9:19, 10:18, 12:26.
[159] E.g. 3:4, 5:9, 5:30, 8:27, 8:29, 9:16, 9:33, 10:3, 10:36, 10:51, 12:16
[160] E.g. 8:17-18.
[161] David Rhoads, *Mark As Story: An Introduction to the Narrative of a Gospel.* Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2012.
[162] Carmignac, *Birth of the Synoptics*, 28-9.
[163] This word appears 10 times in the Aramaic portions of Ezra, between 4:11 and 7:14, and also 3 times in the Aramaic of Daniel; 3:28, 5:24 and 6:22.
[164] This word appears in the Aramaic of Daniel 7:10.
[165] This word appears 7 times in the Aramaic of Daniel 2:38-6:34.
[166] שָׁלַח, for example, occurs 847 times in the Hebrew Bible (Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten*, 1438-44).

'filler', words, lexemes that sit oddly in an otherwise crisp narrative. The writing stands out because it is uncharacteristic. Why does Mark bother to mention that the five thousand sat down upon grass, instead of simply stating they sat or reclined, as he does everywhere else in his gospel?[167] Why does Mark use 'he might send' ('that he might send them out…') instead of, more directly and indeed typically, 'to go' ('in order to go out…')?[168] Also, why mention that Jesus appointed the disciples *to have power* to cast out demons, when simply stating that he appointed them to cast out demons surmises this conferral of authority in typically terse Marcan fashion? Perhaps because, as we have seen, wordplay that relies on multiple repetitions of similar sounding words abounds throughout the Hebrew Bible, particularly in poetic writings, from which Mark and/or his sources drew inspiration. Backfish (2018) notes such a usage in Psalm 91:6-7, where "the Hebrew poet uses parasonancy between בָּאֹפֶל ("in the darkness"), יִפֹּל ("he/it will fall"), and אֶלֶף ("one thousand")."[169] I have found comparable examples in the Psalter, including 9:2-3 and 18:5-6. In the former, parasonancy chimes in particular between samekh, sin and zayin; three similar-sounding consonants:

I will thank the LORD with all my heart.

I will announce all your wonders, (אֲ**ס**ַפְּרָה)

I will rejoice and exult in you, (אֶ**שְׂ**מְחָה)

I will sing praise to your name, Most High. (אֲ**זַ**מְּרָה)

In the latter, parasonancy emerges between the twice-mentioned cords (בְלֵי), of Death and Sheol, and the demon Belial (בְלִיַּעַל).

Why would Mark use such wordplay in 3:14-15? I feel it snaps attention to the nature of the disciples' ministry, via sharply resonating *shins* (שׁ) at the start of each word and similarly harsh consonants, either plosive (ד, ת, ט) or fricative (ח), at their ends. Mark thus highlights crucial details to his audience, that healing people by banishing demonic forces and preaching the imminent arrival of God's kingdom were central to Jesus's mission.

2.1.5 Yinezoq-Nizenach-Zeqeinim-Yizerach: Passion Prediction Pun

In 8:31, I have noticed a certain reconstruction highlights Jesus's fate with a fourfold pun:

the Son of Man must *suffer* much, (יִנְזֹק)

and *be rejected*, (נִזְנַח)

[167] E.g. 2:15, 3:34, 4:1, 9:35.

[168] Mark uses ἐξέρχομαι (to come out/go out) no fewer than 38 times. He uses ἀποστέλλω 20 times, but only twice in the subjunctive (3:14 and 5:10). Of these two, only 3:14 presents atypically Marcan periphrasis.

[169] Elizabeth Backfish, "Transformations in Translation: An Examination of the Septuagint Rendering of Hebrew Wordplay in the Fourth Book of the Psalter." *JBL* 137,1 (2018): 80.

by the *elders*, chief priests and Torah scholars, (זְקֵנִים)

and be killed.

And after three days *he will rise* (יִזְרַח)

Such dense alliteration within a single-verse prophecy conveys a formulaic, yet poetic, utterance. Might this be, therefore, a pre-Marcan saying that the author appropriated into the text, perhaps a primitive creedal statement such as the Philippians hymn (2:6-11) or the pre-Pauline formula of 1 Corinthians 15:3-5?[170] I have attempted to reconstruct such a saying for 8:31 in poetic meter, to illustrate how its alliterative and rhyming punning might have energised and emphasised the message:

בֵן אָדָם יִנְזֹק	Ben ādām yinezoq
הַרְבֵּה וְנִזְנַח	hareveh ve nizenach,
מִן הַזְקֵנִים וְהַכֹּהֲנִים הַגְּדוֹלִים	(Min hazeqeinim ve hacohanim hagedolim
וְהַסוֹפְרִים וְנִקְטַל	ve hasopherim ve niqetal),
וּמִקֵּץ שְׁלֹשֶׁת יָמִים	U miqetz sheloshet yāmim
זָרוֹח יִזְרַח	zāroch yizerach.[171]

The alliteration's density, four times within a single verse (see underlined words), suggests intentional usage. I suspect Mark purposefully added "suffer" and "be rejected" to heighten 8:31's effect, since these words do not appear in the parallel predictions (9:31; 10:33-34), which instead mention Jesus's betrayal to the elders, priests and Torah scholars. Perhaps, therefore, Mark wanted Jesus's initial prediction to stand out, and thus phrased it with more poetic clout than its supporting echoes.

The wordplay resounds in Aramaic, with נזק meaning 'to suffer injury'[172] (an Aramaic loan word borrowed into Hebrew; cf. נֵזֶק in Esther 7:4),[173] זלף (albeit in later usage) meaning 'to rebuke',[174] the Targumic Hebraism זקנה ('old age')[175] nodding respectfully to the Hebrew זְקֵנִים, and זְקַף meaning 'to raise' (cf. Ezra 6:11). A contemporaneous Aramaic variant of זְקַף that also puns quite well is זרח.[176]

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[170] For discussions of these proposed creedal insertions, see John Meier, "Jesus Christ in the New Testament: Part Two: Various Images of Jesus in the Books of the New Testament." *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 31,1 (1998): 144-8.

[171] The verse structure I employ is 3 + 2, counting stressed words only (i.e. ignoring the preposition and conjunctions). This structure is typical of matched versets in Hebrew Bible poetry (Robert Alter, *The Art of Biblical Poetry*. New York: Basic Books (2011): 9).

[172] Fitzmyer, *Manual of Palestinian Aramaic*, 329.

[173] Francis Brown, *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon*, 1906. Reprint, (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2020): 634.

[174] Müller-Kessler, *Corpus of Christian Palestinian*, 233.

[175] "zqn vb.C to grow old," CAL, accessed March 25, 2023, https://cal.huc.edu/index.html.

[176] Fitzmyer, *Manual of Palestinian Aramaic*, 318 (cf. 66; 200).

However, drawbacks persist in our lack of extant Hebrew manuscripts for 8:31 from within a millennium of Mark's time. We simply do not know how this verse would have been rendered, and possibilities abound. Lindsey (1973), for example, translates 'elders' as I do, but renders δεῖ… παθεῖν as עַל…לִסְבֹּל (unto [the Son of Man] to bear burdens), ἀποδοκιμασθῆναι as וַיְמָאֲסוּ בּוֹ (they will reject [to] him) and ἀναστῆναι as קוֹם יָקוּם (he will surely rise).[177] In Lindsey's version, no pun emerges at all. Yet so many of Jesus's sayings are cast in the form of Semitic poetry, oft embellished with puns, and *yinezoq*, *nizenach* and *zeqeinim* are separated by almost as few words, which suggests deliberation, even if the trailing *zāroch yizerach* is incorrectly reconstructed or incidental. Another possibility is that the midsection's detail is subsequent interpolation. Scholars, as we later observe, generally doubt the uncanny precision of the passion predictions, and consider certain details emendations. Accordingly, without the midsection,[178] *yinezoq* and *nizenach* chime with *zāroch yizerach* in terse rhyming meter of conspicuous fluidity and scansion, such as I have never seen in Semitic prose. A compelling case for *zāroch yizerach* as the original wording of this passion prediction emerges in Isaiah 60:1-2.[179] Though often used to describe the rising sun, here the verb describes God rising over Zion to redeem it, with parallels to Jesus's crucifixion and resurrection in Mark. In these verses, darkness covers the land (cf. Mark 15:33) before the Lord rises and his glory appears (cf. Mark 16:6-7) and Zion is redeemed.

2.1.6 Nahga-Nega: Handling Plague

Paronomasia appears several times in Mark's descriptions of Jesus's teachings and missionary activity. In Mark 3:10, those who seek to touch Jesus are those afflicted by scourges: "ἐπιπίπτειν αὐτῷ ἵνα αὐτοῦ ἅψωνται ὅσοι εἶχον μάστιγας". The word μάστιγας derives from μάστιξ, a whip or scourge, that metaphorically denotes "severe pains", "sufferings" or "disease."[180] The Koine is vague and it is unclear what kinds of affliction the supplicants were suffering. In Hebrew, however, a particular translation produces a meaningful pun, where those who seek to touch (נָגַע) Jesus are those that had various types of infection or plague (נֶגַע).[181] The pun spotlights the connection between these debilitating infections and the source of their

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[177] *A Hebrew Translation of the Gospel of Mark*. Translated by Robert L. Lindsey (Jerusalem: Dugith, 1973): 119. Similarly, Delitzsch's version includes no puns; see *Hebrew New Testament*. Translated by Franz Delitzsch, 1878. Reprint, (London: Trinitarian Bible Society, 1998).

[178] This leaves no precise detail except for, apparently, the phrase 'after three days'. However, as a Hebraism, 'three days' can indicate a brief time period of nonspecific duration (e.g. Exodus 19:11; Hosea 6:2; Luke 13:32): see Raymond Brown, "How Much Did Jesus Know? - A Survey of the Biblical Evidence." *CBQ* 29,3 (1967): 16.

[179] Isaiah, the only prophet named in Mark (1.1; 7.6), is the prophet alluded to most often in Mark. Mark cites him more often than any other biblical text, quoting him directly "eight times (1.2-3 / Isaiah 40.3; 4.12 / Isaiah 6.9-10; 7.6-7 / Isaiah 29.13; 9.48 / Isaiah 66.24; 11.17 / Isaiah 56.7; 12.32/ Isaiah 45.21; 13.24 / Isaiah 13.10; 13.25 / Isaiah 34.4)." Further, Isaiah is referenced in Mark's apocalypse as often as Daniel: twice (Sharyn E. Dowd, "Reading Mark. Reading Isaiah." *LTQ* 30,3 (1995): 133-43).

[180] Joseph Thayer, *Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1976): 392.

[181] Carmignac, *Birth of the Synoptics*, 29.

cure, Jesus, who is strikingly presented as one not only immune from infection but one with whom contact removes it.

The pun chimes in Aramaic, with נְגַע meaning ‘to touch’ in texts dating from Qumran and onward,[182] alliterating with the contemporaneous נגד (affliction)[183] and later נגב (plague).[184]

That said, there are several Hebrew/Aramaic words for malaise that the broad term μάστιγας might be rendering, such as מַחֲלֶה (sickness/disease = 6 times in Hebrew Bible; 4 in Dead Sea Scrolls),[185] חֳלִי (sickness = 24 times in Hebrew Bible; 3 in Dead Sea Scrolls)[186] and תַּחֲלוּא (disease = 5 times in Hebrew Bible; once in Dead Sea Scrolls),[187] which would not convey a pun. However, נֶגַע is by far the most common word for blow/infection/plague (78 times in Hebrew Bible; 49 in Dead Sea Scrolls),[188] rendering it a likely Semitic original. Perhaps then, Mark vests Jesus with the unusual power to cure by being touched[189] to activate a pun that illuminates him as a metaphorical fount of healing.

2.1.7 Rahu-Yirahu: They Saw and Feared

In 5:15, רָאוּ... וְיִרָאוּ (they saw… and they feared), a veteran pun of the Hebrew Bible, where it appears 16 times[190], makes its Koine debut. The Gadarenes observe the formerly demon-possessed ‘Legion’ sitting by Jesus, dressed and in his right mind, which dismays them. In the Hebrew Bible, I have noticed this pun generally marks the mortal reaction to an awesome spectacle, often divinely inspired. In Isaiah 41:4-5, the people of the islands see God’s power to hand over nations and subdue kings, and they are afraid. The Jews who behold the mighty Goliath in 1 Samuel 17:24 are similarly cowed. In Exodus 34:30, when Aaron and the Israelites see Moses’s face shining, after his return from speaking with God, they fear to approach. In 1 Samuel 18:14-15, when Saul witnesses David’s divinely-ordained military success, he begins to fear him. Hence, the use of this pun following one of Jesus’s most impressive miracles, the exorcism of a man possessed by myriad demons, fittingly accentuates its grandeur. It also hints at a divine source for Jesus’s thaumaturgy.

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[182] “ngʕ vb. a/a to touch,” CAL, accessed April 17, 2023, https://cal.huc.edu/index.html.
[183] Fitzmyer, *Manual of Palestinian Aramaic*, 329.
[184] Müller-Kessler, *Corpus of Christian Palestinian*, 250.
[185] Clines, *Dictionary of Classical Hebrew*, vol. 5 (Sheffield: Academic Press, 2001): 218.
[186] Clines, *Dictionary of Classical Hebrew*, vol. 3 (Sheffield: Academic Press, 1996): 232.
[187] Clines, *Dictionary of Classical Hebrew*, vol. 8 (Sheffield: Phoenix Press, 2011): 618.
[188] Clines, *Dictionary of Classical Hebrew*, vol. 5, 611-2.
[189] Though such instances of power transference via touch occasionally appear in Greco-Roman literature, Jewish-Christian writings from Mark’s time or earlier lack similar parallels (Candida Moss, “The Man with the Flow of Power: Porous Bodies in Mark 5:25-34.” *JBL* 129,3 (2010): 509-11).
[190] Carmignac, *Birth of the Synoptics*, 30.

As *rhy* persisted only as a Hebraism in Syriac, meaning 'to examine',[191] and רהב meant 'to fear' in somewhat later Aramaic,[192] we cannot say with confidence that Aramaic adopted the pun from Hebrew.

2.1.8 Yahrahk-Chahrak: Foams and Gnashes

In 9:18, another story of demon possession, the stricken son is said to *foam* (at the mouth) (יָרָק) and *gnash* (חָרַק) his teeth whenever the demon seizes him.[193] Interestingly, the colourful 'gnashing of teeth' appears only in poetry in the Hebrew Bible[194] to display the vicious intentions of the wicked, which suggests it would have protruded in Mark's prose, certainly to Jews among his audience. I have also never seen it used in tandem with the similarly graphic 'foam' in prior Semitic literature, which suggests that, rather than recycling a cliché, Mark deliberately aligns the words to form a wordplay. The pun again highlights a particularly tough challenge for Jesus, as 9:18 relays his disciples had already tried and failed to exorcise the possessed son.

The same verb for 'gnash' appears in consonantal text (חרק) in the Babylonian Talmud, the Peshitta and the Targum of Esther,[195] and a Hebraizing form of *rqq* (ירק, meaning 'to spit') presents in the Palestinian Talmud (Bava Qama 6b:39[2]).[196] Whether we read רקק or ירק, the pun clicks, albeit in later Aramaic.

2.1.9 Ozvim-Ochazim: Abandoning and Grasping

Jesus, in 7:8, decries the Pharisees for abandoning the commandment of God whilst grasping the tradition/betrayal[197] of men. I have noticed that the masculine plural participles for עָזַב (to abandon) and אָחַז (to seize/grasp) are *ozvim* and *ochazim* respectively. Thus, we may reconstruct 7:8 in Hebrew:

עוֹזְבִים הַמִּצְוָה אֱלֹהִים אוֹחֲזִים הַמָּסוֹרָה אֲנָשִׁים

The saying both rhymes and scans, and includes the consonance of *mitzvah* (commandment) and *masorah* (tradition), the scansion of *Elohim* (God) and *anashim* (man), plus the conspicuously close alliteration of *ozvim* and *ochazim*. Was Mark placing a well-known saying on the lips of Jesus or creating one himself? And was he deliberately using paronomasia to foreground what he considered a particularly salient point? The wordplay would certainly help the listener remember Mark's message, which denotes the corruption of the Pharisees' traditions that obscure and confound the Mosaic Law's charitable core. This message of the overriding importance of communal charity is untiringly repeated in Mark (1:36-39, 2:15-17, 3:1-

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191 "[rʔy] vb. to see," CAL, accessed March 25, 2023, https://cal.huc.edu/index.html.
192 Müller-Kessler, *Corpus of Christian Palestinian*, 262.
193 Carmignac, *Birth of the Synoptics*, 29.
194 Job 16:9; Psalm 35:16, 37:12, 112:10; Lamentations 2:16.
195 "ḥrq vb. a/u to gnash the teeth," CAL, accessed March 25, 2023, https://cal.huc.edu/index.html.
196 "yrq vb. to spit," CAL, accessed March 25, 2023, https://cal.huc.edu/index.html.
197 Παράδοσις can mean both tradition and betrayal, as 2.4.5 explores.

5, 6:30-44, 8:1-13, 10:17-24, 12:28-34), which justifies why Mark might use poetic technique to amplify it. Indeed, Mark appears to use a Janus parallelism in the next verse and a half, one that functions in both Greek and Hebrew, to add further flourish to his message. We shall explore this instance in 2.4.5. Further, it seems linguistically bizarre for Mark to use the phrase ‘grasp a tradition’ when Hebrew scripture never does. Rather it repeatedly employs ‘keep’ to describe an adherent to a commandment, tradition, way/path or law.[198] This novelty further attests to the wordplay’s intentionality.

The pun does not appear to work in Aramaic. The words I have found for ‘to grasp’ (אחד)[199] and ‘to reject/abandon’ (שְׁבַק; עצי)[200] fail to alliterate.

2.1.10 Ra-ashim-Rah-ahbim: Earthquakes and Famines

In 13:8, Jesus predicts earthquakes (רַעֲשִׁם) and famines (רָעָבִם), a pun also found in the Matthaean (24:7) and Lucan (21:11) parallels.[201] The Hebrew Bible, however, never places these natural disasters together to form a wordplay, which attests to Marcan innovation and intentionality. Earlier in the verse, I notice too the conflict-driven repetition of ‘nation’ and ‘kingdom’ (‘nation will rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom’). The alliterating earthquakes and famines in 8b thus serve to poetically compound this sense of overwhelming conflict.

A similar Aramaic word (‘to tremble/burst out’) appears in Christian Palestinian Aramaic (רְעַשׁ), which the earlier Targum of Esther (c. 200-300 CE) renders ‘to be in commotion’.[202] Moreover, the Hebrew word for ‘famine’ appears as ‘hunger’ in a Targum of Genesis 42:36.[203] It is possible, therefore, that the pun worked in both Semitic tongues.

2.1.11 Yishme’u-Yismechu: Listened and Were Delighted

In 14:11, the high priests listened (יִשְׁמְעוֹ) and were delighted (יִּשְׂמְחוּ),[204] as Judas agrees to betray Jesus. Though the Hebrew Bible does not feature this idiom, the two words are near-identical in Hebrew and adjacent in the Greek text, which suggests deliberate wordplay. I notice too that, if the ‘ἀργύριον’ (silver) promised to Judas were rendered ‘שׁוּעַ’ (riches), and if ‘ἐπηγγείλαντο’ (they promised) were rendered ‘יִשְׁבְּעוּ’ (they swore), a more elaborate four-pronged pun would emerge:

וַיִשְׁמְעוֹ וַיִּשְׂמְחוּ וַיִשְׁבְּעוּ שׁוּעַ לָתֶת לוֹ

[198] Clines, *Dictionary of Classical Hebrew*, vol. 8, 475-84.
[199] Fitzmyer, *Manual of Palestinian Aramaic*, 307.
[200] שְׁבַק: cf. Ezra 6:7; Daniel 2:44, 4:15, 23, 26; Mark 15:34. עצי: Müller-Kessler, *Corpus of Christian Palestinian*, 256.
[201] Carmignac, *Birth of the Synoptics*, 29f.
[202] “rʕš vb. a/a(?) to be in commotion,” CAL, accessed April 13, 2023, https://cal.huc.edu/index.html.
[203] “rʕbwn n.m. hunger,” CAL, accessed March 25, 2023, https://cal.huc.edu/index.html.
[204] Carmignac, *Birth of the Synoptics*, 30.

In this reconstruction, the sibilant alliteration of each of the first four words renders Judas an outstandingly hissworthy villain, and their combined aural effect impresses upon the audience the gravity of his actions. If any verse in the narrative that sets the scene for Jesus's arrest deserves such literary attention, surely it is this pivotal plot moment, this account of supreme treachery, and I think Mark does not disappoint. Though we cannot be certain the above rendition is original, since other ways exist in Hebrew to express ἀργύριον (e.g. כֶּסֶף), and since יִשְׁבְּעוּ (they swore) might too strongly render ἐπηγγείλαντο (they promised), the near-identical spelling of 'listened' and 'delighted', along with a shortage of common Hebrew synonyms for either,[205] at least renders probable the reconstruction's first two synophones.

The pun resounds in contemporaneous Palestinian Aramaic, with שׂמחה (happiness)[206] identical to the Hebrew noun, which in turn derives from the verb 'to be delighted' (שָׂמַח),[207] and שמע (to hear)[208] also identical to the Hebrew.

2.1.12 Yisahteru-Yisahteru: Blindfolded and Hit

In 14:65, Jesus is blindfolded and struck by the assembly of high priests, elders and Torah scholars, after they judge him worthy of death. Carmignac argues that, in Hebrew, 'to hide the face' (סָתַר) is phonologically identical to a verb meaning 'to hit' (סָטַר), suggesting deliberate alliteration.[209] Here, I think Carmignac is stretching. First, the Hebrew Bible never uses סָתַר to mean 'blindfold'. It usually presents as a figure of speech meaning to withdraw favour from someone.[210] It can also mean to hide oneself entirely, or to willingly hide one's own face (presumably with one's hands) as Moses in Exodus 3:6, but the verb never specifically denotes having one's eyes covered by others, with material, as in 14:65. Second, though סָטַר can mean 'to hit', it usually means 'to turn sideways'. Accordingly, it can also mean 'to strike sideways', in other words 'to slap'. Though this makes it a possible candidate for 14:65, the verb never appears in the Hebrew Bible and rarely elsewhere in Jewish literature of the period.[211] There are, however, numerous alternative candidates in the Old Testament - the Hebrew Bible never falls short of words for striking.[212] For these reasons, I think the alliteration unlikely, though its presence certainly helps sharpen our sense of Jesus's distress.

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[205] שָׁמַע is by far the most common word for 'to listen/hear', occurring 1160 times in the Hebrew Bible (Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten*, 1463-73) and שָׂמַח by far the most common rendition of 'to delight', occurring no fewer than 150 times (Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten*, 1376-7).
[206] Fitzmyer, *Manual of Palestinian Aramaic*, 338.
[207] "8057. simchah," Bible Hub, accessed February 21, 2023, https://biblehub.com/hebrew/8057.htm.
[208] Fitzmyer, *Manual of Palestinian Aramaic*, 339.
[209] Carmignac, *Birth of the Synoptics*, 30.
[210] E.g. Micah 3:4, Isaiah 54:8, Deuteronomy 31:17, Jeremiah 33:5, Psalm 22:5.
[211] Marcus Jastrow, "סָטַר," *Dictionary of the Targumim*, accessed May 2, 2023, https://jewish_literature_heb_en.enacademic.com/121622/%D7%A1%D6%B8%D7%98%D6%B7%D7%A8.
[212] E.g. Psalm 9:17: נָקַשׁ (naqash), Exodus 12:23: נָגַף (nagaph), Ezekiel 25:6: מָחָא (macha), Judges 5:26: הָלַם (halam), Exodus 7:17: נָכָה (nacah), Isaiah 53:4: נָגַע (nagah).

2.1.13 Bahra-Arbeh-Bahrah and Sheray-Seruk: Heralds of the New Covenant

The Hebrew for covenant (בְּרִית) derives from בָּרָה, meaning 'to eat'.[213] Though אָכַל abounds far more in the Hebrew Bible (810 times)[214] בָּרָה does appear five times in 2 Samuel (3:35; 12:17; 13:5, 6, 10) and once in Lamentations (4:10). In Mark 1:6, John the Baptist is presented as a man clothed in camel's hair, who wears a leather belt, who eats locusts and wild honey. The belt and hairy vestments reflect the description of Elijah in 2 Kings 1:8, just as Zechariah 13:4 describes the hairy cloak as prophetic raiment, but why would Mark mention John's diet? No obvious connection exists between John's regime and Elijah's lifestyle, or that of any Old Testament prophet. However, I have noticed that if we retrovert the Greek into Hebrew/Aramaic, we might render 1:6b:

בָּרָא אַרְבֶּה וּדְבַשׁ בָּרָא [215]

Here the letters of בָּרָא (he ate), the verb from which בְּרִית (covenant) derives, are closely reflected in אַרְבֶּה (locusts) and repeated in בָּרָא (field).[216] It seems Mark is trying to tell us something, but what? What do locusts and honey represent?

In Hebrew, locust (אַרְבֶּה)[217] and Arabian (עֲרָבִי)[218] are similes, as a punning reference in Judges 6:5 illustrates. Here, Israel is invaded by the peoples of the Arabian peninsula to the east, including Midianites and Amalekites, who swarm like locusts upon the Israelites (cf. Judges 7:12). John eating locusts might therefore symbolise God's intermediary devouring opposition to God and Israel, by the actions of his mouth that turn the people to repentance.[219] Likewise, Jeremiah 46:23-24 prophesies that the Egyptians, once enslavers of the Jewish people, though more numerous than locusts, will be subjugated by the peoples of the north. In the New Testament, Revelation 9:3 describes anthropomorphic locusts emerging from the Abyss to receive power, presumably from their demonic ruler Abaddon (9:11). These locusts sport manlike faces, womanlike hair, leonine teeth and tails like scorpion's stingers, they wear breastplates and crowns, and their wings beat with the thunder of chariots or horses charging to battle (9:7-10). Chilton (1987) notes that "the domain of the Dragon (Job 41:31; Ps. 148:7; Rev. 11:7; 17:8), the prison of the demons (Luke 8:31; Rev. 20:1-3; cf. 2 Pet. 2:4; Jude 6) and the realm of the dead (Rom. 10:7) are all called… Abyss. St. John is thus warning his readers that all hell

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[213] "1285. Berith," Bible Hub, accessed April 9, 2023, https://biblehub.com/hebrew/1285.htm.
[214] Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten*, 72-8.
[215] "…he ate (bahra) locusts (arbeh) and field (bahrah) honey."
[216] בָּרָא appears 8 times in the Aramaic of Daniel (2:38; 4:12, 15, 21, 23 (twice), 25, 32) meaning 'to eat' and in the Peshitta of Genesis 25:27 and Matthew 3:4 meaning 'field' ("br, brᵓ (bar, barrā) n.f. #2 field," CAL, accessed March 25, 2023, https://cal.huc.edu/index.html). However, בָּרָא does not appear as 'field' in Hebrew, including the Hebrew Bible which instead uses שָׂדֶה (333 times: Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten*, 1363-5) and חֶלְקָה (23 times: Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten,* 502-3). Thus 1:6's paronomasia works better in Aramaic.
[217] Cf. e.g. Exodus 10:4-19 (seven times); Leviticus 11:22; Psalm 78:46.
[218] Cf. e.g. Nehemiah 2:19; Isaiah 13:20; Jeremiah 3:2.
[219] As Malachi 4:5-6 prophesies "I will send the prophet Elijah to you before that great and dreadful day of the Lord comes. He will turn the hearts of the parents to their children, and the hearts of the children to their parents…" John eating locusts, or devouring opposition to God, helps highlight his role as Elijah's incarnation.

is about to break loose on the land of Israel…"[220] The locusts, moreover, given their detailed supernatural description, appear to represent demonic rather than human foes, monstrosities numerous enough to torture the Earth's population (9:5-6, 10).

Yet, though locusts often symbolise an enemy's abundancy, these are not always enemies of Israel. Jeremiah 51:14 prophesies that Babylon will be filled with locusts shouting in triumph over them, referencing the Medes that are destined to conquer Judah's oppressors (51:11), whose horses are likened to a locust swarm (51:27-28). Nahum 3:15-16 describes how the Ninevites, God's enemies, will be slain by the sword and devoured as by a locust swarm. Locusts also, more generally, are likened to armies that advance in ranks (Proverbs 30:27) and, as a plague, Joel 1:5-6 compares them to a pillaging army of invaders turning the metaphor's direction against the Jews. Thus a connection between John's locust diet and the devouring of God's enemies seems somewhat speculative, especially since Mark's context suggests no conflict. Mark might simply be depicting John as leading a frugal life free from luxurious temptation: a modest, non-materialistic servant of God. Locusts would hardly have been an unusual staple for Law-observant Jews pressed for food in the wilds, since they are listed in the Torah, alongside grasshoppers and crickets, as permissible consumables (Leviticus 11:22). Moreover, Davies (1983) argues that locusts and honey in the wilderness, as well as being kosher, would escape contamination via Gentile contact, and John, as an Essene, would have been motivated by ritual purity even more than asceticism to eat them: "Essene congregations lived so as to set themselves apart from Gentiles, from the ordinary Jews of their day and from the Jerusalem Priesthood. Their meals were so pure and so central to their practice and their self-definition, that a novice… had to wait a full two years… to participate completely in the food and drink… An Essene… would not have eaten the food of even the Priests, much less the dubiously poor food of the common townspeople…"[221] Thus the point of Mark's description of John's diet is to portray Jesus's forerunner as a man of meticulous Law-observing purity. The alliteration between 'he ate' (bahra), 'locusts' (arbeh) and 'field' (bahrah), each echoing 'covenant' (berit), from which the initial verb (bahra) derives, helps drive this message. John is an exemplary keeper of God's covenant, portrayed as the new Elijah, and a worthy herald for God's good news. Locusts and field honey are chosen as each reflects the word 'berit' since John, a keeper of the old covenant, has come to announce the bringer of the new ("I baptise you with water, but he will baptise you with the Holy Spirit" (1:8)). Jesus himself cites this covenant's conditions a few verses later: in order to inherit God's coming kingdom, his listeners must repent and believe in the good news (1:15). That a locust and field honey diet seems such an unusual and superfluous detail to include, without serving some higher literary purpose, further attests to the wordplay's intentionality. Its expression of John's moral excellence and ritual purity also illuminates Jesus in the following verse (1:7), where John contrasts his relative unworthiness with his successor's glory, proclaiming himself insufficient even to untie the thong of Jesus's sandals.[222]

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[220] David Chilton, *The Days of Vengeance: An Exposition of the Book of Revelation* (Fort Worth, TX: Dominion Press, 1987): 269-70.
[221] Steven Davies, "John the Baptist and Essene Kashruth." *NTS* 29 (1983): 569.
[222] "To carry someone's shoes… or to take them off his feet was the work of a slave. A Hebrew slave was not obliged to do it (Mekilta on Exod. xxi. 2). Rabbi Joshua b. Levi is quoted as saying: 'All

Sibilant sound-paronomasia serves to cement this contrast once we express the Greek in Hebrew.

"The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie (שְׁרֵא) the thong (שְׂרוֹךְ) of his sandals (סְוֹנָם)."

סְאוֹן as 'sandal' is a tentative translation, since the word generally used in the Hebrew Bible is נַעַל (22 times).[223] סְאוֹן, from the verb סָאַן (to tread or tramp), appears just once, in Isaiah 9:4(5), and specifically refers to the sandal, or possibly boot, of a soldier.[224] [225] Perhaps then, the retroversion 'סְאוֹן' is too great a stretch, though the word does appear in Imperial Aramaic around the fifth century BCE,[226] and in Syriac in the late fifth/early sixth century CE,[227] meaning 'shoe'. Nevertheless, the alliteration of שְׁרֵא and שְׂרוֹךְ,[228] coupled with בָּרָא, בָּרָא and אַרְבֶּה in the previous verse, smacks of deliberation. Through this, and through the latter's evocation of בְּרִית, Mark stamps John's significance as righteous herald of the new covenant, and further, by contrast, that of the greater one destined to realise it.

2.1.14 Kalon-Kullon-Xolon: Lame and Maimed

9:43-47 presents another Jesus saying that utilises sound-paronomasia. The pericope's odd-numbered verses strongly echo one another in form and content, with καλόν alliterating with κυλλόν in 9:43, καλόν alliterating with χωλόν in 9:45 and κυλλόν punning with χωλόν across the verses:

καλόν ἐστίν σε *κυλλὸν* εἰσελθεῖν εἰς τὴν ζωὴν ἢ τὰς δύο χεῖρας ἔχοντα ἀπελθεῖν εἰς τὴν γέενναν[229]

καλόν ἐστίν σε εἰσελθεῖν εἰς τὴν ζωὴν *χωλὸν* ἢ τοὺς δύο πόδας ἔχοντα βληθῆναι εἰς τὴν γέενναν[230]

Unlike the prior thirteen, this wordplay works in Greek but not Hebrew/Aramaic. For example, words used to convey 'lame' or 'crippled' in the Hebrew Bible, such as פִּסֵּחַ, נָשֶׁה and נֵכֶה, neither alliterate with nor vaguely resemble the Hebrew Bible's

services a slave does for his master a pupil should do for his teacher, with the exception of undoing his shoes (b. Ket. 96a)" (Charles Cranfield, *The Gospel According to Saint Mark* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1959): 48).

[223] Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten*, 935.

[224] Clines, *Dictionary of Classical Hebrew*, vol. 6 (Sheffield: Phoenix Press, 2007): 103. See also: "Seon," Bible Hub, accessed November 15, 2022, https://biblehub.com/hebrew/5430.htm. I have found no extra-biblical usage of this word in Hebrew.

[225] "A military shoe, or caliga, to be distinguished from the ocrea (מִצְחָה)" (Friedrich Gesenius, *Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon,* 1846, accessed May 31, 2023, http://www.tyndalearchive.com/TABS/Gesenius/index.htm).

[226] TAD C1.1 (Ahiqar): fragment 1 line 3 (CAL, accessed August 19, 2023, https://cal.huc.edu/index.html).

[227] ADiatess1990 (Aphrem on the Diatessaron): page 3 line 3 (CAL, accessed August 19, 2023, https://cal.huc.edu/index.html).

[228] As far as I know, this alliteration does not work in Aramaic, since I find no word for 'thong' that chimes with 'untie'.

[229] "It is better for you maimed to enter into life than having two hands to go away into Gehenna."

[230] "It is better for you to enter into life lame than having two feet to be thrown into Gehenna."

word for ‘maimed’ (חָרוּץ). However, the sayings, which sound like proverbs, exude a distinctly Jewish flavour, as each mentions Gehenna. Wilson explains that Gehenna was “the valley south-west of Jerusalem which had been defiled by Moloch-worship (cf. 2 Kg. 23:10; Jer. 7:31…), and was not symbolic of the place of future punishment (1 Enoch 27:2). The description is taken from Isa. 66:24… Later ideas of eternal punishment should not be read into these words, but neither should their sternness be watered down.”[231] Further, a Semitic idiom is thrice employed in 9:43-47, in which the word καλόν (good) is used to mean ‘better’.[232] Though the Koine of Mark’s day often uses the comparative to express the superlative, it only uses the positive to convey the comparative in texts of Semitic origin or influence, like the New Testament gospels, where the Greek style reflects a Semitic one.[233]

Given Gehenna’s place in Jewish history and its potential symbolic significance to Jewish listeners, I feel these sayings’ origins are most likely Hellenistic Jewish, which explains why the puns work only in Greek, but which lessens the likelihood of Jesus having spoken them, for whenever a translation of Jesus’s words is given in the gospels, it is from Aramaic to Greek and never vice versa. Nonetheless, the jarring alliteration of ‘k’s drives the message that worldly goods and capabilities lose purpose in the coming kingdom; cutting them off and creating a fresh start is crucial. The rich man story in the following chapter resoundingly re-emphasises this point, as 2.4.4 explores. It is unlikely the dual pun emerged by accident, since Mark could easily have used κρείσσων or κρείττων, instead of the alliterating Semitism καλόν, to compare two different fates. Also, I feel it more typical of Mark’s straightforward, Semitically repetitive style and economic vocabulary to use ἐν χείρ/πούς ἔχον (having one hand/foot), to match with δύο χεῖρας/πόδας ἔχοντα, rather than introducing additional words for lame and maimed.

2.1.15 Conclusion

Mark, or his Semitic sources, clearly employed sound-paronomasia as a literary device, as its frequency of appearance in Mark’s gospel, especially when more tersely Marcan modes of expression were available, largely defies coincidence. Further, Mark appears to use these sound effects as beacons in the narrative to highlight times of emotional turbulence (E), grand miracles (M), pivotal plot points (P) and vital theological statements or teachings (T). Though assigning these labels is an occasionally subjective process (e.g. was Jesus’s denouncing of the Pharisaic corruption in 7:6-13 really a moment of emotional turbulence, or was Jesus calm and collected?), I have tagged them to instances of Marcan sound-paronomasia as follows (my own discoveries in bold):

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[231] Wilson, “Mark,” 810.
[232] E.g. Judges 11:25: “עַתָּה, הֲטוֹב טוֹב אַתָּה, מִבָּלָק” (“Now are you really good (better) than Balak?”).
[233] David Black, “New Testament Semitisms.” *The Bible Translator* 39/2 (1988): 217-9.

	E	M	P	T
Barah-Arbeh-Barah/Sheray-Seruk (Covenant Heralds):				**T**
Adam-Zara-Zera-Adamah (Parable of the Sower):				**T**
Yashav-Esev-Shavar-Sahva (Feeding of the 5,000):		**M**		**T**
Lahem-Lehem-Lakem-Lekou (Feeding of the 5,000):		**M**		**T**
Shahlach-Shahret-Shelot-Shelik (Commissioning of Disciples):			**P**	**T**
Yinezoq-Nizenach-Zeqeinim-Yizerach (1st Passion Prediction):	**E**		**P**	**T**
Handling Plague (Jesus as Master of Sickness):		**M**		
Seeing and Fearing (Grand Exorcism):		**M**		
Foams and Gnashes (Difficult Exorcism):	**E**	**M**		
Abandoning and Grasping (Pharisaic Corruption/Betrayal):	**E**			**T**
Earthquakes and Famines (Trials Preceding the Eschaton):	**E**			**T**
Listened and Were Delighted (Judas's Betrayal):	**E**		**P**	
Blindfolded and Hit (Jesus Persecuted):	**E**			
Kalon-Kullon-Xolon (Sacrifice to Inherit God's Kingdom):	**E**			**T**

In this model, sound-paronomasia flags up seven highly emotive moments, five grand miracles, three pivotal plot points and nine key teachings. Hence it appears Mark utilises puns to underscore vital narrative points.

2.2 Sense-paronomasia: Ironic Names in Mark

2.2.1 Petros: Adversarial or Satanic, Steadfast or Wavering?

Osborne (1973) pronounces few of Jesus's sayings "illustrate so well the force of his personality and the vitality of his speech as the words he used to rebuke Peter… 'Get thee behind me, Satan!'"[234] Nowhere else does Mark's Jesus use such strong and unusual language to his followers; the harshest insult he hurls at his enemies is 'hypocrites' (7:6). Why then characterise Peter, one of his inner circle, as Satan, both a general term in the Hebrew Bible for an adversary,[235] a merciless angel who tests mortal morals in Job[236] and, alone in Zechariah, a divine being opposed to God?[237] In the wilderness pericope, Mark, like the other synoptics, appears to understand Satan as the supernatural tempter of either Job or Zechariah (1:13). He would surely, however, be aware of the word's more typical usage in scripture, one denoting a human adversary. Only once elsewhere in Mark does Jesus address his disciples with any kind of name; 10:24, where he calls them 'children'. We will discuss this appellation, and its punning significance to 10:25's 'eye of a needle' saying, in 2.4.4.

Scholars have posited two reasons for Jesus's harshness towards Peter. Swete (1902) first popularised the view that Peter's thought process, in that instance, was precisely that of the devil, thus Peter "for the moment acts Satan's part."[238] McNeile (1928) pioneered the idea that Jesus perceived Peter as momentarily under Satanic possession and hence called Satan out, identifying the two as one, just as the man possessed by thousands of demons identifies himself with his possessors, calling himself Legion (5:9).[239] Osborne observes such supernatural identifications echo the beliefs of the Qumran covenanters, for both in Mark "and in the 'Treatise on the Two Spirits' (I QS 3.13-4.26) it is assumed that a man's wicked imaginings - and therefore his wicked words and deeds as well - are promptings of the Enemy, Satan here and Belial, the Spirit of Falsehood, in the Qumran texts."[240]

Scholars have also associated Simon's reprimand with his nickname. Πέτρος is sometimes rendered by the Aramaic כֵּיפָא, whose Koine renditions (Κηφᾶς/Κηφᾶ) describe Peter both in John 1:42 and four times apiece in 1 Corinthians and Galatians. Yet Osborne observes that, in first-century Palestinian Aramaic, כֵּיפָא can only mean boulder (or rock) rather than stone (or pebble), the latter of which Πέτρος signifies in Greek. Further, he cites Rabbi Simai's (ca. 200) comparison between the

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[234] B. A. E. Osborne, "Peter: Stumbling-Block and Satan." *NovT* 15,3 (1973): 187.
[235] E.g. Numbers 22:22, to describe the Angel of the Lord as an adversary against Balaam; 1 Samuel 29:4, to describe David as a potential adversary of the Philistine princes; 2 Samuel 19:22, this time by David to describe the sons of Zeruiah; 1 Kings 11:23, where God himself raises up Rezon, son of Eliada, as a 'satan' against Solomon.
[236] Job 1:7-12; Job 2: 1-7.
[237] Zechariah 3:1-2.
[238] Henry Swete, *The Gospel According to Saint Mark* (3rd ed.) (London: MacMillan, 1927): 181.
[239] Alan McNeile, *The Gospel According to St. Matthew* (London: MacMillan, 1928): 245.
[240] Osborne, "Peter, Stumbling-Block and Satan," 189.

evil *yezer*[241] and a rock “protruding at a cross-road and causing men to stumble which the king says should be broken up little by little until he comes and takes it away completely.”[242] Is Peter’s name, therefore, a deliberate Aramaic pun for the adversarial rock, one that its diminutive Greek rendition partly veils? Brown (1977) surmises that, in addition to labelling him an ideological stumbling block, Simon’s ‘boulder’ sobriquet might more literally distinguish him as ‘thick’, referencing his repeated failure to understand Jesus’s teachings.[243] He adds it may also describe Simon’s unstable, ‘rocky’ nature[244] as, ironically, one of Jesus’s inner circle and leading followers.[245]

But do further meanings emerge when we reconstruct ‘Petros’ in Hebrew? In 3:16, Jesus gifts the Greek name Πέτρος to Simon, which seems odd considering Simon’s Jewish heritage, the fact that Jesus never specifically sends Simon to Greek or Hellenised towns, and the lack of any Greek name bequeathed by Jesus to any other disciple. Indeed, in 3:17, James and John are given their own nickname (‘Sons of Thunder’) in Aramaic rather than Greek, with the Aramaic subsequently translated.

How then would Hebrew render Petros? I have noticed that the Hebrew Bible’s most recurrent synonym for ‘rock’ is צוּר.[246] Noegel (1996) spotlights this word at the heart of a Janus pun in Job 18:4-5:

“You, who tear yourself to pieces in anger. Shall the earth be forsaken on your account? Or the צור be removed from its place? In due course the light of the wicked is put out.”

Though צור is normally translated “rock”, Noegel explains: “In the purely consonantal text, one might have read צֹור, ‘adversary, enemy’, as well, as a qal infinitive construct derived from צרר, ‘show hostility toward’.” Thus ‘rock’ parallels ‘the earth’ in the previous stich and ‘enemy’ anticipates ‘the wicked’ in the following.[247]

[241] For a detailed discussion of the rabbinic concept of *yezer*, a primal force or Satanic inclination that resides in human souls, see: Norman Goldman, “Mythology of Evil in Judaism.” *Journal of Religion and Health* 15,4 (1976): 230–240.
[242] Osborne, “Peter, Stumbling-Block and Satan,” 190.
[243] Like his fellow disciples, Peter fails to comprehend the parable of the sower (4:13) and the miracle of the loaves (6:52) and, despite Jesus’s teachings on servitude and humility, debates which apostle is greatest (9:33-34). He, like the others, tries to forbid children from seeing Jesus (10:13-14) despite Jesus’s prior teaching on welcoming children (9:36-37). However, Mark portrays Peter in particular as failing to understand the lesson of the rich man (10:28) and deluded in his self-image as devoted and steadfast follower (14:29-31).
[244] Peter’s lack of faith leads him, and the apostles, to panic during a storm (4:40-41). He also wavers on the road to Jerusalem when Jesus prophesies what lies ahead, and tries to dissuade Jesus from his divine calling (8:31-33). Witnessing the Transfiguration, Peter is terrified to the point of spouting irrelevancies (9:4-6). He scatters with the other disciples (14:50) and alone denies Jesus three times (14:66-72).
[245] John Pairman Brown, “The Son of Man: "This Fellow’.” *Biblica* 58,3 (1977): 361–387.
[246] Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten*, 1215 (77 occurrences).
[247] Noegel, *Janus Parallelism*, 60.

What if Jesus had named Simon צור rather than Πέτρος?[248] Simon's sobriquet would still have been 'rock' but would also, ironically, have meant 'adversary', synonymous with the Hebrew שָׂטָן (Satan). Perhaps this illuminates Jesus's harsh rebuke ("Get behind me, Satan!") as wordplay that expresses Simon's human frailty. Yet does שָׂטָן really liken Simon to a human adversary (צור), or Satan himself? Later interpreters of the synoptics prefer the latter, as the same phrase "Ὕπαγε ὀπίσω μου" appears mainly in later manuscripts of both Matthew (4:10) and Luke (4:8) in their accounts of Jesus's desert temptation,[249] replacing the terser Ὕπαγε" of earlier translations.[250] The New Jerome Biblical Commentary (1996) theologises these renditions in connection with 8:33: "By calling Peter "Satan," Jesus indicates that the false view of his messiahship is a temptation (see Job 10:2; Zech 3:1-12)."[251] Thus, Peter's temptation of Jesus to save his own life in harmony with human desires reflects the devil's desert temptation, to submit to human desires of both satiating hunger (Matthew 4:3) and greed for glory (Matthew 4:8-9). Jesus dismisses both Satanic tempters with the same utterance.

However, none of our earliest manuscripts contain this phrase in Luke. Bengel states it was introduced "from Matthew by the later Greek copies wrongly; for Luke records this temptation second in order; therefore it would have been inappropriate for Luke to introduce these words which drove the tempter to flight. We have observed [in Matt. iv. 10] that *behind me* is not even in Matthew."[252] However, "Ὕπαγε ὀπίσω μου, Σατανᾶ" does appear in Matthew 16:23, a parallel story of Jesus' rebuttal of Peter in Mark. It seems likely then that Matthew copied Mark's wording in 16:23, and that only in later manuscript traditions did scribes appropriate this wording to Jesus's rebuttal of the devil in the desert. Hence it seems Matthew was simply interpreting Mark, just as scribes later interpreted Matthew. The earliest traditions did not have Jesus rejecting Peter by repeating the words he used to reject Satan.

What then did Mark's Jesus mean? Thayer's Lexicon records ὀπίσω as the Septuagint for אַחַר in the Hebrew Bible, an adverb of place or time meaning back, behind or after.[253] Mark 8:34, the verse that follows Jesus's rebuke, reads: "If anyone wishes to come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me." Thus, in both 8:33 and 8:34, Jesus appears to be talking about getting behind him in a spatial sense in order to follow him in both a literal and figurative sense. Indeed, it recalls Jesus' first command to Peter in his calling to discipleship: "Δεῦτε ὀπίσω μου" (come after me: Mark 1:17), where Peter leaves behind his livelihood to literally get behind Jesus. Considering this, and the צור wordplay, Jesus does not, in my opinion, characterise Peter as *the* Satan but *a* satan, for

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[248] צור is five times attested as a man's name in the Hebrew Bible, referencing two different males. One is a prominent Midianite (Numbers 25:15, 31:8-9; Joshua 13:21), the other a man from Benjamin (1 Chronicles 8:30, 9:35-6).
[249] C² (5th century), D (6th century) and L (8th century) contain the earliest examples of this variation.
[250] א, B (4th century) and C, Q (5th century) present the earliest examples of this variation.
[251] Daniel J. Harrington, "The Gospel According to Mark," *NJBC,* 615.
[252] *Bengel's Gnomon of the New Testament*. Translated by Charlton T. Lewis (Philadelphia, PA: Perkenpine & Higgins, 1860): 409.
[253] *Thayer's Lexicon*, 449.

behaving as an adversary to Jesus's mission in attempting to dissuade him from the road to Jerusalem and martyrdom. The nature Jesus wishes Simon to adopt is that of the unflinching rock, yet Jesus is aware from the start of Simon's weakness, the road that will lead him to hardiness, and what Simon must learn in order to 'get behind him' - to follow him as a disciple - hence the dual pun (rock/adversary) in the name Jesus gifts. Put succinctly, Jesus is not telling Peter to go away, as in later scribal interpretations of Matthew, but to get back behind him.

Understandably, the disciples begin ill-equipped to handle such physical and mental anguish as Jesus prophesies,[254] so perhaps we should not worry that "In a Gospel marked by reversals and the overturning of expectations, Peter simultaneously follows and fails Jesus. The tension between Mark's portrayal of Peter's faithful following and his immense failure of both understanding and courage is precisely why his character is powerful."[255] In this way, all four meanings of צור (adversarial, satanic, steadfast and wavering) are justified for Simon. The word's appropriacy might be part-coincidental, yet we should consider: what other Hebrew word could characterise Simon so well, not to mention clarifying Jesus's 'Satan' rebuke by meaning both adversary and rock? Moreover, Mark offers a glimpse of the צור Jesus wishes Peter to become in the tale of the Syro-Phoenician woman of Tyre. Here, Jesus rewards a woman's faith in petitioning him, as well as the courage, humility and insight of her response to him, by expelling her daughter's demon (7:24-30). As we shall see, Gentile exemplars of qualities the disciples fail to realise are a recurring theme in Mark, and the tale's unusually remote location might even be a geographical marker (like Mount Jearim) since, coincidence or not, the name 'Tyre' also derives from צור.[256]

2.2.2 Boanerges: Zealous, Overambitious, Angry or Ineffectual?

Simon is not the only disciple to earn a nickname. The other members of Jesus's 'inner circle', James and John, are also gifted a sobriquet: "καὶ ἐπέθηκεν αὐτοῖς ὄνομα Βοανηργές, ὅ ἐστιν Υἱοὶ Βροντῆς" (3:17).[257] HELPS Word-studies describes Boanergés as "an Aramaic term transliterated from two Semitic roots: bēn ("sons") and regesh ("of thunder, tumult"; see Strong's OT #1123; 7285)… We don't know why Jesus named these brothers (James, John), 'sons of tumult', but their passion and boldness in the past no doubt aptly fit their future calling!"[258] The bestowal of the nickname Boanergés has no synoptic parallel and is unique to Mark 3:17. "It seems to have been intended as a title of honor… It is justified by the impetuosity

[254] E.g. "You will be handed over to the local councils and flogged in the synagogues. On account of me you will stand before governors and kings as witnesses to them… Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child. Children will rebel against their parents and have them put to death. Everyone will hate you because of me, but the one who stands firm to the end will be saved." (13:9-13).
[255] Robyn Whitaker, "Rebuke or Recall? Rethinking the Role of Peter in Mark's Gospel." *CBQ* 75,4 (2013): 669.
[256] Clines, *Dictionary of Classical Hebrew*, vol. 7, 157.
[257] "And he placed on them the name Boanergés; that is, 'Sons of Thunder'."
[258] "Boanérges," HELPS Word-studies, Bible Hub, accessed November 19, 2022, https://biblehub.com/greek/993.htm.

and zeal which characterized both the brothers, which prompted them to suggest the calling of fire from heaven to consume the inhospitable Samaritan village (Lk 9:54); which marked James as the victim of an early martyrdom (Ac 12:2); and which sounds in the thunders of John's Apocalypse."[259]

רֶגֶשׁ (regesh), however, appears but twice in the Hebrew Bible (Psalm 55:14; Psalm 64:2) and most translations of the former render רֶגֶשׁ as 'throng' or something similar.[260] No translation gives 'thunder', which makes little sense in 55:14's context:

בְּבֵית אֱלֹהִים, נְהַלֵּךְ בְּרָגֶשׁ ("we walked in the house of God with the throng").

Yet the NASB does translate רָגֶשׁ as 'commotion', which vaguely evokes the din of thunder. In Psalm 64:2,'; some translations, such as the ESV, render רֶגֶשׁ as 'throng'; still others, such as the NASB , render it 'tumult'; others, such as the NRSV, render it 'scheming; and the KJV renders it 'insurrection':

תַּסְתִּירֵנִי, מִסּוֹד מְרֵעִים; מֵרִגְשַׁת, פֹּעֲלֵי אָוֶן [261]

Why then does Mark translate רֶגֶשׁ as thunder? The Aramaic רגז means anger, which certainly brings thunder to mind, yet Mark does not translate the term 'sons of anger'. Taylor (1952) suggests the Arabic cognate *radjas* means 'thunder',[262] though the proposed influence of Arabic on first-century Hebrew seems speculative, especially considering the morphological differences between *radjas* and *regesh*. Rook (1981), however, observes that sometimes when Greek translators encountered a Hebrew word containing an ayin, they represented it with gamma in Greek.[263] If we replace *regesh*'s gamma with ayin we get רַעַשׁ, which the Hebrew Bible uses 29 times to express a quaking of the heavens or the earth.[264] In the former case, what else could it denote but thunder's ominous trembling? Thus, when we synthesise the possibilities outlined above, and note the similarity of the words that express them, Boanerges might have conveyed to Mark's audience notions of thunder, anger, a throng's thunderous bustle and the grand schemes or insurrections of evil-doers.

James and John harbour grand schemes of their own, for in 10:37 they request that Jesus allow them to sit at his left and right hand in his glory; positions of highest exaltation. The thunderous zeal Jesus wishes them to embody as messengers of the kingdom here expresses as burning desire for self-glorification, where they scheme to rise in power to sit second only to the exalted messiah. 9:38 further evinces John's competitive nature, where he reports a non-disciple expelling demons in Jesus's name, whom he and the disciples tried to stop. The brothers thus appear no strangers to the art of one-upmanship, later earning the ire of the disciples (10:41)

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[259] "Boanérges," HELPS Word-studies, Bible Hub, accessed November 22, 2022, https://biblehub.com/greek/993.htm.
[260] E.g. "throng" (KJV, NRSV); "crowd" (NET, ASV); "company" (KJV, WEB).
[261] "Hide me from the secret plots of the wicked, from the throng tumult/scheming/insurrection of evildoers."
[262] Vincent Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark* (London: Macmillan, 1952): 232.
[263] John Rook, "'Boanerges, Sons of Thunder' (Mark 3:17)." *JBL* 100,1 (1981): 94.
[264] E.g. Joel 2:10, Haggai 2:6 (of the heavens); Jeremiah 8:16, Ezekiel 27:28 (of the earth).

and correction from Jesus himself (9:39-41; 10:42-45). It appears their thunder rolls both ways; both as fiery zeal for spreading news of the kingdom, casting out demons and healing the sick (6:7-13) and competitive scheming (ergo spiritual insurrection?) to secure a glorious future (10:37). Wilson concludes “Mark’s translation ‘Sons of Thunder’ indeed fits 9:38, where John reports himself and the disciples obstructing a non-member from casting out demons in Jesus’ name, and also Luke 9:54, where James and John ask Jesus whether they should invoke fire from heaven to immolate a Samaritan village that has rejected Jesus.”[265] The latter, in particular, conveys the Aramaic sense of רגז (anger). So should it be Sons of Zeal, Overambition, Insurrection or Anger?

A problem with all these interpretations is that, phonetically, Boanerges only vaguely approximates to *beni regesh/regez*. Further, in every comparable instance, Mark renders Semitic words and phrases in Greek with distinctly more precision.[266] Hence might Mark’s apparent sloppiness here be deliberate, in order to suggest multiple meanings for the nickname? I have noticed that, in Koine, βοή renders ‘cry’ and άνεργες ‘unemployed’ or ‘ineffectual’, and thus feel the name expresses better sense in Greek than Hebrew or Aramaic. If we simply elide the ή in joining the words, Βοανεργές emerges. Thus, does Jesus characterise James and John as ‘ineffectual cries’? Certainly, their desire in Luke to raze a Samaritan village comes to nothing, as does their exhortation in Mark to be seated alongside Jesus in his glory, as do John’s attempts to stop non-disciples casting out demons in Jesus’s name. The zeal that drives their voices is oft misguided, hence their correction by Jesus, hence its ineffectual nature. Yet, at other times, they conduct Jesus’s work, casting out demons and healing the sick. What should we make of this?

Only Peter, James and John are clearly bequeathed nicknames in Mark (3:16-17), the three presented as chief among Jesus’s disciples. It is they alone whom Jesus leads up the mountain, to witness the Transfiguration and hear the proclamation of Jesus’s authority from the lips of God (9:2-13). It is they alone (with the exception of Jesus’s betrayer) whose individual words and actions Mark considers important enough to record. Further, Jesus bestows on each a nickname that confers both positive and negative connotations. Peter’s decisive boldness as a rock (1:16-18) may express as adversarial stubbornness (8:31-33) or overconfidence (14:29-31), whilst beneath a few layers a distressed waverer lurks (9:5-6; 10:28; 14:66-72). Likewise, the zeal of James and John (1:19-20) may express as competitive self-interest and an ineffectual lust for glory (9:38; 10:37). The literary attraction of these opposing connotations lies in the positive qualities of the leading disciples, which commend them as role models, in conflict with their human frailties, which render them relatable to the reader.

[265] Wilson, “Mark,” 802.
[266] i.e. 5:41: “Ταλιθὰ κούμ” (talitha koum), 7:11: “Κορβᾶν” (Korban), 7:34: “Ἐφφαθά” (Epphathah), 15:22: τὸν Γολγοθᾶν τόπον (Golgotha), 15:34: “Ἐλωῒ Ἐλωῒ λαμὰ σαβαχθανεί;” (Eloi, eloi, lama sabachthani?). Though Mark makes slight errors (7:34 should read Ethphathah and 15:34’s lama should be lema), he is always more phonetically precise than in 3:17.

2.2.3 Bartimaios: Son of Poverty or Honour?

Of all names in Mark, Bartimaios protrudes in the way Mark presents him: ὁ υἱὸς Τιμαίου Βαρτιμαῖος (the son of Timaios, Bartimaios). Since 'bar' in Aramaic means 'son (of)', the preceding description is redundant. One could argue that Mark includes it for the sake of his non-Jewish listeners, but then why not phrase it the way Mark phrases every other lexeme he imports from Aramaic?[267] Spong (2007) suggests both Matthew (20:29-34) and Luke (18:35-43) sense awkwardness in Mark's phrasing, for both omit the name and its description in their retellings, so "one wonders what secret message is being sent to the first readers via these words."[268] On this point, Ossandón notes that Bartimaios's name is irrelevant to the plot and that nothing would have changed had the narrator omitted it.[269] So why include it, and why twice?

Regarding the former query, Mark elsewhere records names that have no ostensible bearing on the narrative.[270] The oddity lies in Mark's strange, repetitious phrasing and the fact that the other synoptics avoid the name altogether. If Matthew and Luke had simply dropped the tautologous "son of Timaeus" and left "Bartimaios," this would seem less odd. Bauckham observes Bartimaios is a rare enough name to be entirely sufficient for identifying the person.[271] Rhoads (1999) further labels the name and its description typically Marcan, due to its dual construction, since the "two-step progression is one of the most pervasive patterns of repetition in Mark's Gospel. It occurs in phrases, clauses, pairs of sentences, and the structure of episodes."[272] Hence, the redactive pattern alone suggests the name is probably invention. In agreement, Price (2006) sees significance in Mark's description of Bartimaios as a beggar, since "The Aramaic form of the name is Bar-teymah, 'son of poverty', which means he is a 'narrative man' - his name is a fictional device."[273] Johnson (1978) disagrees, explaining that this Aramaic form might originate from the earliest stratum of the tradition and that the explanatory phrase could also be pre-Marcan, considering the absence of Mark's typical explicative 'ὅ ἐστιν'. This would indicate the pericope passed from Aramaic listeners to Koine-speaking Christians to Mark, and that the name was already tradition when Greek-speakers received it. Johnson concludes that Mark retains the name, just as elsewhere he retains names, because he aims to preserve tradition wherever possible.[274] Robbins (1973) conversely concludes that the story postdates Mark, since 10:46c, "which introduces 'the son of Timaeus, Bartimaeus, a blind beggar… sitting by the roadside', has nothing in it which is characteristically Marcan. With this the story proper begins. But the story as it stands in Mark has a conspicuously secondary character." He

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[267] Elsewhere, Mark cites the Aramaic lexeme before introducing a Greek translation with the words 'ὅ ἐστιν' (that is) or 'ὅ ἐστιν μεθερμηνευόμενον' (that is translated). E.g. "Κορβᾶν, ὅ ἐστιν, Δῶρον" (7:11); "Γολγοθᾶν τόπον, ὅ ἐστιν μεθερμηνευόμενον Κρανίου Τόπος" (15:22). See also: 3:17, 7:34, 12:42, 15:16 and 15:42.
[268] John Spong, *Jesus for the Nonreligious* (Sydney: Harper Collins, 2007): 83.
[269] Juan Ossandón, "Bartimaeus' Faith: Plot and Point of View in Mark 10,46-52." *Biblica* 93,3 (2012): 389.
[270] E.g. Jairus (5:22) and Simon the Cyrene (15:21).
[271] Richard Bauckham, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2008): 79.
[272] Rhoads, *Mark as Story*, 49.
[273] Robert Price, *The Pre-Nicene New Testament* (Salt Lake City, UT: Signature Books, 2006): 96.
[274] Earl Johnson, "Mark 10:46-52: Blind Bartimaeus." *CBQ* 40,2 (1978): 193.

notes the inclusion of any name, in addition to such a vivid description of the blind man's response (v.50), are highly unusual for a paradigm, but might be later emendations to a paradigm.[275] Further, Robbins observes other incongruities that suggest an original was revised. First, there is noticeable tension between the address 'Rabbi' in 10:51 and 'Son of David' in 10:47-48, both applied by Bartimaios to Jesus. Likewise, the healing centres only on the blind man and Jesus, without any choral ending from the bystanders, which stands in tension with the prominent role the throng plays at the tale's beginning.[276] I would add that it generally stands in tension with other Marcan stories that involve a healing or miracle and a crowd. Whenever a crowd is mentioned elsewhere, except in the feeding miracles, it always responds to the incredible events they witness or hear about.[277] Mark could easily have emended this whilst preserving the elements of any tradition he had received, hence this pericope's compositional history is contested.

Agreeing with Rhoads and Price, I think it likely that 'Bartimaios' and its description originates from Mark, and for additional reasons, namely the paronomasia within 'Bartimaios', the similarity between it and Mark's other name-puns, and the position of this tale within the wider narrative context. As with Boanerges, which means 'ineffectual cry' in Koine but approximates to 'sons of thunder' in Hebrew, 'timaios' presents opposing meanings when rendered in Greek and Aramaic. The Greek's 'Son of Honour', one worthy of deference, respect or veneration, becomes 'Son of Poverty' (see above), which mirrors Bartimaios's social status as a beggar. As with Boanerges, Mark renders one meaning to his audience while the second is merely suggested, translating Bartimaios as 'Son of Timaios' (honour) without explaining the close Aramaic equivalent 'Bar-teymah' (Son of Poverty). More, just as James and John display characteristics of both zeal and powerlessness, justifying the pun in their sobriquet, Bartimaios is treated with both honour and contempt. When he cries for Jesus's help, the crowd exhorts him to shut up, treating him as a beggar that lies beneath them. Jesus, however, delays his own journey, calls Bartimaios to him and restores his sight, before Bartimaios joins the throng following Jesus to Jerusalem. Jesus, unlike the crowd, treats Bartimaios with honour, showing respect for his wishes and needs. This reversal of social convention mirrors the conclusion of the previous pericope, where Jesus teaches that the greatest among his disciples must not lord their authority over others but serve all (10:42-45). This, in turn, reflects the preceding pericope's conclusion, where Jesus states many of the first shall be last and the last first (10:31). Accordingly, Bartimaios, once a blind beggar and thus literally a Son of Poverty, becomes a follower of Jesus after Jesus honours him by serving him. The opposing meanings in Bartimaios's name, a name Mark takes unusual trouble to highlight, foregrounds the opposition between social convention and Jesus's teaching, just as the teachings of the two preceding tales (The Request of James and John; The Rich Man) strive to emphasise. Furthermore, such opposing meanings similarly emerge in Petros, Boanerges, and, as we shall see, in Barabbas.

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[275] Vernon K. Robbins, "The Healing of Blind Bartimaeus (10:46-52) in the Marcan Theology." *JBL* 92,2 (1973): 230.
[276] Robbins, "Healing of Blind Bartimaeus," 231.
[277] E.g. 1:21-27, 5:11-17, 5:39-43, 7:31-37.

2.2.4 Barabbas: Son of the Father or the Sanhedrin Leader?

Maclean (2007) discerns puzzling aspects within the "deceptively simple" story of Barabbas, most significantly the custom of the governor releasing a prisoner during Pesach, a tradition for which no evidence emerges in Judea's history.[278] Rigg (1945) remarks that Luke's omission of this custom shows Luke considered the convention unbelievable.[279] Further, one cannot smoothly reconcile the graciousness of this custom and the crowd's ability to influence Pilate with the uncompromising brute depicted in Jewish literature.[280] Accordingly, Aus (1998) insists that Pilate "never would have allowed himself to be subject to the whims of a crowd, especially which bordered on a riot."[281] And, even if Barabbas were so insignificant that Pilate might have released him on a whim, why would this brutal dictator have created the munificent custom of the Passover pardon, for which we have no extra-gospel evidence? Accordingly, many scholars conclude that the gospel versions of Barabbas's tale are literary creations.[282]

What point, then, does this invention make, and what role does Barabbas's name play? Barabbas is named no fewer than three times in 15:6-15, which itself is unusual in Mark. Scholars typically translate it 'Son of the Father' (from Aramaic), since Abba often appears as a personal name in the Gemara section of the Talmud (200-400 CE) and has likewise been found in a first-century CE burial at Giv'at ha-Mivtar.[283] Rigg provides additional evidence for the name's commonality, noting that its popularity often necessitated another distinguishing name be used with it.[284] He then highlights the name's ironic nature, for 'Son of the Father' would far more suitably describe Jesus than a murderous insurrectionist (cf. Mark 15:7), contending "a noteworthy characteristic of Judaic piety in general at this time is the increasing use of Father when addressing God… In the Scriptures themselves God is the father of Israel and the Israelites, considered collectively and individually. It is, in no small sense, basic to the rabbinic thought of the time."[285] He further cites evidence (Kiddushin 36a) that all pious Jews were considered sons of the father, which relation even sin could not annul, concluding "Now let us ask: to whom could this name Barabbas have been more appropriately applied than Jesus…" who "often stressed a deeply personal relation he felt he had with the Father. No one can read the Gospels without being impressed with their remembrances of his sonship to the

[278] Jennifer Maclean, "Barabbas, the Scapegoat Ritual, and the Development of the Passion Narrative." *HTR* 100,3 (2007): 309. According to Mark and Matthew, this was Roman custom (Mark 15:6; Matthew 27:15); according to John, a Jewish custom (John 18:39).
[279] Horace Rigg, "Barabbas." *JBL* 64,4 (1945): 426.
[280] For example, in Josephus (*The Jewish War* (2.9.4); *Antiquities* (18.3.2)), Pilate offends the Jews by using temple treasury funds to finance an aqueduct to Jerusalem. When an angry mob protests, Pilate has his troops beat them with clubs. Many died from the blows, or from being trampled by horses. Philo similarly describes Pilate's disposition as "inflexible, stubborn, and cruel," stating that his administration espoused "greed, violence, robbery, assault, abusive behaviour, frequent executions without trial, and endless savage ferocity" (*Embassy to Gaius*, 301-2).
[281] Roger Aus, *Caught in the Act, Walking on the Sea and the Release of Barabbas Revisited* (Atlanta, GA: American Scholars Press, 1998): 139.
[282] MacLean, "Barabbas, The Scapegoat Ritual," 310.
[283] Raymond Brown, *The Death of the Messiah Vol. 1* (New York: Doubleday, 1994): 799-800.
[284] Rigg, "Barabbas," 434.
[285] Rigg, "Barabbas," 437.

Father. Some such words were often on his lips."[286] Indeed, Mark's gospel commences with God declaring Jesus his son during baptism (1:11) and Jesus himself addresses God as "Abba, Father" in Gethsemane (14:36), with even the Aramaic 'Abba' rendered in Greek letters. Mark's Jesus, with more precedent than any pious Jew, was truly Barabbas, a Son of the Father. The irony accentuates the injustice of Barabbas's release in contrast to Jesus's betrayal, torture and execution, especially as Pilate calls Jesus 'King of the Jews' (15:9), implying a crime of insurrection, whereas Mark presents Barabbas as an actual insurrectionist (15:7). The irony also emphasises the role-reversing rule of discipleship that Jesus has instituted; the ruler must become the servant (9:35; 10:42-44), the first must become last, and the last first (10:31). Hence Barabbas, the insurrectionist son of the father, is freed, and Jesus, the true Son of the Father who preaches God's word, is condemned for insurrection. The implication in light of Jesus's earlier teaching (8:34-38) is that this injustice will be reversed following the advent of God's kingdom.

I have noticed, moreover, another possible reconstruction of 'Barabbas' in Aramaic; Bar-Rabban, that is, Son of the Sanhedrin Leader. The title Rabban was first used of Gamaliel the Elder, who was active during the early-mid first century CE,[287] and indicated the leader (Nasil; Prince) of the Sanhedrin.[288] In contrast, the related term 'rabbi' seems merely an honorary address in Jesus's day, since Jesus "did not conform to the traditional image of post-70 Jewish rabbis… pre-70 sages do not bear the title 'Rabbi' in the Mishnah…" and it was "almost exclusively applied to ordained teachers of the Law" only after 70 CE. Rabban, however, was the exclusive title for the Sanhedrin leader himself.[289] So how did Mark characterise the Sanhedrin?

Simmonds (2012) contends both Mark and Matthew repeatedly use idealised figures to stress the total illegitimacy of Jesus's trial-by-Sanhedrin. Though Simmonds seems wrong in stating the Sanhedrin never met at night,[290] it was certainly illegal for it to judge and issue rulings on matters of capital law after dark, and also on the eve of a festival (in this case Pesach),[291] which is precisely when they judge and condemn Mark's Jesus.[292] Hence, "recording that it met at night is simply an idealized statement that the trial is illegal. The ear-cutting episode at Jesus's arrest

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[286] Rigg, "Barabbas," 437-8.

[287] Precise dates for Gamaliel's time in office are unknown. However, Acts 5:34-39 relays how Gamaliel spoke on behalf of the apostles after they were seized and brought before the Sanhedrin. Paul, in Acts 22:3, also claims to have been a student of Gamaliel. Further, Shabbat 15a dates Gamaliel's tenure as Sanhedrin leader (Nasi) to before the temple's destruction: "Hillel, and his son Shimon, and his grandson Gamliel, and his great-grandson Shimon filled their position of Nasi before the House, while the Temple was standing…"

[288] James Hastings, *Dictionary of the Bible,.* 2nd ed. (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1963): 829-30.

[289] Catherine Hezser, *The Social Structure of the Rabbinic Movement in Roman Palestine* (Mohr Siebeck: Tübingen, 1997): 59.

[290] "In cases of monetary law, the court judges during the daytime, and may conclude the deliberations and issue the ruling even at night" (Sanhedrin 32a).

[291] "In cases of capital law, the court judges during the daytime, and concludes the deliberations and issues the ruling only in the daytime… the court does not judge cases of capital law on certain days, neither on the eve of Shabbat nor the eve of a Festival" (Sanhedrin 32a).

[292] The sacrifice of the Passover lamb traditionally occurred at twilight (cf. Exodus 12:5-6), on the beginning of the first day of Unleavened Bread (cf. Mark 14:12). Jesus had already eaten the Passover meal, walked to Gethsemane and prayed there before he was arrested by the Sanhedrin, by which time the disciples were so sleepy that they had already dozed off three times (14:37-41).

is another example of the same device, as are both condemning the innocent and freeing the guilty…"[293] Moreover, the Sanhedrin break the ninth commandment (Exodus 20:16) in giving false testimony and the chief priests, who would surely have been members of this ruling council,[294] are responsible for stirring the crowds against Jesus and petitioning Pilate to release Barabbas (15:11). They present as agents of corruption - spiritual insurrectionists who betray their Father in heaven.

Thus, the name Barabbas might have suggested to Mark's Jewish listeners both Bar-abba and Bar-rabban, both a Son of God and a Son of God's enemies who oppose God's word, namely the Sanhedrin. The opposition between these ironies further stresses the unjust nature of Jesus's condemnation, highlighting the dichotomy between the crowd's treatment of Barabbas, as a forgiven fellow Jew and son of the Father, and the reality of the Sanhedrin adopting Barabbas as a pawn in their ploy to dispose of God's true Son.

2.2.5 Iscariot and Magdala: Places or Personalities?

Scholars have long debated the meaning of Iscariot (3:19; 14:10) and Magdala (15:40, 47; 16:1). Taylor (2010) summarises the leading scholarly explanations for Iscariot (Man from Quarioth, Robber or Assassin, Liar or Deceiver, Redhead or Ruddy One, Deliverer) and points out the deficiencies in each.[295] She subsequently reintroduces another rationalisation for Judas's epithet: 'chokiness'/'constriction' (אִסְכַּרְיוּתָא). This explanation is attested as early as Origen (185-254 CE: *exsuffocatus*). Its derivative 'choking' has further been spotted by Lightfoot in Hebrew (אַסְכָּרָא) and numerous times in Mishnaic Hebrew/Aramaic by Jastrow (אִסְכַּרְיָא).[296] Taylor proceeds to justify this translation in the face of manuscript variations.[297] The sobriquet neatly reflects reports on the manner of Judas's death, particularly Matthew 27:5's account of suicide-by-hanging, though Mark himself neglects to mention this event.

Yet the placename explanation also merits regard. This relies, in Hebrew, on אִישׁ merging with קְרִיּוֹת to render Man of Qarioth. As Torrey (1943) relays: "The city-name Qᵉriyyōth, which is thought to be present in 'Iscariot,' is found in Joshua 15: 25… and Jeremiah 48: 24, 41, always in the same form."[298] Though both Torrey and Taylor question this explanation, principally due to its jarringly clumsy gospel translation (why not Καριώτης/ὁ ἀπό Καριώτ?),[299] Mark's predilection for name-puns, even perhaps leading to compromise in translation (n.b. Boanerges), leads me to speculate on deliberate duality. Indeed, Mark appears to work another placename pun with Mary Magdala, likewise to imply something about her character or destiny.

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[293] Andrew Simmonds, "Mark's and Matthew's 'Sub Rosa' Message in the Scene of Pilate and the Crowd." *JBL* 131,4 (2012): 736.
[294] Sanhedrin 32a states that only priests, Levites and Jews of such pure lineage that their daughters were permitted to marry priests could be members of the Sanhedrin..
[295] Joan E.Taylor, "The Name 'Iskarioth' (Iscariot)." *JBL* 129.2 (2010): 368-78.
[296] Taylor, "The Name 'Iskarioth' (Iscariot)," 379.
[297] Taylor, "The Name 'Iskarioth' (Iscariot)," 379-81.
[298] Torrey, "The Name 'Iscariot'," 52.
[299] Taylor, "The Name 'Iskarioth' (Iscariot)," 373.

Moreover, I have noticed that, if we allow Iscariot the same ambiguity, we now have wordplays on Petros, Boanerges, Iscariot and Magdala that neatly combine to illustrate the four types in Jesus's most detailed Marcan teaching: The Parable of the Sower.

Taylor (2014) highlights the likelihood of a double-entendre on Mary's nickname, starting with the oddity of its character: "Mary is not defined in the normal way for a woman as someone in relation to her father, husband or son (e.g. Joanna the wife of Chuza, in Luke 8.2), but rather she is given a designation that defines her as an independent woman with no connection to a man. She follows Jesus from Galilee to Jerusalem and witnesses both his crucifixion and the empty tomb."[300] She proceeds to spotlight the oddity of the nickname's vagueness: "Magdala is unclear as a place designation, since *magdal* in Aramaic just means 'tower' (Hebrew *migdal*). It invariably appears with another name, to indicate the 'Tower of Something', like the Tower of London. A place called 'the Tower', Magdala, is then a shortened form of a fuller name, and to have it on its own is not very specific."[301] In other words, it would have been inefficient as a unique identifier, so perhaps it had a secondary purpose. Taylor subsequently cites contemporaneous texts where Magdala might be construed as a name-pun; one that contrasts scholars known as *Magd^{e}laya* with towers; another that has 'tower', along with 'woman', as metaphors for the Church (b. Baba Metzia 25a and The Shepherd of Hermas: Similitude 9:12-13 respectively).[302] She concludes "Perhaps, as Simon Peter was a Rock, she [Mary] was in some way the woman of the 'Tower'."[303] Indeed, where Jesus's male disciples so often fail, Mary presents as a strong, obedient servant of the word, as 2.3.5 elucidates.

Finally, the Parable of the Sower (4:3-20) is the only parable that Jesus takes pains to explain, which suggests Mark wished to imprint its message on his audience. Accordingly, I have noticed that the parable figuratively describes four types of disciple, or potential disciple, that correspond to the four names Mark gives - with both literal and figurative meanings - to Jesus's disciples. Petros as 'adversary' or 'Satan' mirrors the first type, in whom *Satan* immediately removes the word the listeners hear (4:15). When Jesus describes the path of discipleship, Peter takes him aside and attempts to rebuke him, at which Jesus names him Satan and orders him back (8:31-33). Petros as rock, and the Sons of Thunder, reflect the second type, the seed that falls on *rocky* ground (4:16-17). These immediately receive the word with gladness (cf. 1:16-20), perhaps best expressed in the zeal of James and John (9:38; 10:35-39), yet when tribulation arises for the word's sake, they immediately stumble (cf. 14:27, 50, 66-72). Iscariot as 'chokiness' mirrors the third

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[300] Joan E.Taylor, "Missing Magdala and the Name of Mary Magdalene." *PEQ* 146,3 (2014): 206.
[301] Taylor, "Missing Magdala," 207-8. Numerous locales whose names began with Migdal existed around Mark's time, such as "a place one mile from Tiberias called Migdal Nuniya (b.Pes. 46b), the 'Tower of Fish'… on the Sea of Galilee close to Tiberias... Being very familiar to the rabbis of Tiberias, Migdal Nuniya would provide the most likely provenance for the rabbis designated… as *Magd^{e}laya*, since Migdal Nuniya could even be shortened to 'the Tower', Magdala, in some texts (e.g. j.Sheb. 9.1 [38d]). This is because it was 'the Tower' closest to hand for the rabbis of Tiberias… [However] 'The Tower' to people of the western Sea of Galilee was not 'the Tower'… of people living close to Migdal Gad or Migdal Tsebaya" ("Missing Magdala," 210).
[302] Taylor, "Missing Magdala," 208.
[303] Taylor, "Missing Magdala," 222.

type, in whom desire for wealth enters and *chokes* the word (4:18-19), rendering it fruitless. Indeed, it is ostensibly for money that Judas betrays Jesus (14:10-11). Finally, Magdala as 'tower' reflects the fourth type, who hear and accept the word, and bear fruit, sometimes up to a hundredfold (4:20). The tower thus illustrates the exponential spreading of the word from those who take it to heart, as subsequently illustrated by the Parable of the Mustard Seed (4:30-32), which grows towering enough to shelter the birds beneath its shade.

From a reader-response perspective, the especial pain Mark takes to imprint the parable on the reader coheres with the view that Mark has encoded profundities into the text for them to interpret. As Heil (1992) notes, Mark frames the parable with intense appeals for comprehension. He introduces it with the command to listen and concludes with a challenge and invitation: "Whoever has ears to hear, let him hear." These ardent appeals underline the presence of "a deeper meaning and reference to this metaphorical story that requires attentive 'hearing'… which challenge not only the crowd within the narrative but also the implied audience… to 'hear' and thus penetrate the meaning of the parable."[304]

2.2.6 Conclusion

Notably, as we have seen, four Marcan name puns (Petros, Boanerges, Bartimaios and Barabbas) express opposing connotations to create specific literary effects. This concept of a word or name containing two meanings echoes both Samson's riddle, where the Mount of Honeycombs contains the word 'lion', and Janus parallelisms throughout the Hebrew Bible. Likewise, the concept of a name reflecting a person's character evokes such figures as Noah and Bathsheba, the concept of an ironic name, that reflects the opposite, evokes the likes of Delilah and Adonijah, and the concept of a multivalent name emerges in the Jacob saga. In short, the name puns we perceive diversely mirror types that populate Hebrew scripture. Finally, the resonance between the four types in the sower parable and the four names given to Jesus's followers (Petros, Boeanerges, Iscariot and Magdala), though at worst uncanny coincidence, remains at best a literary, and typically Marcan, illumination of their characters and motivations.

[304] John P. Heil, "Reader-Response and the Narrative Context of the Parables about Growing Seed in Mark 4:1-34." *CBQ* 54,2 (1992): 274.

2.3 Other Sense-Paronomasia in Mark

We shall progress to explore single-word puns, in words that are neither names nor titles.

2.3.1 Cahvod and Cahved: Sharing Glory or a Burden?

We have already discussed the opposing meanings of James and John's sobriquet 'Boanerges' (Sons of Thunder/Ineffectual Cries), in addition to the Hebrew 'regesh' being rendered both 'thunder' and 'insurrection'/'scheming'. In keeping with the initial contrast, a similar irony emerges when we translate Jesus's δόξα (glory) that James and John ask to share (Mark 10:37) into Hebrew. By far the most common word for glory in the Hebrew Bible is כָּבוֹד, which appears 200 times.[305] However, the Hebrew Bible also uses its adjectival form כָּבֵד to mean burdensome, grievious, obstinate, weary, deep or dense.[306] The medieval commentator Rashi mentions this negative connotation in his commentary on Genesis 13:2[307] and a similar relationship presents between the two terms in Aramaic, albeit in later texts.[308]

Is Mark, therefore, hinting that Jesus's coming glory is also his burden or grief? James and John scheme to be raised to positions on Jesus's left and right, places subsequently occupied by λῃσταί (thieves/insurrectionists) who are raised on crosses to die alongside him (15:27). Indeed, that Jesus is ultimately crucified between two insurrectionists raises another interesting parallel with the nickname he gifts James and John (Sons of Thunder/Insurrection). Jesus further hints that sharing in his glory will involve death in his reply to the brothers: "You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" (10:38). This same 'cup' Jesus asks to be taken from him, as he prays in Gethsemane in a state of extreme distress (14:36). In the Hebrew Bible, as well as a vessel for wine with obvious connotations of celebration, the cup often symbolises a vessel of wrath that pours God's judgement upon the nations, where the nations forced to drink from it are oft portrayed as lost in drunkenness. Isaiah 51:17 presents Jerusalem as a woman who drained God's cup to its dregs before God, pitying the city, intervenes. "See, I have taken out of your hand the cup that made you stagger… the goblet of my wrath." (v. 22). This cup is then given to Jerusalem's tormentors, indicating their future punishment. In a vision of Jeremiah (25:15), God forces all nations to drink from his cup and stagger to

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[305] Gary Pratico and Miles Van Pelt, *Basics of Biblical Hebrew*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2007): 91.

[306] Clines, *Dictionary of Classical Hebrew*, vol. 4 (Sheffield: Academic Press, 1998): 352. See also: Wigram, *Englishman's Hebrew and Chaldee*, 582-3. I have also noticed a hitherto undiscovered Janus Parallelism that plays on the twin meanings of the consonantal root in Genesis 50:8-10. Verse 8 lists the masses of people that accompany Joseph to bury his father, verse 9 states this company was very כבד (great/sorrowful) and verse 10 describes their wails of grief and seven-day period of mourning. Thus, כבד as 'great' parallels the company's magnitude in verse 8, and as 'sorrowful' their grieving in verse 10. This parallelism's existence suggests scripture-smart Jews might well have been familiar with wordplays on כבד, even in Mark's day.

[307] Rosenbaum, "Pentateuch with Rashi's Commentary," Sefaria, accessed January 3, 2023, https://www.sefaria.org/Rashi_on_Genesis.13.2.

[308] "kbd vb. to be heavy," CAL, accessed March 25, 2023, https://cal.huc.edu/index.html.

destruction. None can refuse; all humanity is judged and the wicked slain by the sword. Ezekiel 23 depicts Samaria and Jerusalem, representing the people of God, as two prostitute sisters, and Jerusalem drinks from the “cup of ruin and desolation, the cup of your sister Samaria" (23:33). For Ezekiel, the cup symbolises the destruction of both kingdoms. Zechariah uses the cup to depict the fate of Jerusalem’s enemies, adding a twist to the metaphor by making Jerusalem the cup (12:2).

Weaving together these threads of duality, of כָּבוֹד as glory and burden, the foreshadowing of Jesus’s and the λῃσταί’s crucifixion (10:37), and ‘cup’ as a metaphor for God’s anger rather than a drinking vessel, we perceive that James and John, in order to inherit glory, must first face God’s wrath and be martyred. Unsurprisingly, as Jesus states, the brothers fail to understand their ambition’s grievious consequences. Interestingly, the only faithful disciple whose death the New Testament documents is James, whom Herod’s soldiers slay by the sword in Acts 12:2. Further, a very early tradition “ascribed to Papias says John, like James (Ac.12:2), was martyred early in the history of the Church…”.[309] Thus it seems dark irony shrouds the upshot of James and John’s request: they have unwittingly sealed their fates. To those in Mark’s audience perceiving this, Jesus’s confirmation of the brothers’ destiny (10:39-40) would be tarnished with a macabre tang. Nonetheless, Mark considers this glory-burden dichotomy essential to discipleship, even using the verses that sandwich this pericope (10:31, 43-44) to illuminate the point.

2.3.2 Nahtah and Nahtar: With Anger or Outstretched Arms?

3:5a describes a moment that might, for some, render Jesus uncomfortably human, for Mark relates Jesus’s anger as he surveys the synagogue, noting the hardness of people’s hearts. His anger is also an oddity. Mark rarely if ever records Jesus feeling aggression,[310] focusing instead on his capacity for love and grief,[311] and occasionally frustration.[312] Further, why would Jesus be enraged at something so trivial, where his fellow worshippers simply express silent opposition to Jesus’s Sabbath healings due to their rigid interpretation of Mosaic Law, even if their attitudes were stubborn? Would not frustration or sorrow be a more likely, and proportionate, initial response? Jesus is simultaneously described as feeling deeply

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[309] Wilson, “Mark,” 811. Conversely, numerous later traditions, cited by such church fathers as Irenaeus and Polycrates, maintain that John the son of Zebedee lived to old age. See: John H. Bernard, “The Traditions as to the Death of John the Son of Zebedee.” *The Irish Church Quarterly* 1 (1908): 51–66 for a detailed presentation of the counterarguments. The earlier Papias tradition, however, is reflected in the writings of Clement of Alexandria and others, into the fifth century. See: Henry L. Jackson, “The Death of John, Son of Zebedee..” *The Journal of Theological Studies* 18, no. 69 (1916): 30–32.

[310] 1:41 presents the only other time Mark’s Jesus is described as angry, and only in a small clutch of manuscripts, the oldest being Codex Bezae (circa 6th century CE). The lion’s share of manuscripts, including fourth century codices Sinaiticus and Vaticanus, and fifth century Alexandrinus, state instead that Jesus feels moved by pity (*The Greek New Testament*. Edited by Kurt Aland et al., 5th ed. (New York: United Bible Societies, 2014): 123). Conversely, the criterion of embarrassment suggests ‘anger’ is more likely the original reading.

[311] E.g. 9:36-37; 10:13-16, 21 (love); 1:41, 14:34-38, 15:34 (grief).

[312] E.g. 7:9; 8:12; 8:17-21; 9:19; 14:37.

grieved in 3:5a, yet surely this renders his response even less explicable. How often does one feel anger and deep sorrow in unison? And would you feel it at the silent stubbornness of people you had just begun to teach? Elsewhere, Jesus emotes more proportionally in response to opposition, such as by sighing in his spirit (8:12) and exclaiming in exasperation (9:19). Why then 3:5a's hyperbole?

A similar word to ὀργή (anger) - ὀργυιά (a fathom/stretch of the arms) - might solve the problem. If ὀργυιά were the original reading, we would perceive Jesus staring round the crowd with outstretched arms, pained by their stubborn disapproval of his Sabbath healing of a cripple. Here, the yearning body language matches Jesus's frustrated desire for his listeners to understand. This argument's obvious setback is that no extant reading has 'ὀργυιά' instead of 'ὀργή'. However, support may be found when reconstructing the verse from Hebrew. Curiously, a similar relationship to ὀργή/ὀργυιά occurs in the Hebrew verbs נָטָה (to spread/stretch)[313] and נָטַר (to keep/*fig.* to bear a grudge or remain angry).[314] The Biblical Aramaic נְטַר (to keep)[315] closely corresponds to the Hebrew, though I find no synonym that renders 'spread' or 'stretch'. It is conceivable, however, that the Hebrew synophones became synonymous in certain contexts. After all, what is remaining if not a spreading of time, or the bearing of a grudge if not a stretching out of one? Further, as far as I know, the Greek ὀργή carries no such connotation of grudge-bearing or the stretching out of anger. This, along with the non-existence of alternate readings for 3:5a, suggests that, if a confusion of meanings occurred, it occurred early in Hebrew rather than later in Greek. נָטָה/נְטַר could have been confused with נָטַר, in oral or written transmission, for no pointed text exists from Jesus's era, and only the dab of a stylus would differentiate ר from ה. However, a dual meaning might also have been intended. For, just as Jesus outstretches his hands, so might he extend his anger towards the stubbornness in his listeners' hearts. Mark might even have made the emotion deliberately ambiguous, leaving the audience to decide whether Jesus was imploring his audience to listen to reason, or whether he was confrontational in a manner that explains the Pharisees' reactive maleficence (3:6), or both. Indeed, Hebrew offers several words that convey the idea of stretching out[316] so, if Mark's source selected נָטָה/נְטַר, he may well have done so to echo נָטַר and gift his audience a choice of interpretation, one that is lost in the more problematic Greek translation.

2.3.3 Chamets (Zume): Leaven, Influence, Infection or Bitterness?

8:15b literally translates: "Beware the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod." Clearly Jesus is speaking metaphorically, but the metaphor to a contemporary reader seems unclear. The Pharisees have pressured Jesus to display a sign of his power, a miracle, and Jesus refuses, sighing at the Pharisees' lack of faith (8:11-12). The Pharisees and Herodians had previously plotted to kill

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[313] Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten*, 921-3.
[314] Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten*, 924.
[315] Wigram, *Englishman's Hebrew and Chaldee*, 813.
[316] E.g. הָדָה (Isaiah 11:8), פָּרַשׂ (Exodus 9:29), פָּשָׂה (Leviticus 13:5), שָׁטַח (Psalm 88:9), טָפַח (Isaiah 48:13).

Jesus after he dared to heal a man on the Sabbath (3:1-6) and Jesus had, more recently, condemned the Pharisees' selfishness, petty-mindedness, bureaucracy and hypocrisy (7:6-13). Herod, emblematic of the Herodians, executes John the Baptist so as not to lose face among his contemporaries (6: 22-27) and, later in the narrative, both Pharisees and Herodians attempt to trick Jesus into making either a seditious or blasphemous comment (12:13-17), baiting him to play God and Caesar against each other. How then should we understand 'leaven' to describe their attitudes or actions?

Wilson notes that, while Luke interprets the leaven as representing the Pharisees' hypocrisy (12:1) and Matthew sees it as embodying their teaching (16:12), Mark gives no explanation, though leaven "is used by the Rabbis of an evil disposition… and this would certainly fit here."[317] In the Hebrew Bible, חָמֵץ appears over a dozen times to mean 'leaven' or 'leavened', literally referring to bread.[318] It expresses the same meaning in Galilean Aramaic.[319] However, in Hebrew, elsewhere חָמֵץ is figuratively rendered 'bitter',[320] 'cruel'[321] and 'violence'.[322]

Having plotted Jesus's death (3:6), the Pharisees and Herodians certainly crave violence, with the latter's namesake having already killed Jesus's ally John the Baptist (6:27). Thus a warning to Jesus's disciples seems timely in chapter 8. Bitterness of character further reflects the hardness of heart, or stubbornness, Jesus's opponents display in 3:5. Accordingly, neither bitterness nor cruelty nor violence seems out of place in Mark's portrayal of the Pharisees and Herodians. Any of these attested Old Testament usages might convey Jesus's meaning for 'leaven'.

New Testament leaven symbolises "something with an inward, vigorous vitality; here (in Mark 8) it refers to an evil influence that can spread like an infection."[323] Galatians 5:9 presents similar meaning, where Paul cites the proverb: "A little yeast works through the whole batch of dough." Paul refers to the influence of Judaizers in the Galatian church community, whose unchecked negative influence might infect all. The same proverb appears in 1 Corinthians 5, where Paul urges the Corinthians to expel incestuous offenders from their community: "Don't you know that a little yeast works through the whole batch of dough?" (5:6). He explains that "Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed" (5:7) and refers to "the old yeast of malice and wickedness" (5:8). Paul explains that just as ancient Israel was instructed to remove leaven from their homes before Passover, so now the church must remove all sins from their number to correctly observe the new Passover of the Lord's Supper, lest these sins infect the entire community. Leaven also has positive connotations, for Luke (13:20-21) and Matthew (13:33), in parallel accounts, use it to reference the infectious nature of God's spreading kingdom. However, Lohmeyer (1958) interprets this use of leaven as ironic, intended to suggest that what people expect to be

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[317] Wilson, "Mark," 808.
[318] E.g. Exodus 12:34, 12:39; Hosea 7:4.
[319] "ḥmṣ n.m. chametz," CAL, accessed March 25, 2023, https://cal.huc.edu/index.html.
[320] E.g. Psalm 73:21.
[321] E.g. Psalm 71:4.
[322] E.g. 2 Samuel 22:3, Ezekiel 12:19.
[323] Harrington, "Mark," 613.

unclean may in fact turn out sacred, just as what starts out small may unexpectedly thrive.[324] Running with this concept, Funk (1996) argues that Jesus's word choice was, in fact, a coded attack on the temple cult: "To invert the images of the sacred in a society is to subvert its sacred institutions. His word-act was thus understood as an attack on the temple and the temple cult in place in his day."[325] Yet Schellenberg (2009) observes that later rabbinical uses of 'leaven' bore both positive and negative connotations, and could symbolise either the soul's evil impulse (Berakhot 17a), the peace that sustains the world (Derekh Eretz Zuta: Perek ha-Shalom 1) or the redemptive influence of the Torah (Hagigah 1: 76c). However, these citations date to no earlier than the third century CE, so their relevance to Mark's day is questionable.[326] Schellenberg also notes that Philo uses the term to mean both inflated with conceit (Quaestiones et Solutiones in Exodum 1.15, 2:14) and elevated to joy (De Specialibus Legibus 2.185) while, in Gentile literature, Plautus uses the fermentation process as an anger metaphor (Casina 2.5.1; Mercator 5.3.3) and Persius equates leaven to the hidden growth of knowledge acquired by studying (Satires 1:24-28).[327] Thus, extra-scriptural literature contemporary to Mark generally recognises leaven as symbolic for expansion without any specialised connotation.

In summary, if we compare earlier and later usages, it appears that, by the first century CE, a Hebrew figure for cruelty, bitterness and violence has expanded to become a metaphor for infection (and not usually a positive one). In Mark 8, the precise meaning is unclear, and indeed more than one meaning is possible. Reading Mark with a New Testament understanding of 'leaven' as 'infection' reflects the propensity of evil attitudes to spread and poison others, which seems prescient given Jesus's fate,[328] and contrasts with the more positive infectiousness of the feeding miracles. Alternatively, reading Mark with an Old Testament understanding of 'leaven' as 'cruelty', 'violence' and 'bitterness' spotlights the recurrent aggressions of Jesus's foes.

2.3.4 Ben/Eben: The S(t)on(e) the Builders Rejected

Scholars have long recognised the pun between the son in the Parable of the Tenants (12:1-9) and the stone in the scripture Jesus cites (Psalm 118:22-23) to summarise the parable's point (12:10-11).[329] Just as son and stone are synophones in English, so they are in Hebrew (בֵּן and אֶבֶן respectively). This pun is the touchstone to understanding the entire parable. Jesus is both son and stone: God's

[324] Ernst Lohmeyer, *Das Evangelium des Matthäus* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1958): 219-21.
[325] Robert Funk, *Honest to Jesus: Jesus for a New Millennium* (San Francisco, CA: HarperCollins, 1996): 157.
[326] Ryan Schellenberg, "Kingdom as Contaminant? The Role of Repertoire in the Parables of the Mustard Seed and the Leaven." *CBQ* 71,3 (2009): 540.
[327] Schellenberg, "Kingdom as Contaminant," 539.
[328] In Mark's final act, Jesus enters Jerusalem hailed by the people as King of the Jews (11:8-10). A few days later, the people, having been poisoned against Jesus by his enemies, cry out for his crucifixion (15:9-14).
[329] John Heil, "The Narrative Strategy and Pragmatics of the Temple Theme in Mark." *CBQ* 59,1 (1997): 82.

son as the former (cf. 1:11; 15:39) and the cornerstone for the renewal of righteous worship as the latter (12:10-11). Jesus has condemned the chief priests and Torah scholars for turning God's temple into a den of thieves/insurrectionists (11:15-17), just as the parable's tenants steal from the vineyard owner (12:2-5). Just as the chief priests and Torah scholars subsequently plot to kill Jesus (11:18), likewise the tenants plot to slay the owner's son (12:7). Just as Jesus is destined to be murdered (15:25-37), so too is this son (12:8). As a result, the owner returns, kills the tenants, and gives the vineyard to others (12:9); possibly referencing the destruction of Jerusalem's temple in 70 CE, or perhaps the start of the new religion founded by Jesus, who becomes its cornerstone upon the miraculous event of his resurrection (16:1-8). If the latter, Mark "views Christ's resurrection, the exaltation of the rejected stone to the head of the corner, as the creation of a new Temple composed of the resurrected Lord in union with his eschatological community of 'others'."[330] I find the interpretations compatible, not least because Jesus subsequently predicts the destruction of Jerusalem's temple (13:1-2). We might further see this destruction as the obliteration of the corrupt religion overseen by chief priests and Torah scholars in the temple, the same religion Jesus condemns in 11:15-18. Moreover, the account of the fig tree's withering[331] that sandwiches this segment (11:12-14; 19-21) reflects both the temple's destruction predicted by Jesus in chapter 13 and the deaths of its tenants illustrated in chapter 12's parable. Indeed, Jesus's prediction that he, once the rejected stone, will become cornerstone, chimes with his following prediction that not one stone of the current temple will remain standing upon another. The pun linking son and stone thus links Jesus's death and resurrection as God's son with the death of the corrupted religion, symbolised by the temple's annihilation, and its renewal in Jesus as the new foundation. Thus, the parable's 'son' and Psalmist's 'stone', as combined in 12:10-11's pun, each convey tremendous theological gravitas, whilst harmonising synophonically and semantically. Just as the words sound alike in Hebrew, so Jesus is both stone and son. The pun resounds in the audience's mind, highlighting the rationale for Jesus's betrayal-demise and the subsequent necessity of the corrupt religion's death, succeeded by its restoration following Jesus's resurrection.

2.3.5 Gahlal and Gelilah: Circle of Life and Death

When reconstructed in Hebrew, the verb גָּלַל (to roll)[332] emerges in Mark 15:46 (גָּלַל; he rolled), 16:3 (יָגֹל; will roll) and 16:4 (גָּלַל; rolled), similar in construction to the Pa'el stem of the verb in Aramaic (גַּלֵּל).[333] In the first instance, Joseph of Arimathea rolls a stone over the entrance to Jesus's tomb; in the second, the women question who will roll away the stone that blocks the entrance to Jesus's tomb, so they might anoint his body. Subsequently, we read the stone has already been rolled away. The narrative

[330] Joel Marcus, *The Way of the Lord: Christological Exegesis of the Old Testament in the Gospel of Mark* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 1992): 123.
[331] The fig tree was a common metaphor for Israel and the nation's spiritual health in the Hebrew Bible (e.g. 1 Kings 4:25; Amos 4:9; Habakkuk 3:17-18; Micah 4:4; Zechariah 3:10).
[332] Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten*, 327.
[333] *BDB*, 164.

follows the women into the tomb, where a man dressed in white announces Jesus's resurrection.

The noun גְלִילָה, deriving from גָּלַל (circuit/boundary/territory), also names the region of Galilee,[334] which includes Jesus's home town of Nazareth (cf. 6:1-4) and the earliest locations of Jesus's ministry (1:14-39). Though Jesus is crucified in Golgotha (15:22) and buried nearby (15:46), all in Judea, the women are instructed to tell the disciples that Jesus is going ahead of them to Galilee, where they will see him again (16:7). The women; Mary Magdala, Mary the mother of James, and Salome; are introduced just prior to this section, where Mark recounts that they had followed and cared for Jesus in Galilee (15:40-41). Why does Mark include their place of origin, which apparently has no narrative relevance? Why bother to pinpoint the homeland of such minor characters, who are only named after Jesus is already dead? And why would Jesus forge into Galilee, over 60 miles to the north, when they could easily have rendezvoused in Judea or Samaria?[335]

I suggest Mark includes this detail (15:41), the statement that Jesus has returned to Galilee (16:7), and midway three expressions of the 'rolling' of the tomb's stone (15:46; 16:3, 4), to make a punning point around a placename, as commonly occurs in Hebrew scripture.[336] Literally, Galilee means 'circuit', just as a rock would be rolled in a circuit to open a tomb. Symbolically, Jesus is about to complete the circuit of his birth in Galilee, the birth of his Galilean ministry following John's death (1:14), his own death, his rebirth via resurrection, and his return to Galilee. This wordplay might even help clarify Mark's ending (16:8), which has irked scholars from antiquity to modernity. As Whitenton (2016) records: "A group of women fleeing a graveside, seized with terror and mute with fear - what a way to end a Gospel! The abruptness… has incited various responses over the years. Early readers added a more appropriate conclusion to what seemed to be lacking, while some modern interpreters have claimed that the original ending has been lost in the sands of time."[337] Let us therefore explore this problem, and examine how a pun on גָּלַל might help resolve it.

Metzger (2005) observes the less abrupt and more comforting conclusion we have for Mark (16:9-20) does not appear in any of our earliest and most reliable Greek manuscripts: "Clement of Alexandria and Origen show no knowledge of the existence of these verses; furthermore Eusebius and Jerome attest that the passage was absent from almost all Greek copies of Mark known to them… The last twelve verses of the commonly received text of Mark are absent from the two oldest Greek manuscripts (א and B), from the Old Latin codex Bobiensis, the Sinaitic Syriac

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[334] *BDB*, 165.

[335] See: Cartographic Institute of Helmut Fuchs in Leonberg, "Palestine in New Testament Times." In Aland, *The Greek New Testament*, Inside front cover.

[336] For instance, a similar pun on גָּלַל appears in Joshua 5:2-9, where all Israelite men of military age perish for failing to circumcise their sons, yet their sons, who are subsequently circumcised, are healed as they remain in camp. Thus God proclaims to Joshua: "Today I have *rolled away* from you the disgrace of Egypt. And so that place is called *Gilgal (circle)* to this day" (5:9).

[337] Michael Whitenton, "Feeling the Silence: A Moment-by-Moment Account of Emotions at the End of Mark (16:1-8)." *CBQ* 78,2 (2016): 272.

manuscript, about one hundred Armenian manuscripts, and the two oldest Georgian manuscripts…"[338]

Knox (1942), however, robustly contends that Mark's original text could not possibly have ended at 16:8, irrespective of our extant longer ending's validity. While admitting we have no precise parallel to the gospel genre in ancient literature, Knox adduces examples from narrative endings in other genres; the burial of the hero (e.g. Genesis 23, 25, 35 and 50, the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs and the Apocalypse of Moses), the happy 'folk-tale' ending that follows a period of tribulation (e.g. Job, Esther, Judith, 3 Maccabees, Philo's 'De Josepho', the Acts of Thomas and the Acts of Paul and Thecla), the summary panegyric, that ends with an account of the hero's worthiness (e.g. Deuteronomy, Plato's 'Phaedo', Lucian's 'Life of Demonax' and Xenophon's 'Memorabilia'), narratives that end with a formal concluding sentence (e.g. 2 Maccabees, the Gospel of Thomas, Thucydides Vols. 2, 3, 4 and 7, most accounts of Josephus in War/Antiquities of the Jews and Philo's 'Life of Moses'), narratives that close with a tying-up of loose ends (e.g. The Book of Ruth, the Acts of Andrew and Suetonius's 'Lives of the Caesars'), and narratives that, though ending in an unresolved situation, at least conclude with the satisfactory completion of an action or lesson (e.g. Jonah, Ezra, and Bel and the Dragon). In no ancient narrative does Knox find a parallel to Mark's manic final verse and its abrupt closure ("ἐφοβοῦντο γάρ"), thus he concludes Mark's original ending must have been lost.[339]

Despite Knox's detailed structural analysis, others disagree. Citing Robert H. Stein and N.T. Wright, Whitenton records that, in recent scholarship, many have viewed Mark's ending as deliberately emotive and abrupt, for rhetorical and literary purposes such as "to draw readers to participate in the story and create an ending of their own."[340] Lincoln (1989), for example, argues that Mark deliberately juxtaposes the hopefulness of 16:7 with the panic and disobedience of 16:8, to summarise the gospel's recurring themes of promised fulfilment and failure, and to encourage readers to review them. The reader would then decide whether they wanted to live according to Jesus's instruction, or as the male and female disciples in their fear and disobedience. Ultimately, according to Lincoln, the juxtaposition's impact "is encouragement to persevere despite failure and disobedience."[341] Thus, in its concise summary of two contrasting and key gospel themes, Mark's ending is not nearly as arbitrary as it superficially seems.

Problems remain with this perspective. Hurtado (2009) echoes Knox in stating that no other ancient text exhibits such an open ending, where readers must not only supply for themselves this exhortation to review the entire gospel but also to reverse the message of the narrative's final verse in order to supply contradictory information.[342] Lincoln's explanation further contradicts the way in which Mark

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[338] Bruce Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament,* 3rd ed. (London: United Bible Societies, 1994): 123.
[339] Wilfred Knox, "The Ending of St. Mark's Gospel." *HTR* 35,1 (1942): 16-23.
[340] Whitenton, "Feeling the Silence," 272-3.
[341] Andrew Lincoln, "The Promise and the Failure: Mark 16:7, 8." *JBL* 108 (1989): 292.
[342] Larry Hurtado, "The Women, the Tomb, and the Climax of Mark." In A Wandering Galilean: Essays in Honour of Seán Freyne. Edited by Zuleika Rodgers*, JSJSup* 132. Leiden: Brill (2009): 437-8.

generally portrays women, that is, in a positive light, in stark contrast to Jesus's male disciples. Sabin (1998) illustrates this, whilst highlighting how Mark portrays the women at the tomb as witnesses and signs of a new creation. The same women who witnessed the crucifixion reappear as the first witnesses of Jesus's resurrection. While the two Marys appear like a refrain, Salome's name evokes recollection of the Salome who danced for the Baptist's head.[343] Sabin notes a similar Marcan pairing with the name Simon, for "while Simon Peter denies Jesus, Simon the leper welcomes him and Simon of Cyrene carries his cross; while Herod's Salome dances for death, this Salome brings spices for life. The repetition of names conveys a sense of alter egos, or the possibility of transformation: 'Simon' may deny Jesus, or receive him, or share the burden of his cross; 'Salome' may be a shallow woman who becomes an accomplice to murder, or a strong and faithful woman who is among the first to hear the news of resurrection."[344]

Sabin adds that Mark's finale echoes earlier narrative points, giving the impression of history repeating itself as the cycle of Jesus's mission continues. The women at the tomb, like the first woman Jesus healed (1:31), had ministered to him (15:40-41) and, like the unclean woman, had followed him. Like the woman in Bethany (14:3), they came to anoint him (16:1). Further, and symbolic of a new creation, the women come early in the morning on the first day of a new week, at the sun's rising (16:2).[345] As the week comes full circle and begins anew, so does Jesus's life and, with his return to Galilee where his ministry began, along with his message to the disciples to meet him there, so does the gospel mission. Hence, though Mark's final verse is jarring, a sense of the story coming full circle precedes it, with 'gahlal' and 'Galilee', as the revived Jesus returns home to begin the next cycle of his mission. Yet how might we resolve the women's apparent disobedience and failure in 16:8?

Fisher (1999) contends the women were as unlikely to understand the concept of resurrection as the disciples who pondered what it meant (9:10, 32) and that Mark is similarly unsure, projecting his uncertainty onto the awestruck three who flee the tomb, leaving his audience to resolve its actual meaning. Regarding the women's fear, Fisher adds "If Jesus had been raised, this might indicate that the communal raising from the dead, in preparation for the final Judgement, had started. This possibility alone could have been a terrifying thought."[346]

Aernie (2016) refutes this view, noting how Mark's assertion that the women said nothing to anyone (οὐδενὶ οὐδεν εἶπαν) mirrors Jesus's language as he exhorts the leper to silence in 1:44 (μηδὲνὶ μηδὲν εἴπῃς). Whereas the leper disobeys Jesus and relays his miraculous healing to everyone, making it impossible for Jesus to enter a town without being mobbed, the women keep silent and avoid repeating this negative consequence. Aernie adds that Mark's use of καί to introduce both the silence clause (16:8a) and the fear clause (16:8b) suggests their feelings and actions

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[343] Though the other gospel writers never name Salome, Mark presents her as the daughter of Herodias. Josephus identifies Herodias's daughter as Salome (*Antiquities* 18.5.4).
[344]Marie Sabin, "Women Transformed: The Ending of Mark Is the Beginning of Wisdom." *CrossCurrents* 48,2 (1998): 159.
[345] Sabin, "Women Transformed: The Ending," 159-60.
[346] Raymond Fisher, "The Empty Tomb Story in Mark: Its Origin and Significance." *Neotestamentica* 33,1 (1999): 73-4.

were not contrary to 16:7's exhortation. For the introduction of a contrasting or contradictory clause or sentence, or a new idea, δέ or ἀλλά would be typical in standard Koine, not a word that conveys the sense of 'and/also'.[347] These arguments support Hurtado's view that the women's communication in 16:8 was restricted, not non-existent; that they told only the people whom they had been instructed to tell, rather than behave as 1:44's disobedient leper.[348] In this way, the women's fear expresses as reverent awe.[349]

Thus, instead of a sudden, confusing and depressing ending, one without parallel in ancient literature, a clear and hopeful climax emerges. 16:8, in this light, reveals the present as a more positive repetition of the past. Women are generally silent in Mark, yet comprehend much in silence,[350] whereas Jesus's male disciples are constantly confounded by their master's message (e.g. 8:14-21) and, when they talk, they generally say something foolish, or speak when they should be silent (e.g. 8:32-33; 9:5-6). Jesus, in contrast, is generally secretive and sphinx-like throughout his ministry, often withholding knowledge or expecting his followers to deduce it for themselves (see, for example, 3.5.1). Yet, as the second cycle of Jesus's mission begins, it is the women who spread the word and, unlike the male disciples and the leper, they comprehend enough to be discreet with the message, exhibiting appropriate respect. One might hence understand 16:8: "And after going out, they fled from the tomb, for wonder and amazement had seized them, and they said nothing to anyone save the disciples, for they were in awe." I would add that it should have been obvious to Mark's audience that the women did, at some point, relay the message to the disciples, otherwise Christianity would have died that day! There would be no news of Jesus's resurrection, no more disciples, no audience for Mark's gospel and, indeed, no Gospel of Mark. The point is that the women maintained discretion and told nobody else, refusing in their reverence to gossip, allowing the gospel mission to continue without the frenzied crowds that frequently assailed Jesus, not to mention the concomitant levels of socio-political controversy. In this way, Mary and her companions truly were 'Towers' to the cause.

Both in Hebrew and Aramaic, the גָּלַל wordplay helps foreground this sense of a second, more positive, cycle beginning, as opposed to a jarringly sudden end. As a new week begins, so Jesus commences the cycle of his second life. The women who attended and followed him through the cycle of his ministry receive a fresh commission and, unlike the leper in the initial cycle, remain faithful to it. Jesus, whose ministry was born and whose disciples were called in Galilee, now returns to Galilee to reconvene with his disciples for the first time in the second cycle. Just as Jesus performed a ministerial circuit of Galilee in chapter 6, so now a larger circle is complete. Perhaps most crucially, the *gahlal-Gelilah* wordplay spotlights the value of women's roles in both cycles and points the reader back to Galilee, where Jesus's

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[347] Jeffrey Aernie, "Cruciform Discipleship: The Narrative Function of the Women in Mark 15–16." *JBL* 135 (2016): 788.
[348] Hurtado, "The Women, the Tomb," 439.
[349] Drawing on Gundry, Sabin explains how the four words Mark uses to describe the women's fear in 16:1-8 (ἐξεθαμβήθησαν, τρόμος, ἔκστασις, ἐφοβοῦντο) often translate better as religious or reverent awe, not least elsewhere in Mark. For a detailed discussion, see Sabin, "Women Transformed: The Ending," 160-3.
[350] E.g. Mark 5:27-8; 7:26-9.

mission began, hinting that, as time rolls on, its future rests with the disciples' successors - a motivation for Mark's gospel audience.[351]

2.3.6 Conclusion

Like several Marcan instances of sound-paronomasia, sense-paronomasia emerges in emotionally intense situations. Jesus surveys a synagogue, deeply distressed by the stubbornness of his listeners. His listeners tempt him, seeking a sign, evoking a scathing response from Jesus and a warning, to beware the 'leaven' of Herod and the Pharisees, to his disciples. Two disciples, James and John, yearning to be elevated in their master's glory, are rebuked by their equals before Jesus diffuses the confrontation. In another confrontation, Jesus's opponents desire to arrest him after he delivers a parable against them, leading to Jesus's trial and execution. After his execution, a messenger informs the women that Jesus has risen and returned to Galilee, at which the women flee in dumbstruck awe. Perhaps Mark deliberately places instances of wordplay in emotive situations to heighten the impact of their message. The points driven by Marcan sense-paronomasia I summarise below, with my own discoveries in bold.

Usage	Meanings	Pericope Message
כָּבוֹד/כָּבֵד	**glory/burden**	*Jesus's glory is his suffering; glory is service*
נָטָה/נְטַר	**stretch out (arms)/stay angry**	*The Sabbath is for helping one another!*
חָמֵץ	**leaven/bitterness/infection**	*Help, rather than test, one another*[352]
בֵּן/אֶבֶן	son/stone	*Jesus's way will replace corrupted Judaism*
גָּלַל/גְּלִילָה	**rolled away/Galilee**	*Jesus's work is cyclical: we must continue it*

Hence, through the music of wordplay, Mark underscores his gospel's key notes of vicarious love and charitable service, the positive infectiousness of caring and charity that will replace Pharisaically-corrupted Judaism, and the importance of continuing Jesus's revolution - even after he has gone.

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[351] The general idea that Galilee has symbolic and theological, rather than geographical, significance in Mark's resurrection narrative is not new. Arthur Ramsay (1946) suggests: "Perhaps the message about Galilee, and the saying of Jesus before the Passion to which it looks back, had a meaning symbolical rather than geographical and referred less to a place of meeting and journeying than to a Victory and a Mission that would follow the disaster of the Cross" (*The Resurrection of Christ* (London: Centenary Press, 1946): 71). Cranfield further observes Ramsey's interpretation is rooted in antiquity, finding similar understandings in Augustine, Gregory the Great and Bede (*According to Saint Mark*, 469).

[352] Following the wordplay (8:15), Jesus contrasts the positive effects of the feeding miracles with the negative influence of the Pharisees and Herodians (8:17-21).

2.4 Janus Parallelism in Mark

2.4.1 The Hebrew Bible Precedent

Janus parallelism is a form of paronomasia with specialised traits, where one of a word's meanings repeats an idea in the previous narrative stich and another of its meanings foregrounds an idea in the following stich.

Since Gordon coined the term, scholars have unearthed numerous potential Janus candidates within the Hebrew Bible, many of which have been disputed. Indeed, Noegel (1996) lists twelve candidates published by scholars that he rejects, on grounds such as the confusion of paronomasia with antanaclasis and lack of evidence for a speculated word-meaning in contemporaneous Hebrew literature.[353] In the same volume, Noegel proposes "49 hitherto unrecognised examples in the Book of Job."[354] Here, Noegel contends the device transcends mere rhetorical or literary embellishment, since within the context of Job debating his friends "such word-savvy wit takes on the character of a highly-charged demonstration of one-upmanship. Thus, we must not divorce the literary device from its context."[355] In an article published the same year, Noegel illustrates how parallelism complements this overarching contest theme that penetrates most of the narrative (2:11-37:24), both by citing examples of Job's subtlety and noting how his opponents allude to it. In 7:6-7, for example, Job states:

"My days are more trifling than a weaver's shuttle.

They go without תקוה.

Remember, my life is but a wind, my eyes will see no more good."

תקוה means both thread and hope; the former reflecting 'weaver's shuttle' in 6a, the latter reflecting Job's fading hope in verse 7. In response, Bildad addresses both meanings of תקוה: "the hope of the godless will perish; his confidence is a mere gossamer thread" (8:14-15). Elsewhere, Job's companions accuse him of using crafty language devoid of value (15:2-6), claim God alone can truly manipulate words (36:1), mockingly label him "word-hunter" (18:2), claim that Job's subtlety is ineffectual and only obscures his message (4:12) and, ironically, attempt to use wordplay to counter him (37:9-10). In this final instance, Elihu credits God's breath with turning water (קרה) into ice (קרח). Accordingly, to transform the former word into the latter, a rougher breathing when pronouncing the final letter is all that is required.[356]

Such examples highlight how wordplay can enhance a narrative's broader themes, in this case the contest of words and wisdom between Job and his companions and the power and limitations of rhetorical expression when discussing such mysteries as 'why do we suffer?' Hence, when we analyse parallelism in Mark, we shall explore

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[353] Noegel, *Janus Parallelism*, 183-90.
[354] Noegel, *Janus Parallelism*, 25.
[355] Scott Noegel, "Janus Parallelism in Job and its Literary Significance." *JBL* 115,2 (1996): 314.
[356] Noegel, "Janus Parallelism in Job," 314-6.

how each device serves to enhance broader themes within the narrative. This analysis will form our criterion of theological coherence.

Parallelism can also enhance the effect of the immediate text on an audience, by more than an ear-catching use of high-sounding language. Ceresko (1994) cites a repeated example in Amos, used to dramatically condemn Damascus (1:3-4), Gaza (1:6-7), Tyre (1:9-10), Ammon (1:13-14), Moab (2:1-2) and Judah (2:4-5). The Janus formula is each time the same:

“For the three sins of **χ**, even for four,

לֹא אֲשִׁיבֶנּוּ (I will not let him return/I will fan upon it).

I will send fire on **γ**…”

The former rendition parallels the prior mention of sins that will remain unforgiven, while the latter references the devouring flames that follow.[357] The wordplay links a lack of redemption with fiery punishment, heightening the sense of hopelessness and impending doom for Israel’s neighbours - the overarching theme of 1:3-2:16. Likewise, in Mark, we will explore the degree to which a word’s dual-meanings reflect and enhance the immediate narrative context; our criterion of narrative synthesis.

Elsewhere, Greenstein (2003) illustrates how Hebrew Bible puns can interplay between two languages. In Job 3:8, the protagonist summons demons powerful enough to torment the sea monsters Yamm and Leviathan, to curse the night that brought news of his birth:

“May they execrate it, those who curse Yamm,

the ones who are equipped, who curse Leviathan.”

Greenstein maintains the poet vocalised ‘Yamm’ according to the neighbouring Phoenician pronunciation, where the stressed *a* had become a stressed *o*, thus producing a double-entendre. “One hears in the phrase אוֹרְרֵי יוֹם the nearly homonymous אוֹר יוֹם ‘light of day’. The double entendre redoubles the power of the curse: May that night be execrated by the demons whose strength is sufficient to curse the dreaded Yamm/Leviathan; and may that night be cursed, eliminated, as all nights are, by the light of day.”[358] Further, Greenstein argues the poet's use of Arabic produces a pun in the preceding verse, where Job curses the same fateful night:

“Lo, that night, let it be גַלְמוּד.

Let no celebration enter therein!”

Here, גַלְמוּד ostensibly means ‘sterile earth’, as attested elsewhere (Isaiah 49:21; Job 15:34, 30:3). The Arabic noun *julmud*, however, also denotes a boulder or solitary crag. “Job not only wishes that the night of his conception had been an infertile environment; he also wishes it had stood alone, isolated from the days and

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[357] Anthony Ceresko, “Janus Parallelism in Amos’s ‘Oracles Against the Nations’ (Amos 1:3-2:16),” *JBL* 113 (1994): 485-90.

[358] Edward Greenstein, “The Language of Job and its Poetic Function.” *JBL* 122,4 (2003): 654-5.

nights of the year… the image of a solitary structure standing in the desert functions as an objective correlative of Job, who in his opening discourse expresses utter loneliness."[359] Accordingly, our criterion of etymological integrity will explore the extent to which Mark draws on different languages to forge his parallelisms.

Two further criteria will gauge the legitimacy of a proposed parallelism. Our criterion of semantic proximity will assess the closeness in meaning of a word's dual connotations (the further apart, the less likely the proposed parallelism is coincidental). Our criterion of structural density will examine whether the parallelism works over a compressed area of three stichs, as in Hebrew Bible usage, and inspect the strength of the semantic connection between the different meanings and their respective stichs. We shall unpack and justify these criteria in more detail below.

2.4.2 Methodology

In the following sections, I shall analyse potential instances of Janus parallelism that appear in Mark's gospel, none of which scholars have noted. Six pericopae in Mark arguably contain them, whilst displaying the three-stich structural compactness found in Hebrew Bible exemplars. However, four of these only work when reconstructed in Hebrew or Aramaic, which is not an exact science, given the diversity of ways one might reconstruct a verse in another language. Parallelisms might also occur accidentally. For example, one might write: "When I arrived at the railway station, hardly anyone was on the platform. I needed to find somewhere better to advertise." Technically this is Janus, since 'platform' pertaining to where passengers board trains references 'railway station' in the previous stich, and platform as in 'media platform' references 'advertise' in the following. Yet how else would one express such a simple, no-frills statement? Can we confidently assert the parallelism's poetic intentionality? For these and other reasons, my six-point methodology will be applied to each instance, to analyse how closely each case meets multiple criteria that I believe characterise intentional parallelism.

First, we should explore the possibility that a word's polysemy might be incidental, that is, unintended by the author as a device to convey additional meanings. Certain phrases possess metaphorical meanings so semantically similar to their literal meaning that we tend to ignore the distinction, such as 'rising prices', which equates the financial concept of increasing costs with the physical concept of ascension. One might speak, therefore, of a rise in house prices obstructing young couples from getting on the property ladder without intentional irony. From such examples, I deduce that accidental polysemy more often occurs when dual meanings are semantically proximate. Thus, to evaluate Mark's deliberation, we ought to assess the disparity between multiple meanings within a candidate lexeme: a criterion of *semantic proximity*. The more disparate the dual connotations, the less likely Mark used the word arbitrarily.

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[359] Greenstein, "The Language of Job," 656.

Second, we should gauge whether the meanings of a candidate lexeme relate to the parallelism's narrative context, with clarity and precision, and without need for further explanation. Does the parallelism chime with the pericope's point or theme? We shall call this our criterion of *narrative synthesis*. In applying this criterion, we should question whether we are tailoring the narrative context of a polysemic word to make the parallelism appear intentional, rather than viewing a clear relation within the text that requires no creative exegesis to contextualise it. For example, in arguing for parallelism, one might reason that Jesus's use of Πεπλήρωται in Mark 1:15 is a subtle reference to the River Jordan's fullness of water in 1:9-10. This connection is highly tenuous, since almost anything can be seen to be full or empty of something, the Jordan's water level is never mentioned, and the author never explores the connection between the presence of water and the fullness of the pre-gospel season that Jesus proclaims. This contrasts with Songs 2:12, where both the turtledoves' singing and blooming blossoms self-evidently express the pericope's wider theme: the advent of springtime (2:10-13).

Third, we should understand that Mark may have adapted Janus parallelism, a device usually seen in poetry, to fit the gospel genre. Within his narrative, as this thesis explores, Mark incorporates foreshadowings of Jesus's fate, along with rhetorical and structural devices used to foreground the significance and meaning of Jesus's teachings. Hence we should ask: for any given polysemic word, do the multiple meanings help impress upon the reader key aspects of Mark's message (as they do frequently in Job), or do they present as flowery and trivial? The former are more likely intentional devices of a literate theologian, especially as they combine complexity of form with specificity of purpose, which, as any proponent of the teleological argument would argue, is less likely to be the product of mere chance. We shall call this our criterion of *theological coherence.*

Fourth, we should remember that Janus parallelism predominantly features in poetry, and that even extra-poetic occurrences in the Hebrew Bible are tightly structured, with the polysemic lexeme and both relatable contexts condensed within the terse span of a single verse, or occasionally two. For example, Ruth 1:21 states:

אֲנִי מְלֵאָה הָלַכְתִּי, וְרֵיקָם הֱשִׁיבַנִי יְהוָה ;

לָמָּה תִקְרֶאנָה לִי, נָעֳמִי, וַיהוָה **עָנָה** בִי,

וְשַׁדַּי הֵרַע לִי[360]

עָנָה can convey both 'answered' and 'afflicted'; Hebrew Bible translations frequently attest both renditions.[361] In Ruth 1:21, the former shadows the verse's beginning, where the Lord responds to (answers) Naomi's fullness by removing everything she possessed (her husband and two sons). The latter foreshadows the verse's end, which emphasises the calamitous nature of the Lord's response. Thus, in identifying a classic Janus case, use of condensed structure is key. Likewise, when Songs 2:12 relays the time of זמיר (pruning or song) has come, and the preceding verse tells of

[360] "I went away full, but the Lord has brought me back empty. Why call me Naomi when the Lord has answered/afflicted me, and the Almighty has brought calamity upon me?"

[361] E.g. The NASB renders עָנָה 40 times as 'afflict' and 18 times as 'answer' in some form.

blossoms emerging, and the proceeding verse tells of turtle doves' voices sounding, exegetical acrobatics are unnecessary. Hence we should ask: do the different meanings of a candidate word respectively relate to the stichs *immediately* before and after, with clarity and precision? This shall be our criterion of *structural density*.

Finally, we shall examine the linguistic identity of the potential parallelism. Does it work in Hebrew or Aramaic only, or in Greek only, or all three? In the first and third instances, this would suggest an intended parallelism that has either been lost, or cleverly replicated, in translation. In the second instance, the parallel is more likely coincidental, since Janus parallelism is not a feature of Greek poetry and prose, and no hint of an underlying Semitic source exists. We shall call this our criterion of *etymological integrity*. With these criteria in mind, we shall analyse the candidate pericopae; 9:48-50a, 10:24-25, 7:9-10, 10:13-14, 8:15-16 and 2:10; and present our conclusions.

2.4.3 Mahlach: To Salt and Vaporise

9:49 presents a pun on 'to salt', which also means 'vaporise' in Hebrew and Aramaic. Whereas, in the Hebrew Bible, מָלַח is 'to salt' or 'to season' in the Qal, Pual and Hophal stems, it means 'vanish' or 'vaporise' in the Niphal (cf. Isaiah 51:6),[362] which corresponds to Mark's passive use in 9:49 (ἁλισθήσεται). Further, in translations of the Peshitta, 9:49's 'all will be *salted* with fire', as almost all English translations render it,[363] becomes 'all will be *vaporised* with fire."[364] Yet, twice in Ezra (6:9; 7:22), the Aramaic also conveys the meaning 'salt' for מְלַח,[365] as part of a list of foods and materials gifted to Jewish priests, by Darius and Artaxerxes, as they commence reconstruction of Jerusalem's temple. The same meaning appears in Palestinian Aramaic contemporary to Mark.[366] I find no such equivoque for ἅλας and ἁλίζω, thus it seems the Semitic tongues have preserved an ambiguity that was vaporised in Greek translation. With this understanding, we can read 9:48-50a:

Where the worm does not end and the *fire is not quenched*,

For all, *with fire*, will be vaporised/salted.

Salt is good, but if the salt becomes saltless…

The parallelism now emerges, with 'vaporised' reflecting the unquenchable fires of Gehenna in the previous stich, that Jesus warns will consume sinners (9:47-48), and 'salted' reflecting the seasoning in the following stich, symbolising the preservation of peace that Jesus subsequently commends his disciples to cultivate (9:50).

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[362] Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten*, 801.
[363] E.g. the NIV, NRSV and ESV. The NLT has 'tested', the GNB has 'purified' and the NKJV has 'seasoned', but no published English translation offers a verb close in kind to 'vaporised'.
[364] "The Preaching of Marqus Chapter 9," Peshitta Aramaic-English New Testament, accessed November 17, 2022, http://www.peshitta.org.
[365] Wigram, *Englishman's Hebrew and Chaldee*, 707.
[366] 1Q Genesis Apocryphon 29b:21.16 (In Fitzmyer, *Manual of Palestinian Aramaic*, 118-9).

a) Semantic Proximity

A tentative connection between salting and vaporising emerges in the tale of Sodom's destruction, where YHWH rains fire and brimstone upon the land and Lot's wife, too slow to flee, appears to become vaporised into a pillar of salt (Genesis 19:26). Further, the capacity of salt to melt ice illustrates its vaporising properties and perhaps it is in this sense that Isaiah speaks of the earth eventually vanishing away like smoke (51:6). However, in all other Hebrew Bible contexts ('to salt': four times; 'salt': 27 times; 'saltiness': three times), salt never connotes vaporisation.[367] Generally speaking, the twin meanings stand semantically distinct.

b) Narrative Synthesis

The disparate meanings of מָלַח relate strongly to their respective narrative contexts. 'Vaporised' reflects 9:42-48, where Jesus thrice mentions the unquenchable fires of Gehenna, whereas 'salted' reflects the seasoning agent of 9:49 and, in 9:50's sense of living in peace and harmony ("Have salt among yourselves, and be at peace with each other"), the spirit of Jesus's subsequent teaching on divorce (10:1-12), where he exhorts husbands not to reject their wives but to remain faithful to the marriage contract.

c) Theological Coherence

The concept of salt in connection with fire, as used by Jesus, suggests purification, for 9:50's healthful 'salt' "takes up 'salted' […with fire] in 9:49, and 9:50b [have peace with one another] refers back to 9:34 [the disciples' argument over which of them is greatest]. The contribution of the disciples to the health of the world depends on their own wholesomeness."[368] Related to 9:42-50, this suggests all humanity will either be vaporised or purified by fire, as 9:49's double-entendre suggests. Those who sin will be immolated in Gehenna and those who are purified will suffer in the process, as they painstakingly 'cut off' what causes them to sin and thus figuratively become lame, maimed or one-eyed (9:43-47). Watts (2007) notes the grain sacrifice (Leviticus 2) always required salt "of the covenant" to season the grain (2:13) before burning it, and that elsewhere salt participates in the binding nature of covenant (Numbers 18:9; 2 Chronicles 13:5).[369] This Hebrew Bible concept of the necessity of sacrifice (though through personal refinement rather than ritual offering) to receive divine purification and acceptance permeates Mark's gospel. Mark's rich man is frustrated in his desire to achieve eternal life due to his inability to 'cut off' his material possessions in exchange for treasure in heaven (10:17-22). Jesus twice teaches that whoever wishes to become great must prune their pride and humble themselves, becoming servant to all (9:35; 10:42-44), and that this even applies to himself (10:45). Accordingly, Jesus is mocked and beaten (15:16-20) before being

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[367] Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten*, 801.
[368] Wilson, "Mark," 810.
[369] Rikk E. Watts, "Mark." In *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, edited by G.K. Beale and D.A. Carson (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2007): 194.

crucified (15:21-37); only then does he rise from death to fulfil his mission (16:1-8). The disciples too are destined to be handed over to captors, and interrogated and hated, in a time of great conflict and death, yet those who endure to the end will achieve salvation (13:11-13). Thus, in bringing together these options of painful purification and destruction by fire in the מָלַח parallelism, Mark crystallises that the only alternative to a fiery destruction is the fiery path of self-sacrifice.

d) Structural Density

The parallelism meets our criterion of structural density for, though it spans over two verses in English Bibles, these only amount to 18 words in the Greek text, ending with 'καλὸν τὸ ἅλας'. The parallelism is similarly terse in Hebrew:

אֲשֶׁר־שָׁם תּוֹלַעְתָּם לֹא תָמוּת וְאִשָּׁם לֹא תִכְבֶּה (9:48)

כִּי כָל־אִישׁ בָּאֵשׁ יָמְלָח (9:49)

טוֹב הַמֶּלַח (9:50a)[370]

Most notably, the semantic connection is extremely strong between the different meanings and their respective stichs. The unquenching fires of Gehenna in 9:48 dramatically illustrate 9:49's allusion to vaporisation, whereas the usefulness of salt in 9:50 unquestionably echoes 9:49's 'all will be salted'.

e) Etymological Integrity

Since the pun works in Hebrew and Aramaic, but not Greek, this provides the strongest evidence for a Semitic original. If the pun worked only in one Semitic language, or if we could find a similar Koine wordplay, room for doubt would remain.

In conclusion, the narrative synthesis and theological integrity of this wordplay attest to the suitability of a parallelism in 9:49, but perhaps the best evidence for intentional Janus usage is the unquestionable semantic connection between each potential meaning of מָלַח in 9:49 and the content of the stichs they respectively reference.

2.4.4 Gahmahl/Gahmul/Gemul: Camel, Weaned Child and Reward

We will now explore a potential parallelism in Mark's account of Jesus and the rich man. Jesus's explanation to his disciples of the latter's failure to meet God's exacting standards (10:24-25) can be presented in three stichs:

"Τέκνα, πῶς δύσκολόν ἐστιν εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ Θεοῦ εἰσελθεῖν.

εὐκοπώτερόν ἐστιν κάμηλον διὰ τῆς τρυμαλιᾶς τῆς ῥαφίδος διελθεῖν

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[370] Lindsey, *A Hebrew Translation*, 124.

ἢ πλούσιον εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ Θεοῦ εἰσελθεῖν."[371]

This saying has provoked much scholarly debate, and navigating to a clear conclusion will prove much more challenging than with *mahlach*. First, scholars have proposed a possible dual meaning for κάμηλος that might tweak the nuances of this needle's eye simile. Schub (1976) relays evidence for the ambiguity, citing the Biblia Sacra Vulgatae Editionis (1598), which defines κάμηλος as "vel camelus vel funis navalis" (either a camel or a nautical rope).[372] Haupt (1924) cites similar evidence for this equivoque, noting "Some later MSS read in Mark 10, 25 and the two parallel passages κάμιλος, cable, instead of κάμηλος, camel. This reading is followed in the Armenian version (5th cent.) and is mentioned by Cyril of Alexandria (who died in 444)."[373] Haupt adds that, though κάμιλος is absent from ancient Greek literature, "it is mentioned, however, by Suidas (c. 970) and in the Aristophanic scholia in connection with a passage (1030) in *The Wasps*."[374] Intriguingly, the same dual meaning (camel-rope) exists in Arabic[375] and Aramaic,[376] suggesting κάμηλος and κάμιλος were Semitic loan words. Yet, despite this shared ambiguity, the wordplay in these tongues fails to forge a parallelism in Mark. Further, scholars typically dismiss the possibility of 'rope' on grounds that it weakens the comparison. Hooker (1991), for example, states "only the extraordinary inability of commentators to appreciate the hyperbole and humour in the illustration… has led them to suggest that the camel… should be reduced in size to a rope."[377] For Hooker, hyperbole and humour render the analogy more striking and thus easier to reflect on: "Jesus wished to make his hearers think by presenting them with an absurd picture of the largest animal attempting to go through the tiniest aperture."[378] Wilson similarly reports "The saying about the eye of a needle should not be weakened by taking the 'camel' as a cable… the saying is a vivid hyperbole to express what is humanly impossible."[379]

I disagree with this assessment. First, I would not credit the power to make people think, via parabolic imagery, to an image's absurdity, but rather to an image's subtle and nuanced relevance and relatability. In this respect, 'rope' rings truer. For a rope to penetrate a needle's eye, it must painstakingly shed most of its strands, mirroring the hardship of a rich man shedding the weight of wealth and property. Moreover, it is less typical for Mark's Jesus to use hyperbolic imagery or metaphors, unlike the

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[371] "Children, how hard it is to enter into the kingdom of God! It is easier for a κάμηλος to pass through the eye of a needle, than a rich man to enter the kingdom of God."
[372] M.B. Schub, "It Is Easier for a Cable to Go through the Eye of a Needle than for a Rich Man to Enter God's Kingdom." *Arabica* 23,3 (1976): 311.
[373] Paul Haupt, "Philological and Archeological Studies." *AJP* 45,3 (1924): 238-9.
[374] Haupt, "Philological and Archeological Studies," 239.
[375] See: Andrew Rippin, "Qurʾān 7.40: 'Until the Camel Passes through the Eye of the Needle.'" *Arabica* 27,2 (1980): 107-13.
[376] For example, Cyril of Alexandria argues, on the Syriac of Luke 18:25: "by a camel He means not the animal of that name, but a thick cable rather: for it is the custom of those well versed in navigation to call the thicker cables 'camels'" (*A Commentary on the Gospel According to Saint Luke, Part 2.* Translated by Robert P. Smith (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1859): 571-2).
[377] Morna D. Hooker, *The Gospel According To Saint Mark* (London: A&C Black, 1991): 242-3.
[378] Hooker, *According to Saint Mark*, 243.
[379] Wilson, "Mark," 811.

Jesus of Matthew and Luke.[380] Far more often, Mark's Jesus utilises commonplace comparisons that incorporate realistic, everyday imagery, as in the Parable of the Tenants (12:1-12), the Parable of the Fig Tree (13:28-32) and the Parable of the Sower (4:2-20). In particular, Jesus incorporates items familiar to his listeners in their everyday lives[381] and here he offers his disciples, the first of whom were fishermen, a word attested to mean 'a ship's rope'. Thus, the exegetical tug of war between rope and camel should not be too frivolously dismissed. Indeed, the tension might be relieved and both sides reconciled if a dual meaning, one familiar to Jews of Jesus's day, could be established for גַּמְלָא. Evidence exists that ropes were constructed from camel's hair in Ancient Egypt, long before Jesus' time.[382] Thus, in Near-Eastern cultures, it is reasonable to propose that words for 'rope' might have been derived from the camels whose hair composed it. If so, both rope and camel would have been suggested by גַּמְלָא, leaving the listener to decide on the more appropriate meaning.

Drawbacks, however, persist with the rope interpretation. First, I have found no texts which suggest or attest that גַּמְלָא as 'rope' derived from the word for its constituent camel hair. Further, the earliest interpretation of camel as rope, and earliest evidence of their homographic relationship, comes from Cyril of Alexandria in the fifth century CE. Exegetes have found no clues within three and a half centuries of Mark to corroborate this claim. Perhaps this is why, in recent decades, scholarly silence seems to have settled the debate. The persisting consensus on the Aramaic and Greek is that there is no rope, only a camel.

A triple meaning, however, presents in the third biblical language, which scholars have yet to note in reference to 10:24-25, perhaps due to the predominant trend of reconstructing in Aramaic. In Hebrew, camel (גָּמָל) is lexically identical, in non-pointed defective text, to the words for a weaned child (גָּמֻל)[383] and a reward (גְּמֻל).[384] If we postulate a Hebrew original and translate into English, the following parallelism emerges:

[380] Two Marcan exceptions are 9:42-47 and 11:23, both of which appear in Matthew and Luke. However, numerous examples of hyperbole appear in the later synoptics that are absent from Mark (e.g. Luke 6:41-42, 10:3, 14:26, 16:13; Matthew 5:21-22, 6:3, 7:3-5, 23:9).

[381] I.e. a farmer sowing crops (4:1-9), lamps, bowls and beds (4:21), a mustard seed (4:30-32), leaven (8:15), a cup of water (9:41), salt (9:50), a cup (10:39), a vineyard (12:1-11), a fig tree (13:28-29) and sacrificial blood (14:24).

[382] See: Joseph P. Free, "Abraham's Camels," *JNES* 3 (July 1944): 189-90.

[383] E.g. Psalm 131:2 (twice); Isaiah 11:8, 28:9. The verb appears in the Hebrew Bible no fewer than ten times in this context, usually to denote when a child no longer requires their mother for sustenance and can develop independently of their parents. For example, in 1 Samuel 1, Hannah vows to the Lord that if He gifts her a son then that son will dedicate his life to the Lord's service. After her son Samuel is born, her husband Elkanah wishes to hand him over to the temple to honour Hannah's vow, but Hannah insists the child must first be weaned: "עַד יִגָּמֵל הַנַּעַר וַהֲבִאֹתִיו וְנִרְאָה אֶת-פְּנֵי יְהוָה" (Until the child is weaned… then I will take him, and he will appear before the Lord) (1 Samuel 1:22). If we apply this Niphal verb to the parable, the meaning changes dramatically: "It is easier for a weaned child to pass through a needle's eye than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven." Moreover, *gml* as 'weaned' is rare in Aramaic, appearing only twice in our extant manuscripts, furthermore as a Hebraism ("gml vb. #2 to be weaned," CAL, accessed April 15, 2023, https://cal.huc.edu/index.html). Hence the parallelism only really works in Hebrew.

[384] E.g. 2 Chronicles 2:35; Psalm 94:2; Isaiah 3:11; Joel 3:4,7.

"*Children*, how hard it is to enter the kingdom of God!

It is easier for a *weaned child/reward* to pass through the eye of a needle

than a *rich man* to enter into the kingdom of God."

Here, 'weaned child' references 'children' in the previous stich, just as 'reward' references 'rich man' in the following. We also have a third meaning, 'camel', which, purely in terms of divine comparison, might render it more a 'Brahma parallelism'. But does גַמל meet our criteria for a deliberate Janus parallelism?

a) Semantic Proximity

A semantic chasm ostensibly divides 'weaned child' from 'reward', words which would never be labelled English synonyms. In Hebrew, however, its meaning in Isaiah 18:5, which relays the ripening (גֹּמֵל) of buds and sour grapes, reveals a trifold semantic connection. For fruit and flowers *ripen* by being fed, or figuratively *weaned*, both by human carers and heavenly magnanimity, and thus receive their benefit or *reward*. Hence, one might argue that 10:24-25 offers no true parallelism, merely a word with one basic meaning that happens to exude multiple nuances. Yet some semantic distance remains between 'weaned child' and 'reward', as they cannot be used interchangeably, even in Hebrew, in numerous contexts. Genesis 21:8, for example, recounts the great feast held by Abraham on the day that Isaac was weaned. To use 'rewarded' instead of 'weaned' here renders the sentence nonsense. Further still, if we allow both meanings, the exact same Janus parallelism from Mark emerges in the Isaac narrative, revealing a hitherto unnoticed parallelism in Genesis:

וַיִּגְדַּל הַיֶּלֶד	And the child *grew*
וַיִּגָּמַל	and was *weaned/rewarded*
וַיַּעַשׂ אַבְרָהָם מִשְׁתֶּה גָדוֹל	and Abraham made *a great feast*

Accordingly, one might even speculate, was the Genesis pun Mark's inspiration for 10:24-25?

b) Narrative Synthesis

The rendition 'weaned child' resoundingly echoes the context that precedes the 'rich man' pericope (10:17-29). Indeed, Mark's account of Jesus welcoming and embracing small children arguably sets the scene for it (10:13-16), particularly Jesus's pronouncement in 10:15: "Truly I tell you, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it." This perfectly complements Jesus's point about the weaned child in 10:24-25; the synthesis is remarkable. Conversely, without the reading 'weaned child' as a possibility, a jarring contrast emerges between the passages, one that, as Wilson records, troubled even Shakespeare's Richard II:

"For no thought is contented. The better sort,
As thoughts of things divine, are intermixed
With scruples, and do set the word itself
Against the word, as thus: "Come, little ones,"
And then again,
"It is as hard to come as for a camel
To thread the postern of a small needle's eye."[385]

(Richard II: Act 5, Scene 5, 11-17).

How can Jesus so easily welcome untested children into heaven when, for others, the task is impossible? Faced with this paradoxical puzzle, the substitution for 'camel' of 'weaned child', which hints at the importance of relying on God and the community for sustenance, and ultimately salvation, provides a clue.

'Reward' likewise strikes a chord with the pericope's conclusion. In response to Peter's exasperation, Jesus reassures him that all who follow him, forsaking what they have on Earth, will receive a different yet greater reward, not of material wealth but human fellowship, and, in the coming age, eternal life (10:26-30). Hence, following the parallelism, the concept of reward permeates the remainder of the passage. This said, Jesus does not need 'weaned child' and 'reward' as alternatives for 'camel' to make 10:24-25's basic point: that entering the kingdom of heaven is impossible for a rich man. The story and its conclusion make perfect sense without hidden meanings, thus we cannot ascertain intentional polysemy based on narrative synthesis alone.

c) Theological Coherence

The idea of not being self-sufficient, as a weaned child, but relying on God and His community to inherit the kingdom, abounds in Mark. When Jesus abides for forty days in the desert, surrounded by wild animals and tempted by Satan, it is God's angels who protect him (1:13). Similarly, when Jesus commissions the disciples to do God's work, he stipulates that they must carry neither money nor bread (6:8). Hence the disciples become wholly dependent on God's grace and the charity of those they encounter. Echoing this motif, Jesus's first feeding miracle, where he looks to heaven and gives thanks before feeding five thousand with five loaves (6:41), and the second, where Jesus gives thanks not once but twice before enacting the miracle (8:6-7), further illustrate this concept of dependence on the divine, in addition to the exponential blessings that accompany acts of communal sharing. Accordingly, Jesus explicitly teaches this principle to his disciples when he states that faith in God and forgiveness of interpersonal grudges are prerequisite to receiving unlimited rewards, including divine remission of sins (11:22-25). Thus, the recurring gospel concept of remaining unweaned (dependent on God and communal charity) and subsequently receiving divine reward, is coherently summarised by the parallelism. The 'reward' idea also coheres elsewhere with Marcan theology. Jesus denounces the insidious and cancerous nature of greed that thrives on materialism

[385] Wilson, "Mark," 810.

and likewise pronounces the prosperity that arises from practising charity and cultivating spiritual refinement. When Jesus tells Peter that anyone who follows him will receive hundredfold rewards (10:30), he echoes the multiplied bread and fish of his feeding miracles. Obversely, when Jesus denounces the Torah scholars and Pharisees for promoting a lack of filial charity (7:9-13), and devouring the houses of widows whilst they themselves live luxuriously, stating that a greater condemnation awaits them (12:38-40), he emphasises the unrewarding consequences of living an opposing lifestyle. The theological coherence of 10:24-25's parallelism as a concise epithet for one of Jesus's key teachings is undeniable.

From a reader-response critic's perspective, this teaching's importance to Mark is amplified by the way he draws the reader into the story, by making them sympathetic to the rich man's plight. Resseguie (1984) explains how the narrator decreases the distance between reader and character, which enhances the reader's involvement with his quest. "The man's request of Jesus is sincere: he runs up to Jesus and reverentially kneels… his question is not asked to test Jesus (cf. Mark 12:13-15, 10:2; Luke 10:25). The list of commandments which he has kept from his youth heightens his sincerity, while the positive description of Jesus' response to the man ("Jesus looking upon him loved him") increases the reader's sympathy…"[386]

d) Structural Density

10:24-25 clearly meets our criterion of structural density. The parallelism consists of a verse and a half, terse enough to compare with the poetic and prosaic examples from the Hebrew Bible. Further, 'weaned child' clearly relates to Jesus's term for his disciples ("Children") in 10:24 and 'reward' is evocative of the rich man in 10:25. We should note too that elsewhere Mark's Jesus never refers to his disciples as children, nor does he assign them any collective appellation whatsoever. Indeed, both Matthew (19:24) and Luke (18:25) seem jarred by the oddness of Mark's terminology, for each omits it from their parallel accounts. Why then employ this conspicuous mode of address in 10:25, if not to forge a wordplay? Though Black (1967) observes the Aramaic for child (טליה) can also mean servant,[387] Mark's Jesus never calls his disciples servants either, nor does he treat them so.

e) Etymological Integrity

The Hebrew language alone possesses these dual meanings for κάμηλος, once it has been reconstructed as גמל. Both 'weaned child' and 'reward' are unattested as alternatives for κάμηλος in Greek, and the Aramaic גַּמְלָא fails to evoke 'weaned child', which suggests a Greek translation of an original Hebrew source may have accidentally obscured Mark's wordplay. Supporting this contention, evidence exists in Talmudic literature for the existence of a similar saying, one that references an

[386] James Resseguie, "Reader-Response Criticism and the Synoptic Gospels," *JAAR* 52,2 (1984): 312-3.
[387] Black, *An Aramaic Approach*, 221.

elephant passing through a needle's eye as a metaphor for the impossible.[388] Minear (1942) thus states: "The imagery is drawn from Jewish tradition and would be entirely clear to the rural folk of Galilee."[389] The camel variation, however, does not appear in previous Jewish literature, making its first known appearance in Mark. This suggests to me that Mark's sources, knowing the Hebrew saying about the elephant, transformed it into a camel for a literary reason: the parallelism. Further, if they knew such a saying from highbrow Hebrew literature, even if it had become a popular spoken idiom, Hebrew or Aramaic would likely have been their mother tongue. This, considering too that a parallelism only emerges in Hebrew, suggests an initial Hebrew composition of the Marcan pericope.

In conclusion, 10:24-25's classic Janus structure that showcases different nuances of גמל, particularly in view of Jesus's atypical appellation for his disciples ('children'), in a pun whose meanings gel so well with the immediate narrative and reflect similar theology in separate passages, suggests intentional parallelism, birthed in Hebrew then lost in translation. The saying's unique form, where the elephant from the contemporary proverb has conspicuously been transformed into a camel, further exudes intentionality. However, the arguments form a complex mass not easy to digest. I therefore propose a theory that snugly interknits several strands of the evidence; just one possible explanation for how the *gahmahl* parallelism might have been conceived, foregrounded, obscured, and buried. A pre-Marcan Aramaic tradition, written or oral, presented Jesus using the popular 'elephant through a needle's eye' saying to illustrate the impossibility of a rich man entering God's kingdom. A later Hebrew tradition took up this story, its author noticing the similarity between it and the preceding tale about children inheriting the kingdom. It then occurred to the author, while picturing the elephant attempting to traverse the eye, that the word for another large animal, a camel, was near-identical to the Hebrew for 'weaned child', and that this word could also denote a reward, which likewise struck a chord with the rich man. Thus the author decided to enhance the tale by suggesting all three meanings within a parallelism, which he forged by changing the elephant to a camel, and by adding the appellation 'Children' to commence Jesus's address. Accordingly, the children from the previous tale are contrasted with the rich man in the following, emphasizing the central gospel message that the path to salvation requires reliance on God and His community, not servitude to materialism. When Mark faithfully translated his source into Koine, the Greek obscured the Hebrew wordplay. Subsequently, when Matthew and Luke took up Mark's story, each was disconcerted enough by the oddity of 'Children' to remove it from their retellings, inadvertently decapitating the parallelism.

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[388] E.g. Berakhot 55b; b. Baba Metzia 38b. In Berakhot 55b, Rabbi Rava is quoted in support of Rabbi Jonathan's argument that images seen in dreams are limited to the wakeful conceptions of the dreamer. That is, we never dream of the conceptually impossible: "אָמַר רָבָא ׃תֵּדַע, דְּלָא מַחֲווּ לֵיהּ לְאִינִשׁ לָא דִּקְלָא דְּדַהֲבָא וְלָא פִּילָא דְּעָיֵיל בְּקוֹפָא דְמַחְטָא" ("Rava said: know that this is the case, for one is neither shown a golden palm tree nor an elephant going through the eye of a needle in a dream.") In b. Baba Metzia 38b, Rav Sheishet applies this impossibility metaphor to the tenuous reasoning of the sages of Pumbedita: "דלמא מפומבדיתא את דמעיילין פילא בקופא דמחטא" ("Are you from Pumbedita, where they push an elephant through the eye of a needle?")

[389] Paul S. Minear, "The Needle's Eye: A Study in Form Criticism." *JBL* 61,3 (1942): 165.

2.4.5 Paradosis: Tradition and Betrayal

7:1-13 recounts a clash between Jesus and the Pharisees, where the latter question why the disciples fail to follow the elders' tradition[390] and instead eat bread with unwashed hands. Such controversial Pharisaic traditions are well-attested in the first century, both in Josephus and the New Testament.[391] The Qumran scrolls also note the divisiveness of certain traditions, labelling the Pharisees Law-breakers due to them.[392] In similar vein, Jesus rebukes the Pharisees, explaining that, in instituting new traditions, they have discarded God's commandments. Within this condemnation, I perceive a parallelism in Greek and Hebrew; a pun on παράδοσις/יְרֻשָּׁה.

The verb παραδίδωμι occurs 120 times in the New Testament, with several meanings: to pass down a tradition (e.g. Mark 7:13, Acts 6:14), to hand over into custody (e.g. Mark 1:14) or to betray someone (e.g. Mark 3:19).[393] Jesus uses the noun-form παράδοσις several times in his indictment of the Pharisees, in which the parallelism emerges (7:9-10):

How well you displace the commandment of God,

so that you might set up your own *betrayal/tradition*.

For Moses said, 'Honour your father and your mother'…

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[390] Rivkin (1969) defines the Pharisees as a scholar class devoted to their twofold Law, the law of Moses and the oral traditions of their scholars. They opposed the Sadducees who recognised only the former and eventually their unwritten laws, or traditions (halakah), covered all areas of life: including worship, property, judicial procedures and festivals. "They set the date for the cutting of the omer. They set up the procedures for the burning of the red heifer and compelled priestly conformance. They insisted that the High Priest carry through his most sacred act of the year in accordance with their regulations. They determined judicial procedure, the rightful heirs to property, the responsibility of slaves for damages, the purity status of Holy Scriptures" (Ellis Rivkin, "Defining the Pharisees: The Tannaitic Sources." *HUCA* 40/41 (1969): 247).

[391] Rivkin cites Josephus (*Antiquities* 13.297, 408f), who relays discord between the Pharisees and members of the wealthier classes on account of the Pharisees' traditions: "the Pharisees had transmitted to the people certain laws handed down from the Fathers which are not written down in the laws of Moses, and for this reason are rejected by the group of Sadducees, who say only the written laws are to be taught, whereas those handed down from the Fathers are not to be observed. And concerning these matters they came to have controversies and serious differences, the Sadducees having only the confidence of the wealthy, whereas the Pharisees had the support of the masses." Rivkin further cites Paul to evidence the significance of this twofold Law to the Pharisees: "As to the Law, a Pharisee ... as to righteousness under the law blameless (Philippians 3:5, 6)." "And I advanced in Judaism beyond many of my own age among my people, so extremely zealous was I for the *traditions* of my fathers (Galatians 1:14)" (Rivkin, "Defining the Pharisees," 248-9).

[392] Schiffman notes how several Qumran scrolls, specifically the Pesharim and the Zadokite Fragments in the Admonition, condemn the Pharisees. Traditions that earnt such ire include permitting an uncle to marry his niece in contravention to the spirit of Leviticus 18:13 and Pharisaic acceptance of polygamy. He further cites evidence that "Later tannaitic sources attribute to the Pharisees the dual Torah concept according to which God gave two Torahs to Israel at Sinai, the written text and its oral interpretation. Josephus identifies the Pharisees as the leading experts in biblical interpretation, but he nowhere claims divine inspiration for their teachings" (Laurence Schiffman, "The Pharisees and Their Legal Traditions According to the Dead Sea Scrolls." *DSD* 8,3 (2001): 268).

[393] George V. Wigram, *The Englishman's Greek Concordance of the New Testament*, 3rd ed. (London: Walton and Maberly, 1860): 589.90.

Here 'betrayal' reflects the rejection of God's Law in the previous stich, whereas 'tradition' reflects Jesus's citation of the fifth commandment, part of the original written tradition, in the following. How well does this instance meet our criteria for an intended parallelism?

a) Semantic Proximity

Though the twin meanings might initially seem unrelated, the idea of 'handing over' connects betrayal and tradition. Just as a father might hand over a tradition to his son, a traitor might hand over a friend to his enemy. Echoing the latter usage, both Polybius (9,25,5) and Josephus (The Jewish War; 1,8,6) employ παράδοσις to mean 'surrender', in context of a city capitulating to its besiegers.[394] In the New Testament, the verb almost always conveys this sense of surrender, of a person handed over into the power of other people (e.g. a judge in Matthew 5:25; the Gentiles in Mark 10:33) or things (e.g. 'chains' in 2 Peter 2:4; 'death' in 2 Corinthians 4:11), or connotes a sense of betrayal (e.g. Judas named the 'betrayer' of Jesus in John 18:2 and Mark 14:44).[395] However, the noun παράδοσις, which occurs only 13 times in the New Testament, always conveys a sense of tradition, of a custom handed over from one generation to the next, and a remarkable five of these occurrences appear in Mark 7:3-13.[396] Moreover, Mark uses both verb and noun forms in close proximity in 7:13a:

ἀκυροῦντες τὸν λόγον τοῦ Θεοῦ τῇ παραδόσει ὑμῶν ᾗ παρεδώκατε[397]

I feel it possible, therefore, that Mark seeks to highlight the relationship between the verb's typical connotation of surrender or betrayal and the noun's typical connotation of 'custom' via the kind of Hebraistic repetition that so often signals a pun.

b) Narrative Synthesis

The narrative context prior to 7:9-13 clearly emphasises tradition, even detailing a Jewish hand-washing ritual (7:3-4). In 7:14-23, Jesus delineates what truly defiles people: rather than physically unclean matter that enters our bodies from outside and damages our health within, it is, inversely, the evils that take root in our hearts and then outwardly manifest. This chimes with the concept of malicious treachery suggested by παράδοσις. Structurally, therefore, the section (7:1-23) commences with a Pharisaical polemic on the importance of tradition, continues with a condemnation by Jesus of the traditions/betrayals of the Pharisees, and ends with a sermon on the evil attitudes that render people unclean and ultimately express as ungodly actions. Thus, the entire section presents as a Janus macrocosm of the

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[394] *Thayer's Lexicon*, 481.
[395] Wigram, *The Englishman's Greek Concordance*, 589-90.
[396] Wigram, *The Englishman's Greek Concordance*, 590.
[397] "Nullifying the word of God with the traditions that you hand down/betray." Does this mean the handing down of Pharisaic oral traditions nullifies God's word, or do the Pharisees nullify God's word by betraying the *written* traditions, or both?

parallelism that sits midway at 7:9-10, where the traditions discussed in 7:1-8 are revealed as betrayals in 7:11-13, with Jesus expounding on this point in 7:14-23.

c) Theological Coherence

A dual meaning for παράδοσις, as tradition and betrayal, broadens Mark's message. Mark uses the verbal form in 1:14 to describe the treacherous treatment of the Baptist (that 6:14-29 relays in detail), though it is unclear whether a 'betrayal' translation for 1:14 would refer to John's imprisonment by Herod, or Herod's execution of John, or the underhanded scheming of Herodias that triggers John's demise, or all three. Similarly, the Herodians, along with the Pharisees, are already plotting Jesus's murder in 3:6. Hence, in 7:9-10, just as Herod betrayed the Baptist, and the Herodians and Pharisees plotted to betray Jesus to death, so too the Pharisees are revealed as betrayers of God's commandments. In the following chapter, Jesus warns his disciples to beware the yeast of the Pharisees and Herod (8:15), which, as 2.3.3 explores, appears to reference their infectious evil. In 14:10-11, the verb is twice used to describe Judas's plot to betray Jesus to the chief priests. In 14:41, Mark uses παραδίδοται in Jesus's pronouncement that he is about to be betrayed (or delivered) into the hands of men, after which Jesus is imprisoned, put on trial and crucified. In 14:42, Jesus refers to Judas, who has led his captors to him, as παραδιδούς (the one betraying me/handing me over). In 9:31, commencing his second passion prediction, Jesus prophesies this betrayal using the same verb (παραδίδοται), just as he does in 10:33's third passion prediction (παραδοθήσεται). Clearly, to Mark, even if we opt for a 'handing over' translation in each of these instances, the verb was steeped in connotations of treachery. Accordingly, in 7:9-13, Jesus upbraids the Pharisees, who were already plotting to betray him, by condemning their betrayal of God Himself. Though superficially Jesus speaks of the Pharisees ignoring the commandment of God in order to institute their own practices, such as the *qorban* tradition, deeper undertones of betrayal already permeate Jesus's choice of word (1:14; 6:14-29) and continue to do so (9:31; 10:33; 14:10-11, 41-42) throughout Mark's narrative. Moreover, a dual interpretation for παράδοσις significantly enhances the impact of this pericope's message. To replace God's commandment with human *tradition* is an act of hubris, perhaps the most heinous act of *treachery* imaginable for a Torah-observant Jew. Thus, the resonant connotations of treachery exuded by παράδοσις dramatically intensify Mark's point.

Tellingly, such accusations of Pharisaic treachery in Mark's day, and even puns to describe them, were not gospel-confined. Schiffman notes a similar pun in the Zadokite Fragments (CD 5:7-8) that condemns Pharisaic devotion to their oral law, where חלקות (flatteries/smooth talk/deceptions)[398] appears where we expect to see הלקות (halakot, that is, teachings; in this case the Pharisees' oral traditions).[399] Schiffman states: "The pun on הלקות in the phrase דורשי חלקות, 'expounders of false laws,' used for the Pharisees, refers specifically to their acceptance of laws not

[398] Wigram, *Englishman's Hebrew and Chaldee*, 436. .

[399] For a detailed discussion on the differences between Pharisaic and Zadokite halakot, see: Jacob Lauterbach, "Midrash and Mishnah. A Study in the Early History of the Halakah. II." *JQR* 6,1 (1915): 82-95.

derived from exegesis of Scripture as halakhah."[400] Such paronomastic condemnation might be seen to support the case for a similar anti-Pharisee pun in Mark 7.

d) Structural Density

The compactness of Jesus's double-edged pronouncement in 7:9-10 is as tight as the archetypal instances of Janus parallelism found in the Book of Job. With παράδοσις as betrayal, the latter part of verse 9 looks back to the former, where Jesus condemns the Pharisees for betraying God by rejecting his commandment. Obversely, the start of verse 10 reflects παράδοσις as tradition, where Jesus repeats the fifth commandment endorsed by Moses, which, as part of the Decalogue (Exodus 20:2-17; Deuteronomy 5:6-21), is essential to the written tradition. Hammering home the point, 7:11-13 further details the Pharisees' betrayal of this tradition, emphasising how their methods work to nullify the word of God Himself. Hence the semantic connections, between the twin meanings of παράδοσις and their respective stichs, resonate forcefully.

e) Etymological Integrity

The wordplay works not only in Greek. We can also reconstruct a Hebrew template, with יוֹרֵשׁ/יָרַשׁ replacing παραδίδωμι/παράδοσις, to form a similar parallelism. In the Hebrew Bible, יָרַשׁ often means 'to inherit' (e.g. Isaiah 57:13), yet can also mean to dispossess, destroy or bring to ruin (e.g. Exodus 15:9). Indeed, its meaning frequently straddles these definitions in describing a violent dispossession of land, that is, an 'inheritance' by force of arms (e.g. Judges 1:21-33), and this is always its meaning in the Hiphil stem. As a noun (יוֹרֵשׁ), it has the sense of 'heir', the recipient of what will be handed down (e.g Jeremiah 49:1) or a possession taken by force (יְרֵשָׁה: Numbers 24:18).[401] This allows us to Hebraistically render 7:9-10a:

"nullifying the word of God with the *handings down/dispossessions* that you hand down/aggressively enforce."

Yet there is a further possibility. In Hebrew and Aramaic, the noun 'traditions' (משלמ), deriving from the verb (משל), can reference both proverbs/teachings (i.e. *meshalim*), handed down from one generation to the next, or traitors and treacheries, and the verbal form embodies this same double-entendre. In Aramaic, the Peshitta of Mark evidences this ambiguity, as the noun for 'teachings' in 7:9 (משלמ) is used for 'traitor' in 14:44. Likewise, the verb meaning 'betray' in 14:44 (משל) appears in 7:13 to mean 'deliver/hand down'.[402] [403] In Hebrew, a similar relationship exists

[400] Schiffman, "The Pharisees," 269.
[401] Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten*, 642-3.
[402] "Mark 7. Peshitta Aramaic-English New Testament," Bible Hub, accessed November 14, 2022, https://biblehub.com/aramaic-english/mark/7.htm.
[403] "Mark 14. Peshitta Aramaic-English New Testament," Bible Hub, accessed November 14, 2022, https://biblehub.com/aramaic-english/mark/7.htm.

between noun and verb, for, just as מָשָׁל means proverb/teaching, the verb מָשַׁל can mean either to speak a proverb or to rule or dominate and, in the Hiphil stem, to enforce dominion of one party over another (e.g. Daniel 11:39/Psalm 8:6(7)).[404]

Thus we might alternately render 7:9-10a, working again in the Semitic tongues:

"nullifying the word of God with the *proverbs/betrayals* that you speak/enforce."

Either way, the surprising fact that this parallelism works not only in Greek, but also in Hebrew and Aramaic, certainly emboldens its credibility as intentional wordplay.

In conclusion, the evidence suggests Mark intended a παράδοσις pun, whose original form may well have been Hebrew or Aramaic. In 7:9-10a, this pun takes the typically terse Janus form, which may possibly have been accidental, especially given how liberally Mark peppers 7:5-13 with 'παράδοσις', both as noun and verb (five times). Use a double-entendre often enough and eventually a parallelism may occur by chance. However, the instance in 7:9-10a certainly works as a parallelism, and most likely Mark at least intended a pun.

2.4.6 Sahlach: To Forgive, Reject and Exult

Mark 10:13-14 reads: "People were bringing little children to Jesus for him to place his hands on them, but the disciples rebuked them. When Jesus saw this, he was indignant. He said to them, 'Allow the little children to come to me, and do not hinder (κωλύετε) them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these." One Hebrew verb that carries the sense of κωλύω is סָלָה, which twice renders the meaning 'tread underfoot/reject' in the Hebrew Bible (Psalm 119:118 (Qal stem); Lamentations 1:15 (Piel stem)). Curiously, in the Pual stem, the verb conversely means to place value on something or weigh its worth (Job 28:16, 19).[405] Mirroring this reversal, the verb Mark uses for 'allow' is ἀφίημι, which, elsewhere in the New Testament, conveys the opposing meanings 'abandon', 'leave', divorce' and 'send away'.[406] Matters are further complicated by the existence of another Hebrew verb, סָלַח, which carries ἀφίημι's sense of 'graciously allow' or 'forgive' whilst reflecting the form of סָלָה.[407] Then there is the mysterious סֶלָה,[408] oft-cited in Psalms and possibly deriving from סָלַל (to 'lift up' or 'exult').[409] This, in turn, strikes a chord with Jesus's suggestion that children will inherit the kingdom. Hence we have multiple punning options to consider when reconstructing the saying in Hebrew. However, focusing on parallelism, I think our most ambitious might be:

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[404] Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten,* 874-5.
[405] Wigram, *Englishman's Hebrew and Chaldee*, 877.
[406] Wigram, *The Englishman's Greek Concordance*, 97-8.
[407] Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten,* 998.
[408] "The word סֶלָה, which shifts the accent back to the last syllable of the verb form, indicates that in this context, the verb [סָלַל] is being used in the imperative mood as somewhat of a directive… the writer's instruction to the reader to pause and exalt the Lord" (*BDB*, 699). For a discussion of earlier, alternative interpretations, see: Norman Snaith, "Selah." *VT* 2,1 (1952): 43-56.
[409] סֶלָה appears 71 times in Psalms (and elsewhere 3 times in Habakkuk), though its precise meaning has been debated. Its hypothesised parent-verb סָלַל appears 12 times in the Hebrew Bible (Lisowsky, *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Alten*, 998).

Kindly allow (סָלַח) the little children to come to me,

And do not pardon (סָלַח)/ reject (סָלָה)/ exult (סֶלָה/סָלַל) them,

For the kingdom of God belongs to such as these.

This rendition appeals for two reasons. First, I feel it forms the cleanest possible parallelism, with 'pardon' clearly mirroring 'kindly allow' in the previous stich and 'exult' reflecting, in the following stich, children's promised citizenship in God's kingdom. Second, this rendition strikes a chord with Mark's *gahmahl* parallelism (see above), where an obvious literal meaning (in this case 'reject') sits alongside twin alternatives. In my *gahmahl* analysis, I tentatively named this phenomenon 'Brahma parallelism', after the tricephalic Hindu god, since I have not observed the device in Hebrew literature, let alone a technical term for it. It may even be a Marcan innovation, or an innovation of Mark's sources, building on the well-established concept of Janus parallelism, or it may be coincidental convergence. However a simpler, more typical Janus rendition might be:

Kindly allow (סָלַח) the little children to come to me,

And do not reject (סָלָה)/ exult (סֶלָה/סָלַל) them,

For the kingdom of God belongs to such as these.

Here, the exhortation not to reject mirrors 'kindly allow' in the previous stich, and 'exult' reflects the children's inheritance of God's kingdom in the following stich. The overwhelming stumbling block remains a question mark over the meaning of סֶלָה, which scholars have hotly debated (see [330]). However, we can surmount this obstacle by avoiding the word altogether, arranging the parallelism thus:

Kindly allow (סָלַח) the little children to come to me,

And do not reject (סָלָה)/ pardon (סָלַח) them,

For the kingdom of God belongs to such as these.

In this arrangement, the idea of the children not needing the disciples' pardon for potentially bothering Jesus is reflected in the following stich's promise of their future place in God's kingdom. Since only this third rendition stands free from the סֶלָה controversy, we shall explore whether Mark intended it as a parallelism.

a) Semantic Proximity

Considerable semantic distance rests between the concepts of rejection and forgiveness; they might almost be considered antonyms. This strengthens the case for *sahlah-sahlach* as intentional Janus wordplay.

b) Narrative Synthesis

Jesus's teaching on divorce precedes this pericope. Here, Jesus utilises the same verb he uses to instruct his disciples to 'allow' the children to approach him (ἀφίημι), only in this context it means 'divorce'. Moreover, he exhorts the Pharisees not to divorce (i.e. reject) their wives under any circumstance, which strikes a further chord with his subsequent instruction to the disciples not to reject the children. Jesus's encounter with the rich man follows this pericope, which concludes with the teaching that, to be saved (i.e. forgiven for sins) and enter God's kingdom, one must sacrifice self-sufficiency and become as an unweaned child: reliant on God's grace (see *gahmahl* analysis above). Hence, as with the *gahmahl* wordplay, the entire section (10:1-31) presents as a Janus macrocosm, with 10:14's 'rejection' not merely pointing to the previous stich but the previous story (10:1-12) and its alternate meaning 'forgive' pointing both to the following stich and the overarching theme of the following story (10:17-31).

c) Theological Coherence

The counter-intuitive link between initial rejection and a subsequent outpouring of divine grace, leading to exultation, is vital to Mark's theology. In the rich man's tale, Jesus advises his inquisitor to reject his worldly goods, in exchange for treasure in heaven (10:21). In each of the passion predictions, Jesus foretells how the Son of Man must be rejected by the elders, chief priests and Torah scholars and condemned to death, only to rise again after three days (8:31; 9:31; 10:33-34). The disciples too are destined to be hated, yet those who endure till the end will be saved (13:13). Thus, in linking the concepts of rejection and forgiveness/exaltation, the parallelism highlights a crucial paradox within Jesus's teaching.

d) Structural Density

The parallelism meets our criterion of structural density, boasting words whose meanings respectively reference their previous and following stichs, in typically dense Janus format. In addition, 'do not reject' closely mirrors 'kindly allow' as a negative form of the initial positive statement. Likewise, 'do not pardon' is explained by the following stich; those who belong to God's kingdom require no human forgiveness. The necessity of adding a negative to the Janus word to make the parallelism work is, however, a problem. Hebrew Bible parallelisms do not function this way. Also, the link between 'pardon' and the inheritance of God's kingdom feels somewhat tenuous.

e) Etymological Integrity

The parallelism works only in Hebrew. In Greek, Mark uses ἐξουδενόω (9:12), ἀποδοκιμάζω (9:31) and the multivalent ἀφίημι (7:8) to express rejection, and ἀφίημι again to denote forgiveness (e.g. 3:29). While ἀφίημι would work if it sat at the

parallelism's centre, here we find κωλύω instead. In Middle Aramaic, the verb סלח ('to forgive') mirrors the Hebrew.[410] However, I have found no Aramaism that connotes both forgiveness and rejection, though סלי ('to reject')[411] approaches סלח in lexical form, rendering merely a pun.

In conclusion, the connection between the parallelism, the surrounding pericopae and the rejection-forgiveness paradox in Mark strongly indicate intentional wordplay. Yet the density of potential wordplays in 10:14 makes it impossible to ascertain whether Mark was aiming for parallelism, a pun, or a string of puns. However, 10:14 roughly resembles Janus form, whether or not Mark engineered it. I feel the fundamental flaws of this candidate are the tenuous connection between 'pardon' and the inheritance of God's kingdom, and the atypical inclusion of the negative in a parallelism, where we expect to read one word only, to make it work.

2.4.7 Chamets: Infectious Evil, Cruelty and Leaven

We have already explored dual meanings of חָמֵץ (cruelty/leaven) and ζύμη (infectious evil/infectious good/leaven) in 2.3.3. Now we inspect how Mark arguably employs the wordplay in a parallelism (8:15-16).

And Jesus exhorted them: "*Beware! Watch out*...

…for the *infectious evil* (Greek); *cruelty* (Hebrew)/*leaven* of the Pharisees and the *infectious* evil (Greek); *cruelty* (Hebrew)/*leaven* of Herod.

And they were saying to one another: "We have no *loaves*."

Here, the infectious evil or cruelty of Jesus's opponents in 8:15b recalls the dual exhortation to beware in 8:15a, whereas the literal 'leaven' foreshadows the disciples' reference to loaves in 8:16.

a) Semantic Proximity

As we have discussed, the semantic link between leaven and infection stem from leaven's property as a raising agent. Just as leaven increases the spread in volume of bread, so infection increases the spread in volume of disease. Regarding the Hebrew connotation of bitterness or cruelty, this might well derive from the bitter taste of yeast or a similar leavening agent. Thus, considering the closeness in meaning of leaven's connotations in Hebrew and Greek, further evidence is required to demonstrate the word, in 8:15-16, forms the crux of an intentional parallelism.

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[410] "slḥ vb. a/a to forgive," CAL, accessed April 13, 2013, https://cal.huc.edu.
[411] "sly vb. C to reject," CAL, accessed April 13, 2013, https://cal.huc.edu.

b) Narrative Synthesis

Leaven's connotations of cruelty and bitterness embody the aggressive and cynical character of the Pharisees in the previous pericope (8:11-13). Its connotation of evil influence likewise reflects Jesus's concern for his disciples not to be swayed by the pushy attitude they exhibit (8:11). Obversely, leaven as a raising agent for bread is reflected in Jesus's subsequent discussion with his disciples (8:17-21). Thus both meanings of leaven, in Hebrew and Greek, reflect their respective narrative contexts.

Further, if we read 8:11-21 as a single section, I notice a certain 'tug-of-war' pattern (ABABAB) emerges that juxtaposes the spiritual (evil infection/positive infection) and materialistic (bitterness/providing sustenance) connotations of leaven, strengthening the case for 8:15's deliberate duality.

- The Pharisees aggressively demand a physical sign of Jesus's authority (*bitterness; materialistic*) 8:11
- Jesus criticises their lack of faith and leaves (*spiritual*) 8:12-13
- The disciples have forgotten to bring bread (*leaven; materialistic*) 8:14
- Jesus warns against the attitudes of the Pharisees and Herodians (*bitterness/infectious evil; spiritual*) 8:15
- Rather than reflecting on Jesus's warning,[412] the disciples worry that they have no bread (*leaven; materialistic*) 8:16
- Referencing the symbolic nature of the feeding miracles, Jesus reminds his disciples that the power of faith and communal sharing has the multiplying effect of leaven, allowing them to overcome any material challenge (*infectious goodness; spiritual*) 8:17-21

c) Theological Coherence

We have already discussed the strong theological resonances of Hebrew and Greek connotations of leaven in Mark (2.3.3): this potential parallelism meets our criterion of theological coherence.

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[412] Although some translations interpret 8:16 as the disciples misunderstanding Jesus's exhortation to beware his opponents' leaven (e.g. NIV: "They discussed this with one another and said, 'It is because we have no bread'"), I find this unlikely. The disciples concluding that a connection exists between avoiding something symbolically bread-related pertaining to Pharisees and the lack of loaves in their own boat makes little sense and, despite Mark's tendency to portray the disciples as slow-witted, I feel this level of obtuseness sinks into parody. Perhaps in reaction to this strange response from the disciples, some of our earliest manuscripts (p45, B, W) give an alternate reading (καὶ διελογίζοντο πρὸς ἀλλήλους ὅτι ἄρτους οὐκ ἔχουσιν: And they were saying to one another: '*They* have no bread!'). This reflects a more believable level of confusion, where Jesus uses a figure to describe the Pharisees and the disciples' (deliberately humorous?) response simply indicates they fail to understand its symbolism. However, I think the best interpretation is that the disciples are simply not focused on Jesus's warning and continue to have their own separate conversation. After all, Jesus has not asked them a question, so why would we expect an answer? The grounds for the disciples' conversation are already laid out in 8:14, before Jesus's warning, and Mark's use of διελογίζοντο ('they were discussing'; imperfect) suggests a conversation was continuing when Jesus made his pronouncement. Also, the phrase διελογίζοντο πρὸς ἀλλήλους (they were discussing *with one another*) suggests the disciples were not responding to Jesus.

d) Structural Density

The wordplay spreads over two short verses (23 words in Greek), proving terse enough to qualify as typical Janus parallelism. Further, Jesus's use of the dramatic διαστέλλομαι (to charge expressely/exhort) followed by twin imperatives meaning 'beware' (Ὁρᾶτε; βλέπετε) in 8:15a compose a suitable warning against cruelty or evil infection in 8:15b, whereas 'leaven' clearly corresponds to loaves in 8:16. The semantic connection between the different meanings and their respective stichs is robust.

e) Etymological Integrity

That the wordplay works both in Hebrew and Greek increases the likelihood of a deliberate usage, especially since we do not need to reconstruct a hypothetical Semitic original to perceive a parallelism. In Aramaic, though 'leavening' appears once in the Peshitta of the Babylonian Talmud 39b (41), several centuries after Mark, no clear connotation of cruelty or bitterness arises.[413]

In conclusion, that the wordplay works in Greek and Hebrew, theologically coheres with Mark's message, takes typical Janus form, and exudes resonant narrative synthesis, strongly suggests an intentional Marcan parallelism.

2.4.8 Son of Man: Lowly Mortal and Child of the Soil

As we later detail, 'son of man' (בֶּן-אָדָם) appears plentifully in the Hebrew Bible, sometimes as a pejorative for 'human'. This concept particularly resonates in Psalm 62:10, where בְּנֵי-אָדָם references men of low degree and בְּנֵי-אִישׁ men of high degree. Psalms 8:4 and 144:3 present a similarly unflattering contrast, this time between lowly humans and God, questioning: why does God concern himself with mere mortals? That בֶּן-אָדָם has lowly connotations is unsurprising given the connection between אָדָם (human) and אֲדָמָה (earth/ground/soil). In the Hebrew Bible, this link even emerges in a pun in the Yahwist creation story (Genesis 2:7):

וַיִּיצֶר יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים אֶת-הָאָדָם, עָפָר מִן-הָאֲדָמָה

"And YHWH-God formed man, dust from the ground."

A son of man, therefore, is a creature of dust, as his creation tale tells and as the first man's name, Adam, reflects. Little wonder then that בֶּן-אָדָם bears humble connotations. As 3.2 and 3.3.1 explore, scholars have also examined the term's many appearances in Ezekiel, some interpreting its use as a derogatory address to the prophet. For now, we shall focus on a particular occurrence in Mark 2:10. Jesus is about to heal a paralytic whose sins he proclaims forgiven. The Torah scholars are outraged, charging Jesus with blasphemy, for who can forgive sins but God

[413] CAL, accessed April 12, 2023, https://cal.huc.edu/showachapter.php?fullcoord=7100401039241.

alone? Jesus insists the son of man (ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου) indeed has authority to forgive, and proves it by curing the invalid's paralysis. In the 'Son of Man' chapter, we shall discuss diverse scholarly interpretations of this difficult verse. For now, let us focus on what happens when we render ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου in Hebrew:

"But so that you might know that he has authority,

The Son of Man; a lowly mortal/the son of the ground,

To forgive sins on the earth…"

The apocalyptic Son of Man, the divinely empowered saviour of contemporaneous Jewish literature,[414] would certainly qualify as the previous stich's authority figure. However, a lowly mortal would also qualify, in a different way, as a candidate whose authority would need to be proven or known. Either way, בֶּן-אָדָם as 'son of the ground' reflects 'earth' in the following stich. But were these dualities intentional?

a) Semantic Proximity

In Hebrew, אָדָם and אֲדָמָה are semantic neighbours, the former deriving from the latter in Genesis 2:7. The Hebrew Bible uses the adjectives אָדֹם (ruddy) and אָדֹם (red) to describe the colour of skin, both human (Lamentations 4:7) and animal (e.g. Exodus 25:5),[415] ostensibly reflecting the hue of soil (אֲדָמָה). We therefore require further evidence to demonstrate the intentionality of wordplay on אָדָם and אֲדָמָה.

b) Narrative Synthesis

Scholars have labelled 2:10's grammar, and relation to its subsequent verse, conspicuously clumsy, which churns up problems when seeking a clear, poetic parallelism. Cranfield (1959) relays that 2:10a is usually understood as part of Jesus's address to the Torah scholars, with 2:10b (λέγει τῷ παραλυτικῷ) a Marcan parenthesis to show the following words are not addressed to them but the paralytic, which renders the verse inelegant. Cranfield considers the explanation that the parenthesis is Mark's own comment to his readers far more satisfactory, referencing a similar Marcan aside in 7:19 (καθαρίζων πάντα τὰ βρώματα).[416] Hay (1970) concurs, claiming it the "one solution which properly relieves the syntactical difficulty… to treat the son of man saying as a parenthetical remark directed to the reader." Hay cites a similar aside in 13:14 (ὁ ἀναγινώσκων νοείτω), where Mark is likewise concerned with readers' comprehension of the narrative. Hay concludes that, in modern translation, "the saying should be removed from the quotation and placed in parentheses, as is always done with 13 14."[417] Bilezekian (1977) posits that this ironic wink at the reader, who knows Jesus is self-referencing with 'Son of Man', "does not become clear to the personae of the Gospel until the momentous

[414] See 3.1 on 1 Enoch and 4 Ezra.
[415] Wigram, *Englishman's Hebrew and Chaldee*, 20-1.
[416] Cranfield, *According to Saint Mark*, 100.
[417] Lewis S. Hay, "The Son of Man in Mark 2:10 and 2:28." *JBL* 89,1 (1970): 70-1.

confrontation with the high priest."[418] If this saying is indeed self-referential, it weakens the paronomastic interpretation that 2:10's 'Son of Man' refers to a lowly mortal and son of the ground, neither of which seem worthy descriptions of Mark's Jesus.

Others, however, disagree, and we shall explore more fully the arguments debating 2:10's titular referent in 3.3. Camery-Hoggatt (1992) observes the story would not cohere without this phrase, rendering difficult the interpretation that 2:10a is merely a parenthetical remark to the reader.[419] I concur with this assessment as, immediately after Jesus poses the Torah scholars a question, we would either have 2:11's command to the paralytic, with no textual cue to indicate a change of referent, or 2:10b starting a new sentence with 'λέγει τῷ παραλυτικῷ'. The latter is distinctively atypical of Mark, who almost always employs καί or δέ to introduce a new sentence. I further add that 2:10a's comment takes far more ambiguous form than 13:14's obvious aside, which directly addresses the reader as 'ὁ ἀναγινώσκων'. Rather, 2:10a resembles 7:19b which, rather than an aside, could easily be interpreted as a continuation of the text.[420] In my view, 2:10a presents Jesus continuing to speak to the Torah scholars, since no textual cue appears, as in 13:14, to suggest a change of referent. I argue, moreover, that this interpretation would only render 2:10b-11 inelegant, with its sudden change of referent ('λέγει τῷ παραλυτικῷ'), as part of a written narrative, not a spoken one. Even Cranfield concedes that, were Jesus making these comments, he "would presumably have made clear this change of the persons addressed by a gesture."[421] So too might Mark, or Mark's sources, in oral recitations to their non-literate audiences.

Thus, 2:10's focus is not to present an ironic reference to Jesus that Mark's audience understands (as chapter 3 of my thesis further clarifies), but a reference to what the Torah scholars understood by 'son of man'. In Hebrew or Aramaic, this term, as 3.2 explores, evinced both lowly and superhuman connotations. However, in the current context, an argument about the role of mere humans in forgiving sins, only the former seems relevant: 'lowly human' and 'son of the ground' both ring true with the passage's context. The parallelism's presence, with its humble connotations for 'son of man', strengthens the argument against those who posit that Jesus, in 2:10, primarily references himself rather than humanity.

c) Theological Coherence

If 'lowly mortal' is correct, Mark's claim is astounding, for here Jesus contends mere mortals have earthbound power to forgive sins - yet Mark plugs this idea throughout his gospel. In the following Son saying (2:27-28), Jesus approves the authority of

[418] Gilbert Bilezekian, *The Liberated Gospel: A Comparison of the Gospel of Mark and Greek Tragedy* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1977): 123.
[419] Jerry Camery-Hoggatt, *Irony in Mark's Gospel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992): 112-3.
[420] I feel 7:19 can reasonably be translated: "because it [food] does not enter into the heart but into the intestines, and goes out into the latrine, rendering all foods clean." I.e. The fact that no food enters the human heart, but instead leaves the body entirely, renders all foods fit for consumption.
[421] Cranfield, *According to Saint Mark*, 100.

humans to do as they will on the Sabbath, a day the Hebrew Bible commands Jews keep holy by refraining from work (Exodus 20:8-10). Once again, Jesus delegates divine authority to mortal minds. Jesus further delegates his power of forgiving sins to the disciples (6:7), who emulate their rabbi by healing the sick (6:13). Mark even presents a non-disciple doing likewise, whom Jesus tells his followers not to obstruct (9:38-39). After withering the fig tree, Jesus teaches the power of prayer will enable his disciples to reproduce his feats, even commanding a mountain to throw itself into the sea (11:22-24). Hyperbole perhaps, yet the disciples have already been vested with unearthly power (6:7,13). Thus in 2:10, when Jesus asserts the faculty of mortals to forgive sins, the message, one that permeates Mark, is that God either delegates this power to humans from heaven or (as in 6:7,13) grants it to Jesus who, in turn, transmits it to his earthly disciples.

d) Structural Density

The parallelism is typically tight, covering only fifteen words in Greek. Further, the rendition 'lowly mortal' accurately reflects the subject of the previous stich and debate - the mere human whom Jesus insists has authority to forgive sins - despite the Torah scholars' indignation. The rendition 'child of the soil' likewise chimes with 'on the earth' in the following stich.

e) Etymological Integrity

The parallelism does not work in Greek, but makes sense in Hebrew and Aramaic. Accordingly, ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου can be reconstructed as either בֶּן-אָדָם in the former or בַּר אֱנָשׁ in the latter.[422] Like the Hebrew, בַּר אֱנָשׁ conveys the idea of an ordinary human in the Hebrew Bible.[423] Thus it seems a Greek translation has smothered a Semitic original. Indeed, בֶּן-אָדָם is a single word with the maqqef, which ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου takes four to translate, making this Janus parallelism, which must reside in one word only, impossible to replicate in Greek.

In summary, a Semitic parallelism might explain how an elegant, poetic saying (typical, as we shall see, of Jesus's pronouncements in Mark) became a Greek grammatical mess, as the translator tried to preserve the integrity of an oral tradition in writing, without being able to physically gesture to indicate a change of referents, and lacking awareness of a parallelism's existence. That the parallelism's message coheres so well with the surprising empowerment of lowly mortals elsewhere in Mark supports its intentionality, as does the close semantic relation of each meaning to its respective stich.

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[422] 3.3 (p.106) will explore a similar 'Son of Man' occurrence (2:27-28) that only makes sense in Hebrew/Aramaic.
[423] The plural בְּנֵי אֲנָשָׁא appears in Daniel 2:38 and 5:21 to designate human beings (Wigram, *Englishman's Hebrew and Chaldee*, 141).

2.4.9 Conclusion

In all six instances, it seems wordplay is at work, with a high possibility these wordplays, apart from *sahlach*, were intended parallelisms in their original Semitic form. This rings particularly true of the 'camel through a needle's eye', which bears tremendous evidence within the jarring appellation ("Children") and the structure of Mark 10 to support it, and the *mahlach* instance, where the different meanings (salt/vaporise) so precisely relate to their respective stichs. Notably, each instance occurs in a Jesus saying. This, in turn, suggests the phrases, each a carefully crafted and semantically dense poetic morsel, were not spontaneous utterances but later glosses placed on Jesus's lips, to form a two-pronged message or at least a pun. The origin of four, however, strongly appear to be Semitic, most likely Hebrew, thus it seems Mark or his predecessors drew from primitive Hebrew sources, and possibly at times Aramaic, when reconstructing these sayings in Greek. The two remaining parallelisms, παράδοσις/יְרֵשָׁה and ζύμη/חָמֵץ also work in Greek, even though, as Jesus's Semitic utterances and general Marcan wordplay suggests, this was probably not the mother tongue of Mark's earliest sources. A Greek original for these bilingual multivalences thus seems unlikely, yet not impossible.

Chapter 3: Mark's Multivalent Son

3.1 Introduction

In my initial chapters we explored Semitic and Marcan wordplays. Applying these as touchstones, let us now explore Mark's Semitic wordplay *par excellence*: The Son of Man.

'Son of Man' appears 14 times in Mark*;* most often, scholars have argued, as a self-referential title for Jesus. However, the first two sayings (2:10, 28), relating to the Son of Man's activities on Earth, can clearly be construed as a reference to mankind in general, as we have begun to explore. Eight further instances (8:31; 9:9, 12, 31; 10:33, 45; 14:21 (twice), 41) focus on the Son of Man's suffering or betrayal while three others (8:38; 13:26; 14:62) predict his future vindication. These, along with Mark 2's anthropocentric instances, are the categories into which 'Son of Man' synoptic citations are generally divided, though Hooker clarifies these categories are not clear-cut, noting "a certain overlap of ideas."[424] But how would Mark, or his sources, or his audiences, have understood the term? I will argue the title was deliberately multivalent, as its initial usage in 2:10-11's parallelism indicates. I further contend that Mark wished to emphasize differing strands of this multivalency as his gospel unfolded. I feel 'Son of Man' scholars have paid insufficient attention to Mark as a storyteller when analysing his use of the title, and the possibility that Mark weaves deliberate mystery around it to feed his audience's attention, build suspense, and challenge them to solve the conundrum for themselves. Initially, therefore, we shall explore the development of the term in Jewish theology, which will provide a suitable lens through which to view 'Son of Man' through the eyes of Mark's contemporaries. Then, after exploring what the term might have meant to first-century Jews, we shall tackle each appearance of the term in the order in which Mark presents them. In so doing, we shadow the experience of the gospel's intended audience, observing the multiple nuances unfold, and a focus gradually develop, through their eyes. Studying each usage in narrative sequence might construct a clearer picture of what Mark meant to convey, and spotlight how - and why - his meaning evolves as the story develops. We shall bear in mind the ways and contexts in which Semitic and Marcan literature employs paronomasia, with reference to the first chapters of my thesis, remembering how the device often functions to impart multiple messages or spotlight a crucial point, and to stimulate thought, suspense and enjoyment within a narrative. We shall also examine how a multivalent reading might resolve certain 'Son of Man' problems, such as whether the relevant verses were authentically Marcan.

Myriad monographs and articles have addressed 'Son of Man', enough to swamp the shelves of a small library. I shall thus attempt to summarise the most relevant arguments that pertain to each Marcan usage, to provide a useful overview, while adding my own interpretations. I shall conclude by addressing the question: why

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[424] Regarding the overlap, "Mark 10.45 describes Jesus' present activity as well as his future suffering. Mark 8.31, 9.31 and 10.33 all speak of future vindication as well as suffering, and Mark 9.9 refers to the resurrection which follows the suffering of 9:12." (Hooker, *According to Saint Mark*, 89).

was Mark deliberately ambiguous? This will involve a rationalisation of the deliberate haziness of the Son's role in Mark, illustrated by the spectrum of beliefs held by his initial audiences in a time before the early church pinned down the title's meaning. I shall also make comparisons with later Lucan and Matthaean 'Son of Man' usage, instances imbued with the crystallising theology of the early church, where Mark's thought-provoking multivalency substantially evaporates.

3.2 The Son of Man in Judaism

To discern how Jews in Mark's day understood the Son of Man, it is essential to explore prior uses of the term, particularly those arising in Jewish scripture. As James Kugel notes, for Jews of the Persian and Hellenistic periods, the past explained the present, presented a standard whereby the present would be judged and future hopes based, and it was legitimacy. For these interpreters, "the past was not approached in the spirit of antiquarianism but for what message it might yield, and this is necessarily predicated on an interpretive stance, indeed, a willingness to deviate from the texts' plain sense."[425]

Indeed, by Jesus's day, biblical interpretation had become essential to Jewish intellectual life, with exegesis a primary mode of intellectual discourse. All Jews knew at least something of the Tanakh, especially the Torah. The educated "knew it by heart, studied it closely, cited it liberally in their conversations, drew inspiration from it in their writings, and labored long and hard… to clarify its numerous obscurities."[426]

Novenson, citing Schäfer, marks the Son as one of three predominant types of Messiah figure in Judaism: "The respective traditions range mainly within the triangle (Davidic) Messiah-king, priestly Messiah, and Son of Man."[427] Further, according to Hay, three basic usages of Son of Man existed in Judaism. First, there was the neutral use as an expression for 'human being'. Second, 'son of man' might appear as a circumlocution for the pronoun 'I'. Third, the occurrence of the phrase in Daniel 7:13 inspired a long history where the Son played a prominent role in Jewish apocalypticism, "a tradition which exercised an immense influence on early Christianity and perhaps on Jesus himself."[428] We should also note that, even centuries before Daniel and the rise of apocalypticism, 'Son of Man' appears dozens of times in the book of Ezekiel.

In Ezekiel, which records the events of the prophet's ministry (593-571 BCE),[429] God addresses Ezekiel as 'Son of Man' dozens of times through chapters 2-47,[430] always as בֶּן-אָדָם. In chapters 2-24, God outlines His plan of judgement for unfaithful Israel and Judah at the hands of the Babylonian empire, with the Son as His harbinger of destiny and divine punishment.[431] In 25-32, Ezekiel as Son pronounces God's judgement on the foreign lands of Ammon (25:1-7), Moab (25:8-11), Edom (25:12-14), Philistia (25:15-17), Tyre (26:1-28:19), Sidon (28:20-26) and Egypt (29-32). In 33-48, Ezekiel as Son relays divine promises of future restoration, both of the nation

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[425] Matthew V. Novenson, *'After the Messianic Idea', The Grammar of Messianism: An Ancient Jewish Political Idiom and Its Users* (New York: Oxford Academic, 2017): 17.
[426] Novenson, *After the Messianic Idea*, 17-18.
[427] Novenson, *After the Messianic Idea*, 10-11.
[428] Hay, *"The Son of Man,"* 69.
[429] Lawrence Boadt, "Ezekiel," *NJBC*, 306.
[430] E.g. 2:1 ("Son of Man, stand upon your feet and I will speak with you"); 3:4 ("Son of Man, leave, go to the House of Israel and speak my words to them"); 6:2 ("Son of Man, set your face towards the mountains of Israel and prophesy to them").
[431] E.g. 6:11 ("Clap your hands and stamp your foot, and say, Alas for all the vile abominations of the house of Israel! For they shall fall by the sword, by famine, and by pestilence").

and its inhabitants (33-39) and the temple and its community (40-48).[432] In the latter section, God reveals plans for the restoration of the priesthood, a new temple and new laws governing its ordinances. Ezekiel is even given a tour of the second temple by, presumably, a minor deity,[433] during a vision. This temple is distinct "because it has gates that mirror the defensive structures that were otherwise part of city walls… The people no longer need to be defended; rather, Yahweh's holiness must be protected from the profane world."[434] Ezekiel is then shown the holy of holies (41:1-4) before witnessing the return of the God of Israel's glory (43:1-5).

Strikingly, God commands Ezekiel to perform various acts before his audience, often with great intricacy, to illustrate the content of his prophecies, sometimes to the extent that he appears to be performing a one-man play.[435] Yet, though Ezekiel illustrates detailed and dramatic judgement on Israel, Judah and various neighbouring lands, he personally plays no part in the coming destruction and restoration, unlike the apocalyptic Son that develops in Daniel, 1 Enoch and 4 Ezra. Yet, as Bowker (1977) emphasises: "any audience who had heard the Prophets read in synagogue or elsewhere would be familiar with the phrase as a mode of address and might, therefore, not find it surprising or novel to hear it applied to a human figure, albeit one with a particular function in relation to God"[436] Further: "the third main use in the Tanach, the address to Ezekiel, at least helps to explain how such a phrase, used of a particular person, would not have seemed impossibly bizarre."[437]

The Book of Daniel, generally dated to the mid-second century BCE[438], sees its titular hero taken exile into Babylon, precisely where Ezekiel was deported in 597,[439] following Jerusalem's destruction in 586. In chapter 7, Daniel describes a prophetic vision of a 'Son of Man', not as Ezekiel's prophesied punisher of Jews and nearby nations, nor his restorer of Judah and the temple, but as the world's glorious redeemer. Four beasts arise, one by one, from the turbulent sea. They devastate the world, before Daniel sees one "like a son of man" coming on "clouds of heaven"

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[432] James Muilenburg, "Ezekiel." In *Peake's Commentary,* 568.
[433] "a man like a figure of bronze" (40:6).
[434] David L. Petersen, *The Prophetic Literature: An Introduction* (Westminster: John Knox Press, 2002): 145-6.
[435] E.g. 4:1-3 (God commands Ezekiel: "take a brick and set it before you. On it portray a city, Jerusalem; and put siegeworks against it, and build a siege wall against it, and cast up a ramp against it; set camps also against it, and plant battering rams against it all around. Then take an iron plate and place it as an iron wall between you and the city; set your face toward it, and let it be in a state of siege, and press the siege against it. This is a sign for the house of Israel"). See also 5:1-5; 12:4-6.
[436] John Bowker, "The Son of Man." *JTS* 28,1 (1977): 23.
[437] Bowker, "The Son of Man," 45.
[438] John Goldingay summarises the preponderant reasons for dating Daniel to the second century, as opposed to the narrative's setting in the sixth: 1) Daniel exhibits historical inaccuracies, such as Darius the Mede ruling Babylon (5:31; 9:1; 11:1), which no contemporary text attests. 2) Daniel contains three Greek loan words: highly unlikely before the Greek conquest of Palestine. 3) Daniel's predictions are too precise and detailed to seem genuinely prophetic. 4) Apocalyptic literature did not develop as a genre until around the second century. He posits the revelations in chapters 7-12: "focus on events to take place in Jerusalem in the Persian and Hellenistic periods and in particular on the actions and fate of the Seleucid ruler of Judah in the 160s BC, Antiochus IV Epiphanes" (Goldingay, *Daniel*, 98).
[439] Ezekiel 1:1, 33:21, 40:1. Interestingly, a certain Daniel is mentioned three times in the Book of Ezekiel (14:14, 20; 28:3), presented with Noah and Job as "a righteous and wise man."

(7:13)[440] to the Ancient of Days,[441] to be presented before him. This is Daniel's only Son reference, unlike the myriad instances in Ezekiel. However, the destiny of Daniel's apocalyptic figure is clearly defined. The Ancient of Days and his heavenly court judges destroy the four beasts, before our world is turned over to the one "like a Son of Man." An angel interprets Daniel's vision. The beasts each represent world empires that will rise and fall, before the humanlike Son of Man rules the earth, and a share in his sovereignty will be given to the "people of the holy ones of the Most High" (7:27). Yet it is the Ancient of Days (God) and his heavenly court that pronounce judgement on the beasts and strip them of their worldly authority, even before the Son appears (7:9-12); the latter plays no part in the carnage. Contemporary scholarship generally regards the beasts as representing, in order, the Babylonians, the Medes, the Persians and the Greeks.[442] However, in Jewish rabbinical writings, other interpretations emerge. In several instances, the Medes and Persians are presented as a single empire[443] (Daniel, after all, never explicitly names the three that follow Babylon), leaving room for Rome at the end. The Mekilta of Rabbi Ishmael[444] accordingly applies the list to non-kosher animals: "In this tradition, the camel is Babylonia; the hare is Media; the rabbit is Greece and the boar is Rome."[445] Also in the Mekilta: "associations with the covenant of Abram are made via Gen 15:12, 'As the sun was about to set, a deep sleep fell upon Abram and a great dark dread descended upon him.' This verse is interpreted such that 'dread' refers to the Babylonian Empire; 'dark' to Media; 'great' refers to the Greek Empire; and 'descended' to 'the fourth empire, wicked Rome'."[446]

If the last beast were likewise viewed by Jews of Mark's day as the Roman Empire, they may have expected the imminent coming of the Son, who is most fully described in the Similitudes (chapters 37-71) of 1 Enoch, whose dating has generated widespread controversy.[447] Scholars generally place it between 38 BCE and 120 CE[448]; possibly close to Jesus's ministry or the time of Mark's composition.

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[440] Cf. Mark 13:26; 14:62: both refer to the Son 'coming on clouds'.
[441] Cf. Psalm 68:4: God is illustrated as one who 'rides on the clouds'.
[442] "…the four beasts of this apocalyptic vision stand for the four successive pagan empires of the Babylonians, the Medes, the Persians and the Greeks, as the same four empires are represented by the four different metals of the colossal statue in chap. 2." (Louis F. Hartman and Alexander A. Di Lella, "Daniel," *NJBC*, 416). However, only Babylon is given by name, thus the identity of the following empires would depend on whether the Medes and the Persians were grouped together.
[443] Ancient Greek sources made no distinction between them. Indeed, for a Greek to become "too closely associated with Iranian culture" was "to become Medianized, not Persianized" (Cuyler T. Young, "Medes." In Eric M. Meyers, *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Archaeology in the Near East* 3, edited by Eric M. Meyers (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997): 448-50.
[444] "the author of the Mekilta constructed a 'tannaitic' midrash from the material he found in the Mishnah, Babylonian and Palestinian Talmuds, and Tosefta" (Ben Wacholder, "The Date of the Mekilta de-Rabbi Ishmael." *HUCA* 39 (1968): 139).
[445] Geoffrey Herman, "Persia, Rome and the Four Kingdoms Motif in the Babylonian Talmud." In *Four Kingdom Motifs Before and Beyond the Book of Daniel*, edited by Andrew B. Perrin et al. (Leiden: Brill, 2021): 191.
[446] Herman, "Persia, Rome," 191-2.
[447] Several of the controversies are debated in Jonas Greenfield, "The Enochic Pentateuch and the Date of the Similitudes." *HTR* 70, 1/2 (1977): 55-65.
[448] Joanne Hindley lists several positions on the Similitudes' dating. E.g. Eissfeldt: shortly after 39 BCE, when Parthian forces captured most of the Levant from the Romans before Mark Antony routed them from Syria and Judea (// 1 Enoch 56: 5-7, which recounts the Parthians and Medes invading and crushing Jerusalem before turning on and slaughtering each other); Sjoberg: "since nothing indicates

In The Similitudes, the Son was given a name "before the creation of the stars" (48:2-3). The world will fall down and worship him. Before creation God's presence concealed him, but he was always God's chosen one. He reveals God's wisdom to the righteous and holy, who will be "saved in his name", since he desires that they have life (48:2-7). At time's end, when the dead are resurrected, he will even sit on God's throne (51:3) and judge the deeds of the holy ones in heaven (61:8). The Son will crush the teeth of sinners and depose kings who fail to extol and obey him, for he is the source of their kingship (46: 2-6). The Son is eternal, at least in the timeline of humanity, for "he shall never pass away or perish before the face of this world" (69:79). In the last two chapters of the Similitudes, generally regarded as interpolations,[449] Enoch is revealed as this Son of Man, a human who became a divinity almost equal to God Himself. The Similitudes present an amalgam of Ezekiel's pronouncer of judgement and Daniel's redeemer, though the judge has evolved from the oracle of Judah into the arbiter of the world, and the redeemer from a great man or divine human into a god. Though The Similitudes may have been composed after Mark, they could well reflect contemporaneous views about the Son of Man shared by Mark and many in his audience. The similarities with Daniel, and the fact that, according to Josephus (Antiquities 1:266-8), Daniel was popular among first-century Jews, support this position.

The Jewish apocalypse of 4 Ezra, probably written around 150 CE[450] (with a *terminus post quem* of around 75 CE[451] and a *terminus ante quem* of around 195

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the destruction of the Temple, the book must have been written before A.D. 70"; Hindley: 115-117 CE, when Palestine was under threat from a Mesopotamian revolt, in addition to Jewish insurgency against Rome in Egypt, Cyprus and Cyrene, thus also fitting the context of 1 Enoch 56: 5-7("Towards a Date for the Similitudes of Enoch," *NTS* 14 (1967/1968): 151-65).

[449] Chapter 69 ends: "This is the third parable of Enoch." Enoch, like Elijah, was generally thought to have been raised to heaven by God while living, but some suggest Genesis refers to Enoch dying a natural death before ascending (5:21-24). Either way, these traditions imply that Enoch was already in heaven, whereas chapters 70-71 describe Enoch's arrival in heaven as his future fate foreseen in a vision (Michael A. Knibb, *Essays on the Book of Enoch and Other Early Jewish Texts and Traditions*. Leiden: Brill (2009): 139–142). Further, these chapters contradict earlier passages in the parable where the Son of Man is presented as a separate entity. In 70-71, the parable also switches from third person singular to first person singular (Chad Pierce, *Spirits and the Proclamation of Christ* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011): 70).

[450] Zimmerman states 4 Ezra: "composite as the book is, is to be placed circa 150 c.e. The contemporaneity of Rabbis Shimon b. Yohai, Dosa b. Archinus, an older contemporary of Akiba, who posited 400 years for the life of the Messiah (7.28-29) and the coincidence of Halley's comet would confirm the date of the composition." Regarding the comet (see 4 Ezra: 15:13, 34, 40, 41, 44) : "From all indications, this was Halley's comet that appeared in 140 c.e. This enables us therefore to posit the apocalypse (or its final revision) about 150. We know of the tremendous impression that this comet had made on the Jewish people when it appeared in 66. Josephus reported, 'So it was when a star (astron) resembling a sword, stood over the city, and a comet (kometes) which continued for a year...' (Josephus, *The Jewish War*, 6.289. Translated by Henry Thackeray, *LCL*, 210). Josephus berates the people for listening to "charlatans", and ignoring the heavenly warning signs. By calculation, astronomers have placed Halley's comet at 66, then at 140-141, variations occurring because of the attraction of Saturn and Jupiter. This is the 'terrible star' (15.40) that hung high in the heavens for weeks and months with a golden train of 200-400 million miles long (tresses) which certainly would have agitated the populations" (Frank Zimmerman, "The Language, the Date, and the Portrayal of the Messiah in IV Ezra." *HS* 26,2 (1985): 213-5).

[451] "4 Ezra's preoccupation with Jerusalem's destruction indicates the book was composed after 70 CE, but near enough still to raise deep theological questions. If the 'three heads' in Ezra's eagle vision (12:22-28), that appear immediately before a description of the 'end' (12:29-36), are coded

CE[452]) clearly alludes to Daniel's Son in 13:3: "And I looked and beheld, the wind made something like the figure of a man come up out of the heart of the sea, and I looked and beheld that the man flew[453] with the clouds of heaven." Though 4 Ezra was probably written after Mark, its inclusion here is useful to indicate how Jewish concepts of the Son appear to have developed during Mark's time, especially considering 4 Ezra's similarities with Daniel[454] and 1 Enoch.[455]

The divine imagery of Daniel, a man-like figure moving on clouds, is augmented in 4 Ezra when the Most High God calls him "My Son… a man coming up from the sea" (13:32). Not only has Daniel's Son of Man become Son of God, Daniel's earthly king has, as in Enoch, become the divine apocalyptic judge*,* one who further wreaks destruction *without breaking sweat*: "Then he, my Son, will reprove the assembled nations for their ungodliness (this was symbolized by the storm), and will reproach them to their face with their evil thoughts and the torments with which they are to be tortured (which were symbolized by the flames), and will destroy them *without effort* by means of the law[456] (which was symbolized by the fire)" (13:37-38). Hence, in Jewish tradition, from Ezekiel to 4 Ezra, the Son of Man appears to grow ever more powerful, authoritative and cosmologically significant over the passage of time.

Zimmerman (1985) links Ezra's apocalyptic figure to the leader of the revolt against Hadrian (132-135 CE): Shimon Bar Kokhba. Comparing them, Zimmerman notes Bar Kokhba's human side expressed in contemporary literature: "He minted coins… he dealt with religious matters, as we learn from the scrolls in the Judean desert… was brazen enough to say that in the war God should not help or hinder (Yadin, Bar Kokhba, 24-5). Akiba proclaimed him the messianic king, implying that he would establish a royal dynasty anew, but as a mortal will, he would eventually die (cf.

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references to Vespasian and his two sons Titus and Domitian, the book will have been composed during Domitian's reign (81-96 CE). This corresponds to the reference to 'the thirtieth year after the destruction of the city' in 3:1, although this date may simply recall Ezek 1:1" (Andy Wong, "4 Ezra," The Online Critical Pseudepigrapha, edited by Ian W. Scott and Ken M. Penner (Atlanta, GA: SBL, 2010), accessed June 1, 2023, https://pseudepigrapha.org/docs/intro/4Ezra).

[452] "The earliest definite quotation from 4 Ezra occurs in Clement of Alexandria's Stromateis. Since Stromateis is dated to the end of the 2nd century CE, 4 Ezra must have been written and translated into Greek no later than the end of the 2nd century. If the possible reference in Barnabas 12:1 is accepted as a quotation, 4 Ezra will have been composed by the end of the first century. 4 Ezra is also closely related to 2 Baruch… normally dated to the end of the first or the beginning of the second century, but the precise date of 2 Baruch is uncertain, and the nature of the relationship between the two documents remains disputed" (Wong, "4 Ezra," accessed June 1, 2023, https://pseudepigrapha.org/docs/intro/4Ezra).

[453] Syr Ethiop Arab Arm: Lat "grew strong."

[454] "The dream by night (11, 1 - cf. Dan. 7, 1); the eagle rising from the sea (11,1 - cf. Dan. 7, 2-3); the description of the eagle as a monstrous creature with twelve wings and three heads (cf. Dan. 7, 4-8); the winds (11,2 - cf. Dan. 7, 2); the clouds (11,2 - perhaps taken inappropriately from Dan. 7, 13); the talons (11, 7 – cf. Dan. 7, 19); the burning of the eagle (12,3 - cf. Dan. 7, 11). In addition, the use of the lion as a symbol for the Messiah (11, 37), which perhaps derives ultimately from Gen. 49, 9 may have been influenced by the reference to the lion in Dan. 7, 4. The description of the eagle as the fourth beast (11, 39-40) is a clear allusion to Dan. 7" (Michael A. Knibb, "Apocalyptic and Wisdom in 4 Ezra." *JSJ* 13, 1/2 (1982): 70-71).

[455] "in ch. 14, where Ezra dictates the law to five men, there seems to be a deliberate allusion to Rabban Yohanan ben Zakkai and his five famous disciples… the mention of several levels of heaven indicates that Yohanan and his disciples were familiar with an earlier tradition, now found in Enoch" (Knibb, "Apocalyptic and Wisdom," 73).

[456] Syr: Lat "without effort and law."

b.Sanh. 99a)."[457] Then Zimmerman presents Bar Kokhba's reputed supernatural side: "contemporary folklore and later legend embroidered some fanciful tales about him… Bar Kokhba himself could by kicks deflect the immense rocks projected by the ballistae ('Ekha Rabbati, c. 2) and Jerome avers that he could ignite stalks in his mouth and exhale blasts of fire (Apology Against the Books of Ruflnus, in J. N. Hritzu, The Fathers of the Church, 202)."[458] Similarly, 4 Ezra's heavenly messiah presents a divine-human hybrid: "The human side of him is that he will establish a dynasty… and die (7.28-29)," before being raised from the dead with the nations on the Day of Judgement (7:37-38) as God's instrument of punishment and redemption. Zimmerman adds: "in the speculation of the Rabbis, some thought that the Messiah's life will be 40 years, some 70 years, some 60 years; Rabbi Dosa proposed 400 years, an interesting coincidence with the 400 years of the Ezra passage in 7:28-29 (Pesikta Rabbathi c. 1). He too like bar Kokhba projects blasts of fire from his mouth (13:10), a flaming breath with sparks and fiery particles… he also has a supernatural character as chapter 13 fully shows, where God kept this 'man' for 'a great season', and then the 'son' will be declared" (v. 13), and he will come and stand on top of Mount Zion, and judge the wicked and destroy them (vv. 35, 38)."[459] This comparison suggests that inspirational figures in Jewish history might indeed be interpreted as supernatural figures of apocalyptic literature. Just as Jerome exalted Bar Kokhba, so too might Mark have exalted Jesus.

Further, given their similarities and probable dates of composition, perhaps the portrayals in 1 Enoch and 4 Ezra best approach how certain Jews in Mark's audience would have understood this Son; a mortal with superhuman powers destined to become divine judge of the world. However, we should note that, though apocalypticists may have held such notions, they were by no means typical of mainstream Jewish beliefs. The dominant view of divine salvation appears to have revolved around an earthly Messiah, a human warrior-king "who would free the people from the yoke of Rome (this was also the hope of the Essenes)."[460] Conversely, both 1 Enoch and 4 Ezra claim to represent a secret literature.[461] For instance, the 'Son of Man' expectation in 1 Enoch was nurtured in a small community that proclaimed "the Lord of the spirits had revealed to it the secrets of the world beyond and the hidden Son of man. This community complained that it was being persecuted and that its houses of prayer were being burnt down (Eth. Enoch 46.8; 47:1-4)."[462]

Nonetheless, all the above 'Son of Man' concepts bleed through and colour the text of Mark. As a prophetic Son of Man, Mark's Jesus echoes Ezekiel's utterances about the fulfilment of a time, a coming judgement on the Jews, the need to repent, and the restoration of Jerusalem's temple.[463] In addition, in 2:10 and 2:28, 'son of

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[457] Zimmerman, "Messiah in IV Ezra," 213.
[458] Zimmerman, "Messiah in IV Ezra," 213.
[459] Zimmerman, "Messiah in IV Ezra," 213.
[460] Joachim Jeremias, *New Testament Theology* (London: SCM, 1971): 271.
[461] 4 Ezra 14:44-46, cf. 12:36-38; 14:26; 1 Enoch 104:12f.
[462] Jeremias, *New Testament Theology*, 271.
[463] Mark's Jesus proclaims the time is fulfilled and the kingdom of God is at hand (1:15), and predicts a time of war and suffering that features the destruction of the Jerusalem temple (13:1-27). Ezekiel likewise foretells a time when the days of the Siege of Jerusalem are fulfilled (5:2); here Ezekiel, as

man' appears to reference ordinary mortals, just as it tirelessly references Ezekiel in Hebrew scripture, and humanity in general (e.g. Psalm 8:5(4); Psalm 144:3). Indeed, I shall argue that 9:12b's Son rings most true as an Ezekiel reference. Yet Mark's apocalyptic discourse in chapter 13 speaks of a supernatural Son's coming, following eschatological tribulations reminiscent of those predicted in Daniel and 1 Enoch. 13:26 and 14:62 recount the Son's coming on clouds, as in Daniel, and 8:38 hints at his role as Ezra and Enoch's cosmic judge. Moreover, interweaving the title's human and divine connotations, 10:45's servant-ruler, who must self-sacrifice to save others, reflects both Ezekiel's vicarious self-abasement and the death of Jesus himself, to whom Mark 14 makes explicit reference as 'Son of Man'.

Son of Man, enacts a performance of Jerusalem's devastation at the hands of the Babylonians (5:1-17). Both Mark's Jesus (11:12-17) and Ezekiel (8:5-17) denounce corruptions committed by Jews in the temple and urge the people to repent to avoid imminent calamity (e.g. Mark 6:11-12; Ezekiel 18:30-32), yet both predict the building of a new temple; in a vision (Ezekiel 40:1-44:4) and a parable (Mark 12:1-12) respectively.

3.3 Mark 2's Anomalous Son

To unravel these interwoven threads, we shall sequentially examine the verses where Mark presents the Son, starting with 2:10 and 2:28. In *3.3.1 An Ordinary Son*, we shall inspect the unique nature of these verses among Mark's later Son of Man references, and assess the view that the title initially refers to a lowly mortal or ordinary human. In *3.3.2 A Self-Referencing Son*, we shall explore Vermes's argument that the title is self-referential; a circumlocutional phrase for 'I' or 'me'. In *3.3.3 An Apocryphal Son*, we shall dissect the theory that posits Mark 2:28's Son was a later interpolation by the early church; that is, not authentically Marcan. In *3.3.4 A Non-Semitic Son?*, we shall examine arguments surrounding the double arthrous form of the phrase in Greek, perhaps as bizarre and clumsy in Koine as 'the son of the man' sounds in English. In so doing, we shall explore the view that the term may derive not from Jewish scripture, since such universal clumsiness in Greek gospel translation is unlikely, but from early Christian tradition. In *3.3.5 The (Leader of the) Divine Elect*, we will weigh the view that Mark's Son might refer both to Daniel 7's superhuman leader of the divine elect and, by extension, to members of the community he represents. In *3.3.6 Normal Humans with Divine Powers*, we will scrutinise the evidence that Mark 2's Son refers to ordinary mortals, vested by God Himself with power to work miracles. Accordingly, we will explore how Jews of Mark's day might have understood the forgiveness of sins in 2:10-11's healing miracle. Finally, in *3.3.7 A Hint of Multivalency*, we shall conclude that, despite overwhelming evidence for an ordinary Son of Man in Mark 2, a human whom God gifts power to heal the sick and authority to interpret the Sabbath, Mark had already begun to weave a cloak of ambiguity around him.

3.3.1 An Ordinary Son

Starting with the unique nature of these pericopae, Mark's first Son references (2:10-11; 2:27-28) strike scholars as triply anomalous: "These two passages stand aloof from the remaining 'Son of man' sayings, not only by their isolation in the Marcan narrative, but also by their apparent difference in character, and by their setting in public discussions. Any one of these three details is sufficient, in the view of many scholars, to discredit them."[464] Certainly, whereas Mark's later references involve Jesus speaking privately to his disciples, save 14:62 where he addresses the Sanhedrin behind closed doors, 2:10-11 reveals Jesus pronouncing the title before Pharisees and the throngs of Capernaum and 2:27-28 before both disciples and Pharisees. Further, we must wait six chapters before Mark mentions the title again, after which twelve clustered references appear throughout the following six (8:31 to 14:62). As for difference in character, Mark 2's Jesus neither predicts the Son's suffering (8:31; 9:9, 12, 31; 10:33, 45; 14:21, 41) nor his vindication via dramatic apocalyptic events (8:38; 13:26; 14:62), rather he presents teachings.

Regarding 2:10-11, where Jesus states the Son has authority to forgive sins in the world, Hay (1970) notes: "there is absolutely nothing 'apocalyptic' about the

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[464] Morna D. Hooker, *The Son of Man in Mark: A Study of the Background of the Term "Son of Man" and Its Use in St Mark's Gospel* (Quebec: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1967): 174.

passage. In addition, there is no evidence that the apocalyptic son of man was conceived as forgiving sins."[465] Mark 2:27-28 also dwells within a conspicuously non-apocalyptic pericope. Jesus has explained to the Pharisees how even King David ate on the Sabbath, even in the temple, when he was hungry and in need, partaking of consecrated bread conventionally reserved for priests. He concludes that the Sabbath is made for man, not vice versa, before adding the apparent non sequitur: "therefore the Son of Man is also lord of the Sabbath." What is the therefore there for, and how did 'Son of Man' emerge in the text? We can solve the riddle by labelling the language of 2:27-28 'translation Greek', struggling to render an oral Aramaic source. Bowman (1948) points to the 'Galilean dialect' of the Cairo Geniza Targum fragments[466], in which he explains the term בָר נַשָׁא "could be used for 'anyone', or 'a man', in Palestinian Aramaic."[467] In these fragments, בָר נַשׁ replaces the first two consonants of כָל־מֹצְאִ֫י ('anyone [who finds me]') in Genesis 4:14 and elsewhere בָר נַשָׁא (thrice) and בָר נַשׁ (twice) replace אָדָם ('man'). Semantically, the idiom makes sense, for what is the son of man but another man? It further makes logical sense when applied to Mark 2:27-28: "The Sabbath came because of man… therefore *man* is lord even of the Sabbath."

Though the fragments Bowman indicates were composed centuries after Mark, and may reflect Aramaic idioms anachronous to Mark's time, similar idioms appear in the Hebrew Bible. בֶּן־אָדָם, the Hebrew equivalent of the Aramaic בָר נַשָׁא, occasionally appears in poetry as a synonym for 'man', as in the awed contemplation of Psalm 8:5(4), here moreover in poetic parallelism with אֱנ֫וֹשׁ ('man'):

מָה-אֱנוֹשׁ כִּי-תִזְכְּרֶנּוּ ; וּבֶן-אָדָם, כִּי תִפְקְדֶנּוּ [468]

Scholars also indicate the frequency of such synonyms in the Hebrew Bible: "the singular, *ben-ādām*, occurs thirteen times in parallelism with either *ish* or *enosh* as a synonym for "human being"; similarly, *ben-enosh* occurs at Ps 144:3[469] in parallelism with *ādām*… *ben-ādām* is found some ninety-three times in Ezekiel and at Dan 8:17, as a form of direct address or quasi-vocative, applied to the prophet himself."[470]

Parker's (1941) tally is 89 times to Ezekiel and once to Daniel. Rather than emphasising, with grandeur, the addressee's significance, as one might expect with a poetic title and an address for Mark's Jesus, Parker posits the phrase diminishes Ezekiel: "It is always God who addresses his prophet in this way, apparently

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[465] Hay, "The Son of Man," 72.
[466] The hoard of documents discovered in the genizah (storage) of the Ben Ezra synagogue in Fusṭāṭ, old Cairo, in the late nineteenth century: "Halper 331 is the fragment of a codex that has been styled the 'oldest dated document of the Cairo Genizah'. It preserves the opening of a Jewish legal document dated to the year 1182 (Seleucid era), which appears to have been copied into this codex, probably as a formulary, not long after this date, in the late 9th century. Most of the texts and documents are written in Judeo-Arabic or Hebrew, and date from between the 10th and the 13th centuries" (Eve Krakowski and Sacha Stern. "The 'Oldest Dated Document of the Cairo Genizah' (Halper 331): The Seleucid Era and Sectarian Jewish Calendars." *JRAS* 31,3 (2021): 617-8).
[467] John Bowman, "The Background of the Term 'Son of Man'," *ExpTim* 59,11 (August 1948):283-8.
[468] "What is man that you are mindful of them, and the son of man that you care for them?"
[469] This verse interestingly repeats the Hebrew of Psalm 8:5(4) verbatim.
[470] William O. Walker, "The Son of Man: Some Recent Developments." *CBQ* 45,4 (1983): "The Son of Man," 585.

contrasting the unworthiness of the human listener with the dignity of the One who speaks."[471] Though I personally cannot sense any derogatory intent when God addresses Ezekiel - despite his immediate destiny of suffering, I think he presents as a privileged prophet ultimately fated to escape the scourge of divine judgement - Psalm 8:4 and 144:3 undeniably echo a negative contrast, as does 62:10, where בְּנֵי-אָדָם references men of low degree and בְּנֵי-אִישׁ men of high degree. In a way, Hay (1970) harmonises these opposite views, stating the phrase, though not an ordinary, everyday referent, always describes humans in either an *emphatic* or *poetic* sense. He adds: "Although there is no completely satisfactory Greek (or English) equivalent, it is approximated somewhat by ό ἀνθρώπος. The occurrence of ό υἱὸς του ἀνθρώπου in Mark indicates, then, that the evangelist is dependent upon a Semitic Vorlage."[472]

Thus, based on the phrase's Hebrew-Aramaic background, both within and beyond scripture, it seems 'Son of Man', in addition to denoting an apocalyptic divine being, was a synonym for 'human' in the language of Mark's contemporaries. Indeed, if the idiom meant 'human' prior to Mark in the Hebrew Bible, and also after Mark in later Aramaic texts, it is a leap to imagine it lost this meaning before Mark's time only to reclaim it later, especially considering the significance of scripture to Jews throughout these periods. The idiom certainly provides a logical conclusion to Jesus's teaching in 2:28, for if the Sabbath were made for man then surely man, rather than some apocalyptic, contextually-gatecrashing 'Son of Man', is its master. And, based on Hebrew Bible usage, Mark's audience might well have understood 'Son of Man' to mean 'man' in chapter 2.[473] However, considering the phrase's scripturally ingrained dual heritage, where its other parent prophesies the advent of a superhuman figure, and considering the miracles Jesus has already performed in chapters 1 and 2, ambiguity might flicker in Mark's audiences' minds.

3.3.2 A Self-Referencing Son

Another option emerges in Vermes's evidence for a circumlocutional usage of בָּר נַשָׁא; that it may, at times, refer back to the speaker as 'I' or 'me'.[474] If this applies in Mark 2, Jesus would clearly be speaking about himself rather than people in general, hence erasing any trace of ambiguity. Vermes presents numerous examples to support his hypothesis, such as a passage from Genesis Rabbah (7:2), which recounts an incident where Jacob, a Torah scholar from Tyre, pronounces fish should be ritually slaughtered in the same manner as birds, incurring another rabbi's

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[471] Pierson Parker, "The Meaning of 'Son of Man.'" *JBL* 60,2 (1941): 152.
[472] Hay, "The Son of Man," 69.
[473] Moffatt bolsters this argument with support from the synoptic parallel in Matthew 9:1-8: "the closing words of Matthew about the crowd glorifying God who had given such power to *men*, have naturally suggested that originally Jesus said *man… has power on Earth to forgive sins.* Jesus meant… to assert that if to err was human, to forgive was human as well as divine… The forgiveness of sins… was one of the privileges of the new era…" (James Moffatt, *The Theology of the Gospels* (London: Duckworth & Co., 1912): 151-2).
[474] Géza Vermes, "The Use of bar nash/bar nasha in Jewish Aramaic." In *An Aramaic Approach To The Gospels And Acts*, edited by Matthew Black, 310–328 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1967): 320-21.

wrath: “Jacob… gave a ruling in Tyre that fish should be ritually slaughtered. Hearing this, R. Haggai sent him this order: Come and be scourged! He (Jacob) replied, Should בָּר נַשׁ be scourged who proclaims the word of Scripture?”[475]

In such contexts, Vermes observes that the speakers reference themselves and that, though translations such as ‘one’ or ‘a man’ would suffice, they provide less precise renditions. In the above instance, Vermes argues: “the context hardly suggests that at this particular juncture Jacob intends to voice a general principle. Hurt by his opponent’s harsh words, he clearly seems to be referring to himself and the indirect idiom is no doubt due to the implied humiliation.”[476]

Boyarin (2010) counters Vermes, on this and his other examples, with a single succinct argument: “Of course, pragmatically the speaker is referring to himself, but semantically he is using a general expression.”[477] In other words, though the speakers clearly refer to themselves as *bar nasha*, this falls short of proving *bar nasha* is an idiom for ‘I’; the speaker may simply be self-referencing, in the third person, via metaphor or idiom. In English, for example, one might say (obsequiously or sarcastically): “Your servant obeys!” However, it does not follow that ‘Your servant’ is a synonym for ‘I’.

Jeremias (1971) also opposes Vermes, on text-critical rather than semantic grounds. He states the usual starting point for equating *bar nasha* with ‘I’ is the observation that the Galilean Aramaic *hahu gabra* (that man) is used as a periphrasis for ‘I’ or ‘you’, “either out of modesty or in statements with an unwelcome content”, yet that a fundamental difference persists between the phrases. He explains that, when used to mean ‘I’, *hahu gabra* is strictly limited to the speaker, whereas *bar nasha* retains its generic or indefinite significance (third person), even where the speaker includes himself.[478] Assuming the Greek gospels were translations of earlier Aramaic, Jeremias demonstrates this point via multiple references.[479] In each of these, the idiom refers to the third person and never to the first. Jeremias concludes: “In all these passages, *bar nasha* was presumably meant originally in the everyday sense of ‘man’ or ‘a man’, and only the early church tradition found the apocalyptic title ‘Son of man’ in them.”[480]

Jeremias supports his philological analysis with a traditio-historical inspection of conflicting ‘Son of Man’ traditions. He finds the vast majority of Son sayings have been transmitted in two forms, one with and one without ‘Son of Man’: “Of the fifty-one Son of man sayings in the gospels, no fewer than thirty-seven have a competing tradition in which the term Son of man is absent and (usually) ἐγώ is put in its place.”[481] Jeremias contends Son of Man appears to be a secondary emendation in every instance (e.g. Mark 8:27 (‘I’)//Matthew 16:13 (‘the Son of Man’). He observes

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[475] Vermes, “Use of Bar Nash,” 320-21.
[476] Vermes, “Use of Bar Nash*,”* 320-21.
[477] Daniel Boyarin, “The Sovereignty of the Son of Man: Reading Mark 2.” In *The Interface of Orality and Writing: Speaking, Seeing, Writing in the Shaping of New Genres*, edited by Annette Weissenrieder and Robert B. Coote, 352-361 (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2010): 356.
[478] Jeremias, *New Testament Theology,* 261.
[479] Mark 2:10; Matthew 4:4, 8:20, 11:18-19, Luke 7:33-34, 9:58; John 8:40.
[480] Jeremias, *New Testament Theology*, 262.
[481] Jeremias, *New Testament Theology*, 262.

this in refinements of earlier logia (e.g. Matthew 16:28's recasting of Mark 9:1's prediction that certain bystanders would view the kingdom's arrival as a prediction they would view the Son's arrival), in narrative developments (e.g. Matthew 26:2 rewriting Mark 14:1's account of the murderous schemes of the chief priests and Torah scholars as a full-on 'Son of Man' passion prediction) and in novel constructions (e.g. Matthew 13:37 interpreting Mark 4:14's word-sowing farmer as the Son).[482]

Moloney (2013) marks as noteworthy the decreasing number of newer, post-Marcan sayings that refer to Jesus's present existence (two unique to Matthew; two to Luke) and future suffering-vindication (one unique to Matthew; one to Luke), in contrast to the surge in eschatological and non-suffering vindication sayings (eight unique to Matthew; five to Luke). He observes: "This tendency no doubt reflects an increasing interest in matters eschatological in the Matthean and Lucan situations… but the evidence seems to fly in the face of the accepted tradition history for the application of 'the Son of Man' to Jesus."[483] In other words, though later traditions clearly linked the title to Jesus and his destiny, their original templates did not. Rather it appears early Christians were much taken with the expression 'ό υἱὸς του ἀνθρώπου', hence frequently grafting it into Jesus's sayings. Obversely, no instance of the expression's elimination and substitution has been discovered - once the title appeared it was never emended - so Jeremias concludes: "whenever we find rivalry between the simple ἐγώ and the solemn ό υἱὸς του ἀνθρώπου, all the probability is that the simple ἐγώ is the earlier tradition."[484]

Finally, Jeremias notes certain Son sayings were handed down without competitors, where it seems clear based on context that 'Son of Man' was intended as a title all along: Mark 13:26 and 14:62. These logia are both future predictions and epiphany sayings, immersed in apocalyptic themes and imagery.[485] Interestingly, both echo Daniel 7:13, each prophesying the Son's coming on clouds. We shall tackle these exceptions in 3.8. What we can take from Jeremias's analysis in relation to Mark 2 is that 'man' or 'human' seem evermore likely synonyms for 'Son of Man'. However, we should remember that though *bar nasha*, it seems, cannot mean 'I', 'I' may yet have been Mark's wording in certain cases, only supplanted in later Greek copies of Mark by 'Son of Man', which, as we have seen, emerges as a popular title for Jesus in early church literature.

3.3.3 An Apocryphal Son

More extreme arguments along this line suggest the entire pericope (2:26-28) may have been coloured by Christian scribal interference, challenging the extent of its authenticity. If these criticisms ring true we cannot, with any confidence, view 'Son of Man' in 2:28 as authentically Marcan, hence we must assess their validity.

[482] Jeremias, *New Testament Theology*, 262-3.
[483] Francis J. Moloney, "'Constructing Jesus' and the Son of Man." *CBQ* 75,4 (2013): 728-9.
[484] Jeremias, *New Testament Theology*, 263.
[485] Jeremias, *New Testament Theology*, 263.

In 2:26, Jesus describes David's actions: "πῶς εἰσῆλθεν εἰς τὸν οἶκον τοῦ Θεοῦ ἐπὶ Ἀβιαθὰρ ἀρχιερέως καὶ τοὺς ἄρτους τῆς προθέσεως ἔφαγεν…"[486] The problem is that Abiathar was not high priest in the chronology of the account Jesus references (1 Samuel 21:1-6): Abiathar's father Ahimelech held the post. Only after Saul murdered Ahimelech and eighty-four of Ahimelech's priests (1 Samuel 22:6-23) did Abiathar, after an unspecified time, ascend to replace him in joint-leadership with Zadok (1 Chronicles 15:11// 2 Samuel 15:24-29). This has led critics to challenge our understanding of the pericope on various grounds.[487]

Regarding authenticity, text-critical arguments predominate. Wallace (2004) notes that D, W, 271, Itala, Syriac, 1009 and 1546 (an almost universally Western reading) omit 'ἐπὶ ἀρχιερέως', apparently to conform to parallel accounts in Matthew (12:4) and Luke (6:4). He adds that those who adopt these textual variants are generally more inclined to embrace Matthean priority, thus positing that 'ἐπὶ ʼΑβιαθὰρ ἀρχιερέως' was likely a Marcan addition by an ill-informed copyist.[488] This view may be strengthened by the oddity that even Hebrew scripture seems to confuse Ahimelech and Abiathar at times: "In 1 Sam. 22:20, Abiathar is described as son of Ahimelech; whereas 2 Sam. 8:17 and 1 Chron. 24:6 refer to Ahimelech as son of Abiathar and as priest under David…"[489] Yet I feel this oddity also suggests why Mark himself, or indeed anyone else, may have erred in their reading of scripture, without the need to conjure up a scapegoat scribe. Others have suggested, in similar vein, that since Abiathar was better known than Ahimelech and more closely associated with David in later life, popular tradition centuries later - and even Mark - may easily have confused the two.[490]

Wallace further observes that A, C, Θ, Π, Σ, Φ, 074, 1, 131, 209, f13 and others add τοῦ before ἀρχιερέως. Without the article, we have: "in the days of high priest Abiathar," emphasising his period of service in the role. With the article, the meaning shifts to: "in the days of Abiathar the high priest," emphasizing Abiathar's general lifetime. Wallace notes: "This reading has a mixture of some Byzantine, Caesarean, and even semi-Alexandrian support," but insists that the readings adding the article or omitting the phrase altogether are later edits: "It is difficult to imagine scribes intentionally creating a problem by adding ἐπὶ ʼΑβιαθὰρ ἀρχιερέως to Mark's gospel and only to Mark's gospel. Though perhaps easier to understand, the omission of τοῦ before ἀρχιερέως would hardly have occurred intentionally. And there is little good reason for it to occur accidentally as well. Thus, when it comes to determining which reading gave rise to the others, ἐπὶ ʼΑβιαθὰρ ἀρχιερέως clearly is superior."[491]

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[486] "…how he entered the house of God, when Abiathar was high priest, and ate the bread of the Presence…" (NRSV).
[487] "Text-critical: the text is wrong and needs to be emended; Hermeneutical: our interpretation is wrong and needs to altered; Dominical: Jesus is wrong (or intentionally midrashic) and this needs to be adjusted to; Source-critical: Mark's source (Peter?) is wrong (or intentionally midrashic); Mark is wrong (or intentionally midrashic)" (Daniel Wallace, "Mark 2:26 and the Problem," Bible.org, accessed December 12, 2022, https://bible.org/article/mark-226-and-problem-abiathar).
[488] Wallace, "Mark 2:26."
[489] Larry W. Hurtado, *New International Biblical Commentary: Mark* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1989): 54.
[490] Raymond E. Brown, *Introduction to NT Christology* (London: Continuum, 1994): 37-8.
[491] Wallace, "Mark 2:26."

Why then the error? I feel the most likely solution is a combination of Morison's dominical argument, that Jesus deliberately wished to remove emphasis from Ahimelech,[492] and the reasoning that ἐπὶ translated 'when/in the time of' is far less likely the meaning in 2:26 than 'concerning/in the section about'. Morison adopts the view that the prepositional phrase should be translated "in the days of Abiathar."[493] Then, however, he "adds a midrashic twist,"[494] quoting from an unspecified source attributed to Bishop Wordsworth: "If our Lord had mentioned Ahimelech, the Pharisees' answer might have been that Ahimelech was punished by God for this profanation of sacred things; he and his were soon overtaken by divine vengeance and slain. But by specifying Abiathar, who was then with his father (1 Sam. xxii, 20)… and was afterwards blessed by God in his escape, and in a long and glorious priesthood, our Lord obviates the objection of the worldly-minded Pharisees… reminding them that this action took place in the time and under the sanction of one whom they held in reverence as a venerable ornament." In other words, Abiathar as substitution for Ahimelech was a tactical decision by Mark's Jesus. If Jesus had selected the latter, one can easily imagine the Pharisees replying: "And look what happened to Ahimelech!" Admittedly, those embracing a high Christology might feel uncomfortable with the slyness of approach this solution confers on Jesus. And yet, twice more in Mark, Jesus employs such tactical cunning whilst debating his opponents. He dodges the trap about paying taxes to Caesar (12:13-17) and reverses the Catch-22 ('by what authority are you doing these things…') that the chief priests, Torah scholars and elders hurl at him whilst successfully avoiding their question (11:27-33).

However, this still does not explain Mark's use of ἐπὶ Αβιαθὰρ alongside ἀρχιερέως. Why would Jesus mention Abiathar's title at all, if Abiathar were not high priest at the time? Would this not invite Pharisaical criticism of Jesus's sketchy scriptural skills? Why not simply say 'ἐπὶ Αβιαθὰρ'? Here I disagree with the temporal translation ('when', 'in the days of', 'at the time of', 'during') generally ascribed to ἐπὶ in 2:26.[495] Though ἐπί is often translated as a temporal qualifier,[496] Mark never uses ἐπὶ in this sense elsewhere. He does, however, use the preposition to mean 'about', as in 'on the grounds of', in 6:52 ('on the grounds of the loaves') and 12:32 ('on the grounds of truth'). This meaning is attested in both biblical and classical literature.[497] Further, Mark employs the preposition to mean 'concerning', a participle semantically proximate to 'on the grounds of', in verses that, like 2:26, reference scripture: 9:12 ('how it is written concerning the Son of Man') and 9:13 ('as it is written concerning

[492] James Morison, *Mark's Memoirs of Jesus Christ: A Commentary on the Gospel According to Mark* (London: Hamilton, Adams & Co., 1873): 70.
[493] Morison, *Mark's Memoirs of Jesus*, 70.
[494] Wallace, "Mark 2:26."
[495] E.g. KJV, NIV: 'in the days of'; ESV, NASB: 'in the time of'; NLT, BSB: 'during'; ASV, RSV, NRSV: 'when'.
[496] Middleton cites several classical references, alongside 1 Maccabees 13:42, Luke 3:2 and Acts 11:28, to illustrate that ἐπὶ ἀρχιερέως could correctly use the predicate genitive to render "when Abiathar was high priest" and ἐπὶ ᾽Αβιαθὰρ τοῦ ἀρχιερέως could correctly, with ἐπὶ as an appositive to ᾽Αβιαθάρ, render "in the time of Abiathar the high priest." (Thomas Middleton, *The Doctrine of the Greek Article Applied to the Criticism and Illustration of the New Testament* (Cambridge: Deighton, 1833): 188-90).
[497] *Thayer's Lexicon*, 232.

him'). This meaning is attested in biblical and classical literature after verbs of writing, speaking or thinking.[498]

Yet the most telling parallel in Mark presents in 12:26. Unlike 9:12 and 13, which refer very generally to scriptures concerning the Son (or humans) and Elijah (or the Baptist), ἐπί in 12:26 is used in precisely the same sense as 2:26: to refer to a specific section of scripture ('have you not read in the Book of Moses, *in the section about* the (burning) bush…').[499] Thus, it appears that ἐπί can assume this meaning, one closely-related to 'on the grounds of' and 'concerning', when applied to specific material within a text, a meaning Bibles almost universally adopt when translating 12:26, as Thayer's Lexicon demonstrates via its rendition: "at the place in the sacred volume where the burning bush is spoken of, Mk. Xii. 26."[500] Should we not, therefore, apply this sense to 2:26?

When exploring potential Hebrew or Aramaic sources for Mark, I feel this reasoning rings true. In both Hebrew and Aramaic, one commonly-used preposition exists that can mean both 'on the grounds of' and 'concerning': עַל.[501] I have also noticed an instance where, with 'book', it seems to relay the meaning 'in the book of' (// in the section about):

[502] וְיֶתֶר ,דִּבְרֵי זְכַרְיָה ׃הִנָּם כְּתוּבִים ,עַל-סֵפֶר דִּבְרֵי הַיָּמִים - לְמַלְכֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל

However, I have never seen this preposition used to convey 'in the days of' or anything similar. Perhaps, then, ἐπί's ambiguity in 2:26 has arisen through translation of the Semitic preposition into Greek. I find this plausible and the rendition 'in the section about' probable based on the above arguments. I would hence render 25-26a: "Have you never read what David did, when he and those with him had hunger and need? How he entered the House of God, in the section about High Priest Abiathar, and ate the bread of offering…" In any case, the text-critical, dominical and linguistic arguments alone expose insufficient reason to dismiss this pericope on grounds of inauthenticity.

3.3.4 A Non-Semitic Son?

More universal problems emerge, in all pericopae that feature ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου. A key grammatical poser persists: if 'Son of Man' is a synonym for *bar enosh* or *ben ādām*, why then is it expressed in such clumsy Greek? Cortés and Gatti (1968) explain: "It is always found (with the exception of Jn 5,27) with the two definite

[498] *Thayer's Lexicon*, 233.
[499] NIV: "in the account of"; ESV: "in the passage about"; NKJV: "in the burning bush passage"; RSV, NRSV: "in the story about."
[500] *Thayer's Lexicon*, 232. John Wenham first noticed this similarity, commenting that 2:26 should probably be translated likewise (John Wenham, "Mark 2, 26," *JTS*, vol. 1, 2 (1950): 156).
[501] עַל occurs in the Hebrew Bible dozens of times meaning 'concerning' (e.g. Genesis 12:20, 24:9) and 'on the grounds of/because' (e.g. Genesis 20:18, 21:11, 26:7). It also appears 94 times in the Aramaic of Ezra and Daniel, often with the same meanings (e.g. Ezra 5:5, 17; Daniel 4:33, 5:29 (concerning), Ezra 6:11, Daniel 2:15 (on the grounds of)).
[502] "And the remnant of the words of Zechariah, they are written in the book of the Matters of the Days [Chronicles] of the kings of Israel" (2 Kings 15:11).

articles… such an expression is awkward and unheard of in classical Greek. Dupont wrote that grammatically speaking, the term was a *monstruosité littéraire*; Barrett, that "Paul is too idiomatic in the use of Greek to employ such a barbarism as ό υἱὸς του ἀνθρώπου (which is no more Greek than 'the son of the man' is English). According to Roslaniec, even the shorter expression, without articles, was unknown to Greek authors - indeed entirely foreign to the Greek language.[503]

Marcus (2003) summarises: “The main theory… to account for this strange double definite form is that of mistranslation from an Aramaic original such as בר (א)נשא. The cause of the abnormality of the Greek term is supposed to be the final א in the second word. In biblical Aramaic this final א would have made the noun definite, but in later Aramaic the final א lost this nuance and became the ending for indefinite as well as definite nouns. For some reason unaware… the translators wrongly rendered בר (א)נשא as a definite noun phrase.”[504] Marcus indicates a flaw in the theory, noting that this phrase only ever meant ‘a son of man’: a human in the generic sense or a certain someone. He further observes many scholars alternate between these interpretations, seeing a generic sense in some New Testament passages[505] and an indefinite sense in others.[506]

Evidence abounds, in parallels between the Hebrew Bible and the synoptics, that at least the generic Old Testament usage impacted on gospel writers’ imaginations, even if the titular usage were later interpretation. Decades before Casey, Parker (1941) noticed links between ‘Son of Man’ pericopae in Hebrew scripture and synoptic verses. He highlights the occurrences in Isaiah 51:12 and 56:2, along with Psalm 8:4, 80:17 and 144:3 as specially significant, since Jesus so often refers to Deutero-Isaiah and Psalms, and even quotes Isaiah 56 in Mark 11:17. Parker concludes: “It can hardly be doubted that his (Jesus’s) use of the phrase was influenced by these passages, yet… the words are simply a poetic equivalent for ‘man’ or ‘mankind’ with no messianic significance whatsoever.”[507] He then comments on the individual-specific usage in Ezekiel and the lone occurrence in Daniel; interpreting the title as one emphasising the human unworthiness of the addressee in the former and the messianic usage in Daniel as not a Son of Man saying at all; it indicates the figure looked *like* a man and nothing more. Parker notes in Daniel 7’s context that the one like a son of man appears at the end of a list of creatures: “a lion, a bear, a leopard, a horned beast, then ‘one like unto a son of man’.”[508] Hence, contextually, the term seems nothing more than a descriptor to distinguish the human from the animals, perhaps phrased in poetic form to emphasise this particular individual’s importance. In other words, ό υἱὸς του ἀνθρώπου, in double arthrous form, was a mistranslation of a simple Semitic idiom.

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[503] Juan B. Cortés and Florence M. Gatti. “The Son of Man or The Son of Adam.” *Biblica* 49,4 (1968): 466.
[504] Joel Marcus, “Son of Man as Son of Adam.” *RB* 110,1 (2003): 42.
[505] E.g. Matthew 12:32// Luke 12:10; Mark 2:10// Matthew 9:6// Luke 5:24, Mark 2:28// Matthew 12:8// Luke 6:5.
[506] E.g. Matthew 8:20// Luke 9:58 and Matthew 11:19// Luke 7:34.16.
[507] Parker, “The Meaning of Son,” 151-2.
[508] Parker, “The Meaning of Son,” 152.

Marcus challenges this view, labelling mistranslation theories suspect on the grounds they trust modern exegetes to know the source language better than the original translators 2,000 years ago. Further, he argues, if different translators were involved, why did they all make the same error? He adds: “the mistranslation theory in the present instance is especially doubtful, since it is unclear whether or not the א had in fact lost its emphatic function in NT times.”[509]

Casey thus proposes that Jesus used the Aramaic בר (א)נש(א) to refer indirectly to himself, but that ό υἱὸς του ἀνθρώπου is no mistranslation, since "the first article is...as near as possible to the Aramaic idiom, in which a general statement is used with particular reference to an individual, and the second article...is simply generic."[510] Casey further indicates Septuagint instances in which the arthrous plural form οἱ υἱοι τῶν ἀνφρώπων represents the anarthrous בני אדם (e.g. Psalms 11:4; 12:2, 9), where he claims both Greek articles are generic.[511]

Marcus responds: “if ό υἱὸς του ἀνθρώπου is a perfectly acceptable translation, why does it never occur in the LXX as a rendering for any of the numerous instances of the Hebrew phrase?” Second, he states it remains unclear why, if *bar nasha* on Jesus's lips were a general expression, a competent translator would have consistently rendered it ‘ό υἱὸς του ἀνθρώπου’, in double definite form, rather than ἀνθρώπος or υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου, which would have been unambiguously indefinite. Third, Marcus observes that when later Christians translated ό υἱὸς του ἀνθρώπου into Syriac or Christian Palestinian Aramaic, they rendered it with the definite phrase rather than with an indefinite form.[512]

Counters to Marcus’s second and third arguments have already been listed, following Jeremias’s observations that ό υἱὸς του ἀνθρώπου appears to have been vested with new meaning during the formation of the early church. Marcus’s first argument casts doubt on written Hebrew or Aramaic sources for Mark, though it is possible, following Jeremias, that ό υἱὸς του ἀνθρώπου had already begun to assume fresh significance before the composition of Mark’s gospel. If the end of Jesus’s ministry fell around 30-35 CE,[513] and Mark’s gospel appeared around 70 CE,[514] nearly forty years of theological developments would have bridged the gap.

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[509] Marcus, “Son of Man,” 42. “For the relevant texts and a summary of the debate, see J. R. Donahue, "Recent Studies on the Origin of 'Son of Man' in the Gospels," *CBQ* 48 (1986): 488-89.” (Marcus’s footnote).
[510] Maurice P. Casey, "Idiom and Translation: Some Aspects of the Son of Man Problem." In *NTS* 41 (1995): 173.
[511] Casey, “Idiom and Translation,” 174.
[512] Marcus, “Son of Man,” 43-4.
[513] Numerous hypotheses have aimed to approximate the dates of Jesus’s ministry, with scholars setting the boundaries around 26-35 CE. For example, Josephus (*The Jewish Antiquities* 18.5.1-2) records Herod’s clandestine scheme to divorce Aretas IV’s daughter Herodias, the scheme’s discovery by the latter, and subsequent fermentation of conflict between Herod and Aretas. He notes that Herod’s subsequent military defeat to the latter, in 36 CE, was perceived by some Jews as divine punishment for Herod's execution of John the Baptist. As John was executed before Herod’s defeat, and based on scholarly estimates for the approximate date of his marriage to Herodias, the end of the Baptist’s ministry (and hence part of Jesus’s ministry) falls within AD 28–35.
[514] In *Ecclesiastical History* 3.39.15 (circa 320 CE), Eusebius quotes Papias of Hierapolis (early second century), who states Mark was Peter’s interpreter and scribe. On this statement, and its unanimous support among patristic writers, the gospel is traditionally ascribed to Mark and placed in

Even if the eccentric arthrous form of 'ό υἱὸς του ἀνθρώπου' had not yet evolved, Mark appears, at least in some instances, to deliberately render *ben ādām*/*bar nasha* in eccentric Greek, to create a sense of exoticism, mystery and ambiguity. We shall discuss this further as we progress. For now, in brief, we have a multitude of contested options for translating 'Son of Man'; I, one, man/human, a certain person, or the apocalyptic judge/redeemer of Hebrew scripture - a messianic figure.

3.3.5 The (Leader of the) Divine Elect

How then should we understand 2:10-11's Son? Based on our linguistic analysis and the passage's non-apocalyptic context, 'man' or 'human' seems the best fit. Yet scholars have formulated additional options. Wilson spotlights 2:10-11's emphasis on the Son forgiving sins. In brief, no apocalyptic figure, whether Son of Man or Messiah: "was expected to forgive sins, which in the OT is the prerogative of God alone… On the surface, it is easier to declare forgiveness, which cannot be verified, than to restore a bed-ridden man to manifest health, but Jesus submits to the test. The implication is that he who can do the one can do the other."[515] Thus, Wilson implies this tale subtly functions to foreground the unique significance of Jesus, but not as a recognisable or traditional apocalyptic figure.

Yet why would Jesus, at this unripe point in the narrative, expose himself to his opponents and the crowds as superhuman, despite all the secrecy he musters throughout Mark to conceal his identity?[516] Perhaps in light of this, more nuanced interpretations have arisen. For example, relating to the apocalyptic 'one like a son of man': "In Dan. the phrase is interpreted of 'the people of the Saints of the Most High', and this has led some commentators to understand it here as a reference to the Elect Community; in this case Jesus speaks here as representative and head of that community. Another possibility is that Jesus deliberately chose the title to provoke reflection: to claim Messiahship was to court misunderstanding, the popular conception being so far removed from his own;[517] to claim to be Son of Man might make men think."[518]

Rome after Peter's death (c. 64-67 CE). That Mark wrote in Rome is suggested by Latin loanwords in the Greek text (e.g. δηνάριον) and the aura of impending doom that pervades Mark's final act. Since Mark 13 does not explicitly state the Roman destruction of the temple, the gospel may have been composed a little before 70 CE in Rome, for "then the Christian community lived under the threat (or reality) of persecution and looked upon incipient revolt in Palestine as a source of potential trouble for the Jewish (and even Gentile) Christians in Rome" (Harrington, "Mark," 596). Others argue for a date around 70-75 CE, based on Mark 13:2's prediction of the temple's (albeit unattributed) destruction.

[515] Wilson, "Mark," 801.

[516] We shall explore this 'messianic secret' motif, initially debated by Wrede and Schweitzer, in 3.5.1.

[517] Jesus only clarifies his messiahship in 14:62, before which he strives to conceal his identity (e.g. 8:29-30) and source of authority (e.g. 11:27-33). Various messianic archetypes, concerning one, two, or perhaps even several messiahs, appear in the contemporary literature, especially the Qumran scrolls, including a Davidic warrior-king who will destroy Israel's oppressors (e.g. Psalm Solomon 17f), a heavenly being who restores Israel to its former glory (the third and fifth Sybilline Oracles) and a great teacher who will lead the hearts of the people back to God (4Q541). The idea of a suffering Messiah crucified by the Romans would not have fit well into the general picture.

[518] Wilson, "Mark," 802.

LaCocque (1979) sees the Son as representative of God's elect, with authority to relieve suffering. He highlights that this figure, emerging vindicated in Daniel 7:13-14, is subsequently identified with 'the saints of the Most High', who likewise emerge vindicated in 7:17-27. He notes that historical-critical scholarship has struggled to identify these 'saints'. Their ostensible relevance to Jews persecuted by Antiochus IV around the time scholars typically date Daniel has been challenged by more recent scholarship that identifies the saints (lit' 'holy ones') with angels. LaCocque observes that Daniel's word קְדֹשִׁים typically refers to angels in Jewish and apocalyptic material of the time. Yet he observes another possibility, since other passages; in Daniel, Exodus and the Qumran scrolls; reference the people of Israel as 'holy ones' (Daniel 12:7; 1QH 3:9; 1QS 11:7-8; 1QM 10:10, 15:14). He suggests a compromise: in Daniel 7 the 'true' Israel, the Israel persecuted by Antiochus IV, identifies with the eschatological community that already exists in the heavens. Reflecting their heavenly counterpart, 'the saints of the Most High' are the tyrannised of Israel, a body that includes 'one like a son of man'.[519]

Moloney (2013) thus speculates: "Is it possible that Jesus found in Israel's Scriptures a description of suffering Israel, which was promised ultimate vindication as 'one like a son of man'/'the saints of the Most High' (Dan 7:1-28)?" Perhaps then the expression, used by Jesus to indicate his oppressed community, was later recast by all four evangelists in clumsy Greek, reflecting an original Aramaic: 'the son of the man'.[520] This understanding would make further sense of Jesus's conclusion to the Sabbath debate in Mark 2:27-28. If the Sabbath were made for man, then the Son of Man, symbolising righteous Jews fighting for the fulfilment of Daniel's prophecy, would be the ones who model its proper observance. In a sense, this would render them 'lords' of the Sabbath, as they enact examples for others to follow, as opposed to just any man being the Sabbath's lord. It makes similar sense of Mark 2:10, where Jesus states the Son of Man has authority on Earth to forgive sins, and hence heal the sick. As argued above, this verse makes better contextual sense when Son of Man is rendered 'man', or 'person', yet a pragmatic problem persists. Do all humans really possess such power to forgive sins and work miraculous healings, just as Jesus healed the paralytic? Common experience would suggest they do not. Yet what if 'Son of Man' refers to the holy ones of God, personified in Mark as Jesus and his disciples? In Mark 6, the disciples gain such power, granted them by Jesus, to heal the sick and cast out demons, and they proceed to replicate their master. Further textual support for this position can be found in 1:24, where Jesus casts out an unclean spirit in the Capernaum synagogue, and the spirit cries out: "οἶδά σε τίς εἶ, ὁ Ἅγιος τοῦ Θεοῦ." The Septuagint employs synonymous phrases to refer to Daniel's holy ones: "ἁγίους Ὑψίστου" and "ἁγίοις Ὑψίστου". Does the spirit therefore recognise Jesus as the leader of these holy ones? Wright (1992) maintains that Jesus self-identifies as precisely this figure, finding in Daniel a paradigm of suffering, enthronement and authority through which he interprets himself and his mission.[521]

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[519] André LaCocque, *The Book of Daniel* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 1979): 125-6.
[520] Moloney, "Constructing Jesus," 735.
[521] Nicholas T. Wright, *Christian Origins and the Question of God, vol. 1: The New Testament and the People of God* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1992): 291-7.

3.3.6 Normal Humans with Divine Powers?

In response to such speculation, I feel we should also view Mark's narrative in its self-contained context. In Mark 2, Jesus has not yet claimed to be this Son, or indeed a messianic figure, either to the Pharisees or anyone else, either in this story or the preceding stories. Indeed, both Son of Man instances in Mark 2 relate to everyday present-time activities, specifically eating food and healing ailments: fundamental human concerns. Further, the Son of Man who evolved from the apocalyptic prophecies of Daniel to 4 Ezra was not only contrastive to any kind of Old Testament (e.g. human) messiah, but also totally unconcerned with forgiveness of sins and Sabbath regulations. One might even perceive an anti-apocalyptic theme running through Mark 2's sayings: both emphasise human authority over the world God made them, rather than a helpless creation facing imminent judgement. Humans (not just Jesus, as Mark later reveals, for Jesus grants the disciples his powers in 6:7-13 and even a non-disciple expels demons in 9:38) not only hold authority over Sabbath observance but also power to heal the sick (even on the Sabbath cf. Mark 3:1-6, which synthesises the theologies of the two accounts in Mark 2), and therefore, by extension, power to forgive sins.[522] This last point emerges when we perceive the surrounding literary context of 2:10-11 and 2:27-28 as a series of conflict stories between Jesus and the Pharisees (2:1-3:6); stories which, as we discuss below, stress not a messiah's might but humanity's power.

But how can humans forgive sins? Citing 4Q242, Fitzmyer (1980) posits certain Palestinian Jews in pre-Christian times believed mortals could do so in God's name. "The Qumran text is the well-known Prayer of Nabonidus from Cave 4. It recounts… the prayer that Nabonidus eventually uttered after his cure… 'was I smitten (for) seven years, and unlike [a human being] was I made; [and I prayed to the Most High God]; and an exorcist remitted my sins for Him; he (was) a Jew from (among) the deportees…'"[523]

Branscomb (1934) concurs, proceeding to argue the early composition of Mark's conflict stories (2:1-3:6). He begins by noting that "the healing of the paralytic occurs in a group of conflict episodes which are so uniform in type that they have been generally regarded as coming from a written collection of such stories which Mk incorporated in whole or in part." He supports his argument by illustrating the conflict stories' contemporary relevance, noting the issues presented; eating with sinners, individual fasting, and violating the *halacha* of the Sabbath; are all issues known to have concerned Jewish Palestinian circles of Jesus's day.[524] Branscomb further highlights their thematic unity, identifying 2:10-11 as first in a cluster of accounts, related not by its healing miracle but by controversy concerning forgiveness of sins: "There was a difference of opinion in Jewish thought of the first century as to the cause and cure of disease. The older view was that it was due to sin, a view which finds repeated expression in the Jewish Scriptures and particularly in the book of

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[522] This is precisely the function of John's Jordan baptism, whereby multitudes from Jerusalem and the entire Judean countryside are absolved before Jesus even appears (1: 4-8).
[523] Fitzmyer, "The Aramaic Language," 15.
[524] Harvie Branscomb, "Mark 2:5, 'Son Thy Sins Are Forgiven.'" *JBL* 53,1 (1934): 56-7 (cf. Israel Abrahams, *Studies in Pharisaism and the Gospels, vol. 1* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1924): 108-12; Billerbeck*, Kommentar zum Neuen Testament*, 495).

Job. It is most likely that the great majority of the scribes of Jesus' day held to this view and used it for homiletic ends. If one became ill one should examine his ways, repent of his wrongdoing, and seek divine forgiveness. Afflictions thus were made to serve a moral end."[525] However, by Jesus's day another view had arisen; the attribution of eclectic human ailments to evil spirits. Branscomb explains the two views were compatible; one could interpret an evil spirit as inflicting divine punishment, just as Paul, a Pharisee trained as a Torah scholar, combines his own spiritual presence with the ability to effect divine retribution in 1 Corinthians 5:4-5.[526] Yet the Pharisees in Mark 2 appear to champion the earlier view alone, where only God, not an exorcist, can forgive sins. A clash of the older view with the newer, or perhaps with the hybrid view of 1 Corinthians 5, explains the friction between the Pharisees and Jesus.

The evidence for these opposing worldviews forms a lens, untainted by time's passage, through which to view the theology Mark's Son represents. Accordingly, throughout the conflict stories (2:1-3:6), I perceive a general approach emerging in opposition to traditional Pharisaical beliefs; one that champions the power and authority of humans to nurture themselves and others, in the face of restrictive ritualistic rules and practices. In 2:1-12, the Pharisees' view echoes the tradition that suffering can only be healed by God after the repentance of the afflicted sinner. Jesus demonstrates that humans have the authority to heal each other, a demonstration he repeats in 3:1-6. Here, the Pharisees object to Jesus healing on the Sabbath, a view Jesus passionately opposes (3:5). In 2:23-28, Jesus again defends working on the Sabbath, this time upholding the right of his disciples to pluck grain to feed themselves. Hence, again, Jesus champions human initiative rather than static deferral to the divine in matters pertaining to health. In 2:13-17, Jesus defends himself and his disciples eating with sinners, explaining his mission is not to heal the healthy but the sick. In 2:18-22, Jesus explains his disciples do not fast because he, the bridegroom, remains in their presence. In Jewish religious tradition, people generally fasted when those they cared about were sick (2 Samuel 12: 16-23, Psalm 35: 11-13) or had died (1 Samuel 31:13, 2 Samuel 1:12), and when they sought divine forgiveness for themselves or others (Deuteronomy 9:15-18, 1 Kings 21:17-29, Jonah 3:4-10, Daniel 9:3-5, Nehemiah 9:1-3). Jesus appears to be saying that, while he remains with his disciples, none of these matters should concern them. He has, after all, demonstrated power to forgive sins by healing the sick and removing evil spirits, a power he later grants his mortal disciples before sending them out to preach repentance to the people (6:7-13).

How did humanity gain this power? Jeremias (1971) notes that only in 2:1-12 does Jesus explicitly promise the forgiveness of sins, and that the passive in 2:5 is a periphrasis for divine action: God is the one who forgives, though his power works through human hands. Jesus further models the bestowal of forgiveness via communal action, not words, which his table-fellowship with sinners (Mark 2:15f) in festive meals exemplifies.[527] First, Jeremias argues the house in Mark 2:15 might

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[525] Branscomb, "Mark 2:5," 57.
[526] Branscomb, "Mark 2:5," 57.
[527] Jeremias, *New Testament Theology*, 114-5.

well refer to Jesus's own abode.[528] Further, the festive character of the meal emerges from κατακεῖσθαι (to recline) since, for ordinary meals, people sat at table.[529] To invite a man to a meal was furthermore an honour. It could represent an offer of peace, trust, brotherhood and forgiveness. Jeremias notes that the report in 2 Kings 25:27-30 (cf. Jeremiah 52:31-34), that Jehoiachin was brought by the king of Babylon from prison to the royal table, was public proclamation of his rehabilitation. Similarly, King Agrippa I invited supreme commander Silas, who had fallen out of favour, to his table as a sign that he had forgiven him (Antiquities 19.321).[530] In Judaism in particular, table-fellowship meant communion before God, for the eating of broken bread by all who shared in the meal represented their inclusion in the blessing that the host had spoken over the unbroken bread. Thus, as God's adopted son and representative (1:10-11), Jesus's meals with publicans and sinners are more than events on a social level, or an expression of his social generosity and sympathy towards the despised. They are "an expression of the mission and message of Jesus (Mark 2:17)… anticipatory celebrations of the feast in the end-time… in which the community of the saints is already being represented (Mark 2:19). The inclusion of sinners in the community of salvation, achieved in table-fellowship, is the most meaningful expression of the message of the redeeming love of God."[531] Thus, in these stories, Mark expresses how God's redemptive power may manifest through mortal words and deeds, via delegated jurisdiction that Jesus terms 'the authority of the Son of Man' (2:10).

3.3.7 A Hint of Multivalency

Considering the grounding of these arguments in historical and literary context, in addition to the linguistic arguments, it seems likeliest Mark 2 uses 'Son of Man' as a synonym for 'faithful follower of God'. The message emerges that God's power may work through his servants to perform miracles of healing and forgiveness, for He can vest them with authority. Indeed, just such thaumaturges appear in the Hebrew Bible, most notably the prophets Elijah and Elisha, who perform diverse miracles that include healing the sick, and whom Mark respectively identifies with the Baptist and Jesus (3.6.2 explores the former connection). Mark even records Jesus's disciples, and one non-disciple, wielding these powers. If Son of Man means anything more specific, *the uninitiated in Mark's audience do not yet realise.*

Yet the double arthrous form of the phrase gives some scholars pause: "With the articles, whether originally used by Jesus or the evangelists, the expression must refer to a man unique among men. Such a man stands alone, the title is attributed only to Jesus and designates only Jesus. Even those authors who are of the opinion

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[528] Cf. Ernst Lohmeyer, *Das Evangelium des Markus* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1967): 55.
[529] Joachim Jeremias, *The Eucharistic Words of Jesus* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1977): 48-50.
[530] Jeremias, *New Testament Theology*, 115.
[531] Jeremias, *New Testament Theology*, 115-6.

that it means simply "man", add phrases such as: '... it seems always to have been used with a certain special emphasis'."[532]

Thus, though historical and textual context, scriptural precedent and the Hebrew-Aramaic languages point to 'human'/'faithful follower of God' as the likeliest meaning for Mark 2's 'Son of Man', the arthrous and eccentric Greek rendition 'ό υἰὸς του ἀνθρώπου' conveys a sense of mysticism and titular grandeur, one pertinent to a major prophet (Ezekiel) and the mighty beings depicted in Daniel, 1 Enoch and 4 Ezra, figures known to Mark's contemporaries as 'Son of Man'. Maybe Mark employs this phrasing as a dramatic device to encourage his audience to reflect on its meaning and significance. Indeed, this ambiguity, which we shall see appears ever more deliberate, pervades all but the Mark 14 Son sayings.

[532]Cortés, "The Son of Man," 467.

3.4 The Passion Predictions: A Suffering and Vindicated Son

8:31, 9:31 and 10:33-34 reflect one another as predictions of the Son's betrayal and death. Being thematically homogenous, we shall address them as a unit. In these verses, Jesus foreshadows his arrest, humiliation, crucifixion and resurrection, as transpires in chapters 15 and 16, referencing 'Son of Man' as the victim. Knowing what unfolds in these chapters, it seems logical to attribute the title, in all three passion predictions, to Jesus alone. Yet how do we reconcile this identification with chapter 2's more generalised Son? Are the foretellings even genuinely Marcan? *3.4.1 Eschatological Insertions?* will introduce the contention that the predictions were early church interpolations rather than Marcan products, spotlighting the clash between Hooker and Hahn. We will then scrutinise Jeremias's argument defending their authenticity, exploring their Semitic flavour; in particular that of the second prediction with its multivalent *masal*, or riddle; and their congruence with the broader gospel picture. *3.4.2 Thematic and Structural Inconsistencies* will principally explore arguments from McKinnis, Edwards and Danove on how well the predictions gel with the pericopae that encompass them, in terms of thematic synthesis and literary structure, again in order to assess authenticity. *3.4.3 A Multivalent Harmonisation* will explore how deliberate multivalency on the author's part would solve some of the problems above. I shall conclude by outlining my own arguments on how the remaining problems might be resolved, thus further vindicating the multivalent approach.

3.4.1 Eschatological Insertions?

Hahn (1969), agreeing with Bultmann, argues these verses, each an echo of the other, were later insertions, portraying Jesus as the eschatological Son so eagerly expected by the Christian community. If Hahn and Bultmann are correct, the predictions may not have originated with Jesus or even Mark, which would partly explain the variegated 'Son of Man' usage in the gospel we now possess. Hahn summarises a certain consensus among scholars, that these prophecies, at least in their highly specific gospel form, were developed by early Christian communities and adds that it is debated "whether the words about the coming Son of Man or those about his earthly work must be regarded as primary and so referred back to Jesus Himself."[533]

Despite the albeit limited evidence of 1 Enoch and 4 Ezra, Hooker contends Hahn's argument "founders on lack of evidence for first-century expectation of an eschatological Son of Man." She further argues it "assumes an extraordinary leap was made by the community" in "creating Son of Man sayings of an apparently entirely inappropriate kind." She criticises views on the extremity of this spectrum, as espoused by Conzelmann,[534] which argue Jesus never once used the phrase in any context, stating this "fails to explain the remarkable fact that, according to the

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[533] Ferdinand Hahn, *The Titles of Jesus in Christology: Their History in Early Christianity* (London: Lutterworth Press, 1969): 21.
[534] Hans Conzelmann, *An Outline of the Theology of the New Testament*., 2nd ed.). Translated by John Bowden (London: SCM, 1969): 131-7.

gospels, every occurrence of the phrase is found in the mouth of Jesus."[535] If Christians intended to fabricate a connection between the two, would they have been so bold as to put every single Son saying on Jesus's lips, rather than simply describing him with the title? Hooker concludes the early church composition view is badly flawed, though she fails to account for other such "extraordinary leaps" we can evidence, like the evolution in Matthew, Luke and John of the divine nature of Jesus, to a point where it far surpasses the glory of 1 Enoch's apocalyptic Son.[536] These later gospels illustrate the rapid evolution of the early Christian community towards an even higher Christology than Bultmann and Hahn suggest Mark's early audiences espoused. How far this evolution had played out by the time of Mark, however, remains speculation.

Yet how can we ascertain these predictions were not forgeries, meticulous prophesies inserted by the church to bolster Jesus's credibility? Hooker proposes a compromise. First, she argues the precision with which Jesus describes his betrayal, torture, death and resurrection in all three accounts renders the disciples' subsequent reactions to these events incomprehensible.[537] Why would they scatter in fear and confusion (14:48-52) had they been repeatedly told by their rabbi that these events were God's plan? I would add that it renders Jesus's 'crucifixion reaction' even more incomprehensible. Unlike every other gospel account, Mark's Jesus appears shocked and confused throughout the passion narrative. He is mocked and criticised by bystanders, high priests, Torah scholars, even the criminals with whom he was crucified, yet, for the first time in Mark, Jesus fails to respond. He remains completely silent, as though stunned, until the moment before he dies, when, directly quoting Psalm 22:1, he cries "My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?" (15:34). For once, Mark's Jesus appears to be totally out of his depth, a confusion that ends in despair. How can we possibly reconcile this with Jesus's three detailed predictions of his death and resurrection? If everything were going precisely as God planned and Jesus predicted, why did Jesus feel abandoned? This contrast suggests that Jesus's three precognitions of the Son's fate were subsequent, somewhat ill-considered, textual insertions.

However, Hooker also states: "it seems incredible that Jesus should not have foreseen at least the likelihood… of his death." She cites the hostility of the authorities, presumably referring to the Torah scholars and chief priests, and the influence of scriptures on Jesus's worldview, particularly Isaiah 53, in which the suffering servant endures torture and death at the hands of the people whose transgressions his trials atone for. Hooker argues: "that the early Christian

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[535] Hooker, *According to Saint Mark*, 91.

[536] For example, Mark's Jesus seems distraught on the cross whereas Luke's Jesus appears calm and fully in control of the situation. Mark's Jesus is portrayed as human; capable of anger, impatience and lack of knowledge; whereas John's Jesus displays no such imperfections and, unlike the synoptic figure, is stated to be equal to God, having existed since the beginning of time. Whereas, in Mark, Jesus appears to become the adopted son of God during his baptism, John's Jesus as the divine Logos is God's equal from before the creation of the universe. For a fuller discussion of these Christological developments from Mark through to John, see Bart D. Ehrman, *How Jesus Became God* (New York: Harper Collins, 2014): especially 238-9 on Mark's adoptionist Christology and 271-4 on John's pre-incarnation Christology.

[537] Hooker, *According to Saint Mark*, 204-5.

communities combed the scriptures for passages which would explain the death of Jesus does not rule out the possibility that he, too, looked in the scriptures for guidance."[538] Hooker concludes Jesus probably did, in general terms, predict his rejection and downfall, seeing himself treading the path of the suffering servant, but that the detailed descriptions in Mark were retrospectively informed.

Jeremias (1971), arguing for an Aramaic Vorlage, contends the second prediction should be recognised as earliest, "not only by its brevity and indefiniteness, but above all by its terminology."[539] He explains that we can reconstruct 9:31a: '*mitmesar bar nasa lide bene nasa'*. If we view the participle as a divine passive, the phrase translates as: 'God will soon deliver up the man to men'. The wordplay *bar nasa*/*ben nasa* further suggests a *masal*, or riddle, "simply because bar nasa can be understood either as a title or generically."[540] Understood generically, the saying announces the disorders of the eschatological time of distress, in which the individual would be surrendered up to the mass. As a title, the phrase announces the delivering up of the Son of Man (cf. 14:21). We thus have an apocalyptic riddle. Jeremias concludes that it does not present as an *ex eventu* formula, due to its ambiguous nature, and that it displays three stylistic characteristics typical of Mark's Jesus, all with a Semitic flavour: a *masal* character, the divine passive and paronomasia.[541]

Moreover, though the passion predictions protrude due to their explicit and, in the first and third, detailed nature, driving scholars to doubt their authenticity, Mark contains other material that predicts the passion. Jeremias notes threats against the betrayer (14:21), a warning against murdering the heir to the kingdom (12:8), *mesalim* that focus on Jesus's fate: the imminent separation (14:7), the Passover lamb (14:22-24), the cup (14:36). There are *mesalim* that place Jesus's fate in context with other end time events: the murdered shepherd and scattered flock (14:27), the snatched-away bridegroom (2:20), cup and baptism (10:38f), the ransom (10:45) and the rejected keystone of the temple (12:10). There are also announcements of the disciples' suffering, relevant because Jesus would hardly have prepared them for suffering if he too had not expected to suffer. Further, why give such detailed future instruction in Mark 13, and exhort his disciples to stay on guard, if he did not realise he would soon be gone and they would have to fend for themselves (cf. Mark 8:34-35, 9:1, 10:38f, 14:27f)? Jeremias summarises: "The very fullness of the announcements of suffering listed… above, and even more the mysteriousness and indefiniteness of many of them, to say nothing of the many images in which they are expressed and the variety of forms and genres, show that here we have a broad stratum of tradition with much early material in it."[542]

The criterion of embarrassment further evidences these sayings' primitive origin. Jeremias notes that, though tradition tends to spare the disciples, Mark's passion material emphasizes their incomprehension and failure, being rooted in theological

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[538] Hooker, *According to Saint Mark*, 204.
[539] Jeremias, *New Testament Theology*, 281.
[540] Jeremias, *New Testament Theology*, 282.
[541] Jeremias, *New Testament Theology*, 282.
[542] Jeremias, *New Testament Theology*, 282-3.

context rather than window dressing. He argues the designation of Peter as Satan (8:33) was surely not invented, and forms a non-artificial contextual unity with 8:31's passion prediction. 10:35-37 reports how the disciples are blinded by expectations of glory that pass over the suffering ahead, of which Jesus has to remind them (10:38). The forecast of suffering announces the disciples' flight in a scriptural quotation (14:27) that is realised in 14:50. Luke's later tradition omits both the prediction and the flight. But in Mark, even the embarrassing certainty with which Peter and his companions deny their predicted apostasy (14:29-31) is not concealed. "Mark 14:8 is also firmly rooted in the passion context. The verse is often regarded as a secondary appendix to the anointing, which allowed the passage to be localised on the passion narrative."[543] Yet Jeremias contends that, since 14:8 presupposes a distinction between the gift and the work of love, it becomes an integral part of the story - the foreshadowing of the passion. Jesus defends the woman by declaring that the anointing is a work of love, which stands higher than a gift of love, namely the work of laying out the dead.[544] Perhaps then, the narrative's point is that Jesus expects to be crucified as a criminal and accordingly thrown, unanointed and unentombed, into a shared and unmarked grave.[545] Why would the church invent such material?

Jeremias concedes, however, that the strangely precise phrase common to each prediction ('after three days') may have been formulated *ex eventu*. Nonetheless, he notes that the phrase shows signs of antiquity, appearing elsewhere in Mark (14:58; 15:29) and later in Luke (13:32, 33) and John (16:16, 17, 19), though never in these instances appearing to reference the three days from Good Friday to Easter.[546] What then is its origin and significance? Semitic languages have no word for several/a few/some, and use the expedient of saying 'three'.[547] Even in the Hebrew Bible, the phrase 'three days' denotes an indefinite but not lengthy time period. Thus, Jesus appears to have made no distinction between parousia, resurrection, consummation, and the building of the New Temple; all these events describe the imminent triumph of God.[548] Jeremias concludes: "Certainly the three so-called

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[543] For this argument, see Bultmann, *Synoptic Tradition*, 36f, cited in Jeremias, *New Testament Theology*, 283-4.
[544] Jeremias, *New Testament Theology*, 283-4.
[545] Scholars debate how frequently the Roman administration might have allowed crucified criminals a decent burial; Dijkhuizen (2011) summarises these arguments, citing Philo's statement that on festal occasions a body *might* be released to family or friends as an act of mercy, and Josephus's description in The Jewish War of the crucified being buried before sunset, which further accords with Jewish law (Deuteronomy 21: 22-23) and Essene custom as recorded in the Temple Scroll. He also cites Crossan, who presents Hengel's evidence that quite often the dead were not buried but left suspended for consumption, by wild animals and birds of prey (Petra Dijkhuizen, "'Buried Shamefully': Historical Reconstruction of Jesus' Burial and Tomb." *Neotestamentica* 45,1 (2011): 119-20). Thus it seems degrading decomposition was at least possible for crucified criminals, as opposed to compassionate anointing and ritual burial.
[546] Jeremias argues that even Mark 14:58's "after three days," which John 2:21 later reinterprets as a metaphor for Jesus's crucifixion and resurrection, appears simply to mean "the definitive turning point, not Easter," in Mark's context, as its recurrence in 15:29 further suggests.
[547] Jeremias cites Bauer, "Drei Tage," *Biblica* 39 (1958): 354-8, and Landes, "The 'Three Days and Three Nights' Motif in Jonah 2.1," *JBL* 86 (1967): 446-50 in support of this argument (Jeremias, *New Testament Theology*, 285).
[548] Jeremias, *New Testament Theology*, 285-6.

passion predictions are, in their present form, constructed *ex eventu*, but they go back to an early Aramaic *masal*."[549]

3.4.2 Thematic and Structural Inconsistencies

Other evidence, however, casts doubt on Marcan/pre-Marcan authorship. One characteristic shared by Jesus's second and third predictions of death and resurrection is the seemingly arbitrary positioning of these accounts in the text, neither developing from a previous story nor linking coherently to the next, either thematically or, in the latter case, in terms of geographical transition. It seems the narrative would flow more logically and smoothly if these accounts were removed, which suggests scribal interference. I have noticed such an inconsistency in the final prediction. 10:32-34 places Jesus on the road "going up" (ἀναβαίνοντες) into Jerusalem. In verse 33, the proximity of Jerusalem, the steep ascent, and the imminent peril that lay within, is implicit in Jesus's warning to his disciples: "ἰδού, ἀναβαίνομεν εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα, καὶ ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου παραδοθήσεται…". [550] Topographically, this journey would have involved an arduous ascent of 3,500 feet over a stretch of 20 miles from the town of Jericho.[551] However, in 10:46, the narrative presents Jesus entering the town of Jericho, prior to which the road would have eased along flattish ground close to the River Jordan.[552] In 10:46, Jesus and his entourage appear to have performed a geographical somersault, landing at an earlier stage of their journey; a stage where entry into Jerusalem was far from imminent, and where they could not have been 'ἀναβαίνοντες'. This strengthens the view that 10:32-34 was a later, awkward insertion.

The geographical disjunct is augmented by thematic inconsistency in Mark's narrative. Before Jesus's final prophecy of death and resurrection, he teaches his disciples that they will receive eternal life in the coming age, but that many of the first will be last and the last first (10:30-31). James and John then approach, seeking the highest places of glory for themselves (10:37). Jesus tells them that the one who wishes to be great among the disciples will be their servant, and the one who wishes to be foremost will be slave to all (10:43-44). Thus 10:35-45's teaching follows smoothly, in both theme and conclusion, from 10:30-31. The second repetition of Jesus's prophecy of death and resurrection somewhat breaks the flow, especially with the strange description of the unexplained fear the disciples and crowds felt as they ascended towards Jerusalem (10:32). This fear foreshadows the trials Jesus faces in the city, culminating with his arrest, the scattering of the disciples, and the crucifixion, none of which seems appropriate in the middle of Jesus's teaching on cultivating a general attitude of humble service to the community. The passion theme would sit more comfortably later in the narrative, suggesting it was not part of

[549] Jeremias, *New Testament Theology*, 286.
[550] "See, we are ascending into Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be handed over/betrayed…"
[551] C.C. McCown, "The Geography of Jesus' Last Journey to Jerusalem." *JBL* 51 (1932): 112.
[552] "Palestine in New Testament Times." In Aland, *The Greek New Testament*, Inside front cover.

Mark's original text, whose structure, broadly speaking, is meticulously fluid and logical.[553]

McKinnis (1976) notes, however, that several features of 10:32-34 suggest Marcan authorship: "The vocabulary is largely distinctively Markan words and phrases used with distinctively Markan meanings: 'on the way', 'Jesus going before them', 'astonished', 'following', 'afraid' (used absolutely), 'behold'. The syntax is characteristically Markan, with the use of the periphrastic construction, the paratactic use of kai, the impersonal plural, and the use of archesthai as an auxiliary verb… Finally, this passage is clearly a connecting link which moves the whole story in Mark decisively forward toward Jerusalem and the passion… the previous passion 'predictions' were not strictly foretelling what was going to happen in Jerusalem; but this one, which is set just before Jesus gets to Jerusalem, does just that."[554] Schweizer (1960) tentatively accords that, though the prediction material: "has certainly been elaborated by the church in many details… the verb paradidosthai is used so often of the Son of man that he must have been said to have been 'handed over' at a very early stage of the tradition."[555] Thus, was this third prediction a careful forgery, or was the narrative's thematic inconsistency simply a case of careless editing by Mark - of poor positioning - with the geographical inconsistency stemming from Mark's ignorance of Palestinian topography?

Sustaining the former concept, I notice the second prediction also sits awkwardly in the *wider* narrative. Immediately beforehand, Jesus expels an evil spirit from a young man with symptoms of epilepsy and explains why his disciples failed to cure him: only prayer might expel such a spirit (9:29). Later, while passing through Galilee, Jesus speaks of the betrayal, murder and resurrection of the Son of Man, where his disciples fail to understand and fear to question him (9:30-32). There is no obvious thematic link between these stories. Indeed, this story stands in tension with the initial prediction, where Peter thinks he understands Jesus to the point he even takes him aside and rebukes him (8:31-32). Jesus proceeds to teach his disciples that discipleship may involve martyrdom, but that whoever loses his life for the sake of the gospel will find salvation (8:35). Why then do the disciples fail to understand Jesus's repetition, in chapter 9, of the passion prediction? Then, in the verses following this second prediction, Jesus asks his disciples what they had been discussing on the road to Capernaum, and it transpires that they had been debating who was greatest among them (9:33-34). This seems a bizarre topic for the disciples to raise, immediately after their rabbi has predicted betrayal and murder, and certainly sits at odds with Peter's concerned reaction following Jesus's initial prediction. Hence, on grounds of narrative incongruity, as with the third, one might argue the second prediction was interpolated.

Edwards (1989), however, highlights the familiar Marcan trend of fragmenting a story or pericope by splicing a second, ostensibly unrelated, story into its centre. He

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553 Though scholars disagree on the precise form of Mark's structural composition, all concord that it is both tightly organised and rhetorically sophisticated. For an overview of the theories, see: Kevin W. Larsen, *The Structure of Mark's Gospel: Current Proposals* (New York: Continuum, 2004): 143-64.
554 Ray McKinnis,"An Analysis of Mark X 32-34." *NovT* 18,2 (1976): 82-83.
555 Eduard Schweizer, "The Son of Man," *JBL* 79, no.2 (June 1960): 120.

details the example of Jairus (5:21-24), who exhorts Jesus to save his dying daughter, before a woman with internal bleeding stalls Jesus's progress to Jairus's house (5:25-34), interrupting the narrative till Jesus resumes his journey and raises the now deceased daughter from death (5:35-43). Edwards further cites the cursing of the fig tree (11:12-14), which segues into Jesus cleansing the Jerusalem temple of impure practices (11:15-19), before he and his disciples return to see the fig tree withered (11:20-21). Edwards labels this device 'a Markan sandwich', following an A-B-A pattern, noting its ninefold appearance in Mark. He further suggests scholars have misunderstood these literary insertions as editorial interferences.[556]

Edwards observes scholarly concordance that Mark consciously employs the sandwich technique, but adds that scholars cannot agree why. He notes Redlich acknowledges these sandwiches without discussing their purpose, that Von Dobschütz believes the sandwiches create a sense of a longer time period or a greater spatial distance passing during the narrative, that Nineham similarly posits the insertions allow more time for initial actions to develop (possibly to simmer in the audience's minds?) and that Bultmann, though agreeing a time lapse plays a role in some sandwiches, contends this is not Mark's reason for using them. Bultmann explains that if the slowing of pace were deliberate, we would have to clarify why Mark: "who uses the word 'immediately' some 40 times, and who narrates his gospel in an otherwise rapid-fire fashion, would need to create the illusion of a passage of time at these particular points?"[557] Edwards adds that Fowler believes the technique encourages the audience to digest the sandwich segments as a whole, that Klostermann contends the technique pulls related material together, that Burkhill thinks it stresses a parallel or contrast between stories, and that Gaston feels unsure whether the surrounding or the inserted story provides the interpretative key. Finally, Edwards cites Donahue's contention that the sandwiches' purpose are theological rather than literary: "to underscore two major themes of his gospel, the way of suffering of Jesus, and the necessity of the disciples to follow Jesus on this way."[558] Edwards's own view is similarly theological; that the sandwiches emphasize major gospel motifs: "especially the meaning of faith, discipleship, bearing witness, and the dangers of apostasy. Moreover… the middle story nearly always provides the key to the theological purpose… To use the language of medicine, the transplanted organ enlivens the host material."[559]

The lack of consensus, especially in light of Bultmann's reasoning, highlights to me the confusion inherent in viewing 'sandwiches' as devices for achieving literary effect. However, if clear theological purpose could be perceived in the passion prediction sandwiches, purpose that chimes with Mark's major motifs, this would weaken scholarly notions that the prediction pericopae were nothing but clumsy, non-Marcan, insertions. Let us therefore examine these stories as sandwiches, to see whether theological parallels with Marcan motifs emerge.

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[556] James R. Edwards, "Markan Sandwiches. The Significance of Interpolations in Markan Narratives." *NovT* 31,3 (1989): 193.
[557] Edwards, "Markan Sandwiches," 195.
[558] Edwards, "Markan Sandwiches," 195-6.
[559] Edwards, "Markan Sandwiches," 196.

In chapter 8, the prediction follows Peter's confession of Jesus's messiahship and subsequent exhortation to secrecy (8:27-30). A teaching on the importance of suffering, possibly even martyrdom, for his disciples ensues (8:34-9:1). On the one hand, the command for secrecy seems almost at odds with the boldness Jesus demands of his disciples in 8:34-9:1. I feel it possible, however, that Mark is linking the Messiah in the first segment, the Son in the second and the disciples in the third, to show their similar purpose and woe-ridden destiny. Certainly, Mark recounts the disciples experiencing opposition when they feel pressured to flee Gethsemane (14:50-52), though not nearly so much as Jesus who is crucified. Mark also recounts the rejection, hate and courtroom trials the disciples are destined to endure (13:9-13). Yet this suffering stands at odds with the Son's glorious arrival at the end of the final segment 8:38-9:1. Thus, if we use suffering as the key to this sandwich, we have A (Peter believes Jesus is the Messiah) – BC (The Son of Man is destined to suffer and die, but then to rise again) – BC (The disciples must also be willing to suffer and die, but those who lose their lives will save them just like the Son destined to return in glory). Though Mark may well be linking Messiah, Son of Man and the disciples in this pericope, its segments fail to function as a literary sandwich on any detailed level.

The story of the demon-possessed child precedes the second prediction, followed by Jesus's teaching that whoever wishes to be greatest must serve all, before presenting a child to his disciples and encouraging them to show kindness to children, not just for his sake but for God's. Here a child appears in each surrounding segment; the former saved by Jesus, the latter an illustration of the kindness disciples should show all children. Despite this connection, the sandwiched passion prediction, with its grim foretelling of death and the disciples' subsequent fear, feels jarringly unrelated.

The story of the rich man precedes the third prediction, followed by James and John's request for glory. Here the sandwich technique appears to function: the love of wealth espoused by the rich man parallels the disciples' desire for glorification. The prediction of Jesus's arrest, subjection to abuse, and execution starkly contrasts with this. The sandwich thus, framing black with white, foregrounds a theological point: the way of discipleship rejects worldly wealth and dreams and follows a path of hardship and persecution.

Based on this analysis, I feel that viewing the passion prediction pericope through the lens of 'sandwich theory' is somewhat hit-and-miss. Perrin (1971), however, provides a different structural approach for analysing the passion prediction units, units he delineates as 8:31-9:1, 9:30-37 and 10:32-45: "Each has exactly the same structure (prediction-misunderstanding-teaching), and each is a form of an interpretation of Peter's confession."[560] He posits their trifold nature reflects Mark's rhetorical habit of threefold repetition (see below) and that they scaffold the gospel section (8:27-10:45) where Mark outlines his *theologia crucis*. Robbins (1981) accords: "Each one of the passion predictions itself stands within a unit characterized by three parts (viii 27-30, 31-33, 34-ix I; ix 30-32, 33-34, 35-50; x 32-

[560] Norman Perrin, "The Christology of Mark: A Study in Methodology." *JR* 51,3 (1971): 179.

34, 35-41, 42-45)."[561] He further cites Neirynck's study, which lists 23 triplets that together characterise Mark's narrative. These triplets range from simple lists (e.g. 3:35: οὗτος ἀδελφός μου καὶ ἀδελφὴ καὶ μήτηρ ἐστίν) to framings of a triptych's central segment (e.g. 6:14-16's trifold ἔλεγον ὅτι, which highlights the confusion surrounding Jesus's identity by listing what different people were saying). Neirynck further highlights numerous doublets which also typify Mark.[562] Some we have discussed, such as Jesus's repetition of the difficulty rich men face in entering God's kingdom and the encore of the feeding miracle. In assessing whether a pericope is authentically Marcan, dual and triple-part content should hence be factored into the equation. Regarding the passion pericopae, Perrin argues these all interpret Peter's confession, of what it means to be the Messiah and his disciple: "in the first, the necessary preparedness Jesus exhibited; in the second, the necessity of servanthood; in the third, the climactic presentation of servanthood culminating in the ransom saying." Perrin states the trifold presentation foregrounds Mark's point (the true nature of discipleship), each iteration following the same structural pattern: the disciples set the stage by asking questions or voicing tendencies or opinions, which Perrin believes reflect theologies present in Mark's church, before Jesus exhorts and teaches. He concludes: "The true Christology is then expressed by Jesus using Son of Man, and adhering to the convention, Son of Man is never found in Mark except on the lips of Jesus."[563]

This prediction-misunderstanding-teaching pattern rings true in 8:31-9:1, where Jesus predicts the Son's fate, Peter rebukes him and Jesus corrects Peter whilst teaching the disciples. However, in 9:30-37, the misunderstanding and teaching, on the nature of greatness as servitude, fail to connect with the prediction of death and resurrection. Further, in 10:32-45, where the brothers request glorification and Jesus teaches that glorification requires humility and servitude, only a tenuous connection to Jesus's prediction of persecution, death and resurrection emerges. Thus, only the first prediction clearly functions as a teaching triptych.[564] Accordingly I feel that, at times, structural critics too earnestly seek to establish narrative patterns by forcing them onto unsuitable material. Further, on Perrin's observation that in each passion

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[561] Vernon K. Robbins, "Summons and Outline in Mark: The Three-Step Progression." *NovT* 23,2 (1981): 97.

[562] Frans Neirynck, *Duality in Mark: Contributions to the Study of the Markan Redaction* (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1972): 110-2, cited in Robbins, "Summons and Outline," 97.

[563] Perrin, "The Christology of Mark," 179.

[564] Several other triptychs are similarly constructed, with framing segments that enclose a central panel, one that tells a different story that is somehow illuminated by its frames. 3:20-35 relates Jesus's family, when they hear of his throngs of followers, coming to Jesus in Capernaum to bring him home, for fear he has gone mad. In the parallel frame (3:31-35), Jesus hears of his family's arrival, and replies that his true family are the crowd that were currently thronging him. The core panel, 3:22-30 recounts the scribes' claim that Jesus exorcises demons through Satan's power, and Jesus's response that Satan cannot cast out Satan, using an analogy of a divided house. Thus, the framing panels that describe Jesus's split from his biological family illuminate the divided house metaphor in the core panel with a literal illustration, perhaps foregrounding the message that the houses of the Jews are similarly divided, both in terms of their understanding of God's way and of Jesus's role in promoting it. 5:21-43, another triptych, has Jesus raising Jairus's daughter from death interrupted by the account of Jesus healing the woman with menorrhagia (5:25-34). The faith of Jairus in the framing segments highlights the faith of the woman, who believes she need only touch the hem of Jesus's garment for her 12-year condition to disappear. Here, the framing panels serve to highlight the power of faith over sickness, even chronic and terminal afflictions.

pericope the true Christology is expressed using 'Son of Man' at the finale, this rings true for the first and third but not the second. Also, in first and third, I notice 'Son of Man' is used both at the start and end of the pericope, thus better suiting Edwards's sandwich hypothesis.

Danove (2003) argues the positioning of Mark's predictions was no accident, as each mirrors the other in terms of rhetorical structure when we factor their pursuant verses into the equation: "Structural repetition of 8,31-9,1, 9,30-41, and 10,32-45, links the repeated predictions (8,31-32a; 9,30-32; 10,32-34), controversies (8,32b-33; 9,33-34; 10,35-41), and teachings (8,34-9,1; 9,35-41; 10,42-45)."[565] This repetition relates cultivated beliefs about the Son's near-future experience and activity, and his parousiac identity and activity, in two ways. First, the initial and third teachings coordinate and relate statements about the Son's parousiac identity and activity, in coming in his father's glory with the holy angels (8:38), and his near-future activity in not being served but serving and giving his life as ransom (10,45). Second, the initial occurrence of this structure relates the Son's near-future experience and activity (prediction) to parousiac identity and activity (teaching), thus revealing the identity of the one fated to suffer, die and rise (8:31) as the Son who comes in his father's glory (8:38). "Structural repetition then ensures that all of the progressively augmented contradictory content of the predictions is related to the parousiac identity and activity of the Son of Man."[566]

Though Danove's theory signposts clear structural parallels, I feel flaws emerge on detailed inspection. First, James' and John's request (10:35-41), which Danove labels controversy, is mainly a non-argumentative discourse between Jesus and the brothers. Only in 10:41 do the onlooking disciples react angrily, within the space of a single verse, just as in the one-verse controversies of 8:32b-33 and 9:33-34. Yet the added textual weight and non-argumentative nature of 10:35-40 intrudes on Danove's prediction-controversy-teaching pattern. Next, the second prediction teaching (9:35-41) totally ignores the Son's identity, unlike the teachings of the first and third, extolling instead the virtues of humble servitude, kindness to children and allowing others to exorcise demons in Jesus's name. This thematic disjunct clearly undercuts the harmony of the triad's rhetorical effect. Third, unlike the first and third, the second prediction's teaching never mentions 'Son of Man', thus failing to relate the prediction content to his nature and purpose as Danove hypothesises.

In conclusion, based on the aforementioned theories, I feel 8:31-33's Son pericope is likely the most authentic on the grounds I initially discussed (topographical and thematic). Even a sandwich technique emerges in the wider narrative, when we consider that 8:31's Son commences the pericope and 8:38-9:1's Son concludes it. The pericope moreover commences with the Son's tribulation, progresses with a relevant lesson for the disciples and ends with the Son's glorious return; a reward for following the lesson's prescriptions. Unlike the latter predictions, 8:30-32 shines as the illuminating centrepiece of a typical Marcan triptych. Based on sandwich theory, the final prediction also seems Marcan, though it fails to meet the topographical and

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[565] Paul Danove, "The Rhetoric of the Characterization of Jesus as the Son of Man and Christ in Mark." *Biblica* 84,1 (2003): 27.
[566] Danove, "Rhetoric of the Characterization," 27.

thematic criteria detailed above. Regarding narrative and thematic continuity, 9:31 seems least authentic, and both this and the initial prediction fail the sandwich test. However, I shall argue all three can be vindicated as Marcan, when we read them as part of a cohesive narrative, comprehending Mark's deliberate use of multivalency and, as a storyteller, his thought-provoking building of suspense. Accordingly, we shall shed new light on the Son in the passion pericopae, arriving at a better understanding of what Mark meant to convey.

3.4.3 A Multivalent Harmonisation

The uninitiated initially hearing the gospel would, I think, link this pericope's suffering Son to Jesus, but not Jesus alone. If Jesus alone were destined to suffer, why would Peter rebuke him as opposed to showing concern? Why would Jesus respond so jarringly, calling him Satan, rather than showing gratitude for Peter's vicarious love? Why would Jesus so harshly label Peter's worry about his rabbi's impending death a feeling motivated by "merely human concerns"? And then, in 8:34-8:37, why would Jesus teach the Twelve that *any* true disciple must take up their cross and traverse the same path as he, surrendering their very lives to save their souls? To the uninitiated, I feel 8:31's 'Son of Man' would present as Lindars's 'man in my position'.[567] A body of scholars, inspired by Manson's studies,[568] argue for a similar definition which Horbury (1985) summarises: "As used by Jesus, it was not a title, but a reference to the Danielic figure, understood as a symbol for saints, in the sense of the loyal Israelites" (cf. 3.3.5). Along with Manson, Horbury lists Dodd, Moule and Hooker as proponents of this theory.[569] He further notes the hybrid positions it has spawned, noting that a self-referencing or circumlocutional use of 'Son of Man' does not exclude the possibility of a titular usage also. He observes, for example, that O'Neill, following Vermes, argues for a circumlocutional use but leaves the titular usage open to question and that Hooker, though doubting the titular usage, modifies Vermes's argument by positing that: "in the mouth of Jesus, the phrase was not only circumlocutional, but also, and more importantly, Danielic - an identification with the mission of the people of God."[570]

This solution really chimes with 8:31's Son saying, when we consider that Jesus is predicting suffering and death not just for himself but for his disciples, who are indeed faithful Israelites and other 'sons of men' in his position. According with chapter 2's similarly generalised usages, it simultaneously explains Peter's rebuke (for he is worried about himself, not Jesus), Jesus's harsh response to Peter's self-interest, Peter's motivation stemming from "merely human concerns" and the subsequent lesson that *anyone* who wishes to be a disciple must sacrifice their lives to save their souls. However, the two later predictions use 'Son of Man' in a more specialised sense, both implying a certain *someone* will be "betrayed"; 9:31 into the hands of men and 10:33 to the chief priests and teachers of the law in Jerusalem,

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[567] Richard Bauckham, "The Son of Man: 'A Man in My Position' or 'Someone'?" *JSNT* 7 (1985): 23-4.
[568] E.g. Manson's *The Servant Messiah*, cited in William Horbury, "The Messianic Associations of 'The Son of Man'." *JTS* 36, 1 (April 1985): 35.
[569] Horbury, "The Messianic Associations," 35.
[570] Horbury, "The Messianic Associations," 35.

who will deliver him to the Gentiles, detail which 8:31-37 omits. This explains why the disciples became confused, and furthermore indicates deliberate multivalency, with the detail and diverging contexts of the later predictions emphasising a more specific Son in contrast to 8:31's generic figure. The ambiguous title also fits the Semitic style of these pericopae, as Jeremias indicates above, as typical *mesalim*. With such a reading, the uninitiated in Mark's audience remain in the position of the floundering disciples (9:32), unable to precisely grasp how this ambiguous 'Son of Man' title relates to the gospel's protagonists and their precise fate. It heightens the suspense of the tale, and maintains tension by making the audience wait for the nature of Jesus's and his followers' destinies to crystallise as the narrative evolves.

Moreover, with such a reading, objections to these pericopae's authenticity based on inconsistency with the disciples' subsequent panic, even Jesus's panic in Gethsemane and on the cross, despite all he had predicted, can be countered. Like those in Mark's audience who remain puzzled by the title's ambiguity, the disciples do not understand the passion predictions. After the first, where the Son seems to reference a group of Jesus's followers, Peter seems dismayed and unwilling to accept his prophesied fate. However, Mark relays that none of them understand the second prediction (9:32), whose 'betrayal' revelation suggests more an individual referent than a group. The third, whose additional specifics seem further to reference an individual (one betrayed from Jews to Gentiles), hence not the disciples, follows Jesus's promise of eternal life to his disciples, which James and John seize upon immediately afterwards, ignoring the passion teaching. None of them seem to realise their master will shortly be executed. Jesus himself understands what the prediction entails, as we see when the knowledge tortures him in Gethsemane (14:33-36). He even knows his betrayer and the time of his betrayal (14:41-42), so, in my opinion, his cry on the cross should not be labelled panic or confusion but a rhetorical exclamation of anguish.

I further feel the inauthenticity argument based on the final prediction's chronological inconsistency, where Jesus ascends to Jerusalem only to later tread flat ground as he enters Jericho, misunderstands Mark's genre. Mark is not writing a history, certainly not one tailored to twenty-first century standards of chronological accuracy, rather he writes a gospel. Mark was not composing a mechanical and temporally ordered account but an oft-poetic, theologically coherent (yet complex) expression of Jesus and his message. First, the same density of literary devices that appear in Mark, such as chiasm, paronomasia and Janus parallelism, never appear in Jewish histories (e.g. Samuel-Kings; Chronicles; Antiquities of the Jews; The Jewish War), only, as we have seen, in Semitic poetry and poetic prose (e.g. Psalms; Job). Further, Eusebius in the fourth century, quoting a document he attributes to Papias in the first, states Mark's source (allegedly Peter) never intended to provide chronological sequence. Rather, he tailored the order of his tales either to the needs of the moment, or to Mark's needs, depending on how we interpret Eusebius.[571] The oft-overlooked poetic nature of Mark's writing, particularly evident when reconstructed in Hebrew and Aramaic, in addition to Mark's predominant motive of

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[571] H. J. Lawlor, "Eusebius on Papias." *Hermathena* 19,43 (1922): 200.

conveying socio-theological truth rather than chronology,[572] strengthens the view that we should not read Mark as a contemporary, or even ancient, historian. Perhaps we would better understand him as a philosopher-bard conveying important prophetic teachings. To such an artist, whether the historical Jesus completed certain actions before or after leaving Jericho would, I suspect, seem inanely irrelevant.

Regarding inauthenticity arguments based on thematic inconsistencies between the predictions and their surrounding pericopae, I feel thematic unity emerges when we view the predictions as preludes to teachings on the sacrificial path of discipleship. In short, I feel the best explanation is a simpler variant of Danove's theory. The first prediction (8:31) introduces a teaching about the importance of suffering for the soul to achieve salvation (8:32-9:1). The second (9:31) introduces near-identical teachings (9:32-37, 42-50). The third (10:33-34) does likewise, along with a related teaching about the great serving humbly (10:42-45), following an irreverent and untimely thunderclap by James and John (10:35-41). Perhaps due to their interruption, this point about the great serving humbly in defiance of social convention is subsequently accentuated, by Mark ignoring chronology and returning to Jericho for the theme-reinforcing Bartimaios account (10:46-52).

[572] As opposed to Luke, who emphasises the importance of writing an orderly account as one of his principal motives for composing a gospel (Luke 1:1-4).

3.5 Mark 8:38: A Heavenly Son

8:38 ostensibly presents Jesus and Son as distinct: "ὃς γὰρ ἐὰν ἐπαισχυνθῇ με καὶ τοὺς ἐμοὺς λόγους ἐν τῇ γενεᾷ ταύτῃ τῇ μοιχαλίδι καὶ ἁμαρτωλῷ, καὶ ὁ Υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐπαισχυνθήσεται αὐτὸν, ὅταν ἔλθῃ ἐν τῇ δόξῃ τοῦ Πατρὸς αὐτοῦ μετὰ τῶν ἀγγέλων τῶν ἁγίων."[573] Yet again, Jesus references the Son in third person, for, though Christian tradition has long conferred Jesus with the title, in no Marcan occurrence does Jesus directly claim it. Ehrman (2014) notes, pointing in particular to 8:38, that anyone who already believes Jesus is the Son may casually assume the title is self-referential, even though the text never claims this: "A reader who thinks Jesus is talking about himself… has brought that understanding to the text, not taken it from the text."[574] A recent Christian convert, or investigator, hearing these words for the first time, in the first century, might not make this connection at this point in Mark's tale. Ehrman further observes: "This is probably not the way an early Christian would have made up a saying about the Son of Man. You can imagine someone inventing a saying in which it is crystal clear Jesus is talking about himself: 'If you do this to me then I, the Son of Man, will do that to you.' But it is less likely that a Christian would make up a saying that seems to differentiate between Jesus and the Son of Man. This means the saying is more likely authentic."[575] The argument has force, for why would Jesus not simply say "If anyone is ashamed of me in this adulterous and sinful generation, *I* also will be ashamed of him, when *I* come in the glory of my Father and the holy angels", if that is what he meant? This would state his message in clear and natural speech, far more characteristic of Mark's formulaic and economical (yet paradoxically ponderous) style.[576] However, it is possible that, when referencing his divine nature and destiny, Mark's Jesus was deliberately ambiguous and obscure, in accordance with Mark's 'messianic secret' motif, a term coined by Wilhelm Wrede.

Hence, in *3.5.1 A Secret Son*, we shall examine the ideas that Wrede and Schweitzer, Wrede's fellow *Messiasgeheimnis* pioneer, propounded, exploring the extent to which Mark's messianic secret motif justifies the title as Jesus's covert self-reference. *3.5.2 I, the Son* will assess whether 8:38's Son might originally have been rendered 'I', based on Jeremias's text-critical evidence and Eduard Schweizer's counterargument. *3.5.3 A Semitic 'Someone Like Me'* will explore the

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573 "For whoever is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will also be ashamed of him when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels."
574 Ehrman, *How Jesus Became God*, 107.
575 Ehrman, *How Jesus Became God*, 107.
576 "Germane to "the heaviness of style… the over-use of stereotyped expressions and preference for a set formula… apparent in some of the repeated expressions: iii 12, viii 30 *he charged them to*; iii 5,34; x 23 *he looked around… and said*; i 31; v 41; ix 27 *he took… by the hand*; vii 17; ix 28,33; x 10 *he entered the house*; viii 27; ix 33; x 32 *on the road*. The poverty of expression must be deliberate, for it is not due to lack of skill in Greek composition… he can properly employ his tenses, preserving the correct distinction between perfect and aorist, imperfect and aorist, which was quite beyond the powers of some contemporary writers. The vocabulary is economical, too, limited to 1270 words, and specially weak in particles (another feature of Semitic Greek). He has only 80 NT hapax, and only 5 words entirely peculiar to himself… he overworks certain words and expressions, *immediately, which is, why?, again, much, amazed, bring*": Nigel Turner, "The Style of Mark." In *The Language and Style of the Gospel of Mark*, edited by J.K. Elliott, 232-234 (Leiden: Brill, 1993). I would add that Mark particularly overworks *and/also*, using it even where no word is necessary (e.g. 8:38 above), encapsulating his brief, yet ironically heavy and typically Semitic, style.

extent to which 8:38's antithetic parallelism justifies the interpretation of Son of Man in the Semitic sense of 'humans in general' or 'someone like me'. In *3.5.4 A Son in Waiting*, we will review the arguments contending 8:38 should be read in the light of its surrounding verses, which in turn raises the possibility that the Son is Jesus's future identity. We will conclude by comparing this verse to the Son sayings earlier in Mark, suggesting that - and indicative of deliberate multivalency - Mark's meaning for the term is changing as the narrative progresses.

3.5.1 A Secret Son

Wrede and Schweitzer, in their revolutionary works,[577] each discuss the theme discovered by Wrede. Initially, Wrede identifies multiple Marcan verses in which Jesus apparently strives to mask his activity or identity, exposing a pervasive secrecy motif. Aune (1969) thematically lists Wrede's pericopae thus: "(1) Jesus commanded the demons to keep silence, for they recognized him (Mk. i 23 ff., 34, iii II ff., v 6 f., ix 20), (2) Those who were healed by Jesus were enjoined to remain silent (Mk. i 44, v 43, vii 36, viii 26), (3) His disciples were ordered not to reveal that he was the Messiah after Peter's confession (Mk. viii 30), (4) Jesus asked his disciples not to speak of the Transfiguration until after the Resurrection (Mk. ix 9), and (5) Jesus frequently withdrew from the crowd to go on secret trips with his disciples and gave private instruction to them, though the nature of Jesus's Messiahship is never elucidated (Mk. iv 10-13, 34, vii 17-23, ix 28 ff., viii I, ix 3I, x 32-34, xiii 3 ff)."[578]

From this, Wrede concludes that the historical Jesus made no messianic claims during his lifetime that his disciples could clearly understand, and that, as 9:9 suggests, only after the resurrection did they realise what Jesus's messiahship meant: "the appearance of the Risen One… evoked a sudden revolution in their understanding… Jesus became Messiah - so far as the belief of his followers was concerned - with the Resurrection, and… they acquire a new understanding of Jesus as a result of the Resurrection."[579] Mark, however, believed this was Jesus's role, as Jesus's authoritative words and miraculous deeds illustrated. Yet Jesus, rejected and crucified, had fallen far short of traditional Jewish messianic expectations.[580] Hence, by incorporating the messianic secret motif, where Jesus's messiahship was deliberately concealed, Mark successfully reconciled the Church's belief in Jesus as Messiah with the historical traditions that recounted his eventual desertion and demise.[581]

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[577] Wilhelm Wrede, *The Messianic Secret*. Translated by J.C.G. Grieg (London: Clarke & Co., 1971); Albert Schweitzer, *The Quest of the Historical Jesus* (First Complete Edition). Translated by W. Montgomery, J.R. Coates, Susan Cupitt and John Bowden (London: SCM, 2000).
[578] David E. Aune, "The Problem of the Messianic Secret." *NovT* 11, 1/2 (1969): 2.
[579] Wrede, *The Messianic Secret*, 234-6.
[580] As we have seen, traditional messianic views held that the Messiah would be a mighty king, in the mould of David, who would restore the kingdom of Israel to its former glory. Other grand perceptions present him as a great prophet or priest, who would return the people's hearts and minds to God before ushering in God's kingdom (cf. Martin Hengel, *Studies in Early Christology* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1995): 36-7).
[581] Aune, "Problem of the Messianic," 2-3.

Schweitzer, though agreeing with Wrede that the messianic secret was a Marcan literary motif, refutes both that it pervades the gospel and that Jesus never proclaimed his messiahship prior to the resurrection. Schweitzer highlights the triumphal entry, where jubilant throngs proclaim Jesus as the one who will re-establish David's kingdom in the Lord's name (11:1-11), Peter's confession of Jesus's messiahship, albeit rapidly silenced by Jesus, at Caesarea (8:29), and Jesus's open confession to the high priest in Jerusalem (14:61-62) as three 'messianic facts', occasions where Wrede must accept that another tradition, placing a public messianic claim on Jesus's lips, intrudes into Mark's tale. Thus, for Schweitzer, the secrecy motif is limited to certain contexts.[582]

Schweitzer defined these contexts by dividing Jesus's ministry into two periods. During the first, Jesus believed God's kingdom would emerge by harvest time (cf. 4:26-29). This expectation is marked by the sending out of the Twelve (6:7-13). When the kingdom failed to come, the second period began, where Jesus believes he must go to Jerusalem and die in order to quicken its arrival. In Schweitzer's view, Jesus expected to be vindicated by God, returning as enthroned judge of the world, thus fulfilling contemporary Jewish messianic expectations.[583] Hence, in Mark's narrative, Jesus drops all attempts at secrecy as his journey to Jerusalem begins. This explains the comparative lack of equivocacy in Jesus's self-referential sayings from this point on.

Schweitzer further criticises Wrede's view that Jesus's messiahship was only recognised post-resurrection: "But how did the appearance of the risen Jesus suddenly become for them a proof of his Messiahship and the basis of their eschatology? That Wrede fails to explain, and so makes this 'event' an 'historical' miracle which in reality is harder to believe than the supernatural event."[584] Thus, for Schweitzer, whereas a resurrection requires a miracle, having the disciples unanimously proclaim Jesus as Messiah and instrument of God's judgement at the imminent eschaton, after he had been arrested, mocked, abandoned and crucified, just because they saw him resurrected, requires a greater leap still. He concludes: "The Jesus of Nazareth who came forth publicly as Messiah… and died to give his work its final consecration, never existed."[585]

Thus a debate was born that still endures today, over the extent to which the secrecy motif overshadows and penetrates Mark's gospel and how much it reveals about the historical Jesus. For the purpose of arguing that Jesus might, in 8:38, be referring to himself, it is enough to recognise that Mark's Jesus frequently sought to shroud his identity and presence prior to his trek to Jerusalem (10:32ff), may often have spoken about himself in ambiguous terms (3:31-35; 8:27-30,31,38; 9:9,12,31; 10:33,45; 11:27-33; 12:1-12; 13:24-27) and caused others, by actions and words, to wonder who he was (1:27; 4:40-41; 6:1-3; 8:11-12). Hence, in 8:38, it would be typically Marcan for Jesus to refer to himself in the third person, using a title his disciples did not associate with him or comprehend.

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[582] Aune, "Problem of the Messianic," 5.
[583] Aune, "Problem of the Messianic," 8.
[584] Aune, "Problem of the Messianic," 5-6.
[585] Schweitzer, *Quest of the Historical*, 478.

3.5.2 I, the Son

Yet, following Jeremias's text-critical analysis (3.3.2), we might speculate 8:38's Son was originally rendered 'I', which would totally clarify the meaning: Jesus himself is the future apocalyptic judge who leads the heavenly host to establish God's kingdom on Earth. On literary grounds I think this unlikely; such a rendition would expose the messianic secret halfway through the gospel, which makes little sense in light of Mark 11:27-33, where Jesus remains reticent about his divine authority and identity. One could argue that here Jesus's mysterious response stems from his being surrounded by enemies, whereas in 8:38 only disciples are present. Yet I feel that if Jesus did declare his divine nature or destiny, for once clearly, to his disciples, Mark would surely have recorded their reaction to this unexpected thunderclap.

Schweizer (1960) refutes the 'I' hypothesis on historical grounds, stating the early church had no reason to obscure vital details about Jesus's role by changing 'I' to 'Son of Man' in key verses such as 8:38, nor to excise links between the coming kingdom and the Son in post-Marcan literature. He supports this with synoptic evidence: "Mark 8 38, where the Son of man is distinguished from the 'I' of Jesus, has a Q parallel in Luke 12 8f.: 'Everyone who acknowledges me before men, the Son of man also will acknowledge before the angels of God.' Here the Son of man is not the coming savior of the parousia conception, but the exalted one who witnesses in favor of or against the accused in the last judgment."[586] If Mark were written before Q, why would Q jettison Mark's elements about Jesus as the coming Messiah? Surely he would preserve or add kingdom material, not reject it? Schweizer thus reasons that Q is the earlier form, which captures Jesus self-referencing as Son of Man and Jesus's original message; that he is the suffering servant whom God will redeem, not an earthly Messiah (8:34-38). He adds, in support, that the archetype of the humiliated righteous, who suffer and die prior to exaltation, who bear witness against their unrepentant contemporaries, appears often in Second Temple Judaism, yet always unassociated with the title 'Son of Man'. And yet, the archetype provides a template for Jesus's ministry. Schweizer concludes Jesus "takes up the term Son of man, on the one hand because it was no customary title and could designate a humble 'man' as well as an 'eschatological' figure, on the other, perhaps, because in Daniel 7 the Son of man is the representative of the suffering and finally exalted Israel, and in Ezekiel he is the prophet anticipating the suffering and the coming glory of the nation."[587]

3.5.3 A Semitic 'Someone Like Me'

Schweizer's representative of suffering Israel, heralding the prophetic message of redemption, presents Jesus as humble human with superhuman powers. However, on the basis of a Hebrew/Aramaic Vorlage, one might also argue that Jesus depicts a different human, or 'someone like me'. After all, the latter is precisely what *bar nasha* and *ben ādām* would connote in Mark 2's preceding contexts, and 8:38's antithetic parallelism is not only highly Semitic in style, but also highly reminiscent of

[586] Schweizer, "The Son of Man," 120.
[587] Schweizer, "The Son of Man," 122.

the psalms Mark frequently references.[588] In antithetic parallelism, the second part presents the same idea as the first by way of contrast or negation, as in Psalm 1:6:

For YHWH takes care of the way the virtuous go,

but the way of the wicked is doomed.[589]

Jeremias (1971) notes that, in the synoptics, antithetic parallelism occurs well over 100 times in the sayings of Jesus, including 30 times in Mark,[590] and cites the judgement of Eduard Norden that, after starting a sentence with a verb, parallelism of clauses was the most certain Semitism to be found in the New Testament.[591] In Mark in particular, the parallelism is achieved by contrast of question and statement (Mark 3:33f; 8:12; 10:18; 11:17), by inversion (Mark 2:27; 8:35), by polarisation (Mark 4:25; 10:31), and very often by the combination of an opposition with a negation (Mark 2:19; 3:28f; 4:21, 25; 6:10f; 7:15; 10:27; 13:11, 31; 14:7).[592] Jeremias explains that, in the Hebrew Bible, the second member usually serves to illuminate and deepen the first by an opposed statement, citing Proverbs 10:1 ("A wise son makes a glad father, but a foolish son is a sorrow to his mother"). However, he notes that, conversely, the stress is almost always on the second half in Jesus's sayings. In Mark, only 2:27 clearly stresses the first half. This passage, however, seems a special case, as 2:27 has also been handed down in the Talmud.[593] Hence, rather than using his own words, Jesus quotes a popular maxim.

Jeremias adds that, like the Old Testament, the Judaism of Jesus's day mainly used this device to formulate proverbial wisdom, maxims, legal axioms, truths of life and rules for wise conduct; it also occurred in apocalyptic sayings. Moreover, besides Mark 2:27, we have parallels in Jewish literature for Mark 8:35 (b. Tam. 66a = 32a). However, Mark's Jesus uses this device in far more than the traditional, and his contemporary, context. He uses it as a vehicle for attack (Mark 7:8), threat (Mark 10:25), rebuff (Mark 10:18), repudiation (Mark 8:12), commissioning (Mark 6:10f), strengthening (Mark 13:20) and acknowledgement (Mark 12:24).[594] Yet despite these apparent Marcan innovations, the roots of the device remain, as we have seen, strongly Semitic.

Based on these reasons for viewing 8:38 in the same Semitic light as 2:10 and 2:28, 'Son of Man' may well, in typical Semitic idiom, denote 'a human' or 'someone like me'. However, in 8:38's context, 'Son of Man' must, at least, refer to a special figure

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[588] E.g. Psalm 2:7 (Mark 1:11), Psalm 22:1 (Mark 15:34), Psalm 118:22-23 (Mark 12:10-11), Psalm 110:1 (Mark 12:36).
[589] Psalm 34:10 presents a similar example from the Psalter: "The young lions suffer want and hunger, but those who seek the Lord lack no good thing."
[590] Mark 2.19b//20, 22a//c, 27a//b; 3.28//29, 33//34; 4:4-7//8, 11b//c, 21a//b, 25a//b, 31//32; 6:10//1; 7:6b//c. 8a//b, 10a//b, 10//11f, 15a//b; 8:12b//c, 35a//b; 10:18a//b, 27b//c, 31a//b, 23//43f; ,11:17b//c; 12:44a//b; 13:11a//b, 20a//b, 31a//b; 14:7a//b, 38ba//bb, 58b//c (Jeremias, *New Testament Theology*, 14-15).
[591] Eduard Norden, *Agnostos Theos* (Leipzig: Teubner, 1913): 365; in Jeremias, *New Testament Theology*, 14.
[592] Jeremias, *New Testament Theology*, 16.
[593] Mek. Ex. On 31:13, 14 (Simeon b. Mensaya, c.180; b. Yom. 85b gives R. Jonathan b. Joseph, c.140, as the author); Billerbeck, *Kommentar zum Neuen Testament*, II, 5. In Jeremias, *New Testament Theology*, 18.
[594] Jeremias, *New Testament Theology*, 19.

or figures rather than a person or people in general, for here the Son appears as leader of the heavenly host. Further, I feel Jesus's language in this verse suggests more an individual (ἐπαισχυνθήσεται; ἔλθῃ; αὐτοῦ) than people in general.

3.5.4 A Son in Waiting

In addition to the one-verse antithetical parallelism of 8:38a and b, a broader antithesis may be perceived between 8:38 and 9:1. Perrin (1967) was one of the first to claim these verses were deliberately arranged in parallelism to reflect different aspects of the eschaton; the former a threat, the latter a promise.[595] Hatina (2005) further posits these verses belong together thematically, with 9:2 beginning the separate account of the Transfiguration. He additionally observes that 9:1's 'Καὶ ἔλεγεν' is used elsewhere in Mark "to conclude and preserve the salient point of a larger discourse rather than to commence a fresh section. He notes that: "Of the eleven other occurrences, 'Καὶ ἔλεγεν' functions as a link which connects the preceding material."[596]

Such antithetical parallelism between different verses also appears in Psalms. In Psalm 29: "the Psalmist… calls upon the sons of God to declare the sovereignty of Yahweh, whose power is manifest in a storm. The psalm displays an inclusion wherein the opening, 'give Yahweh… glory and strength', is answered in and parallel to the closing verse (but with a shift of subject and object)."[597] A consecutive-verse example manifests in Psalm 37:16-17: "Better is the little that the righteous has than the abundance of many wicked. For the arms of the wicked shall be broken, but the Lord upholds the righteous."

Morrison (2014) stretches the device a stage further by positing a whole-section synthetic parallelism between 8:27-9:1 (Peter's confession of Jesus as Messiah) and 9:2-13 (The Transfiguration). Again, I have noticed this device appears in Psalms.[598] Morrison suggests these pericopae were linked: "by virtue of their shared vocabulary and similar grammatical constructions and… that this linkage was a conscious attempt… This intentionality appears to be corroborated when one observes the thematic parallels between the two passages."[599] Morrison explains that one can view, heuristically, the pericopae as a multi-verse Janus parallelism, to better comprehend their synthetic message: "The Janus image helps readers see the

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[595] Norman Perrin, *Rediscovering the Teaching of Jesus* (New York: Harper and Row, 1967): 200.
[596] Thomas R. Hatina, "Who Will See 'The Kingdom of God Coming with Power' in Mark 9,1 - Protagonists or Antagonists?" *Biblica* 86,1 (2005): 21. Examples include Mark 2:27 (The Sabbath Discourse), 8:21 (Explanation of the Loaves Miracle) and 11:17 (Rebuke of the Moneychangers).
[597] Grossberg, "Multiple Meaning," 211-12.
[598] Psalm 2, for example, is split into two sections. Verses 1-6 question the hubris of nations that rise against the Lord and his Messiah, with the Lord mocking and rebuking them. 7-12, segmented from the former verses by the sectional introduction 'I will proclaim the Lord's decree', build on this message by explaining why the Messiah has nothing to fear - because he is God's adopted son. Thus the psalm ends warning the kings of foreign nations to serve the Lord with fear, and to respect his earthly heir.
[599] Gregg S. Morrison, "Converging Lines in Markan Christology." In *The Turning Point in the Gospel of Mark: A Study in Markan Christology*, 1st ed. (Cambridge: The Lutterworth Press, 2014): 98.

backward and forward nature of 8:27-9:13."[600] This enables readers to surmise Mark wanted his audience to view Jesus as God's anointed one during his lifetime, who precedes the Son of Man (8:27-9:1), and who, through vindication via resurrection and heavenly elevation, will one day return as this Son (9:2-13). I find this idea striking, as both pericopae contain mutually-complementing material. However, perhaps Morrison stretches the parallels too far in reaching his conclusion. Many consecutive pericopae in the New Testament deal with mutually-related material, as do segments in contemporary textbooks, just as one similar subject naturally flows from another. Are we to infer each time this happens that the author meant to foreground something of special significance? Also, how we divide pericopae is largely subjective; we can only guess how the gospel writers thematically segmented their texts.[601]

Nonetheless, the Semitic flavour of the one-verse/two-verse parallelisms suggests a Semitic Vorlage for 8:38, and thus *bar nasha* or *ben ādām*, yet the separation of Jesus from this 'Son of Man' in 8:38 (surely not rendered by the early church) and the latter's introduction as leader of the heavenly host suggest Mark means something different here than in chapter 2. Here, Son of Man appears as an individual rather than a collective; a divine figure, yet one seemingly differentiated from Jesus. One might still argue Mark's Son remains an indistinct, undeveloped concept, one that could refer to a collective elect, yet 8:38's 'Son of Man' is described as 'he', and made distinct from the heavenly host that Mark states accompanies him, bringing individual emphasis to the title.

Hatina (2005) notes both an understated connection and contrast between 8:38-9:1's Son pronouncement and 13:26's, stemming from 9:1's climactic ἐν δυνάμει. He observes this qualifier never appears in early Christian literature save Revelation 12:10, referencing God's advent on the eschatological battlefield. 9:1's implication, for Hatina, is that there was an earlier coming of the kingdom, not in power and largely unrecognised (1:14-15). He further observes that ἐν δυνάμει, or equivalent phrases, used as adverbs in Mark and the Synoptics only refer to the Son's coming 'in power'. In Mark, the exact phrase is used in 13:26 and a similar phrase in 14:62. Hatina queries and propounds: "Given Mark's interest to directly link δυνάμει with these son of man sayings in 13,26 and 14,62, one wonders why he is not consistent in 8,38. Why would he instead link δυνάμει with the future coming of the kingdom? A plausible explanation is that the evangelist understood both the future coming of the son of man and the future coming of the kingdom with power as the same eschatological act of judgment, which would certainly echo the sense of the apocalyptic scenario in Dan 7,9-14, which seems to be an influence."[602]

[600] Morrison, "Converging Lines in Markan," 229.
[601] E.g. John 6: 1-24 and 25-58: Jesus feeds five thousand with bread before crossing the lake; the disciples find Jesus on the other side and Jesus explains to them that spiritual bread is more important than physical nutrition. This could be interpreted as a single section, or two sections (as above), or three (with the crossing of the lake providing a mid-section). If two: does the latter deliberately augment the former, or did John view the spiritual discourse as completely unrelated to the loaves miracle, which Jesus did simply to satisfy the people?
[602] Hatina, "Who Will See," 24.

Though I concur with Hatina, it may also be true that Mark, as dramatist rather than theologian, does not yet wish to reveal all to his audience. As in chapter 2, maybe Mark plays with ambiguity, stirring his audience to ponder this mysterious figure. In 2:10-11 and 27-28, Jesus ostensibly references faithful followers of God/loyal Israelites via ‘Son of Man’, though the phrase is unusual, emphatic and poetic, with apocalyptic undertones. In 8:31, Son of Man appears to reference Jesus and his disciples in particular. In 8:38, Mark steps further, hinting the Son might be a heavenly judge and describing him as one would an individual, although, based on 8:31’s sense, one might likewise understand ‘Son of Man’ as ‘obedient disciples’ seven verses later. That said, for the first time, the Son is described as distinct from both Jesus and his current followers, which may well have led the uninitiated in Mark’s audience to reexamine his identity.

3.6 Mark 9:9-13: Humanity, Jesus, Elijah-John or Ezekiel?

In 9:9-9:13, Jesus's referent is similarly unclear when he mentions 'Son of Man'. First, Jesus commands his disciples to say nothing of the Transfiguration, until "ὁ Υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐκ νεκρῶν ἀναστῇ." The disciples ask why the Torah scholars say Elijah must come first, to which Jesus replies that Elijah will indeed come first to restore all things. Then, apparently digressing, he mentions the Son of Man's prophesied suffering in the same verse "Ἠλείας μὲν ἐλθὼν πρῶτον ἀποκαθιστάνει πάντα· καὶ πῶς γέγραπται ἐπὶ τὸν Υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου, ἵνα πολλὰ πάθῃ καὶ ἐξουδενηθῇ;" Finally, snapping back to his original subject, Jesus explains that Elijah has already come and been mistreated "ἀλλὰ λέγω ὑμῖν ὅτι καὶ Ἠλείας ἐλήλυθεν, καὶ ἐποίησαν αὐτῷ ὅσα ἤθελον, καθὼς γέγραπται ἐπ' αὐτόν." Scholars hence wonder how much this Son pericope is authentically Marcan, and how badly it has been lacerated by the editor's reed brush. We shall therefore explore whether 9:9-13 was truly written by Mark and, if so, what it reveals about the Son.

3.6.1 The Coming of Elijah will explore the disciples' conviction that the Torah scholars believe that Elijah's coming must precede the resurrection of the dead, despite the absence of scriptural evidence for this, and assess whether later traditions about Elijah's return have been grafted into Mark's account, casting doubt on the pericope's authenticity. *3.6.2 What is Written of the Son?* will explore explanations for similar scriptural silence on the suffering and rejected Son, whom Jesus claims has been written about. *3.6.3 Ezekiel as Son* will present my attempt to resolve this problem, via scriptural evidence and a multivalent reading of 9:9-13.

3.6.1 The Coming of Elijah

We begin by tackling a problem that emerges in 9:9-11 that I feel scholars have largely bypassed, perhaps due to more blatant thematic inconsistencies in 9:12-13. Jesus speaks of the Son of Man's resurrection that his disciples say, according to the Torah scholars, Elijah's advent must precede. Yet despite Jewish traditions centuries later reflecting this claim, no prior or contemporaneous record states Elijah's return must precede any resurrection. Malachi 4:5-6 does predict Elijah, before the Day of the Lord, returning to turn the hearts of the fathers to their children and vice versa, lest God strike the land with a curse. Further, Christians today tend to understand this Day as heralding the resurrection of the dead among the living, before God judges both, based on a brief account in the Book of Revelation.[603] However, no reference to Elijah's return preceding a resurrection, one that precedes a judgement on the Day, appears in the Old Testament or in contemporaneous Jewish sources.[604] Isaiah 2:12, the earliest verse to mention this event, proclaims the proud will be humbled. Amos 5:18-20 states that Israelites yearn for the Day, yet that it will bring darkness rather than light, in the shape of God's judgement upon them. Wright (1962) argues the phrase was generally understood by Amos's peers to reference a time when God would place Israel first among the nations, regardless

[603] Revelation 20:4-6, 12-15.
[604] Revelation 16:14 is the only New Testament reference.

of their obedience to Him.[605] Yet, according to Amos, even unfaithful Israel would be humbled. Wright thus claims the Day of the Lord concerns God chastening His own people, whether through the Babylonian invasion or the locust plague of Joel 2:1–11.[606] Nevertheless, Joel 2:32 qualifies that on this day, "everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." Zephaniah 1:14-18 also speaks of the Day as a time of great calamity and God's destruction of mankind. Yet, as with Joel, a caveat appears: 3:6-20 exempts the faithful remnant of God's people, whom God will vindicate as He restores Israel to its former glory. Daniel 12:1-2, though not specifically mentioning 'Day of the Lord', describes just such a time of distress, one unparalleled in human history, where many who sleep in the dust of the earth will awaken, some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt. This is the closest any scripture comes to linking resurrection with the Day of the Lord and, even then, Daniel never states Elijah must come first, nor does he name him once. Casey (2004) notes that Sirach 48:10 and 4Q558[607] take up the text of Malachi (4:5-6), "in which it is quite clear that Elijah will come before the day of the Lord."[608] Yet Malachi's Day of the Lord is a day of destruction, not resurrection; Sirach speaks of Elijah's past, not his predicted future; and the Qumran text never names Elijah.

Öhler (1999) lists several references outside the Testaments where Elijah's coming is expected. Pseudo-Philo's Biblical Antiquities (48:1) identifies Elijah with the zealous warrior Phinehas, an eternal priest who fought for the purity of Israel (Numbers 25:6-13). According to Pseudo-Philo, Phinehas returned to Earth as Elijah before leaving a second time, being destined to return again to taste death with the others that did not die.[609] Öhler further notes the announcement of Elijah's return on a heavenly chariot (Sibylline Oracles 2: 187-89), after which apocalyptic signs of darkness, fire and falling stars follow. Here Elijah performs no works of reconciliation or resurrection, rather he appears as the fiery prophet of his former earthly ministry. Öhler notes too the Coptic Apocalypse of Elyah, a Christian work containing Jewish and Christian traditions from the third century, which twice recounts Elijah returning with Enoch. In 5:32-33, the duo appear to slay the Son of Lawlessness, which Öhler suggests is a Jewish form of the Elijah expectation. In 4:7-20, we see an expanded version of Revelation 11:3-13[610] (though the latter verses do not name the two characters, who are described only as 'witnesses'). Öhler observes that neither Old Testament nor near-contemporary Jewish texts mention a Messiah in connection with Elijah, suggesting the New Testament fails to reflect the subsequent mainstream Jewish hope for Elijah's return. Indeed, Öhler states the earliest

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[605] J. S. Wright "Day of the Lord". In *The New Bible Dictionary*, edited by J.D. Douglas (Wheaton, IL: Inter-Varsity Fellowship, 1962): 296.
[606] Wright, "Day of the Lord," 296.
[607] Possibly a misprint in the article: 4Q521 contains the Elijah reference and Malachi quote; 4Q558 is highly fragmentary with unidentified text ("4Q558," *Dead Sea Scrolls Digital*, accessed March 29, 2023, https://www.deadseascrolls.org.il/explore-the-archive/manuscript/4Q558-1).
[608] Maurice P. Casey, "The Aramaic Background of Mark 9:11: A Response to J. K. Aitken." *JTS* 55,1 (2004): 93.
[609] Markus Öhler, "The Expectation of Elijah and the Presence of the Kingdom of God." *JBL* 118,3 (1999): 462. Öhler notes a similar expectation of the return of those who did not die can appears in 4 Ezra 6:26. There it says, without mentioning Elijah, that the people's heart will be changed and converted to a different spirit (probably an allusion to Malachi 4:5-6).
[610] Öhler, "The Expectation of Elijah," 463.

rabbinical linking of the two appears in an anonymous note on Erubin 4:1 in the Babylonian Talmud (b. Erub. 43a-b), which dates from no earlier than the third century. Öhler concludes: “the idea of Elijah preparing the way of the messiah is more likely an attempt by rabbinic writers to weld different eschatological views into one system. The hope for Elijah was nevertheless prominent in Judaism after 70 CE, as can be seen, for example, in the expectation that he would settle legal questions.”[611] This expectation, albeit far less grand and apocalyptic, appears in the Mishnah, along with a single hazy reference to the resurrection of the dead proceeding from Elijah’s hands, that Öhler omits, but that possibly dates closer to Mark’s time: Mishnah Sotah[612] 9:15.[613] The expectation Öhler references appears in Mishnah Eduyot[614], finalised near the end of this Tannaitic period, stating Elijah will come to resolve all disputes and reconcile all discrepancies in the holy writings (8:7). In this passage, the rabbis discuss what Elijah will accomplish. It concludes: “The Sages say, [Elijah will come]… to make peace in the world, as it is said…” followed by a quotation of Malachi 4:5-6. Hence, it seems Elijah’s return was expected, though only the former, later reference briefly marks resurrection as an act proceeding from Elijah, and not on the Day of the Lord or any time of judgement, or in any historical-theological context at all. Thus were later traditions, about Elijah’s return preceding a mass resurrection, grafted into Mark’s account?

In Mark, the author figuratively identifies John the Baptist with Elijah, as we shall see, and John indeed paves the way for Jesus’s mission of restoration. He prepares vast throngs of disciples to follow him, even enabling forgiveness of their sins via baptism (1:4-8). But John, the new Elijah, is never portrayed as resurrecting the dead as Mishnah Sotah 9:15 implies. Quite to the contrary, John is arrested, imprisoned, executed and interred in a tomb. How might we resolve this discrepancy?

First, we might draw on Casey’s argument that 9:11’s imperative (must) is too strong, as Aramaic has no known word “with the same semantic area as δεῖ.”[615] Casey proceeds to suggest דיתע, meaning ready or prepared, as the original Aramaic that prompted the translator to use δεῖ, a word Casey marks extant before Jesus’s time. He notes its use in Daniel 3:15, where Daniel’s three friends will be exonerated if they are ready/prepared to worship Nebuchadnezzar’s image. He further observes

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[611] Öhler, “The Expectation of Elijah,” 463-4.

[612] A tractate of the Talmud recording debates of the rabbinic sages (70-200 CE), committed to writing around 200 CE. This tractate explains the ordeal of bitter water, a trial by ordeal of a woman suspected of adultery, prescribed by Numbers 5: 11-31. In most editions, this tractate is fifth in the order of Nashim, and divided into 9 chapters. The tractate appears in the Mishnah, Tosefta, and the Babylonian and Jerusalem Talmuds.

[613] “Rabbi Pinchas ben Yair says, ‘Heedfulness leads to cleanliness, cleanliness leads to purity, purity leads to separation, separation leads to holiness, holiness leads to modesty, modesty leads to fear of sin, fear of sin leads to piety, piety leads to the Holy Spirit, The Holy Spirit leads to the resurrection of the dead, and the resurrection of the dead shall come from the hand of Elijah, blessed be his memory, Amen’.”

[614] “The seventh treatise in the order Neziḳin of the Mishnah. When, after the destruction of the Temple, it became necessary, through the removal of R. Gamaliel II. from the office of patriarch, to decide religious questions by the will of the majority, there was produced, as the groundwork of the treatise 'Eduyot, a collection of unassailable traditions… the treatise was concluded on the redaction of the whole Mishnah” (Isidore Singer (ed.), *The Jewish Encyclopedia*, 12 vols. (New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1901-1906): 48-50).

[615] Casey, “Aramaic Background of Mark,” 92.

that the Geniza text of Sirach 48:10, in referencing Malachi 4:5-6, uses נכון, whose semantic area includes 'ready' and that, in later Aramaic, דיתע is used idiomatically to indicate the future, even distant future. Casey thus deems it a suitable choice to specify the future event of Elijah's coming, just as the Peshitta of Sirach 48:10 displays its appropriacy to relate, in Aramaic, Malachi's future predictions. "The translator has taken the same kind of option as the translator of Daniel 2:28-9… where δεῖ is part of an explicitative translation of an Aramaic imperfect. He has indicated the certainty of the scribes that scripture will be fulfilled, and thereby correctly represented them."[616] Casey thus reconstructs 9:11 "And (they were) asking him and saying, 'Why do (the) scribes say that Elijah is going to come first?'"

Despite Casey's comment on certainty, I feel this substitution softens δεῖ, rendering the prediction at least a little hazy and doubtful. Thus, perhaps the belief that Elijah's return would precede a mass resurrection was, in Mark's day, held only by a minority of Jewish apocalypticists, who had linked this event to the Day of the Lord, just as 1 Enoch and 4 Ezra link a figure entitled 'Son of Man' to Daniel's 'one like a son of man'. I find it plausible that 9:9-13 is a Marcan interpretation of this minority belief that Elijah's coming would precede a resurrection of the dead, followed by divine judgement upon the arrival of God's kingdom. First, in his prior teaching, Jesus speaks about the kingdom's arrival and hints at imminent judgement (8:38-9:1). Second, Mark presents Jesus as an apocalypticist elsewhere; especially chapter 13, where he speaks in urgent manner to his disciples of the need to watch for signs of the kingdom's coming. Jesus's belief in resurrection likewise emerges in his debate with the Sadducees (12:18-27). Finally John, the new Elijah, prepares the way for Jesus, calling the people to repent and baptising them to forgive their sins. He baptises Jesus, at which point God's spirit descends on him, commencing his ministry. Hence, when Jesus's ministry leads to his crucifixion and rising from the dead, it seems that Elijah's coming has indeed preceded and precipitated a resurrection, leaving open the question of when the Day of the Lord will come and other resurrections follow. According to 9:1, just a few verses earlier, and chapter 13, its advent seems imminent. The prediction of Elijah's return, rather than seeming an interpolation from later centuries, chimes with the urgency of Mark's message, even if it reflects a belief not yet held by the majority of Jewish scripture scholars. Hence, 9:9's Son of Man appears to reference mankind in general, or at least this is what Peter, James and John think, for they immediately reference Elijah's precession of the prophesied mass resurrection. It also evidently refers to Jesus's resurrection in chapter 16, though the uninitiated in Mark's audience, like the disciples, would not yet realise. Therefore, 9:9-10 presents not only a typically Semitic double-entendre but also typical Marcan *Messiasgeheimnis*.

3.6.2 What is Written of the Son?

Regarding our understanding of the Son, more glaring problems emerge in 9:11-13. Wilson summarises: "The difficulty here lies in the question, 12b, 'How is it written of the Son of Man…?' which seems at variance with the [Elijah] context. Attempts have

[616] Casey, "Aramaic Background of Mark," 93.

been made to rearrange the verses, but none are entirely satisfactory, and Taylor and others think them unnecessary (see *Jesus and His Sacrifice* (1937), 91ff.)." He reasons: "Jesus as often replies to a question with a counter-question to bring out the really important issue: the suffering of the Son of Man."[617] However, if this is truly preponderant, why brush over it in a single verse before reverting to the original subject in 9:13?

Scholars typically view 9:12b's Son as Jesus, perhaps through the parallel connection in the previous stich between John and Elijah, the latter's return being understood to precede the Lord's advent. Indeed, in 9:12a, Mark clearly identifies Elijah with John as the one who prepares all things (cf. 1:3) for the Lord's coming, and 9:13 recalls how Elijah has already returned and been cruelly used (cf. 6:14-29), just as it has been written about him (1 Kings 19:1-18). In the Kings account, Elijah was persecuted by Queen Jezebel; in Mark 6, John was persecuted by another powerful woman, the wife of Herod the Tetrarch, Herodias. Similarly, both prophets preached against the sinful acts of ruling men; Elijah against Ahab (1 Kings 18:18), John against Herod (6:17-18). Both wore leather belts round their waists (1:6// 2 Kings 1:8); the Kings verse describing Elijah as hairy, the Marcan verse presenting John clothed in camel's hair. Stuhlmacher (2018) adds that the location of John's ministry also has typological meaning: "the wilderness is the place of the new exodus and of the establishment of new end-time fellowship with God (cf. Hos. 2:16ff. [ET 2:14ff.]; Isa. 40:3–5; Bar. 5:7–9; 1QS 8:13; 9:19–20). The Jordan is the traditional boundary of the Holy Land (cf. Josh. 3). Here Elijah repeated the miracle of parting the waters at the Sea of Reeds (cf. 2 Kings 2:8)… Therefore, according to Mark 1:3–6, John is to be associated with the returning Elijah."[618] Thus, if the apocalyptic Son must follow Elijah, and suffer similar abuse, who else could he be but Jesus; for whom John prepared the way in chapter 1, whose pre-eminence over Elijah the Transfiguration has just illuminated (9:4-7)?

This view, however, is flawed, as it ignores the strange digression in 9:12, where Jesus begins by speaking of Elijah's coming, cuts to make an unrelated statement about the Son's suffering (referring, moreover, to each in third person, as though he were neither), before returning to speak of Elijah in 9:13. Wilson suggests another possibility, that Mark has "momentarily reverted to indirect speech, and that 12b should be read as a statement, not a question ('he told them how it is written…')."[619] This solves the problem of the non sequitur. Instead of posing a topic-changing question, Jesus presents a statement (or perhaps rhetorical question) about Elijah as Son of Man, that substantiates the point he has made: Elijah, who indeed comes first, has already come, and has suffered under Herodias just as he did under Jezebel (though Jezebel did not exactly reject his teachings). Hence Elijah appears to have been reborn as John, and, though Wilson does not argue this, one might conclude, with reference to 9:9, that Elijah rises, following death, to a new, exalted status as apocalyptic Son of Man. This line of reasoning flows so much better than to accept, despite the strange non sequitur, the interpretation that 9:12's Son

[617] Wilson, "Mark," 809.
[618] Peter Stuhlmacher, *Biblical Theology of the New Testament*. Translated by Dan Bailey (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2018): 74.
[619] Wilson, "Mark,", 809.

denotes Jesus. The Elijah interpretation further aligns with Jesus's consistent referrals in Mark to 'Son of Man' in the third person, as though he and they were two distinct characters. Despite vesting Elijah with unprecedented standing as a Danielic divinity, this interpretation at least solves the problem in 9:12. We now have: "Elijah coming first will restore all. And how it has been written about the Son of Man (Elijah), that he would suffer much and be rejected!" This point about suffering and rejection now links more logically to Jesus's follow-up in 9:13: that Elijah has indeed returned and been ill-used. Moreover, to make clearer sense, I feel 9:12's 'Son of Man' could be rendered 'man', thus avoiding comparison with any superhuman judge or redeemer and referring, simply and directly, to the subject of verse 11: "And how it has been written about the man, that he would suffer much and be rejected!" Here, I translate πάθῃ in the typical sense of the aorist active subjunctive and ἐξουδενηθῇ in that of the aorist passive subjunctive, rather than rendering each in the sense of δεῖ ('that he must suffer…'). Indeed, 1 and 2 Kings never record that Elijah must, rather that he did, suffer during his ministry.

Yet the debate endures. Despite 9:12b's digression, Öhler perceives that Elijah's role in Mark, as forerunner to someone greater (cf. Mark 1:7), reveals Jesus as 9:11's Son. "'The scribes say that Elijah must come first.' This fits very well with the announcement of Elijah as ultimate precursor of God, because the day of judgment is the day of the resurrection of the dead."[620] He argues Elijah's fate is a reflection, for if the greater must suffer then so must the lesser. Thus the consequence of the Son's suffering (9:12) is that Elijah too must suffer (9:13). "By this Jesus asserts that his own fate determines the fate of the returning Elijah."[621] Öhler notes that, though early Christian literature saw John as the returning Elijah, his function was different from Elijah's in Malachi and Sirach. Rather than preparing the way for God and his day of judgement, or reconciling the people of Israel, he was preparing the way for the Messiah. "With this interpretation of Mal. 3:23-24, it was possible to rule out any rivalry between John and Jesus and to proclaim that an important promise of the OT had been fulfilled."[622]

But was this Mark's original meaning? Öhler posits that, historically, John's scriptural citations proclaimed himself forerunner of God, not Jesus, and that his message was tweaked, either by Mark or by Christian editors of Mark. Arguing for the historicity of the Baptist's sayings, Öhler observes that details of John's eschatological preaching (Mark 1:2; 6:18; Luke 3:7-9, 16-17 // Q) and appearance (Mark 1:6; John 1:28) are never, in the gospels, systematically presented to foreground John as the returned Elijah, as early Christians might have written them. Rather, "since those traditions are only indirectly connected to Elijah, they could very well give historical information."[623] Regarding John's citation of scripture (1:2-3), Öhler argues that the Malachi segment of this quotation (1:2) was later Christologically corrected to an announcement of a preparer for Jesus and that the earlier version, which we can probably attribute to the Baptist, identified the precursor of God, a message that "very well accords with other points of John's

[620] Öhler, "The Expectation of Elijah," 464.
[621] Öhler, "The Expectation of Elijah," 465.
[622] Öhler, "The Expectation of Elijah," 468.
[623] Öhler, "The Expectation of Elijah," 469.

preaching."[624] He explains that, for Christians, to uphold John as forerunner of God vested the prophet with a grandeur they attached to Jesus alone, hence they downgraded the Jewish expectation of Elijah, who became the Messiah's forerunner instead. Öhler argues this was Mark's innovation, noting that 9:9's exhortation to secrecy presents typical Marcan Messiasgeheimnis, that the disciples' misunderstanding in 9:10 leading to a correction followed by a teaching point from Jesus is also typically Marcan (cf. 4:10-34; 8:14-21; 10:32), and 9:12's announcement of the Son's suffering echoes another prominent Marcan motif (8:31; 9:31; 10:33-34). Öhler concludes Mark's motive for writing this pericope likely stemmed from a debate in his own community about whether Elijah had already returned. Mark resolves the problem by equating Elijah with the Baptist, and in Jesus's own words.[625]

Yet, even if we accept Öhler's position, the awkwardness of 9:12b's digression remains. A reader, or listener, who did not hold preconceptions about the Son being Jesus, would find this verse particularly confusing. One might argue this is typical of Jesus's reticence about revealing his true identity, though here I find it unlikely. Jesus was alone with his inner circle when speaking these words, which further proceed from the Transfiguration's striking revelation to Peter, James and John that Jesus is God's Son, so why hide details from those who held his confidence? Accordingly, a long-established trend in Marcan scholarship, starting with Bultmann (see below), regards 9:12b as an Elijah reference. Taylor (1991) posits: "A careful reading of Mk 9, 12 reveals that this text identifies Elijah as the Son of Man." He explains the widespread opposition to this view by stating how accustomed readers are to New Testament texts that cast John in the role of the Messiah's forerunner. This stymies our vision and preconditions our interpretations, so that when we read of Elijah preceding the Son, we automatically think of the Baptist preceding Jesus. Taylor notes, however, that Elijah's identification with the Son appears in other New Testament texts, notably the Ascension in Acts (1:9-11) that alludes both to the assumption of Elijah (2 Kings 2:1ff) and the Son of Man's journey to God's presence (Daniel 7:13).[626] He claims that, in the verse that originally preceded 9:11 (9:1),[627] Jesus predicts the imminent coming of God's kingdom in power. The disciples therefore question why, if this is true, Elijah has not yet appeared. Taylor concludes that 9:12's sense is: "If Elijah (= the Son of Man) is to come before the kingdom of God comes in power, in order to restore all things, how then is it written that the Son of Man (= Elijah) is to suffer many things and be despised? The question is thrown out as a challenge: it is for Jesus' hearers to wrestle with the paradox of the eschatological messenger."[628]

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[624] Öhler, "The Expectation of Elijah," 470.
[625] Öhler, "The Expectation of Elijah," 473-5.
[626] Justin Taylor, "The Coming of Elijah, Mt 17, 10-13 and Mk 9, 11-13: The Development of the Texts." *RB* 98,1 (1991): 117.
[627] Taylor agrees with Bultmann's argument, that in Mark's source 9:11 followed 9:1. This makes better sense of the entire passage, both resolving 9:12's non sequitur by removing 9:11 and justifying 8:38-9:1's theology by evidencing the imminency of the eschaton: "the questioners in the original story were concerned to know why Jesus is confidently predicting the arrival of the Kingdom of God, when Elijah has not yet arrived on the scene" (Hooker, *According to Saint Mark*, 219).
[628] Taylor, "The Coming of Elijah," 117.

Taylor admits this leaves 9:13 as a non sequitur, whereas before 9:12b was the anomaly, for now there is no point adding that Elijah has come, and they treated him as they pleased: it becomes peripheral information irrelevant to the riddle Jesus poses his disciples. Taylor reconciles this by labelling 9:13 “a foreign body, imported no doubt from the Matthean form of the pericope, just as the Matthean tradition borrowed from the Marcan the prediction of the suffering Son of Man.”[629] Though this hypothesis neatly solves the problem, it relies on dual speculation; first, that 9:11 originally followed 9:1 and second, that 9:13 was a rogue verse imported into Mark. No manuscript evidence has emerged to justify either proposition.

Then again, what if we translate 9:12b’s ‘Son of Man’ as ‘man’? Jesus might be instructing his disciples to hide what they know of his divine purpose as God’s son (9:9), revealed in the Transfiguration, until man (in this case himself) has been raised from the dead. That Jesus uses the general term ‘man’ to conceal the identity of the resurrected one chimes with Mark’s recurring theme of the messianic secret. Though, as implied above, I find such coyness comical following the Transfiguration, perhaps here Mark’s secrecy motif might not so much concern Jesus being enigmatic to his disciples as Mark to his own audience. The motif is, after all, unique to Mark among the gospels, implying a literary device rather than an historical reflection. Following this reasoning, after mentioning Elijah’s coming, Jesus could logically exclaim: “And how it is written about man, that he must suffer much and be rejected!” without deviating from his subject Elijah, who indeed suffered under Jezebel, whilst subtly referencing the fate of all such men, particularly himself. Casey (1999) takes such a line, arguing that the translation here should be man/the man, whilst agreeing Mark’s meaning was deliberately ambiguous.[630]

Hooker (1991), who views Mark’s Son as a symbol of Daniel’s elect community of faithful Israel, interprets the pericope in accordance with this view “…since those who die and those who triumph are members of the one community, each of them can be the representative of that community; the martyrs represent faithful Israel, steadfast even under persecution, while the one like a son of man represents the victorious saints."[631] Following Elijah restoring all in 9:11, Hooker suggests 9:12b’s ‘How is it written of the Son of Man?’ as a question and 9:12c’s ‘That he must suffer much and be rejected’ as its answer.[632] Together, verse 11 and 12 crystallise the glorification-suffering duality that is the destiny of God’s elect community, as Daniel 7 delineates. This explanation chimes beautifully with Mark’s recurring glory=suffering paradox (e.g. 8:34-37; 10:43-45). However, I feel 9:12b’s Son still intrudes, unintroduced, into the text, with Jesus failing to clarify this figure as a different person and the duality’s counterpoint, whereas other illustrations of the glory-suffering paradox in Mark (e.g. 8:34-37; 10:43-45) are lucidly demarcated.

My initial solution harmonised Taylor, Casey and Hooker. I agreed with Taylor that the Son’s most evident identity here, to Mark’s original listeners, was Elijah, with Hooker that the phrase also referenced ‘members of the elect of Israel’ (cf. Daniel 7;

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[629] Taylor, “The Coming of Elijah,” 118.
[630] Casey, *Aramaic Sources of Mark,* 121-2.
[631] Hooker, *According to Saint Mark*, 250.
[632] Hooker, *According to Saint Mark*, 220.

thus by inclusion both Elijah and Jesus) and that it was the fate of this community both to suffer and be redeemed, and with Casey that this deliberately ambiguous phrase should be translated 'man/the man'.

My reasons for this compromise hinged partly on Mark's frequent playfulness with paronomasia and multivalency, which we have explored. But more, I find a certain translation of 9:11-13 retains this paronomasia, whilst solving the non sequitur problem and clarifying Jesus's lesson on the glorification-suffering duality:

(9:11) And they asked him: "Why do the Torah scholars say that Elijah is going to come first?"

(9:12a) And he said to them: "Elijah indeed, coming first, restores everything.

(9:12b) And how has it been written about the (son of) man**?** That he *will* suffer much and be rejected**?**

(9:13) But I tell you that Elijah has indeed come, and they did to him as much as they wished, just as it *has been* written about him."

Here, 9:12a expresses the glorification aspect of the duality and 9:12b its suffering counterpart. In 9:12b, Jesus ostensibly and congruously references Elijah, the subject of 9:11-12a, though Mark's use of the idiom 'son of man' for 'man' would surely strike additional chords in his audience's minds. This seems especially likely when we consider that, in Jesus's earlier Son saying on sacrifice and shame (8:34-9:1), this duality might apply to any of Jesus's followers. Further, the disciples have just witnessed the heaven-sent Elijah, with Moses, talking to Jesus in the presence of God, before both vanish leaving Jesus standing alone. It seems likely, then, that they expect Elijah's next return to be similarly awe-inspiring, as scriptural predictions suggest. Jesus thus uses back-to-back rhetorical questions to snap them away from this view (a technique he also uses in 8:17-18), introducing the shocking idea that Elijah will be ignored and ill-used. With such a flip of the script, 9:13 provides much-needed back-up. Jesus states that what he suggests in 9:12b has, in fact, already happened. Mark's audience, having already learnt of the Baptist's arrest, imprisonment and execution in chapter 6, and having already noted, perhaps, numerous parallels between Elijah and John in chapters 1 and 6 (see above), might therefore perceive what the disciples apparently miss: the Baptist was Elijah. 9:13's closure "just as it has been written about him" further supports Jesus's teaching. Though nowhere in scripture is the future Elijah's suffering mentioned (hence 9:12b's rhetorical surprise), Elijah's past suffering via Jezebel's wrath is graphically documented (1 Kings 19:1-18). Hence, one might paraphrase Jesus's explanation: 'Don't be so surprised that the second Elijah suffered due to his divine vocation; that's precisely what happened to the first'.

This interpretation solves a further problem, that the Old Testament never foretells a future Son will suffer, or a future Messiah, and certainly not the Danielic saviour, but it does recount Elijah's suffering. Without linking the Son to Elijah's past fate (or Ezekiel's as I argue below), Jesus appears to be citing non-existent scripture. As Hooker (1999) relays, "there is no direct prophecy of suffering for the Son of man in the Old Testament, any more than there is for Elijah, but it is perhaps implied in the

description of the suffering of the remnant of Israel in Daniel 7."[633] Cranfield (1959) hunts for clues in 9:12's ἐξουδενηθῇ, reporting that derivatives of the verb occur often in the Septuagint and other Greek versions of the Old Testament: "Symmachus and Theodotion use it to translate bāzāh ('despise') in Isa. xlix.7, and Symmachus uses it twice to translate that verb in Isa. liii.3 (while Aquila and Theodotion use it once)." He concludes that behind Mark's term may lie an allusion to Isaiah's Suffering Servant.[634] However, these translations of Isaiah post-date Mark by some time, being composed well into the Christian era.[635] Their work may thus be coloured by their own theological biases. Further, no such identification is made in earlier texts like the Septuagint, even obliquely in terms of the language used. Instead of ἐξουδενόω, the Septuagint uses φαυλίέσσω in Isaiah 49:7 and ἐκλείπω in 53:3.[636] I therefore find this argument unconvincing.

McCurley (1974) produces intriguing evidence for Jesus, not Elijah, as primary referent of 9:11-13's Son of Man, based on the use of "after six days" (9:2), in the Hebrew Bible and other ancient literature, to denote the time after which an aforementioned conflict or question is resolved. McCurley's argument provides a parallel and more individualised explanation, albeit cryptic, of the Son's identity (8:38), in addition to the Messiah's identity (8:29-30), in each case pointing to Jesus, as well as divine resolution to Jesus's debate with Peter on whether the Son must suffer (8:31-37). In brief, 9:2 subtly links the questions arising in 8:29-8:38 to their resolution in 9:3-13. McCurley observes that among "the many recognized affinities between the poetic structure of biblical Hebrew and Ugaritic literature is the common literary scheme in which an action continues for six days and then 'on the seventh day' occurs the climax of the action."[637] He cites three Ugaritic examples where a preceding conflict is resolved after six days; that is, on the seventh; and then an Akkadian example.[638] The obvious Hebrew Bible parallel occurs in Genesis 1:1-2.3, where God creates the world in six days and rests at the resolution of his work on the seventh. Further, in Exodus 24:15-16, a cloud suffuses Mount Sinai for six days till on the seventh God calls Moses to Him, to reveal His will for the Israelites. In

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[633] Hooker, *According to Saint Mark*, 220.
[634] Cranfield, *According to Saint Mark*, 298.
[635] The earliest, Theodotion and Aquila, wrote in the second century CE. Their contemporary, Irenaeus, labels them "Jewish proselytes" for translating Isaiah 7:14's prophesied "virgin" who will conceive as "young woman," following whom "the Ebionites pretend that he [Jesus] was begotten of Joseph" (*Against Heresies*, 3.21.1, in William W. Harvey, *Sancti Irenaei episcopi Lugdunensis Libros quinque adversus haereses* (Cambridge: Typis Academicis, 1857): 110).
[636] Charles Brenton (ed.) *The Septuagint Version: Greek & English* (London: Bagster and Sons, 1879): 885; 889.
[637] Foster R. McCurley, "'And after Six Days' (Mark 9:2): A Semitic Literary Device." *JBL* 93,1 (1974): 68.
[638] II Aqht i: 6-17 relates King Daniel's persistent prayer to be given a son. The divine response emerges "on the seventh day" when Baal intercedes, bringing Daniel's petition to the highest God, El. II Baal-Anath vi: 22-35 recounts the reverse alchemy achieved by a raging inferno within a palace on the seventh day. For six days, fire consumes the building until, on the seventh, the flames disappear; the silver turns into blocks of stone and the gold into bricks. 1 Keret iii: 114-25 describes a castle siege that lasts till the seventh day, when King Pabel of Udum offers many precious gifts to his besieger, Keret, in exchange for leaving Udum peacefully, thus resolving the conflict. The Akkadian Gilgamesh epic (XI: 140-6) tells the tale of the Deluge, where a ship is trapped at the base of Mount Nisir for six days until, on the seventh, the ship sails free into the sea and a dove is sent forth to locate dry land (McCurley, "And After Six Days," 68-70).

Joshua 6:14-17, Joshua's army marches round Jericho for six days, and, on the seventh day during the seventh circling the wall collapses, ending the siege. In 1 Kings 18:43-44, during a drought, Elijah commands his servant to look toward the sea seven times. On the seventh, a raincloud arises from the sea to resolve the problem. 1 Kings 20:26-29 recounts a confrontation between Israelites and Syrians, whose armies encamp opposite each other till the seventh day, when battle commences and the Israelites triumph. Esther 1:10 relays a banquet's climax on the seventh day, when King Ahasuerus commands the queen to display her beauty and the queen refuses, providing the basis for the following tale. Judges 14:17-18 recounts Samson's wife weeping for the duration of a similarly prolonged feast, as she entreats Samson to reveal the answer to his riddle. On the seventh day, Samson reveals the solution, which immediately she relays to her countrymen who, on the same day, confront Samson with it.[639] McCurley concludes that the Transfiguration resolves the question of Jesus's identity posed in 8:27-30, when God Himself announces: "This is my beloved son," echoing Psalm 2:7, which employs this phrase as a cultic announcement on God's behalf to the king during his coronation, thus combining Jesus's sonship with divinely-designated kingship, the latter of which encapsulates the traditional concept of Messiah (the divinely anointed king of Israel). Moreover, the phrase "beloved son" echoes Genesis 22's account of Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac, where 22:2, alone in the Hebrew Bible and Septuagint, employs the same phrase, relating Abraham's love for his only son. Yet God intervenes, delivering Isaac from death, allowing God's promise to Abraham of siring a great nation (Genesis 12:1) to progress towards fulfilment. Early Christians noticed this Jesus-Isaac parallel, for Paul allegorically relates Isaac and Christ in Galatians 3:16. Indeed, "the whole notion of God himself providing the lamb for sacrifice must surely have been related to the crucifixion in the minds of first century Christians. Thus, the Transfiguration announcement seems to identify Jesus as the promised son who will be sacrificed and then delivered."[640] McCurley concludes that, if both Psalm 2:7 and Genesis 22:2 inform Mark's message, "the combination of the two ideas is particularly striking. Jesus is the Christ/Messiah, and Jesus is about to be sacrificed. Such an unprecedented combination would confirm Peter's confession (8:29) and also Jesus's teaching about suffering and death which Peter rejected (8:31-32). The climactic episode to the Christological discussion in 8:27-9:2 comes "after six days" when God himself announces who he thinks Jesus is."[641] I would add that McCurley's concept of a Messianic Son of God who must be sacrificed is strengthened by 9:12b, where Jesus explains the Son of Man must suffer and face rejection.

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[639] McCurley, "And After Six Days," 70-3.
[640] McCurley, "And After Six Days," 78.
[641] McCurley, "And After Six Days," 79.

3.6.3 Ezekiel as Son

There is, however, a less abstracted solution than McCurley's, which fails to resolve the text-critical problems of 9:9-13, and a less convoluted explanation than my own initial hypothesis, one scholars have bypassed despite substantial supporting evidence. I contend 9:12b's *primary* referent is Ezekiel.

We have already listed general similarities between Ezekiel and Jesus (3.2, p.104). We should now emphasise that Ezekiel, in multiple revelations where God names him Son, was likewise destined to suffer *and* be rejected by his people, unlike Elijah who only experienced the former, and less emphatically than Ezekiel, and not ostensibly as 'Son of Man'. Yet Ezekiel's destiny as Son we learn from the lips of God Himself, in the very scriptures scholars state stand silent on the Son's fate. Ezekiel 2:3-8, where God thrice addresses the prophet as Son of Man, commences these predictions. God tells Ezekiel he will dwell among metaphorical briers, thorns and scorpions as he preaches to a rebellious and stubborn people. In 3:24-27, where God again addresses Ezekiel as Son of Man, the prophet is fated to be bound with ropes inside his own house, by the very people he comes to save, so he can preach no more. Worse, God states he will render Ezekiel mute till Jerusalem falls, a span of seven years (cf. 1:2; 33:21-22), so that he cannot even rebuke his tormentors for abusing him. In 4:1-15, God tells Ezekiel, again naming him Son of Man, that he must lie tied to the ground on one side for 390 days, and on the other for a further 40 days, while eating cakes cooked over cow dung (which God originally intends to be human excrement till Ezekiel objects), to bear the sins of Israel and Judah, to become a sign of their iniquity and an omen of future judgement. Finally, in 24:15-27, God again addresses Ezekiel as Son of Man, stating He is about to take the life of Ezekiel's wife, and more, that Ezekiel is forbidden to mourn. However we interpret these verses, here is irrefutable proof of an Old Testament prophet, whom God names 'Son of Man' some 90 times, whose fate the scriptures foretell is both to suffer and face rejection.

Yet no scholar I have seen names 9:12b's Son 'Ezekiel', though Wink (1968) comes close.[642] Perhaps they hesitate since 9:11, 9:12a and 9:13 clearly reference Elijah, leading them to dismiss Ezekiel and hence claim scriptural silence on the Son's suffering.[643] However, through a multivalent lens the problem disappears, with 9:13 linking the two figures ("And how has it been written about the *Son of Man* [Ezekiel], that he will suffer much and be rejected! …Elijah has come, and they did to him whatever they wanted, just as it has been written about *him* [Ezekiel, i.e. another Son of Man]"). In tune with such multivalency, Mark 2's Son references neither prophet, rather humanity in general, or at least God's people. Likewise the passion predictions, rather than referencing deceased prophets, foretell the suffering and

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[642] "In the passion predictions, the Son of Man is to be rejected and treated with contempt. Wink finds the prototype for this treatment in… Ezekiel, a *ben adam* who did in fact endure rejection and contempt. Similarly, just as Mark 10:45 says, 'The son of the man came to give his life as a ransom for many,' so God says to Ezekiel, 'Son of man. . .you shall bear their punishment' (Ezek. 4:4)" (Delbert R. Burkett, "Constructing a Meaningful Alternative." *CrossCurrents* 53,2 (2003): 283; cf. Wink, *John the Baptist in the Gospel Tradition*, SNTSMS 7 (London: Cambridge University Press, 1968)).
[643] E.g. "Although fulfillment of the OT is a major theme in the Marcan passion story, there is no OT passage that speaks of the sufferings of the Son of Man" (Harrington, "Mark," 625-6).

vindication of a person/persons yet to die. Why then must Mark 9:9-13's denote a single, specific individual, when other Marcan 'Son verses' clearly reference different persons?

To review the state of the play: in Mark 2, Son of Man represents humans (perhaps righteous Jews in particular). In 8:31, he is an individual, or a group, or the group's representative, who will suffer and be redeemed. In 8:38 (-9:1?), he is a heavenly figure (perhaps representative of an elect group), whose arrival is imminent and who might judge the wicked. In 9:9, the disciples think Jesus refers to humanity, yet in 9:12a and 9:13, he is presented as Elijah, reincarnated(?) as John the Baptist, whose future appearance will precede the resurrection of the dead. Yet McCurley's cryptic connection to Jesus as Son is additionally coded into the text, one that further links 'Son of Man' to the role of Messiah, and 9:12b's scriptural allusion to his fated suffering evokes God's plans for Ezekiel - the only person God nicknames 'Son of Man' in the Hebrew Bible. To Mark's audience, a multifaceted yet confused picture is emerging, leading them to ponder this elusive figure, and how they might arrange the pieces of his puzzle. Further, with each new pericope that features the phrase, the title becomes more individualised, from Mark 2's connotations of people in general, to 8:31's apparent band of martyrs, to 8:38's Danielic elect or - more likely - their unknown representative, to 9:9-13's evocation of several famous individuals.

3.7 Mark 10:45: Son as Suffering Saviour

10:45 presents another enigmatic reference to the Son's role: "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve and to give his life - a ransom against many." In the immediate context, the focus of this teaching is discipleship. James and John have made a bold request, to sit to the left and right of Jesus in his glory (10:37), for which their fellow disciples rebuke them (10:41). Jesus then contrasts the power-wielders amongst the Gentiles, who lord it over their subjects, with power-wielding in discipleship (10:42-43), stating that whoever wishes to be first among them must be slave to all (10:44). Thus, when Jesus states the Son's role, as ruler, is to serve and to sacrifice his life for others' sakes, he commends a behavioural paradigm to his disciples. Yet 10:45's Son also suggests an individual, similar to the figure depicted in 9:12b, for surely not all righteous followers of God are required to sacrifice their lives and somehow succeed in ransoming multitudes. What kind of person is this individual, and what kind of sacrifice will they make?

In *3.7.1 Self-Sacrificing Saviour: Marcan Innovation?* we will assess Seeley, Hooker and Collins on whether this Servant-Ruler concept is original to Mark. Accordingly, we will explore evidence in the Hebrew Bible, Septuagint, Apocrypha, and extra-scriptural documents that supports the contemporaneous existence of a comparable character. In *3.7.2 A Gentile-Inspired Saviour?* we will inspect Seeley's evidence for a Gentile paradigm, and the clash between Seeley's conception of Jesus's healing ministry embodying the Roman virtue of *clementia* and Thiessen's view that 10:45 compromises between servant-king ideals popular in Gentile philosophy and the concept of a soul-saving sacrifice developed in Paul's epistles. Finally, we will examine Jeremias's view that a template for such a figure actually did exist in prior Semitic literature.

3.7.1 Self-sacrificing Saviour: Marcan Innovation?

Listeners familiar with the mighty, retributive and glorious Son in apocalyptic literature (e.g. Daniel 7), would surely balk at the Son's portrayal as a humble, self-sacrificing servitor, a polar opposite, a figure reminiscent of Isaiah's suffering servant. As Seeley (1993) states: "the ideas of rule and service are combined in a way for which no clear precedent exists in the Hebrew Bible or intertestamental Judaism… according to 10:41-45, the Son of Man rules, serves, and gives his life. A precedent for a figure who combines these traits has not been forthcoming."[644] Seeley further argues that even Isaiah's suffering servant fails to provide an adequate template for 10:45's Son: "Isa. 52-53 is normally referred to as the background for 10:45, but the connection revolves around giving one's life 'as a ransom for many.' This connection does not speak directly to the combination of rule and service which is the focus here… The Suffering Servant is never simultaneously a servant and a ruler. Whether he is a ruler at all is very doubtful… he is exalted only after his humiliation. Whatever service he engaged in seems to have ended before his exaltation. That he should rule through serving is thus not an issue in Isa.

[644] David Seeley, "Rulership and Service in Mark 10:41-45." *NovT* 35,3 (1993): 234.

52-53… Appeals to a suffering Son of man lack evidence, as do claims that the Son of Man and Suffering Servant traditions intertwined prior to the New Testament."[645]

Hooker, though agreeing Daniel 7's Son is pronounced victor while others perish, nonetheless argues the reversal makes both contextual and scriptural sense: contextually in light of Mark's earlier sayings about the "paradoxical road to greatness" and scripturally when we consider the Daniel parallel. In Daniel 7, many 'holy ones' of the community represented by the Son likewise perish (e.g. 7:21), thus "since those who die and those who triumph are members of the one community, each of them can be the representative of that community; the martyrs represent faithful Israel, steadfast even under persecution, while the 'one like a son of man' represents the victorious saints."[646] The problem is that 10:45's Son rules by devoting himself to service and sacrifice, never through wielding sovereign power as Daniel 7 describes.

Collins (1997) contends that those in Mark's audience well-acquainted with scripture would likely perceive Isaiah allusions. She states that, in the Septuagint of Isaiah 53:11, the servant of the Lord is just a man who serves many well and that, in 53:12, his life was given over to death and that he bore the sins of many. The servant assumes the role of scapegoat, both in Septuagint and Hebrew Bible renditions, the latter further describing him as a sin offering. Though the precise image of ransom for a human life does not appear in Isaiah 53, it emerges elsewhere in scripture,[647] thus Collins concludes that the informed among Mark's audience "may well have interpreted Mark 10:45 in light of one or more of those occurrences."[648] Collins further points to non-scriptural documents from the time of Mark, "three documents from Oxyrhynchus relating to manumissions dating from the years 86, 100, and 91 or 107 CE that use the word λύτρον. Two… use the phrase ἐπι λύτροις (by ransom) to indicate that the slave has obtained freedom through the payment of… money, probably at his or her own initiative.[649] In the third document, one of two brothers emancipating a slave says that he has received 'the ransom' (τα λύτρα), that is… money."[650] Collins concludes that, if the ritual act derives from this practice of manumission, the logic implies that humans, having offended the gods, become slaves of the gods "and must pay a sum or perform a ritual act to free themselves. Thereafter they can resume good relations..."[651] Collins admits that 10:45's ransom saying, and these writings, differ from scriptural citations of λύτρον, as they do not occur via ritual acts in the sense of procedures regulated by established cults. She nonetheless posits that people familiar with such acts in Mark's day would probably "have perceived the same layers of meaning in this saying… the 'many' could be

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645 Seeley, "Rulership and Service," 235.
646 Hooker, *According to Saint Mark*, 250.
647 λύτρον in the Septuagint, as ransom for a taken, doomed or endangered life, occurs in Exodus 30:12, Leviticus 21:30, 27:29; Numbers 35:31-2; Job 2:4; Psalms 7:2, 49:7, 59:1, 119:154; Proverbs 6:34-5, 13:8; Isaiah 43:2-3, Jeremiah 15:21, 31:11 and Zephaniah 3:15.
648 Adela Y. Collins, "The Signification of Mark 10:45 among Gentile Christians." *HTR* 90,4 (1997): 372.
649 Bernard Grenfell and Arthur Hunt (eds.) *The Oxyrhynchus Papyri*, 63 vols. (London: Egypt Exploration Fund, 1898-1996): 1.105-7.
650 Grenfell, *The Oxyrhynchus Papyri*, 4.199-203.
651 Collins, "The Signification of Mark," 377.

those enslaved to God because of their offenses… On another level of meaning, the 'many' are those in captivity to or bound by such misfortunes, such as demon possession or illness… Finally, the word λύτρον could be understood as a synonym of ἱλαστήριον (expiation or propitiation)… In 4 Macc 17:22, the deaths of Eleazar, the mother, and her seven sons are described as an expiation (ἱλαστήριον). Since blood is mentioned in the immediate context, the passage evokes the notion of sacrifice."[652] Thus for Collins, the role of 10:45's Son might have struck several chords, with both Jew and Gentile listeners, each suggesting the figure's destiny of vicarious sacrifice in redeeming doomed or distressed mortals.

3.7.2 A Gentile-Inspired Saviour?

Whether we support Seeley or Collins, here is a verse that radically differentiates the Son from the Danielic figure that apocalypticists might recognise. What inspired Mark, or Jesus before him, to associate a rulership of service with him? Seeley argues a template for such a figure indeed exists, yet in Gentile philosophy rather than Jewish scripture. He cites Dio Chrysostom's (c. 40-112 CE) Discourses, which state a king receives his station from Zeus, on the qualifier that he plans and studies his subjects' welfare (1.12), honours and loves the good while caring for all (1.17), exemplifies philanthropy (1.18), shows all a benign and gentle soul (1.20), not revelling in his kingly powers, even in company of slaves, but seeing himself as king not for his own sake but that of his subjects (1.22-23). For Chrysostom, the king's greatest pleasure is to serve all (1.34; cf. 1.65), tirelessly ministering as the ever-present sun (3.73) that exemplifies the most taxing servitude (3.75). Seeley traces the inspiration for Chrysostom's kingly template to one of his teachers, the Stoic Musonius Rufus (c. 30-100 CE), who states a king's first duty is to protect and benefit his people,[653] thus sketching an outline for ruler-as-servant.[654] With further examples from centuries preceding and including that of Mark's composition, Seeley evidences the enduring popularity of this Gentile paradigm, citing fragments

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[652] Collins, "The Signification of Mark," 381.
[653] See also Cora E. Lutz, *Musonius Rufus: "The Roman Socrates"* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1947): 61.
[654] Seeley, "Rulership and Service," 236.

attributed to Archytas and Diotogenes (pre-CE),[655] echoed by Plato and Xenophon (5th-4th century BCE),[656] Seneca (4 BCE-65 CE) and Epictetus (50-135 CE).[657]

Thiessen (2016) develops Seeley's argument, contending Seneca's De Clementia (55/56 CE)[658] not only mirrors the connection between Mark's ransom language and Jesus's criticism of Gentile power-wielders, but also illuminates Jesus's subsequent behaviour. After 10:45, Mark presents a blind man twice hailing Jesus as "Son of David" (10:46-52). Thiessen explains: "The people surrounding Jesus attempt to silence this inconsequential man's entreaties for mercy… but Jesus hears the man's cries and restores his sight, thereby confirming his claim that he is a king who serves his subjects."[659] Thiessen expounds that, if Mark identifies this mercy with the virtue of *clementia*, Jesus's healing of Bartimaios reflects Seneca's admonition toward clemency, thus portraying Jesus's healing ministry as embodying a Roman virtue.[660] Hence, 10:45's serving Son is linked both to the serving Son of David in 10:46-52 and to Roman political theory on the centrality of clemency for ethical rulership. And yet, in 12:35-37, Jesus states the Messiah is *not* David's son, and then, in 14:62, Jesus confesses his own messiahship. In response, Thiessen cites Marcus, who notes that Jesus does not reject the title he is hailed by, either when Bartimaios calls him Son of David (10:47-48) or when the crowd names him so during the triumphal entry (11:9-10).[661] Thus, Thiessen argues that Jesus, in stating the Messiah is not David's son, is attempting to remould traditional Jewish ideas of messiahship. Contrasting with the warrior-king of, for example, the Psalm of Solomon 17, which

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[655] A fragment preserved by Stobaeus, assigned to a certain Archytas, presents the view that the "best ruler ... would do nothing in his own interest, but only for the sake of his subjects." Stobaeus attributes another fragment to Diotogenes, whom like Archytas he classifies as a Pythagorean. Diotogenes states the king is "occupied in doing well to and benefitting his subjects…" Seeley notes these fragments cannot be dated precisely, though most judgments put them well before the New Testament (Seeley, "Rulership and Service," 237).

[656] Supporting the pre-CE dating of Stobaeus's fragments, Plato and Xenophon also portrayed the ideal ruler as his subjects' servant. In Plato's Republic, "the true ruler does not naturally seek his own advantage but that of the ruled" (1.347D). Further, rulers should be called saviours and helpers (5.463B), fulfilling duty by "toiling in the service of the state and holding office for the city's sake" (7.540B). In the Laws, we find that the man who has not been a servant will never become a praiseworthy master, and that the right way to gain honour is by serving honourably rather than by ruling honourably (6.762E). Xenophon, like Plato a student of Socrates, quotes the latter pronouncing: "a king is chosen, not to himself, but for the good of those who have chosen him" (Memorabilia, 3.2.3). In: Seeley, "Rulership and Service," 238.

[657] Seneca comments on Posidonius (135-50 BCE), an earlier Stoic: "in that… golden age, Posidonius holds that the government was under the jurisdiction of the wise. They… protected the weaker from the stronger… gave advice… showed what was useful and what was useless. Their forethought provided that their subjects should lack nothing; their bravery warded off dangers; their kindness enriched and adorned their subjects. For them ruling was a service, not an exercise of royalty" (Ad Lucilium Epistulae Morales, 90.5; cited in Seeley, "Rulership and Service," 241). In similar spirit, Epictetus contends that the Cynic's solicitous fatherhood over mankind renders marriage untenable, as he must oversee the welfare of all (Discourses, 3.22.72). Thus the Cynic rules in that he shares God's kingly service to humanity (Seeley, "Rulership and Service," 243).

[658] "This date is based upon Seneca's reference to the actions of the young Augustus when he 'was the same age that you [i.e., Nero] now are, just past his eighteenth birthday' (Clem. 1.9.1)" (Matthew Thiessen, "The Many for One or One for the Many? Reading Mark 10:45 in the Roman Empire." *HTR* 109,3 (2016): 456).

[659] Thiessen, "The Many for One," 463.

[660] Thiessen, "The Many for One," 463-4.

[661] Marcus, *Mark 8-16*, 647, in Thiessen, "The Many for One," 464.

depicts David's descendants ruling Israel (17:21) and conquering the Gentiles (17:22-25), "Bartimaeus's claim that Jesus is the son of David, coming… immediately after Jesus's claim that he came to serve and not to be served, helps to redefine the role of the son of David in terms of servanthood."[662]

But regarding mercy's role within this servant-messiah paradigm, differences persist between the Roman concept of *clementia* and Mark's ἔλεος (10:47-48). Seneca pointedly distinguishes between *clementia* (clemency) and *misericordia* (pity), and Bartimaios seeks the latter from Jesus. Yet Seneca advises all good men, especially kings, to avoid *misericordia*.[663] Thiessen suspects Seneca has inherited the Stoic disdain for ἔλεος "attested by Diogenes Laertius, who claims that Stoic wise-men do not show mercy (7.123)[664]… Contrary to Seneca's… portrayal of the virtuous Roman emperor, Jesus, the son of David, shows unbridled mercy."[665]

Regarding λύτρον in 10:45, Seeley observes another difference between the Cynic-Stoic concept of the ruler's vicarious servitude and that of Mark's Jesus, stating that, when used in tandem with ἀντί, λύτρον implies substitutionary rather than paradigmatic death.[666] In support, Collins (1997) notes that Mark's antithetical structure and message mirror a saying Cassius Dio attributes to Otho: ""I shall free myself [that is, take my own life], that all may learn from the deed you chose for your emperor, one who would not give you up to save himself, but rather himself to save you,"[667] stating that here the message differs from Mark's theology of ransom. "Although some of the exempla cited by Otho have cultic connotations, his own death is portrayed as a noble and honorable death with no such connotations."[668] Thiessen, assessing Collins, nonetheless observes that Dio's comments (circa 300 CE), were penned long after the Sitz im Leben of Mark. However, he invokes an earlier witness to support Dio's characterisation of Otho, that of Plutarch in the late first century CE, who "presents Otho's supporters begging him not to surrender… Otho responds by claiming, 'If I was worthy to be Roman emperor, I ought to give my life freely for my country'… and concludes that even were he to be victorious, it would not be worth as much as giving himself for peace and harmony"[669] thus providing a contemporaneous Gentile parallel for 10:45. Thiessen adds that Tacitus, Plutarch's contemporary, similarly portrays Otho's suicide by depicting Otho sacrificing his life to spare his followers from slaughter (The Annals, 2:46). Otho ransoms the lives of many destined to die by self-sacrifice, thus paralleling the Son's sacrificial fate in 10:45, albeit in paradigmatic rather than cultic fashion.[670] Thiessen amplifies this evidence for a Gentile template by citing servant-ruler exemplars in other Gentile sources, sources that further present rulers' deaths as both cultic and

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662 Thiessen, "The Many for One," 464.
663 Seneca, *De Clementia*. Translated by Susanna Braund (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009): 145; cf. 402-403.
664 Diogenes Laertius. *Lives of Eminent Philosophers. Books 6-10*. Translated by Robert D. Hicks. LCL 185 (London: Heinemann, 1925): 226-7.
665 Thiessen, "The Many for One," 464.
666 Seeley, "Rulership and Service," 246.
667 Dio, Cassius. *Roman History, Volume I: Books 1-11.* Translated by Earnest Cary and Herbert B. Foster. LCL 32 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1914): 214-7.
668 Collins, "The Signification of Mark," 371.
669 Thiessen, "The Many for One," 454.
670 Thiessen, "The Many for One," 454.

expiatory. He notes Euripides's (4th century BCE) portrayal of Creon of Thebes, who sacrifices his life to placate Ares and thereby save his city (Phoenissae: 963-9). He cites the poet Lucan, writing in Mark's time of the senator Cato's passion to offer his life, on behalf of all Roman citizens, to satiate the gods.[671] He mentions Livy (59 BCE-17 CE), who depicts Publius Decius and his son Decius, both Roman consuls in the 4th century BCE, giving their lives to expiate the gods' wrath and preserve Rome (The History of Rome: 8.9.10; 10.23.13).[672]

Seeley reasons the Son's role in 10:45 compromises between such servant-king ideals popular in Gentile philosophy and the suffering servant's soul-saving sacrifice developed in Paul's epistles.[673] He argues Mark 10:41-45 progresses as a paradigmatic template for suffering and martyrdom until λύτρον appears, which suddenly invites the audience to understand the Son's death, in particular, as a liberation. However "10:45 does not elaborate, and nothing else in the narrative picks up the theme. This verse would thus have reminded any audience familiar with Paul of the latter's views on Jesus' death, but the Second Gospel's failure to follow up on that reminiscence prevents substantial links from being made between it and the Pauline cultic and mystical notions which Mark apparently wanted to avoid."[674] Seeley expounds, stating λύτρον's ambiguity perfectly suited Mark's purposes, allowing him to reference one of Paul's metaphors for Jesus's death without committing himself to Paul's theology. Seeley concludes "Mark is indirectly acknowledging a theologian he could not completely ignore but whose theology he did not fully approve of. Mark could anticipate Pauline churches reading or hearing his story, and so would have wanted to give them at least some opportunity… to understand it in terms of their own concepts. At the same time, non-Pauline churches could encounter it and receive virtually no impetus toward the Pauline ideas with which he was uncomfortable."[675]

Thiessen counters that Mark might easily have held both exemplary and substitutionary interpretations of the Son's death and that Paul's writings likewise express both understandings (e.g. 1 Corinthians 11:1; Philippians 2:5-8; Thessalonians 1:6). Citing Marcus's work,[676] Thiessen argues that, though Seeley may be right about Mark knowing Paul's theology, insufficient evidence exists to posit Paul's influence on 10:45. He further contends such a connection is unnecessary for revealing Mark's inspiration in casting Son of Man as ransomed ruler, given the abundance of Gentile resources that showcase identical themes.[677]

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[671] "Let Rome pay atonement (piaculum) in full to the pitiless gods… may I be transfixed by every spear, and may I stand between and intercept every blow dealt in this war! Let my blood redeem the nations, and my death pay the whole penalty incurred by the corruption of Rome" (Bellum Civile 2: 304-13). Here, Cato uses 'piaculum' (a sacrificial rite that re-establishes communion between god and worshipper) in line 304, thus connecting the ransom concept of a ruler's desire to sacrifice himself for his nation to a cultic rite, and thus, as Collins indicates, mirroring the Son of Man's destiny in Mark 10:45 (Thiessen, "The Many for One," 455-6).

[672] Thiessen, "The Many for One," 455.

[673] Paul taught Christ's death served to ransom the doomed lives of sinners (e.g. Romans 3:25-26).

[674] Seeley, "Rulership and Service," 249.

[675] Seeley, "Rulership and Service," 249.

[676] Joel Marcus, "Mark - Interpreter of Paul." *NTS*, 46(4) (2000): 473-87.

[677] Thiessen, "The Many for One," 453.

And yet, the concept of vicarious atoning sacrifice is not alien to Judaism. Jeremias notes the power of human death as atoning sacrifice initially surfaces in the Second Temple era and further maintains that, centuries before Jesus, *any* death had power to atone when bound up with repentance, and that criminals might announce before their execution: "May my death be an atonement (kappārā) for all my sins". Further, any Israelite's death carried special atoning power if they made this declaration on their deathbed. The death of a righteous man was more potent still, for his supererogatory suffering would advantage others, and the deaths of innocent children atoned for their parents' sins. Even greater atoning power was attributed to the death of a witness of the faith.[678] Jeremias explains that "Hellenistic Judaism praises martyrdom, because it brings God's wrath upon Israel to a standstill [2 Macc. 7:37f; 4 Macc. 9:23f] and is an ἀντίψυχον (substitute) [4 Macc. 6:29; 17:22], a καθάρσιον (means of cleansing) [4 Macc 6:29], ἱλαστήριον (means of atonement) [4 Macc. 17:22] for Israel."[679]

Likewise, in the Palestinian milieu, it was said "martyrdoms would usher in the end (Ass. Moses. 9:7ff; Ethiopian Enoch 47: 1-4; Revelation: 6:11), that they disclosed the world to come to the martyrs [Siphre Deut. 307 on 32:4; Gen. R. 65 on 27:27] and made them intercessors [Jeremias, Heiligengraber in Jesu Umwelt, Gottingen, 1958, 136f], that they had missionary power [Siphre Deut. 307 on 32:4; Gen R. 65 on 27:27] and worked atonement for Israel [Siphre Deut. 333 on 32:43: 'The massacre of Israel by the nations of the world brings about atonement for it in the world to come']."[680]

Considering Jeremias's evidence, the self-sacrifice of an individual ruler would surely make sense, at least to certain Jews in Mark's day, as glorious atonement for his people, just as it would to Gentiles. Either way, and regardless of whether Paul informs Mark's theology, λύτρον's ambiguity in 10:45 still obfuscates the Son's role: should we understand him as an exemplary martyr, a special sacrifice, or both? It further remains unclear, in view of the Semitic idiom בָּר נָשָׁא, whether Jesus is referring to an individual Son, the faithful elect, or mankind in general. Perhaps Jesus illustrates, via hyperbole, that the purpose for which humans were created is to sacrifice themselves for others and to serve, that such is the way we should treat our neighbours. Certainly, the service element resonates with Jesus's teachings throughout Mark, teachings he exemplifies by healing those who seek aid and instructing those who seek advice. However, the concept of the Son of Man giving his life to ransom many is new, and applies only to Jesus and the Baptist in Mark, though Mark does not explore how their deaths practically function to save others, either here or elsewhere in his gospel. Mark's Jesus does, however, generalise to humankind the concept of sacrificing one's life for the sake of the good news (8:35). Perhaps the listener is supposed, at this point, to equate the preaching of the gospel itself as the ransom for many, for which the exemplary disciple, or human, is willing to sacrifice his life? However, this conceptual connection with 8:35, separated by two full chapters, is not clarified anywhere in the text, hence 10:45 strongly hints at a

[678] Jeremias, *New Testament Theology*, 287. Jeremias lists Rabbi Ishmael's (died c. 135 CE) expiatory hierarchy, as recorded in Billerbeck's *Kommentar zum Neuen Testament*, vol. 1, 636.
[679] Jeremias, *New Testament Theology*, 287-8 (Maccabees quotations are Jeremias's footnotes).
[680] Jeremias, *New Testament Theology*, 288 (Bracketed references are Jeremias's footnotes).

special sacrificial and redemptive purpose for a particular mortal. Yet again, Mark's Son exudes multivalency whilst simultaneously growing more substantial and individualised; this time suggesting a human ruler (as opposed to 8:38's nebulous heavenly being/s or 9:11-13's multiple mortal exemplars) who came not only to serve, but to sacrifice his life to save others - a model familiar and acceptable to both Jews and Gentiles, yet evoking different nuances to each.

3.8 Mark 13:26-14:62: Son as Murdered Messiah

Chapter 14's Son sayings lack much of the multivalency of previous utterances and make special reference to Jesus. In 14:21 and 14:41-42, the fate of Jesus as suffering servant is finally elucidated. In 14:62, when linked to 12:35-37 and 13:26, the destiny of Jesus as Messiah, one connected to the Danielic saviour of God's elect, likewise emerges. Above all, the two contrasting figures of 10:45, servant and ruler, become one in Jesus. *3.8.1 Destined for Betrayal and Death?* will scrutinise the Son as one foreordained to be murdered. *3.8.2 Son as Messiah* will focus on this Son who nonetheless rises in triumph, enthroned in the language of Daniel 7.

3.8.1 Destined for Betrayal and Death?

Mark 14:12-26 narrates the Passover meal, where Jesus uses 'Son of Man' twice (14:21), to refer to the Son's fate and that of his betrayer.[681] Hooker states this pericope stresses the themes of the scripturally preordained divine plan and the Son's obedience to it. For Hooker, who here equates Son of Man with Jesus, he "goes on the way ordained by God, a way that leads to death."[682] 14:21's titles appear self-referential, clearly foreshadowing Jesus's suffering and sacrificial death in the first instance, as written of the suffering servant in Isaiah 53, and his imminent betrayal by Judas in the second. Here it seems strange to claim 'Son of Man' refers to humans, or disciples, in general.

However, one might argue the pattern of Jesus's life; preaching, rejection, betrayal and death; presented by Mark as parallel to John the Baptist's and the disciples' lives (see below) could be generalised to the lives of all Jesus's followers. Malbon explains: "The intercalated stories of the mission of the disciples and the death of John, following as they do the story of Jesus' rejection in his patris, serve to link the careers of John, Jesus, and the disciples." As Malbon outlines, John the Baptizer goes to preach (1:4), is rejected and handed over[683] (1:14), and executed (chapter 6). Jesus likewise goes to preach (1:14), is rejected (chapter 6), will be handed over (e.g. 3:19; 14:21) and executed (e.g. 8:31; 9:31; 10:33-34). The disciples also go to preach (chapter 6), later too to be rejected, handed over (13:9-12), and killed (13:12). Malbon summarises: "At chapter 6, the disciples are in the initial phase of their career-preaching; Jesus is in the middle phase - rejection; and John is in the final phase - death."[684]

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[681] "For the Son of Man goes away just as it has been written about him, but woe to that one by whom the Son of Man is betrayed: better (good) for that man if he was not born."
[682] Hooker, *According to Saint Mark*, 336.
[683] John's preaching and 'handing over' are expressed via the same verbs (κηρύσσειν and παραδίδωμι) Mark subsequently uses to describe Jesus's own preaching (1:14) and betrayal (14:21), and then that of the disciples (6:12; 13:9-12).
[684] Elizabeth S. Malbon, "Echoes and Foreshadowings in Mark 4-8 Reading and Rereading." *JBL* 112,2 (1993): 222.

A problem in seeking scriptural precedent for this chain of destiny, where the Son plays both a chronologically and momentously central role[685], emerges in 14:21a "ὁ μὲν Υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ὑπάγει καθὼς γέγραπται περὶ αὐτοῦ."[686] The Old Testament never references the Son's betrayal to which this phrase alludes. Even Isaiah never mentions the doomed suffering servant's betrayal, nor does he name this servant, destined to be led away to the slaughter, as 'Son of Man'. Further, the Son described in apocalyptic scripture seems, in many ways, antipodal to the suffering servant. In Daniel 7, rather than suffering persecution, the Son dispenses universal justice; not a target for mockery, but an object of awe; not ignominiously slain, but enduring forever as glorious king, just as 1 Enoch and 4 Ezra similarly portray him. He never experiences any part of Malbon's cycle.

A solution emerges in Daniel 7's link between the Son and the holy ones. The Ancient of Days grants dominion of a kingdom to the Son in Daniel 7:13, then in 7:22 קַדִּישֵׁי עֶלְיוֹנִין (the holy ones of the Highest One) come to possess this kingdom, and finally, in 7:27, the people of the holy ones are given dominion of a kingdom that encompasses all the kingdoms under heaven. Thus, a chain of identity and destiny is forged between the Son, the holy ones of God, and the people of the holy ones. One 'like a son of man' hence primarily refers to the holy people, or in a derived sense to their representative, not to a godlike being. Scholarly opinion varies on the identity of Daniel's holy ones. As previously discussed, certain scholars view them as angels. Others view them as righteous Jews, or the specific group of righteous Jews sympathetic to the apocalyptic vision. Either way, the fourth beast in Daniel's vision makes war on them and wears them out, until they are given into his power for "a time, two times, and half a time" (Daniel 7:25). Then the beast is judged, his dominion taken away, he is destroyed, and the holy ones inherit all the kingdoms under the heavens (7:26-27). That these holy ones have the human capacity to be worn out, to be subjugated and to rule on Earth suggests they are no angels, rather righteous Jews who believe in Daniel's prophecy, who are willing to strive and suffer for its fulfilment, with the Son as their leader or symbolic representation. This reconciles the figures of Son and suffering servant, to the point where we might see Jesus and his disciples as the holy ones of the Highest, with Son of Man a symbolic term to describe their shared, and their leader's, identity. Then again, scholars like LaCocque (3.3.5) view the faithful elect on Earth and their heavenly counterparts as two sides of the same coin. Both are members of God's holy community; some destined to suffer and die, others destined to reign victorious. Thus if John, Jesus, and Jesus's disciples belong to the first category, the Son indeed goes as is written of him (e.g. Daniel 7:25). I would argue that Jesus could also be referencing the suffering of Ezekiel and equating it with this own, even greater, agony to come. For Ezekiel's suffering served as an omen to Jerusalem, where perhaps the penitent could be saved, and Ezekiel, as we have seen, devoted his life to ransom them.

Mark's multivalency in 14:21 seems more deliberate in the Syriac versions of the text, as Brown observes, citing their literal translation "For the Son of man goes as it

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[685] Not only is Jesus portrayed as chronologically central in Mark's chain that begins with the Baptist and ends with the disciples, but his central importance is foregrounded from the gospel's beginning (1:7-8).

[686] "On the one hand, the Son of Man goes away just as it has been written about him."

is written of him, but woe to that… son of man… by whom the Son of man is betrayed!"[687] Thus 14:21 presents a riddle to Mark's audience, with 'Son of Man' mentioned thrice, referring to at least two different persons, the latter with a multitude of potential identities.

Regarding 14:21's purpose for the Son, Hooker argues that, rather than foregrounding death's inevitability, ὑπάγει emphasises the dedication of the Son to his mission. He will depart, even to death, because God preordains it. Hooker justifies this emphasis based on Mark's choice of language: "The verb to go (ὑπάγω) is taken up by the fourth evangelist and used of Jesus going to the Father (e.g. John 7.33; 8.14; 16.5) but it is not normally used in the sense of 'to die'."[688] Black, however, uncovers a different conclusion, on reversion to Aramaic. Though he agrees that no Greek or Septuagint parallels to Mark's use of ὑπάγειν in 14:21, meaning to die, have been found, or to John's frequent use of the word in this sense, these anomalies suggest the hampering evidence of a foreign idiom. "It seems probable, in view of the Aramaic colouring in the Fourth Gospel and the presence of the expression in a saying of Jesus in Mark, that the influence in question is Aramaic." Black evidences this use of 'go away' meaning 'die' in Ketuvim 12:3 (As a man departs this life so he will return).[689]

Arguing against an Aramaic Vorlage, Elliott likewise notes examples of 'to go away' meaning "to die" in the Hebrew Bible (Genesis 15:2; 1 Kings 2:2; Joshua 23:14). He further observes similar meanings in the Greek of 14:21's synoptic parallels, where "Matthew 26:24 keeps ὑπάγειν, Luke 22:22 changes it to πορεύεσθαι. A few verses later, Luke uses the latter to mean 'go to death': Luke 22:33." Elliot thus deduces that the Marcan use "probably had its origin in want of a word to express 'go' as contrasted with 'come' (Mark vi 31 οἱ ἐρχόμενοι… οἱ ὑπάγοντες is exactly our coming and going), and for this purpose it is more expressive than the alternative πορεύεσθαι."[690] An Aramaic Vorlage, therefore, seems possible but unnecessary.

Either way, Elliot's observation highlights the literary impact Mark effects in 14:21: contrasting the Son's death (going) and Godly destiny through loyal service with the traitor's unfortunate birth (coming) and woeful destiny through betrayal of godly service. Further, despite ὑπάγει's ambiguity, it seems Jesus obliquely refers, at least on one level, to the Son's imminent demise. Death is part of God's plan for Jesus/the faithful elect, whereas those who betray them to death and continue to live would be better off never having lived. Hence, another ironic reversal emerges, one typical of Mark's juxtapositions of the godly and the ungodly life. Moreover, both the Son and Judas retain free will to govern their destinies (hence shouldering the concomitant responsibility). Just as the text suggests no compulsion underlies the former's actions (no '*δεῖ* ὑπάγειν', for example), likewise Judas is not spared the consequences of his decision. Barclay thus argues that Jesus as Son is making love's last appeal. He offers Judas one final chance, warning of the consequences

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[687] Brown, "The Son of Man," 371-2. Brown also notes a similar Syriac parallel in 9:31 "For the Son of man is delivered into the hands of the sons of men."
[688] Hooker*, According to Saint Mark*, 336-7.
[689] Black, *An Aramaic Approach*, 302-3.
[690] Elliot, *The Language and Style*, 117.

should he continue, yet refusing to interfere with Judas's agency. This suggests that, as powerful as Mark's Son might be, he does not attempt to control or punish the moral decisions of others. "Without a doubt Jesus could have stopped Judas. All he had to do was tell the other eleven what Judas was planning, and Judas would never have left that room alive."[691]

So what does this say about the Son's destiny and nature? 14:21 underlines the emphasis of the passion prediction sayings that faithful followers of God may be destined for rejection, suffering and death. It further hints at death for a particular Son of Man, for Jesus has just spoken of one who will betray him (14:18-20) before fingering a particular individual (ὁ ἄνθρωπος ἐκεῖνος) who will betray the Son. Jesus's identity as Son of Man has become almost tangible, even though Jesus continues to name him in the third person. 14:21 also underlines the Son's patient and merciful nature to straying members of his own community, refusing to override their free will or to punish them, instead appealing to their better nature to love one another.

Mark 14:41-42 links Son of Man to Jesus even more explicitly. Judas, having agreed to betray Jesus (14:10-11), is about to follow through (14:43-46), just as Jesus predicts the Son is about to be betrayed. Hooker contends the Son's divinely-ordained fate further resounds in the dual meaning of παραδίδωμι; on the one hand 'betrayal' by humans, on the other 'handed over' to humans by God: "Once again, the verb… has a double sense and conveys both the idea that Jesus is betrayed by the treachery of men, and that what is taking place is part of the divine purpose."[692] Marcan ambiguity hints at a more esoteric purpose for the Son via 'handed over', whilst plainly stating the mundane fact of Judas's treachery via 'betrayal'.

3.8.2 Son as Messiah

In 14:21 and 14:41, the fate of Jesus as suffering Son is finally elucidated. But what of the Son as glorious victor, the Danielic champion of the holy ones of the Most High? Do we primarily identify this figure with Jesus, with the more fortunate of the holy community, with the heavenly host, or with someone else? Mark's most resonant references to Daniel appear in 13:26 and 14:62. In Mark 13, Jesus relays to his disciples the forthcoming wars and tribulations that precede the Son's coming. These reflect the conflict and suffering of Daniel's holy ones, who wage war against a kingdom that oppresses, tramples and crushes them (7:23-25). Then in Mark,

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[691] "Commentary on Mark 14," *Barclay's Daily Study Bible*, accessed February 19, 2023, https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/eng/dsb/mark-14.html. Barclay further illustrates the appeal to love expressed by Mark's Son by analogy to Greek legend: "two famous travellers passed the rocks where the Sirens sang. The Sirens sat on these rocks and sang with such sweetness that they lured mariners irresistibly to their doom. Ulysses sailed past... His method was to stop the sailors' ears so that they could not hear and order them to bind himself to the mast with ropes so that, however much he struggled, he would not be able to answer to that seductive sweetness. He resisted by compulsion. The other traveller was Orpheus, the sweetest musician of all. His method was to play and sing with such surpassing sweetness as his ship passed the rocks… that the attraction of the song of the Sirens was never even felt because of the attraction of the song he sang. His method was to answer the appeal of seduction with a still greater appeal."

[692] Hooker, *According to Saint Mark*, 350.

after the sun is darkened, the stars fall from heaven and the moon fails to shine, Jesus foretells how the Son will appear: "ὄψονται τὸν Υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐρχόμενον ἐν νεφέλαις μετὰ δυνάμεως πολλῆς καὶ δόξης" (13:26). In the Septuagint of Daniel, we find a parallel so close and so telling that it seems Mark paraphrased it: "ἐθεώρουν ἐν ὁράματι τῆς νυκτὸς καὶ ἰδοὺ μετὰ τῶν νεφελῶν τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ὡς υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου ἐρχόμενος ἦν" (7:13). That all natural light has been extinguished, as in Mark 13:24, is reflected in the statement that Daniel is viewing these events through night vision: "ἐν ὁράματι τῆς νυκτὸς." This parallel alone is not particularly remarkable, since a period of darkness before judgement's advent is otherwise attested in apocalyptic literature. For example, Joel 2:10 speaks of the sun and moon darkening and the stars losing their lustre, and Joel 2:31 prophesies the sun will turn to darkness and the moon to blood before the Day of the Lord. However, both Daniel and Mark refer not only to the coming of a Son of Man at this time of judgement, but also to the mode of his arrival, on clouds. Moreover, I have noticed that the verbs ὄψονται in Mark and ἐθεώρουν in Daniel can be translated in the same person and number, subtly providing perhaps the strongest attestation that Mark is deliberately paraphrasing Septuagint prophecy. In Mark 13, Jesus addresses his disciples in the second person throughout, each time he recounts details of events they are destined to experience, with this solitary exception. Instead of telling his disciples: "Then you will see the Son of Man", he pronounces: "Then *they* will see the Son of Man". Why this sudden shift in emphasis? In Daniel, the first person singular form of the imperfect tense is used to describe what Daniel saw in 7:13, and likewise throughout his vision, yet, in the Greek imperfect, the first person singular of a verb, in this case θεωρέω, is identical to the third person plural. It is possible, therefore, that Mark was familiar with the Septuagint of Daniel, and wished to link its Messianic figure to the Son in Jesus's prophesy so much that he sacrificed grammatical consistency for a better reflection of 7:13. The sudden, one-off shift to third person plural in verse 26, while Jesus recounts future events to his disciples, events that Mark's Jesus believes the disciples will experience for themselves, seems odd, and suggests the author is quoting an external source. Even if not, 13:26 remains a dramatic depiction of the Son as the Danielic figure. But is he merely a symbol for the holy ones of God, as previous passages suggest, or something more? Only when we reach Mark's final Son saying, and cross-reference it with Jesus's earlier teaching about the Son of David, does the answer materialise.

To appreciate this, we must first understand how Mark's Jesus views the Messiah. In 12:35-37, Jesus quotes Psalm 110:1 to illustrate the Messiah is not a descendant of David: "David himself said in the Holy Spirit: "The Lord said to my Lord, 'Sit on my right until I put your enemies under your feet.' David himself calls him Lord, and how then is he his son?" Here, Jesus presents David speaking these words under the influence of the Holy Spirit. David's first words are: "The Lord said to my Lord". Mark reveals the identities of the lords when Jesus concludes "David himself calls him Lord, and how then is he his son?" Thus the Lord that speaks is God and the Lord addressed is His Messiah, each ranking higher than the celebrated warrior-king, who names both 'lord' with equal deference. This interpretation of Psalm 110:1 may well be original to Mark. In earlier Jewish tradition, the one who names both

lords is not David but the Levite composer of the psalm's musical arrangement[693] or the prophet addressing the Davidic king.[694] Thus the initial 'Lord' is God and the second lord, 'my lord', is the psalmist who inspired the musical composition, namely King David, or a similarly messianic figure in certain Jewish traditions.[695] Hebrew versions of the text reflect this understanding, where the psalm's first "Lord" is represented as יהוה - the tetragrammaton and ineffable name of God - but the referent "my lord" is rendered אֲדֹנָי, which only ever denotes a human master in the Hebrew Bible.[696] That this subtlety is lost in Mark suggests the author may only have been familiar with the Septuagint translation of Psalms, where κύριος, which may refer to human or divine beings,[697] describes both lords. However, we cannot know whether this novel interpretation predates Mark, or even originates from Jesus himself.[698] What we can see, however, is the relative novelty of this tradition Mark champions, one that depicts the Messiah as greater even than David.

Wilson argues that Jesus does not deny the Messiah's Davidic descent, since this implication is "decisively refuted by the universal witness of the early Church." Rather, Wilson posits Jesus's purpose is to provoke reflection and expose the futility of Messianic hopes confined to the transient, material world, or to replace the political view of Messiah with a transcendental concept: the Messiah is more than heir to David's earthly glory.[699] Certainly, Psalm 110:1's ambiguity and Jesus's open question to the crowd would have provoked reflection among Mark's listeners, as well as Jesus's audience, on the Messiah's identity. The listener might well recall

[693] According to scripture, David compiled "the book of Psalms to be sung by the Levites in the Temple: 'Then on that day David first delivered the psalm into the hands of Asaf and his brethren' 1 Chronicles 16:7; 'For the chief musician a psalm for David' Psalm 20:1; 'And David spoke to the chiefs of the Levites to appoint their brethren the singers with instruments of music' I Chronicles 15:16. Psalm 110 was composed in the third person to be sung by the Levites, and thus reflects their point of view, for they would call their king 'my master - adoni'. In other words, the Levites are saying that 'God spoke to our master (King David). Sit at My right hand, until I make your enemies your footstool' (Kravitz, "Psalm 110 - A Jewish Perspective," Jews for Judaism, accessed February 19, 2023, https://jewsforjudaism.org/knowledge/articles/psalm-110-a-jewish-perspective.

[694] T. H. Rich, "Psalm 110." *Journal of the Society of Biblical Literature and Exegesis* 7,2 (1887): 43.

[695] E.g. the coming Messiah as prophesied by the 'Four Craftsmen' vision of Zechariah 1:18-21 (Boustan, Ra'anan S. *From Martyr to Mystic: Rabbinic Martyrology and the Making of Merkavah Mysticism* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005): 138).

[696] "an address of honour to those more noble than the speaker, or superior in rank: to a father, Genesis 31:35; to a brother, Numbers 12:11; a royal consort, 1 Kings 1:17-18; to a prince, 1 Kings 3:17; with addition of the royal title, "my Lord, O king," 2 Samuel 14:19" (Ellicott, Charles J. *Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers* (London: Cassell, 1884): 252).

[697] *Thayer's Lexicon*, 365-6.

[698] Hay, for example, cites rabbinic texts from the 3rd century CE onward that share Mark's concept of Psalm 110 denoting a future Messiah, though these texts vest David rather than Jesus with the honour. He argues the universal consensus on the psalm's messianic nature in early Christianity makes clearest sense if Jews of that period commonly held the same view. Similarly, Jesus's argument about David's son is most easily understood if a messianic interpretation prevailed in Jesus's time. He adds the psalm contains nothing that Jews could not have predicated of the messiah (David M. Hay, *Glory at the Right Hand* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1973): 28-31. It is therefore possible that Hellenised Jews familiar with Septuagint translation but not the Hebrew Bible might have conferred this messiahship, like Mark, on someone other than David. Hay's best evidence for this is The Testament of Job 33:3 (1st century BCE - 1st century CE), where Job proclaims, in possible allusion to the psalm, "My throne is in the heavenly world… at the right hand of God" (Hay, *Glory at the Right*, 22-3).

[699] Wilson, "Mark," 813.

Peter's confession, and Jesus's exhortation to Peter to keep silent (8:29-30). Now, Jesus speaks to a different audience, in Jerusalem, presenting the Messiah as greater than David, yet still he neglects to reveal this Messiah's identity. Only in 14:62, at Jesus's trial, in Mark's last mention of the Son, does Jesus finally unmask himself. When the high priest asks whether Jesus is indeed the Messiah, the son of the Blessed One, Jesus responds:

"I am. And you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming with the clouds of heaven" (14:62).

Again, Jesus refers to the Son in the third person, maintaining distance between himself and the divine. However, he accepts he is the Messiah, whom he claims in 12:36 to be greater even than King David, who will sit at God's right hand and crush Israel's enemies under his feet. Likewise, in 14:62, the Son of Man is prophesied to sit at the right hand of the Mighty One, coming with the Danielic clouds (cf. 13:26) of heaven.[700] Thus, in this verse, Mark finally combines three key figures; Son of Man, Messiah and Jesus; expressing them as one.

Perceiving this, what else can we learn about 14:62's Son with special reference to Jesus? Wilson notes disagreement on whether the Son's coming on clouds refers to the second coming, citing Vincent Taylor's claim that the emphasis lies on enthronement, particularly as a triumphant symbol, and that what belongs to the Messiah will be seen to be his.[701] Likewise, Schweizer views this verse as referencing Jesus's exaltation and transformation into a heavenly being, but not to the *parousia* of an apocalyptic judge: "It is a very strange assumption that the Jewish judges of Jesus will see the Son… sitting and coming. One should expect them to see him either sitting on the throne of the heavenly lord or coming for judgement."[702] Schweizer concludes the verse, in original form, was probably phrased with the 'coming' section describing the exaltation to the right hand of power, rather than a separate, subsequent act. He reasons this would work if it were a subordinate clause, linked to the 'sitting' clause without the 'and', or if the sentence ran with the two clauses placed in reverse order. He notes that clouds are vehicles of exaltation in Enoch 14:8, Acts 1:9, 1 Thessalonians 4:17 and Revelation 11:12. Further, he states that no Jewish text describes the Son descending from heaven. Indeed, Daniel 7's Son comes with heaven's clouds not to Earth but to the Ancient of Days, not to pass judgement but to be vested with glory and kingship over all nations. Thus 14:62's Son is not arriving on Earth but rising to heaven, revealing that even Jesus's opponents will see his exaltation, taking his place among the heavenly host.

Collins (1999) contends the remark "You will see the Son…" suggests the Son's arrival will somehow vindicate Jesus, but notes his tormentors' punishment remains unmentioned. Rather, "the arrival of the Son of Man is linked with the judgment of the individual followers of Jesus in Mark 8:38 and 9:42-48, and the gathering of the

[700] Such a combination of Daniel 7 and Psalm 110 is unsurprising, "since the latter probably influenced the former and is found in several first-century traditions concerning the Son of Man (e.g., *1 Enoch*, *4 Ezra*; cf. the later *Midr. Ps. 2:9…*)" (Watts, "Mark," *Commentary on New Testament,* 234).
[701] Wilson, "Mark," 817.
[702] Schweizer, "The Son of Man," 120.

elect in Mark 13:27."[703] Leaning towards Schweizer, Collins states 13:27 does not specify whether they will be meet the Son on Earth or in heaven, though the emphasis as in 8:38 is on union and fellowship rather than judgement. Collins spotlights its parallel in The Similitudes, which destines the righteous to dwell with the Son in eternal fellowship,[704] arguing this link between a blessed state and the Son's return designates Mark's Son more a heavenly Messiah than the royal or military figure of traditional Jewish expectation.[705] Collins further posits that both the Similitudes and 4 Ezra provide pertinent analogies to the Son's role in Mark, reasoning that, though 4 Ezra was composed later, The Similitudes may well have been written earlier, since "the prominent use of the epithet 'Son of Man' by Jews becomes less likely the more famously it is applied to Jesus."[706] All three texts interpret Daniel 7's figure as Messiah. The Similitudes reveals the Son as judge of kings, the mighty and exalted, and every sinner on Earth. Similarly, Mark states the Son will be ashamed of his deniers when he comes in power; which at least hints at judgement, or a refusal to be their advocate. However, The Similitudes and 4 Ezra present the Son as a pre-existent, heavenly being, whereas Mark's Jesus lacks a premortal backstory.

Collins concludes that Mark views Daniel's man-like icon in two ways. First, there is Mark 2's earthly Son who forgives sins having received God's Spirit and authority on earth, who interprets the law with divine inspiration; one destined to suffer and die. Subsequently, the risen Jesus becomes the heavenly Son who sits at God's right hand; one returning to gather the elect in a godlike display of power. For Collins, Mark's combination of Psalm 110:1 and Daniel 7:13 in 14:62[707] crystallises this duality. Rather than denying the Messiah is David's son, as 12:36-37 suggests, Jesus preaches the Messiah is more than a mortal king, and when "Jesus quotes the psalm again in Mark 14:62, in combination with Dan 7:13, the picture of the messiah

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[703] Adela Y. Collins, "Mark and His Readers: The Son of God among Jews." *HTR* 92,4 (1999): 407.
[704] 1 Enoch 62:14; 71: 16-17.
[705] When Mark was written, some Jews understood Isaiah 11:1-5 messianically. A passage in the Rule of the Community prophesies the advent of an eschatological prophet, and Messiahs of Aaron and Israel (1QS 9: 10-11). Israel's Messiah recalls the end-time Davidic king whose arrival is predicted in a Qumran commentary on Isaiah. Here, the description of the shoot of Jesse, the messiah of the Davidic line, seems to comprise an eschatological interpretation of Isaiah 11:1-3, with reference to "the end of days" (Collins, "Mark and His Readers," 397). The contemporaneous Psalms of Solomon also cite Isaiah 11 in describing the Davidic Messiah: "And he will not weaken in his days, (relying upon his God), for God made him powerful in the Holy Spirit and wise in the counsel of understanding, with strength and righteousness." (17:37). Seen as messianic prophecy, Mark's audience may have interpreted the Spirit descending upon Jesus in these terms. Similarly 1 Enoch 49:3, reflecting Isaiah 11:3, recounts the spirit of righteousness dwelling in the Chosen One and 1 Enoch 62:2, reflecting Isaiah 11:2-4, recounts the pouring out of this spirit on the Chosen One and that sinners are slain by the words of his mouth. Yet "any expectations of a warrior-messiah who would restore the kingdom of Israel in a military and political sense… is frustrated by the rest of the narrative of Mark. It is possible that Mark presents Jesus as the royal messiah designate, who will carry out the expected activities upon his return as Son of Man" (Collins, "Mark and His Readers," 398).
[706] Collins, "Mark and His Readers," 407.
[707] Further, 14:62 "strongly echoes Psalm 80:17, which may well refer to a messianic figure" (David Hill, "'Son of Man' in Psalm 80 V. 17." *NovT* 15,4 (1973): 262).

that emerges is a cosmic ruler, a heavenly being who mediates the blessing and rule of God to all creation."[708]

Both Weiss and Schweitzer maintain that Jesus was not the Son during his earthly ministry but expected himself to obtain the title in the Kingdom's imminent manifestation. The difference is that while Weiss believes no human activity would bring the Kingdom, not even Jesus's death, but only God's subsequent intervention,[709] Schweitzer seems convinced that Jesus saw his death as an invocation of that divine intervention.[710]

Why then wait till 14:62 to reveal the fullness of the Son's purpose when it promises so much? Why is Mark so oblique in referring to Jesus as Son before chapter 14? It further remains unclear whether Jesus will be resurrected as Son of Man or reincarnated as this entity, for Mark hints at both possibilities. And then what role will he play? Why, in sum, is Mark so ambiguous, even hazy, in describing the exemplary Son's nature and ultimately his destiny, to the point that scholars debate its meaning two millennia later? Surely this would be the most important thing for Mark to clarify?

In part, perhaps, it is the inherently multivalent Semitic language, and the predilection for puns in much of its literature, literature that further prizes the *masal*, invites reader interpretation, and encodes multiple meanings - in this case different 'Son of Man' characteristics and even multiple referents - that gradually become apparent, from which readers can select, thus providing fertile ground for theological discussion. A gradual unveiling of an exemplary Son amongst other Sons, whose precise role remains unclear, moreover creates suspense and retains an audience's attention. I further contend that Mark is 'politically' multivalent and obscure, knowing the variety of eschatological views present among his audience, not wishing to divide them, and, perhaps, wary of the consequences of portraying the Son as a dangerous insurrectionist in light of Jesus's execution and the troubles leading into the First Jewish-Roman War (66-73 CE). Space does not permit the exploration, in this thesis, of all his listeners' differences. To illustrate, however, let us tackle the resurrection-reincarnation issue, exploring how Mark's Jewish contemporaries diversely viewed the afterlife, to better appreciate how Mark's ambiguity worked to usefully unite incongruities.[711]

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[708] Collins, "Mark and His Readers," 408.
[709] Johann Weiss, *Jesus' Proclamation of the Kingdom of God*. Translated by R.H. Hiers and D.L. Holland (London: SCM, 1971): 82.
[710] Schweitzer, *Quest of the Historical*, 386-7.
[711] Unlike the Pharisees, Essenes and Jesus himself, Gentiles did not appear to find afterlife-oriented beliefs controversial. Generally their expectations seem non-existent, which explains their lack of interest. "We learn from tombstone inscriptions… that nearly ninety-five percent of people… in the Greco-Roman world in general, thought that when one died, that was it; one was gone forever. One common sentiment is expressed by the tombstone inscription: "O Tettius, my brother. Farewell. No one is immortal." And one of the most common tombstone inscriptions, so common that it was abbreviated, much like our RIP for 'rest in peace', was: 'I was not; I was; I am not; I don't care'." (Gregory Riley, "What Has Galilee to Do with Jerusalem?" In *Christian Origins and the New Testament in the Greco-Roman Context: Essays in Honor of Dennis R. MacDonald*, edited by Margaret Froelich, Michael Kochenash, Thomas E. Phillips, and Ilseo Park, 39–52 (Claremont, CA: Claremont Press, 2016): 46).

3.9 A Spectrum of Afterlife Conceptions

Evidence for ancient Jewish afterlife beliefs is sparse, and the texts we possess are often equivocal or imprecise. Yet they suggest a range of notions co-existed in first-century Palestine. Josephus, for example, implies that Pharisees believed in reincarnation. In Antiquities 18.1.3, he records: "ἀθάνατόν τε ἰσχὺν ταῖς ψυχαῖς πίστις αὐτοῖς εἶναι καὶ ὑπὸ χθονὸς δικαιώσεις τε καὶ τιμὰς οἷς ἀρετῆς ἢ κακίας ἐπιτήδευσις ἐν τῷ βίῳ γέγονεν, καὶ ταῖς μὲν εἱργμὸν ἀίδιον προτίθεσθαι, ταῖς δὲ ῥᾳστώνην τοῦ ἀναβιοῦν." The translation given by Rogers (2011) echoes that of Feldman (1965),[712] rendering ὑπὸ χθονὸς as 'beneath the earth' while leaving the future active 'δικαιώσεις' untranslated. This presents a mysterious underworld as the place of judgement after death, with some consigned to eternal prison and others restored to life. However, I would note that ὑπὸ followed by the genitive means 'by' rather than 'under' in Koine. Further, the noun it qualifies, χθών, is generally attested to denote the surface of the earth, or the whole world, rather than its bowels.[713] Thus, I would translate ὑπὸ χθονὸς δικαιώσεις as "by the world you will show to be righteous," which removes the concept of a subterranean venue. 18.1.3 would now read: "They also believe that souls have an immortal rigor in them, and that by the world you will show to be righteous, and there will be rewards or punishments, according as they have lived virtuously or viciously in this life; and the latter are to be detained in an everlasting prison, but the former shall have power to revive and live again…" It appears, according to Josephus, that the Pharisees believed our worldly existence is justified by good deeds in a previous life. Further, living another good life will lead to another incarnation, whereas evil-doers are punished by some form of eternal restriction. Josephus elsewhere echoes this belief,[714] yet leaves unclarified the nature of the chastisement.

Josephus also states the Essene community lived "the same kind of life" as Pythagoras's disciples, who taught reincarnation and the transmigration of souls.[715] Elsewhere, Josephus reaffirms the Essenes believed in the soul's immortality and strove to earn the rewards of righteousness it may inherit.[716] This view chimes with the near-contemporaneous Alexandrian Jewish philosopher, Philo Judaeus (20 BCE-50 CE), who espoused a similar notion of reincarnation via a Platonic transmigration of souls. Philo believed some souls descended to Earth to bind with human bodies, that others ascended to leave such bodies and, of the latter, that those desiring a mortal life return again to it, whereas others fly towards the aether.[717] A higher class of souls, more divinely intelligent, never covet worldly comforts, but exist as God's lieutenants - his eyes and ears - beholding all. These, to Philo, are scripture's

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[712] Feldman, *Josephus IX: Jewish Antiquities*, 12-13.
[713] Liddell, *Greek-English Lexicon*, 783.
[714] "…on the one hand all souls are incorruptible; but to move into another body only those of the good, and those of the evil to be subjected to eternal punishment" (*The Jewish War*, 2.8.14).
[715] *The Jewish Antiquities*, 15.10.4.
[716] *The Jewish Antiquities*, 18.1.5.
[717] Philo, *On Flight and Finding. On the Change of Names. On Dreams*. Translated by F. H. Colson and G. H. Whitaker. LCL 275 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1934): 22.1.139-40.

angels, who ascend and descend from earthly to heavenly realms, reporting the commands of God to his children and the needs of the children to God.[718]

Josephus's own view reflects the Pharisaical conception of reincarnation following death. Recalling his time as a military commander, Josephus records himself rallying his men by citing a doctrine:

"καθαραὶ δὲ καὶ ἐπήκοοι μένουσιν αἱ ψυχαί χῶρον οὐράνιον λαχοῦσαι τὸν ἁγιώτατον ἔνθεν ἐκ περιτροπῆς αἰώνων ἁγνοῖς πάλιν ἀντενοικίζονται σώμασιν."[719]

Interestingly, commenting on Josephus's portrayals of all but Sadducee theology, Yli-Karjanmaa notes their potential compatibility. "Not only does the harmonization of the Essene, Josephan and Pharisaic beliefs seem possible if we assume that the different accounts… reveal different parts of a bigger picture, but also the speeches by Titus (B.J. 6.46-49) and Eleazar (B.J. 7.343-349) provide several further commonalities with especially the Essene and Josephan beliefs."[720] In 6:46-49, Titus states the souls of those who fail to die bravely in war are condemned to the grave together with their bodies, inheriting oblivion that removes all remembrance of them, whereas those souls whose bodies die in battle are received by the ether and join the company which are placed among the stars, becoming daemons and heroes who reveal their glory to their posterity.[721] In 7:343-349, Eleazar proclaims death affords liberty to souls, sending them to a place of purity beyond pain's influence.[722] Neither text specifies whether subsequent incarnations are possible for these souls, in line with Pharisaic views, yet the freedom of souls after death from corporeal ailments and limitations mirrors the Essene view as Josephus reports it. Thus, lack of specificity in Mark might have helped to unite people who held such close-in-kind conceptions.

Schweizer notes that such views of humans as heavenly beings who descend to inhabit bodies, before returning after death to the divine realm, are attested both in and before Jesus's day. The patriarch Jacob had been considered, long before Jesus, a heavenly figure. "In a Jewish apocryphal book, the 'Prayer of Joseph,' Jacob, whose divine name is Israel, is the first of all creatures, Lord over all the archangels, angel of God, and first Spirit. Here, Israel is represented by its patriarch, who is a divine being, higher than all angels."[723] Philo reflects this characterisation of Jacob, naming him Israel the firstborn Logos: "He is called the beginning, the name of God, the Logos, the Man according to the image (of God); and his sons, the Israelites, are sons of the Logos, of the invisible image of God. At the same time he is the 'seeing one,' Israel."[724] Hence, I consider it likely that, in Jesus's day, certain Jews saw Jacob as representing Israel, as first and highest of angels, Logos of God,

[718] *On Dreams*, 22.1.141-2.
[719] "But the souls remain pure and obedient to receive a holy place in heaven, from which, as the ages turn, they are reinfused into bodies" (*The Jewish War*, 3.8.5).
[720] Sami Yli-Karjanmaa, "The New Life of the Good Souls in Josephus: Resurrection or Reincarnation?" *JSJ* 48, 4/5 (2017):530.
[721] *The Jewish War*, 6.1.5.
[722] *The Jewish War*, 7.8.7.
[723] Schweizer, "The Son of Man," 126-7.
[724] Schweizer, "The Son of Man," 127.

identical with the firstborn Adam, whose earthly existence thus appears to be Adam's reincarnation. Philo's words, which speak of souls returning to many earthly births on heavenly missions, also recall Solomon's words about his own ancient and cosmic past: "The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old.…from the beginning, or ever the earth was.…Then I was by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men."[725]

Yet other Jews, even Pharisees, embraced different views. Paul, a self-confessed Pharisee (see below), believed not in reincarnation but resurrection, preaching both soul *and* body would be raised from death into heaven, our souls being infused into resurrected bodies that God will upgrade to an imperishable state.[726] Similarly, in Acts 23:6, Paul states that he, a Pharisee, is on trial concerning hope of resurrection for the dead. 23:8 reveals that, unlike the Sadducees, Pharisees believe in resurrection. And in 24:15, Paul voices hope that both the righteous and the unrighteous will be resurrected, hope which he states his Jewish persecutors share (24:14). Moreover, precedent exists in both the Qumran manuscripts and Hebrew Bible for belief in resurrection, yet nothing that clearly posits reincarnation.[727]

It seems, therefore, that Judaism in Jesus's time encompassed a spectrum of afterlife beliefs, including concepts of reincarnation, resurrection, and oblivion marking our journey's end. This diversity resonates in Mark, where multiple concepts emerge. The Sadducees argue life after death is non-existent, and this is the only group whose afterlife view Jesus clearly rejects (12:18-27). Mark's Jesus, however, could be seen to embrace both reincarnation and resurrection, and in various different forms. For, just as Jesus implies the Baptist was Elijah's reincarnation in 9:12-13, he speaks of a resurrection of the dead only a few verses earlier (9:9). In 14:62, it transpires that Jesus will either be reincarnated or resurrected as Mark 13:26's heavenly Son, yet the empty tomb in chapter 16 maintains a question mark over which, and how, and what has actually happened. It is thus possible, within Mark's ambiguity, to reconcile multiple afterlife views, including Philo's ideas on the transmigration of souls, Josephus's explanation of

[725] Proverbs 8:22-31.

[726] 1 Corinthians 15:39-55.

[727] Elijah raises a boy from the dead (1 Kings 17:17-24) as does Elisha (2 Kings 4:32-37), and a dead man being thrown onto Elisha's bones returns to life (2 Kings 13:21). In Ezekiel 37: 7-11, God resurrects a vast army from a valley of dry bones, restoring both their bodies and spirits. The prophet Samuel is briefly recalled from death by the Witch of Endor to give Saul counsel in 1 Samuel 28:8-19, though it is unclear whether only his spirit, or both spirit and body, have been raised to the land of the living. The fragmentary 11Q13, referencing Psalm 82:1, recounts Melchezidek's resurrection, and his rise to the role of heavenly judge. 11Q13 even names him Elohim, and Isaiah 61:2's year of the lord's favour becomes the year of Melchezidek's favour, suggesting the royal priest of Genesis 14 has been resurrected into the role of Israel's God: "For this is the moment of the Year of Grace for Melchizedek… he will, by his strength, judge the holy ones of God, executing judgement as it is written concerning him in the Songs of David, who said, Elohim has taken his place in the divine council; in the midst of the gods he holds judgement." Melchezidek also appears in Psalm 110, where God passes judgement on a number of lesser gods, whom he refers to as 'sons of the Most High', that will die like mere mortals. Psalm 110 thus illustrates a belief in a spectrum of divinity, held by at least some Jews, and reveals the potential for a godlike being to become mortal. In identifying Melchezidek as this God who passes judgement, 11Q13 goes further by suggesting the reverse, that in some sense a human can be resurrected into a god or God.

Pharisaic beliefs in reincarnation and Pauline views on resurrection. For example, Jesus's description of exalted humans becoming like angels in heaven (12:25) is nebulous enough to straddle all three.

3.10 From Multivalency to Transparency

Another explanation for Mark's haziness and ambiguity on the Son's identity is, as Moloney suggests, that the early church had not yet developed a doctrine, or even a specific widespread belief, prior to Mark's composition. "It is widely accepted that the Son of Man tradition, primarily because of its dependence on Daniel 7, began with reference to an eschatological figure: either Jesus or someone else. For most scholars, the tradition began in the early church, under the influence of Daniel 7 and other eschatological developments (the Similitudes of Enoch and 4 Ezra), and only later was applied to the present and the suffering figure of Jesus. In this way, the human Jesus was identified with the expected eschatological figure who would come on the clouds as judge..."[728] Others suggest Jesus himself created this identification between himself and the Son, with Allison, for example, positing that Jesus associated himself with 'the coming of the Son of Man'."[729] Evidence also exists to propose Mark invented the connection, as no Q saying exists that explicitly references the suffering and vindicated Son. Merely a "note of rejection is found in 6:22; 7:34; 9:58; and 11:30; and perhaps rejection and eschatological vindication in 12:8, 10."[730] In any case, Mark wrote his gospel during the early days of the Son's introduction into Christianity.

3.10.1 Jacob's Wrestler and Mark's Son: A Parallel

Yet, as previously suggested, I feel Mark partly fostered multivalency to create 'umbrella theologies' to encompass multiple viewpoints, to appeal to as wide an audience as possible, thus efficiently transmitting his vital message of charity, hope and salvation. To those who find such an approach unusual, or even without precedent in Semitic literature, I would observe it had been done before. Perhaps it found inspiration in the story of Jacob's wrestling match with his mysterious assailant (Genesis 32:24-32), this being the closest Hebrew Bible equivalent, regarding richness of ambiguity and multivalency, to Mark's Son.

Marks (1995) highlights one such ambiguity, in the wrestler's renaming of Jacob: "'your name shall be called El-strives, for *you* have striven with El and with man'… the unexpected inversion of subject and object invites us to reconfigure the identity of the two contenders."[731] To Marks, this very ambiguity presents a clue to the identity of Jacob's opponent; it is Jacob himself. "Like our view of the solitary victor himself bearing the losses of the battle, the reflexive turn in the name formula figures a dynamic intimacy, a coinherence of self and other, man and God, grounded in mutual resistance… the stranger is not only Jacob's twin but his own phantasmic projection… The new name testifies that Jacob has avoided the melancholic deadlock of being merely Jacob: by grappling the phantom of invulnerable selfhood, the victor empowers it as agent of his own alteration."[732] Marks explains the author's

[728] Moloney, "'Constructing Jesus'," 722.
[729] Dale Allison, *Constructing Jesus: Memory, Imagination and History* (Ada, MI: Baker, 2010): 303.
[730] Moloney, "'Constructing Jesus'," 724.
[731] Marks, "Biblical Naming and Poetic," 40.
[732] Marks, "Biblical Naming and Poetic," 40.

haziness by reasoning that "Divine presence and name, for the biblical writer, can never be manifest in and of themselves, but only… as the poetic possibilities latent in the names of men."[733] Thus for Marks, perhaps, poetic ambiguity is the only way for limited human authors to loosely approximate the ineffable divine. Yet other interpretations exist. McKenzie (1963) argues the adversary in the original tale was the territory's protective god or demon, who later became YHWH in Hebrew revision. For one, the story in present form avoids identification with YHWH until 34:31, which relates more to the Peniel theme and thus less likely belongs to the original wrestling narrative. Second, when Jacob asks his adversary's name, it is withheld. "This cannot be explained by J's refusal to employ the name at this phase of his history… The reticence is easily understood if Yahweh has quietly replaced a god or a demon…"[734] Third, a clue presents in the author's precision about the tale's geographical location, which ostensibly seems irrelevant to its content. Yet "The Jabbok was the eastern frontier of Israel (Jgs 11,13.22), and the wrestling occurs when Jacob passes into the future territory of the people which bears his name… Jacob's entrance is opposed by a mysterious superhuman being… in all probability to be identified with a god or a demon who is the protecting genius of the land against the arrival of Israel in its eponymous ancestor."[735] McKenzie thus maintains that this original story expresses a very primitive form of Israelite belief, refined by the Yahwist's suggestion that the opponent is YHWH Himself: "this he did by introducing the blessing, a common Jahwist theme, which Jacob extorts from his adversary. This modification places the story in the Jahwist scheme of promise and blessing which gives structure to the patriarchal history."[736] Yet again, Molen (1993) interprets Jacob's adversary as either Esau or God, or, more probably, both at once. He uses the ensuing story of the brothers' reconciliation to link the two very different characters: "In the premonition Jacob merely fears seeing the face of his brother; in the dramatic inset of the river conflict, Jacob claims to see the face of God; and finally, in the actual meeting between brothers, Jacob relates the premonition to the struggle: seeing Esau's face reminds him of the visage of the opponent. So shocking was the face, glimpsed in the light of the rising sun, that Jacob names the place Peniel, quite literally 'the face of God'."[737] Furthermore, the struggle at the river resolves not only the conflict between Jacob and Esau but also the more subtle conflict between Jacob and God regarding the non-fulfilment of Jacob's vow to Him. "One condition of the vow was that Jacob worship God in exchange for divine providence and deliverance to the homeland. After parting from a now friendly Esau, Jacob as Israel seals a pact with God, the other opponent, by building an altar."[738] I would add that only later in the tale does Jacob rid himself of the images of foreign gods he carries with him, thus fully and properly observing the pact, before building a final altar to God (Genesis 35:1-6). To Molen, however, the "man" at the river remains mysterious. "I have suggested at different points that he is God, Esau, and

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[733] Marks, "Biblical Naming and Poetic," 41.
[734] John L. McKenzie, "Jacob at Peniel: Gn 32,24-32." *CBQ* 25,1 (1963): 73.
[735] McKenzie, "Jacob at Peniel," 73.
[736] McKenzie, "Jacob at Peniel," 74.
[737] Steven Molen, "The Identity of Jacob's Opponent: Wrestling with Ambiguity in Genesis 32:22-32." *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, vol. 26,2 (1993): 198.
[738] Molen, "Identity of Jacob's Opponent," 199.

somehow both. For obvious reasons the last identification is the most paradoxical; it is also the one which best responds to the ambiguities of the passage and their reverberations throughout the larger narrative." Molen adds: "As a confusion of the divine and the human, Jacob's opponent would naturally confuse our attempts to label him."[739] Indeed, however we interpret the details, a multivalent understanding of Jacob's assailant's identity, as of Mark's Son of Man, is the only understanding that interweaves all the loose ends. Likewise, Mark's 'Son of Man' naturally confounds our attempts to label him. Just as the Yahwist author of Genesis 32:24-32 vests Jacob's assailant with more than one identity, including an ineffable superhuman nature, so Mark indicates both human and superhuman referents with his Son of Man, in addition to collective and individual ones. Just as McKenzie argues the story was confused by an underlying pre-Yahwist tale, so Mark's Son is confused by what underlies it: its variegated use in pre-Marcan scripture. But instead of clarifying, both authors weave the underlying inferences into multivalent tales of greater sophistication. And, just as Marks argues Jacob's opponent is a third person representation for Jacob himself, so too can Mark's Son be construed as a third person representation of Jesus. These similarities are, I think, significant, for illustrating that characters with plural referents are not unknown in Hebraica. More, the characters of Mark's Son and Jacob's assailant are deliberately obscured, inviting the reader to ponder and, ultimately, to colour them whichever way they wish. Both characters also seem a product of layering: the imposition of a newer story and message upon an older tale or idea. And, just as we previously spotlighted the importance of structure to foreground a narrative's key themes; in Jacob's story of supplanters, and in poetry and poetic prose featuring paronomasia, polysemy and Janus parallelism; likewise structure features in defining the multivalent Son. As the title becomes ever more individualised, and points increasingly to Jesus and his destiny of self-sacrifice leading to triumph, the reader feels he is ascending to the top of a pyramid, where finally the *exemplary* Son of Man may be espied, albeit from a distance and through a cloudy lens, standing alone. I would express this structure thus: -

[739] Molen, "Identity of Jacob's Opponent," 200.

i) From a General to a Special Collective

2:10; 2:28:	Ordinary humans/righteous Jews or followers of God.
8:31:	(Ideally) self-sacrificing disciples.

ii) From an Unnamed Individual/Group to Named Individuals (Dead/In Heaven)

8:38:	A powerful heavenly figure, or the divine elect, attended by angels.
9:9:	One, or many, who will rise from the dead.
9:12b:	Ezekiel.
9:13:	Elijah-John.

iii) A Living Leader, Destined for Self-Sacrifice and Betrayal

9:31; 10:33-34:	Repetitions (2nd and 3rd Passion Predictions): The confused disciples begin to realise that Jesus does not *primarily* refer to them as 'Son of Man', or to anyone dead, but to a living individual destined to be betrayed by Jews to Gentiles.
10:45:	A self-sacrificing ruler and role model for the disciples.

iv) Jesus

13:26:	A Danielic heavenly being, coming on clouds with power and glory (as 8:38, but this time with Danielic 'clouds'; further, after ii) and iii), 13:26's Son more strongly evokes an individual, and one still alive).
14:21; 14:41:	Jesus destined to be betrayed to death.
14:62:	Jesus revealed as Messiah and future heavenly being of 13:26.

3.10.2 Matthew and Luke: The Journey to Transparency

If multivalency, then, were a common feature of Semitic literature, why does no scholar suggest 'Son of Man' might have deliberately referenced differing individuals, or a collective, at different points in Mark and sometimes even at the same point in Mark (e.g. 9:11-13)? For one, traditional Western literature does not feature multivalent titles that reference - sometimes simultaneously - different persons and groups. If a literary device is utterly foreign, it is understandable that our eyes glaze over it when scanning ancient texts. Another reason emerges in the overriding popularity of Luke and Matthew, which led, till recently, to Mark being somewhat overlooked. Until the mid-19th century, Mark was generally considered an inferior abridgement of Matthew, before acceptance of Marcan priority gradually led scholars to appreciate Mark as an artist and theologian in his own right.[740] This is significant because, in Matthew and Luke, Mark's poetic ambiguity that shrouds the Son of Man is comprehensively lifted to reveal Jesus's face alone. Matthew 12:8 and Luke 6:5 edit Mark's saying: "The Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath, therefore (the son of) man is even lord of the Sabbath." Both simply relay the second part of the statement minus the 'therefore', which diminishes the likelihood of 'Son of Man' meaning 'ordinary human' in this instance. Unlike Mark 2:27-28, the synoptic parallels do not need a Semitic reconstruction to make logical sense, which suggests they emended Mark and not vice versa. Later, Luke 6:22's Jesus states that, when people persecute us on account of the Son of Man, we are blessed, which brings to mind followers being persecuted on account of their leader, again suggesting Jesus. The Matthaean parallel (5:11) replaces the title with 'me', pointing unequivocally to Jesus as leader. In Luke 9:57-58 and Matthew 8:19-20, a potential disciple tells Jesus he will follow him wherever he goes, to which Jesus replies: "Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head." Then another hopeful addresses Jesus, and the man's voice disappears. It therefore seems the Son primarily references Jesus again, whose unique example expresses an untouchable model of discipleship. Mark features no parallel to this Q saying.

Further, both Matthew (11:18-19) and Luke (7:33-34) starkly contrast Son of Man with John the Baptist, whereas Mark makes no such distinction, even suggesting the figure *is* John, or Elijah, in some way (9:11-13). More, whereas Mark merely hints that Elijah and John are one, Matthew states it plainly in his version of 9:11-13 (17:13), after both differentiating Elijah-John from the Son of Man (17:12) and erasing Mark's scriptural reference to Ezekiel in 9:12b, entirely eliminating Mark's ambiguity. Luke achieves the same clarifying effect by omitting the entire pericope, whereas Mark 9:11-13's Son potentially references Ezekiel, John, Elijah and/or Jesus.

In Matthew, Marcan ambiguity evaporates most strikingly in the parallel account of Peter's confession (16:13-16 cf. Mark 8:27-30). Here, Jesus asks Peter "Who do people say *the Son of Man* is?" Peter reels off a list, including John the Baptist, Elijah and Jeremiah. Then Jesus asks: "But who do you say *I* am?" Peter responds: "You are the Messiah, the son of the living God." Hence, throughout Matthew, most

[740] James R. Edwards, *The Gospel According to Mark* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2002): 1-3.

Marcan possibilities are eliminated in favour of a simple and solitary connection for 'Son of Man' with Jesus.

Luke similarly reveals Jesus as Son of Man, through more than simply ignoring Mark's most multivalent pericope (9:11-13) and, in 7:33-34, strictly differentiating the Son from the Baptist. In the story of Zacchaeus's redemption, Jesus visits Zacchaeus and accepts his offer of restitution to the poor and those he has defrauded, stating that salvation has come to his house, for "the Son of Man came to seek out and save the lost" (Luke 19:1-10). This could hardly be anything but a reference to himself, for it is he who found Zacchaeus and pronounced salvation upon him. Further, in Luke's parallel accounts of the arrest of Jesus (22:47-48, cf. Mark 14:45) and the discovery of the empty tomb (24:5-7, cf. Mark 16:6-7), Luke explicitly refers to Jesus as Son of Man, whereas Mark is silent. In summary, both Matthew and Luke have erased most of Mark's multivalency, and also added references, in favour of a clear connection between the Son and Jesus which, as Jeremias explained, became the overwhelming trend in the early church. In short, it seems the Son's multivalency had little time to tantalise and expand Mark's audiences' minds, before being boxed-in by subsequent Christian impositions of a more rigid theology around the term.

Conclusion

Numerous instances of Semitic punning can be discerned in Mark, in whose multivalent atmosphere Mark's Son of Man becomes more penetrable. Building on Carmignac's work, I have discovered four further instances of sound-paronomasia, commencing with the Baptist's locust-field-covenant pun, which foregrounds Jesus's new covenant and John's worthiness to announce it. Second emerges the scathing rebuke of the Pharisees (7:8) who, abandoning (עוֹזְבִים) God's commandments, cling (אוֹחֲזִים) to human laws. 8:31's initial passion prediction (יִנְזֹק-נִזְנַח-זְקֵנִים-יִזְרַח) displays a fourfold pun in poetic form, suggesting a pre-Marcan saying or creed. Finally, Jesus emphasises it is better (καλόν) to enter heaven maimed (κυλλόν) in 9:43, and better (καλόν) to enter heaven lame (χωλόν) in 9:45, than to fall whole into Gehenna. Each of these puns occurs on Jesus's lips, which suggests either he is quoting well-known sayings or his words have been poetically enhanced by subsequent editors. I have discovered that key to assessing the intentionality of many of these puns is the extent to which Mark selects atypically Marcan words, or an unusual Semitic expression (e.g. foams and gnashes), or includes atypically Marcan detail, to compose them. The lack of alternative likely retrojections due to the absence of common synonyms also serves as a marker.

I have also uncovered three new cases of name-paronomasia and four further instances of sense-paronomasia. Regarding names, Petros/צור may additionally mean 'adversary' when reconstructed in Hebrew. The Sons of Thunder may likewise be 'ineffectual cries' in Greek, or Sons of Insurrection in Hebrew, and Barabbas, ostensibly Son of the Father, may covertly be 'Son of the Sanhedrin leader' (Bar-Rabban). Moreover, each of the four names possess both an obvious meaning and a subtle irony that expresses its opposite. Peter's dependable rock conceals a Semitic adversary and the Sons of Thunder are ineffectual in Gentile translation. Obversely, Bartimaios is a poor Jew who becomes honoured when his Aramaic is rendered in Greek and Barabbas, whom the Jewish crowds treat as Son of the Father, is secretly a son of the Father-betraying Sanhedrin. In similar vein, the glory James and John wish to share emerges as the burden or grief of martyrdom; perhaps even, in sharing their master's cup, death on the cross. The latter highlights Mark's key theme of the sacrificial nature of discipleship and his seemingly paradoxical equation of service and suffering with consequent glory and exaltation. On the significance of service, when Jesus surveys the synagogue (3:5), is he angry at the crowd who oppose his Sabbath healing, or extending his arms to implore them to listen to reason, or both? The multivalency intensifies both the scene's emotional content and thought-provoking potential. Likewise, Pharisees' leaven may reference both their cruelty and infectious evil, each differently foreshadowing Jesus's fate. For not only did Jesus's opponents plan his demise, they also poisoned people against him, to the point that Jerusalem's crowds pressured Pilate to release a murderous insurrectionist instead of their once-beloved rabbi. Both are justified interpretations of the Pharisaic leaven that Jesus exhorts his disciples to beware. Finally, the pun on the rolling away of the rock and the town of Galilee helps impress

upon the reader that Jesus's life and ministry have come full circle, and that a new stage of gospel mission has been actuated. In short, each sense-pun serves a dramatic and a theological purpose. It is also possible that the Parable of the Sower illuminates the quasi-allegorical nomenclature of Petros, Boanerges, Iscariot and Magdala. Coincidence or not, each name, and the attitudes of the disciple/s they describe, respectively mirrors one (or in Peter's case two) of the four types the parable presents.

Five of our six potential Janus puns present as intentional, with the outlier (סָלַח /סָלָה) certainly a pun but probably not Janus. The parallelism on salting and vaporisation italicises the need for all humanity to be cleansed; the unrepentant in destructive flame, those willing to dissever their vices and enter God's kingdom in the furnace of self-purification. The camel-rewarded-weaned parallelism connects the rich man tale with the previous lesson on children, and clarifies the need for reliance on God's grace and communal sharing, rather than independence and materialism, to inherit God's kingdom. The parallelism on tradition and betrayal stresses the Pharisees' imported traditions are, in fact, betrayals, and further evokes the Baptist's recent betrayal to death. It also foreshadows Judas's backstabbing of Jesus, the criminal actions of his enemies in Jerusalem and his betrayal by the crowds that once commended him. The leaven parallelism further impresses what this simple pun imparts, while the pun on Son of Man as child of the earth or lowly mortal hammers home another of Mark's fundamental points: that ordinary humans are both authorised and empowered to perform feats of healing and charity as God's kingdom approaches, as the disciples later illustrate and whose continuity Jesus promises them, even after he has gone, contingent solely upon their faith. In researching these parallelisms, I stumbled across two hitherto undiscovered examples in Genesis (21:8; 50:8-10), highlighting the Hebrew Bible's fertility for further enquiry. Finally, supporting inquiry into Hebrew Vorlagen for Semitic Greek texts such as Mark, seven of the analysed wordplays work better in Hebrew than Aramaic (2.1.1, 5, 7, 8; 2.3.1; 2.4.5, 7) and six work only in Hebrew (2.1.9; 2.2.1; 2.3.2, 3, 4; 2.4.4).

Regarding 'Son of Man', I conclude the controversial Mark 2 and passion prediction instances probably all featured in Mark's original text. The former dovetail with the later Son sayings when the title is viewed multivalently, complementing Jesus's teachings on the importance of human authority on Earth and our propensity for charity. Similarly, the predictions fit coherently into Mark's narrative structure, as each segues into a teaching on the sacrificial path of discipleship. Perhaps these prophecies were not as detailed on Jesus's lips as they ultimately appear in Mark, but evidence that Mark, or later Christian editors, composed them from scratch is not compelling.

One general conclusion is that it is better to interpret the evidence we have than to speculate 'bridging' evidence into existence, such as hypothesizing an earlier copy of 9:9-13 with the verses rearranged, or an original copy of Judges 14 with a Ugaritic word for honey instead of the Hebrew, where no manuscript evidence exists. It is better to find, if possible, a simpler explanation that gels with the existing evidence; whether textual, geographical or archaeological. Just as a connection emerges

between Samson's lion and the nearby Honeycomb Mountain (הַר-יְעָרִים), so a link appears between what Jesus claims is written of the Son of Man (9:12) and the suffering and rejected Ezekiel. It is vital to note that the latter makes sense only when the title is viewed through a multivalent lens, and that multivalency is a trademark feature of all genres of Hebrew scripture, and of many pericopae in Mark. Indeed, we come close to a Hebrew Bible equivalent of Mark's mysterious, multivalent figure in Jacob's assailant at the Jabbok ford. The nearest approximation in previous scholarship of the multivalent model I propose is that the Son represents both the divine elect of Daniel and their heavenly leader or representative. Yet even this I find too great a squeeze, for, in attempting to subsume diverse Marcan figures into a single bloated entity, it inadequately covers the required ground. The Danielic elect paradigm does not convincingly account for non-Jews whom Jesus accepts or who accept Jesus, such as the Syro-Phoenician woman and the centurion at the cross, not to mention Jesus's excursions into Gentile territory to preach the gospel (e.g. 5:1-20) and the Gentiles who journey to be healed by Jesus in his homeland (3:7-12). Moreover, the collective paradigm does not comfortably account for Mark's highly individualised references to Elijah and Ezekiel as 'Son of Man' in 9:9-13. Furthermore, no evidence linking the destiny of Daniel's elect to Mark's vicarious path of communal servitude and peaceful self-sacrifice exists in scripture. I conclude therefore that multiple referents for Mark's Son, that cannot comfortably be pigeonholed into a Danielic collective, were intended, just as they were for Jacob's wrestling antagonist. Mark's Son may have been part-inspired by Daniel, but he was never wholly defined by Daniel. Mark's referents do, however, have one thing in common: they are all followers, or potential followers, of the path of discipleship taught and modelled by Jesus, with Jesus himself as exemplary Son of Man.

Further, Mark's references reflect different uses of the term in both canonical and extra-canonical scripture. Son of Man as lowly human or ordinary Israelite (2:10-11; 2:27-28) reflects the general usage in the Hebrew Bible (e.g. Psalm 8:4, 62:10, 114:3). Son of Man as persecuted prophet (9:11-13) references Elijah as the Baptist, while reflecting both the persecutions *and* rejections of Ezekiel. 14:62's Messiah-Son and 8:38's hinted-at judge mirror conceptions in 4 Ezra and 1 Enoch, just as 13:26's cloud-borne Son reflects Daniel 7:13's son "coming with the clouds" to God. Stretching multivalent potential to its limit, Mark expresses every prior conceptual use of the term. And more, he adds his own concept: Son of Man as *self-sacrificing* Messiah (10:45) and model of discipleship, following in whose footsteps Jesus's disciples might also be called Son of Man. For the Son in the first passion prediction appears to include the disciples, hence Peter's rebellious reaction. If the disciples had not fled the scene of Jesus's arrest, and if Peter had not thrice denied Jesus, they may well have shared his fate. That they eschewed the chance to share Jesus's destiny, despite having promised never to abandon him (14:27-31), suggests they were not yet ready to be called Son, as opposed to Ezekiel, Elijah and John, each of whom faced terrible trials in God's service.

Aside from flaunting his skills as Semitic raconteur and poet, Mark has several potential motives for introducing this multivalent character. First, if the title existed among early Christians prior to Mark's gospel, but division persisted over the title's

meaning and significance, Mark may have broadened his Son's multivalency to encompass a wealth of differing opinions, not wishing to alienate sections of his audience, which seems broader than that of Matthew (predominantly Jewish) and Luke (predominantly Gentile),[741] since Mark, as we have seen, caters to both Jewish and Gentile perspectives. To Mark, 'Son of Man' could be anyone who follows God's way, living a life of vicarious charity in the face of persecution on Earth, before becoming an angelic being in heaven (cf. 12:25-27). Mark's Jesus even commends a Torah scholar (12:28-34), an unclean woman (5:25-34) and a Gentile woman (7:24-30), and it is women who best model the path of discipleship (15:40-41, 16:1-8). A Roman centurion recognises the Son's heavenly nature (15:39), the Roman governor himself is sympathetic towards him (15:9-15), and Jesus's body is even rescued by a member of the Sanhedrin (15:43). Thus, Mark opens his invitation to a surprisingly broad audience, which in turn necessitates a certain vagueness in theologising in order to appeal to all. Perhaps this is why there is no Sermon on the Mount?

As a storyteller, Mark may have shrouded his Son in mystery to generate interest and build suspense throughout the narrative. This would encourage his audience to find their answers for themselves, and thereby reflect on, discuss, and (for the literate) re-read the subject matter with diligence. Accordingly, Mark may have layered his Son in multivalency to cater for readers and listeners of differing levels of education and capacity for insight. Perceptive and literate students of the gospel might discover new meanings with each fresh reading, thus refreshing their interest in the message Mark sought to impart. Further, that Jesus is ultimately revealed as Son of Man *par excellence* gifts the gospel the characteristics of a mystery novel, with all that implies for audience stimulation. In modern terms, we might see first-time listeners thrust into the shoes of Sherlock Holmes, as they strive to solve the case and unmask the Son's identity before the *denouement* unfolds, whereas the well-versed might suavely assume the role of Columbo, smiling smugly throughout the story because they somehow (and perhaps to the uninitiated's irritation) know the culprit's identity all along. Yet, by the time of the later synoptics, perhaps a clearer, more universal 'Son of Man' picture had evolved within Christianity. Matthew and Luke also appear to be evangelising to more specific sub-communities (Jews and Gentiles respectively), so the usefulness of multivalency to encompass a broader spectrum of theologies would have attenuated regardless.

Finally, my thesis reveals much room remains for further research. Scholarship has largely overlooked the potential for Semitic gospel Vorlagen, particularly Hebrew Vorlagen, yet Semitic paronomasia and multivalency abound in Mark, as we have seen. Perhaps Hebrew Vorlagen might be considered for other books of the New Testament, or even fragments of these books, or contemporaneous Palestinian literature? Thus might the unfinished quest of Jean Carmignac be championed by his successors.

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[741] See: Pheme Perkins, *Introduction to the Synoptic Gospels* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2009): 193-7; 240-4.

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4) Electronic Resources

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