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THE CHRISTOLOGY OF MARK

by

Gregory L. Jackson

A Thesis submitted to the Faculty in partial
fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of

MASTER OF DIVINITY

from Waterloo Lutheran Seminary

Waterloo, Ontario

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INTRODUCTION

In the last century the Christology of the New Testament has been widely debated from two points of view. The first has sought to discover the real life of Jesus within the synoptic gospels' account of his ministry. This school gained its impetus from the study of the synoptic problem and the resulting consensus about the priority of Mark. Accordingly the life of Jesus was considered the kernel around which theological speculations accumulated over the years. Therefore, the proper method for obtaining the true life of Jesus lay in removing the Christological formulations and revealing the simple career of Jesus. In this school of thought Jesus was portrayed as a humanitarian and religious teacher, whose humility was revealed in his use of the title "Son of Man". Great confidence was put in obtaining an objective biography of Jesus which could ignore theological issues. In his popular treatment of Jesus, entitled The Son of Man, Emil Ludwig stated: "This book deals with 'Jesus' and has not a word to say about 'Christ'. The author does not meddle with theology; that arose later, and he does not pretend to understand it."¹ Such optimism (or ignorance) was based on the attempts of Adolph Harnack and other nineteenth century scholars to produce the Jesus of history, stripped of the accretions of ecclesiastical thought. This was the low Christology of the nineteenth century liberals.

Although low Christology has continued its popularity, most recently in the form of Jesus Christ Superstar, research into the life of Jesus had moved in a new direction already at the beginning of this century. William Wrede destroyed the notion that the gospel of Mark was a simple biography in his Das Messiasgeheimnis in den Evangelium (1901). Indeed, the injunctions of silence in Mark served a theological purpose. "Ich gehe weiter und behaupte: ein geschichtliches Motiv kommt wirklich gar nicht in Frage; positiv die Idee des Messiasgeheimnisses ist ein theologische Vorstellung."² Research into the meaning of the titles of Jesus revealed the high Christology of the title "Son of Man" and the theological implications of such a title of majesty. Wilhelm Bousset and Rudolf Bultmann carried on the pioneering work of Wrede by investigating the strata of the gospels in search of the origins of the many titles ascribed to Jesus: Son of Man, Son of God, Christ, Son of David, and so on.³ Their work has been elaborated upon by Ferdinand Hahn, Reginald Fuller, and Heinz Tödt.⁴ The result of this work has been the realization that each title had a different meaning at the individual stages of tradition within the gospels. Mark's use of titles reveals what he accepted from earlier tradition and what he altered to suit his theological purpose. Jesus is portrayed in Mark as the great savior who transcends the realm of mortals through his suffering, death, and resurrection. This high Christology is a refutation of the notion that Mark presents Jesus as the humble and humane teacher of ethics.

In this thesis I intend to investigate the three layers of

tradition in the Christology of Mark: that of the historical Jesus, the Palestinian community, and the Hellenistic Church. The result of this work will be a clearer picture of Mark's contribution to the Christology of the Church. I propose that Mark constructed his gospel to bring out the role of Jesus as the Suffering Servant who was exalted through his crucifixion and resurrection. The evangelist did not discard his traditional material nor its theology; instead, he worked the earlier material together to form a bridge from the earlier Palestinian community to the later Hellenistic community. The Christology of Mark was aimed at the Hellenistic Gentiles, whose concepts of salvation were based on the dying and rising gods of the Hellenistic world. The idea of the Messiah and the Son of Man, as developed in Jewish literature, was foreign and uninformative to them, but the Suffering Servant concept paralleled their own religious environment. Mark's Christology, then, served as the basis by which Gentiles would understand the ministry of Jesus -- all his work culminated in his death on the cross: he fulfilled his role by suffering for the sins of the world. Therefore, the gospel does not resolve the conflicts of high and low Christology but transcends their problems to proclaim Jesus as the universal savior who lived and died in Jewish Palestine for the benefit of all men.

The Christology of Mark is treated in three chapters. The first chapter introduces the first two layers of tradition and demonstrates the relationship between Jesus and the Messianic hopes of the Jews. The historical Jesus was a prophet and a rabbi who gathered

disciples around him and proclaimed the nearness of the Kingdom of God. After his death his disciples believed he would return as the Son of Man or Messiah. Their belief was the Christology of the Palestinian community.

The second chapter presents the Hellenistic Christology of Mark as revealed in the theological themes of Galilee and Jerusalem, the blindness of the disciples, and the Messianic Secret. The themes are the redaction of the evangelist and are Hellenistic in their similarity to the Gnostic motifs of hiddenness and secret knowledge. The third chapter discusses the relation of these themes of Mark to the Suffering Son of Man Christology, which the evangelist has developed. Mark has departed from Jewish tradition in several ways: occasionally he speaks of the resurrection of the Son of Man instead of the coming of that figure; he uses the Servant concept messianically; and he combines the Servant concept with the Son of Man title. The redactor has created a Hellenistic Christology for the Gentile world.

CHAPTER I

THE MESSIAH AND THE SON OF MAN IN THE FIRST TWO LAYERS OF TRADITION

Jesus has been traditionally preached as the Messiah by the Church. The uncritical approach has been to treat the title "Messiah" as something which Jesus changed in meaning through his deliberate actions.⁵ He realized the political implications of the title and sought to negate them completely, so that his Messiahship was spiritual and not material.⁶ The occasions when Jesus silenced those who confessed him as Son of God or Christ are examples of his control of the situation.

Critical studies of the origin and use of Messiah have radically changed the traditional interpretation of the term, although many scholars have been slow to realize the distinctiveness of the title. The word has had a long history, but time has not obscured its meaning. The original connection was with the royal ideology of the Ancient Near East. The word Messiah is a transliteration of the Hebrew word which means "anointed" (מָשִׁיחַ). In the Ancient Near East the act of anointing the body with oil had several sacred and secular uses.⁷ The most important was the anointing of kings, attested in the Tell el-Amarna letters (14th century B.C.) and reported in considerable detail

in reference to Saul, David, Solomon, and other kings in the Old Testament. The primary use of מֶלֶךְ in the Old Testament is to designate the present ruling king of Judah or Israel.

From the kingly ideal of Israel came the belief in the Messiah, which is "the prophetic hope for the end of this age, in which a strong redeemer, by his power and his spirit, will bring complete redemption, political and spiritual, to the people Israel, and along with this, earthly bliss and moral perfection to the entire human race."⁸ Like the Ancient Near Eastern king the Messiah would be a political and religious leader. The belief in the Messiah is found first in the prophets and later in the sayings of the Tannaim in the Talmud and Midrash. The Messiah may be found in II Baruch and in the seventeenth Psalm of Solomon. The Qumran literature has separated the dual function of the king and portrays two anointed figures, one priestly and one royal. Within the Messianic tradition this is the most notable divergence from the portrait of the Messiah.

Critical research has determined the general nature of the Messiah within the Jewish tradition. He would be a mortal of outstanding power and authority, a king of the Davidic line. He would have a close relationship with God, not as a divine son but rather as an adoptive son. He might perform miracles, but his main function was that of restoring the political status of Israel and reforming the religious character of the people. We would expect such characteristics in the synoptic portrait of Jesus, if he acted as the Messiah.

The period in which Jesus lived was filled with Messianic

movements; for the death of Herod the Great in 4 B.C. ended the years in which Jewish hostility was masterfully controlled. His death also marked the end of partial Jewish autonomy. A Roman procurator was brought in to replace Archelaus in Jerusalem 10 years after his father's death. Judas the Galilean led a revolt against the census and payment of tribute that the procurator was order to supervise. This began the Zealot party, according to Josephus, and the work was carried on by Judas' sons in the following years. "Religiously the Zealots belonged with the Pharisees, but they made their Messianic hope into a political program."⁹ Numerous revolts began and were immediately crushed in years between Herod's death and the fall of Jerusalem. Not all of them were Zealot inspired, but they were all prompted by nationalistic-religious feelings. Theudas the prophet promised to separate the waters of the Jordan, in the fashion of a new Moses. He was decapitated.¹⁰ Two of the sons of Judas were crucified by the procurator Tiberius Alexander as a result of their rebellious actions.¹¹ A prophet from Egypt expected the walls of Jerusalem to fall at his command,¹² and a later prophet appeared "who promised them deliverance and freedom from the miseries they were under, if they would but follow him as far as the wilderness."¹³ In the revolt which brought about the destruction of Jerusalem, Menahem celebrated his victory at Masada by wearing royal robes while he sacrificed at the Temple. The priestly leader of the revolt had him, the third son of Judas, killed.¹⁴ The Messianic hope was therefore a danger to the Jews as well as to the Romans.

The deaths of John the Baptist and Jesus are characteristic of the Roman response to political danger. John's program was not political but he proclaimed that the end of the age was near. The popularity of his movement and its eschatological character inevitably led to his execution in the lonely fortress of Machaerus.¹⁵ Since some of John's followers went over to Jesus, who also proclaimed the nearness of the Kingdom of God, it is no surprise that Jesus was under suspicion as rebel against Rome. "Outsiders certainly could not recognize the essentially unpolitical character of the leadership of both John and Jesus, especially as both aroused considerable popular excitement."¹⁶ The disciples of Jesus included a Zealot, which has prompted some to claim that Jesus and his disciples were closely related to the Zealot movement.¹⁷ A less specific assertion would be more accurate: the popularity of Jesus stirred up hopes that the Messiah had come, a widespread Jewish expectation that was radicalized by the Zealots and related movements. At any rate, Jesus was understood to be a Messianic pretender by the Romans and was crucified as a seditionist.¹⁸

Although we cannot penetrate the mind of Jesus, since the gospels do not raise the question of his self-consciousness,¹⁹ it is possible to sketch the ministry of Jesus from the scanty evidence in the gospels. Essentially the gospels present Jesus as the one who is proclaimed by the community. Of the synoptics, Mark employs this method most consistently. While Matthew and Luke reveal Jesus as the one who proclaimed the Kingdom of God in his teaching, Mark records

little of his teaching but much about how people reacted to him. The gospel of John goes further by making the substance of Jesus' discourses his Christological claims. The community of believers proclaimed Jesus as Messiah, Son of Man, and Servant. Therefore, the most reliable evidence is that which does not debate Christology. This evidence may be found in the earliest stratum of Mark and in Q.

The process of uncovering the original ministry of Jesus may be criticized as a repetition of the old liberal school's mistake, especially since the Christological titles of Jesus are mostly eliminated. One way of avoiding such pitfalls is by employing different methods, or by seeking different goals. The old liberal school felt it could reach back and ultimately unlock the consciousness of Jesus. The resulting portrait of the mind of Jesus was taken as authoritative, but it invariably mirrored the theology of the liberal school, as Albert Schweitzer has noted. The way around this roadblock is the realization that the New Testament era is alien to our own and cannot be measured by our cultural yardsticks or our theological presuppositions.²⁰

Rudolf Bultmann's treatment of Jesus remains the most thorough-going attempt to understand the oldest traditions embedded in the synoptic gospels.²¹ Jesus cannot be understood apart from "the historical context of Jewish expectations about the end of the world and God's new future."²² At the same time his teaching was not centered around the national hope of the renewal of the ideal kingdom of David.

No saying of Jesus mentions the Messiah-king who is to crush the enemies of the People, nor the

lordship of Israel over the earth, nor the gathering of the twelve tribes, nor the joy that will be in the bounteous peace-blessed Land.²³

Jesus' message is better understood in the circle of apocalyptic thought, which awaits salvation through a cosmic catastrophe which will end the conditions of the present world. The present world will soon be replaced by a new one which begins with great tribulation. This view is pessimistic in its characterization of the present world as evil and dualistic in its doctrine of two distinct aeons. The dominant proclamation of Jesus is the nearness of the Kingdom of God, which is so close that its power is already being felt.

The message of Jesus is that of a prophet and quite similar to that of John the Baptist. In fact both are called prophets -- John in Mk.11:32 and Mt.11:9, Jesus in Mk.8:28, Mt.21:11, Lk.7:16 and 13:33. The function of a prophet is to declare the will of God in the light of his soon-to-be-revealed acts. Therefore, Jesus is a proclaimer in his ministry, a man who announces the word of God rather than one who demands belief in him as a savior. This shift in the interpretation of Jesus' ministry has been strongly resisted since it seems to take away from the authority of his titles, but critical research cannot stop at the threshold of discovery.

The early history of the Church would be inexplicable if we assumed that Jesus passed on to his followers the meaning of his suffering and resurrection before it happened. If the disciples were so well trained in Christology, then why did they desert their master at the very time of trial which he predicted as leading to victory?

The complex use of Christological titles in the synoptics is the result of the work of the Church. Jesus did not define himself as the eschatological prophet but rather acted as such in his proclamation and activity concerning the Kingdom, which he announced with authority. "To interpret this datum in terms of explicit Christology was the task of the post-Easter Church, in whose kerygma the Proclaimer became the Proclaimed."²⁴

A second title of Jesus from the earliest tradition also lacks the Christian content of later believers. Jesus is often addressed as "rabbi".²⁵ We do not know how he was trained or where he was educated, but it is clear that Jesus actually lived as a Jewish rabbi.²⁶ He taught in the synagogue, gathered a circle of pupils, disputed questions of the Law with his students and his opponents, and employed the methods of the rabbis in his teaching.²⁷ His followers (not just the twelve) are called disciples, a technical term that designates the students of a rabbi, not the members of a religious movement.²⁸ In the Church the relationship of rabbi to pupil was replaced by terms that were in line with that of savior and believer. Nevertheless, the tradition of Jesus as rabbi remained, especially in the Q sayings. Mark has not eliminated such sayings, even though the evangelist's tendency is to diminish the teaching aspect of the ministry. In several pericopes he responds to scribal questions with rabbinical answers, quoting the Decalogue,²⁹ Old Testament Law and passages in Genesis.³⁰

The transition from rabbi to Messiah may seem too great to have been accomplished by the followers of Jesus. Indeed, this has

been argued by those who would defend the Messianic consciousness of Jesus. But that argument ignores the importance of the apocalyptic preaching of Jesus and the prophetic authority of his deeds, both of which heighten the importance and urgency of his message. Although Jesus did not make specific Messianic claims, his authoritative words and deeds raised hopes that he was indeed the promised Messiah. Since the Roman authorities showed little reluctance in quashing political-religious movements before and after the time of Jesus, we should not wonder that his teaching was seen as a danger to the Romans and a hope for the Jews. The crucifixion cannot be explained apart from the fact that Jesus was understood by the Romans to be a Messianic pretender. That is the substance of the question, "Are you the King of the Jews,"³¹ and the necessary conclusion from the punishment given him. The harshness of Pilate's rule and his subsequent removal for his severity also confirm the early Messianic interpretation of Jesus.³²

While Jesus lived as an eschatological prophet and rabbi, without personal claims to any Messianic titles, he was executed as one who claimed to be the Messiah. His first followers clung to the idea that Jesus was the expected King of Israel. Outside of the actual passion narrative of Mark, two passages in the gospel preserve the Messianic expectations of the early community. The first is the confession of Peter (8:27-30) and the second is the entry into Jerusalem (11:1-10). The confession at Caesarea Philippi, once the Marcian secrecy motif is removed, is a formulation of the Palestinian Church, where Peter was considered the founder and head of the Church.³³ Then the

blessing of Peter (Mt.16:17-19) is probably the original conclusion of the story, in which the risen Lord is confessed by Peter.³⁴ Mark has changed the nature of the story by combining it with the first passion prediction, which then produces a polemic against the Jewish-Christian view represented by Peter, so the original confession of Messiahship is substantially altered in the gospel.³⁵

The entry into Jerusalem also preserves the Messianic teaching of the first believers; for the story has been molded to the Messianic entry passage of Zechariah 9:9. However, Mark did not expand the narrative beyond what he received from the Palestinian community.³⁶ Matthew completes the prophecy motif by quoting Zechariah and bringing in the Davidic sonship of Jesus, while Luke revises the narrative by portraying Jesus as the King who comes in peace with unqualified assurance. The original narrative grew up in the Palestinian Church, also as an Easter story which confesses Jesus. Either Mark omitted the explicit confession of Jesus as Messiah or he passed on an account which had not reached the grandness it achieves in Matthew.

The transfiguration story is related to the above passages in its proclamation of the risen and exalted Christ.³⁷ The story itself has long been recognized as a resurrection story, and its message is clearly presented.³⁸ The voice from heaven says, "This is my beloved Son: listen to him."³⁹ The placement of the story in Mark suggests that the evangelist is deliberately confirming the Christology of the Caesarea Philippi narrative. The transfiguration narrative was not originally part of an elaborate unfolding of the future role of Jesus,

as in Mark, but a brief exposition on the sonship of Jesus in traditional Messianic language, in which Peter again played the major role. The story is essentially Palestinian.

The concept that Jesus was the Messiah is the foundation of New Testament Christology, which indicates that it was the earliest tradition of the Church, unless the Son of Man concept existed at the same time with it. Even if that was so, the Messiahship of Jesus certainly took precedence over the function of the Son of Man. The title Christ became the name of Jesus early in Christian teaching and served to bring other concepts under one far-reaching concept. This transformed the meaning of Christ, making it a Christian term for Jesus rather than a limited title determined by the expectations of the Jews alone. Consequently, we find the author of Hebrews using the name Christ in his discussion of Jesus as the high priest. In the same way Paul continued to use the Christ designation even when modified by the title Lord, which defined Jesus as a universal savior quite different from the Jewish Messiah.^{39a}

The belief in Jesus as the Messiah was no doubt the most logical interpretation for the Palestinian community at first. The political oppression of Israel at that time and the thousand year old ideal of Davidic kingship formed the matrix of early Jewish Christian hopes. The presence of a Zealot among Jesus' disciples lends credence to the notion that political hopes were below the surface among the disciples. This is attested by the execution of James as a rabble rouser (recorded by Josephus) and the suspicion that Christians were

Zealots (recorded by Luke).⁴⁰ The political hopes of the early Christians were not realized, yet the Messiahship of Jesus was not omitted from the teaching of the Church. In fact, the Davidic sonship of Jesus was emphasized by Matthew and Luke, even though it appears only twice in Mark (10:47; 12:35) and not at all in Q.

In the gospel of Mark the Messiahship of Jesus serves as a necessary foundation for his work, but not as the framework of his Christology. Like the prophetic and rabbinic role of Jesus, the Messianic role serves to introduce the specific theology of the cross in Mark. The evangelist had no choice but to accept the tradition of the Palestinian Church, which already existed within a Christological framework. This tradition consisted of disconnected stories and a unified passion narrative. The stories featured the Messianic role of Jesus and the leadership role of Peter. The disconnected stories were resurrection commentaries on the status of Jesus (Caesarea Philippi and the transfiguration) and the royal entry into Jerusalem. Other traditions existed which told of the relationship between Jesus and John the Baptist and which told of his teaching and miracles, but these had not been worked into a unified form before Mark. Further sayings dealt with the title Son of Man.

Jesus has been traditionally preached as the Son of Man, which was generally understood to be a title of humility contrasted with Son of God.⁴¹ Since it is the only title that appears on Jesus' lips, the possibility of the term expressing the self-consciousness of Jesus has been greatly explored by laymen and scholars.⁴² Furthermore, in

the New Testament the title appears almost exclusively in the gospels.⁴³ The data may be included within the low Christological scheme with little apparent difficulty. Jesus used the title because it made no lofty claims for his status. He expressed his humanity and humility with the term, which was dropped by later writers in the New Testament with loftier concepts of Jesus than he himself had.

However, the lowliness of the Son of Man concept has been questioned by a century of Biblical scholarship. Outside of its use as a synonym for man in the Old Testament it appears only in Daniel, where a figure like the Son of Man comes before the presence of God and is given dominion over the earth.⁴⁴ The figure also appears in the Parables of Enoch (chapters 37-71) and in IV Ezra 13. In both cases the term applies to a heavenly king who has a special relationship with God and a future role of judgment. The exact nature and origin of the Son of Man concept have been debated with undiminished vigor, but it seems quite possible that the term was known to apocalyptic Judaism before the time of Jesus and was applied to a heavenly king who would come to judge the world.

How is this Son of Man used in the synoptic gospels in relation to the mission of Jesus? The answer may be found in the investigation of the Son of Man sayings in the categories assigned by Bultmann: the coming Son of Man, the suffering Son of Man, and the Son of Man now at work.⁴⁵ At this point we are primarily concerned with the first group of sayings, since they are closest to the apocalyptic tradition of the Son of Man. Two questions need to be answered in connection with the

coming Son of Man. First -- what was Jesus' teaching about the coming Son of Man? Second -- how did the primitive community and Mark alter that teaching?

In the first place, Jesus did not identify himself with the Son of Man. "At any rate, the synoptic tradition contains no sayings in which Jesus says he will sometime (or soon) return."⁴⁶ The primary sayings about the coming Son of Man, imbedded in Q and in the early material peculiar to Matthew, can be traced back to Jesus with a high degree of probability.⁴⁷ These sayings maintain a distinction between Jesus and the Son of Man. Mark 8:38 is the only Marcan saying where this distinction is preserved.

For whoever is ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him will the Son of Man also be ashamed, when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.

Yet there is a continuity between earthly fellowship with Jesus through discipleship and redemptive fellowship with the Son of Man.⁴⁸ The historical Jesus did not consider himself the present or future Son of Man but expected confirmation of his words through this figure.

Two other sayings in Mark treat the coming of the Son of Man, but neither one is an authentic saying from Jesus' lips. The first is preserved in Mark 13:24-27, one of the Jewish apocalyptic sayings that has been worked into the gospel.⁴⁹ The authentic Son of Man sayings do not allude to scripture, as this passage does, so this saying has probably been placed here because of its resemblance to Jesus' teaching.⁵⁰ In the time of tribulation the Son of Man will come in clouds with great

power and glory to gather the elect from the ends of the earth. This saying is probably Palestinian in origin.

The second saying is placed in the trial before the Sanhedrin. The Christological concerns of the passage and the fact that no disciple could have witnessed the scene (if it happened) make the saying historically questionable but illuminating. The high priest's question juxtaposes Christ and Son of God, which is not attested in Judaism and therefore belongs to the community's interpretation or an even later stage of development. Jesus confesses to being the Messiah before his adversaries and confirms his sovereignty by announcing that they will see the Son of Man seated in heaven. "The allusion to the coming Son of Man places the scene before the Sanhedrin in a definite light which illuminates the absurd arrogance of the earthly judges who wish to judge the one who confesses that he is the Christ and the Son of God and will be vindicated as such at the coming of the Son of Man."⁵¹

This Son of Man saying has departed from the original teaching of Jesus and therefore betrays a Christological interest in the title.⁵² Jesus did not identify himself with the Son of Man, nor did he legitimate his teaching about the Son of Man by alluding to scripture. Jesus was the herald of the new age, so attention to his words meant salvation in the coming aeon. The Son of Man was well known to Jesus' audience, so the meaning of his appearance is spoken of rather than the description of it. All men are divided into two groups by the fact of the parousia -- those who attach themselves to Jesus as the proclaimer of the new age and those who are unprepared for the future catastrophic

events. Those were the concepts that the Palestinian community worked into a Son of Man Christology.

The death of Jesus clearly indicates that he died because he threatened the political stability of Judea. The hope of the Messiah could be understood as politically oriented, so it is reasonable to assume that Jesus was executed because he was considered the Messiah. The Son of Man concept was not as intimately tied with the tradition and hopes of the Jews as the Messianic idea, nor was the Son of Man expected to function as an earthly warrior or king. The coming Son of Man belonged to apocalyptic speculation and therefore represented no threat to the Roman government, especially since a prophetic rabbi could not conceivably claim to being the Son of Man on earth. Moreover, the passion story which is the earliest unit of narrative material, is wholly dominated by the Messianic idea.⁵³ Although the Son of Man concept existed in the teaching of Jesus, the first interpretation of Jesus' ministry and passion was characterized by the Messianic hope.

While the importance of the Messianic hope made itself felt in the passion narrative and in other passages, it could not continue without modification.⁵⁴ Jesus did not act as the Messiah on earth and he did not bring about the political freedom or religious reform on which the Messianic hope was based. The resurrection faith of the Palestinian community opened a new channel of interpretation: Jesus himself would return as the Son of Man. Such a hope could be sustained in the face of the Jewish-Christian community's circumstances. The rabbi they followed was executed by the Romans, but they experienced his resurrection

appearances. These first followers could continue their Messianic hopes through the expectation that Jesus would ratify his promise of a new age by returning in glory. This coming Son of Man concept was confirmed in the synoptics by the exclusive use of the sayings by Jesus. The fact that it was confined primarily to the Palestinian community is shown in that Jesus is not specifically identified as the Son of Man elsewhere in the New Testament, except by the martyr Stephan in an ecstatic vision.⁵⁵ The use of the Son of Man title was firmly entrenched in the synoptic tradition and carried over to the gospel of John but dropped out of sight as a Christological title after the New Testament period.

The Palestinian community, then, preached the Messiahship of Jesus based on their hope that he would come as the Son of Man. Peter acted as leader of the Jewish-Christian community and served as the spokesman in the growing traditions about the meaning of the ministry of Jesus. The beginnings of a Gentile community of believers led to new interpretations of the role of Jesus, interpretations that were molded by the culture of the Hellenistic world.

CHAPTER II

THREE CHRISTOLOGICAL THEMES OF THE HELLENISTIC REDACTION

The Christology of Mark is basically a Hellenistic interpretation of the Palestinian tradition. Between Mark and the Palestinian community stand the Hellenistic Gentile communities of Antioch, Damascus, Tarsus and the Pauline tradition. Paul's contact with the Palestinian Church was meager; the tradition he received was from such communities as Antioch, which developed before Paul came.⁵⁶ Only indirectly did he learn from the Jerusalem Christians. He wrote to Rome with the knowledge that it too was a community begun before his time in the center of religious syncretism. He did not abandon the established title of Christ but modified it by using Lord as the major title of his Christology. Paul established a definite gospel to the Gentiles in his letters, based on universal salvation through the cross of Jesus. His Christology was probably known to Mark, if only indirectly through the Gentile community.

The gospel of Mark was written shortly after the fall of Jerusalem, probably in Rome, certainly by a Gentile communicating his message to other Gentiles.⁵⁷ The author's close relationship to Peter, although attested by several later writers, is not confirmed by his

display of special knowledge of the apostle or of the apostle's work with Jesus. On the contrary, the evangelist is primarily indebted to Hellenistic Gentile tradition, just as Paul was,⁵⁸ and his work can only be understood as a Hellenistic Gentile redaction which has re-interpreted the earlier Christology of the Palestinian community. The redaction of Mark focuses on the Suffering Son of Man as the mode for understanding the mission of Jesus. The concept of suffering for the sins of men is part of the three Passion predictions which introduce the days in Jerusalem and appears again just before the Passion account (14:21). Although the idea of a suffering and rising god is a common motif in the Hellenistic world, the same is not true of Jewish religious thought. The Messiah was not known to suffer until the Messiah ben Ephraim appeared in second century A.D. literature, and he did not suffer vicariously. The Targum on the Servant Songs further proves that in Messianic interpretation the nations may suffer but the savior does not.^{58a} Finally, there is no evidence that the apocalyptic Son of Man was understood to be the Suffering Servant before Mark was composed. From this we must conclude that the Suffering Son of Man sayings in Mark are not Jewish but rather Hellenistic and most probably are creations of the evangelist.

The second gospel is Mark's sermon to Gentiles on the meaning of Jesus' life and death, so the themes in the gospel -- which were formerly understood as biographical details -- are really theological motifs. In so far as they are manifestly part of Mark's editorial work, that is -- capable of being separated from the traditional matter, they

serve to introduce his dominant Christological concept -- that Jesus is the Suffering Son of Man. Three themes accomplish this task. The Galilee and Jerusalem theme portrays the two spheres of Jesus' activity and the importance of the journey to Jerusalem, which is seen as a single, necessary trip. The theme of the blindness of the disciples serves to contrast the Christology of the Jewish disciples with the Christology of the universal savior. The Messianic secret points toward the revelation of Jesus as the Suffering Son of Man. Mark's editorial work has united the fragments of tradition into a Christological framework.

The importance of the framework of Mark has been studied by Lohmeyer, Lightfoot, and Marxsen;⁵⁹ for "the second gospel scarcely notes one biographical detail which does not have theological significance."⁶⁰ Lohmeyer was the first to recognize the theological importance of Markan geography, and Marxsen has continued his work. Two epochs can be discerned in Mark: that of Galilee (chapters 1-9) and that of Jerusalem (chapters 11-16). The tenth chapter serves as a transition from one sphere of activity to the other. There is every indication that Mark has presented one extended journey from the original site of activity toward the city of Jerusalem for the Passion. The single journey is a creation of Mark; for a series of traditional references indicate that Jesus had been in or about Jerusalem (10:46-47; 11:2-3; 14:3,13ff.; 14:49; 15:43).⁶¹ The word Galilee occurs twelve times in Mark, ten of which are in the narrative. Nine of the narrative references are in the first nine chapters.⁶² The two mentions of

Galilee in discourse passages (14:28; 16:7) are manifestly editorial. The journey depicted by Mark has no consistency in its itinerary and serves as a theological framework rather than a historical account.⁶³

The purpose of Mark's geography is brought out in the contrast between the Galilean ministry and the days in Jerusalem. In Jerusalem:

- 1) the gospel is not proclaimed;
- 2) no summons to repentance is given;
- 3) the city is the place of destruction;
- 4) there are only two acts of power (10:46-52; 11:12-14);
- 5) only one parable is taught, and it is understood;
- 6) exorcisms and commands of secrecy cease;
- 7) the welcome in the entry comes only from followers.⁶⁴

"In the first place Galilee, not Jerusalem, is for him . . . the scene and seat of revelation."⁶⁵ Even in the Judean section the complete revelation of Jesus is predicted as occurring in Galilee, first in the words of Jesus (14:28) and second in the words of the angel (16:7).

The Galilean section portrays Jesus as the prophet, the wonder worker, the Son of God, even as the Son of Man at work on earth.^{65a} His power and glory are overwhelming and his fame cannot be contained by the strictest orders for secrecy. The Jerusalem section has the opposite character: Jesus is met by such antipathy from the Jewish leaders that the reluctance of Pilate to execute Jesus is quashed by their rabble-rousing tactics. Just as the crowd deserts the man they formerly flocked to see, so the disciples reject their own leader. Yet

the true revelation of Jesus is not achieved until he enters the capital city of his enemies, so the two epochs of Mark are not precisely the Galilean Spring and the Via Dolorosa but the days of secret glory followed by the days of victory over hatred and death.

The theme of rejection in Jerusalem is supplemented by the motif of the disciples' blindness, which climaxes with the total rejection of Jesus by the disciples and Peter. The relationship between Jesus and the disciples may be divided into three stages:

- 1) the inability to perceive who Jesus is (Mk.1:16-8:26)
- 2) the misconception of disciples about Jesus (8:27-14:9),
- 3) the rejection of Jesus (14:10-72).⁶⁶

The Markan treatment of the disciples is modified by the synoptic writers. Both Matthew and Luke subtract and add to Mark's account in certain places, always for the purpose of softening the harsh picture of the disciples. The following passages will illustrate this principle.

The disciples did not understand the parables, and Jesus asked them, "Do you not understand the parables? How then will you understand all the parables."⁶⁷ The question is dropped in Matthew and Luke. Matthew adds a saying to Mark's account: "But blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear. Truly, I say to you, many prophets and righteous men longed to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it."⁶⁸ Luke repeats the same basic saying, placing it after the return of the seventy.⁶⁹ Mark has Jesus giving the secret of the Kingdom of God to the disciples (4.11.pars.), but Matthew and Luke have heightened their position and

omitted a question which lessens the character of the disciples.

The study of the stilling of the storm offers similar results.⁷⁰ The disciples asked Jesus in Mark's account: "Teacher, do you not care if we perish?" But Matthew and Luke both change the doubting question to statements which reflect faith in Jesus. Matthew 8:25 has: "Save, Lord; we are perishing." Luke 8:24 reads: "Master, Master, we are perishing." In Mark Jesus asks, "Why are you afraid? Have you no faith?" Luke modifies the question to "Where is your faith?" and Matthew omits the question and has Jesus ask about their fear instead. Matthew and Luke soften the fear and doubt displayed by the disciples in Mark.

In the Markan story about the woman with a hemorrhage, the disciples asked Jesus: "You see the crowd pressing around you, and yet you say, 'Who touched me?'"⁷¹ Matthew does not record the disrespectful question and Luke has Peter explain tactfully: "Master, the multitudes surround you and press upon you!"⁷² The reaction of Matthew and Luke to this question is interesting. Matthew simply eliminates the disciples' reply to Jesus, but Luke turns it into a display of Peter's leadership and understanding.

The disciples have no redeeming qualities in the walking on water episode in Mark.⁷³ The disciples were terrified when Jesus approached them and were utterly astounded when he entered the boat, "for they did not understand about the loaves, but their hearts were hardened." Matthew 6:52 preserves the initial fear of the disciples, but Peter showed initiative in asking to copy the miracle. Peter was

afraid and began to sink, so Jesus saved him and admonished him about his doubt. Instead of displaying astonishment, lack of understanding, and hardness of heart, the disciples worshiped Jesus and said, "Truly, you are the Son of God."⁷⁴ Matthew has preserved and heightened the miraculous, added a didactic legend about Peter, and turned the bad traits of the disciples into a confession.

The discourse on leaven seems to be almost identical in Matthew and Mark.⁷⁵ The disciples did not understand what Jesus was saying in either gospel. Jesus is more critical in Mark, questioning the disciples' perception and understanding. Jesus also implies or states that they are hard of heart, blind, and deaf. Matthew retains the questioning of their perception and also follows Mark when Jesus asks if they remember about the loaves. The difference is in the endings. Mark's pericope finishes with the question of Jesus, "Do you not yet understand?" Matthew answers that question with an editorial statement: "Then they understood that he did not tell them to beware of the leaven of bread, but of the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees." Matthew has turned lack of perception into understanding.

The second stage of the relationship between Jesus and the disciples begins with the confession at Caesarea Philippi. In this section (Mk.8:27-14:9) the disciples have the wrong conception of Jesus.⁷⁶ First of all, Peter called Jesus the Christ at Caesarea Philippi, and Jesus told them not to make this known, as he did with demonic confessions. When Jesus spoke of himself as the Son of Man, who must suffer and die, Peter rebuked him. Jesus rebuked Peter for this and said, "Get behind

me, Satan! For you are not on the side of God, but of men."⁷⁷ Matthew has retained the command to keep silence and the saying against Peter, but two additions to Mark's account have changed Peter's role considerably. After Peter's confession (which is expanded to include divine sonship), Jesus announced that Peter is blessed, and that he is a spokesman of God, the foundation of the Church, and the keeper of divine destiny. Secondly, Peter's remark about the death of Jesus, which Mark and Luke do not have, seems to be a pious wish: "God forbid, Lord! This shall never happen to you."⁷⁸ Luke omits the debate between Jesus and Peter entirely. Luke's passion prediction is not challenged or misunderstood. Despite a long tradition to the contrary, Peter's confession is not the high point of the gospel of Mark, but rather the beginning of the disciples' stubborn misunderstanding of Jesus' mission.

The second passion prediction left the disciples without understanding and they were afraid to ask.⁷⁹ Matthew omits the lack of understanding and Luke explains the lack by remarking that the saying was concealed, so they would not understand. The failure of the disciples to understand in Mark 9:30-32 is followed immediately by an example of their misconception in the dispute about greatness.⁸⁰ The disciples wanted to know who was the greatest among them. Jesus' reply was a lesson on service and humility. The problem is raised again in Mark and Matthew. In Mark the sons of Zebedee wanted seats of glory in heaven, which cannot be given to them by Jesus.⁸¹ Matthew does not put such a bold question in the mouths of disciples. The mother of James and John approached Jesus instead and made the request on her knees. Mark's

point is that the two followers were looking for glory instead of discipleship, and their question came immediately after the third prediction of suffering and death.⁸²

The third stage of blindness is characterized by rejection of Jesus by the disciples. The first to leave Jesus was Judas (Mk. 14:10-11, pars.).⁸³ Later, at Gethsemane the disciples slept instead of obeying Jesus' command to watch. Jesus addressed the disciples three times, Peter the first time and the group the other two times. In Mark and Matthew Peter is singled out for blame. In Luke, Jesus came to the disciples once "and found them sleeping for sorrow."⁸⁴ In Matthew and Mark the rejection of Jesus through indifference is highlighted at Gethsemane, and Peter is portrayed as one who could not watch one hour. Luke removed the elaborate details of the disciples' indifference and explained their sleep as a sign of sympathy. The story of the arrest continues along the lines of the Gethsemane passage.⁸⁵ In Matthew and Mark all the disciples forsook Jesus and fled, but Luke has omitted the verse of abandonment and has completed the passage with a speech showing Jesus' acceptance of his fate.⁸⁶

The rejection of Jesus culminates in the threefold denial of Peter.⁸⁷ The actual denial in Mark is made more ironic through the prediction of it by Jesus and Peter's vehement insistence (echoed by the disciples) that he would die before denying Jesus.⁸⁸ Matthew dropped the adverb "vehemently", thus decreasing the irony of the subsequent denial. On the other hand, Luke has turned the denial into a didactic story by preceding the prediction with this saying of Jesus: "Simon,

Simon, behold, Satan demanded to have you, that he might sift you like wheat, but I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail, and when you have turned again, strengthen your brethren."⁸⁹ As a result, the Lukan story of the denial serves a didactic purpose. His audience read that the Lord looked at Peter, who remembered the prediction and wept, but the audience knew that Peter would turn and be the source of strength for his brothers in the Church. Similarly, the audience of Matthew knew that Peter would become the foundation of the Church, as Jesus had said at Caesarea Philippi. They might have compared Peter's denial with the walking on water, when Peter's faith weakened temporarily. However, Mark has no extra stories to change the meaning of the denial.

In Mark's gospel the relationship between Jesus and the disciples is strained from the beginning and ends in abandonment and denial. The disciples never understood the meaning of Jesus' words and deeds. Ironically, Peter was the leader of the blind and the chief of the sinners. His great confession at Caesarea Philippi was silenced and he refused to accept the suffering role of Jesus. Moreover, he denied all knowledge of his master at the time of trial. He and the other disciples have no personal role in the gospel after the fourteenth chapter. The young man at the tomb gave orders to the women: "But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going before you to Galilee" ⁹⁰ Peter is mentioned after the disciples, unlike the later and shorter ending of Mark, where Peter alone receives the news. ⁹¹

The blindness theme, especially in its treatment of Peter, serves to contrast the Christology of the Palestinian tradition with that

of the Hellenistic tradition. The disciples did not understand Jesus, then conceived him to be what he was not, and finally rejected him at the highpoint of his revelation to the world. Peter confessed Jesus as the Messiah, a locus classicus in the Palestinian Church, which preached Jesus as the Messiah - Son of Man. The sons of Zebedee asked for a special position in glory in Mark because the evangelist sought to criticize the expectations of splendor that accompanied the Messianic hope. Mark affects a criticism of the entire Palestinian tradition by making the proponents and the chief spokesman of that point of view the theological equals of the blind, hard hearted scribes and Pharisees. The blindness relates to the Messianic Secret.

The Messianic secret is the most complex of the three Christological themes in Mark, because it extends over a wider area in order to point the ministry of Jesus toward the passion narrative. The secret is an integral part of the editorial structure, where it tends to keep the fame of Jesus unknown. The secret is the conscious effort of Jesus to silence those who confess his greatness, but it is not automatically employed, nor is it at all effective. As a result, there is a large amount of tension between the apparent purpose of the secret and the end-product of its use. A list of passages where the editorial device is employed will help begin the discussion of its purpose.

Confessions of Jesus' Majesty Are Silenced

- | | |
|---------|-------------------------------------|
| 1:21-28 | Demoniac: "Holy One of God" |
| 3:7-12 | Demoniacs: "You are the Son of God" |
| 8:27-33 | Peter: "You are the Christ" |

10:46-52 Blind Bartimaeus: "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" The crowd orders silence in this passage alone.

No One Is to Speak about Jesus

1:32-34 After the healing at evening

1:40-45 After the healing of the leper

5:21-43 After the healing of Jairus' daughter

7:31-37 After the healing of the deaf mute

8:22-26 After the healing of the blind man

9:9-13 After the transfiguration of Jesus

The Secretive Nature of Jesus' Ministry

1:45 Jesus does not enter towns because of his fame.

4:10-12 The parables are secrets.

4:33-34 The necessity of explaining the parables

7:24 Jesus travels incognito but cannot be hid.

9:30 Jesus travels incognito because of the Passion.

The former explanation of the secrecy motif, that Jesus used it to guard against premature or erroneous ideas of his Messiahship, does not stand up under Bultmann's statement that the motif belongs to the redaction of Mark and not to the historical sayings of Jesus.⁹²

The complexity of the Secret is a major reason for the failure of most critics' attempts to explain the motif. No single title is rejected by Jesus. One title -- the Son of God -- is used to reveal the role of Jesus in the baptism (1:11), the transfiguration (9:7), and after the crucifixion (15:39), yet the same title is to be concealed in one healing passage (3:7-12) and not in another (5:7). Another title -- the Christ -- is rejected by Jesus at Caesarea Philippi but accepted by him at

his trial (14:62). The same title appears in a saying by Jesus on discipleship (9:41). Any attempt to explain the Secret on the basis of one title will therefore fail, especially if the various titles were merged in the evangelist's mind.

The Messianic Secret is complex, but classifying the passages tends to clarify the issue. Out of fifteen uses of the secrecy motif (listed above), fourteen are located in the Galilean ministry (1:14-9:50). The only exception involves the crowd silencing the one who acknowledges the office of Jesus (10:46-52). Otherwise, the Judean section (chapters 10-16) is devoid of secrecy passages. The reason for this is that the role of Jesus is no longer a secret in the Judean section, for the evangelist has explained the meaning of the Jerusalem days in the three passion predictions.

Formerly, the Secret was nearly always discussed in close relation to the question of the Messiahship of Jesus,⁹³ but this cannot be. Mark's editorial activity was concerned with more than the specific Messianic office of Jesus.^{93a} The miracles in the gospel reveal Mark's use of the paradox involved in revelation and hiddenness. A pair of passages describes the role of Jesus without the editorial secrecy motif, which indicates that Mark did not choose to veil these particular stories.⁹⁴ The baptism reveals Jesus as the Son of God in the Hellenistic sense. The Hellenistic origin of the legend is vouched for by the non-Jewish details of the story (1:9-11).⁹⁵ The second passage is an editorial section on the healing activity of Jesus (6:53-56). The power of Jesus is so great that the fringe of his garment heals the sick.

The result of the editorial secrecy theme is that Jesus is only partially revealed in his ministry of miracles. The healings are not meaningless in the gospel of Mark -- otherwise the total criticism of them would have been part of the evangelist's efforts. Instead the wonderful deeds of Jesus, though done in secret, are pictured as too miraculous to remain hidden. Jesus simply cannot escape recognition (7:24). This fascination with the miraculous is part of the Hellenistic culture,⁹⁶ so one might correctly say that Mark has not eliminated or criticized the wonder stories but has made them secondary to the most important message of the gospel -- the Passion. This is revealed in the last use of the Secret by Jesus. He traveled incognito because he was teaching the disciples that the Son of Man will be delivered into the hands of men and be killed and rise again (9:30-31).

In contrast to the secrecy involved with what might delay the passion, the actions or words of Jesus are quite plain when the evangelist is making a point.

The veil of secrecy is lifted in the healing of the Gerasene demoniac, where Jesus is addressed as the Son of the Most High God (5:7). The healed man then becomes the first apostle to the Gentiles, sent out by Jesus to preach to the Decapolis what the Lord had done for him (5:19-20). Likewise, the secrecy motif is absent when Jesus speaks about his role as the Suffering Son of Man. "And he said this plainly." (8:32a) Lastly, the Secret is omitted when Jesus answers the high priest, providing a reason for the crucifixion. The reply of Jesus, however, is qualified by his status as the coming Son of Man.

The secret seems unusually perplexing and overly complex, but this makes it all the more certain that the evangelist was attempting a difficult task in Christological interpretation: "the union of the Hellenistic kerygma about Christ, whose essential content consists of the Christ myth as we learn of it in Paul (esp. Phil. 2:6ff; Rom. 3:24) with the tradition of the story of Jesus."⁹⁷ The evangelist achieved this fact through his combination of the Hellenistic Christ myth with the Palestinian Son of Man - Messiah tradition.

Although the study of Gnostic influence on Christianity is an uncertain area of scholarship, some tentative proposals might be suggested for the meaning behind these three Christological themes of the Hellenistic redaction. The themes actually propagate a paradox of revelation: Jesus does not reveal his role as Servant until he approaches his Passion in Jerusalem, but he reveals his power through preaching and working miracles in Galilee, both of which cease in Jerusalem itself. In addition, Jesus orders silence about his glorious titles in many circumstances, yet his fame spreads everywhere. Furthermore, his disciples never understand his mission, yet they follow him until the time of the trial. Lastly, the ones who desert Jesus are the same ones who heard his predictions of the Passion. The themes of Mark develop the paradox that Jesus is constantly hidden and revealed, accepted and rejected, known and unknown. The peculiar nature of this paradoxical revelation suggests that the evangelist was influenced by Gnostic stories of the mysterious Redeemer of Light who is known only by the elect and rejected by the rest. Mark may have been aware of the

widespread influence of the Gnostic redeemer myth and therefore chose to subtly identify Jesus with some of the Gnostic traits. His relationship to Gnostic thought cannot be pushed to extremes, but the Hellenistic aim of the gospel seems more clear because of it. The Hellenistic nature of the gospel is further clarified by the Markan use of the Passion predictions.

CHAPTER III

THE SUFFERING SON OF MAN IN THE CHRISTOLOGY OF MARK

In the Christian Church, it has been common to assume that Jesus understood himself to be the Suffering Servant of Deutero-Isaiah. This has not been the idea of traditional theologians alone. Reginald Fuller, in The Mission and Achievement of Jesus, said that Jesus "understood himself to be called to a mission of obedience in terms of the Suffering Servant" ⁹⁸ The Servant concept seemed to connect with the Passion narrative and interpret it more accurately than the glorious Son of Man and Messiah concepts. The priority of Mark led scholars to think that the second gospel was relatively simple in its Christology, and the Servant concept seemed to fit in with the low Christology of the nineteenth century liberals. Albert Schweitzer, despite his distain for the liberalizing tendency of the life of Jesus movement, adopted a scheme of low Christology from Mark as the authentic life of Jesus. ⁹⁹

The Suffering Servant, however, was not part of the earliest layers of synoptic tradition. The passion narrative relies on the Psalms for scriptural confirmation and the Q sayings do not contain Suffering Servant sayings. The Servant was not considered Messianic by the Jews,

but the concept did resemble the beliefs in the dying and rising gods of the Hellenistic world.¹⁰⁰ The Christ myth was used early in the Hellenistic Church, appearing in Philippians 2:6-11, Romans 3:24f., and dominating I Peter. The Christ myth emphasizes the atoning death of Jesus and subsequent exaltation through resurrection. By combining the dying and rising god motif with the Son of Man concept Mark bridged the gulf between the Jewish Christians and Gentile Christians. In doing this Mark decreased the eschatological tension concerning the coming Son of Man hope and focused more on the death and resurrection of Jesus.¹⁰¹ The Suffering Son of Man Christology clearly belongs to the editorial framework of Mark, for it introduces the primary units of the Passion tradition through the predictions of suffering.^{101a}

Recent Biblical scholars, Tódt especially, have argued that the Suffering Servant concept was rooted in the Palestinian tradition, since the idea of atoning death was prevalent in Jewish circles at that time. Without denying the possible Jewish origin of this interpretation of Jesus, one can understand the value of the Gentile point of view. Assuming that the first followers of Jesus might have employed rabbinic exegesis to demonstrate that their master was the Servant, we would still argue that such an interpretation did not find its way into Q or the Passion narrative. It was therefore relatively late in the synoptic layers of tradition. We have no definite proof that the Servant was interpreted messianically by the Jews at the time of Jesus, although we do have ample evidence for the messianic function of the Son of Man. This suggests that the Messiah and the coming Son of Man

concepts were the earliest and most natural interpretations of Jesus by the Palestinian community. The Suffering Son of Man tradition works in a new direction. Although it retains the Jewish terminology of its origin, it falls more naturally into the provenance of the Hellenistic Gentile Church: it parallels the pagan redeemer myth pattern and it serves to broaden the extent of Christian theology by removing the barriers of nationalistic feelings. It is our understanding that Mark has employed the Servant concept to bring together the traditions he has received and unify them in a theology of the cross. He has accomplished this with his predictions of the Passion.

The first Passion predictions belong to the section of Mark which immediately precedes the entry into Jerusalem. "The particular nature of the section (Mark 8:27-10:52) has long been recognized."¹⁰² Lohmeyer has noted that the section is held together by the three predictions, each one carefully allotted to the three stages of the journey.¹⁰³ Mark 8:31 is located near Caesarea Philippi, Mark 9:31 in Galilee, and Mark 10:33f. on the road to Jerusalem. The disciples are the audience in the announcements. "The fact that the disciples play a greater part in this section is grounded simply in their being the natural objects of the teachings. They thus represent the reader, i.e. the Church."¹⁰⁴ The reception of the predictions among the disciples is noteworthy. Peter rejects the first announcement (8:32), the disciples fail to understand the second (9:32), and the sons of Zebedee ask for seats of glory after the third (10:35), prompting Jesus to comment on his role (10:45). The Suffering Son of Man section is a

systematic construction of Mark: "here Christian dogma has attained its point of greatest influence on the presentation."¹⁰⁵

The origin of that theology is extremely important. Considerable discussion has arisen about the provenance of the Son of Man sayings. The saying in Mark 10:45 is clearly influenced by the idea of the Suffering Servant.¹⁰⁶ Although the concept of sacrificial death was rooted in the Jewish community,¹⁰⁷ the Suffering Servant was not considered a Messianic figure among the Jews. Despite attempts to find a pre-Christian suffering Messiah or suffering Son of Man, the evidence does not support such arguments. The earliest evidence for a suffering or dying Messiah (Messiah ben Ephraim) is from the second century A.D., and the Son of Man in I Enoch does not endure shameful suffering for the sins of the world.¹⁰⁸

The Suffering Son of Man occurs first in Mark within the synoptic tradition; the sayings are not found in the Q-source.¹⁰⁹ Besides the two late sayings in Mark about the Son of Man's activity on earth (2:10,28), there are parousia sayings (8:38; 13:26f.; 14:62). The parousia sayings in Mark are not assimilated with the predictions of the Passion, which speak of death and resurrection but not of the advent of the Son of Man. The Passion sayings assume that the Son of Man is Jesus, at work on earth through his suffering. The two types of sayings in Mark occur together without being brought together in meaning. "In Mark 9:1, 11-13 only the parousia is assumed,¹¹⁰ while the transfiguration (9:2-10), which the evangelist inserted between the originally connected verses, contains only the idea of resurrection."¹¹¹ Matthew and Luke

combine the two concepts (Mt.17:12b, 24:26f.; Lk.17:23-25) -- "an altogether secondary combination."¹¹² H.E.Tödt believes that Mark assimilates the two kinds of sayings by their proximity (8:31 and 8:38), but he fails to take into account the secondary assimilations in Matthew, Luke, and the interpolation in Mark.¹¹³

Considering the absence of Passion predictions in the Q-source, it is not to be doubted that the parousia sayings are older. The Passion sayings are "probably later products of the Hellenistic Church,¹¹⁴ in which the title 'Son of Man' was no longer understood in its original sense" ¹¹⁵ Mark's editorial work is revealed in the placing of these sayings as introductory and interpretive remarks on the Passion. The result of Mark's understanding of the crucifixion is that the Gentile world was free to accept Jesus as the universal savior of the present.

The aim of the evangelist was to proclaim his message to the Gentiles without sacrificing the earlier gospel traditions. He ~~accom-~~ accomplished this by applying his Christological concerns to the traditional matter available to him. He has molded the traditions of Jesus' activities in Palestine into an extended journey to the cross. He has taken the non-acceptance of Jesus and turned it into the theme of the disciples' blindness. He has heightened the authority and power of Jesus by employing the Messianic Secret sayings, in 8:27-10:52 (before the entry) and in 14:1-42 (before the arrest). The Suffering Son of Man sayings do not appear outside these two sections. The entry and the Passion are mainly units of tradition that Mark has received, so

he has used the sayings to lead up to and interpret the heart of his gospel.

The gospel of Mark is centered around the cross. This was not a new method of Christology, since Paul's works are permeated with the crucifixion motif, but Mark's gospel does stand out in comparison with the other synoptic accounts of the Passion. Mark tells the Passion story in a new format, elaborating the details that Paul did not provide. Matthew and Luke insert special editorial work to make the crucifixion more palatable. Matthew carries out Mark's anti-Jewish polemic and Luke concentrates on the innocence of Jesus, so the cross becomes more and more institutionalized. One is reminded of the sterling silver pectoral cross, a popular incongruity.

The cross of Mark does not have the glory of an established symbol. Instead, the cross is presented as the necessary means by which God's will was carried out. The crucifixion is stark and mournful. Jesus is crucified, mocked by passers-by and priests and the two criminals. He cries out in despair, misunderstood by the bystanders, and breathes his last. A note of triumph is recorded in the rending of the temple veil and the exclamation of the centurion, but the scene retains its dirge-like quality in the simplicity of the recognition of Jesus' power. The gospel of Matthew concludes the crucifixion with far more impressive portents (27:51ff.) and Luke has the witnesses (now multitudes) beating their breasts in regret (23:48).

Luke provides the greatest contrast with the Markan account, for Jesus accepts his role in the third gospel and carries it out with

enormous power and glory. Jesus asks God to forgive the perpetrators' sin, since they are ignorant of their crime. One thief rebukes the other for reviling Jesus, who has done nothing wrong. Jesus replies by offering the good thief a place in paradise. Jesus dies with an accepting exclamation to God, committing his spirit to God. The centurion remarks that Jesus was certainly innocent. The theological confession is no longer needed, for the multitudes acknowledge their deed with profound grieving -- All of this material is unique to Luke and quite different from Mark's view.

The shame of the cross was met by the two evangelists in separate ways. While Luke's method is more apologetic, Mark's is more Christological. The second gospel approaches the problem more directly, by introducing the Passion accounts with a theology of necessity. The role of Jesus is inseparably bound with the crucifixion, and the crucifixion itself is a picture of shame, torture, and despair. Mark has changed the original meaning of the Passion by providing the Christological introduction of the predictions. The earliest Passion account was based upon the Psalms of Lament, appropriate for the suffering of the Messiah. The king suffers but he will soon display his power: so the first followers believed. The delay of the parousia meant that the role of Jesus must be better interpreted. Therefore, the concept of Jesus as the Redeemer God or Suffering Servant provided a dual answer to the theological questions of the Gentile community. First of all, it meant that the crucifixion itself had a special purpose in God's plan -- the forgiveness of sins. Secondly, the Servant role focused

salvation on a realized event of the past instead of a hope in the future. The basic Jewish narrations remain but their content is altered. The miracle stories become Hellenistic tales of wondrous deeds. The authority of the Son of Man transcends the Torah and encompasses the power of God. The death of the Messiah is now the suffering of the Servant.

The Christology of Mark is not confined to any section of the gospel; on the contrary, it permeates the entire gospel. Since the cross is the focus of the gospel, and Jesus' role is declared to be that of the Suffering Servant, one must read the gospel with those things in mind in order to understand his highly developed Christology. Although the gospel seems rough, crude, and simple, the Christology in it is none of those things. Mark's proclamation of Jesus draws from various sources for his material, but the product is a unified doctrine of Christ.

The Christology of Mark has rightly been called a mysterious revelation, for the power of Jesus is revealed and displayed in a number of perplexing ways. We must guard against trying too hard to solve the mystery behind Mark's Christology, because his proclamation of Jesus rests on a series of paradoxes. The Christological themes bear witness to the impossibility of biographical interpretation and demand instead to be understood on the basis of the necessity of the crucifixion.

The geography of Mark is an essential ingredient of his Christology. One might say that the geography of the second gospel is the framework on which the evangelist constructs his mysterious revelation.

Galilee and Jerusalem are balanced against each other to create the feeling of irony -- that the mission of Jesus must be fulfilled in a hostile city. It would be wrong to say that the happy beginning of the gospel, the Galilean ministry, is a surprising contrast to the dirge-like second half. Since the glory of Jesus is only partially revealed in the Galilean ministry, the days in Judea provide the only true revelation of Jesus -- that he is the suffering Redeemer.

The geographical framework is didactic as well as theological. The Gentile reader saw that the glory of the Galilean ministry was conditioned by the torture of Golgotha. Jesus preached among the Gentiles but accepted the danger of Jerusalem. Two sections of the gospel show the tension between the spheres of revelation. The narratives which center around the Sea of Galilee have Jesus reaching out to the areas outside of his home territory. The section begins with the multitudes flocking to him at the Sea of Galilee (3:7ff). He teaches the people but he commissions his first apostle in the country of the Gerasenes. The healed demoniac proclaims the gospel to the citizens of the Decapolis (5:20). In the course of crossing back and forth he travels to Tyre and Sidon, meeting a Greek woman. The result of their conversation is that even foreigners deserve the healing power of Jesus (7:28). The paradoxical revelation of Jesus at Caesarea Philippi is also on foreign territory. The purpose of this theme of homeland in contrast to the outside world seems to be a lesson in reaching new lands with the gospel. The mission to the Gentiles has important precedents in the gospel of Mark.

The second section which develops the tension between in-country and out-country is the days in Jerusalem. There Jesus enters the city to do his work and leaves again. This occurs three times in the eleventh chapter of Mark and is not copied by Matthew or Luke. The purpose of the repeated withdrawal from Jerusalem seems to be an emphasis on the function of Jerusalem as a special place of revelation. Jerusalem is the city of confrontation and destruction, so it is appropriate to withdraw from her hostile confines when the necessary work of Jesus is completed for the day. This theme is carried out in the necessary revelation of Jesus as the crucified Servant, who chooses to reveal himself in Galilee rather than in the holy city.

The theme of the disciples' blindness serves to carry on the tension developed between homeland and foreign (or hostile) territory in the geographical framework. The gospel begins within the Jewish tradition, using John the Baptist as the herald of the coming Messiah. The disciples are gathered together at the very beginning of Jesus' ministry, and they have a close relationship to their master. The cross is far away, yet they show many signs of imperception about the role of Jesus. This blindness increases as they draw closer to the time of revelation. At Caesarea Philippi Peter confesses Jesus to be the Messiah but misconceives the meaning of Jesus' role. The disciples quest for glory is challenged by the Passion predictions, but they fail to understand what those sayings mean. Ultimately, they reject Jesus at the time of complete revelation. Jesus is left to die without his disciples present, yet he sparks the faith of a pagan soldier.

The Gentile gospel of Mark contrasts the knowledge of Jesus with the disbelief of the disciples. Important acclamations of his majesty come from outsiders, the Gerasene demoniac and the centurion. This is an important affirmation of the Gentile Church, which viewed the events of Jesus' life differently than did the Jewish Christian Church. The intimate relationship between Jesus and the disciples is altered so that their very closeness sets off the ironic observation that the earliest followers did not fully understand their own master. Therefore, the gospel contrasts intimacy with Jesus to full understanding of his mission. The distant Gentile Christians could enjoy a privilege which even the disciples failed to obtain, just as the despised demoniac became the first actual missionary in Mark.

The three main Christological themes of Mark depend on each other to maintain the consistent mysterious revelation of Christ. The Messianic Secret serves to unite the themes, giving substance to the concept of Jesus as hidden until the time of revelation. The secrecy motif belongs to the Galilean sphere, when people confess Jesus on the basis of his wonderful deeds. In fact, the confessions of the crowd do not prompt the majority of the commands of silence. Two thirds of the commands come from Jesus' mouth as a prior warning against such confessions. The impression given by this is that Jesus realizes that people will talk about his power and does not permit talk on account of his self-conception.

The narrative of his travels strengthens this concept of deliberately hidden glory. Early in his ministry he does not enter the

towns because of his fame (1:45). He travels incognito but cannot be hid (7:24). Jesus travels secretly because of the Passion (9:30). Like the hidden Son of Man in I Enoch, the Suffering Servant in Mark is not fully known until the crucial moment of revelation. Therefore, the secrecy motif operates chiefly in the sphere of Jesus' ministry, when the Hellenistic and Jewish readers are inclined to base their theology on the glorious deeds of Jesus.

The Christology of Mark seems to be directed toward serving two purposes. The first is a thoroughgoing attempt to make the proclamation of Jesus a message which is not limited by the boundaries of Jewish faith and culture. This meant an interpretation of the life of Jesus based on the Hellenistic concepts of the universal savior-god. Mark carried out the theology of Paul by attaching the cosmic importance of the crucifixion to the earthly ministry of Jesus. At the same time Mark made the ministry of Jesus an introduction and commentary on the suffering of the Son of Man.

The second purpose of Mark's Christology is a firmer picture of what discipleship means. The tendency to glorify the special status of the believers is avoided in the gospel. Discipleship is an exacting task full of danger and suffering. The glory of the kingdom of God is not the goal of the followers. Instead, many times of trial are held up as the consequences of faith. The disciples must be like children, ready to follow without question. Although the eschatological hopes of the first believers remain in various forms, the gospel reaches its climax of meaning in the crucifixion narrative. Jesus has died for the

sins of the world, rending the Temple curtain which has hidden God, and prompting a Gentile to express his profound faith in Jesus in his bitterest hour.

The gospel grew from the minute it began in the hearts of the disciples. The power, authority, and uniqueness of Jesus implied a Christology which we cannot fully determine. The disciples responded to the call of Jesus by forming their own Christology, which probably began to form early in the ministry of Jesus. The crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus required more elaborate constructions about the meaning of Jesus' mission. The earliest theology used Jewish Messianic expectations and the associated Son of Man hopes of apocalyptic Judaism as a model for their Christology. The gospel reached the Gentiles quite early and they formed a Christology which modeled their understanding of salvation. They found harmony between the Redeemer God of the Hellenistic world and the Suffering Servant of the Jewish world. Mark took this Gentile concept and molded the basically Jewish narratives of the ministry and passion of Jesus into a gospel for the entire world. He effectively released Christians from the futile eschatological hopes they inherited from Judaism and placed the importance of the mission of Jesus on the atoning death of the savior.

This study has many implications for the field of New Testament studies. Although redaction criticism has been applied to Matthew and Luke quite successfully, the gospel of Mark does lend itself so readily to such analysis. The primary difficulty is that we have nothing with which to compare Mark, no earlier document by which we can

measure the editorial changes. However, we can reach a deeper understanding of Mark's theology by investigating his distinctive editorial devices. Such research will underline the conclusion of Marxsen's treatment of the evangelist and the assumption of this paper -- that Mark was a creative theologian who arranged his material in such a way that his own interpretation of Jesus would emerge.

This relatively new approach to the gospel of Mark does not ask the same questions of high and low Christology that the liberals and conservatives often debated. Scholars no longer wish to determine the exact life of Jesus; that quest has ended. We can make certain statements about the distinctive quality of Jesus' ministry and about the historicity of the resurrection experience of the Church. Jesus did not make explicit Christological claims but he left the disciples with the profound conviction that he was promised savior. However, the Church has not paid sufficient attention to this.

More specifically, we would argue that the evangelist made a number of choices when composing his gospel. The primary choice was his selection of a Christology. We believe that Mark was aware of the implications of the various titles already applied to Jesus. The Messiah was a Davidic king, the Son of Man a superhuman savior, and both were hopes to be realized in the future. Mark chose the Servant Christology because it did not rely on future hopes. Moreover, this Christology linked the Gentile branch of the Church to the Jewish side by moderating between Jewish nationalism and Gentile universalism.

The result of Mark's work is a commentary on the life of Jesus which the other synoptic writers often chose to alter considerably while adopting his format. These are the distinctive traits of the Markan Christology: Jesus had one mission, to die on the cross for the sins of the world. So strong was this destiny that it inevitably brought him to Jerusalem. At no time did his disciples understand his mission; on the contrary, they displayed less understanding as the days in Jerusalem approached. Jesus realized his destiny and so he chose to keep his future wrapped in an enigma. Through he ordered silence about his miraculous healings, he frequently displayed his glory openly. Yet he traveled in secret because of his coming Passion. He declared his mission to the disciples in three predictions, but they were blind to his destiny. Jesus entered Jerusalem in glory but the Jews quickly persuaded the Romans to crucify him. While within the city Jesus predicted the fall of the Temple. At his trial a witness declared that Jesus promised to destroy the Temple and replace it with a new one made without hands. After he suffered and died for the sins of the world and rose from the dead, as he had predicted, he became the new Temple, made without hands. The city that destroyed Jesus was doomed to destruction, while Jesus was victorious. The mission of Jesus was fulfilled and his glory was fully revealed. His glorious coming would soon prove the truth of the gospel and mark the end of the age. Essentially, this is the Christology of Mark.

Mark's direct influence on the Church was small, perhaps because the timeliness of its message tended to restrict the extent of

its meaning. Although the gospel moved with increasing drama toward an imminent climax in the parousia, the resolution of the believers' hopes, raised by the destruction of Jerusalem, was never achieved. Tension about the fall of the Temple inevitably subsided, and greater interest in the Church as an institution began to be felt. The gospel of Luke and the Acts of the Apostles were written with a lengthy period of the Church in mind. In Luke's gospel Jesus stood in the midst of time, between the ages of the Jewish religion and the Christian faith, no longer at the end of time.^{115a} Matthew also altered the eschatological tension of Mark by looking toward a lengthy period of the Church. In Matthew the last words of Jesus are directed at the world-wide Gentile mission. Matthew and Luke are both more interested in material aimed at the life of the Church and its continuing problems. It is no surprise, then, that Mark suffered considerable neglect once the situation of the Church changed and no longer required Mark's timely message.

As the mission of the Church became increasingly directed toward the Hellenistic world, the influence of Mark's Christology began to be felt indirectly. Although we must give credit to Paul for the theology of the cross and universal salvation, and acknowledge that Mark was probably not the first to use the Suffering Servant interpretation of Jesus, we can assert that Mark was the first to write a life of Jesus based on the Servant concept from the beginning of his ministry. By combining the extended journey of Jesus with the increasing blindness of the disciples and the Messianic Secret, the entire gospel proclaims the entire ministry of Jesus as one devoted to the fulfillment of the Servant's

role: the salvation of the world through his atoning death on the cross.

The proclamation of Mark has been understood as low Christology and high Christology because of the two basic interpretations of the Servant concept. The earthly life of Jesus was his period of humility and suffering, as Justin Martyr portrayed the work of the Servant in his Dialogue with Trypho the Jew. While the human Jesus was crucified, the divine Christ will return in glory to judge the world. In Justin Martyr, high and low Christology are combined, but the nineteenth century critics were able to separate the two by pointing out the theme of Mark as Servant Christology, which exemplified the human nature of Jesus in the eyes of Justin. Opponents of the liberals' low Christology sought to rescue the gospels from the methods which seemed to eliminate the content of the Christian faith.

While the battles of the New Testament critics have produced volumes of material on both sides of the debate, the Christology of Mark cannot be clearly understood exclusively in terms of either viewpoint. Proponents of low Christology have tended to neglect the unique quality and authority of Jesus' words and deeds and have frequently given credit for the remarkable expansion of Christianity to everyone but its founder. At the same time, defenders of high Christology have often gone to extremes in trying to prove the historicity of sayings which declare the titles of Jesus and tend to overlook the importance of the layers of tradition in the gospels. The Christology of Mark was not directed at the controversies of our time, so the gospel must be understood as an answer to problems of a previous era.

The problems of high and low Christology can be applied to the Markan narrative of the Passion. Does his suffering prove that he was human or does his atoning death establish his divinity? Neither question can be answered adequately. But if we ask the purpose behind the Markan Passion narrative, as explained by the entire gospel, we can give an answer: Jesus died on the cross for all mankind, rejected by his disciples but accepted by a Gentile centurion. The curtain of the Temple was split and later Jerusalem fell, and the proclamation of Jesus as the universal savior began to reach the ends of the earth.

APPENDIX ONE

EXTERNAL EVIDENCE FOR THE PROVENANCE OF MARK

The Gospel of Mark is not referred to in the ancient writers with great clarity or frequency. However, it is important to note what tradition had to say about the second gospel. The most quoted citation comes from Papias, the bishop of Hierapolis, in his Exegesis of the Lord's Oracles, a lost work (ca. A.D.140) quoted by Eusebius.¹¹⁶

And the Elder said this also: Mark, having become the interpreter of Peter, wrote down accurately all that he remembered of the things said and done by the Lord, but not however in order. For neither did he hear the Lord, nor did he follow him, but afterwards, as I said, Peter, who adapted his teachings to the needs (of the hearers), but not as though he were drawing up a connected account of the Lord's oracles. So then Mark made no mistake in thus recording some things just as he remembered them, for he made it his one care to omit nothing that he had heard and to make no false statement therein.¹¹⁷

An early Latin prologue (A.D. 170-190) to the Gospel of Mark records the same basic information from the Papias tradition but locates the gospel geographically and chronologically.

. . . Mark declared, who is called "stump-fingered", because he had rather small fingers in comparison with the stature of the rest of his body. He was the interpreter of Peter. After the death of Peter himself he wrote down this same gospel in the regions of Italy.¹¹⁸

Irenaeus discusses Mark in a passage about the four gospels.¹¹⁹ He precedes his statement about Mark with the information that Matthew wrote while Peter and Paul were preaching in Rome. He writes: "And after the death of these Mark, the disciple and interpreter of Peter, also transmitted to us in writing the things preached by Peter."¹²⁰

Three passages in the works of Clement of Alexandria refer to Mark. The first two are quoted in Eusebius.^{120a}

When Peter had preached the word publicly in Rome and announced the gospel by the Spirit, those present, of whom there were many, besought Mark, since for a long time he had followed him and remembered what had been said, to record his words. Mark did this and communicated the gospel to those who made request of him. When Peter knew of it, he neither actively prevented nor encouraged the undertaking.¹²¹

The second passage emphasizes the gospel's endorsement by Peter: "They say that, when the Apostle knew what had been done, the Spirit having revealed it to him, he was pleased with the zeal of the men, and ratified the writing for reading in the Churches."¹²²

The third passage is similar:

Mark, the follower of Peter, while Peter was preaching publicly the gospel at Rome in the presence of certain of Caesar's knights and was putting forward many testimonies concerning Christ, being requested by them that they might be able to commit to memory the things which were being spoken, wrote from the things which were spoken by Peter the Gospel which is called according to Mark.¹²³

Origen supports the Papias tradition and quotes I Peter 5:13: "And second, that according to Mark, who did as Peter instructed him, whom he also acknowledged as a son in the Catholic Epistle in these words, 'She that is in Babylon, elect together with you, saluteth you, and Mark my

son."¹²⁴ Jerome's Commentary on Matthew, Prooemium, 6, contradicts the Roman tradition by associating Mark with Alexandria: "Second, Mark, the interpreter of the Apostle Peter and the first Bishop of the Church of Alexandria, who himself did not see the Lord the Saviour, but narrated those things which he heard his master preaching, with fidelity to the deeds rather than to their order."¹²⁵ Jerome also placed Mark's death in Alexandria before Peter and Paul died, (de Vir. Ill. 8).

Other references to the gospel are uncertain. What appears to be a knowledge of Mark in the Epistle of Barnabas (A.D. 130), the Epistle of Clement of Rome to the Corinthians (A.D. 95), the Shepherd of Hermas (? A.D. 145), and Polycarp's Epistle to the Philippians (A.D. 135) may well be simply a knowledge of synoptic tradition.¹²⁶ Justin Martyr mentions certain Memoirs of Peter (Dialogue 106) and uses some Marcan terminology,¹²⁷ but Justin also employs the phraseology of the Gospel of Peter, with which the Memoirs of Peter has been identified.¹²⁸ The Muratonian Canon (seventh to eighth century) contains the books recognized in Rome in the period A.D.170-190. The fragmentary sentence quoted below is followed by a direct reference to Luke's gospel, leading Taylor to believe that the former sentence refers to Mark: "At some things he was present, and so he recorded them."¹²⁹

Ancient church tradition, then, has three things to say about the author of Mark:

- 1) he was the interpreter of Peter, not a witness to the life of Jesus;
- 2) he was considered a resident of Rome in the earliest tradition;
- 3) he wrote in such a way that Papias and others after him found

it necessary to defend the accuracy of his
gospel.¹³⁰

APPENDIX TWO

INTERNAL EVIDENCE FOR THE PROVENANCE OF MARK

We do not know which passage Papias (or Eusebius) was defending against the charge of inaccuracy,¹³¹ but further study of the gospel's background may inform us about the significance of the tradition.¹³² First of all, Mark's language indicates that the evangelist and his audience were both outside the Palestinian tradition. Mark explains the meaning of abba (Mk.14:36), as Paul does in his letters to the Romans (8:15) and the Galatians (4:6). Neither Matthew nor Luke find it necessary to display a knowledge of Aramaic. Instead, they use the Greek work (pater) alone. (Mt.6:9; 26:39; Lk.11:2; 22:42) Mark also explains koinos (7:3-4), although not even Paul considers it necessary (Rom.14:14). The word is not interpreted in Matthew (15:11, 18,20), Hebrews (10:29), or Revelation (21:27). (An exception to this is found in the story of Peter's vision of unclean food (Acts 10:14; 11:8), where Mark's phraseology is employed.) Brief explanations are also attached to Gehenna (Mk.9:43) and the Day of Preparation (Mk.15:42). In both cases Matthew and Luke fail to follow Mark.¹³³ The same is true when Mark translates ephphatha (7:34) and talitha koum (5:41).¹³⁴ Mark reveals his own unfamiliarity with Aramaic in his mysterious title for the sons of Zebedee (3:17) and in his quotation of the cry of dereliction

(15:34).¹³⁵ The transliteration he provides has puzzled scholars and has led them to believe that the author was not knowledgeable in Aramaic. His explanations of Aramaic show that he assumed ignorance of the language on the part of his audience.

Likewise, Mark's treatment of Palestinian history, geography, and culture reveal an outsider trying to communicate with outsiders. His historical treatment of John the Baptist's death (6:17-29) is so inaccurate that Holtzmann called it "the very pattern of a legend."¹³⁶ Instead of the hermit in the Judean desert who attracts the curious from Jerusalem (Mt.11:7 = Lk.7:24), we find the Baptist portrayed as Elijah at the court of Ahab and Jezebel, denouncing the king and plotted against by the queen (I Kings 17). The lonely frontier fortress of Machaerus is replaced by scenes of revelry in the palace at Tiberias.¹³⁷ Furthermore, Mark's erroneous application of the title "king" to the tetrarch Antipas is corrected by Luke (3:19).¹³⁸ A second example of historical difficulty in Mark is the party of the Herodians (3:6; 8:15; 12:13), which cannot be accounted for previous to the accession of Agrippa I (A.D.41).¹³⁹

Geographically, Mark has puzzled ancient and modern writers. The evangelist has Jesus landing at a place on the Sea of Galilee called Dalmanutha (Mk.8:10 = Mt.15:39). Matthew changes the name to Magadan in the original hand of the Aleph manuscript and in Vaticanus. Matthew and Mark have many textual variants, and the later variants in Mark conform to Matthew's correction. Arthur Wright has stated that "no satisfactory explanation of the word Dalmanutha has been found."¹⁴⁰ The second major

geographical problem is the landing at Gerasa (Mk.5:1; Mt.8:28; Lk.8:26). Matthew changes the name to Gadara and Luke has both readings as a possibility. Origen saw that Gadara was too distant for the details related in the story, so he proposed still another explanation.¹⁴¹ In these and other matters of geography the writers who followed Mark took pains to correct his itinerary.

In two instances of general knowledge of Jewish or Palestinian culture, Matthew has omitted the comments of Mark, in the first case because Mark's comments are in error, in the second case because the information is already known to the readers. Mark (7:3-4) offers an explanation of Jewish terms and practices which Montefiore and Abrahams repudiate as libellous.¹⁴² Mark confuses part of Jewish ritual, the cleansing of pots and cups, with the distinction between clean and unclean. His explanation of the proper season for figs (Mk.11:13) would not be needed on any of the eastern coasts of the Mediterranean (cf. Mt.21:19), but it might be required in a place like Rome.¹⁴³

Altogether, the evidence supports two points of tradition: 1) the gospel is Roman, or at least Western; 2) the evangelist was not an accurate recorder of facts. The third point, that Mark was a follower or interpreter of Peter, has been accepted by some scholars, despite the unheroic stature of Peter and the disciples in the gospel. The critical portrait has been defended as evidence of Mark's accuracy and candor,¹⁴⁴ but such a defense does not allow for Mark's unfamiliarity with Palestinian culture and geography. Nor does it take into account the consistently polemical nature of the evangelist's portrayal of the disciples. At any

rate, the gospel is clearly removed from the Palestinian tradition, in terms of accuracy and empathy.

APPENDIX THREE

THE DATE OF MARK

Mark's gospel is commonly assigned to the years between 65 and 75, and this dating depends on the reference to the destruction of the Temple in the thirteenth chapter. Conservative scholars are inclined to view Mark 13 as a genuine prediction of Jesus and therefore date the gospel in the years before the fall of Jerusalem (A.D. 69-70). as Lloyd Gaston remarks: "Of course this means that we shall be speaking of the fall of Jerusalem and the temple in terms of real predictions before the event. . . ." ¹⁴⁵ Vincent Taylor feels that the reference to the desolating sacrilege (Mk. 13:14) is not explicit enough to be a vaticinium ev eventu, as he feels that the most probable years are between 65 and 67. ¹⁴⁶

The record of growing hostility before the destruction of Jerusalem provides valuable information about the redaction of Mark's gospel. A specific saying against the Temple could be a prophecy handed down by the Church, as Bultmann has noted. ¹⁴⁷ Before the year 70 there was a hope that the Temple would be replaced by a more glorious one in the Messianic Age, and Mark 13:2 need not imply anything more than this. "But it would then hardly be comprehensible why it gave such offense as Jesus spoke it, and how the Church was able by its aid to explain why

Jesus was condemned."¹⁴⁸ Although the prediction may be genuine, the use of it displays the retrospect of a post-Fall apologete. A date after the Destruction is also suggested by Mark 13:14. The desolating sacrilege set up where it ought not to be and the aside to the readers seem to be a reflection on the ensigns set up in the Temple. The saying may have originated in the crisis of A.D.39, when Caligula attempted to do what Antiochus had done (I Macc. 1:54), but the actual sacrilege was not repeated until the Temple fell.¹⁴⁹ Moreover, in A.D.70 the sacrilege was followed by the panic which Mark 13:14 ff describes. Lastly, the statement of the witnesses in accusing Jesus has no meaning before the loss of the Temple (Mk.14-58). After A.D.70 the redactor could understand Jesus as a temple made without hands, replacing the one made with hands.¹⁵⁰ Therefore, the gospel is most likely the work of a redactor writing after the Fall of Jerusalem while employing material from earlier years. Probable dates for the composition of the gospel are between 70 and 75.

FOOTNOTES

¹Emil Ludwig, The Son of Man, (Garden City: Garden City Publishing Company, 1928), p.xii.

²William Wrede, Das Messiasgeheimnis in den Evangelium, (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1963), p.66.

³Wilhelm Bousset, Kyrios Christos, (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1970).

Rudolf Bultmann, The History of the Synoptic Tradition, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1963).

R.Bultmann, Theology of the New Testament, 2 Vols., (London: S.C.M. Press, 1952).

⁴Ferdinand Hahn, The Titles of Jesus in Christology, (London: Lutterworth Press, 1969).

Reginald Fuller, The Foundation of New Testament Christology, (London: Collins Press, 1969).

Heinz Tödt, The Son of Man in the Synoptic Tradition, (London: SCM Press, 1963).

⁵This has frequently been the approach of the English critics, especially Vincent Taylor.

⁶Part of the conservative English approach has been to attack the German school of form criticism and the results of the study of comparative religion.

⁷William Smith, Lectures on the Religion of the Semites, (New York: Ktav Publishing, 1969), pp.332f., pp.383f., pp.582f.

⁸Joseph Klausner. The Messianic Idea in Israel. New York: MacMillan, 1955), p.9.

⁹R.Bultmann, Jesus and the Word, (New York: C.Scribner's Sons, 1934).

¹⁰Josephus, Antiquities, XX, V, 1.

¹¹Ant., XX, V, 2.

¹²Ant., XX, VIII, 6.

- ¹³ Ant., XX, VIII, 10.
- ¹⁴ Josephus, Wars, II, XVII, 8f.
- ¹⁵ Ant., XVIII, V.
- ¹⁶ Bultmann, Jesus and the Word, p.25.
- ¹⁷ G.G.F.Brandon has argued this point in several books (cf.M.Hengel), following the theory earlier proposed by Eisler.
- ¹⁸ R.Fuller, Foundations of New Testament Christology, p.110.
R.Bultmann, Jesus and the Word, p.26.
- ¹⁹ Wrede, p.5.
- ²⁰ Albert Schweitzer and Rudolf Bultmann have both worked on the New Testament from this point of view.
- ²¹ R.Bultmann, Theology of the New Testament, Jesus and the Word, History of the Synoptic Tradition.
- ²² Bultmann, Theology of the New Testament, vol.I, p.4.
- ²³ Ibid.
- ²⁴ Fuller, Foundations, p.131.
- ²⁵ Mark 9:5; 10:51; 11:21; 14:45.
- ²⁶ Bultmann, Jesus and the Word, p.58.
- ²⁷ Ibid., pp.58ff.
- ²⁸ Ibid., p.60.
- ²⁹ Mk. 10:17-19.
- ³⁰ Mk.12:18-31; 10:6-8.
- ³¹ Mk.15:2.
- ³² Ant., XVIII, 111
- ³³ Hahn (op.cit.p.158) and Fuller (op.cit.p.109) agree that the confession first existed as an example of how Jesus rejected the title of Messiah, but the command of silence is part of the editorial framework of Mark and is not historical. The confession is an affirmation of faith by the post-Easter Palestinian community.
- ³⁴ Bultmann, History of the Synoptic Tradition, pp.258f.

³⁵Ibid., p.258.

³⁶Ibid., p.305.

³⁷Mk.9:2-8, and parallels.

³⁸Bultmann, History of the Synoptic Tradition, p.259.

³⁹Mk.9:6.

^{39a}While the title of Messiah was meaningful to the Jews, it meant very little to the Gentiles, who knew of no saviors who were anointed with oil. Lord, however, was commonly used in reference to the dying and rising gods of the ancient world. In Paul's letters, the formula "Jesus Christ our Lord" makes Christ a second name while Lord defines his function as savior.

⁴⁰Acts 21:38.

⁴¹J.Y.Campbell, "The Origin and Meaning of the Term Son of Man," Journal of Theological Studies, XLVIII (1947).

⁴²Emil Ludwig has adopted the term as the title of his liberal biography. Nineteenth century liberals thought it expressed a low Christology, but modern scholarship has reversed that conclusion.

⁴³The only exception in the New Testament is Acts 7:56, Revelation 1:13 and 14:14 and Hebrews 2:6 may be interpreted more generally as "a son of man," but the question rests on whether the term in Daniel should be understood specifically or not. The problem is not resolved.

⁴⁴Dan.7:13.

⁴⁵Bultmann, Theology I, p.30.

⁴⁶Ibid., p.29.

⁴⁷Tödt, op.cit., p.32.

⁴⁸Ibid., p.42.

⁴⁹Bultmann, Synoptic Tradition, p.122.

⁵⁰Tödt, op.cit., p.36.

⁵¹Ibid., p.39.

⁵²Jesus did not allude to himself as the Son of Man but proclaimed that the Son of Man would come to verify his teaching.

⁵³Bousset, op.cit., p.71.

⁵⁴Paul mentions Davidic descent in Romans 1:3 but does not place any importance on this article of traditional (i.e. Palestinian) faith, unlike the author of Matthew.

⁵⁵Acts 7:56. The gospel of John also uses the title.

⁵⁶Acts 11:19ff.

⁵⁷See the three appendices to this paper.

⁵⁸Bousset, op.cit., p.120.

^{58a}The suffering of the Servant is placed on the Gentiles and no longer has the power of atonement. The Servant is victorious over the nations, as is the traditional Messianic doctrine, so we must conclude that the Servant passage of Isaiah 52-53 has been brought into conformity with the idea of the Messiah.

⁵⁹Ernst Lohmeyer, Galiläa und Jerusalem, (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1936).

E.Lohmeyer, Das Evangelium des Markus, (Göttingen: und Ruprecht, 1963).

R.H.Lightfoot, Locality and Doctrine in the Gospels, (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1938).

Willi Marksen, Mark the Evangelist, (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1969).

⁶⁰Lohmeyer, Das Evangelium des Markus, p.162, quoted in Marksen, op.cit., p.55.

⁶¹Marksen, op.cit., p.56.

⁶²Lightfoot, op.cit., p.112.

⁶³Marksen, op.cit., p.71f.

⁶⁴Lightfoot, op.cit., pp.123ff.

⁶⁵Ibid., p.26.

^{65a}The only Son of Man passages in Mark which precede the confession at Caesarea Philippi are the two sections about the Son of Man at work on earth. Jesus has the power to forgive sins (Mk.2:9-11) and he is lord of the sabbath (2:28). Both belong to the Hellenistic stratum of the gospel; for the Son of Man did not function on earth but was revealed in the end time in Jewish apocalyptic.

⁶⁶T.J.Weeden, "The Heresy That Necessitated Mark's Gospel,"
Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft, vol.59 (1968), p.147.

⁶⁷Mk.4:10-20, pars.

⁶⁸Mt.13:16f.

⁶⁹Lk.10:23f.

⁷⁰Mk.4:35-41, pars.

⁷¹Mk.5:21-43, pars. Disciples' question - Mk.5:31.

⁷²Lk.8:45.

⁷³Mk.6:45-52; Mt.14:22-33.

⁷⁴Mt.14:32f.

⁷⁵Mk.8:14-21; Mt.16:5-12.

⁷⁶Mk.8:27-33.

⁷⁷Mk.8:33.

⁷⁸Mt.16:22.

⁷⁹Mk.9:30-32.

⁸⁰Mk.9:33-37.

⁸¹Mk.10:35-45; Mt.20:20-28.

⁸²Mk.10:32-34.

⁸³Mk.14:32-42.

⁸⁴Lk.22:45.

⁸⁵Mk.14:43-52.

⁸⁶Lk.22:53.

⁸⁷Mk.14:53-72.

⁸⁸Mk.14:26-31.

⁸⁹Lk.22:31-34.

⁹⁰Mk.16:7.

⁹¹Found in Bobiensis, fourth to fifth century A.D.

⁹²Bultmann, Theology I, p.32.

⁹³Cf.the works of W.Wrede, V.Taylor, and R.Bultmann.

^{93a}Mark was not answering the problem of whether Jesus was considered the Messiah in his lifetime. Vincent Taylor and other English scholars have argued that the Messianic Secret shows how Jesus chose to reveal himself, i.e. as the non-political Messiah. Bultmann and Wrede have said that the Secret is a retrospective explanation by the editor of why Jesus did not claim to be the Messiah. However, the Secret involves more titles than that of Messiah alone.

⁹⁴Mk.1:9-11; 6:53f.

⁹⁵Bultmann, Synoptic Tradition, p.251.

⁹⁶R.Bultmann and K.Kundsin. Form Criticism, (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1962), pp.36ff.

⁹⁷Bultmann, Synoptic Tradition, p.347.

⁹⁸R.Fuller, Foundations, p.130.

⁹⁹Albert Schweitzer, The Mystery of the Kingdom of God, (New York: Schocken Books, 1964).

¹⁰⁰Cf.note 58a. Since we have no evidence that the Jews believed in a savior who would suffer vicariously, die, and rise from the dead, and since we have ample evidence that the forementioned pattern existed in Hellenistic religion, notably the mystery religions, we conclude that the Passion predictions are Hellenistic in origin.

¹⁰¹Bultmann and Kundsin, Form Criticism, pp.121ff.

^{101a}This is treated in Bultmann's History of the Synoptic Tradition.

¹⁰²Tödt, op.cit.,p.145.

¹⁰³Lohmeyer, Das Evangelium des Markus, pp.160f.

¹⁰⁴Bultmann, Synoptic Tradition, p.350.

¹⁰⁵Ibid.

¹⁰⁶Hahn, op.cit.,p.19..

¹⁰⁷Bousset, op.cit.,p.115

- 108 H.H.Rowley, The Servant of the Lord and Other Essays on the Old Testament, (London: Lutterworth Press, 1952), p.65n.
- 109 Tödt, op.cit., p.144.
- 110 Verse 12b is a later interpolation, modeled after Mt.17:12b. Kurt Aland, Synopsis Quattuor Evangeliorum, (Stuttgart: Wurttembergische Bibelanstalt, 1964), p.239n.
- 111 Bultmann, Theology I, p.30.
- 112 Ibid.
- 113 Tödt, op.cit., pp.146,169.
- 114 contra Tödt, op.cit., pp.201ff.
- 115 Bultmann, Theology I, p.30.
- 115a Hans Conzelmann, The Theology of St. Luke, (London: Faber and Faber, 1960).
- 116 Eusebins, Ecclesiastical History, 11, 39, 15.
- 117 Quoted in Vincent Taylor, The Gospel According to St. Mark, (London: MacMillan, 1957), p.2.
- 118 Ibid., p.3.
- 119 Adv. Haer., 111, 1, 2.
- 120 Quoted in Taylor, op.cit., p.4.
- 120a Eusebius, VI, 14 6f and 11, 15, 2.
- 121 Quoted in Taylor, op.cit., pp.5.
- 122 Ibid., p.6.
- 123 Adumb. in I Peter 5:13. Quoted in Taylor, op.cit., p.6.
- 124 Eusebius, VI, 25, 5. Quoted in Taylor, op.cit., pp.6f.
- 125 Quoted on Taylor, op.cit., p.7.
- 126 Ibid., p.1.
- 127 Ibid., p.4.

¹²⁸E.Goodspeed, A History of Early Christian Literature, revised by Robert Grant, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966), p.50.

¹²⁹Taylor, op.cit., p.5.

¹³⁰Mark's gospel suffered from relative neglect in the Early Church. In the sixth century Victor of Antioch wrote what he considered the first commentary on Mark. A patristic commentary, however, may be found in Migne, Pat.Lat., XXX, 589 ff. R.H.Lightfoot, The Gospel Message of St.Mark, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1958), p.2.

¹³¹The last sentence of the Papias quotation may be a commentary by Eusebius on the matter, or it may be the reported words of Papias.

¹³²Bacon is sceptical about tradition. "Like the dragoman who escorts the devout traveller through the Holy Land, its business is to please." B.W.Bacon, Is Mark a Roman Gospel?, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1919), p.7.

¹³³Bacon, op.cit., pp.55ff.

¹³⁴Mark's Latinisms have been the object of many discussions. The Latinisms tend to be replaced by more acceptable Greek words in Matthew and Luke. Bacon concludes from his study of Mark's Latinisms: "All these expressions had passed over into the current speech of Jews throughout the empire, so that their mere occurrence in Mark cannot prove anything as to its origin in a Latin-speaking region. Even their greater proportion in Mark is merely suggestive." B.W.Bacon, op.cit., p.54.

¹³⁵Bacon, op.cit., pp.56f.

¹³⁶Ibid., p.65.

¹³⁷Josephus, Ant., XVIII, V.

¹³⁸The writer is aware that many errors or distinctive traits of Mark are carried over by Matthew or Luke. Since all but fifty verses of Mark are used by the other two synoptics, one would expect that the editorial process of Matthew and Luke would not always correct Mark. The examples noted here are given to reveal the overall tendency of Mark in comparison with Matthew and Luke.

In reference to king and tetrarch. Matthew and Luke both use the wrong title once, but the fact remains that Luke found it necessary to correct Mark's error. The same is true in connection with the Herodians, where Matthew follows Mark (Mt.22:15 = Mk.12:13) and corrects Mark (Mt.12:14 = Mk.3:6).

- 139 Bacon, op.cit., p.65. See previous note.
- 140 Ibid., p.62.
- 141 Ibid., p.63.
- 142 Ibid., p.58.
- 143 Ibid., p.59.
- 144 Examples are given by T.Weeden, op.cit., p.143.
- 145 Lloyd Gaston, No Stone on Another, (Leiden: E.J.Brill, 1970), p.5.
- 146 Taylor, op.cit., p.32.
- 147 Bultmann, Synoptic Tradition, p.36.
- 148 Ibid., p.120, referring also to Mk.14:58.
- 149 Mark uses a neuter noun (bdelygma) but the participle which modifies it is masculine ('estēkota). The sacrifice conducted by the soldiers of Titus was accompanied by the acclamation of him as emperor. Brandon understands this verse to be a cryptic reference to the divine image of the emperor, but we feel the same could be said about the crisis of A.D.39.
G.G.T.Brandon. The Trial of Jesus of Nazareth, (New York: Stein and Day, 1968) p.72.
- 150 J.T.Townsend has argued that the Temple is a subject of great importance in the New Testament. He has presented two ideas: (1) pre-Fall Christianity accepted the Temple as a place for the worship of Christians and Jews; (2) post-Fall Christianity asked, "Why did God allow his Temple to be destroyed?"
Gaston has described Townsend's thesis but does agree with it; op.cit., p.4.
J.T.Townsend, The Jerusalem Temple in New Testament Thought, (Cambridge: Harvard University Dissertation, 1958), p.286.

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