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THE CHARACTERISATION OF JESUS THE DAVIDIC SHEPHERD IN
MARK'S GOSPEL: A NARRATIVE ANALYSIS THROUGH THE LENS OF
METALEPSIS

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Abstract

While commentators widely acknowledge the importance of the role of the shepherd image in portraying the God of Israel, the earthly leadership and Jesus in the Hebrew Bible (HB) and the New Testament (NT), the two appearances of the images in Mark's Gospel (6:34; 14:27) may appear to be of limited significance in portraying Jesus and his ministry, compared with the use of the Son of Man. While Mark's use of the shepherd images has been the subject of scholarly debate, there is not yet a thorough analysis fully acknowledging the literary qualities of these images, which are intertextual references to the HB and figures of speech for narrative characterisation. Previous intertextual studies of the shepherd images selectively reduce the original literary backgrounds of the references to static themes without clarifying the selection process. Other examinations explore how the images portray Mark's Jesus. However, those analyses inadequately consider the connections between the portrayal of Jesus as the Davidic shepherd and the other portraits of Jesus and the relevance between the two shepherd images along the plotline. By adopting a narrative-critical approach using Genette's conception of narrative *metalepsis*, this thesis offers insights into the significance of Mark's use of the shepherd images. It illuminates how the original literary background of the shepherd images functions to characterise Jesus and other characters along the plotline and create rhetorical impacts on Mark's implied readers, persuading them to acknowledge the shepherding work of Jesus and the nature of being his disciples.

Chapter 1 surveys the issues related to Mark's shepherd image and reviews the secondary literature on the topic. Chapter 2 establishes a narrative-critical method for the thesis. By defining a specific implied reader, the methodology offers a theoretical framework for approaching the two shepherd images in Mark's narrative as intertextual references and

figures of speech. Chapter 3 conducts an exegetical examination of the events surrounding the shepherd images in Ezekiel 34 and in Zech 13:7–9. This examination demonstrates how these events are relevant to the shepherd images and their significance in their original literary contexts. Chapter 4 studies the plot development of Mark 1:1–6:6 and explores how Mark’s narrator portrays Jesus and other characters, preparing the implied readers to receive the shepherd images. Before the concluding chapter summarises the present research, chapters 5 and 6 investigate the stories of Jesus feeding the five thousand (6:30–44) and Jesus’ prediction of Peter’s denial (14:26–31), which contain the two shepherd images in Mark’s narrative. Through the lens of narrative *metalepsis*, the analysis explains how the images characterise Jesus and other characters in the immediate context. These chapters also demonstrate how the portrayal of Jesus the Davidic shepherd connects to other portraits in the broader context of Mark’s narrative, creating rhetorical impacts on the implied readers.

The metaleptic understanding of the shepherd images in Mark’s narrative highlights their profound significance in contrast to previous studies in several ways. First, Jesus is characterised as the Davidic shepherd appointed to fulfil God’s radical restoration with his death. The renewed community will enjoy the abundance of God and live a life of purity under Jesus’ shepherding ministry. Second, the Jewish religious leaders are portrayed as incorrigibly corrupted and deserving of God’s punishment. Lastly, the disciples appear to be both the insiders and outsiders in God’s kingdom. Their desertion of Jesus after he is arrested is to be understood as part of God’s refining and testing of them, demanding a response. Will they decide to follow Jesus the Davidic shepherd who will radically restore the covenantal relationship, or will they become outsiders in the kingdom of God?

Lay Summary

Commentators widely acknowledge the importance of the role of the shepherd image in portraying the God of Israel, the earthly leadership and Jesus in the Hebrew Bible (HB) and the New Testament (NT). However, the two appearances of the images in Mark's Gospel (6:34; 14:27) may appear to be of limited significance in portraying Jesus and his ministry, compared with other portrayals. While Mark's use of the shepherd images has been the subject of scholarly debate, there is not yet a thorough analysis fully acknowledging the feature of these images: references to the HB and figures for character's portrayal. Previous studies fail to examine the connections of Mark's shepherd images to the HB and to other portrayals of Jesus in Mark's Gospel. By adopting a specific narrative-critical approach, this thesis offers insights into the significance of Mark's use of the shepherd images. It illuminates how the shepherd images are used to portray Jesus and other characters along the plotline and how they persuade the readers to acknowledge the shepherding work of Jesus and the nature of being his disciples.

This thesis highlights the profound significance of the use of Mark's shepherd images in contrast to previous studies in several ways. First, Jesus is characterised as the Davidic shepherd appointed to fulfil God's radical restoration with his death. The community renewed by Jesus will enjoy the abundance of the God of Israel and live a life of purity under Jesus' shepherding ministry. Second, the Jewish religious leaders are portrayed as incorrigibly corrupted and deserving of God's punishment. Lastly, the disciples' desertion of Jesus after he is arrested is to be understood as part of God's refining and testing of them, demanding a response. Will they decide to follow Jesus the Davidic shepherd who will radically restore the covenantal relationship, or will they become outsiders in the kingdom of God?

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Abbreviations

AB	Anchor Bible
ABD	<i>Anchor Bible Dictionary</i> . Edited by David Noel Freedman. 6 vols. New York: Doubleday, 1992
AcBib	Academia Biblica
ANET	<i>Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament</i> . Edited by James B. Pritchard. 3rd ed. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969
ANF	<i>Ante-Nicene Fathers</i>
AIL	Ancient Israel and Its Literature
ArBib	The Aramaic Bible
AsTJ	<i>Asbury Theological Journal</i>
ATDan	Acta Theologica Danica
AYBRL	Anchor Yale Bible Reference Library
BBR	<i>Bulletin for Biblical Research</i>
BCAW	Blackwell Companions to the Ancient World
BDB	Brown, Francis, S. R. Driver, and Charles A. Briggs. <i>A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament</i> . Oxford: Clarendon, 1907.
BDAG	Danker, Frederick W., Walter Bauer, William F. Arndt, and F. Wilbur Gingrich. <i>Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature</i> . 3rd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000.
BECNT	Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament
BerO	Berit Olam
BETL	Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium
BHGNT	Baylor Handbook on the Greek New Testament
Bib	<i>Biblica</i>
BibInt	Biblical Interpretation Series
BibSem	The Biblical Seminar
BJRL	<i>Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester</i>
BNTC	Black's New Testament Commentaries
BST	The Bible Speaks Today
BTNT	Biblical Theology of the New Testament
BSac	<i>Bibliotheca Sacra</i>
BZNW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft
CGTC	Cambridge Greek Testament Commentary
CBET	Contributions to Biblical Exegesis and Theology
CBNT	Commentaire Biblique: Nouveau Testament
CBQ	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>
CCWJCW	Cambridge Commentaries on Writings of the Jewish and Christian World
ConBNT	Coniectanea Biblica: New Testament Series
ConcC	Concordia Commentary
Colloq	<i>Colloquium</i>
CurBR	<i>Currents in Biblical Research</i>
dGS	de Gruyter Studium

<i>DSD</i>	<i>Dead Sea Discoveries</i>
<i>EBib</i>	<i>Etudes bibliques</i>
FRLANT	Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments
GGBB	Wallace, Daniel B. <i>Greek Grammar beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament with Scripture, Subject, and Greek Word Indexes</i> . 4th ed. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 1996.
HALOT	Koehler, Ludwig, Walter Baumgartner, and Johann J. Stamm. <i>The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament</i> . Translated and edited under the supervision of Mervyn E. J. Richardson. 2 vols. Leiden: Brill, 2001.
<i>HAR</i>	<i>Hebrew Annual Review</i>
<i>HBT</i>	<i>Horizons in Biblical Theology</i>
Hermeneia	Hermeneia: A Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible
NIBCNT	New International Biblical Commentary on the New Testament
<i>Historia</i>	<i>Historia: Zeitschrift für alte Geschichte</i>
NovTSup	Supplements to Novum Testamentum
HSM	Harvard Semitic Monographs
HTA	Historisch-Theologische Auslegung
NTD	Das Neue Testament Deutsch
NTR	New Testament Readings
NTSI	New Testament and the Scriptures of Israel
<i>HUCA</i>	<i>Hebrew Union College Annual</i>
IBC	Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching
ICC	International Critical Commentary
IECOT	International Exegetical Commentary on the Old Testament
JLSM	Janua Linguarum. Series Maior
<i>JBL</i>	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
<i>JGRChJ</i>	<i>Journal of Greco-Roman Christianity and Judaism</i>
<i>JHebS</i>	<i>Journal of Hebrew Scriptures</i>
<i>JNT</i>	<i>Journal of Narrative Theory</i>
<i>JR</i>	<i>Journal of Religion</i>
<i>JSHS</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the Historical Jesus</i>
<i>JSOT</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the Old Testament</i>
<i>JSNT</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the New Testament</i>
JSNTSup	Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series
JSOTSup	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series
<i>JTS</i>	<i>Journal of Theological Studies</i>
LCL	Loeb Classical Library
LHBOTS	The Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies
LNTS	The Library of New Testament Studies
LSJ	Liddell, Henry George, Robert Scott, Henry Stuart Jones. <i>A Greek-English Lexicon</i> . 9th ed. with revised supplement. Oxford: Clarendon, 1996
MMNTS	McMaster New Testament Studies
NICNT	New International Commentary on the New Testament

NICOT	New International Commentary on the Old Testament
NIDNTE	<i>New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology and Exegesis</i> . Edited by Moisés Silva. 2nd ed. 5 vols. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2014
NIDOTTE	<i>New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis</i> . Edited by Willem A. VanGemeren. 5 vols. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997
NIGTC	New International Greek Testament Commentary
NIVAC	The NIV Application Commentary
<i>NewLitH</i>	<i>New Literary History</i>
<i>NovT</i>	<i>Novum Testamentum</i>
NovTSup	Supplements to Novum Testamentum
NTL	New Testament Library
<i>NTS</i>	<i>New Testament Studies</i>
OCDS	The Oxford Commentary on the Dead Sea Scrolls
OTL	Old Testament Library
OTT	Old Testament Theology
<i>PT</i>	<i>Poetics Today</i>
<i>RB</i>	<i>Revue biblique</i>
RBS	Resources for Biblical Study
RNBC	Readings: A New Biblical Commentary
RSECW	Routledge Studies in the Early Christian World
SC	Septuagint Commentary Series
SFACS	South Florida Academic Commentary Series
SNTSMS	Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series
SP	Sacra Pagina
StBibLit	Studies in Biblical Literature
STDJ	Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah
SymS	Symposium Series
<i>TDNT</i>	<i>Theological Dictionary of the New Testament</i> . Edited by Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich. Translated by Geoffrey W. Bromiley. 10 vols. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964–1976
<i>TDOT</i>	<i>Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament</i> . Edited by G. Johannes Botterweck and Helmer Ringgren. Translated by John T. Willis et al. 8 vols. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974–2006
TNTC	Tyndale New Testament Commentaries
TOTC	Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries
TCSup	Trends in Classics – Supplementary Volumes
<i>VE</i>	<i>Verbum et Ecclesia</i>
<i>VT</i>	<i>Vetus Testamentum</i>
VTSup	Supplements to Vetus Testamentum
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
<i>ZAW</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche wissenschaft</i>
ZECNT	Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament

Chapter 1. Introduction

In her book *The Good Shepherd: Image, Meaning, and Power* published in 2021, Jennifer Awes Freeman explores the shepherd image as it is adapted in textual and non-textual mediums from the Ancient Near East to the early Middle Ages. She makes the following comment:

The Good Shepherd warrants more careful study because, when placed in its longer history in the ancient world, it can provide further insight into early Christian meaning making, and, more broadly, is a compelling example of the flexibility and durability of a particular motif over time and in various cultures and communities. The way that religious and political power is constructed and maintained through images is indeed a pressing issue in every age.¹

Contrary to the complexity of the image through the ages, Freeman Awes proposes that modern viewers tend to romanticise the shepherd representation and detach it from its contemporary social context. “The awareness of the multivalence and durability of [shepherd] images, as well as their power to create new realities” should accompany the quest for the shepherd image.² In other words, she argues that the shepherd image is a pivotal figure in history used to illustrate specific points of view and persuade its recipients to acknowledge it.

The shepherd image is a well-known figure employed in the Hebrew Bible (HB) to portray the God of Israel and the earthly leadership. The New Testament (NT) followed the

¹ Jennifer Awes Freeman, *The Good Shepherd: Image, Meaning, and Power* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2021), 3.

² Awes Freeman, *The Good Shepherd*, 160–161.

line of thought of the HB and adopted the shepherd image to characterise Jesus.³ One of the obvious examples in the NT appears in John's Gospel, where Jesus explicitly identifies himself as the good shepherd who lays down his life for the flock (John 10:11–12). The shepherd discourse attracts various examinations from a historical, literary and theological perspective.⁴ By contrast, the shepherd images in Mark's narrative (6:34; 14:27), which are intertextual references⁵ to the HB and are figures of speech used to characterise the protagonist Jesus, receive inadequate attention. Broadhead suggests that Mark's Gospel only

³ Golding comments that the shepherd tradition in Jewish literature mostly “continues in the same basic trajectory [of the HB]”, see Thomas Alan Golding, “Jewish Expectations of the Shepherd Image at the Time of Christ” (PhD diss., Dallas Theological Seminary, 2004); see also Jonathan Gan, *The Metaphor of Shepherd in the Hebrew Bible: A Historical-Literary Reading* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2007).

⁴ Recent studies explicitly focusing on John's shepherd image, e.g., Karoline M. Lewis, *Rereading the “Shepherd Discourse”: Restoring the Integrity of John 9:39–10:21*, *StBibLit* 113 (New York: Peter Lang, 2008); D. Francois Tolmie, “The (not so) Good Shepherd: The Use of Shepherd Imagery in the Characterisation of Peter in the Fourth Gospel,” in *Imagery in the Gospel of John: Terms, Forms, Themes, and Theology of Johannine Figurative Language*, ed. Jörg Frey, Jan van der Watt, and Ruben Zimmerman, *WUNT* 200 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006), 353–368; Johannes Beutler, and Robert T. Fortna eds., *The Shepherd Discourse of John 10 and its Context*, *SNTSMS* 67 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

⁵ The categorisation of the intertextual reference remains controversial, see Samuel Emadi, “Intertextuality in New Testament Scholarship: Significance, Criteria, and the Art of Intertextual Reading,” *CurBR* 14.1 (2015): 8–23. Rather than discovering potential intertextual references in Mark's narrative, the present research focuses on the two shepherd images (6:34; 14:27), which are widely recognised as citations from the HB. Therefore, I employ the term “intertextual reference”, which neutrally refers to the shepherd image and other texts citing from or alluding to the HB.

employs the shepherd image “in subtle ways to name and characterise Jesus”.⁶ The image appears to be of little significance in terms of its occurrence when compared with the other expression, “Son of Man” (ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου), which occurs fourteen times (2:10, 28; 8:31, 38; 9:9, 12, 31; 10:33, 45; 13:26; 14:21, 41, 62; cf. Χριστός in 1:1; 8:29; 9:41; 12:35; 13:21; 14:61; 15:32), and plays a vital role in Mark’s Christology.⁷ Notwithstanding, Broadhead’s reading potentially lessens the impact of the shepherd image on Mark’s narrative. The past analyses suggest that the shepherd image identifies Jesus as the shepherd

⁶ Edwin Keith Broadhead, *Naming Jesus: Titular Christology in the Gospel of Mark*, JSNTSup 175 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1999), 96; in the NT, the term ποιμήν occurs eighteen times (Matt. 9:36; 25:32; 26:31; Luke 2:8, 15, 18, 20; John 10:2, 11–12, 14, 16; Eph 4:11; Heb 13:20; 1 Pet 2:25). Twelve of them metaphorically portray Jesus (directly or indirectly), four in Matthew’s Gospel, two in Mark and five in John. In contrast, Luke only uses ποιμήν to refer to the actual characters (Luke 2:8, 15, 18, 20). Meanwhile, there is one shepherd metaphor in the parable of Lost Sheep (Luke 15:3–7), characterising God, see Klyne R. Snodgrass, *Stories with Intent: A Comprehensive Guide to the Parables of Jesus* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2008), 95–111. Apart from ποιμήν, there are other terms to describe different roles of pastoralism in the Greco-Roman world, including ἀρχιποίμην (1 Pet 5:2–4), μισθωτὸς (John 10:12) and νομεύς, see BDAG, s.v. “ἀρχιποίμην”; BDAG, s.v. “μισθωτὸς”; LSJ, s.v. “νομεύς”. For a detailed analysis, see Sabine R. Huebner, *Papyri and the Social World of the New Testament* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), 115–134.

⁷ Broadhead comments on the expression “Son of Man”, that it “ultimately exceeds the power of the narrative to clarify and to complete”, see Broadhead, *Naming Jesus*, 134; Hooker attends to the scriptural background of the term “Son of Man” and examines its relevance within Mark’s Gospel, see Morna D. Hooker, *The Son of Man in Mark: A Study of the Background of the Term “Son of Man” and its Use in St. Mark’s Gospel* (London: S.P.C.K., 1967). The expression also draws others attention to explore its literary function in Mark’s narrative, e.g., Robert S. Snow, *Daniel’s Son of Man in Mark: A Redefinition of the Jerusalem Temple and the Formation of a New Covenant Community* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2016); David Forrest Mitchell, *The Son of Man in Mark’s Gospel: Exploring its Possible Connections with the Book of Ezekiel*, ACTMS (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2020). Regarding its deep-rooted tradition and the debate, please refer to Douglas R. A. Hare, *The Son of Man Tradition* (Fortress Press, 1990); Delbert Burkett, *The Son of Man Debate: A History and Evaluation*, SNTSMS 107, ed. Richard Bauckham (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

who leads the people of God.⁸ This reading highlights that the shepherd images are intertextual references to the HB. However, the interpretation only draws on one of the themes from the original literary context⁹ of the reference without theoretical support for the selection. Previous analyses also insufficiently discuss the connection between the portrayal of Jesus as the Davidic shepherd and other portraits of Jesus in the broader context of Mark's narrative. Subsequently, both the shepherd images are reduced to a static description of Mark's Jesus.

In his book *Narrative Discourse: An Essay in Method*, modern literary theorist Gérard Genette develops his conception of narrative *metalepsis*, which provides the present research with a theoretical framework to engage with both of the characteristics of Mark's shepherd images.¹⁰ Subsequently, following on from this, I argue that *metalepsis* can illustrate how

⁸ Regarding the first shepherd image in 6:34, see William L. Lane, *The Gospel of Mark*, NICNT (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1974), 226; Robert A. Guelich, *Mark 1–8:26*, WBC 34A (Dallas, TX: Word Books, 1989), 340; David E. Garland, *Mark*, NIVAC (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1996), 252–253; Morna D. Hooker, *A Commentary on The Gospel According to St Mark*, BNTC (London: A & C Black, 1997), 165–166; R. T. France, *The Gospel of Mark: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, NIGTC (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2002), 265; Robert H. Stein, *Mark*, BECNT (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008), 313; Camille Focant, *The Gospel According to Mark: A Commentary*, trans Leslie Robert Keylock, CBNT (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2012), 255; Mark L. Strauss, *Mark*, ZECNT (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2014), 274. For the second image, see Lane, *Mark*, 510; R. Alan Cole, *Mark: An Introduction and Commentary*, TNTC (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1989), 300; Garland, *Mark*, 530; Hooker, *Mark*, 344; Craig A. Evans, *Mark 8:27–16:20*, WBC 34B (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 2001), 401; France, *Mark*, 575; Stein, *Mark*, 654; Focant, *Mark*, 582–583; Strauss, *Mark*, 626.

⁹ Rather than illustrating the literary genre or the form, in the present research, the term “literary context” refers to the details of events recorded in the text, including the settings, the characters, the plot development, and the characterisation. For example, the literary context of Ezekiel 34 refers to all the events reported in the text and the way that these events are presented, while that of Mark's narrative refers to the story world of Mark.

¹⁰ Gérard Genette, *Narrative Discourse: An Essay in Method*, trans. Jane E. Lewin (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1983); see also Gérard Genette, *Métalepse: De La Figure à La Fiction* (Paris: Seuil, 2004).

Mark's narrative employs the shepherd images to characterise Jesus and other characters. In this introductory chapter, I first briefly introduce a review of the scholarly literature dealing with Mark's shepherd image. Then, I outline how the present research discusses the images.

Literature Review of Mark's Shepherd Image

This section briefly presents a literature review on the shepherd image in Mark's Gospel. I loosely categorise the review into intertextual analyses and narrative analyses. The former tends to emphasise the shepherd image as an intertextual reference to the HB, and the latter highlights the shepherd image as a characterisation of Jesus in the narrative. The review aims to illustrate the directions that the previous studies of the shepherd image have taken. Specifically, I demonstrate how the analyses address the intertextual background of the shepherd images and Mark's representation of Jesus as a character in the narrative. The gaps that have been discovered in the past research create space for the present research to provide insights into the shepherd images in narrative terms.

Intertextual Analyses of Mark's Shepherd Image

As early as in the mid-19th century, in his book *According to the Scriptures: The Sub-Structure of New Testament Theology*, C. H. Dodd argued that the NT writers selected the HB texts without decontextualising them in their writing process. Those texts ultimately formed the *testimonia* and gave the early Christian community a primitive theology to express the

fulfilment of God's salvation in Jesus' destiny and his mission, and a way to understand them.¹¹

Dodd's study gives prominence to the original literary context of the intertextual reference of Zechariah. He proposes that Zechariah 9–14 serves as a “whole eschatological programme” in the Gospels' passion narrative.¹² In light of Zechariah's literary context, the intertextual references to Zechariah coherently portray Jesus as the Messianic king, not coming with a militant force, but appearing in humility, bringing liberation and peace to the nations.¹³ Although Dodd does not specifically focus on Mark's shepherd image, he delineates how the literary background of Zechariah 9–14 participates in the passion tradition.

Following Dodd's argument, Barnabas Lindars examined the HB references in the NT in his book *New Testament Apologetic: The Doctrinal Significance of the Old Testament Quotations*.¹⁴ His primary interest lay in the apologetic motive of the early Christian community when using HB references. By appealing to the HB texts in light of Jesus' resurrection, the community defended its primitive theology, which centred on the Messianic identity of Jesus.¹⁵

¹¹ C. H. Dodd, *According to the Scriptures: The Sub-structure of New Testament Theology* (London: Nisbet, 1952), 57–60, 110, 127–128; Dodd's view of *testimonia* contrasts with what Harris proposes, that the proof-text is a pre-existing document prior to the NT writings, see J. Rendel Harris, *Testimonies*, 2 vols (Cambridge University Press, 2011).

¹² Dodd suggests the use of Zechariah in Mark's Gospel (Zech 9:9 in Mark 11:1–11; Zech 9:11 in Mark 14:24; Zech 13:7 in Mark 14:27), see Dodd, *According to the Scriptures*, 49, 64–67.

¹³ Although the NT writers only quote some particular words or texts from the OT, they do not understand the HB references away from their context, see *ibid.*, 127.

¹⁴ Barnabas Lindars, *New Testament Apologetic: The Doctrinal Significance of the Old Testament Quotations* (London: SCM Press, 1961), 13–17.

¹⁵ Lindars, *New Testament Apologetic*, 28–30.

According to Lindars' analysis, the use of Zech 13:7 in Mark 14:27, with an introductory phrase (ὅτι γέγραπται), echoes ἵνα πληρωθῶσιν αἱ γραφαί in Mark 14:49. This pattern indicates how Mark's Gospel modifies Zech 13:7 to facilitate its plot development.¹⁶ In this appropriation, Jesus is best understood as the smitten shepherd. Although the shepherd image is ambiguous in meaning within Zechariah's context, it is related to Zech 12:10 and 13:6 in which a theme of suffering emerges. This theme illustrates Jesus as the suffering Messiah. In addition, the intertextual reference portrays the disciples as the scattered flocks, but this depiction was not the original application in Zechariah.¹⁷

Not only does Lindars acknowledge the use of Zechariah references in Mark's Gospel, but he also realises how the adaption of the references (e.g., Zech 13:7 in Mark 14:27) serves the narrative plot. In other words, the intertextual references to Zechariah function as narrative devices that contribute to the plot development and portray the characters.

On the other hand, Lindars only scratches the surface of Zechariah's literary context. He reduces the relation between Zech 13:7 and two other Zechariah texts (Zech 12:10; 13:6) to thematic coherence in understanding the shepherd image in Mark's Gospel. Although the reduction might offer a sound reason to support the apologetic purpose of Zech 13:7 in Mark's Gospel, Lindars omits Zech 13:8–9, which is inextricably attached to God's striking the shepherd in Zechariah. The analysis of the shepherd image in light of the overall redactional shaping of Zechariah 9–14 is also inadequate. I argue that this simple theme of suffering does not fully reflect the significance of the smitten shepherd in Zechariah.

¹⁶ Ibid., 128; like Dodd, Lindars considers that Mark's Gospel adopts Zech 9:9 in Mark 11:1–11 and Zech 9:11 in Mark 14:24, see *ibid.*, 111–113, 132.

¹⁷ Ibid., 130–131.

Unlike the analyses of Dodd and Lindars, F. F. Bruce shifted his focus to the use of Zechariah within the Gospels' passion narrative. He shows particular interest in the use of Zech 13:7 and its literary context within Mark's Gospel.¹⁸ Basically, Bruce agrees with Dodd and Lindars in the sense that Zech 13:7 portrays Mark's Jesus as the smitten shepherd. He further identifies this smitten shepherd as a good shepherd for several reasons. First, Zechariah portrays the smitten shepherd as the associate of Yahweh, which is not identical to the worthless shepherd in Zech 11:17.¹⁹ Second, the Damascus Document from the Qumran Community adapts Zech 13:7 to refer to a wicked ruler of Israel. However, Jesus' self-declaration of the smitten shepherd in Mark's Gospel displays its positive sense.²⁰ Third, the shepherd image in 6:34 illustrates a positive leader who would continue to lead the scattered flocks.²¹ Lastly, while good shepherd figures recur in Zechariah 9–14, Mark's use of Zech 9:9, 11 and 14:4 positively affirms the work of Jesus.²²

Bruce's analysis is inspiring in terms of his concern for the overall redactional shaping of Zechariah 9–14 when deducing the meaning of Mark's shepherd image and the consideration of another image (6:34) in narrative terms.²³ On the other hand, Bruce oversimplifies the significance of the smitten shepherd in Zechariah's literary context and reduces it to a binary category (good or wicked). While the shepherd image is an intertextual

¹⁸ F. F. Bruce, "The Book of Zechariah and the Passion Narrative," *BJRL* (1961): 337.

¹⁹ Bruce, "Zechariah and Passion," 342.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 343.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 344–345.

²² *Ibid.*, 345–348.

²³ Historically, Bruce suggests that Zech 13:7–9 originates from an isolated oracle. Nonetheless, it deserves serious examination in the literary context of Zechariah, see *ibid.*, 342–343, 345.

reference to the HB, the corresponding analysis of the intertextual background is also absent. Therefore, in terms of Bruce's proposal, the relationship to how Mark's narrative uses the shepherd images in Mark 6:34 and 14:27 becomes linear, without justifying how the narrative develops the character Jesus along the plotline. Subsequently, this understanding lessens the prominence of the shepherd image in the narrative.

While Dodd and Lindars discussed the way that the early Christian community used the intertextual references to deal with the *Sitz im Leben*, R. T. France and Douglas J. Moo explored the interpretative approach of the HB texts in the Gospels' passion narrative. France aimed to determine the way in which Jesus fulfilled the divine salvific plan typologically. France argues that the typological use of the HB in the NT was neither a prediction nor an allegory. Instead, it was a historical and theological correspondence that did not require equivalence at every point.²⁴ By contrast, Moo adopted a soteriological interpretation of the intertextual references used in Jesus' passion. Moo contends that the early Christian community appropriated the HB texts to fit into the narrative so the Gospel could illustrate Jesus' destiny, which was a voluntary, sacrificial, and substitutionary death and extended its meaning to the social setting of the community.²⁵ In other words, Mark's narrative has an intricate relationship with intertextual references. The appropriation of the references in the narrative serves to create new impacts on the community.

²⁴ R. T. France, *Jesus and the Old Testament: His Application of Old Testament Passages to Himself and His Mission* (London: Tyndale Press, 1971), 39–41, 45, 76–77. In addition, France addresses the issue regarding the authenticity of Jesus' saying (France, *Jesus and the Old Testament*, 22, 37). Given that I employ a narrative-critical approach to examine Mark's shepherd image, authenticity is not a determinative factor in the present research.

²⁵ Douglas J. Moo, *The Old Testament in the Gospel Passion Narratives* (Sheffield: Almond Press, 1983), 3–4, 7–8, 390–391, 395, 397.

France proposed that the smitten shepherd (Zech 13:7) and other Zechariah references in Mark's passion narrative collectively portrayed Jesus as the shepherd-king who suffers for the eschatological blessing of Israel.²⁶ In addition, France observed that Mark's Gospel attached Zech 9:9 in Mark 14:24 to a relative clause τὸ ἐκχυννόμενον ὑπὲρ πολλῶν, which is an allusion to Isaiah 53:12 characterising Jesus as Isaiah's servant. Hence, in terms of France's understanding, both figures share a sense of suffering and harmonised in humility.²⁷ Similarly, Moo suggested that Zech 13:7 is actualised to explain God's striking of Jesus and the disciples being scattered. With the realisation of the significance of Zech 13:8–9 in God's restoration, Zech 13:8–9 conceptually influences Mark 14:28.²⁸

While France and Moo consider the literary background of Zech 13:7 in various degrees to seek a deeper significance of the shepherd image in Mark's Gospel, they examine the image inadequately within the original literary context. France only draws on the thematic correspondence between Zech 12:10 and 13:7, without getting into the debate over the Davidic nature of the shepherd image. Moo also fails to elaborate on how Mark's narrative identifies the disciples with the scattered flocks in light of Zechariah's immediate context.

As observed, the use of the intertextual references in the Gospels' passion narrative has drawn scholarly attention, but there has been no dedicated research on the use of

²⁶ France comments that the interpretation of the smitten shepherd by the worthless one in Zech 11:15–17 is “a hazardous expedient” (France, *Jesus and the Old Testament*, 108). Besides Zech 13:7 in Mark 14:27, France explores the other three Zechariah references in Mark's Gospel: Zech 9:9 in Mark 11:1–10, Zech 14:21 in Mark 11:15–16 and Zech 9:11 in Mark 14:24. France also considers the figurative adoption of Zech 6:11–13 in Mark 14:58 to illustrate the temple re-building, see France, *Jesus and the Old Testament*, 65–66, 92, 100, 105–106.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 66–67, 104, 122.

²⁸ Moo, *The Old Testament in the Gospel Passion Narratives*, 215–217. Moo emphasises that Mark appropriates Zechariah's text. We do not need to assume Zech 13:7 in itself as a *vaticinium ex eventu*, see *ibid.*, 182–187.

Zechariah 9–14 in various Jewish literature. By the end of the 20th century, Mark Cothran Black examined the Christological contribution of Zechariah 9–14 in the Gospels’ passion narrative. He compared the interpretation of several Zechariah passages (9:9–13; 11:4–17; 12:10–13:1; 14:1–21) in the canonical Gospels with those in other contemporary Jewish literature.²⁹

According to Black, Zechariah’s shepherd image in the Gospels provides three redactional contributions, including anticipation of the disciples’ desertion of Jesus, an assertion of God’s salvific plan promised in Zechariah’s prophecy, and the assurance of the death of Jesus. Moreover, the smitten shepherd will refine the flock, according to Zech 13:8–9, which is also reflected in Mark 14:28.³⁰

In two aspects, Black’s study supplies a valuable contribution to the present study. First, Black compares the use of the shepherd image (Zech 13:7) in various Jewish literature. He lays a strong foundation for the perception of the image. Second, Black demonstrates the collective contribution of Zechariah’s references to Mark’s narrative from an exegetical perspective. Therefore, the significance of the references lies within the text of Mark.³¹ This provides a fresh look at Zechariah’s shepherd image in Mark’s narrative.

²⁹ Mark Cothran Black, “The Rejected and Slain Messiah who is Coming with His Angels: The Messianic Exegesis of Zechariah 9–14 in the Passion Narratives” (PhD diss., Emory University, 1990), 29.

³⁰ Black, “The Rejected and Slain Messiah,” 193–195; apart from Zech 13:7 in Mark 14:27, Black proposes other Zechariah references, including Zech 9:9 in Mark 11:2, Zech 14:3–5 in Mark 13:3, Zech 12:10 in Mark 13:26, Zech 13:7 in Mark 14:27, and Zech 12:10 in Mark 14:62. Two other texts, Mark 11:17 and Mark 14:24, might also refer to Zech 14:21 and Zech 9:11, respectively, see *ibid.*, 235.

³¹ Both Dodd and Lindars affirm the significance of Zechariah 9–14 in the passion narrative of the Gospels. However, this significance is either attached behind the text (the backbone theology) or in front of the text (the apologetic defence for Jesus’ death), see C. H. Dodd, *According to the Scriptures*, 128; Lindars, *New Testament Apologetic*, 134.

Nonetheless, the value of Zechariah's shepherd image from the broader context of Zechariah, and its contribution to Mark's narrative, is minimised. Black's research primarily focuses on interpreting several Zechariah texts using various examples of Jewish literature and the canonical Gospels. This approach fragments the redactional shaping of Zechariah 9–14, even though Black preserves a section to discuss the unity of Zechariah 9–14. The piecemeal understanding of Zechariah's shepherd image depreciates its contribution to Mark's narrative.

So far, the selected analyses have been spread across the canonical Gospels. Joel Marcus reduces the scope to Mark's Gospel and investigates its Christology by examining its use of the HB inductively. His work constitutes an understanding of Mark's Christology in relation to the *Sitz im Leben* of Mark's community.³² This research approach enabled Marcus to draw a complex picture of the portrayals of Jesus in Mark's Gospel. For example, Marcus argues that the suffering Jesus was a composite image created by Isaiah, Zechariah and Psalms.³³ This picture reveals how various figures co-exist in Mark's narrative and coherently characterise Jesus. The concept sheds new light on the present research in its understanding of the way that the narrative employs the shepherd image to portray Jesus. Meanwhile, it helps to prevent an over-interpretation of Zechariah's shepherd image in the narrative.

Marcus proposes that Mark's Gospel collectively uses the Zechariah references to portray Jesus as the eschatological shepherd who is struck by God, followed by the

³² Joel Marcus, *The Way of the Lord: Christological Exegesis of the Old Testament in the Gospel of Mark*, Studies of the New Testament and Its World, ed. John Riches (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1993), 5–7.

³³ Regarding the discussion of the suffering servant in Deutero-Isaiah and the Righteous Sufferer in Psalms, refer to Marcus, *The Way of the Lord*, 162–163, 184–185, 194–195.

restoration of Israel and his resurrection.³⁴ While Zechariah's shepherd image is a military warrior, Mark characterises Jesus as the suffering and humble Messiah.³⁵ Moreover, in light of Zechariah's shepherd image, the scattered flocks also share the fate of the shepherd.³⁶ Therefore, Marcus argues that using Zech 13:7 in Mark's Gospel is not merely Christological but also ecclesiological. Although Marcus turns his focus to the *Sitz im Leben* of Mark's community at this point, its significance to the disciples within Mark's story world deserves scrutiny.

On the other hand, Marcus' analysis is similar to Black's in terms of the way it approaches the Zechariah references. Both only focus on several particular references in the text of the Gospel. The discussion of the overall development of the shepherd image in Zechariah 9–14 is insufficient, but the unity of Zechariah 9–14 is highlighted.³⁷ Second, Marcus discusses Jesus feeding the five thousand (6:30–44), but he focuses on the wilderness theme in this story. Thus, the discussion of the shepherd image in 6:34 is absent, even though the image has a Christological contribution to Mark's Gospel.³⁸ Lastly, while Marcus' primary interest in his research is Mark's Christology and its relation to the *Sitz im Leben* of Mark's community, the plot development of Mark's narrative is beyond the scope of his research.

³⁴ Zech 9:9–13 in Mark 11:1–10, Zech 14:21 in Mark 11:17, Zech 9:11 in Mark 14:24, Zech 14:4, 9 in Mark 14:25, Zech 14:4 in Mark 14:26 and Zech 13:7 in Mark 14:27, see *ibid.*, 157–160.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 161–162.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 163.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 154.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 24.

Determining intertextual references and their origins is one of the major topics in biblical studies. In particular, the identification of allusive references remains controversial. Richard B. Hays makes a breakthrough for this issue by employing Hollander's conception of *metalepsis* to study the canonical Gospels. His research investigates how the Gospels' authors used the immediate and broad literary context of intertextual references to characterise Israel's story, Jesus' identity, and the role of the early Christian community.³⁹

According to Hays, Mark's Gospel is a story of Israel based on God's eschatological restoration with the inbreaking judgement for the purification of Israel through the agency of Jesus the crucified Messiah.⁴⁰ In the story of Jesus feeding the five thousand, the phrase "like the flock without a shepherd" (6:34) echoes Num 27:17 and Ezek 34:2–6. The former reference depicts Jesus typologically as Joshua, Moses' successor, and reveals God's ultimate restoration of Israel. The latter portrays Jesus as the Davidic king who represents the agency required to perform divine shepherding to fulfil God's promise and end Israel's suffering (cf. Ezek 34:23–24).⁴¹

Another shepherd image (Zech 13:7 in Mark 14:27) portrays Jesus' identity and the destiny of the early Christian community. The use of this image and its apocalyptic context at

³⁹ Richard B. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Gospels* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2016), 8–9. In light of Hollander's *metalepsis*, Hays believes that only a short phrase in the Gospels can form echoes to the HB in the mind of the real readers. Moreover, it could be possible for the readers to recall several HB texts from a single reference, see *ibid.*, 11; see also Richard B. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), 1–33; cf. John Hollander, *The Figure of Echo: A Mode of Allusion in Milton and After* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981), 115.

⁴⁰ Hays, *Echoes in the Gospels*, 22–44.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 49–50, 69–70.

the end of the last supper signals the death of Jesus. The scattered flock also indicates the suffering of the early Christian community.⁴²

Hays makes a significant movement in the intertextual study of the Gospels. Rather than dealing with the historical questions regarding the intertextual references in the canonical Gospels, Hays explicitly focuses on the story world of the Gospels. In characterising the Gospels' narratives, he affirms the literary function of the references.⁴³ Moreover, Hays attempts to grasp a deeper significance of the intertextual reference from its broader literary context. For example, he examines Ezek 34:23–24 to explore how the shepherd image of Ezek 34:5 in Mark 6:34 portrays Mark's Jesus. His quest refreshes the use of the intertextual background in the Gospels.

Nevertheless, several questions remain unresolved in Hays' research. First, Hays does not develop a systematic theoretical ground to access the original literary background of the intertextual references. His adoption of Hollander's *metalepsis* only focuses on discovering the unstated source(s) of the HB behind the intertextual references. This literary approach fails to indicate how the intertextual background is understood in a narrative environment. Second, Hays breaks the Gospels' narrative into piecemeal stories. He specifically and individually discusses the presentation of Israel's story, Jesus' identity and the role of the early Christian community in light of the intertextual references. Thus, this approach fragments the plotline of Mark's narrative and ignores how the narrative moves along the plotline and develops the characters. The connection between the use of the shepherd image

⁴² Ibid., 81–82, 88–89.

⁴³ Cf., some intertextual analyses focus on whether and how the HB references are fulfilled, see Darrell Bock, "Evangelicals and the Use of the Old Testament in the New: Part 1." *BSac* 142.567 (1985): 209–223; Darrell Bock, "Evangelicals and the Use of the Old Testament in the New: Part 2." *BSac* 142.568 (1985): 306–319.

in Mark 6:34 and 14:27 to characterise Mark's Jesus remains unclear.⁴⁴ Lastly, Hays is elusive when dealing with the literary context of Zechariah 9–14.⁴⁵ While several commentators (e.g., Dodd, France, Moo and Marcus) have affirmed the contribution of Zechariah 9–14 to the passion narrative, the inadequate discussion Hays presents of the Zechariah discourse affects the understanding of the shepherd image in Mark's narrative.

Hays' conception of allusive intertextual references significantly impacts biblical scholarship. Paul T. Sloan is one of the commentators who generally acknowledged Hays' proposal that an allusive reference, even a phrase with one or two words, can significantly contribute to the text with the reference. In his book *Mark 13 and the Return of the Shepherd*, he examines the Olivet Discourse (Mark 13) in light of the intertextual references in Zechariah. He performs a semiotic analysis to determine the influence of Zechariah in Mark's Gospel.⁴⁶

Before discussing Mark's use of Zechariah 14 in the Olivet Discourse, Sloan expands his analysis of the Zechariah references to Mark's non-passion narrative. By comparing the events between Zechariah and Mark's Gospel, he concludes that the Zechariah references are embedded in the "fabric of Mark's narrative".⁴⁷ Regarding the shepherd image in 14:27, Sloan proposes that Zech 13:7 depicts the death of Jesus. However, the scattering of the flock (Zech 13:8–9) does not entirely correspond to the disciples who flee in Mark's narrative.

⁴⁴ Cf., Hays, *Echoes in the Gospels*, 81.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 82.

⁴⁶ Paul Sloan, *Mark 13 and the Return of the Shepherd: The Narrative Logic of Zechariah in Mark*, LNTS 604, ed. Chris Keith (London: T&T Clark, 2019), 12, 214.

⁴⁷ Sloan proposes that Mark 6:56 refers to Zech 8:23 and Mark 8:38 to Zech 14:5, see Sloan, *Mark 13*, 79–82; 82–85; 111–118.

Instead, the disciples' falling away is only the beginning of the scattering, and the tribulation in Mark 13 is the subsequent event.⁴⁸

Sloan's research successfully takes one step forward to affirm Zechariah's influence in Mark's narrative. However, his inclusion of the tribulation within God's scattering has to come under scrutiny. According to the plot development of Mark's narrative, Jesus' promise of going to Galilee (14:28) is attached to the use of Zech 13:7, functioning as a consecutive event after his resurrection. This promise is echoed in the story of the empty tomb (16:1–8), the ending of Mark's narrative. According to the witness of the young man in that story, Jesus going to Galilee is characterised as an ongoing event (16:7). In contrast, the tribulation in Mark 13 is identified as an impending incident which does not explicitly occur later in the narrative. This contrast demonstrates that there will be difficulty in accommodating the tribulation within the plotline of Mark's narrative. In my view, Sloan's reading tends to be a theological reading rather than narratological. In addition, the discussion of the empty tomb is absent in Sloan's analysis. Thus, the use of Zech 13:7 in characterising Jesus' ministry deserves further careful examination in narrative terms.

Narrative Analyses of Mark's Shepherd Image

From a narrative perspective, the two shepherd images in Mark's narrative characterise Jesus and his ministry. Tooley detects an association between the images and Jesus' words within the narrative. Although Tooley expressed his interest in the authenticity of how the historical Jesus used the shepherd image, his research reveals the contribution of the shepherd images to the portrayal of Jesus in Mark's Gospel.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 90–91.

In his analysis of Mark 6:34, Tooley proposed that teaching is a dominant theme in Jesus feeding of the five thousand. The attachment of the passage of 6:30–34 to the feeding story establishes a relationship between the shepherd image and Jesus’ act of teaching.⁴⁹ Regarding the second shepherd image (14:27), the echo of Jesus’ promise (14:28) in Mark 16:7 illustrates that Jesus resumed his mission in Galilee after the resurrection. Given the highlight of the references to Galilee in both 14:28 and 16:7, Tooley suggested that Mark’s narrative was an attempt to persuade his real audiences to continue the ministry of Jesus.⁵⁰ Furthermore, Tooley observed that the shepherd image itself “has the strongest military and political overtones”. This picture does not align with the mission of Jesus in the Gospels’ narrative.⁵¹ In other words, the shepherd image serves Mark’s narrative, but not vice versa, in terms of Tooley’s exploration.

Tooley’s research affirms the connection between the shepherd image and Jesus’ ministry in Mark’s narrative, particularly through his teaching and the disciples’ continuation of his mission. The research broadens the understanding of the image in terms of Mark’s narrative. On the other hand, how the intertextual background of the shepherd image is related to Jesus’ teaching ministry in the narrative requires further elaboration.

J.D. Kingsbury is another NT commentator who specialises in narrative analysis of the canonical Gospels. Although Kingsbury devotes his attention to the “Son of God” and “Son of Man” in his book *The Christology of Mark’s Gospel*, his brief discussion of the shepherd image and the teaching role of Jesus remains valuable to the present research.

⁴⁹ Wilfred Tooley, “The Shepherd and Sheep Image in the Teaching of Jesus,” *NovT* 7.1 (1964): 16.

⁵⁰ Tooley, “Shepherd and Sheep,” 17.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 24.

Kingsbury argues that the shepherd image has “the potential for being a major Christological title” in Mark’s narrative because of its rich association with God and David in the HB. Due to its comparatively rare occurrence in the narrative, however, Kingsbury considers it a title of little significance compared with the “Son of Man” and “Son of God”.⁵²

Whether the shepherd image is subtle in Mark’s Christology requires further examination. Still, its connection with Jesus’ teaching in Mark’s narrative is observable. Similar to the findings of Tooley, Kingsbury affirmed the importance of Jesus’ teaching in the narrative. According to Kingsbury’s interpretation, teaching is a “principal activity” in the public ministry of Mark’s Jesus. He is frequently identified as a “teacher” by other characters.⁵³ He also reserves the teaching task for himself, without dedicating it to his disciples (3:14–15; 6:7, 10, 12–13), except in Mark 6:30.⁵⁴ Thus, Kingsbury rightly points out the prominence of Jesus’ teaching in Mark’s narrative. Given the connection between the shepherd image and Jesus’ act of teaching in Mark 6:34, further analysis is needed, especially when the shepherd image has a close relationship with God and his restoration in the HB.

⁵² Jack Dean Kingsbury, *The Christology of Mark’s Gospel* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1989), 53–54.

⁵³ Kingsbury, *Christology of Mark*, 54 n.37.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 75; the term διδάσκω occurs 17 times in Mark’s Gospel (1:21–22; 2:13; 4:1–2; 6:2, 6, 30, 34; 7:7; 8:31; 9:31; 10:1; 11:17; 12:14; 35; 14:49). That is more than that in Matthew’s Gospel, although there is no extensive speech by Mark’s Jesus (cf. the five lengthy sermons in Matthew’s Gospel). Except in Mark 6:30, Jesus is the only subject to carry out the action (cf. Matt. 4:23; 5:2, 19; 7:29; 9:35; 11:1; 13:54; 15:9; 21:23; 22:16; 26:55; 28:15, 20; Luke 4:15, 31; 5:3, 17; 6:6; 11:1; 12:12; 13:10, 22, 26; 19:47; 20:1, 21; 21:37; 23:5; John 6:59; 7:14, 28, 35; 8:2, 20, 28; 9:34; 18:20; except in John 14:26 which tells the teaching of God). In Jesus’ prediction of his death, only Mark’s account uses διδάσκω to depict how Jesus tells his disciples (8:31; 9:31; cf. Matt 16:21; 17:22; Luke 9:22, 43). Even in John’s Gospel, διδάσκω is not used when Jesus tells of his crucifixion (John 2:4; 7:6, 8, 30, 33; 8:20; 12:23; 13:1; 17:1).

The book *Jesus the Shepherd: A Narrative-Critical Study of Mark 6:30–44* by Jonathan Bi Fan Cai is one of the few publications which attentively discusses the story surrounding the shepherd image (6:34) in Mark's narrative. Cai provides a thorough narrative-critical analysis of the story of Jesus feeding the five thousand (6:30–44) and examines the intertextual background of the image.

According to Cai's analysis, different literary elements (e.g., wilderness, twelve baskets) evoke the vision of the superabundant eschatological banquet in the kingdom of God in the feeding story.⁵⁵ Under this setting, Mark's Jesus provides the crowd with physical and spiritual nourishment. By interacting with the crowd and the disciples in the story, Jesus demonstrates superiority over HB characters.⁵⁶ First, Mark's use of the intertextual reference in 6:34, which alludes to Num 27:17 and Ezek 34:5, portrays Jesus as the Davidic Shepherd-king. This portrayal suggests Jesus as the one who supersedes Moses. Second, the feeding story is a type scene of Elisha's feeding (2 Kgs 4:42–44). By comparing how Elisha and Jesus offer their feeding, Cai concludes that Mark's Jesus is superior to Elisha.⁵⁷ From the whole picture of Mark's narrative, the feeding story is a kernel event designed to foreshadow the second feeding story (8:1–10) and the Last Supper (14:12–26).⁵⁸

Cai's analysis attempts to examine the feeding story by combining the narrative approach and the intertextual approach. This methodology appropriately acknowledges the shepherd image as both an intertextual reference to the HB and a figure of speech in the

⁵⁵ Jonathan Cai, *Jesus the Shepherd: A Narrative-Critical Study of Mark 6:30–44* (London: Lambert Academic, 2012), 71–77.

⁵⁶ Cai, *Jesus the Shepherd*, 160–161.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 80–81, 122–123.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 171.

narrative to characterise Mark's Jesus. It also addresses how Mark's narrative situates the shepherd image in the plot development of the story. The combination of approaches serves as a reference model for the present research.

On the other hand, several questions regarding the shepherd image arise. First, Cai selectively adapts the intertextual background for his interpretation. The phrase “ὡς πρόβατα μὴ ἔχοντα ποιμένα” explicitly describes the plight of the crowd. While Cai also considers that this intertextual reference portrays Mark's Jesus, the other events surrounding the Davidic shepherd in Ezekiel 34 (e.g., God's establishment of the peaceful covenant for the renewed people in Ezek 34:25–31) are omitted. In my view, the exegetical observation of Ezekiel 34 is somewhat inadequate. Therefore, the vivid understanding of the shepherd image in Ezekiel 34 is reduced to thematic ideas.

Second, Cai's research does not gain theoretical ground to indicate the interaction between the intertextual background and Mark's narrative. Cai employs Hays' approach to the intertextual references to examine the intertextual background of the shepherd image. It is noteworthy that Hollander's conception of *metalepsis*, which Hays adopts in his study, emphasises the possibility of having multiple unstated sources of an intertextual reference. This literary theory can only enable Cai to interpret the significance of the shepherd image through the lens of multiple intertextual origins (Num 27:17 and Ezek 34:5 in Mark 6:34). Still, how those intertextual backgrounds operate in a narrative environment remains uncertain. The way Mark's Gospel adopts the intertextual background in its narrative is not justified.

Lastly, examining the connection between the portrayal of Jesus as the Davidic shepherd and other portraits of Jesus is beyond the scope of Cai's analysis. From a narrative perspective, various portrayals of characters are interconnected and cumulative. In other

words, Mark's use of the shepherd image in 6:34 is relevant to the second shepherd image (14:27) and Jesus' other portraits in Mark's narrative. Therefore, the analysis of Jesus' portrayal along the plotline can shed light on how Mark's narrative uses the shepherd images to characterise Jesus. There is room for the present research to examine both the shepherd images and the characters' portrayals along the plotline in the narrative.

I have argued that the two shepherd images in Mark's narrative receive inadequate attention from the biblical scholarship. The absence of dedicated research on Mark's shepherd image supports this observation. Jogy Cheruvathoor George expressed his passion for determining a complete picture of Mark's shepherd image by adopting a narrative-critical approach. He proposes that the image is a language in the fabric of the narrative. Besides the term ποιμήν in 6:34 and 14:27, there are several themes, including the "way", "teaching", "seeing", and "feeding", relating to the image. The analysis reveals how the image is used to characterise Jesus and his ministry in the narrative.⁵⁹

In his discussion, George initiates a significant move away from the term ποιμήν to the shepherd language in his discussion. He illustrates a web of connection between the shepherd image and the narrative. Therefore, the image continuously interacts with the narrative in either an implicit or explicit way. This characterisation gradually convinces the implied readers to follow what the narrative delivers through the shepherd image.

Still, the significance of the shepherd image in the HB background remains uncertain. George explores the original literary contexts of the intertextual references in Mark 6:34 and 14:27. By considering these contexts, George identifies Jesus as a shepherd who leads the flock. However, this understanding detaches the shepherd image from its intertextual

⁵⁹ Jogy Cheruvathoor George, *The Metaphor of Shepherd in the Gospel of Mark* (Bern: Peter Lang GmbH, Internationaler Verlag der Wissenschaften, 2015), 16–17, 20–21.

background and reads the image in a more general sense. In addition, there is room to explore the connection between the shepherd images in Mark 6:34 and 14:27. George proposes that both shepherd images share the motif of God's way, the restoration of his people.⁶⁰ However, the connection remains at the thematic level of the narrative. How the intertextual backgrounds of the shepherd images contribute to the narrative remains unexplored.

Furthermore, the significance of Jesus' teaching in light of the shepherd image remains obscure. George recognises the explicit connection between the shepherd image in 6:34 and the teaching theme in the narrative layer.⁶¹ Indeed, teaching is described as one of the significant works in the ministry of Mark's Jesus. However, is the intertextual background of the shepherd image entirely irrelevant to the teaching theme? Interestingly, the only lengthy teaching that Jesus offers in the narrative is his teaching on purity (7:1–23). Does the background contribute to the concept of purity in narrative terms? These questions remain unanswered in George's study.

Lastly, the rhetorical impact that the shepherd images produce in Mark's narrative is beyond the scope of George's research. Notably, the narrative attaches the shepherd image (6:34) to Jesus' teaching, which is a significant work in his ministry in the narrative. Similarly, it uses another image (14:27) to characterise the climax of Jesus' ministry, the crucifixion, which is the ultimate means fulfilling God's restoration. Thus, I argue that the rhetorical impacts that the two shepherd images create on the implied readers deserve further discussion.

⁶⁰ George, *Shepherd in Mark*, 215–216.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 79, 148.

Summary

The literature review demonstrates how past biblical research evaluates Mark's shepherd image. Based on the literary quality of the two images in Mark's narrative, I conduct the review from the intertextual and narrative aspects. The examination raises questions regarding the theoretical ground dealing with the original literary background of the image in the HB and the interpretation of the image in a narrative environment.

I summarise the finding and the corresponding concerns here. First, the two Mark's shepherd images (6:34; 14:27) are widely acknowledged as intertextual references to the HB in biblical scholarship. The commentators generally agree that the first one is used to characterise Jesus as a shepherd leading the people of God, and the second one depicts the death of Jesus and the disciples' desertion. Second, the commentators examine the corresponding intertextual backgrounds to illuminate the meaning of the images. However, their approaches perhaps inadequately obtain theoretical support for the backgrounds to operate in a narrative environment. Third, the adaption of the intertextual contexts in understanding the shepherd images has been selective in past research, albeit they have acknowledged the whole backgrounds. Thus, other events surrounding the images in their original literary context in the HB were omitted.

And finally, the characterisation of Jesus by the shepherd images appears to be a static description irrelevant to his other portraits in Mark's narrative. Some commentators realised the connection between the shepherd image in 6:34 and Jesus' teaching in the immediate context of the narrative. Still, whether the image contributes to Jesus' teaching ministry in the broader context is absent from the discussions. Similarly, the connection between the two shepherd images in Mark's narrative remains obscure.

Research Outline

In the previous section, I identify several areas of Mark's shepherd image that the present research can explore. The research outline in this section indicates how the current study approaches the image and addresses the issues in those areas.

In Chapter 2, I will discuss the methodology for the present research. In particular, I will explore Genette's conception of narrative *metalepsis* and its application to an intertextual reference in a narrative environment. By defining a specific implied reader acknowledging *metalepsis* to approach the text, I develop a combined method, consisting of a narrative-critical and an intertextual analysis to examine how the two shepherd images serve to characterise Jesus and other characters.

Chapter 3 delivers an exegetical observation of Ezekiel 34 and Zech 13:7–9. I argue that these two pieces of text are the original intertextual sources of the shepherd images. The examination discusses various events surrounding the shepherd images and their significance within their broad contexts. This illustrates the relationship between the events and their relevance with the shepherd images. Subsequently, the vivid picture creates insights into the images in Mark's narrative.

In Chapter 4, I turn my attention to Mark's narrative and discuss the plot development of 1:1–6:6. This chapter discusses the way that Mark's narrator develops the protagonist Jesus and his interaction with other characters. The portrayal of Jesus' identity and his ministry and its rhetorical impact on the implied readers prepare them to receive the metaleptic use of the first shepherd image.

Chapter 5 focuses on the first shepherd image in the story of Jesus feeding the five thousand (6:30–44). In light of *metalepsis*, I will explore how the original literary background

of Ezekiel 34 interacts with the feeding story, and how the interaction provides the implied readers with additional information to understand Jesus the Davidic shepherd. Furthermore, the story of Jesus' teaching on purity (7:1–23) potentially enriches the understanding of Jesus' shepherding ministry in terms of the narrator's metaleptic interpretation of the first shepherd image.

Following the plot development, Chapter 6 explores the second shepherd image in Jesus' prediction of Peter's denial (14:26–31). Through the lens of *metalepsis*, I propose that Zech 13:7–9 illuminates Jesus' fulfilment of God's restoration and his promise (14:27–28) to the disciples as a renewal of God's people. By recalling the promise in the story of the empty tomb (16:1–8), the narrator guides the implied readers to respond to Jesus and acknowledge his shepherding ministry.

Chapter 2. Methodology

Introduction

In the previous chapter, I surveyed past discussions about the shepherd images in Mark's narrative. The images are widely acknowledged as two intertextual references (Ezek 34:5 in Mark 6:34; Zech 13:7 in Mark 14:27) and figures of speech characterising Mark's characters. As a result of both the insights and inadequacies revealed in the literature review, I propose that adopting a narratological perspective while considering Genette's conception of *metalepsis* will illuminate the characterisation of Mark's characters by the shepherd image and potential rhetorical impacts on the implied readers.

This chapter introduces a proposed narratological perspective for the present research. First, I will discuss the underlying assumptions and the scope of the thesis. This establishes boundaries to indicate what is within or beyond the scope of the research. Second, I will explore the communicative nature of the narrative. A narrative in itself is a means for the real author to communicate with the real readers. Four essential entities (implied author, implied readers, narrator and narratee) facilitate this type of communication. In particular, I will elaborate on the characteristics of the implied readers for the present research because this will provide the research with a hermeneutical lens designed to observe the shepherd image.

In addition, a considerable discussion about Genette's conception of narrative *metalepsis* within a narrative framework will take place. As a figure of speech, *metalepsis* entails a scene shifting within the narrative. Considering Mark's shepherd image, the shifting occurs between Mark's narrative and the original literary contexts of the intertextual references. This results in an interaction between the events in the intertextual background

and Mark's narrative. The interaction will subsequently disclose plentiful information for the interpretation of Mark's shepherd image. Lastly, I will develop a set of analytical methods according to the characteristics of the implied readers. The methods will enable the research to define how Mark's narrator uses the shepherd images to characterise his narrative and create rhetorical impact(s) on the implied readers.

Adopting a Narratological Perspective

I argue that a narratological perspective engaging with *metalepsis* provides the present research with a fresh look at the use of the shepherd image in characterising Mark's narrative. The research can overcome the inadequacies of the past studies that I summarised in the survey in the previous chapter. According to the literature review, there are varying degrees of reduction in the intertextual backgrounds of the shepherd images to single themes without theoretical ground.¹ In my view, Genette's narrative *metalepsis* utilises those literary contexts in Mark's narrative. The events surrounding the shepherd images in the contexts interact with the narrative. Subsequently, the interplay discloses additional information to understand the characterisation of the characters and its rhetorical impact.

Furthermore, past studies tend to underplay the significance of the shepherd image in Mark's narrative. In those discussions, the literary analysis disentangles the image from its

¹ For details, see the section "Literature Review of Mark's Shepherd Image" in Chapter 1. The present research will further discuss the use of *metalepsis* in the section "Narrative Metalepsis in Reading Mark's Shepherd Image" in this chapter.

narrative environment.² The image only gives Jesus a plain and static title, which is external to other portrayals of Jesus, and has a weak correlation with his portrayal in the rest of the narrative. In other words, the portrayal of Jesus as the shepherd eventually becomes a standalone figure in the narrative. In fact, Mark's Jesus is a character who continuously interacts with others from a narrative point of view. His portrayals develop along the plotline in those interactions. The character's portrayal along the plotline has a cumulative impact on the implied readers. Therefore, a literary analysis without exploring how the characters are portrayed along the plotline would not allow for a satisfactory answer about how Jesus is characterised by the shepherd images and how this portrayal rhetorically impacts the implied readers.

Assumptions

Before I discuss the narratological perspective on Mark's shepherd image in the present research, this section discusses the assumptions made about the unity of Mark's Gospel. From a narratological perspective, the present research accepts Mark's Gospel as a unified story about the life and death of the protagonist Jesus. Commentators in biblical studies have long acknowledged the story nature of the canonical Gospels. They treat the

² E.g., France and Marcus propose the relationship between the shepherd image (and Isaiah's Suffering Servant) and the death of Jesus. However, their proposal relies on the coherence of the suffering theme. How this image is associated with the character's vivid portrayal in the plotline is absent: see the section "Literature Review of Mark's Shepherd Image" in Chapter 1.

canonical Gospels as four unified stories intentionally composed by their authors.³ Although the awkward literary style of Mark's Gospel and its gaps and breaks create an illusion that Mark's Gospel is a set of collected stories rather than a single story with a specific design, this understanding of Mark's literary style fails to put forward a conclusive argument against the obvious unity of Mark. Gaps are significant elements in a narrative, appearing at linguistic, semantic, syntactical, grammatical, and narrative levels. The real readers fill them by interpreting them by using a presupposition pool shared with the real author.⁴ Moreover, the whole of Mark's Gospel demonstrates an internal consistency regarding the story of Jesus. The narrative is not merely composed of a set of diverse collected materials. Instead, it maintains the high integrity of the narrator's point of view with the internal coherence of the

³ The story nature of the biblical text received attention in the late twentieth century. Frei emphasises the literary nature of biblical texts, see Hans W. Frei, *The Eclipse of Biblical Narrative: A Study in Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century Hermeneutics* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1974); Alter promotes a narrative reading of the OT, see Robert Alter, *The Art of Biblical Narrative* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 1981). More specifically for the analysis of the Gospel's narrative, see Mark Allan Powell, *What is Narrative Criticism?* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1990). A recent publication by Brown acknowledges the Gospels' narrative nature as having a theologising purpose, see Jeannine K. Brown, *The Gospels as Stories: A Narrative Approach to Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John* (Grand Rapids: MI: Baker Academic, 2020), 147–186.

⁴ Max Turner, "Historical Criticism and Theological Hermeneutics," in *Between Two Horizons: Spanning New Testament Studies and Systematic Theology*, ed. Joel B. Green and Max Turner (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2000), 48–49; see also Wolfgang Iser, *The Act of Reading: A Theory of Aesthetic Response* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1978), 163–231.

thematic development, plotline and rhetoric.⁵ Therefore, the complete consistency demonstrates the intentional composition of Mark's Gospel as a single story with its simple literary style and unsophisticated structure.

Furthermore, the present research acknowledges that Mark's narrative, with an ending at Mark 16:8, is a complete story. There has been a long debate over Mark's original ending,

⁵ Norman R. Petersen, "'Point of View' in Mark's Narrative," *Semeia* 12 (1978): 97–121. See also David Rhoads, Joanna Dewey, and Donald M. Michie, *Mark as Story: An Introduction to the Narrative of a Gospel*, 3rd ed (Minneapolis, MI: Fortress Press, 2012), 3–4; Robert C. Tannehill, "The Gospel of Mark as Narrative Christology," *Semeia* 16 (1979): 57–95; F. F. Bruce, "The Date and Character of Mark," in *Jesus and the Politics of his Day*, ed. E. Bammel and C. F. D. Moule (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 69–90; Collins conducts a comprehensive survey on Mark's genre. Although the survey is a genre-related study, the result implies a coherence about Jesus' way of life in Mark's narrative, see Adela Yarbro Collins, *Mark: A Commentary*, ed. Harold W. Attridge, Hermeneia (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2007), 15–43. See also other studies which accept the unity of Mark's Gospel, e.g., Jack Dean Kingsbury, *Conflict in Mark: Jesus, Authorities, Disciples* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1989); Suzanne Watts Henderson, *Christology and Discipleship in the Gospel of Mark*, SNTSMS 135 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006); Christopher W. Skinner and Matthew Ryan Hauge eds., *Character Studies and the Gospel of Mark*, LNTS 483 (London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2014).

with another proposal offered: a longer ending (16:9–20) attached to Mark 16:8.⁶ There are three lines of argument to support the longer ending. First, the number of textual witnesses tends to support the longer ending. However, all the majuscule scripts with different endings are close in dates, perhaps around a few decades, so the textual witnesses could not serve as a decisive factor in this case.⁷

⁶ While the textual-critical analysis expresses its interest in what is historically original, the present research focuses on the implication of the original ending, for example, whether Mark 16:8 is a possible ending. France expresses his strong disagreement on accepting this abrupt ending. He claims this reading is “an unacceptably ‘modern’ option” (France, *Mark*, 673). Regarding the response to France’s claim, see Kelly R. Iverson, “A Postmodern Riddle? Gaps, Inferences and Mark’s Abrupt Ending,” *JSNT* 44.3 (2022): 337–367; cf. Upton deciphers the meaning and significance created by different endings of Mark, see Bridget Gilfillan Upton, *Hearing Mark’s Endings: Listening to Ancient Popular Texts through Speech Act Theory*, *BibInt* 79 (Leiden: Brill, 2006). Indeed, there are five various endings of Mark from the manuscripts, but the other three only have weak textual and literary coherence with the other texts of Mark, see Robert H. Stein, “The Ending of Mark,” *BBR* 18.1 (2008): 79–98; Bruce M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament: A Companion Volume to the United Bible Societies’ Greek New Testament*, 3rd ed (London: United Bible Societies, 1971), 124–125.

Another issue is the verbal and grammatical inconsistency of Mark 1:1–3 with the rest of the section. Some commentators propose that either Mark 1:4 is the original beginning or the original beginning has been lost, see J. K. Elliott, “Mark 1:1–3 — A Later Addition to the Gospel?” *NTS* 46.4 (2000): 584–588; N. Clayton Croy, “Where the Gospel Text Begins: A Non-Theological Interpretation of Mark 1:1,” *NovT* 43.2 (2001): 105–127. Nonetheless, these proposals do not gain support from any surviving manuscripts. While Mark 1:1–3 is consistent with the rest of Mark in narrative terms, the present research considers Mark 1:1–3 an integral part of the narrative.

⁷ Kurt Aland and Barbara Aland, *The Text of the New Testament: An Introduction to the Critical Editions and to the Theory and Practice of Modern Textual Criticism*, trans. Erroll F. Rhodes (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1987), 108–109, 292.

Second, a number of patristic writings demonstrate familiarity with the longer endings. However, they also acknowledge the ending at 16:8.⁸ More importantly, none of these writings deal with the question of which version is the original one. While the canonisation was still in progress, references to the longer ending could not produce conclusive evidence to support its originality.

Third, the longer ending has literary features in common with the whole story of Mark (e.g., words used once or twice only, such as ἀπιστέω in Mark 16:11 and 16, cf. ἀφεδρών in Mark 7:19; three-step progression of the episode).⁹ However, this only demonstrates the completeness of Mark's narrative with the longer ending, perhaps due to scribal imitation rather than originality. Thus, the internal evidence does not negate the ending at Mark 16:8 as the original ending.

Overall, the evidence for the longer ending is not sufficiently convincing to reject the argument for the other proposals. Given the abrupt ending at 16:8, which appears to be a more difficult reading, and has the omission of Mark 16:9–20 during transmission, this seems

⁸ In *Against the Pelagians* 2.15, Jerome even refers to an ending of Mark, which is widely accepted as a later scribal addition, see Saint Jerome, "The Dialogue against the Pelagians," in *Dogmatic and Polemical Works*, vol. 53 of *The Fathers of the Church*, trans. John N. Hritz (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2010), 317–319. In *Against Celsus* 2.69, Origen omits Mark in the discussion on Jesus' tomb. It is more likely that the version of Mark received by Origen ends at 16:8, see Origen, *Origen: Contra Celsum*, ed. Henry Chadwick, trans. Henry Chadwick (London: Cambridge University Press, 1980), 119; cf. Nicholas P. Lunn, *The Original Ending of Mark: A New Case for the Authenticity of Mark 16:9–20* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 1 Oct 2014), 61–116.

⁹ Lunn, *The Original Ending of Mark*, 117–272; the defence against the longer ending in terms of linguistic features, see James Keith Elliot, "The Text and Language of the Endings to Mark's Gospel," in *The Language and Style of the Gospel of Mark: An Edition of C.H. Turner's Notes on Marcan Usage together with Other Comparable Studies*, NovTSup 71 (Leiden: Brill, 1993), 203–211.

less probable. The present research accepts that Mark's Gospel with an ending at Mark 16:8 is a complete and coherent narrative.¹⁰

Scope of the Thesis

Given that the present research adopts a narratological perspective, I have highlighted several points beyond the scope of the current research. First, this research has little interest in the historical development of the shepherd image or in the technique that the real author adopts to interpret this image in Mark's Gospel (e.g., identifying the intertextual source(s), determining the exegetical principles, or exploring the reception history). Instead, I will focus on the plot development of the events surrounding the shepherd images in their original literary context of the HB and examine their contribution to the character's portrayal in Mark's narrative.

Second, the *Sitz im Leben* of Mark's Gospel and the historical identity of the real author and the original recipient are beyond the scope of this research. Some commentators explore the historical situation of the recipient by examining the intertextual references in Mark's Gospel.¹¹ By contrast, I explore the two shepherd images in Mark's narrative for another reason. The primary concern falls on the characterisation of Jesus and his ministry by the intertextual background of the shepherd images, and its potential rhetorical impact(s) created by the characterisation on the implied readers.

¹⁰ Some discussions propose another theory that the ending at Mark 16:8 is a corruption, see Bruce M. Metzger and Bart D. Ehrman, *The Text of the New Testament: Its Transmission, Corruption and Restoration*, 4th ed (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 326. However, this theory remains speculative without any historical evidence.

¹¹ E.g., Joel Marcus, "The Jewish War and the *Sitz im Leben* of Mark," *JBL* 111.3 (1992): 456–460.

Finally, the present research excludes the interpretation of Mark's shepherd images from the perspective of their psychological and cognitive aspects. Instead, it approaches the shepherd images in Mark's Gospel in narrative terms, investigating how the narrator uses the images to interact with the broader context of the narrative and move the story of Mark's Jesus from the beginning to the end.

Key Entities of a Narrative for Communication

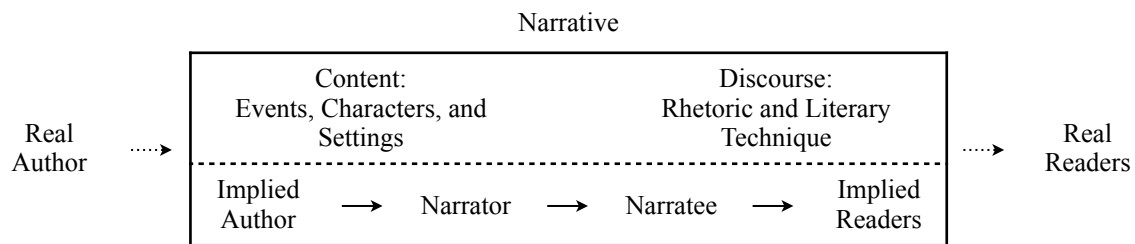
According to Chatman, a narrative's structure is made up of the story (content) and the discourse (expression). While the former includes settings, characters and events, the latter refers to the rhetoric of the story, that is, how the story is composed to create a certain effect which communicates the points of view embodied in the narrative persuasively.¹² With a specific external purpose(s), a real author as a flesh-and-blood creator composes a narrative intended to communicate with the flesh-and-blood recipient, the real readers. Both entities, the real author and the real readers, are significant from a historical-critical perspective.¹³ The historical identity, the social-cultural background and the *Sitz im Leben* regarding these two entities, have received much attention. The ancient literary or interpretive technique, which is closely related to their historical background, also raises considerable concerns.

Nevertheless, the historical issues concerning the real author or the real readers are beyond the scope of discussions from a narratological perspective. The two entities are not an

¹² Seymour Benjamin Chatman, *Story and Discourse: Narrative Structure in Fiction and Film* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1978), 19–26.

¹³ The survey in the last chapter has observed that some discussions of Mark's shepherd image are concerned with these historical issues.

essential part of the communicative act through a narrative.¹⁴ They lie outside the parameters of the narrative. Instead, the written text *per se* facilitates communication. Accordingly, four entities (the implied author, the implied readers, the narrator, and the narratee) are derived from the text for the communication. These entities decisively guide the interpretation of the narrative. I lay out the communication through a narrative as the diagram below:



Implied Author and Implied Readers

Unlike the flesh-and-blood author, the implied author is a textual construct implied by the text.¹⁵ Although s/he does not have a pragmatic role and voice in the narrative, s/he delivers the internal purpose for the communication. In a technical sense, the implied author is only an image presupposed by the written text for a particular communicative purpose(s). During the composition process, the real author selects the setting, the character’s portrayal, the plotting, and the rhetoric, but excludes what is not required. The selection and the exclusion of the materials form an image of the implied author with a specific internal purpose(s) embedded in the text.¹⁶ In other words, all the purpose(s) implied by the text are

¹⁴ Chatman, *Story and Discourse*, 151.

¹⁵ Ibid., 148.

¹⁶ Quentin Skinner, “Motives, Intentions and the Interpretation of Texts,” *NewLitH* 3.2 (1972): 393–408; Jeannine K. Brown, *Scripture as Communication: Introducing Biblical Hermeneutics* (Grand Rapids: MI: Baker Academic, 2007), 61, 70–72.

internal purpose(s) according to the implied author. Other information, which is external to the communication or retained in the mind of the real author, is excluded.¹⁷ To sum up, the implied author does not appear identical to the real author. S/he is only a textually derived construct representing the real author for a particular communication. All the purposes this construct intends to deliver are completely embedded in the text.

Some commentators have argued against the construction of the implied author. They consider that this textual construct does not have any pragmatic role in the narrative (cf., the narrator). Such a construct might even obscure the distinction between the implied and the real author, especially when the former is not a narrative agent intentionally created by the latter.¹⁸ However, justifying the implied author from a pragmatic aspect perhaps underplays its significance. According to Chatman, the implied author is a distinctive entity different from the real one within the communicative model. Genette shares the view of Chatman and highlights that “the implied author is everything the text lets us know about the author”.¹⁹ This statement reflects the very nature of the implied author, that this construct is only an ideal agent of the text, which ideally expresses the points of view derived from the narrative. It is worth noting that these points of view do not necessarily align with the real author’s

¹⁷ The exclusion of the information retained in the real author’s mind draws one of the distinctions between the real author and the implied author, see also E. D. Hirsch, *Validity in Interpretation* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1967), 31–33. According to the theory of Schleiermacher and Dilthey, the real recipient would know more than the real author, see Anthony C. Thiselton, *Hermeneutics: An Introduction* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2009), 148–165. Whether or not it is feasible, any of the purposes outside the text of the narrative is regarded as external, which is beyond the scope of the present research.

¹⁸ Regarding a brief summary of the debate, see Wolf Schmid, “Implied Author,” in vol. 1 of *Handbook of Narratology*, ed. Peter Hühn et al. (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2014), 292–294.

¹⁹ Gérard Genette, *Narrative Discourse Revisited*, trans. Jane E. Lewin (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1988), 135–154.

personal way of thinking in his/her real life. S/he has the freedom to make alternate points of view for a communicative purpose. Therefore, the construction of the implied author offers a conceptual framework for communication that confines the interpretation of the narrative, thereby ignoring endless speculations about the real author that are not presupposed by the text. This serves as a guide to acquiring the narrative's internal purpose and an ideal response to it.

There is a specific internal purpose(s) reflected in the image of the implied author. This internal purpose(s) is actually embedded in different text layers. These layers include words, phrases, sentences, pericopes, episodes and the whole piece of text. They exert mutual influence and collectively function to guide the implied readers to recognise the overall internal purpose implied by the text.²⁰ For example, Mark's narrative aims to invite its readers to emulate Jesus. When Jesus calls to Simon and Andrew (1:16–18), the use of the phrase δεῦτε ὀπίσω μου and the verb ἀκολουθέω reflect the notion of emulating Jesus. The term μαθητής appears later (e.g., 2:15) to portray those who are called to follow Jesus. This term denotes that there is a sense of the possibility of learning from Jesus and emulating him. Again in Mark 3:13–14 and 6:7–30, the event describes the commission of Jesus to the disciples to do what he has done in the narrative. Thus, the theme of emulation presumably emerges from various text layers at different stages of the narrative.

²⁰ Smith draws an analogy between a driver's journey and the multiple layers of the internal purpose. The ultimate destination corresponds to the overall internal purpose. While particular routes refer to the purposes of different episodes and pericopes, the road signs and the traffic lights symbolise the purposes of the sentences, phrases and words. On the journey, the road signs guide the driver to follow the route to the end. All the routes will finally take the driver to reach a particular destination. Similarly, the purposes from different layers of text will lead the implied readers to identify with the overall internal purpose, see Frank Smith, *Writing and the Writer*, 2nd ed. (London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1994), 88–89.

The implied readers²¹ are regarded as the counterpart of the implied author. The real author presupposes an image of the recipient who is competent in understanding the text and recognising the narrative's internal purpose(s) and embeds this in the text. The real readers reconstruct the image during the reception process.²² However, the figure of the implied readers does not necessarily refer to the original readers. A narrative reading offers more freedom to reconstruct the implied readers from within different interpretative frameworks (e.g., its psychological aspects) and/or having purposes other than those presupposed by the text. This freedom brings new light into the text.²³ In sum, the construct of the implied readers offers a direction to interpret the narrative and understand the internal purpose(s) within it. I will further define the characteristics of the implied readers for the present research in a later section.

²¹ The present research explores the reading process along the plotline of Mark's narrative from a modern narratological perspective. Furthermore, Mark's Gospel is expected to be received by the early Christian community rather than an individual. Therefore, the present research will use the term "readers" in the plural to represent the recipient of Mark's Gospel. Cf. in the narratological discussion, some commentators replace the term "reader" with "audience" to reflect the historical nature of the Gospels' text, e.g., Rhoads, Dewey and Michie, *Mark as Story*, 137–152; Janice Capel Anderson and Stephen D. Moore, "Introduction: The Lives of Mark," in *Mark & Method: New Approaches in Biblical Studies*, ed. Janice Capel Anderson and Stephen D. Moore (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1992), 1–22; see also Warren Carter, *Matthew: Storyteller, Interpreter, Evangelist* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1996), 1–9; Christopher William Skinner, "The Good Shepherd παροικία (John 10:1–21) and John's Implied Readers: A Thought Experiment in Reading the Fourth Gospel," *HBT* 40.2 (2018): 183–202. Bauckham further suggests that the recipient is the anonymous Christian community, see Richard Bauckham, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses: The Gospels as Eyewitness Testimony*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: W. B. Eerdmans, 2017), 5–8. While the present research focuses on the story world of Mark's Gospel, the historical identity of the Gospel's recipient is not a determinative factor.

²² Chatman, *Story and Discourse*, 149–150.

²³ Powell, *Narrative Criticism*, 20; Wolf Schmid, *Elemente der Narratologie*, dGS, 3rd ed. (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2014), 69; Dinkler proposes that "narratives engender multiple interpretive possibilities, but interpretive latitude can be limited in several ways, depending on the criteria established", see Michal Beth Dinkler, *Literary Theory and the New Testament*, AYBRL (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2019), 146.

The acknowledgement of the implied author and readers in Chatman's communicative model theoretically streamlines the present research in two ways. First, the model avoids the temptation of historicity and false expectation regarding the shepherd image, including its relationship with the messianic figure in God's salvific promise and its implication for addressing the *Sitz im Leben* of the early Christian community. These historical concerns are rendered as the business of the real author, which is irrelevant to the present research. Second, the model underscores the focus of the research — the point of view of Mark's narrative on the shepherd image. This distinguishes the external purposes of the narrative from its internal purpose. The boundary establishment theoretically enables the research to focus on how the narrative develops points of view and delivers them to the implied readers for the sake of their acknowledgement. Overall, the model facilitates the research to examine Mark's shepherd image within the scope of the thesis.

Narrator and Narratee

According to their construction, neither the implied author nor the implied readers have a pragmatic role within the narrative. Who then is responsible for facilitating the communication between the real author and the real readers with the narrative? This requires two virtual positions: narrator and narratee. The narrator is a storyteller embedded in the narrative to tell the story.²⁴ His/her role is to reflect the way that the narrative is presented, that is, the content and the expression of the narrative. There are several ways for the narrator

²⁴ Uri Margolin, "Narrator," in vol. 2 of *Handbook of Narratology*, ed. Peter Hühn et al. (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2014), 646–647.

to function in a narrative.²⁵ The use of the first-person pronoun “I” is a direct way that strongly signals the narrator’s presence within a narrative. In another way, the narrator can function in the absence of the first-person pronoun. S/he even hides from the scene when the characters are performing within the narrative.

In Mark’s narrative, the performance of the narrator is clear.²⁶ He does not express his voice by using the first-person pronoun or performing as a character. Rather, he plays as a witness to the events, intrudes into the narrative and connects the events in a simple and direct way.²⁷ I would highlight two characteristics of Mark’s narrator here. First, Mark’s narrator is omniscient. He closely follows the characters’ journey and publicises the events, thoughts, and feelings concerning them without boundaries of time and place.²⁸ For example, the narrator recognises Jesus’ compassion for those who look for him (1:41; cf. 6:34). He can even access Jesus’ teaching while Jesus and his disciples segregate themselves from the crowd (4:10–34). Thus, the narrator’s omniscience supplies the readers with additional

²⁵ Gerald Prince, *Narratology: The Form and Functioning of Narrative*, JLSM 108 (Berlin: Mouton, 1982), 8–16; indeed, the role of the narrator can be an optional entity in some forms of the narrative (e.g., an audio story purely with dialogue), see also Chatman, *Story and Discourse*, 151.

²⁶ The discussion of the authorship of Mark’s Gospel is beyond the scope of the thesis. While Mark’s Gospel is anonymous, commentators tend to identify Mark’s author as a male (e.g., Collins, *Mark*, 2–6). For simplicity, this thesis uses the male pronoun (he/his/him) to identify Mark’s narrator.

²⁷ In terms of Prince’s understanding, Mark’s narrator has considerable intrusiveness in the narrative. For example, Jesus is questioned about fasting (2:18–22). The conversation abruptly ends without mentioning the response from the disciples of John the Baptist and the Pharisees. The narrator obviously intrudes into the plotline and speaks about Jesus’ ongoing journey (2:23). This intrusion signifies his/her presence in the narrative and directly governs the movement of the narrative. Regarding the narrator of intrusiveness, see Prince, *Narratology*, 10–13.

²⁸ Rhoads, Dewey and Michie, *Mark as Story*, 41–43.

information about the characters' performance and enriches their understanding of the narrative.

Furthermore, Mark's narrator is reliable. According to Booth, who explored this idea in his book on fictional rhetoric, modern authors attempt to construct an unreliable narrator who holds conflicting views and judgments different from the implied author. The unreliability creates a distance between the implied author and the narrator. This forces an interpretation of the narrative that relies more on the evidence outside the text.²⁹ On the contrary, there are no unreliable narrators in the canonical Gospels. Mark's narrator and the others function reliably. They align with their implied authors in judging the characters and events in the narrative.³⁰ The reliability suggests that the text of Mark is the primary source for the implied readers to explore the points of view and grasp the internal purpose of the narrative.

The reliability of Mark's narrator makes his work virtually identical to the implied author in terms of the points of view. Therefore, some commentators intentionally do not distinguish them.³¹ Notably, the construction of the narrator and the implied author are indeed based on different theoretical grounds. They occupy different positions in the communicative

²⁹ Wayne C. Booth, *The Rhetoric of Fiction*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983), 156–159.

³⁰ Powell, *Narrative Criticism*, 26; Rhoads et al. does not use the term “reliable” to describe the narrator. However, they consider that Mark's narrator follows the implied author to make judgements in God's terms, see Rhoads, Dewey and Michie, *Mark as Story*, 45–46.

³¹ Elizabeth Struthers Malbon, “Narrative Criticism: How Does the Story Mean?” in *Mark & Method: New Approaches in Biblical Studies*, ed. Janice Capel Anderson and Stephen D. Moore (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1992), 28.

model. Confusion between these two entities perhaps leads to ambiguity in the conceptual framework when exploring the narrative.³²

For the sake of clarity, the recognition of Mark's narrator has value in the present research. In general, the current research demonstrates a close interest in the work of Mark's narrator. As a narrator, his primary role is to guarantee to get the story told according to the narration. He brings out the characterisation of the events and the characters, expresses the points of view about them, and keeps the story's movement from the beginning to the end along the plotline. With the emphasis on the narrator's role, the discussion on the characterisation of Mark's characters by the shepherd image does not centre on the rhetorical technique from an author-oriented perspective. Instead, it is concerned about what Mark's narrator asserts about the shepherd image, the content of the shepherd image, and its expression in the narrative. Moreover, the identification of Mark's narrator facilitates the discussion of the shepherd image in narrative terms. It clarifies the significance of *metalepsis* in a narrative.³³

The narratee is the addressee of the narrator. S/he is the one to whom the narrator tells the story. In principle, the narratee is different from the implied readers in the sense that the implied readers are the assumed recipients of the narrative while the narratee is a rhetorical device of the narrative, the assumed listener of the narrator.³⁴ Mark's narratee is implicit

³² Schmid argues against the confusion between the implied author and the narrator, see Schmid, *der Narratologie*, 60–64.

³³ For example, *metalepsis* occurs when the narrator shifts from his/her story world to another one, and turns to be a character in the new context. Thus, the work of the narrator is involved. I will further discuss the significance of *metalepsis* in the section "Metalepsis in Reading Mark's Shepherd Image".

³⁴ Wolf Schmid, "Narratee," in vol. 1 of *Handbook of Narratology*, ed. Peter Hühn et al. (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2014), 364; see also Powell, *Narrative Criticism*, 27.

because the narrator does not use the second person (“You”) or the first person (“We”) to address his/her narratee explicitly in the narrative.³⁵ The absence of those pronouns keeps the narratee a consistent distance away from the story. Therefore, the reading role of Mark’s narratee is straightforward. S/he works identically to the implied readers in the sense that they both follow the plotline as it extends through the narrative. For simplicity, the present research does not highlight the work of the narratee in the narrative unless it is required.

The conception of the narrator in Chatman’s communicative model contributes to the discussion of Mark’s shepherd image, especially when the research considers *metalepsis* as a figure of speech and employs this conception to analyse the image. Theoretically, this model supports my argument to demonstrate how *metalepsis* functions within the narrative. I will further discuss the operation of *metalepsis* later in this chapter.

Defining the Implied Readers of Mark’s Narrative

The previous section briefly introduces a general view of the implied readers in a communicative model. In this section, I will further define the implied readers for the present research. This definition is essential because it defines the way to interpret the text. The characteristics of the readers function as a hermeneutical lens to analyse Mark’s narrative with clear directions.

As I have discussed, the implied readers are the textually derived construct implied by the text of Mark’s narrative. Based on this definition, Rhoads et al. further adopt the conception of the ideal readers, who receive the rhetoric of the story and responds to it ideally

³⁵ Prince, *Narratology*, 16–17.

according to how the text simulates them.³⁶ Therefore, as the implied readers of Mark's narrative, they acknowledge the internal purpose(s) of the narrative to "receive the rule of God with faith and have the courage to follow Jesus whatever the consequences". Under the persuasion and empowerment of the story, the implied readers would embrace the good news manifested by Mark's Jesus and live faithfully according to the good news.³⁷

Subject to this basic definition, I will highlight and elaborate on several characteristics of the implied readers essential for the present research. These characteristics give the research a direction to analyse the way that Mark's narrator uses the shepherd image to portray the characters and create rhetorical impact on the implied readers. Accordingly, I will develop an analytical method and introduce it afterwards.

Presupposition Pool of Implied Readers

The presupposition pool refers to a set of prior knowledge that the implied readers possess before reading Mark's narrative.³⁸ Apart from the linguistic and literary knowledge

³⁶ Rhoads, Dewey, and Michie, *Mark as Story*, 138; see also Warren, *Matthew*, 4. Although commentators name the implied reader using various terms (e.g., postulated reader, model reader), they share the concept of ideal response by the implied reader, see Booth, *Rhetoric of Fiction*, 177; Jonathan Culler, *Structuralist Poetics: Structuralism, Linguistics and the Study of Literature* (Abingdon: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1975; repr., London: Taylor & Francis Group, 2004), 123–124; Umberto Eco, *The Role of the Reader: Explorations in the Semiotics of Texts* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1981), 7–9.

³⁷ Rhoads, Dewey, and Michie, *Mark as Story*, 138–139.

³⁸ See Grant R. Osborne, *The Hermeneutical Spiral: A Comprehensive Introduction to Biblical Interpretation*, 2nd ed. (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2006), 412; other commentators described the prior knowledge in different ways, e.g., "pre-understanding" (Thiselton, *Hermeneutics*, 13–16) or "encyclopaedia of production," and "encyclopaedia of reception" (Umberto Eco, *A Theory of Semiotics* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1979), 98–114).

that I will discuss later, this section focuses on three knowledge sets. The first one is the knowledge of the HB. The implied readers are knowledgeable about the HB of both the Masoretic Text (MT) and the Septuagint (LXX) in the present research. Their knowledge enables the research to detect different stories in the HB embedded in Mark's Gospel. Indeed, those stories significantly influence the shaping of the NT's writing. Themes like the Exodus, the Temple, and kingship, to name but a few, are observed in the canonical Gospels.³⁹ These themes do not merely appear in the foreground of the Gospels' stories (e.g., 1:2–3; cf. Matt 3:3; Luke 3:4), but they also emerge in the backbone of the narrative in the form of setting, character's portrait, and intertextual reference. The knowledge of the HB enhances the understanding of these elements in a narrative.

From a historical perspective, the real historical/first readers of Mark's Gospel may not possess comprehensive knowledge of the HB. However, the limited knowledge of the first readers in their real circumstances does not cause difficulties in defining the quality of the knowledge of the implied readers. In the Greco-Roman world, the early Christian communities (and other associations) share a widespread practice of communal reading events. This reading encourages examinations and discussions to establish a quality control for interpreting and understanding the text.⁴⁰ Therefore, the ancient reading practice provides

³⁹ Willard M. Swartley, *Israel's Scripture Traditions and the Synoptic Gospels: Story Shaping Story* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1994). Additionally, the tradition of Israel's Scripture influences the epistolary writings in the NT, e.g., N. T. Wright, *Paul and the Faithfulness of God*, vol. 4 of *Christian Origins and the Question of God* (London: SPCK Publishing, 2013); Steve Moyise, and M. J. J. Menken eds., *Isaiah in the New Testament*, NTSI (London: T&T Clark, 2005).

⁴⁰ Brian J. Wright, *Communal Reading in the Time of Jesus: A Window into Early Christian Reading Practices* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2017), 207–209; cf. Daniel Peretz, "The Roman Interpreter and His Diplomatic and Military Roles," *Historia* 55.4 (2006): 451–470.

this thesis with a solid ground for presupposing the knowledge of the HB of the implied readers, who give ideal responses to the text.

When defining the implied reader of Matthew's Gospel, Powell also has a similar assumption about the knowledge of the HB on the part of the reader. He lists two important criteria in Matthew, which can also be used to justify the scriptural knowledge of the implied readers of Mark's narrative. The first one is the expected knowledge of the HB implied by the text. In Matthew's Gospel, references to the HB with quotation formulas (e.g., Matt 4:4; 11:10; cf. Matt 12:3; 19:4; 21:16) frequently appear in the narrative. Powell proposes that Matthew's implied reader is expected to know the HB. The same case applies to the allusive references, such as the portrayal of John the Baptist in light of Elijah (Matt 3:4; cf. 2 Kgs 1:8).⁴¹ Similarly, Mark's narrator occasionally refers to the HB in an explicit manner in his narrative. For example, if the implied readers do not possess the knowledge of Isaiah and Malachi, they will fail to understand the meaning of the way of the Lord in Mark 1:2–3 (see also 7:6; 9:13; 11:17; 14:21, 27). Thus, the use of these references assumes the knowledge of the corresponding texts and their literary context in the HB so the readers can grasp their significance within Mark's narrative.

Second, Powell proposes not to exaggerate the knowledge that the implied reader potentially has. For example, Matt 27:9–10 contains a composite reference attributed to the prophet Jeremiah. Matthew's implied reader will acknowledge this attribution rather than pondering the authorship of the references. Otherwise, unexpected reading will be caused by the fact that the implied reader knows the HB too well.⁴² The present thesis will apply the

⁴¹ Mark Allan Powell, "Expected and Unexpected Reading of Matthew: What the Reader Knows," *AsTJ* 48.2 (1993): 41–42.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 42–43.

same principle to the definition of Mark's implied readers. It assumes that the implied readers have knowledge which is grammatically enough to understand the intertextual references and their immediate literary context in Mark's narrative. For example, the implied readers are familiar with Ezekiel 34 and Zech 13:7–9. They can realise that they are two self-contained literacy units within their literary contexts. The events reported in the passages are directly related to the shepherd images. The former recounts the antecedents and consequences of God's restoration with the appointed shepherd involved; the latter contains God's actions directly on the shepherd and his people to fulfil the restorative programme.⁴³ This understanding prevents the present research from inappropriately interpreting Mark's narrative and over-stretching the definition of the implied readers.

In addition, the implied readers are familiar with the socio-cultural context of the world defined by the story. It is noteworthy that every narrative has gaps and there is a presupposition that the readers will fill them to interpret the narrative.⁴⁴ Some of them require knowledge of the socio-cultural context regarding the story world. For example, Mark's narrator introduces an event about Jesus having a meal with the tax collectors and sinners (2:15). A wide range of social significance was attached to the meal custom in the first-century Greco-Roman world. For example, the meal custom, either in Graeco-Roman or

⁴³ Regarding the text of Ezekiel, assuming that the implied readers know the whole of the book of Ezekiel is perhaps exaggeration, but the implied readers can be assumed to know Zechariah 9–14 because Mark's narrator frequently recalls the content of those Zechariah passages (Dodd, *According to the Scriptures*, 49,64–67; Marcus, *The Way of the Lord*, 158–159). The exegetical observation in Chapter 3 will further examine the text of Ezekiel 34 and Zech 13:7–9.

⁴⁴ See Stephen E. Fowl, "The Role of Authorial Intention in the Theological Interpretation of Scripture," in *Between Two Horizons: Spanning New Testament Studies and Systematic Theology*, ed. Joel B. Green and Max Turner (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2000), 74–76; Wolfgang Iser, *The Implied Reader: Patterns of Communication in Prose Fiction from Bunyan to Beckett* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974), 38–40, 274–275.

Jewish culture, has its social parameters to control and define the communal identity within a social hierarchy.⁴⁵ Subject to the social function of the meal custom, the practice of Jesus' having a meal with the toll collectors and sinners breaks the social norm. The question from the scribes of the Pharisees (2:16) is no longer a general enquiry, but represents an attitude of severe doubt about Jesus' countercultural act. Thus, the implied readers can infer the significance of Jesus' ministry and its impact on other characters from his response (2:17) from this social background.

Lastly, the implied readers have general knowledge about stories regarding the life of Jesus.⁴⁶ It is widely agreed that the Gospel narratives come into existence with the materials from various traditions about Jesus in oral and written forms, which are widespread among (some) early Christian communities.⁴⁷ With the knowledge of those traditions, the implied readers gain a general impression of Jesus' ministry — exorcism, healing, feeding and other miracles. They also realise some of the events that happened in the life of Jesus, including his

⁴⁵ Regarding the table fellowship in Jewish and Graeco-Roman culture, see Dennis E. Smith, "The Greco-Roman Banquet as a Social Institution," in *Meals in the Early Christian World: Social Formation, Experimentation, and Conflict at the Table*, ed. Smith, Dennis E. and Hal Taussig (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 23–33; Jordan D. Rosenblum, "Jewish Meals in Antiquity," in *A Companion to Food in the Ancient World*, ed. John Wilkins and Robin Nadeau, BCAW (Chichester: Wiley Blackwell, 2015), 355–356; Wassen discusses the Pharisees' critique of Jesus' meal with the toll collectors and sinners, see Cecilia Wassen, "Jesus' Table Fellowship with 'Toll Collectors and Sinners,'" *JSHS* 14.2 (2016): 137–157.

⁴⁶ Powell, "Expected and Unexpected Reading of Matthew," 39–40, 46.

⁴⁷ In his review of the transmission of Jesus' tradition, Tuckett states that "whatever the 'primary' setting for the transmission of Jesus traditions, it is still clear that this tradition was used — and adapted — by (some) early Christians, at least to an extent", see Christopher Tuckett, "Form Criticism," in *Jesus in Memory: Traditions in Oral and Scribal Perspectives*, ed. Kelber, Werner H. and Samuel Byrskog (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2009), 26, 37.

baptism, transfiguration, crucifixion and the empty tomb.⁴⁸ Given the general understanding about Jesus' life story, the present research focuses on how Mark's narrator characterises his narrative about the life of Jesus and its rhetorical impact on the implied readers rather than what Jesus does in his life.

Linguistics and Literary Competence

From a narratological perspective, the implied readers are assumed to be competent in linguistics and the notion of literary aspect.⁴⁹ The readers have the linguistic knowledge available to perform grammatical analysis, including morphological study, semantic exploration, and syntactical examination of the text. The analysis shows a basic literal understanding of the text. For example, the readers recognise the syntactical structure of the conjunctive clause καθὼς γέγραπται ἐν τῷ Ἡσαΐα τῷ προφήτῃ (1:2). In this clause, the

⁴⁸ It would be hard to determine the exact form of the traditions. However, Ellis' comparison of the Synoptic Gospels draws an outline of what Jesus does, see E. Earle Ellis, "The Making of Narratives in the Synoptic Gospels," in *Jesus and the Oral Gospel Tradition*, ed. Henry Wansbrough, JSNTSup 64, (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1991), 310–333.

⁴⁹ See Schmid, *der Narratologie*, 64–65, 67. Linguistic competence is a common characteristic of the implied readers, see Umberto Eco, *The Role of the Reader*, 7; Culler, *Structuralist Poetics*, 131–152; Stanley E. Fish, *Is There a Text in This Class?: The Authority of Interpretive Communities* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1980), 26–27. Rather than a presupposition that needs further proof, linguistic competence is the basis that the implied reader must possess to make communication feasible, even though it is different from the real historical situation because of various education levels, see Powell, "Expected and Unexpected Reading of Matthew," 32; cf. the education in the Greco-Roman world, see Raffaella Cribiore, *Gymnastics of the Mind: Greek Education in Hellenistic and Roman Egypt* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), see also Raffaella Cribiore, "Education in the Papyri," in *The Oxford Handbook of Papyrology*, ed. Roger S. Bagnall (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 320–337. The amanuensis, employed or voluntary, writes letters for others in the Greco-Roman world. One of the implications of this practice is the literary incompetence of the people in the ancient world, see E. Randolph Richards, *The Secretary in the Letters of Paul*, WUNT II 42 (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr Paul Siebeck, 1991), 97–110.

adverb καθὼς displays the sense of comparison to Mark 1:1 and the perfect aspect of γέγραπται highlights the state of the prophetic writing by Isaiah.⁵⁰

Furthermore, the implied readers are competent in narratological analysis. They could identify the essential elements in a narrative, including the settings, the characters' portrayals and the events. More than the story's content, different rhetorical devices are used in the narrative to characterise the story, for example, verbal repetition, figures of speech, irony and misunderstanding, and scene patterns.⁵¹ The implied readers recognise these rhetorical devices, particularly those for the character's performance, and acknowledge the persuasive effect they have on them. For example, the verbal repetition of εὐθὺς indicates the hastiness of Simon and Andrew in responding to Jesus' calling (1:16–20). This demonstrates their loyalty to Jesus. By contrast to the disciples, the theme of challenge to Jesus by the religious leaders emerges in Mark 2:1–3:12. The thematic repetition reflects that a growing conflict between them arises in the early stage of Jesus' ministry.

In identifying a character's performance, the present research focuses on Mark's textual expression. It reflects a considerable difference from Forster's proposal, which is widely accepted in narrative analyses in biblical studies. Forster categorises the characters as either flat or round. 'Flat' character refers to those with a single and consistent quality. By contrast, a 'round' character possesses various conflicting traits.⁵² For example, Jesus and the disciples can be identified as 'round' characters, while the women and other minor characters

⁵⁰ BDAG, s.v. “καθὼς”; GGBB, 662–663.

⁵¹ Regarding the narrative rhetoric, see James L. Resseguie, *Narrative Criticism of the New Testament: An Introduction* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2005), 41–86; for the rhetoric of Mark's narrative, see Rhoads, Dewey and Michie, *Mark as Story*, 47–60.

⁵² E. M. Forster, *Aspects of the Novel* (London: Edward Arnold, 1949), 67–69; others who follow Forster's categorisation, e.g., Powell, *Narrative Criticism*, 54–55; Resseguie, *Narrative Criticism*, 124.

are considered ‘flat’ characters. Nonetheless, the ‘flat-round’ categorisation perhaps improperly assesses the character’s performance in Mark’s narrative. On the one hand, the categorisation is based on the emotional quality of the characters, but the implied author shows minimal interest in this dimension. The actions they take in the narrative are the major source of their portrayals. Thus, using Forster’s binary categorisation is inappropriate for exploring the characters’ portraits in Mark’s narrative.⁵³

On the other hand, the ‘flat-round’ model reduces Mark’s characters to homogeneous figures. The reduction potentially undermines their vivid and diverse performance. Rather than fitting the characters into a binary system, Bennema reconstructs the Gospels’ characters in a continuum of characterisation with three axes (complexity, development, and penetration into the inner life). This results in a complex web of understanding of the characters. By acknowledging the diverse nature of the character’s portrayal in the canonical Gospels, Bennema demonstrates that the traits of Mark’s characters are displayed in different ways at different points in the narrative. They range from single to multiple, with varying degrees of complexity. The divergence in the characters’ performance indicates that they have their own paths of development in the narrative.⁵⁴ For example, Joseph of Arimathea and Mary Magdalene are minor characters with simple portrayals in the narrative. Although they both

⁵³ Mieke Bal, *Narratology: Introduction to the Theory of Narrative*, 4th ed. (Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press, 2017), 106–107; see also Helen K. Bond, *The First Biography of Jesus: Genre and Meaning in Mark’s Gospel* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2020), 103.

⁵⁴ Cornelis Bennema, “Character Reconstruction in the New Testament (1): The Theory,” *ExpTim* 127.8 (2016): 365–374. Similarly, Moore discusses the study of Mark’s characters philosophically. He argues that Forster’s categorisation is deeply rooted in Cartesian assumptions. This significantly dehumanises Mark’s characters and turns them into creatures either flat or round, see Stephen D. Moore, “Why There Are No Humans or Animals in the Gospel of Mark,” in *Mark as Story: Retrospect and Prospect*, ed. Kelly R. Iverson and Christopher W. Skinner, RBS 65 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2011), 71–93.

show similar attitudes towards Jesus, they take different actions and have different responses to the death of Jesus. The characterisation of these two characters is indeed divergent. Therefore, the binary categorisation suppresses the characters' performance along the plotline. Rather than fitting the characters into a binary system, the present research considers Mark's characters independently of their traits according to the characterisation expressed by the text.

Exploring this linguistic and narrative knowledge allows the present research to develop a close examination of the performance of Mark's characters. Based on the careful observation of the characters in the plot, the research can establish the association between the shepherd image and the characters. Subsequently, it outlines the way that the shepherd image portrays the characters along the plotline.

Acknowledgement of the Internal Purpose

The implied readers are designated to acknowledge the implied author's internal purpose. The significance of this acknowledgement for the present research lies in the capability of the implied readers to compare Jesus' performance with other characters in Mark's narrative. The comparison subsequently enables the research to examine Mark's portrayal of Jesus, as the shepherd, in relation to other characters.

According to Rhoads et al., the internal purpose of Mark's narrative is to convince the implied readers to embrace the good news manifested by Jesus and to live faithfully in accordance with this message. The implied author expresses this purpose by developing a remarkable correlation between Jesus and other characters in the narrative. Under the

presentation of Mark's narrator, in Mark's story Jesus is the protagonist (1:1).⁵⁵ He is the character who submits to the will of God and shares God's point of view. He also functions as a model to manifest the good news (e.g., 1:17–18, 20; 8:31, 34). More significantly, both his ministry and the authority come directly from God. His commission promoting discipleship functions as the extension of God's commission.⁵⁶ When Jesus calls for disciples to follow him, it is a call for emulation, embracing the good news as he does, and responding to it faithfully. Other characters are engaged in a way that they live for and/or against the good news in varying degrees.⁵⁷

The call for emulation by Mark's Jesus is also an invitation to the implied readers. The implied readers, who acknowledge the internal purpose of the narrative, can recognise Jesus' way of living as a model for emulation and be persuaded to emulate it. The acknowledgement carries a crucial implication for the present research. By considering Jesus as the model in the narrative, the implied readers have an established norm with Jesus as the standard of judgement. The other characters reflect the degree of conformity to the norm or the deviation from it. The correlation between Jesus and other characters paints a vivid picture and sheds light on how Mark's narrator uses the shepherd images to characterise Jesus' identity and his ministry.

⁵⁵ Rhoads, Dewey and Michie, *Mark as Story*, 105; Tannehill, "Mark as Narrative Christology," 57–95; Kingsbury, *Conflict in Mark*, 4–8.

⁵⁶ David E. Garland, *A Theology of Mark's Gospel*, BTNT (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Academic, 2015), 389–390.

⁵⁷ See also Susan Miller, *Women in Mark's Gospel*, JSNTSup 259 (London: T&T Clark International, 2004), 198–199; Joel F. Williams, *Other Followers of Jesus: Minor Characters as Major Figures in Mark's Gospel*, JSNTSup 102 (Sheffield, England: JSOT Press, 1994), 11. This understanding aligns with Bond's analysis of Mark's Gospel in genre criticism, see Bond, *The First Biography of Jesus*, 103.

Narrative Metalepsis in Reading Mark's Shepherd Image

The model of the implied readers adopted by Rhoads et al. offers the present research an interpretative lens to analyse Mark's plotline. This model potentially creates insights into the significance of the shepherd images as figures of speech. I will discuss the plot analysis in the next section. However, exploring the plotline alone is inadequate for understanding the images because they are both the figures of speech and the intertextual references to the HB in Mark's narrative. Therefore, I will expand the model of Rhoads et al. by adopting Genette's conception of *metalepsis*.

In the present research, the implied readers can grasp the significance that Genette's conception of narrative *metalepsis*⁵⁸ has from a narrative aspect. Before exploring *metalepsis*, I will first introduce the narrative level, which describes the relationship between the world of narrating and narrated. Genette defines *extradiegetic* as the act of narrating, the first level of narrative. It is the layer in which the narrator performs. The second level is called *diegetic* (or *intradiegetic*), where the narrative recounts the events, that is, the layer within which the characters perform. Within the events, the characters could act like a narrator presenting another narrative. Thus, that narrative within the original narrative becomes *metadiegetic*.⁵⁹ The narrative level draws the boundary within the narrative and clarifies the operation of the

⁵⁸ Unless specified, I use the term *metalepsis* to refer to Genette's conception of narrative *metalepsis* in this thesis.

⁵⁹ Genette, *Narrative Discourse*, 227–231. Indeed, the narrative level functions recursively. *Metadiegetic* would become *extradiegetic* with its *diegetic* and *metadiegetic* levels when the characters compose their own narrative (e.g., Jesus teaches in parables). While the narrative level is not our primary focus, the present research represents the simplest mode of the level; some studies would use the narrator's voice and the character's voice to present the narrative level, e.g., Schmid, *der Narratologie*, 142–146; Bal, *Narratology*, 36–39.

narrator and the characters. It also assists in understanding the operation of *metalepsis* in the narrative.

Now I turn my attention to *metalepsis*. The concept of *metalepsis* (μετάληψις) originally appeared in ancient rhetoric, referring to a figure of speech that involves a semantic shift, similar to metonymy or metaphor. It is a rhetorical technique used to increase the narrator's authority or the credibility of the narrative.⁶⁰ Modern literary theorists continue to develop the conception of *metalepsis*. In his book *The Figure of Echo*, Hollander defines *metalepsis* as “a form which likens A to B in that X is palpably true of them both, but with no mention of W, Y and Z, which are also true of them both. As a heuristic function, the simile [*metalepsis*] will eventually call on the reader to consider the unmentioned W, Y, Z, or whatever”.⁶¹ Thus, in terms of Hollander's definition, *metalepsis* is diachronic figurative language which brings about a rhetorical effect that stimulates the reader to recall multiple unstated origins.

Here, I highlight the characteristics of Hollander's conception of *metalepsis*. According to his delineation, *metalepsis* is understood as a literary tool used by the real author to create rhetorical impacts on the real reader. This technique serves the authorial intention to create multiple unstated resonances. For example, in his book *Paradise Lost*, Milton cites the event of a Greek divine hero, Bellerophon, riding on an immortal winged horse. Rather than merely recounting this event, Hollander suggests that this metaleptic citation invokes the story of Bellerophon killing a monstrous animal.⁶² The recalling of

⁶⁰ Irene J. F. de Jong, “Metalepsis in Ancient Greek Literature,” in *Narratology and Interpretation: The Content of Form in Ancient Literature*, ed. Jonas Grethlein, and Antonios Rengakos, TCSup (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2009), 88.

⁶¹ Hollander, *The Figure of Echo*, 115.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 116.

literary contexts from various sources appears in the real reader. Hollander describes this process as a “recovery of the transmuted materials [from other literary contexts]” and requires the readers to have “a simultaneous appreciation of the beauty of the vehicle [the phrase that is cited] and of the importance of its freight”.⁶³ In this regard, the invocation of those contexts and their interpretation occurs in the reader, in the domain outside the literary world of the text.

By the late 20th century, Hollander’s conception of *metalepsis* was first introduced to intertextual analysis in biblical studies. In light of this literary technique, Hays suggests that multiple origins of an intertextual reference in the HB could be identified when interpreting the reference in the latter text. The original literary contexts collectively create insights into the meaning of the reference. Hays emphasises that *metalepsis* is “a literary technique of citing or echoing a small bit of a precursor text in such a way that the reader can grasp the significance of the echo only by recalling or recovering the original context from which the fragmentary echo came and then reading the two texts in dialogical juxtaposition.”⁶⁴ Moreover, Hays adopts Fish’s conception of the reading community to define the nature of the real reader for the biblical texts. This reader-oriented approach enables Hays to justify the application of Hollander’s *metalepsis* in his intertextual analysis.⁶⁵

Although Hays develops seven criteria to identify allusive intertextual references to the HB and their source(s), a question remains unanswered. How does the real reader deal

⁶³ Ibid., 115.

⁶⁴ Hays, *Echoes in the Letters of Paul*, 11; Hays, *Echoes in the Gospels*, 10–11.

⁶⁵ Hays, *Echoes in the Letters of Paul*, 25–29; Porter disagrees with Hays on the engagement of the real readers in assessing the validity of the intertextual reference. However, discussing the methodology of Hays is beyond the scope of this thesis. Regarding the summary of Porter’s disagreement, see Alec J. Lucas, “Assessing Stanley E. Porter’s Objections to Richard B. Hays’s Notion of Metalepsis,” *CBQ* 76.1 (2014): 108–110.

with the multiple literary contexts when exploring the way that an intertextual reference characterises the Gospel's narrative? Hays argues that the Gospel's authors lead the real readers to interpret the references with multiple sources imaginatively. This kind of interpretation is a figural way of reading the HB in terms of the Gospel's stories.⁶⁶ Nonetheless, Hollander's *metalepsis* can only offer Hays a conceptual framework for connecting an intertextual reference to multiple literary contexts. Hays' proposal of the figural reading does not offer a theoretical ground to understand the original literary context of an intertextual reference within the Gospel's narrative environment. Hollander rightly points out that *metalepsis* is "both elusive and allusive at once". Complications due to the allusiveness have to be acknowledged.⁶⁷ In other words, the effect of Hollander's *metalepsis* has to be understood from a poetic perspective. On the other hand, Hays adopts Fish's theory to suggest how the early Christian community would potentially read the Gospel, but he establishes this argument without presenting historical evidence on the way that the ancient community might deal with multiple intertextual sources when interpreting the text. Therefore, I argue that Hays inadequately justifies his suggestion on historical grounds.

Furthermore, Hays inadequately considers the original literary contexts of Mark's shepherd images. In the section Literature Review of Mark's Shepherd Image in Chapter 1, I discussed Hays' interpretation of the two shepherd images. He selectively adopts the events surrounding the images in their original literary contexts without theoretical ground, even though he acknowledges their significance.⁶⁸ This reduces the vivid literary contexts to static thematic ideas. The omitted elements from those original contexts potentially create insights

⁶⁶ Hays, *Echoes in the Gospels*, 2–4.

⁶⁷ Hollander, *The Figure of Echo*, 115–116.

⁶⁸ See the section "Literature Review of Mark's Shepherd Image" in Chapter 1.

into the understanding of the characterisation of Mark's narrative in terms of the shepherd images.

Hays' metaleptic approach opens a poetic realm of interpreting intertextual references in the NT. By contrast, Genette's conception of *metalepsis* does not draw attention from biblical scholars, but I argue that his metaleptic theory contributes to the interpretation of Mark's shepherd images from a narrative perspective. It offers a theoretical ground to situate the events surrounding the shepherd images in their original literary contexts of the HB in the story world of Mark's narrative.

Genette first introduced his conception of *metalepsis* in his book *Narrative Discourse: An Essay in Method* in 1983. In 2004, he continued to work on the literary theory in *Métalepse: De La Figure à La Fiction*. Genette defines *metalepsis* as "any intrusion by the *extradiegetic* narrator or narratee into the *diegetic* (or by *diegetic* characters into a *metadiegetic universe*), or the inverse, [which] produces an effect of strangeness that is either comical ... or fantastic". Having established the transgressive nature of *metalepsis* in his analysis, Genette then expands his conception of the term to the narratological realm and suggests that in the narrative *metalepsis* plays "on the double temporality of the story [the performance of the characters] and the narrating [the performance of the narrator]."⁶⁹ I will further discuss the implication of the double temporality to the narrative's plotline below, but here I highlight that it is its transgressive nature that gives a minimal definition to *metalepsis*

⁶⁹ Genette, *Narrative Discourse*, 234–235. Regarding the development of *metalepsis* in modern criticism, see Julian Hanebeck, *Understanding Metalepsis: The Hermeneutics of Narrative Transgression*, *Narratologia* 65, ed. Fotis Jannidis, Matías Martínez, John Pier, and Wolf Schmid (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2017), 11–31.

in Genette's understanding.⁷⁰ It serves as the fundamental element in Genette's conception of *metalepsis*.

Later in his book *Métalepse: De la figure à la fiction*, Genette further discusses the figurative function of *metalepsis* in fictional literature and offers more examples. Following Fontanier's understanding of *metalepsis* in *Les Figures du Discours*, Genette suggests that *metalepsis* is never a noun but always a proposition, where an "indirect" expression is substituted with a "direct" expression ("à substituer l'expression indirect à l'expression directe").⁷¹ According to Genette's understanding, one cannot interpret the expression by itself because that expression only indirectly points to the meaning that it is intended to designate. Rather, another expression from a different context, which is feasibly recalled, serves as a direct indicator to illustrate the meaning. This definition opens up the possibility of the multiple-directional nature of *metalepsis*. Although Genette does not deliberately develop a systematic categorisation of *metalepsis* in his analysis, the examples he offers sketch out a landscape of the metaleptic features. One way to analyse Genette's conception of *metalepsis* is the direction of the metaleptic transgression. Wagner categorises the metaleptic movement into two directions. The first one is vertical, either the narrator intruding from a lower to a higher narrative level or the character intruding from a higher to a lower level. This transgressive movement enables the real author to jump into the real world or the real readers into the story world. In other words, the vertical transgression facilitates an interaction between the real world and the story world (the real author and the real reader). This kind of

⁷⁰ Lavocat describes Genette's way of understanding *metalepsis* as a simplification and specialisation, see Françoise Lavocat, "A Diachronic Perspective on Metalepsis," in *Handbook of Diachronic Narratology*, Narratologia 86 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2023), 728; see also John Pier, "Metalepsis," in vol. 1 of *Handbook of Narratology*, ed. Peter Hühn et al. (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2014), 329.

⁷¹ Genette, *Métalepse*, 7–9.

metalepsis is rather apparent when the real author constructs the narrator with the first or second person to address the real reader.⁷² Genette uses Laurence Sterne's novel *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman* to exemplify the vertical *metalepsis*. In this novel, the narrator acts in the first-person form to tell the story of Tristram Shandy, but s/he frequently interrupts the plot development and addresses the real readers by using the second-person pronoun. James suggests that the narrator highlights himself as the subject and puts the reader's concern as the object. This arrangement enables the narrator to drive the reader "[not] to be denied anything which might enable him to understand what Tristram is and says".⁷³ Given that an interaction between the narrator and the real readers is facilitated, a vertical metaleptic transgression occurs in the text.

Another direction of the transgression is horizontal, which is the focus of the present thesis. Pier terms this movement as transfictionality because the transgression involves two heterogeneous spheres.⁷⁴ Unlike the vertical *metalepsis*, the narrator or the character even violates the boundaries of his/her own story world and intrudes into another story world, which is ontologically distinct from his/her own one. Genette exemplifies this kind of *metalepsis* with the novel *Pierre Menard, Author of Don Quixote* by Jorge Luis Borges.

⁷² Frank Wagner, "Glissements et Déphasages: Note sur la Métalepse Narrative," *Poétique* 33.130 (2002), 235–253; Pier, "Metalepsis," 332. Some theorists regards the horizontal movement as a transmigration, see Alice Bell and Jan Alber, "Ontological Metalepsis and Unnatural Narratology," *JNT* 42.2 (2012): 166, 168.

⁷³ Genette, *Métalepse*, 24; see also Overton Philip James, *The Relation of Tristram Shandy to the Life of Sterne* (The Hague: Mouton, 1966), 105. The NT text which potentially involves the vertical metaleptic transgression is the we-passage of Acts (Acts 16:10–17; 20:5–15; 21:1–8; 27:1–28:16). In these passages, the narrator shifts his narration style from the third-person to the first-person, enabling himself to be one of the members of Paul's missionary team and get the real readers involved. However, the feasibility of the metaleptic transgression deserves further examination, which is beyond the scope of the present thesis.

⁷⁴ Pier, "Metalepsis," 332.

Within the story world of this novel, the main character, Menard, decides to rewrite the epic novel *Don Quixote*, which is originally a real piece of literature in the real world, written by Miguel de Cervantes. By sharing the letter that Menard writes to the novel's narrator, the narrator recounts how Menard seriously quotes the words of the story of *Don Quixote* and rethinks their meaning. Genette describes this relationship as a partial magic (*magie partielle*) evoked in the connection between two distinct pieces of literature, *Pierre Menard, Author of Don Quixote* and *Don Quixote*. Menard's references to *Don Quixote* within the story world facilitate horizontal metaleptic movements to another piece of distinct literature. In light of *metalepsis*, Genette considers that Cervantes is virtually no longer the real author of *Don Quixote* ("non le père, mais seulement le "beau-père" de don Quichotte").⁷⁵ While the story of Menard demonstrates a horizontal movement in *metalepsis*, the significance of this example lies in the feasibility of the metaleptic movement across two distinct narratives of different real authors.

In his dedicated analysis of *metalepsis*, Hanebeck acknowledges that Genette only gives a minimal definition of *metalepsis*. However, he does not fully embrace Genette's conception of horizontal *metalepsis*. Rather than expanding Genette's *metalepsis* based on his simple definition, Hanebeck believes that a narrow definition (only) for the vertical *metalepsis* can preserve the significant effect of the strangeness introduced by *metalepsis* when transgression across the narratives level within the same text occurs. This kind of transgression is indeed a paradox; the narrator/character is supposedly incapable of crossing the narrative boundary to interact with the real reader but s/he does.⁷⁶ By contrast, Hanebeck has reservations about the horizontal *metalepsis* because it potentially widens the scope of the

⁷⁵ Genette, *Métalepse*, 47, 70.

⁷⁶ Hanebeck, *Understanding Metalepsis*, 18–20.

metaleptic transgression and entails a loss of precision and heuristic value. According to his strict sense of Genette's definition, Haneback doubts whether an intrusion into another narrative world constructed by a different narrator can occur and create a sense of strangeness, or the so-called "*metalepsis*" is only a report of the content from another narrative. If commentators loosely accept the latter connection and acknowledge too broad a definition of horizontal *metalepsis*, they run the risk of suggesting that every narrative world shares elements from the other world(s). In this case, all the texts are metaleptic. The effect of strangeness due to the metaleptic transgression, as suggested by Genette, will then completely vanish. Ultimately, Genette's *metalepsis* loses its poetic value.⁷⁷

I agree with Haneback that a too broad definition of *metalepsis* potentially minimises the effect of strangeness or even ruins the metaleptic transgression. On the other hand, Haneback inadequately demonstrates how the horizontal *metalepsis* does not fulfil Genette's definition. Indeed, when Haneback examines the effect generated by the transgression, he aims to measure the level of the effect.⁷⁸ His approach implies that the analysis of *metalepsis* is qualitative instead of quantitative. Unfortunately, when Haneback denies *Pierre Menard, Author of Don Quixote* as a possible case of horizontal *metalepsis*, his argument appears to be incomplete. There is no measurement of how the narration of the references to *Don Quixote* in their literary context fail to create a sense of strangeness in light of *metalepsis*. Haneback merely regards those references as intertexts, reporting the content of *Don Quixote*. Thus,

⁷⁷ Ibid., 68–70.

⁷⁸ In particular, one can observe this kind of measurement in the way of how Haneback uses the terms to describe the metaleptic transgression (e.g., a more radical transgression, a too broad definition) and the cartesian plan to visualise the effect, see *ibid.*, 81–92.

Haneback inconsistently assesses the horizontal *metalepsis* and reduces the measurement to an either-or case study.

To address Haneback's concern over horizontal *metalepsis*, one can go back to his strict sense of Genette's *metalepsis*, that it violates "the distinction between the narrative 'worlds' that are hierarchically and logically connected by signification".⁷⁹ Given that the study of *metalepsis* is qualitative, the key elements in the definition are the intent that the narrator has to establish an ontological connection between his literature and another distinct work and create the level of strangeness in the metaleptic transgression.⁸⁰

In my view, Mark's narrator explicitly leads the readers to realise his intent that he does not merely refer to the content of the HB but also establishes a logical connection between his narrative and the HB, a distinct piece of literature. At the beginning of his story, Mark's narrator recounts his narrative with an abrupt opening statement which lacks an obvious and intimate connection to stories within the HB (1:1). Nonetheless, the narrator carefully frames the narrative with an explicit quotation to the prophetic literature in the HB (1:2–3). Clifton boldly confirms that "the significance of Jesus in this gospel depends on faith's hindsight not only upon the resurrection and death and life of Jesus but also upon Scripture [the HB]".⁸¹ This statement potentially suggests that Mark's narrator does not merely build spontaneous links between some of Jesus' stories within his narrative and the

⁷⁹ Haneback, *Understanding Metalepsis*, 71.

⁸⁰ Cf. To construct a cognitive model for the horizontal *metalepsis*, Bell and Alber simplify the case and restrict the horizontal transgression between the texts of the same author, see Bell and Alber. "Metalepsis," 173–174.

⁸¹ C. Clifton Black, *Mark's Gospel: History, Theology, Interpretation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2023), 214–217.

events within the HB. Instead, he attempts to establish an inextricable connection between his narrative and the HB at the level of literature. I will further discuss this matter in Chapter 4.

Here, I will continue to explore the potential application of the horizontal *metalepsis* to an intertextual reference in a narrative. From Genette's example of *Pierre Menard, Author of Don Quixote*, a potential horizontal *metalepsis* is that when the narrator expresses a word or phrase originally from a character in another literary context, s/he transgresses the boundary of the narrative level and intrudes into the *diegetic* layer. Within that context, s/he plays as a character of the story, the one who says the word or phrase.⁸² Thus, the narrator's intrusion signifies a transformation of the word or phrase into the events within that context. Similarly, when a character expresses that word or phrase, he/she becomes a *metadiegetic* narrator who participates in the events. In both cases, either the narrator or the character intrudes into another narrative level. A deliberate transgression occurs between the boundary of two worlds: the narrator's world and the character's world.

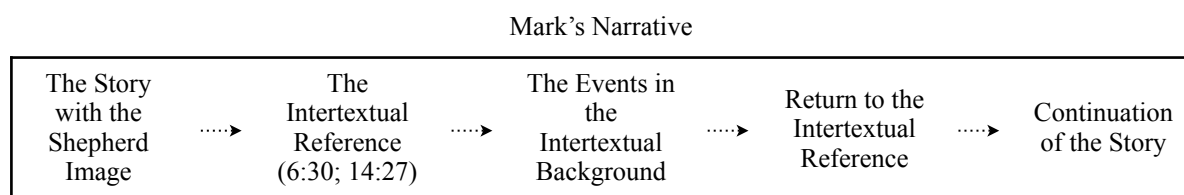
The transgressive nature decisively distinguishes *metalepsis* from metonymy. The latter is a word or phrase with a meaning that has deviated from its literal one, but there is no intrusion by the narrator or the character. Contrarily, the former entails a transgression between the narrative level.⁸³ In this transgression, what is emerged through the word or

⁸² The narrator may remain on the same narrative level in order to tell the most vivid story, because rather than the character, the narrator expresses that word or phrase in its original context. Genette still regards this as *metalepsis* with an intrusion from *extradiegetic* into *pseudo-diegetic*, see Genette, *Narrative Discourse*, 236–237.

⁸³ In Genette's conception, *metalepsis* is always transgressive, see *ibid.*, 234; the nature of the transgression can be categorised as rhetorical and ontological. In the former case, the transgression appears as a virtual intrusion with the boundary between the two story worlds, while the latter facilitates a complete intrusion with the boundary being obscured, see Pier, "Metalepsis," 331. However, the present research is primarily concerned with the contribution of the narrative *metalepsis* to an understanding of the plotline. Thus, the theoretical distinction of the metaleptic transgression is not a determinative factor.

phrase is not a deviated meaning. Rather, the vivid events in the original literary context of the word or phrase unfold. Therefore, as a figure of speech, *metalepsis* signifies the events, which are from another literary context and are now understood in a new literary environment.⁸⁴

The metaleptic transgression carries a crucial implication for the narrative’s plotline. As discussed above, Genette describes this as a play “on double temporality” of the events and the original narrative.⁸⁵ In this regard, while the events in the original literary background of the word or phrase emerge in light of the *metalepsis*, the events are virtually brought into the narrative through the word or phrase. In other words, there is a virtual expansion of the plotline in the latter narrative. *Metalepsis* virtually inserts the events from another literary context into the plotline, so a scene shifting occurs from the original narrative to the events and vice versa.⁸⁶ Specifically, for the shepherd image in Mark’s narrative, the scene shifting occurs from the narrative to the events in the original literary context of the intertextual references (Ezek 34:5 in Mark 6:34; Zech 13:7 in Mark 14:27). This shift is diagrammed as followed:



⁸⁴ Genette refers to Fontanier’s definition of *metalepsis* in *Les figures du discours*, that “la métalepse ... n’est jamais un nom seul, mais toujours une proposition, consiste à substituer l’expression indirecte à l’expression directe”, see Genette, *Métalepse*, 9; cf. Genette, *Narrative Discourse*, 236.

⁸⁵ Genette, *Narrative Discourse*, 235.

⁸⁶ See also Monika Fludernik, “Scene Shift, Metalepsis, and the Metaleptic Mode,” *Style* 37.4 (2003): 382–400.

The scene shifting has two dimensions, chronological and contextual. In the chronological dimension, the shifting breaks from the original literary chronology of Mark's narrative (or pauses it temporarily), links it to the prior events in the intertextual context and connects those events to the present narrative. This is similar to *analepsis* because both recall prior events, with the chronological line connected (e.g., 6:14–29). In contrast, however, events recalled by *metalepsis* does not physically appear in the narrative.⁸⁷ Thus, it is unstated information included through the use of *metalepsis*.

In the contextual dimension, the original literary context of the intertextual reference becomes part of Mark's narrative. At the point of the intertextual reference, the original literary context of the reference virtually intrudes into Mark's plotline. The scene shifts from Mark's narrative to the vivid events within the intertextual context and returns to the narrative afterwards.⁸⁸ Rather than a static theme, the events from the intertextual context establish connections with the present narrative and interact with it using an expression of the intertextual reference as guidance. In the interaction, valuable information from the unnarrated story sheds light on the meaning of Mark's narrative.

By acknowledging Genette's narrative *metalepsis*, I argue there is a theoretical ground for the events from intertextual backgrounds in the HB to be understood within Mark's narrative. This ground prevents my research from a selective adoption of the intertextual background. Notwithstanding, some questions remain unanswered. First, are the two intertextual references of Mark's shepherd image *metalepsis*? Second, how does the metaleptic transgression occur regarding the image within Mark's narrative? Third, how does

⁸⁷ Genette, *Narrative Discourse*, 33–85; the similarity draws on the chronological effect that *analepsis* and *metalepsis* create. In theory, they are ontologically different, where the former does not enable a transgression between narrative levels.

⁸⁸ Fludernik, "Scene Shift," 382–400.

metalepsis illuminate the understanding of the image in terms of the narrative? I will answer these questions in Chapter 5 and 6. So far, this section has observed and explored the potential appearance of *metalepsis* in the field of narrative. In my view, *metalepsis* in the narrative field gives us a new vision of Mark's shepherd image.

The Analysis of the Plotline and its Cumulative Effect

The implied readers are first-time readers who engage with the reading process along the plotline. They do not have the whole picture of how the narrator develops Mark's narrative. The plot is the way of how the narrator connects and organises events to construct his/her narrative. Throughout reading along the plotline, the narrative persuades the implied readers to reach the story's ending so that they can reflect on the whole text from that vantage point. In contrast to receiving the text as a static end product, Fowler describes this temporal process as a "rich and dynamic experience".⁸⁹

By examining how Mark's narrator organises the events in his narrative, the readers will realise the narrator's characterisation of his narrative, and acknowledge his point of view about Jesus' identity and ministry. Rhoads et al. suggest that Mark's plotline reveals the conflict between the power of God and human power.⁹⁰ The exploration of the conflict is significant to the present research because it can reflect the perception of Jesus the Davidic shepherd and his shepherding ministry by other characters in terms of the narrator's

⁸⁹ Robert M. Fowler, *Let the Reader Understand: Reader-Response Criticism and the Gospel of Mark* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991), 42–46; see also Peter Brooks, *Reading for the Plot: Design and Intention in Narrative* (New York: Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group, 2012), 5–6, 12; Resseguie, *Narrative Criticism*, 197–198.

⁹⁰ Rhoads, Dewey and Michie, *Mark as Story*, 73.

understanding of the shepherd image, while the narrator presents Jesus as the one in line with God.

On the other hand, I expand the plot analysis of Rhoads et al. and consider the way that Mark's plotline stimulates the readers to have anticipation and retrospection. Rather than flipping over the text, the readers stick to the plotline from the beginning to the end in their reading process. In this way, they virtually follow the narrating act by the narrator. Thus, the order of events in the narrative becomes significant to the readers in the sense that two similar events in the narrative mean more than a static repetition.

The event sequence offers the implied readers anticipation and retrospection.⁹¹ While the anticipation functions as a prospective activity conditioning the implied readers to receive the following events, the current event stimulates the readers to look retrospectively and to recall preceding events for comparison. The sense of anticipation and retrospection continuously interlace with each other in the reading process and produce cumulative rhetorical impacts on the readers which influence their interpretation of the narrative.⁹² For example, the disciples display their determination to follow Jesus by leaving their possessions (1:18, 20). However, they fail to understand the mission of Jesus later in the narrative (e.g., 8:30–33; 9:30–32). The discrepancy in the disciples' performance surprises the implied readers.

⁹¹ Robert M. Fowler, "Who Is "the Reader" in Reader Response Criticism?" *Semeia* 31 (1985): 18–19.

⁹² Menakhem Perry, "Literary Dynamics: How the Order of a Text Creates Its Meanings [With an Analysis of Faulkner's "A Rose for Emily"]," *PT* 1.1/2 (1979): 43–61. According to Abbott's understanding, the implied readers would have expectations about the development of the narrative throughout the reading. Whether the expectations are fulfilled or not, what the readers gain would let them build up another level of expectations. "In reality, that level is activated in all narratives, and right from page one, or scene one, or shot one", see H. Porter Abbott, *The Cambridge Introduction to Narrative* (West Nyack: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 57–61.

Unlike the static literary analysis of specific episodes, recognising these effects enhances understanding of the characters' performance along the plotline. Such analysis reveals how the rhetoric of the characters' performance in the plot development impacts the implied readers. In particular, Mark's narrative is full of contrasting viewpoints between characters without providing an ultimate resolution.⁹³ From a first-time reader's perspective, this characterisation continuously creates a sense of unpredictability in the readers. I argue that the narrator uses this effect to keep the reader in suspense about how Mark's Jesus develops his ministry.⁹⁴ The rhetorical impact sheds light on the use of the shepherd images in Mark's narrative. It dynamically reflects how Jesus the Davidic shepherd continuously impacts the readers through his interaction with other characters from the beginning to the end of the narrative.

Method and Purpose

The definition of the implied readers introduced in the previous section gives the research a direction to use to analyse how the narrator utilises the two shepherd images to characterise his narrative. This section develops a set of analytical methods according to the definition of the readers. Its central focus is on the portrayal of Jesus and his interaction with other characters along the plotline and the metaleptic interpretation of the shepherd image in Mark 6:30–44 and 14:26–31.

⁹³ Jerry Camery-Hoggatt, *Irony in Mark's Gospel*, SNTSMS 72 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 2–13; Kingsbury, *Conflict in Mark*, 89–90.

⁹⁴ In contrast, Powell argues that whether the implied reader experiences Matthew's Gospel for the first time may not be a significant issue because suspense is not a major motif in the Gospel, see Powell, "Expected and Unexpected Reading of Matthew," 34–35.

The research follows the sequential order of the events in Mark's narrative. It begins in the prologue and follows along the plotline to the end. Rather than going through all the stories in Mark's narrative, I focus on the stories related to the shepherd image, including Jesus feeding the five thousand (6:30–44), Jesus' prediction of Peter's denial (14:26–31) and other stories with a point(s) of contact between the intertextual backgrounds of the two shepherd images.

In every relevant story, I examine the narrator's presentation of how Mark's protagonist, Jesus, interacts with other characters from two perspectives. The first one is the exploration of the characters' portrayals. This step develops a general understanding of Mark's characters in the story. According to Brown, there is a set of questions to be asked which display the character's portrayals, including what they do, what they say, how they interact with others, what the others say about them, how the narrator describes them and other supplementary data from the social-cultural background of the story world.⁹⁵ I will pose these questions to determine the characters' portrayals in the relevant stories.

In addition, I analyse the plot development and investigate the causal relationship between the characters' actions within the plot. The term "plot" refers to the arrangement of the events and the characters' actions. It is the movement of a story from the beginning to the end. The plot in a narrative has a vital role in leading the implied readers to reach the

⁹⁵ Brown, *The Gospels as Stories*, 72–73. In general terms, the way to sketch the portraits of the character is through *showing* and *telling*. The former is what the recipient witnesses about the characters, while the latter is what is said about the event. For a detailed discussion, see Tobias Klauk and Tilmann Köppe, "Telling vs. Showing," in vol. 2 of *Handbook of Narratology*, ed. Peter Hühn et al. (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2014), 846–853.

intended consequences of a story.⁹⁶ Although three dimensions (temporal, spatial and causal) facilitate the movement along the plotline, the current section examines the causal relationship in detail. It is the correlation of the actions between Jesus and other characters in the plot. Specifically, this correlation illustrates the motivation to move the story away from its beginning towards a resolution and the consequence.⁹⁷

By combining the analysis of the characters' portrayals, this step reinstates the characters' portrayals into their dynamic literary context. I also compare the interpretation of the characters' performance with those at an earlier point in Mark's narrative.⁹⁸ Subsequently, a complete and vivid picture of the characters' performance emerges. The results delineates how the narrator uses the characters to motivate the story to go onwards and drive it to reach a resolution, and finally follows through to the intended consequence. This research also illustrates the cumulative rhetorical impact that the narrator creates on the readers through his presentation.

In particular, I will apply a metaleptic interpretation to the intertextual references (Ezek 34:5 in Mark 6:34; Zech 13:7 in Mark 14:27) to explore how shepherd images in Mark 6:30–44 and 14:26–31 participate in characterising the corresponding story. While the second

⁹⁶ Aristotle defines the plot as having a beginning, middle, and end. Although he focuses on tragedy, his definition provides a basic framework for other types of narrative, see Resseguie, *Narrative Criticism*, 197–201; Chatman, *Story and Discourse*, 45–48; Rhoads, Dewey and Michie, *Mark as Story*, 74–75. For a detailed analysis of plot's conception, see Brooks, *Reading for the Plot*, 3–36.

⁹⁷ Karin Kukkonen, "Plot," in vol. 2 of *Handbook of Narratology*, ed. Peter Hühn et al. (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2014), 706.

⁹⁸ The image of a character is a developing expression along the narrative's plotline rather than a static painting. According to Bal, the implied author would characterise the characters repetitively or transform them in various stages of the narrative. Throughout the process of repetition and transformation, a complete image is finally formed and grasped by the implied readers, see Bal, *Narratology*, 113–114, 116.

reference appears to be an explicit quotation without mentioning the source, the first one is potentially an allusive reference with several potential sources. Therefore, I will scrutinise my proposal that the primary intertextual source of the first and second references are Ezekiel and Zechariah, respectively. Regarding the metaleptic interpretation, there are two major steps. First, I conduct an exegetical examination of the intertextual backgrounds of the shepherd images in the HB. The analysis indicates the plot development of the events surrounding the shepherd images in their original contexts. It also determines the significance of those events within their contexts.⁹⁹ In my view, the additional information from the exegetical observation will prepare the ground to understand the narrator's uses of the shepherd images in characterising his narrative. Second, by considering the expression of the intertextual references and the characters' cumulative interaction from the beginning, I will determine how those events and their plot developments in the intertextual context interact with Mark's narrative. This step potentially creates insights into the narrator's characterisation of Jesus and other characters using the shepherd images and its rhetorical impacts on the readers through the lens of *metalepsis*. With the reading of the characters' interaction along the plotline, I argue that the present research ultimately broadens the understanding of how the narrator characterises Jesus, his disciples and other characters in terms of the metaleptic interpretation of the shepherd image.

⁹⁹ As it takes a lengthy amount of space to examine the original context of the intertextual references, I will conduct the exegetical examination in a separate chapter in this thesis.

Conclusion

This chapter briefly introduces the four key textually derived entities (implied author, implied readers, narrator and narratee) to facilitate the communication between the real author and the real readers. The construct of the implied author and the implied readers signifies the narrative's internal purpose(s) and the direction to understand the narrative, respectively. Moreover, I elaborate on several essential characteristics of the implied readers, including the acknowledgement of Genette's narrative *metalepsis*. Following these characteristics, I develop a set of methods to analyse the characterisation of Jesus, his disciples and other characters along the plotline, and the metaleptic interpretation of the two shepherd images (6:34; 14:27). With the theoretical support of the method by which the intertextual background operates in Mark's narrative, the methodology potentially illuminates the characterisation of Mark's Jesus, his disciples, and other characters. The rhetorical impacts on the implied readers along the plotline are explored in terms of the narrator's metaleptic understanding of the shepherd image.

Chapter 3. The Shepherd Image in Ezekiel 34 and Zechariah 13:7–9

Introduction

From a narratological perspective, two crucial elements participate in the use of the shepherd image to portray Jesus and his ministry in Mark's narrative. They include the character's performance through the whole of the narrative arc and the original literary contexts of the intertextual references (Ezek 34:5 in Mark 6:34; Zech 13:7 in Mark 14:27). While the former is part of the investigation into Mark's narrative, which I will address in the following chapters, I will focus on the latter in the present chapter.

As discussed in the survey of past scholarship, there is a tendency to reduce the original literary contexts of the intertextual reference into simple themes. The past discussions also fail to utilise *metalepsis* in the field of the narrative. Consequently, all these examinations underplay the influence of the intertextual contexts in understanding Mark's shepherd image. In light of this, the current chapter aims to explore the immediate and broad contexts of the intertextual references (Ezekiel 34; Zech 13:7–9). For each of the texts, I offer an exegetical study. More significantly, I examine the plot development of the events surrounding the shepherd image. This investigation aims to demonstrate how the events are relevant to the shepherd image, and their significance in their original literary contexts.

Generally, the events surrounding the shepherd images in Ezekiel 34 and Zech 13:7–9 share some common elements. They both refer to a Davidic figure who participates in God's radical restoration. This figure signifies the punishment for the corruption within God's community and renews those who are weak and poor. However, the shepherds bear different roles in the restoration. In Ezekiel 34, God appoints a Davidic prince to shepherd the renewed

community. During his leadership, the renewed community of God lives a life of purity, which corresponds to the abundance given to them by God. On the other hand, the events in Zech 13:7–9 revolve around a smitten shepherd, a suffering Davidic figure. His participation in God's restoration prompts the punishment of those who are corrupt and, more prominently, the purification of those who are weak. Against the potentially profaning background of the exilic period, this refinement enables the people of God to obtain the renewal of the covenant with God.

An Overview of the Shepherd Image in Jewish Literature

The shepherd image is not an alien concept in Jewish literature. Its origin could go back to the Ancient Near East. In ancient societies, shepherding was one of the common occupations.¹ The life of a shepherd and his shepherding activity had a deep symbolic significance for portraying the ancient deities and their appointee, the rulers of the state. The symbol of the shepherd functioned to reflect their abundant supply to the people and their protection against the enemy.

From the ancient Egyptian and Mesopotamian texts, this symbol was noticeable. For example, a piece of text about the ritual of covering the temple kettledrums by the priest describes a Mesopotamian god of the atmosphere Enlil as a faithful shepherd. The text also applies this image to Enlil's appointee, Hammurabi, the sixth king in the Old Babylon Dynasty. Hammurabi enacts a set of law codes, the Code of Hammurabi. The prologue of this

¹ Regarding the shepherd occupation in the first-century Greco-Roman world by analysing the papyi, see Huebner, *New Testament*, 115–134.

code portrays Hammurabi as the shepherd who leads the state into abundance.² Overall, the shepherd image is widespread in different types of literature (legal texts, ritual texts, didactic literature, lamentations, poems, etc.) in the ancient Egyptian and Mesopotamian world, with an intimate connection to the deity and the ruler of the state.³ This suggests the deep-rooted tradition of this image within the socio-cultural context behind the biblical world.

The shepherd image in Jewish literature continues the ancient tradition. The texts repeatedly use the image to portray the God of Israel and the rulers or kings. For example, when Jacob speaks to his sons (Gen 49:24), he depicts God as his shepherd (רֹעֶה) who protects him with his power. Another typical example appears in Psalm 23. The psalmist explicitly declares that God is his shepherd. He uses this image to portray God as the one who supplies him abundantly, leads him to rest, and protects him from evil (cf. Ps 28:9).

Jewish literature also applies the shepherd image to God's appointed leaders. Namely, Joshua (Num 27:16) and Saul (2 Sam 5:2) are the shepherds who pledge allegiance to God and lead his people accordingly. The prophetic literature even links the shepherd image to a faithful Davidic figure who participates in God's eschatological restoration. For example, Isaiah describes Cyrus as God's shepherd (Isa 44:28; cf. Ezek 34:23–24; 37:24; Mic 5:4).

On the other hand, the shepherd image could represent a negative figure, especially in the literature from the exilic or post-exilic periods. Several texts use the image of the wicked shepherds to illustrate the leaders who fail to occupy their shepherding role according to the will of God. For example, God describes the leaders of the Jewish community as corrupt shepherds, and their corruption is condemned through the destruction of the community in Jer

² ANET, 164, 337.

³ For a list of the use of the shepherd image in the Ancient Near Eastern texts, see Golding, "Shepherd Image," 387–394.

23:1–2 (cf. Isa 56:11; Nah 3:18). Another text in 2Bar. 77:13–16 has a similar scene. The prophet Baruch describes the religious leaders as shepherds and admonishes them for their failure to preserve the law which God gives to his people to guide their thoughts and lives.

During the widespread adoption of the shepherd image used to characterise God or the appointed leaders, it is not surprising that the text compares the people of God to the flock of the shepherd. In Ps 78:52–55, the people of God are considered to be similar to a flock, with God as their shepherd. The prophetic message in Isa 40:11 also describes how God is comparable to a shepherd who feeds and protects his flock. The text does not merely use the shepherd image to illustrate the abundance and the protection of the people from their God, but also reflects the suffering of God’s people because they lack a shepherd (e.g., 1 Kgs 22:17; Jer 11:19).

A brief discussion of different Jewish texts presents an overview of the shepherd image in Jewish literature. It is worth noting that the text does not confine the shepherd imagery to the term shepherd only. When characterising God or the rulers, several features of shepherding activity are attached to the shepherd image. In his research, Golding proposes that there are two literal levels in the shepherd image. While the term shepherd and the flock form the core image, a set of subordinate images is attached to this core image. They illustrate what a shepherd would do during shepherding activities or describe the situations a shepherd would address. Through these subordinate images, the literature could adopt the shepherd image without explicitly using the core image.⁴

Golding explored the HB and compiled a list of actions that identifies these subordinate images. These actions include guarding (e.g., Ps 121), watering (e.g., Ps 78:15),

⁴ Golding, “Shepherd Image,” 57–58.

grazing (Ps 23:1), and multiplying (Jer 23:3), to name but a few.⁵ The most typical one is the use of the verb *רָעָה* to denote the shepherding act. For example, Jacob does not explicitly portray God as his shepherd when he blesses Joseph (Gen 48:15). Rather, he depicts the guidance of God in his life as a shepherding act (cf. Pss. Sol. 17:45). The results imply that God is the shepherd and Jacob is his sheep. With the subordinate images, the implicit use of the shepherd image becomes recognisable. On the other hand, the subordinate images expand the understanding of the shepherd imagery in Jewish literature. They illustrate the relationship between God and his people within his role of the shepherd.

I highlight three kinds of action from the list, particularly those related to Ezekiel and Zechariah. First, God or the ruler as the shepherd leads the Jewish community (e.g., Ps 78:52; Mic 2:12; cf. Gen 31:18; 33:14). Second, they seek and gather the community together (Num 27:17; Ps 119:176; Ezek 34:11–12, 16; Nah 3:18; cf. Gen 29:3, 7, 8; Deut 22:1). The gathering probably implies that the community is scattered, perhaps because of their corruption (Deut 30:3; Ezek 34:5; Jer 23:2; Zech 13:7). The third action is closely associated with the second. This is the deliverance of the community by God or the ruler for the community (Ezek 34:10, 12; Amos 3:12; Mic 5:4–6; cf. Gen 31:9, 16). These actions offer a general outline of the relationship between God and the Jewish community embodied in the shepherd imagery found in Ezekiel 34 and Zech 13:7–9.

This section briefly discusses the shepherd imagery in Jewish literature. Vancil rightly points out that this imagery is one of the humanity's earliest symbols, widely adopted in the ancient Egyptian and Mesopotamian literature and in the HB as a reference to the deity or his/

⁵ By considering the literal or figurative meaning of the Hebrew verbs, Golding compiles a list of actions which is associated with the shepherd image, see Golding, "Shepherd Image," 78–84.

her appointed rulers.⁶ This illustrates the relationship between the deity or his/her appointed ruler and the human. In the next section, I will closely examine the shepherd image in Ezekiel and Zechariah, and explore how the texts use the image to express their particular concerns over the people of God.

The Shepherd Image in Ezekiel 34

Ezekiel 34 is one of the critical texts regarding the shepherd image in Mark 6:34. From their intertextual analyses, the commentators broadly agree that Ezek 34:5 in Mark's narrative portrays Jesus as an appointed shepherd who would feed the people of Israel abundantly, according to Ezekiel 34. This shepherding activity illustrates the fulfilment of God's promise and ends the plight of Israel. Hays further draws on the broad context of Ezekiel 34 to demonstrate how it probably characterises Jesus as God of Israel (cf. Ezek 34:15).⁷ Notwithstanding this treatment, the understanding of the literary context of Ezekiel 34 is insufficient. Past discussions have reduced the dynamic of the divine shepherding in God's eschatological restoration of Israel to a static description of Mark's Jesus. The commentators have omitted several features of the restoration in Ezekiel 34, including the role of God, the role of the Davidic shepherd, the action (scattering and gathering) of God's restoration, the incorrigibility of wicked Israel, and the radical nature and ultimate goal of God's restoration.

⁶ Jack W. Vancil, "Sheep, Shepherd," *ABD* 5:1187–1188.

⁷ Hays, *Echoes in the Gospels*, 70.

God's Restoration in Ezekiel 34

From the plot development of Ezekiel, Ezekiel 34 serves as a turning point from the punishment to the promise to reveal God's salvation.⁸ According to the chronological sequence, Ezekiel 34 comes after the destruction of the Temple and the fall of Jerusalem (Ezek 33:2; cf. Ezek 1:1–2, 3:16; 8:1; 20:1; 24:1; 26:1; 29:1, 17; 30:20; 31:1; 32:1, 17; 33:21). Thus, Ezekiel situates Israel's restoration in a literary context within which the Jewish community exists in exile. In other words, the Jewish community has begun to receive God's punishment through the military defeat by Babylon.

Two storylines are interwoven into the discussion of the oracle of Ezekiel 34. One is the punishment of the corrupt Jewish leaders and the prosperous class. Ezekiel depicts them as the shepherds and the fat sheep, respectively, who fail to perform their roles to feed the flock (Ezek 34:2–4). They even exploit them (Ezek 34:18–19). Another is the restoration of the exilic Jewish community. God himself will fulfil the role of the shepherd and regather the scattered sheep.

Ezekiel connects these two storylines by establishing a direct causal relation. From Ezek 34:5–6 and 21, the immediate cause of the exile includes the corrupted acts of the Jewish leaders and the prosperous class rather than the Babylonian conquest.⁹ Indeed, Ezekiel has exposed the corruption (Ezek 2:3; 5:6, 11; 7:20–21) and the fate of the community (Ezek

⁸ Other commentators consider Ezekiel 33 as the beginning of God's promise, see R. E. Clements, "The Ezekiel Tradition: Prophecy in a Time of Crisis," in *Israel's Prophetic Tradition: Essays in Honour of Peter R. Ackroyd*, ed. Richard Coggins, Anthony Phillips and Michael Knibb (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 127. By comparing Ezekiel 33 and 34, the present research observes that the theme of the punishment and the promise are interwoven into both chapters. Rather than having a clear-cut move from the punishment to the promise, a thematic transition takes place in these chapters.

⁹ According to Ezekiel 34, the scattering of the Jewish community is not the result of the Babylonian conquest.

6:2–7) in the earlier text. Remarkably, in Ezekiel 8, God condemns the community for their idolatrous practice. This defiles the holiness of the community. As Ganzel suggests, the use of Deuteronomy 4 reinforces God’s warning and justifies God’s severe punishment described in Ezekiel.¹⁰

The message about corruption continues in the plot development of Ezekiel (e.g., Ezek 14:3–5; 16:17–20; cf. 20:7–8). Those involved in the corruption have to bear the responsibility for Israel’s fate and receive God’s punishment accordingly (Ezek 34:10). However, God’s involvement does not end with the punishment. He ultimately aims to deliver the scattered sheep (Ezek 34:11, 15, 22; cf. 6:8–10). Following the logic of the oracle, God’s restoration reaches its climax in Ezek 34:23ff. The text uses the shepherd-sheep relation between God and the exilic Jewish community (Ezek 34:15, 31) to encapsulate this climax. Overall, Ezekiel 34 primarily focuses on God’s restorative act, although these two storylines appear alternately in the text.

Regathering of the Scattered Flock of Israel

Ezekiel 34 begins with the expression “the word of the Lord comes to me [Ezekiel]” (דְּבַר־יְהוָה אֵלַי). This expression is common in prophetic literature (e.g., Jer 1:1; Hos 1:1; Joel 1:1; Jonah 1:1; 3:1; Mic 1:1; Zeph 1:1; Zech 1:7; 7:1). It indicates the origin of the prophecy. More significantly, it declares that God is the initiator of the oracle.¹¹

¹⁰ Tova Ganzel, “Transformation of Pentateuchal Descriptions of Idolatry,” in *Transforming Visions: Transformations of Text Tradition and Theology in Ezekiel*, ed. Michael A. Lyons and William A. Tooman (Cambridge: James Clarke & Co, 2010), 33–49.

¹¹ See Frank Ritchel Ames, “דְּבַר־יְהוָה,” *NIDOTTE* 1:896–897.

God requests Ezekiel to prophesy to the shepherds of Israel (Ezek 34:2). According to the use of הָיִ in Ezekiel, the prophecy is a polemic against the shepherds rather than a positive message (Ezek 13:3, 18; cf. Isa 55:1; Amos 6:1).¹² Although it does not explicitly identify “the shepherds of Israel” (רֹעֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל), both the shepherd tradition and the literary context of Ezekiel 34 suggests that they are the Jewish leaders.¹³ The leaders fail to perform their roles properly (Ezek 34:3–4). The text does not directly list their corrupted acts. Some commentators attempt to explain these acts allegorically, but perhaps this over-interprets the text without any contextual support. However, in terms of metaphorical language, their failures include social injustice, economic inequality, and abusive violence.¹⁴

Due to the leaders’ corruption, the flock virtually lacks shepherds. Consequently, the flock becomes the food of the wild beasts and scatters across the land (Ezek 34:5–6). This is how Ezekiel describes the situation of the exiled Jewish community. Therefore, God himself will uncompromisingly punish the wicked leaders. They will lose the role of the shepherds and receive the punishment corresponding to their corruption.¹⁵ From the broad context of Ezekiel, the expression “rebellious house” (בַּיִת מְרִי, Ezek 2:5–8; 3:9, 26–27; 12:2–3, 9, 25; 17:12; 24:3; cf. Ezek 44:6) portrays Southern Judah collectively. In other words, Ezekiel

¹² See also BDB, s.v. “הָיִ.”

¹³ The historical identity of the corrupt shepherds is disputable. Although the identity is not a determinative factor for the present research, it would be best to preserve a broad view of the shepherds as the Jewish leaders in light of Ezekiel 8 and 17 and the shepherd tradition (cf. Jer 23:1–6).

¹⁴ Paul M. Joyce, *Ezekiel: A Commentary*, LHBOTS 482 (New York, NY: T&T Clark, 2007), 196; cf. Leslie C. Allen, *Ezekiel 20–48*, WBC 29 (Dallas, TX: Word Books, 1990), 162.

¹⁵ God declares that he will require his flock from the hand of the wicked leaders (Ezek 34:10). The term מְדָדִים reflects their accountability for the fate of the flock, see S. Wagner, “מְדָדִים,” *TDOT* 3:297

considers the whole nation incorrigible, and believes that the nation deserves exile as punishment.¹⁶ Thus, according to Ezekiel’s portrayal, the punishment is unavoidable because of Jewish unfaithfulness in political, religious and social aspects.

Nevertheless, God will seek and gather the scattered flock (Ezek 34:9–13). The text describes them as the flock of God (צֹאֲנֵי, Ezek 34:8, 10, 11). This description reveals God’s ownership of the flock and their intimate relationship, both in the present and the future.¹⁷ Moreover, the change of the verb, from “to search” and “to seek” (שָׁרַץ and בָּקַשׁ, Ezek 34:6) to “to require” (שָׁרַץ, Ezek 34:10), and then “to seek” (בָּקַר, Ezek 34:11–12), highlights God’s eagerness to search for the scattered flock.¹⁸ According to the literary context of Ezekiel 34, this action signifies the renewal of the covenant (Ezek 34:13, 25; cf. 11:16–20; 20:41; 36:24–28; 37:21–23). As a result, God will abundantly supply the flock (Ezek 34:14).

In Ezek 34:15, God declares himself the shepherd of the scattered flock.¹⁹ His primary work is to restore the scattered flock (וְאֲנִי אֶרְבֵּיצֵם, cf. Ps 23:2). The sequence of the shepherding act in Ezek 34:16 is inverted (cf. Ezek 34:4). It underscores the reversal effect of God’s regathering of scattered Israel from its plight. At the same time, this creates a sharp

¹⁶ Baruch Schwartz, “Ezekiel’s Dim View of Israel’s Restoration,” in *The Book of Ezekiel: Theological and Anthropological Perspectives*, ed. Margaret S. Odell and John T. Strong, SymS 9 (Atlanta: SBL, 2000), 46, 57.

¹⁷ Daniel I. Block, *The Book of Ezekiel, Chapters 25–48*, NICOT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 284.

¹⁸ S. Wagner, “בָּקַר,” *TDOT* 2:229; in priestly context, the term figuratively denotes “to examine”. Therefore, God will examine the condition of the flock when the flock is found. This understanding gains support from the role of a real shepherd in the ancient world, see Huebner, *New Testament*, 127–128.

¹⁹ The LXX attaches an additional clause, “καὶ γνώσονται ὅτι ἐγὼ εἰμι κύριος”, to this verse. It further emphasises God’s sovereignty and his initiation of the restoration.

contrast between God and the corrupt shepherds. Moreover, there is one more action attached to shepherding: God will feed the flock with justice.

Here, God turns to the flock of Israel (Ezek 34:17–22). The fat sheep exploits the weak and the poor. This suggests that the prosperous class within the Jewish community, which is similar to the corrupt leaders, oppresses the lower class.²⁰ The emphasis on this uncompromising judgement of the flock is the separation of the lean from the fat (Ezek 34:20; cf. Ezek 34:17, 22). God will gather and strengthen those who are weak, while he will destroy those who are fat.

Establishment of a Peaceful Covenant

The prophecy reaches its climax in Ezek 34:23–31. Given the covenantal formula (“I, the LORD, will be their God”, Ezek 34:24, 31; cf. Exod 29:45; Lev 26:45), the restoration of the exilic Jewish community signals the covenantal renewal of Israel. The nature of this renewal is noteworthy. From Ezekiel’s view of God’s restoration, it is not contingent on any human engagement. He makes a pronouncement for both the punishment and the restoration (Ezek 34:8; cf. Ezek. 5:11; 14:16, 18, 20; 16:48; 17:16, 19; 18:3; 20:3, 31, 33; 33:11, 27; 34:8; 35:6, 11). As a rhetorical transition, the pronouncement highlights the initiation of the punishment and the restoration by God himself. Moreover, God declares himself as God of Israel (Ezek 34:25). If one compares this declaration with those in other passages of Ezekiel, and in other prophetic literature (e.g., Jer 31:33; 32:28; Ezek 11:20; 14:11; 37:23, 27; Zech

²⁰ John B. Taylor, *Ezekiel: An Introduction and Commentary*, TOTC 22 (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1969), 216; Eichrodt, *Ezekiel*, 473. Others suggest that the fat and the lean flock refers to the Jewish community and the Gentiles. However, this suggestion contradicts the literary context of Ezekiel 34. Accordingly, the flock is best understood as the Jewish community.

8:8), Ezekiel omits the second half, “they shall be my people”. This underscores the divine supremacy of the restoration (cf. Ezek 34:30).²¹

Another notable image is the appointment in God’s restoration (Ezek 34:23–24) and the establishment of a peaceful covenant (Ezek 34:25–31) for a renewed Israel. I will first expound on the latter in this section. According to the covenant, there are two groups of actions, each of which include the peace that God promises to the renewed Israel (Ezek 34:25, 27, 28): his abundant provision and deliverance from oppression.²² Moreover, the actions are repeated and end with the expression “וַיִּדְעוּ כִּי־אֲנִי יְהוָה” (Ezek 34:27, 30). This expression that frequently occurs in Ezekiel reflects God’s intervention into the midst of his people.²³ It is not the human’s recognition that brings forth God’s activity. Inversely, God’s intervention enables the people to recognise God and his mighty presence (cf. Ezek 34:30). Thus, it is God himself who makes the covenant with renewed Israel.

Basically, the peaceful covenant paints a picture of God’s abundant supply and the promise to the renewed Israel. Nonetheless, its significance is wider than its face value suggests, and this lies in Ezekiel’s strategic use of the covenantal blessing in the Holiness Code. Ezekiel fully utilises Lev 26:4–13 and weaves the core element of the blessing, including the abundant supply and the peace of the land, into the fabric of the peaceful

²¹ Walther Eichrodt, *Ezekiel: A Commentary*, trans. Cosslett Quin. OTL (Philadelphia, PA: The Westminster Press, 1970), 479.

²² Block, *Ezekiel 25–48*, 305.

²³ The expression occurs 150 times in the HB, with 115 occurrences in Ezekiel (Ezek. 5:13; 6:7, 10, 13–14; 7:4, 9, 27; 11:10, 12; 12:15–16, 20; 13:14, 21, 23; 14:8; 15:7; 16:62; 17:21; 20:12, 20, 38, 42, 44; 22:16, 22, 27; 25:5, 7, 11, 17; 26:6; 28:22–23, 26; 29:9, 21; 30:8, 19, 25–26; 32:15; 33:29; 34:27, 30; 35:4, 9, 12, 15; 36:11, 38; 37:6, 13–14, 38:23; 39:6, 28). In their contexts, it is best to interpret וַיִּדְעוּ as recognition of God, see Terence E. Fretheim, “וַיִּדְעוּ,” *NIDOTTE* 2:405–406.

covenant (Ezek 34:25–29). The presence of God signifies the ultimate fulfilment of the covenant (Lev 26:12–13; cf. Ezek 34:30–31).

Contrarily, Ezekiel removes the entire section of the curse in Leviticus (Lev 26:14–39) from its covenant. Lyon terms this a radical reconceptualisation.²⁴ It is a strategic modification of the conditional blessing, which is contingent upon the submission of the Holiness Code, into a radical blessing for the renewed Israel. The radicalised covenant resonates with God’s appointment of the Davidic prince, and guarantees the future hope in God’s eschatological restoration.

Beyond this abundant supply by God is the purity of the renewed Israel implied by the peaceful covenant. In the earlier section, Chapters 33–37, Ezekiel has already created a transition stage, which expresses the prohibition of idolatry and the recognition of guilt.²⁵ It then portrays further the new covenant for the exilic Jewish community in terms of the Holiness Code. The exaggeration of the blessing of “security” (Ezek 34:25, 27, 28) warrants the recognition of the connection between the Holiness Code and God’s radical restoration in

²⁴ Regarding the priestly language of Lev 26 in Ezekiel 34, see Michael A. Lyons, *From Law to Prophecy: Ezekiel’s Use of the Holiness Code*, LHBOTS 507 (New York: T&T Clark, 2009), 122–127. Eichrodt argues against the influence of Leviticus 26 on Ezekiel 34. He suggests that Ezekiel adopts the custom at the covenant festival. Without any elaboration, his suggestion remains speculative and neglects the verbal and thematic link to Leviticus, see Eichrodt, *Ezekiel*, 481–482.

²⁵ Lawrence Boadt, “The Function of the Salvation Oracles in Ezekiel 33 to 37,” *HAR* 12 (1990): 20.

Ezekiel 34.²⁶ In the original context of the Code, the covenantal blessing is a conditional result of God's promise for the community to preserve their purity before him. By removing the curse from the Code, Ezekiel describes a new relationship between God and Israel.²⁷ In other words, the renewed community of God will no longer violate the law of God but will definitely demonstrate a cleansed life as led by the Davidic shepherd. This is a lifestyle corresponding to the radical renewal in terms of Ezekiel's understanding.

I argue that such an understanding receives continuing support from a broader context. For example, Ezekiel is vividly portrayed as a privileged priest. He seriously expresses his concern over the purity of the Jewish community (e.g., Ezek 1:3; 2:10–3:1; 4:14; 8:1; 9:8; 20:1; 22:1–2; 24:2).²⁸ Moreover, the restoration programme in Ezekiel 40–48 pictures how the renewed community of God lives a life of purity under the leadership of the

²⁶ Ezekiel widely adapts the Holiness Code to develop its argument for accusation, judgement, instruction, and hope. Lyon proposes that Ezekiel responds to “the challenge of social and religious catastrophe”, see Lyons, *From Law to Prophecy*, 148–151, 156, 165–186; see also Risa Levitt Kohn, *A New Heart and a New Soul: Ezekiel, the Exile and the Torah*, JSOTSup 358 (London: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002), 30–85; the commentators who accept the influence of Leviticus in Ezekiel, e.g., Joyce, *Ezekiel*, 35; Daniel I. Block, *The Book of Ezekiel, Chapters 1–24*, NICOT (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1997), 40; Joseph Blenkinsopp, *Ezekiel*, IBC (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1990), 7; Walther Eichrodt, *Ezekiel*, 481–482; Allen, *Ezekiel 20–48*, xxvi.

²⁷ Lyons, *From Law to Prophecy*, 74–75.

²⁸ See also Corrine L. Patton, “Priest, Prophet, and Exile: Ezekiel as a Literary Construct,” in *Ezekiel's Hierarchical World: Wrestling with a Tiered Reality*, ed. Stephen L. Cook and Corrine L. Patton, SymS 31 (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2004), 73–89; Matthijs J. de Jong, “Ezekiel as a Literary Figure and the Quest for the Historical Prophet,” in *The Book of Ezekiel and Its Influence*, ed. Henk Jan de Jong and Johannes Tromp (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2007), 1–16.

appointed Davidic prince (e.g., Ezek 45:17, 21–25; 46:4–8, 11–15, 18).²⁹ Given that the construction of the peaceful covenant is grounded on the adaptation of the Holiness Code, Ezekiel reveals a crucial element in the peaceful covenant — the renewed community lives a cleansed lifestyle under the leadership the Davidic shepherd.

Appointment of a Davidic Prince

According to Ezekiel 34, in his eschatological restoration, God himself will appoint one Davidic servant who is an agent radically subordinate to God. He will fulfil the shepherding role in the midst of a renewed Israel.³⁰ There are several features in this appointment. First, the singular form of the shepherd in Ezek 34:23 signifies a reversal of the divided Israel monarch. Later in Ezek 37:15–28, God promises this reversal.³¹ Second, the

²⁹ From a rhetorical point of view, Ezekiel uses the theme of restoration to project a paradigmatic life for the Jewish community in the time of exile, see Thomas Renz, *The Rhetorical Function of the Book of Ezekiel*, VTSup 76 (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 240–241; see also Corinna Körting, “The Cultic Dimension of Prophecy in the Book of Ezekiel,” in *The Prophets Speak on Forced Migration*, ed. Mark J. Boda, Frank Ritzel Ames, John Ahn, and Mark Leuchter, AIL 21 (Atlanta, GA: SBL Press, 2015), 121–132; Andrew Mein, “Ezekiel: Structure, Themes, and Contested Issues,” in *The Oxford Handbook of the Prophets*, ed. Carolyn J. Sharp (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), 201; cf. Drew N. Grumbles, “YHWH Is There: Ezekiel’s Temple Vision as a Type” (PhD diss., Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2020), 179–255. It is disputable whether the renewed Temple in Ezekiel is real, eschatological or ideal. Regarding the discussions, see G. A. Cooke, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Ezekiel*, ICC (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1936), 425; Eichrodt, *Ezekiel*, 530; Susan Niditch, “Ezekiel 40–48 in a Visionary Context,” *CBQ* 48.2 (1986): 208–224. At any rate, this is not a determinative factor in the present research. What is in the foreground of the text of the peaceful covenant in Ezekiel 34 is the radical purified life of the renewed community of God.

³⁰ The appointment of a servant from the Davidic line does not mean resurrection of the historical David, see Jon Douglas Levenson, *Resurrection and the Restoration of Israel the Ultimate Victory of the God of Life*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2006), 109–110.

³¹ Joyce, *Ezekiel*, 198.

shepherd is also among the flock of Israel. This symbolises the presence of God.³² The concept resonates with the manifestation of God's glory in the land and the Temple of a renewed Israel (Ezek 43:2, 4–5; 44:4).³³ Third, there is no human engagement and/or election in this appointment. This arrangement is different from the divided monarchy.

Finally, Ezekiel identifies this shepherd as a prince (אֲשִׁינָּה, Ezek 34:24). The use of אֲשִׁינָּה rather than מְלִיךָ does not intend to highlight his political ranking or downplay the roles of Israel's monarchs. Given that Ezekiel reserves the term מְלִיךָ for the Gentile kings in the book, the use of אֲשִׁינָּה presumably suggests that a renewed Israel differs from the contemporary bureaucratic system and the old Davidic dynasty, especially when the prince is radically subordinate to God.³⁴ His fundamental role is to shepherd the renewed Jewish community (Ezek 34:23). This role includes the execution of justice and righteousness (Ezek 45:9; 46:18; cf. 34:16), which sharply contrasts with the corrupt Jewish leaders (Ezek 34:3–4).

Different from the way the role of the Davidic prince is possibly perceived, the prince in Ezekiel does not perform as a militant leader. Instead, God himself will participate in the military campaign to rescue the scattered sheep of Israel from the nations (Ezek 34:10, 25; cf. 35:1–15). Moreover, the prince does not participate in temple building. According to the

³² Block, *Ezekiel 25–48*, 300.

³³ BDB s.v. “מְלִיךָ.”

³⁴ Except in Ezek 1:2; 20:33; 37:22, 24; 43:7, Ezekiel always describes the Gentiles kings as מְלִיךָ with a negative sense, see Ezek 7:27; 17:12, 16; 19:9; 21:19, 21; 24:2; 26:7; 27:33, 35; 28:12, 17; 29:2–3, 18–19; 30:10, 21–22, 24–25; 31:2; 32:2, 10–11; 32:29; 43:9; Levenson rightly points out that the discussions about Ezekiel's use of אֲשִׁינָּה focus on the lexicology, but they omit the literary context of Ezekiel. By considering Ezekiel's context and comparing it with Deuteronomy, Levenson concludes that this term highlights the unique role of the prince under the covenant of God in Ezekiel's restoration, see Jon Douglas Levenson, *Theology of the Program of Restoration of Ezekiel 40–48*, HSM 10 (Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1976), 57–73.

vision in Ezekiel 40–43, what God shows Ezekiel is a completed construction. The text remains silent about who leads the construction of the renewed temple.

On the other hand, the text explicitly describes the roles of the prince (e.g., Ezek 44:3; 45:8–9, 17, 22; 46:2, 12, 18). These descriptions, however, exclude the role of temple building. If the prince is involved in the temple building, it is likely it would have been mentioned somewhere in the book of Ezekiel. Thus, I would infer that the prince has no involvement in temple building. The prince also does not have any control over the land allotment. God allots the land to the whole renewed Jewish community, even the land for the prince (Ezek 48:21–22; cf. 46:16–18). Nonetheless, the prince has a unique position in a renewed Israel. God grants him the privilege to eat before God (Ezek 44:3) and to receive offerings from the land of the people (Ezek 45:16).

According to Ezekiel 34, the central role of the appointed prince is to shepherd the renewed Jewish community. Although the immediate context does not explicitly describe the nature of his shepherding activity, Ezekiel's use of the Holiness Code sheds light on it. As previously discussed, the Davidic prince leads the renewed community through his shepherding activity to enjoy God's abundant supply. Given that Ezekiel weaves the Code into the fabric of the covenant, the picture of abundance implies that the renewed community preserves their purity before God. In other words, the community lives a cleansed life through the leadership the Davidic shepherd. This understanding resonates with Ezekiel's portrayals of the prince in the restorative programme in Ezekiel 40–48. Upon the regulations God imposes, the prince has an obligation to lead the community to preserve moral purity by avoiding violence and oppression and executing justice and righteousness in the community (Ezek 45:9; cf. 46:18). He also has to maintain the ritual purity of the community (e.g., Ezek 45:21–25; 46:2, 4–8). By considering the broader context, a clear picture of the role of the

appointed Davidic prince in his shepherding activity comes up. Rather than focusing on the militant campaign and the political administration, his primary role is to ensure that the renewed community continuously preserves their purity before God.

Human Engagement in God's restoration?

According to Ezekiel, if God intends to restore the exilic Jewish community, is the restoration also contingent on human engagement, for example, on the community's repentance? Repentance frequently refers to the corporate sector turning to God from rebellion in the prophetic literature of the HB. This enables the Jewish community to return to God and so ends the exile.³⁵ However, given that the community is incapable of turning away from their corruption, repentance does not count as an element used to initiate God's restoration in Ezekiel. Unlike other prophetic literature (e.g., Isa 44:22; 45:22; Jer 3:10, 12, 14, 22), Ezekiel does not tie repentance to God's restoration in Ezekiel 34. The theme of repentance is entirely absent from this oracle. Rather, the restoration is solely contingent on what God pronounces and accordingly, on how he acts (Ezek 34:8; cf. Ezek 22:14; 24:14; 36:36; 37:14). The sole responsibility of God is also observable in other passages regarding God's restoration (Ezek 11:14–21; 16:60–63; 20:33–44; 28:25–26; 34:11–16, 23–31; 36:8–15, 22–38; 37). In my view, Ezekiel disregards any human engagement in initiating the restoration.

³⁵ Isa 44:22; 45:22; 46:8; 55:7; Jer 3:10, 12, 14, 22; 4:1; 5:3; 15:19; 18:8; 24:7; 31:18; Ezek 14:6; 18:30, 32; Hos 3:5; 6:1; 7:10; 11:5; 12:6; 14:1–2; Joel 2:12–13; Hag 2:17; Zech 1:3–6; 10:9–10; see also J. A. Thompson and Elmer A. Martens, “שוב,” *NIDOTTE* 4:56–57; cf. N. T. Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God*, vol. 2 of *Christian Origins and the Question of God* (London: SPCK, 1996), 246–258.

According to Ezek 20:41, 28:25 and 36:23–24, God’s primary interest in bringing forth the restoration is his own reputation among the nations.³⁶ Particularly in Ezek 36:23–24, the same logic as Ezek 34:25–30 appears in the text. The temporal clause (בְּהִקְדָּשִׁי בְּכֶם לְעֵינֵיהֶם) in Ezek 36:23 expresses the way that the nations will acknowledge God as a result of God’s action for his own reputation. This logic reveals the absolute dependence of God’s restoration on his own sake. Therefore, it could be said that God’s restoration in Ezekiel is radical, regardless of the repentance of the exilic Jewish community. Nonetheless, the theme of repentance is not utterly alien to Ezekiel. There is a call to repentance for Israel (Ezek 33:10–20; cf. 14:6; 18:30), but the call in this context functions as an appeal to the Jewish community to live properly during exile rather than to be the catalyst for God’s restoration.³⁷ Repentance does not enable the Jewish community to reverse God’s punishment on Israel (cf. Ezek 33:12). Overall, repentance could not prevent exile or bring the Jewish community in from being exiled or experiencing the end of the exile, according to Ezekiel’s view.

³⁶ Daniel I. Block, “The God Ezekiel Wants Us to Meet: Theological Perspectives on the Book of Ezekiel,” in *The God Ezekiel Creates*, ed. Paul M. Joyce and Dalit Rom-Shiloni, LHBOTS 607 (London: Bloomsbury, 2015), 163–164, 191–192; cf. Andrew Mein, “Profitable and Unprofitable Shepherds: Economic and Theological Perspectives on Ezekiel 34,” *JSOT* 31.4 (2007): 493–504. According to Joyce, Ezekiel consistently portrays God as the initiator of both his punishment and the restoration without being contingent on human engagement. He terms this portrayal as a “radical theocentricity”, see Paul M. Joyce, *Divine Initiative and Human Response in Ezekiel*, JSOTSup 51 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1989), 89–105.

³⁷ See also Mein, “Ezekiel,” 201; I will further explore this concern in the discussion of the peaceful covenant in Ezek 34:25ff.

Ezekiel in Later Writings

Although the name of Ezekiel (Ezek 1:3; 24:24) does not appear elsewhere in the HB, other Jewish literature or the NT, the book of Ezekiel exerts a positive influence on many of these later writings. More than literary dependence, it offers those writings a hermeneutical lens to reflect on the cleansing life of the post-exilic Jewish and Christian communities.³⁸ The later writings, in various degrees, show an affinity with Ezekiel's primary concern about the purity of God's community.

The Book of Daniel

The book of Daniel in the HB is one of the later writings referring to Ezekiel. Its central message is about the ultimate sovereignty of God and the identity of the people of God under foreign authority.³⁹ In the socio-historical context of Daniel, there is a conflict between the cultic system and the purity law of God and those of the pagan. Thus, Daniel has to persuade the exilic Jewish community to live out the cultic and purified life that pledges allegiance to God.

³⁸ Mikael Winninge, "The New Testament Reception of Judaism in the Second Temple Period," in *The New Testament as Reception*, ed. Mogens Müller and Henrik Tronier, JSNTSup 230 (London: Bloomsbury Publishing Plc, 2002), 31.

³⁹ John Goldingay, *Daniel*, WBC 30, rev. ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Academic, 2019), 330–334; John J. Collins, *Daniel: A Commentary on the Book of Daniel*, Hermeneia—A Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993), 146; Joyce G. Baldwin, *Daniel: An Introduction and Commentary TOTC 23* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1978), 70–76.

Vogel proposes that there are lots of cultic elements embedded in the text of Daniel, including the sanctuary, temple, mountain, and cultic time.⁴⁰ The cultic performance of the Jewish community is one of the dominant motifs in Daniel. Daniel associates the reference to Ezekiel with its concern over the cultic life. In Daniel 7, there is an allusion to the vision of Ezekiel 1 to depict the throne vision of Theophany. Like Ezekiel, God's intervention demonstrates his sovereignty over earthly authority (Dan 7:14, 26). Daniel potentially modifies the figure like a Son of Man in Ezek 1:26 to describe the people of God who are under radical transformation and receive the glory of God (Dan 7:13, 18, 27).⁴¹ This vision is significant in terms of the literary structure of Daniel because Daniel 7 functions as a hinge to connect two chiasmic structures (Daniel 2–7 and 8–12).⁴² It links God's sovereignty and his radical restoration (Daniel 1–7) to the central message in Daniel 8–12, the prayer of repentance on behalf of the people of God in a temple setting (Dan 9:20), is the act which signifies the responsibility of the Jewish community for preserving the purity.⁴³

Therefore, the literary structure of Daniel establishes a connection between the reference to Ezekiel and Daniel's primary concern over the purified life of the Jewish community. Although this connection cannot affirm the influence of Ezekiel on Daniel, living

⁴⁰ Winfried Vogel, "The Cultic Motif in Space and Time in the Book of Daniel" (PhD diss., University of St Andrews, 1999), 339.

⁴¹ Daewoong Kim, "Biblical Interpretation in the Book of Daniel: Literary Allusions in Daniel to Genesis and Ezekiel" (PhD diss., Rice University, 2013), 167–276.

⁴² Steinmann's proposal addresses both the bilingual nature and thematic coherence. The two chiasmic structures have the centres in Daniel 4–5 and 9, respectively, see Andrew E. Steinmann, *Daniel*, ConcC (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2008), 16; see also Ad. Lenglet, "La Structure Littéraire de Daniel 2–7" *Bib* 53.2 (1972): 169–190.

⁴³ Goldingay, *Daniel*, 458–459; see also Collins, *Daniel*, 360.

a purified life as allegiance to God is a recognisable factor in God's restoration, according to Daniel.

4 Maccabees

In the first-century Greco-Roman world, the deification of the Roman Emperors became one of the challenges to the Jewish community's monotheist belief. To respond to this challenge, 4 Maccabees clarifies the allegiance to God by following the Mosaic Law.⁴⁴ Chapter 18 recounts an exhortation from a mother of seven sons. The mother mentions how her husband teaches the sons about the Law and the prophets. After quoting several texts from the HB, the husband explicitly refers to the dry bones (Ezek 37:2–3 in 4 Macc 18:17) to clarify the destiny of those who remain faithful to God. Although the people of God suffer and even die, God would keep their lives eternally.⁴⁵ The author does not explain the reason for the citation. The clue comes in the succeeding reference to the Song of Moses (4 Macc 18:18). This song indicates that God will punish those who commit idolatry and will purify the land and the people of God. It reveals the expectation of God about the purified lives of his people. Therefore, faithfulness in 4 Macc 18:17 is best understood as the commitment to purity according to the Mosaic Law.⁴⁶ It is noted that the image of dry bones in Ezekiel's context already links to the renewed Jewish community's responsibility for preserving purity

⁴⁴ R. B. Townshend, "The Forth Book of Maccabees," in *The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament in English: With Introductions and Critical and Explanatory Notes to the Several Books*, ed. R. H. Charles (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1913), 2:653–654.

⁴⁵ David A. deSilva, *4 Maccabees: Introduction and Commentary on the Greek Text in Codex Sinaiticus*, SC (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 264.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 264–265.

in God's restoration (Ezek. 37:23). Thus, 4 Maccabees potentially recognises Ezekiel as a book with concern about how the people of God preserve their purity.

On the Special Law 1

Unlike the previous writings, Philo of Alexandria, in *On the Special Law 1*, adopts the text of Ezekiel to address his concern over the priesthood institution. As a Hellenised Jewish thinker, Philo allegorically interprets the various texts from the HB and produces commentaries and treaties for the Alexandrian Jewish community to address contemporary issues and pursue a pious life in God under the Roman context.⁴⁷ By adapting Ezek 44:17–18, Philo carefully paints a picture of the priesthood dress code in the Temple (1.84–97) and explains its symbolic meanings.⁴⁸ In this adaptation, the text of Ezekiel functions as an idealised paradigm in the liturgical dimension for the Alexandrian Jewish community to understand the priesthood. In my view, Philo adopts the vision of God's restorative programme in Ezekiel to address the contemporary institution of priesthood specifically rather than the purity of God's community in general.

Apocryphon of Ezekiel

Modern commentators group five surviving fragments as the Apocryphon of Ezekiel. Of the surviving fragments, however, only one is the original text of Apocryphon, and the

⁴⁷ Maren R. Niehoff, *Philo of Alexandria: An Intellectual Biography*, AYBRL (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2018), 25–46.

⁴⁸ Philo, *On the Decalogue. On the Special Laws, Books 1–3*, trans F. H. Colson, LCL 320 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1937), 148–153.

other four are from secondary sources. Notwithstanding the limited available information about this text, the original one clearly states that God will make a fair judgement with reward or punishment in the future. Another fragment is *Paedagogus* by Clement of Alexandria. In *Paedagogus* 1:9, Clement refers to the text of the Apocryphon. This reference contains an allusion to Ezek 34:14–16, which tells of the feeding and healing of the flock by their shepherd.⁴⁹ Due to the tiny number of surviving fragments, the original literary context of the reference to the Apocryphon remains obscure. On the other hand, *Paedagogus* might uncover some clues. According to *Paedagogus*, the reference to the Apocryphon portrays Jesus as the “all-holy Shepherd and Instructor”.⁵⁰ This portrayal possibly suggests that the Apocryphon uses the reference to Ezekiel to project God’s shepherding activity. If this fragment and the original text are part of a unified text, the Apocryphon of Ezekiel does not set the shepherding activity apart from the judgement and human responsibility. However, the current data do not permit the present research to develop any firm proposal regarding the view of God’s restoration in Ezekiel from the fragments.

⁴⁹ J. R. Mueller, and S. E. Robinson, “Apocryphon of Ezekiel,” in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, ed. James Charlesworth (Garden City, NT: Doubleday & Company, 1983), 1:488–489, 495.

⁵⁰ Clement of Alexandria, *Paedagogus* 1.9 (*ANF* 8:230–231).

The Dead Sea Scrolls⁵¹

The Qumran community considered the Jerusalem priesthood in the post-exilic period as a defiled religious institution under foreign political influence. They seek from the HB to justify their viewpoints and establish a new social identity, the true remnant in exile awaiting God's eschatological salvation, and their pious lifestyle.⁵²

Manning proposes that the Qumran community strongly relied on the theological framework of Ezekiel to construct the priesthood and the living conduct.⁵³ For example, the Qumran community alludes to Ezekiel to illustrate the corruption of the contemporary Jerusalem priesthood (Ezek 4:4–5 in CD A 1:5–6; Ezek 9:4 in CD B 19:11–12; Ezekiel 22:26 in CD A 6:17). Also, the community establishes the role of the leaders and priests in the new Temple according to Ezekiel's restorative programme (Ezek 44:15 in CD A 3:21–4:6; Ezekiel 44–45 in 1QM 2:3–4). By sharing Ezekiel's priestly concern and its eschatology, the Qumran community prepares themselves to undergo purification in awaiting God in the wilderness (Ezek 20:35 in 1QM 1:2–3). These allusions to Ezekiel suggests that the Qumran community

⁵¹ Regarding the primary texts of the Dead Sea Scrolls Document and their English translation, see Emanuel Tov, '1QH_a,' Dead Sea Scrolls Electronic Library Non-Biblical Texts, http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/2542-3525_dsselnbt_DSS_EL_NBT_1QH_a; Emanuel Tov, '1QS,' Dead Sea Scrolls Electronic Library Non-Biblical Texts, http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/2542-3525_dsselnbt_DSS_EL_NBT_1QS; Emanuel Tov, '11Q14,' Dead Sea Scrolls Electronic Library Non-Biblical Texts, http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/2542-3525_dsselnbt_DSS_EL_NBT_11Q14; Emanuel Tov, "CD," Dead Sea Scrolls Electronic Library Non-Biblical Texts, http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/2542-3525_dsselnbt_DSS_EL_NBT_CD.

⁵² Jutta examines the Qumran community members shaped their social identity with the Damascus Document and the Community Rule. One central belief in the community, she proposes, is "the need to turn to the Torah and to the community's counselling on the Torah", see Jutta Jokiranta, *Social Identity and Sectarianism in the Qumran Movement*, STDJ 105 (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 215–220.

⁵³ Gary T. Manning Jr., *Echoes of a Prophet: The Use of Ezekiel in the Gospel of John and in Literature of the Second Temple Period*, JSNTSup 270 (London: T&T Clark, 2004), 73–75.

views God's restoration in Ezekiel as an eschatological hope interweaving with the purification of the community, which includes the purified priesthood and a holy lifestyle within the community.

Ancient Rabbinic Literature

Ancient rabbinic literature refers to all those ancient Jewish writings containing interpretative traditions from various religious groups (e.g., the sages and the rabbi) in the first few centuries CE. These writings, which include Targum, the Mishnah, the Tosefta, the Palestinian and the Babylonian Talmuds and other Midrashim, expands on the HB and gives the contemporary Jewish community a self-understanding and corresponding lifestyle.⁵⁴

Targum of Ezekiel gives the contemporary Jewish community an explanation of their plight and a resolution. I will highlight several points here. First, Targum of Ezekiel makes the sin of idolatry explicit in the text. It reads harlotry in Ezekiel 16 and 23 as idolatry (Tg. Ezek 16:15, 25, 29; 23:27). God calls the house of Israel to turn away from the idolatry and worship him exclusively (Tg. Ezek 18:30).⁵⁵ Second, the Targum underscores the prominence of the Temple among the renewed community. It is the presence of God and the source of blessing in God's restoration (Tg. Ezek. 34:26; cf. 37:27).⁵⁶ Third, the element of repentance becomes significant in God's restoration. The Targumic account of Ezek 39:28 introduces

⁵⁴ Hyam MacCoby, *Early Rabbinic Writing*, CCWJCW 3 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 1–5, 16–17; H. L. Strack and Günter Stemberger, *Introduction to the Talmud and Midrash*, trans. Markus Bockmuehl (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992), 4–5; see also Samson H. Levey, *The Targum of Ezekiel: Translated, with a Critical Introduction, Apparatus, and Notes*, ArBib 13 (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1987), 3–4.

⁵⁵ Levey, *Ezekiel*, 11.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 98.

repentance as the condition for God to regather the scattered community.⁵⁷ From the way the Targum emphasises the severity of the idolatry, the repentance presumably focuses on turning to a purified life that worships God exclusively. Overall, Targum Ezekiel has a specific concern about idolatry. Repentance enables the Jewish community to preserve the purity and worship God exclusively.

Besides, some Babylonian Talmudic texts associate Ezekiel with their discussion of Jewish law. b. B. Bat 14b–15a considers the Men of the Great Assembly as the writers of Ezekiel, the Twelve Minor Prophets, Daniel and the scroll of Esther.⁵⁸ There is no elaboration on this suggestion, but it affirms Ezekiel’s relationship with the Temple. Another text, b. Menah 45a, discusses the offering regulations. According to Ezek 45:18, there is a sin offering on the first day of the first month with a young bullock without blemish. However, Num 28:21 regards this kind of offering as a burnt offering. The rabbi Yohanan accepts the discrepancy and suggests that Elijah will resolve it in the future.⁵⁹ The rabbinic sages seriously examine the offering regulations in Ezekiel. As Sweeney suggests, the talmudic texts display “something of rabbinic reasoning concerning the questions raised by the book of

⁵⁷ Ibid., 12, 109.

⁵⁸ Jacob Neusner, *Bavut Tractate Baba Batra: Chapters I through VI*, vol. 22A of *The Talmud of Babylonia: An Academic Commentary*, SFACS 22 (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1996), 55.

⁵⁹ Jacob Neusner, *Bavu Tractate Menahot: Chapters I through VI*, vol. 29A of *The Talmud of Babylonia: An Academic Commentary*, SFACS 23 (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1996), 235; a similar discussion of the offering regulation between Ezekiel and the Torah appears in b. Šabb. 13b, see Jacob Neusner, *Bavut Tractate Shabbat: Chapters I through XII*, vol. 2A of *The Talmud of Babylonia: An Academic Commentary*. SFACS 32 (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1996), 50.

Ezekiel and its relationship to the Torah”.⁶⁰ Notably, the sages share Ezekiel’s concern around purity and considers how the offering ordinance in Ezekiel pragmatically affects this concern in a ritual context.

Summary of the Shepherd Image in Ezekiel 34

According to the exegetical observation of Ezekiel 34, God’s shepherding through the Davidic agent is evidently a dynamic activity. Due to the incorrigible behaviour of the exilic Jewish community, God will initiate his punishment for the corrupt community and restore the community by regathering those who have scattered. During the restoration, he will appoint a Davidic agent to shepherd the regathered Jewish community abundantly. Notably, this is not a continuation of the old Davidic dynasty. Instead, God radically restores the community and re-establishes a peaceful covenant with the community, which is no longer under a curse.

The radical restoration (Ezek 34:15–31), along with the shepherding activity of the Davidic prince, has a broader significance in Ezekiel. Ezekiel radically adapts the Holiness Code from Leviticus 26 to establish a peaceful covenant with no curse. This adaptation reflects Ezekiel’s understanding of the peaceful covenant that inextricably connects God’s eschatological restoration to the purity of God’s people. The renewed community of God will no longer live with corruption but will instead demonstrate a complete cleansed life under the leadership of the appointed Davidic shepherd, corresponding to the absolute blessing given by God.

⁶⁰ See Marvin A. Sweeney, “The Problem of Ezekiel in Talmudic Literature.” in *After Ezekiel: Essays on the Reception of a Difficult Prophet*, ed. Paul M. Joyce and Andrew Mein, LHBOTS 535 (New York: T&T Clark, 2011), 23.

Interestingly, the later Jewish writings which are covered in the discussion do not refer to the shepherd image in Ezekiel 34. Notwithstanding, they all, in a varying degrees, share the concern of Ezekiel over the purified life of God's community. While some (e.g., Babylonian Talmud; cf. On the Special Law 1) express this concern from a ritual or cultic aspect, others (e.g., Targum of Ezekiel) directly highlight the responsibility of preserving purity among the people of God. This picture potentially suggests that the connection between God's restoration in Ezekiel and his expectation of the purity of his people is acknowledged among those writings.

The Shepherd Image in Zechariah 13:7–9

The use of Zechariah 9–14 in the Synoptic Gospels has received more attention than Ezekiel 34 in previous intertextual studies.⁶¹ The commentators widely accept that Zech 13:7–9 offers the Gospels an explanation for the death of Jesus and the desertion of the disciples. However, their interpretation of the smitten shepherd tends to omit the subsequent events after the striking of the shepherd and the overall thematic development of God's restorative programme in Zechariah 9–14. Consequently, the significance of God's forceful act in this programme (Zechariah 9–14) is yet to be determined. Given that Mark's Gospel shows recognition of various texts in Zechariah 9–14 (e.g., Zech 9:9–10 in Mark 11:1–10; Zech 9:11 in Mark 14:24) in the passion narrative, it is worth investigating Zech 13:7–9 both in the immediate and in a broader context.

⁶¹ Regarding the past intertextual discussion, see the section "Literature Review of Mark's Shepherd Image" in Chapter 2.

Unlike the exegetical discussion of Ezekiel, however, there is a considerable challenge to understanding the significance of the smitten shepherd. There is only a short saying of God in the text, almost without narrative elements. The course of striking the shepherd and scattering the flock, and the consequences, to which the saying refers, are absent. Perhaps an identification of any particular historical situation may illuminate the understanding of the shepherd. Unfortunately, the historical quest has not come up with a satisfactory answer. Indeed, the literary chronology of Zechariah is unclear. There are only three timestamps in the book of Zechariah (Zech 1:1, 7; 7:1), all falling within Zechariah 1–8 and referring to the Persian period. Meanwhile, the terms “Greece” in Zech 9:13 and “Egypt” in Zech 10:10–11 and 14:18–19 perhaps suggest an ancient Greek context for the literary environment. However, the information from these timestamps and locations is still insufficient. A wide range of historical situations is potentially associated with the event of God’s striking the shepherd.⁶² Thus, uncertainty remains and surrounds any inference about the course of this violent act.

⁶² From a historical point of view, commentators attempt to date Zechariah 9–14, but the date ranges from the pre-exilic period to the Maccabean revolt. This wide range of periods poses challenges in associating Zech 13:7–9 with any historical situation. Regarding the discussion of the date, see Hinckley G. Mitchell, “A Commentary on Haggai and Zechariah,” in *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi and Jonah*, ed. C. A. Briggs, S. R. Driver and A. Plummer, ICC (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1912), 258–259; M. Delcor, “Les Allusions à Alexandre le Grand dans Zach IX 1–8,” *VT* 1.2 (1951): 110–124; Douglas R. Jones, “A Fresh Interpretation of Zechariah IX–XI,” *VT* 12.3 (1962): 241–259; Benedikt Otzen, *Studien Über Deuterostacharja*, ATDan 6 (Copenhagen: Prostant Apud Munksgaard, 1964), 212; Andrew E. Hill, “Dating Second Zechariah: A Linguistic Reexamination,” *HAR* 6 (1982): 105–134; Konrad R. Schaefer, “Zechariah 14 and the Composition of the Book of Zechariah,” *RB* 100.3 (1993): 368–398;

Nevertheless, a holistic view of the book produces fresh insight into the event of the smitten shepherd in God's restorative programme.⁶³ According to the plot development in Zechariah, a clear disjunction appeared between Zechariah 8 and 9, where visions occupied the first half while the second half consisted of God's oracles to Zechariah. Thus, it is widely accepted that Zechariah 1–8 forms a distinctive unit by the time Zechariah 9–14 is composed.⁶⁴ Notwithstanding, the final form of Zechariah displays a clear and coherent internal structure.

The commentators widely accept that there are four major sections in Zechariah. Beginning with an introduction of the book (Zech 1:1–6), Zechariah has eight vision reports (Zech 1:7–6:15) and oracles with fasting (Zech 7:1–8:23), followed by two sets of oracle collections about God's eschatological restoration (Zech 9:1–11:17; 12:1–14:21). The consistent view of Zechariah's structure reflects a careful redaction of the book intended by its author. Moreover, different sections of Zechariah are linguistically and thematically interconnected. The interconnection facilitates the thematic development of God's sovereignty, his complete rejection of the corrupted leadership, and his purification for the

⁶³ Gonzalez argues that the emphasis on the disjunction between the first half and the second half of Zechariah overlooks the reason why Zechariah comes up to the present form, see Hervé Gonzalez, "Zechariah 9–14 and the Continuation of Zechariah during the Ptolemaic Period," *JHebS* 13.13 (2013): 12–15; Byron G. Curtis, *Up the Steep and Stony Road: The Book of Zechariah in Social Location Trajectory Analysis*, *AcBib* 25 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2006), 231–280.

⁶⁴ Based on the introductory formula *מִשָּׂא דְּבַר־יְהוָה*, some commentators further separate Zechariah 9–14 into two sections (Zech 9:1–11:17; 12:1–14:21) and treat them as Deutero- and Trito-Zechariah. Similarly, in Zechariah 1–8, some view Zechariah 1–6 (or 1:7–6:15) and 7–8 as two discrete units. Regarding the discussions, see Paul D. Hanson, *The Dawn of Apocalyptic: The Historical and Sociological Roots of Jewish Apocalyptic Eschatology*, rev. ed. (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1979), 280–401; Brevard S. Childs, *Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1979), 472–487.

sake of radical restoration, reaching the climax at Zechariah 14.⁶⁵ As part of the restorative programme (Zechariah 9–14), the event of the smitten shepherd presumably has a causal connection to these themes. In light of the thematic development in the restorative programme, particularly the climax of Zechariah 14, which is attached to Zech 13:7–9, this section attempts to grasp the deeper significance that the event of the smitten shepherd has within this literary context.

God's Purification in Zech 13:7–9

Zechariah situates the event of the smitten shepherd (Zech 13:7–9) in the second oracle set of Zechariah 9–14, the last unit before the climax of Zechariah 14. Following the thematic development of Zechariah 9–14, there is a shift in the target of the text. In the beginning, Zechariah attends to all the twelve tribes of Israel all along (Zech 9:1, 10, 13). By recalling a historical situation (Zech 10:1–2), Zechariah ascribes the flock's scattering to the

⁶⁵ Otto Plöger, *Theocracy and Eschatology*, trans. S. Rudman (Oxford: Blackwell, 1968), 87–88; some commentators explore the text of Zechariah from a holistic view. For example, Wenzel considers Zech 1:1–6 as an introduction to the whole book and examines its connection to the rest of the book, see Heiko Wenzel, *Reading Zechariah with Zechariah 1:1–6 as the Introduction to the Entire Book*, CBET (Leuven: Peeters, 2010); cf. Mason examines how Zechariah 9–14 expands the first half of the book and elaborates on the restoration of God, see Rex A. Mason, “The Relation of Zech 9–14 to Proto-Zechariah,” *ZAW* 88.2 (1976): 227–239; by adopting structural chiasmus, Butterworth demonstrates a strong continuity between Zechariah 1–8 and 9–14, see Mike Butterworth, *Structure and the Book of Zechariah*, JSOTSup 130 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1992). Others recognise the thematic coherence, see Mark J. Boda, *The Book of Zechariah*, NICOT (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2016), 41–43; Carol L. Meyers and Eric M. Meyers, *Haggai, Zechariah 1–8: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB 25B (New York: Doubleday, 1987), xl–xliv; Carol L. Meyers, and Eric M. Meyers, *Zechariah 9–14: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB 25C (New York: Doubleday, 1993), 26–29; Joyce G. Baldwin, *Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi: An Introduction and Commentary*, TOTC 28 (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1972), 77–85; Childs, *Old Testament*, 482–483; Ralph L. Smith, *Micah-Malachi*, WBC 32 (Dallas, TX: Word Books, 1984), 171–174.

corrupted leadership.⁶⁶ The scattered flock virtually lacks a shepherd, but God promises to regather them (Zech 10:3, 6, 9). God will break his covenant with Israel and the brotherhood between northern Israel and southern Judah (Zech 11:10, 14). He himself will fulfil the shepherding activity by appointing Zechariah as his agent (Zech 11:4, 7).⁶⁷

Moving towards the second set of oracles (Zechariah 12–14), God’s promise for the whole of Israel in Zechariah 9–11 becomes the backdrop for this unit. Here, the text shifts its focus to Judah, particularly the events in Jerusalem (Zech 9:1; 12:1–3). God initiates his retribution on Jerusalem. He will also protect and purify the Jewish community. Unlike Zechariah 9–11, this unit expands its worldview to a cosmic level (Zech 12:1; 14:9), with Jerusalem as the centre of the universe. The text portrays God as the universal sovereign.⁶⁸ In this setting, Zech 13:7–9 continues the cleansing of the corrupted Jewish leadership (Zech 13:1–6) and prepares the refined Jewish community to transit to the ultimate victory of God (Zechariah 14).

⁶⁶ Petterson rightly points out that the false prophecy described in Zech 10:2 matches the pre-exilic and exilic situation (cf. Isa 3:2–3; Jer 14:13–22; 29:8–9; Ezek 13:8–9), see Anthony R. Petterson, *Behold Your King: The Hope for The House of David in the Book of Zechariah*, LHBOTS 513 (New York: T&T Clark, 2009), 154.

⁶⁷ Zech 11:4–16 probably draws from the materials of Ezekiel 34 and 27, see Mark J. Boda, “Reading between the Lines: Zechariah 11.4–16 in its Literary Contexts,” in *Bringing out the Treasure: Inner Biblical Allusion in Zechariah 9–14*, ed. Mark J. Boda, Michael H. Floyd, and Rex Mason, JSOTSup 370 (London: Sheffield Academic Press, 2003), 277–291; Rex A. Mason, “The Use of Earlier Biblical Material in Zechariah 9–14: A Study in Inner Biblical Exegesis,” in *Bringing out the Treasure: Inner Biblical Allusion in Zechariah 9–14*, ed. Mark J. Boda, Michael H. Floyd, and Rex Mason, JSOTSup 370 (London: Sheffield Academic Press, 2003), 93–116; Hanson, *The Dawn of Apocalyptic*, 341–342.

⁶⁸ See also Meyers and Meyers, *Zechariah 9–14*, 404.

The Smitten Shepherd and Scattered Flock

This unit begins with a command from God (הָרַב עוֹרֵי, Zech 13:7). In this command, the sword is personified. God speaks to the sword and requests it to awaken. He attempts to invoke the sword in his act. The HB commonly uses the sword to present fighting and militant scenes (e.g., Gen 34:25–26; Num 14:43; Josh 8:24; 1 Sam 13:22; 1 Kgs 2:32). It signifies a violent act.⁶⁹ Without further comment, God issues the command. He is the initiator to act against his shepherd. Seemingly, this violent act presupposes the corruption of the shepherd and its broken relationship with God. However, the way the text characterises the shepherd takes an opposite direction. The pronominal suffix in the expression עַל־רַעִי reflects a close relationship of the shepherd with God. The following phrase וְעַל־גֹּבֵר עֲמִיתִי further elaborates on this relationship. Different from the usual word for “man” (cf. אִישׁ) in the HB, the term גֹּבֵר highlights the strength one has.⁷⁰ Another term עֲמִית only appears in Leviticus apart from Zechariah and consistently refers to the neighbour (e.g., Lev 6:2; 18:20; 19:11). In the context of Leviticus, this term reflects the mutual responsibility of the members within the Jewish community.⁷¹ Thus, the use of עֲמִית in Zechariah suggests the intimate relationship between God and the shepherd, with the role and responsibility in this relationship being highlighted. In sum, the evidence tends to suggest that the shepherd is a positive figure with a close relationship to God rather than a corrupted one who is against God. I will discuss this matter further in a later section.

⁶⁹ It is preferable to read “the sword” figuratively, see also Peter Enns, “הָרַב,” *NIDOTTE* 2:253–256; Victor P. Hamilton, “עוֹרֵי,” *NIDOTTE* 3:356–358.

⁷⁰ BDB, s.v. “גֹּבֵר”; cf. HALOT, s.v. “גֹּבֵר and גֹּבֵר.”

⁷¹ Richard S. Hess, “עֲמִית,” *NIDOTTE* 3:432–433; Boda, *Zechariah*, 738; cf. BDB reads it as “my fellow”, but it perhaps does not fully reflect the term’s significance, see BDB, s.v. “עֲמִית.”

Regarding the flock, the text does not say too much. However, from the broader context of Zech 12:10–13:6 and 13:8–9, not only the corrupted leadership (priest and false prophets) in the house of David and Jerusalem, but all the people of God become the target of God. Moreover, the use of the insignificant ones (הַצְעִירִים) favours this reading. God will turn his hand against those who are insignificant. The term צֶעַר only appears once in Zechariah. The HB often uses this term or its cognate to portray the young, weak, helpless, or shameful (Gen 19:34; Isa 60:22; Jer 30:19; Job 14:21). The meaning of adversary or opponent is out of its semantic range. Given that the term matches the flock for the plurality in the immediate context, it is preferable to read those who are insignificant in Zech 13:8 as the one-third who are left alive.⁷²

The meaning of God's action (וְהִשְׁבַּתִּי יָדַי) is also ambiguous. The HB applies this action in various contexts (e.g., Gen 43:12; Exod 4:7; Ezek 38:12; Amos 1:8), ranging from a positive sense of support and caring to a negative sense of punishment and destruction. By comparing with Isa 1:25, Lamarche proposes to read the action as God's protective act.⁷³ However, his proposal perhaps over-interprets Isa 1:25 and reads Zech 12:8 into 13:7. The immediate context (Zech 13:8–9) creates a direct reading to the action that it is God's purification for his people. Similarly, the second half of Isa 1:25 intends to convey a message

⁷² Meyers read this unit in a poetic form and suggested a balanced structure, that the insignificant one corresponds to the one-third, see Meyers and Meyers, *Zechariah 9–14*, 404–405; the LXX offers a different reading. It turns the smitten shepherd in the MT from a singular form into a plural form and interprets the insignificant ones as those smitten shepherds. Given that the LXX keeps describing the smitten shepherds as τοὺς ποιμένας μου and ἄνδρα πολίτην μου, the LXX reading emphasises God's intention and initiation of the purification.

⁷³ Paul Lamarche, *Zacharie IX–XIV: Structure Littéraire et Messianisme, EBib* (Paris: Librairie Lecoffre, J. Gabalda, 1961), 92; Mason even suggests Zech 13:7–9 here connects to Isa 1:21–26, see Mason, "The Use of Earlier Biblical Material," 179–181.

of purification figuratively (וְאֶצְרֶךָ פֶּבֶר סִיגָה וְאֶסִּירָה כָּל־בְּדִילִיָּהוּ).⁷⁴ Although God declares he will protect his people in his restoration on the day of the Lord (Zech 12:8; cf. 13:1; 14:1), I argue that reading the action as purification shows no conflict with God’s protective act and is rather straightforward from the immediate context. This is supported by the parallel text of Isaiah. Given the interpretation of the insignificant ones, the last clause in Zech 13:7 emphasises the full coverage of God’s action on the flock. None of the flock, even those who are insignificant, will be excluded. Following the context in Zech 12:10–13:6, God will judge the corrupted leadership (priest and false prophets) in the house of David and Jerusalem. Thus, the scattered flock presumably includes those corrupt leaders.

God’s Purification and his Renewal of the Covenant

According to Zech 13:7, God’s violent act is directed against both the shepherd and the flock. He strikes the shepherd, and subsequently the flock will be scattered. The imperative sequence (וְהִפְנוּצִינָהּ ... הִהָ) suggests that the scattering of the flock is the purpose of God’s striking the shepherd.⁷⁵ The following verses, Zech 13:8–9, clarify why God scatters the flock — purification of the whole land.⁷⁶ Only one-third of the scattered flock will

⁷⁴ The LXX makes the theme of purification more explicit than the MT (πυρώσω σε εἰς καθαρόν).

⁷⁵ C. L. Seow, *A Grammar for Biblical Hebrew*, rev. ed. (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1995), 243.

⁷⁶ Although there is no indication of whether Zech 13:8–9 follows the context of verse 7, the redactional shaping hints at the connection. In Zechariah 9–11, the people of God are described as the flock (Zech 9:16). God makes his promise to regather the flock (Zech 10:2, 6, 8). It implies the scattering of the flock. The speech of God in Zech 13:8 now addresses the people from all the land (בְּכָל־הָאָרֶץ). While God declares the scattering of the flock in Zech 13:7, the purification (Zech 13:8–9) is best understood as an event expounding the ultimate purpose of the scattering.

remain, and the two-third will suffer. Comparison of these two groups of people results in a small portion of the community surviving. Contrary to the tiny portion, the two-thirds meet the fate that Zechariah depicts with two strong verbs (כָּרַח and גָּזַע). This group of people has offended God and will no longer be part of the community.⁷⁷ This represents a judgement from God to separate them from the one-third who undergo the purification process in Zech 13:9.

Indeed, Zechariah has revealed the corruption within the Jewish community. Perhaps the clearest example is Zech 11:4–17. God pronounces his judgement against the corrupt Jewish leaders. They fail to assume their shepherding role. Instead of leading the community, they exploit them. Thus, God explicitly identifies them as worthless shepherds destined for a serious punishment (Zech 11:17). Perhaps this corruption has been foreshadowed in Zechariah 1–8. Zechariah arranges this piece of text in a chiasmic structure, with the Temple's rebuilding and the leadership renewal (Zechariah 4–5) at the centre.⁷⁸ This arrangement underscores the leadership of Zerubbabel (Zech 4:7), and the resistance to the negative influence of the foreign cult on the Jewish community with the flying scroll and the women (Zech 5:3–4, 9).⁷⁹ The whole picture suggests the profane life of the Jewish community during their exile.

⁷⁷ The term כָּרַח in Niphil is used technically to denote the expulsion from the community (e.g., Lev 7:20–21; 17:4; 18:29; 22:3); cf. Eugene Carpenter, “כָּרַח,” *NIDOTTE* 2:722–724.

⁷⁸ Chaney R. Bergdall, “Zechariah’s Program of Restoration: A Rhetorical Critical Study of Zechariah 1–8” (PhD diss., Fuller Theological Seminary, 1986), 120–209.

⁷⁹ Curtis, *Up the Steep and Stony Road*, 136–142; Boda, *Zechariah*, 325–326; cf. Martien A. Halvorson-Taylor, *Enduring Exile: The Metaphorization of Exile in the Hebrew Bible*, VTSup 141 (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 197–198.

One-third of the community will undergo purification, where Zechariah uses the refinement of gold and silver to characterise the process. Finally, God will put the remaining one-third into the fire. The expression *שִׁנְיָ* could refer to God's anger and theophany. More importantly, it functions as metaphorical language used to denote a refining process (cf. Jer 6:29).⁸⁰ This process for the one-third is analogically parallel to the refinement and test of silver (*הַכֶּסֶף*) and gold (*הַזָּהָב*). Like a smith removing the impurity from these two materials (Ps 12:6; 66:10; Prov 17:3, 27:21; Isa 48:10; Mal 3:3), the one-third turn away from the evil conduct.⁸¹ Thus, the refinement is a transformation process for the one-third, so they can turn away from the defiled conduct and live according to the law of God.

Zech 1:1–6 provides considerable support for this understanding. Previous commentators have widely accepted that this passage serves as an introduction to the whole book.⁸² As the opening of the book, the section describes how God requests the post-exilic Jewish community to turn away from the ancestors' evil ways (Zech 1:4) and follow his word and law (Zech 1:6). Without devoting much space to recount God's punishment for the profane nations, Zechariah particularly focuses on how the community of God has to repent,

⁸⁰ BDB, s.v. “*שִׁנְיָ*.”

⁸¹ One of the functions of the refining process is to remove the impurity from the gold and silver. By analogy, impurity could refer to evil conduct in general, but it probably over-interprets the text if one attempts to specify the evil conduct within the immediate context, because the text does not intend to elaborate on the evil conduct. Instead, it focuses on the positive result of the purification; cf. Boda, *Zechariah*, 741.

⁸² Wenzel thoroughly explores how Zechariah establishes an interpretative framework with the introduction and investigates its underlying concern, see Wenzel, *Reading Zechariah*, 45–282; cf. Marvin A. Sweeney, *The Twelve Prophets: Volume Two*, BerO (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2000), 567–573; Boda, *Zechariah*, 56–62; David L. Peterson, *Haggai and Zechariah 1–8: A Commentary*, OTL (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster Press, 1984), 35, Due to the compositional history of Zechariah, some consider Zech 1:1–6 as an introduction for the first half of the book, see Smith, *Micah-Malachi*, 183; Meyers and Meyers, *Zechariah 1–8*, 98; Baldwin, *Zechariah*, 78; Mitchell, “Zechariah,” 108–109.

and turn away from their ancestors' ways in failing to keep the law of God.⁸³ In the pivotal event in God's restoration, therefore, Zechariah highlights that God primarily requests his people to turn away from the negative lifestyle and submit to his law rather than merely condemning the pagan nations.

Consequently, the purification in Zech 13:9 results in the renewal of the covenant between God and his community. The minority group will call the name of God, and God will answer them. Here, the covenantal formula wherein the community calls to God establishes a chiasmic structure (אֱמַרְתִּי ... אֲנִי ... אֱמַרְתִּי ... אֱמַרְתִּי; cf. Lev 26:12; Deut 26:17–18; Jer 7:23; Ezek 36:28; Zech 8:8; Ps 100:3; Isa 51:16; Jer. 29:12; Zeph. 3:9). It also illustrates a restored relationship between God and the one-third. Following the context of Zech 13:1–2, it is an eschatological restoration in which God radically renews the community.

This picture becomes clear in Zechariah 14, the climax of the book. God ultimately accomplishes his radical restoration with nations coming to worship God. There is no more distinction between sacred and secular in the reign of God. Webb proposes that holiness, which is the signature characteristic of Zechariah's eschatological day, pervades all aspects of life.⁸⁴ Thus, Zechariah decisively affirms how the people of God are radically renewed via the purification.

⁸³ Andrew, E. Hill, *Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi: An Introduction and Commentary*, TOTC 28 (Nottingham: Inter-Varsity Press, 2012), 123–127. Cf. Rather than advocating a militant campaign, Foster suggests that Zechariah's prophesy encourages "fortitude and willingness to risk themselves in a variety of ways", which indeed is a life of returning to God, see Robert Foster, *The Theology of the Books of Haggai and Zechariah*, OTT (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020), 194, 197–198.

⁸⁴ Barry Webb, *The Message of Zechariah: Your Kingdom Come*, BST (London: Inter-Varsity Press, 2003), 182.

Ambiguity in Determining the Identity of the Smitten Shepherd

Noticeably, God's striking of the shepherd initiates the purification of the scattered flock. What is contrary to this clear picture is the identity of the smitten shepherd, which remains ambiguous. There are only a few details given about the smitten shepherd in Zech 13:7. While Zechariah omits his patrilineal background (cf. Jer 23:3–5; Ezek 34:23), the immediate context does not hint at identifying the shepherd. However, the present research argues against the view of complete ignorance about the shepherd's identity.⁸⁵ The redactional shaping of Zechariah gives us clues about the potential identity of the smitten shepherd in the final form.

There are several proposals that should be reviewed from past discussions. A predominant view about the smitten shepherd is its connection to the worthless shepherd in Zech 11:15–17. Some commentators consider the smitten shepherd as the figure “my shepherd of worthless” (Zech 11:17). They follow this negative portrayal and identify the smitten shepherd as a corrupt priest.⁸⁶

Nevertheless, this proposal does not gain firm support from the text and its literary context. First, the repetition of the term *רֹעֵי* is the only verbal connection between the

⁸⁵ Petersen suggests that the shepherd is an “identifiable individual”, see David L. Petersen, *Zechariah 9–14 and Malachi: A Commentary*, OTL (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1995), 132.

⁸⁶ In 1840, Ewald proposed that the text of Zech 13:7–9 initially follows Zech 11:15–17 but is now in the wrong place. The transposition significantly influences the scholarship afterwards. For a brief discussion of Ewald's proposal, see Smith, *Micah-Malachi*, 283; others who accept this view, e.g., Hanson, *The Dawn of Apocalyptic*, 337–354; Mason, “The Use of Earlier Biblical Material,” 130; Mitchell, “Zechariah,” 302–320; Redditt follows Ewald's proposal and identifies the smitten shepherd as a corrupt priest, see Paul L. Redditt, “Israel's Shepherds: Hope and Pessimism in Zechariah 9–14,” *CBQ* 51.4 (1989): 631–642. Contrarily, Cook argues against Ewald's proposal, see Stephen L. Cook, “The Metamorphosis of a Shepherd: The Tradition History of Zechariah 11:17 + 13:7–9,” *CBQ* 55.3 (1993): 453–466.

worthless shepherd and the smitten shepherd. There is no other verbal support for the link between them. Second, the literary context does not confirm sufficient support for the thematic coherence between the texts. From the literary context, the worthless shepherd is the one who deserts the flock (Zech 11:16), and God's striking of the shepherd is the direct cause of the flock's scattering (Zech 13:7). Petterson rightly points out that these two pictures are actually incomparable.⁸⁷ Those who justify the thematic coherence have an inappropriate presupposition regarding the text in determining the identity of the smitten shepherd. For example, Mason suggests that the portrayal of the smitten shepherd in Zech 13:7, which appears as positive, functions ironically. However, his argument is explicitly based on his prejudice towards a close connection between Zech 11:15–17 and 13:7.⁸⁸ In fact, Zechariah only gives a tiny amount of information about the worthless shepherd and leaves no comment on the smitten shepherd. In my view, both a close and broad examination of the text can potentially yield insights into this predominant view.

In Zech 11:15–17, both the terms *אָנִי* and *הָאֵלִיל* modify the shepherd and negatively portray him as one who is foolish and worthless, because he does not fulfil his role. The former makes a sharp contrast to wisdom (Prov 10:8). It describes those who are morally corrupt, despise wisdom (Prov 1:7), mock guilt (Prov 14:9) and do not even know God (Jer

⁸⁷ Petterson, *Behold Your King*, 201; Petterson develops another argument against the predominant view. By comparing the potential outcome of punishing the worthless shepherd (Zech 11:17), and striking the shepherd (Zech 13:7), he envisions benefits in the former and negative results in the latter. Based on the difference, Petterson suggests that the worthless shepherd is not identical to the smitten one. However, his argument remains speculative because the text does not comment on the former case. Conversely, the outcome of Zech 13:7–9 could possibly be regarded as a benefit in terms of God's restoration (cf. Zech 1:4). This makes no difference to the outcomes.

⁸⁸ See Mason, "The Use of Earlier Biblical Material," 123.

4:22).⁸⁹ Like the former, the latter character is often associated with deception and lies (e.g., Job 13:4; Jer 14:14), or is comparable with idols in prophetic literature (Isa 2:8; 10:10; 19:1–3; Ezek 30:13; cf. Lev 19:4; 26:1).⁹⁰ Contrarily, the smitten shepherd is the figure described as גִּבֹר עֲמִיתִי. As discussed, this scene paints a positive and obedient picture of the smitten shepherd. There are clear distinctions and contradictions between these portrayals of the two shepherds.

Based on an overall view of the text, there are different shepherd figures in Zechariah 9–14. In Zech 10:2–3, the shepherds fail to fulfil their role, so God will punish them because he cares for the house of Judah.⁹¹ In contrast, Zech 11:1–3 tells of the wailing of the shepherds because of God’s punishment for the nations. Moreover, God appoints Zechariah to occupy the shepherd’s role and fulfil the divine shepherding role (Zech 11:4). Briefly, the shepherd images in Zechariah 9–14 refer to different figures. A close look at the immediate context enables us to distinguish between the portrayals of different shepherd images. The smitten shepherd, who is a man closely associated with God, is best understood as a positive figure rather than the worthless shepherd in Zech 11:17.

Following the sequential order of Zechariah, others suggest the smitten shepherd is the deceitful prophet in Zech 13:2–6.⁹² Seemingly, this reading gains contextual support based on the thematic connection. However, this contradicts the positive portrayal of the

⁸⁹ Chou-wee Pan, “אָוִיל,” *NIDOTTE* 1:303–306.

⁹⁰ Cf. BDB, s.v. “אָלִיל.”

⁹¹ There are different views about the setting of Zech 10:2, whether pre-exilic and exilic or post-exilic, see Boda, *Zechariah*, 601; cf. Mason, “The Use of Earlier Biblical Material,” 64. However, the negative portrayal of the shepherd in the text is clear.

⁹² E.g., Edgar W. Conrad, *Zechariah*, RNBC (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), 188–189.

smitten shepherd in its immediate context. I have argued that the smitten shepherd has an intimate relationship with God. He is a faithful figure rather than a deceitful one. Moreover, the HB never uses the shepherd image to portray a prophet except for Moses.⁹³ Subject to the frequent use of the shepherd image as a reference to the leadership other than the prophetic role, it is not convincing to read the smitten shepherd as the deceitful prophet.

Cyrus, the Persian king, is another suggestion for the smitten shepherd's identity, because Isaiah also portrays him as רֹעֵי (Isa 44:28), the same as the smitten shepherd.⁹⁴ However, Zechariah adopts a different attitude towards Cyrus from Isaiah. Isaiah shows an affinity for Cyrus, the agent of God, to fulfil the Temple's reestablishment. By contrast, Zechariah holds a pessimistic view of the foreign nations (e.g., Zech 10:3; 11:1–3). Again, this contradicts the positive portraits of the smitten shepherd.

Other commentators consider the socio-political situation during the post-exilic period to identify the smitten shepherd. They argue that the priesthood exercises the civil leadership of the post-exilic Jewish community under foreign sovereignty. Thus, the smitten shepherd possibly refers to the priest who establishes leadership over the community.⁹⁵ Seemingly, in the absence of a Jewish king, this identification is sound.

This view, however, oversimplifies the political hierarchy of the community in the post-exilic period. According to Neh 3:7, 5:15 and Mal 1:8, the office of governor exists as a civic leader in the community between Cyrus and Nehemiah. The archaeological evidence

⁹³ Meyers and Meyers, *Zechariah 9–14*, 250.

⁹⁴ See Marvin A. Sweeney, *The Twelve Prophets*, 695–697; the LXX gives a different reading to Isa 44:28. Rather than describing Cyrus as the shepherd of God, the LXX depicts him as wise (Κύρω φρονεῖν; cf. Zech 13:7 LXX).

⁹⁵ Plöger, *Theocracy*, 88; Hanson, *The Dawn of Apocalyptic*, 258, 262.

provides substantial support for this understanding.⁹⁶ Under this political structure, it was the governor rather than the priest who took over the leadership of the post-exilic Jewish community at the beginning. The priesthood was likely to take over the control of the civil office gradually and ultimately performed the hierocratic management over the community, perhaps beginning in the Ptolemaic period.⁹⁷ Notably, the proposal of a priestly figure assumes the corruption of the smitten shepherd. This proposal perhaps aligns with the perception of the worthless shepherd in Zech 11:4–17, especially in and after the Ptolemaic period. Still, the assumption is inappropriate for the smitten shepherd because it contradicts the intimate relationship denoted by the expression *וְעַל-גֹּבֶר עִמִּיתִי*.⁹⁸ Thus, I would conclude that the reading of the smitten shepherd as the priestly leader is not convincing in its literary context.

⁹⁶ The archaeological evidence supports the role of the governor as a civil leader between Cyrus to Nehemiah, see J. Maxwell Miller and John H. Hayes, *A History of Ancient Israel and Judah* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1986), 461–462; Sean E. McEvenue, “The Political Structure in Judah from Cyrus to Nehemiah,” *CBQ* 43.3 (1981): 353–364; see also Joseph Blenkinsopp, “Temple and Society in Achaemenid Judah,” in *Persian Period*, ed. Philip R. Davies, vol. 1 of *Second Temple Studies*, JSOTSup 117 (Sheffield, Sheffield Academic Press, 1991), 22–53.

⁹⁷ John M. Halligan, “Conflicting Ideologies Concerning the Second Temple,” in *Studies in Politics, Class and Material Culture*, ed. Philip R. Davies and John M. Halligan, vol. 3 of *Second Temple Studies*, JSOTSup 340 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002), 108–115.

⁹⁸ Redditt considers the priest the most appropriate one with the title “my associate” in the socio-historical context of the post-exilic period. According to his consideration, the priests are the worthless shepherds in Zech 11:4–17. To facilitate and establish the argument, Redditt reduces the term “my associates” to a relationship without intimacy, but the reduction makes the meaning out of the semantic range, see Paul L. Redditt, *Zechariah 9–14*, IECOT (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 2012), 120–121.

Continuation of the Davidic Promise

From what I observed, the immediate context provides a small amount of information needed to determine the identity of the smitten shepherd. The quest for identity has to rely on the final form of Zechariah. I argue that Zechariah portrays the smitten shepherd as a suffering Davidic figure.⁹⁹ Indeed, the shepherd image as a reference to a faithful Davidic figure is not an alien concept in the rest of the HB. As discussed in the previous section, prophetic literature frequently uses shepherd images to portray a faithful Davidic figure. This figure bears a significant role in God's eschatological restoration.

Petterson's study of the Davidic hope in the final form of Zechariah provides strong support for my argument. He discovers that Zechariah continuously presents the Davidic promise with different figures. First, Zechariah 3 contains a vision regarding Joshua, which signifies the reconstruction of the temple and the reinstatement of the priesthood. With the branch (מִנְחָה in Zech 3:8; cf. 6:12) which God promises to bring, Zechariah conveys a message about the expectation for the coming of the Davidic king. The vision of Zerubbabel taking the throne in Zechariah 4 further heightens this expectation.¹⁰⁰ Second, Zechariah draws on the prophetic tradition (e.g., Jeremiah 23; Ezekiel 43, 47) to depict the future coming of a Davidic king in Chapter 9. This presents an image of the victory of God and his

⁹⁹ Commentators who concur my proposal, e.g., Meyers and Meyers, *Zechariah 9–14*, 386; Sweeney, *The Twelve Prophets*, 695–696; Boda, *Zechariah*, 738.

¹⁰⁰ Petterson, *Behold Your King*, 86, 128.

abundant blessing. Petterson suggests that this Davidic hope is no different from the one in Zechariah 1–8.¹⁰¹

Third, Petterson focuses on the terms “cornerstone” (פִּנְיָה), the “tent peg” (יָתֵד), the “battle bow” (קֶשֶׁת מִלְחָמָה), and “every ruler” (כָּל־יֹגֵדִישׁ) in Zech 10:4–5. By comparing the usage of these terms in the HB, Petterson believes that these terms in Zechariah signify the Davidic context, especially when the passage focuses on the tribes of Joseph and Judah and when it has a close linguistic and thematic connection to Zechariah 9 in terms of God’s restoration of his kingdom.¹⁰² Fourth, Zech 12:10–13:6 pictures God’s punishment for the corrupted leadership and renewal of Judah’s leadership. Petterson examines the pierced one in light of Zechariah’s broad context. He argues that the pierced one is best understood as a Davidic king. This understanding reasonably fit the immediate context and explains different elements in the passage (e.g., the mourning from the house of David and Levi).¹⁰³

Petterson’s exhaustive study of different figures in the final form of Zechariah points to the fact that the expectation of a future Davidic king is a necessary backdrop when reading Zechariah. He states that “it is entirely fitting to identify the shepherd of 13:7 as this king”.¹⁰⁴ I concur with his proposal, particularly since this reading does align with the portrayal of the

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 146–148; cf. Suk Yee Lee, *An Intertextual Analysis of Zechariah 9–10: The Earlier Restoration Expectations of Second Zechariah*, LHBOTS 599 (London: T&T Clark, 2015), 56–117; Eibert Tigchelaar, “Some Observations on the Relationship between Zechariah 9–11 and Jeremiah,” in *Bringing out the Treasure: Inner Biblical Allusion in Zechariah 9–14*, ed. Mark J. Boda, Michael H. Floyd, and Rex Mason, JSOTSup 370 (London: Sheffield Academic Press, 2003), 260–270.

¹⁰² Petterson, *Behold Your King*, 167; see also Lee, *Zechariah 9–10*, 176–179; Meyers and Meyers, *Zechariah 9–14*, 33, 200; Boda, *Zechariah*, 24. It is disputable whether Zech 10:4 is understood in Davidic terms, see Smith, *Micah-Malachi*, 265; cf. Peterson, *Zechariah 9–14*, 74; Sweeney, *The Twelve Prophets*, 671–672.

¹⁰³ Petterson, *Behold Your King*, 244–245.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 211.

smitten shepherd (עֶלְרֵעִי וְעַל־גֹּבֶר עַמִּיתִי) and the use of the shepherd image in other prophetic literature.

Regarding the event of God's striking the shepherd, some commentators hold a view that this strike represents God's indignation designed to end the promise about the eternal establishment of the Davidic kingdom (cf. 2 Sam 7:16).¹⁰⁵ However, there is no comment about the strike within the immediate context of Zechariah. This act does not necessitate a break of God's promise for the Davidic line. This reading gains support from another piece of prophetic literature, Isaiah. In fact, there are numerous contact points between the positive figures in Zechariah 9–14 and the Suffering Servant in Isaiah 40–55.¹⁰⁶ For example, the future king in Zech 9:9–17 is humble, brings blessing to the nations and gathers the scattered flock (cf. Isa 42:1–2, 4, 6; 49:5–6). The king in Zech 12:10 and the shepherd in Zech 13:7 are both rejected by the people (Isa 53:3). They are pierced and struck, respectively (cf. Isa 53:4–5). They both result in God's cleansing (cf. Isa 53:5–6). These similarities point to the fact that God's striking of the shepherd does not necessarily display a negative meaning. When referring to Isaiah, the violent act could function as a means for God's restoration and the

¹⁰⁵ The view in itself is divergent. God's striking the shepherd symbolises either a shift of leadership from the Davidic line to the priesthood, God's taking over of the leadership, or a complete abandonment of Davidic leadership. Regarding the divergent view, see Mitchell, "Zechariah," 186, 318; Peterson, *Zechariah 9–14*, 59, 258–259; Hanson, *The Dawn of Apocalyptic*, 283, 323. For a brief survey about these views, see Petterson, *Behold Your King*, 13–45.

¹⁰⁶ For a detailed analysis, see Lamarche, *Zacharie IX–XIV*, 124–147.

continuation of his promise.¹⁰⁷ Through the suffering of the shepherd, God's purification comes to his people, and he radically restores his people and his kingdom.

It is noteworthy that God declares himself to be the king over all the land (Zech 14:9). This declaration soundly leads to the demise of the Davidic promise.¹⁰⁸ In fact, this declaration in itself does not display this sense. A similar language appears in Psalms and the prophetic literature (Ps 10:16; 93:1; 96:10; 97:1; Isa 24:23; Mic 4:7; Zeph 3:15). Even in Ezekiel 34, God declares himself the shepherd of his people, but at the same time, he appointed a Davidic shepherd to lead his people (Ezek 34:15, 23–24). Although the text of Zechariah, Zechariah 14 in particular, remains silent about the Davidic leadership, the silence could not illustrate a compelling argument for the demise of God's promise. On the contrary, Zechariah follows the prophetic traditions used to develop God's eschatological restoration.¹⁰⁹ These traditions acknowledge the promise that God makes for the Davidic kingdom. The text of Zechariah 9–14 also continuously associates the restoration with the Davidic line. Without obvious and explicit contrast to prophetic literature in terms of the attitude towards the Davidic leadership, it is preferable to suggest that God's promise for the Davidic kingdom continues with the striking of the shepherd.

¹⁰⁷ Cf. Crotty compares various figures (the king, the shepherd and the pierced one) in Zechariah 9–14 with the portrayal of Moses. He concludes that using those figures in Zechariah is “a new activation of the Moses-model”, see Robert B. Crotty, “The Suffering Moses of Deutero-Zechariah,” *Colloq* 14.2 (1982): 43–44, 48. In my view, the main flaw in Crotty's conclusion is that he associates Zechariah with various prophetic and priestly materials. He considers these materials a reinterpretation of the Exodus tradition. In other words, Crotty does not establish any direct connection between Zechariah and Mosaic tradition. At any rate, he demonstrates a possible reading in the HB that the shepherd's suffering can have a positive sense related to God's restoration.

¹⁰⁸ Schaefer, “Zechariah,” 372.

¹⁰⁹ See n.80.

Zech 13:7–9 in Later Writings

In general, Zech 13:7–9 only receives limited attention from the later writings, including the ancient Rabbinic writings, the Dead Sea Scrolls and the NT.¹¹⁰ However, Targum Zechariah gives a clear picture of how the smitten shepherd is understood. Another explicit reference to Zech 13:7, which appears in the Damascus Document (CD B 19:7–9), supposedly provides the Qumran community with an understanding of God’s restoration for the remnant.

Targum Zechariah

Targum Zechariah makes an explicit interpretation of the smitten shepherd, where the shepherd is a king (מַלְכָּא דְּבִבְלָל), a companion of God (שְׂלִטְוִנָּא חֲבֵרִיהּ) in Tg. Zech 13:7.¹¹¹ This king is different from the worthless shepherd in Tg. Zech 11:17. From the outset, Targum Zechariah follows the plot of the MT in its final form. The passage of the smitten king is separate from that of the worthless one (Tg. Zech 11:4–17). On the other hand, the targumic text also translates the worthless shepherd as a ruler (פְּרִנְסָא טַפְשָׂא) rather than a king. The distinct identification of these two shepherd images reflects that the future king is not the

¹¹⁰ One rabbinic writing, *'Avot de Rabbi Nathan*, in the late third century contains a partial reference to Zech 13:7. The reference, however, is appropriated and detached from its original context, see R. T. France, *Jesus and the Old Testament: His Application of Old Testament Passages to himself and his Mission* (London: Tyndale Press, 1971), 192; regarding the dating of *'Avot de Rabbi Nathan*, see Craig A. Evans, *Noncanonical Writings and New Testament Interpretation* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1992), 127.

¹¹¹ Regarding the text of Targum Zechariah, see Kevin J. Cathcart, and R. P. Gordon, *Targum of the Minor Prophets*, vol. 14 of *The Aramaic Bible* (Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, 1989).

worthless shepherd who receives the punishment of God but a positive figure participating in God's restoration.

Furthermore, the targumic account understands the smitten shepherd in Davidic terms.¹¹² While this understanding is not obvious, especially when the relationship between the smitten shepherd and other figures in Zechariah 9–14 is ambiguous and unclear in the MT, Targum Zechariah yields clues to this question with its translation. As noted above, the targumic text translates the smitten shepherd as a king. The reference to מְלִכָּא in Tg. Zech 13:7 removes the ambiguity in the MT and makes the smitten shepherd identical to the humble and righteous king in Tg. Zech 9:9, who arrives to redeem the people of God.

Zech 12:10–13:1 also encourages a reading of the smitten shepherd as a Davidic king. In the MT, the mourning of the pierced one is comparable with the mourning for Hadad-Rimmon in the plain of Megiddo (Zech 12:11). Hadad-Rimmon probably refers to an ancient deity. By contrast, the targumic text reads the mourning for Hadad-Rimmon as the mourning for Ahab, the son of Omri (דָּאָהָב בֶּר עֲמֹרִי) and Josiah, the son of Amon (יֹאשִׁיָּהוּ בֶר אֲמוֹן) in Tg. Zech 12:11. Both are kingly figures from the Davidic line. By analogically paralleling the mourning of the pierced one to two Davidic kings, Targum Zechariah makes the motif of the suffering Davidic king explicit in the literary context.¹¹³ While the smitten shepherd is a

¹¹² Black claims that Tg. Zech 13:7–9 has “no messianic intent” with elaboration, see Black, “The Rejected and Slain Messiah,” 116. Perhaps he is right in the sense that the immediate context does not hint at the messianic intent. However, he omits the identification of the smitten shepherd within the broad context of Targum Zechariah.

¹¹³ Other rabbinic literature accepts the pierced as a Messianic figure. b. Sukkah 52a read the pierced one as messiah ben Joseph. According to the marginal note in Codex Reuchlinianus, a lost Targum Yerushalmi reads the pierced one as a suffering figure referring to the messianic son of Ephraim, see Matthew V. Novenson, *The Grammar of Messianism: An Ancient Jewish Political Idiom and its Users* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2017), 181. Notwithstanding the different identification of the pierced one, both readings consider the pierced one as a suffering Davidic figure (cf. Matt 24:30 and John 19:37).

suffering king in the Targum, reading the king in Davidic terms is convincing according to the overall shaping of Zechariah.

Overall, Targumic interpretation of Zechariah expresses the Jewish community's deep desire for God's radical restoration in terms of the arrival of a Davidic king. According to the literary context of Zechariah, the radical restoration of God delineates the hope of awaiting the suffering king, who brings the people of God away from their plight and towards receiving the blessing of God's restoration.

Damascus Document

CD B 19:7–9 has an explicit reference to Zech 13:7.¹¹⁴ From the Damascus Document, some points are noteworthy. First, the flock in the text refers to the Qumran community. Second, the punishment by the sword comes at the time when the Messiah arrives. Third, the poor flock will be excluded from the punishment. Probably, the poor flock refers to Zech 11:7 (cf. Zech 11:11). Fourth, the key to being free from God's punishment is whole-hearted repentance and obedience to God's covenantal law (cf. CD B 19:4, 13, 16). In other words, the Qumran community is responsible for selecting their destiny, whether God will punish them or not. Fifth, the punishment occurs when God visits the land (CD B 19:6). In this case, God himself initiates the punishment.

¹¹⁴ Two manuscripts of the Damascus Document exist, termed as A and B. The reference to Zech 13:7–9 only appears in CD B, while A has a reference to Isa 7:17 with a lengthy explanation, see Joseph M. Baumgarten and Daniel R. Schwartz, "Damascus Document (CD)," in *Damascus Document, War Scroll, and Related Documents*. ed. James H. Charlesworth et al., vol. 2 of *The Dead Sea Scrolls: Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek Texts with English Translations*, (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1995), 4; regarding the primary text of CD B 19:7–9 and its translation, see Emanuel Tov, "CD."

Nevertheless, the identity of the smitten shepherd in the Damascus Document remains ambiguous. There are two proposals about the shepherd from past discussions: the Qumran community leader, the Teacher of Righteousness¹¹⁵ or the Hellenizing aristocracy¹¹⁶. However, neither of the proposals receives adequate support from the literary context of the Damascus Document. Indeed, the Damascus Document does not attempt to identify the shepherd. In addition, the shepherd image does not appear elsewhere except CD A 13:9. The text plainly describes a priest who teaches the Qumran community the covenantal law of God, like a shepherd who takes care of his flock, but the passage does not have any connection to CD B 19:7–9. According to Kister, various interpretations of the passage do not give an affirmative answer. On the contrary, Zechariah’s prophecy shows a clear division between those who perish and those who are saved.¹¹⁷ In other words, identifying the smitten shepherd in the Damascus Document remains speculative.

The lack of intention to portray the shepherd’s historical identity in the text perhaps clarifies why commentators show little interest in this topic in their recent studies. In his dedicated research of the Damascus Document, Fraade reserves space to discuss the textual difference between the manuscript CD A and CD B rather than seeking a historical figure of the shepherd.¹¹⁸ Waard is potentially right on this issue. “Every attempt to identify the הרעה in

¹¹⁵ Chaim Rabin, *The Zadokite Documents*, 2nd rev. ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1958), 31; Bruce accepts Rabin’s view, see Bruce, “Passion Narrative,” 343.

¹¹⁶ Isaac Rabinowitz, “A Reconsideration of “Damascus” and “390 Years” in the “Damascus” (“Zadokite”) Fragments,” *JBL* 73.1 (1954): 28.

¹¹⁷ Menahem Kister, “The Development of the Early Recensions of the Damascus Document,” *DSD* 14.1 (2007): 68–69.

¹¹⁸ Steven D. Fraade, *The Damascus Document*, OCDSS, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021), 60–61; see also B. Z. Wacholder, *The New Damascus Document: The Midrash on the Eschatological Torah of the Dead Sea Scrolls: Reconstruction, Translation and Commentary*, STDJ 56 (Boston: Brill, 2007), 95.

CD has led to pure speculation".¹¹⁹ It is in vain to search for the shepherd's historical identity, but its portrayal in the literal context is far more than enough to express the view about God's salvation.

At any rate, the reference to Zech 13:7–9, in view of the Qumran community, is meant to convey a message about the community's responsibility to keep away from God's punishment in his eschatological restoration. As the community who considers themselves as the remnant of God, the adoption of Zechariah justifies their lifestyle in awaiting the arrival of the Messiah.

Summary of the Shepherd Image in Zech 13:7–9

The exegetical study of Zechariah 13:7–9 proposes that God initiates his restorative programme to strike the shepherd. Rather than referring to a corrupt Jewish leader under the punishment of God, the smitten shepherd is a positive figure in Zechariah's view. He is a suffering Davidic figure and functions as an agent to facilitate God's restorative plan. With his violent act, God initiates the scattering of the Jewish community. Behind this scattering is his punishment for the corruption of the Jewish community and, more importantly, the purification of those who are weak and exploited. This is shown to be a refinement process used to restore the community of God and renew the covenant with the community in a radical fashion.

According to the overview of Zechariah in later writings, the smitten shepherd in Zech 13:7 receives two extreme interpretations: either a positive figure suffering for God's

¹¹⁹ Jan de Waard, *A Comparative Study of the Old Testament Text in the Dead Sea Scrolls and in the New Testament*, STDJ 4 (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1965), 40.

restoration or a negative figure punished by God. Notwithstanding the equivocal reception of the shepherd image, interpretative diversity in the meaning of the shepherd is encouraged. This factor opens up the possibility of interpreting the smitten shepherd in Mark's narrative, depending on how the narrator uses the image to express his point of view. On the other hand, the various interpretations acknowledge the literary context in which the image is located. The fate of the shepherd facilitates the plan of God's restoration whatever the portrayal of the shepherd.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have offered an exegetical analysis of Ezekiel 34 and Zech 13:7–9. The analysis shows the relationship between the shepherd images and other elements in their literary contexts. Moreover, an observation from the broader context strengthens the study in order to identify the underlying significance of the events using the shepherd images.

The shepherd images in both the text of Ezekiel and Zechariah share the shepherd's tradition in Jewish literature. They are appointed as Davidic agents participating in God's radical eschatological restoration. In the events surrounding the images, God's judgment and punishment in response to the corrupt Jewish community are displayed prior to the restoration.

On the other hand, there are some distinctive elements in those events. First, the shepherd in Ezekiel actively participates in God's restoration to shepherd the renewed community, while the shepherd in Zechariah is a passive agent suffering and struck by God. Second, Ezekiel ascribes the scattering of the flock to the community's corruption, while in the immediate context of Zechariah it is the result of God's striking the shepherd. Third,

Ezekiel describes an abundant supply from God for the renewed community. By contrast, Zechariah pictures a purification used to facilitate God's renewal process. With a close look at the shepherd images, the analysis demonstrates the vital role of the shepherds within their literary context.

Furthermore, both Ezekiel and Zechariah express considerable concern over the purity of the people of God. From their plot development, the events surrounding the shepherd images signify the cleansed life of God's renewed community. In the former text, the community radically lives a life of purity led by the Davidic shepherd, corresponding to the absolute blessing given by God. The latter text identifies the refinement as a crucial step and a test to transform the people of God, so the covenantal relationship between God and his people is radically restored. Both texts affirm the weight of the concern for purity in God's eschatological restoration.

Overall, the study of Ezekiel 34 and Zechariah 13:7-9 revives the shepherd images within their literary context. Accordingly, the connection to the Davidic line is only a tiny piece of the whole image. Both shepherd images have a web of connections to God's eschatological restoration. In light of *metalepsis*, how do these connections give a fresh look at the portrayals of Mark's characters by the shepherd image? I will respond to this question in the following chapter.

Chapter 4. The Distinctive Dimension of Jesus' Identity and His Ministry (1:1–6:6)

Introduction

In the last chapter, I suggested a framework within which to understand the shepherd image in Jewish literature in general, and in Ezekiel 34 and Zech 13.7–9 in particular. I argue that applying an exegetical reading to the events surrounding the appearance of these shepherd images offers new insights into the role of the shepherd image in Mark's narrative (6:34; 14:27). This chapter will follow the plotline of Mark's narrative to examine several stories in Mark 1:1–6:6b. Rather than offering an overview of this early stage of Jesus' ministry, I attentively and selectively follow the plotline. I will explore the way that Mark's narrator establishes each character and creates rhetorical impacts to prepare the readers to receive the first shepherd image. In other words, this chapter will only focus on the passages within Mark 1:1–6:6 which are related to the shepherd image. Stories at other stages of the plotline (between the first and the second image or after the second) will be discussed in the later chapter.

I argue that Mark 1:1–6:6 sets the stage for the readers to receive Mark's Jesus and his ministry in a perplexing manner. The fresh beginning of Jesus' Gospel in the narrative renders this Jesus and his ministry ambiguous and distinctive in the narrative world. Various responses to Jesus (amazement from the crowd, challenge and hostility from the religious leaders, and the misunderstanding from the disciples) in the subsequent events further heighten the quality of distinctiveness.

Meanwhile, Mark's narrator introduces unpredictability through his sequential ordering of the events. In my view, this rhetorical effect keeps the readers in suspense during

the development of the story and stimulates them to recognise the distinctiveness of Jesus' ministry, compared with their pre-understanding. The purpose with which the narrator displays this distinctiveness in his story is intended to destabilise the readers' perception of Jesus and his work.

Remarkably, the narrator does not explicitly use the shepherd image at the early stage of his narrative. Indeed, he is preparing his readers to receive his understanding of Jesus the Davidic shepherd by using a broad literal level of imagery, which is discussed in the previous chapter.¹ This chapter, starting from Mark 1:1 and moving along the plotline, aims to illustrate the way that the narrator uses the plotline to establish the characters and create rhetorical impacts on the readers. He strategically guides the readers to anticipate the ministry of Jesus in the absence of the term shepherd and sheep. When the readers reach the feeding story with the first shepherd image (6:30–44), they will recall what they received from the narrator and realise the metaleptic interaction between the feeding story and Ezekiel 34.² In this regard, they will be enlightened and acknowledge Jesus and his work in terms of Mark's understanding of the shepherd image.

¹ Following Golding (Golding, "Shepherd Image," 57–58.), I argue that the shepherd imagery includes two literal levels: the direct use of the term shepherd and sheep and the indirect description of the shepherd-related activities such as gathering and feeding. See the section "An Overview of the Shepherd Image in Jewish Literature" in Chapter 3.

² The narrator designs the sequence of the events to lead the readers to have anticipation and retrospection of Jesus and his ministry. Therefore, the analysis according to the direction of the plotline is significant, revealing how the narrator persuades the readers to acknowledge Jesus' shepherding ministry, especially when the readers in this thesis are first-time readers. Regarding the significance of the event sequence in a narrative, see the section "The Analysis of the Plotline and its Cumulative Effect" in Chapter 2.

Beginning the Story of Mark's Jesus (1:1–13)

The passage of Mark 1:1–13 forms the prologue for the whole narrative.³ This section introduces Jesus as the protagonist of the narrative and gives a basic but adequate definition to understand his identity and ministry. As Hooker rightly points out, those who consider the prologue a historically reminiscent account of the events will miss the profound Christological significance in the plotting.⁴ The prologue serves as a sketch for the rest of the story, directs the readers to understand the identity of Jesus and his ministry, creates anticipation of how Jesus would develop his work, and stimulates the readers to justify Jesus' Gospel in Mark's narrative.

The Setting of the Whole Story (1:1)

“The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God” (1:1) is a straightforward introductory statement. One of the remarkable characteristics of this statement is the absence of a verb, which makes the interpretation of Ἀρχὴ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου difficult. Nonetheless, the modifiers of Χριστοῦ and υἱοῦ θεοῦ, which follows the name Ἰησοῦ, unambiguously shapes the portrayal of Jesus. Another expression, τοῦ εὐαγγελίου, gives the basic definition of Jesus' ministry. Together with the head noun ἀρχή, they provide a controlling parameter for the readers to understand Jesus and his ministry in the story.

³ There are three proposals for the prologue of Mark's narrative. Some commentators end the prologue at verse 8, which excludes the baptism and forty-day test of Jesus, e.g., Ezra P. Gould, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to St. Mark*, ICC (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1896), 1. Others expand to include Jesus' proclamation (1:14–15), e.g., Guelich, *Mark*, 4; Collins, *Mark*, 133–135. The present research accepts Mark 1:1–13 as the prologue of the whole narrative and this will be further discussed in the later section, see also Lane, *Mark*, 39; Cole, *Mark*, 110; Stein, *Mark*, 38; Strauss, *Mark*, 48.

⁴ Hooker, *Mark*, 31–32.

The Elements in the Introductory Statement

The two modifiers, Χριστός and υιοῦ θεοῦ, have their roots in Jewish and Hellenistic cultures. Χριστός in its genitive form frequently appears in the NT epistles (e.g., Rom 1:1; 1 Cor 1:1–4; Gal 1:1, 3; Heb 10:10; 13:8, 21; James 1:1; 2:1; 1 Pet 1:1–3; 1 John 1:3; 2:1) and functions as a honorific title for Jesus.⁵ The term highlights Jesus’ Davidic messianic role in fulfilling the eschatological promise of God and bringing forth redemption for his people.⁶ Along with the development of the messianic expectation in Jewish culture, the term is applied in various contexts, from a religious and spiritual transformation from the priestly office (e.g., 1QS 9:10–11; CD 14:18–19) to a militant and political restoration from the kingship (e.g. Pss. Sol. 17:21, 32; 18:5, 7).⁷

⁵ In the NT epistles, Jesus has been explicitly referred to as Χριστός in over a hundred occurrences, not to mention the implicit references, with acknowledgement from other Jewish literature outside the HB (e.g., *Claud.* 25.4; Josephus, *A.J.* 18.63; 20.200). Botner firmly states that “Jesus of Nazareth cannot be properly apprehended apart from the honorific Χριστος”, see Max Botner, *Jesus Christ as the Son of David in the Gospel of Mark*, SNTSMS 174 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), 75; cf. Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God*, 486–489. Some commentators believe that Χριστός is the personal name of Jesus, e.g., Stein, *Mark*, 41. Novenson argues against it and suggests that Χριστός is not “an onomastic innovation. Rather, it fits a known onomastic category from antiquity, namely the honorific”, see Matthew V. Novenson, *Christ among the Messiahs: Christ Language in Paul and Messiah Language in Ancient Judaism*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2012), 64–97.

⁶ Hesse, “χρίω, χριστός, αντίχριστος, χρῖσμα, χριστιανός,” *TDNT* 4:496–509; van der Woude, “χρίω, χριστός, αντίχριστος, χρῖσμα, χριστιανός,” *TDNT* 4:509–527.

⁷ For a detailed discussion, see Novenson, *The Grammar of Messianism*, 72–77.

Another modifier, “the Son of God”, describes the relationship between Jesus and God.⁸ As a reference to the HB, this expression modifies a wide range of characters, from a divine being (e.g., Gen 6:2, 4) to a man (Wis 2:18); from an appointed king (e.g., 2 Sam 7:14) to the people of God (e.g., Jer 3:19). It is also placed in a messianic context to modify the Shoot of David described in 2 Samuel 7 (4Q246). On the other hand, the expression functions as a royal title, *divi filius* (son of god), for some Roman Emperors (e.g., Augustus, Octavian) to denote their divine nature.⁹

By comparison, Mark’s introductory statement appears strikingly different from the other two Synoptic Gospels. The narrator omits Jesus’ family background entirely and his birth story in the first place (cf. Matt 1:1–2:23; Luke 1:26–2:25; 3:23–38). The omission would minimise the human agency in God’s salvific plan and draws a boundary of understanding around Jesus’ identity, not primarily concerning his family but relating to God and his promise.

Technically, the narrator links his identification to Jesus’ ministry by framing his work as εὐαγγέλιον.¹⁰ With the literal meaning of the good news from a messenger, Jewish literature uses this link in a militant context (e.g., 1 Sam 3:19; 2 Sam 4:10) or in relation to God’s eschatological restoration with God’s sovereignty and victory over the nations being highlighted (Ps 39:10; 67:12; Isa 41:27; 52:7 LXX). Similarly, Paul applies it to portray

⁸ Stein considers this expression a title revealing Jesus’ “unique and unparalleled” relationship with God, see Stein, *Mark*, 41. However, Mark’s narrator expresses this relationship in different ways (e.g., ὁ υἱός μου ὁ ἀγαπητός in 1:11; ὁ υἱός τοῦ εὐλογητοῦ in 14:61). Thus, rather than being a title, this expression is more likely to be a depiction, which denotes the unique relationship between Jesus and God.

⁹ Tae Hun Kim, “The Anarthrous υἱός θεοῦ in Mark 15,39 and the Roman Imperial Cult,” *Biblica* 79.2 (1998): 225–238.

¹⁰ Ἰησοῦ functions as a plenary genitive to modify τοῦ εὐαγγελίου, see France, *Mark*, 53.

God's salvation through the incarnation, death, and resurrection of Jesus.¹¹ On the other hand, εὐαγγέλιον has its significance in the Greco-Roman world, particularly the imperial cult. It was used to portray Augustus as a god, the saviour and the most significant benefactor who brings good news (εὐαγγελίων) to the world and hope for all humankind. The narrator possibly compares Mark 1:1 with the Roman imperial cult, and demonstrates the distinctiveness of Jesus in terms of his understanding.¹²

As discussed, Jesus is the appointed agent, one who has a special relationship with God, and who is designated to fulfil the salvific promise. The narrator initially uses an anarthrous term ἀρχή to declare the decisive beginning moment before Jesus sets out on his journey for the good news.¹³ He selectively reports several events at this moment, including the ministry of John the Baptist (1:4–8), the baptism of Jesus (1:9–11), and his forty-day test

¹¹ “εὐαγγέλιον εὐαγγελίζω εὐαγγελιστῆς προεραγγελίζομαι,” *NIDNTTE* 2:307–311.

¹² Craig A. Evans, “Mark’s Incipit and the Priene Calendar Inscription: From Jewish Gospel to Greco-Roman Gospel,” *JGRChJ* 1 (2000): 69–70. Watts argues against that the concept of εὐαγγέλιον is primarily influenced by Hellenistic culture, see Rikki E. Watts, *Isaiah’s New Exodus and Mark*, WUNT II 88 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1997), 99, 119. His argument is sound because εὐαγγέλιον has its root in Jewish tradition concerning God’s eschatological restoration, especially when Mark’s narrative links its headline to Isaiah’s prophecy. On the other hand, one cannot deny the influence of the Greco-Roman world on the understanding of εὐαγγέλιον when it is closely associated with the Roman imperial cult. Rather than leading to misunderstanding, the acknowledgement of both Jewish and Greco-Roman culture maximises the potential rhetorical effect of εὐαγγέλιον in Mark’s narrative on the readers.

¹³ There is no article to modify ἀρχή, but the genitive construction implies its definiteness, see GGBB, 250–252. Edwards believes that Mark alludes to Genesis to use ἀρχή to begin the story, see James R. Edwards, *The Gospel According to Mark*, PNTC (Grand Rapids: MI: Eerdmans, 2002), 23–24. However, Mark uses ἀρχή to denote the beginning of the Gospel instead of the world (cf. John 1:1). There is no substantial evidence to support Edwards’s proposal from the literary context of Mark.

in the wilderness (1:12–13) for his own sake.¹⁴ Later in this chapter, I will discuss how these events serve the narrator to illustrate the significance of Jesus' identity and his ministry, and to create rhetorical effects on the readers.

Functioning as a Setting

Mann makes a notable comment for Mark 1:1 that “as a summary of the intent of Mark’s work it could not be bettered”.¹⁵ Perhaps he exaggerates in his comment, but he points out that the introductory statement sets a stage for the narrative in that it is a story about the Gospel of Jesus rather than that of other characters.¹⁶ The reliable narrator uses his authentic voice to issue a bold proclamation that Jesus is Χριστός and “the Son of God”, rather than the son of David and the son of Abraham in Matt 1:1 or the Word (ὁ λόγος) in

¹⁴ Commentators who concur with my proposal, e.g., Guelich, *Mark*, 8; Lane, *Mark*, 42; Strauss have considered the moment as Mark 1:1–8 (Strauss, *Mark*, 59; cf. Robert H. Gundry, *Mark: A Commentary on His Apology for the Cross* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1993), 31; Hooker, *Mark*, 33). However, he excludes Mark 1:9–13 without any explanation. Indeed, the events in that passage have a close connection to the ministry of John the Baptist in 1:1–8. On the other hand, Collins expands the “beginning” as a reference to the whole narrative (Collins, *Mark*, 130; see also Jack Dean Kingsbury, *The Christology of Mark’s Gospel* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1989), 56). However, her proposal reduces εὐαγγέλιον to a theological idea encapsulating the incarnation, crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus. By contrast, the readers receive Jesus’ Gospel in a narrative form. This gives them the expectancy to read ἀρχή as a signal for the beginning moment of the Gospel’s story. Perhaps, Collins’ reading is close to the Pauline interpretation of the “good news” (e.g., 1 Cor 15:8); cf. Cameron Evan Ferguson, *A New Perspective on the Use of Paul in the Gospel of Mark*, RSECW (Abingdon, OX: Routledge, 2021), 15–18.

¹⁵ C. S. Mann, *Mark: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB 27 (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1986), 194; see also Cole, *Mark*, 103. However, Mann does not elaborate on his comment.

¹⁶ From the perspective of genre criticism, Bond suggests that Jesus is the protagonist of Mark’s Gospel. This reading aligns with Rhoads et al., see Bond, *The First Biography of Jesus*, 103; cf., Rhoads, Dewey and Michie, *Mark as Story*, 104.

John 1:1.¹⁷ The proclamation further narrows down the scope of Jesus' ministry and gives a particular direction to the readers to help understand Jesus and his ministry from the point of view of the narrator. Although the readers do not fully grasp the significance of Jesus' ministry in Mark's narrative at this stage, the portrayals of Jesus in Mark 1:1 are not entirely new to them. As discussed, both are closely associated with the socio-cultural world of the narrative. This close association formulates the readers' pre-understanding, enabling them to anticipate what Jesus would perform in the narrative before entering the story. However, how is the pre-understanding comparable to the actual performance of Jesus in the narrative? This question remains in the mind of the readers, and they will figure out the answer in the characters' cumulative interaction along the plotline.

There is a broad recognition from the commentators that Mark 1:1 gives a summary of Jesus' identity through Mark's narrative. However, I argue that perceiving this verse as a headline does not fully reflect the functionality of this verse.¹⁸ This concept potentially reads Mark 1:1 as an opening line outside the narrative world and detaches it from the plotline.

By comparing the material with the ancient inscriptions, Lane reads this verse as the superscription of 1:2–13. Thus, it displays “the general plan of Jesus' (his) work” and expresses the primary concern of Mark's Gospel, which is to “delineate the historical content of the primitive Christian message of salvation”.¹⁹ Seemingly, his inference is reasonable

¹⁷ John Paul Heil, *The Gospel of Mark as A Model for Action: A Reader-Response Commentary* (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1992), 28.

¹⁸ Although Mark 1:1 is similar to the heading of prophetic literature in the LXX, this verse is not directly paralleled to any of these headings, see France, *Mark*, 51. Moreover, the present research assumes that εὐαγγέλιον in 1:1 does not refer to the genre of Mark's Gospel, see the section “Methodology” in Chapter 2. Therefore, I suggest it is unlikely that the readers receive Mark 1:1 as the title of the whole narrative.

¹⁹ Lane, *Mark*, 42, 44–45.

because the ancient inscriptions aimed to narrate the life journey of a historical figure. In fact, the narration is a literary reconstruction. As Bond has commented, “literary figures overtake their historical counterparts”.²⁰ Various literary works would have their own interest in highlighting certain characteristics of a historical figure. In the same way, Mark’s narrative has its own construction of the image of Jesus. In particular, the two modifiers in Mark 1:1 reappear in Jesus’ interaction with other characters in the rest of the narrative. The repetition establishes an intimate connection between the headline and the plotline. Considering Mark 1:1 as a headline outside the narrative would be unconvincing.

While reading Mark 1:1 as a headline, Collins observes its thematic links with the rest of the narrative.²¹ Although the thematic link gives the readers a conceptual framework for the way the story of Mark’s Jesus will be expressed, it does not entirely resolve the detachment issue. Again, Collins’s proposal reduces Mark 1:1 to a descriptive account that merely informs the readers about Jesus’ identity. The reduction underplays its literary function in the unified narrative and subsequently dismisses the rhetorical effect from the opening of the story.

Tannehill claims that it is necessary to treat every statement and event as part of a unified narrative to understand the presentation of Jesus Christ in Mark’s narrative.²² Mark 1:1 is indeed part of the narrative and an intended design to begin the story of Mark’s Jesus. In other words, this opening line provides a literary contribution for the readers to understand Mark’s Jesus in narrative terms, whereas Focant terms it an element in the plotline.²³ This

²⁰ Bond, *The First Biography of Jesus*, 205–207.

²¹ Collins, *Mark*, 134.

²² Tannehill, “Mark as Narrative Christology,” 60.

²³ Focant, *Mark*, 28; cf. Stein, *Mark*, 39; Strauss, *Mark*, 59.

suggests that Mark 1:1 is no longer a headline outside the narrative but participates in characterising the narrative. Its expression serves the narrator in order to produce a rhetorical effect on the readers and guide them to move along with the plotline.

While Mark 1:1 functions as a setting for the whole narrative, this setting significantly contributes to the narrative in two aspects: contextual construction and establishment of temporality. This verse prepares a literary context for the readers to explore Jesus' interaction with other characters. It permits the readers to acknowledge Jesus' performance, which will be marvelled at, challenged and misunderstood from the other characters in the rest of the narrative. I will analyse the characters' interaction in the later section, but here the potential forthcoming rhetorical effect caused by this narrative setting is the focus.

Basically, the setting in a narrative refers to the context within which the events take place. Apart from physical (geographical, topographical, or architectural), temporal or spatial, the setting could also be social-cultural.²⁴ For example, when Jesus teaches in Capernaum (1:21–28), the narrator consistently describes the spirit as unclean. On the one hand, this is an element in characterising the spirit and displays its nature in the story. This characterisation permits the readers to distinguish this spirit from others in the narrative (e.g., the holy spirit in 1:8). On the other hand, that modifier defines the spirit as impure. This modification outlines a background of religious purity against the conflict between Jesus and the spirit. Similarly, in Mark 1:1, the narrator depicts Jesus as Χριστός and “the Son of God”. Apart from their characterising function, these two portrayals evidently create a specific religious background for Jesus' performance in the rest of the narrative.

With this specific context, the readers receive a set of values from the narrator to understand the actions of Mark's Jesus. According to Schmid, context generally is a system of

²⁴ Resseguie, *Narrative Criticism*, 87–88.

general social norms and values (“das System der sozialen Normen und Werte”) within the narrative world. This set of norms is not simply a system identical to that in the real world. Instead, it is an intended design with varying degrees of relevance between the narrative world and the real one. Differentiating the relevance and discrepancy would create anticipation and unpredictability in the mind of the readers, which could reinforce or surprise them with the norms within the narrative world.²⁵ Hence, with Mark 1:1 as the setting of the whole narrative, the identification of Jesus as Χριστός and “the Son of God”, and his work as Gospel, gives the readers a set of established norms with which to anticipate Jesus’ actions in the narrative. The readers could also compare their anticipation with the actual performance of Mark’s Jesus. According to Mark’s narration, the comparison potentially creates rhetorical effects on the readers to persuade them to accept Jesus and his ministry in view of the narrator.

Another aspect is the establishment of the notion of temporality in the narrative. The semantic meaning of ἀρχή actually refers to the point of time for an events to begin. What it highlights is the temporal quality regarding the event rather than the event itself.²⁶ Given this

²⁵ Schmid, *der Narratologie*, 14–23; cf. Chatman, *Story and Discourse*, 138–141; Powell argues that “settings are never presented as espousing a particular point of view”. He reckons that this creates a clear distinction between character and setting, see Powell, *Narrative Criticism*, 69. However, Powell considers the characters Herod (6:14–29) and Pilate (15:1–5) as elements of the political setting. More importantly, the choice of setting is part of the design of a narrative used to reflect how the narrative values the event. For example, Jesus’ calling of the disciples occurs in the sea of Galilee (1:16–21). While Galilee has its historical significance in Jewish tradition, Galilee is prominent in relation to the continuation of Jesus’ ministry (14:28; 16:7), see M. Eugene Boring, *Mark: A Commentary*, NTL (Louisville, KY: Presbyterian Publishing Corporation, 2006), 58; cf. Mark A. Chancey, *Greco-Roman Culture and the Galilee of Jesus*, SNTSMS 134 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 1–23. In contrast, Luke locates Jesus’ calling in the lake of Gennesaret (Luke 5:1–11) and omits Jesus’ saying about his regathering in Galilee. Perhaps Luke intends to downplay the relationship between Galilee and Jewish tradition.

²⁶ BDAG, s.v. “ἀρχή”; see also Stein, *Mark*, 40.

understanding, I propose that the narrator does not primarily announce the events that bring forth the story of Jesus. Instead, he declares a decisive moment that separates the temporality of Jesus' Gospel from those in the past, in terms of his understanding. This implies potential distinction(s) with discontinuity between the good news from Jesus Christ and the others, without denying the possible similarity and continuity between them.²⁷ Unlike the consideration of ἀρχή as a reference to the beginning events, the temporal understanding creates a noticeable rhetorical effect on the readers. It keeps them in suspense during all the events in the rest of the narrative, and for comparing Jesus' performance with their pre-understanding. In other words, the signal of a new beginning keeps the distinctiveness of Mark's Jesus and his ministry in the readers' minds. This causes them to remain keen in searching for how Jesus and his ministry are distinct from their pre-understanding.

Elaborating on the Setting (1:2–3)

After presenting the setting of Mark's narrative, the narrator immediately attaches Isaiah's prophecy to the setting for elaboration. The prophecy defines the role of Jesus in his ministry and the nature of his Gospel in light of the ancient promise of the God of Israel. I argue that the prophecy functions as a double entendre intended to introduce contradictory ideas into interpreting Jesus' identity and his ministry. It reinforces Jesus' identity as an appointed agent designed to bring forth God's salvation for his people. By contrast, it

²⁷ Identifying Jesus' Gospel in Mark's narrative as entirely distinct from all others perhaps underplays that the conception of the messiah exists in a spectrum within the historical context. As with the case that Novenson comments on concerning the Jewish messiah–Christian messiah distinction, a putative contrast “inscribes a convenient notional boundary where there is otherwise uncomfortable contested territory”, see Novenson, *The Grammar of Messianism*, 216.

obscures Jesus' identity by implicitly identifying him as God, the Lord of Israel. At the same time, the judgement of God closely shadows Jesus' ministry in spreading the good news.

Establishing a Bridge to the HB

Through this quotation, Mark's narrator announces his intention of establishing a connection between the whole narrative and the HB. Gundry realises that the narrator situates the prophecy in a position that precedes the narrative. This construction enables the narrator to demonstrate the predetermined plan of the God of Israel on Jesus.²⁸ Similarly, Bayers comments that the use of the quotation reflects the narrator's view of God's salvation through the biblical arc of promise in the HB and fulfilment in the NT ("den großen biblischen Bogen von Verheißung (AT) und Erfüllung (NT)"). He clarifies how Jesus works with the God of Israel in his ministry.²⁹

More significantly, the narrator explicitly gives a verbatim reference to Isaiah, which modifies the introductory statement (1:1) of the whole narrative. When the narrator recounts the stories of Jesus, he frequently refers to the HB allusively according to his narration strategy. However, his use of Isaiah's prophecy appears in a totally different style, a verbatim quotation, with an explicit formula bringing out the prophecy and connecting it to the setting of the whole narrative, the forthcoming Gospel of Jesus Christ. Although Mark's Jesus quotes the text of the HB (7:6; 9:12–13; 10:5; 11:17; 12:19; 14:21, 27) in his sayings, the prophecy is the only quotation that the narrator adopts explicitly in his comment.

By contrast, Matthew's narrative often uses quotation formula to introduce the text of the HB and supplies explanations for Mark's allusions, but Hays comments that "Matthew

²⁸ Gundry, *Mark*, 34–35.

²⁹ Bayer, *Markus*, 128.

shows little of Mark's restraint in pressing bold narrative claims about Jesus and linking them explicitly to numerous Old Testament texts".³⁰ Matthew's narrator begins his narrative with the genealogy of Jesus, beginning with Abraham (Matt 1:1–17). This retrospection enables Matthew's narrator to establish a link between his Jesus and the Israelite ancestors recorded in the HB. Regarding this link, Konradt rightly points out that the story of Matthew's Jesus is situated in the biblical narrative world ("die biblische Erzählwelt hinein").³¹ In my view, this comment suggests that the connection is established between the content of Matthew and that of the HB.

Similarly, I argue that Luke's narrator establishes connections with the HB at the story level. For example, when the narrator recounts the birth stories of Jesus, he embeds the pattern of the annunciation to Zechariah in terms of the story's features and wording. Tannehill proposes that the narrator recalls "past sacred occasions when God disclosed an important birth". The motif in the birth story is "joy at the fulfilment of Old Testament prophecies of salvation".³² Carroll and Cox make a stronger claim that the narrator "from the outset immerses readers in the world of biblical Israel".

By examining the narrative strategy of Mark's narrator and comparing it with that of Matthew and Luke, there is a noticeable difference. The former uses a verbatim report with an explicit quotation formula to develop a relationship between the narrative and the prophetic literature of the HB; the latter establishes Jesus' continuation of the salvation story

³⁰ Hays, *Echoes in the Gospels*, 105.

³¹ Matthias Konradt, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus*, NTD, 2nd ed. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2023), 25.

³² Robert C. Tannehill, *The Gospel According to Luke*, vol. 1 of *The Narrative Unity of Luke-Acts: A Literary Interpretation* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1986), 15–16; John T. Carroll and Jennifer K. Cox, *Luke: A Commentary*, NTL (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2012), 23.

of the God of Israel from the HB. Given the construction of the relationship with other pieces of literature of the HB, I argue that Mark's narrator does not merely borrow the content of Isaiah's prophecy to characterise Jesus and his ministry. Instead, he enables the readers to realise the engagement of a distinct text of the HB in his narrative. This prepares the readers to receive the shepherd images in a metaleptic way.

The Prophetic Voice from the Narrator

The narrator strategically uses καθώς to make his introductory statement comparable with Isaiah's prophecy (1:2–3). The eschatological salvific events of God within the prophecy now serve as a clarification of Jesus' ministry.³³ It draws the readers away from the imagination of Jesus' identity in the narrative into the prophecy from the HB. More significantly, it signals to the readers about the prominence of the prophecy in elaborating on Jesus' ministry in the narrative.

Explicitly, Isaiah's prophecy becomes an authentic source to delineate Jesus' Gospel in the narrative.³⁴ In his narration, Mark's narrator uses a direct quotation with a citation formula to express Isaiah's prophecy. He borrows the voice of Isaiah to characterise the forthcoming ministry of Jesus. As a legitimate source from the HB, therefore, the Isaiah

³³ BDAG, s.v. “καθώς.” Indeed, there is linguistic ambiguity about whether καθώς describes the preceding headline. Hatina re-examined the use of καθώς γέγραπται in the NT and the LXX. She concludes that καθώς γέγραπται and Isaiah's prophecy are best understood as the elaboration on the preceding sentence, see Thomas R. Hatina, *In Search of a Context: The Function of Scripture in Mark's Narrative*, JSNTSup 232 (London: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002), 140–142.

³⁴ Hans F. Bayer, *Das Evangelium des Markus*, Historisch-Theologische Auslegung, 4th ed. (Gießen: Brunnen, 2023), 136.

prophecy supports the narrator and allows him to justify his claim in Mark 1:1.³⁵ Meanwhile, as a reliable narrator who tells Jesus' story, he turns this prophecy into his authentic voice in the narrative to illustrate Jesus' Gospel. In other words, instead of other texts in Jewish literature or those from the Greco-Roman world, Isaiah's prophecy functions as a reliable source, providing the narrator with additional information to frame Jesus' Gospel, which is the fundamental setting of the whole narrative..

A Composite Voice in the Prophecy

Indeed, Isaiah's prophecy in Mark 1:2–3 provides Jesus' ministry with a unique literary context. It is a composite citation, a literary creation combined with Mal 3:1 and Isa 40:3.³⁶ The texts of Malachi and Isaiah and their original literary contexts are conflated to form a new theological background.³⁷ By referring to this composite citation, the narrator sets Jesus' ministry neither in the positive context of Isaiah, nor in the negative situation in Malachi, but creates a combination of them. The new special background reflects how Jesus' Gospel is distinct according to the narrator.

³⁵ J. Ross Wagner, "The Prophets in the New Testament," in *The Oxford Handbook of the Prophets*, ed. Carolyn J. Sharp (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), 373–374.

³⁶ Technically, the composite conflates Mal 3:1 and Exod 23:20 LXX (1:2) and attaches Isa 40:3 (1:3). The inclusion of the text from Exodus situates the work of the messenger in Mal 3:1 in a wilderness context, and so it aligns with the Isa 40:3. Hooker believes that the use of Exodus-Malachi highlights the role of John the Baptist and ensures the readers' understanding of the primary purpose of his ministry: to point forward to the one who follows him (Jesus), see Morna D. Hooker, "Isaiah in Mark's Gospel," in *Isaiah in the New Testament*, ed. Steve Moyise and M. J. J. Menken, NTSI (London: T&T Clark, 2005), 37.

³⁷ Cf. Sean A. Adams and Seth M. Ehorn. "What is a Composite Citation? An Introduction," in *Composite Citations in Antiquity: Volume One: Jewish, Graeco-Roman, and Early Christian Uses*, ed. Sean A. Adams and Seth M. Ehorn, LNTS 525. London: T&T Clark, 2016), 4, 11. By contrast, Hatina claims that there is no parallel for conflating intertextual references in early Christian writings in her understanding, see Hatina, *In Search of a Context*, 144.

Rhoads et al. read this beginning of Mark's narrative as the arrival of the rule of God. He "takes action to bring the "creation that God created" to fulfilment".³⁸ By considering God's subsequent actions on Jesus in Mark 1:4–13, Rhoads et al. demonstrate the way that God initiates this fulfilment. Nonetheless, this reading fails to fully engage with the narrator's construction of the conflated intertextual references. Interestingly, Isaiah 40 and Malachi 3 offer two different contexts. To a certain extent, the events in these two contexts contradict each other. In Isaiah 40, God initiates and declares his comfort (נְחַמוּ נְחַמוּ עַמִּי in Isa 40:1) for his people, subject to his decision that the people have received enough punishment for their iniquity (Isa 40:2).³⁹ More significantly, the comforting message contains a salvific hope for the people. The preparatory work of the way of the Lord in Isa 40:3 is used to describe the coming of God's sovereignty and his restoration. Here, Isaiah regards the message as good news for the people of God in a military picture (Isa 40:9).⁴⁰ In his coming, God will shepherd his people with justice (Isa 40:10–11). In contrast, the messenger in Malachi comes to prepare the way of the Lord for a different purpose. In Mal 2:17, the people of God cause their Lord weariness with their words, so the prophet Malachi accuses them. These people are totally corrupt because they do, with pleasure, what God prohibits.⁴¹ This implies that they entirely deny the truth and justice of God. Because of their corruption, God comes to his people for judgement (Mal 3:5).

³⁸ Rhoads, Dewey and Michie, *Mark as Story*, 78.

³⁹ J. Alec Motyer, *The Prophecy of Isaiah: An Introduction & Commentary* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1993), 299.

⁴⁰ John N. Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah: Chapters 40–66*, NICOT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 55.

⁴¹ The rhetorical question that the people ask for the justice of God indicates their denial of truth and lack of piety, see Pieter A. Verhoef, *The Books of Haggai and Malachi*, NICOT (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1987), 285–286.

Notwithstanding the theme of preparation, the preparatory acts in Malachi 3 and Isaiah 40 have different causes and purposes. Commentators tend to reduce the events in these two prophetic messages to a basic theme that portrays the work of John the Baptist.⁴² As briefly discussed, the preparatory acts in Malachi and Isaiah are vivid events in their literary context. In light of *metalepsis*, each event interacts with the narrative, and different characteristics of the event (e.g., the cause and purpose) would then enhance the readers' understanding of the narrative.

If both the literary contexts of Malachi and Isaiah are significant, how does the narrator combine them in a composite form? It is worth noting that a composite citation does not always join all the literary contexts together in equal weight.⁴³ The key to understanding the combination lies in the expression of the citation. Watts suggests that there is a literary sandwich pattern in the composite citation, with Mal 3:1 in Mark 1:2b as the centre, framed by the citation formula (1:2a) and Isa 40:3 in Mark 1:3. In this structure, Isaiah provides a larger framework, possibly with a "special stress on the threat element" from Malachi.⁴⁴ By

⁴² E.g., Stein, *Mark*, 42–43. Although Hays reinstates the significance of judgment offered by Mal 3:1, he reduces God's act of judgement in Malachi to a theme of judgement that merely emerges in Mark's narrative.

⁴³ Kee suggests the use of intertextual references in Mark's narrative as a synthesis, see C. Howard Kee, "The Function of Scriptural Quotations and Allusions in Mark 11–16," in *Jesus and Paulus: Festschrift für W. G. Kümmel zum 70. Geburtstag*, ed. E. E. Ellis and E. Grässer (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1975), 176. However, this does not specifically reflect the characteristic of composite citation.

⁴⁴ Watts proposes that "twin themes of the fulfilment of the delayed INE promise and possible judgement" emerges from the composite citation, see Watts, *Mark*, 89–90, 370. However, his proposal becomes elusive because of his reference to Edwards's analysis of Mark's sandwich structure. From Edwards, the centre element is significant in a sandwich, rather than the frame, see James R. Edwards, "Markan Sandwiches: The Significance of Interpolations in Markan Narratives," *NovT* 31.3 (1989): 196, 216. If it applies to Mark 1:2–3, judgement from Malachi would be more prominent than the comfort from Isaiah. Thus, it contradicts Watts's proposal. Moreover, Edwards only examines the events in the narrative instead of the intertextual references. This undermines Watts's proposal.

ascribing the citation to Isaiah, Mark's narrator artfully guides the readers to understand that the salvific hope from God is the primary motif of Jesus' Gospel in the narrative.

Nonetheless, the prophecy of Malachi does not lose its voice in the narrative.⁴⁵ On the contrary, the judgment of God shadows the salvific hope. The shadowing is designed to remind the readers about the justice of God and the corruption of his people.

Preparing the Way of the Lord

There is one to prepare the way of the Lord. The repetition of the theme with different verbs (*κατασκευάζω* and *έτοιμάζω*) collectively makes it explicit and central in the prophecy.⁴⁶ Rather than directly giving an answer to the readers about who the one is, the narrator immediately attaches the ministry of John the Baptist in the wilderness after the prophecy. This attachment establishes a strong relevance between John the Baptist and the prophecy, which guides the readers to receive John the Baptist as the messenger who prepares the way of the Lord (cf. Matt 3:1–4; Luke 3:2–4).⁴⁷

The primary ministry of John the Baptist is the baptism of repentance (*βάπτισμα μετανοίας*). This idea draws the people from all the countries of Judea and Jerusalem coming

⁴⁵ See also Hays, *Echoes in the Gospels*, 21.

⁴⁶ Steve Moyise, "Composite Citations in the Gospel of Mark," in *Composite Citations in Antiquity: Volume Two: New Testament Uses*, ed. Sean A. Adams and Seth M. Ehorn, LNTS 593 (London: T&T Clark, 2018), 19.

⁴⁷ Schmid, *der Narratologie*, 15–19; see also Lane, *Mark*, 46–47; Marcus includes Jesus' disciples in the answer while Tolbert suggests Jesus as the messenger, see Marcus, *The Way of the Lord*, 43; Tolbert suggests Jesus as the messenger in Mark 1:2–3, see Mary Ann Tolbert, *Sowing the Gospel: Mark's World in Literary-Historical Perspective* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1989), 240–247. However, neither of their proposals makes good sense in the plotline. According to the event sequence, the repeated messages in Isaiah's prophecy are best understood as a single reference to John the Baptist.

to him (1:4–5). According to the plotline, his baptism of repentance (1:4) is best understood as the preparatory act for the way of the Lord. Rather than embellishing the meaning of μετάνοια, the narrator simply connects the baptism to sin forgiveness (εἰς ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν) without other descriptions. These two expressions are aligned in the sense that they both refer to the turning to God.⁴⁸ It makes good sense to accept this reading in Mark, especially when the narrator does not give further information at this point. Hence, what John the Baptist prepares for is the turning to God.

With John the Baptist as the messenger, Jesus is likely to be the Lord.⁴⁹ The narrator skilfully arranges a transition from John the Baptist (1:4–8) to both John the Baptist and Jesus (1:9–11), and then to Jesus alone (1:12–13), with John the Baptist fading out (1:14). The transition along the plotline guides the readers to perceive Jesus as the Lord in 1:2–3.

Nonetheless, the identification of the Lord is indeed ambiguous. The underlying question here is whether Jesus is portrayed as God in Mark’s narrative. The narrator seems to identify Jesus as God. Evidently, the Lord in the literary contexts of Mal 3:1 and Isa 40:3 refers to the God of Israel and “the way of the Lord” as the coming of God.⁵⁰ In contrast, the narrator separates Jesus from God. The identification of Jesus as Χριστός and “the Son of God” (1:1, 11) maintains the separation. Moreover, the narrator replaces the modifier “τοῦ

⁴⁸ Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God*, 246–258. Cf. Hatina interprets repentance in an ethical sense by referring to Mark 10:15 and 12:29–31 (Hatina, *In Search of a Context*, 167, 172). Unfortunately, her supporting evidence is relatively weak compared with teachings from Jesus in Mark’s narrative. While the narrator only has a brief description, it would be good to understand the baptism through its primary meaning.

⁴⁹ The NT epistles frequently describes Jesus as the Lord (e.g., Rom. 1:7; 1 Cor 1:3; Gal 1:3; Eph 1:2; James 1:1; 1 Pet 1:3; 2 Pet 1:2).

⁵⁰ Κύριος is a common term to refer to God in Jewish literature, Hellenistic culture and Greco-Roman world, see Foerster, “κύριος, κυρία, κυριακός, κυριότης, κυριεύω, κατακυριεύω,” *TDNT* 3:1046–1085; see also Oswalt, *Isaiah 40–66*, 52; Verhoef, *Malachi*, 287.

θεοῦ ἡμῶν” with “αὐτοῦ” (1:3; cf. Isa 40:3 LXX). The replacement suggests the differentiation between Mark’s Jesus and God in Isaiah and Malachi.⁵¹

Marcus considers the ambiguity resolvable and suggests that “where Jesus acts, there the Lord is also powerfully at work”.⁵² However, Marcus’s proposal appears to be a confessional statement without strong contextual support from Mark’s narrative. The narrator remains silent on reporting the work of God (e.g., 14:32–42; cf. Luke 22:42). Instead of pursuing a resolution, I propose that the ambiguity of Jesus’ identity functions as a rhetorical device. The use of Isaiah’s prophecy with modification permits the narrator to obscure Jesus’ identity, including whether he is God or an appointed agent. This question would remain with the readers and stimulate them to hunt for clues from the story.⁵³

More importantly, from the unambiguous portrayals (1:1) to contradictory identification (1:2–3), the narrator increases the unpredictability of understanding Jesus and his ministry. This enhances the distinctiveness of the story of Jesus’ Gospel in Mark’s narrative. Against the background of God’s salvific hope, with a shadow of his judgement, the story’s distinctiveness continuously arouses the readers’ interest and encourages them to compare Jesus’ identity and his ministry with their anticipation and pre-understanding.

⁵¹ See also Krister Stendahl, *The School of St. Matthew, and Its Use of the Old Testament*, 2nd ed. (Lund: Gleerup, 1968), 48; see also Hooker, *Mark*, 34–35.

⁵² Marcus, *The Way of the Lord*, 38–40; contra Hugh Anderson, “The Old Testament in Mark’s Gospel,” in *The Use of the Old Testament in the New and Other Essays: Studies in Honor of William Franklin Stinespring*, ed. James M. Efird (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1972), 283.

⁵³ Hays, *Echoes in the Gospels*, 64; Johnson rightly points out that “the narrative never allows these two character figures to collapse into the other. There is more to God in Mark than God in Jesus”, see Philip Reuben Johnson, “God in Mark: The Narrative Function of God as a Character in the Gospel of Mark” (PhD diss., Luther Seminary, 2000), 412. However, one cannot deny the fact that the narrator also leaves the readers with ambiguity when he refers to Isaiah’s prophecy.

Enhancing the Distinctiveness of Jesus

The narrator attaches several events after Isaiah's prophecy. These events continuously highlight the distinctiveness of Jesus and his ministry. Subsequently, the narration reinforces this perception in the readers. They also create anticipation in the readers about how the other characters potentially respond to Jesus' ministry. Overall, the work of Jesus is not always as good as what the "good news" literally means within the narrative.

After narrating the ministry of John the Baptist, the narrator attaches the saying from John the Baptist (1:7–8). This saying forms a bridge to connect the events about the ministry of John the Baptist to Jesus' baptism. In this bridge, John the Baptist announces that there is one coming after him. The phrase *ὀπίσω μου* vividly pictures the sequence of John the Baptist and Jesus appearing in the narrative. This echoes the idea in Mark 1:2 that the messenger comes before the Lord (*πρὸ προσώπου σου*) and enables the readers to receive Jesus as the one for whom John the Baptist prepares.

According to John the Baptist, the forthcoming has a superior status with stronger authority.⁵⁴ During the next event, when he first introduces Jesus (1:9–11), the plot development stimulates the readers to link Jesus to the forthcoming one.⁵⁵ According to the narration, Jesus comes up from the water, the sky opens, and the Spirit descends on him. These three actions, together with the use of *εὐθὺς* in Mark 1:10, dramatically shift the

⁵⁴ Hooker, *Mark*, 37–38.

⁵⁵ The portrayal of John the Baptist in 1:6 possibly compares him with the prophet Elijah, see Guelich, *Mark 1–8:26*, 21. It might perhaps echo the coming of Elijah in God's eschatological restoration (Mal 4:5). In this case, Mark's Jesus is portrayed as one superior to Elijah.

readers' attention from the baptism itself to what happens after the baptism. With the empowerment of the Spirit and a voice from the sky declaring Jesus as his beloved son, the narrator guides the readers to perceive Jesus as a character radically superior to John the Baptist. This difference does not merely lie in their roles in God's sovereignty, but also in their status and authority.

After Jesus' baptism, the narrator introduces the forty-day test in the wilderness (1:12–13).⁵⁶ The Spirit expels (ἐκβάλλει) Jesus to the wilderness for the purpose of testing him. The idea of expelling, which underlines God's sovereignty, provides the event with an important background.⁵⁷ In this event, rather than presenting the triumph of Jesus, the narrator intends to let the readers know about Jesus' struggle and confrontation with the opposition under God's sovereignty.⁵⁸ More significantly, the narrator does not end the story at this point. Notwithstanding the presence of the beast, the service of the angels, which gives weight to God's protection, serves as the resolution to the story. Overall, there is a danger and threat behind the testing, but the narrator expects the readers to focus on God's protection. Although this event happens before the beginning of Jesus' ministry, the confrontation of

⁵⁶ Some commentators compare Jesus' forty-day test with Israel's forty years in the wilderness (Num 14:34), Moses on Sinai for forty days and nights (Exod 24:18) or Elijah's wandering through the wilderness to Mount Horeb (1 Kgs 19:8), see France, *Mark*, 85; Strauss, *Mark*, 74. Notwithstanding these possibilities, the brief report in Mark's narrative (cf. Matt 4:1–16; Luke 4:1–13) leads the readers to focus on the presence of beasts and the service of the angels.

⁵⁷ Cf. ἀνήχθη in Matt 4:1 and ἤγειρο in Luke 4:1.

⁵⁸ Lane, *Mark*, 60–61; other commentators read the presence of the beasts positively as a companionship without harm or the apocalyptic restoration of Paradise, or negatively as a demonic force, e.g., Gundry, *Mark*, 59; Richard Bauckham, "Jesus and the Wild Animals (1:13): A Christological Image for an Ecological Age," in *Jesus of Nazareth: Lord and Christ —Essays on the Historical Jesus and New Testament Christology*, ed. Joel B. Green and Max Turner (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1994), 19–21. However, the narrator remains silent about Jesus' victory and the work of Satan (cf. Matt 4:1–11; Luke 4:1–13). Instead, both God's protection and the threat arrive at the scene.

Jesus leads the readers to imagine God's protection and the potential challenges in his ministry. The reader will also focus on the source of these challenges, and ponder whether they are from the corrupt people of God, such as the prophecy describes.⁵⁹

It is noteworthy that John the Baptist successfully gathers the people in his ministry (1:5). While the narrator establishes Jesus as a figure more powerful than John the Baptist, the readers are likely to anticipate a more profound transformative effect from Jesus' ministry. As a whole, the readers foresee distinctiveness in Jesus' identity and his ministry. In the next section, I will argue that there are various responses to him from different characters in the rest of the story.

Developing the Distinctiveness of Jesus' Ministry (1:14–3:12)

Throughout the plotline in Mark 1:14–3:12, the narrator continues to develop the perception of how Jesus and his ministry display distinctiveness. He reveals this quality by narrating various responses to Jesus in his interaction with the other characters. In general, the narrator categorises the response into two extreme poles: positive (marvel and gathering) and negative (challenge and destroying).

This reading gains substantial support from Rhoads et al. They suggest that the disciples demonstrate their faith in Jesus while the religious leaders express an unrelieved opposition by examining Mark's plot development.⁶⁰ On the other hand, Rhoads et al. only present a brief overview of Mark's plotline. Another character, the crowd, is also not taken into account. Their interaction with Jesus is important because their intense interest in Jesus

⁵⁹ Cf. Heil, *Mark*, 38.

⁶⁰ Rhoads, Dewey and Michie, *Mark as Story*, 84, 90–91.

conveys an impression that they are likened to the disciples. In the later section, I will argue that the narrator uses this characterisation as a counterpart of the disciples to stimulate the readers to reflect on the nature of the true insider. Moreover, Rhoads et al. superficially explore the rhetorical effects the narrator introduces to the readers with these stories, and conclude that the readers are led to accept the narrator's point of view about Jesus with these stories.⁶¹ Without denying the definition of the ideal readers of Rhoads et al., who acknowledge the general purpose of Mark's narrative, I argue that the readers would first recognise the distinction of Jesus' ministry according to the narrator's presentation. Subsequently, this understanding would surprise the readers and lead them to rethink and acknowledge the nature of Jesus' ministry.

Positive Pole

According to the narrator, several named characters and the crowd produce positive responses to Jesus. In Mark 1:16–20, Jesus calls Simon, Andrew, James and John to follow him. The narrator establishes their work, net casting in Mark 1:16 and net mending in Mark 1:19, as the background against Jesus' calling. By introducing this setting to the readers, the decision made by these four characters becomes a striking contrast to their life situation. First, the four characters immediately respond to Jesus' calling without hesitation. The narrator uses εὐθὺς to describe how they hasten to follow Jesus.⁶² Second, they leave their families and abandon all their tools (1:18, 20). Focant considers their response as an act

⁶¹ Ibid., 138–140.

⁶² Rodney J. Decker, *Mark 1–8: A Handbook on the Greek Text*, BHGNT (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2014), 13.

without intelligence.⁶³ Indeed, along the plotline, Jesus does not demonstrate his power or publicly announce his identity. There is no clue for the readers to assume that the four characters know Jesus or have experienced his power before.⁶⁴ While the readers have had knowledge about Jesus' unique identity from the narrator recently (cf. 1:1, 7–8, 11), the four characters' immediate response to Jesus astonishes the readers regarding the effect of Jesus' calling.

Another item regarding the sense of amazement from this event is Jesus' gathering as the first action in his ministry. Boring observes that, after presenting the superior status of Jesus with empowerment by the Spirit in the prologue, the narrator does not continue to establish this image. Rather, he narrates Jesus' calling of the four fishermen. This appears to be a reversal of the readers' expectation.⁶⁵ Compare this with Luke 4–5, where Luke's narrator immediately describes Jesus as one with the power of Spirit and designated role (Luke 4:14, 18–19).

Unlike the plotline of Luke, Mark's narrator here is more likely to focus on the nature of Jesus' ministry than his identity. In particular, the narrator only identifies the four characters as disciples when Jesus' conflict with the religious leaders begins (2:15), several scenes afterwards. Rather than highlighting the process of establishing the twelve disciples (cf. 3:14), this event probably underlines the gathering nature of Jesus' ministry. In contrast to

⁶³ Focant, *Mark*, 58.

⁶⁴ The scene in John 1:35–42 indicates that Simon and Andrew meet Jesus before they are called. In this way, it makes sense for them to follow Jesus. On the contrary, this information does not appear in Mark's narrative. The gap creates a sense of abruptness in their response to Jesus.

⁶⁵ Boring, *Mark*, 58.

Jesus' individual identification, the positive response from those four characters inspires the readers to explore why his ministry would have such a gathering effect.

Mark's plot development continuously arouses the readers' curiosity with the response from the crowd in the subsequent events. In Mark 1:21–28, the narrator compares Jesus and the scribes and establishes Jesus' authority as the background of the story. With this background, the event reaches the climax at the encounter with the unclean spirit. Before Jesus exorcises the spirit, however, the narrator lets the readers listen to what the spirit says in the rising action. In this regard, I propose that the narrator guides the readers to observe how supreme the authority of Jesus, the Holy One of God (ὁ ἅγιος τοῦ θεοῦ), would be, enough that the unclean spirit submits to him. This explains why Jesus' ministry has the power to draw people close to him (1:28). With the connection to another healing event (1:29–34), the readers realise the superior power of Jesus in teaching, healing, and exorcising. His ministry produces a dramatic effect and brings the whole city (ὅλη ἡ πόλις) to Jesus, while the spirits know him (cf. 1:5).

So far, the stories at the early stage of Jesus' ministry create a positive response to Jesus. Nonetheless, the narrator introduces Jesus' unpredictable response to the acclaim. In Mark 1:35–39, Jesus himself goes to the wilderness to pray. The narrator does not elucidate whether Jesus intentionally avoids the crowd in order to have personal time with God. Edwards reported that the current event in the wilderness is opposite to the crowding around Jesus in the last event.⁶⁶ Under this opposition, the narrator discloses important information through Simon and the other characters, that all the crowd is looking for Jesus (1:37). They

⁶⁶ Edwards, *Mark*, 66.

vividly remind the readers about the popularity of Jesus.⁶⁷ Paradoxically, Jesus' response creates an unpredictable turn that ends this story. Without any clarification from the narrator, Jesus emphasises his preaching mission, where he goes to other places in Galilee to continue his ministry (1:38–39).

Why does Jesus make such a response? Jesus' turn to preaching may imply that Jesus is not primarily concerned with the fame of his ministry. Conceivably, he aims to announce the kingdom of God (cf. 1:14–15).⁶⁸ However, the narrator remains elusive regarding this question. Instead, he explicitly recounts Jesus' leaving as the resolution to the crowd's seeking. This narration significantly reflects an odd situation: the crowd is seeking Jesus and Jesus is leaving for his ministry. Jesus' decision here is decisive because it does not merely bring the event to an end (1:39), but it also brings the readers out of their expectations. This is especially true when Jesus has a unique role in God's salvation, gradually earns high public esteem, and calls for followers at the beginning of his ministry.⁶⁹ The whole picture remarkably shows Jesus' persistence in leaving. As a result, the scene introduces a sense of unpredictability to the readers, stimulating them to rethink what Jesus' ministry is according to the narrator's understanding.

⁶⁷ The use of πάντες to describe the crowd seeking Jesus perhaps is a hyperbole used to demonstrate his popularity, see Stein, *Mark*, 101.

⁶⁸ Strauss, *Mark*, 106; Boring suggests that “preaching has priority over miracles” because “the Markan church is commissioned to continue preaching, whether or not it experiences miracles”, see Boring, *Mark*, 59–60. However, he only thematically compares the calling of disciples with the calling for preaching in the NT epistles. As a result, he does not gain substantial support from Mark's narrative, especially when Mark's narrator reports several miraculous acts in Jesus' ministry.

⁶⁹ According to Schmid, the performance of the characters in the previous stories will give the readers' anticipation of how they will act in the later stories, see Schmid, *der Narratologie*, 17–18.

Negative Pole

From Mark 2:1 onwards, a voice of challenge appears in Mark's narrative.⁷⁰ At this stage, the voice is from the opponents: the religious leaders, including the Pharisees, scribes, Sadducees, the Herodians, the chief priest, and the elders.⁷¹ There are two reasons for the voice of challenge. First, Jesus occupies the role of God to declare forgiveness for sin (2:7). He is accused of blasphemy. Second, Jesus' act in his ministry violates the Mosaic Law and/or the tradition of the religious leaders, including the purity law (2:16), fasting (2:18), and work on the Sabbath (2:24).⁷² Jesus' performance demonstrates the distinction between his work and that of the religious leaders. Gradually, the challenging voice becomes a disturbance to Jesus' ministry and subsequently foreshadows the fate of Jesus. Indeed, the readers do not feel surprised by the challenging voice. As early as the forty-day test in the wilderness (1:12–13), the narrator has established the potential threat and danger to Jesus' life. This provides the readers with an expectation that the opponents will accuse Jesus further along in the narrative.

Jesus responds to the challenges every time with his teaching. His response (2:10, 17, 19–22, 25–28; 3:4) gradually discloses more information to the readers. This information

⁷⁰ What event triggers the appearance of the challenging voice? The narrator does not explain, but the event in Mark 1:45, where the healed leper widely spreads the news, perhaps catches the religious leaders' attention, see France, *Mark*, 121. Mark 2:1–3:6 is widely accepted as a cycle of controversies, see Lane, *Mark*, 91; Kingsbury, *Conflict in Mark*, 70.

⁷¹ Although Mark's narrator distinguishes the religious leaders, almost all of them share a similar response to Jesus in that they consistently reject Jesus and the sovereignty of God. In the present research, I concur with Rhoads et al. that they could be put them in one group, see Rhoads, Dewey and Michie, *Mark as Story*, 117–118; cf. Kingsbury, *Conflict in Mark*, 64.

⁷² Kingsbury, *Conflict in Mark*, 65.

indicates how Jesus and his ministry are distinct from what the religious leaders consider. The narrative continues to guide the readers to realise the distinctiveness of Jesus' ministry. Again, the narrator destabilises Jesus' identity. For example, in Mark 2:1–12, Jesus forgives the sin of the paralytic, but in the view of the scribes, only God can do so. His declaration of the possession of the authority to forgive sin introduces ambiguity into Jesus' identity.⁷³ This would provoke the readers to recall the question about Jesus' identity that they have faced in Mark 1:2–3.

In Mark 3:1–6, the narrator finally reports the reaction of the religious leaders to Jesus' responses. In this event, the appearance of the man with a withered hand (ἐξηραμμένην ἔχων τὴν χεῖρα) vividly draws the readers' attention. What is behind this man is the act of the religious leaders. They are watching for the chance to accuse Jesus (3:2). Their act is not totally unpredictable as they have posed challenges to Jesus, especially when, in their viewpoints, he violates the Mosaic Law and tradition. Within this setting, the event presumably focuses on the controversy about the healing of the man with the withered hand on the Sabbath rather than the healing itself.

According to the previous stories, Jesus will speak and heal that man, but there are some special features in this story. First, the religious leaders only accuse in their minds, but the narrator makes the accusation explicit in the text (cf. 2:6–7). The narrator does not explain whether Jesus knows of their conspiracy, but he establishes the scene where the man comes in front of the readers by Jesus' request (ἔγειρε εἰς τὸ μέσον in 3:3). Still, none of the religious leaders give a response (οἱ δὲ ἐσιώπων) to Jesus' rhetorical question (3:4). They

⁷³ Snow follows Marcus and suggests that Jesus, as the Son of Man, possesses the divine authority, with the Spirit of God working through him, see Snow, *Daniel's Son of Man in Mark*, 79–80. However, the narrator remains silent about the work of the Spirit in Jesus' ministry up to that point (cf. 1:12). See also the section "Preparing the Way of the Lord" in this chapter.

possibly face a dilemma. To concur with Jesus' attempt to do good and save a life is to undermine their view of the Sabbath as an identity marker and their accusation against Jesus. But disagreeing with Jesus would denote their rejection of saving lives, which is contrary to the divine will.⁷⁴ However, the narrator gives another answer by revealing Jesus' emotion and his mind. In fact, the narrator seldom describes Jesus' emotional performance (cf. 1:41, 43). In this particular passage, Jesus is angry, and more significantly, he is grieved at the leaders' hardness of heart. This characterisation of Jesus is entirely in contrast to the religious leaders, who remain silent. Hooker rightly observes that they are insensible to the divine will.⁷⁵

Supposedly, the event ends at this point, following the previous pattern. However, the narrator attaches his comment about the conspiracy (3:6). The attachment foreshadows the consequence of the controversy behind the religious leaders' hardness: to destroy Jesus. France emphasises that it would be too early to suggest that the religious leaders have developed a strategic plan to put Jesus to death. Only later in Mark's narrative, do the leaders plot to kill Jesus (14:1–2, 10–11).⁷⁶ At any rate, the conspiracy leads the readers to foresee the danger that Jesus faces in his ministry, but one thing that the readers would not omit here is the characterisation of the religious leaders. Their hardness of heart leads them to reject Jesus in a radical way.

Noticeably, the narrator has revealed the identity of Jesus to the readers at the beginning of the narrative. The rejection of Jesus, therefore, reflects their refusal of the will

⁷⁴ France, *Mark*, 150; Focant, *Mark*, 121.

⁷⁵ Hooker, *Mark*, 107.

⁷⁶ France, *Mark*, 152; contra Stein, *Mark*, 157. From the narrative foreground, what is clear is that the religious leaders entirely reject Jesus; see also Sug-Ho Lee, "An Exegetical-Theological Consideration of the Hardening of the Jewish Religious Leaders' Hearts in Mark 3:1–6," *VE* 27.2 (2006): 596–613.

of God. In other words, those religious leaders are likely to be incorrigible characters who act against the sovereignty of God. Ironically, the Herodians and Pharisees come together for their conspiracy. From a historical perspective, these two parties had entirely different interests and were even in conflict with each other.⁷⁷ In the view of the narrator, the irony vividly reflects how persistent they are about killing Jesus. The sense of persistence sharpens their incorrigibility.

Insiders and Outsiders (3:13–4:34)

After the narrator has established a clear opposing situation in front of the readers, he begins to change this situation by introducing a sense of unpredictability into the story. Following the plotline, the readers would expect that the disciples are eligible to be insiders of the community, but Jesus' parabolic teaching in Mark 4:1–34 does not fully support this understanding. Instead, his teaching presents a paradox intended to destabilise the readers' perception of Jesus' ministry, and this leaves the readers puzzled about the disciples' eligibility.

What do the Insiders Look Like? (3:13–35)

After narrating the conspiracy of the religious leaders, the narrator reports Jesus' reconstitution into the community of God. There are three characteristics in the narrator's expression of reconstitution: (1) Jesus has a complete control in his appointment (οὐς ἤθελεν

⁷⁷ Étienne Nodet, "Pharisees, Sadducees, Essenes, Herodians," in *Handbook for the Study of the Historical Jesus*, ed. Tom Holmén and Stanley E. Porter (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 2.3:1521.

αὐτός); (2) Jesus establishes the inner circle while on the mountain; and (3) the circle is named as “Twelve”. These characteristics potentially provoke the readers to consider the formation as a reconstitution of the remnant of Israel. Jesus intends to establish the eschatological messianic community.⁷⁸

The readers do not feel surprised by the act of Jesus’ appointment, because Isaiah’s prophecy in Mark 1:2–3 has foreshadowed the restoration of Israel in Jesus’ ministry. They would have expected to see the formation of God’s community happen at some point in Mark’s narrative. However, the list of “Twelve” is noticeable (3:17–19). The narrator focuses on the act of naming and labelling the disciples, signifying their various characteristics of the disciples.⁷⁹ The diverse portrayals of the disciples perhaps increase the dynamic of the community in joining Jesus’ ministry.

Meanwhile, the narrator situates Jesus’ ministry amidst growing tension. Among the pressing crowd, those who are close to Jesus attempt to seize him and consider him as having lost his mind (ὄτι ἐξέστη).⁸⁰ Moreover, the scribes from Jerusalem accuse Jesus of using demonic power in his ministry (3:22). Jesus’ teaching outlines a dualistic situation, either in the realm of the Spirit or that of the demon. While he is in the realm of the Spirit with the

⁷⁸ C. H. Turner, “Marcan Usage: Notes, Critical and Exegetical on the Second Gospel Introductory Words,” in *The Language and Style of the Gospel of Mark: An Edition of C.H. Turner’s Notes on Marcan Usage together with Other Comparable Studies*, NovTSup 71 (Leiden: Brill, 1993), 82–89.

⁷⁹ Gundry, *Mark*, 166; Collins, *Mark*, 218–224.

⁸⁰ The commentators widely accept that οἱ παρ’ αὐτοῦ refers to Jesus’ family, see France, *Mark*, 165, but Best proposes that this expression is best understood as adherents, see Ernest Best, *Disciples and Discipleship: Studies in the Gospel According to Mark* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1986), 52. Best’s proposal is convincing from the plot development, especially when the narrator explicitly mentions Jesus’ family without any negative portrayals in 3:31.

capability of overthrowing the demonic power, those scribes are those who are in the demonic realm and act against God without a middle ground.⁸¹

In contrast, the insiders are those who are obedient to God (3:35). Kinship, which was a decisive structure used to identify a person within a community in the ancient world, now becomes a marginalised element within Jesus' community.⁸² The subordination of family in the allegiance to God is probably deeply rooted in the Jewish faith intended to reflect religious piety.⁸³ Hence, Jesus' redefinition demonstrates the radical nature of his work, which is in the realm of the Spirit.

Surprisingly, the narrator does not explicitly identify who are the eligible members of this community. Although those who sit around Jesus are specifically the insiders (3:34), this is an elusive expression (cf. Matt 12:49), perhaps including the crowd, the disciples and the Twelve in the event.⁸⁴ With the expected betrayal from Judas (3:19) and the counter-voice from the adherents (3:21), the readers would probably remain uncertain about who the insiders are in the narrative at this stage.

⁸¹ The repeated use of δύνάμει in this parable (3:23–24, 26–27) expresses what is possible in the conflict. The climax of this parabolic story (3:27) portrays Jesus as the one with a stronger power in a violent picture; Myers firmly states that “Jesus has turned the tables completely upon his opponents”. Those who are aligned with these opponents are also against God, see Ched Myers, *Binding the Strong Man: A Political Reading of Mark's Story of Jesus* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1988), 167.

⁸² Bruce J. Malina, *The New Testament World: Insights from Cultural Anthropology* (London: SCM Press, 1983), 54–60. Best reminds us that Jesus does not literally restructure a new family for himself. Rather, the image of kinship accentuates the prominence of obedience to God, see Best, *Disciples and Discipleship*, 62.

⁸³ Stephen C. Barton, *Discipleship and Family Ties in Mark and Matthew*, SNTSMS 80 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 54–56.

⁸⁴ Jesus' family members participate in this event and are outside the house, so France considers them outsiders, see France, *Mark*, 164. France rightly observes that Jesus' family is outside his ministry, but this only suggests that the narrator shows no interest in Jesus' family. He remains evasive about whether or not Jesus' family are outsiders.

Recipients of the Secret of God's Kingdom (4:1–34)

While the narrator does not explicitly identify which characters in the story are the eligible insiders, the succeeding story, Jesus' teaching in parables (4:1–34), would destabilise the readers' perception that the disciples are the eligible insiders. Using the background of a large crowd gathering and sitting around Jesus, the narrator leads the readers to listen to Jesus' teaching.

Unlike the previous teaching events (1:21; 2:13; 3:23), the narrator makes an interesting comment to highlight the parabolic form that Jesus uses to teach (4:2). Similar to its counterpart *לְפָנָי* in the HB, the term parable (*παραβολή*) has a wide semantic range, referring to comparison, parable, proverb, maxim, or riddle. Nonetheless, these understandings point to the fact that a parable invites its receivers to get involved in indirect teaching and to gain new insight.⁸⁵ Moreover, the narrator also uses *ἀκούω* in the imperative form (4:3, 9), in the parable of the sower, to reinforce the need for the readers to pay close attention to Jesus' teaching, especially when the first imperative is in the second person.⁸⁶ Therefore, the narrator's comment could be regarded as a call for the readers to seek to understand what Jesus teaches and acknowledge why he teaches in parables.

What is the significance of using the parabolic form? The narrator offers this answer to the readers by revealing Jesus' teaching to the disciples (and the Twelve) in a private

⁸⁵ Robert H. Stein, "The Genre of the Parables," in *The Challenge of Jesus' Parables*, ed. Richard N. Longenecker, MMNTS (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2000), 39–49. In another way, France suggests reading *ἐν παραβολαῖς* as "enigmatically", see France, *Mark*, 188. France's reading fits the narrative context, especially when the readers realise that the disciples fail to comprehend Jesus' teaching.

⁸⁶ Prince, *Narratology*, 16–20.

sphere (4:10). The disciples could not grasp the meaning of the parable (cf. 4:13).⁸⁷ Rather than responding to them directly, Jesus refers to Isa 6:9–10 to delineate the purpose of using parables. As Beavis suggests, this description functions as “the glue that holds the parables ... together”.⁸⁸ Hence, it is the key for both the disciples and the readers to understand the significance of using parabolic teaching at this moment.

The Secret Given to the Insiders (4:11)

Jesus’ saying in Mark 4:11 describes what the insiders and outsiders receive. There is a clear comparison that while God has given the disciples the secret about his kingdom, what the outsiders receive is in parables.⁸⁹ Recalling the previous event (3:31–35), the readers have received the foundation of the community of God: the people of God must have obedience to his will, but the readers find it difficult to determine which characters in Mark’s narrative are the insiders. Understanding the secret would provide a clue to the way to distinguish the insiders from the outsiders.

However, the narrator does not elaborate on what exactly the secret is. From the Jewish apocalyptic, the secret (μυστήριον) could be understood as something which is hidden before but is now made known.⁹⁰ Through this understanding, some commentators propose

⁸⁷ Lane suggests that the disciples may also ask Jesus why parables are used, see Lane, *Mark*, 156. At any rate, the disciples’ incomprehension of the parable is obvious in this story.

⁸⁸ Mary Ann Beavis, *Mark’s Audience: The Literary and Social Setting of Mark 4.11–12*, JSNTSup 33 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1989), 154.

⁸⁹ Decker, *Mark 1–8*, 96.

⁹⁰ Bornkamm, “μυστήριον, μύεω,” *TDNT* 4:815.

that the secret in Mark's narrative would be Jesus' inauguration of the kingdom of God rather than the parables' explanation, because the secret has been given (δέδοται).⁹¹ On the one hand, the secret is unlikely to refer to the explanation of the parable. This is because the use of δίδωμι in the perfect tense denotes that the disciples have received the secret before Jesus gives the explanation according to the plot development.

On the other hand, this proposal improperly assumes that the secret refers to ready-made knowledge that the insiders have firmly grasped. It ignores two noticeable features in the narrator's expression. The first one is the verb-noun collocation. The narrator simply uses δίδωμι to portray the act of reception. This collocation is different from the one using οἶδα in 1 Cor 13:2 or γνωρίζω in Eph 1:9. Comparatively, both Matt 13:11 and Luke 8:10 use γινώσκω in the infinitive form to clarify δίδωμι. This comparison suggests that the narrator's use of δίδωμι implies that the disciples do not have a complete understanding of the content of the secret. Van Iersel suggests that the key difference between the insiders and outsiders is that with the secret given, the insiders come to the realisation that something significant will happen involving the coming of the kingdom of God through Jesus' ministry, but they do not precisely know what it is. The outsiders would not have this awareness.⁹² In other words, the insiders would probably know the role of Jesus in fulfilling God's salvific promise, and realise that they do not fully understand what exactly he will do to accomplish it.

The second feature is the comparison between the reception of the insiders and the outsiders. Through Jesus' saying, the secret regarding the kingdom of God becomes comparable to "everything in parables" (ἐν παραβολαῖς τὰ πάντα). The narrator establishes a

⁹¹ E.g., Collins, *Mark*, 249.

⁹² Van Iersel describes Mark's collocation of δίδωμι and μυστήριον as "a strange combination", see Bas M. F. van Iersel, *Mark: A Reader-Response Commentary*, JSNTSup 164 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998), 181–182.

contrast between the secret for the insiders and “everything in parables” for the outsiders. Here, I argue that both groups indeed receive something. The difference between them is not the state of possession. In this story, all the characters receive the same parables, but only the insiders receive the explanation of the parables in the narrator’s terms (4:33–34). Notably, the readers have realised that the insiders and the outsiders are mutually exclusive (e.g., 3:31–35). This perception enables the readers to consider that although both groups receive the same piece of information, their understanding would uncover the clue to the difference between these two groups of people, given that it is unlikely to identify the secret that the insiders receive as the explanation of the parable according to the plot development.

From the plot development, the parables that the narrator gathers in this story coherently encourage the disciples to have an appropriate response to receive the word of God: to listen carefully and to seek to understand the kingdom of God.⁹³ Jesus’ parabolic teaching serves to encourage the disciples to seek understanding rather than giving them ready-made knowledge. By contrast, what the outsiders perceive are literally parables without

⁹³ From a structural perspective, Mark 4 has a seven-part chiasmus with the interpretation of the parable of the sower (4:14–20) as the central element. Therefore, the appropriate reception of the disciples, as the interpretation of the parable, becomes the primary focus of Jesus’ parabolic teaching here, see Snodgrass, *Stories with Intent*, 157. Cf. by comparing with Jewish apocalyptic writings, Marcus proposes that the secret is revealed, but for some of the people it remains obscure, see Joel Marcus, “Mark 4:10–12 and Marcan Epistemology,” *JBL* 103.4 (1984): 573–574. By contrast, Runggemeier relies on Schnelle’s theological reading that God is the ultimate agent who reveals the mystery of his kingdom (the person of Jesus Christ). With this theocentric ground, Runggemeier considers the disciples misunderstanding Jesus’ teaching a defensible situation, see Jan Runggemeier, *Poetik der Markinischen Christologie: Eine Kognitiv-Narratologische Exegese*, WUNT II 458 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2017), 368; Udo Schnelle, *Theologie des Neuen Testaments* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2016), 372–373. While the parable in Mark 4 implies God’s sovereignty of his salvific plan, Runggemeier ignores how Mark’s narrator establishes the plot to present the collection of Jesus’ parables.

any explanation.⁹⁴ Therefore, according to the narrator, the difference between the insiders and the outsiders lies in their response to seeking to understand Jesus' teaching about the kingdom of God. Given that the secret is comparable with "the parables", the encouragement also implies that the disciples do not fully understand the secret that they are given.

In sum, the narrator's expression in Mark 4:11 makes good sense in that the secret about the kingdom of God is more than a piece of general knowledge about Jesus' designated role and the purpose of his ministry. Although the disciples realise Jesus' inauguration of the kingdom of God, they remain uncertain about how Jesus fulfils God's salvation with his work.

The Parabolic Effect in Jesus' Ministry (Isa 6:9–10 in Mark 4:12)

The reference to Isa 6:9–10 illustrates why everything is "in parables" to the outsiders. Isaiah 6 recounts how God punishes his people because of the unfaithfulness of King Uzziah and hardened their hearts. In a similar tone in the narrative, the narrator uses ἵνα to bring out the sense of purpose of Jesus' parabolic teaching, that the uncomprehending

⁹⁴ As I have argued, all the characters receive the parables in the story (4:33), so it is unlikely to interpret ἐν παραβολαῖς as the specific parabolic sayings that Jesus uses in this story. On the other hand, the narrator states that "everything" is in parables, but Jesus does not use parables every time to teach in the narrative. Thus, Donahue and Harrington suggest reading ἐν παραβολαῖς adverbially, where Jesus aims to obscure his teaching, see John R. Donahue and Daniel J. Harrington, *The Gospel of Mark*, SP 2 (Collegeville, PA: Liturgical Press, 2002), 140. However, the parables in this story collectively suggest that Jesus intends to convey truth rather than conceal it. Meanwhile, what the characters receive in this story is literally parables. Thus, it is reasonable to understand ἐν παραβολαῖς in a general sense, which means "in parables" (France, *Mark*, 198).

outsiders ultimately fail to repent.⁹⁵ Although the blindness theme is not an alien concept in the HB (e.g., Deut 29:4; Ps 115:4–8), some commentators have attempted to remove the unpleasant sense from Mark’s Jesus and argued against this interpretation. They offer various readings by speculating on the meanings of ἵνα, which are out of the semantic range and the usage of ἵνα within the narrative.⁹⁶ In the same way, others propose that Jesus’ parabolic teaching is only an indirect cause of the incomprehension. The root cause of the incomprehension is indeed the incorrigibility of the outsiders.⁹⁷ This proposal might align with the literary context of Isa 6:9–10 in the sense that those who do not comprehend have a hardened heart and will receive their judgement from God (cf. Isa 6:5).⁹⁸ As observed, the narrator portrays some religious leaders as those who reject Jesus and even plot to kill him (3:6). Through Jesus’ language, these people are designated as incorrigible and belong to the realm of Satan. Thus, the proposal gains contextual support from the narrative.

⁹⁵ The use of ἵνα to attach the intertextual reference to Mark 4:11 makes the syntactical structure closer to the MT than the LXX, where the former uses ܢܦܫ in the Hiphil to express God’s causation of the dull heart and the latter describes the status of the dull heart (ἐπαχύνθη ... ἡ καρδία) in Isa 6:9.

⁹⁶ There are various proposals to speculate the meaning of ἵνα such as the mistranslation of Targum, reading ἵνα as ἵνα πληρωθῆ or interpreting ἵνα in an ironic sense. However, the sense of purpose is the most natural reading with sufficient linguistics and Mark’s contextual support. For a detailed discussion of the heated debate over the meaning of the conjunction pair ἵνα-μήποτε in 4:12, see Craig A. Evans, *To See and not Perceive: Isaiah 6.9–10 in Early Jewish and Christian Interpretation*, JSOTSup 64 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1989), 91–99; cf. Matthew Black, *An Aramaic Approach to the Gospels and Acts* (3rd ed. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967), 211–216. In addition, blindness is a common theme in the HB to describe those who fail to submit to the God of Israel, see G. K. Beale, *We Become What We Worship: A Biblical Theology of Idolatry* (Nottingham: IVP Academic, 2008).

⁹⁷ E.g., Hooker, *Mark*, 128; cf. Jesus does not intend to elect insiders with his parabolic teaching, see Beavis, *Mark’s Audience*, 89–91.

⁹⁸ John N. Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah: Chapters 1–39*, NICOT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986), 189.

Nevertheless, this proposal fails to include Jesus' intention in the argument. It perhaps over-emphasises the condition of the outsiders and ignores the narrator's expression.⁹⁹ The use of the conjunction ἵνα (cf. Matt 13:14) does not serve the result of incomprehension but the aim of using parabolic teaching. Henderson rightly observes that Jesus' use of Isa 6:9–10 in Mark 4:11–12 implies that not everyone in the narrative could understand and acknowledge Jesus' teaching.¹⁰⁰ In other words, Jesus' parabolic teaching has a dramatic effect on his audience in the narrative, and the outsiders are shown as not able to comprehend the teachings of Jesus. Although the narrator does not explain why Jesus intends to produce this effect with his teaching, it is one of the characteristics of Jesus' ministry in terms of the narrator's understanding. The readers have realised that the fulfilment of God's salvation shadows his retribution in Jesus' ministry through Isaiah's prophecy in Mark 1:2–3. Observing the effect of Jesus' teaching in parables, the readers would understand how God's punishment is imposed on those outsiders through Jesus' ministry and anticipate their fate in the rest of Mark's narrative.

Who will be the Insiders?

According to the plot development, both the crowd and the disciples perform like insiders because they welcome Jesus and follow him closely.¹⁰¹ However, the narrator has left the readers puzzled over the insider-like image of the disciples in Mark 3:31–35. Seemingly,

⁹⁹ Virtually, the over-emphasis on the outsiders' condition makes Mark's account identical to Matthew's, which uses ὅτι instead of ἵνα (Matt 13:13).

¹⁰⁰ Henderson, *Christology and Discipleship in Mark*, 134.

¹⁰¹ Elizabeth Struthers Malbon, "Disciples/Crowds/Whoever: Markan Characters and Readers," *NovT* 28.2 (1986): 110–112.

Jesus' saying (4:11) solves the readers' puzzle. The reception of the secret about the kingdom of God gives the disciples proof of their eligibility as insiders. However, Tolbert rightly points out that Jesus' saying in Mark 4:11 has a broader sense of distinction between the insiders and the outsiders (τοῖς ἔξω) rather than simply putting the disciples and the crowd in opposition.¹⁰² More significantly, the rhetorical question of Jesus (4:13), along with his explanation (4:14–20), again obscures the insider-like image of the disciples. They fail to understand the parable of the sower. Indeed, the disciples also need Jesus' explanation to understand the other parables (4:33–34). In other words, they are entirely uncomprehending, like those described in Mark 4:12.

In fact, the narrator's portrayal of the disciples here becomes paradoxical.¹⁰³ On the one hand, the disciples are only given the secret. In this case, their failure to comprehend the parable is understandable. While they receive the parable's interpretation, they begin to comprehend what they hear, as opposed to those in the crowd (4:33–34). On the other hand,

¹⁰² Tolbert, *Sowing the Gospel*, 160–161. Notwithstanding, Tolbert suggests that the disciples are identified as the unfruitful ground with “eternal bad fortune” by comparing the parable of the sower with the portrayal of the disciples in the rest of the narrative (Tolbert, *Sowing the Gospel*, 290). Her reading over-exaggerates the negative side of all the disciples without considering how the narrator portrays the disciples along the plotline. She also fails to take the open-ending in Mark's narrative into account. Regarding how the narrator judges the disciples in the open-ending, I will discuss this in Chapter 6.

¹⁰³ Cf. Beavis considers that “the distinction between insiders and outsiders is not fixed, but depends on individual response”, see Beavis, *Mark's Audience*, 154–155; Focant also considers this event paradoxical (Focant, *Mark*, 157–158). He suggests that the act of asking questions distinguishes the insiders from the outsiders at the narrative level. However, Jesus offers explanations without the disciples' asking in the story (4:34). What is clear from the plotline is that the act of asking functions as a bridge for the narrator to bring out Jesus' saying (4:11–12). Thus, I would argue that the narrator leaves the readers puzzled about whether the disciples are the insiders; it is noteworthy that the narrator does not reveal the disciples' incomprehension at the earlier stage of the narrative. Only since in Mark 4, their misunderstanding is gradually revealed, see also Henderson, *Christology and Discipleship in Mark*, 242.

according to the rhetorical question (4:13), Jesus assumes that the disciples understand the parable without his explanation. Still, they behave like outsiders, as depicted in Mark 4:12.

This paradoxical understanding does not change the fact that the narrator guides the readers to follow Jesus and acknowledge his work. Roads et al. argue that, although the readers would experience confusion about Jesus' teaching, the narrator enables the readers to stand in a position of advantage and learn how to give an ideal response to Jesus despite the failure of the disciples.¹⁰⁴ The argument of Rhoads et al. is convincing. As I have discussed, the parables in Mark 4 encourage the disciples to follow the way of Jesus. Although the parable of the sower includes failed cases, they function as warnings for potential failure.¹⁰⁵ These parables point the readers towards the acknowledgement of the kingdom of God.

On the other hand, the paradox produces insight into how the disciples' performance rhetorically impacts the readers. In this story, the narrator does not plainly report the disciples' incomprehension of Jesus' teaching, which contrasts with their early performance (1:16–20). Instead, the narrator includes Jesus' saying in Mark 4:13 to highlight the failure of the disciples' incomprehension, like the outsiders. And simultaneously, he ends the story with his comment that the disciples receive the explanation (4:33–34). Rhoads et al. propose that this characterisation of the disciples shows “a struggle between living on God's terms and living on human terms”.¹⁰⁶ Although Rhoads et al. rightly point out the complex nature of the disciples' portrayal, they do not further elaborate on how this portrayal rhetorically leads the readers to acknowledge the faith in following Jesus in terms of the narrator's understanding.

¹⁰⁴ Rhoads, Dewey and Michie, *Mark as Story*, 140; see also Bond, *The First Biography of Jesus*, 137, 204.

¹⁰⁵ Heil, *Mark*, 104.

¹⁰⁶ Rhoads, Dewey and Michie, *Mark as Story*, 124.

Given the readers remain uncertain about who the insiders are in Mark 3 and the crowd performs like the disciples, I propose that the paradoxical portrayal would leave the readers puzzled about the disciples' eligibility to be the insiders. As the narrative develops, I will argue that the narrator continues to portray the disciples paradoxically. Here, he offers a paradox to the readers and leaves them puzzled by it. While the readers are encouraged to acknowledge Jesus and follow him, the puzzle about the disciples' eligibility destabilises their understanding of what it means to be the insiders in Jesus' community. Subsequently, the readers are stimulated to reflect on the true significance of obedience to God (3:35) in Jesus' ministry.

Misunderstanding and Rejecting Jesus (4:35–6:6)

After Jesus reconstitutes the community of God and his parabolic teaching, the narrator continues to report on his miraculous ministry. In this section, I argue that the narrator begins to reveal the incomprehension of the insider-like disciples. As Rhoads et al. propose, the portrayal of Mark's disciples shifts from "faith, loyalty, and authority" to "lack of understanding, fear, and lack of faith".¹⁰⁷ I will take a step forward to closely examine the plot development of the stories in 4:35–6:6, which explicitly reveals the incomprehension of the disciples, to develop my arguments. I will also elaborate on how the new understanding of the disciples creates rhetorical impacts on the readers.

¹⁰⁷ See Rhoads, Dewey and Michie, *Mark as Story*, 125; Tannehill also concurs with my reading that there is a change in establishing the portrayal of the disciples since Mark 4, see Robert C. Tannehill, "The Disciples in Mark: The Function of a Narrative Role," *JR* 57.4 (1977): 398.

Since the story of Jesus calming the sea (4:35–41), the disciples begin to fail to recognise the identity of Jesus during his miraculous act to calm the sea. This story occurs on the evening immediately after Jesus gives his parabolic teaching. Jesus is determined to cross the lake of Galilee. Although the crowd follow Jesus as usual, Jesus is separate from the crowd, and his disciples are with Jesus on the boat (μετ' αὐτοῦ in 4:36; cf. 3:14). Against this background, there is a violent windstorm. The simple wooden boat in ancient Galilee allows the readers to imagine how vulnerable a boat was in the windstorm.¹⁰⁸ The narrator paints a picture of the conflict in front of the readers: Jesus remains asleep (καθεύδων), but the disciples reproach him (οὐ μέλει σοι ὅτι ἀπολλύμεθα).

Then, the miraculous act is the climax of this event. By rebuking the sea, Jesus radically reverses the fatal situation and settles the conflict with the disciples.¹⁰⁹ As expected, this brings an end to the event, but the narrator further reports the saying of Jesus and his disciples (4:40–41), which provides additional significance to the event. In the view of Jesus, the disciples are not merely in fear but also lack faith. This enables the readers to recall what Jesus proclaims in Mark 1:14–15. In this case, the disciples act like those who do not believe in the Gospel of Jesus. Moreover, the disciples fail to comprehend Jesus' identity.

Presumably, the central query that the disciples would have is about the divine nature of Jesus. Accordingly, their query regarding Jesus' identity is related to the obedience of the sea and wind to Jesus' commands. By underlining the obedient act, the narrator enables the readers to focus on the action, and stimulates them to realise that Jesus has done something

¹⁰⁸ Lane, *Mark*, 175; France, *Mark*, 223.

¹⁰⁹ Jesus' reproach to the sea does not necessarily suggest that the sea is a representation of the evil in the story, even though the sea may refer to the demonic power in the ancient world. The narrator applies Jesus' rebuking language in various contexts in Mark's narrative, see Gundry, *Mark*, 240.

that is exclusively an act of God in the HB.¹¹⁰ Hence, it makes good sense that the disciples struggle to understand Jesus' identity as the God of Israel. The readers have experienced the same struggle because the narrator has obscured Jesus' identity when referring to Isaiah's prophecy (1:2–3). In sum, the incomprehension of the disciples during this event continues to destabilise the readers' perception of the disciples as insiders. It also introduces the ambiguous identification of Jesus, which, in turn, enhances the unpredictability of his ministry.

While Jesus' disciples begin to reveal their incomprehension, the counter-voice from the crowd also gradually rises in the scene (e.g., 5:40). In Mark 6:1–6, Jesus returns to his home town and teaches in the synagogue on the Sabbath. Compared with the setting in the previous stories, in this story, the narrator offers something quite different. The pressing crowd disappears from the scene, and only the disciples follow Jesus. This background signals to the readers that something has changed in the situation that Jesus is going to face.

In this story, the whole congregation in the synagogue are amazed by Jesus' teaching again (e.g., 1:27). They question the source of Jesus' wisdom, power, and authority.

According to the congregation, Jesus' family background does not equip him to have scribal literary training for such amazing teaching.¹¹¹ However, the congregation's amazement is due to their suspicion rather than pure surprise this time. The narrator omnisciently reveals the mind of the congregation and comments that they take offence at Jesus (6:3; cf., 2:12). This guides the readers to realise that the crowd misunderstands and rejects Jesus because of his

¹¹⁰ E.g., Ps 18:15; Isa 50:2; Nah 1:4, see also Donahue and Harrington, *Mark*, 160–161.

¹¹¹ Chris Keith, *Jesus' Literacy Scribal Culture and the Teacher from Galilee*, LNTS 413 (New York, NY: T & T Clark, 2011), 110–122; cf. Karel van der Toorn, *Scribal Culture and the Making of the Hebrew Bible* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009), 51–73.

ordinary family background, especially when the readers have privileged knowledge about Jesus' identity (1:1).

The narrator recounts Jesus' proverbial saying (6:4) as the resolution of the story, explaining the congregation's rejection. Like the prophets, those who are close to Jesus (his relatives or others in his home town) reject Jesus due to their disbelief in him according to the narrator's comment (6:6). As a result, Jesus continues his teaching in other places. By introducing the irony and emphasising Jesus' onward teaching ministry, the narrator allows the readers to look forward to see how the narrator develops the story of Jesus and this prepares them to foresee the misunderstanding, rejection and disbelief Jesus receives from those who are close to him.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have discussed how Mark's narrator characterises Jesus and his ministry in Mark 1:1–6:6. By creating a unique setting for Jesus' Gospel in light of God's salvific promise, the narrator establishes a sense of distinctiveness that demonstrate how this Jesus and his work would be different from the readers' pre-understanding. He guides the readers to recognise how Jesus (and his work) is distinctive from the others in the narrative world through various interactions between Jesus and the other characters (the disciples, the crowd and the religious leaders). Meanwhile, the narrator creates a sense of unpredictability in the readers via the plot development in the narrative. In particular, the disciples' incomprehension of Jesus' ministry greatly surprises the readers because they are given the secret about the kingdom of God. However, like the outsiders, they fail to understand what Jesus teaches in the parabolic form. Their behaviour marks a sharp contrast to their

immediate response to Jesus before they experience the power of Jesus at the beginning of the story (1:16–21). The unpredictability would destabilise the readers' anticipation of Jesus' ministry, and keep them in suspense about how the ministry would be developed at a later point of the story.

Furthermore, closely examining the plot development produces new insight into the rhetorical impact of the disciples' incomprehension on the readers. In my view, the narrator leaves the readers puzzled about the disciples' eligibility to be insiders. Jesus' enigmatic teaching in Mark 4:10–12 is a paradoxical message. While it does not deny the insider role of the disciples, at the same time the passage asserts the incomprehension of the disciples (cf. 4:35–41). In other words, the portrayal of the disciples by the narrator is indeed a paradox. The narrator does not merely guide the readers to understand Jesus' ministry more by explaining the parable of the sower. He also leaves the readers a puzzle that needs to be solved in order to understand the disciples.

In the next chapter, I will shift my focus to the first appearance of the shepherd image. I will discuss the way the metaleptic interpretation of the image creates significant insights into the understanding of Jesus and his ministry in terms of the narrator. With this interpretation, the readers will recall the stories in Mark 1:1–6:6 and recognise how the narrator has prepared them. They will then acknowledge that Jesus has engaged in his shepherding ministry, gathering the people of God, revealing God's salvation and judgement to them and leading them to the restoration in terms of Mark's understanding of the shepherd image.

Chapter 5. The First Shepherd Image: God's Radical Restoration in Jesus' Ministry

Introduction

Chapter 4 discussed the plot development of Mark 1:1–6:6 and explored, from the narrator's perspective, how it creates rhetorical impacts on the readers in receiving Jesus and other characters. Following the plotline, the readers would acknowledge the distinctiveness of Jesus' ministry, the incorrigibility of the religious leaders and the paradoxical portrayal of the disciples.

This chapter will examine Jesus' first miraculous feeding, the story of Jesus feeding the five thousand (6:30–44), which contains the first shepherd image in Mark's narrative. Using metaleptic interpretation, I will illustrate how the events surrounding the shepherd image in the immediate context of Ezekiel 34 interact with the feeding story. I propose that the interaction does not merely portray Jesus as a shepherd who feeds the people of God, but also suggests that Jesus is the Davidic shepherd who fulfils God's radical restoration. In addition, the metaleptic reading of the shepherd image illuminates the portrayal of other characters and the purity concern in Jesus' ministry. I will also demonstrate how the narrator uses the preceding stories discussed in the last chapter to prepare the readers to receive Jesus as the Davidic shepherd.

Furthermore, the current chapter will examine the story of Jesus' teaching on purity (7:1–23). While this story appears to be an abrupt event, loosely attached to the plotline, I will argue that, in light of *metalepsis*, a fresh look at Jesus' feeding story enables the readers to establish relevance to Jesus' understanding of purity from the narrator's point of view.

They would also perceive a clearer vision of what Jesus, as the Davidic shepherd, is concerned about in his ministry in Mark's narrative.

The Shepherd Image in Jesus Feeding the Five Thousand (6:30–44)

The story of Jesus feeding the five thousand recounts how Jesus miraculously feeds a crowd, climaxing with the miracle of multiplying the food. The whole story is composed of two storylines (6:30–33; 35–44), one after another, linked by a narrator's comment in Mark 6:34. This comment functions as a hinge to connect two storylines and moves the event of the miraculous feeding to be shown against the backdrop of the disciples' resting. In his comment, the narrator occupies the prophetic voice in Ezekiel 34 and uses shepherd imagery, an intertextual reference (πρόβατα μὴ ἔχοντα ποιμένα), to express his point of view on Jesus' compassion (cf. Matt 14:14; Luke 9:11).¹ The metaleptic interpretation of the reference produces insights into understanding Jesus' identity and his ministry at a deeper level in the plot development.

Backdrop of the Feeding Story (6:30–33)

The first storyline, which is about the resting of Jesus and his disciples, provides the feeding story with a backdrop. The narrator begins this storyline with a brief report about the return of the disciples, since Jesus has summoned his disciples for a mission as an extension

¹ Unlike Mark, Matthew's narrator adopts Ezek 34:5 as the background of Jesus sending out his disciples instead of the miraculous feeding (Matt 9:36–38; cf. 14:13–21).

of his ministry (6:7–13).² Before the disciples' return, the narrator recounts a past event, the death of John the Baptist. The use of *analepsis* transforms the past event into a subordinate story, containing materials for the narrator to characterise his narrative.³

On the surface, the flashback to the death of John the Baptist offers the readers an explanation of his imprisonment in Mark 1:14. Given that the narrator has established the relevance between Jesus and John in the prologue, this story stimulates the readers to anticipate the destiny of Jesus and his disciples. The narrator triggers the *analepsis* by using Herod's incorrect identification (6:14, 16). This link again leads the readers to read this past event as a type-scene that helps understand Jesus. In this event, John condemns Herod's violation of Lev 20:21 (6:17–19) and so triggers Herodias to plot to kill him. Although Jesus does not come into conflict with Herod up to this point, the readers have observed his confrontation with the religious leaders, which results in their conspiracy to kill him (3:5–6). With this observation, the readers would anticipate the death of Jesus to ensue later in the narrative.

Furthermore, the readers would also have an aroused interest in the disciples' destiny when following Jesus. After narrating the death of John, the narrator immediately returns to the main storyline, the mission of the disciples, which establishes an intercalation in the plotline. Given that the narrator has identified the disciples' mission as an extension of Jesus' ministry (3:14–15), the sandwich structure extends the connection between John the Baptist and Jesus to the disciples, although the death of John excludes any comparable elements of

² Jesus' delegation of his authority to the disciples (6:7) suggests that the disciples' mission is an extension of his ministry; see also Stein, *Mark*, 311.

³ Genette, *Narrative Discourse*, 48.

Jesus' discipleship.⁴ The extension to the disciples potentially draws the readers' interest in whether Jesus' followers will share his destiny by following him.

The brief report of John the Baptist offers a backdrop to the destiny of Jesus and his disciples. Meanwhile, the immediate context (6:31–33) forms another backdrop for the second storyline. After being fully occupied by the crowd, Jesus decides to go to the wilderness with his disciples. What is notable here is the movement of Jesus and his disciples, where Jesus intends to go with the disciples only, and separates the crowd from them (δεῦτε ὑμεῖς αὐτοὶ κατ' ἰδίαν; cf. 4:34). The narrator anchors the reason for Jesus to make such a decision because the crowd swarms around Jesus and his disciples, leading them to have no chance to eat (6:31). According to the plot development, the situation even worsens because members of the crowd run and go to the place ahead of Jesus. His withdrawal from the pressing crowd eventually fails (6:33). The dynamic of Jesus' interaction with the crowd forms a backdrop to his miraculous feeding of the crowd.

Reading the Hinge in Light of Ezekiel 34 (Mark 6:34)

As a hinge connecting to the second storyline, the narrator offers his comment on Jesus' response when he sees the crowd pressing forward. The phrase "flock without [having] a shepherd" (πρόβατα μὴ ἔχοντα ποιμένα) in the hinge reflects the narrator's understanding of the shepherd image. This serves two key functions. First, the narration provides a

⁴ Cf. following Perrin, Culpepper believes that a pattern of preaching-arrest-death is built up among John the Baptist, Jesus and the disciples, see R. Alan Culpepper, "Mark 6:17–29 in Its Narrative Context: Kingdoms in Conflict, in *Mark as Story: Retrospect and Prospect*, ed. Kelly R. Iverson and Christopher W. Skinner, RBS 65 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2011), 160–161. Although Culpepper has a reading strategy different from the first-time readers in the present research, the intercalation assures the link between John and Jesus' disciples.

relational ground for Jesus to arouse his compassion towards the crowd. Second, it offers a symbolic and intertextual context to support Jesus' teaching and the subsequent miraculous feeding.

By using the particle ὄς, the phrase “flock without [having] a shepherd” appears to be a metaphor to compare the crowd with the flock analogically. While the narrator situates the event in the wilderness, readers might consider that the flock encounters a hazardous situation because they lack a shepherd. The crowd does not gain feeding and protection from the shepherd.⁵ This picture seemingly reflects an adequate understanding of Jesus' compassion, his subsequent teaching, and feeding. However, one should not ignore the long-established tradition of the shepherd image in the Ancient Near East and the HB.⁶ In the prologue of Mark's narrative, the narrator has referred to the HB tradition to identify Jesus (e.g., 1:1, 11), and explicitly framed Jesus' Gospel with Isaiah's prophecy. In addition, Jesus follows the Mosaic Law in his ministry (e.g., 1:44) and adapts the HB into his teaching (e.g., Isa 6:9–10 in Mark 4:12). Therefore, the connection between Jesus' ministry and the HB tradition would remain intensely within the readers' mind. It seems likely that they would attempt to seek a more profound significance for the shepherd image beyond its surface value.

Apart from being a metaphor modifying the crowd, I argue that this phrase functions as an intertextual reference to Ezek 34:5.⁷ The narrator guides the readers to acknowledge the intertextual background with his expressions in several ways. The first and the most obvious

⁵ Huebner, *New Testament*, 127–128.

⁶ See the section, “An Overview of the Shepherd Image in Jewish Literature”, in Chapter 3.

⁷ The proposal gains support from commentators (e.g., Bayer, *Markus*, 317; Focant, *Mark*, 255). Moreover, NA–28 (Appendix IV: Loci Citati vel Allegati, A. Ex Vetere Testamento) and UBS–5 (Index of Allusions and Verbal Parallel) also accept Ezek 34:5 as a potential intertextual source.

way is the verbal parallel between the phrase in Mark 6:34 and the text in Ezek 34:5 (τὰ πρόβατά μου διὰ τὸ μὴ εἶναι ποιμένας). Notwithstanding the terms πρόβατον and ποιμήν, the syntactical construction of Ezek 34:5 indicates the same situation as that in Mark, where the flock lacks a shepherd.⁸

Indeed, there are two other potential intertextual sources, Num 27:17 and 1 Kgs 22:17, which share the verbal affinity. To determine the source of the allusive intertextual reference, Foster advocates paying attention not just to the similarities but also the difference between the source and the latter text in terms of the context, apart from the verbal parallel.⁹ While the two sources share the verbal affinity with the phrase in Mark 6:34, there is a substantial discrepancy in the context between the source and Mark's feeding story.

Regarding the former, the shepherd image is used to refer to a situation in which Moses seeks the God of Israel to appoint his successor, which is Joshua, to lead the community of God. Although a theme of leadership emerges in the conversation between God and Moses, and this theme is recurring in the HB and other Jewish literature, Watts rightly points out that Moses' request functions to deal with the issue of the succession in

⁸ The source text of the intertextual reference, whether it is MT or LXX, remains ambiguous. The singular form of the term "shepherd" in Mark's narrative follows the MT. On the other hand, the use of the participle rather than a particle to express the lack of the shepherd is close to the LXX. The brevity of reference does not enable us to come to a conclusion. Therefore, the present research remains open to this question and could accommodate both accounts if necessary.

⁹ Paul Foster, "Echoes without Resonance: Critiquing Certain Aspects of Recent Scholarly Trends in the Study of the Jewish Scriptures in the New Testament," *JSNT* 38.1 (2015): 110–111; cf. Christopher D. Stanley, *Paul and the Language of Scripture: Citation Technique in the Pauline Epistles and Contemporary Literature*, SNTSMS 74 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 343–347.

leadership because of the disobedience of Moses.¹⁰ By contrast, the phrase in Mark 6:34 functions to portray the plight of the crowd and indicate the motivation for Jesus showing his compassion and the subsequent feeding, even though the phrase implies the corruption of Jewish leadership. On the other hand, Kraft argues for the existence of a Jewish messiah-Joshua tradition in a pre-Christian era. Not only the Greek name of Joshua being Jesus (Ἰησοῦς), but also the Testimonia (4Q175) demonstrate a textual tradition linking the Psalms of Joshua to Exodus 20, Numbers 24 and Deuteronomy 33, which are widely accepted as the texts with reference to messiahs of Israel. Samaritan Targum also understands Joshua as Messiah in its interpretation.¹¹ However, Mark's narrator shows no interest in building up Joshua's image to portray Jesus in his narrative.¹² Watt attempts to link the reference to Moses-Joshua by considering God's provision in the wilderness as a parallel to Jesus' miraculous feeding, but this argument only indirectly strings Mark 6:34 and Num 27:17

¹⁰ Rikki E. Watts, "Mark," in *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, ed. G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2007), 158–159.

¹¹ John J. Collins, *The Scepter and the Star: The Messiahs of the Dead Sea Scrolls and other Ancient Literature*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1995), 79–80. As Novenson has commented on Kraft's proposal: "Robert Kraft has mounted a speculative but plausible argument for a pre-Christian Jewish messiah-Joshua tradition that could conceivably have provided fodder both for Christian reflection on a messiah Jesus and for the rabbinic myth of an Ephraimite messiah (Robert A. Kraft, "Was There a Messiah-Joshua Tradition at the Turn of the Era?" *IOUDAIOS*, 1992)", see Novenson, *The Grammar of Messianism*, 201; another Joshua-figure in Zechariah, the high priest Joshua in Zech 4:12, together with Zerubbabel, are portrayed as the "two sons of oil", but here it is Zerubbabel instead of Joshua being regarded as the messianic figure (Collins, *The Scepter and the Star*, 36; Novenson, *The Grammar of Messianism*, 69).

¹² Hays, *Echoes in the Gospels*, 49–50; contra. France, *Mark*, 265; Marcus, *The Way of the Lord*, 24.

through Exodus 16. However, Watts himself realises the “little correlation between the miracles of Exodus 13–17 and those in the first section of Mark”.¹³

Another commentator, Lau, also acknowledges that being the intertextual source, Num 27:17 portrays Jesus as an ideal king and a good shepherd who feeds others. This picture aligns with his comparison between Jesus’ miraculous feeding and Herod’s feast.¹⁴ However, the feeding theme is indeed absent from the immediate context of Num 27:15–21. Instead, the theme of appointment and authority delegation inextricably interweaves the conversation between the God of Israel and Moses in the context. In this case, Lau significantly simplifies the shepherd image to an ideal ruler figure which can be adopted universally. Although I agree to the contrast between Jesus’ feeding and Herod’s feast, Lau fails to explain the inconsistency in connecting Num 27:17 to Jesus’ feeding story. Similarly, Lau suggests that Jesus’ teaching in 6:34 metaphorically and implicitly reflects his feeding, but he does not consider whether this teaching theme appears in Num 27 or not. By contrast, Moses’ pleading for God’s appointment of Joshua is widely accepted as the key theme of the passage. In my view, Lau ignores the difference between the context of Numbers and Jesus’ feeding and selectively adopts the context to facilitate his interpretation. Thus, the shepherd image loses the significance that the context of the book of Numbers attaches.

The source of 1 Kgs 22:17 is even less relevant to the immediate context of Mark 6:34 because the shepherd image in that passage appears in a conversation between the prophet Micaiah and the king Jehoshaphat about a military campaign. This theme has no connection

¹³ It is noteworthy that while Watts tend to suggest Num 27:17 as the primary intertextual source of the reference, he does not completely deny the influence of Ezek 34:5 on Mark 6:34, see Watts, *Mark*, 178–179.

¹⁴ Markus Lau, *Der Gekreuzigte Triumphator: Eine Motivkritische Studie zum Markusevangelium* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2019), 493–516.

to Jesus' teaching and his feeding in Mark 6. While Ezekiel 34 explicitly expresses the abundant provision of God in the leading of the appointed shepherd, in my view, the phrase with a verbal construction close to Ezek 34:5 primarily evokes the shepherd image in Ezekiel 34.

Second, the topological setting of the wilderness has its significance in relation to God's salvific promise. It is noteworthy that the narrator uses various topographical settings, such as wilderness or mountain, to recall the HB stories. For example, he locates Jesus' appointment of disciples on a mountain (3:13–14). This setting directs the readers to recall God's declaration of the law on Sinai to establish Israel.¹⁵ In the prologue, the wilderness setting serves as a landmark to indicate the fulfilment of God's salvific promise in the HB through Jesus' ministry. The narrator situates the current event again in the wilderness (6:31–32). Through Jesus' movement to the wilderness as the prominent element in the backdrop, the narrator potentially prepares the readers to receive the current event in light of the HB.

Third, in this event, the narrator explicitly depicts the condition of the crowd. There is almost no background information about the crowd in the previous events except in Mark 3:8. Instead, the narrator always simply and directly describes the crowd's coming to Jesus (e.g., 2:2, 13; 3:20; 4:1–2). In other words, the narrator shows minimal interest in the crowd's life situation. In another way, the narrator reveals the condition of the crowd with the phrase "flock without [having] a shepherd". If the narrator uses this phrase to deliver a pragmatic concern about the crowd's life situation, he is more likely to express the concern directly (e.g., 1:32). Therefore, it is reasonable to understand the phrase as a reference to the HB rather than an analogy with ancient pastoralism.

¹⁵ Swartley, *Israel's Scripture Traditions and the Synoptic Gospels*, 49–50.

Lastly, the narrator underscores Jesus' compassion towards the crowd in his comment. Since Jesus has begun his public ministry in Mark 1:16, the narrator rarely describes Jesus' emotions, with only two occurrences during the previous events (1:41 and 3:5). In both cases, the narrator recounts Jesus' immediate response without any embellishment. The simple literary pattern sharply contrasts with what the readers observe in the current event. The narrator specifically uses the phrase to characterise Jesus' emotion. This narration might stimulate the readers to seek a significance, which is deeper than what an analogy to ancient pastoralism would have, for the phrase.

To sum up, the narrator preserves a clear textual and thematic link between the phrase "flock without [having] a shepherd" in Mark 6:34 and the text of Ezekiel 34:5. In addition, the narration style also signals to the readers that the phrase is not a simple analogy to the actual ancient pastoralism. Rather, it is of considerable significance beyond its surface value. Given the long-established tradition of the shepherd image in the HB, the readers are guided to acknowledge the phrase as an intertextual reference to Ezek 34:5.

Metaleptic Transgression to Ezekiel 34

In this section, I will explore how feasibly a metaleptic transgression occurs between Ezek 34:5 and Mark 6:34. According to Genette and other theorists who discuss his conception of *metalepsis*, the effect of strangeness is the key element revealing the transgression.¹⁶ In the present case, therefore, I will explore the degree of the paradoxical effect created by Mark's narrator intruding into Ezekiel.

First, the narrator does not express the intertextual reference in the form of a verbatim report about an mythological divine event recorded in the ancient text. Instead, the reference

¹⁶ Pier, "Metalepsis," 328.

takes an allusive form and merges into the narrator's comment on Jesus's caring for the crowd with the particle ὥς. This deeply embedded form of expression enables it to separate itself from mere description. As Fludernik comments, "when the narrator reports dialogue in verbatim fashion we do not talk about metalepsis either."¹⁷ The reference potentially becomes part of the narrator's action. It does not appear as a piece of information external to the word of the narrator.

Second, Mark's narrator is regarded as an omniscient narrator because he can guide the reader to know something happened in a private sphere, for example, Jesus's private teaching to his disciples (4:10). Nonetheless, the narrator characterises God as a transcendent, mysterious but recognisably divine figure. This God is the only one who empowers Jesus the protagonist from heaven and affirms his role as the beloved son, while the others only recognise Jesus' identity (1:9–11; cf. 1:1, 24; 3:11; 5:7). God's remoteness to the events within story world of Mark does not weaken his governing power. In the next chapter, I will demonstrate how God exercises his control over the destiny of Jesus. God in Mark's narrative is the ultimate one who demands fidelity even in complete despair.¹⁸ Based on these characterisations, Johnson suggests that "God [as a character] in Mark does not invite classification". This feature of the characterisation enables the narrator to establish God as an indeterminate character, who is not an agent merely used by the narrator to address

¹⁷ Fludernik, "Scene Shift," 387.

¹⁸ Paul L. Danove, *The Rhetoric of the Characterization of God, Jesus, and Jesus' Disciples in the Gospel of Mark*, JSNTSup 290 (New York: T&T Clark International, 2005), 35, 55.

functionary need.¹⁹ In this regard, the nature of God in Mark's narrative is radically different from that of all the other characters within the same narrative, but with engagement in the life journey of Jesus. While the omniscient narrator is accessible to some private knowledge and has control over the establishment of the characters and the stories, God is the ultimate one who governs the contents of the events. Therefore, the superiority of this God within the narrative denies the possibilities for the narrator bearing the role of God to declare the oracle in Ezekiel. In other words, this potentially creates a paradox (an effect of strangeness in Genette's term) in the narrator's transgression between Mark's narrative and Ezekiel.

Third, the narrator demonstrates his understanding of the life situation of the crowd with a reference rather than his personal knowledge. As I have mentioned, the narrator shows minimal interest in portraying the crowd. He does not report any problem around leadership among the crowd since the beginning of the narrative. One possible reference to this issue is Mark 1:22. However, the comparison between Jesus and the scribe in the story does not imply the corruption of the leadership. Instead, the text positively establishes Jesus and distinguishes him from the scribe (cf. 1:27).²⁰ Moreover, the additional information from Mark 3:8 indicates the wide range of the geographical origin of the crowd, including from Jewish and Gentile areas. With such a wide diversity, it is better not to presume the narrator

¹⁹ "God in Mark is given a grand entrance. God's exit is quiet and unsettling." Johnson, 409–410. Similarly, Guttenberger acknowledges God's portrait of transcendence in Mark's narrative. He proposes that "Die Gottesvorstellung im Markusevangelium betont die Transzendenz Gottes ... Als Retter wird er erst im Eschaton handeln ... Der Wille Gottes regelt die Verhältnisse der Menschen untereinander", see Gudrun Guttenberger, *Die Gottesvorstellung im Markusevangelium*, BZNW 123 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2004), 335–336.

²⁰ Sandra Huebenthal, *Das Markusevangelium als Kollektives Gedächtnis*, FRLANT 253 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2018), 212; see also Gundry, *Mark*, 74.

has comprehensive knowledge of the crowd's situation.²¹ Meanwhile, the intertextual reference portrays the crowd's situation from a divine perspective. This description is God's interpretation of his people in his restoration programme according to Ezekiel. It is noteworthy that the reference does not appear as a verbatim report but is seamlessly expressed as part of the narrator's voice. In my view, the narrator "seizes" the message of God as his personal point of view on the crowd, while he is presumed not to have this knowledge. The readers will realise that this creates a paradox when the narrator is assumed to transgress the narrative boundary.

In sum, I have demonstrated the allusive way that the narrator cites the reference which enables him to transgress the narrative boundary and create a substantial paradoxical impact on the readers. Especially, his "usurpation" of the role of the God of Israel and his interpretation in Ezekiel 34 magnifies the effect and makes it detectable and remarkable. In this regard, I propose that the metaleptic transgression in this intertextual reference, Ezek 34:5 in Mark 6:34, is feasible.

Metaleptic Interpretation of Ezek 34:5 in Mark 6:34

In acknowledging the phrase as an intertextual reference to Ezek 34:5, the commentators widely accept that the reference portrays Mark's Jesus as the shepherd who fulfils God's salvific promise. Boring further reads the reference as an indication that God

²¹ This limitation does not nullify the omniscience of Mark's narrator because he is textually constructed to possess what is enough and required in order to move on the story, see Uri Margolin, "Narrator," in vol. 2 of *Handbook of Narratology*, ed. Peter Hühn et al. (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2014), 653–654; cf. when Rhoads et al. define the omniscience of Mark's narrator, they also base this on what the text tells its readers, see Rhoads, Dewey and Michie, *Mark as Story*, 41–42.

appoints Jesus to lead the renewed community of God as a replacement for the corrupted leadership.²² As I have argued, these understandings selectively adopt the literary context of Ezekiel 34 and drastically reduce it to a thematic idea. The reduction omits the other events surrounding the shepherd image.²³ If the present research draws on the insights of *metalepsis*, Mark's narrator blends in the voice of God to declare his salvific promise of Ezekiel 34 by referring to Ezek 34:5. Those events regarding the shepherd image in Ezekiel 34 virtually intrude into Mark's plotline and interact with the feeding story. Therefore, understanding the events in their original literary context provides the readers with additional information to understand Mark's narrative.

In Chapter 3, I conducted an exegetical investigation into Ezekiel 34. This study reveals several key characteristics of the events surrounding the shepherd image.²⁴ The metaleptic interpretation of Ezek 34:5 in Mark 6:34 enables interaction between these characteristics and Mark's narrative, in turn, which guides the readers to reflect on the way that the narrator characterises the feeding story. In particular, I will demonstrate how Ezekiel 34 reinforces the paradoxical understanding of the disciples and sheds light on the primary concern in Jesus' teaching ministry.

²² Boring, *Mark*, 183; see also Brian J. Incigneri, *The Gospel to the Romans: The Setting and Rhetoric of Mark's Gospel* (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 288; Broadhead comments that this shepherd image "contains both characterisation and critique", see Broadhead, *Naming Jesus*, 94.

²³ Regarding the previous intertextual studies on Ezek 34:5 in Mark 6:34, see the section "Literature Review of Mark's Shepherd Image" in Chapter 1.

²⁴ For a detailed discussion, see the section "Shepherd Image in Ezekiel 34" in Chapter 3.

The Initiator of God's Restoration

According to Ezekiel 34, the community of God, which is portrayed as the flock, is scattered due to the lack of shepherds. Without mentioning any supplication related to the scattered community, God himself responds to their suffering and initiates his restoration for them. I have argued that in Mark's narrative, the reference to Ezek 34:5 analogically compares the coming crowd to the flock in Ezekiel. While Jesus' compassion is aroused and he responds to them, he appears to be the one who initiates God's restoration for them.

Indeed, the narrator has prepared the readers to acknowledge the relationship between Jesus' ministry and God's restoration in the prologue. Jesus is the appointed agent who will carry out God's restoration in his ministry according to Isaiah's prophecy (1:1–3). His ministry serves to fulfil God's salvific promise.

Nevertheless, does Jesus take the initiative in his response to the crowd? According to the plotline, the crowd run together and arrive ahead of Jesus (6:33). Their intense interest in Jesus is hardly surprising. In the earlier stage of the narrative, the crowd has come to follow Jesus like the disciples, even swarming into the place where Jesus stays (1:37; 2:1–2, 13; 3:7, 20; 4:1, 36; 5:21). Similarly, the crowd follow Jesus there, but this time the narrator describes them running together (συνέδραμον) and going ahead of Jesus (προῆλθον). This depiction expresses a more vital force in describing how the crowd hasten to come to Jesus.²⁵

At first glance, through their enthusiasm, the crowd become the active agents in evoking Jesus' compassion. However, the narrator directs the readers in another direction. Once he mentions the coming crowd, he becomes silent about them and brings Jesus into

²⁵ In the previous events, the narrator describes the crowd coming to Jesus in several ways: ἔρχομαι (2:13), θλίβω (3:9), συνέρχομαι (3:20), κάθημαι (3:32), συνάγω (4:1; 5:21) and ἀκολουθέω (5:24), and συνθλίβω (5:31). In comparisons, the crowd here shows a strong desire to come to Jesus in terms of the narrator's viewpoint.

sight (6:33–34).²⁶ In view of the narrator, it is not the crowd presenting themselves to Jesus, but Jesus actively sees the crowd, and his seeing, in turn, leads him to have compassion for them. Thus, Jesus is the active agent who begins his teaching act in correspondence to the intertextual reference. Moreover, the narrator portrays Jesus as the one with compassion for the crowd. The intransitive form of *σπλαγχνίζομαι* denotes the emotional status of Jesus (cf. 1:41; Matt 9:36).²⁷ This implies that Jesus' compassion is not contingent upon the crowd's action, but is his natural attribute. In other words, Jesus takes the initiative and responds to the crowd because of his compassion, regardless of the crowd's request.

If the narrator portrays Jesus as the initiator, does he intend to identify Jesus as the God of Israel? The attached feeding story sheds light on the question. Recalling the context of Ezekiel 34, the readers would observe that the text highlights God rather than the Davidic prince as the true shepherd of Israel who regathers and feeds the flock abundantly. Likewise, Jesus miraculously feeds the crowd. Obviously, Mark's Jesus is in line with God in Ezekiel 34. Although this stimulates the readers to identify Jesus as God, it would be hasty to consider this identification as the final answer. In Ezekiel 34, God explicitly declares his ownership of the flock (Ezek 34:6, 8, 10, 11, 12, 15, 17, 19, 22, 31). By contrast, the narrator uses the anarthrous form of *πρόβατα* to denote the indefinite sense. The indefiniteness sharply contrasts with the LXX account which uses the possessive pronoun *μου* to signify the flock's ownership. Thus, the narrator's expression of the reference reduces the sense that Jesus has possession of the flock in the narrative. The readers remain uncertain whether Mark's Jesus is identified as God in terms of the narrator's interpretation.

²⁶ Although the disciples mention the crowd's physical need (6:35–36), it happens after the narrator's comment. The narrator only links Ezek 34:5 to Jesus' compassion rather than the crowd's physical need.

²⁷ Decker, *Mark 1–8*, 39, 166.

The obscurity of Jesus' divine identity is not a new issue to the readers. The narrator has prepared them to see this blurred picture of Jesus in Isaiah's prophecy (1:2–3), Jesus forgiving sin (2:7) and the incident of calming the sea (4:35–41). Again, he builds up the tension between Jesus as God and Jesus as a man in his use of Ezek 34:5 in Mark 6:34. The tension keeps the readers in suspense about who Jesus is, and stimulates them to decide whether Mark's Jesus is distinctive from their anticipation and prior understanding.

The Plight of the Crowd

The phrase “flock without [having] a shepherd” basically describes the condition of the crowd without a leader.²⁸ However, Ezekiel 34 does not simply paint a picture of the absent leadership. The flock in an adverse condition will experience God's fulfilment of his promise, and undergo a transformation into the renewed community of God. In other words, the members of the flock become the eligible ones in the community. In my view, the metaleptic reading illuminates the plight of the crowd in Mark's narrative in light of the literary context of Ezekiel. It gives the readers an initial point to gain insight into the portrayal of the crowd in this story.

In Ezekiel 34, the flock refers to the exilic Jewish community that suffers and is being exploited. Although Mark's narrator makes the crowd analogically comparable with the flock by using the particle ὡς, the reference appears to be an abrupt description in Mark's narrative. My reasons for this understanding is that the narrator does not explicitly identify the crowd as members of the exilic Jewish community and rarely tells the readers about the crowd's life

²⁸ France, *Mark*, 265; Rhoads et al. considered this phrase to refer to the failure of the national leaders to take care of the people, see Rhoads, Dewey, and Michie, *Mark as Story*, 134. However, they do not elaborate on this point within the literary context of Ezekiel 34.

situation.²⁹ Possibly because the group is a mix of Jews and Gentiles (3:8), the crowd's attitude towards Jesus (1:22, 27, 33–34, 37; 2:1–2; 3:7–8; 4:1; 5:17, 20; 6:2) is the primary focus of the narrator. Thus, the readers receive insufficient information from the plotline about the characteristics of the crowd.

Nevertheless, the readers can look up clues from Mark's use of Isaiah's prophecy to associate the crowd with the exilic Jewish community. In the previous chapter, I have demonstrated that the narrator refers to Isaiah's prophecy (1:2–3) to elaborate on the significance of Jesus' ministry. God's redemption and warnings in Isaiah and Malachi, respectively, provide the readers with two dimensions to understand the nature of Jesus' ministry in Mark's narrative.³⁰ Notably, God's redemption implies the end of the exilic status of God's community, and their return to him according to the prophecy. While the narrator compares Jesus' ministry with Isaiah's prophecy, the readers would also consider that Jesus aims to transform the tragic situation of the people of God with his ministry.³¹ In the current feeding story, George rightly remarks on the narrator's comment that the condition of the crowd stimulates Jesus (εἶδεν πολλὸν ὄχλον) to have compassion for them, which leads him to

²⁹ Wright proposes the exilic status does not come to an end in Jewish belief in the first century, see N. T. Wright, *The New Testament and the People of God*, vol. 1 of *Christian Origins and the Question of God*, 2nd ed. (London: SPCK, 1993), 268–272. Although Wright gains support from Jewish literature (e.g., CD 1:3–11; Bar 3:6–8; Tob 14.5–7; 2 Macc 1:27–29), Jewish perception of exile in the time of Jesus remains debatable due to the diversity of Jewish faith. More discussion on the definition of exile is required, see Nicholas G. Piotrowski, “The Concept of Exile in Late Second Temple Judaism: A Review of Recent Scholarship,” *CurBR* 15.2 (2017): 214–247.

³⁰ Morna D. Hooker, “Good News about Jesus Christ, the Son of God,” in *Mark as Story: Retrospect and Prospect*, ed. Kelly R. Iverson and Christopher W. Skinner, RBS 65 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2011), 171.

³¹ According to Watts, the prophecy suggests that God's restoration through Jesus' ministry is a journey to end the exilic status of the community of God, see Watts, *Mark*, 90. However, the narrator remains silent about his view of the exilic status.

subsequent acts which transform their situation.³² Given the religious leaders' hostility towards Jesus in the early stage of the narrative, the readers would imagine the plight of the crowd, which is similar to the exilic Jewish community in Ezekiel 34, awaiting God's redemption and return to him.

The Gathered Crowd Sharing the Abundance

With the crowd comparable to the scattered community in Ezekiel 34, the readers would anticipate the regathering of the crowd during Jesus' ministry because God also regathers the scattered Jewish community (Ezek 34:11–13). Mark's narrator has demonstrated Jesus' gathering effect in his ministry along the plotline. His work astonishes the crowd, and his fame is widespread in the region of Galilee (1:22, 28). The crowd positively responds to Jesus and is highly enthusiastic in following Jesus just as the disciples are (1:18, 2:14; 5:24; 6:1; cf. 2:15; 5:24). However, the narrator draws a clear distinction between the crowd and the disciples. Jesus does not actively call (καλέω or προσκαλέω) the crowd to gather (cf. 1:16–20), but he appoints the disciples to reconstitute the community of God (3:13–14). Unlike the crowd coming to Jesus, Jesus brings disciples with him (4:36; 5:37; 6:31), and sends them to preach, to heal (6:7, 12–13), to teach (6:30) and to share the work of Jesus (6:41). The most significant event to indicate this distinction is Jesus' teaching of the parables in Mark 4. The disciples are portrayed as the insiders being given the mystery regarding the kingdom of God (4:12, 33–34).

In this case, the readers would identify the disciples rather than the crowd as the regathered community, but here I argue that the narrator again destabilises the readers'

³² George, *Shepherd in Mark*, 58, 63.

perception with his plotline. In the immediate context of the event, Jesus' compassion for the crowd is aroused and he responds to them. Obviously, he breaks with his original plan of having rest with the disciples (6:31). Cai suggests that Jesus is aware of the spiritual and physical needs of the crowd.³³ Unfortunately, this reading overgeneralises Jesus' act of teaching, and breaks the plotline that the physical hunger happens after Jesus' compassionate response, with a temporal gap in between (6:35). In light of *metalepsis*, the narrator guides the readers to understand that Jesus realises the plight of the crowd, which is their suffering from corrupted leadership, similar to that of the scattered community in Ezekiel 34. Given that the crowd receives a positive response from Jesus, this group of characters becomes comparable to the regathered community, who ultimately receive God's shepherding in Ezekiel 34.

The broad context of the event further offers support to this reading. After Jesus' teaching, the narrator immediately attaches the event of his miraculous feeding and displays a sense of abundance with this story. First, there is a sharp contrast between the five loaves and the two fishes at the beginning (6:38, 41), and those filling up twelve baskets at the end (6:43). Second, the narrator does not merely produce statistics of how large the crowd is (6:44) but also allows it to be visualised by the readers (6:39–40). This enables them to

³³ Cai, *Jesus the Shepherd*, 75.

imagine the scale of the organised crowd.³⁴ Last, the narrator describes the crowd's fullness after the feeding (6:42). The whole picture is particularly significant in metaleptic interpretation because it harmonises God's restoration in Ezekiel 34.³⁵ It is noteworthy that those who receive God's shepherding are the regathered community of God. Therefore, the attachment of the feeding story displays a sense that the crowd appears as the insiders of the community.

As I have demonstrated, the narrator has destabilised the reader's perception of Jesus' ministry and the disciples' eligibility to be insiders in the previous stories. The metaleptic reading of the intertextual reference here heightens the destabilising effect on the readers. The distinction between the insiders and the outsiders remains obscure. Still, this time, rather than blurring the identity of the disciples' insider role, the narrator draws the crowd closer, in order to be an insider-like figure.

The Failure in Shepherding the Flock and Its Consequence

Before I continue to discuss God's restoration of his community, another noteworthy issue in Ezekiel 34 is God's judgement on those who fail to shepherd the community of God.

³⁴ Gundry, *Mark*, 325; the terms (e.g., *πρασιαὶ πρασιαὶ*) might have a military sense. Watts reads the shepherd image as a militant figure (Watts, *Mark*, 180), but the narrator does not deliberately develop this sense in the story, see France, *Mark*, 267. Similarly, Jesus' arrangement of the crowd possibly echoes Moses' organisation of Israel in the wilderness (Exod 18:21) so that Jesus seems to be a new Moses (cf. Exodus 16), see Hooker, *Mark*, 164; Ben Witherington III, *The Gospel of Mark: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2001), 218. However, unlike Matthew's Gospel, Mark's narrator does not substantially identify Jesus as Moses in his narrative (See Dale C. Allison Jr., *The New Moses: A Matthean Typology* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1993)). Therefore, perhaps the narrator primarily leads the readers to understand the story in light of Ezekiel 34 instead of Exodus.

³⁵ I will further discuss how Jesus' plentiful feeding resonates with God's restoration in Ezekiel 34 in the section "The Abundance of Jesus' Feeding as a Radical Sign".

The previous intertextual analyses have acknowledged Jesus as the shepherd who fulfils God's salvific promise according to Ezekiel 34.³⁶ However, they selectively adopt the literary context of Ezekiel 34 and entirely omit the event of God's judgement. Notably, God deals with two groups of people in his judgement: the corrupt Jewish leaders, and the exploiting group within the flock. He ultimately excludes these two groups from the renewed community as retribution for their corruption.³⁷

According to Ezekiel 34, the corrupt Jewish leaders fail to care, protect, and heal the flock, and they even exploit those who are weak and poor. Their corruption leads the community of God to fall into the status of scattering (Ezek 34:5). This portrayal basically aligns with how the narrator presents the religious readers in his narrative. Unlike the crowd and the disciples at the beginning of the narrative, the religious leaders consistently give a negative response to Jesus, who is identified as Χριστός the one who fulfils God's salvific promise. Although the narrator does not delineate the leaders' corrupted acts at this stage, their hostile attitude towards Jesus and the disturbance to his work imply that the leaders have failed to take their shepherding role. The narrator also gives a solid statement to reveal those leaders' hardened hearts and their plot to kill Jesus (3:5–6). Thus, the portrayal of the leaders' incorrigibility has prepared the readers to identify them in light of the corrupt Jewish leaders in Ezekiel 34.

Furthermore, the religious leaders perhaps fail to provide teaching for the community of God from the narrator's viewpoint. According to his construction of the comment, the

³⁶ E.g., when Collins discusses the intertextual reference, he shifts his focus from the absent leadership to Jesus' inauguration as the Messiah of Israel and ignores the theme of judgement in Ezekiel 34, see Collins, *Mark*, 319; see also Hooker, *Mark*, 165.

³⁷ For a detailed exegetical observation Ezekiel 34, see the section "The Shepherd Image in Ezekiel 34" in Chapter 3.

narrator presents Jesus' teaching as the result of his compassion towards the crowd.³⁸ By reading the intertextual reference metaleptically, the teaching act corresponds to the shepherding activity by the appointed Davidic prince in Ezekiel 34. In other words, the narrator understands Jesus' teaching as part of his fulfilment of the shepherding role. Conversely, this implies that the religious leaders fail to teach the community of God. Indeed, the narrator has highlighted the distinctiveness of Jesus' ministry by comparing his teaching with that of scribes (1:22). The comparison suggests that Jesus' teaching comes with the authority of God, and, on the other hand, the scribes, who are supposed to be the experts in the law of God, lack God's authority. Through this sharp contrast, the scribes represent the character who incompetently performs the role of teaching.³⁹ Therefore, the readers would have expected that the religious leaders fail to teach the community of God as a part of their shepherding work.

Admittedly, the narrator does not paint a full picture of the religious leaders' failure to teach before the feeding event. After plotting to kill Jesus (3:2, 6), the leaders disappear from the scene until the debate of the purity law in Mark 7.⁴⁰ As I will argue, the narrator gradually reveals the religious leaders' corrupted acts of shepherding the community of God at later points in the narrative (7:6–13; see also 8:15; 11:15–17; 12:38–40).

Given that the readers would perceive the religious leaders as likened to the corrupt Jewish leaders in Ezekiel 34, this would arouse their interest in the fate of the leaders. According to Ezekiel 34, the corrupt Jewish leaders are incorrigible and finally receive God's

³⁸ The conjunction *καὶ* is used to introduce Jesus' teaching. The syntactical construction makes the causal relationship clear, see also BDAG, s.v. "καὶ."

³⁹ Rhoads, Dewey and Michie, *Mark as Story*, 118.

⁴⁰ Unlike Matthew, Mark's narrator does not unfold the corruption of the religious leaders at the beginning (cf. Matt 3:7–10; 5:20; 6:2, 5; 7:15).

retribution. Although the consequence of the religious leaders is not yet revealed in the feeding story, the readers would expect to see God's punishment for the leaders later in the narrative.

Focant makes a counter-proposal that the absent shepherd refers to Jesus' disciples rather than the religious leaders. By considering the disciples' completion of the mission as the backdrop of the feeding story, the disciples' failure in organising the crowd indicates that they fail to occupy their shepherding role.⁴¹ Although Focant seems to gain contextual support from Ezekiel 34 and Mark's narrative, he does not take into account the literary context of Ezekiel 34 and that of the feeding story. Focant merely ascribes the corruption reported in Ezekiel 34 to the leadership, but he omits the exploitation within the Jewish community. In addition, Focant fails to grasp the way that Mark's narrator characterises the disciples along the plotline of the feeding story. Eventually, he reduces the vivid story into a simple situation: either the disciples or the religious leaders are the absent shepherds.

I propose that the narrator remains ambiguous and evasive in portraying the disciples in the feeding story. On the one hand, the narrator holds a positive view of the disciples in the story. They continue to share the ministry of Jesus. At the beginning of the miraculous feeding, the disciples initiate the conversation by addressing the physical need of the crowd.⁴² At the story's climax, although the disciples do not align with Jesus (6:37), Jesus appoints them to distribute the food to the crowd (6:41). In this case, the disciples participate in the

⁴¹ Focant, *Mark*, 255; similar to Focant, Painter considers that "the disciples objected to Jesus", see John Painter, *Mark's Gospel: Worlds in Conflict*, NTR (London: Routledge, 1997), 100.

⁴² To a certain extent, the disciples make a good and practical suggestion, see Lane, *Mark*, 228. However, the disciples' initiation should not be over-emphasised as a compassionate act similar to that of Jesus because the narrator does not comment on the disciples' suggestions.

miraculous feeding together with Jesus, in a manner slightly different from the previous commission in Mark 6:7.⁴³ Moreover, the readers would realise that this is the first time for the disciples to work with Jesus in his ministry. Rather than being silent about the work of the disciples, the narrator affirms their participation in Jesus' ministry.

Cai considers that the feeding story has a key function to highlight the disciples' misunderstanding.⁴⁴ He rightly points out that the narrator's comment in Mark 6:52 and 8:17–19 links the feeding story to the disciples' misunderstanding. However, the immediate context of the story guides the readers to develop a different focus. The narrator does not recount the disciples' emotion and their incomprehension here (cf. 4:41). In contrast, this feeding story finishes with an emphasis on the abundance of the feeding (6:43–44). This picture suggests that the narrator primarily focuses on the abundance of Jesus' feeding rather than the disciples' misunderstanding.

On the other hand, the narrator highlights Jesus' compassionate act in contrast to the disciples. At the beginning of the event, the disciples report what they have done in the mission. The narrator recounts their involvement in the teaching activity (6:30; cf. 6:12–13), which is described as an exclusive ministry for Jesus in the previous stories in Mark's narrative.⁴⁵ According to the narrator's comment, only Jesus can recognise the crowd's plight and perform his shepherding role by teaching them. In other words, the disciples do not participate in the shepherding activity. Although the narrator does not comment on the

⁴³ Boring, *Mark*, 186. This is the first time for the disciples to participate in the ministry together with Jesus in Mark's narrative.

⁴⁴ Cai, *Jesus the Shepherd*, 75–76.

⁴⁵ Even Jesus' commissioning of his disciples does not include the work of teaching (6:7, 12–13). The redactional attachment of *καὶ ὅσα ἐδίδαξαν* guides the readers to recognise the disciples' involvement in the teaching activity. It also prepares the readers to receive the feeding story; see also Guelich, *Mark 1–8:26*, 339.

disciples' non-involvement, Jesus' proactive teaching activity provides a clear contrast with the disciples. The expression of the intertextual reference might also magnify the contrast between Jesus and the disciples. The narrator uses a singular form of ποιμένα (הָרֹעֶה in Ezek 34:5 MT; cf. ποιμένας in the LXX) in the reference. This possibly sharpens the sense that not even one shepherd could be found, but in that event, Jesus proactively and definitively demonstrates himself to be the shepherd who teaches the flock and feeds them.

Given that the narrator is evasive about the disciples' portrayal, the metaleptic view of Ezekiel 34 interacts with his ambiguous view. According to Ezekiel 34, God does not merely punish the corrupt leaders but also judges those within the Jewish community to separate the exploiting group from the weak and poor. The determination is made because this group is another causative factor that leads to the community being scattered (Ezek 34:17, 20–21). God only includes the weak and poor in the peaceful covenant, while the exploiting group is regarded as consisting of outsiders.⁴⁶ This picture would inspire the readers to look back at the theme of insider/outsider in Mark 4.

In the last chapter, I demonstrated that the use of Isa 6:9–10 in Mark 4:12 reveals the parabolic effect in Jesus' ministry, in which the outsiders are shown not to understand Jesus' teaching. Thus, the metaleptic interpretation would invite the readers to realise that the parabolic effect signifies God's separation in his eschatological restoration, according to Ezekiel 34. While the exploiting group is certainly within the Jewish community, the narrator does not display who corresponds to this group in his narrative. With the continuous ambiguous portrayal of the disciples since Mark 4, the narrator maintains the readers' reservations about the insider role of the disciples, especially when the crowd, who share Jesus' abundant feeding, appears to occupy the insider role.

⁴⁶ See the section "Regathering of the Scattered Flock of Israel" in Chapter 3.

The Abundance of Jesus' Feeding as a Radical Sign

As I have observed, the focus of Jesus' miraculous feeding falls on its abundance to address the needs of the crowd. The narrator further accentuates this concept by putting Herod's banquet (6:21) as part of the backdrop for this feeding. As Culpepper notes, there is a sharp contrast between Herod and Jesus in preparing the meal for their followers. As an antithesis, Herod's meal is served for his own birthday celebration, utterly different from the compassion that Jesus demonstrates for others.⁴⁷ Superficially, Jesus' miraculous feeding represents his physical provision after he addresses the crowd's spiritual needs through his teaching. Below the surface, Lane reads the miraculous feeding as a sign of the messianic banquet (Isa 25:6–9).⁴⁸ Although the wilderness scene of the banquet in Isaiah 25 aligns with the setting of the miraculous feeding, more links connect Ezekiel 34 to the feeding story. First, to portray Jesus' compassionate act, the narrator explicitly refers to Ezek 34:5 instead of Isaiah 25. Second, Ezekiel 34 ends at the climax, when the renewed community would receive abundant feeding in the wilderness in God's restoration (Ezek 34:25–27). This aligns with the plotline of the feeding story. Third, God explicitly calls the renewed community the flock in his pasture (Ezek 34:31). This depiction resonates with the scene of Jesus' feeding

⁴⁷ Culpepper, "Mark 6:17–29," 161.

⁴⁸ Lane, *Mark*, 232–233; see also Strauss, *Mark*, 273. Some commentators propose different symbolic meanings for the loaves and the fishes, but their proposal remains speculative without any contextual support from Mark's narrative, France, *Mark*, 266; Painter, *Mark*, 102. This feeding story perhaps foreshadows the second feeding in Mark 8 and the last supper in Mark 14, see Cai, *Jesus the Shepherd*, 159–160. However, it is not a determining factor in the present research because the first-time readers do not know the whole picture of the narrative. They will only recall the first feeding when they read the second feeding story or the last supper.

(6:39). These links collectively suggest that the narrator is leading the readers to read the feeding story primarily in the light of God's restoration in Ezekiel 34.

According to the prophecy in Ezekiel 34, the restoration reaches a climax when God re-establishes a peaceful covenant with the renewed community. The covenant covers God's unconditional and abundant blessing for the community, with the curse entirely excluded. As discussed in Chapter 3 of this research, the specific covenantal form in Ezekiel 34 implies that God's restoration represents a radical renewal of the community. While the narrator has explicitly identified Jesus' ministry as the fulfilment of God's salvation in his understanding, the radical nature keeps the readers increasingly eager to see how the narrator displays the radical nature of Jesus' ministry.

In the prologue, the narrator has guided the readers to acknowledge the fresh beginning of the gospel in Jesus' ministry. He also continuously creates a sense of unpredictability in the ministry with his plotline. The erratic development of the narrative leads the readers to realise that Jesus and his work are distinctive from what they anticipate. Notwithstanding the religious leaders' conspiracy, the readers have observed a paradoxical situation regarding the disciples' membership, in which they are supposed to be the insiders of the community of God, but they behave like outsiders who fail to comprehend the work of Jesus. This unexpected behaviour sharpens the sense that Jesus' ministry is different from what the disciples consider. As discussed, the whole feeding story is situated against the backdrop of foreshadowing Jesus' death. This characterisation would arouse the readers' interest in how the narrator holds Jesus' fulfilment of God's radical restoration and his death destiny together at the later stage of the narrative.

The Purity Concern in the Davidic Shepherding Activity

Apart from the absent shepherd within the flock, I argue that the significance of the narrator's comment is the link between the act of teaching and Ezekiel's shepherding activity. It is possible that the readers will not be amazed because CD 13:7–10 and the Pss. Sol. 17:40–42 make a similar connection, suggesting the idea is well-known.⁴⁹ However, in his dedicated research on Mark's narrative, George rightly observes that only Mark's narrator describes Jesus' compassion which leads him to teach the crowd (cf. Matt 14:14; Luke 9:11).⁵⁰ This portrait enables the readers to understand Jesus' emotional response to the condition, but George inadequately observes how the narrator syntactically connects Ezekiel 34 to Jesus' teaching ministry in his narrative.

In Mark's narrative, teaching is a common practice in Jesus' ministry (e.g., 1:21; 2:13; 4:1–2; 6:2, 6), which creates high opinions (1:22) and acknowledgement from the others (e.g., 4:38; 5:35). It is also an exclusive work of Jesus except in Mark 6:30. Still, the narrator seldom reports what Jesus teaches, including when recounting the feeding story. Some commentators suggest that Jesus teaches the kingdom of God in the feeding story based on the previous teachings (1:14–15; 4:11, 26, 30).⁵¹ However, the suggestion perhaps appears as a universal answer without considering why the narrator holds Ezekiel 34 and Jesus' teaching

⁴⁹ Botner proposes that Mark “does not appear to be particularly innovative”, see Botner, *Son of David in Mark*, 135–136.

⁵⁰ George, *Shepherd in Mark*, 63. As Shul commented, “geht es [Markus] ihm doch hierbei nicht einfach direkt um die Einleitung eines Speisungswunders. Das zeigt einmal schon die Einfügung seines Gedankens, daß Jesus “sie viel lehrte”, zum anderen die Beschreibung der Situation des Volkes mit einem atl. Bild”, see Alfred Shul, *Die Funktion der alttestamentlichen Zitate und Anspielungen im Markusevangelium* (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus G. Mohn, 1965), 144. Comparatively, Matt 14:14 removes the intertextual reference and Jesus' act of teaching. Instead, it describes the healing work of Jesus. Similarly, Luke 9:11 removes the reference and recounts Jesus' teaching and healing.

⁵¹ E.g., Stein, *Mark*, 313; Strauss, *Mark*, 274.

together in his comment (cf. Matt 9:36). Boring proposes that there is no requirement to overemphasise the content of what Jesus teaches at this point. Rather, the primary focus here is the act of teaching itself. It is the work of Jesus as the Davidic shepherd.⁵² However, Boring's proposal fails to clarify the significance of Jesus' teaching act in light of the shepherding activity in Ezekiel 34.

Indeed, the shepherding activity of the Davidic appointed prince in God's radical restoration has a specific concern to the renewed community. As discussed in Chapter 3, Ezekiel entirely removes the curse and only adapts the blessing of the Holiness Code to construct the peaceful covenant. With this adaptation, the covenant conveys Ezekiel's understanding of God's eschatological restoration, that God's renewed community lives a life of purity through the lead of the Davidic shepherd. The preservation of purity reflects a new relationship between God and his community.

In Mark's feeding story, Jesus' proactive response to the crowd indicates that this Χριστός is the appointed Davidic prince in Ezekiel 34 in terms of the narrator's understanding.⁵³ The more prominent point, which has not yet been explored in the previous studies, is the significance of Jesus' teaching in relation to his shepherding activity. With a metaleptic reading, Jesus' teaching becomes the means used to lead the renewed community of God, the true insiders. Given the life of purity of God's renewed community through the

⁵² Boring, *Mark*, 183–184.

⁵³ E.g., Lane, *Mark*, 233; Hays, *Echo in the Gospels*, 50; Stein, *Mark*, 313; see also the section "Literature Review of Mark's Shepherd Image" in Chapter 1; cf. Donahue and Harrington identify God as the shepherd according to Ezek 34:15 (Donahue and Harrington, *Mark*, 205). However, they overlook how Jesus leads the shepherding activity in the immediate context of the narrative, while God also appoints a Davidic prince to assume the shepherding role in Ezekiel 34.

lead of the Davidic shepherding in Ezekiel 34, the readers are stimulated to contemplate whether Jesus' teaching here reflects his primary concern for the purity of God's people.

Although the narrator does not elaborate on the nature of the teaching, I propose that the whole picture in this feeding story contradicts Watts' proposal that the Davidic shepherd is a warrior.⁵⁴ The characterisation of the feeding story demonstrates the abundance of Jesus' feeding, which is parallel to the fruitful life of the renewed community under the Davidic prince's shepherding as described in Ezekiel 34:25–31, rather than a militant campaign led by a political king. As a sign of God's radical restoration, Jesus' provision drives the readers to acknowledge the abundance that comes from being the members of the renewed community which Jesus reconstitutes.

With this acknowledgement, I argue that the readers would anticipate that the narrator will establish a clear relationship between the concern about the purity of the community of God and Jesus' teaching later in the narrative. While the narrator has been destabilising the readers' perception of Jesus and his ministry along the plotline, the readers would also expect that Jesus would show an understanding of the purity of God's community, which is distinctively different from the other characters.

⁵⁴ Watts makes the use of the term "warrior" ambiguous in his research. He reads this term in Isaiah's context, which delivers a political and militant sense, but at the same time, he interprets it in a spiritual sense, seeing Jesus as a warrior who conquers the demonic chaos, see Watts, *Mark*, 179–182. To a certain extent, Watts overemphasises Isaiah's influence in the feeding story without considering how the narrator recounts the story. The arrangement of the miraculous feeding primarily denotes abundance rather than a militant sense (e.g., 6:42–44), see also the section "The Gathered Crowd Sharing the Abundance".

Summary

The metaleptic interpretation of Ezek 34:5 in Mark 6:34 encourages interactions between the events surrounding the Davidic shepherd (Ezekiel 34) and Jesus feeding the five thousand (6:30–44). This interaction creates insights into interpreting Jesus' miraculous feeding, a story beyond a mere spiritual and physical provision. The events surrounding the shepherd image in Ezekiel 34 enrich the portrayals of the crowd, the disciples, and particularly Jesus. As discussed, this understanding is not entirely new to the readers. The narrator has already prepared them to receive the shepherd image due to the preceding events in the narrative. In short, the narrator portrays Jesus as the appointed Davidic shepherd. Through his leadership, the renewed community of God would live a cleansed life and share the abundance of God's radical restoration.

In the next section, I will argue that the narrator establishes wider relevance between Jesus' miraculous feeding and his teaching on purity (7:1–23), with the metaleptic understanding of the feeding story. The narrator guides the readers to look at the feeding story retrospectively and enables them to realise that the moral purity, which Jesus promulgates in his teaching, is the primary concern of the Davidic shepherd for the reconstituted community of God, according to Ezekiel.

Jesus' Purity Concern in His Ministry (7:1–23)

Jesus' teaching on purity abruptly appears after the summary of Jesus' ministry in the region of Gennesaret (6:53–56) without any connective elements at the narrative level. On the

surface, this story has no apparent relevance to its surrounding context.⁵⁵ As I will argue, however, the metaleptic interpretation of Ezek 34:5 in Mark 6:34 enables the readers to acknowledge that Jesus' first feeding story is relevant to his teaching of purity. The teaching story continues the presentation of Jesus' ministry in terms of the narrator's understanding of Ezekiel's Davidic shepherd. In addition, the narrator also further expands the readers' understanding of how Jesus fulfils the Davidic shepherding activity in his work.

Establishing the Uncomprehending Disciples

In the last chapter, I demonstrated that the narrator has begun to reveal the disciples' failure to understand Jesus' identity and his ministry since Mark 4. When Jesus walks on the sea (6:45–52), the narrator displays a new portrait of the disciples — hardened hearts, intensifying their incomprehension. With the link to the first miraculous feeding, the narrator also associates the disciples' misunderstanding with the work of Jesus, his Davidic shepherding activity.

After the first feeding, the disciples go to Bethsaida by boat and experience a heavy storm on the sea. In this story, the turning point appears in the scene when Jesus walks on the sea, but the disciples are frightened and fail to recognise him. The event reaches its resolution as Jesus finally calms the sea (6:52).

Although the readers have experienced a similar story before, with Jesus calming the sea in 4:35–41, they would find three differences in the current version. First, the narrator

⁵⁵ From a character perspective, Malbon rightly points out that the dispute in this story connects the religious leaders' challenges to Jesus (2:1–3:6) and their act of killing Jesus in Mark 11–16, see Elizabeth Struthers Malbon, "The Jewish Leaders in the Gospel of Mark: A Literary Study of Marcan Characterization," *JBL* 108.2 (1989): 271. Still, the connection between the current story and its surrounding events along the plotline remains uncertain.

judges the disciples' incomprehension. Unlike the first calming, after he calms the sea, Jesus remains silent about the disciples' fear. Instead, the narrator describes them as amazed (6:51; cf. 4:40–41) with his comment. The theme of amazement in itself is neutral in Mark's narrative (1:22, 27; 2:12; cf. 6:2).⁵⁶ However, this time, the narrator ascribes their astonishment to their misunderstanding of Jesus' feeding and their hardened hearts (6:52). Second, Jesus consistently demonstrates his power, but the emphasis in this story is on the epiphany through Jesus rather than his act of rescue (cf. 4:39).⁵⁷ Both miracles on the sea share two elements: the disciples' fear and suffering from a difficult situation (4:37–38; 6:48) and the miraculous resolution (4:39; 6:51). However, there is no plea from the disciples here. Instead, the narrator reports that Jesus passes by them (παρελθεῖν αὐτούς) and identifies himself with ἐγώ εἰμι. These depictions echo how God reveals himself in the HB (e.g., Exod 3:14; 33:18–23; Isa 41:4; 43:10).⁵⁸ Jesus' manifestation of the divine presence strikingly contrasts with the disciples' identifying him as a ghost (6:49).

Lastly, the narrator only describes the calm state of the sea (ἐκόπασεν ὁ ἄνεμος) without mentioning Jesus' miraculous act (6:51; cf. 4:39). Rather than highlighting the

⁵⁶ Cf. in his analysis of the wonder motif in Mark's Gospel, Dwyer proposes that wonder is a response to the breaking-in of God's kingdom. Rather than a negative response, it is "the necessary experience when the mortal meets the uncanny", see Timothy Dwyer, *The Motif of Wonder in the Gospel of Mark*, JSNTSup 128 (Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996), 197–198.

⁵⁷ See also Theissen's analysis from a form-critical perspective, Gerd Theissen, *The Miracle Stories of the Early Christian Tradition*, trans. Francis McDonagh (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1983), 94–103.

⁵⁸ Gundry, *Mark*, 336–337; see also Guelich, *Mark 1–8:26*, 347; cf. Marcus considers that Mark's Gospel establishes a typology between Moses and Jesus with this story, see Joel Marcus, *Mark 1–8: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB 27 (London: Yale University Press, 2007), 422–423. However, the narrator does not substantially identify Jesus as Moses in his narrative (see n.22). Therefore, I argue that the narrator primarily leads the readers to acknowledge Jesus' manifestation of the divine presence with his act of walking to the disciples on the sea.

miraculous power, the narrator strategically ends the story by his comment that the disciples fail to understand Jesus because of their hardened hearts (πεπωρωμένη). He leads his readers to shift their focus away from the miraculous act to the disciples' failure, especially when it is the second time that the disciples misunderstand Jesus.

Obviously, the narrator continues to develop the theme of the disciples' incomprehension (cf. 4:11). What is significant is the depiction of the hardened heart, which further identifies the disciples as being like another group of incorrigible figures, the religious leaders (cf. 3:5). This reinforces the negative impression of the disciples within the narrative. On the other hand, the narrator guides the readers to reflect on the disciples' incomprehension in light of the feeding story (6:52), even though the narrator does not describe what the disciples have failed to understand.⁵⁹ As discussed in the previous section, the narrator adopts the intertextual reference to Ezek 34:5 to portray Jesus' miraculous feeding. As the Davidic shepherd is appointed by God, his shepherding activity — the abundant feeding — functions as a sign of God's radical renewal of his community through the ministry of Jesus. In this case, I argue that the disciples fail to recognise the significance of Jesus' great feeding, the renewal picture painted by Ezekiel. With this picture, the narrator affirms Jesus as God's appointed agent and, on the other hand, accentuates the disciples' failure.

Afterwards, the narrator summarises Jesus' ministry in Gennesaret (6:53–56). Unlike the summary in Mark 1:32–34 and 3:7–12, he shifts his attention to the crowd rather than Jesus. According to the summary, their recognition of Jesus triggers them to bring the weak to

⁵⁹ The narrator's comment is slightly awkward because Jesus' feeding story shows no explicit connection to his miraculous calming of the sea. Hooker uses the theme of Exodus to connect both events, but her proposal does not have any exegetical or contextual support from Mark's narrative, see Hooker, *Mark*, 169; Boring suggests that the disciples fail to grasp Jesus' messianic identity, see Boring, *Mark*, 191. However, his suggestion misses how the narrator connects the miraculous calming of the sea to the feeding story.

him, regardless of where he is (6:55–56).⁶⁰ Their behaviour strikingly contrasts with what the disciples have done in the feeding story (cf. 6:36). The disparity further heightens the sense of how the disciples have misunderstood the work of Jesus as the Davidic shepherd in terms of the narrator's understanding of Ezekiel.

Plot Development of Jesus' Teaching on Purity

With the backdrop of the disciples' misunderstanding contrasting with the aggressive crowd, the narrator recounts Jesus' teaching on purity. In this story, Jesus demonstrates his concern about purity, which is entirely different from that of the Pharisees and the scribes. He gradually reveals his distinctive understanding of God's commandment to the crowd and the disciples.

The Setting for Jesus' Teaching

Without any geographical and chronological identifier, the narrator begins the story by describing the Pharisees and the scribes coming from Jerusalem to Jesus. They question the way the disciples eat with defiled hands (7:1–2, 5). It is not the first time they question Jesus through the misbehaviour of his disciples (cf. 2:18–28). The readers have also

⁶⁰ According to the plot development, the narrator vividly describes the crowd's proactive response to Jesus once they recognise him and hear his location (ἐπιγνόντες ... περιέδραμον ... ἤρξαντο ... περιφέρειν ... ἤκουον) with the locations specifically listed (εἰς κώμας ἢ εἰς πόλεις ἢ εἰς ἀγρούς ἐν ταῖς ἀγοραῖς). He paints a picture of how the crowd enthusiastically support Jesus. In contrast, the disciples are portrayed as ones with hardened hearts, just like the religious leaders.

experienced their hostility towards Jesus (3:6, 22).⁶¹ Thus, they would expect that the Pharisees and the scribes also challenge Jesus with malice this time. However, unlike the previous stories, the Pharisees do not directly ask why the disciples eat with defiled hands. Rather, they question why the disciples fail to keep the elders' tradition (7:5). This emphasis escalates the issue from a generic violation of the Mosaic Law to the submission to the elders' tradition.

Before the religious leaders pose the question, the narrator interrupts the plot and briefly explains the requirement of handwashing in the tradition of the elders (7:3–4). Rather than a hygiene issue, the requirement is considered an expansion of the commands for ritual purity in Leviticus 11–15.⁶² Historically, some of the Pharisaic groups probably acknowledged this requirement, but it is unlikely that it was universally applied among the Jewish community in the first century Greco-Roman world. Therefore, the claim that all the Jews observe the handwashing rule is best understood as a hyperbolic expression.⁶³ However, at the narrative level, the exaggeration would prepare the readers to realise the considerable

⁶¹ For the way the narrator gradually reveals the hostility of the religious leaders towards Jesus, see Chapter 4; Collins argues that the question itself is “not overtly hostile” (cf. Matt 15:2), see Collins, *Mark*, 349. Still, the plot development strongly invites the readers to establish relevance between the leaders' questions to their previous hostile behaviour.

⁶² See Herbert Danby, *The Mishnah: Translated from the Hebrew, with Introduction and Brief Explanatory Notes* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1933), 73, 213; Thomas Kazen, *Jesus and Purity Halakhah*, ConBNT 38 (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 2002), 60–88. Indeed, the meaning of handwashing with fist (πυγμῆ νίψονται τὰς χεῖρας) and after coming back from the marketplace is uncertain, see Guelich, *Mark 1–8:26*, 364. However, the purity concern behind the question is evident.

⁶³ There is even discrepancy in the application of purity laws in different Pharisaic circles, e.g., E. P. Sanders, *Jewish Law from Jesus to the Mishnah: Five Studies* (London: SCM Press, 1990), 197, 209. Scornaienchi rightly points out that the complexity of the norms and rituals of cleansing is not shown in the story, see Lorenzo Scornaienchi, *Der Umstrittene Jesus und seine Apologie: Die Streitgespräche im Markusevangelium*, NTOA 110 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2016), 281.

influence of the tradition of the elders among the Jews before reading Jesus' teaching on purity within Mark's story world.

The Condemnation of the Religious Leaders

Given that the narrator has set the stage with the coming of the Pharisees and the scribes, Jesus gives his first response to the religious leaders. As opposed to what he does in Mark 2, Jesus condemns the religious leaders as hypocrites by referring to Isa 29:13 without answering the question and defending the disciples. Although the corrupt nature of the leaders has been recognised since Mark 3:6, this is the first time that Jesus directly and explicitly rebukes them for their corruption.⁶⁴ This condemnation further alienates the leaders and intensifies their corruption.

By referring to the immediate context of Isa 29:13, the narrator identifies the religious leaders as those who merely observe God's commandment externally, but fail to worship God with their inner lives.⁶⁵ What they have done is an outward activity, according to the commandments of men. Jesus clarifies this kind of observance as upholding the tradition of men, which abandons the commandment of God (7:8). The narrator establishes an antithesis

⁶⁴ The corrupt nature of the religious leaders first appears in Mark 3:5. In that scene, the narrator only omnisciently reveals the hardened heart of the religious leaders without other condemnation. Then, in the religious leaders' accusation of blasphemy (3:20–30), Jesus offers an offensive response to the scribes, but he only implicitly exposes their corruption.

⁶⁵ People approaching God (נִגְשׁוּ הָעַם הַזֶּה) can be interpreted as an act of observing God's commandment, see Motyer, *The Prophecy of Isaiah*, 240. Although the narrator does not expound on the meaning of God's commandment, it is best understood as the word of God from the original literary context of Isaiah, see France, 282; cf. Oswalt, *Isaiah 1–39*, 533.

between the commandment of God and the tradition of men.⁶⁶ The observance of the tradition becomes a matter of obeying God. Furthermore, God's condemnation in Isa 29:13 originates from the Jerusalem leaders' failure to discern the work of God and their refusal of his word in the time of Isaiah. As a result, they become totally blind, indicating their status of irrevocable heart-hardening (cf. Isa 6:9).⁶⁷ By recounting Jesus' condemnation with the use of Isa 29:13, the narrator roughly sketches out the incorrigible nature of the religious leaders and reveals their profound blindness to God's work.

Isaiah, in its literary context, speaks to all the people of God who observe the commandment of God. Here, Jesus' appropriation of the prophecy shifts its focus to the leaders.⁶⁸ Still, there is a link to the whole community of God. The leaders do not merely observe the tradition of the elders themselves, but also teach others (7:7), leading all the Jews to follow the tradition (7:3). Therefore, in terms of the narrator's understanding of God, the readers would expect that their failure to follow God's commandment would become the problem of all the people. In other words, all the people of God suffer from false worshipping due to the leaders' corruption.

Jesus elaborates on his condemnation by offering examples (7:9–13). He refers to Exod 20:12 and 21:17, in contrast to the tradition of the dedicatory vow in Mark 7:11–12. These examples from the Mosaic law indicate how one should treat their parents and outlines the fate of disobedience. By contrast, the elders' requirement hinders them from observing

⁶⁶ See also Scornaienchi, *Der Umstrittene Jesus und seine Apologie*, 282–283, 286–287.

⁶⁷ Motyer, *The Prophecy of Isaiah*, 238.

⁶⁸ Gundry, *Mark*, 351.

what God asked his people to do.⁶⁹ Seemingly, there is a conflict between the two commandments, honouring parents and keeping one's vow (Num 30:2; Deut 23:21–22). Gundry rightly points out that Jesus does not intend to override the latter with the former.⁷⁰ Jesus' saying in Mark 7:12 reveals the intention of the religious leaders. The emphatic use of ὑμεῖς (cf. Μωϋσῆς in 7:10) suggests that it is the religious leaders instead of the commandment itself which does not permit one to do anything for one's parents. Thus, the religious leaders refuse the word of God, and simultaneously corrupt the people to abrogate the law, similar to what Isa 29:13 in Mark 7:6 suggests.

The narrator frames Jesus' elaboration with an *inclusio* about abandoning God's commandment and upholding the tradition, at the beginning and the end of his speech. Basically, the intercalation intensifies the problem of abandonment. However, his additional statement, "and many such things you do", in Mark 7:13, indicates that the case of the dedicatory vow is only one of the many examples used to indicate the corruption of the religious leaders.⁷¹ With this indication, the narrator leads readers to realise in a concrete manner the leaders' incorrigible corruption and their severe influence on the people of God, while they only observe their hardened hearts through the conflict with Jesus (e.g., 3:5–6).

⁶⁹ The immediate context does not expound on whether the one makes a genuine oath or a rash one (Hooker, *Mark*, 177), but the elders' tradition offers an excuse for not honouring the parents.

⁷⁰ Gundry, *Mark*, 363.

⁷¹ Other examples of corruption are possibly in Mark 2:23–28 and 3:1–6, see Collins, *Mark*, 353.

Jesus' Concern for the Purity of God's Community

After condemning the religious leaders, Jesus suddenly turns to the crowd and teaches them about purity (7:14–15). The turning point gradually leads the current story to its climax, when the narrator provides his readers with a resolution for the conflict. Rather than directly responding to the religious leaders' questions, Jesus surprisingly shifts the topic from how one is defiled to what makes one defiled. Those from the outside cannot defile a person, but those from the inside can. Although this is abstract teaching, without specifying what those things from outside and inside precisely are, and which context (ritual, moral or both) he is referring to, a contrasting pair of issues in Jesus' teaching is observable. Meanwhile, the handwashing practice becomes insignificant in terms of Jesus' understanding of purity. Thus, Jesus' concern over the purity of God's community is different from that of the religious leaders. The narrator continues to demonstrate Jesus' distinctiveness in his ministry.

This passage has drawn the commentators' attention to Jesus' understanding of the Mosaic Law.⁷² Still, I argue that his teaching on purity has a deeper significance at the narrative level beyond his transformative interpretation. At the beginning of the narrative, the narrator has identified Jesus as the one standing in line with God. For example, the narrator states that Jesus is Χριστός and the "Son of God" (1:1). Jesus is also portrayed as the "Holy One of God" (1:24).⁷³ Moreover, the narrator identifies Jesus' teaching as one superior to that of the scribes (1:22). By situating this teaching event in the context of the conflict between God's commandment and the elders' tradition, the narrator guides the readers to receive Jesus' teaching in this event as the commandment from God, in contrast to the handwashing requirement, which belongs to the tradition of the elders. In terms of Isa 29:13, those who

⁷² Stein, *Mark*, 335.

⁷³ See also the section "Acknowledgement of the Internal Purpose" in Chapter 3.

listen to and follow Jesus' teaching on purity are those who truly worship and obey God (cf. 3:35). In addition, Jesus requests that the crowd explicitly listen and understand what he will teach (7:14). This draws both the crowd's attention and the readers' focus. What is significant in this request is the use of the language. It is similar to that in Jesus' teaching with parables (4:3, 9, 23–24), particularly the identification of the outsiders through Isa 6:9–10.⁷⁴ With the verbal repetition and the use of Isa 29:13, the narrator drives the readers to link the current teaching event to the issue of being the insiders of God's community. Therefore, Jesus' transformative interpretation of the law of God only represents the surface value of the story. Beyond this theme, Jesus' understanding of purity is the key for insiders to live with true obedience to God.

After Jesus' abstract teaching to the crowd, the disciples ask Jesus about the meaning of his teaching (7:17), which brings the story to an ending, a final resolution. Interestingly, the disciples define Jesus' teaching as a parable. This definition again stimulates the readers to recall the situation in Mark 4, where the disciples receive private teaching from Jesus (4:33–34), implying that they are eligible to be the insiders of God's community. On the other hand, the narrator also explicitly highlights the disciples' incomprehension through Jesus' response (7:18; cf. 4:13). While the narrator has underscored their misunderstanding, and identified them as those with hardened hearts (6:52), he continues to portray the disciples paradoxically, as he does in Mark 4, but with a greater magnitude.

Jesus clarifies his teaching and enables his disciples to understand what things are from the outside and from the inside. By figuratively referring to the digestive system, all foods and excrement cannot defile one person because they have no contact with the heart,

⁷⁴ Contra. Stein who considers this saying echoes Deut 6:4 (Stein, *Mark*, 343), but the language here suggests a connection to Mark 4; see also Beavis, *Mark's Audience*, 158.

the person's inner life. Here, Jesus declares that all foods are clean (7:19).⁷⁵ This additional comment totally nullifies the handwashing requirement from the elders' tradition. After explaining what things are from the outside, Jesus lists the things from the inside.⁷⁶ According to his expression in Mark 7:21 and 23, all these thoughts and acts are evil in nature (οἱ διαλογισμοὶ οἱ κακοὶ; πάντα ταῦτα τὰ πονηρὰ) and will surely defile a person.

The elaboration on the contrasted pair expresses Jesus' primary concern about purity. According to Jesus' point of view, moral purity is more important than ritual purity.⁷⁷ From the flow of the teaching, the requirement of handwashing has no value in keeping one's purity before God, because it has not originated from God's commandment, but from the elders' tradition. By contrast, moral values take a central position in Jesus' understanding of purity. He primarily appreciates moral rather than ritual purity. Instead of outward acts, the moral integrity of a person's inner life is the key to preserving their purity. As I have discussed, the narrator guides the readers to connect Jesus' teaching on purity in this event to the membership of God's community. Thus, the readers would realise that moral purity is the primary concern of those who are considered the insiders. This enables the readers to clarify the abstract definition in Mark 3:35 that the insiders are those who are obedient to God.

⁷⁵ Black considers that the participle phrase (καθαρίζων πάντα τὰ βρώματα) is not a declaration by Jesus. Instead, it modifies latrine (τὸν ἀφεδρῶνα) and means "the latrine cleans the food", see Black, *Gospels and Acts*, 217–218. However, the nominative case of the participle (καθαρίζων) demonstrates its link to Jesus' act of saying (λέγει in Mark 7:18) rather than the latrine, see Decker, *Mark 1–8*, 192.

⁷⁶ Regarding the discussion of the moral values, see Gundry, *Mark*, 356.

⁷⁷ See also Focant, *Mark*, 284.

The Relevance to the Ministry of the Davidic Shepherd

After a close look at the plot development of Jesus' teaching on purity, this section will demonstrate how the story guides the readers to recall the metaleptic interpretation of the first feeding story. In my view, this retrospection leads the readers to establish relevance between the two stories, which subsequently illustrates how Jesus occupies the role of the appointed Davidic shepherd and fulfils God's restoration.

The narrator provides no chronological or geographical sign to the story of Jesus' teaching on purity, and thus a noticeable gap appears in the plotline. Without any connective element, Stein considers the current event a standalone story without the need to tie it to the preceding ones. However, his proposal omits the idea that this story contains Jesus' lengthy teaching, which is prominent in Mark's narrative (cf. 4:1–34).⁷⁸ As expected, the teaching would contain crucial elements for the readers to understand the broader context of the narrative, rather than simply displaying thematic coherences.

Focant ties Jesus' teaching on purity with the first and second feeding stories through the mention of bread (6:37–38, 41, 44; 7:2, 5; 8:4–6). He reads the image of Jesus' feeding the crowd as a sign of an eschatological gift. Accordingly, he proposes that the teaching story is "a pivot between the gift of food to Israel and its increase in the direction of all people". Focant's missional understanding (from the Jews to the Gentiles) gains substantial support from the geographical shift in the plotline, from the Jewish region (6:45) to the Gentile area

⁷⁸ Stein, *Mark*, 335; see also Lane, *Mark*, 244. Although it seems that there is only a little of Jesus' teaching in Mark's Gospel (4:1–34; 7:1–23; 9:30–10:45; 13:1–37; cf. Matt 5–7, 10, 13, 18, 23–25), France's deliberate research discerns that over half of the Gospel contains events regarding Jesus' teaching, see R. T. France, "Mark and the Teaching of Jesus," in *Studies of History and Tradition in the Four Gospels*, vol. 1 of *Gospel Perspectives*, ed. Richard. T. France and David Wenham (Sheffield: JSOT, 1980), 101–136.

(6:53–56; 7:24–37).⁷⁹ Still, this proposal drastically reduces the significance of Jesus’ miraculous feeding in terms of the narrator’s metaleptic understanding. In the previous section, I demonstrated that the feeding reflects Davidic shepherding activity in God’s eschatological restoration. If Jesus’ teaching on purity was tied with the feeding story, his concern over purity in the teaching would correspond to the shepherding activity and would have a deeper significance than a pivot. While the exegetical analysis of Ezekiel 34 in Chapter 3 revealed the concern about the cleansed life of God’s people in the restoration, the relevance between the first feeding and the teaching on purity is presumably beyond what Focant proposes.

With his characterisation of Jesus’ teaching on purity, the narrator establishes the relevance of this story to Jesus’ first feeding in several ways. First, the narrator specifically exposes the corrupted acts of the religious leaders on the people of God. Initially, Jesus’ rare condemnation plainly identifies the leaders as those who are entirely blind, as they abandon the commandment of God, and are far from God in their inner persons. Even worse, they manipulate God’s community by asking them to follow the elders’ tradition, not God’s commandment. Thus, the condemnation deliberately exposes the corruption of the leaders.

From the beginning of the narrative, the narrator does not delineate what corrupt act(s) the leaders have done to the people of God. In terms of the narrator, the only observable corruption is their hostility towards Jesus and the conspiracy to kill him, which in turn permits the readers to predict the leaders’ corrupted acts on God’s people. By metaleptically reading Ezek 34:5 in Mark 6:34, the narrator first leads the readers to taste the

⁷⁹ Focant, *Mark*, 277–278; Gundry suggests that what the disciples eat (7:2) is those left in the feeding story (6:43), see Gundry, *Mark*, 348, but his proposal remains speculative.

failure of the religious leaders in shepherding and teaching the people of God. Still, what exactly their failure is remains uncertain, and this leaves a question for the readers.

Only when the readers reach the current story does the narrator drive them to recall the question and realise how the leaders fail to shepherd and teach God's people by recounting Jesus' condemnation. With this retrospection, the current event becomes a key to the leaders' corruption, as suggested by Ezekiel 34. According to the original literary context of Isa 29:13, although Jesus does not explicitly declare God's judgement here, the irreparable blindness of the leaders induces God's negative response to their corruption.⁸⁰ Thus, the exposure of the leaders' corrupt nature stimulates the readers to acknowledge that they deserve God's punishment and to ponder whether they will receive the punishment in the rest of the narrative.

Second, the narrator stimulates the readers to recall the first feeding story by leaving the open question of whether the disciples are inside God's community while they follow Jesus' teaching. In terms of Jesus' teaching on purity, it is clearer that the crowd appears to be outside of God's community. According to Ezekiel 34, God will separate both the corrupt Jewish leaders and the exploiting class from the Jewish community, and target his punishment towards them. As I have discussed, all the Jews are influenced by the religious leaders, observing the elders' tradition instead of God's commandments according to the teaching story. In this case, the crowd potentially shares the leaders' corruption and fails to obey God. The readers would not be surprised by this as they have seen how the crowd opposes Jesus in Mark 6:1–6.⁸¹

⁸⁰ Motyer, *The Prophecy of Isaiah*, 238–239.

⁸¹ For a brief discussion of this passage, see the section "Misunderstanding and Rejecting Jesus (4:35–6:6)" in Chapter 4.

How about the disciples? Here, the narrator's portrayal of the disciples' behaviours in the context has received inadequate attention. For example, Strauss observes that the disciples follow Jesus' teaching rather than submitting to the elders' tradition, as implied by the question from the religious leaders (7:5). However, Strauss does not analyse further the significance of this behaviour in its own context.⁸² By reconsidering the story's setting, the antithesis between God's commandment and the elders' tradition, the readers would expect the disciples to have learned the significance of moral purity, the key to truly worshipping God, while they have followed Jesus' teaching.

Ironically, the narrator finally shows the disciples' misunderstanding of Jesus' parabolic teaching. This ironic portrayal stimulates the readers to escalate their reservation of the disciples' insider role to a question of whether the disciples genuinely obey God or are far from him, like the leaders. This suspicion leads the readers to look back at the metaleptic reading of the first feeding story, where the exploiting class within the Jewish community contributes to the corruption, apart from the leaders, while the renewed community of God will live a life of purity in the peaceful covenant.⁸³ Notably, the narrator has prepared the readers to receive the paradoxical image of the disciples with a greater magnitude (6:52). Therefore, the readers would not merely ponder the disciples' eligibility to be the insiders in God's community but also contemplate whether the disciples will eventually fail to follow Jesus and become outsiders at a later stage of the narrative.

⁸² Strauss, *Mark*, 300.

⁸³ In my view, the readers would also look back at Mark 4 because of Jesus' private explanation of the parabolic teaching and the paradoxical portrayal of the disciples. Again, however, the specific motif of purity in this teaching story would drive the readers primarily to establish relevance to the metaleptic interpretation of the first feeding story.

Perhaps the conversation between Jesus and the disciples after the second feeding story would confirm the readers' suspicion. In Mark 8:11–21, the Pharisees come to test Jesus, but he leaves without directly responding to their question. While the disciples forget to bring bread with them, Jesus asks them to beware of the religious leaders' corruption.⁸⁴ At this stage, even though they witness both miraculous feedings and correctly answer the corresponding questions, the disciples still misunderstand Jesus' teaching (8:17–20).⁸⁵ According to Fowler, the readers would understand the significance of Jesus' miraculous feeding in the second story by referring to the first one. Therefore, the narrator creates an irony between the disciples and readers through the two feeding stories.⁸⁶ The ironic force would increase the readers' uncertainty and pessimism about the disciples' allegiance to Jesus at the later stage of the narrative.

Third, the narrator expresses the radical nature of Jesus' ministry in his teaching on purity. In terms of metaleptic interpretation, the abundant feeding signifies the radical nature of God's eschatological restoration in Jesus' ministry. Although the narrator enables the readers to experience how distinctive the work of Jesus is, they are not provided with a clear

⁸⁴ Larry W. Hurtado, *Mark*, NIBCNT 2 (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1989), 125–126.

⁸⁵ Cf. From a structural perspective, Richardson discovers that Jesus' declaration of the disciples' hardness of heart is located between two miraculous healing stories (7:31–37; 8:22–26). This structure identifies the disciples as deaf and blind, see Alan Richardson, *The Miracle Stories of the Gospels* (London: SCM Press, 2012), 81–99.

⁸⁶ Robert M. Fowler, *Loaves and Fishes: The Function of the Feeding Stories in the Gospel of Mark*, SBL 54 (Chico, Calif: Scholars Press, 1981), 94–99. From a structural perspective, Klumbies also suggests that the repeated feeding stories (6:30–44; 8:1–9), together with the disciples' incomprehension and the later Jesus' healing of the blind, draws the readers to realise the identity of Jesus, see Paul-Gerhard Klumbies, *Das Markusevangelium als Erzählung*, WUNT 408 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2018), 188.

picture of the revolutionary change that Jesus will produce with his work. Through the teaching on purity, the readers get a foretaste of that radical change.

Hershman suggests that Jesus completely replaces the Mosaic Law concerning the purity of food. His pronouncement that all foods are clean negates Leviticus 11, the prohibition of unclean foods. Meanwhile, he advocates that those from the inside are the only things that can defile one person. In this case, Jesus' teaching serves as a replacement for the food law.⁸⁷ However, it contradicts Jesus' reference to the Law in Mark 7:10 as an example of God's commandment for his people to follow. Aligned with Hershman, Stein suggests that this pronouncement has to be interpreted in the context of the entire narrative of Mark. In this story, Jesus demonstrates his authority as the Son of God. With his pronouncement of the coming of the kingdom of God, Jesus brings an end to the Mosaic Law regarding food with his new teaching for the coming of God's kingdom.⁸⁸ Although Jesus' prerogative as the Son of God gains contextual support from the narrator, the view of replacing the food law probably overstretches how the narrator recounts Jesus' teaching in this event.

Here I compare Jesus' teaching on purity and another prior teaching story (2:23–28). In the previous teaching regarding the Sabbath, the narrator explicitly portrays how Jesus, as the Son of Man, has the authority to allow his disciples to act against the regulation of the Sabbath.⁸⁹ Comparatively, there is no setting of Jesus' authority in the current story. Instead,

⁸⁷ Evan Hershman, *Jesus as Teacher in the Gospel of Mark: The Function of a Motif*, LNTS 626 (London: T&T Clark, 2020), 128. Similarly, Voelz considers the specific role of Jesus in God's salvific promise. As "the bringer of the eschatological reign and rule of God", Jesus abrogates all the Mosaic Laws. This reading is only convincing based on the covenantal theology that faith is overturning the Laws, see James W. Voelz, *Mark 1:1–8:26*, ConcC (Saint Louis, Mo.: Concordia, 2013), 469–474.

⁸⁸ Stein, *Mark*, 345.

⁸⁹ Steve Moyise, *Jesus and Scripture: Studying the New Testament Use of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2011), 15.

the plot development shows that Jesus uses Isa 29:13 to establish the antithesis between God's commandment and the elders' tradition before he clarifies his understanding of purity. Although the participial clause (καθαρίζων πάντα τὰ βρώματα) in Mark 7:19 seems to be a challenge to Leviticus 11, it functions as a parenthesis for elaborating on why foods cannot defile people.⁹⁰ This declaration is best considered as part of Jesus' argument against the elder's tradition. Therefore, it is convincing to understand that Jesus intends to argue against the religious leaders' abrogation of God's word with human commandments rather than override the Mosaic Law with his transformative understanding.

The narrator has set the stage to show that the Pharisees and all the Jews follow the tradition of the elders and abandon God's commandment (7:3). By contrast, I have mentioned in the above section that from the beginning of Mark's narrative, the narrator has consistently portrayed Jesus as the one in line with God. This characterisation suggests that Jesus' view on moral purity is the authoritative teaching, in line with God's commandment. In light of the antithesis that Jesus establishes in the current story, his understanding of purity radically deviates from the Jewish social norms within the world of Mark's narrative. This reading invites the readers to link Jesus' teaching on purity back to the Davidic shepherding activity,

⁹⁰ France, *Mark*, 276; from a redactional perspective, Crossley suggests Jesus' declaration could be understood as "all foods permitted in the Torah clean", which has no contradiction, see James Crossley, "Mark 7.1–23: Revisiting the Question of 'All Foods Clean'," in *The Torah in the New Testament: Papers Delivered at the Manchester-Lausanne Seminar of June 2008*, LNTS 401 (London: T&T Clark, 2009), 8–20. Cf. by examining the intertextual connection between Mark 7 and Leviticus 11, Mueller proposes that "Mark 7 connects to the touch impurities section in Lev 11:24–40 rather than to the section on the ontological impurity of the unclean animals (Lev 11:2–23; 41–43)". Therefore, Jesus' declaration is an abrogation of touch impurity, see Eike Arend Mueller, "Cleansing the Common: Narrative-Intertextual Study of Mark 7:1–23" (PhD diss., Andrews University, 2015), 222–238. From a historical perspective, Kazen investigates the conception of purity in the early Judaism. He agrees that the clause refers to an eating issue that is known to the early Christian community, rather than attempting to replace the Mosaic Laws, see Thomas Kazen, *Impurity and Purification in Early Judaism and the Jesus Tradition*, RBS 98 (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2021), 247.

according to Ezekiel 34. They would realise the radical change that Jesus would bring about through his work in fulfilling God's salvific promise.

Lastly, Jesus' specific teaching on purity leads the readers to recall the primary concern of the Davidic shepherding activity. From a geographical perspective, the narrator surrounds the teaching event with Jesus' ministry in the Gentile territory (6:53–56; 7:24–37). Perhaps, his transformative interpretation of purity provides the early Christian community with a solid ground for supporting the gentile mission.⁹¹ Notwithstanding the prominence of the mission reading, the event arouses the commentators' interest in the historicity of Jesus' attitude towards purity regarding the food law.⁹² By contrast, Jesus' specific concern over purity within the story receives inadequate attention.

Indeed, the characterisation of this teaching story has two noticeable features in the plotline. The first one is the unpredictability that the narrator creates in the story. As I discussed previously, Jesus' condemnation in Mark 7:6–8 and 13 represents his first time criticising the religious leaders publicly and severely in the narrative. Without any prior notice (cf. 2:18, 23–24), Jesus' act of condemning becomes unpredictable. In addition, Jesus' interpretation of purity is definitely different from the other characters (the religious leaders and all the Jews, perhaps even the disciples). This discrepancy considerably heightens the sense of unpredictability within the readers' understanding.⁹³ Jesus' unexpected behaviour draws the readers' attention to how he will act in the remaining part of this story, which includes Jesus' lengthy teaching about purity. This prominent teaching contains the second feature that I suggest: it is the first (and only) event in which Jesus gives the disciples direct

⁹¹ Incigneri, *The Gospel to the Romans*, 98–100.

⁹² Stein, *Mark*, 335.

⁹³ Schmid, *der Narratologie*, 16–17.

moral instructions for true purity in the narrative.⁹⁴ As I have argued, the significance of this teaching lies in the context within which it is situated. The narrator does not primarily highlight Jesus' transformative interpretation of the Mosaic Law. Instead, he underscores that the moral purity of an inner person is the key to having a new relationship with God — true obedience to God, which is the crucial element of Jesus' reconstituted community (cf. 3:35).

In my view, the plotline stimulates the readers to look retrospectively at the first feeding story. Before the first feeding story, the narrator does not devote space to recount any purity teaching by Jesus. According to the metaleptic view of Ezek 34:5 in Mark 6:34, the narrator first enlightens the readers about the purity concern of Jesus' ministry in fulfilling God's salvific promise. This concern is about the life of God's renewed community, reflecting a new relationship with him. Nonetheless, the narrator remains silent about what Jesus teaches the crowd or what specifically Jesus is concerned with regarding purity. It is noteworthy that the narrator does not present Jesus' distinctive teaching in the story as issuing instructions for a didactic purpose. Instead, he characterises the story as a concern over true obedience to God. Thus, the way the narrator recounts the story drives the readers to recall the potential purity concern in God's eschatological restoration, as mentioned in Ezekiel 34. By teaching about his view of purity, Jesus fulfils the role of the Davidic shepherd and leads the community of God to live an absolutely cleansed life. As one of his shepherding activities in the narrative, Jesus' teaching on purity illuminates the concept for the readers and prepares them to acknowledge what is significant in being the insiders of God's community in his

⁹⁴ The work of Jesus (e.g., healing a leper in 1:40–45, healing a woman who is bleeding, and raising up a young girl in 5:21–43) has its purity dimension, see Matthew Thiessen, *Jesus and the Forces of Death: The Gospels' Portrayal of Ritual Impurity within First-Century Judaism* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2020); cf. Jerome H. Neyrey, "The Idea of Purity in Mark's Gospel," *Semeia* 35.35 (1986): 91–128. However, Jesus' teaching on purity (7:1–23) is the only direct and lengthy teaching that the narrator explicitly recounts in Mark's narrative.

eschatological restoration. In the next chapter, I will argue that the second shepherd image (Zech 13:7 in Mark 14:27) further clarifies this concern about purity in God's restoration.

Summary

In terms of chronology, geography or plot, the narrator presents no explicit connection between Jesus' teaching on purity (7:1–23) and the preceding events. However, I have argued that a new understanding of the first feeding story (6:30–44), in light of *metalepsis*, foregrounds the way the narrator establishes relevance between the teaching event and the miraculous feeding, with his characterisation of the stories. Moreover, by situating Jesus' teaching on moral purity in a specific context, the narrator clarifies how Jesus, as the Davidic shepherd, fulfils God's eschatological restoration with his ministry. I will argue that this fresh understanding prepares the readers to receive the later stage of the narrative, particularly the second shepherd image in Mark 14:27.

Conclusion

This chapter focuses on Jesus' first miraculous feeding (6:30–44), and his teaching on purity (7:1–23), which collectively contributes to understanding the first shepherd image in Mark's narrative in terms of the narrator's point of view. By reading Ezek 34:5 in Mark 6:34 in light of *metalepsis*, I argue that its significance is beyond that of metaphor — Jesus as the Davidic shepherd fulfilling God's salvific promise. The events surrounding the shepherd image in the literary context of Ezekiel provide the readers with additional materials in order to understand the significance of Jesus' ministry. First, the work of Jesus in Mark's narrative

manifests God's radical restoration in Ezekiel 34, which gathers the suffering people of God because of the incorrigible religious leaders, and appoints a Davidic shepherd who abundantly feeds them. Second, the readers would consider that the leaders will receive their punishment from God. Besides, with God's judgement within his community, the readers will also ponder the membership of the disciples. Third, the readers would initially realise the purity concern in Jesus' shepherding activity, but the narrator only clarifies this concern in Mark 7.

In Jesus' teaching on purity, the narrator guides the readers to recognise the relevance between the first feeding story and the teaching on purity, and expands their understanding of Jesus' shepherding ministry. First, the incorrigible act of the religious leaders becomes unequivocal according to Jesus' condemnation. Second, the readers would then seriously challenge the disciples' eligibility to be the insiders. Given the disciples' hardened hearts and their incomprehension even after the second feeding (8:17–21), the readers would begin to question whether or not the disciples would fail to follow Jesus at a later stage of the narrative. Third, the readers would acknowledge the true purity in terms of the narrator's understanding. By establishing the antithesis between God's commandment and the tradition of the elders, Jesus radically abrogates the commandment of men. What he teaches regarding purity — the emphasis on the moral values from the inner life — is the critical element required for God's community to be the insiders who genuinely do the will of God.

Chapter 6. The Second Shepherd Image: The Purification of Jesus' Disciples

Introduction

In the last chapter, I discussed how *metalepsis* sheds light on the use of the first shepherd image (Ezek 34:5 in Mark 6:34) designed to characterise Jesus' identity and his ministry in relation to other characters. As the appointed Davidic agent, Jesus fulfils God's radical restoration and expresses his concern over true purity before God.

This chapter will explore the story of Jesus' prediction of Peter's denial (14:26–31), which contains the second shepherd image in Mark's narrative. I will argue that the narrator uses the plotline to prepare the readers to receive the second shepherd image. Moreover, I will investigate the metaleptic interaction between the events surrounding the shepherd image in Zech 13:7–9 and Jesus' prediction and his promise. Through the lens of *metalepsis*, the narrator drives the readers to acknowledge several things. First, Jesus is portrayed as the Davidic smitten shepherd with connections to the first shepherd image. Second, Jesus continues his shepherd activity after his resurrection. Lastly, the disciples, as the scattered flock, undergo purification and are tested as part of God's restorative programme.

In addition, I will examine the narrative's ending, the story of the empty tomb (16:1–8). Given that the narrator characterises this story as the affirmation of Jesus' continuation of his shepherding activity after the resurrection, the metaleptic interpretation of the shepherd images offers insights into how the readers understand the abrupt ending of the narrative. Moreover, this offers a specific direction to the readers to ponder how the disciples should respond to Jesus as the true insiders in terms of the narrator.

The Prediction of the Way to the Cross (8:22–10:52)

After a series of miracles, Mark's Jesus turns over a new leaf, setting out on his journey to Jerusalem. In this episode, Jesus describes himself as the Son of Man three times, with an inevitable consequence: being rejected, crucified and rising after three days. The narrative comes to a turning point when the narrator explicitly reveals and elaborates on Jesus' death thereby fulfilling God's salvific promise. In addition, the discipleship of Mark's Jesus becomes clearer with the specific mission of going the way of the cross (cf. 6:7–13). These readings are widely acknowledged in previous scholarship. Still, in this section, I argue that the narrator uses the prediction stories to prepare the readers to move from the first shepherd image to the second shepherd image along the plotline.

The Plot Development of the Three Predictions

At this new stage of the narrative, the theme of the way (ἡ ὁδός) appears again in the scene. In the three prediction stories, the narrator continuously guides the readers to observe that Jesus and his disciples are on the way (8:27; 9:34; 10:32). Perhaps the readers only fully recognise the echo of the way of the Lord in Mark 1:2–3 after the three predictions.¹ After narrating Isaiah's prophecy, the narrator only literally uses the term to refer to the physical road or the path on which the characters go (e.g., 2:23; 4:4, 15, 6:8). He does not specify a

¹ This reading is slightly different from other commentators who also acknowledge the theme of the way of the Lord in the prediction stories, e.g., Elizabeth Struthers Malbon, *Narrative Space and Mythic Meaning in Mark*, BibSem 13 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1991), 68–69; George, *Shepherd in Mark*, 148. The discrepancy is due to the definition of the first-time implied readers in the present research, who do not know how the narrator would develop the narrative.

link back to the prophecy in the first prediction. Following the plotline, however, the readers will observe that Jesus' prediction represents a new teaching (ἤρξατο διδάσκειν, 8:31; see also 9:31) to the disciples.² They will also recognise the divine purpose behind Jesus' suffering, death and resurrection from the content of the predictions. By locating the third prediction on the way to Jerusalem (10:32–33), the readers will eventually understand that Jesus' leading the disciples (ἦν προάγων αὐτοὺς ὁ Ἰησοῦς) to Jerusalem is the way for the Lord to fulfil God's eschatological promise.

The narrator establishes a simple pattern for the prediction stories:

- (1) Jesus specifically talks to his disciples but not the others (8:27; 9:30–31; 10:32);
- (2) He explicitly predicts his death and resurrection (8:31; 9:31; 10:33–34);
- (3) The disciples misunderstand Jesus (8:32; 9:32; 10:35–41); and
- (4) Jesus offers insightful teaching (8:33–9:1; 9:33–50; 10:42–45).³

With this four-fold pattern, the narrator holds Jesus and his death together as an explanation for the ultimate outcome of his ministry. The narrator also underscores this core message by repeating it three times while gradually displaying additional information to the readers in the predictions.

In the prediction stories, Jesus adopts the expression the “Son of Man” (ὁ υἱὸς ὁ ἄνθρωπος) to present his prediction from a third-person point of view. It is not his first time using this expression to teach others (2:10, 28). Who is the Son of Man in Mark's narrative?

² Cf. Gundry proposes that the narrator highlights Jesus' predictive power (Gundry, *Mark*, 428), but he is more likely to underscore the fate of Jesus rather than his act of prediction, because he recounts the prediction three times with information gradually revealed to the readers.

³ Boring, *Mark*, 231; some commentators consider the last prediction as the fullest set among the three (e.g., Witherington, *Mark*, 242). With more information about Jesus' passion included, the narrator skips the term δεῖ (cf. 8:33) and shifts the focus from the divine purpose to the details of Jesus' fate.

Although the narrator never explicitly identifies Jesus as the Son of Man, through his comment or through the statement of other characters, the use of this expression in Mark 2 enables the readers to fill in the identification gap. According to the teaching in Mark 2:8–10 and 27–28, Jesus describes the Son of Man with a certain authority. This depiction precisely aligns with how Jesus executes the prerogatives of the God of Israel in the corresponding stories. With Jesus as the protagonist and a reliable character in Mark’s narrative, this portrayal in the earlier text enables the readers to identify Jesus as the Son of Man, who will suffer, die and rise, even though Jesus expresses his predictions from a third-person viewpoint.

Indeed, this expression has a wide range of meanings. It literally refers to a “human being”. By translating ὁ υἱὸς ὁ ἄνθρωπος as “son of humanity”, Rhoads et al. consider that the narrator uses the expression to highlight the human nature of Jesus throughout his ministry.⁴ However, I argue that the expression has significance beyond this literal meaning. The most common term that the narrator uses in the narrative is ἄνθρωπος (1:23; 3:1, 3), referring to a man, or a less frequent term ἀνὴρ (6:20) to the human nature of Jesus. He has applied the plural form οἱ υἱοὶ τῶν ἀνθρώπων (3:28) to describe the sin of men being forgiven. Notwithstanding the grammatical structure, the phrase is a common Semitic expression (e.g., Ps 10:4; 11:2 LXX), which functions in a more general way different from the use of that expression. The emphasis of this phrase is on human ancestry, but not human nature.⁵

On the other hand, the Son of Man has a tradition deeply rooted in Jewish culture. This expression appears in Dan 7:13–14 and other Jewish literature to indicate the one who

⁴ Rhoads, Dewey and Michie, *Mark as Story*, 110.

⁵ France, *Mark*, 176; Strauss, *Mark*, 170.

serves the divine eschatological purpose.⁶ The question is whether the readers identify the expression as a Danielic reference. Indeed, the narrator has prepared the readers for this recognition. According to Snow's comparison of the use of the Son of Man between Daniel and Mark, Jesus' execution of God's authority (ἐξουσία) on earth (ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς) in Mark 2:10 and 28 is consistent with the depiction of the Danielic Son of Man. The verbal and thematic links indicate that the Son of Man in Mark's narrative probably alludes to Daniel.⁷ As Snow states, among all the possible figures behind Mark's Son of Man, the Danielic reference is the only one associated with a group of faithful people of God. This association resonates with Jesus' expectation in the prediction stories that the disciples share the way of the cross.⁸ With various connections to Daniel, the narrator leads the readers to receive the Son of Man in Jesus' prediction as a Danielic reference.

From the original literary context of Daniel, the Son of Man functions as a glorified figure, which signifies God's deliverance and vindicates the suffering of God's people. In this way, it makes good sense that Jesus fulfils God's salvific promise with his ministry in the same way, but the narrator's point of view does not strictly follow the Danielic understanding of the Son of Man. He attaches this expression to a tragic and terrible idea, that Jesus must suffer, die and rises in three days, rather than establish Jesus as a glorious figure. His

⁶ Regarding the tradition of the Son of Man in the HB, see Hooker, *The Son of Man in Mark*.

⁷ For a comprehensive discussion, see Snow, *Daniel's Son of Man in Mark*, 67–91; Evans also agrees that the use of Son of Man in Mark 2:10 and 28 links it to Daniel, see Evans, *Mark 8–16*, 17. Other commentators accept the Son of Man as a Danielic reference, e.g., Joel Marcus, *Mark 8–16: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB 27A (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 613.

⁸ Snow, *Daniel's Son of Man in Mark*, 124.

understanding is different from Peter's perception of Χριστός.⁹ Rather than being a glorious figure with dominion over the other, this Son of Man has to be a servant to others. In the third prediction, Jesus further expounds on the destiny of this servant, who gives his life as "a ransom for many" (λύτρον ἀντὶ πολλῶν, 10:45).¹⁰ The narrator encapsulates the suffering Son of Man as having a divine purpose by using the term δεῖ in the first prediction. This usage does not merely emphasise the necessity for Jesus to fulfil God's salvific promise through this means, but also describes how God governs the way of fulfilment behind the story.¹¹ Jesus' insistence on the way of the cross demonstrates his true obedience, a sharp contrast to the religious leaders (cf. 7:6–8).

From the predictions, the narrator reveals the hostility towards Jesus. Although the religious leaders are absent from the scene, their corruption is revealed in Jesus' predictions. In the first prediction, Jesus explicitly identifies three groups of people who reject him.¹² This expression vividly describes the rejection from every single party within the central Jewish religious authority. More significantly, the narrator reveals the fate that Jesus will meet. The

⁹ To some extent, it is reasonable for Peter to have an understanding different from Jesus, because the concept of the Messiah suffering such a terrible fate is absent in ancient Judaism, see Hurtado, *Mark*, 136.

¹⁰ Perhaps the concept of suffering in the text originates from Isaiah 52:13–53:12, where the righteous servant of God is designated to suffer for divine vindication. Of all the suffering figures in the HB, France believes that the one in Isaiah is the most influential intertext for Mark's Son of Man, based on the collective support from conceptual and thematic connections, even though there is no verbal echo, see France, *Mark*, 335. See also Marcus, *The Way of the Lord*, 186–190; Evans, *Mark 8–16*, 120–123; cf. Collins suggests the use of παραδίδωμι echoes Isa 53:12 LXX, see Adela Yarbro Collins, "From Noble Death to Crucified Messiah," NTS 40 (1994): 492–493.

¹¹ Grundmann, "δεῖ," *TDNT* 2:22–23.

¹² The narrator repeatedly uses an article to present each group. This repetition underscores "the individuality of each of these groups (the elders, the scribes)", see Stein, *Mark*, 401.

Jewish religious leaders would deliver Jesus to the Roman authority, treating him violently and shamefully, and even executing him (10:33–34). Moreover, the narrator foreshadows the opposing force from the disciples. In his second prediction, Jesus mentions that someone will betray him (παραδίδοται, 9:31).¹³ Notwithstanding the anonymous depiction, the readers could observe Jesus' appointment of the Twelve, and discover that Judah is the one to do so (3:19). With the rejection from the outsiders and the opposition from Judah, the hostile force towards Jesus is significantly intensified.

One notable feature in the prediction stories is the interaction between Jesus and his disciples. As Boring says, “the inseparable bond between Christology [the identity and the ministry of Jesus] and discipleship becomes more clear” in the repetition of the predictions.¹⁴ The narrator expresses this connection through the disciples' misunderstanding, and their reception of Jesus' private teaching (except 8:34). In the first prediction, Peter correctly identifies Jesus as the Χριστός, which has been known to the readers (1:1), but he also hinders Jesus from accomplishing his mission (8:29, 32). According to the rebuke to Peter (8:33), Jesus' suffering and death for the divine purpose is strikingly different from Peter's understanding of the messianic mission (8:33), the concerns of God versus the human concerns. The narrator then immediately attaches Jesus' teaching about discipleship to the

¹³ Although Jesus is betrayed, the immediate context does not portray Jesus' death as God's judgement (cf. Rom 1:24–28). Rather, this outcome highlights the divine purpose with Jesus submitting to it. See also Hurtado, *Mark*, 151.

¹⁴ Boring, *Mark*, 232.

rebuke to correct them.¹⁵ Pictorially, he uses ὀπίσω μου ἀκολουθεῖν to portray how his disciples have to follow him. The language echoes Mark 1:17, where Jesus first calls his disciples in the narrative. Taking up one's own cross becomes fundamental for every disciple who follows Jesus.

Some commentators have attempted to reduce this action to a metaphorical sense that denotes a humiliating way of life. Still, the cross was a well-known death penalty in the first-century Greco-Roman world. It is unnecessary to reject its literal understanding to accept the metaphorical meaning.¹⁶ Thus, Jesus teaches his disciples to share his work (6:7, 12–13) and prepare their lives for the worst-case scenario — the crucifixion — reflecting a proper understanding of his identity and ministry. With a similar interaction pattern between Jesus and his disciples observed in the second and third predictions (9:32; 10:32), the narrator portrays the disciples' failure to grasp the significance of Jesus' identity and the mission they share with Jesus.

A Preparation for Receiving the Second Shepherd Image

The whole episode with the three times predictions of Jesus is widely understood as significant in the plot development of the narrative because of its crucial position. Best has commented that this episode contains “almost all of Jesus' teaching on behaviour in respect

¹⁵ According to Stein, “it is an error to see the switch of terms [from Χριστός to the Son of Man] as a “correction” of Peter's confession in Mark 8:29” because Jesus is identified as the Christ (1:1), see Stein, *Mark*, 401. Χριστός is a proper title for Jesus in terms of the narrator's understanding, as Stein suggests. On the other hand, the content of Jesus' predictions corrects Peter's misunderstanding of the significance of the title according to the plotline. The correction does not necessarily deny the significance of the title Χριστός, see also Kingsbury, *Christology*, 94–97.

¹⁶ Witherington, *Mark*, 244; contra. Gundry, *Mark*, 435.

of the general situation of believers and not of their particular or accidental situations”.¹⁷ As I have discussed, Jesus’ predictions reveal valuable information about his identity, the ultimate mission, and discipleship. This piece of information creates notable contributions to the plot development, leading the narrative to the climax — Jesus’ passion in Jerusalem. First, there is a geographical significance in this episode: Jesus moves his ministry core from Galilee to Jerusalem.¹⁸ With a substantial discrepancy between these two regions from the social-cultural and political aspects, Jesus’ movement to Jerusalem stimulates the readers to anticipate the narrative’s climax.

In addition, the prediction stories contribute to discipleship. As I have discussed, the narrator inextricably holds Jesus’ prediction, the disciples’ misunderstanding, and Jesus’ teaching about discipleship together. It is noteworthy that what the disciples misunderstand is not Jesus’ peripheral teaching. Instead, they fail to grasp the significance of Jesus’ core ministry for fulfilling God’s salvific promise. Correspondingly, when Jesus corrects them, his teaching constitutes the most important part of discipleship.¹⁹ The last, which is also the most prominent piece in the narrative, is the missional significance. In this episode, the narrator foreshadows the fate of Jesus. The content of the three predictions explains the death of Jesus, and sketches a blueprint for how Jesus will suffer, die and rise for the later narrative.²⁰

¹⁷ Ernest Best, *Following Jesus: Discipleship in the Gospel of Mark*, JSNTSup 4 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1981), 162.

¹⁸ Malbon, *Narrative Space*, 30–34.

¹⁹ France considers that the disciples’ incomprehension becomes central in this episode. The teaching of Jesus represents a revolutionary viewpoint of the kingdom of God, see France, *Mark*, 321.

²⁰ Lane, *Mark*, 374–376; Evans, *Mark 8–16*, 106–109.

Nevertheless, without denying the above analysis, I argue that the way the narrator recounts this episode provides the readers with additional information, which prepares them to receive the second shepherd image (Zech 13:7 in 14:27). First, the corruption of the religious leaders leaves no room for manoeuvre. Indeed, the prediction stories focus on the interaction between Jesus and his disciples. The religious leaders are absent from those scenes. However, Jesus' prediction yields insight into the portrayal of the religious leaders. With the first prediction highlighting three different groups of religious leaders, the narrator asserts how the central religious authority of Jerusalem rejects Jesus and prompts his death. This depiction aligns with their portrayal in Mark 3:5–6 that they have hardened hearts and conspire to kill Jesus (3:5–6). Even worse is the party that these leaders use to get involved in their conspiracy. The narrator describes the Roman dominion as the Gentiles' authority (τό ἔθνος, 10:34). To a certain extent, the plot can be seen as ironical to the readers, in terms of purity according to the Mosaic Law. The religious leaders from Jerusalem, who are at the top of the holiness hierarchy, now break the boundary of purity and join the Gentiles' authority, whom they consider as those who are “off the purity map”.²¹ This irony significantly sharpens the incorrigible corruption of the leaders, which enables the readers to anticipate that their status of being punished by God is irreversible.

Second, Jesus continues to lead his disciples to the way of true obedience to God. According to the repetitive pattern of the prediction stories, Jesus bears the leading role in guiding his disciples to walk in the way of the cross. Although the disciples misunderstand and deviate from this path, Jesus corrects them by offering a new set of norms, which points

²¹ David A. deSilva, *Honor, Patronage, Kinship & Purity: Unlocking New Testament Culture* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2000), 269–270; a similar irony can be observed in Mark 3:6 because the Pharisees begin to plot with the Herodians, a party that conflicts with them.

to the way of the Lord.²² Moreover, the narrator uses the term *προάγω* (10:34) to make Jesus' leading role more explicit. This term underscores Jesus' leading position before the disciples (cf. 6:45).²³

More significantly, Jesus aims to lead his disciples in the way of complete obedience to God. In the first prediction, the narrator identifies Jesus' way to Jerusalem as a sign of having in mind the concerns of God, in sharp contrast to human concerns (8:33). While the narrator explains Jesus' death in terms of the divine purpose by using *δεῖ*, he guides the readers to understand that Jesus' way to the cross reflects his entire obedience to God. Given that Jesus invites the disciples to share his fate, he does not merely ask them to take on his healing and exorcising work (cf. 6:7), but leads them to obey God completely. This portrayal of Jesus resonates with the Danielic Son of Man, who leads the faithful community of God to live in his kingdom (Dan 7:18).

Third, the narrator transforms the death of Jesus from a tragedy due to the conspiracy of the religious leaders (3:6) into Jesus' obedience to God as part of the salvific programme. In the prediction stories, the narrator reinterprets Jesus' fate as the ransom for many, and packages it with the necessity of the divine purpose. The reinterpretation presumably leads the readers to observe the bigger picture behind the corrupted human conspiracy, and to understand better the ultimate purpose of Jesus' death.²⁴ Still, the readers do not fully realise

²² Hurtado, *Mark*, 152–153.

²³ LSJ, s.v. “*προάγω*”; *προάγω* is used in the shepherd imagery, see Chapter 3. This usage in Mark's narrative is not obvious, but it has a link to the second shepherd image (14:28).

²⁴ Cf. from an ancient pedagogical perspective, Robbins proposes that the death of Jesus “is internally accepted as a benefit to others through insight into the will of God”, see Vernon K. Robbins, *Jesus the Teacher: A Socio-Rhetorical Interpretation of Mark* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984), 212.

the divine plan at this moment because the narrator does not specify a text from the HB here (cf. 1:2–3). An area of uncertainty about the divine plan for Jesus’ death remains. In addition, the narrator connects the messianic identity of Jesus to his cruel and shameful fate by using the glorified figure of the Danielic Son of Man. This tie-up creates a sense of unpredictability, because it contrasts in a striking manner with how Χριστός is generally perceived, and how Jesus performs with a supernatural power at the early stage of his ministry (e.g., 2:1–12; 3:7–12; 4:35–41; 5:11–20, 21–43).²⁵ The uncertainty and unpredictability among the readers encourage them to pay attention to how God formulates his plan for Jesus’ fate.

Fourth, the prediction stories present a pessimistic view of the disciples. In the three predictions, the disciples totally misunderstand Jesus’ teaching about his fate. According to Jesus’ response to Peter in the first prediction (8:38), the disciples are concerned with the mind of humans but not with that of God. Similarly, the disciples fail to occupy the role of being a servant in continuing Jesus’ ministry and ask for greatness and glory (9:35; 10:44). Kingsbury vividly describes the conflict between Jesus and his disciples in the three predictions — “Repeatedly [Three times], Jesus clashes with the disciples”.²⁶ The disciples demonstrate their misunderstanding of Jesus’ same teaching in the episode three times. This pattern emphasises the disciples’ incomprehension.

More significantly, the whole picture creates a strong sense of irony, leading the readers to become suspicious. After receiving the first prediction and teaching from Jesus, the disciples are expected to understand Jesus’ teaching about his fate, but they fail to do so. They are even identified as part of the unbelieving generation (9:19; 8:12, 38), the same as

²⁵ Heil rightly named this tie-up “the mysterious paradox of the divine necessity”. It brings the readers to another level of reading about the fate of Jesus, see Heil, *Mark*, 181.

²⁶ Kingsbury, *Conflict in Mark*, 116.

the religious leaders and the crowd.²⁷ What they fail to grasp this time is not his general teaching (e.g., 4:3–8) but his ultimate fate, and the core mission required to fulfil God’s promise. The narrator continuously breaks the readers’ expectations and keeps them in suspense about the disciples’ fates. Even worse, they stop asking Jesus for further explanation (9:32; cf. 10:32) when they misunderstand his teaching. The change in their behaviour is entirely different from what they have done before (e.g., 4:10; 7:17). They abandon the privilege of receiving Jesus’ private teaching, and make themselves no different from the outsiders, even though Jesus actively and consistently teaches them (9:33–50). Meanwhile, the betrayal of Judas has been acknowledged in Jesus’ prediction. Judas becomes one of the characters who prompts Jesus’ death. This depiction seriously repudiates the allegiance of at least one of the disciples. In the prediction stories, the narrator gradually sharpens the dark side of the characters and intensifies the readers’ suspicion along the plotline.

Nevertheless, the disciples are the only group of characters who have the privilege to receive Jesus’ private teaching about his fate and the explanation of his teaching (8:27, 31; 9:30; 10:32). Although the disciples successively fail to understand Jesus’ teaching in the prediction stories, he is insistent about teaching them and leading them to understand.²⁸ He does not forsake them and brings them to Jerusalem (10:32), the place for him to accomplish his mission. Moreover, the disciples’ life is inextricably interwoven with the ultimate fate of Jesus. In the last chapter, I demonstrated that the death of John the Baptist stimulates the

²⁷ Marcus believes that, according to the plot development, the disciples are the primary referent of the unbelieving generation, even though the religious leaders and the crowd are included, see Marcus, *Mark 8–16*, 653.

²⁸ Cf. from a broader context, the disciples are encouraged to listen again and again in order to understand, see Elizabeth S. Malbon, “Echoes and Foreshadowings in Mark 4–8: Reading and Rereading,” *JBL* 112.2 (1993): 229. From his analysis, Danone also notices the positive portrayal of the disciples among the negative depictions, see Danone, *The Rhetoric in Mark*, 126.

readers to ponder the destiny of the disciples in following Jesus. However, the prediction stories interpret discipleship at another level. The potential fate of the disciples who follow Jesus is no longer simply an external threat. Instead, it becomes the essential life for every Jesus' disciple (8:34; 10:44–45). The disciples must prepare themselves for the most humiliating execution when following Jesus.

Overall, the narrator still positively affirms the insiders' position of the disciples and continues to portray them paradoxically, but he dramatically expands on their negative side. In this case, the readers would seriously question whether the disciples are the true insiders of God's community. The readers would no longer be suspicious, but instead would expect that the disciples will end in complete failure in following Jesus. With the new expectation, the readers would consider that the disciples will ultimately be separated from God's restored community.

Besides, the readers obtain an entirely new piece of information regarding the death of Jesus from the predictions. Jesus will rise in three days. What does this resurrection mean to Jesus' shepherding ministry of fulfilling God's salvific promise in the narrative? While the answer remains unknown in the immediate context, I propose that the narrator will elaborate on it by using the second shepherd image.

So far, the readers have obtained additional information from the three predictions of Jesus. However, the association between this data and Jesus' shepherding activity remains obscure, because the narrator does not explicitly establish their connection here. When receiving the second shepherd image in a metaleptic way, I propose that the readers realise how the narrator has prepared them to receive the second one, and they can connect it to the first image along the plotline.

The Shepherd Image in the Prediction of Peter's Denial (14:26–31)

The narrator recounts a short story about Jesus' explanation of the disciples being scattered with the use of the shepherd imagery in Zech 13:7, and his prediction of Peter's denial after the Last Supper (14:12–25). The story provides a geographical transition for Jesus' ministry from the city of Jerusalem (14:16–17) to the Mount of Olives (14:26), and it also leads the readers to witness how his prediction gradually comes true.²⁹ The conversation between Jesus and Peter in the story succinctly and definitely delivers the readers a blueprint of how Jesus and his disciples face their fate. This blueprint both stimulates the readers to recall the first shepherd image and prepares them to receive the events at the later stage of the narrative in terms of Mark's metaleptic understanding of the shepherd images.

The Backdrop of the Prediction of Peter's Denial

By locating the prediction of Peter's denial immediately after the story of the Last Supper (14:12–25), the characterisation of the Passover meal, including the preparation, becomes the backdrop against which the prediction is established. This arrangement provides the readers with an immediate context to understand the second shepherd image. According to the plot development, the narrator decorates the meal with the motif of Jesus' accomplishment of God's salvific promise, with the human conspiracy and betrayal as the shadow.

²⁹ Since Jesus' prayer at Gethsemane (14:32–42), Jesus' inevitable way to his death becomes increasingly clear. Meanwhile, the disciples abandon Jesus when he is arrested. Malbon describes this place as being "central to the culmination of Jesus' ministry", see Malbon, *Narrative Space*, 34.

The story of the Last Supper begins with the demonstration of Jesus' predictive power. The plot development of the preparation of the Passover meal, particularly the resolution in Mark 14:16, reveals Jesus' mastery instead of the involvement of the two disciples.³⁰ More significantly, this predictive power fulfils the divine salvific plan. Indeed, the preparation parallels Jesus' entry to Jerusalem (11:1–6) in terms of the narrator's presentation.³¹ With the adaptation of Ps 118:25–26, the readers would identify the ultimate purpose of Jesus' prediction as the way of fulfilling God's eschatological promise (cf. 1:1–3; 8:31; 9:31; 10:33–34). This picture echoes the focus of the anointment (14:1–11) — the impending death of Jesus.³² The woman's act of anointing has a positive value (καλὸν ἔργον, 14:6) in terms of Jesus' understanding, even though his death results from the plot of the Jewish religious leaders and the betrayal by Judas (14:1–2, 10–11).

During the Passover meal, the narrator continues to develop his motif. He initially recounts how Jesus obscurely exposes the betrayal from one of his disciples and his terrible

³⁰ E.g., Edwards, *Mark*, 420; Marcus further suggests that the disciples here demonstrate a faithful paradigm (Marcus, *Mark 8–16*, 949). However, Marcus overlooks how the disciples still fall asleep in Gethsemane (14:37, 39, 41) when the threat is close to them. Rather than showing a faithful response, the disciples' act is more likely to accentuate Jesus' predictive power.

³¹ Not only do both stories have a similar plot development, but the narrator also makes verbal repetitions in his narration (ἀποστέλλει δύο τῶν μαθητῶν αὐτοῦ in Mark 11:1 and 14:14; καὶ λέγει αὐτοῖς ὑπάγετε εἰς τὴν κώμην in Mark 11:2 and καὶ λέγει αὐτοῖς ὑπάγετε εἰς τὴν πόλιν in Mark 14:13; αὐτοῖς καθὼς εἶπεν in Mark 11:6 and καθὼς εἶπεν αὐτοῖς in Mark 14:16).

³² Edwards proposes the woman as a model for sacrificial faith, in contrast to the betrayal of Judah (Edwards, "Markan Sandwiches," 208–209). This proposal gains contextual support because Jesus explicitly admires the act of the woman (14:6–9); cf. Holly J. Carey, "Women in Action: Models for Discipleship in Mark's Gospel," *CBQ* 81.3 (2019): 442. However, the plot development shows that the narrator directs the readers to focus on Mark's point of view about the death of Jesus. Given that the present research affirms Jesus as the protagonist while the other characters serve as the foil for Jesus, the woman's acts reflect Jesus' positive view of his impending death.

fate (14:18, 20; cf. Matt 26:25).³³ While the disciples cannot receive a clear answer, the readers know that Judas is the one (3:19; 14:10–11). Nonetheless, the narrator reaffirms the divine plan in the death of Jesus by recalling the Son of Man (14:21) as the conclusion, with which to lead his readers to move to the climax of the meal — Jesus’ redefinition of the traditional Passover meal, symbolising the salvation in Exodus (Exod 6:6–7).³⁴ The central focus of the meal now becomes the bread, the body of Jesus (τὸ σῶμά μου, 14:22), and the cup, the blood of the covenant pouring out for many (ὁ αἶμά μου τῆς διαθήκης τὸ ἐκχυννόμενον ὑπὲρ πολλῶν, 14:24). This characterisation of the story leads the readers to interpret breaking the bread and sharing the cup symbolically as a sign of Jesus’ sacrificial act.³⁵

³³ From the plot development, only the twelve disciples, which are portrayed as the close companions of Jesus in the narrative, share the Passover meal with Jesus (cf. Ps 41:10 MT). Meanwhile, the narrator highlights the betrayer from one of the disciples by using a repetitive pattern (“ὁ ... ὁ ...” and “εἷς ... ὁ” in 14:18 and 20, respectively), see Frans Neirynck, *Duality in Mark: Contributions to the Study of the Markan Redaction*, BETL 31. (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1988), 100.

³⁴ The narrator omits several details in the traditional Passover meal, including the lamb, unleavened bread, a bowl of salt water, bitter herbs and the four cups of wine, see Joseph Tabory, *JPS Commentary on the Haggadah Historical Introduction, Translation, and Commentary* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 2008), 79–135. The omission of these elements raises a historical question about whether this supper refers to the traditional Passover meal. However, from the foreground of the narrative, the narrator guides the readers to recognise this supper as a Passover meal, for example, having a meal in the city of Jerusalem (14:12–13, 16, 26); in the reclining position (14:18). These characterisations suggest that the meal is a banquet like the Passover meal. For a detailed discussion, see Stein, *Mark*, 641–643. Another issue related to the last supper is the institution of the Lord’s supper. Boring rightly points out that the plot development shows no intention about this institution because the focus of the story is on Jesus himself (see Boring, *Mark*, 390).

³⁵ It is hard for the readers to accept these depictions literally because it makes no sense for the disciples to share the whole person of Jesus physically, and to drink blood, which is prohibited in the HB (Lev 3:17; 7:26–27; 17:14); See also Gundry, *Mark*, 831. Some commentators consider the phrase ὑπὲρ πολλῶν (10:45) as a reference to Isa 53:12. If this reference is considered, the covenant that Jesus establishes with his blood potentially vindicates God’s eschatology victory, according to Isaiah’s literary context in terms of Mark’s understanding, see also n.10.

From the plotline of the Passover meal, the readers now gain new information about the fate of both Jesus and his disciples, compared with that from Jesus' three predictions (8:31; 9:31; 10:33–34). First, the death of Jesus is not simply an event of life-giving as a ransom for many (cf. 10:45). Rather, it becomes evident that it is an eschatological event that fulfils God's salvific promise with a covenant established for his people, in contrast to the one in Exodus.³⁶ Second, the fate of the disciples is inextricably interwoven with that of Jesus because he requests his disciples to bear the cross (8:34), which is a potential threat from extending Jesus' work from the Jewish religious leaders and Roman authorities. By sharing the bread and the cup (ἔκλασεν ... ἔδωκεν αὐτοῖς καὶ εἶπεν λάβετε ... ἔδωκεν αὐτοῖς, 14:22–23) in the Passover meal, the readers would expect that the disciples will have active participation in Jesus' sacrificial event to fulfil God's promise. This is different from bearing the cross which is portrayed as an event independent of the death of Jesus (8:34).³⁷ Given that Jesus makes a futuristic projection for the kingdom of God (14:25), the readers would also anticipate the renewal facilitated by the sacrificial death of Jesus.³⁸

On the whole, the plotline of the Last Supper indicates that Jesus is heading towards his deadly fate. The readers realise the conspiracy of the religious leaders (3:5; 8:31; 9:31; 10:33–34) and observe how this plot is progressively fulfilled during the Passover meal

³⁶ Wright suggests that the impending death of Jesus has its atoning value, see Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God*, 579–584. Without denying this value, however, the narrator is likely to highlight the sacrificial suffering for the sake of the covenant establishment in his narrative (cf. 8:31; 9:31; 10:33–34; cf. εἰς ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν, Matt 26:28). The shift from God's redemptive act in Exodus to Jesus' sacrificial act implies the new dimension in the covenant that God establishes with Jesus' blood (cf. ἡ καινὴ διαθήκη, Luke 22:20).

³⁷ Cf. Ernest Best, *The Temptation and the Passion: The Markan Soteriology*, SNTSMS 2, 2nd. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 144–147.

³⁸ The function of καινὸ in the text is ambiguous (e.g., France, *Mark*, 572; Evans, *Mark 8–16*, 395). Still, the temporal direction is clear. The use of οὐκέτι and ἕως creates the future scene in the kingdom of God, see BDAG, s.v. “οὐκέτι”; BDAG, s.v. “ἕως”.

(14:1–2, 10–11, 18–21). Nonetheless, the narrator continuously reminds his readers of the primary cause of Jesus’ death, which is the divine eschatological plan for the salvation of God’s people.

Acknowledging Jesus’ Explanation in Light of Zechariah (Mark 14:27)

After a series of events, the narrator gradually leads the readers to acknowledge that the death of Jesus is an inevitable incident, with the positive function of establishing a new covenant for the people of God. Meanwhile, the narrator portrays the disciples as actively participating in Jesus’ sacrificial death. At this moment, Jesus uses Zechariah’s shepherd image to explain the disciples’ falling away. Their scattering becomes a component of the divine salvific plan, a purpose for God to strike his shepherd to accomplish his restoration.

Unlike the first shepherd image, the second one takes on the form of an intertextual reference to Jewish scripture (γέγραπται, 14:27; cf. ὡς πρόβατα μὴ ἔχοντα ποιμένα, 6:34). Although Jesus does not explicitly refer to a source, the narrator leads the readers to recognise Zechariah as the original literary background of the reference. The readers can observe the verbal and thematic parallel between Mark 14:26–31 and Zech 13:7. Despite minor verbal and syntactical differences, the reference explicitly indicates that the shepherd(s) will receive a violent blow, and the flock will be scattered.³⁹ More significantly, the narrator has prepared some elements from the previous stories for recognition. In the

³⁹ Mark’s narrator uses the singular form of the shepherd, which aligns with the MT account, but he uses the future tense in the first person, which is different from both the MT (the imperative in the second person) and the LXX (the aorist tense in the second person) to express the striking act. In addition, the narrator employs the term διασκορπίζω in the future passive voice, which is probably closer to פָּרַץ in the MT instead of ἐκσπάω in the LXX in terms of the concept (see Carroll R., “פָּרַץ,” *NIDOTTE* 3:582–586; cf. LSJ, s.v. “ἐκσπάω”).

story of Jesus' entry of Jerusalem (11:1–11), the narration of Jesus entering the city is parallel to the oracle in Zech 9:9–10;⁴⁰ the narrator situates Jesus' eschatological discourse regarding the consequence of the Jerusalem Temple in the Mount of Olives (τὸ ὄρος τῶν ἐλαιῶν, 13:3; see also 11:1; 14:26). The picture possibly resonates with the eschatological battle in which the God of Israel initially stands on the Mount of Olives (Zech 14:4; see also τῆς ἡμέρας ἐκείνης, 14:25; cf. Zech 14:4, 9); the blood of the covenant (14:24) might also echo Zech 9:11 in God's salvific context.⁴¹ Admittedly, none of these elements is strong enough to work independently. However, they collectively stimulate the readers to evoke the literary context of Zechariah 9–14. As Marcus proposes, the eschatological aspect of Zechariah 9–14 “has profound ramifications” for the narrator to employ.⁴² All these findings collectively guide the readers to acknowledge Zechariah's literary context as the background of the intertextual reference.

Metaleptic Transgression to Zech 13:7–9

In Mark 14:27, Jesus explicitly refers to the text of Zechariah by using the quotation formula. The citing style indicates that this intertextual reference appears to be a verbatim report about the work of the God of Israel as described in Zechariah 13. When I discussed the metaleptic transgression in the use of Ezek 34:5 in Mark 6:34 in Chapter 5, I followed

⁴⁰ In Matthew's narrative, there is a supplementary text in Matt 21:4–5 used to identify this entry as a fulfilment of the messianic oracle in Zechariah, see Clay Alan Ham, *The Coming King and the Rejected Shepherd: Matthew's Reading of Zechariah's Messianic Hope* (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2005), 39–44.

⁴¹ Marcus suggests that Mark 14:28 conceptually and thematically alludes to Zech 13:8–14:5, see Marcus, *The Way of the Lord*, 155.

⁴² Marcus, *The Way of the Lord*, 158–159; see also Raymond E. Brown, *The Death of the Messiah: From Gethsemane to the Grave: A Commentary on the Passion Narratives in the Four Gospels* (New York: Doubleday, 1994), 2:124.

Fludernik and proposed that the allusive expression of an intertextual reference serves as one of the criteria for metaleptic transgression to occur. By considering this proposal, the explicit reference to Zech 13:7 here seemingly stops the transgression from happening. However, the citation style, whether it is explicit or allusive, is only one of the conditions for the narrator or the character crossing the narrative boundary. Indeed, Zech 13:7 in Mark 14:27 has its particular feature, which facilitates the metaleptic transgression.

Unlike Ezek 35:5 in Mark 6:34, the narrator situates the explicit intertextual reference to Zech 13:7 within the speech of Jesus. In other words, it is Jesus rather than the narrator who refers to the text of Zechariah. According to the literary context of Zechariah, the text cited in Mark 14:27 is part of God's oracle about his restorative programme. Given the context of both Zechariah and Mark's narrative, if Jesus metaleptically intrudes into Zechariah, Jesus virtually takes on the character of the God of Israel within Zechariah's context. He does not move to another narrative level. Genette describes this situation as a pseudo-*metalepsis*. While this type of *metalepsis* is hardly detected, Genette suggests that a possible and obvious indicator is the change of the person.⁴³ The change enables the text to create a sense of strangeness, fulfilling the condition of *metalepsis*.

When Mark's Jesus refers to Zech 13:7, he adopts the first person rather than the third person to express the oracle. Viewing the text literally, Jesus is no longer a witness of what Zechariah's God will do, but he himself performs the action. This construction stimulates the readers to be conscious of Jesus' identification with God's oracle in Zechariah. Jesus' citing the text creates a sense of strangeness in his virtual assumption of the role of Zechariah's God. In particular, Mark's narrator maintains the distinction between Jesus and the God of Israel. He unambiguously portrays Jesus as the appointed agent of God (1:1). In the use of the

⁴³ Genette, *Narrative Discourse*, 237.

first shepherd image in Mark 6:34, Jesus is also characterised as the Davidic prince whom God appoints as the leader of the renewed people. Even though the narrator has occasionally introduced ambiguity into the identification of Jesus as God, his act of maintaining the distinction in his narration is more explicit. Therefore, I argue that Jesus metaleptically transgresses into the literary context of Zechariah, playing the role of the God of Israel in that context to declare the oracle about the restorative programme.

Metaleptic Interpretation of Zech 13:7 in Mark 14:27

The previous section has demonstrated that the narrator guides the reader to acknowledge Jesus' saying in Mark 14:27 as a reference to Zech 13:7. In this section, I will argue that the metaleptic interpretation of this reference yields insights into the use of the second shepherd image in Mark's narrative. In light of *metalepsis*, the events regarding the shepherd image in Zech 13:7–9 virtually intrude into Mark's plotline, and interact with Jesus' prediction of Peter's denial. Zechariah's literary background offers the readers additional information to understand the death of Jesus.

According to the reference to Zech 13:7 in Mark 14:27, Jesus rhetorically modifies the striking act using the first person. This emphatic tone decisively indicates that Jesus is acting for the God of Israel in order to declare as oracle that God will surely strike the shepherd and scatter the flock, a final and irreversible pronouncement regarding the fate of Jesus. However, the striking act in Zechariah only serves as an essential step in God's eschatological restoration. It triggers God's scattering of the flock, explaining why the

disciples fall away.⁴⁴ Given that the scattering facilitates an ultimate purpose — purification — in the restoration, I argue that the narrator further clarifies that the disciples’ falling away has theological significance in this context through the lens of *metalepsis*.

In Chapter 3, I have presented several characteristics of the events surrounding the shepherd image in Zech 13:7–9.⁴⁵ With the metaleptic interpretation of Zech 13:7 in Mark 14:27, I will argue that the way the narrator uses Zech 13:7–9 is to portray Jesus as a smitten shepherd. In addition, the intertextual background sheds light on the characterisation of the disciples in following Jesus in the narrative. In particular, I will demonstrate how the narrator connects the two shepherd images along the plotline through the lens of *metalepsis*.

Ultimately, he gives the readers a complete picture of the Davidic shepherding activity in Jesus’ ministry.

Jesus as the Smitten Shepherd in God’s Initiated Restoration

In his analysis of Zechariah 11 and 13, Redditt suggests that the shepherd materials in Zechariah 9–14 expose the corruption of contemporary Jewish leadership.⁴⁶ His proposal seemingly aligns with how Jesus refers to Zech 13:7, that he himself will act as the striker to punish the corrupt Jewish religious leaders, especially when they consistently demonstrate their incorrigible corruption against God in the narrative.

⁴⁴ The second *ὅτι* in Mark 14:27 between *πάντες σκανδαλισθήσεσθε* and *γέγραπται* denotes a causal relationship, see Rodney J. Decker, *Mark 9–16: A Handbook on the Greek Text*, BHGNT (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2014), 194.

⁴⁵ For a detailed examination, see the section “The Shepherd Image in Zechariah 13:7–9” in Chapter 3.

⁴⁶ Paul L. Redditt, “Israel’s Shepherds,” 631–642.

Nevertheless, in my exegetical exposition of the shepherd image in Zechariah, I have argued that the smitten shepherd is a Davidic leader with a close relationship with the God of Israel. Rather than punishment, God's striking is part of his eschatological restoration of his people, even though it is a violent act.⁴⁷ Second, from the metaleptic perspective, Jesus only acts on behalf of God to declare the oracle. The use of the first person unequivocally affirms how God violently treats Jesus in his salvific plan, while the narrator explicitly maintains the distinction between the God of Israel and Jesus as the Son of God (1:1, 11; 3:11; 5:7). Third, the plot development intends to identify Jesus as the smitten shepherd. At the beginning of the narrative, the narrator declares Jesus as the Χριστός who fulfils God's salvific promise (1:1–3). As I have discussed in the previous chapters, Jesus also consistently and insistently demonstrates his obedience to God, utterly different from the religious leaders.⁴⁸ In other words, he is a close companion to God, similar to the portrayal of the smitten shepherd in Zechariah.

Furthermore, the narrator has portrayed Jesus as the Davidic shepherd who leads the renewed community of God (6:30–44). Meanwhile, the narrator continuously signals to his readers that Jesus is heading to his death in his three predictions and in the story of last

⁴⁷ In Chapter 3, I argue that the smitten shepherd is a positive Davidic figure whose suffering is for God's restoration, see the section "The Smitten Shepherd and Scattered Flock", "Ambiguity in Determining the Identity of the Smitten Shepherd" and "Continuation of the Davidic Promise" in Chapter 3.

⁴⁸ For example, the narrator identifies Jesus as the beloved son (1:11; 9:7) and the Holy One of God (1:24); in Jesus' teaching on purity (7:1–23), Jesus leads the religious leaders, the disciples and the crowd to have true obedience to God. In his three predictions (8:22–10:52), Jesus demonstrates his insistence on submitting to God.

supper because of the religious leaders' conspiracy.⁴⁹ In this case, comparing Jesus with the smitten shepherd is convincing. We might note that Redditt's proposal fails to receive support from the wider field of current biblical scholarship. Commentators tend to retain their reading of Zech 13:7 in Mark 14:27 as portraying Jesus as the smitten shepherd rather than the corrupted leadership.⁵⁰ Therefore, the figure of Jesus in the narrative is best understood as the Davidic suffering shepherd in Zechariah.

By identifying Jesus as the smitten shepherd in Zechariah in light of *metalepsis*, the narrator establishes connections between the use of both shepherd images along the plotline. First, according to Ezekiel 34, the narrator portrays Jesus as the appointed Davidic shepherd who leads the renewed community of God. The Davidic nature continues in the metaleptic use of the second shepherd image. Seemingly, in the story of Jesus' teaching about his understanding of Χριστός (12:35–37), Jesus himself rejects the Davidic identity with rhetorical questions and the use of Ps 109 LXX. However, this reading contradicts Bartimaeus' cry, where the narrator implicitly affirms the Davidic sonship of Jesus (cf. 10:47–48). In addition, Botner rightly points out that the stories surrounding Jesus' teaching in 12:35–37 focus on the authority of the God of Israel. Thus, instead of the relationship

⁴⁹ While the narrator recounts Jesus' meeting his tragic fate because of the religious leaders' corruption, Jesus' pronouncement of God's punishment on the Jewish central religious authority is also reported (11:12–26; 12:1–12). Some commentators suggest that the consistent negative image of the Jewish religious leadership reflects Mark's anti-Judaism. However, by considering the whole of Mark's Gospel, Marcus rightly points out that the Gospel does not merely expose the corruption of the Jewish religious leaders but also highlights how the crowds, the Roman authority, and particularly the disciples are responsible for their own problems, see Marcus, *Mark 8–16*, 929–930.

⁵⁰ Cook, "The Metamorphosis of a Shepherd," 463–466; other NT commentators who positively read the smitten shepherd as Jesus, e.g., Gould, *Mark*, 266–267; C. E. B. Cranfield, *The Gospel According to St Mark: An Introduction and Commentary*, CGTC (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1959), 428; Brown, *The Death of the Messiah*, 1:129; Gundry, *Mark*, 845; Evans, *Mark 8–16*, 400; Hays, *Echoes in the Gospels*, 81; see also the section "Literature Review of Mark's Shepherd Image" in Chapter 1.

between Χριστός and the son of David, the story highlights that Jesus is the one who exercises the authority of God.⁵¹ By contrast, other characters in Mark's narrative are not likely those who exercise God's authority. Besides the incorrigible Jewish religious leaders, the crowd and the disciples reject and misunderstand Jesus, respectively, even though they have been keen on following Jesus. From the narrator's point of view, therefore, the readers would acknowledge the Davidic nature of Jesus as the Χριστός.

Second, both shepherds perform as non-militant leaders who participate in the eschatological restoration. While the use of the first image signifies the purity concern in Jesus' shepherding ministry, the second one portrays Jesus as a suffering figure and outlines his death in terms of the HB. However, the suffering sense of the Davidic shepherd is totally absent from Ezekiel 34.⁵²

To fill the gap between the two shepherd images, the narrator uses several events along the plotline to supply that information. As I have discussed, the narrator continuously creates a sense of unpredictability within Jesus' ministry, which keeps the readers in suspense about how Jesus will act to fulfil God's salvific promise at the later stage of the narrative.

While human conspiracy appears to be the cause of Jesus' death (3:5), the three-time

⁵¹ Evans proposes a dichotomous interpretation that "Jesus is not (just) the Son of David but (also) the Son of God" (Evans, *Mark 8–16*, 850–851; cf. Leonhard Goppelt, *Typos: The Typological Interpretation of the Old Testament in the New*, trans. Donald H. Madvig (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans, 1982), 83–84). His proposal mitigates the issue created by Jesus' rhetorical question in Mark 12:37, where Jesus does not deny the Davidic identity, but considers David's inferiority to the Messiah in the narrative. In view of Botner, Evan's interpretation "involves some form of a not-only-but-also resolution" and gains no historical support. The key issue that Jesus deals with in the story is the person who exercises the authority of the God of Israel, see Max Botner, *Son of David in Mark*, 162–173.

⁵² The readers have known of the death of Jesus when they receive the first shepherd image, but they only realise the conspiracy of the religious leaders in Mark 3:5. The literary context of Ezekiel 34 does not display any suffering sense in the Davidic shepherd image, see the section "Appointment of a Davidic Prince" in Chapter 3.

predictions and the story of the Last Supper surprisingly transform the dreadful fate into a sacrificial means of following through on the divine plan for the eschatological restoration. This new understanding enables the narrator to align the readers and prepare them to receive the second shepherd image. In light of *metalepsis*, the narrator attaches the suffering sense from Zechariah to Jesus' shepherding ministry. He portrays Jesus as the designated Davidic shepherd being smitten by God. Given that Jesus has not been involved in any militant campaign in the narrative, the readers would acknowledge that Jesus is a suffering shepherd in the divine salvific plan. In the story of Jesus' trial (14:53–65; 15:1–15), the religious leaders and the Roman authority cannot reach a guilty verdict against Jesus according to the terms of the narrator's understanding (14:55, 59; 15:11, 14–15; cf. Matt 27:18; Luke 23:22).⁵³ In this regard, the characterisation of Jesus' trial presumably has the notion that Jesus' suffering is related to his role as Davidic shepherd rather than as an insurrectionist.

Third, the Davidic shepherding activity of both Ezekiel and Zechariah signifies the radical nature of God's restoration. According to Ezekiel 34, God's peaceful covenant delivers to his people a radical restoration. In the use of the first shepherd image, however, the narrator does not clarify the link between Jesus' death and the radicalness of God's

⁵³ Seemingly, Mark's Jesus is deemed guilty of Jewish kingship. However, Jesus does not claim this for himself in the narrative, even though he is portrayed as the king of the Jews (15:2, 9, 12, 18, 26). Moreover, his response to Pilate's question in Mark 15:2 is ambiguous (cf. 15:12). Whether Jesus denies his kingship before Pilate or not, Pilates cannot reach a verdict against him in terms of the narrator (15:4); see also Felix John, *Eine Jesus-Vita aus Flavischer Zeit: Das Markusevangelium im Narratologischen Vergleich mit den Biographien Plutarchs*, WUNT 480 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2022), 108; Gundry, *Mark*, 924.

restoration.⁵⁴ He then gradually guides his readers to understand that Jesus' death is a sacrifice for establishing a new covenant in the divine plan instead of a tragedy, based on Jesus' three predictions (8:31; 9:31; 10:33–34) and the Last Supper (14:12–25). Using the second shepherd image, the narrator resolves the question. Zechariah portrays God's striking as an essential step necessary to bring forth his radical restoration. Therefore, the death of Jesus is no longer an interim stage in God's restoration. On the contrary, it is a crucial step that symbolises the radicalness of the restoration.

Lastly, God is the one who initiates the restoration in which both the shepherds participate. According to Ezekiel 34, God's renewal is not contingent on human engagement. Likewise, in the first feeding story, Jesus does not have compassion towards the crowd due to their enthusiasm.⁵⁵ Similarly, in Zech 13:7–9, it is God himself who strikes his shepherd, though Jesus dies through the rejection of the Jewish religious leaders, the betrayal of Judas, and the crucifixion ordered by the Roman authority. The sense of God's initiation becomes evident in Mark's narrative by changing the verb *πατάσσω* from imperative to first person singular (14:27; cf. Zech 13:7). Hence, the readers would realise that Jesus' shepherding activity is part of the divine salvific plan without being contingent on any human engagement.

⁵⁴ Ezekiel displays a sense of radicalness by partially adopting the blessing part of the Holiness Code in Leviticus (see the section "Establishment of a Peaceful Covenant" in Chapter 3). While the narrator foreshadows the death of Jesus before recounting his miraculous feeding using the first shepherd image, he stimulates the readers to contemplate the radicalness of God's restoration in Jesus' ministry against the backdrop of Jesus' death. However, he remains silent about this question, which is then resolved in the use of the second shepherd image, see the section "The Abundance of Jesus' Feeding as a Radical Sign" in Chapter 5.

⁵⁵ See the section "The Initiator of God's Restoration" in Chapter 5.

According to the narration, the readers would realise the connections between the use of the two shepherd images. They would then plausibly query the relationship between Jesus' teaching on purity (from the first shepherd image) and his death (from the second shepherd image). I will discuss this question further in a later section. Before that, I will first examine how the metaleptic interpretation of Zech 13:7 in Mark 14:27 creates insights into the understanding about the disciples' falling away in the narrative.

The Disciples' Falling Away from Jesus

Primarily, Jesus uses Zech 13:7 to explain the disciples' desertion. They will cease to follow Jesus as his disciples.⁵⁶ According to Zechariah, the flock being scattered is the inevitable consequence of striking the shepherd. Given that the smitten shepherd corresponds to the fate of Jesus, many commentators tend to consider the scattered flock as a descriptive account of the disciples' fleeing.⁵⁷ Does the narrator guide the readers to receive this superficial reading? In my view, the narrator's metaleptic interpretation of Zech 13:7 enables the readers to realise the paradoxical portrayal of the disciples and the significance of their desertion.

⁵⁶ Basically, the term *σκανδαλίζομαι* denotes causing someone to sin or giving offence to someone. Matthew's Gospel associates this term with the temptation of sin (e.g., Matt 5:30–31; 13:41; cf. Rom 14:13; 2 Cor 11:29; 1 John 2:6; Rev 2:14). It also uses the term to denote the cessation of believing the kingdom of God proclaimed by Jesus (e.g., Matt 13:21). When Mark's Gospel employs this term, it shares the meaning of causing someone unbelief (e.g., Mark 4:17). However, it tends to turn the theme of committing sin implicit and highlight the consequence of unbelief – cease following Jesus (9:42–47). France rightly observes that the use of *διασκορπίζω* in Zechariah's reference gives a sharper focus to the meaning of *σκανδαλίζομαι* in Mark's Gospel, see France, *Mark*, 575; see also BDAG, s.v. “*σκανδαλίζομαι*”; “*σκάνδαλον σκανδαλίζω*,” *NIDNTTE* 4:297.

⁵⁷ E.g., Hooker, *Mark*, 344; Gundry, *Mark*, 845; Hurtado, *Mark*, 241; Evans, *Mark* 8–16, 400; Brown, *Death*, 127.

Basically, the disciples are best understood as the figures comparable to the scattered flock in terms of the metaleptic interaction between Jesus' prediction and Zech 13:7–9. At the beginning of the Passover meal, the narrator indicates that Jesus is alone with his twelve disciples (14:17, 20). Without any gap in the plotline, the same group of people sings the hymn and goes to the Mount of Olives after the meal (14:26). Thus, when Jesus begins his speech to a group of people (λέγει αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς), it is convincing that the twelve disciples are the target audience who receive Jesus' use of Zech 13:7. Moreover, Jesus briefly and explicitly addresses the disciples' desertion in his prediction (14:27; cf. v.29). The response of Peter and the other disciples (14:29, 31) also demonstrates that all the disciples understand that Jesus is talking about their denial, but not that of others. Therefore, the plot development lets the readers compare the disciples to the scattered flock in Zechariah.

Indeed, the narrator has prepared the readers to receive the failure of the disciples along the plotline. Since Jesus teaches in parables in Mark 4, the narrator has portrayed the disciples paradoxically.⁵⁸ They appear to be the insiders in Jesus' community, but at the same time, they fail to comprehend his identity and ministry. With the metaleptic use of the first shepherd image, the narrator makes the readers question whether the disciples are eligible members.⁵⁹ The continuous incomprehension of the disciples leads the readers to query the disciples' membership. Nonetheless, Jesus continuously allows them to share his work (e.g., 6:6–13) and offers his private teaching to the disciples (e.g., 7:17–23). Three times he reveals his ultimate mission to the disciples (8:31; 9:31; 10:33–34) and invites them to share his fate

⁵⁸ For the analysis of the disciples' paradoxical portrayal, see Chapter 4.

⁵⁹ According to Ezekiel 34, God will judge the regathered community, and separate the corrupted from the weak and exploited. In light of *metalepsis*, the judgement within the community stimulates the readers to reconsider the eligibility of the disciples, especially when they continuously misunderstand Jesus' teaching. For a complete discussion, see the section "The Failure in Shepherding the Flock and Its Consequence" in Chapter 5.

(8:34). Unfortunately, the disciples misunderstand it and even stop asking Jesus for further clarification (9:32). The narrator gradually leads the readers to be pessimistic about the consequence of the disciples, and to question whether they will abandon following Jesus.⁶⁰ In this case, the disciples' falling away is not an abrupt prediction for the readers. Rather, the readers have had such expectations before the Last Supper. Given that the narrator displays Jesus' predictive power in his entry to Jerusalem and the preparation of the Passover meal, the readers will also foresee Peter and the other disciples denying Jesus later (cf. 14:50).

Rather than simply referring to the disciples' desertion, Sloan expands on this and suggests the inclusion of the tribulation in Mark 13 in Jesus' prediction. He compares both tribulation and prediction to illustrate their thematic correlation.⁶¹ While a suffering theme emerges in the comparison, Sloan's proposal potentially introduces a problem to the timeframe of Mark's narrative. The temporal phrase in Jesus' answer (σήμερον ταύτη τῇ νυκτὶ πρὶν, 14:30) brings the scattering to an imminent moment close to the time that Jesus predicts here. Comparatively, Jesus does not introduce any noticeable time gap in his reference to Zech 13:7. The act of striking and scattering bear a futuristic sense without further modification. Moreover, Jesus promises to go to Galilee (14:28) after his resurrection. The young man recalls the promise in the empty tomb (16:7). Unlike the tribulation being portrayed as an event (13:7–8; cf. v.4) in the distant future, Jesus' promise expectedly finds fulfilment sooner in terms of the narrator's characterisation of the message.⁶² In other words,

⁶⁰ The plot development shows how the disciples gradually demonstrate their negative side, see the section "The Plot Development of the Three Predictions" and "Preparing for the Second Shepherd Image".

⁶¹ Sloan, *Mark 13*, 90–91.

⁶² Lane, *Mark*, 459. I will further discuss the young man's message in the section "The Plot Development of the Empty Tomb (16:1–8)".

the tribulation cannot be accommodated in the scattering within the timeframe of the narrative. Thus, a direct reading that the narrator guides the readers to identify the disciples as being like the scattered flock in Zechariah is preferable.

Notably, the relationship between God's striking the shepherd and the flock being scattered in Zechariah's restoration is significant. According to Zech 13:7–9, the flock being scattered is not an event independent of God's striking the shepherd. Instead, it is part of the divine plan prompted by the striking.⁶³ From the immediate context of the narrative, the narrator does not make clear the cause of the disciple's denial of Jesus, but the readers can have hints based on how the narrator portrays the disciples earlier. As I have argued, the readers have been pessimistic about the faithfulness of the disciples. The impending death of Jesus becomes a possible cause for the disciples' abandonment, especially when they misunderstand Jesus' ultimate mission in his three-time predictions (8:32–33; 9:32). Not far from this incident, the readers will finally recognise that the disciples abandon Jesus when he is arrested (14:50). Their failure is due to the death threat against Jesus. Thus, this causal relationship in the narrative foreground presumably aligns with the picture of Zech 13:7.

With the metaleptic reading, the narrator assembles Jesus' death and the disciples' falling away into the divine plan. Rather than actively fleeing from Jesus, the disciples become passive agents who are scattered by God. Seemingly, the narrator positively values the disciples' denial for this reason, similar to the way Jesus' violent fate is described (cf. 14:6, 9, 24).⁶⁴ I argue, however, that the metaleptic use of Zech 13:7 in the narrative does not decisively judge the disciples' falling away at this stage. According to the exegetical

⁶³ See the section "The Shepherd Image in Zechariah 13:7–9" in Chapter 3.

⁶⁴ E.g., the disciples' failure is not a failure of the divine plan, see Hurtado, *Mark*, 241.

observation of Zech 13:7–9, the scattered flock covers all the people of God, including the corrupt ones, but only one-third will remain.⁶⁵ In Mark’s narrative, the readers observe the corruption of the Jewish religious leaders at an early stage. The leaders plot to kill Jesus and attempt to accomplish their conspiracy by working with the Gentiles (10:33).⁶⁶ In addition, Jesus gives the disciples a promise (14:28) which is an encouraging message to them. This message indicates that Jesus does not intend to abandon them, as opposed to the fate of the corrupt two-thirds in Zechariah. Therefore, the religious leaders’ incorrigibility and Jesus’ promise to the disciples would suggest that the readers compare the disciples with the minority group in the Zechariah.

On the other hand, the continuous negative performance of the disciples worries the readers. The narrator does not entirely establish the disciples as faithful figures who insistently obey God by following Jesus. He preserves positive values when portraying the disciples, but simultaneously exposes their negative side.⁶⁷ While Jesus invites his disciples to have an active role in his sacrificial death in the Last Supper (14:22–24), Jesus does not explicitly predict their return after they fall away. Instead, the plot development in Mark 14:27–31 (Jesus’ prediction of the denial, Peter’s rejection and then Jesus’ proclamation)

⁶⁵ In Chapter 3, the exegetical observation of Zech 13:7–9 demonstrates that the flock refers to all the people of God according to the overall shaping of Zechariah 9–14, covering the corrupted ones and those who are not.

⁶⁶ In the previous section, “Preparing for the Second Shepherd Image”, I have demonstrated how the alliance of the Jewish religious leaders and the Roman authority exposes their corruption. For how the leaders continuously show hostility towards Jesus, see the section “Negative Pole” in Chapter 4, and “The Failure in Shepherding the Flock and Its Consequence” and “The Condemnation of the Religious Leaders” in Chapter 5.

⁶⁷ I argue that the narrator begins portraying the disciples paradoxically in Mark 4, see the section “Who are the Insiders?” in Chapter 4. The disciples continue to receive Jesus’ private teaching in his prediction of the way to the cross but fail to acknowledge it, see the section “A Preparation for the Use of the Second Shepherd Image” in this chapter.

rhetorically intensifies the forthcoming failure of the disciples.⁶⁸ Thus, the narrator takes an evasive portrayal of the disciples, indicating that, though they seem to be the minority, but they also act like the two-thirds.

This reading is different from what Marcus proposes. He considers that “the poor of the flock” who ultimately receive God’s restoration in Zechariah are comparable to Jesus’ disciples so that they will ultimately be the faithful followers of Jesus.⁶⁹ Perhaps his argument receives historical support with a retrospective look at Mark’s narrative. However, from the plot development, the narrator does not reveal the ending of the disciples to the readers. Just as the readers received from the first shepherd image, the ambiguity in the second image drives the readers to doubt whether the disciples will totally abandon Jesus after being scattered. The narrator further intensifies this doubt by putting Peter in the spotlight. Jesus names him the Rock (Πέτρος, 3:16),⁷⁰ but he is going to deny Jesus three times (14:30). His vigorous protests (ἐκπερισσῶς ἐλάλει, 14:31) are in vain. Peter’s denial is unavoidable in terms of the narrator’s interpretation, especially when Jesus has demonstrated his predictive power (11:1–6; 14:12–16). This irony sharpens the sense that the disciples would completely forsake Jesus at the end of the narrative.

⁶⁸ Gabriella Gelardini, *Christus Militans: Studien zur Politisch-Militärischen Semantik im Markusevangelium vor dem Hintergrund des Ersten Jüdisch-römischen Krieges*, NovTSup 165 (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 406.

⁶⁹ Marcus, *The Way of the Lord*, 158.

⁷⁰ BDAG, s.v. “Πέτρος.”

The Purification of the Disciples

God's act of scattering the flock is not the ultimate goal of his restoration in Zechariah. After the scattering, God will separate the corrupt people from his community and the remaining group, the one-third, will undergo purification (Zech 13:8–9). As I have argued, purification cannot be isolated from the scattering of the flock in God's restoration according to the plot development of Zechariah. It is an essential step in terms of the understanding of Zechariah. This refinement signifies a transformation process in which God will radically restore the covenantal relationship with his people who undergo purification and pass the test.⁷¹

Nevertheless, the contribution of this theological significance to Mark's narrative receives inadequate attention from the previous intertextual analyses. O'Brien recognises the prominence of purification in God's restorative programme in Zechariah. He argues that it does not appear in Jesus' prediction of Peter's denial, even though this theme fills up Zechariah 12–14. Instead, the prediction focuses on how God completes his restoration in narrative terms.⁷² O'Brien realises that the reference to Zechariah is not all that Jesus says. The narrator uses Jesus' promise of his resurrection (14:28) to clarify the ultimate consequence of God's striking and scattering. Given the necessity for the suffering, crucifixion, and the resurrection of the Son of Man (8:31; 9:31; 10:33–34), this promise serves as a vindication of God's eschatological restoration.⁷³ Nonetheless, O'Brien selectively interprets the reference to Zechariah. He only acknowledges the contextual significance of

⁷¹ See the section "Purification of God and Renewal of the Covenant" in Chapter 3.

⁷² Kelli S. O'Brien, *The Use of Scripture in the Markan Passion Narrative*, LNTS 384 (London: T&T Clark, 2010), 123–124.

⁷³ See also Stein, *Mark*, 654.

God's striking the shepherd, but he accepts the literal value of the flock being scattered without further elaboration.

In my view, the metaleptic interpretation of Zech 13:7–9 enables the interaction between God's purification in his restoration in Zechariah and the disciples' denial and Jesus' promise in Mark's narrative. The readers would contemplate the significance of this purification in Jesus' promise after his sacrificial death event. According to Zechariah, there is no detail in the immediate context for how the purification process would take place. What is recorded in the text is the ultimate goal, the restoration of the covenantal relationship between God and those who undergo the purification and pass the test (Zech 13:9).

In comparison, Mark's narrator recounts nothing about purification at this stage of the narrative, but he raises another crucial point here: Jesus promises to continue to bear his shepherding role (14:28).⁷⁴ In the content of the promise, the narrator creates an echo to the Davidic shepherding activity. Jesus declares that he will go ahead (*προάγω*) of the disciples to Galilee after his resurrection. This action remains unclear. The question is whether Jesus will physically lead the disciples to Galilee or he will go to Galilee before the disciples?⁷⁵ In fact, to a certain extent, both views are compatible with each other in the narrative. In the story of the empty tomb (16:1–8), when the young man says that Jesus goes ahead of the disciples (16:7), he implies that Jesus precedes the disciples to Galilee (cf. Matt 28:16–17). On the other hand, the term *προάγω* is part of the shepherd language describing how a shepherd

⁷⁴ Marcus suggests that Jesus' promise in 14:28 probably has Zech 13:8–14:5 in the background (Marcus, *The Way*, 154–158), but he does not elaborate on how Zechariah's context contributes to the understanding of the disciples' scattering in the foreground of the narrative. Moreover, it is not a determinative factor in the present research. The key factor is how the narrator characterises Jesus' promise, with which to interact with Zech 13:7–9 in light of *metalepsis*.

⁷⁵ BDAG, s.v. “*προάγω*.”

leads his flock (e.g., Ps 23:2; 78:52; Mic 2:12).⁷⁶ Given that Jesus' promise immediately follows his reference to Zechariah, Hooker rightly points out that the connection drives the readers to identify this action in terms of the shepherd image, that Jesus, like a shepherd, leads his flock.⁷⁷ Thus, it is likely that Jesus' promise will be understood in such a way — as the Davidic shepherd, Jesus continues to bear his leading role in guiding the people of God after his resurrection. This interpretation stimulates the readers to acknowledge Jesus' continuation of his shepherding activity.

With his promise, Jesus continues to embrace his disciples after his resurrection, even though he foresees their denial. If the disciples decide to return to Jesus and follow him, returning would lead the readers to consider that the disciples remain the reconstituted community of God (cf. 3:14–15, 35) rather than the outsiders.

The narrator attaches Jesus' promise of going to Galilee with the shepherd language to his use of Zech 13:7. In light of *metalepsis*, this pattern potentially stimulates the readers to compare the promise with Zechariah's purification. Jesus' promise becomes the test for the disciples in God's radical restoration. According to Jesus' promise, the disciples must decide whether they will return to Jesus and follow him after being scattered. By following Jesus again, the disciples bear the role of the insiders of God's community, reconstituted by Jesus, just like the one-third who undergo the purification and have a renewed covenantal

⁷⁶ The shepherd image in Jewish literature comprises the use of the term shepherd and various shepherding activities, see “An Overview of the Shepherd Image in Jewish literature” in Chapter 3.

⁷⁷ Hooker, *Mark*, 345; Gundry also considers Jesus' leading implies regathering (Gundry, *Mark*, 845). This reading aligns with how Jesus demonstrates his gathering power at the early stage of his ministry, see the section “Developing the Distinctiveness of Jesus' Ministry (1:14–3:12)” in Chapter 4.

relationship with God.⁷⁸ In this regard, I propose that the disciples' following Jesus no longer merely signifies a restoration of their personal relationship with Jesus in the narrative. It also symbolises their decision to call upon God. Therefore, the radical restoration of the covenantal relationship with God is warranted in terms of the narrator's metaleptic use of the second shepherd image.

Indeed, the idea of God's radical restoration with Jesus' shepherding ministry does not sound strange to the readers. According to the use of the first shepherd image, God will establish a peaceful covenant, which signifies a radical restoration wherein the renewed community of God will live a cleansed life and be led by the appointed Davidic shepherd. The narrator further delineates this renewed life with his narration of Jesus' teaching on purity (7:1–23). Jesus' understanding of moral purity is the key to having a true obedient life devoted to God, utterly different from the teaching of the religious leaders.⁷⁹ This picture stimulates the reader to acknowledge how God renews and leads his people in his radical restoration through Jesus, the Davidic shepherd. With the metaleptic use of the second shepherd image, the narrator guides the readers to realise that Jesus' promise serves as a test for the disciples to restore their covenantal relationship with God through a radical means.

With a pessimistic view of the disciples before, the readers would now ponder whether the disciples would return to Jesus and follow Jesus again after the scattering. If the

⁷⁸ Similarly, De Campos examines how Peter's denial is characterised in Mark's narrative. He argues that it is "undoubtedly a tragic story", but in light of Zechariah, "hope rises with the promise of their regathering and restoration", see Mateus F. de Campos, *Resisting Jesus: A Narrative and Intertextual Analysis of Mark's Portrayal of the Disciples of Jesus*, *BibInt* 191 (Leiden: Brill, 2021), 215–216. However, he does not take a step forward to explore the significance of this hope in terms of Zechariah's literary context.

⁷⁹ In Chapter 5, I argue that the narrator metaleptically uses the first shepherd image and Jesus' teaching on purity to guide his readers. For a detailed discussion, see the section "The Purity Concern in the Davidic Shepherding Activity", "Jesus' Concern for Purity of God's Community", and "The Relevance to the Ministry of the Davidic Shepherd".

disciples return to Jesus and follow him again, the narrator metaleptically guides the readers to acknowledge that the disciples will be the insiders, with the covenantal relationship with God radically restored, or they will totally be the outsiders in God's renewed community. As long as God will scatter the disciples by striking Jesus for sure (14:50), the narrator keeps the readers in suspense about what the disciples will finally decide. I will discuss this question further in the following section.

Summary

Through the lens of *metalepsis*, the interaction between the events regarding the shepherd image in Zech 13:7–9 and the story of Jesus' prediction of Peter's denial (14:26–31) illuminates the understanding of the death of Jesus, the denial of the disciples, and their relationship in the divine plan. In particular, the ultimate purpose of scattering the disciples for the sake of purification is revealed. Rather than receiving this new understanding instantaneously, I argue that the narrator has used Jesus' three predictions of his death in Mark 8:22–10:52 to prepare the readers. Furthermore, I have discussed how the shepherd images in Mark 6:34 and 14:27 are connected metaleptically.

Subsequently, the shepherd image from Zechariah expands the readers' understanding of Jesus' shepherding ministry in the narrative, according to the one from Ezekiel. As a whole, the narrator metaleptically employs Zech 13:7–9 to portray Jesus as the suffering agent of God. According to God's radical restorative plan, Jesus completely and obediently fulfils the role of the Davidic shepherd with his promise of going ahead to Galilee as the purification and the test for his disciples. The next question is how the disciples respond to Jesus' promise in his shepherding ministry.

The Continuation of Jesus' Shepherd Ministry in His Resurrection

After discussing the metaleptic use of the second shepherd image and its connection to the first one along the plotline, in this section I will examine the characterisation of the empty tomb (16:1–8). I propose that the narrator uses this story to portray the fulfilment of the continuation of Jesus' shepherding activity and deliver his viewpoints to the readers in terms of the shepherd images. The open ending of the narrative illuminates the portrayal of the disciples as the followers of the appointed Davidic Shepherd.

The Plot Development of the Empty Tomb (16:1–8)

The narrator situates the story at the moment when the Sabbath is over, immediately after the burial of Jesus' corpse by Joseph of Arimathea (15:42–47). This signifies the success of the human conspiracy, but it is also the fulfilment of the divine plan of eschatological restoration. Moreover, the disciples flee (14:50), and Peter denies Jesus (14:68, 70–72) just as Jesus predicts in Mark 14:27 and 30.⁸⁰ By contrast, the narrator names and highlights three women, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome, who have followed and served Jesus and now become the final witnesses of Jesus' crucifixion (15:40–41).

⁸⁰ Since Peter's denial, all the disciples are absent from the scene in Mark 15–16 until the end of the story. Ironically, Simon of Cyrene, who only appears once, is requested to bear the cross of Jesus (15:21). He literally fulfils the role of the disciples (cf. 8:34). Another anonymous character, the centurion, confesses that Jesus is the son of God (ὁ ἄνθρωπος υἱὸς θεοῦ ἦν, 15:40; cf. 1:1; 3:1; 5:7) while no disciples do so. While the religious leaders are also absent from the Empty Tomb (cf. Matt 28:11–15), the setting particularly highlights the participation of the women in this story.

The women set out to the tomb to anoint Jesus' corpse out of respect to him on the first day of the week after sunrise. This temporal indicator sharply contrasts with the moment of Jesus' crucifixion, where the darkness covers the whole land (15:33).⁸¹ What they are going to do is comparable to the anonymous woman who is admired by Jesus for her act of anointing and preparing for his burial (14:3–9). The whole setting turns the narrative from the dark side to the bright, especially after Jesus has predicted his resurrection several times (8:31; 9:31; 10:32–33; 14:28).

Under the setting, the narrator motivates the readers to move along the plotline, when the women are surprised by the stone being rolled away from the entrance to the tomb (16:3). From a pragmatic point of view, this question seems illogical because the women must roll away the stone before entering the tomb to perfume Jesus' corpse. However, the narrator shifts the focus to how surprising the rolled stone would be with his comment that the women find that it has been rolled away before they arrive and the stone is very large (16:4).⁸² Given that the story recounts no one being present to roll away the stone, this characterisation implies the participation of God, which would deliver a message of hope that God does not forsake Jesus, contrary to what Jesus had proclaimed on the cross (15:34).

The story reaches its climax when the women meet a young man with an ambiguous identity. Notwithstanding the term *νεανίσκος* being used to refer to an angel (2 Macc 3:26,

⁸¹ Marcus reads the sun rising in light of the HB and emphasises its symbolic meaning, foreshadowing the resurrection of Jesus (Marcus, *Mark 8–16*, 1083–1084). While there is no substantial evidence supporting the link in the immediate context of the narrative, the narrator presumably uses it to describe a natural environment (4:6). Notwithstanding, this timestamp reflects a different scene from Jesus' crucifixion.

⁸² Hooker, *Mark*, 384; Boring symbolically reads the stone rolling as a “once-for-alltime-rolled-away” event denoting the everlasting effect of God's salvation and the women's act of looking up as God's restoration (Boring, *Mark*, 443–444). This reading perhaps over-interprets the text without considering how the narrator characterises the story in a straightforward way.

33; 5:2; Josephus, *Ant.* 5.8.2 §§522), the way that the narrator portrays the man prepares the readers to identify this man as an angelic being (cf. Matt 28:2).⁸³ First, his sitting position on the right side reflects his authority (cf. 10:37; 14:62). Second, the white robe portrays the young man as a heavenly and glorious being (cf. 9:3; see also Rev 6:11; 7:9, 13). Third, the man is the only character in the tomb before the women enter. This picture gives the impression that this man is possibly the angelic being who rolls away the stone, while the narrator tends to suggest divine participation. Lastly, the shocking reaction of the women (16:5) and the man's immediate response (16:6) perhaps indicate that the women have encountered a heavenly being.⁸⁴ All these characterisations collectively suggest that the young man is a heavenly being in terms of the narrator's understanding.

Notably, the story of the empty tomb is not an actual account of Jesus' resurrection. The narrator only recounts the young man's report and the women's witnesses. There is no record of Jesus' resurrection at this moment.⁸⁵ Moreover, he only plainly describes the appearance of the young man by omitting all extraordinary elements in this story (cf. 9:3; Luke 24:4). In a straightforward manner, the readers focus entirely on the young man's message rather than how Jesus rises or how the man appears. In this climatic moment, the man declares the fulfilment of Jesus' promise in Mark 14:28 that Jesus has left the tomb and

⁸³ A number of commentators agree with this view, e.g., Lane, *Mark*, 587; Hooker, 384; Gundry, *Mark*, 991; Strauss, *Mark*, 718. Focant further suggests that the young man is symbolically a disciple model of Jesus who is responsible for announcing the good news, different from the young man who flees when Jesus is arrested in Mark 14:51–52 (Focant, *Mark*, 657). Apart from using the same term (νεανίσκος) to describe the young man, Focant perhaps over-emphasises the contrast between the two young men while there are no explicit connections in terms of the plot development (see also Evans, *Mark 8–16*, 427–428, 535).

⁸⁴ Gundry, *Mark*, 991.

⁸⁵ Rhoads, Dewey and Michie, *Mark as Story*, 115; contra. Boring who considers this story delivers an explicit scene of resurrection, see Boring, *Mark*, 442.

is going to Galilee.⁸⁶ Superficially, the man conveys a message of Jesus' resurrection. Still, its significance lies in the absence of Jesus in the tomb, which is reinforced by the invitation of the young man to look at the tomb (ἴδε ὁ τόπος ὅπου ἔθηκαν αὐτόν, 16:6).⁸⁷

According to the young man's message, Jesus is identified as the crucified one from Nazareth. This characterisation enables the declaration to have broader connections to the early works of Jesus in the region of Galilee and subsequently forms a backdrop for the fulfilment of Jesus' promise.⁸⁸ It drives the readers to recall how Jesus, as the Χριστός, faithfully and insistently continues and completes his mission from the beginning.

Afterwards, the narrator requests that the women tell Peter and the other disciples to go to Galilee to meet Jesus (16:7). This naming pattern is identical to the scene where Peter and other disciples protest against their denial after Jesus' promise (14:29, 31). Here, the narrator highlights the connection between the message of the young man and Jesus' promise

⁸⁶ Lane suggests that the use of ζητέω implies that the young man rebukes the women for seeking Jesus (Lane, *Mark*, 587–588). However, there is not enough contextual evidence to support this claim (cf. 8:11; 11:18; 12:12).

⁸⁷ Notably, the narrator does not end the young man's saying at the point of Jesus' resurrection (ἠγέρθη). Instead, he continues to recount the absence of Jesus.

⁸⁸ Unlike Luke and John, Mark's narrator establishes a unidirectional geographical framework from Galilee to Jerusalem for Jesus' ministry in his narrative. Thus, it makes good sense that the use of Nazareth to portray Jesus after he is crucified in Jerusalem would recall his early ministry; see also Malbon, *Narrative Space*, 26; rather than considering the connections as a backdrop, Focant highlights how these connections significantly stimulate the readers to reread the narrative in a new believing manner (Focant, *Mark*, 659–600). Without denying the analeptic effect introduced by the use of Nazareth, the echo of 14:28 explicitly appears in the foreground of the story and leads the readers to recall Jesus' promise.

in Mark 14:27–28 (καθὼς εἶπεν ὑμῖν).⁸⁹ This echo further sharpens the sense of fulfilment of Jesus’ promise. Given that Jesus keeps his promise regardless of the disciples’ fleeing and denial, the message of the young man demonstrates the forgiveness of Jesus.⁹⁰ It serves as an assurance and encouragement for the disciples to follow Jesus again.

Surprisingly, the story does not adopt a firm resolution. Although the young man unequivocally assigns the women the announcement task, the women flee without hesitation because they are trembling and astonished.⁹¹ The women refuse to share the message with the disciples because they are afraid. From the foreground of the narrative, the fear drives them not to complete the task. However, the narrator does not clarify whether the women will share the message with the disciples one day. There is a lack of elaboration on why the women remain fearful, which leads them to fail to accomplish the task after they leave the tomb.⁹² Moreover, he keeps silent about the ultimate consequence for the women and the disciples. This pattern differs from the characterisation of the other stories in the narrative (e.g., 1:40–

⁸⁹ I argue that the narrator expects that Jesus going to Galilee would occur immediately after his resurrection. The change in the term προάγω from the future tense (14:28) to the present tense (16:7) reflects the imminence; see also Stein, *Mark*, 732–733; Hooker, *Mark*, 386; contra. some commentators read this promise as his *parousia*, e.g., C. F. D. Moule, “The Influence of Circumstances on the Use of Christological Terms.” *JTS* 10.2 (1959): 258; Theodore J. Weeden, *Mark — Traditions in Conflict* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1971), 111–116.

⁹⁰ See also Hurtado, *Mark*, 285.

⁹¹ The participle ἐξελθοῦσαι serves the temporal aspect to denote the moment when the women flee, see Decker, *Mark 9–16*, 277.

⁹² Dwyer highlights the positive side of the women in order to secure God’s salvific plan. He suggests that οὐδενὶ οὐδὲν εἶπαν should be interpreted in a provisional sense that “[the women] told no one else, or told no one until they told the disciples”, see Dwyer, *Wonder in Mark*, 185–193; cf. Witherington, *Mark*, 415. Although Dwyer collects evidence from the story’s pattern in Mark’s narrative to support his provisional interpretation, he reads the potential *Sitz im Leben* into the story world. He omits the fact that the narrator skips the ultimate situation of the women and the disciples. In other words, the narrative foreground does not support Dwyer’s proposal.

45).⁹³ The narrator keeps the ending open. Hence, the readers remain uncertain whether the disciples will return to Jesus and follow him again.

Continuing the Shepherding Activity

The way that the young man describes Jesus going ahead to Galilee (16:7) stimulates the readers to recall Jesus' promise in Mark 14:27–28, where I argue that the narrator portrays Jesus' continuation of his shepherd ministry after his resurrection in the light of *metalepsis*. In this section, I argue that the metaleptic interpretation yields insight(s) into the significance of the story of the empty tomb, the open ending of the narrative, and its rhetorical impact on the readers. This story generates a resultant force designed to direct the readers to acknowledge Jesus' shepherding ministry and its influence on the disciples.

According to the plot development, the narrator places the young man's message as the central focus of the story. This message repeats Jesus' promise in Mark 14:28, and indicates the fulfilment of his promise.⁹⁴ However, it deserves scrutiny in light of the shepherd image. I have argued that the narrator characterises Jesus' promise in terms of the Davidic shepherding activity. The promise is closely attached to Zech 13:7 in Mark 14:27 and

⁹³ In the story of Jesus' healing a man with leprosy (1:40–45), the man fails to follow Jesus' command to keep silent. The narrator leaves a remark about the final consequence (ὥστε), in which Jesus could no longer publicly enter the town (1:45). To a certain extent, the story of Jesus calming the sea (4:35–41) is similar to the empty tomb, because both stories end with a note of fear (4:41; cf. 16:8). Marcus even considers the latter is reminiscent of the former based on thematic coherence (Marcus, *Mark 8–16*, 1084). However, the two stories have different plot developments. While the disciples' fear has nothing to do with Jesus' miraculous calming in the former, the women's reaction is directly linked to the speech of the young man (16:7–8).

⁹⁴ E.g., Lane, *Mark*, 589; Evans, *Mark 8–16*, 538; Donahue and Harrington, *Mark*, 459; Strauss, *Mark*, 720.

is associated with the shepherd language. This demonstrates Jesus' insistence on continuing the Davidic shepherding ministry.⁹⁵ In addition, the narrator explicitly portrays Jesus as the crucified one from Nazareth who fulfils his promise of going to Galilee in the young man's message. This pattern aligns with Jesus' prediction and promise by using Zech 13:7 in Mark 14:27–28. Hence, the narrator guides the readers to recall that Jesus faithfully performs as the smitten shepherd of Zechariah to facilitate God's restoration and goes ahead to Galilee to continue his shepherding activity.⁹⁶

Furthermore, God's radical restoration is warranted according to the young man's message. As I have discussed previously, through the metaleptic use of the second shepherd image, Jesus' promise functions as the test for the scattered disciples in the narrative, so God will restore the covenantal relationship with them if they return and follow Jesus again. While the young man affirms Jesus going to Galilee after his resurrection, his message vindicates God's restoration. Notably, the message becomes authentic and reliable in the story by portraying the young man as a divine agent. Since the readers have observed Jesus' predictive power in the story of the entry of Jerusalem and the last supper, the readers would strongly anticipate and acknowledge that Jesus going to Galilee after his resurrection (14:28) is now an undeniable fact. Therefore, the young man does not merely denote Jesus' completion of going to Galilee. Still, in terms of the narrator's understanding, the young man also declares Jesus' actualisation of God's salvific programme through his shepherding ministry.

⁹⁵ For the discussion, see the section "The Purification of the Disciples".

⁹⁶ According to the exegetical observation of Zech 13:7–9 in the section "The Smitten Shepherd and Scattered Flock" of Chapter 3, God's act of striking the shepherd is not a punishment, even though it is a violent act. Rather, the shepherd is a close companion of God and bears the role of a suffering agent. This portrayal aligns with the characterisation of Jesus in terms of Mark's narrator.

Subject to the vindication of God's restoration by the young man's message, the readers would question the fate of the women and the disciples. From the plot development, the narrator ends the story and the whole narrative in Mark 16:8 in an absolutely abrupt manner.⁹⁷ The surprising ending exposes and underscores the failure of the women. To address the negative impression of the women (and the disciples), Weeden suggests that Mark's Gospel uses the negative image of the women (and the disciples) to represent the early Christian communities' opponents, who have an improper Christological understanding, while the story of Mark justifies the identity and ministry of Jesus.⁹⁸ However, his proposal overlooks that the narrator positively and specifically values the women (15:40–41), in sharp contrast to the religious leaders who consistently demonstrate their dark side.

On the other hand, Sweat highlights the work of God in this abrupt ending as a harmonisation. She makes a close comparison between Mark 14:28 and 16:6–7 and suggests that "Jesus' resurrection and his disciples' restoration are assured, even if they are not narrated." In this regard, "God can make silence yield proclamation".⁹⁹ This reading perhaps mitigates the failure of the women and the disciples, but Sweat inappropriately interprets the fulfilment of Jesus going ahead to Galilee (16:6–7) within the narrative. While this fulfilment

⁹⁷ The present research holds the assumption that Mark 1:1–16:8 is a unified and complete narrative, see the section "Assumptions" in Chapter 2.

⁹⁸ Weeden, *Mark — Traditions in Conflict*, 117. Like Weeden, Wrede believes that the disciples and women serve as a contrast to the Gentile Christian community, who properly understands Jesus after his resurrection, see William Wrede, *The Messianic Secret*, trans. J.C.G. Greig (Cambridge: Clarke, 1971), 231–236. Kingsbury gives a comprehensive analysis of the claim of both Weeden and Wrede, see Kingsbury, *Christology*, 1–45.

⁹⁹ Laura C. Sweat, *The Theological Role of Paradox in the Gospel of Mark*, LNTS 492 (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), 175–176. Similarly, Miller positively values the story and suggests that "Mark's Gospel itself is testimony that the women's silence will not hinder the proclamation of the new creation" (Miller, *Women in Mark's Gospel*, 192). However, Miller's claim is predicated on the historical situation of how Mark's Gospel serves as a testimony among the early Christian community, which is out of the story world of Mark.

assures Jesus' resurrection, it only indicates the opportunity that Jesus offers his disciples to return to him and follow him again. Sweat rightly points out that "because of Jesus' resurrection, the disciples' restoration is already beginning even as other disciples fail."¹⁰⁰ However, the narrator does not warrant the disciples' restoration within the story world because the narrative ends at Mark 16:8. In other words, in terms of the narrator, the question of whether there would be a proclamation of Jesus' resurrection remains uncertain. Although Sweat demonstrates how God acts unexpectedly and surprisingly in other places of Mark's narrative, she perhaps overemphasises this theological conception at this ending, without considering how the narrator develops the story.

Similarly, Rügge-meier considers that the prior knowledge of the readers and the previous reading of Mark 13:10 and 14:9 illuminates the abrupt ending where the readers will assume that those women are not remaining silent. The real readers of Mark's narrative may possess the knowledge of the historical fact (cf. Matt 28:11–20; Mark 16:9–20; Luke 24:13–53). However, Rügge-meier's proposal heavily relies on the post-East tradition and overstretches the knowledge of Mark's implied readers.¹⁰¹ As I discussed in Chapter 2, Mark's implied readers probably possess knowledge of various traditions about Jesus, which also appear in the narrative. By contrast, the post-Easter tradition is a piece of information outside the narrative. Emphasis on this knowledge potentially leads to an improper definition of the implied readers and causes unexpected interpretations, overriding the plot development of the narrative and erasing the rhetorical effect the narrator intended to deliver to his readers. Although the implied readers have observed Jesus' teaching of the gospel's proclamation, it is

¹⁰⁰ Sweat, *Paradox in Mark*, 176.

¹⁰¹ Rügge-meier, *Poetik der Markinischen Christologie*, 95, 466, 507–508.

not necessary to read the women positively, especially when the readers realise the fall of the disciples along the plotline.

Rather than highlighting or lessening the failure of the women, I argue that the narrator paradoxically portrays the women in the scene of Jesus' continuation of his shepherding ministry. As I have discussed, the narrator particularly highlights the faithfulness of the three women, in contrast to the disciples who continuously misunderstand Jesus and ultimately flee (15:40–41; cf. 14:50). While all the disciples disappear from the scene of Jesus' crucifixion, the women become the last of Jesus' followers, and they become those whom the young man assigns to announce Jesus' fulfilment of God's restoration in his ministry. The three women appear to be better than the disciples to a certain extent.¹⁰² Still, they flee after receiving the message from the young man. What they do is precisely the same as the disciples (16:8; cf. 14:50). While the women fail to accomplish their designated task, I have demonstrated that the narrator remains silent about their ultimate fate in the same way he portrays the disciples.¹⁰³ In other words, the narrator does not offer a final judgement on the women and the disciples. Instead, he leaves an open ending for this story and for the whole narrative.

Indeed, an open ending serves as a rhetorical device to create unpredictability, stimulating them to think about various possible developments in the narrative and ask about

¹⁰² Cf. from a socio-cultural perspective, the followers usually act out their grief about the death of their masters publicly in the first-century Greco-Roman world, see Dietmar Neufeld, *Mockery and Secretism in the Social World of Mark's Gospel*, LNTS 503 (London: T&T Clark, 2014), 169–170. This understanding suggests a better impression of the present women than the absent disciples.

¹⁰³ Juel rightly points out the fact that the readers “are left to imagine what became of them [the women] ... the fate of Judas, and the naked young man, and Peter, and the Twelve”. However, he overemphasises the imagery of the tomb's door, which signifies hope for the readers, without giving any contextual and historical support, see Donald Juel, *A Master of Surprise: Mark Interpreted* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1994), 116, 120.

the corresponding endings.¹⁰⁴ In the case of Mark's narrative, Danove terms this thinking process as the crisis of interpretation. The abrupt ending drives the readers to re-evaluate the women and the disciples through what they have gained from the narrator in the cessation of the narration.¹⁰⁵ The readers have acknowledged the act of following Jesus and living according to his teaching as the basis of being Jesus' disciple. On the other hand, the failure of the twelve disciples and the women cannot be easily reconciled with the readers' acknowledgement. How would the readers then question the consequence of the women and the disciples and understand the significance of their paradoxical portrayal in the abrupt ending?

According to the empty tomb, Jesus' promise in Mark 14:28 (cf. 16:7) offers the disciples an opportunity to return to Jesus and follow him again. As I have demonstrated, there is an apparent connection between the story of the empty tomb and Jesus' shepherding activity. Therefore, the narrator characterises this opportunity as a refinement and a test for

¹⁰⁴ Abbott, *Narrative*, 55–66.

¹⁰⁵ Paul L. Danove, *The End of Mark's Story: A Methodological Study*, BibInt 3 (Leiden: Brill, 1993), 208–210; cf. Upton, *Hearing Mark's Ending*, 153; Elizabeth E. Shively, "Becoming a Disciple Without Seeing Jesus: Narrative as A Way of Knowing in Mark's Gospel," in *Let the Reader Understand: Studies in Honor of Elizabeth Struthers Malbon*, ed. Edwin Keith Broadhead, LNTS 583 (London, UK: T&T Clark, Bloomsbury Publishing Plc, 2018), 50. From a narrative perspective, Rügemeier also suggests that the readers "spekulieren auf kommende Ereignisse und rechnen mit alternativen Handlungsentwicklungen" because of their reading along the plotline, see Rügemeier, *Poetik der Markinischen Christologie*, 79. However, Rügemeier suggests that Mark's implied readers have known the women spreading the news about Jesus' resurrection. While I have argued against this assumption, this improper definition of the readers will potentially result in less eager anticipation of how the disciples and women respond.

the disciples with his metaleptic understanding of the second shepherd image.¹⁰⁶ The disciples have to decide whether they will return and follow Jesus. If they do so, God will warrant restoring the covenantal relationship with them radically.¹⁰⁷ In other words, the disciples will become the true insiders in the narrative terms. With the new reading of Jesus' promise, in light of *metalepsis*, the narrator introduces a dichotomous view into the nature of being the disciples of Jesus the Davidic shepherd, those who either return and follow Jesus as the true insiders or live as the outsiders.

This view embellishes the understanding of the disciples' faithfulness in following Mark's Jesus. According to Rhoads et al., the response of the disciples and the women to Jesus demonstrates their intent to boldly follow Jesus.¹⁰⁸ Based on this proposal, the metaleptic interpretation of the second shepherd image elucidates the significance of the response in God's salvific restoration. The narrator modifies the disciples' fidelity to Jesus as

¹⁰⁶ From a historical perspective, Wilcox argues that the test used to refine his people in God's restoration (Zech 13:7–9) refers to Peter's three times denials (14:66–72) rather than the disciples' desertion, see Max Wilcox, "The Denial-Sequence in Mark XIV. 26–31, 66–72," *NTS* 17.4 (1971): 426–436. On the one hand, Wilcox acknowledges that the literary context of Zech 13:7–9 is used to characterise Mark's narrative. On the other hand, a serious weakness in Wilcox's argument is that διασκοπίζω in Zechariah's reference does not represent the plain meaning of σκανδαλίζω. He ignores the fact that the reference *per se* uses metaphorical language (shepherd and flock) to describe the fate of the leader and the people of God. However, Wilcox's connection between the desertion and Peter's denial (ἀπαρνέομαι) is based on contextual interpretation rather than the plain sense. In terms of Mark's plot development, as I have argued, it is persuasive to compare the test in Zechariah with the disciples' decision of whether they return and follow Jesus after his resurrection.

¹⁰⁷ In a similar way, Vette comments that the task of taking up one's cross in following Jesus (8:34) illustrates the disciples' moral responsibility, even though they desert Jesus because of what is written in the scriptures, see Nathanael Vette, *Writing with Scripture: Scripturalized Narrative in the Gospel of Mark*, LNTS 670 (London: T&T Clark, 2022), 175.

¹⁰⁸ From the perspective of an ideal reader, Rhoads et al. propose that by putting themselves in the position of the disciples, the readers would question whether they will remain faithful and follow Jesus again in such a failure, see Rhoads, Dewey and Michie, *Mark as Story*, 129–130; cf. Andrew T. Lincoln, "The Promise and the Failure: Mark 16:7, 8," *JBL* 108.2 (1989): 297–298; Danone, *Mark*, 210; van Iersel, *Mark*, 501.

the criterion used to pass the test, with God's guarantee for restoring the covenantal relationship with them radically completed. The disciples' expression of their faith by following Jesus again enables them to enjoy a renewed covenantal relationship with God.

Nevertheless, does the narrator encourage returning to Jesus in such a failure? Van Iersel rightly points out that the unexpected ending leaves the readers "as bewildered as the women".¹⁰⁹ However, this emotional impact is not the ultimate rhetorical force that the narrator exerts on his readers. Mark's Jesus insists on assuring his disciples of fulfilling God's radical renewal with his shepherding ministry even when facing a desperate situation. His performance aligns with how he consistently holds his view, which is entirely different from the religious leaders and the crowd (e.g., 1:22; 2:12; 7:1–5). In particular, although the disciples continuously display their misunderstanding of Jesus and his ministry, Jesus invites them to share his mission and even to participate in his sacrificial death, regardless of their betrayal and abandonment. This indicates how insistent Jesus would be and implies that his mission differs from the disciples' perception.¹¹⁰ As the Davidic shepherd, Jesus faithfully fulfils God's radical restoration with no compromise with the religious leaders, the disciples, and the crowds. This aligns with how the narrator introduces Jesus as the appointed agent of God to complete his salvific promise (cf. 1:1–3). When the readers put themselves in the position of the disciples, the characterisation of Mark's Jesus along the plotline encourages them to acknowledge the decision of returning to Jesus the Davidic shepherd. On the other hand, the narrator persuades the readers to accept that following this Jesus but not the others is the way to pass the test in God's restoration. Just as in the beginning of his narrative (1:1),

¹⁰⁹ Van Iersel, *Mark*, 500.

¹¹⁰ In Chapters 4 and 5, I discuss how the work of Jesus is distinctive from the perception of the religious leaders, the disciples and the crowd in the narrator's terms. The distinction creates a sense of unpredictability in the readers.

the narrator has reached a decisive moment in Jesus' Gospel here. Jesus' ministry has the distinction of fulfilling God's salvific promise, while it is associated with the tradition of the HB.¹¹¹ Mark's Jesus makes a resolution, the final answer, to the disciples to pass the test through his shepherding ministry. Without explicitly recounting the decision of the disciples and the women, the readers know how to respond according to the narrator's viewpoint, and they have to respond on their own.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I examine the metaleptic use of the second shepherd image in Jesus' prediction of Peter's denial (14:26–31) and its connection to the first image along the plotline. In terms of the *metalepsis*, the narrator uses Zechariah's prophecy (Zech 13:7–9) to portray Jesus as the Davidic smitten shepherd who suffers at the hand of God in order to facilitate his radical restoration. To fill in the sense of suffering, which is absent from the first shepherd image in Ezekiel, the narrator prepares the readers through the use of Jesus' three-time prediction of his death (8:31; 9:31; 10:33–34). Moreover, the event of the disciples' fleeing is portrayed as the flock being scattered by God, which is the consequence of the striking. In this regard, the narrator transforms the disciples' fleeing into part of the divine plan for the restoration. With the metaleptic interaction between Zechariah's prophecy and Jesus' promise (14:28), the scattered disciples undergo purification and are tested by God; will they return and follow Jesus again? If they do so, God warrants that he will radically restore the covenantal relationship with them.

¹¹¹ See the section "Functioning as a Setting" in Chapter 4.

Jesus' shepherding ministry does not end with his crucifixion. Through the story of the empty tomb (16:1–8), the narrator affirms Jesus' insistently continuing to bear the role of the Davidic shepherd and lead his disciples after his resurrection. Moreover, the young man's message expresses the opportunity that the disciples could return and follow Jesus again. Given the clear connection between Jesus' promise in 14:28 and the young man's message, the narrator metaleptically guides the readers to recall the promise as a test of God in his restoration and to realise the only way to pass the test — either by becoming an insider and following Jesus, with God's guarantee of a radically restored covenantal relationship; or by remaining as an outsider. By putting themselves in the position of the women and the disciples, the readers would question how they could decide. Although the open ending of the story does not enable the readers to know the final consequence of the women and the disciples, the uncertainty stimulates the readers to contemplate whether they accept this metaleptic understanding for the covenantal relationship restored by God radically.

Chapter 7. Conclusion

This thesis has explored the characterisation of Jesus and his ministry in Mark's narrative and the rhetorical impacts the narrator creates on the implied readers through the two shepherd images (6:34; 14:27) in light of Genette's conception of narrative *metalepsis*. In this concluding chapter, I will summarise the findings in each chapter, and reflect on the potential areas that this thesis leaves open for further analysis.

Chapter 1 briefly painted an interpretative picture of the two shepherd images (6:34; 14:27) in Mark's narrative in biblical scholarship. According to the survey, the previous analyses focused on the literary quality of the images, the intertextual references to the HB and the figures of speech characterising Mark's Jesus. However, I argue that neither the methodology nor the interpretation attached to those studies fully illustrates how the images portray Jesus and other characters in Mark's narrative and create rhetorical impacts on the implied readers. Interpreting Jesus as a shepherd who leads God's community selectively accepts only one of the themes from the original literary background of the shepherd images. This selection significantly reduces the dramatic events surrounding the shepherd images in the HB to a thin description, although the intertextual background was still acknowledged as significant. The connection between Jesus as the shepherd and his ministry recounted in the narrative remains obscure. By employing Genette's narrative *metalepsis*, this thesis has accommodated both aspects of the shepherd images — figures of speech within the narrative and intertextual references to the HB, offering new insights into the characterisation of Mark's Jesus and his ministry by the shepherd images.

Chapter 2 established the methodology of the thesis. This chapter defines a methodological framework in narrative terms, which makes a fundamental and valid assumption and indicates the analytical direction. This thesis has adopted and expanded the model of the implied readers from Rhoads et al. By explicitly defining these readers, I have developed an interpretative approach to examine the characters' portrayal, the plot development and the rhetorical impact on the readers. Notably, the implied readers acknowledge Genette's conception of the narrative *metalepsis*, a figure of speech signifying another literary context. This acknowledgement offers a theoretical ground to delineate how the intertextual background is virtually inserted into the plotline of Mark's narrative and interacts with it, and how this portrays the interaction between Jesus and other characters in the narrative.

In Chapter 3, I examined the shepherd image in Jewish literature, particularly in Ezekiel 34 and Zech 13:7–9. First, the survey of Jewish literature sketched out a blueprint for how a shepherd image is adopted to portray different positions (e.g., kingship and leadership) and their corresponding roles. Second, the exegetical observation focused on the texts from Ezekiel and Zechariah, identified as the primary texts of the intertextual reference with the shepherd images in Mark's narrative.

According to Ezekiel 34, the Davidic shepherd is an appointed Davidic prince who leads the renewed community of God. While the incorrigible religious leaders and the exploiting class are punished by God and excluded from this community, the renewed people enjoy abundance and live a life of purity under the lead of the Davidic shepherd.

Unlike Ezekiel, Zech 13:7–9 portrays a suffering Davidic shepherd whom God smites to facilitate his restoration. God's striking prompts the scattering of the flock, with one-third remaining to undergo the purification of God's radical restoration. This process of refining

suggests that the remaining renewed community of God radically turns away from all corrupt acts. In sum, this exegetical investigation clarifies how the Davidic shepherd participates in God's radical restoration by various means and brings about the cleansed lifestyle of the renewed community of God.

Chapter 4 examined Mark's narrative from the beginning as it progresses along the plotline. The narrator portrays Jesus as the Χριστός fulfilling God's salvific promise in light of Mal 3:1 and Isa 40:3, and bringing the good news to the people of God. As the narrative moves along the plotline, the narrator portrays Jesus' identity and ministry in a way that differs from the other characters' understanding, especially when it is revealed through the disciples' misunderstanding of Jesus' teaching and through the crowd's astonishment when they hear it. The distinctive dimension of Jesus' work creates a sense of unpredictability in the readers so that the narrator keeps them in suspense about how Jesus would complete God's salvific promise at the later point of the narrative. Furthermore, I have proposed that the narrator describes the disciples in a paradoxical manner: they do not fully grasp the way Jesus completes his mission even though they accept the secret of the kingdom of God, that Jesus is the Χριστός (4:11). The narrator continues to affirm the disciples' role of being Jesus' eligible followers, and on the other hand exposes their failure to understand his identity and mission. The ambiguity of the disciples' portrayal leaves the readers with a puzzle about how the disciples will continue to follow Jesus in the narrative. From the perspective of the plot development, the narrator's characterisation of Jesus and his disciples and its rhetorical effect prepares the readers to read the first and the second shepherd image in the narrative.

In Chapter 5, the present research turned its attention to the first shepherd image (ὡς πρόβατα μὴ ἔχοντα ποιμένα, 6:34) in the feeding story. In my view, the narrator stimulates the readers to identify this image as an intertextual reference from Ezekiel 34 through his way

of narration. In light of *metalepsis*, the events surrounding the shepherd image in Ezekiel 34 would interact with the story of Jesus feeding the five thousand (6:30–44). Rather than simply reading the intertextual reference as a thin description intended to portray Jesus as a shepherd leading the people of God, the interaction creates insights into how the narrator characterises Jesus and other characters. First, because of the Jewish leaders' failure to shepherd the people of God in Ezekiel 34, the narrator sharpens the incorrigibility of the religious leaders and exposes the potential punishment for their corruption. Second, in Ezekiel 34, God will judge and separate the exploiting class from the Jewish community. Given the disciples' continuous misunderstanding of Jesus and Jesus' invitation to them to participate in his ministry, the narrator keeps the readers in suspense about the disciples' eligibility to be the insiders of God's kingdom. Third, Ezekiel 34 illustrates God's radical restoration with a peaceful covenant established. This picture guides the readers to realise the radical nature of the mission that Jesus, the appointed Davidic shepherd, carries out.

Lastly, God appoints a Davidic prince to lead the renewed community of God in Ezekiel 34. In his shepherding activity, the community lives a cleansed life. In this case, the readers would ponder the purity concern in Jesus' shepherding activity in the narrative. However, this concern is not apparent after the first feeding. Instead, the narrator uses the story of Jesus' teaching on purity (7:1–23) to clarify how the people of God have to live a life of purity to reflect their true obedience to God. This is radically different from what all the religious leaders teach and do and what other Jewish people follow in Mark's story world.

Following the plotline, Chapter 6 examined the rest of Mark's narrative. As I have demonstrated, Jesus' three predictions of the way to the cross in Mark 8:22–10:52 do not merely record how Jesus predicts his death using the Son of Man paradigm. Instead, the way Jesus teaches about his death enables the readers to gain new information in the narrative so

that they can establish relevance between the two shepherd images in terms of the narrator's metaleptic understanding of the images. This includes Jesus' suffering as a means to complete God's restoration and his invitation to the disciples to share his mission.

The thesis then turned to the second shepherd image, and argued that, in light of *metalepsis*, the events surrounding the shepherd image in Zech 13:7–9 would interact with the prediction of Peter's denial (14:26–31). I argue that using the intertextual reference has a deeper significance than merely explaining Jesus' death and the disciples' fleeing, in several ways. First, the narrator portrays Jesus as a non-militant suffering shepherd facilitating God's radical restoration. Second, the disciples' fleeing is part of the restorative programme, which is triggered by God's striking his fellow shepherd. Finally, it is worth noting that the flock being scattered has a theological significance in Zechariah. Two-thirds of the flock deserve God's punishment, while the remaining one-third will receive God's purification and be tested, with God's guarantee of restoring the covenantal relationship when they call upon him. Thus, the narrator metaleptically transforms Jesus' promise of going to Galilee (14:28) into the test for the disciples in God's restoration. However, the narrator does not clarify if the disciples ultimately appear to be one-third in the immediate context. Instead, the readers tend to be pessimistic, because the disciples continuously demonstrate their negative side. Without any hint from the narrator, the readers would contemplate the fate of the disciples.

In the story of the empty tomb (16:1–8), I proposed that the narrator guides the readers to recall Jesus' promise in 14:28, which signifies his continuation of the shepherding activity. Given that this story offers an open ending to the narrative, the readers are left to query the consequence of the disciples and the women, whether they will return to Jesus and follow him again. From the narrator's metaleptic understanding of the second shepherd image, this decision is the key to God's act of refining and testing, which leads to his radical

restoration. Returning and following Jesus again becomes the only way to pass the test, so the disciples become the insiders, with God's guarantee of restoring the covenantal relationship radically. Otherwise, they live as outsiders.

Mark's narrator introduces a dichotomous view into the nature of being the disciples of Jesus the Davidic shepherd. Although the narrator leads the readers to be pessimistic about the disciples, the faithfulness of Jesus in completing God's restoration and his insistence on continuing the shepherding activity encourages the readers. By putting themselves in the position of the disciples, the readers would contemplate whether they could accept the dichotomous understanding of discipleship in narrative terms.

This thesis has explored the metaleptic interpretation of Mark's shepherd image in narrative terms and its rhetorical impacts on the readers. Still, discussing the metaleptic application in the Gospels' narrative has immense value, far more than what is revealed in this research. Genette's conception of narrative *metalepsis* utilises the literary background of the intertextual references and creates insights into its contributions to characterise the story and the characters. While the present research only focuses on two intertextual references regarding the shepherd image, there are frequent occurrences of intertextual references in the canonical Gospels.¹ Perhaps this picture suggests the enormous potential of *metalepsis* for intertextual analysis in the Gospels' narrative.

¹ The definition of the intertextual reference is a disputed topic in biblical studies, see Steve Moyise, "Intertextuality and the Study of the Old Testament in the New Testament," in *The Old Testament in the New Testament: Essays in Honour of J. L. North*, ed. Steve Moyise, JSNTSup 189 (Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), 14–16. However, one cannot deny the fact that the canonical Gospels frequently adopt the HB to characterise the narratives. The references with a quotation formula have appeared 25 times (Matt 2:5–6; 4:4, 6–7, 10; 11:10; 21:13; 26:24, 31; Mark 1:2–3; 7:6; 9:12–13; 11:17; 14:21, 27; Luke 2:23; 3:4–5; 4:4, 8, 10; 7:27; 10:26; 19:46; 24:46–47).

Furthermore, the theoretical quality of the umbrella of *metalepsis* deserves more attention. Genette's conception of narrative *metalepsis* provides the present research with a theoretical framework to approach intertextual references. The transgression of the narrator and the character across the literary environments visualises how the intertextual literary background operates in a narrative environment. Unlike the present research, Hays' intertextual study adopts Hollander's conception of *metalepsis*, which focuses on unstated resonance with multiple sources.² Nonetheless, various branches of *metalepsis* share a common characteristic of interaction between different literary contexts. Interestingly, the intertextual analyses that follow Hays' methodology in recent biblical scholarship tend to focus on the criteria for identifying intertextual references and pay inadequate attention to the interactive quality.³ Although the notion of *metalepsis* in literary theory is complicated and challenging due to its diverse definition, Dinkler rightly points out that studies using literary

² Hollander, *The Figure of Echo*, 115; see also Hays, *Echoes in the Letters of Paul*, 11; Hays, *Echoes in the Gospels*, 11–12.

³ Although a number of recent studies have adopted Hays' conception of *metalepsis*, the discussion of metaleptic theory and its significance in the Gospel's narrative is unfortunately absent, see, Cai, *Jesus the Shepherd*, 81–87; Holly J. Carey, *Jesus' Cry from the Cross: Towards a First-Century Understanding of the Intertextual Relationship Between Psalm 22 and the Narrative of Mark's Gospel*, LNTS 398 (London: T&T Clark, 2009), 29–44; Snow, *Daniel's Son of Man in Mark*, 10–13; Jocelyn McWhirter, *The Bridegroom Messiah and the People of God Marriage in the Fourth Gospel*, SNTSMS 138 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 22–36. Both Porter and Foster also voice their concern about Hays' approach, particularly his definition of echo and its identification process, see Stanley E. Porter, "Allusions and Echoes," in *As it is Written: Studying Paul's Use of Scripture*, ed. Stanley E. Porter, and Christopher D. Stanley, SymbS 50 (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2008), 29–33; Foster, "Echoes without Resonance," 96–111; see also David Allen, "The Use of Criteria: The State of the Question," in *Methodology in the Use of the Old Testament in the New: Context and Criteria*, ed. David M. Allen and Steve Smith, LNTS 579 (London: T&T Clark, 2019), 129–141. While their comments encourage deep reflection on Hays' methodology, the theoretical foundation of *metalepsis* itself has received inadequate attention.

theory “should not shy away from or try to erase the complexities.”⁴ The attention to this quality has the potential to illuminate the analyses of the intertextual references in the Gospels and the epistolary writings in terms of modern literary theory.

Lastly, *metalepsis* in intertextual analysis from a historical perspective is worth discussing. Indeed, metaleptic theory has its rhetorical roots in ancient literature, and its use in Hellenistic writings has recently drawn scholars’ attention.⁵ Does *metalepsis* in ancient literature share the transgressive characteristic of Genette’s conception of narrative *metalepsis*? Given the NT texts as ancient literature, how does the ancient use of *metalepsis* illuminate the understanding of the NT texts? How is *metalepsis* compared with other citation methods in Qumran or rabbinic literature? The present research approaches Mark’s narrative from a modern literary perspective and shifts the focus away from some of the historical issues, for example, identifying the intertextual source and comparing the exegetical technique. While the biblical scholarship of using the HB in the NT demonstrates interest in these historical questions,⁶ the attention to the theoretical ground of *metalepsis* potentially sheds light on the interpretation of the texts from a historical vantage point.

⁴ Dinkler, *Literary Theory*, 8.

⁵ E.g., Sebastian Matzner and Gail Trimble eds., *Metalepsis: Ancient Texts, New Perspectives* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020); see also Irene J. F. de Jong, “Metalepsis in Ancient Greek Literature,” in *Narratology and Interpretation: The Content of Narrative Form in Ancient Literature*, ed. Jonas Grethlein and Antonios Rengakos, TCSup (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2009), 87–115.

⁶ Docherty identifies six historical issues which the studies of the inner-biblical quotation and the use of the HB in the NT address, including exegetical tradition, exegetical motivation, identifying quotations and allusions, introducing citations, literal accuracy of quotations and rhetorical purposes of quotations, see Susan Docherty, “Crossing Testamentary Borders: Methodological Insights for OT/NT Study from Contemporary Hebrew Bible Scholarship,” in *Methodology in the Use of the Old Testament in the New: Context and Criteria*, ed. David M. Allen and Steve Smith, LNTS 579 (London: T&T Clark, 2019), 11–22.

After thoroughly exploring the shepherd image used before the early Middle Ages, Awe Freeman proposed that the interpretation of the shepherd image is oversimplified and romanticised. This image is in fact a complex figure with multiple values and meanings.⁷ Although the current thesis has a research purpose different from that of Awe Freeman, it aligns with her in terms of the multivalent nature of the shepherd image. The metaleptic understanding of the two shepherd images in Mark's narrative demonstrated the profound significance the images have in characterising Jesus and his ministry, in contrast to previous studies. Mark's shepherd image is not merely a simple representation of a leader. Instead, it is adopted to paint a vivid picture of how Jesus performs as the Davidic shepherd to fulfil God's eschatological restoration, and how he leads the people of God to participate in the kingdom of God as true insiders with his shepherding ministry in Mark's narrative.

⁷ Awe Freeman, *The Good Shepherd*, 160–161.

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