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Thematic Evidence

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter we explore themes that are found in the body of Mark's Gospel and which continue into the concluding twelve verses. Here we investigate the following five subjects: (1) the prediction of the passion and resurrection; (2) the new exodus; (3) Elijah; (4) the movement from fear to faith; and (5) the proclamation of the gospel message. Certain of these are more prominent than others, but all, we submit, are more a feature of Mark than of the other three canonical Gospels. Considered separately each one might not be granted its due weight, yet taken together they further fortify the argument that the author of Mark 16:9–20 was indeed that of 1:1—16:8.

THE PASSION PREDICTIONS

As is well known, each of the Synoptic Gospels records sayings of Jesus foretelling his death and resurrection in Jerusalem. In Mark three such passages occur:

And he began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise. (8:31)

“The Son of Man is to be betrayed into the hands of men, and they will kill him. And when he has been killed, he will rise after three days.” (9:31)

“Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and to the scribes; and they will condemn him to death and deliver him to the Gentiles; and they will mock him, and scourge him, and spit on him, and kill him. And after three days he will rise.” (10:33–34)¹

Matthew records three analogous predictions (16:21; 17:22–23; 20:18–19), and Luke two (9:22; 18:31–33), plus one partial statement (9:44). Despite this incorporation of similar

1. 9:31 and 10:34 both have the textual variant “on the third day” (τῇ τρίτῃ ἡμέρᾳ) for “after three days” (μετὰ τρεῖς ἡμέρας).

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statements in all Synoptic accounts it shall here be argued that a certain distinct function exists in Mark's usage not present in the others.

We begin by observing that the first two Markan predictions are comparatively brief, the first having four elements (suffer, rejected, killed, rise), and the second just three (betrayed, killed, rise). The third prediction is much fuller, comprising an opening statement of the present situation followed by a series of eight verbal clauses, seven relating to Jesus' betrayal, trial, and execution, and the final one to his resurrection. Of these eight clauses the first and the last have Jesus, or "the Son of Man" as the explicit or implicit grammatical subject. The intervening clauses are all third person plural, two referring to the actions of the Jewish rulers, and four to the Gentiles. The Greek text may be laid out as follows:

- Ἴδου ἀναβαίνομεν εἰς Ἱερουσόλυμα
- a καὶ ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου παραδοθήσεται τοῖς ἀρχιερεῦσιν καὶ τοῖς γραμματεῦσιν
- b1 καὶ κατακρινούσιν αὐτὸν θανάτῳ
- b2 καὶ παραδώσουσιν αὐτὸν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν
- c1 καὶ ἐμπαίξουσιν αὐτῷ
- c2 καὶ ἐμπτύσουσιν αὐτῷ
- c3 καὶ μαστιγώσουσιν αὐτόν
- c4 καὶ ἀποκτενοῦσιν [αὐτόν]
- d καὶ μετὰ τρεῖς ἡμέρας ἀναστήσεται.

We note the stylized arrangement. Excluding the initial statement, which as a present tense statement evidently does not form part of the prediction itself, the eight predictive clauses are enveloped within two (a/d) which correlate in having Jesus as the subject, both verbs showing the future middle/passive ending -σεται. The first of these in its latter part introduces the high priests and scribes in a dative phrase. These then become the grammatical subjects of the two subsequent clauses (b1/b2). The last of these two presents the Gentiles in a dative phrase, who then become the grammatical subjects of the following four clauses (c1/c2/c3/c4). This series of six verbal phrases (b1–c4) all display the future active ending -σουσιν/-οῦσιν.² It may be purely coincidental, but it is not beyond the bounds of credibility that the resurrection has been located in the eighth clause (d), since this is the number connotative of a new beginning, the first day of the week on which this event transpired also being an eighth.

It is here proposed that Mark has deliberately designed this saying of Jesus in order to function as a programmatic statement for the remainder of his Gospel.³ What these words contain is in fact the series of principal events concerning Jesus that Mark is about to record:

- Going up to Jerusalem (10:32–13:36)⁴
- Betrayal to the Jewish leaders (14:1–52)

2. Without wishing to press the linguistic details too far, we also observe a 2 2 2 pattern in the six middle clauses created by three separate features: (1) the syllable length of the verbs is 5 5 4 4 5 5; (2) the case of the governed object is accusative for the first two verbs, dative for the middle two, then accusative again; (3) the middle two verbs resemble each other in being compounded with the ἐμ- prefix.

3. Cf. Wright, *Resurrection of the Son of God*, 620, "These predictions shape and punctuate the narrative of the second half of the gospel."

4. This section includes Jesus' deeds and teaching upon arrival in Jerusalem.

- Condemned by the Jewish leaders (14:53–65)⁵
- Handed over to the Gentiles (15:1–15a)
- Maltreated by the Gentiles (15:15b–20)
- Put to death (15:21–47)
- Resurrected (16:1–20)

Such programmatic statements are not unknown elsewhere in the NT. It is commonly acknowledged that Luke has placed a similar feature near the beginning of his second volume: “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth” (Acts 1:8). Here in a summary prediction Jesus speaks of the coming of the Spirit, the period of witness in Jerusalem, then in Judea and Samaria, and finally to the farther lands of the Gentiles. Scholars have long recognized that this single verse lays down the thematic contents of the entire book. As I. Howard Marshall states, “in a broad sense the programme outlined here corresponds to the structure of Acts as a whole.”⁶

In the case of Mark 10:33–34 the thematic outline of what is to follow is further supported by the presence of unmistakable verbal correspondences. That is to say, the wording of the predictions is, in almost every instance, echoed by corresponding phraseology later in the book where the fulfillment is recorded. This trend is established at the outset by the introductory remark in which Jesus describes their current situation:

“Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem [ἀναβαίνομεν εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα]” (10:33a)	They were on the way going up to Jerusalem [ἀναβαίνοντες εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα] (10:32)
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This clear verbal link between the saying and the accompanying narrative sets the pattern for the list of predictions and their subsequent narrative fulfillments. The details may be tabulated as follows:

<i>Prediction: Mark 10:33–34</i>	<i>Fulfillment: Mark 14–16</i>
and the Son of Man will be betrayed [ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου παραδοθήσεται] to the chief priests and to the scribes Cf. The Son of Man is betrayed [ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου παραδίδεται] into the hands [εἰς χεῖρας] of men (9:31)	Behold, the Son of Man is betrayed [παραδίδεται ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου] into the hands [εἰς τὰς χεῖρας] of sinners (14:41) Cf. the chief priests and the scribes were seeking how to seize him by stealth (14:1); Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve, went to the chief priests to betray him to them (14:10); woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed [ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου παραδίδεται] (14:21)

5. Between this section and the next comes Peter’s denial (14:66–72). This falls outside of the programmatic statement in that it relates not to Jesus himself but to one of the disciples. Interestingly this event is given its own separate predictive utterance in 14:27–31.

6. Marshall, *Acts of the Apostles*, 61. The same is noted by many other commentators such as, for example, Conzelmann, *Acts of the Apostles*, 7; Fitzmyer, *Acts of the Apostles*, 119, who speaks of “the programmatic verse 1:8”; Witherington, *Acts of the Apostles*, 110; cf. also Pao, *Acts and the Isaianic New Exodus*, 94, who uses the term “programmatic statement.”

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and they will condemn him [κατακρίνουσιν αὐτόν] to death [θανάτῳ]	and they all condemned him [κατέκριναν αὐτόν] as deserving death [θανάτου] (14:64)
and deliver him [παράδωσουσιν] to the Gentiles	And they delivered him [παρέδωκαν] to Pilate (15:1) Cf. it was out of envy that the chief priests had delivered [παράδεδώκεισαν] him up (15:10)
and they will mock him [ἐμπαίξουσιν αὐτῷ], and scourge him, and spit on him [ἐμπτύσουσιν αὐτῷ]	and having flogged Jesus . . . the soldiers led him away . . . and they were striking his head with a staff and were spitting on him [ἐνέπτυσον αὐτῷ] and kneeling down they worshipped him. And when they had mocked him [ἐνέπαιξαν αὐτῷ] . . . (15:10–20)
and kill [ἀποκτενοῦσιν] him.	And they crucified him (15:24, 25)
And after three days he will rise [ἀναστήσεται]	Having risen [ἀναστὰς] early on the first day of the week (16:9)

In 10:34 “scourge” (μαστιγώσουσιν) and 15:10 “flogged” (φραγελλώσας) are essentially synonymous. The variation in terms is most likely due to the different settings. The first depicts Jesus speaking to fellow Jews, the latter is a narrative regarding the action of Roman soldiers. For this latter the more appropriate Latin-derived term (φραγελλώσας; cf. *flagellare*) is employed.

Mark’s three predictions contain the verb “kill” four times (8:31; 9:31 [twice]; 10:34), while “crucify” is not used at all, as it is in Matthew, though it does find a place in the fulfillment. Semantically the two verbs obviously cohere in a generic-specific relationship. Arguably “kill” has the characteristic of being more original in the prediction, since Matthew’s “crucify” could easily be an accommodation to the actual event as known to have occurred. Mark’s choice of word for the prediction may have been determined by the desire to emphasize the fact of death, rather than the means of death. Jesus is depicted here as foretelling his coming death and resurrection, in which context the manner of his death as a crucifixion is secondary. Additionally, though crucifixion was a common and effective method of execution, the bare verb “crucify” may not be sufficient to establish the actuality of death with absolute certainty.⁷ It is perhaps significant that elsewhere in the NT, the act of crucifixion is given further qualification by the addition of the verb “kill,” as in “this man . . . you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men” (Acts 2:23; cf. 10:39–40). It may further be proposed that with the term “rise,” “kill” creates a better antithetical collocation. It is noteworthy that apart from Matthew’s predictive sayings “crucify” never collocates directly with “rise” anywhere else in the NT. Collocations with the latter are usually formed with the verbs “die” and “kill,” which needless to say inherently involve death (as in Acts 3:15; Rom 6:9; 8:34; 1 Cor 15:3–4; 2 Cor 5:15; 1 Thess 4:14). So arguably for the prediction “he will rise,” that is, to life again, the prediction “they will kill him” makes a more appropriate prequel.

To demonstrate the particularly Markan nature of this programmatic statement, we need to consider the related passages in the other Gospels. Looking first at the parallel text

7. The prediction may have been intended to utterly exclude the possibility that Jesus meant a case of crucifixion from which the victim was released before death and made a recovery.

in Luke 18:31–33, we note that several elements of Mark’s program are present and some are missing. Yet with most of those that are included there is no later verbal correspondence relating to the fulfillment, as is shown below:

<i>Prediction</i>	<i>Fulfillment</i>
Going up to Jerusalem	[No verbal parallel]
[Betrayed to rulers—omitted]	
Fulfillment of what is written	(Reiterated in 22:37; 24:44, 46)
[Condemned to death—omitted]	
Delivered to Gentiles	[No verbal parallel]
Mocking [ἐμπαιχθήσεται]	They mocked [ἐνέπαιζον] him (22:63)
Spitting	[No verbal parallel]
Insulting [ὕβρισθήσεται]	They insulted [βλασφημοῦντες] him (22:65)
Scourging	[No verbal parallel]
Killed	They crucified him (23:33)
Rise [ἀναστήσεται]	To rise [ἀναστῆναι] (24:46)

From this it may instantly be seen how Luke is ignorant of Mark’s schema. Even in the section concerning the abuse of Jesus, where there is one precise verbal parallel, the narrative treatment of the fulfillment is out of sequence with the predictive saying. In the prediction these abuses take place *after* Jesus has been handed over to the Gentiles. In Mark therefore it is Pilate’s soldiers who behave in this way (15:15–20). In Luke, however, the men who do this are those Jews guarding Jesus *before* he is led away to the Roman governor (22:63–65; cf. 23:1). Regarding the verb ἀναστῆναι in connection with the resurrection, although the same verb is used, it does not seem that the statement given in 24:46 is being presented as the fulfillment of the earlier saying. In his final chapter when Luke speaks of the resurrection event itself he uses the term ἡγέρθη (v. 6 and v. 34). The usage in v. 46 is part of Jesus opening up the minds of the disciples to understand the scriptures in which it was written that the Christ would suffer and rise from the dead. In other words, here Jesus is talking about the OT witness to the resurrection of the Messiah. Hence the verb’s infinitive form, looking to the future from the OT perspective, the scriptures testifying that the Christ “would suffer” (NASB, NJB) or “is to suffer” (NRSV), not that he “*did* suffer.” The verb ἀναστῆναι is not then in this context a finite statement denoting the event that has just occurred. This being so, we see that there is not the same close affinity in Luke as there is between the prediction in Mark 10:34 (ἀναστήσεται) and the suggested fulfillment in 16:9 (ἀναστὰς).

With respect to Matthew there are more points of agreement with Mark than in the case of Luke. Matthew 20:18–19 has most of the basic elements of Mark 10:33–34 and in identical order:

<i>Prediction</i>	<i>Fulfillment</i>
Going up [ἀναβαίνομεν] to Jerusalem	Jesus was going up [ἀναβαίνων] to Jerusalem (20:17)
Betrayed [παραδοθήσεται] to rulers	Son of Man is betrayed [παραδίδοται] . . . (26:45)
Condemned to death [θανάτῳ]	he is worthy of death [θανάτου] (26:66)

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Delivered [παραδώσουσιν] to Gentiles	They delivered [παρέδωκαν] him to Pilate (27:2)
To mock [ἐμπαίζαι]	they mocked [ἐνέπαιζαν] him (27:29)
To scourge [μαστιγῶσαι]	[No verbal parallel]
[Spitting—omitted]	
To crucify [σταυρῶσαι]	having crucified [σταυρώσαντες] him (27:35)
Rise [ἐγερθήσεται]	He is risen [ἡγέρθη] (28:6)

While at first sight the data from Matthew might appear not to differ much from that of Mark, closer inspection shows that the verbal connections between the predictions and the fulfillments are not so nearly related as in Mark. The verb “go up” at the onset of the predictive utterance is plural, yet the narrative counterpart is singular, of Jesus alone. In Mark both are plural. The verb of condemnation in the prediction has nothing to match in the fulfillment, while Mark repeats the very same word. Matthew has lesser detail regarding the maltreatment of Jesus, with just one verbal parallel compared with two exact and one synonymous term in Mark. Matthew’s resemblance to Mark breaks down following the handing over to the Gentiles. The three verbs following παραδώσουσιν are all infinitives of purpose, rather than each its own main clause as in Mark. Finally, concerning the verb “rise,” although the same verb occurs in 28:6, this latter may not in fact be intended to relate to the passion prediction of 20:18–19. Rather from the context in Matthew 28 it appears to connect more closely to the separate foretelling of the resurrection found in 26:32, “But after I have risen [ἐγερθῆναι], I will go before you into Galilee,” concerning which more presently.

Since neither replicates it, it would seem that both Matthew and Luke were unaware of the programmatic function of Mark 10:33–34 within the course of events. The laying out of the forthcoming themes in such a fashion, with distinct verbal links in the narrative fulfillments, would appear to be a specifically Markan feature.

What has greatest relevance to our particular concern, of course, is the fact that Mark records Jesus as having predicted his resurrection. Though commonly designated “passion predictions,” the three utterances so called are in actual fact “passion and resurrection” predictions.⁸ Here then is strong evidence for arguing that Mark’s original composition contained an account of Jesus’ rising from the dead. Is it sustainable to argue that Mark 16:1–8 satisfies that requirement? In these latter verses the fact of Jesus’ resurrection is implicit, though not confirmed, in the vacant tomb. It is plainly verbalized through the angelic announcement, ἡγέρθη (v. 6, “He has risen”). This pericope lacks, however, any mention of a tangible appearance of the risen Jesus to any human witness, such as those followers addressed in the predictive sayings. It is not unreasonable to contend that the bodily resurrection of a dead man is an event of such an extraordinary nature as to require fully sufficient proofs to be in place. The disciples would not know with certainty that what was foretold had come true until they had seen the risen Jesus for themselves. If Mark was so emphatic in his threefold repetition of a predicted resurrection, we could not reasonably expect him to be so indefinite regarding the fulfillment.

It is our contention here that the events recorded in Mark 16:1–8 are not the ultimate fulfillment of the Markan predictions. Rather this is to be found in 16:9–20. Besides the reasons just given regarding the inadequacy of vv. 1–8, there is the all important fact

8. Wright, *Resurrection of the Son of God*, 620, “. . . always, in looking ahead to his death, they look ahead as well to his resurrection.”

that the verbal echo of the prediction is actually created by 16:9. In Mark's predictions of the resurrection, unlike Matthew and Luke, the self-same verb is employed in all three instances: *ἀναστῆναι* (8:31), *ἀναστήσεται* (9:31), *ἀναστήσεται* (10:34). It is in fact the very opening word of the final section, 16:9–20, that provides a resounding declaration that this has now been fulfilled—*ἀναστὰς* (“Having risen . . .”).⁹ In view of the uniformity seen in the verb within the context of the predictions, there is no reason to seek an instance of *ἐγερθῆναι* as indicating the fulfillment. Moreover, with regard to *ἡγέρθη* in 16:6, this may be excluded from consideration as the fulfillment of the prediction by virtue of the fact that the young man in the tomb is actually referencing another separate utterance of Jesus. Rather than hearken back to the resurrection predictions, there can be no doubt that the words of vv. 6–7 contain a reiteration of the saying found in 14:28 following the last supper. There Jesus informs his disciples, “After I have risen [*μετὰ τὸ ἐγερθῆναί με*], I will go before you into Galilee [*προάξω ὑμᾶς εἰς τὴν Γαλιλαίαν*].” This saying the angel in the tomb unmistakably echoes to the women, “he is risen [*ἡγέρθη*] . . . he goes before you into Galilee [*προάγει ὑμᾶς εἰς τὴν Γαλιλαίαν*].” To make the connection absolutely clear the angel adds “as he told you.” Here he indicates explicitly the existence of the earlier saying in 14:28. With regard to *ἡγέρθη* in 16:6, therefore, its intratextual correspondence unambiguously lies in a text other than the passion predictions. A further important detail not to be overlooked is the fact that with regard to the time phrases that locate temporally both 16:1–8 and 9–20, it is only the second of the two that defines the event of the resurrection. The phrase “on the first day of the week” appears in both contexts (v. 2 and v. 9), which, according to Hebrew reckoning, amounts to the third day after the crucifixion. Yet, it is essential to note, in its first instance this has no reference to the resurrection. Rather, there we are told that “very early on the first day of the week, they [the women listed in v. 1] came to the tomb.” This time relates directly to the visit of the women. In v. 9, on the other hand, it is specifically the resurrection of Jesus that is in view: “Having risen early on the first day of the week.”

In light of the above, we conclude that the final element of the programmatic statement found in Mark 10:33–34 finds its later narrative fulfillment in 16:9–20, with v. 9 containing the verbal echo. By way of summary we give the overall picture regarding the relationship between the verbs in the prediction and fulfillment as follows:

<i>Prediction</i>	<i>Fulfillment</i>
<i>ἀναβαίνομεν</i> (10:33a)	<i>ἀναβαίνοντες</i> (10:32)
<i>παραδοθήσεται</i> (10:33b)	<i>παραδίδοται</i> (14:41)
<i>κατακρινούσιν</i> (10:33c)	<i>κατέκριναν</i> (14:64)
<i>παραδώσουσιν</i> (10:33d)	<i>παρέδωκαν</i> (15:1)
<i>ἐμπαίξουσιν</i> (10:34a)	<i>ἐνέπαιξαν</i> (15:19)
<i>ἐμπτύσουσιν</i> (10:34b)	<i>ἐνέπτυσον</i> (15:20)
<i>μαστιγώσουσιν</i> (10:34c) [Greek]	<i>[φραγελλώσας]</i> (15:15) [Latin synonym]
<i>ἀποκτενοῦσιν</i> (10:34d) [generic]	<i>[ἐσταύρωσαν]</i> (15:25) [specific]
<i>ἀναστήσεται</i> (10:34e)	<i>ἀναστὰς</i> (16:9)

9. There might also be some significance in the fact that 16:9–20 contains three distinct resurrection appearances in concord with the three predictions.

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Seen in this way, the sequence of verbal correspondences gives reason to accept the material introduced at 16:9 as being an integral part of the Gospel as originally composed.

THE NEW EXODUS

We next consider one strongly Markan motif, whose presence throughout the whole Gospel including 16:9–20 carries considerable weight as an argument for the inclusion of the latter. The incorporation of the exodus motif as a major thematic component in the second Gospel is widely recognized. Details have been presented in the works of Swartley, Marcus, and Watts, among others.¹⁰ Mark has been shown to employ a whole series of allusions to events associated with the historical exodus, embracing the Passover sacrifice, the deliverance from bondage, the wilderness journey, the Sinai covenant, and conquest of the promised land. These allusions are all fitted into an overall schema which is, as Watts argues, influenced by the new exodus as portrayed in the latter half of Isaiah.¹¹

Some of these features appear in the other Synoptic Gospels, while others do not. If Mark was written prior to Matthew and Luke the allusions in these latter might simply have been carried over from their source. The unique manner in which Mark opens his Gospel (especially 1:2, see below), among other details to be considered, suggests that this was a particularly Markan theme.

By way of illustration, we will first outline in this section some of the more definite instances in which Mark draws upon exodus themes, beginning with the prologue, continuing through the body of the Gospel, and into the passion narrative. We will then demonstrate their existence in the longer ending also.

Exodus allusions in the prologue

Following the superscription in the opening verse, the reader is immediately confronted with an OT citation having definite exodus/new exodus overtones (1:2–3). It is a composite citation involving Exodus 23:20, Malachi 3:1, and Isaiah 40:3,¹² all of which relate to a “messenger” being sent to prepare the way—“Behold, I am sending my messenger before your face, who will prepare your way. The voice of one crying in the wilderness: ‘Prepare the way of the Lord; make his paths straight.’”

The Isaianic text stands distinct from the other two, which are conflated. It may be for this reason that the whole is introduced as being from “Isaiah the prophet” (v. 2a). There is much discussion revolving around whether it is the Exodus text or that from Malachi which is at the forefront of Mark’s mind.¹³ For present purposes this issue is not of great relevance since our aim is merely to illustrate the importance of the exodus motif for Mark. It will just

10. Swartley, “A Study in Markan Structure,”; also more recently by the same author, *Israel’s Scripture Traditions*; Marcus, *Way of the Lord*; Watts, *Isaiah’s New Exodus*; Pitre, *Jesus, the Tribulation, and the End of the Exile*, chapter 5. Marcus also identifies numerous aspects of the exodus/new exodus theme in his two volume commentary on Mark in the Anchor Bible series (*Mark 1–8*, *Mark 8–16*), as does Watts in his more recent “Mark,” in Beale and Carson (eds.), *Commentary on the New Testament*, 111–249.

11. Watts, *Isaiah’s New Exodus*, 48–49.

12. Cf. Marcus, *Way of the Lord*, 12–14; Watts, *Isaiah’s New Exodus*, 61–62, 113–14; Edwards, *Gospel according to Mark*, 26–27. Edwards describes it as “a tapestry of three OT passages.”

13. E.g., Watts, *Isaiah’s New Exodus*, 61–62; Marcus, *Way of the Lord*, 12–14.

briefly be stated in this context that, merely on the basis of form, the Exodus text does seem to be primary, as a comparison between Mark 1:2 and the two OT texts will reveal:

Mark 1:2, Ἰδοὺ ἀποστέλλω τὸν ἄγγελόν μου πρὸ προσώπου σου, ὃς κατασκευάσει τὴν ὁδὸν σου (“Behold, I am sending my messenger before your face, who will prepare your way”)

Exodus 23:20 LXX, Καὶ ἰδοὺ ἐγὼ ἀποστέλλω τὸν ἄγγελόν μου πρὸ προσώπου σου, ἵνα φυλάξῃ σε ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ, ὅπως εἰσαγάγῃ σε εἰς τὴν γῆν, ἣν ἡτοίμασά σοι (“Behold, I am sending my angel before your face in order to keep you in the way and to bring you into the land which I have prepared for you”)¹⁴

Malachi 3:1 LXX, ἰδοὺ ἐγὼ ἐξαποστέλλω τὸν ἄγγελόν μου, καὶ ἐπιβλέψεται ὁδὸν πρὸ προσώπου μου (“Behold, I am sending forth my angel, and he shall survey the way before my face”)

Firstly, the verb “send” is a compound verb in Malachi (ἐξαποστέλλω), while not so in Exodus and Mark (both ἀποστέλλω). Secondly, the prepositional phrase “before your face” is placed directly after the object of “send” in both Mark and Exodus, while in Malachi it forms the final element in the following clause. Thirdly, the possessive pronoun qualifying “way” is second person singular in Mark and Exodus (σου), but first person singular in Malachi (μου). These agreements show a closer affinity between the Gospel citation and the pentateuchal book, rather than the minor prophet. In any case, since Malachi 3:1 itself has similarities with Exodus 23:30 which have been described as “too striking to be accidental,” the former is probably, a “re-working” of the latter, as suggested by a number of scholars.¹⁵ So either way, Exodus 23:20 was without doubt in the author’s mind at the commencement of his work.¹⁶

According to Watts, this citation from Exodus would have evoked the memory of Israel’s historical redemption as a model for the greater eschatological deliverance, now inaugurated through the coming of the “Lord” presented in the adjoining words from Isaiah 40:3.¹⁷ This latter text, of course, though declared by a prophet, itself has obvious exodus connotations.¹⁸

14. The Masoretic Text is very similar except that it has “place” for “land.”

15. Cf. Watts, *Isaiah’s New Exodus*, 71; cf. Watts, “Mark,” 114, 118.

16. Austen Farrer here makes a noteworthy observation which lends support to the priority of the Exodus text: “The prophets were not read in synagogue except as comments upon the Law, and St Mark, obedient to the custom, places in front of Isaiah’s text the text of Moses with which it most simply corresponds, and on which it may be taken to be the comment. God had said through Moses: ‘Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, to keep thee in the way’ (Exod. XXIII, 20). He had been speaking of divine leading in the return from Egyptian bondage to the Promised Land. Isaiah in chapter XL is predicting a new return to Canaan from a second bondage, a new Exodus like the old, and so it is very proper that Isaiah’s text should be applied to the Exodus text. Needless to say, St Mark, like all Christians, sees our salvation through Jesus as a spiritual exodus, and a conquest of the true Promised Land.” Farrer then continues with reference to the Malachi text: “St Mark does not merely quote as ‘Isaiah’ a text of Moses together with its Isaianic comment. He colours the wording of the Mosaic text with the wording of a text in Malachi . . . Exodus sends the messenger before Israel, Malachi before the Lord, and Mark before Jesus. If Mark can fuse Exodus and Malachi, he must see in Jesus both Israel and the Lord” (*Study in St Mark*, 55–56).

17. Watts, *Isaiah’s New Exodus*, 67, 90.

18. *Ibid.*, 114.

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Significantly, the verses in Exodus 23 following that cited by Mark go on to deal with the driving out of the Canaanite nations (23:22–23).¹⁹ The relevance of this will become apparent when we come to consider Mark 16.

The baptism and temptation. These two events directly adjoin each other in Mark's narrative (1:9–11; 12–13), as they do in Matthew (3:13–17; 4:1–11). In Luke they are separated by Jesus' genealogy (Luke 3:23–38). Allusions to the historical exodus are apparent, as also to the Isaianic new exodus:

(1) The sequence of events and the topography are highly suggestive. In both the Gospel and the exodus narrative there is the passage through water followed by entrance into a wilderness.²⁰

(2) Immediately after the baptism Mark states that Jesus "saw the heavens being torn apart and the Spirit descending upon him like a dove" (1:10). In this context, whereas Matthew and Luke both speak of the heavens being "opened" (Matt 3:16, ἡνεώχθησαν; Luke 3:21, ἀνεψχθῆναι), Mark has the participle of the verb "tear/split" (σχιζομένους). This has been taken as a deliberate echo to the Hebrew text of Isaiah 64:1 (63:19 MT), "O that you would tear open [קרע, 'tear'] the heavens and come down," a verse which connects the rending of the heavens with a divine descent.²¹ The preceding verses in the prophet (Isa 63:7–19) clearly portray a new exodus event, with references to Moses (vv. 11, 12), crossing the sea (vv. 11, 12), the wilderness (v. 13), and significantly also to the "Holy Spirit" (vv. 9, 11) and the "Spirit of the LORD" (v. 14). In view of these connections Marcus and Watts both argue strongly for Mark's interest in the Isaianic passage at this point.²² Watts concludes, "the rent heavens and descent of the Spirit can hardly be anything but the sign that God himself has now come in power to rescue his people. The long-awaited new exodus has begun."²³

(3) Following the descent of the Spirit there comes the voice from heaven declaring, "You are my beloved Son; in you I am well pleased" (1:11). Though this is not a precise citation from the OT it clearly alludes to two particular texts, which are Psalm 2:7 and Isaiah 42:1.²⁴ The latter of these, "Behold, my servant, whom I uphold; my chosen one in whom my soul delights," speaks of the divinely appointed agent through whom the new exodus would be accomplished.²⁵ While the Psalm concerns the enthronement of the king in Zion, the immediately following verse (Ps 2:8, "I will give the nations as your inheritance, and the ends of the earth as your possession") uses typical language associated with the original conquest of the land (e.g., Num 32:32; Deut 4:38; cf. Ps 105:44). The themes of the Davidic king and

19. Ibid., 115.

20. Ibid., 120, where the baptism is described as a "reenactment of the exodus sea crossing."

21. Mann, *Mark*, 199; Guelich, *Mark 1—8:26*, 32; Edwards, *Gospel according to Mark*, 35. Lane commits himself to an interpretation of this allusion grounded in the historical exodus when he writes: "Mark's distinctive language echoes Isa. 64:1, where the prophet prays, 'Oh that thou wouldst rend the heavens, that thou wouldst come down, that the mountains might quake at thy presence . . .' The pattern had been established already in the first exodus that God could not come down until the people had been consecrated (Ex. 19:10f.). For this reason Jesus expressed a vicarious confession of sin on behalf of the many. He walked into the waters of baptism in obedience to the Father's will. He had consecrated himself in faith, even as every other man must do. But in this instance God came down, and there was the striking attestation that sonship has been re-established through the one true Israelite whose repentance was perfect" (*Gospel of Mark*, 55–56).

22. Marcus, *Way of the Lord*, 49–50; Watts, *Isaiah's New Exodus*, 103–4; cf. Marcus, *Mark 1–8*, 165.

23. Watts, "Mark," 121.

24. Cf. the discussion in France, *Gospel of Matthew*, 80–82; cf. Wright, *Jesus and the Victory*, 537.

25. Marcus, *Way of the Lord*, 51–53; 72–75; Watts, *Isaiah's New Exodus*, 113–16.

the Isaianic servant are here not inappropriately combined.²⁶ Besides Psalm 2:7 and Isaiah 42:1, there is the possibility of a further allusion to Exodus 4:22–23, where Israel is termed God’s “son” (“Israel is my firstborn son. . . . Let my son go that he may serve me”).²⁷ The idea of divine sonship is one that is thematically bound up with the exodus (cf. Deut 1:31; Hos 11:1). Finally we note that the divine voice relates also to the heavenly voice in Mark 9:7, another passage with strong exodus-Sinai overtones.²⁸

(4) When in 1:13 Mark locates Jesus in the wilderness for a period of “forty days,” the allusion to the wilderness wanderings of Israel becomes all the more certain, in that the people were in the wilderness for forty years (Num 32:13; Deut 29:5). It is only Mark, we observe, who intends the forty days to expressly quantify the time for which Jesus was actually in the wilderness location (“he was in the wilderness for forty days”). Both Matthew and Luke are nuanced otherwise.²⁹

(5) The fact that Jesus was then “tested” (πειραζόμενος) in the wilderness (1:13) cannot but have taken Mark’s readers back to the events following the exodus (cf. Exod 15:25; 16:4; Deut 4:34; 8:2, 16).³⁰ Deuteronomy 8:2, we note, brings together all three ideas of wilderness, forty, and testing: “Remember how the LORD your God led you all the way in the wilderness these forty years, to humble you and to test you.”

Taken together, all the foregoing point to the fact that in the baptismal and temptation narratives Mark wanted to produce, what Watts terms, a “conscious echo of Israel’s Exodus experience.”³¹

Exodus allusions in the body of the Gospel

In the main body of Mark’s Gospel allusions to the exodus theme or the new-exodus schema are readily detectable. We will here examine the allusive features of three particular events that fall within this part of his work—sending out the disciples to preach, the feeding of the five thousand, and the transfiguration, all of which draw distinctly upon events within the book of Exodus. Yet before turning to these, two sub-themes deserve a mention that scholars have identified as participating in the broader exodus motif. These are the “way” motif and the idea of divine warfare.

The way. All three scholars, Marcus, Swartley, and Watts, draw attention to the place that the “way” (ὁδός) plays in Mark, a motif based upon exodus and new exodus traditions.³² This motif, introduced right at the beginning of the Gospel (1:2–3), is given further promi-

26. Cf. Watts, “Mark,” 128.

27. Watts, *Isaiah’s New Exodus*, 113. Watts opines: “Given that Mark surrounds Jesus’ baptism with pervasive Exodus imagery . . . it is difficult to avoid the impression that the ‘son’ designation carries ‘Israel’ connotations as well”; cf. also Edwards, *Gospel according to Mark*, 37.

28. Donahue and Harrington, *Gospel of Mark*, 65.

29. For Matthew the forty days was the length of the fast (“having fasted for forty days and forty nights,” Matt 4:2), while for Luke it denotes the duration of the testing (“being tempted for forty days by the devil,” Luke 4:2). In these two Gospels the fact that Jesus was in the wilderness for forty days is implicit, rather than explicit as in Mark.

30. France, *Gospel of Mark*, 85.

31. Watts, *Isaiah’s New Exodus*, 117.

32. Marcus, *Way of the Lord*, 31–33; Swartley, *Israel’s Scripture Traditions*, 97–102; Watts, *Isaiah’s New Exodus*, 221–91.

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nence in the central section.³³ Here Mark employs the noun “way” no less than seven times (8:27; 9:33, 34; 10:17, 32, 46, 52), where Matthew has only two parallel usages and Luke just one,³⁴ serving to underscore Mark’s particular interest in this exodus-based theme. Swartley comments: “More recent Markan scholarship recognizes that Mark crafts his middle section purposefully. In the absence of geographical designations, another kind of topographical feature, the ‘way,’ provides settings for the events and teachings.”³⁵ It is noteworthy that Mark’s “way” section ends with Jesus arriving in Jericho (10:46), in that Jericho also marked the conclusion to ancient Israel’s wilderness journey (Josh 5:10–15).³⁶ Here we observe that Mark alone mentions “Jericho” twice in the same verse (10:46; cf. Matt 20:29; Luke 18:35), which is redundant from a purely semantic point of view. The episode-initial independent clause “And they came to Jericho” is uniquely Markan.

According to Marcus, this “way” motif in Mark has more than one significance. For the disciples it is an “ethical” way, as they learn from their master while they proceed on their journey, a way which will ultimately bring them into the kingdom of God.³⁷ For Jesus, however, the way is, in view of the Isaianic new exodus background, the divine triumphant processional march, culminating in Jesus’ definitive victory over the forces of evil (see below) in Jerusalem.³⁸ These different senses each has its parallel in the wilderness journeying of Israel, which at one and the same time was to instruct and refine the people, and also to bring them to the place where they would be victorious over the Gentiles and enter their promised inheritance.

Divine warfare. The conflict between Jesus and the evil spirits is also understood to have its background in the exodus/new exodus. This theme is treated in detail in a specifically Markan context by Watts.³⁹ Historically the exodus first recounted the superior power of Israel’s God over the king, magicians, and even gods (Exod 12:12) of Egypt. The overthrow of the Egyptian hosts in the Red Sea was celebrated as a great victory for Yahweh over his enemies (Exod 15:1–12). This same divine might was again displayed in God going forth to fight against the inhabitants of Canaan at the time of the conquest (e.g., Exod 23:23, 27; Deut 20:4). Eschatologically Isaiah depicts God as victorious over the nations, delivering his people from their power (e.g., Isa 42:22–23; 49:9). Just as he had destroyed the Egyptians in the sea, so he will overthrow Israel’s oppressors (43:16–17; 51:9–10). In so doing God demonstrates his superiority over the idol-gods which epitomized those Gentile nations (e.g., 41:1–5; 43:8–13).⁴⁰

The Gospel shows Jesus exercising divine power in expelling, not the Gentile oppressors, but the evil spirits. Watts states:

Mark continues to build his case that in Jesus Israel’s long-awaited eschatological new exodus from exile has begun. . . . [T]he enemy is no longer Babylon or Rome and their idols, but rather the demons. . . . Jesus’ casting out of demons, unlike

33. Marcus, *Way of the Lord*, 32.

34. Swartley, *Israel’s Scripture Traditions*, 100.

35. *Ibid.*, 98.

36. *Ibid.*, 106.

37. Marcus, *Way of the Lord*, 29–32.

38. *Ibid.*, 35–36.

39. Watts, *Isaiah’s New Exodus in Mark*, 137–69.

40. *Ibid.*, 141–42.

those of his contemporaries . . . is uniquely identified with both the inbreaking and the powerful kingly rule of Isaiah's Yahweh-Warrior himself and his true-Israel servant.⁴¹

Swartley is clearly in agreement with Watts in this understanding of the casting out of demons and its relation to the exodus when he writes:

[T]he theology of the exodus affirms not Moses, but Yahweh as the actual Liberator, indeed as the Warrior who has triumphed gloriously (Exod 15:1–3). Just as Yahweh-Warrior conquered through miracles . . . so Jesus is depicted by Mark as God's Warrior, attacking Satan's stronghold through his exorcisms as well as his healings. Jesus' method of subduing the enemy stands fully within the divine warfare miracle tradition: *the word (of God) in and through Jesus is the power that smites the demons*. The exodus type behind Jesus' work is thus not Moses, but Yahweh.⁴²

One exorcism will be mentioned, that of the Gerasene demoniac (Mark 5:1–20), which does not merely fit into the general exodus/new exodus motif, but which also has particular features especially evocative of details appearing in the historical exodus narrative. Here, as in the deliverance of Israel from Egypt, the sea figures prominently. Once the demons are cast out of the man into the pigs, the latter rush into the sea and are “drowned” (5:13), sharing a fate identical to that of Israel's Egyptian oppressors (Exod 14:28–30; 15:19).⁴³ Both accounts include the fear of those who learn of this great deliverance (Exod 15:14–16; Mark 5:15, 17). Both also use the phrase “the things the Lord has done” (Exod 14:31, *ἃ ἐποίησεν κύριος*; Mark 5:19, *ὅσα ὁ κύριός . . . πεποίηκεν*).⁴⁴ The juxtaposition of the Gerasene exorcism with the pericope relating Jesus and his disciples crossing the sea and Jesus' authority over the wind and waves (4:35–41) serves to corroborate the exodus connection.⁴⁵

All such exorcisms in the Gospel are a manifestation of Jesus' binding of the “strong man [τοῦ ἰσχυροῦ]” (Mark 3:27) that his possessions may be plundered. This, claims Watts, is an evident allusion to Isaiah 49:25, “Even the captives of the mighty man will be taken away, and the plunder of the strong man [ἰσχύοντος] will be rescued; for I will contend with the one who contends with you, and I will save your sons,” words uttered at the heart of Isaiah's new exodus prophecies.⁴⁶

The interpretation put forward by Longman and Reid further advocates this exodus-conquest background to the exorcisms:

In this pericope [Mark 3:22–27] and elsewhere, the word typically used of Jesus' work is *ekballō* (“cast out,” “drive out”). In the LXX this Greek verb is used to translate the Hebrew verb *gāraš*. While this term can be used in numerous

41. Watts, “Mark,” 148.

42. Swartley, *Israel's Scripture Tradition*, 56.

43. Longman and Reid, *God is a Warrior*, 116. On the destruction of the pigs the authors write: “It not only serves as evidence that the evil spirits have left the man, but within Mark's second Exodus typology, it recalls the drowning of Pharaoh, the god-king, in the sea (Ex 14:26–28; 15:3–5, 10; cf. Isa 43:16–17). As in Exodus 15, the divine warrior exerts his sovereign power over both Pharaoh and the Sea.”

44. These allusions, and more, are to be found listed in Marcus, *Mark 1–8*, 349.

45. Longman and Reid, *God is a Warrior*, 114.

46. Watts, *Isaiah's New Exodus*, 147–49.

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contexts, it is frequently and memorably used with reference to Israel, Yahweh, his angel or the “hornet” driving out the Canaanites from the land of promise.

As we have seen, the Conquest was an archetypal act of Yahweh, the divine warrior. If Jesus regarded himself as performing the eschatological work of the divine warrior, it would have been appropriate for him to refer to his encounters with demons in language derived from the Conquest tradition. . . . [F]or Jesus, the enemy was perceived as highly individualized—demonic powers who exercised control over actual men and women within the borders of Israel. . . . From an eschatological perspective, Jesus was carrying out a new Exodus and Conquest, routing the enemy that had occupied the land and held individuals in his thrall. God’s reign could not be established apart from defeating the occupying forces. By binding the strong man and plundering his property, Jesus actually advanced the kingdom.⁴⁷

Sending out the disciples. In Mark 6:7–9, a passage with parallels in both Matthew (10:5–10) and Luke (9:3; 10:1–4), we read: “He [Jesus] called the twelve and began to send them out two by two, and gave them authority over the unclean spirits; and he instructed them to take nothing for their journey except a staff; no bread, no bag, no money in their belts; but to wear sandals and not to put on two tunics.” A comparison with the other Synoptics shows that Mark’s list of items the disciples should take or leave differs remarkably. Whereas in the Matthean and in both Lukan versions everything that Jesus mentions is forbidden, in the Markan account he allows a staff and sandals. Why these two only? It is surely no coincidence that these were the two things mentioned in the context of the departure of Israel from Egypt. Exodus 12:11 tells us that on the night of the first Passover the Hebrews were instructed to eat, “with your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand.” The connection is reinforced when it is noted that the same context speaks of being “girded” (περιεζωσμέναι), while Mark (followed by Matthew only) here refers to a “belt/girdle” (ζώνη).⁴⁸ The presence of these allusions is, according to Edwards, to “suggest that the mission of the Twelve announces something as foundational and revelatory as the Exodus from Egypt, and that the disciples must be as free from encumbrances as were the Israelites, to serve their God in a new venture.”⁴⁹

The miraculous feeding. Echoes of the wilderness journey following the exodus are also to be found in Christ’s miraculous multiplication of the loaves and fishes. Correspondences in words and themes are noted in the various commentaries. The chief of these are:

(1) The event occurs in “a desolate place” (Mark 6:31, ἔρημον τόπον; cf. vv. 32, 35). This, say Donahue and Harrington, “evokes the journey of the people of Israel in the wilderness (LXX: ἔρημος) and the miraculous feedings there.”⁵⁰

(2) The miraculous supply of bread is linked with the provision of manna. R. T. France comments: “Another aspect to the symbolism of the event which an instructed reader could

47. Longman and Reid, *God is a Warrior*, 108–9.

48. This section is based upon the more detailed analysis in Marcus, *Mark 1–8*, 382–91.

49. Edwards, *Gospel according to Mark*, 180.

50. Donahue and Harrington, *Gospel of Mark*, 204, 208. Collins (*Mark*, 322) describes this particular connection at some length.

hardly miss . . . is the echo of Moses and the manna in the motif of bread miraculously provided in the wilderness.”⁵¹

(3) Mark speaks of the “green grass” (6:39) in that place. This is an indication that the miracle occurred in spring,⁵² around the time of the Passover festival. Though the allusion here is not so strong, Marcus ventures the comment: “In Palestine grass grows in the desert only in springtime, and the parallel in John 6:4 sets this miracle during Passover, a spring festival. The green grass may be part of the Passover/exodus typology of the passage rather than a personal reminiscence.”⁵³

(4) The description of the people on this occasion as “sheep without a shepherd” (6:34) echoes the similar statement on the lips of Moses regarding the Israelites in the wilderness in Numbers 27:17.⁵⁴

(5) Mark’s use of the verb “recline” (6:39, ἀνακλῖναι) has also been interpreted as having exodus overtones in a first century Jewish context. Marcus claims that “In the ancient world, banqueters normally reclined on banqueting couches, but in the Jewish sphere the reclining posture was especially associated with Passover (cf. 14:18). . . . Thus the references to reclining may be part of the Passover typology of our passage.”⁵⁵

(6) The phrase “in groups [πρᾶσιαι πρᾶσιαι] of hundreds and fifties” (6:40; cf. v. 39, συμπόσια συμπόσια) possibly alludes to the organization of the people following the exodus (cf. Exod 18:21, 25; Deut 1:15). Markus says the descending order of numbers is unusual and points to some specific background, which is, he suggests, the camp of Israel in the wilderness.⁵⁶ Several other commentators also note the possible connection.⁵⁷

(7) Following the feeding Mark tells his readers, “Everyone ate and was satisfied” (6:42). Here there are distinct echoes of the manna narrative in Exodus 16. Occurring twice there is the phrase “eat bread to the full” (vv. 3, 8). In these verses the Hebrew infinitive לִשְׂבֹּעַ means literally “to be satisfied.”⁵⁸ The same verb is found a third time in 16:16, “you shall be satisfied with bread” (cf. also Ps 105:40, “he satisfied them [יִשְׂבִּיעֵם] with bread from heaven”). Donahue and Harrington detect here a “subtle allusion . . . to the manna that was always enough for every one of the Israelites in the desert.”⁵⁹

(8) The fragments of the meal were gathered up in “twelve baskets” (6:43). Taken with the other exodus-wilderness elements in this passage the occurrence of “twelve” immediately calls to mind the tribes of Israel. At Sinai these were represented by the twelve pillars set up before the mountain (Exod 24:4).⁶⁰

51. France, *Gospel of Mark*, 262.

52. Edwards, *Gospel according to Mark*, 228.

53. Marcus, *Mark* 1–8, 408.

54. Stein (*Mark*, , 313) interprets this detail as follows: “The christological nature of this saying may be especially apparent in Num. 27:16–17, where Moses’ request for someone to lead Israel is answered in Joshua (Num. 27:18–22). Now a greater Joshua (‘Jesus’ in Greek), who possesses even more of the Spirit of God (cf. Num. 27:18 and Mark 1:10), has come to lead Israel (cf. Heb. 4:8).” Donahue and Harrington (*Gospel of Mark*, 205) link the sheep-shepherd idea with the Isaianic new exodus: “In Isa 40:11 God will ‘feed his flock like a shepherd,’ which may influence the feeding motif of the narrative.”

55. Marcus, *Mark* 1–8, 407.

56. Ibid., 408.

57. E.g., Lane, *Gospel of Mark*, 229; Witherington, *Gospel of Mark*, 217, 219.

58. See Brown et al., *Hebrew and English Lexicon*, 959, שָׂבַע, “be satisfied.”

59. Donahue and Harrington, *Gospel of Mark*, 207.

60. The number twelve, along with the previously mentioned “fifties and hundreds” are, according

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(9) The distinct connections between this passage and the institution of the last supper reinforce the Passover overtones of the former. Marcus comments: “The description of the feeding is later echoed in striking detail in the narrative of the Last Supper (Mark 14:17–23 . . .), and it is highly probable that Mark sees the miraculous feedings here and in 8:1–10 not only as reminiscent of the exodus but also as anticipatory of the Last Supper.”⁶¹ The latter, we recall, is the inauguration of the “new covenant” (Mark 14:24), echoing Exodus 24:8, thus also indirectly linking the miraculous feeding pericope with that earlier text.

In the light of these allusions we see how Mark presents a picture of Jesus, the new deliverer, feeding a reconstituted Israel in the wilderness on supernaturally provided bread, all being an anticipation of what Jesus is yet to accomplish at the coming final Passover. As Marcus observes, “the Passover/exodus typology . . . points forward to an expected eschatological recapitulation of the exodus events.”⁶²

The transfiguration. There are associations, noted in the scholarly literature,⁶³ between the account of the transfiguration of Christ (Mark 9) and the pentateuchal narrative concerning Moses receiving the law (Exod 24).⁶⁴ France, for one, speaks of “extensive echoes . . . of the Sinai account” at this point in Mark’s narrative.⁶⁵ The correspondences are so many that their deliberateness can hardly be doubted:

- (1) Each event is located in a mountain (Exod 24:12, 15; Mark 9:2).
- (2) The time phrase “six days” occurs in both contexts (Exod 24:16; Mark 9:2).⁶⁶
- (3) Moses and Jesus both take with them three named persons (Exod 24:1, 9; Mark 9:2).⁶⁷
- (4) A cloud overshadows the mountain (Exod 24:15; Mark 9:7).⁶⁸
- (5) A voice, that of God, speaks out of the cloud (Exod 24:16; Mark 9:7).
- (6) Explicit in Exodus and clearly implicit in Mark is the temporal detail that the voice spoke on the seventh day (Exod 24:16; Mark 9:2, 7).

to Marcus (*Mark* 1–8, 419; cf. 408), not only “reminiscent of the exodus . . . but also point forward to the hope for a new exodus by a renewed Israel.” Witherington (*Gospel of Mark*, 220) also sees exodus symbolism here.

61. Marcus, *Mark* 1–8, 419–20; cf. 410–11. The connection is also noted, for example, by France (*Gospel of Mark*, 263) and Mann (*Mark*, 300).

62. Marcus, *Mark* 1–8, 408.

63. See, for example, Swartley, *Israel’s Scripture Traditions*, 103–4; Marcus, *Way of the Lord*, 80–84; Evans, *Mark* 8:27–16:20, 34; Edwards, *Gospel according to Mark*, 169; France, *Gospel of Mark*, 348; Watts, “Mark,” 186.

64. It is noteworthy in this context that in Jewish traditions the different ascents of Moses up to Sinai described in Exod 24 and 34 had become conflated. For references, see Marcus, *Mark* 8–16, 1114.

65. France, *Gospel of Mark*, 353.

66. Marcus (*Mark* 8–16, 1114) describes this connection as “particularly impressive because time indications outside the passion narrative are rare and tend to be vague.”

67. France, *Gospel of Mark*, 348.

68. France comments (*ibid.*, 354–55) that “While a cloud is a frequent theophanic motif in the OT (Ex. 13:21–22; 33:9–10; 40:34–38; 1 Ki. 8:10–11, etc.), the echoes here are more specifically of the Sinai narratives, in the coming of a cloud on a mountain (Ex. 19:16; 24:15–16) and the voice of God speaking from the cloud (Ex. 19:9; 24:16; 24:18–25:11; 34:5). Ex. 19:9 offers a particularly interesting parallel, in that God’s speaking out of the cloud to Moses was intended to ensure that the Israelites would thereafter heed his words.”

(7) Both contexts speak of the construction of tabernacles (σκηνή), in each case being the object of the verb “make” (Exod 25:9, ποιήσεις; Mark 9:5, ποιήσωμεν).⁶⁹

(8) The appearance of both principal characters is transformed (Exod 34:29–35; Mark 9:2, 3).

(9) Those who saw Moses’ radiant face were afraid (Exod 34:30, ἐφοβήθησαν), as were the disciples in the mount of transfiguration (Mark 9:6, ἔκφοβοι γὰρ ἐγένοντο).⁷⁰

(10) The respective sequels to each mountain-top narrative also correlate. Moses descends to encounter idolatrous Israel and forcibly removes an idol from the camp (Exod 32:7–20). Jesus descends to face the unbelief of the people and expels an unclean spirit (Mark 9:17–29, especially note v. 19, “O faithless generation”).⁷¹

(11) One further possible corresponding detail not mentioned by the commentators may be noted. Mark records that Elijah and Moses were “speaking with Jesus” (9:4, ἦσαν συλλαλοῦντες τῷ Ἰησοῦ), while Exodus states that Moses went to “speak with him [God]” (34:35, συλλαλεῖν αὐτῷ). This might be purely coincidental, though it should be noted that this particular verb is rarely used in the LXX, this being its sole occurrence in the whole of the Pentateuch. In the NT it only occurs in the synoptic transfiguration narratives and three times further in Luke-Acts.

(12) To the above we may add that the injunction “Listen to him” (Mark 9:7, ἀκούετε αὐτοῦ) also has Mosaic overtones.⁷² Almost identical words occur respecting the future Moses-like prophet (Deut 18:15, αὐτοῦ ἀκούσεσθε).⁷³ Marcus speaks of this as a “virtual citation.”⁷⁴ Concerning the accompanying words, “This is my beloved Son,” Watts makes the significant observation that this is “only the second time in Mark there is the voice of divine attestation, and here using words almost identical to those at Jesus’ baptism [1:11]. . . . Reflecting Mark’s new-exodus schema, if the first attestation occurred during a new Red Sea crossing . . . the second takes place on a new Mount Sinai.”⁷⁵

The presence of Elijah at the transfiguration does not counter the presence of the exodus motif, but rather serves to reinforce the Sinai connection, as noted by France.⁷⁶ Elijah, like Moses, also experienced a theophany on this very mountain, more of which later.

It is further pointed out by Swartley that the narratives concerning the mount of transfiguration and the expulsion of the evil spirit that follows are enclosed by a literary framework involving two “way” sections of Mark’s Gospel, a fact which establishes another connection with the exodus-Sinai tradition. Swartley states that “Mark 9:1–29 is placed between two *hodos*-framed segments. . . . Also, an entrance-formula, ‘entering into the kingdom of God,’ begins the segment in 9:1 and recurs three times at the end of the following *hodos*-cycle (9:43, 45, 47). Similarly, Exodus 24–32 [Moses on the mountain/the golden

69. Cf. Collins, *Mark*, 417.

70. This particular detail is noted by Evans (*Mark* 8:27–16:20, 34).

71. Cf. Farrer, *Mark*, 110.

72. Cf. Cranfield, *Gospel according to St Mark*, 295; Evans, *Mark* 8:27–16:20, 38; Edwards, *Gospel according to Mark*, 268; France, *Gospel of Mark*, 353, 355.

73. The Nestle-Aland text gives the word order as ἀκούετε αὐτοῦ. Many Greek MSS, however, have αὐτοῦ ἀκούετε, placing the pronominal form first as in Deut 18:15 LXX, which follows the Hebrew order.

74. Marcus, *Way of the Lord*, 81.

75. Watts, “Mark,” 186.

76. France, *Gospel of Mark*, 352.

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calf] is framed by Israel's land entrance formulas (Exod 23:23–33; 33:1–3).⁷⁷ These features, it should be noted, are uniquely Markan among the Synoptics.

We see then, in a similar manner to the earlier feeding miracle, that the author of the second Gospel wishes to draw the reader's mind back to these OT events and to depict Jesus as the new divinely appointed mediator. On this particular passage Watts concludes: "If, as I have argued, Mark is describing a new exodus, then this is its new Sinai."⁷⁸

Exodus allusions in the passion narrative

More briefly we observe that the exodus theme continues strongly into the passion narrative. From a general perspective, the fact that the whole account focuses on a death at the time of the Passover is an obvious yet highly significant feature. The original sacrifice of the lamb underlying this Jewish feast was, of course, one that was intimately bound up with the exodus from Egypt (Exod 12–13).

Mark's particular interest in the association between the death of Christ and the sacrifice of the lamb is shown by the temporal setting he gives for the Last Supper: "the first day of Unleavened Bread, when they sacrificed the Passover" (14:12). Significantly, regarding the words "they sacrificed the Passover," though Luke contains a matching phrase (22:7), probably derived from Mark as one of his several sources, Matthew's account has no parallel statement (see 26:17). For Mark there is no doubt that the meal with the disciples was understood as a Passover feast.⁷⁹

The act of distribution of the bread and wine at the supper has undoubted connections with the distribution of food in the miraculous feeding miracle.⁸⁰ This latter, as outlined above, is an event with obvious exodus overtones. The related language seems to indicate that both these events are to be viewed in a similar light. The new messianic deliverer has come to provide his people with the bread that gives life. Both events hearken back to the Passover-exodus tradition, and both foreshadow Christ's coming sacrificial death.

At the height of the meal, Jesus explains to his disciples the significance of the symbolic act which they are performing. He says, "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out on behalf of many" (14:24). Many commentators point out here the relationship with the transaction at Sinai recorded in Exodus. This is probably the single most significant event forming the backdrop to the Last Supper. In this context Craig Evans comments:

The foundational passage is Exod 24:1–8, in which the story is told of God's establishment of his covenant with Israel through Moses. The blood was thrown against the altar next to the twelve pillars that represented the twelve tribes; then it was thrown upon the people. . . . While throwing the blood on the people, Moses cried out: "Behold, the blood of the covenant" (cf. *Targ. Onq.*, "This is the blood of the covenant").⁸¹

To this we may add the further insights of James Edwards:

77. Swartley, *Israel's Scripture Traditions*, 104.

78. Watts, "Mark," 186.

79. Cf. Hooker, *Gospel according to Mark*, 337; Lane, *Gospel of Mark*, 497.

80. Cf. Taylor, *Gospel according to St. Mark*, 324; also Cranfield, *Gospel according to Saint Mark*, 222–23; Mann, *Mark*, 300; Marcus, *Mark 1–8*, 420; Stein, *Mark*, 316.

81. Evans, *Mark 8:27–16:20*, 393.

The “blood of the covenant” cannot be understood apart from the first covenant that Moses instituted by throwing blood on the people (Exod 24:3–8). That covenant was sealed by necessity with the blood of a surrogate sacrificial animal. The new covenant here instituted (Jer 31:31–34) must be sealed by Jesus’ blood; it is not simply thrown *on* the community as in Exod 24:8, but imbibed *into* believers.⁸²

The allusion to Exodus 24 is strengthened by the verb “poured out,” appearing in both contexts concerning the disposal of the blood (Exod 24:6, ἐνέχεεν and προσέχεεν; cf. Mark 14:24, ἐκχυνόμενον), and also by the occurrence of the verb “taking” (λαμβάνω) in connection with both Moses (Exod 24:6, 8) and Jesus (Mark 14:22, 23), who officiate at the respective covenant ceremonies.

Since in 14:24 Jesus in the same breath speaks of the “many” who will benefit from his sacrificial death, some see a connection with the repeated “many” in Isaiah 53:11–12.⁸³ These latter are those freed from sin through the death of the righteous Servant, set against the backdrop of the Isaianic new exodus. Indeed throughout the passion account alongside the explicit and allusive references to the historical exodus in the passion narrative, Marcus also notes a whole series of allusions to the Isaianic new exodus.⁸⁴

Exodus allusions in the longer ending

The foregoing sections have amply illustrated the prevalence of the exodus theme in the second Gospel. Coming now to the questioned verses in Mark 16, the same exodus overtones are seen to continue. In fact these form a major component in the conclusion to the Gospel, just as they did at its very beginning.

The longer ending records how Jesus appeared to the eleven disciples, upbraided them for their unbelief, and then commissioned them to go and preach to all creation to elicit a response of faith, to which end various signs would accompany them (16:14–18). Since generally regarded as non-Markan this passage has not previously been read in the light of Mark’s exodus motif. When one does so, however, the OT allusions are apparent. Upon examination there can be little doubt that the commission of the disciples in these disputed verses makes deliberate allusion to the commission of Moses in Exodus 3–4. Differences exist, of course, between the two passages, since one is dealing with a physical deliverance of a single people from one particular locality, while the other concerns a spiritual deliverance extended to all nations. This is merely the distinction between the old exodus and the new. Despite this, the correspondences are evident. Precisely the same sequence of ideas is present in both texts employing similar language.

Firstly, in the Gospel the commission is initiated by the event: “Jesus appeared to the eleven” (16:14). In Exodus the term “appeared” is prominent in connection with the call and commissioning of Moses. In the first instance it is stated that “the angel of the LORD appeared to him” (3:2), yet this is later described as an appearance of Yahweh himself—“the LORD, the God of their fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of

82. Edwards, *Gospel according to Mark*, 426–27.

83. Lane, *Gospel of Mark*, 507; France, *Gospel of Mark*, 570–71; Marcus, *Mark* 8–16, 958; Edwards, *Gospel according to Mark*, 427. Cf. the use of “many” in Mark 10:45.

84. Marcus, *Way of the Lord*, 186–96.

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Jacob, has appeared to you” (4:5). This may be compared with 3:16 and 4:1. In Hebrew all of these appearances are expressed by the verb נראה (“appeared,” “was seen”). In these particular verses the LXX renders this Hebrew verb by either of the Greek forms ὤφθη or ὤπται. These two, especially the former, are the commonest ways of translating נראה into Greek since like the Hebrew they are passives of the verb “to see,” and so the translators have generally preserved the correspondence of form. Yet elsewhere the same Hebrew verb is found translated as ἐφάνη (Dan 1:15), as is used of the appearance of the angel of the Lord in Matthew 1:20. This latter form is that of the verb “appeared” in Mark 16:9, and the virtually synonymous ἐφανερώθη occurs in 16:12, 14. Since Greek had a much larger vocabulary than Hebrew⁸⁵ the existence of multiple words for the same basic idea is to be expected. The difference in verb aside, the fact remains that both commissions are initiated by the appearance of a divine being.

Following his appearance to Moses the Lord then commissioned him to “go” to Pharaoh (Exod 3:10, “Now go [לכה]”; cf. 4:12, “Now go [לך, πορεύσου],” and v. 21 “When you go [בלכתך, πορευομένου σου]”) to bring the Israelites out of their slavery in Egypt. When he appeared to the disciples Jesus commissioned them to “go” (Mark 16:15, πορευθέντες) and take the gospel message to all creation.

After giving Moses his instructions the question arises of belief in his message about the appearance of the Lord to him. This is a prominent theme in the first part of Exodus 4: “What if they will not believe [μὴ πιστεύσωσιν] me or listen to my voice? For they may say, ‘The LORD has not appeared to you’” (v. 1); “that they may believe [πιστεύσωσιν] that the LORD, the God of their fathers . . . has appeared to you” (v. 5). In Exodus 4:31 we read that when Moses returned to the Israelites in Egypt that “the people believed [ἐπίστευσεν].”⁸⁶ In Mark 16, following his instruction to go into the world with the gospel, Jesus speaks of the response of belief to the message that is preached: “Whoever believes [πιστεύσας] and is baptized will be saved; but whoever does not believe [ἀπιστήσας] will be condemned” (v. 16).

Within this same context of belief both passages give a prominent place to “signs.” Moses is granted certain signs (σημεῖα, vv. 9, 17, 28, 30) to perform as a confirmation of his message. Jesus speaks of signs (Mark 16:17, σημεῖα) that will accompany those who believe, so “confirming the word” (v. 20).

One of the signs given to Moses involved his staff turning into a snake (Exod 4:2–3), which he was then commanded to pick up (v. 4a). So Moses “stretched out his hand and took hold of it” (v. 4b), at which it reverted to a staff. Among the signs mentioned by Jesus an unusual one is that “they will pick up snakes” (Mark 16:18). At this point commentators typically direct their readers to the passage in Acts 28:3 where the apostle Paul was putting sticks on a fire and “a viper came out because of the heat, and fastened on his hand.”⁸⁷ Yet it is evident that the Mosaic text forms a much closer parallel. Firstly, Paul does not actually pick up the snake, but rather it attaches itself to him. Secondly, the Greek word in Acts is ἔχιδνα (“viper”), whereas both Exodus 4:3 and Mark 16:18 contain the more general term ὄφις. Additionally, if the Markan variant “and with their hands” (καὶ ἐν ταῖς χερσὶν) is genu-

85. The OT corpus contains only approximately 8,000 different Hebrew words. The known vocabulary of Ancient Greek on the other hand exceeds 100,000.

86. Exod 4 accounts for no less than five out of the total of seven instances of the verb “believe” (האמין) in the book of Exodus (4:1, 5, 8, 9, 31: 14:31; 19:9).

87. See, for example, Evans, *Mark 8:27–16:20*, 549; Donahue and Harrington, *Mark*, 463.

ine, then the allusion to Exodus 4:4 (τὴν χεῖρα and ἐν τῇ χειρὶ) is even closer. Since Exodus 4 is the only other passage in scripture which expressly speaks of picking up a snake it is reasonable to suppose that the verse in Mark is alluding to this context, especially considering the similar subject matter of appearances, commissioning, belief, and signs.⁸⁸

Subsequent to their commissioning, each narrative then tells how Moses and the disciples went in obedience to the divine command, spoke the message, and performed the signs (Exod 4:20, 30–31; Mark 16:19–20).

Besides this series of allusions to the sending of Moses, other similar correspondences relating to the exodus-conquest may be detected in the longer ending. There is, we note, the fact of “hardheartedness” (σκληροκαρδία) on the part of the disciples at the first reports of the resurrection (16:14), “He reproached them for their unbelief and hardness of heart.” The prominence of this idea in Mark in comparison with the other Gospels has previously been observed (chapter 4). Mark, we recall, speaks of the hardening of the heart five times in total (3:5; 6:52; 8:17; 10:5; 16:14), with respect to both Jesus’ opponents and his disciples. In contrast, it is completely absent from Luke, while in John it only appears in the Isaiah quotation of 12:40. Hardheartedness occurs just once in Matthew (19:8), in the parallel to Mark 10:5 about divorce. Significantly, in the parallel to Mark 8:14–21, the discussion about the fragments of bread gathered up after the miraculous feedings, Matthew’s version (16:5–12), which is in many other respects close to Mark, does not include the question “Are your hearts hardened?” of Mark 8:17. Not only this but Mark had earlier used similar unparalleled words following the first feeding miracle, “they did not understand about the loaves, but their hearts were hardened” (6:52). The concept, therefore, is undoubtedly one that is distinctively Markan.

The hardening of the heart, especially that of Pharaoh and the Egyptians, is a well-known recurring theme in the exodus account. Whereas the response of the Hebrews to the signs of Moses was one of belief (Exod 4:31), the Egyptians’ hearts were hardened (4:31; 7:13, etc). Yet later as they moved into the wilderness, the faith of Israel wavered (cf. Num 14:11; 20:12; Deut 1:32), and it was then their heart that began to suffer from hardening. In the rebellion at Meribah, their lack of faith is presented by the psalmist as a hardening of the heart—“Do not harden your hearts, as at Meribah, as on the day at Massah in the wilderness” (Ps 95:8; cf. Heb 3:8, 15). We see then in Mark’s allusive use of this idea a reversal. With respect to the Israelites the exodus account presents an initial faith, which later fails and turns into unbelief and hardness of heart. In the disciples, however, their initial unbelief and hardness of heart is eventually transformed into faith.

Finally, in the longer ending reference is made to the same spiritual warfare as seen earlier in the Gospel, in such a way that alludes to the exodus-conquest tradition. One of the miraculous signs granted to Jesus’ followers in 16:17–18 is that “they will cast out demons” (δαιμόνια ἐκβαλοῦσιν). They will thus be empowered to continue what Jesus himself was seen to do in his ministry, all part of the binding of the strong man (3:27). Yet the longer ending also includes in this respect a phrase that unmistakably places this activity within the context of conquering the promised land. Mark has introduced us to Mary Magdalene (16:9) as one from whom Jesus “had cast out seven demons” (ἐκβεβλήκει ἐπὶ δαιμόνια). Jewish readers could not fail to detect the allusion to the casting out of the *seven* Canaanite nations, foretold in the Pentateuch and enacted for the most part at the time of Joshua. For

88. Kelhoffer notes a possible connection between Mark 16:18 and Exod 4, though not against a new exodus background. See Kelhoffer, *Miracle and Mission*, 390.

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this expulsion the Greek translation frequently uses the same verb ἐκβάλλειν (e.g., Exod 34:11, 24; Deut 11:23; Josh 24:18), and the number of nations is explicitly given as “seven” (Deut 7:1; cf. Josh 24:11). The phrase “seven nations” was to become Judaism’s standard description of the original occupants of Canaan (cf. Acts 13:19).⁸⁹ According to the LXX, supported by the Samaritan Pentateuch,⁹⁰ the passage concerning the commissioning of Moses also twice lists seven such nations (Exod 3:8, 17). Not only this, the text cited from Exodus (23:20) at the beginning of the Gospel (Mark 1:2) regarding the angel/messenger sent before the people presents the seven nations in the same context (23:23 LXX). We also note that the LXX of Exodus 34:11, again in agreement with the Samaritan,⁹¹ reads: “Behold, I am casting out [ἐκβάλλω] before your face the Amorite and the Canaanite and the Hittite and the Perizzite and the Hivite and the Gergashite and the Jebusite,” where the phrase “before your face” (πρὸ προσώπου ὑμῶν) links back to the passage about the angel (23:20, πρὸ προσώπου σου; cf. v. 23, מִלִּפְנֵי), referenced in Mark’s opening verses.⁹² Even more noteworthy is Exodus 33:2. Here, if the full list of seven is given according to the corrected LXX text found in the Samaritan version and Codex Vaticanus,⁹³ then we read with the latter: “I will send my angel before your face [συναποστελῶ τὸν ἄγγελόν μου πρὸ προσώπου σου] and he [Samaritan: ‘I’] will cast out [ἐκβαλεῖ] the Amorite, and the Hittite, and the Perizzite, and the Gergashite, and the Hivite, and the Jebusite, and the Canaanite.”⁹⁴ What is significant about this is that the first half of the verse, “I will send my angel before your face,” corresponds to Mark 1:2, while the second half, “he will cast out . . .” followed by a sevenfold direct object denoting the occupying forces, corresponds to the statement in Mark 16:9 about Jesus having cast out seven demons.⁹⁵

In the light of the foregoing, it would seem plausible then that the phrase in Mark 16:9, in similar fashion to 1:2, constitutes another of the author’s allusions to the narrative of the exodus and conquest. The seven nations were initially defeated through physical warfare at the time of Joshua and the land settled, though there was more yet to conquer after his death. So too Jesus (Ἰησοῦς, “Joshua”) had decisively overcome the spiritual enemy having occupation of the promised realm. Of this victory the dispossession of seven demons from Mary Magdalene was a token, though his followers now had to cast out what remained of the opposition (cf. Mark 16:17). It might also be pointed out that 1:2 is the opening verse of

89. The phrase “seven nations” is commonly used with this reference in Rabbinic literature (e.g., *b. Abod. Zar.* 36b; *y. Shabb.* 1.7). Also *Numb. Rabb.* 5: “the tribe of Levi . . . had no share in the division of the seven nations.” In Targum Pseudo-Jonathan on Deut 13:8, where the Masoretic Text just has an unqualified “peoples,” the targum gives “seven nations.” See Clarke, *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan: Deuteronomy*, 41.

90. Von Gall, *Hebräische Pentateuch der Samaritaner*, 117–18.

91. *Ibid.*, 190.

92. The connection with Exodus 23 is noted, for example, in Stuart, *Exodus*, 721–22.

93. See Rahlfs (ed.), *Septuaginta*, 144, critical apparatus; von Gall, *Hebräische Pentateuch der Samaritaner*, 187.

94. Though the same seven nations are listed in the Samaritan Pentateuch and Codex Vaticanus, the order in which they appear varies. We might also add that even if the original OT text cannot be established to have included precisely seven, the list of nations itself, regardless of the exact quantity mentioned, is biblically associated with the number seven.

95. The parallel statement found in Luke 8:2 reads: “from whom seven demons had gone out [ἐξεληλύθει].” The difference in verb makes this less suitable as an allusion to the driving out of the Canaanite nations.

the prologue, following the superscription of v. 1, and that 16:9 is the opening verse of the ending. This possibly indicates deliberate design in the placement of these allusions.

Besides allusive elements relating to the exodus-conquest theme found in both prologue and ending, there might additionally be in Mark 16:19 another component of the Markan inclusio, this time contrastive. Whereas the prologue sees the casting out (also ἐκβάλλειν) of Jesus to be tempted by the spirit of evil (1:12–13), the conclusion refers to Jesus having cast out seven spirits. The former of these two relates to Israel coming out of Egypt into the wilderness to be tested for forty years, the latter to Israel overcoming the seven nations upon reaching the promised land.

In this section it has been seen how the same motif that began in the prologue of Mark's Gospel and continues throughout the book is also to be found in the longer ending, pointing to its integrity. The allusions to the commission of Moses in Exodus 3–4 are particularly strong. At this point precisely the same sequence of ideas is evident in both texts. There are also lesser echoes of the conquest. These correspondences are here summarized in tabular form:

<i>Mark 16</i>	<i>Exodus</i>
Jesus “appeared” to the disciples (v. 14)	The LORD “appeared” to Moses (3:16; 4:5)
Commissioned to “go” into all of creation and proclaim the gospel (v. 15)	Commissioned to “go” to Egypt and bring out the Israelites from slavery (3:10)
“Whoever believes . . . whoever does not believe . . .” (v. 16)	“What if they will not believe me . . .?” (4:1); “that they may believe . . .” (4:5)
“signs” (v. 17)	“signs” (4:9, etc)
“with their hands” (v. 18) ⁹⁶	“in his hand” (4:4)
“they will pick up snakes” (v. 18)	Moses took hold of a snake (4:4)
The disciples went and preached, accompanied by signs (vv. 19–20)	Moses went and spoke the message and performed the signs (4:20, 30–31)
“hardness of heart” (v. 14)	“hardened . . . heart” (<i>passim</i>)
“cast out seven demons” (v. 9)	cast out seven nations (3:8; 34:24, etc)

ELIJAH

Much more briefly we will give some consideration to the Elijah motif in Mark. The presence of such need not be treated in any way as a rival to the exodus theme previously discussed. Rather, the two may be taken as complementary. It is evident from both Testaments that Moses and Elijah were seen as standing in a close relationship with each other in the history and theology of the Hebrew nation. Unmistakable literary parallels exist, frequently commented upon, between the accounts of these two figures. Both men are presented in the OT as having similar experiences on Mount Sinai/Horeb, each in connection with a forty day period, and each involving a theophany in which the Lord “passed by” (Exod 24:15–18;

96. This phrase, as previously stated, is not present in all manuscripts.

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33:19–23; 34:5–8; cf. 1 Kgs 19:9–15).⁹⁷ Both characters divided a body of water and passed through on dry ground (Exod 14:21–22; 2 Kgs 2:8). Concordant with this affinity, we find that the very close of the prophetic corpus (Mal 4) juxtaposes Moses (v. 4) with the prophet Elijah (vv. 5–6). In the Synoptic Gospels it is these two who appear with Jesus at his transfiguration (Matt 17:3; Mark 9:4; Luke 9:30).

In recent years scholars have detected an Elijah motif in the portrayal of Jesus in the Gospels, or a joint Elijah-Elisha motif.⁹⁸ Some studies, like those of Adam Winn and Warren Gage, see such a motif as being particularly applicable to the Gospel of Mark.⁹⁹ Here in the prologue John the Baptist is clearly presented as an Elijah-like figure.¹⁰⁰ Yet Jesus too, through his fasting for forty days in the wilderness (Mark 1:13), evokes narratives of both Moses and Elijah.¹⁰¹ The body of the Gospel then includes nine specific references to Elijah (6:15; 8:28; 9:4, 5, 11, 12, 13; 15:35, 36). Luke and John contain less. Matthew also has nine, though mostly in parallels to Mark. Besides these explicit references there are also further allusions. Gage shows how “the undisputed portions of Mark’s Gospel allude to five of the six major narratives in the Old Testament accounts of Elijah’s life, as well as several events from the life of Elijah’s successor, Elisha.” Among these are the question concerning Baalzebub (Mark 3:22; cf. 2 Kgs 1:2–8), and the theophany on Mount Horeb evoked in the account of the transfiguration (Mark 9:2–8; cf. 1 Kgs 19:9–15). In this latter passage Mark is the only Evangelist who produces the names in the order “Elijah” then “Moses” (9:4). Further, Mark alone of the Gospel-writers presents not one but two versions of the saying that some held Jesus to be Elijah (6:15; 8:28).

Considering the nature of the Markan inclusio, noted earlier, the strong exodus overtones in the prologue accompanied by less prominent Elijah allusions may be matched by similar features in the Gospel’s conclusion. In the latter the Moses-exodus connections, as already outlined, are reasonably pronounced. What of Elijah? Interestingly, there is a possible echo in the Markan ending of the final event involving the prophet. When Elijah was taken up, witnessed by Elisha his successor, the LXX text says “As they were walking along talking [ἐλάλουν] . . . Elijah was taken up [ἀνελήμθη] in a whirlwind as into heaven [εἰς τὸν οὐρανόν]” (2 Kgs 2:11). This exhibits the same words as used in Mark’s ending with reference to Jesus’ ascension (16:19), “the Lord Jesus, after he had spoken [λαλῆσαι] to them, was taken up [ἀνελήμθη] into heaven [εἰς τὸν οὐρανόν].” The sequence ἐλάλουν . . . ἀνελήμθη . . . εἰς τὸν οὐρανόν in 2 Kings is matched by λαλῆσαι . . . ἀνελήμθη εἰς τὸν οὐρανόν in Mark. Since each contains three related elements occurring in the same order, with the verb in identical form, the similarity is not likely to be purely coincidental. The deliberateness of it has been firmly advocated by Gage, who also contends that with regard to Elijah “thematic analysis of the Gospel supports the conclusion that the longer ending of Mark fits within the typological structure of the Gospel.”¹⁰² Accepting the validity of this allusion results in

97. Cf. Walsh, *1 Kings*, 271–72.

98. See, for example, Hinnebusch, *Jesus, The New Elijah*; Brodie, *Crucial Bridge*.

99. Winn, *Mark and the Elijah-Elisha Narrative*; Gage, “Jesus as the New Elijah.” Note also Brodie, *Crucial Bridge*, 86.

100. See Cranfield, *Gospel according to St Mark*, 35; Lane, *Gospel according to Mark*, 51.

101. Gage observes that “Mark’s abbreviated account of the temptation of the Lord is reduced to the mention of a ‘forty days’ journey into the ‘wilderness,’ where ‘angels’ ministered to Jesus.” He then adds, “It appears that Elijah’s fearful flight from Jezebel into the wilderness of Horeb is the background to Mark’s account of Christ’s temptation”; cf. also Cranfield, *Gospel according to St Mark*, 57.

102. Gage, “Jesus as the New Elijah.” Gages states that “The longer ending of Mark’s Gospel brings

further evidence of an essential unity of thought between the ending and the opening, as well as the body, of the second Gospel.

One further element within the longer ending may be explained by reference to the Elijah-Elisha motif, though the proposal, it ought to be stressed, is put forward more tentatively. If in Mark 16:18 the picking up of snakes makes reference to Moses, the immediately adjoining and equally extraordinary sign of drinking something deadly might possibly have its origins in the Elijah-Elisha cycle. The text of the ending, commonly understood as referring to poison, reads: “if they drink what is deadly [θανάσιμὸν] it shall not harm them.” More strictly then the miracle involves the drinking of something that causes death. Directly following the ascension of Elijah, we find the following pericope:

Then the men of the city said to Elisha, “Behold, the location of this city is good, as our lord sees; but the water is bad and the land is barren.” He said, “Bring me a new bowl, and put salt in it.” So they brought it to him. Then he went out to the spring of water and threw salt in it and said, “Thus says the LORD, ‘I have healed these waters; there shall be from there no more death [LXX: θάνατος] or barrenness.’” So the waters have been healed to this day, according to the word of Elisha which he spoke. (2 Kgs 2:19–22)

While not as precise in correspondence as the Mosaic text concerning the snake, there is nevertheless a related conceptual parallel. In both cases the potentially deadly nature of the drink is miraculously removed. We also note in this context the wonders performed by the prophetic figures depicted in Revelation 11:5–6, where allusions are made to miracles relating to Elijah (fire, shutting up the sky) and to Moses (water turned into blood, plagues) in immediate juxtaposition with each other. It is not impossible that the two most controversial signs in the list of Mark 16:17–18 present a similar juxtaposition, as suggested by the ending of Malachi, noted above.

FROM FEAR TO FAITH

Words conveying the idea of fear are common in all three Synoptic Gospels, totaling twenty-one instances in Matthew, fifteen in Mark, and thirty-four in Luke. Likewise words relating to faith occur frequently in each, thirty-two times in Matthew, twenty-four in Mark, and twenty-four in Luke. Nothing of great note is obtained from such frequencies, though in such comparisons it should be borne in mind that Mark’s Gospel is only around 55–60 percent the length of the other two. It can be observed, therefore, that proportionately Mark makes more references to faith than Matthew and Luke. This means that the element of faith appears in several places in Mark where the others offer no parallel text. One notable example of this is “Repent and believe the gospel” (1:15), a key text in Mark’s work.¹⁰³ Another important instance is the exchange concerning faith between Jesus and the father of the

the book’s Elijah theme to a fitting consummation, showing that Jesus the True Elijah is received up into heaven like the prophet before Him. . . . This analysis shows that the Elijah typology of Mark 16:19 is necessary to round out and complete the Gospel’s major theme; namely, Christ’s ascension as it had been uniquely foreshadowed by Elijah’s translation into heaven.” These conclusions of Gage are endorsed by Robinson, “Long Ending of Mark,” 67–68.

103. Cf. Marshall, *Faith as a Theme*, 2, 34–54.

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demon-possessed boy in which faith related words occur three times—Mark 9:23–24, “to him who believes [τῷ πιστεύοντι] . . . I believe [πιστεύω] . . . my unbelief [μου τῇ ἀπιστίᾳ].”¹⁰⁴

More significant than the mere frequency of words is their use and association. Analysis shows that Mark brings together the two ideas of fear and faith in several places where the other Gospels do not, or Mark intensifies one of these elements where the others lack such a feature. In the pericope relating the calming of the storm, Matthew and Luke each have one reference to fear and one to faith:

He said to them, “Why are you fearful,¹⁰⁵ O you of little faith?” Then he rose up and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm. So the men were amazed, saying, “Who can this be, that even the winds and the sea obey him?” (Matt 8:26–27)

He said to them, “Where is your faith?” They were afraid and amazed, saying to one another, “Who is this? He commands even the winds and the water, and they obey him.” (Luke 8:25)

He said to them, “Why are you so fearful? Do you not yet have faith?” And they were exceedingly afraid, and said to one another, “Who can this be, that even the wind and the sea obey him!” (Mark 4:40–41)

Underlying the translation of Mark’s “exceedingly afraid” is the Semitic idiom “feared a great fear” (ἐφοβήθησαν φόβον μέγαν).¹⁰⁶ This means that in this pericope Mark uses three words denoting fear, whereas Matthew and Luke each have just one, the second Markan reference being paralleled by amazement in both. In all three the fear is found in juxtaposition with faith. Yet in Mark the relationship is closer. Luke has the greatest separation between the two ideas. For him the fear is part of the disciples’ response to Jesus’ ability to still the storm. In Matthew the fear component relates to the storm itself, while the element of “faith” occurs merely within a vocative phrase by which Jesus addresses his disciples. The fear referenced in Christ’s rebuke as recorded by Mark is initially at the storm. It is only in Mark that we find the fear and the faith expressed through two statements of equal grammatical rank, that is, two independent clauses each in the form of a rhetorical question. While in Matthew the association between the fear and faith, though present, is more implicit, it is made explicit in Mark. Not only this, while Matthew allows the disciples some degree of faith, the form of the question in Mark suggests simply that they had no faith. It was their lack of faith that rendered them fearful.¹⁰⁷ Then Mark has a second more intensive reference to the disciples’ fear, this time their awe at the person before them who had authority over the elements.¹⁰⁸

We again encounter a close association between fear and faith in Mark’s narrative describing the healing of the woman with a flow of blood and the raising of Jairus’ daughter

104. Ibid., 110–23.

105. That the adjective here is δειλός (“fearful, cowardly”), rather than any cognate of φόβος (“fear”), makes little difference to the discussion. Semantically both obviously belong to the same domain. Interestingly, in Luke’s rendering the only possible element that might represent his parallel to δειλός at this point is φοβηθέντες (“being afraid”).

106. Marcus, *Mark* 1–8, 334.

107. Cf. France, *Gospel of Mark*, 225.

108. Cf. Guelich, *Mark* 1–8:26, 269.

(5:21–43). Comparing this with the other Gospel records highlights Mark's predilection for these particular themes. Matthew's account of these two incidents makes one sole reference to faith, in connection with the woman (9:22, "your faith has saved you"), and none at all to fear. Luke gives slightly more in stating that the woman came "trembling" (τρέμουσα) to Jesus (8:47) before he declared that her faith had saved her (v. 48). At this point of the narrative Mark is fullest: "the woman, frightened and trembling, knowing what had happened to her, came and fell down before him and told him the whole truth. And he said to her, 'Daughter, your faith has made you well. Go in peace . . .'" (5:33–34). Mark alone intensifies the woman's fear with the double participial phrase "frightened and trembling" (φοβηθεῖσα καὶ τρέμουσα). More importantly, Mark uniquely includes the words of Jesus to Jairus, "Do not be afraid; only believe" (5:36). Consequently, not only does Mark contain more references to fear and faith than the other Evangelists, but in one saying without any Matthean or Lukan parallel he places these two side by side. There is no space within this work to develop Mark's thought in detail on the connection between fear and faith, yet evidently for him they held a significant relation, apparently contrastive in nature. Each of the three situations discussed so far suggests that the correct spiritual progression ought to be from fear to faith. The disciples' lack of faith resulted in fear at the storm, which earned them Jesus' rebuke. The woman's fearful approach to Jesus issued in a declaration of her faith. Jesus tells the dead girl's father not to fear but to believe.

One further such passage is that regarding Jesus' walking on the water (Mark 6:45–52). Though here the word "faith" is not found in these verses, the idea, or in this case the lack of it, is nevertheless expressed through other words. When the disciples are disturbed at the sight of their master walking over the sea, Jesus said to them, "Have courage! It is I; do not be afraid" (v. 50). Once Jesus had climbed into the boat and the wind that was against them had died down, Mark records, "They were utterly astonished and marveled, for they had not understood about the loaves, because their heart was hardened" (vv. 51–52). This latter clause concerning the hardness of their hearts presents a state that amounts to unbelief.¹⁰⁹ This has no parallel in the other Gospels. So in a way not too dissimilar to the earlier passage relating the stilling of the storm, the disciples again express fear stemming from the fundamental inability of their faith to grasp who Jesus was.

In all the above passages Mark conveys the necessity of faith for overcoming fear to a greater degree than is found in the other Synoptics, a fear which, it is to be noted, is largely regarded by both Jesus and Mark as a negative quality. Applying this to the longer ending, one wonders whether the author of the second Gospel could possibly have ended at 16:8. This verse, widely claimed to have been the original ending, brings the "good news" (1:1) concerning Jesus Christ to a close on a note of fear. As in 5:33 Mark doubles the reference to fear by the addition of trembling: "They went out and fled from the tomb, for trembling [τρόμος] and astonishment had seized them; and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid [ἐφοβοῦντο]" (16:8).

In the light of the foregoing trend observed in Mark a conclusion emphasizing the fear of Jesus' followers hardly seems likely. Fear needs to be resolved into the faith that Jesus

109. As understood, for example, by Edwards, *Gospel according to Mark*, 201. Note NLT: "for their hearts were hard and they did not believe." The discussion in Heb 3:7–4:2 also equates hardness of heart with unbelief. This is not to deny that the phrase may also have connotations of lack of comprehension, which in the context of spiritual perception is a closely related concept; cf. Hooker, *Gospel according to Mark*, 170, who understands it in both senses.

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called for (1:15). Is such a resolution present in 16:9–20? In these twelve verses words relating to faith (from the root πιστ-) occur no less than seven times:

16:11, “they did not believe” (ἡπίστησαν)

16:13, “but they did not believe them either” (οὐδὲ ἐκείνοις ἐπίστευσαν)

16:14, “he reproved their unbelief” (ὠνειδισεν τὴν ἀπιστίαν αὐτῶν)

16:14, “because . . . they did not believe” (ὅτι . . . οὐκ ἐπίστευσαν)

16:16, “the one who believes” (ὁ πιστεύσας)

16:16, “the one who does not believe” (ὁ δὲ ἀπιστήσας)

16:17, “those who believe” (τοῖς πιστεύουσιν)

Without doubt the longer ending gives significant place to faith, firstly among the disciples, then with respect to those who would believe through their proclamation of the gospel message. In keeping with the presentation of the disciples’ faith in the body of the Gospel is the fact that they did not believe in the first instance, nor even the second. Three times reference is made to their not believing those who reported that they had seen the resurrected Jesus. There is no question, however, that this is the state in which the disciples remained. The point is that they did not believe until they saw the risen Lord for themselves. Eventually Jesus did appear to them, at which “he reproved their unbelief and hardness of heart” (v. 14), noting here in passing the association between lack of faith and hardheartedness (cf. 6:52). For this band of disciples the predictions of Jesus concerning his resurrection and the eyewitness testimonies of others were insufficient for them to believe in the event, hence the reproof. Once they were confronted by him in person, then belief inevitably followed. Being then convinced of the truth of the resurrection through the personal appearance of Jesus, they were able to go forth and preach. Those who responded were to do so primarily on the basis of the word preached, though confirmed by accompanying signs (v. 20). Early commentators on this passage in Mark, we note, drew out the ironies present in the unbelief of those called to be apostles—“Those who at first did not believe became the fathers of the faith for all who would later believe.”¹¹⁰

The fact of Mark’s juxtaposing elements relating to fear and faith does not, of course, in itself provide a conclusive argument for the inclusion of 16:9–20. It does, however, show that the stress found on believing in these verses is entirely in keeping with what we would expect from Mark. It also makes the proposal that the author deliberately ended on a note of fear and trembling more doubtful.

THE PROCLAMATION OF THE GOSPEL

Another important theme in the second Gospel is that of preaching or proclamation. Considering the comparative brevity of his work, relative to the other Gospel-writers Mark employs the verb κηρύσσειν (“preach/proclaim”) with greater frequency. Excluding the longer

110. Oden and Hall, *Mark*, 248–49. This is a summary of a comment by Augustine of Hippo: “The Lord Jesus himself chided his disciples, his earliest followers who remained close to him, because they did not believe that he was now alive, but grieved over him as dead [Mark 16:14]. They were the fathers of the faith, but they were not yet fully believers. They did not yet believe, although they were made teachers so that the whole world might believe what they were destined to preach and what they were going to die for. They did not yet believe that he, whom they had seen raising others from the dead, had himself arisen. Deservedly, then, they were rebuked.”

ending, this word occurs twelve times altogether in Mark (666 verses). It appears just nine times in Matthew (1,071 verses), nine in Luke (1,151 verses), and not even once in John.

The opening chapter of Mark presents us with the preaching of John the Baptist, of whom *κηρύσσειν* is predicated twice in a short span of text (vv. 4 and 7). The other Synoptic authors give much greater space than Mark to the ministry of John, yet each only uses the term “preach” once (Matt 3:1; Luke 3:3). Then following the arrest of John, Jesus came into Galilee, “preaching the gospel of God” (Mark 1:14). Two further times in the first chapter reference is made to the preaching of Jesus (vv. 38, 39).

Early in his ministry Jesus chose twelve apostles expressly for the purpose of sending them out to preach (3:14). This they later did: “They went out and preached that people should repent” (6:12). In both the case of the preaching of Jesus and of the apostles, miraculous healings and the casting out of demons accompany the message (cf. 1:39; 3:15; 6:13).

Yet it is not simply Mark’s more frequent use of *κηρύσσειν* that is noteworthy. That he gave particular prominence to this term and its associated theme is evident from a comparison between certain verses in Mark and their Synoptic parallels. We here consider two Markan texts concerning preaching. The first is 13:10, located in the Olivet discourse. Between the initiating questions of vv. 3–4, and the concluding unit about the time of the end in vv. 24–27, the bulk of the discourse (vv. 5–23)¹¹¹ has a definite inverted parallel structure, as follows:¹¹²

A1	5 Jesus answered and began to say to them, “Beware [<i>βλέπετε</i>] that no one [<i>τις</i>] deceives [<i>πλανήσῃ</i>] you. 6 Many will come in my name, saying, ‘I am he!’ and will deceive [<i>πλανήσουσιν</i>] many.	Beware of deceivers
B1	7 When you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be alarmed; those things must take place; but that is not yet the end. 8 For nation will rise up against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; there will be earthquakes in various places; there will also be famines. These things are but the beginning of the birth pangs.	Troubles (in general)
C1	9 But be on your guard; for they will deliver [<i>παραδώσουσιν</i>] you up to the courts, and you will be flogged in the synagogues, and you will stand before governors and kings for my sake, as a testimony to them.	Persecution / Testimony
D	10 The gospel must first be preached to all the nations.	Gospel preached

111. For the separate demarcation of vv. 5–23, see Gundry, *Mark*, 733.

112. Sharyn Dowd notes most of the parallel elements, in Dowd, *Reading Mark*, 135; Marcus (*Mark* 8–16, 867) also notes a “concentric structure” for vv. 5–23, though he offers a less detailed outline.

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| C2 | 11 When they arrest you and deliver [παραδιδόντες] you up, do not worry beforehand about what you are to say, but say whatever is given you at that time; for it is not you who speak, but the Holy Spirit. 12 Brother will deliver up [παραδώσει] brother to death, and a father his child; and children will rise up against parents and have them put to death. 13 You will be hated by everybody because of my name, but he who endures to the end will be saved. | Persecution / Testimony |
| B2 | 14 But when you see the abomination of desolation standing where it should not be (let the reader understand), then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. 15 He who is on the roof must not go down, or go in to get anything out of his house; 16 and he who is in the field must not turn back to get his cloak. 17 But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! 18 But pray that it may not happen in the winter. 19 For those days will be a time of tribulation such as has not been since the beginning of the creation which God created until now, and never will be. 20 Unless the Lord had shortened those days, nobody would be saved. But for the sake of the elect, whom he has chosen, he has shortened the days. | Tribulation (in Judea) |
| A2 | 21 And then if anyone [τις] says to you, 'Behold, here is the Christ!' or, 'Behold, he is there!' do not believe him; 22 for false Christs and false prophets will arise, and will show signs and wonders in order to deceive [ἀποπλανᾶν], if possible, the elect. 23 But beware [βλέπετε]; behold, I have told you everything beforehand." | Beware of deceivers |

The verse in question (13:10) has no parallel in Luke's version of the discourse, but in Matthew a similar verse is found (24:14). With regard to this latter two differences are to be observed. Firstly, in these two versions of the Olivet discourse only Mark places the reference to preaching in the centerpiece of the text,¹¹³ that is, the position of rhetorical prominence.¹¹⁴ A consideration of the Matthean version reveals that Matthew did not have this same concern. Though the material loosely parallels the Markan order, the verse concerning preaching appears at the end of the section dealing with persecution and apostasy (24:9–13), following words identical to those of Mark 13:13, "he who endures to the end will be saved." Mark, on the other hand, has divided this section into two with 13:10 in the middle to create the inverted rhetorical structure. Secondly, Matthew 24:14 differs in that it lacks the modal particle of obligation, δεῖ ("must"), present in Mark. Undoubtedly this explicitly expressed necessity gives greater import to the activity of preaching in the Markan version. On this Lane comments, "The proclamation of the gospel is an absolute priority in the divine plan of

113. As noted in Breck, *Shape of Biblical Language*, 175.

114. Ibid., 18–19.

salvation, and as such is an integral element in God's eschatological purpose."¹¹⁵ Lane is also right to add in the same context that, "Verse 10 envisages the disciples' active participation in the missionary enterprise." This is apparent from the surrounding context in Mark 13, where Jesus addresses his disciples in the second person as the ones who will stand before rulers to give testimony (v. 9) and who will speak words given by the Holy Spirit (v. 11).

We have seen then that in both its Matthean and Markan versions the Olivet discourse speaks of the gospel being preached to all nations, but it is only in the latter that this is given special prominence through the literary structure and obligatory force through the inclusion of "must." In Matthew the idea of the future preaching of the gospel to Gentiles is present only at this point (24:14) and at the book's conclusion (28:19). It is at this latter juncture that the worldwide mission, foretold by Jesus, is initiated. Outside of the longer ending Mark 13:10 is again the only verse intimating the proclamation of the gospel to the nations.¹¹⁶ It would be strange, in view of the Markan stress on preaching, if the future statement of 13:10 was left hanging, with no subsequent development. If Matthew in his volume later presents his readers with the first all-important step towards the fulfillment of this statement of Jesus, then it is reasonable to assume that Mark, by whom the activity of preaching is made even more salient, should include this at the very end of his Gospel. The longer ending, we note, contains two instances of the verb *κηρύσσειν* in connection with the preaching of the apostles (16:15, 20), as was the case with respect to John the Baptist in the prologue.¹¹⁷ It can be seen, therefore, that the place given to this word in the opening and body of the Gospel is also reflected in the disputed final verses, bringing the total number of instances up to fourteen. The theme of preaching then runs throughout the entire Gospel from beginning to end. It commences with John, Jesus' forerunner (1:5, 7), is continued by Jesus (1:14, 39), it is the express intention for which the twelve apostles are chosen (3:14), who later assist their master in this work (6:13), it is the preaching to Gentiles that of necessity must take place before the end comes (13:10), and it is the apostles who, commissioned with this task (16:15), put it into effect (16:20). Thematically the prominence of *κηρύσσειν* in the longer ending fits well with this particular Markan emphasis.

The other reference to preaching we shall consider is found in Mark 1:38. Here Jesus explains to his disciples the reason why he has come. This text is given below, followed by its sole parallel in Luke:

Let us go elsewhere—to the neighboring villages—so that I can preach there also, for I have come forth for this reason. (Mark 1:38)

I must announce the good news of the kingdom of God to the other towns also; for I was sent for this reason. (Luke 4:43)

At this point Luke does not use the verb *κηρύσσειν* at all, but rather *εὐαγγελίσασθαι* ("to announce good news"). We also observe the difference between the final verbs. Whereas Mark has the active *ἐξῆλθον* (literally "I came out/went forth"), or *ἐξῆλθον* in some manuscripts ("I have come out/gone forth"), Luke has the passive *ἀπεστάλην* ("I was sent"). Luke also lacks the adverb *ἄλλαχοῦ* ("elsewhere"). This comparison enables us to establish what is

115. Lane, *Gospel according to Mark*, 462.

116. The "house of prayer for all nations" in Mark 11:17 is a quotation from Isaiah 56:7 and does not explicitly speak of preaching to Gentiles.

117. Another feature strengthening the sense of inclusio argued for in the foregoing chapter.

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distinctively Markan in the text rather than common synoptic tradition. What is significant here is that we can discern a lexical correspondence between distinctive features of 1:38 and the last verse of the longer ending. As Jesus in connection with the commencement of his own ministry used the terms (for the moment changing the order) ἐξῆλθον, κηρύξω, and ἀλλαχοῦ, so the close of the same Gospel states (16:20) the continuation of this task by his successors with the words ἐξελθόντες ἐκήρυξαν πανταχοῦ (“having gone forth they preached everywhere”). The association between these two verses underlines the essential distinction between the preaching of Jesus and that of the apostles. Besides the obvious similarity, including the healings and casting out of demons, also mentioned in both contexts (1:34, 39; cf. 16:17, 18, 20), there is an important contrast in the adverbials ἀλλαχοῦ (“elsewhere”) and πανταχοῦ (“everywhere”) qualifying the act of preaching. Contextually by the former Jesus meant other local villages. This reflects the fairly confined nature of Christ’s own ministry. Jesus “went forth” and preached in Galilee and Judea, with the occasional brief venture across the borders. His apostles on the other hand “went forth” and preached “everywhere,” defined in the ending as “all the world” (16:15). We see, therefore, that the longer ending relates closely to, and develops, what is presented in connection with the theme of preaching at the beginning of the Gospel.

CONCLUSION

The themes considered in this chapter all point to an essential unity between the last twelve verses and the rest of the Gospel. What Mark in particular of all the Synoptic writers has made prominent in the body of his Gospel, even sometimes by quite subtle means, is given similar prominence in the longer ending. This has been shown to be so on several different accounts: through themes laid out in the programmatic statement of 10:33–34, in the matter of fear giving way to faith, the place given to the proclamation of the gospel, with respect to Elijah typology, and above all with regard to the more pervasive motif of the exodus/new exodus. Taken together, and combined with the literary evidence presented in the previous chapter, these stand as strong indicators that affirm the common authorship of 16:9–20 and 1:1–16:9.