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The Structure of the Gospel of Mark: Revisiting the Implications of Repetition and Characterization

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THE STRUCTURE OF THE GOSPEL OF MARK: REVISITING THE IMPLICATIONS OF REPETITION AND CHARACTERIZATION

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ABSTRACT

The search for a distinctive and coherent structure to the Gospel of Mark has long been a challenge for scholarship. While denying redaction and narrative criticism's slavish adherence to their methodology, this thesis utilizes repetition and characterization to assess the matter of Markan structure. Key points of repetition addressed within the text are repetition of words and phrases, forms, and thematic items. The discussion of words and phrases highlight: θάλασσα, πάλιν, εἰς πέραν, ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ, and Jewish leaders. The forms addressed are call narratives, exorcisms, and passion predictions. The thesis presents six key repeated thematic elements: geopolitical locations, the senses of hearing and seeing, the motif of following, the recruitment of the Twelve, the feeding/boat sequences, and the temple and its destruction. With respect to characterization, the thesis addresses three main characters of the Gospel of Mark: the Jewish leaders, the disciples, and the unclean. With these tools, the thesis outlines a four-section structure: 1:1–6:29; 6:30–8:21; 8:22–10:52; 11:1–16:8.

INRODUCTION

While the scholarly world has held renewed interest in the Gospel of Mark over the past century, it continues to fail to achieve consensus in delineating a structure for the Gospel of Mark. Attempts to solve this dilemma have not been wanting. In her "Mark as Interwoven Tapestry: Forecasts and Echoes for a Listening Audience," Joanna Dewey notes sixteen different outlines of the Gospel of Mark.[1] More recently, other scholars have approached the task and offered more outlines.[2] In the midst of the numerous proposals, there even have been suggestions that the search for a linear structure is misdirected.[3] In spite of the breadth of opinion concerning a unified structure in the Gospel of Mark, this thesis approaches the task anew.[4]

The quest for the structure of Mark's gospel is important for several reasons.[5] First and foremost, the structure of a text assists the process of digesting the text. It aids the reader in presenting the text to an audience effectively; it helps the reader receive the

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[1] Joanna Dewey, "Mark as Interwoven Tapestry: Forecasts and Echoes for a Listening Audience," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 53 (1991): 221–222n3.

[2] E.g. Edwin K. Broadhead, *Mark* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), suggests breaks at 1:21; 3:7; 6:6b; 8:27; 11:1; 14:1; 14:43; 15:16.

[3] Cf. Dewey, "Mark as Interwoven Tapestry"; Elizabeth Struthers Malbon, *Narrative Space and Mythic Meaning in Mark*, The Biblical Seminar 13 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1991). Dewey and Malbon both argue that the Gospel of Mark consists of many interwoven parts that cannot neatly be relegated to a linear structure. The assertion of these writings is well taken. Nonetheless, the text's existence as an intricately connected work does not negate the possibility that the Gospel of Mark has a primary intentional structure by which Mark desired to assist his readers through the gospel.

[4] For a more exhaustive presentation of various outlines and the approaches that have produced them cf. John G. Cook, *The Structure and Persuasive Power of Mark: A Linguistic Approach*. The Society of Biblical Literature Semeia Studies (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1995), 13–52.

[5] The following reasons do not seek to exhaust the significance of structure for the Gospel of Mark. They merely intend to illustrate some of the impact that the structure has on the reader of a given text.

material and maintain attention.[6] Second, the text's structure also directs the reader in understanding specific passages within the text. It informs the reader concerning how he should understand the particular passage. Third, the structure serves to emphasize the key points in the narrative and limit the emphasis on secondary and tertiary points.[7]

The search for the structure of Mark's gospel is also legitimate, since it is a written document. While the gospel was certainly intended to be heard, the medium of the written word by nature bears both a directional and linear character.[8] In addition, as close analysis of the text shows, there are numerous guides throughout the gospel that direct the reader of the gospel.[9] The presence of interlocking features further knits the gospel together and aids the propulsion of the reader through the text.[10]

To achieve the task of discerning the structure of Mark's gospel, this thesis proceeds in two parts. The first part analyzes some efforts of scholarship; it presents some of its achievements and failures in its effort to find Markan structure. Due to the constraints of this project, this first part focuses only on the contributions of two key components of Markan criticism: redaction criticism and narrative criticism. The second part utilizes the achievements of these methods and attempts to offer a composite look at

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[6] This thesis will use the term 'reader' to designate the one receiving the text. Paul J. Achtemeier's argument that most if not all who receive the text hear it in their reception is well received. His evidence that even solitary readers generally would read out loud is significant. Nonetheless, as the text is a written document, it is always read in its presentation, either to an individual or a greater audience. For this reason, and for ease of use, this thesis will employ the term 'reader'. Cf. Paul J. Achtemeier, "*Omne Verbum Sonat*: The New Testament and the Oral Environment of Late Western Antiquity," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 109 (1990): 15.

[7] Cf. Mary Ann Tolbert, *Sowing the Gospel: Mark's World in Literary-Historical Perspective* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1989), 107.

[8] Werner Kelber, *The Oral and Written Gospel: The Hermeneutics of Speaking and Writing in the Synoptic Tradition, Mark, Paul, and Q* (1983; repr., Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1997), 106–107.

[9] Cf. the analysis of part 2 below.

[10] Tolbert, *Sowing the Gospel*, 108.

the structure of Mark's gospel without falling into the ruts worn by recent solutions.[11] *The present thesis asserts that the bondage of scholars to specific critical techniques and their predetermined results greatly inhibits the efforts to reach a consensus concerning Markan structure; however being freed from slavishly following a specific methodology and utilizing the basic insights of different methodologies, one can begin to discern the primary structure of the Gospel of Mark.*

[11] This thesis will refer to the author and the redactor of the Gospel of Mark as Mark. This use does not speak to the discussion of authorship; the thesis uses the name strictly out of convenience and familiarity.

PART I

EFFORTS OF REDACTION AND NARRATIVE CRITICISM

The debate concerning Markan structure is a fairly recent phenomenon. It arose out of the general neglect of structure in the methodological approaches of scholarship. Since the onset of historical criticism and continuing through the use of source criticism and then in the employment of form criticism, scholars have thoroughly dissected the Gospel of Mark. They assessed each portion of the gospel for its historical reliability and its use in the primitive church. They distinguished pre-Markan material from Markan material and pronouncement stories from summary statements. From these differentiations, the form critics analyzed the pre-Markan groupings so that they could better understand the *Sitz im Leben* of the primitive church that produced and transmitted the oral tradition. But in their efforts to understand the history behind the text, they failed to see the whole text.

In response to these failures, redaction criticism arose. In spite of the multilayered history of the Markan text, redaction critics recognize that the Gospel of Mark has become a unified whole. They use the process of differentiation unveiled by form and source criticism to determine how the redactor joined the material into a cohesive whole.[1]

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[1] The term 'redactor' will be used to designate the editor/composer of tradition materials. While there is a distinction between 'editing' and 'composing', both traditionally have fallen under the nomenclature 'redacting'. Cf. John R. Donahue, "Redaction Criticism: Has the *Hauptstrasse* Become a *Sackgasse*?," in *The New Literary Criticism and the New Testament*, edited by. Elizabeth Struthers Malbon and Edgar V. McKnight, Journal for the Study of the New Testament Series, 109 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994), 29. While Best's argument, cf. Ernest Best, *Mark: The Gospel as Story*, Studies of the New Testament and Its World (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1983), 14, that 'composer' is a better term for the description of his work is well received, the term 'redactor' encompasses the breadth of 'redactional' criticism. In addition, distinguishing between composition and editing is not always a clean cut discipline. Thus this thesis employs 'redactor'. Cf. also Norman Perrin, *What is Redaction Criticism?* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1969), 65–67.

This activity then informs their understanding of the redactor's theology and his concerns for the gospel's intended recipients.[2]

Following the advent of redaction criticism, narrative criticism arose attempting to address the Gospel of Mark as a narrative whole. While redaction criticism isolates portions of the text to understand the redactor's intent for the unified whole, narrative criticism studies the narrative elements throughout the text to understand the unity of the text.[3] Narrative criticism thus focuses on the text within itself. It uses plot, setting, characters, et al., to analyze the gospel as a consistent literary whole.

Yet in spite of these developments in critical scholarship, an agreed upon structure for the Gospel of Mark has not been determined. The following chapters attempt to view each critical perspective from the point of view of sample scholars and analyze them according to the accomplishments and failures of their methodological approach to the text. Chapter 1 looks at the form critical approach that preceded the present state of scholarship by analyzing Vincent Taylor's commentary. Chapter 2 addresses redaction criticism and considers the scholarship of Werner Kelber and Ernest Best. Chapter 3 discusses the narrative critical approach through the work of Jack Dean Kingsbury and Elizabeth Struthers Malbon.

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[2] Craig A. Evans, "Source, Form and Redaction Criticism: The 'Traditional' Methods of Synoptic Interpretation," in *Approaches to New Testament Studies*, ed. Stanley E. Porter and David Tombs, Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series 120 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995), 33. Cf. also Willi Marxsen, *Mark the Evangelist: Studies on the Redaction History of the Gospel*, trans. James Boyce, Donald Juel, William Poehlmann with Roy A. Harrisville (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1969), 18; Best, *Mark: The Gospel as Story*, 9–10; et al.

[3] As Norman Petersen critiques it, redaction critics end up looking through the text rather than at the text. Cf. Norman R. Petersen, *Literary Criticism for New Testament Critics* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1978), 17–20.

CHAPTER ONE

FORMATIVE WORK

The rise of redaction and narrative critical approaches was the direct result of both source and form criticism's failure to recognize the gospel as a unified whole.[1] Nonetheless, these methodologies left a legacy that has influenced both redaction and narrative approaches. The conclusions drawn by both source and form criticism have had lasting impact on the presuppositions of all subsequent approaches. The pre-Markan units determined by this era of scholarship penetrate the work of redaction and narrative criticism. As a result, a study of these methodologies is necessary for a full understanding of redaction and narrative criticisms. Toward this end, the ensuing chapter analyzes Vincent Taylor's commentary.

Vincent Taylor

Vincent Taylor's commentary, *The Gospel According to St. Mark*, demonstrates a typical approach of the era of source and form criticism.[2] First he analyzes the sources from which Mark wrote. Then he determines the origin of the source through a dissection of the vocabulary, style, theological import, vividness, artlessness, etc. From this diagnosis he interprets the collecting activity of Mark.[3] The collecting activity

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[1] Marxsen, *Mark the Evangelist*, 20–21.

[2] Vincent Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1966).

[3] The term 'collecting' will be used to describe the redactional activity of Mark as viewed in the realm of form criticism. This nomenclature is artificial; nonetheless, the distinction is helpful. Although the form critics recognize the fact that the individual parts have come together, the activity that has brought them together does little to alter the forms received from tradition. Marxsen, *Mark the Evangelist*, 20–21.

demonstrates the method Mark used as he formed his gospel.[4] Taylor recognizes five tendencies in Mark's methodology: (1) When tradition is acquired, Mark inserts it into his structure with minimal alterations. He uses simple links to connect it to the surrounding material. (2) He preserves previously grouped materials as units. (3) Mark rarely comments on the material received. (4) He does not force a narrative structure on units topically arranged. (5) When he receives two differing accounts of the same story, Mark uses both traditions.[5] These methods then result in the structural conclusion that the "Gospel is not a carefully planned literary composition, but a popular writing conditioned by the state of the existing tradition and by the fact that the Gospel was a new undertaking."[6]

Although Taylor's approach results in the conclusion that the composition of Mark is not artful, he does outline a general structure for Mark's gospel. Taylor sees seven major sections: (1) The Introduction (1:1–13); (2) the Galilean Ministry (1:14–3:6); (3) The Height of the Galilean Ministry (3:7–6:13); (4) The Ministry Beyond Galilee (6:14–8:26); (5) Caesarea Philippi: The Journey to Jerusalem (8:27–10:52); (6) The Ministry in Jerusalem (11:1–13:37); (7) The Passion and Resurrection Narrative (14:1–16:8).[7]

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[4] Taylor recognizes the Gospel of Mark, and thus the collecting activity, as "an attempt to tell how the Good News concerning Jesus Christ, the Son of God, began, and thus to serve historical as well as religious ends." Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark*, 105.

[5] Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark*, 112–113.

[6] Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark*, 105. It is at this quote that the distinction between Taylor's perspective and a redaction critic is clear. While there is certainly recognition of the compilation of material by Mark, this activity bears little influence on his scholarship. In form criticism the influence of the collector is secondary at best.

[7] Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark*, 107–111.

Mark delineates the sections through the use of introductory statements. The summary statements at 1:14f. and 3:7–12 provide introduction for the first two divisions.[8] The third division is not as clear. Taylor divides the material at 6:14, but he offers no certainty for that division.[9] Following "a brief interlude" at 6:14–6:29, two feeding sequences topically present this fourth section in two parts.[10] The remaining sections begin with passages introducing a "new stage in the course of events."[11] These passages occur at 8:27, 11:1, and 14:1.

Taylor's form critical approach fails on many points. First, Taylor does not recognize a cohesive macro-structure to the Gospel of Mark. Second, Taylor approaches the text from a perspective that often uses data arbitrarily or is blurred by presuppositions. Third, his source and form conclusions produce a misunderstanding of Mark's method of collection that misinforms many of his micro-structural assessments. Nonetheless, in spite of these problems, the commentary is thorough and quite helpful in many respects. It clarifies numerous points of Markan uniqueness and illustrates points where themes are drawn out by Mark.

The first deficiency in Taylor's approach is his inability to recognize the cohesive unity which is the Gospel of Mark. As the findings of redaction and narrative criticism have pointed out, the text of Mark is a unified whole. [12] It is not simply a hodgepodge of sources put together to provide for a historical account of the ministry of Jesus. Thematic links and theological continuity characterize the Gospel of Mark as a whole. The

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[8] Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark*, 165, 225.

[9] Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark*, 225.

[10] Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark*, 307.

[11] Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark*, 106.

[12] Cf. chapters 2 and 3 below.

participants in Mark's gospel form a cast of characters that basically hold true to form throughout the text, and the plot moves forward toward the climax of the cross.[13]

This first fundamental problem leads to a second more critical problem. Taking a conclusion that neglects unity throughout the gospel, Taylor looks to the parts that make up the gospel. In this process, Taylor makes decisions that tend to be arbitrary and blurred by various presuppositions. While guidelines for the process are present, the application of those guidelines is not applied uniformly.

Evidence of the arbitrary nature of some of Taylor's decisions comes out in his use of the vividness of a narrative, and Mark's use of repetition.[14] The first and most blatant abuse of criteria is Taylor's 'standard' of vividness.[15] Taylor holds that units which bear vivid story telling are closer to an eyewitness report and possibly more historically reliable. But delineating the specifics of this 'standard' is elusive. Taylor somewhat clarifies this 'standard' by associating vividness with the presentation of "unimportant features of interest to those concerned in the event."[16] Nonetheless, determining what features are unimportant remains arbitrary. If Mark intends to draw a connection with another part of his gospel, then that which is unimportant may become important. As a

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[13] Although Taylor provides hints at recognizing this continuity, this understanding does not bear out fully in his commentary. Cf. Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark*, 17–18, 485, et al.

[14] These examples by no means exhaust the arbitrary nature of the standards for Taylor's assessment of the origins of the text; they merely attempt to provide a sampling of the problem. Other examples of this problem are seen in the gospel's vocabulary and style, the function of summary statements, Mark's use of geography, etc. The subjectivity of assessment is recognized to some degree by Taylor himself: "The facts set out above show the great variety of the Markan material and how impossible it is to characterize it in unqualified statements which treat it as if it were of one stamp and kind." Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark*, 88.

[15] Admittedly, Taylor does not see this standard to be "a sure criterion." Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark*, 135. Nonetheless, even with the recognition that determining what is imaginative is "more speculative," cf. Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark*, 139, he believes that "they present data on which a judgment may be based, especially if their character and distribution are considered." Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark*, 135.

[16] Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark*, 178.

result, the distinction becomes blurred. Taylor's commentary on 3:7–12 presents an example of this blurring. Here he recognizes the inclusion of the need for a boat as a mark of vividness, but classifies the unit as entirely a Markan construction that relies on living memory.[17] In 3:19b–21, however, the unit appears to be a Markan construction because it lacks vivid detail that non-Markan constructions bear.[18] The same 'standard' produces two different conclusions. This disparity, which is present elsewhere, reduces the credibility of conclusions made from this 'standard'. [19]

Mark's use of repetition is another 'standard' used to determine origin. But again, the 'standard' is arbitrary. Taylor recognizes Mark's tendency of repeating vocabulary and information to provide narrative links.[20] At another point in the commentary, he uses the same criterion to help determine that 1:21–39 is a pre-Markan unit.[21] At still another point, it is clear that the absence of repetition can be seen as "artificial."[22] Whether the inclusion of repetitive material is linked to Mark or the original eyewitness seems to be a decision left to the discretion of the commentator rather than the data presented.

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[17] Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark*, 227.

[18] Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark*, 235.

[19] E.g. The use of the historic present provides a mark of vividness. Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark*, 272–273. Yet Taylor also considers the historic present as a signal of Markan style. Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark*, 46–47, 235. Also, the sharpness of Jesus' rebuke in 4:40 suggests greater originality. Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark*, 276. But Taylor downplays the fear of the disciples in 4:41 to reverential awe. Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark*, 277. Also cf. Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark*, 347, 352, 357, 446, 447, 529, 541, 588, et al.

[20] A clear example of this occurs at his analysis of 6:6b–13. He recognizes the vocabulary and style to reflect 3:7–12. Thus the material is Markan. Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark*, 302. Also cf. Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark*, 53, 369, 506, et al.

[21] The reference to Simon's house and the temporal reference link the account of the healing in the evening to the preceding material. Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark*, 180. The mentioning of the door in 1:33 unites the account to Peter's house. Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark*, 181. Taylor thus determines the whole unit to be a Petrine unity.

[22] Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark*, 466.

Presuppositions also blur these decisions. The understanding that doublets exist within Mark provides evidence for Taylor that Mark uses different sources.[23] Taylor also views material that is miraculous with greater scrutiny[24] and often as a development of the early Christian community.[25] He deems predictions of Jesus[26] and plots of the religious leaders[27] to be from a later point in Jesus' ministry by default. The level of theological development also influences the determination of the material's proximity to events.[28] In addition, predetermined definitions of the function of forms help to determine originality.[29] Taylor also determines that inclusion of material bearing geographical or personal names is the result of its preexistent place in tradition.[30]

As a result of these shifting 'standards', the conclusions made by Taylor often fail to address the structural concerns of the gospel. The 'standards' determine the materials' grouping. Since the 'standards' are faulty, the grouping becomes flawed as well.

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[23] Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark*, 67.

[24] E.g. in 4:35–41 Taylor attributes the obedience of the wind and the waves to be an inference drawn by the disciples on the spot. Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark*, 277. Decisions concerning miracles are based upon the assertion that legendary elements have distorted Mark's presentation of Jesus as *Deus absconditus*. Mark does not intend such a powerful Jesus. Mark does not want a Jesus who stands more as a demi-God rather than a human. Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark*, 143–144.

[25] E.g. Jesus gives the disciples the ability to cast out demons in 6:6b–13. Taylor sees this ability as a projection of the early community. The inability of the disciples in 9:18 is more accurate to history. Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark*, 303.

[26] E.g. 2:19f. Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark*, 212. If the prediction is too specific it is deemed *vaticinium ex eventu* and completely dismissed from Jesus' ministry. Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark*, 436–437.

[27] E.g. 3:6. Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark*, 220–221.

[28] E.g. Taylor cites the failure to use the term 'Christ' more frequently as evidence of Mark's primitive nature. Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark*, 117. Also cf. Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark*, 534, 596.

[29] E.g. for Taylor, the details of the parable are not supposed to be important. A parable conveys one main point. The explanation of the parable of the sower is too developed and thus reflects secondary tradition. Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark*, 258; also Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark*, 249. A similar problem comes up in his explanation of 4:10–12. Since Taylor views the parable as a tool used to elucidate, he denies the implications of 4:10–12, cf. Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark*, 255, and concludes that Mark misplaced the material. Cf. Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark*, 257–258.

[30] Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark*, 172, 278, et al.

Unfortunately once the pre-Markan units are established, the structure of the gospel cannot override the groupings.

Two examples of this failure are Taylor's understanding of 2:1–3:6 and 6:30–8:26. Using his 'standards', Taylor views 2:1–3:6 as a pre-Markan unit. He explains the arrangement as a topical group of conflict stories. While Taylor recognizes the formal connections to 1:16–18 and 1:19–20, Taylor's conclusion of the pre-Markan unit of 2:1–3:6 results in his classification of 2:13–14 as an introductory remark which is historically natural to the following conflict unit. But this assessment neglects the character of the established unit. An established unit often is marked by roundedness (i.e. a dropping of details). Although other details have been dropped because of roundedness, the details of 2:13–14 remain. Taylor fails to provide an explanation for 2:13–14 befitting his 'standards'; yet, he cannot change the established unit to meet the intrusion of 2:13–14 because the pre-Markan tradition is established.

These 'standards' also produce the conclusion that 6:30–7:37 and 8:1–26 are parallel. The principal standard that encourages this judgment is the determination that both contain different traditions of the same account.[31] This doublet then leads to the correlation of the healing of the deaf mute and the healing of the blind man at Bethsaida.[32] Unfortunately, the devotion to this possible parallel leads to the neglect of

[31] Taylor views the feeding of the five thousand, the crossing (along with the storm and the disciples' failure to understand), and the landing at Gennesaret as the same historical event as the feeding of the four thousand, the crossing and landing at Dalmanutha. Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark*, 628–629.

[32] To be certain, Taylor does not view these as a doublet as some do. Nonetheless, he sees them structurally parallel in part due to the view that they are doublets. Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark*, 630–632. Ernest Best deems the perpetuation of this structural parallelism as a "scholarly fiction." Ernest Best, *Following Jesus: Discipleship in the Gospel of Mark*, Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series, 4 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1981), 135.

the more obvious parallel of the healing of the blind man at Bethsaida and the healing of blind Bartimaeus.[33]

In spite of these significant shortcomings, Taylor's efforts provide substantial assistance toward a structural understanding of the Gospel of Mark. While his conclusions are often faulty, the data Taylor presents are enlightening. For example his discussion of a preexisting form between 3:9, 4:1f., and 4:35 draws attention to the multiple references to boats. He suggests that these historical accounts then provide the opportunity to introduce sayings sources in between the accounts.[34] Although this connection is lacking in his general structure, the use of boats in the Markan account is apparent. Taylor also recognizes the repetition of words such as πάλιν, θάλασσα, et al. that help to recognize connections made by Mark to preceding units.[35] In addition, Taylor highlights the selective representation of place names; while Taylor disregards these inclusions as Mark's adherence to tradition, the recognition is significant.[36] Finally, the asserted gaps in the narrative provide assistance in attributing breaks in the structure.[37]

In short, Taylor's assessment of the Gospel of Mark provides much data to assist in discovery of the structure of the Gospel of Mark. Yet the arbitrary use of data and presuppositions obscure his accomplishments. In the end, Taylor's commentary fails to provide an adequate, unified structure to the Gospel of Mark.

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[33] Cf. R. T. France, *The Gospel of Mark: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, The New International Greek Testament Commentary Series (Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 2002), 320; Francis J. Moloney, *The Gospel of Mark: A Commentary* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2002),163; et al.

[34] Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark*, 94.

[35] E.g. Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark*, 202, 251, 464, et al.

[36] Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark*, 172, 328, et al.

[37] E.g. Taylor suggests that there is a temporal jump from 1:14f and 1:16 as well as between 1:20 and 1:21. Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark*, 167. Discontinuity is also present at the three individual pericopes, 6:1–6a, 6:6b–13, and 6:14–16, 17–29. The use of these accounts in these locations assists in the understanding of Markan structure, cf. chapter 7 below.

Conclusion

The efforts of source and form criticism have resulted in the identification of some key tools by which the author organized his material. Nonetheless, the use of the data has resulted in a variety of arbitrary conclusions. These conclusions have established and confirmed various combinations of material as pre-Markan. As a result, these blocks of material stand before redaction and narrative critics and influence them as they make structural decisions.

CHAPTER TWO

REDACTION CRITICISM

Redaction Criticism is a reaction to form criticism's piecemeal approach to the text. Redaction critics recognize each gospel as the product of a community. As the result of this focus, they approach the material, which is identified as redactional, differently. Whereas the form critics pushed the redactional material aside as secondary, the redaction critics see the material as a vehicle to understanding the community of the redactor.[1]

The level of perceived redactional activity varies from scholar to scholar and gospel to gospel. Redaction critics fall along a continuum ranging from a view of the gospel as a collection of beads on a thread to an interwoven assemblage of tradition. Within the criticism of the Gospel of Mark, scholarly perspective varies concerning the role of the redactor; opinions range from creative editor to faithful compiler.[2] This difference in perspective widens as the scholar uses perceived redactional activity to present his understanding of the Gospel of Mark. The works of Werner H. Kelber and Ernest Best provide evidence of the chasm that can result from this difference of opinion and the resulting influence on structural interpretation.

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[1] Best, *Mark: The Gospel as Story*, 9–10.

[2] While the terminology might change, this distinction is made by many redaction critics. Cf. Joel Marcus, *Mark 1–8: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, The Anchor Bible 27 (New York: Doubleday, 2000), 59–62; Ernest Best, *Disciples and Discipleship: Studies in the Gospel According to Mark* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1986), 47; et al.

Werner Kelber

From his interpretation of Mark's redactional activity, Werner Kelber finds Mark to be a polemic that transitions from an orally supported tradition to a textually based tradition.[3] This transfer in the locus of authority corresponds to the shift from a Jerusalem based Christianity to a Galilean focused Christianity. The shift removes the power from the establishment, which is represented in the text by the authorities, the family of Jesus, and Jesus' disciples, and gives it to those in the north who survived the destruction of Jerusalem.[4]

This polemical perception drives Kelber's interpretation of the text. Using source criticism's conclusion of Markan priority and the forms discovered by form criticism, Kelber presents Mark as a polemic against the oral authoritative tradition. As such, Mark is not merely a collector of tradition but a creative molder of it. Kelber argues that Mark first disorients his audience from the usual presentation of oral tradition. In order to disorient, Mark adjusts traditional pieces of and places for tradition. After Mark disorients, then his new presentation of the gospel reorients the audience into his perspective. Specifically, Mark's orientation of material promotes a shift from the traditional authoritative voices of Jerusalem, the family of Jesus, and the disciples.[5]

The polemical interpretation thus thoroughly motivates Kelber's structural understanding of Mark. Kelber delineates five key sections of the gospel: 1:1–4:34; 4:35–

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[3] Kelber, *The Oral and Written*, 129–131. Werner H. Kelber's position is analyzed based upon three of his works: *The Oral and Written Gospel*; *The Kingdom in Mark: A New Place and a New Time* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1974); *Mark's Story of Jesus* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1979).

[4] Kelber, *The Kingdom in Mark*, 64–65.

[5] Kelber, *The Oral and Written*, 91–105.

8:21; 8:22–10:52; 11:1–13:37; 14:1–16:8.[6] In 1:1–4:34, Mark presents the mystery of the Kingdom. Kelber sees Mark introducing the dichotomy of inside versus outside. He interprets 3:20–37 as the establishment of new categories. Here Mark castigates those who should have access to the mystery, Jesus' biological family and the privileged authorities, to the outside; those that have moved to the inside are those around Jesus, the ones to whom Jesus explains everything. Also in this section, Mark establishes the group of disciples as the oral representatives of Jesus. The disciples are the ones who are to listen to and in turn teach like Jesus.[7] Upon these disciples, Jesus plans to lay foundation for a new community.

At 4:35, Kelber recognizes the beginning of a section characterized by crossing the lake. Mark shapes this section around six voyages across the Sea of Galilee. These voyages define Galilee by bringing together both Jew and Gentile into the Kingdom, the new community.[8] This section instructs the disciples as to the composition of the community, but in the end the disciples do not understand and are relegated to stand on the outside.[9] At 8:21, they neither see nor hear. Nonetheless, the wording of Jesus offers hope: 'Do you not *yet* understand?'

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[6] Kelber sees the first fifteen verses of this section as Mark's redactional activity. 1:14–15 concludes this block of material with a summary statement. Kelber sees this statement as key for understanding Jesus' ministry and Markan theology, Kelber *The Kingdom in Mark*, 3–4. As a result, it may be appropriate to view 1:1–15 as an introduction. Kelber, however, does not distinguish it as such. For this reason, 1:1–4:34 is maintained as a unit. Cf. also Kelber, *Mark's Story of Jesus*, 15–29. Kelber presents the divisions most cleanly as chapter divisions in *Mark's Story of Jesus*.

[7] Kelber, *The Oral and Written*, 96–97.

[8] Kelber, *The Kingdom in Mark*, 45–47.

[9] Kelber, *The Kingdom in Mark*, 64.

The unit from 8:22 to 10:52 provides a clear redactional unit for Kelber.[10] Marked by the two healings of blind men, the unit tracks the journey of Jesus and his disciples on their way to Jerusalem.[11] Here Jesus continues to explain to the disciples not only the composition of the new community, but also the aspects that characterize life in that community. The threefold repetition of Jesus' death and resurrection informs the disciples that the way leads to the cross. As the disciples make their way to Jerusalem with Jesus, they continue to misunderstand the kingdom Jesus proclaims. First Peter is rebuked, then the Twelve hinder children from seeing Jesus, and finally James and John and the other ten demonstrate that they fail to understand the message. The section builds the theme of the disciples' continued failure.

In 11:1–13:37, Kelber argues that Mark demonstrates that the end has come for the temple. On three separate days Jesus enters the temple and leaves. The second day begins with the cursing of the fig tree and leads to the casting out of the sellers in the temple. On the third day Jesus and the disciples see that the curse of the fig tree took effect, Jesus stands in conflict with various religious authorities, and Jesus tells four disciples of the destruction of the temple. The section drives a wedge between the temple, in which Jerusalem Christianity has great hope, and the possibility for any future connection with the Kingdom of God.[12]

Finally, Kelber recognizes 14:1–16:8 to be the passion narrative. This event brings to culmination the conflict that has arisen between Jesus and the disciples. As the cross

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[10] For Kelber, the section is so thoroughly manipulated by Mark that the original sources are no longer helpful. He writes, "The central section (8:22–10:52) more than any other part of the gospel bears the imprint of a skillfully designed composition." Kelber, *The Kingdom in Mark*, 67.

[11] Paralleled to the six voyage segments, Kelber also recognizes six way units in 8:22–10:52. Kelber, *Mark's Story of Jesus*, 44.

[12] Kelber, *Mark's Story of Jesus*, 70.

grows nearer, the two groups part company. The disciples' failure stands complete. Jesus' prediction of death and resurrection stand fulfilled. At the empty tomb, the ultimate failure of the disciples is sealed. The women never tell the disciples, and the disciples are doomed to perish with Jerusalem.[13]

Kelber's layout of the gospel offers several helpful points. First, in attempting to demonstrate the paucity of orality in Mark relative to the other gospels, Kelber recognizes the importance of the speech acts found in chapters 4 and 13. Although his conclusions concerning these chapters are influenced by his perspective on the redactional efforts against oral authority, Kelber does well to recognize that there are only two concentrations of oral discourse. Second, Kelber connects the quotes of 4:10–12 and 8:21. Third, Kelber, like many others, recognizes the artfulness behind the crafting of the 'on the way' section. Finally, Kelber recognizes some structural significance to the destruction of the temple.

Unfortunately, Kelber's overall presentation of the structure is lacking. Too often his analysis seems to reflect the desired results of his interpretation rather than a comprehensive look at the text of Mark. This failure can be seen at three key points. First, while he recognizes the repetition of some key words and phrases he does not account for the strategic placement of each particular use. Second, Kelber also accents Mark's use of particular forms, but he fails to recognize all uses of that form. Third, in his interpretation of the Gospel of Mark, he virtually ignores the presentation of the section recognized to be the most craftily put together (i.e. 8:22–10:52); instead he affirms the Galilee vs. Jerusalem distinction.

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[13] Kelber, *Mark's Story of Jesus*, 87.

The first two points concern Kelber's use of details. He appears to strategically use details to support the perceived redactional perspective; he also strategically neglects similar details that confuse his redactional perspective. He demonstrates these practices when he uses particular words and phrases and when he interprets the structural placement of particular forms.

The first problem most vividly presents itself in Kelber's analysis of 4:35–8:21. In this section, Kelber keys in upon the use of the boat voyages. The activity of crossing the lake is essential for his interpretation of presenting a new community.[14] Kelber keys in on the verb διαπεράω and the phrase εἰς τὸ πέραν. However, the activity of crossing the lake is not actively present at all six voyages.[15] For example, at 6:32, although the disciples and Jesus get in a boat, the text does not present them going to another side or crossing over the lake. In fact, the lake is not even in the text. While Kelber recognizes this passage as not being a crossing, he does characterize it as a voyage to be included in the section characterized by crossing.[16] The unifying factor also cannot be the boat; boats have been mentioned in non-crossing situations twice.[17] As a result, the void in crossings

[14] Kelber, *The Kingdom in Mark*, 46–47, 48.

[15] Kelber, *Mark's Story of Jesus*, 44. The assertion of six voyages is clear in his interpretation of the six ways in the following section.

[16] Kelber, *Mark's Story of Jesus*, 35. Further questions arise concerning the fact that Kelber views 6:31–33 as redactional. Kelber, *The Kingdom in Mark*, 55. A redactional passage should have no difficulty in morphing to the redactional structure intended. If Mark wanted a crossing to take place, he would have included crossing language.

[17] Cf. Mark 3:9 (although it is recognized that this boat is a 'small boat' and distinct from the other references in Mark) and 4:1. It is important to note that most redaction critics view both of these sections as greatly influenced, if not entirely composed, by the hand of the redactor. Thus the use of boat would not be relegated to the position of 'inclusion for the sake of tradition'.

broadens to the span between 5:22 and 6:44. Nonetheless, since the crossing section is integral to his understanding of the gospel as polemic, the unit is preserved.[18]

The second point can be seen most explicitly in his acknowledgement of the parallelism between 1:21–28 and 5:1–20. Kelber asserts that the use of the exorcism at 5:1–20 demonstrates the Kingdom's openness to the Gentiles much as the exorcism in the synagogue of Capernaum did with respect to the Jews in 1:21–28.[19] While Kelber sees these events as two events that both begin an aspect of the public ministry of Jesus, Kelber neglects a similar form in between these sections. Although 3:7–12 is classified as a summary statement, the summary recalls the events with the same ingredients as the exorcisms of 1:21–28 and 5:1–20.[20] All three events have three stages: (1) a confrontation; (2) the expulsion of the unclean spirit; (3) the spirits acclaim Jesus.[21] Kelber does not address 3:7–12 because it does not begin an aspect of the public ministry of Jesus that fits his structure. Another pericope which he labels as a polarization story, the healing of the epileptic boy, is presented later in the gospel.[22] The strategic use of two of these accounts and disregard for the other accounts reflects the goals of the Kelber more than offer substantial evidence for his structural divisions. His redactional conclusion influences the employment of data.

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[18] Cf. Kelber, *The Kingdom in Mark*, 53–55. Through a convoluted argument, Kelber posits that 6:1–29 is material inserted by Mark for the purpose of presenting the responsibility of the apostolic community following the death of Jesus. This section makes clear the expectation that the apostles were to be the foundation of the new community. As the gospel progresses, it becomes apparent that the disciples will fail to meet this expectation.

[19] Kelber, *Mark's Story of Jesus*, 31–32; Kelber, *The Kingdom in Mark*, 51.

[20] The primary distinction lies in the location of the acclamation, cf. chapter 5 for discussion on this matter.

[21] Kelber, *The Oral and Written Gospel*, 52. These elements define the form 'polarization story'.

[22] Kelber, *The Oral and Written Gospel*, 52–55. Kelber classifies this pericope as a polarization story even though it lacks the third element of a polarization story, i.e. the acclamation. As a result, with regards to form, he classifies 1:21–28; 5:1–20; and 9:14–29 together.

Kelber's handling of 8:22–10:52 presents a third point of difficulty. Here the proposed Markan purpose subverts Kelber's understanding of Markan structure. Kelber recognizes this section as a significant redactional unit.[23] He recognizes Mark's hand as thoroughly influential in the formation of this section. Yet, within this section is Jesus' first move outside of Galilee.[24] As a result, Kelber interprets 10:1 as a great shift from Galilee to the region of Judea, home of Jerusalem.[25] The impetus behind viewing this shift in the face of such a structured unit of material is the perceived redactional motive of Mark. Kelber argues that Mark intended for the gospel to help his community adjust to the shift that occurred after the fall of Jerusalem. The gospel removes the authority of Jerusalem, the religious authorities, the temple, oral tradition, the family of Jesus, and the disciples. Because of this perceived importance of Christianity's shift from Jerusalem to Galilee, Kelber finds it necessary to emphasize the shift within Mark from Galilee to Jerusalem at 10:1. However, this shift is not the emphasis of 10:1. As a result, Kelber's interpretation distracts from the unity of 8:22–10:52 and this unit's structural use of geopolitical markers.[26]

Ernest Best

Ernest Best's redactional approach views Mark's activity as that of an artist creating a collage.[27] Mark is creative in summarizing material and in his collation of material, but

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[23] Kelber, *The Kingdom in Mark*, 67.

[24] To be certain Jesus has entered regions other than Galilee at this point of Mark's gospel, e.g. Decapolis. Nonetheless, Kelber views these regions as redactionally combined via the activity of Jesus 4:35–8:21. Galilee includes more than just Galilee, cf. Kelber, *The Kingdom in Mark*, 45–47. Thus, for Kelber, 10:1 is Jesus' first move outside of Galilee.

[25] Kelber, *The Kingdom in Mark*, 87–92.

[26] Cf. discussion below in chapters 5 and 7.

[27] Best's position is based upon four of his works: *Following Jesus: Discipleship in the Gospel of Mark*; *Mark: The Gospel as Story*; "Mark's Preservation of Tradition," in *Disciples and Discipleship:*

he preserves the tradition that he finds already in tact.[28] Sometimes he groups and arranges material for a particular purpose; other times he must conform to the rubrics of standard tradition. Best finds the latter practice evident in the "preservation of unnecessary, even contradictory, detail"[29] and especially in the ordering of the Passion events.[30] In these instances, Mark is limited because he recognizes that the readers are aware of the traditions that he is using and would be scandalized by too great a variance from them.[31] This restriction being recognized, Best also admits that the former practice is not slight. Mark often contributes much to the purpose of the gospel he presents.

For Best, Mark's purpose is pastoral. This purpose directs attention to the death and resurrection of Jesus. The amount of space consumed by the Passion narrative makes this direction clear. In fact, Best goes as far as labeling it a case of "the tail wagging the dog."[32] He believes that this concentration of material provides a double emphasis. First, the disciples are to follow Jesus in the way of the cross. Second, they are to be supported and atoned for by Jesus' successful completion of his way to the cross.[33]

Studies in the Gospel According to Mark (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1986): 31–48; *The Temptation and the Passion: the Markan Soteriology*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

[28] Best, *Disciples and Discipleship*, 47.

[29] Best, *The Temptation and the Passion*, xxix. Cf. also Best, *Disciples and Discipleship*, 31–48.

[30] Best, *The Temptation and the Passion*, 90, 125.

[31] Best, *The Temptation and the Passion*, xxix. This assertion does not attempt to suggest that Mark does not mold the pericopae to fit his needs. Best clearly states that this tactic is an option for Mark, cf. Ernest Best, *Following Jesus: Discipleship in the Gospel of Mark*, 10. The key is that Mark had limits to the modifications he could make to the pericopae. This perspective serves as a sharp contrast to Kelber's belief that the gospel was written for the purpose of bucking the traditional oral transmission. Cf. Kelber, *The Oral and Written*, 91–105.

[32] Best, *The Temptation and the Passion*, 112–113. Best draws this conclusion not only from the disproportionate material at the end of the gospel concerning the Passion but also from the early introduction and repeated presence of conflict in the gospel.

[33] Best, *The Temptation and the Passion*, xlix–l.

The structural division of the gospel follows suit. Using markers, content, and a geographical distinction between Galilee and Jerusalem, Best delineates three chief parts to the gospel that culminate in the death and resurrection of Jesus. The first part, 1:16–8:26, bears the markers of 'and' or 'and immediately' and briskly takes the reader through Galilee encountering Jesus, "a great healer and teacher, victorious in controversy, overcoming demons and sickness, calling disciples who fail to understand what he is about, encountering opposition."[34] The central section, 8:27–10:52, uses geographical markers as Jesus presents himself as the one who is 'on the way' to suffer and die in Jerusalem.[35] Finally, in the third section, 11:1–15:47, time slows down to days and then hours providing markers in the description of the time when Jesus finally reaches Jerusalem.[36] This central core of the gospel is introduced by a prologue, 1:1–15, and followed by an epilogue, 16:1–8.[37] Transitional passages bridge each of the five pieces.[38]

Best's approach makes helpful steps toward the discovery of a Markan structure. His belief that Mark is both conservative and creative requires a very detailed approach to the text. In addition, the attention given to the preferred vocabulary, phrases, and themes of Mark as compared to the other gospels helps one see the direction toward which Mark leads the reader. Finally, Best presents a detailed analysis of the intricate construction of the 'on the way' section.

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[34] Best, *The Temptation and the Passion*, xxxii–xxxiii.

[35] Best, *The Temptation and the Passion*, xxxii–xxxiii.

[36] Best, *The Temptation and the Passion*, xxxii–xxxiii.

[37] This assessment is a composite assessment based upon Best, *Mark: The Gospel as Story*, and Best, *The Temptation and the Passion*. The former offers 1:1–15 as the prologue but merges the epilogue with the preceding to form the unit 11:1–16:8, cf. 129–130. The latter views 1:1–13 as the prologue, viewing 1:14–15 as a transitional section, and offers 16:1–8 as the epilogue, cf. xxxii–xxxiv.

[38] Best views 1:14–15; 8:22–26; 10:46–52; and 15:40–47 as transitional passages. Cf. Best, *The Temptation and the Passion*, xxxiin4.

In spite of these achievements, Best's analysis does fail as the result of his methodological approach. Most significantly, his arbitrary assessment and use of Markan material prevents him from recognizing significant points in the Markan structure. Two primary factors demonstrate this problem. First, Best uses circular evidence to differentiate Markan material from pre-Markan. Second, reversing form critical tendencies, Best uses the redactional material at the neglect of the pre-Markan material. Because of these problems, his analysis does not account for portions of the text which suggest a modified structural understanding.

The first difficulty arises in Best's differentiation of the material that composes the Gospel of Mark. As with most redaction critics, his reasoning is circular.[39] The redactional activity of Mark helps to determine Mark's theology. Mark's theology then helps to distinguish traditional material from the material inserted by Mark. Best's analysis of 3:7–12 provides an appropriate example of this problem. Unlike many scholars, Best does not take this pericope to be an entirely Markan construct. He sees the use of the boat in 3:9 as an example of tradition. This tradition in turn inspired the use of the boat in the Markan construction of 4:1, 2. Mark 3:7–8 also sees tradition in the use of geographical distinctions. In addition, the pericope fails to emphasize Jesus, the teacher, a common Markan emphasis. Given the opportunity for Jesus to be recorded as teaching from the boat, as he does in 4:1–2, Best concludes that it is likely that the omission is the product of tradition. 4:1–2, includes Jesus the teacher and a boat; thus 4:1–2 probably is Markan.[40] 3:7–12 includes and omits and thus is the product of tradition; 4:1–2 includes

[39] Cf. Marxsen, *Mark the Evangelist*, 25.

[40] Best, *The Temptation and the Passion*, 73–74.

and omits and thus is the product of redaction. As is evident from this discussion, one argument influences the other and the basis for differentiation freely shifts.

The second point that inhibits Best's understanding of Markan structure is his neglect of the traditional material used by Mark. Because Best considers Mark's aim as a preserver of tradition and not a creative editor, material that falls under the category of tradition is often disregarded as not helpful in discerning Mark's intent.[41] This neglect of the traditional material can be seen at various points. One example of this practice is Best's understanding of Markan Christology. Best considers terms such as 'King of the Jews' and 'Son of David' to be preserved from the tradition. Thus they do not play a major role in understanding his Christology. 'Son of God' however is deemed a Markan term and thus is integral in understanding Mark's Christology. [42] Best's analysis of 4:35–5:43 and 2:1–3.6 presents two further examples of this problem. He completely disregards 4:35–5:43 from redactional consideration[43] and fundamentally disregards 2:1–3:6. The only note applied to 2:1–3:6 is redactional activity found at 2:13. Even with Best's willingness to recognize this redactional activity, he does not consider any structural import of the redaction; he merely suggests that Mark here presents Jesus as a teacher.[44] In his words, "we must look for Mark's authorship in the framework and selection of the material rather than in the stories as such."[45] Thus the material within the received tradition is often overlooked. As a result, Best neglects significant portions of

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[41] Best, *Disciples and Discipleship*, 47.

[42] Best, *Mark: The Gospel as Story*, 81–82. Best's distinction between Markan theology and the theology of the Gospel of Mark further bears out this illustration, cf. Best, *Disciples and Discipleship*, 47.

[43] Best, *The Temptation and the Passion*, 74.

[44] Best, *The Temptation and the Passion*, 71–72.

[45] Best, *Mark: The Gospel as Story*, 113.

Mark's gospel; without these portions he undermines the efforts of discerning the structural unity of the gospel.

Conclusion

The redaction critical approach to the Gospel of Mark offers much with regards to structure. Both Kelber and Best illustrate the methodology's ability to recognize material particular to Mark. They also demonstrate the importance of detailed attention to vocabulary and syntax; in particular redaction critics recognize repetition.

Nonetheless, the redaction critical method bears shortcomings that inhibit an adequate structural presentation of Mark's gospel. The theological conclusions drawn by the scholar significantly influence the reading of the text and delineation of the structure. As a result, the process is circular and the results unsatisfactory. This reality can be seen in the stark differences between the interpretations of Kelber and Best. The methodology fails to analyze and approach the pre-Markan formations in a consistent manner. In the end, redaction criticism is the slave of the theological conclusions drawn by the scholar. This central problem prevents the redaction critical approach from discerning an appropriate structure for the gospel.

CHAPTER THREE

NARRATIVE CRITICISM

Another response to the disunity of source and form criticism is narrative criticism. In contrast to redaction criticism's emphasis on the redactor, narrative criticism focuses on the world within the text. Narrative criticism keys in on the unity of setting, plot, characters, and other aspects of the text itself. Narrative criticism does not address the history of the text. The text presented is the text analyzed. Thus portions of the text not conducive to the projected goal of the author cannot be cut out of the interpretation due to its part in tradition. This approach is analyzed through the works of Jack Dean Kingsbury and Elizabeth Struthers Malbon.

Jack Dean Kingsbury

Kingsbury's narrative approach, presented in *Conflict in Mark*, uses the narrative elements of setting and plot to offer a coherent analysis of the storylines of three key characters in the Gospel of Mark. [1] Although character development attracts most of Kingsbury's attention, all three literary elements are intimately related. Together they provide the basis for his structure of the Gospel of Mark.

As indicated by his emphasis on character development within the Markan narrative, Kingsbury sees the plot as the propulsive force of Markan structure.[2]

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[1] Jack Dean Kingsbury's position on Mark is viewed through *Conflict in Mark: Jesus, Authorities, Disciples* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1989). Although Kingsbury also includes the aspect of 'world' in the discussion, its influence on Markan structure is not borne out in Kingsbury's book.

[2] Kingsbury, *Conflict in Mark*, 27.

Specifically, conflict between the protagonist, Jesus, and the antagonist, the religious authorities, propels the story forward until it reaches its "fundamental resolution" at Jesus' death and resurrection.[3] Primarily then, the structure of the story revolves around Jesus and is divided accordingly.[4] The antagonist provides the conflict that moves the story to completion.[5] The disciples, the third main character, being neither the protagonist nor the antagonist, do not materially influence the flow of Mark's story.[6] The result of this interpretation is an outline in three parts: 1:1–13, 1:24–8:26, and 8:27–16:8.[7]

Supporting this structure, the setting also is significant for the story. Spatially the story reveals a journey from Galilee to 'on the way' to Jerusalem.[8] Temporally it presents a story that begins with great speed moving from week to week and scene to scene with celerity.[9] By the end of the story, the events slow to a daily and then hourly description of the climactic event of the crucifixion.[10] Thus both spatially and temporally the role of setting assists the reader through the structure of the gospel.

Kingsbury's analysis offers much in various ways. First, his narrative approach assumes a coherent unity in the Gospel of Mark. Second, the emphasis placed on the characters of the Gospel of Mark encourages the reader to look not only at the glory of the events, but also at the reactions and impressions of the participants in the story. Third,

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[3] Kingsbury, *Conflict in Mark*, 28.

[4] Kingsbury, *Conflict in Mark*, 31.

[5] Kingsbury, *Conflict in Mark*, 86.

[6] Kingsbury, *Conflict in Mark*, 89. As a disclaimer, Kingsbury does recognize that Judas has a significant role in the narrative plot, cf. Kingsbury, *Conflict in Mark*, 8.

[7] Kingsbury, *Conflict in Mark*, 27–28.

[8] Kingsbury, *Conflict in Mark*, 3.

[9] Kingsbury, *Conflict in Mark*, 36.

[10] Kingsbury, *Conflict in Mark*, 46, 49.

in general, the observation of consistent character traits is helpful for understanding Mark's gospel (e.g. the religious leaders fall into a general category that conforms to a position of the antagonist). Also, the discussion of the characters' storylines reveals the Markan grouping of the characters throughout Mark's gospel (e.g. the religious authorities are present in lengthy sections and then proceed to disappear in equally lengthy sections). Finally, Kingsbury does well to recognize that Jesus is the character with whom the narrative flows.

While these aspects are helpful in understanding Markan structure, overall Kingsbury's presentation is lacking. His application of narrative critical methodology is too broad to provide an adequate structure. Four points are most striking. First, while Jesus is the character with whom the narrative flows, the question of his identity is not sufficient for Markan structure. Second, although Jesus' conflict with the religious authorities does lead to the crucifixion of Jesus, the other characters also are integral to the propulsion of the plot toward crucifixion as well as to the revelation of Markan structure. Third, Kingsbury confines the characters of the gospel into certain molds and does not allow the characters much flexibility. Finally, Kingsbury's schema does not adequately address the layout of the Gospel.

A brief look at Kingsbury's structure based upon the identity of Jesus reveals the first failure of Kingsbury's approach. As mentioned above, Kingsbury divides the gospel into three sections: 1:1–13, 1:14–8:26, and 8:27–16:8. His first section introduces the character of Jesus. This section defines who Jesus is from the perspective of the omniscient narrator and God.[11] His second section raises four questions which reveal the

[11] Kingsbury, *Conflict in Mark*, 31–36.

perspective of the human characters concerning Jesus' identity in response to his mighty acts. These questions are found at 1:27 (people at the synagogue, presumably the crowd), 2:7 (the religious authorities), 4:41 (the disciples), and 6:3 (the people of Nazareth).[12] At 6:14–16 the narrative presents perspectives on Jesus' identity through accounts of his fame.[13] The third section presents Jesus as the Messiah (8:27–10:45)[14], the Son of David (10:46–11:11, 12:35–37)[15], and the Son of God (11:11–15:39, especially 12:1–12 and 15:39).[16]

This outline reveals two significant failures. First, while this outline revolves around a coherent theme, it does not account for the entire Gospel of Mark. Most notably, it neglects the large body of material that lies between the popular opinions of Jesus found at 6:14–16 and the presentation of Jesus as Messiah at 8:27ff. Second, his assertion that Jesus' presented identity is the structural key to the Gospel of Mark also fails as it imposes an unnatural three part structure upon the final section of the Gospel of Mark. Of the three assertions Kingsbury uses to define the last section, the last two are interwoven to such an extent that delineating two distinct sections becomes artificial. Nonetheless, in spite of this artificiality, Kingsbury affirms that Jesus as Son of David is presented between 10:46 and 12:37 and Jesus as Son of God from 11:11–15:39.

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[12] Kingsbury, *Conflict in Mark*, 39–41.

[13] Kingsbury, *Conflict in Mark*, 41–42.

[14] Kingsbury, *Conflict in Mark*, 43–45.

[15] Kingsbury, *Conflict in Mark*, 45–46.

[16] Kingsbury, *Conflict in Mark*, 46–56.

Kingsbury's understanding of the religious authorities as the antagonists of the story produce a second point of neglect in his analysis.[17] Certainly, the religious authorities are the ones who look to have Jesus arrested, tried and killed. But the story moves forward more generally with the conflict ensuing between the call of Jesus to discipleship and the fulfillment of the following. This interchange between the proclamation of the good news and the hearing of it involves all of the characters of the gospel.[18] The response ranges from the rejection of the religious authorities, to the wavering of the crowd, to the following yet failing disciples, to the people who are acclaimed to have faith or who serve Jesus. Narrowly attaching the conflict to the religious authorities, with only minor conflict involving the rest of the characters, neglects the greater portion of the gospel. While the religious authorities engage in conflict with Jesus throughout the gospel, their conflict largely is relegated to only two main groups of material.[19] Moreover conflict is not limited to the religious authorities. The disciples also are engaged in conflict with Jesus through large portions of the gospel.[20] In fact, even the Gentiles are in conflict with Jesus in chapter 15. In the end, most of the characters contribute to the conflict that sends Jesus to the cross.

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[17] Malbon reacts with a similar perspective concerning this failure of Kingsbury, cf. Elizabeth Struthers Malbon, "'Reflected Christology': An Aspect of Narrative 'Christology' in the Gospel of Mark," *Perspectives in Religious Studies* 26 (Summer 1999): 131–132.

[18] While Kingsbury recognizes this conflict within the disciples, he does not see it as integral to the plot. Cf. Kingsbury, *Conflict in Mark*, 8, 89.

[19] The religious authorities appear, as antagonists, in 1:22; *2:1–3:6*; 7:1–13; 8:11–13, 15; 9:11–13; 10:2–9; *11:*18, *27–12:34*; 14:1–2, 53–65; 15:1, 31–32. Malbon also includes the interchange at 7:1–13 as a significant body of material, cf. Elizabeth Struthers Malbon, *In the Company of Jesus: Characterization in Mark's Gospel* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2000), 139.

[20] The disciples' response is in conflict with Jesus numerous times throughout the Gospel. Most notably the disciples fail at 4:10–13, 34–41; 6:35–52; 8:1–21, 27–9:1, 14–50; 10:17–45; 11:20–25; 14:3–51, 66–72.

A third failure in Kingsbury's analysis is his confinement of characters in the gospel to molds that do not account for the flexibility that exists in Mark's presentation of his characters. A prime example of this problem is evident in Kingsbury's discussion of the religious authorities. The interpretation of 12:28–34 reveals the position Kingsbury has imposed upon the religious authorities. In this pericope, Mark presents a scribe who responds favorably to Jesus' answer. Jesus in turn responds favorably to the response of the scribe. Yet, in spite of this positive interchange, Kingsbury views the scribe's response as irony and the scribe as "emblematic of 'what could have been the case'."[21] The character mold of religious leader as antagonist fails to accommodate for this positive turn in events.

Finally, Kingsbury's most significant failure is his lack of attention to the structural layout of the gospel. Kingsbury repeatedly fails to answer significant questions concerning the placement of pericopes. Four examples suffice to illustrate this neglect. First, at 2:14 there is a brief formulaic call to discipleship in the midst of the first conflict unit, but Kingsbury's presentation of the religious authorities' conflict with Jesus in 2:1–3:6 does not address this inclusion. Second, although he addresses the account of John the Baptist in the first section of the gospel, he does not explain the narrative role of the pericope inserted at 6:14–29.[22] Third, Kingsbury recognizes the role of the healing of the first blind man as a paradigm for discipleship, yet he does not provide an adequate

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[21] Kingsbury, *Conflict in Mark*, 82. In contrast, cf. Malbon, "Reflected Christology," 135; also Malbon, *In the Company of Jesus*, 44, 139, 157, 163–164, 195–196. Malbon argues that the exceptional characters are integral in understanding that the character groups are based on the typical responses to Jesus and not the stereotypical characteristics connected to specific statuses or roles, Malbon, *In the Company of* Jesus, 163.

[22] The use of 6:14–16 to provide perspectives on Jesus' identity does not offer sufficient explanation for the incorporation of the following reflective pericope. Cf. Kingsbury, *Conflict in Mark*, 41–42.

explanation to the inclusion of the healing of blind Bartimaeus at 10:46–52.[23] Fourth, he considers 14:1 to be a tool Mark used to keep the role of the religious authorities and the progression of the Gospel of Mark's driving conflict in the foreground; but he does not explain what made 14:1 an appropriate location for this task.[24] These points of neglect seriously call into question the appropriateness of Kingsbury's narrative structure.

Elizabeth Struthers Malbon

Elizabeth Struthers Malbon also approaches the Gospel of Mark from a narrative perspective.[25] But while Kingsbury utilizes the aspects of character conflict to delineate the Gospel of Mark, Malbon analyzes narrative space and characterization. This dual concentration results in a more illusory structure of the Gospel of Mark. For Malbon, the "overlapping narrative patterns" prevent one from establishing a single structure for the Gospel of Mark.[26] Nevertheless, although the narrative does not demonstrate an exclusive

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[23] Given the use of the title 'Son of David' in the following pericope (11:1–11), Kingsbury's claim that Mark uses this pericope to introduce the title 'Son of David' seems to be unsubstantiated. Cf. Kingsbury, *Conflict in Mark*, 45–46.

[24] Kingsbury sees 14:1 both as a response to the failure of 11:27–12:34, cf. Kingsbury, *Conflict in Mark*, 77, and also as an attempt to notify the reader of their plot to arrest and kill Jesus, cf. Kingsbury, *Conflict in Mark*, 83, yet he does not explain why the verse is sandwiched between the discourse of chapter 13 and the events concerning the disciples in chapter 14.

[25] Malbon's perspective is analyzed through numerous books and essays: "The Beginning of a Narrative Commentary on the Gospel of Mark," in *Society of Biblical Literature: 1996 Seminar Papers* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1996), 98–121; "The Christology of Mark's Gospel: Narrative Christology and the Markan Jesus," in *Who Do You Say That I Am?: Essays on Christology*, ed. Mark Allan Powell and David R. Bauer (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1999), 33–48; "Echoes and Foreshadowing in Mark 4–8: Reading and Rereading," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 112 (1993): 211–30; "Elements of an Exegesis of the Gospel of Mark according to Lévi-Strauss' Methodology," in *SBL Seminar Papers One Hundred Thirteenth Annual Meeting*, ed. by Paul J. Achtemeier (Missoula: Scholars Press, 1977), 155–170; "Ending at the Beginning: A Response," *Semeia* 52 (1990): 172–184; "Galilee and Jerusalem: History and Literature in Marcan Interpretation," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 44 (1982): 242–255; *Hearing Mark: Listener's Guide* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 2002); *In the Company of Jesus: Characterization in Mark's Gospel*; "The Jesus of Mark and the Sea of Galilee," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 103 (1984): 363–377; *Narrative Space and Mythic Meaning in Mark*; "TH OIKIA AYTOY: Mark 2:15 in Context," *New Testament Studies* 31 (1985): 282–292; ""Reflected Christology": An Aspect of Narrative "Christology" in the Gospel of Mark."

[26] Malbon, "Echoes and Foreshadowing," 214n11.

structure, Malbon does sketch a "rough 'score'" of the Gospel of Mark. She describes the Markan structure thusly: [first section] 1:1–3:35; (4:1–34); 4:35–8:21; [middle section] 8:22–10:52; [end section] 11–12; (13); 14–16.[27] But for Malbon, this layout of the gospel is clearly provisional. Malbon does not cling to any one structure; instead she recognizes other dividing lines throughout the Gospel of Mark.[28] Thus, in the end, Malbon's thorough application of narrative critical methodology inhibits her assertion of any one structure.

Malbon's thorough application of two aspects of narrative critical methodology comes out most clearly in her two main endeavors. The first offers an attempt to address every spatial feature of the Gospel of Mark. The second addresses the characters and their roles in Mark's gospel.

The thoroughness of Malbon's presentation of narrative space in the Gospel of Mark comes through most clearly in her *Narrative Space and Mythic Meaning in Mark.* In this work, she analyzes Mark's gospel with respect to the diachronic and synchronic use of "all" geopolitical, topographical, and architectural space.[29] In efforts to thoroughly apply Lévi-Strauss's method of analysis, Malbon includes "all" spatially suggestive language (i.e. her delineation of Markan language categorizes terms both explicitly and

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[27] Malbon, "Echoes and Foreshadowing," 214n11. This suggested outline is not defended in this Malbon essay. In *Hearing Mark*, Malbon uses this outline as the structure of her presentation of the Gospel of Mark. Nonetheless, Malbon still views the outline as provisional and not as the single structure of the Gospel of Mark. Cf. also Malbon, "The Christology of Mark's Gospel," 36. However, this sketch presents the break between the first and middle sections at 8:27.

[28] E.g. Malbon sees Galilee as the dominant setting for chapters 1–9 and Judea the setting for 10–16. Cf. Malbon, "Galilee and Jerusalem," 250. The conflict between Jesus and the scribes and Pharisees from chapters 2–10 escalates with the chief priests, scribes, and elders from chapters 11–15. Cf. Malbon, *In the Company of Jesus*, 154. Also, Malbon sees the synagogue as the "chief architectural centre" from 1:21–6:6, but following 6:1–6 the house takes over as the "chief architectural centre" for teaching. Cf. Malbon, "TH OIKIA AYTOY," 287.

[29] The goal of considering all the uses of space comes up at various points in the text. Cf. e.g. Malbon, *Narrative Space*, 2, 50.

implicitly spatial). For this reason implicitly spatial terms such as προάγει[30] and πλοῖον[31] are included in the field of topographical space. Having delineated the spatial features of the Gospel of Mark, Malbon describes the role of the mythical resolution of opposition in Mark's Gospel. This interpretation of the data then provides for basic structural understandings of the Gospel of Mark. For example, Malbon views the architectural space of 'house' in opposition to 'synagogue' and 'temple'.[32] The 'synagogue' and 'house' stand in opposition from 1:21–6:4;[33] the 'house' stands alone as the chief architectural place of teaching from 6:10–10:17;[34] finally, in the final third of his gospel, Mark holds 'house' and 'temple' in opposition.[35] Geopolitically, Galilee and Judea stand in opposition. From chapters 1–9 Galilee is the primary setting for the gospel. In chapter 10 the setting shifts to Judea for the duration of Mark's gospel.[36] Topographically however, Mark's gospel seems to split at 8:21. The first half of the Gospel of Mark involves repeated incidents at the Sea of Galilee. The second half of the Gospel of Mark no longer mentions the sea.[37]

Beyond Malbon's explanation of the Markan use of narrative space, she also demonstrates this thoroughness in her description of Markan structure via the characters of the gospel. Most significantly, she provides perspectives upon the Markan use of

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[30] E.g. Mark 16:7. Cf. Malbon, *Narrative Space*, 54.

[31] E.g. Mark 4:1. Cf. Malbon, *Narrative Space*, 9, 52–53.

[32] Malbon, *Narrative Space*, 133–134.

[33] Malbon, *Narrative Space*, 113, 115.

[34] Malbon, *Narrative Space*, 115–116. Cf. also Malbon, "TH OIKIA AYTOY," 287.

[35] Malbon, *Narrative Space*, 134.

[36] Malbon, "Galilee and Jerusalem," 250.

[37] This claim recognizes the use of sea in chapters 9 and 10 as metaphorical uses of the sea that bear no influence on the setting of the gospel. Malbon, *Narrative Space*, 58–59.

minor characters, the Jewish leaders, and the fallible followers.[38] While the characters' primary function is to provide various types of responses to Jesus, they also provide some indications as to the delineation of Markan structure. For example, the conflict between Jesus and the scribes and Pharisees dominates chapters 2–10 and then from 11–15 the conflict escalates with the trio of the chief priests, scribes, and elders.[39] Also, during the section of 8:22–10:52, the minor characters distinguish the section as the only portion of the gospel in which the minor characters approach Jesus as suppliants.[40] The use of two accounts of women 'fallible followers' surrounding chapter 13 lends itself to the interpretation of chapter 13 as an intercalated unit that aids in the interpretation of the greater unit from chapters 11–16.[41]

As this sampling of Malbon's analysis of narrative space and characterization demonstrates, Malbon does not attempt to legitimize any one macrostructure over another. Nevertheless, in these studies Malbon does provide avenue for the presentation of numerous microstructures. In fact, three major microstructures seem to provide the basis for her provisional sketch of a possible macrostructure. Malbon views 4–8:21, 8:22–10:52, and 11–16 as structural entities.[42] Jesus' activity by the sea delineates the

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[38] Malbon uses this term, 'fallible followers', to broaden the category of disciples to include more than just the disciples per se. Thus, the crowd, women, the centurion, and whoever exhibits the traits of discipleship are included in the category 'fallible followers'. Cf. Malbon, *In the Company*, 42–50.

[39] Malbon, *In the Company*, 154.

[40] Malbon, *In the Company*, 204–205.

[41] Malbon, *In the Company*, 53–57. Malbon recognizes these women as exemplary characters. Nonetheless, they fall under the category of 'fallible followers' in the broad understanding of the term, i.e. as part of a group that demonstrates positive and negative traits. Specifically, they are included with the other women of the gospel.

[42] The first section of her provisional sketch, 1:1–3:35, is presented in Malbon, "The Beginning of a Narrative Commentary," 98–121. But this presentation is merely descriptive and does not offer substantial structural explanation.

first unit.[43] The second unit is marked by three passion predictions given by Jesus 'on the way' and is bracketed by two healings of blind men.[44] Malbon views the final unit as a giant intercalation and understands chapter 13 to be the central interpretive section.[45]

In spite of the dominance of these three structural entities in Malbon's writing, her thorough application of narrative critical principles prevents her from asserting a macrostructure.[46] This obstacle presents itself most notably at two key points. First, Malbon incorporates too much material into the construct 'sea'. Second, her attempts at presenting a comprehensive interpretation of 'on the way' fail to be consistent.

The first difficulty presented by Malbon's approach is her understanding of the sea. Malbon attempts to include any space related to the sea in the category 'sea'. Θάλασσα, πλοῖον, πλοιάριον, ἐμβαίνω, πέραν, διαπεράω, ἐλαύνω, and προσορμίζομαι all fall under her classification 'sea'.[47] While certainly all of these vocables are related to the sea, they are not all 'sea'. 'Boat' is no more related to the 'sea' than 'donkey' is to the 'way' or 'house' to the land, yet she classifies 'house' as architectural space and does not classify 'donkey' at all. While it may seem appropriate to include 'boat' in the consideration of setting, Malbon does not provide adequate warrant for including it under the category 'sea'. The use of 'boat' in Mark seems to be quite distinct from the use of 'sea'.[48] Malbon's desire to incorporate "all" the data inhibits her ability to recognize the verbal

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[43] Malbon, *In the Company of Jesus*, 24. Cf. also Malbon, "Echoes and Foreshadowing."

[44] Malbon, *In the Company of Jesus*, 210–213.

[45] Malbon, *In the Company of Jesus*, 55, 179–80.

[46] As mentioned above, Malbon does suggest a structure in a footnote of "Echoes and Foreshadowing" and uses this structure in *Hearing Mark*. Nonetheless, Malbon does not view this structure as more than provisional.

[47] Malbon, *Narrative Space*, 53.

[48] Cf. discussion below in part 2.

distinction between 'sea' and 'boat'. As a result, she misses the pronounced drop off in Mark's use of θάλασσα in a forwarded position[49] following chapter 5.[50]

In a similar way, Malbon's assessment of προάγω incorporates it into the classification 'on the way'. Fundamentally, this assessment is flawed. While it may be appropriate to hold προάγω as part of the same narrative space as 'on the way', Malbon's defense for the inclusion is lacking. Specifically, she claims the right of inclusion based upon the use of προάγω in correlation to the use of ὁδός. Yet one of these correlative examples uses ἀκολουθέω as well. Malbon however views 'following' as spatially distinct from 'going before'. She argues that Mark uses 'following' in more situations than just spatial relations.[51] Since the usage extends beyond narrative space, Malbon does not include 'following' in the category of 'on the way'. But since at 11:9 'following' verb is used in the exact same context and manner as 'going before', it seems that, if 'going before' implies narrative space, this use of 'following' also must be viewed as spatial. As a result, the dismissal of the multivalent 'following' discredits the attempted thoroughness of Malbon and negates the efforts to include 'going before'. Consequently, Malbon's interpretation of the 'way' as a key thematic bracket for the entire gospel also loses merit.[52]

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[49] Forward position is used here to describe the material that introduces a new unit. For example, information in 4:1–2 would be considered forwarded whereas information in 4:5 would not.

[50] Even the three boat events, to which Malbon turns as structural keys to her understanding of 4:35–8:21, do not magnify the term θάλασσα. In contrast, at 5:1 Mark willingly describes the setting using θάλασσα. In another boat situation, 8:10–21 does not even use θάλασσα. Admittedly, the term is pronounced in 6:47–49, but it also should be noted that without the contrast between the disciples location and Jesus', the account loses its contents.

[51] This assessment is hampered further by Malbon's willingness to recognize spatial terminology that is used non-spatially. As a result the unwillingness to include ἀκολουθέω demonstrates two double standards.

[52] Malbon sees 'way' as the final point of mediation in the mythic scheme. 16:7's use of προάγει is the key to providing a link to the beginning of the gospel where the 'way' is to be prepared and the middle

As a whole, Malbon's efforts at presenting an analysis of both narrative space and characters in the Gospel of Mark are beneficial. While the thoroughness required by her methodology inhibits her from presenting a macrostructure for the gospel, the descriptive quality of her work assists toward understanding the role of narrative space and characterization in the acquisition of Mark's intended structure.

Conclusion

While the narrative critical methodology addresses some of the concerns raised by the redaction critical approach, it continues to fail to produce a viable structure. Whether using the approach broadly as Kingsbury employs character conflict or thoroughly applying it as Malbon uses narrative space and characterization, narrative criticism does not account for the structural framework of Mark's gospel. It utilizes the details of Mark's gospel without recognizing the achievements of redaction criticism.

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of the gospel where the dominant setting is 'on the way'. Cf. Malbon, *Narrative Space*, 104–105, 154, 164–168.

PART II

TOWARD A MARKAN STRUCTURE

Although redaction and narrative criticism fail to address adequately the quest for Markan structure, these methods have left adequate tools from which the search for a Markan structure may proceed. Redaction criticism addresses the compilers influence on the use of sources. It demonstrates that key words and phrases are used and repeated by the author in an attempt to unify the Gospel into a whole. Narrative criticism provides emphasis on time and place, characters, and content. Part 2 utilizes these tools to arrive at a working structure for the Gospel of Mark.

Part 2 is divided into four chapters. Chapter 4 addresses the foundational question of pericopal division in the Gospel of Mark. From these pericopal divisions chapters 5 and 6 approach Markan structure with key tools provided by redaction and narrative criticism. Chapter 5 discusses repetition in the Gospel. Chapter 6 presents the characters of the Gospel of Mark with respect to their support of a structural understanding of the Gospel. Chapter 7 bring the findings of chapters 4–6 together to present a coherent structure of the Gospel of Mark.

CHAPTER FOUR

DELINEATING PERICOPAL DIVISIONS

Any discussion of Markan structure, must first set forth the basic pericopal divisions of the Gospel of Mark. Only with well defined pericopal divisions can one discern transitional passages. As redaction critics highlight, transitional passages are important for understanding the basic emphasis and presentation of the text. Toward this end attention now turns.

For the most part, the Gospel of Mark clearly divides its pericopes with clear shifts from one pericope to the next. Transitional passages communicate the shift to a new pericope by using a change of setting, the presentation of a new character, the repetition of particular words, etc. Internally the pericope also provides indications of its limits. The pericope often demonstrates its parameters with a clear beginning to its main action and a clear resolution of that event. Finally, setting and character changes within the flow of the narrative may also demarcate narrative units.[1] These indicators have led to general consensus between scholars regarding the majority of divisions within the Gospel of Mark.[2]

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[1] For a lengthy discussion of narrative discourse and the constraints of it cf. Robert W. Funk, *The Poetics of Biblical Narrative* (Sonoma, CA: Polebridge Press, 1988), §27–44.

[2] Cf. Cook, *The Structure and Persuasive Power of Mark*, 17–18.

Table 1 illustrates eight scholars' pericopal divisions of the Gospel of Mark.[3] The figure demonstrates that there is not unanimous agreement concerning all of the pericopal divisions in the Gospel of Mark. Nonetheless, from this figure we can classify three types of division. First, even though the agreement is not unanimous throughout the Gospel of Mark, scholars do agree upon many divisions. These agreements include pure agreements (i.e. agreements that the figure presents as agreements), and functional agreements (i.e. agreements that the figure provides some disagreement on, but for all intents and purposes are agreements). Functional agreements are present when two or more scholars divide the text more or less thoroughly than their colleagues. For example, most scholars take 5:21–43 as one unit. Vincent Taylor however delineates two accounts: 5:21–24, 35–43 and 5:25–34. Vincent Taylor would not deny that the present state of 5:21–43 is a unit, but he emphasizes the sources and forms of the text. Thus his division, in this situation, is more specific than the other eight scholars listed. Nonetheless, whether carrying a higher or a lower level of division, there is agreement on 5:21–43 as a literary unit.

Table 1 also highlights some divisions that, while there is a lack of clarity as to the delineation of entire pericopes, there are passages that scholars find to be transitional passages. Some scholars see these passages as the end of the preceding pericope, other scholars understand them to be the beginning of the following pericope. Nonetheless,

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[3] Cf. C. E. B. Cranfield, *The Gospel According to St. Mark* (1959; repr., Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997); Josef Ernst, *Das Evangelium nach Markus: Übersetzt und erklärt von Josef Ernst*, Regensburger Neues Testament (Regensburg: Friedrich Pustet,1981); R. T. France, *The Gospel of Mark*; Walter Grundmann, *Das Evangelium nach Markus*, Theologischer Handkommentar zum Neuen Testament (Berlin: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1984); Robert H. Gundry, *Mark: A Commentary on His Apology for the Cross* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B Eerdmans, 1993); Hooker, Morna D., *A Commentary on the Gospel According to St. Mark*, Black's New Testament Commentaries (London: A & C Black, 1991); Harold Riley, *The Making of Mark: An Exploration* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1989); Vincent Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark*. These scholars are intended to be representative of the different perspectives on Markan structure. In no way is this list exhaustive. Nonetheless, most scholars' divisions fall under one of or a combination of the scholars' divisions listed.

Table 1. Pericopal Divisions for Mark

Pericopal Divisions for Mark							
Riley	Gundry	Taylor	Cranfield	Ernst	France	Grundmann	Hooker
1:1–13	1:1–8	1:1–13	1:1–8	"	1:1	1:1–8	"
					1:2–8		
	1:9–11		"	"	"	"	"
	1:12–13		"	"	"	"	"
1:14–15	1:14–20	1:14–15	"	"	"	"	"
1:16–20		"	"	"	"	"	"
1:21–28	"	"	"	"	"	"	"
1:29–31	1:29–34		"	"	"	1:29–34	1:29–31
1:32–34		"	"	"	"	"	"
1:35–39	1:35–45		"	"	"	"	"
1:40–45		"	"	"	"	"	"
2:1–12	"	"	"	"	"	"	"
2:13–17	"	2:13–14	2:13–17	"	"	"	"
		2:15–17					
2:18–22	"	2:18–20	2:18–22	"	"	"	"
		2:21–22					
2:23–28	"	2:23–26	2:23–28	"	(2:23–3:6) 2:23–28	"	"
		2:27–28					
3:1–6	"	"	"	"	"	"	"
3:7–12	"	"	"	"	"	"	"
3:13–19a	3:13–19	3:13–19a	3:13–19	"	"	"	"
3:19b–35	3:20–35	3:19b–21	3:20–21	3:20–35	3:20–21	"	3:20–35
		3:22–26	3:22–30		3:22–30	"	
		3:27–30					
		3:31–35	"		"	"	
4:1–9	(4:1–34) 4:1–2	4:1–9	(4:1–34) 4:1–9	"	(4:1–34) 4:1–2	"	4:1–9
	4:3–9				"	"	
4:10–12	"	"	"	"	"	"	"
4:13–20	"	"	"	"	"	"	"
4:21–25	4:21–23	4:21–25	"	"	"	"	"
	4:24–25						
4:26–34	4:26–29	"	"	"	4:26–32	4:26–29	4:26–32
	4:30–32	"	"	"		"	

(Table 1 Continued)

Pericopal Divisions for Mark							
Riley	Gundry	Taylor	Cranfield	Ernst	France	Grundmann	Hooker
	4:33–34	"	"	"	"	"	"
4:35–41	"	"	"	"	"	"	"
5:1–20	"	"	"	"	"	"	"
5:21–43	"	5:21–24, 35–43	5:21–43	"	"	"	"
		5:24–34					
6:1–6	6:1–6a	"	"	"	6:1–6	6:1–6a	"
6:7–13	6:6b–29	6:6b–13	"	"	6:7–13,30	6:6b–13	"
6:14–16		"	"	"	"	"	6:14–29
6:17–29		"	"	"	"	"	
6:30–31	6:30–44	6:30–34	6:30–33	6:30–31	6:31–44	6:30–44	6:30–31
6:32–44		6:35–44	6:34–44	6:32–44			6:32–45
6:45–52	"	"	"	"	"	6:45–56	6:46–52
6:53–56	"	"	"	"	"		"
7:1–23	"	7:1–8	7:1–23	"	"	"	"
		7:9–13					
		7:14–23					
7:24–30	"	"	"	"	"	"	"
7:31–37	"	"	"	"	"	"	"
8:1–10	8:1–9	8:1–10	"	8:1–9	8:1–10	8:1–9	8:1–10
8:11–13	8:10–12	8:11–13	"	8:10–13	8:11–13	8:10–13	8:11–12
8:14–21	8:13–21	8:14–21	"	"	"	"	8:13–21
8:22–26	"	"	"	"	"	"	"
8:27–30	8:27–9:1	8:27–33	"	"	8:27–30	8:27–33	8:27–30
8:31–32a					8:31–9:1		8:31–33
8:32b–33							
8:34–9:1		"	"	"		"	"

(Table 1 Continued)

Pericopal Divisions for Mark							
Riley	Gundry	Taylor	Cranfield	Ernst	France	Grundmann	Hooker
9:2–10	9:2–13	9:2–8	"	"	9:2–13	9:2–8	"
9:11–13		9:9–13	"	"		"	"
9:14–29	"	"	"	"	"	"	"
9:30–32	"	"	"	"	"	"	"
9:33–37	9:33–50	9:33–37	"	"	"	9:33–50	9:33–37
9:38–41		"	9:38–40	9:38–41	"		9:38–40
9:42–50		"	9:41–50	9:42–48	9:42–50		9:41–50
				9:49–50			
10:1–12	"	"	"	"	"	"	"
10:13–16	"	"	"	"	"	"	"
10:17–22	10:17–31	10:17–22	10:17–31	"	10:17–27	10:17–31	"
10:23–31		10:23–27					
		10:28–31			"		
10:32–34	"	"	"	"	"	"	"
10:35–45	"	10:35–40	10:35–45	"	"	"	"
		10:41–45					
10:46–52	"	"	"	"	"	"	"
11:1–11	11:1–10	11:1–11	"	"	11:1–10	11:1–11	"
	11:11–14				(11:11–25) 11:11		
11:12–14		"	"	"	"	"	11:12–26
11:15–19	11:15–18	11:15–19	"	"	"	"	

(Table 1 Continued)

Pericopal Divisions for Mark							
Riley	Gundry	Taylor	Cranfield	Ernst	France	Grundmann	Hooker
11:20–25	11:19–25	11:20–25	11:20–26	11:20–25	"	"	
11:27–33	11:27–12:12	11:27–33	"	"	"	"	11:27–33
12:1–12	"	"	"	"	"	"	"
12:13–17	"	"	"	"	"	"	"
12:18–27	"	"	"	"	"	"	"
12:28–34	"	"	"	"	"	"	"
12:35–37a	12:35–40	12:35–37a	"	12:35–37	"	"	"
12:37b–40		"	"	12:38–40	(12:38–44) 12:38–40	12:38–40	"
12:41–44	"	"	"	"	12:41–44	"	"
13:1–2	13:1–37	13:1–2	13:1–37	13:1–4	13:1–2	13:1–4	"
13:3–4		"			(13:3–37) 13:3–4		
13:5–8		"		"	"	13:5–13	13:5–8
13:9–13		"		"	"		"
13:14–23		13:14–20		"	13:14–23	"	13:14–20
		13:21–23		"			"
13:24–27		"		"	13:24–31	13:24–27	"
13:28–37		"		13:28–32	13:32–37	13:28–37	13:28–21
				13:33–37			13:32–37
14:1–2	14:1–11	14:1–2	"	"	"	"	"
14:3–9		"	"	"	"	"	"
14:10–11		"	"	"	"	"	"
14:12–16	"	"	"	"	14:12–25	14:12–16	"

(Table 1 Continued)

Pericopal Divisions for Mark							
Riley	Gundry	Taylor	Cranfield	Ernst	France	Grundmann	Hooker
14:17–21	14:17–25	14:17–21	""	""		""	""
14:22–25		""	""	14:22–26		14:22–25	""
14:26–31	""	""	""	14:27–31	14:26–31	""	""
14:32–42	14:32–52	14:32–42	""	""	""	""	""
14:43–50		14:43–52	""	""	""	""	""
14:51–52							
14:53–65	14:53–72	14:53–65	""	""	""	14:53–54	15:53–65
						14:55–65	
14:66–72		""	""	""	""	""	""
15:1	15:1–15	""	""	""	""	15:1–20a	15:1–15
15:2–5							
15:6–15							
15:16–20	15:16–20a	15:16–20	""	15:16–20a	15:16–20		15:16–20a
15:21–32	15:20b–41	15:21–41	""	15:20b–41	15:21–32	15:20b–41	15:20b–32
15:33–41					15:33–39		15:33–41
15:42–47	""	""	""	""	15:40–47	15:42–47	""
16:1–8	16:1–7	16:1–8	""	""	""	""	""
	16:8						

each scholar views the passage as transitional. For example, within the disputed pericopes of Mark 8:1–21, scholars agree that 8:10 is a transitional passage.

Finally, Table 1 also demonstrates that some pericopes that lack consensus. While the majority of pericopes enjoy scholarly consensus, some pericopes are not as well

defined. For example, Mark 8:1–21 has three distinct parts to it, but the delineation of those parts is not agreed upon.

The pericopal divisions meriting primary attention are 1:8/9; 1:14–15;[4] 1:16–20; 1:21–28; 1:29–31; 1:32–34; 1:35–39; 1:40–45; 2:1–12; 2:13–17; 2:18–22; 2:23–38; 3:1–6; 3:7–12; 3:13–19[5]; 3:20–35; 4:1–34; 4:35–41; 5:1–20; 5:21–43; 6:1–6a; 6:7–13; 6:14–16; 6:17–29; 6:45–52; 6:53–56; 7:1–23; 7:24–30; 7:31–37; 8:22–26; 9:1/2; 9:14–29; 9:30–32; 10:1–12; 10:13–16; 10:32–34; 10:35–45; 10:46–52; 11:27–33; 12:1–12; 12:13–17; 12:18–27; 12:28–34; 12:41–44; 13:1–37; 14:1–2; 14:3–9; 14:10–11; 14:12–16; 14:32–42; 14:43–52; 14:53–65; 14:66–72; 15:1–15; 15:42–47; and 16:1–8.[6]

In addition, there are several verses in Mark that provide transition from one pericope to the next without clearly belonging to either pericope. These verses include: 6:6b; 8:10; 11:11; and 14:26. These verses will be used for a similar function as the verses that mark the beginning or ending of accepted pericopal divisions.[7] Together, these two categories constitute the accepted transitional verses of the Gospel of Mark. The accepted transitional verses provide primary evidence for the discussion of Markan structure.

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[4] While some authors may include verses 1:14–15 in the prologue or connected to 1:16–20, the recognition of 1:14–15 as a summary distinct from the preceding generally remains. Eg. Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark*, 107; etc.

[5] Some scholars understand "And he comes into a house" as 3:19b. Many scholars include the sentence with 3:20. The distinction between dividing the text at 3:19 or 3:19a revolves around the numbering of the material and not a distinction in where to divide the text. The present study uses 3:19/20 and not 3:19a/19b.

[6] The pericopal divisions are presented as accepted pericopes. Thus the divisions of the text occur at the beginning and the end of the pericope. These are the points toward which this study focuses its attention. For situations where one division is recognized yet the other divisions for the two pericopes united by the common division are not recognized a slash is employed.

[7] Verses that conclude the pericopes that immediately precede or follow the agreed upon pericopal unit are also considered accepted transitional verses.

The sections of text that are not as neatly divided are 1:1–8; 1:9–13; 6:30–6:44; 8:1–21; 8:27–9:1; 9:2–13; 9:33–50; 10:17–31; 11:1–25[8]; 12:35–40; 14:17–31; and 15:16–41. These sections of material will be utilized for their content, but any divisions within these sections are understood to be secondary distinctions. These distinctions will not provide a primary source for understanding the structure of the Gospel of Mark. The general content of these sections, however, will still assist the search for Markan structure.

Primary attention, in efforts to discover Markan structure, will be given to the clear divisions in the text and the statements of transition that aid these divisions. As redaction criticism emphasizes, these points offer the most promise to understanding the intentions of the author concerning the text as a whole.[9] They are by nature to be understood as prominent in the intentions of the author; they draw the most attention from the reader. Key words and features of these 'seams' are integral to understanding the structure of the text.

[8] This study agrees with the standard conclusion that 11:26 is not part of the text.

[9] Best, *The Temptation and the Passion*, 63.

CHAPTER FIVE

REPETITION

A key achievement provided by the work of narrative and redaction critics is the importance of repetition in texts. Narrative critics such as Malbon have demonstrated the significance of setting such as geopolitical and topographical space. Repeated, these details prove to be helpful in mapping out the structure of the text. Redaction critics have drawn attention to the key words, phrases, forms, and content/themes intentionally used by the redactor for theological purposes. The theological purposes in turn often affect the presentation of the text's structure. Both recognize the structural significance of repetition. While their conclusions are not always beneficial, their recognition of repetition's role in recognizing structure is. Toward this end, attention is now turned to the study of Markan repetition.

To study repetition, it is imperative first to delineate the criteria used to determine significant repetition. This study focuses on four keys to identifying noteworthy repetition. A fifth criterion adds further credence to the first four keys in situations that involve thematic repetition.[1] While none of these criteria are solely sufficient to determine significance, combined they highlight key points of repetition in the text.

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[1] Cf. William Freedman, "The Literary Motif: A Definition and Evaluation," *Novel* 4 (1971): 123–131. These points were modified from Freedman's points and are functionally similar. The primary distinction between the two is the change from viewing repetition in the context of recognizing motifs to viewing repetition in the context of recognizing various types of repetition. While certainly motifs are different than other types of repetition, the only point that is specific to motifs or themes is the fifth point: the significance of repetition of a motif is enhanced when the symbol or related material directly connects with the motif it represents, e.g. fences are a related symbol to the motif of isolation. As a result, this study expands the use of these criteria to identify significance in all uses of repetition with the exception of the fifth point which applies specifically to thematic repetition.

The first point is frequency. The more something is repeated, the more likely it is significant. Obviously, just because an author repeats something numerous times does not make it structurally significant. Authors repeat prepositions on a regular basis; nonetheless, they are rarely a key to structural significance. Rather than numbers, repetition meets the criterion of frequency when the repetition conveys intentionality.[2]

The second criterion is avoidability and unlikelihood. If the text can avoid the repetition or if the repetition is unlikely to have occurred in that context, the repetition draws more attention as significant. In contrast, if the text uses the repetition out of necessity, that single instance does not draw the conclusion of special significance. In this situation, the repetition can still meet this criterion; but its other uses in the text qualify it as avoidable or unlikely use, not the necessary use in itself.[3]

The third factor used to determine the relative significance of a point of repetition is the strategic use of the repetition. When the author locates repetition in the midst of a transitional verse or context, the repetition meets this criterion. On the other hand, if the author locates the repetition in the midst of a pericope or some other context that fails to draw attention to itself, the author probably does not intend this use primarily as significant repetition. This parameter being set, sufficient strategic use elsewhere in a text can add viability to a point of repetition that otherwise fails to meet this criterion.[4]

The fourth aspect addresses the relation of a point of repetition to the other examples of the repetition. If a word is repeated ten times but the author uses the word in ten different ways and ten different contexts, the reader does not readily recognize it as

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[2] Freedman, "The Literary Motif," 126.

[3] Freedman, "The Literary Motif," 126.

[4] Freedman, "The Literary Motif," 126–127.

repetition. On the other hand if the author uses the point of repetition in similar contexts and situations throughout the text, the reader is more likely to make the connection; this repetition meets the fourth criterion.[5]

The fifth criterion used to recognize repetition as significant involves largely thematic repetition. With thematic repetition, the repetition used in relation to its theme conveys a greater significance in its use than thematic repetition that is used without relation to its theme. For example, the repeated use of working hands conveys the theme of helping much better than the repetition of closed eyes. If this relation is not present, the significance of the repetition as thematic is less likely.[6]

These five criteria will be employed to determine whether or not repeated items within the Gospel of Mark are noteworthy. Some categories of repetition will lean more heavily on one criterion than another. For example, the repetition of forms by their very nature lends itself to excessive similarities in use; yet this same repetition inhibits great frequency due to the size of the unit being repeated, and it inhibits much assessment of avoidability or unlikelihood. Or, the repetition of larger units (e.g. those recognized by forms or content) might bear significance with regards to their strategic location, but recognition of this can only occur once other factors demonstrate the location to be significant.[7] For this reason, the appropriate balance of the criteria will verify the significance of each point of repetition.

Working off the assertion that repetition assists in identifying structure and utilizing the aforementioned criteria, this chapter attempts to present three categories of

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[5] Freedman, "The Literary Motif," 127.

[6] Freedman, "The Literary Motif," 127.

[7] This recognition will occur largely in chapter 7.

repetition commonly used by Mark. First, it highlights his repetition of words and phrases throughout the text. Second, the chapter presents Mark's use of repeated forms. Finally, it accents Mark's repetition of thematic items (e.g. setting, content and themes). Together this repetition offers signposts that direct the reader toward understanding the text.

Repetition of Words and Phrases

Mark commonly uses verbal repetition. He repeats such words and phrases as εὐθύς, πάλιν, καί, etc. Of these words, several meet the criteria that determine significance. The present study discusses five examples of this category of repetition: θάλασσα, πάλιν, εἰς πέραν, ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ, and Jewish leaders.[8]

Mark uses θάλασσα nineteen times in his gospel. Of these nineteen uses he uses eleven in transitional verses. He uses it in 1:16 (2x); 2:13; 3:7; 4:1 (3x); 4:41; 5:1; and 5:21; and 7:31. Of these transitional verses, all but 4:41, are opening verses of a pericope. Context requires the remaining eight occurrences of θάλασσα.[9] Four of the uses occur in pericopes involving sea travel on a boat. The use at 4:39 stands in the midst of an event that takes place on the lake. At 5:13(2x), the lake is the destination for the swine possessed by the unclean spirits. At 6:47, the disciples are in a boat in the middle of the θάλασσα. This information is vital to conveying the account of Jesus walking on the θάλασσα in 6:48–49. Neither of these boat events begins by mentioning the geographical setting of the sea.[10] In fact, a third boat event at 8:14–21, does not use the term at all. The

[8] This list is by no means exhaustive. These five have been chosen for their structural significance. Some words, such as boat, may bear structural significance through repetition, but may not demonstrate the criteria above. These words bear secondary significance and will be included in the discussion of macrostructure in chapter 7.

[9] V. 4:41 could also be considered contextually required.

[10] Malbon argues that the phrase εἰς τὸ πέραν and the term πλοῖον are both implicitly sea. While these terms may be implicitly sea, the text does not specifically mention θάλασσα. Given the demonstrated

use at 9:42 is a necessary part of a punishment and 11:23 likewise is a necessary part of an illustration of faith. The verses 1:16; 2:13; 3:7; 4:1; 5:1; 5:21; and 7:31 then stand as unnecessary uses of θάλασσα in transitional verses.[11] Furthermore, the omission of the term in obvious places such as the beginning of pericopes that take place on the sea enhances the importance of these points of repetition.

Mark uses πάλιν twenty-eight times. Of these twenty-eight uses twelve occur in transitional verses. He uses it in 2:1, 13; 3:1, 20; 4:1; 5:21; 7:31; 8:1; 10:1(2x), 10:32; and 11:27. In addition two disputed transitional verses, 7:14 and 8:13, also bear the adverb.[12] In these instances Mark appears to use the adverb retrospectively. Each of the verses makes a connection back to a preceding pericope or pericopes in the text.[13] These uses do not enhance the individual pericopes within which they are found and thus are avoidable uses.

On the other hand, the other times Mark uses πάλιν are necessary for the pericope and do not merit as much attention. Of the remaining fourteen occurrences, the term continues to be retrospective twelve times. In these instances the term refers back to an event within the pericope.[14] It is intrapericopal in 8:25; 10:10, 24; 12:4; 14:39, 40; 14:61; 14:69, 70(2x); 15:4, 12, 13. The final use is a Markan anomaly. At 11:3, Mark uses πάλιν

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willingness of Mark to use the term, Malbon's argument is unconvincing. Cf. Malbon, *Narrative Space*, 53 and the discussion above.

[11] The present assertion stands in contrast to Tolbert's omission of 5:1; 5:21; and 7:31 from her list of signposts marked by the use of θάλασσα. Cf. Tolbert, *Sowing the Gospel*, 131, 142, 148, 149.

[12] Rodney J. Decker, *Temporal Deixis of the Greek Verb in the Gospel of Mark with Reference to Verbal Aspect*, Studies in Biblical Greek 10 (New York: Peter Lang, 2001), 71. David Peabody offers a similar list. In his list, however, he includes 10:10 in this category. David Barrett Peabody, *Mark as Composer*, New Gospel Studies 1 (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1987), 139.

[13] Peabody, *Mark as Composer*, 115–147. Cf. also Tolbert, *Sowing the Gospel*, 131–132, 148.

[14] Peabody, *Mark as Composer*, 136, 146.

in accordance with its common classical Greek meaning of 'back'.[15] This function also is internal to the pericope. As a result, the remaining thirteen uses of πάλιν fall outside the category of unnecessary.

Mark uses the phrase εἰς τὸ πέραν five times: 4:35; 5:1; 5:21; 6:45; and 8:13. Each occurrence is found in a transitional verse. More specifically, Mark locates each occurrence in the opening of a new pericope. At 4:35; 6:45; and 8:13, the term is used without reference to θάλασσα. These verses also open a pericope involving the setting of a boat and the characters of Jesus and the disciples. In 5:1, there is no reference to a boat[16] and θάλασσα modifies the phrase. At 5:21, there is also no boat reference, but πάλιν stands juxtaposed to the phrase and θάλασσα is present in the second half of the verse.

The phrase ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ appears 6 times: 8:3, 27; 9:33f; 10:32, 52. Of these uses only 8:3 falls in a non-transitional verse. 8:27; 9:33f; and 10:32 introduce or stand proximal to a passion prediction. The final occurrence of 10:52 concludes the pericope involving the healing of Bartimaeus and precedes Jesus and the disciples' arrival to the proximity of Jerusalem.

The final example of verbal repetition is the repeated use of references to the Jewish leaders. Mark represents the character of the Jewish leaders by numerous different sub-characters (e.g. Herodians, Pharisees, scribes, etc).[17] These references are numerous and certainly do not all bear mention as a form of repetition. Chapter 6 addresses these references under the discussion of the character Jewish leaders. Nonetheless, there are

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[15] Peabody, *Mark as Composer*, 144.

[16] Certainly there is a reference to a boat at 5:18, but the boat is not central for the pericope.

[17] This nomenclature does not include John the Baptist, Moses, or Elijah. While these are Jewish leaders, they do not qualify as part of the Jewish political or ruling structure and thus are not included in this classification.

specific references to the Jewish leaders that do bear significance with regards to Mark's use of repetition. Specifically, the introduction and/or grouping of these characters in the transitional verses of a pericope merits attention.

The statistics with respect to the use of Jewish leaders in the Gospel of Mark are as follows. Sixty-six individual occurrences house a total of eighty-eight references to Jewish leaders throughout the Gospel of Mark. [18] Of these occurrences, forty are non-transitional,[19] twenty-two are transitional,[20] and four are undetermined (i.e. not recognized by all scholarship as transitional but thought by some to be transitional).[21] Within these individual occurrences, there are fifteen instances where Jewish leaders were grouped (i.e. Mark presents more than one category of Jewish leader in a particular occurrence). Six of these groupings are in non-transitional passages.[22] Eight of these groupings are in transitional passages.[23] One of the groupings is in an undetermined passage.[24] The six non-transitional groupings bear twelve references to Jewish leaders. The eight transitional groupings carry twenty-two references to Jewish leaders. The sole undetermined passage references three Jewish leaders.

These statistics present two significant distinctions. First, while there are 1.81 times as many occurrences referencing Jewish leaders in non-transitional passages as in

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[18] This paper distinguishes between occurrence and reference. The term reference denotes the number of times something appears; the term occurrence conveys the event of one or more appearances. For example, at Mark 11:27 there are three references to Jewish leaders but the verse provides only one occurrence of their mentioning.

[19] 1:22; 2:6, 16, 24, 26; 3:22; 5:22, 35, 38; 6:18, 19, 20, 22 (3x), 25, 26, 27; 7:3 (2x), 5 (2x); 8:15; 9:11; 10:2, 33; 11:18; 12:32; 14:47, 54, 55, 60, 61, 63; 15:3, 10, 11, 31, 43, 45.

[20] 2:18 (2x); 3:6; 6:14, 16, 17 (3x); 7:1; 9:14; 11:27; 12:13, 18, 28, 35; 14:1, 10, 43, 53 (2x), 66; 15:1.

[21] 8:11, 31; 12:38; 13:9.

[22] 7:5; 8:15; 10:33; 11:18; 14:55; 15:31.

[23] 3:6; 7:1; 11:27; 12:13; 14:1, 43, 53; 15:1.

[24] 8:31.

transitional passages, there are only 1.28 times more total references to Jewish leaders in non-transitional passages. Second, chapter 1–10 non-transitional occurrences outnumber transitional occurrences twenty-six to ten. Chapter 11–16, non-transitional occurrences outnumber transitional occurrences fourteen to twelve. Furthermore, in that same span of chapters (i.e. eleven through sixteen), the total references found in transitional passages outnumber those occurring in non-transitional passages twenty-three to seventeen.

These distinctions suggest three things. First, the transitional passages reference groups of Jewish leaders at a higher rate than non-transitional passages. Second, the number of non-transitional passages that reference Jewish leaders drop off dramatically at a time when transitional passages referencing Jewish leaders increases. Recognizing these first two points, a third conclusion can be drawn. The use of multiple references to Jewish leaders in transitional passages provides sufficient reason to consider the references significant repetition.

In addition to meeting the criteria of frequency and strategic use, the repeated use of the Jewish leaders also meets the criteria of avoidable and consistent use. First, the use of Jewish leaders in transitional passages is sometimes avoidable. For example, Mark mentions the leaders of the Jews at 14:1–2. But these verses introduce a pericope that presents a woman anointing Jesus for burial; the Jewish leaders are not involved. While one might argue that the announcement of the leaders' plot to kill Jesus provides background for Jesus' comment that the woman was anointing him for burial, this same function is served with the more proximal statement following this comment at 14:10–11. Finally, Mark uses the Jewish leaders consistently as they provide a point of opposition to Jesus. Chapter 6 demonstrates this characterization.

Repetition of Forms

Another significant point of repetition in the Gospel of Mark regards form. While this study does not specifically target the tools of form criticism, both redaction and narrative critics have acquired and employ the tools of form criticism.[25] In addition, recognizable repetition of form is a type of repetition, and as such it functions much like the other forms of repetition. In recognition of specific forms repeated by Mark, three meet the criteria for significance.[26] Mark repeats forms in three call narratives, three exorcisms, and three passion predictions.

The first form is the call narrative. The call narrative opens with Jesus seeing someone working. Next, Jesus calls the workers. Then, the called follow Jesus. There are three call narratives: 1:16–18, 19–20; 2:14.

The call narrative meets the criteria for significant repetition. Certainly, the narratives appear only three times in a mere two locations. Nonetheless, in spite of the low frequency, the similarity in use and form is unmistakeable.[27] The abundant contextual similarities amplify this connection between the three callings. Each calling takes place παρὰ τὴν θάλασσαν. They involve Jesus παράγων and then εἶδεν. The call narrative at 2:14 is also linked to the first two via the word πάλιν. Likewise, the location

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[25] E.g. Kelber, *The Oral and Written*; Marcus, *Mark 1–8*, 183–186, 229–230; et al.

[26] While the criteria are met, it is important to recognize the caveat stated previously. Not every type of repetition can exhibit the criteria in the same way. Repetition of form does not allow for much assessment of avoidability. Regardless, the use of form generally is understood as intentional, otherwise the forms would not match so neatly and thus are avoidable. While strategic location can be assessed, this assessment only becomes evident as the structure of Mark is brought together in chapter 7. Finally, the frequency of repetition of form is going to be much lower than verbal repetition. Nonetheless, due to the size of the forms, the units are more noticeable. As a result, the forms are functional without as much tangible evidence of the stated criteria.

[27] Cf. Moloney, *The Gospel of Mark*, 50–53, 63; Best, *Following Jesus*, 166–172, 175–178; Marcus, *Mark 1–8*, 183–186, 229–230; etc.

of each narrative seems to fall at a transitional point in the text. Finally, the textual need for such repetition of form is not present.

The second repeated form to note is the exorcism. Exorcisms are located at various places throughout the Gospel. 1:21–28; 1:32–34, 39; 3:11–12; 5:1–20; 7:24–30; and 9:14–29 all present exorcisms performed by Jesus. Of these exorcisms three stand out: 1:21–28; 3:7–12; 5:1–20. Only these three fit the key elements of Werner Kelber's classification, 'polarization story'. Each contains confrontation, expulsion and acclamation.[28] The confrontation is highlighted most vividly as demons call out Jesus' name recognizing Jesus in his relation to God. First in 1:24, the unclean spirit recognizes Jesus as the 'Holy One of God'. Then in 3:11, the unclean spirits cry out concerning Jesus: 'you are the Son of God'. Finally in 5:7, the demons recognize Jesus as 'the Son of the Most High God'. In addition, each pericope records the casting out of a demon.[29] The third feature of the polarization story, the acclamation, is also evident in each. In 1:27–28, the people recognize Jesus' teaching and authority and the report goes out into the entire region of Galilee. At 3:7–8, the report has already gone out as the presence of representatives from Galilee, Judea, Jerusalem, Idumea, and around Tyre and Sidon indicates.[30] In 5:16–17, the people recognize what Jesus has done and they ask him to leave. At 5:19–20, the report of all that Jesus has done for the demoniac spreads into the Decapolis and the people were amazed.

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[28] Kelber, *The Oral and Written*, 52.

[29] Cf. 1:26; 3:11; 5:13.

[30] The expected acclamation of Kelber's 'polarization story' is present here out of order. While the acclamation follows the exorcism in 1:21–28 and 5:1–20, this pericope is not the first done in a region. As a result, the people come to Jesus because they already know what he does. Jesus does not just happen upon someone in the synagogue or among the tombs. As a result, Mark adjusts the ordering and the geographic references demonstrating the spread and acclamation of Jesus are at the beginning of the pericope rather than the end.

The other accounts of exorcisms do not bear these signature marks. While Kelber argues that the account at 9:14–29 fits the form, the recognized lack of the acclamation and the lack of the demons' pronouncement of who Jesus is presents significant cause not to include the account in this category.[31] In addition, the other extended account of an exorcism, found in 7:24–30, bears little resemblance to the other exorcisms due to the long distance nature of the request. In addition, the references to exorcisms at both 1:32–34 and 1:39 are merely summary statements that bear no specifics with respect to the events.[32]

The final form of note is the passion prediction. There are three occurrences of this form: 8:31, 9:31, and 10:32–34. In each instance, the passion prediction contains four elements. First, in each occurrence Jesus explains the things that are going to happen.[33] Second, each bears reference to the son of man. Third, the three predictions each describe suffering and death. Fourth, to each prediction the disciples respond in misunderstanding.[34]

Further enhancing the similarity in its three uses is the similarity of the context in which each prediction finds itself and the relative significance of the statements to that context. Each prediction occurs with Jesus speaking to the disciples ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ. In a similar way, Jesus makes the predictions in the midst of a progressive movement from

[31] Cf. Kelber, *The Oral and Written*, 54. Kelber does argue that the reason for the lack of confrontation elements is the fact that the demon caused the boy to be deaf and mute. While this argument is real, the structural implications of form seem to require concrete textual connections for the audience. The use of the naming formula is key to connecting the 'polarization stories'.

[32] Mark's inclusion of these general summary statements enhance the significance of the specifics of the summary statement at 3:7–12.

[33] At the final prediction, imminence replaces necessity. The travel to Jerusalem is close enough that it is not just something that has to be done, it is being done.

[34] E.g., Mark I. Wegener, *Cruciformed: The Literary Impact of Mark's Story of Jesus and His Disciples* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1995), 145, 155–156; Moloney, *The Gospel of Mark*, 171–172, 211.

city to city and eventually to Jerusalem. This movement relates to the message of the passion prediction, namely that Jesus was making his way to Jerusalem to suffer and die.[35]

Repetition of Thematic Items

A third and final category of repetition is the repetition of thematic items. Beyond the repetition of specific words and phrases, specific formulaic expressions and presentations of events, Mark also seems to repeat items that utilize broader themes in the narrative (e.g. setting, content, and motifs). This repetition is noticeable through mention of geopolitical locations, motifs, various types of events, and various actions. Pertinent to the structural concerns of Mark, this paper addresses six different aspects of this category: geopolitical locations, the senses of hearing and seeing, the motif of following, the recruitment of the Twelve, the feeding/boat sequences, and the temple and its destruction.

Geopolitical Locations

The Gospel of Mark frequently includes geopolitical locations in its narrative. Malbon records seventy-two geopolitical references.[36] Within the seventy-two references two main categories of references stand out: classification of character and provision of setting. The former assists in character development and understanding and is not a matter of structurally significant repetition. The latter provides repetition of a stock setting distinction and merits discussion under repetition. In fact, of the forty-six

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[35] E.g., Wegener, *Cruciformed*, 154–155; Moloney, *The Gospel of Mark*, 171–172; Best, *Following Jesus*, 15–16; etc.

[36] Mark makes geopolitical distinctions in 1:5(3x), 9(3x), 14, 16, 21, 24, 28, 39; 2:1; 3:7(2x), 8(5x), 22; 5:1, 20; 6:21, 45, 53; 7:1, 24, 26, 31(4x); 8:10, 22, 27; 9:30, 33; 10:1(2x), 32, 33, 46(2x), 47; 11:1(4x), 11(2x), 12, 15, 27; 13:3, 14; 14:3, 26, 28, 32, 67, 70; 15:21, 22, 40, 41(2x), 43, 47; 16:1, 6, 7. Malbon, *Narrative Space*, 18.

references[37] used to provide setting, thirty-eight of these references[38] are found in the recognized transitional verses. The remaining eight references, although some might be classified as transitional, provide only a secondary reference point.[39]

From these references, which structurally merit specific attention, three distinct uses of geopolitical location are discernable. First, Mark uses geopolitical references in simple repetition to provide an inclusio. Second, geopolitical references demonstrate systematic movement. Third, Mark also uses geopolitical designations to contrast two general settings of specific events. Beyond these three primary uses, the remaining transitional geopolitical references provide information pertinent to self-contained pericopes.

Simple repetition characterizes four of the geopolitical references in the Gospel of Mark. 1:21 presents the setting for the pericope at Καφαρναούμ. 2:1 sets the location to be πάλιν εἰς Καφαρναούμ. The clear coordination with πάλιν provides a link between 1:21 and 2:1.[40] Mark also uses simple repetition at 6:45 and 8:22. Here the common city is Βηθσαϊδάν. In the former verse, Jesus instructs the disciples προάγειν εἰς τὸ πέραν πρὸς Βηθσαϊδάν. In the latter verse, the disciples and Jesus finally ἔρχονται εἰς Βηθσαϊδάν. The repetition denotes the completion of the instructions as the group arrives at the appointed destination.[41]

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[37] 1:5, 9, 14, 16, 21, 28, 39; 2:1; 5:1, 20; 6:45, 53; 7:24, 31(4x); 8:10, 22, 27; 9:30, 33; 10:1(2x), 32, 33, 46(2x); 11:1(4x), 11(2x), 12, 15, 27; 13:3; 14:3, 26, 28, 32; 15:22, 41(2x); 16:7.

[38] 1:9, 14, 16, 21, 28, 39; 2:1; 5:1, 20; 6:45, 53; 7:24, 31(4x); 8:10, 22, 27; 9:30, 33; 10:1(2x), 32, 46(2x); 11:1(4x), 11(2x), 27; 14:3, 26, 32; 15:41(2x).

[39] 1:5; 10:33; 11:12, 15; 13:3; 14:28; 15:22; 16:7.

[40] Peabody, *Mark as Composer*, 116–117; Joanna Dewey, *Markan Public Debate: Literary Technique, Concentric Structure, and Theology in Mark 2:1–3:6*, Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series 48 (Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1980), 67.

[41] Robert L. Humphrey, *Narrative Structure and Message in Mark: A Rhetorical Analysis*, Studies in the Bible and Early Christianity 60 (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 2003), 242–243; Cf. also Kelly R. Iverson, *Gentiles in The Gospel of Mark: 'Even the Dogs Under the Table Eat the Children's Crumbs'*, Library of New Testament Studies 339 (New York: T & T Clark International, 2007), 89–97.

The second category, and the category with the majority of geopolitical references, is that of systematic movement. Systematic movement is demonstrated in two clusters. The first cluster runs from 6:45 to 8:22. The second cluster begins at 8:22 and reaches completion at 11:1.

As just noted, the opening verse and the closing verse of the first cluster, 6:45–8:22, use simple repetition to bracket this cluster. The systematic movement begins at the command to cross over to Bethsaida and the 'completion' of that movement as the disciples with Jesus came into Gennesaret at 6:53. The contrast between the instruction and the resulting destination draws attention to the setting of the pericope. Following their time in Gennesaret, the next movement comes at 7:24 where the group enters the region of Tyre. Then the group moves out of the region of Tyre, through Sidon, into the Sea of Galilee through the Decapolis at 7:31. Here, the path is quite unorthodox, yet the movement is very systematic. It intentionally connects the miracles to Gentile lands.[42] At 8:10 they enter into the region of Dalmanoutha. Finally at 8:22 the group, after traveling and ministering through the Gentile lands, reaches the destination of Bethsaida.[43]

This movement demonstrates systematic travel to Bethsaida. Mark does not present the starting point of this sequence. Nonetheless, with the instruction to cross over to the other side, the text suggests that the group began on the western shore of the Sea of Galilee.[44] From this point, the disciples meet Jesus on the sea and go into Gennesaret. The area of Gennesaret is part of the Jewish territory located on the Sea of Galilee

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[42] Moloney, *The Gospel of Mark*, 144.

[43] Cf. Iverson, *Gentiles in the Gospel of Mark*, 89–97.

[44] The distinctively Jewish content within the feeding of the five thousand encourages this understanding. Cf. Moloney, *The Gospel of Mark*, 129–133.

southwest of Capernaum.[45] Tyre, the next location mentioned on the trip, rests on the Mediterranean Sea outside of Galilee and to the north. The various geopolitical locales in 7:31 move the group from Tyre north to Sidon then back down to the Sea of Galilee. Important in this movement is that the group goes to the Sea of Galilee through the Decapolis, the region on the southeastern quadrant of the Sea of Galilee. The group then stops in the district of Dalmanoutha, a district undetermined in its location. The lack of reference to crossing would suggest that Dalmanoutha is on the eastern side of the sea. Finally from this locale, the group sails to Bethsaida.

This sequence bears significance when one takes the use of geopolitical space into consideration. The movement recorded begins in Jewish territory and travels decidedly through Gentile territory until the disciples and Jesus reach the Jewish city of Bethsaida. This systematic movement highlights the transition from the first feeding narrative, recognized as a Jewish feeding, to the second feeding narrative, recognized as a Gentile feeding.[46]

The second cluster of geopolitical references marking systematic movement runs from 8:27 to 11:1. From Bethsaida a distinct move is made to the village of Caesarea Philippi in 8:27. This movement returns the group to a point distant from Jerusalem. The next recorded movement is through Galilee in 9:30 coming into Capernaum at 9:33. At 10:1 the group moves into the boundaries of Judea and across the Jordan. At 10:32 the group's destination is revealed as Jerusalem.[47] At 10:45, the group reaches Jericho, the

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[45] Gundry, *Mark*, 344.

[46] Cf. Moloney, *The Gospel of Mark*, 129–164; Iverson, *Gentiles in the Gospel of Mark*, 70–74.

[47] It is important to note that this inclusion of Jerusalem assists in the systematic movement of the group. The following final passion prediction makes clear that Jerusalem is the place where Jesus is to suffer, die and be raised. This connection also explains the use of a geopolitical reference in a non-transitional verse.

city at the base of a common ascent into Jerusalem. Finally at 11:1, through four geopolitical references, the destination of Jerusalem is reached.[48] The systematic movement of 8:27–11:1 thus presents Jesus moving ever closer to Jerusalem.[49]

Contrast between two distinct settings is another goal of geopolitical references. Mark demonstrates this third use at two different points of his Gospel. First, the location of 'in the Jordan' provides contrast to Galilee. This distinction clarifies the distinction between Jesus and John the Baptist. [50] Second, once in Jerusalem, the outskirts of the city are distinct from Jerusalem proper.[51] A third example, on an overarching thematic scale also falls in this category. The general vicinity of Galilee provides contrast to the final destination of Jerusalem.[52]

The Senses of Hearing and Seeing

Another form of thematic repetition is the use of two senses: seeing and hearing. Unlike the development of the geographical themes, which Mark presented through repetition in transitional verses, the themes of seeing and hearing are established within two key pericopal units: 4:1–34 and 13:1–37. While one might argue that throughout Mark there are numerous motifs that come up in various pericopes, the motifs in 4:1–34 and 13:1–37 merit special attention for four basic reasons. First, these two pericopes naturally stand out apart from the rest of Mark's gospel because they are the sole extended Markan discourses. Second the motifs that these two pericopes present are

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[48] Malbon, *Narrative Space*, 30–31.

[49] France, *The Gospel of Mark*, 320.

[50] Malbon, *Narrative Space*, 24–25.

[51] Malbon, *Narrative Space*, 31–33.

[52] This mention is recognized by most scholars and does not need illustration here. For a brief discussion of this use of geopolitical space, cf. France, *The Gospel of Mark*, 11–13.

similar in nature, (i.e. both focus on the senses). In addition, while the two motifs have a general connection because they are both senses, Mark also directly links these two senses. Finally, as the connection of the two motifs is pursued beyond the two discourses, it is clear that Mark carries the motifs through other parts of his gospel as well.

Werner Kelber presents the uniqueness of 4:1–34 and 13:1–37 most thoroughly. Kelber's use of redaction criticism led him to the conclusion that these two pericopes are Mark's only two extended discourses because the Gospel of Mark was pushing a cultural transition from orality to textuality.[53] While the significance of Mark as a gospel shifting to textuality may be argued by other scholars, many if not most scholars recognize the distinctiveness of these two discourses within the Gospel of Mark. Some have argued that these two pericopes bear structural significance.[54]

Recognizing the position of these pericopes as the sole extended Markan discourses, it is also important to recognize the similarity between their thematic emphases. Both stress a sense. 4:1–34 emphasizes the sense of hearing. 13:1–37 stresses seeing.[55]

The motif of hearing is present throughout 4:1–34. In chapter 4, the verb ἀκούω comes up a total of thirteen times 4:3, 9(2x), 12(2x), 15, 16, 18, 20, 23(2x), 24, and 33.

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[53] Cf. discussion above.

[54] Bas M. F. Van Iersel, *Mark: A Reader Response Commentary*, Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series 164 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press), 110–113. Cf. also France, *The Gospel of Mark*, 14.

[55] For thorough discussion of the Markan emphasis on discernment through the use of these senses, cf. Timothy J. Geddert, "A Markan Perspective on Discernment," in *Watchwords: Mark 13 in Markan Eschatology*, Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series 26 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1989), 59–87. Humphrey also draws attention to the correlation of the two senses in Mark and especially as used structurally in these discourses, cf. Humphrey, *Narrative Structure and Message in Mark*, 213.

To put this repetition in perspective, this verb is used only forty-three times throughout Mark's gospel (i.e. thirty percent of the uses are in this portion of one chapter).[56]

In addition to this verb, two other words appear connected to Mark's motif of hearing in 4:1–34. The first is οὖς. Two out of the four Markan uses of οὖς are found in 4:1–34.[57] The other two uses are found in 7:33 and 8:18. The second is the verb συνίημι. This word comes up in 4:12 and again in 6:52; 7:14; 8:17; and 8:21.

The motif of seeing appears in chapter 13. The verb βλέπω appears here five times; in Mark it appears a total of fifteen times.[58] As thirty percent of Markan uses of ἀκούω are present in chapter 4, so in chapter 13 thirty-three percent of Markan uses of βλέπω are found. In addition, four out of the five uses in chapter 13 are imperatives. These imperatives stand out as ἀκούετε stood out in 4:3 and provide a thematic marker for the chapter.[59]

It is recognized that the aorist form of βλέπω is no longer actively used in koine Greek and ὁράω is generally used for aspects other than the present. But of the twenty New Testament uses of ὁράω in the present, three of those are in the Gospel of Mark. This demonstrates that the author did recognize the use of the present aspect of this verb and utilized it. Furthermore, the fact that the author uses the two verbs in the present in the same verse lends significance to the choice and placement of βλέπω in the Gospel of Mark.

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[56] This number is based upon NA[27]. The verb is used in Mk. 2:1, 17; 3:8, 21; 4:3, 9, 12, 15, 16, 18, 20, 23, 24, 33; 5:27; 6:2, 11, 14, 16, 20, 29, 55; 7:14, 25, 37; 8:18; 9:7; 10:41, 47; 11:14, 18; 12:28, 29, 37; 13:7; 14:11, 58, 64; 15:35; 16:11.

[57] Cf. Mark 4:9 and 4:23.

[58] According to the text of NA[27], the verb is used in Mk. 4:12, 24; 5:31; 8:15, 18, 23, 24; 12:14, 38; *13:2, 5, 9, 23, 33.*

[59] Humphrey, *Narrative Structure and Message in Mark*, 213.

Further exploration of the use of βλέπω reveals that the author uses βλέπω sparingly and technically. As Timothy Geddert argues, Mark uses the term in a technical sense to denote discernment (i.e. it is used to teach an epistemology that leads to proper understanding).[60] While it is unnecessary to present his argument here, the illustration of 8:22–26 reveals this distinction. In this pericope, Jesus heals the blind man. The man reports to Jesus what he sees. He sees everything after the first healing, but he correctly discerns nothing seen. Only after a second healing did the man see clearly. This miracle illustrates the difficulty the disciples have following the miracles of the feedings. They have seen the miracles both times, as the answering of Jesus' questions in 8:19–20 reveals, but in both cases they do not understand the feedings. They needed clear vision.[61]

In addition to the common verb βλέπω, the corresponding action, γρηγορέω, also is prominent in the chapter. In fact, as the chapter concludes, the imperatives shift from βλέπετε in 13:33 to γρηγορεῖτε in 13:35 and 13:37. This shift is in a basic sense one from 'see' to 'watch'. But as one looks at the use of βλέπω in the Gospel of Mark, it becomes clear that Mark uses the term βλέπω in a similar way as γρηγορέω normally is. He uses the two words almost interchangeably. As a result, many scholars have questioned the distinction between the two verbs. Yet Mark uses two verbs. In fact after 13:33, Mark does not use βλέπω again, but uses γρηγορέω six times. As a result, it is evident that there are eight verbs of seeing/watching in chapter 13 and there is a shift present in the language of the Gospel of Mark at 13:33.[62]

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[60] Geddert, *Watchwords*, 59–87.

[61] Geddert, *Watchwords*, 61–71, 76–77.

[62] Geddert, *Watchwords*, 90.

Recognizing the prevalence of the sense of seeing and hearing in the two examples of extended discourse in the Gospel of Mark, it is prudent to consider whether the connection between these two motifs is merely convenient or intentional. A quick look at the text of Mark reveals evidence for intentionality. Mark juxtaposes these motifs at 4:12; 4:24; and 8:18. In each of these places seeing and hearing are intimately related. In 4:12 and 8:18, Mark presents both as part of a single quotation. In 4:24, ἀκούω is the object of βλέπω. In each, both verbs convey understanding or a lack thereof. In addition, the completion of the two verbs is the desired activity of the disciple.[63]

Finally, beyond these examples of direct connection between these two senses, one can recognize the two related motifs present in other portions of the Gospel of Mark. Most clearly the extension of the motif can be seen in three miracles of Jesus.

Three miracles in Mark's gospel present healing of hearing or seeing. In 7:31–37 Jesus heals a deaf mute. Mark accents this miracle by the concluding acclamation that announces Jesus as the one who makes the deaf ἀκούειν and the mute to speak.[64] In 8:22–26 and 10:46–52 there are two healings of blind men. While these healings do not have the concluding acclamation to emphasize the sense of seeing, they both draw attention to themselves by their uniqueness. In 8:22–26, Jesus heals a blind man in two stages.[65] After

[63] The argument of Geddert that suggests that hearing and seeing are significantly distinct activities is lacking. While he demonstrates a relationship between the two, he fails to show that the key to both is anything more than simple understanding, i.e., it reflects understanding whether with regards to teaching or miracles. The activities of hearing and seeing go hand and hand. To suggest that Mark uses hearing as the important factor for understanding Jesus' teaching and seeing as the important factor for understanding Jesus' miracles misses the fact that in chapter 4 both are used with regards to understanding the parables. At 4:12 both are used explaining why everything is taught in parables. At 4:24 the exhortation is to 'see' what 'you hear'. Both senses are integral to the understanding of the parables. Likewise at 8:18 the feeding miracles are not understood because both faculties, 'seeing' and 'hearing', are faulty. Contra Geddert, *Watchwords*, 59–87.

[64] Cf. 7:37.

[65] The claim that the miracle of 7:31–37 is performed in two stages as well does not seem to be warranted. While one might claim that the healing process included two parts, i.e. the physical and the

the first stage, the blind man can see, but not clearly. After the second stage, the blind man sees clearly. This use of a two stage healing draws attention to this healing of sight and the very distinction between seeing and not seeing (i.e. seeing properly and not seeing properly).[66] In 10:46–52, the account of Jesus healing the blind man draws attention to itself as well. First, this healing is the only healing of a named character in the Gospel of Mark.[67] Second, and more importantly for the purpose of accenting the motif of seeing, after Jesus heals Bartimaeus of his blindness, Bartimaeus turns and follows Jesus.[68] Mark connects the desire to see (i.e. Bartimaeus' request for mercy), to Bartimaeus' response of discipleship.[69]

In addition to these miracles' individual uniqueness, the miracles stand out by their interrelatedness. Many scholars view 7:31–39 and 8:22–26,[70] or 8:22–26 and 10:46–52,[71] or all three miracles[72] as interrelated. In each case, the connection of 8:22–26 is

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verbal, at no time does the text suggest that the miracle was a two stage process, i.e. the process did not have to be repeated, cf. 8:25. Contra Richard A. Horsley, *Hearing the Whole Story: The Politics of Plot in Mark's Gospel* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001), 267n48.

[66] Cf. Geddert, *Watchwords*, 77; Moloney, *The Gospel of Mark*, 163; et al.

[67] This use of the name is further accented for the modern reader by the fact that the blind man is not named in the similar accounts of Matthew and Luke.

[68] For discussion of the theme of following see below.

[69] As Geddert points out, "[f]or Mark 'discernment' and 'discipleship' are inseparable," Geddert, *Watchwords*, 78. Cf. also France, *The Gospel of Mark*, 425; Van Iersel, *Mark*, 343–344, et al.

[70]Form and redactional critical scholarship historically found much connection between 7:31–39 and 8:22–26. Some even have concluded that the two pericopes are doublets, e.g. Best, 135 (while Best believes this might be a doublet, he believes that if it is a doublet it has been broken for redactional purposes). Others merely view a close relationship between the two texts, e.g. Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark*, 368–370; Robert A. Guelich, *Mark 1–8.26*, Word Biblical Commentary 34a (Dallas: Word Books, 1982), 429; et al.

[71] E.g. Etienne Trocme, *The Formation of the Gospel According to Mark*, trans. Pamela Gaughan (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1975), 82; Kelber, *The Kingdom in Mark*, 67; Vernon K. Robbins, *New Boundaries in Old Territory: Form and Social Rhetoric in Mark*, ed. David B. Gowler, Emory Studies in Early Christianity 3 (New York: Peter Lang, 1994), 39; Best, *Following Jesus*, 134–145; Malbon, *Hearing Mark*, 56; et al.

[72] E.g. Geddert, *Watchwords*, 78; Horsley, *Hearing the Whole Story*, 71; Moloney, *The Gospel of Mark*, 163; et al.

employed. Connecting 7:31–39 to 8:22–26 is much verbal similarity. Connecting 8:22–26 to 10:46–52 is much similarity in content. The final position admits both connections and recognizes them both as important to interpretation.

The connection between 7:31–39 and 8:22–26 bears several key verbal and situational similarities. Distinctive verbal commonalities are: (1) φέρουσιν αὐτῷ; (2) παρακαλοῦσιν αὐτὸν ἵνα; (3) ἐπιθῇ αὐτῷ τὴν χεῖρα/ἐπέθηκεν τὰς χεῖρας; (4) πτύσας; (5) ἀναβλέψας. While these similarities may be coincidental, the general similarity in context of use increases their significance. The activity in both is similar as well: (1) someone is brought to Jesus to be touched; (2) Jesus takes that person away from the public setting; (3) Jesus heals the person with the use of spitting and touching; (4) the healing resulted in full success (i.e. either speaking plainly/seeing clearly).[73] Yet for all the similarities, the specific event and the emphasis of the event is different in each pericope. In the former, the emphasis focuses on the healing of a man who is deaf and mute. In the latter, the emphasis focuses on the healing of a blind man. This distinction is significant as the connections between 8:22–26 and 10:46–52 are considered.

Unlike the correlation between 7:31–39 and 8:22–29, the similarities between 8:22–26 and 10:46–52 lie almost entirely in the contextual realm. To be certain, verbal similarities are found in τυφλός[74] and in forms of βλέπω.[75] But these similarities are limited to the motif of 'seeing' and do not resemble the correspondence in phrases that 7:31–39 and 8:22–26 do. Nonetheless, the emphasis on these terms does reflect a

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[73] Many would add that the command to silence is similar in both, e.g. Guelich, *Mark 1–8.26*, 429; Horsley, *Hearing the Whole Story*, 267n48; et al. However, as Gundry argues, secrecy is not present in the text of 8:26, cf. Gundry, *Mark*, 419.

[74] Cf. 8:22, 23; 10:46, 49, 51.

[75] Cf. 8:23, 24(2x), 25(2x); 10:51, 52.

significant similarity in content. Both 8:22–26 and 10:46–52 focus on the healing of a blind man. This content, reinforced by the repeated language, gives credence to the connection between these pericopes that 7:31–39 and 8:22–26 do not bear.

In both cases there is significant relationship between the two pericopes. For further delineation as to their specific uses on a structural level, addition data must be employed.[76] It is sufficient at this point to recognize the motifs of the healing of the senses in each of them.

Through the two extended discourses and these three miracle accounts Mark develops the theme of seeing and hearing. This development leads to a technical understanding of these terms and language related to them. From these connections, one senses that the theme pervades much of the Gospel of Mark.

Following

A third thematic element is the Markan emphasis on following. Mark presents this motif through the use of content repetition and interrelated verbal repetition. The repetition of content centers around the John the Baptist episodes. The interrelated verbal repetition is found in the words ὁδός, ἀκολουθέω, ὀπίσω μου, and προάγω.

The references to John the Baptist stand out as significant due to their locations. The first reference, 1:2–11, is the first pericope in the Gospel of Mark. The second reference, 1:14, is a transitional verse that directs the reader to the ministry of Jesus. The third reference, and the second, and only other, pericope that has John the Baptist as a primary actor, Mark locates at 6:14–29. This pericope is the only example of the incorporation of material that on a literary level does not follow sequentially (i.e. it is a

[76] Greater discussion on the structural level will occur in chapter 7.

flashback). Because of these distinctions, the related content of the John the Baptist pericopes stands out as an aspect of repetition worthy of consideration.

Beyond providing the only references to John the Baptist, these references provide significant content and related language that will be repeated in the Gospel of Mark. First, the references convey John the Baptist's activity: he proclaimed to gathering crowds;[77] he was handed over;[78] he was killed by the authorities;[79] he was buried by his disciples.[80] Second, coupled to this familiar order of events is the stated purpose of John the Baptist.[81] John the Baptist was the messenger that came to prepare the way of the Lord. In such a task additional words of note come up: ὁδός, πρὸ προσώπον σου, and ὀπίσω μου.

While the activity of John the Baptist bears remarkable similarities to Jesus' activity, it is important also to recognize the language that corresponds to John the Baptist's purpose. As stated, John the Baptist's purpose in the Gospel of Mark is to prepare the way for the Lord. He comes before; Jesus comes after. This emphasis highlights the aspects of following: the path upon which the following is done, going before, and going after. Each of these three aspects of following is repeated throughout the Gospel of Mark. Each will now be taken up in order.

The first aspect of following (i.e. ὁδός), demonstrates clear signs of repetition. This repetition is seen most distinctly in the phrase ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ. This phrase appears six times in Mark: 8:3, 27; 9:33, 34; 10:32, 52. Of these uses only 8:3 falls in a non-transitional verse.

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[77] 1:4.

[78] 1:14, 6:17.

[79] 6:16, 27.

[80] 6:29.

[81] These events are paralleled in many ways by Jesus' ministry. Jesus proclaimed to gathering crowds, cf. 1:14–15; 3:7–12; 4:1–2; etc. Jesus was handed over, cf. 14:43–45. Jesus was executed by the authorities, cf. 15:25, 37. Jesus was buried by his disciples, 14:42–47.

8:27; 9:33, 34; and 10:32 introduce or stand proximal to a passion prediction. The final occurrence of 10:52 concludes the pericope involving the healing of Bartimaeus and precedes Jesus and the disciples' arrival to the proximity of Jerusalem.

In addition to the phrase ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ, ὁδός appears 10 times throughout the Gospel of Mark.[82] Of these ten phrases four do not need much consideration at present. Two of these four are part of the quote that introduces John the Baptist in 1:2–3 and have already been mentioned as related to the motif of following. The other two of these uses fall within the body of pericopes that seem to highlight being ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ and themselves reveal a similar emphasis.[83] The remaining uses,[84] as well as the non-transitional use of the common phrase ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ,[85] which is not part of the systematic employment of the phrase in 8:22–10:52, merit special consideration.

These seven uses of ὁδός, 2:23; 4:4, 15; 6:8; 8:3; 11:8; and 12:14, all stand outside the series found between 8:22–10:52. The first of these, 2:23, does not seem to carry much significance concerning the motif of following.[86] It is merely an integral part of the account being presented. At 4:4 and 4:15 the use is again not thematic in intent. In only one of the illustrations within the parable does the word come up and this occurrence is present out of necessity. If the intent were thematic, the parable would have carried the

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[82] 1:2, 3; 2:23; 4:4, 15; 6:8; 10:17, 46; 11:8; 12:14.

[83] 10:17, 46. It is appropriate to ask why these two examples are not according to the formula ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ. The likely explanation is probably one of structure. While the thematic highlight is present in 10:17 and 10:46, these passages are probably not intended to be structural markers. The formula is imposed only in conjunction with the passion prediction along with 10.52 at the conclusion of the trip to Jerusalem.

[84] 2:23; 4:4, 15; 6:8; 8:3; 11:8; 12:14.

[85] 8:3.

[86] It could be argued that the use here is providing a contrast between the way of the Pharisees and the way of Christ. However, the lack of surrounding support for this makes this a stretch at best. The theme has not yet been developed, although it has been introduced at 1:2–3. As a result, it is unlikely that this contrast is intended to bear much influence on the reader.

motif throughout. The fourth example, 6:8, certainly builds the thematic color of the term, but it does not build the motif significantly. At 8:3, the formulaic ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ is introduced. Here the term certainly permits the thematic power of the phrase as presented in 8:22–10:52; it also can be understood on a surface level. Following the systematic development of the motif in 8:22–10:52, the word is again used at 11:8. Here the term follows immediately after 8:22–10:52 and is combined with προάγω and ἀκολουθέω. This combination highlights the motif of following. Finally, at 12:14, Mark qualifies the term with the prepositional phrase 'of God'. Here we see a contrast between the way of the opponents of Jesus and the way of God. Thus out of these seven uses, only the one used in conjunction with other 'following' words (i.e. 11:8), carries clear thematic intent.

The second aspect of following is the 'going before'. While Mark introduces the language of path in the opening pericope, going before was introduced thematically, but not verbally. The quotation from Malachi used πρὸ προσώπον σου; the Markan term of choice is προάγω. While the two are distinctly different terms, the two bear a similar relationship as the terms ὀπίσω μου and ἀκολουθέω bear to one another. The former is the physical relationship; the latter is the action that creates that physical relationship. Mark further encourages the connection between πρὸ προσώπον σου and προάγω by the relationship of ὁδός to both. This connection is made with πρὸ προσώπον σου at 1:2–3 and with προάγω at 10:32 and 11:8–9. As a result, although the connection between πρὸ προσώπον σου and προάγω is not explicit, it can be seen as implicit.

The term προάγω appears five times in the Gospel of Mark.[87] At 6:45 Mark uses the term in a transitional verse. In this passage Jesus sends the disciples ahead of him to

[87] 6:45; 10:32; 11:9; 14:28; 16:7.

Bethsaida; noteably, they did not make it there on this journey. A second use of the verb comes at 10:32 in another transitional verse. Here Mark uses it with the formulaic ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ. At 11:9, the term appears again. Here the verb appears, as mentioned earlier, with its thematic counterparts ὁδός and ἀκολουθέω. The final two occurrences of προάγω are near copies of each other and carry the same motif. At 14:28, Jesus tells the disciples that after his death and resurrection he will go ahead of them into Galilee. At 16:7, the young man dressed in white reminds the women of this promise at the empty tomb.

The third aspect of following is the 'coming after'. Two key terms govern this aspect: ὀπίσω μου and ἀκολουθέω. The former introduces the motif at 1:7, but the latter continues and furthers the motif throughout the Gospel of Mark. In fact, 1:7 is the only occurrence of ὀπίσω μου that is not immediately proximal to ἀκολουθέω. At 1:16–20, Mark connects the two terms using them interchangeably. While Jesus calls Peter and Andrew 'to follow', their response is to 'come after' him. In addition, when Jesus calls James and John in the following verses, they respond by coming after him.[88] When the phrase ὀπίσω μου comes up again in 8:33–34, it is again used in conjunction with ἀκολουθέω. This time instead of the call to follow being accented, the text accents the definition of following through a contrast between Peter's rebuke at 8:33 and the description of appropriate following in 8:34.[89]

Recognizing the connection between ὀπίσω μου and ἀκολουθέω, it is appropriate to pursue the motif of following beyond the phrase ὀπίσω μου and consider the 18 uses of

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[88] At 1.20, the term used is not ὀπίσω μου. Nonetheless, the phrase is essentially the same, ὀπίσω αὐτοῦ, and can responsibly be considered with the uses of ὀπίσω μου.

[89] Cf. Moloney, *The Gospel of Mark*, 174–175; Best, *Following Jesus*, 19–22, 23–25; Van Iersel, *Mark*, 285–286; et al.

the verb ἀκολουθέω.[90] Of the 18 occurrences of ἀκολουθέω it appears 7 times in the section that is dominated by the phrase ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ.[91] In each of these uses, the motif of following is highlighted. As has been discussed, the two uses in 8:34 help to contrast the misperceptions of the motif of following with true following. At 9:38, John asks a question concerning whether someone who is not following Jesus (i.e. not a disciple), should be permitted to cast out demons in the name of Jesus. The concern is one of what it means to be a follower of Jesus.[92] At 10:21, Jesus tells the man to sell all that he has and follow Jesus. This direction made the man saddened because he would stand to lose a lot of things. It highlights that following requires leaving everything else behind.[93] An extension of this conversation comes up at 10:28 where Peter wonders if they will receive benefit because they have left all to follow him. At 10:32, Mark connects ἀκολουθέω to the other two words that carry the motif of following, namely προάγω and ἐν τῇ ὁδω. Finally, the section concludes with another reference to the verb at 10:52 where the blind man follows Jesus.

The remaining eleven references demonstrate both a common usage and a more thematic usage. Six of these uses unmistakably convey the thematic usage. At 1:18 and 2:14(2x) Mark uses the verb in direct connection to a call narrative. At 2:15, he uses the verb immediately proximal to a call narrative. As discussed previously, Mark coordinates the term with its thematic counterparts (i.e. προάγω and ὁδός), at 11:9. Finally, at 15:41, he uses the verb to describe the women who followed Jesus in Galilee. Of the remaining

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[90] ἀκολουθέω is found at 1:18; 2:14(2x), 15; 3:7; 5:24; 6:1; 8:34(2x); 9:38; 10:21, 28, 32, 52; 11:9; 14:13, 54; 15:41.

[91] 8:34(2x); 9:38; 10:21, 28, 32, 52.

[92] Cf. Moloney, *The Gospel of Mark*, 189–190; Best, *Following Jesus*, 83; et al.

[93] Cf. Moloney, *The Gospel of Mark*, 200; Van Iersel, *Mark*, 325–326; et al.

five uses, one use unmistakably is not related to the thematic usage and four uses are ambiguous. At 14:13, two disciples are told to follow a man in the city. This instruction is clearly not intended to relate to the thematic understanding of following. The other four uses however could be a similar case of people just physically following or a case of people following in the thematic sense. Two of the uses, 3:7 and 5:24, present a great crowd following Jesus. The other two uses, 6:1 and 14:54, present disciples following Jesus. The former instance has the disciples following Jesus to his homeland. The latter has Peter following at a distance while Jesus goes to trial. None of the four are strong examples of the thematic usage, but each of the four could be seen in that light.

The theme of following is thus prominent in Mark's gospel. Mark highlights it in the only two pericopes that involve John the Baptist. These pericopes bear significant connection to both Jesus and the call of discipleship (i.e. the call of following). In addition the language of following is accented throughout the Gospel of Mark in a generally consist manner that accents the theme of following. Also, Mark frequently and strategically utilizes the theme from 8:22–10:52. Finally, the following theme is very closely related to the nature of discipleship it concerns.

The Recruitment of the Twelve

The recruitment process of the twelve disciples provides another form of thematic repetition. While certainly Mark develops the character of discipleship throughout his gospel, three pericopes focus on the recruitment process of the Twelve: 1:16–20; 3:13–19; 6:7–13. At 1:16–20, Jesus calls two different groups of disciples.[94] The pericope

[94] As discussed previously, a similar call narrative is found at 2:14. While this narrative is connected to 1:16–20, it is not as directly connected to the events of 3:13–19 and 6:7–13. Certainly, scholars often recognize Levi as an alternate name of Matthew, and Matthew is listed among the Twelve in Mark. Nonetheless, the use of a name not included among the Twelve significantly reduces the literary connection

focuses on the call and response of four disciples. Jesus calls, and the disciples follow.[95] In 3:13–19, the Twelve are separated from the disciples and made apostles.[96] Jesus sets the inner Twelve apart from the others and defines their purpose. They are to be with Jesus and also are to be sent to preach and cast out demons.[97] Last of all in 6:7–13, Jesus sends out the Twelve.[98] Jesus gives them their instructions as he sends them.[99] The author provides a thematic progression in these three accounts that call, set apart, and send the Twelve.[100]

Feedings/Boat Sequences

Another occurrence of thematic repetition appears with the two feedings and two subsequent boat trips.[101] In these two sequences, many similarities arise.[102] Most notably, the similarities within the events draw immediate attention. In both feedings: (1) Jesus teaches a crowd; (2) It is recognized that the people need something to eat; (3) The disciples ask how such a crowd could be fed by them; (4) Jesus asks them to assess how

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between 2:14 and 3:13–19 and 6:7–13. In addition to this loss of verbal connection to the latter two pericopes, the placing of the call in conjunction with another account, i.e., 2:15–17, also limits the viability of the passage if a connection with these other more distant pericopes were intended. As a result, the passage is not included with these three pericopes even though, as illustrated above, it is directly connected to 1:16–20.

[95] 1:17–18, 20.

[96] 3:14.

[97] 3:14–15.

[98] 6:7.

[99] 6:8–11.

[100] Various commentaries recognize this thematic unity between 1:16–20; 3:13–19; and 6:7–13. Cf. Broadhead, *Mark*; Cranfield, *The Gospel According to St. Mark*; Guelich, *Mark 1–8:26*; et al. who see the disciples' sections as introducing new units. Although this recognition misses the overall structure of Mark, it does acknowledge the structural significance of the three disciple pericopes.

[101] 6:30–52; 8:1–21.

[102] In fact, the similarities between the two feeding pericopes have led many scholars to conclude that the feedings provide two accounts of the same event. E.g., Marcus, *Mark 1–8*, 491; Moloney, *The Gospel of Mark*, 132n83; D. E. Nineham, *The Gospel of Saint Mark*, The Pelican Commentaries (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1963), 205–207; Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark*, 628–629; et al.

much bread they have; (5) The disciples count the food available; (6) The people are instructed to sit down on the ground; (7) Jesus prays and breaks the bread; (8) Jesus gives the food to the disciples; (9) The disciples give the food to the people; (10) The people eat and are satisfied; (11) Baskets of food are gathered as leftovers; (12) A great count is given.

Following each feeding, there is a boat trip. These trips are not as similar as the events of the feedings, but both are boat events that are presented in relationship to the feedings.[103] Mark makes this clear through the repetition of the misunderstanding of the disciples (i.e. they did not understand about the bread).[104] The trip at 6.45–52 concludes with the recognition that they were amazed at Jesus' ability (i.e. to walk on water and calm the wind), because they did not understand about the bread. The second trip revolves around misunderstanding the bread. It begins with a mention of the disciples' failure to bring more than one loaf of bread on the boat and the disciples' misunderstanding of Jesus' warning to watch out for the yeast of the Pharisees and the Herodians. Thus both boat events reflect back upon and elucidate the feeding accounts.

Given this thematic emphasis a great concentration of ἄρτος appears within the feeding and the boat trips. Twelve times it appears in these two sequences. Seven times the term appears outside of these two pericopal sequences. In addition, three of these uses appear between these two sequences.[105] An additional use occurs within the pericope in which Jesus sends out the Twelve, the sending which is reported on at the beginning of

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[103] The connection between the two is generally accepted by scholarship. Many have used the obvious connection between the two sequences to argue that the two sequences begin two longer doublets, Nineham, *The Gospel of Saint Mark*, 206.

[104] 6:52; 8:14–20

[105] 7:2, 5, 27.

the first feeding pericope.[106] Another use of the term comes at 14.22. While the celebration of the Passover is widely connected to the two feeding sequences, the question of thematic use here is difficult. The term is necessary to the recording of the Passover meal; the Passover meal is necessary to the account of the passion. As a result, while the use does, to some extent, appear to be thematic, the utter necessity of the term limits its significance in developing this theme in Mark. The final two verses bearing the term ἄρτος, 2:26 and 3:20, do not seem to carry any thematic intent.[107]

Temple and Its Destruction

Another form of thematic repetition is Mark's inclusion of the temple and reference to its destruction. The term 'temple' appears twelve times throughout the Gospel of Mark. Each appearance is located in chapters 11–15. The temple appears at 11:11, 15(2x), 16, 27; 12:35; 13:1, 3; 14:49, 58; 15:29, 38.[108] At 11:11, Jesus enters the temple, looks around, and returns to Bethany. At 11:15–16, Jesus overturns tables of money-changers and pigeon sellers in the temple. 11:27 and 12:35 both highlight the venue for Jesus' teaching as the temple. This venue is brought up in 14:49 to point out that the leaders of the Jews could have taken him during the day rather than like a robber at night. At 13:1 and 13:3 the setting is set for the Olivet discourse. At 14:58 and 15:29 a false witness and a mocker, respectively, claim that Jesus said that he would destroy this

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[106] 6:8. The report of the disciples at 6:30 provides for a brief intercalation with 6:7–13. The use of the term ἀπόστολος, a term Mark uses only here, calls to mind the sending verb ἀποστέλλω used in 6:7. In addition, 6:30 bears a report of their words and deeds in response to their charge to proclaim and do in 6:7–13. Cf. Moloney, *The Gospel of Mark*, 118–120. As a result, the entire unit serves to lead into the first feeding. Thus the use of ἄρτος with Jesus' instructions to the disciples serves as a preliminary introduction to the theme developed in the feeding/boat sequences.

[107] Given the fact that both of these terms stand prior to and removed from the development of the theme in 6:7–8:21, the non-thematic use should not have caused a distraction to the reader.

[108] The term 'temple' is used to denote both ναός and ἱερόν. While the two terms are distinct, for Mark's purposes, both seem to be used to convey the repetition for the same basic theme.

temple and build it up in three days. Finally, at 15:38, the curtain of the temple is torn in two.

More important than the content of the temple references is the location of the temple references. As Geddert recognizes in his assessment of the theology of temple in Mark,

> The strategic placement of each of these temple texts indicates that they are supremely important for Mark's message. The 'cleansing' is the occasion for the initiation of the actual death plot by the Jerusalem authorities (11:18). The prophecy to destroy and rebuild features both in the trial of Jesus and in the death scene. The rending of the temple veil is the first recorded 'result' of Jesus' expiration. In a Gospel that focuses so heavily on Jesus' passion, such collocations *must* indicate that, however puzzling the references may be, understanding them is vital. Whether interpreters consider Mark's enigma infuriating or an exciting challenge, it would appear they have little choice but to try to unravel hidden messages, or else join those who criticize Mark as a clumsy editor. [109]

Beyond these assertions of contextual note, it seems prudent also to mention the location of these pericopes from a physical standpoint. The first of these pericopes begins chapter 11.[110] The second of these pericopal units includes and surrounds chapter 13.[111] The third of the inclusions appears at 14:58. The final two inclusions, 15:29 and 15:38 form a bracket around the death of Jesus, the closing parts of chapter 15.

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[109] Geddert, *Watchwords*, 115–116.

[110] One may argue, especially from a narrative critical standpoint, that 11:11 is a concluding word to the first pericope. The day concludes and Jesus leaves Jerusalem. However, if the argument of Paul Brooks Duff, "The March of the Divine Warrior and the Advent of the Greco-Roman King: Mark's Account of Jesus' Entry into Jerusalem," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 111 (1992): 55–71, is taken seriously, one should recognize a much closer relationship between 11:1–11 and 11:12–25. As Duff argues, the 'triumphal entry' follows similar patterns as the Greco-Roman Entrance Processions, cf. Duff, "The March of the Divine Warrior," 58–69. This pattern should end with a temple event, e.g. a sacrifice or a feast, that claims the town as the victor's own, cf. Duff, "The March of the Divine Warrior," 61. This event, albeit an ironic ending, comes at 11:12–25. As a result, the entire entrance spans beyond the events of 11:1–11 and includes 11:12–25.

[111] Malbon, Geddert, and others argue that the account of the widow serves as a bracket with the account of the woman who anointed Jesus. Cf. Malbon, *In the Company of Jesus*, 179–180; Geddert, *Watchwords*, 133–138; et al.

An additional note concerning 11:27 and 12:35 should be added to Geddert's assertion. The uses at 11:27; 12:35; and 14:49 do not carry the same import as the temple texts.[112] While 11:27 and 12:35 mention the temple in transitional verses, they do not develop the temple theme that Mark presents in these chapters. Nonetheless, while they do not develop the temple theme per se, they do, as they are used in transitional verses, keep the reader's attention on the thematic reality that Jesus is teaching in the temple and on the temple theme (i.e. the destruction of the temple as synecdoche for the deposition of the Jewish leadership structure).[113] In a similar way, although it does not appear in a defined transitional verse, 14:49 carries the temple emphasis into the night of Jesus' betrayal without a developed presentation of the theme.

As has been demonstrated, the Gospel of Mark employs significant repetition on numerous occasions. Through the repetition of words and phrases, forms, and content, setting, and themes the author connects various pericopes to each other. As both narrative and redactional critics assert, and this paper will highlight, these points of repetition are significant; they highlight an overarching structure to the Gospel of Mark.

[112] The term 'temple' texts only refers to those texts which develops the theme of the temple.

[113] This assertion utilizes the conclusions of Geddert's arguments, cf. Geddert, *Watchwords*, 113–147. The issue here is a matter of the repetition and maintenance of the theme, not on the specifics of what this theme entails. As a result, the argument for this position is not presented.

CHAPTER SIX

CHARACTERS

Narrative critics, as illustrated in the assessment of Malbon and Kingsbury, have shown that the author strategically uses elements of narrative in the Gospel of Mark. While all the elements come together to present the full story of the gospel, the use of characters plays an important support role as it undergirds the structure of Mark's gospel.[1] For this reason it is now important to consider the characters of the gospel.

In consideration of the characters of the Gospel of Mark, it is prudent to recognize the depth of the matter of character.[2] Discussions of character involve the merits of the extreme positions of a 'purist' view of character and a 'realist' view.[3] They assess the matters of 'flat', 'round', 'functionary'[4], 'stock', 'actants', complexity, development, penetration, etc.[5] They consider whether the author characterizes through direct or

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[1] The significance of the use of characters in support of the Gospel's structure in no way minimizes the role of temporal elements, geographic elements, etc. in the Gospel. However, many of these elements, while significant for the narrative critic, have been addressed with the emphasis on repetition in chapter 5. As a result, this chapter will focus on the use of the narrative element of characters.

[2] For substantial discussions regarding the matter of character cf. the presentations of D.F. Tolmie, "Character," in *Narratology and Biblical Narratives: A Practical Guide* (San Francisco: International Scholars Publications, 1999), 39–62; Adele Berlin, *Poetics and Interpretation of Biblical Narrative* (Sheffield: The Almond Press, 1983), 23–42; Iverson, *Gentiles in the Gospel of Mark*, 5–9; et al.

[3] The 'purist' view holds that the character is words; the character does not go beyond the words on the page. The 'realist' recognizes the character as a real person that has history and life beyond the printed word. Iverson, *Gentiles in the Gospel of Mark*, 5–9.

[4] The term 'functionary' is the unconverted language of Berlin. Berlin builds upon the designations of 'flat' and 'round' by recognizing a third category of 'functionary'. These terms however are abandoned to prevent the possible confusion with a paradigm that does not include the third category. Thus Berlin uses 'full-fledged' for 'round', 'types' for 'flat', and 'agents' for 'functionary'. Berlin, *Poetics and Interpretation of Biblical Narrative*, 23–24. Using the unconverted term seeks to reduce repetition in basic concepts that would result from differing nomenclature.

[5] For a more extensive overview, cf. Tolmie, "Character," 42–62.

indirect means.[6] They discuss matters that are abstract and complex. This discussion has been active for some time and will continue as narrative critics explore the possibilities of the field of narratology applied to New Testament studies.

Recognizing the attention various narrative critics have given to the discussion of characterization in the abstract, it is important for this study to recognize its limitations. First, as this study considers the placement and use of characters in the Gospel of Mark, it does not enter into these debates of characterization. Instead, it accepts several basic understandings of the role of characters and the process of characterization in the Gospel of Mark: (1) The Gospel of Mark utilizes characterization to present groups of characters that function largely as single characters.[7] (2) While these groups of characters function as single characters, the Mark's gospel does not relegate them to their 'group'.[8] (3) The development of the individual characters in the Gospel of Mark takes place through direct and indirect means (i.e., by the description of them and by their actions, speech and thoughts). Thus, through the direct description of the characters and by the implications of their actions, speech and thoughts, one can assess the individual characters and place them into character groups.[9] (4) Since the groups of characters function in the narrative as single characters, they can be understood collectively as 'flat', 'round', or 'stock'.[10]

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[6] Cf. Tolmie, "Character," 42–47; Iverson, *Gentiles in the Gospel of Mark*, 8–9; David Rhoads, *Reading Mark, Engaging the Gospel* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2004), 10; et al.

[7] Malbon, *In the Company*, 160–164. Malbon argues sufficiently for this corporate use of character in the ancient world. Her discussion of the *Characters* of Theophrastus highlights the use of a grouping of characters to communicate "good" types and "bad" types. The "good" types are those Theophrastus uses to encourage emulation; the "bad" types are those he uses to discourage a behavior and its support. Malbon does well also to recognize that these groups do contain individuals that can act contrary to the group, but nonetheless, the general categories stand. Cf. also Rhoads, Dewey, and Michie, *Mark as Story*, 100–101.

[8] Malbon, *In the Company*, 163–164. Cf. also Tolmie, "Character," 42–47.

[9] Malbon, *In the Company*, 163–164.

[10] Rhoads, Dewey, and Michie, *Mark as Story: An Introduction to the Narrative of a Gospel*, 102.

Second, as is evident from this list, this study does not emphasize individual characters outside their relationship to character groups.[11] The focus of this study centers on groups of characters for two reasons. First, the Gospel of Mark highlights groups of characters. Second, as the individual characters function as members of a group classification, they bear a much more visible role in undergirding the macrostructure of the Mark's gospel. Both of these reasons will become evident in the following presentation and evaluation of the characters.

In addition to limiting the study of characterization in Mark's gospel in these ways, it is important also to recognize how Mark uses the groups in his gospel. Pericopes involving character groups play three primary functions in the Gospel of Mark. First, events in the text serve to highlight and develop the character group's relationship to Jesus and his message. Second, sometimes Mark's gospel uses characters to advance the characterization of another character group. Third, references to character groups provide a source of repetition connecting certain verses and pericopes with other parts of the text. In these three ways, the following discussion classifies the various appearances of character groups in the Gospel of Mark.

With this preliminary understanding, it is important now to present the character groups in the Gospel of Mark. Three key groups stand out. The first two are widely recognized (i.e., the Jewish leaders and the disciples).[12] The last group, the unclean, is not

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[11] For an extensive list of studies on the characterization of various characters in the Gospel of Mark cf. Iverson, *Gentiles in the Gospel of Mark*, 1–2nn5–10.

[12] Joel F. Williams, *Other Followers of Jesus: Minor Characters as Major Figures in Mark's Gospel*, Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series 102 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994), 11; Rhoads, *Reading Mark, Engaging the Gospel*, 11–13; Rhoads, Dewey, Michie, *Mark as Story*, 116–129; Malbon, *In the Company of Jesus*, 70–165. In a similar way, studies that were not specifically on the matter of characterization have focused on or hinged on functionally what is here labeled as the character of the disciples or the character of the Jewish leaders. With respect to the Jewish leaders cf.

as established in scholarship, but it is a compilation of several well recognized groups.[13] This study will define each group according to its parameters, note the traits that characterize the group, and delineate its occurrences according to their primary character function in Mark's gospel.

Jewish Leaders

The first group of characters is the Jewish leaders. The Jewish leaders in the Gospel of Mark are political and religious leaders of the Jewish establishment present at the time of the setting for the Gospel of Mark. Jewish leaders thus include leaders of synagogues, Pharisees, Herodians, scribes, elders, chief priests, Sadducees, members of the council, and Herod and his relations.[14] It does not include Pilate and other Gentiles who are ruling in the midst of the Jews but are not defined by Jewish considerations. The primary characteristic of the Jewish leaders is their conflict with Jesus; although on occasion this character group demonstrates a proper understanding and desire for the kingdom of God (e.g., Joseph of Arimathea, Jairus, and one of the scribes).[15]

Joanna Dewey, *Markan Public Debate*. With respect to discipleship cf. e.g. Ernest Best, *Disciples and Discipleship*.

[13] Rhoads, *Mark as Story*, 129. Scholars often label many of the characters in this group "minor characters" or some other catch all category. Since these characters do not reappear in the narrative, they are not considered an ongoing character. Yet they are similar enough to study together. Cf. Rhoads, *Reading Mark, Engaging the Gospel*, 13; Malbon, *In the Company of Jesus*, 189–194; Williams, *Other Followers of Jesus*, 11–14; et al.

[14] While Herod is part of the Roman establishment, he is such as a puppet ruler who provides a semblance of the sovereignty that ended with Herod the Great. Marcus, *Mark 1–8*, 392. In addition, Mark highlights Herod's kingship, even though Herod Antipas was merely a tetrarch; in contrast, he does not mention Pilate's position. In addition, two other factors encourage linking Herod as a leader of the Jews. First, the Herodians are linked to the Pharisees in Mark's gospel. Second, Mark explicitly includes the complaint of John the Baptist in the text. This complaint is a matter of Jewish law, not a matter of general expectations. Mark seems to be highlighting Herod's connection as a leader of the Jews. As a result, while Malbon is correct in recognizing Herod's connection to Rome, she misses the functional characteristic of Herod, cf. Malbon's distinction in *In the Company*, 158.

[15] Cf. 15:43; 5:22; and 12:28–34 respectively.

In several pericopes, the Jewish leaders are substantial players in the Gospel of Mark. These pericopes divide into seven groups: 2:1–3:30; 6:14–29; 7:1–13; 11:12–12:40; 14:53–66; and 15:1–39, 42–47. Of these groups, three are clusters of pericopes and four are single pericopes.

The first cluster of pericopes that actively highlights the Jewish leaders and their relationship to Jesus begins at 2:1. Traditionally, this cluster includes five pericopes in which there is an increase in conflict between Jesus and their character.[16] The first pericope, 2:1–12, presents Jesus as one who has authority to forgive sins. The scribes oppose this authority; they, as highlighted in 1:22, do not have the same type of authority as Jesus. Seeing the extent of Jesus' claimed authority, they assume that Jesus is blaspheming. At 2:13–14 there is a break in the generally recognized sequence.[17] Here the crowd was coming to him; Jesus taught them; and he called Levi to follow him. At 2:15–17, the sequence resumes as the scribes of the Pharisees approach the disciples of Jesus and confront them about Jesus' eating with tax collectors and sinners. Then at 2:18–22 people contrasted the actions of John the Baptist's disciples and the Pharisees' disciples with Jesus' disciples. Jesus addresses the question with a teaching. Now, certainly the Pharisees are not the actors in this pericope; nonetheless, the contrast between Jesus' disciples and the disciples of the Pharisees highlights the nascent conflict between Jesus and the Jewish leaders.[18] At 2:23–28, the Pharisees confront Jesus about

[16] For the traditional argument for this pericopal unit cf. Dewey, *Markan Public Debate*.

[17] Contra Dewey's assessment of 2:13–14, cf. Dewey, *Markan Public Debate*, 113. She sees these verses as the parallel to the description at 2:23. However, these connections are tenuous at best, especially when compared to the connections with the events of 3:7ff. and 3:13ff, cf. Dewey 247n122 where Dewey denies Clark's assertion of connection between 2:13–14 and 3:7–12. Dewey herself argues that 2:13–14 bears more resemblance to 3:13–19 than 3:7–12. Dewey fails to see the setting provided by 3:7–12 that compares to 2:13 and the activity of 3:13–19 that compares to 2:14.

[18] Marcus, *Mark 1–8*, 234.

his disciples working on the Sabbath. Jesus responds to the concern with the historical precedent of David in the time of Abiathar. Jesus further asserts his authority by stating that the son of man is lord even of the Sabbath. Finally, at 3:1–6 the sequence, as scholarship generally views it, concludes. At this point the Pharisees, the implied subject of the verb, directly confront Jesus concerning his healing on the Sabbath. The Pharisees and the Herodians, at 3:6, collectively begin to plan how to destroy him.

At 3:7ff., the crowds again appear by the sea and Jesus heals them and casts out demons. At 3:13ff. Jesus appoints twelve to be with him. Following these brief pericopes which highlight Jesus' interaction with the crowds and his appointing of disciples, another episode with the scribes begins.[19] In this episode, the scribes accuse Jesus of being possessed. Jesus argues that he is not possessed but rather binding Satan. In so doing, Jesus accuses the scribes of blasphemy.[20]

As one considers this first cluster of pericopes, 3:22–30 should thus be considered. The similarities between 2:1–12 and 3:22–30 are clear: (1) Both pericopes are separated from the main cluster by interaction with the crowds by the sea; (2) Both pericopes are separated from the main cluster by a calling/appointment of disciples; (3) Both pericopes present the scribes in conflict with Jesus; (4) Both pericopes accuse someone of blasphemy.[21] These connections suggest that 2:1–12 and 3:22–30 may serve similar structural functions. They both may be part of the cluster; they both may stand outside the first cluster.

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[19] 3:22–30.

[20] Cf. Van Iersel, *Mark*, 172; Marcus, *Mark 1–8*, 283–285; et al.

[21] Even though Dewey does not make structural connection between 2:1–12 and 3:22–30, she does recognize the 'blasphemy' connection between 2:7 and 3:22–30. Cf. Dewey, *Markan Public Debate*, 124.

The second cluster, 11:12–12:40, continues the conflict between Jesus and the Jewish leaders. The cluster begins with Jesus cursing the fig tree because it was not its season. In the midst of this account, Jesus enters the temple area and accuses the people of making the house of prayer into a den of robbers. Upon hearing this charge, the chief priests and the scribes echo the search of the Pharisees and Herodians at 3:6 as they look for a way to destroy him.[22] After Jesus and the disciples see that the fig tree is completely withered, a new sequence of pericopes involving conflict between Jesus and the Jewish leaders begins.[23] In this sequence, different classifications of Jewish leaders approach Jesus each asking him a challenging question. These questions begin where the first cluster left off; they question Jesus' authority. On this occasion the collective group (i.e. the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders) begin the cluster by asking Jesus from where his authority comes. Jesus responds to them with a question. Upon hearing no response he asserts that he will not answer their question. Instead Jesus responds with the parable of the tenants, a parable that bears clear implications of judgment upon the Jewish leaders. At 12:13–17, some of the Pharisees and Herodians approach Jesus with a question intending to trap Jesus; Jesus answers judiciously. Then in the next pericope, 12:19–27, the Sadducees present Jesus with another question. Again Jesus responds to the question with wisdom. Finally, at 12:28–34, one of the scribes asks one more question. Jesus responds and the scribe recognizes the answer as a good answer. Jesus then concludes the sequence with a question for the Jewish leaders.

The third and final cluster of pericopes runs from 15:1–39. This grouping of pericopes involves the Jewish leaders in significant roles on three occasions, but their

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[22] Cf. 11:18.

[23] Cf. Moloney, *The Gospel of Mark*, 229; Malbon, *In the Company of Jesus*, 146–148; et al.

roles are only minimal. The unit begins with a transfer of action; the chief priests, elders, scribes, and the whole Council bind Jesus and send him to Pilate.[24] The focus continues to be on Pilate and his relationship to Jesus as the Jewish leaders encourage Pilate by inciting the crowds to call for Jesus' crucifixion.[25] The final interaction presents the chief priests and the scribes as some of the many mockers of Jesus.[26] Thus, while the Jewish leaders play significant roles in a cluster of actions, they are in no way the focus of the action. The primary action of this unit involves Pilate and extensions of his rule as they sentence Jesus and crucify him.

Beyond these three clusters, four individual pericopes contribute to the relationship between Jesus and the Jewish leaders. The first pericope, 6:14–29, presents the execution of John the Baptist at the hands of Herod.[27] In the second pericope Jesus is confronted by the Pharisees and scribes.[28] The confrontation challenged Jesus on the practice of his disciples not washing their hands. Third, on the night of Jesus' betrayal, the Jewish leaders try Jesus and find him guilty of blasphemy.[29] Finally, after Jesus dies, it is a Jewish leader, Joseph of Arimathea, who buries Jesus.[30]

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[24] 15:1.

[25] 15:10–11.

[26] 15:31–32.

[27] This pericope focuses on the relationship between John the Baptist and a Jewish leader. Nonetheless, it falls under this first category because of the relationship between Jesus and John the Baptist. John is the one who goes before Jesus. Thus if the Jewish leader puts John to death, they will put Jesus to death. The parallels between John's death and Jesus' death confirm this connection. Cf. Paul L. Danove, *The Rhetoric of Characterization of God, Jesus, and Jesus' Disciples in the Gospel of Mark*, Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series 290 (New York: T&T Clark, 2005), 24–25; Malbon, *In the Company of Jesus*, 206–207; et al. In a similar way, at 2:18 the Jewish leaders take issue with Jesus' disciples. Although they do not directly conflict with Jesus, their issue with Jesus' disciples, the ones who follow Jesus, is an issue with Jesus.

[28] Cf. 7:1–13.

[29] Cf. 14:53–65.

[30] Cf. 15:42–47.

In addition to playing significant roles that highlight their relationship with Jesus, the Jewish leaders also appear in nine pericopes to communicate an unrelated point. In the first pericope, 1:21–28, the scribes are presented in contrast to Jesus to highlight Jesus' authority.[31] At 5:21–43, Jesus revivifies the daughter of Jairus, a ruler of the synagogue. Here the emphasis is on the dead daughter and her healing.[32] The third example, 8:10–21, presents the disciples lack of understanding of the bread.[33] While the Pharisees seek a sign from Jesus in 8:11–12, this account serves to provide clear background for the misunderstanding of 8:15–16. Mark's lack of an explicit subject in 8:14 classifies these verses as part of this second category. Even though, the verb in 8:13 is singular and only includes Jesus, the verb at 8:14 does not need a subject because it is so closely connected to the traveling of 8:10.[34] The fourth and fifth instances use the Jewish leaders in a similar way. Both at 9:14–29 and 10:1–11 the Jewish leaders come into conflict with Jesus and his disciples. In both cases the resolution of that conflict results in private explanation and teaching of the disciples.[35] Three more instances also use the character of the Jewish leaders uniformly. At 9:9–13; 10:32–34; and 13:3–13[36] Jesus teaches the disciples that the call of discipleship involves suffering and death; the Jewish leaders provide such suffering in each instance. The final references occur at 14:10–11, 43–52. Here the text emphasizes that Judas is one of the twelve; the Jewish

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[31] Cf. Broadhead, *Mark*, 58–59; Marcus, *Mark 1–8*, 191–192; et al.

[32] The connections between the daughter and the intercalated account of the woman with the flow of blood make this emphasis clear. If anything, this account characterizes Jairus, one of the few named Jewish leaders, as unclean for addressing the needs of his dead daughter. Cf. Numbers 5:2. Thus this account, which presents a Jewish leader, develops the character of the unclean and its relationship to Jesus.

[33] Cf. Marcus, *Mark 1–8*, 511.

[34] Moloney, *The Gospel of Mark*, 157.

[35] Cf. 9:28–29 and 10:10–11.

[36] The reference to the Jewish leaders is at 13:9.

leaders are merely functionary in Judas' betrayal.[37] In each of these instances, the Jewish leaders' primary function is to facilitate the development of other points and characters rather than their relationship to Jesus.

Finally, as recognized in chapter 5, the Gospel utilizes Jewish leaders in the transitional verses. While almost all of those transitions function in one of the two previously discussed ways, one occurrence stands merely as a marker in a transitional verse. At 14:1 the text presents the Jewish leaders. While the verse does remind the reader that the Jewish leaders are in conflict with Jesus, there is no immediate connection with the preceding or the following.[38] It is merely a reference utilized for the purpose of repetition.

In summary, the character of 'the Jewish leaders' appears many times in Mark's gospel. Out of these uses several key pericopes and clusters of pericopes serve as a primary tool for developing their character and relationship to Jesus: Mark 2:1–3:30; 6:14–29; 7:1–13; 11:12–12:40; 14:53–66; 15:42–47. The other references to the Jewish leaders, while significant to the narrative of the Gospel of Mark, do not accent the Jewish leaders. Instead, the references highlight other characters and their development.

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[37] The emphasis is seen in Moloney who goes as far as including the Jewish leaders, both at 14:10–11 and at 14:1–2, as carrying the narrative force of the disciples. Cf. Moloney, *The Gospel of Mark*, 277.

[38] While some scholars connect Judas' betrayal in 14:10–11 as a bracket with 14:1–2, the loss of the scribes at 14:10 suggest that this connection may not be foremost. Contra Moloney, *The Gospel of Mark*, 276–280, 282; Nineham, *The Gospel of Saint Mark*, 370–373; et al. Even if connection is to be made, the use of two types of Jewish leaders to introduce the pericope at 14:1–2 encourages us to understand its role as repetition. Cf. chapter 5.

Disciples

The second character group is the disciples. The disciples are those people who are with Jesus and connected to him.[1] Mark characterizes the disciples by their following of Jesus. Under this description, the character group includes many individual characters within the Gospel of Mark.

While many individual characters in the Gospel of Mark are followers of Jesus, the broad category of the disciples divides into several subgroups. The first distinction within the disciples is a group named the Twelve.[2] Within the Twelve are the first four who were called: Simon, Andrew, James, and John.[3] Within the four is the group of three: Peter, James and John.[4] These three are then reduced to two and one in James and John[5] and in Peter.[6] Finally, Judas, one of the Twelve, is also distinguished as a subset of the Twelve.[7]

Beyond these characters that bear the name of disciples, some other characters explicitly bear the characteristics that define a disciple. In 10:52, Bartimaeus follows Jesus on the way to Jerusalem.[8] In 15:40–41, women are listed as those following and serving Jesus in Galilee and going up to Jerusalem with him.[9]

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[1] Cf. Best, *Disciples and Discipleship*, 62.

[2] E.g., 3:14; 6:7; 14:10.

[3] E.g., 1:16–20; 1:29; 13:3.

[4] E.g., 5:37; 9:2; 14:33.

[5] E.g., 1:19; 10:35.

[6] E.g., 8:29; 14:29–30, 37.

[7] Cf. 14:10, 43.

[8] Cf. Williams, *Other Followers of Jesus*, 152; Malbon, *In the Company of Jesus*, 200–201; et al.

[9] Cf. Williams, *Other Followers of Jesus*, 187–188; Danove, *The Rhetoric of Characterization of God, Jesus, and Jesus' Disciples in the Gospel of Mark*, 128–129; et al.

Three clusters of pericopes,[10] two groups of separated pericopes joined by repetition,[11] and three individual pericopes[12] highlight and develop this character group's relationship to Jesus and his message. The first cluster runs from 3:13–4:41. The cluster begins with the defining of the Twelve. At 3:13–19 the text both names and classifies the Twelve; they were those who were to be with him and who were to be sent out.[13] This designation stands in contrast to an intercalation of the family[14] of Jesus and the question of the scribes.[15] In this intercalation Mark presents the distinction between being biologically connected to Jesus and being family who is περὶ αὐτὸν (i.e., a disciple).[16] Within the discussion that falls within the intercalation the scribes question Jesus' authority to cast out demons (i.e. the same authority Jesus just appointed the disciples to carry out as well).

With this introduction, an extended parable section begins. Although Jesus speaks the parables to the crowd, the explanations are addressed specifically to the disciples and οἱ περὶ αὐτὸν. This reference connects, at this point, the crowd to the category of the disciples (i.e., τοὺς περὶ αὐτὸν).[17] At the conclusion of the parables, the Gospel of Mark again highlights the exclusivity of the explanation. Only to the disciples, in private, does

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[10] 3:13–4:41; 8:27–10:52; and 13:1–14:52.

[11] The first grouping includes 1:16–20; 2:14; 3:13–19; and 6:7–13 and the second grouping includes 6:30–44, 45–52 and 8:1–9, 10–21.

[12] 7:17–23; 14:66–72; 15:40–47; and 16:1–8.

[13] Cf. Best, *Disciples and Discipleship*, 62.

[14] Moloney, *The Gospel of Mark*, 81. While the term in 3:21 is οἱ παρ᾽ αὐτοῦ, it is "widely accepted that in light of Jesus' being at a house and sharing a meal" suggest that this should be understood as his biological family. Cf. also Marcus, *Mark 1–8*, 270.

[15] Cf. 3:20–35. For recognition of this unit as an intercalation cf. Marcus, *Mark 1–8*, 277–279; Moloney, *The Gospel of Mark*, 80–84; et al.

[16] Cf. Best, *Disciples and Discipleship*, 49–63.

[17] Cf. 3:32, 34–35. Cf. Best, *Disciples and Discipleship*, 61

Jesus explain the parables.[18] With these same disciples Jesus proceeds to go across the lake. At 5:1 this extended section involving the character of the disciples comes to a close.

A second sequence is also noteworthy. The sequence from 8:27–10:52 is recognized by the vast majority of scholarship as a well crafted sequence involving the disciples.[19] Introducing this sequence is the healing of the blind man at Bethsaida. While this healing does not involve a disciple in its primary action and thus is not explicitly included in this sequence, it does provide an appropriate introduction for the subsequent sequence which concerns the disciples. The pericope introduces this section through the healing of a blind man at Bethsaida. The healing takes two stages. In the first stage, the blind man could see things but was unable to perceive what they really were. This account relates to the disciples and their ability to see Jesus' teaching. The disciples heard and saw the parables of Jesus, but could not perceive or understand them. They were present at the two feedings but they could not understand the teaching behind them. They did not yet understand.[20] Following their failure to understand, Jesus heals the blind man from Bethsaida. In addition, after this pericope, Peter makes a confession of faith that sees Jesus but does not perceive who he is.[21] Every event that takes place from 8:27–10:45 includes an explanation after the event which clarifies the event for the disciples. These clarifications highlight that, although the disciples had been healed by Jesus, they

[18] Cf. Mark 4:34.

[19] Paul J. Achtemeier, "'And He Followed Him': Miracles and Discipleship in Mark 10:46–52," *Semeia* 11 (1978): 132; Best, *Following Jesus*; Van Iersel, *Mark*, 270–277; et al.

[20] Cf. 8:21.

[21] Cf. Moloney, *The Gospel of Mark*, 165–167; Malbon, *In the Company of Jesus*, 200; et al..

still needed to see more fully. Thus, while the healing does not involve the disciples, it does introduce the opening of the eyes that will take place from 8:27–10:45.[22]

Following this brief introduction, there is a sequence of pericopes running from 8:27–10:52. This sequence of pericopes, often referred to as the 'on the way' section, presents various accounts of Jesus teaching the disciples.[23] Interspersed in the midst of these accounts are several events that took place which facilitated Jesus' teaching. The first event of the sequence is the transfiguration of Jesus. Here, while there is inherent emphasis on who Jesus is in this pericope, Mark uses this pericope as an instruction for the disciples. First the disciples hear the voice which instructs them to listen to Jesus. Then Jesus instructs them providing clarification of the event that just took place. At 9:14–29, the healing of a boy with an unclean spirit highlights two key elements relating to the disciples. It begins with the disciples failing to understand and ends with Jesus teaching the disciples privately about the working of the miracle. Jesus uses the miracle to teach. Later, John approaches Jesus concerning the casting out of demons in Jesus' name by someone who does not follow Jesus and the disciples. Jesus calms John's concerns and explains why it is permissible for someone else to cast out demons in Jesus name.[24] The Pharisees approach Jesus at the beginning of chapter 10; Jesus answers their question and then proceeds to explain to the disciples privately the teaching on divorce.[25] When the children come to Jesus, the disciples rebuke them; Jesus teaches the disciples.[26]

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[22] For recognition of this metaphorical understanding of the implications of this pericope, cf. Moloney, *The Gospel of Mark*, 163; Nineham, *The Gospel of Saint Mark*, 216–219; et al.

[23] Cf. 8:27–9:1; 9:30–37; 10:32–45. Cf. Danove, *The Rhetoric of Characterization of God, Jesus, and Jesus' Disciples in the Gospel of Mark*, 108–118.

[24] Cf. 9:38–41.

[25] Cf. 10:1–12.

[26] Cf. 10:13–16.

Finally, as the rich man asks what he must do to inherit eternal life, Jesus first teaches the rich man and then clarifies the teaching for the disciples and Peter.[27]

The sequence closes much as it was introduced. Jesus heals a blind man. Unlike the healing at Bethsaida, this blind man sees immediately. Upon seeing, he follows Jesus. He responds as a disciple. In this manner, the cluster draws to a close.

The third and final cluster runs from 13:1–14:52. The cluster begins at 13:1 with a disciple asking Jesus a question. Jesus proceeds to answer the question and also answers a follow up question presented by Peter, James, John, and Andrew. The extended discourse that follows instructs the disciples that they will suffer and will need to remain watchful as they face these last days.[28] The discourse concludes with the final imperatives, γρηγορεῖτε(2x), instructions that the Gospel of Mark repeats later in this cluster.[29] 14:1–2 provides transition. The mention of the Jewish leaders resumes the looming conflict between Jesus and the Jewish leaders. At 14:3–9, a women anoints Jesus for burial. This pericope does not include the disciples explicitly, but does provide a clear mirror for the failure of Judas, one of the Twelve. On the one hand, she pours perfume worth more than three hundred denarii upon Jesus and demonstrates her perception of his worth. On the other hand, Judas betrays Jesus for money.[30] At 14:10, there is a continuous account of Jesus and his relationship with the disciples up until 14:52 when the disciples flee.

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[27] Cf. 10:17–31.

[28] Cf. Geddert, *Watchwords*, 223–258.

[29] Cf. 13:35, 37. The subjunctive occurs at 13:34. γρηγορεῖτε appears again at 14:34, 38.

[30] Susan Miller, *Women in Mark's Gospel*, Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series 259 (London: T&T Clark, 2004), 129.

In addition to these three clusters, there are also two groups of pericopes that are connected via repetition. As discussed in chapter 5, four pericopes involve the calling of, the appointing of, or the sending of the disciples: 1:16–20; 2:14; 3:13–19; and 6:7–13. Each pericope centers on the establishment of the disciples. Another group includes the repeated feeding/boat sequence which was also discussed in chapter 5. Two pairs of pericopes compose this grouping: 6:30–44, 45–52 and 8:1–9, 10–21. The latter pericope includes the discussion of Jewish leaders in 8:11–13. But this discussion informs 8:14–21 and thus should be included as part of the grouping.[31] These pericopes focus on Jesus' instruction of the Twelve and their lack of understanding.

Finally, four individual pericopes serve to highlight and develop the disciples' relationship to Jesus and his message. The first pericope is 7:1–23 where the disciples are instructed via the conflict with the Jewish leaders about clean and unclean. The second pericope is 14:66–72 when Peter denies Jesus. The third pericope, 15:40–47, involves the women followers watching Jesus' crucifixion and burial at a distance. Finally, 16:1–8 presents the women's interaction with the resurrected Jesus along with Jesus' instructions to Peter and the others.

The Gospel of Mark also uses the character of the disciples to develop other characters and to illustrate unrelated points. Nine pericopes fall under this category.[32] The first two pericopes help to develop the character of Jesus. As Jesus goes with the disciples to Peter and Andrew's house, he demonstrates his desire to bring healing to people in need.[33] Immediately following this pericope, at 1:35–39, when Simon and those with him

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[31] Moloney, *The Gospel of Mark*, 157.

[32] 1:29–34; 1:35–39; 2:15–17; 2:18–22; 2:23–28; 5:21–43; 11:1–11; 11:12–14, 20–25; 12:41–44.

[33] Cf. 1:29–34.

seek Jesus out, Jesus communicates that he came to preach elsewhere as well. The next three pericopes included in this category facilitate the escalation of the conflict between Jesus and the Jewish leaders.[34] In the pericope that stretches from 5:21–43, the disciples provide a contrast to the bleeding women's faith and Jesus' understanding[35] and highlight the significance of Jesus' action.[36] The seventh pericope in this second category of character usage is 11:1–11 where the disciples participate in the entrance of Jesus into Jerusalem. Here the focus is on Jesus' instructions and entry into Jerusalem; the disciples' role is merely functionary.[37] In the unit 11:12–14, 20–25 the disciples provide the question for highlighting Jesus' cursing of the temple. Finally, in 12:41–44, the disciples are there for the instruction concerning the call of discipleship. In each case the disciples' role is clearly not central.

Finally, the Gospel of Mark employs the character of the disciple for the sake of repetition. It uses the disciples at two points toward this end.[38] At 3:7–12, the disciples are present, by the lake, and instructed to have a boat ready because of the crowds. This pericope provides repetition to connect it with 4:1–2. At 4:1–2 Jesus, the disciples, and the crowds are by the lake, and Jesus needs to go in the boat to teach because of the

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[34] Cf. 2:15–17, 18–22, and 23–28.

[35] Cf. 5:30–34. Moloney, *The Gospel of Mark*, 108; also Marcus, *Mark 1–8*, 368–369.

[36] The inclusion of the Peter, James, and John at 5:37 seems to parallel the transfiguration (9:2) and the Garden of Gethsemane (14:33) where only the three were allowed to be with Jesus. In each of these cases, the magnitude of who Jesus was and what he was doing is evident. Cf. Marcus, *Mark 1–8*, 371.

[37] There is connection between 11:1–6 and 14:12–16. The two disciples in both instances serve very similar functions. Nonetheless, this repetition does not negate the greater context in which these pericopes take place. The former takes place in the context of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem where the focus is entirely on Jesus and his mission. The latter is in the midst of pericopes involving the disciples in which the relationship between Jesus and the disciples is very much in the forefront. As a result, 14:12–16 is included in the first category and 11:1–6 in the second.

[38] 3:7–12; 4:1–2; 6:29; and 14:54.

crowds.[39] Finally, at 14:54, Peter is mentioned to unite the trial of Jesus and the pericope presenting Jesus' denial.[40]

In summary, from the various uses of the character group of the disciples, several key pericopes and clusters of pericopes serve to develop their character and relationship to Jesus in a primary fashion: Mark 3:13–4:41; 8:27–10:52; 13:1–14:52; 1:16–20; 2:14; 3:13–19; 6:7–13; 6:30–52; 8:1–21; 7:17–23; 14:66–72; 15:40–47; 16:1–8. The other references to the disciples, while significant to the narrative of the Gospel of Mark, do not accent the disciples. Instead, they highlight other characters or matters involved with the pericope.

The Unclean

The third classification of characters is the unclean. This classification includes those who have as their primary characteristic some aspect that makes them ritualistically unclean. This classification thus does not include the disciples who violate the ritual laws in 7:1–15 or Jesus who touches or is touched by the unclean. It does include the Gentiles and all Jews whose primary characteristics make them unclean.

Three clusters of pericopes are used to highlight the character of the unclean in the Gospel of Mark: 5:1–43; 7:24–37; and 15:1–39. The first sequence of pericopes that center on unclean characters runs from 5:1–43. In the first pericope, 5:1–20, several efforts are made to highlight the uncleanness of the character. First, the pericope opens and closes with mention of the setting as a Gentile region. Both the region of the

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[39] Peabody, *Mark as Composer*, 121–124, 150, 152. While the term disciples is not part of this verbal repetition, the subsequent connection to the disciples in the remainder of the unit, 4:3–34, provides adequate connection to the verbal inclusion of the disciples in 3:7–12.

[40] Brian J. Incigneri, *The Gospel to the Romans: The Setting and Rhetoric of Mark's Gospel*, Biblical Interpretation Series 65 (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 350. The reference to Peter in 14:54 is widely recognized by scholarship as evidence of an intercalation of 14:53–65 and 14:66–72.

Gerasenes[41] and the cities of the Decapolis are east of the Sea of Galilee, a largely Gentile region.[42] The use of εἰς τὸ πέραν further contrasts this location from the region they have left. Second, explicit reference to the pigs emphasizes the scene as an unclean Gentile region.[43] Third, exorcism took place in the midst of the tombs, a ritually unclean setting.[44] Finally, the character himself was possessed by an unclean spirit.[45]

The second pericope is an intercalated unit that encompasses the healing of two unclean women. In the center of this intercalation is the healing of a woman with an issue of blood.[46] The issue of blood is most likely a chronic issue of vaginal bleeding.[47] The women had been suffering from it for twelve years. As a result, according to Numbers 5:2, this woman has been unclean for twelve years.[48] In Jesus' response to the woman he calls her 'daughter'. The account surrounding this event involves the twelve year old daughter of Jairus, a synagogue ruler. She dies while Jesus is en route. Her death, according to Numbers 5:2 makes her unclean to contact.[49] Nonetheless, Jesus revivifies her.

A second cluster of pericopes centering around the unclean runs from 7:24–37. Introducing this sequence is a pericope with a discussion between the Pharisees and the

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[41] Iverson, *Gentiles in the Gospel of Mark*, 21. The exact location is under dispute. Nonetheless, it is sufficient for this discussion to recognize that the four different place names are all located on the east side of the Sea of Galilee in Gentile territory.

[42] Marcus, *Mark 1–8*, 341–2. The east side of the Sea of Galilee is primarily Gentile region.

[43] Iverson, *Gentiles in the Gospel of Mark*, 22. The pig was an unclean animal that was not permitted to be raised in Jewish lands.

[44] Marcus, *Mark 1–8*, 342.

[45] The text designates the spirit as unclean three times. Cf. 5:2, 8, 13.

[46] Cf. 5:25–34.

[47] Marcus, *Mark 1–8*, 357.

[48] Cf. also Leviticus 15:25.

[49] Cf. also Numbers 9:11.

scribes from Jerusalem and Jesus concerning the matters of clean and unclean.[50] Jesus concludes this interchange by providing clarification of that discussion for the crowds and disciples.[51]

Like the sequence of 5:1–43, the sequence of 7:24–37 opens with a pericope that makes abundantly clear the Gentile nature of the character and setting. 7:24–30 begins with Jesus entering the region of Tyre.[52] The text then presents the women as a Gentile, a Syrophoenician.[53] Finally, Jesus labels her as a dog, a term used for Gentiles, and she does not argue.[54] In addition to her recognition as a Gentile, the text tells the reader that her daughter has an unclean spirit.[55]

The second pericope also bears the marks of a Gentile character. While Jesus leaves the region of Tyre, passing through Sidon to the Sea of Galilee, he still ends up in the area of the Decapolis. As recognized above concerning 5:20, the area of the Decapolis was a Gentile region. Thus the Gospel of Mark presents this healing as another Gentile healing. The pericope focuses on a Gentile character.

The final cluster of pericopes that involves unclean characters runs from 15:1–29, 39. From 15:1–15 Pilate, the Roman governor, is central to the action. At 15:16–20, the occupying forces take center stage. Then at 15:21 Simon of Cyrene is enlisted to carry Jesus' cross. By recognizing him as from Cyrene, the Gospel of Mark connects him to

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[50] Cf. 7:1–13.

[51] Cf. 7:14–23.

[52] Cf. 7:24.

[53] Cf. 7:26.

[54] Marcus, *Mark 1–8*, 463–464. Cf. 7:27–28.

[55] Cf. 7:25.

Gentile territory.[56] Mark's gospel amplifies this geopolitical connection by naming his children. His children bear distinctly Gentile names (i.e., Alexander and Rufus).[57] From 15:22–37 Jesus is crucified. Finally, at 15:39, the centurion declares that Jesus surely was the son of God.[58]

The Gospel of Mark also uses the unclean characters to highlight and develop other characters. At 1:40–45 a leper comes to Jesus asking him, if it is his will, to make him clean. Jesus heals the leper and demonstrates his own desire to make him clean. The scribes describe Jesus as one with an unclean spirit in 3:22, 30. The accusation highlights the relationship between Jesus and the Jewish leaders; it does not further the development of the unclean character. In another pericope, the disciples are sent out and given authority over unclean spirits. Here at 6:7–12, the emphasis is on the sending out of the Twelve rather than the unclean spirits. At 9:14–29 Jesus heals a boy with an unclean spirit. Here the emphasis is on the failure of the disciples to do what they have been sent to do rather than the development of the child who had been plagued by an unclean spirit.

The third and final category includes two pericopes in which unclean spirits are cast out of people.[59] These unclean characters are made clean and restored to their right mind by Jesus. As discussed in chapter 5, they provide three points of repetition in the Gospel of Mark. They do not seem to further the development of any particular character group or any particular point.

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[56] Iverson, *Gentiles in the Gospel of Mark*, 128.

[57] While the Jews in the diaspora demonstrate a willingness to utilize the names of the cultures in which they live, the names here are distinctively Greek and Roman respectively. Cf. Harry J. Leon, *The Jews of Ancient Rome*, rev. ed. (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1995), 93–107.

[58] Iverson, *Gentiles in the Gospel of Mark*, 154.

[59] Cf. 1:21–28 and 3:7–12. In addition to these pericopes, 5:1–20 also provides repetition with these two pericopes. Nonetheless, since 5:1–20 also falls under category one, it is not discussed here.

In summary, from these various uses of the unclean, it is clear that three key pericopes and clusters of pericopes serve to develop their character and relationship to Jesus in a primary fashion: Mark 5:1–43; 7:24–37; 15:1–29, 39. The other references to the unclean, while significant to the narrative of the Gospel of Mark, do not accent the unclean. Instead, they highlight other characters involved with the pericope.

This analysis of the characterization of three key groups in the Gospel of Mark draws the following conclusions: First, Mark clusters pericopes that highlight specific character groups. Two clusters focus on the Jewish leaders' relationship to Jesus: 2:1–3:30 and 11:12–12:40; three clusters emphasize the disciples: 3:13–4:41; 8:27–10:52; and 13:1–14:52; and three clusters highlight the relationship of the unclean to Jesus: 5:1–43; 7:24–37; 15:1–39. Second, there are two groups of pericopes that develop the character of the disciples: (1) 1:16–20; 2:14; 3:13–19; and 6:7–13; and (2) 6:30–44, 45–52 and 8:1–9, 10–21. Finally, many individual pericopes characterize the groups of the Jewish leaders and the disciples. Mark develops the Jewish leaders in 6:14–29; 7:1–13; 14:53–66; and 15:42–47. He develops the disciples in 7:17–23; 14:66–72; 15:40–47; and 16:1–8.

When put into sequential order, these passages represent the vast majority of verses in the Gospel of Mark.[60] They are clearly grouped by Mark throughout the text according

[60] 1:16–20; 2:1–3:6; 3:13–5:43; 6:7–7:13; 7:17–8:21; 8:27–10:52; 11:12–12:40; and 13:1–16:8. Only seventy-four verses do not fall under these groups (1:1–15; 1:21–45; 3:7–12; 6:1–6; 7:14, 16 (there is no verse 15); 8:22–26; 11:1–11; and 12:41–44). These seventy-four verses function in three ways. They support the development of Jesus' character. Jesus' character is central to understanding almost every character relationship in the Gospel of Mark and pervades the entire Markan text. Thus, the character of Jesus cannot in his own character determine structural significance. The verses focus on the crowds who are a character that sometimes falls in line with the disciples, sometimes with the unclean, and sometimes with the opposition of the Jewish leaders. This character does not have enough stability to define the structure through characterization. Finally, the verses provide a point of transition in the text and thus, in this single goal, provide no character development. While these are three important goals, these goals, by their very function, do not support the structure of the Gospel of Mark through their own characterization.

to the characters they feature. Through this strategic placement, these groupings support the overarching structure of Mark's gospel that he highlights through repetition. This strategy is now taken up in chapter 7.

CHAPTER SEVEN

WORKING OUTLINE

The data of repetition and characterization presented in the previous two chapters begins to suggest that Mark intended to connect elements of the text one to another. When these various connections are taken together four distinct sections of material emerge: 1:1–6:29; 6:30–8:21; 8:22–10:52; and 11:1–16:8. These sections demarcate a basic working outline of the Gospel of Mark.

This chapter will present each of these sections. It begins with the generally recognized section 8:22–10:52. Once the chapter presents this section, it will continue with the presentation of the second section 6:30–8:21. Then the chapter addresses the two longer sections. First, it presents 1:1–6:29, then 11:1–16:8. In each section, the chapter highlights Mark's intentional use of repetition and characterization. Finally, after the chapter presents the basic sections of Mark's structure, it will highlight the themes that undergird Mark's entire gospel and support its structure.[1]

Section Three: 8:22–10:52

Many scholars recognize the third section of Mark.[2] The author provides four key uses of repetition and clear characterization of the disciples to set this section apart. Repeated in this section are the following key markers: (1) the phrase ἐν τῷ ὁδῷ; (2)

[1] For a visual overview of these sections please note the figures in the appendix.

[2] E.g. Best, *Following Jesus*; Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark*, 373; Moloney, *The Gospel of Mark*, 162–212; etc. While there is some discussion as to whether the unit includes the healing of the blind man at Bethsaida, many scholars recognize the other points of repetition set apart by the author of the Gospel of Mark.

three formulaic passion predictions; (3) two pericopes about the healing of a blind man; and (4) geopolitical markers. Throughout the section, Jesus clarifies for the disciples what it means to follow him.

Two points of repetition have drawn significant attention to this section: the repetition of 'on the way' and the corresponding repetition of Jesus predicting his passion. These combinations are at 8:27, 31; 9:30–32, 33–34; and 10:32, 33–34. A fourth example of this repetition concludes the section at 10:52 and 11:1. While this verse includes no formulaic passion prediction, Jesus' approach to Jerusalem at 11:1 fills the void as the fulfillment of the passion unfolds.

The integrated effect of the remaining points of repetition and characterization supports the role of these combinations. The repeated use of pericopes in which Jesus gives a blind man sight brackets this section. This repetition accents the internal character development the section seeks to present. The pericope which immediately precedes this section, 8:10–21, reminds the reader that the disciples do not yet understand. They neither see nor hear. At 8:27–33, Peter demonstrates some sight but fails to see clearly. From 8:34–10:45 Jesus teaches the disciples as they systematically go through several cities and regions making their way toward Jerusalem. Through these teachings, Jesus reveals to the disciples what it means that Jesus is the Christ and what it means to follow him. Following this series of instructional pericopes, the section concludes with clarity. At 10:46–52, another blind man is healed. This time the blind man immediately sees clearly and follows Jesus on the way to Jerusalem.

Section Two: 6:30–8:21

The second section runs from 6:30–8:21. While the residue of past scholarship often inhibits the recognition of this collection of passages as a section, scholars do recognize the two major points of repetition that demarcate them, namely the feeding and boating sequences of 6:30–52 and 8:1–21.[1] These sequences bracket the section. In each sequence, Jesus feeds the crowds; the disciples get into a boat; and the disciples do not understand about the bread.

While these sequences bear clear similarities, it is the clear distinctions that affirm these pericopes as a section and not a doublet or a sequence related to the doublet hypothesis. The text makes three significant distinctions. First, the two feedings bear different characteristics. The first feeding bears the markings of a Jewish feeding. The second feeding bears the markings of a Gentile feeding. Second, the text exhibits a clear progression of geopolitical movement from Jewish territory to Gentile territory. Third, the section clearly develops the theme of clean and unclean.

Thus the reader should not hold to a perception derived from form criticism (i.e. that the feeding/boat sequences are part of a doublet or a sequence related to the doublet hypothesis).[2] Instead, the text encourages the reader to view the sequences as a bracket

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[1] E.g. Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark*, 628–632; Moloney, *The Gospel of Mark*, 129–136, 152–162; etc. As mentioned above, form criticism suggests that these sequences might be part of a doublet or at the very least that they are part of two intentionally linked strands. Many scholars continue this conclusion; they thus recognize the connection between the two sequences but fail to see this second unit. Moloney is a prime example of this line of thinking. Moloney presents a clear argument for the clean and unclean theme along with the connection between the two sequences. Moloney also presents a clear statement that links the two healings of blind men; he even recognizes those as a unit. Nonetheless, he maintains the unit, which was initiated during the scholarship of form criticism, that links the feedings/boat trips/healing of the deaf-mute and the blind man at Bethsaida that appear between 6:30–8:26. He even extends the unit to include 6:6b–8:30. Moloney, "Jesus and the Disciples (Mark 6:6B–8:30)," in *The Gospel of Mark*, 115–168.

[2] Cf. Moloney, *The Gospel of Mark*, 152n183. Moloney offers substantial discussion of scholarship on this matter in addition to further resources for understanding the history of the debate.

similar to the bracket in which Jesus gives sight to the blind men. The internal evidence demonstrates that the text presents a concisely woven argument centering around the theme of clean and unclean.

Section One: 1:1–6:29

The final two sections bear similar attributes; but they are larger and more complex sections. The first section is 1:1–6:29. It is comprised of three main parts. The Gospel of Mark accents and announces these parts with several key points of repetition. It also supports them through characterization. Finally, the text brackets these divisions with a threefold inclusio that brackets the whole section.

Three key categories of repetition help to delineate the first section of the Gospel of Mark. First, each part begins with three key verbal indicators. Second the opening of each part presents an exorcism. Third, the parts utilize verbal repetition within its transitional pericopes.

Two key verbal indicators delineate each of the three parts. These indicators provide a cue for the reader that a new part is beginning. The first word used is θάλασσα. As noted before, the Gospel of Mark uses this term strategically in transitional verses. It is found at the beginning of each part and at the key division within each part.[3] The term is doubled up prior to the final part of the first section at 4:41 and at 5:1. The Gospel of Mark draws attention to θάλασσα's use at the main division within each part through the use of πάλιν.

The use of πάλιν indicates the conclusion of parts and notes internal divisions within parts. The Gospel of Mark uses πάλιν to announce to the reader the conclusion of

[3] Cf. 1:16; 2:13; 3:7; 4:1; 5:1; 5:21.

the first division within the first part at 2:1. It draws attention to the return to Capernaum, the location of the event of 1:21–28. At 2:13, it confirms this conclusion and announces the beginning of the second division within the first part. Here the adverb draws attention to the θάλασσα highlighted at 1:16. At 3:1, πάλιν draws attention to the synagogue, the location of the event at 1:21–28, announcing the conclusion to the first part.

This use continues in the second and third parts of the first section of the Gospel of Mark. At 4:1, πάλιν connects what follows to the first half of the second part. It connects θάλασσα and ὄχλος to 3:7–12. It also joins this part to the larger section bringing into mind 1:21 and 2:13. At 5:21, πάλιν draws attention to θαλασσα and εἰς τὸ πέραν at 5:1. In addition, the use of ὄχλος and παρὰ τὴν θάλασσαν draws attention to the concluding divisions of 2:13 and 4:1.

The Gospel of Mark also utilizes three exorcisms to announce the beginning of a new part.[4] Each part's opening pericope records a demon(s) being cast out.[5] Also, in each episode, the demons recognize Jesus in his relation to God. First in 1:24, Jesus is recognized as the 'Holy One of God'. Then in 3:11, Jesus is recognized as the 'Son of God'. Finally in 5:7, the demons recognize Jesus as 'the Son of the Most High God'.

Supporting these indications are a few additional points of repetition. While these points of repetition do not necessarily merit study on the scale of the entire Gospel, they do offer a third category of support for the literary connections made between the parts of inclusios. These additional connections appear between 1:21–28 and 2:1–12; 1:21–28 and 3:1–6; 3:7–12 and 4:1–2; and 5:1–2 and 5:21.

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[4] Cf. 1:21–28; 3:7–12; 5:1–20.

[5] Cf. 1:26; 3:11; 5:13.

Between 1:21–28 and 2:1–12 there are several points where words and content repeat beyond the aforementioned repetition. First, the language of the two pericopes repeats. In particular the use of γραμματεύς[6] and ἐξουσία ἔχω[7] appears in both pericopes. The unnecessary use of the γραμματεύς at 1:22 accents a connection between the two pericopes. It establishes the relationship between Jesus and the scribes as one centering on the issue of authority. This issue of authority, highlighted in the repetition of ἐξουσία ἔχω, is the central theme to both pericopes. This theme finds further emphasis at 1:27 where the mass of people acclaim his teaching as authoritative.

Second, the content of the pericopes is similar. Both pericopes present similar activities. They recount a miracle of Jesus, the amazement of the people,[8] and the questioning of Jesus and his purpose.[9] Both pericopes also contain similar concepts. The pericopes each highlight that Jesus has a special relationship with God. In the first pericope Jesus is acclaimed as ὁ ἅγιος τοῦ θεοῦ.[10] In the second pericope, the scribes connect the forgiveness of sins with the activity of God.[11] Jesus thus confirms his special relationship to God by forgiving sins.[12] The two pericopes also accent the otherness of Jesus. In each pericope the amazement of the people pronounces with a clear statement that Jesus is special. At 1:27, ἅπαντες declare "what is this?" and then proceed to describe his teaching with authority and his power over unclean spirits. In 2:12 πάντας declare

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[6] Cf. 1:22 and 2:6.

[7] The sequence ἐξουσία ἔχω occurs at 1:22 and 2:10.

[8] Cf. 1:22, 27; 2:12. While the verbal repetition is not present between these verses, the basic response is quite similar.

[9] Cf. 1:24, 27; 2:7.

[10] Cf. 1:24.

[11] Cf. 2:7.

[12] Cf. 2:5, 10.

"we have never seen thus!" Finally, the pericopes anticipate the conflict between Jesus and the Jewish leaders. At 1:22 the scribes' lack of authority in comparison to Jesus' authority provides fuel for the ensuing conflict. At 2:6–7 the scribes are beginning to think about this same issue as they question Jesus' authority to themselves. The content of both pericopes encourages the reader to link the two pericopes.

In a similar way there are several links of words and content between 1:21–28 and 3:1–6. In addition to the link of εἰς συναγωγήν accented by πάλιν, the two pericopes both take place τοῖς σάββασιν.[13] They also involve a miracle of Jesus and accent conflict between Jesus and the Jewish leaders.

Additional links support the inclusio of 3:7–12 and 4:1–2. Most significant is the connection between the large crowds. The key connection is ὄχλος.[14] In addition to this word is the accompanying description. Mark develops the description in 3:7–9. The emphasis on size is evident in the repetition of πολὺ πλῆθος.[15] The Gospel further accents the size by the description of the breadth of the origins of the crowd.[16] The discussion of size culminates in 3:9 with the use of ὄχλος. Here the ὄχλος was so large that Jesus requested a small boat on account of them. 4:1–2 picks up this emphasis. In 4:1 ὄχλος is repeated twice. Furthermore, the size of the crowd forces Jesus again to utilize a boat. The verbal link with ὄχλος, its accompanying description, and the need for a boat all support the connection between 3:7–12 and 4:1–2.

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[13] Cf. 1:21 and 3:2.

[14] Cf. 3:9 and 4:1.

[15] Cf. 3:7,8.

[16] Cf. 3:7,8.

The final part also includes addition language and content that encourages the understanding of an inclusio. The key word πλοῖον appears at 5:2 and 5:21. The use of an intercalation in 5:21–43 defines the second half of this third part.

Beyond repetition, the use of characters further guides the reader to understand this three part division in the first section of the Gospel of Mark. The first part focuses on Jesus and his relationship to the Jewish leaders. The second part focuses on Jesus and his relationship to the disciples; it defines what it means to be a disciple. The third part accents Jesus' interaction with unclean characters.

Finally, much as the second and third sections were bracketed by an inclusio, the Gospel of Mark encloses the first section in a three part inclusio. The pericopes of 1:1–8, 14–15 and 6:14–29; 1:9–13 and 6:1–6a; and 1:16–20, 3:13–19 and 6:7–13 bear many similarities and connections that create bookends for the three parts within.

The first of these three inclusios focuses on John the Baptist. In 1:1–8, Mark introduces John the Baptist. John preaches a baptism of repentance.[17] He is dressed in camel's hair and a leather belt and eats locusts and wild honey. [18] John the Baptist distinguishes himself from the one who is to come (i.e. Jesus).[19] In 1:14 John the Baptist is thrown into prison. The pericope 6:14–29 reintroduces John the Baptist to evaluate Jesus. Jesus is viewed in relation to John the Baptist, Elijah or another prophet.[20] Herod thinks that Jesus is John the Baptist.[21] The event of John the Baptist's imprisonment in

[17] Cf. 1:4.

[18] Cf. 1:6. The references to John's dress and diet almost certainly draw one's attention to Elijah (2 Kings 1:8).

[19] Cf. 1:7–8.

[20] Cf. 6:14–15.

[21] Cf. 6:16.

1:14 is recalled in 6:17ff. John the Baptist had been thrown into prison for telling Herod not to marry his sister-in-law.[22] Then the story is told of what happened to John the Baptist in prison.[23]

The similarities in the plots of these two pericopes are too numerous to overlook. Both pericopes are centered on John the Baptist. Both evaluate John the Baptist and Jesus with respect to each other.[24] Both make reference to Elijah.[25] In both, John the Baptist calls for or has called for repentance.[26] Finally, both pericopes tell of John the Baptist's imprisonment.[27] Certainly they do not bear all of the same language, but the coincidence that two different events sound so similar in theme is an indication that these two pericopes are connected.

In addition to similarities in the pericopes, the insertion of the latter pericope into the flow of Mark is significant. The account of John the Baptist's death is not contemporaneous to the plot. If Mark's primary concern was to include the account of John the Baptist's death, a contemporaneous inclusion could have flowed naturally out of the recognition of John the Baptist's imprisonment at 1:14. If Mark felt that the placement of John the Baptist's imprisonment and death was more appropriate in chapter 6, then the first reference to John the Baptist's imprisonment could have been made in chapter 6. Regardless, the insignificance of John the Baptist in the rest of the Gospel of

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[22] Cf. 6:18.

[23] Cf. 6:21–29.

[24] Cf. 1:7–8; 6:14–16.

[25] Cf. 1:6; 6:15.

[26] Cf. 1:4; 6:18.

[27] Cf. 1:14; 6:17ff.

Mark indicates a strategic use of John the Baptist. This placement should be seen as structurally significant.

Also in support of the intentional use of 6:14–29 as an inclusio with 1:1–8, 14–15 is Mark's use of an inclusio that brackets this pericope. At 6:7–13, the disciples are sent out (ἀποστέλλειν). At 6:30 οἱ ἀπόστολοι gather to Jesus again and report all that they had done. This reference is the only time that the Gospel of Mark uses the term ἀπόστολος to describe the disciples. This reference brings the reader back to the flow of the narrative as presented in 6:7–13. 6:14–29 clearly is not part of the temporal flow of the narrative; the Gospel of Mark strategically places this pericope.

The second inclusio of the three-fold inclusio focuses on Jesus. Here the two pericopes are not synonymous. 1:9–15 records the account of Jesus' baptism. Jesus comes from Nazareth of Galilee.[28] The voice from heaven tells the reader that Jesus is His beloved Son.[29] Following the baptism, Jesus is tempted in the wilderness.[30] In this account, Mark makes known that the wild beasts and the angels help Jesus during his time in the wilderness.[31] Then Jesus proclaims the good news of the kingdom in Galilee and calls people to repentance.[32] In 6:1–6, Mark records the account of Jesus returning to his homeland.[33] Jesus teaches and the people marvel rather than believe.[34] The people recognize Jesus as the son of Mary and the brother of James, Joseph, Judas, and Simon.[35]

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[28] Cf. 1:9.

[29] Cf. 1:11.

[30] Cf. 1:12.

[31] Cf. 1:13.

[32] Cf. 1:14–15.

[33] Cf. 6:1.

[34] Cf. 6:2.

[35] Cf. 6:3.

His sisters are with the murmurers.[36] Jesus is not able to do miracles here.[37] He was amazed by their unbelief.[38]

The connection between the two pericopes largely is in their contrast.[39] Certainly both draw attention to the land whence Jesus came.[40] But in the first, a voice acclaims Jesus as the beloved Son.[41] Creation and even the angels help Jesus in the wilderness.[42] In the second, Jesus is the son of Mary[43] who is unable to do the miracles to which the reader has become accustomed.[44] This contrast is clear not only through the multiple references to Jesus' origins in 6:1–6,[45] but also in the statement that Jesus was not able to do miracles there.[46] This statement functions not to convey that Jesus was not able to do miracles there, but that Jesus was a true man. If it were to convey Jesus' inability, the verse would not state, "except for healing a few sick people by laying on hands."[47] Finally, the intent of conveying that Jesus is true man is evident in the fact that Jesus is

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[36] Cf. 6:3.

[37] Cf. 6:5.

[38] Cf. 6:6a.

[39] Although Bauer suggests that contrast is separate from repetition, this paper sees contrast as a negative of the same material. The framework is repetition, even if the content is not synonymous. Bauer, *The Structure of Matthew's Gospel*, 14.

[40] Cf. 1:9; 6:1.

[41] Cf. 1:11.

[42] Cf. 1:13.

[43] Cf. 6:3.

[44] Cf. 6:5.

[45] It refers to his homeland, mother, and siblings.

[46] Cf. 6:5.

[47] Cf. 6:5.

amazed in 6:6. Amazement is something that only others did as they encountered Jesus, not an attribute of Jesus.[48]

Finally, the third of the three inclusios focuses on the disciples. It is composed of three pericopes.[49] Mark introduces the character of the disciples in 1:16–20. In this pericope Jesus calls four disciples.[50] The pericope focuses on the call and response. Jesus calls, and the disciples follow.[51] In 3:13–19, the Twelve are separated from the disciples and made apostles.[52] Here Mark sets apart the Twelve and defines their purpose. They are to be with Jesus and also are to be sent to preach and cast out demons.[53] Last of all in 6:7–13, the disciples are sent out.[54] They are given their instructions as they are sent.[55] Through these three pericopes there is a simple thematic progression: Jesus calls the disciples, sets them apart, and sends them out.[56]

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[48] Joachim Gnilka, *Das Evangelium nach Markus*, Evangelisch-Katholischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament 2 (Zurich: Benziger, 1978), 233; William L. Lane, *The Gospel According to Mark: The English Text with Introduction, Exposition and Notes* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1974), 204.

[49] Cf. 1:16–20; 3:13–19; 6:7–13.

[50] Cf. 1:17, 20.

[51] Cf. 1:17–18, 20.

[52] Cf. 3:14. The textual variant accents their role as οἱ ἀπόστολοι. Several factors encourage the retention of this variant. First, the variant falls in line with the Mark's use of repetition. Second, the manuscript evidence is weighty. Third, there is clear rationale for its omission by copyists. With the cognate verb present in the sentence the word could have been seen as redundant. There are also several reasons not to accept the variant. The omission would certainly be the shorter reading. The copyists could have wanted to have the official classification of the Twelve as apostles. Regardless of whether or not one accepts this variant, the Twelve are still defined as οἱ απόστολοι. The uncontested verb ἀποστέλλη provides such classification in itself.

[53] Cf. 3:14–15.

[54] Cf. 6:7.

[55] Cf. 6:8–11.

[56] Various commentaries recognize this thematic unity between 1:16–20; 3:13–19; and 6:7–13. Cf. Broadhead, *Mark*; Cranfield, *The Gospel According to St. Mark*; Guelich, *Mark 1–8:26*; et al. who see the disciples sections as introducing new units. Although this recognition misses the overall structure of Mark, it does acknowledge the structural significance of the three disciple pericopes.

In addition to the thematic progression of the three pericopes, an external inclusion also encourages their unity. The external inclusio of 3:7–12 and 3:20 sets 3:13–19 apart from the flow of Mark's account. The focus of 3:7–12 is the crowds. As noted earlier, the size of the groups of people is emphasized repeatedly throughout this pericope.[57] The pericope 3:13–19 has little connection with this account, yet 3:20 continues where 3:7–12 left off. 3:20 records that πάλιν ὁ ὄχλος came along. The closest recognition of the crowd is in 3:7–12, and specifically ὄχλος in 3:9. Given this repetition, Mark encourages the reader to understand the relationship between 3:7–12 and 3:20 as an external inclusio.[58] As an external inclusio, it sets apart 3:13–19 as secondary to the context in which it is found.[59] In so doing, it shifts the pericope's importance from outside the immediate context to the greater context of 1:4–6:29.

Similarities in content, aside from the aforementioned, between 3:13–19 and 6:7–13 also support this three-part inclusio. Both 3:13–19 and 6:7–13 begin with Jesus calling (προσκαλέω) the twelve.[60] Also, Jesus gives the disciples the authority to cast out demons in 3:15 and authority over unclean spirits in 6:7. It may be possible that authority over demons is distinct from authority over unclean spirits. The fact that 6:13 records, "they cast out many demons" makes this possibility unlikely. It is clear that here and throughout the Gospel of Mark the terms, δαιμόνιον and πνεῦμα ἀκάθαρτος, are

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[57] Cf. 3:7–9.

[58] Another possible understanding of πάλιν in 3:20 is that it creates an inclusio with 2:1–12. The crowd and the house are both mentioned. Both are healing units. But this direction neglects the fact that the connection between the crowds is just as viable in 3:9 as 2:4. It also neglects the almost excessive emphasis on the crowd in 3:7–9. In addition, a connection to 2:12 confuses the overall structure of the first section of Mark. The only advantage to understanding the inclusio to start at 2:1–12 is that it bears reference to the house. But because the house is not connected to πάλιν, this advantage is minimal.

[59] H. Van Dyke Parunak, "Oral Typesetting: Some Uses of Biblical Structure," *Biblica* 62 (1981): 168.

[60] Cf. 3:13 and 6:7.

interchangeable.[61] The relation of 3:22 to 3:30, which is fairly proximal to the first occurrence, further asserts this fact. The scribes from Jerusalem accused Jesus of performing miracles by the power of the ruler of demons.[62] Yet in 3:30, it is explained that Jesus speaks the words of 3:29 "because they were saying, 'he has an unclean spirit'."[63] These similarities suggest that either Jesus called and gave the twelve authority over demons twice, or Mark divides this account in two to promote the three-part inclusio. Since Mark demonstrates a similar practice with the account of John the Baptist, the latter is more likely.[64]

Thus the first section, 1:1–6:29 is divided into three main parts. These parts are delineated via key points of repetition. They are further accented by the use of characters. Finally, a set of three inclusios set apart the section as a whole.

Section Four: 11:1–16:8

The fourth section is the most challenging. While it is recognized by many as a textual unit, its contours are more difficult to discern. Part of this challenge stems from the use of preformed materials. While Mark could utilize the accounts that best fit his aims in other parts of his gospel, he could not do the same in the passion narrative. The basic contents of the story were standard. As a result, much material is present in this section because of tradition even if it interferes with the primary goals of the author.

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[61] This assertion does not deny the intentional use of 'unclean spirits' for the sake of repetition and thematic emphasis on the 'unclean'.

[62] Cf. 3:22.

[63] All translations used are the authors. With regards to the interchangeability of δαιμόνιον and πνεῦμα ἀκάθαρτος consult also the relation of 5:8, 13 with 5:15, 16, and 18.

[64] Cf. discussion above.

Understanding this challenge, the final section of the Gospel of Mark nonetheless provides clear indications as to its structure. Using repetition and characterization, it becomes evident that the structure of this fourth section resembles the structure of the first.

Two key elements provide the greatest clues as to the structure of this final section of the Gospel of Mark. The first and most recognizable attribute is the temple theme. The destruction of the temple is at issue throughout the fourth section. It appears at 11:12–25; 13:1–4; 14:58; and 15:29–30, 38. These references highlight four parts of the fourth section.

The use of repeated clusters of Jewish leaders further demarcates this section. As presented in chapter 5, clusters of Jewish leaders arise in this section at 11:27; 14:1, 43, 53; and 15:1.[65] Each of these passages provide transition into a new part of the plot. At 11:27 a sequence begins in which the Jewish leadership approaches Jesus and challenges him. At 14:1, the discourse addressing the destruction of the temple comes to an end and the passion narrative begins. From 14:43 until 14:53 there is a handing over of Jesus for trial. In this pericope, Judas and his collaboration with the Jewish leaders highlight the transition. This transition moves the activity away from the disciples as a group to the parallel failure of the Jewish leadership and Peter. Finally, at 15:1 Jesus stands trial and faces punishment from the rulers.

These two key elements of repetition are supported by clusters of character groups. Much as is found in the first section, this fourth section presents an extended part in

[65] A cluster also appears at 12:13. Here the cluster highlights the Herodians and the Pharisees. This grouping hearkens back to 3:6 and serves to connect and continue the conflict of that unit. Another exception appears at 14:55. This use however employs συνέδριον to refer to the Jewish leaders. Thus the cluster does not bear the same flavor as the other clusters.

which the Jewish leaders challenge Jesus, an extended part in which the disciples are instructed and are with Jesus, and an extended part in which Jesus interacts with the unclean (i.e. Gentiles). Interjected within these parts is a fourth part in which there is a reprise of the Jewish leaders' opposition intertwined with a reprise of the disciples' failure.

The first part is most explicit. Much as was presented in 2:15–3:6, there is a sequence of pericopes extending from 11:27–12:40 that highlights the conflict between Jesus and the Jewish leaders. Each pericope accents a different member of the Jewish leaders attempt to catch Jesus in his words. The pericope sequence ends with a warning from Jesus to beware of the scribes.[66]

The second part has two halves: the first half is bracketed with an inclusio; the second involves the disciples' demarcated and demonstrated failures. Both of these units focus on the disciples. The first unit of the second part centers around the Olivet discourse. This discourse was spoken to the disciples; its content was given for the disciples. The second unit of the part includes various groupings of the disciples.[67]

The third part provides a reprise. It presents both the Jewish leaders and the disciples. The unified work of Judas and the Jewish leaders provides a transition that prepares the reader for this part. The comment concerning Peter at 14:54 also highlights this unity. Peter is not involved in the action of 14:53–65; his inclusion is unnecessary. His inclusion accents the relationship of Peter's failure to the Jewish leaders' plot to kill Jesus.

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[66] Cf. 12:38.

[67] Moloney, *The Gospel of Mark*, 277.

The fourth part presents four references to the unclean (i.e. Gentiles). It highlights several who fall under this category: Pilate, soldiers, Simon whose sons are Alexander and Rufus, and the centurion. The inclusion of Alexander and Rufus, an unnecessary inclusion, accents this emphasis.

This last section of the Gospel of Mark is not as neat as the other three. Nonetheless, the precedence of the other three encourages us to recognize the structure of this fourth section even as tradition has made it difficult to discern it with the same level of exactness. Just as the first section breaks up along the lines of characters and repetition, this last section also divides into parts according to characters and repetition.

Overarching Thematic Support

Two major themes further support these four major sections. The first is the theme of hearing and seeing. The Gospel of Mark presents this theme at several key points in the sections throughout its narrative. The unity of hearing and seeing is established at 4:12 and confirmed at 8:18. In the first half of the Gospel, the theme of hearing takes center stage. Hearing is the key sense in the first discourse at 4:1–34. Hearing is also a primary subject of the first of the healing triad of 7:31–39; 8:22–26; and 10:46–52. It is a deaf mute who is healed at 7:31–39. Seeing, in turn, plays the primary role in the second half of the book. The second and third pericopes of the healing triad bracket the third section of the book. The second discourse, at chapter 13, emphasizes the exhortation to see. Thus the theme of hearing and seeing is in the key discourse of the first section, a central pericope of the second section, the bracketing pericopes of the third section, and the key discourse of the fourth section.

The second theme is that of 'following'. 'Following' brackets both the first and fourth sections. As the first section presents John the Baptist at 1:2–8,14–15, he is clearly recognized as the one who goes before Jesus. Jesus comes after him. At 1:16–20 and 2:14 Jesus calls the disciples to follow/come after him. He empowers and sends these disciples on this task at 3:13–19 and 6:7–13. When John the Baptist reappears at 6:14–29 his imprisonment and death reflect that which the one who comes after him will experience. The fourth section begins with people going before and after Jesus. This line picks up the gospel's theme which accents that people are coming before and after Jesus. The discourse at chapter 13 highlights what the disciples should expect as they continue the line of suffering before the authorities. Finally the section concludes with the specific language that Jesus goes to Galilee before the disciples (i.e. the disciples will come after him).

In addition to the first and last sections highlighting the theme, the Gospel structures the third section around the movement that is 'on the way'. This section thematically highlights the call to take up one's cross and follow Jesus. The 'on the way' language highlights this call as they are on the way to Jerusalem, the place where Jesus takes up his cross.

Admittedly, the second section does not highlight this theme to the same extent as the other sections. Nonetheless, even though the Gospel of Mark does not carry the theme overtly through this section, it is present. At 6:45 Jesus sends the disciples to go ahead of him.[68] Mark highlights the movement of the disciples and Jesus in this second section

[68] While going before is not following, it is clear that those who go before Jesus and those who come after Jesus face the same path of discipleship. Cf. 6:29.

with numerous geopolitical markers. These markers make clear that the disciples did not heed the call; they failed to go before and needed to be instructed in discipleship again.

Thus through the use of repetition and characterization the Gospel of Mark presents a coherent structure that guides the reader through its content. It divides the Gospel of Mark into four basic sections and assists the reader of the Gospel in hearing and seeing the message of discipleship.

CONCLUSION

While narrative and redaction criticism have failed to produce a working structure for the Gospel of Mark, this failure is not due to a lack of tools; rather it is related to their slavish adherence to a specific methodology. In fact, when one employs the basic tools of both disciplines, much progress can be made in understanding the structure of the Gospel of Mark. As has been seen, repetition and characterization suggest that Mark's gospel is divided into four parts: 1:1–6:29; 6:30–8:21; 8:22–10:52; 11:1–16:8.

This four-part structure guides our understanding of the text today. On a larger scale, the structure supports the general understanding that Mark's gospel encourages discipleship. The themes of following and hearing and seeing that undergird the entire structure encourage us toward this understanding. On a smaller scale, the structure also bears significant impact. It informs our understanding of specific passages. For example, the structure guides the reader to recognize that Simon of Cyrene is not a hero for carrying Jesus' cross, but another person who plays a supporting role in sending Jesus to the cross. The structure also clarifies some cryptic comments in the text such as "for it was not fig season" in Mark 11:13. Seeing these words in the context of the temple theme in the fourth part helps the reader realize that the comment affirms that it is no longer the temple's season. Given the structure's relationship to the entire Gospel of Mark, the implications of structure are almost endless.

Recognizing these implications, it is appropriate for the work to continue. While a look at repetition and characterization provides a healthy foundation for understanding

the Gospel of Mark, the work is not done. The four parts presented above are roughly divided. Given Mark's intricate work to guide his reader with these four parts, it is a fair assumption to expect the composite parts to be intricately woven as well. Certainly much work has already been done with respect to some sections of the Mark's gospel; but more work remains. In particular more work can be done to delineate the composite parts of the first and fourth parts of the Gospel of Mark. These efforts will likely produce further insights into Mark's use of language that helps the reader digest his gospel personally and present it to others effectively.

APPENDIX

ILLUSTRATIONS

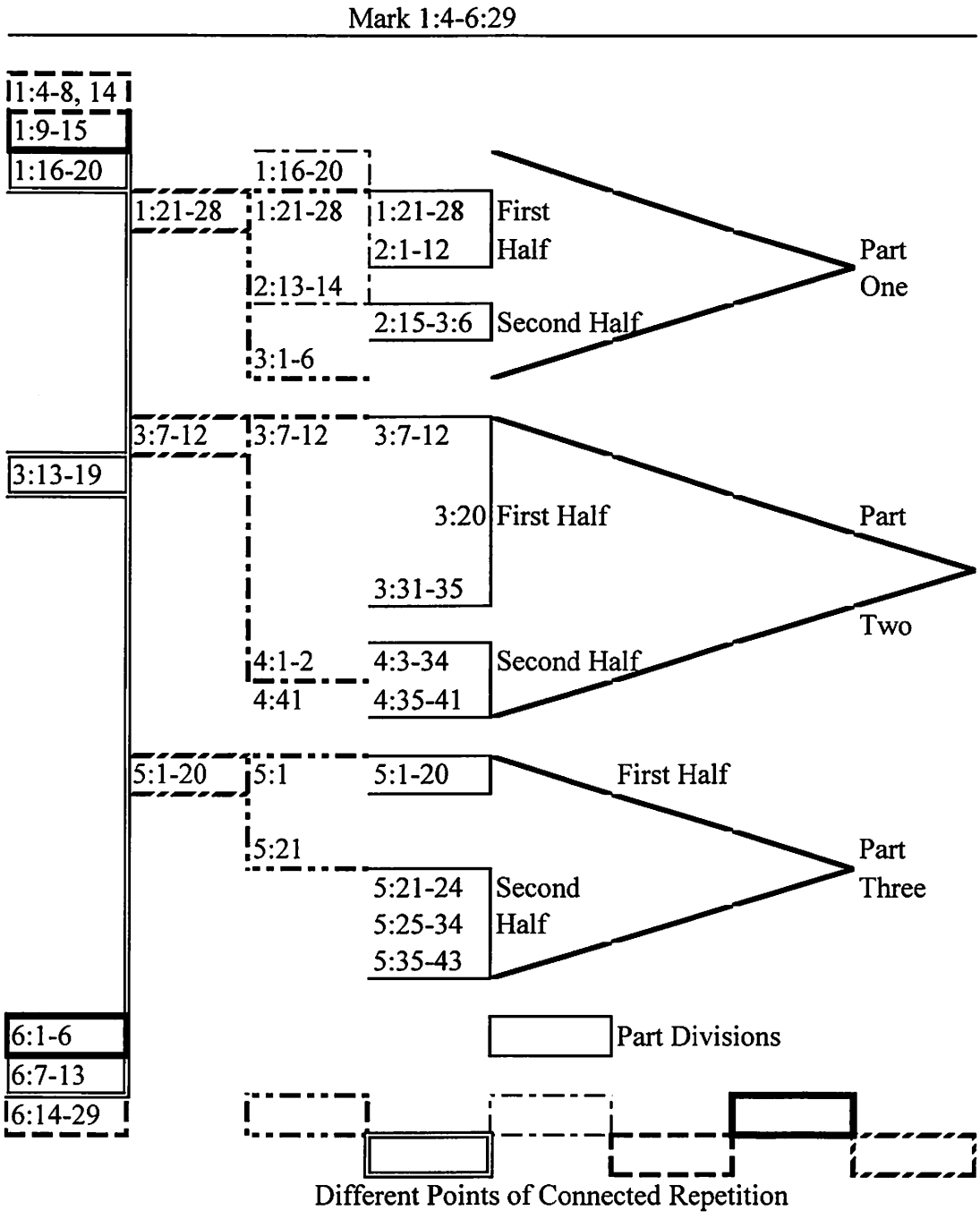

Figure 1. Outline for Section One

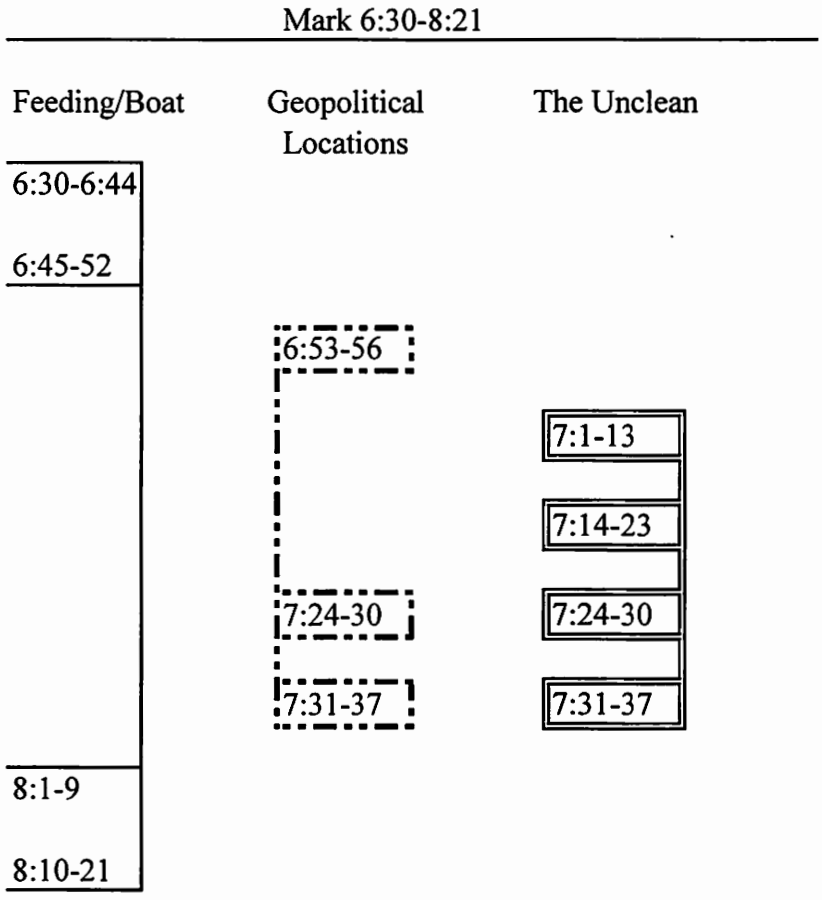

Figure 2 Outline for Section Two

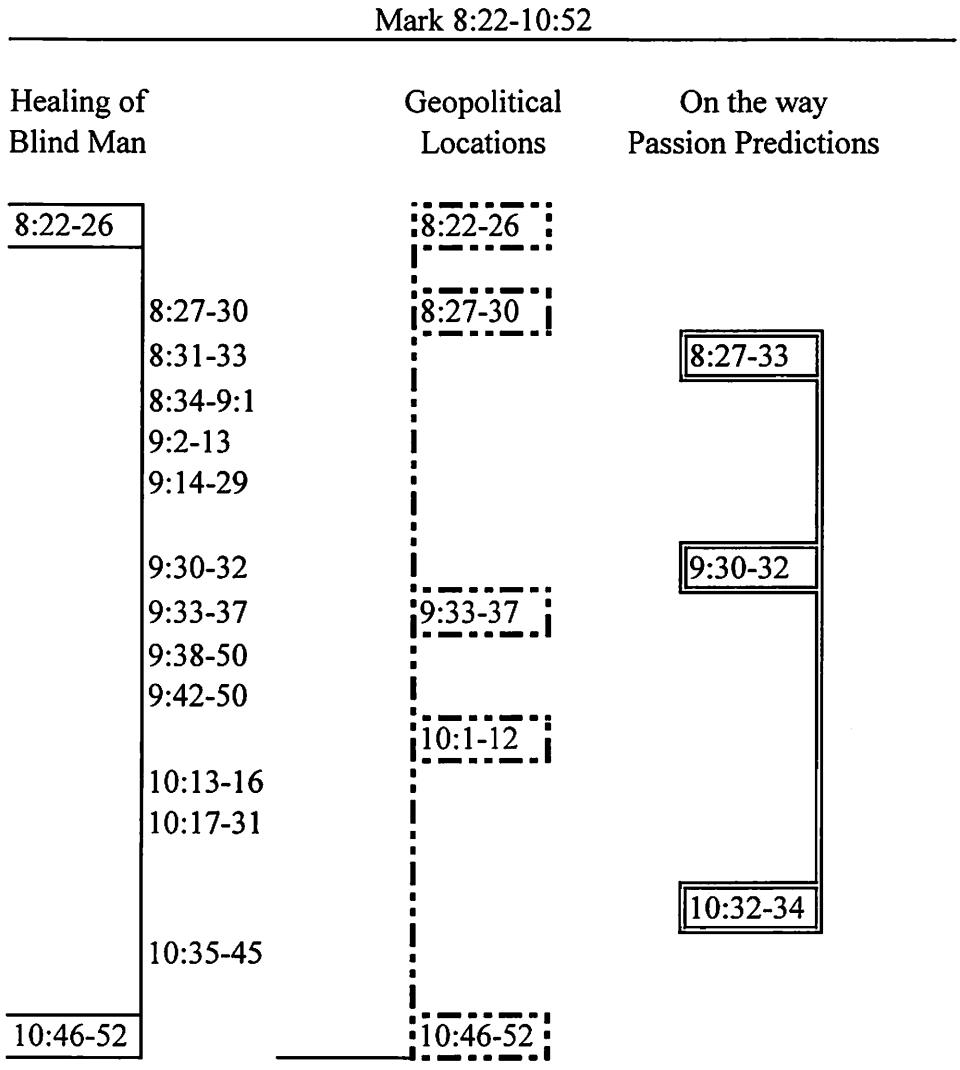

Figure 3. Outline for Section Three

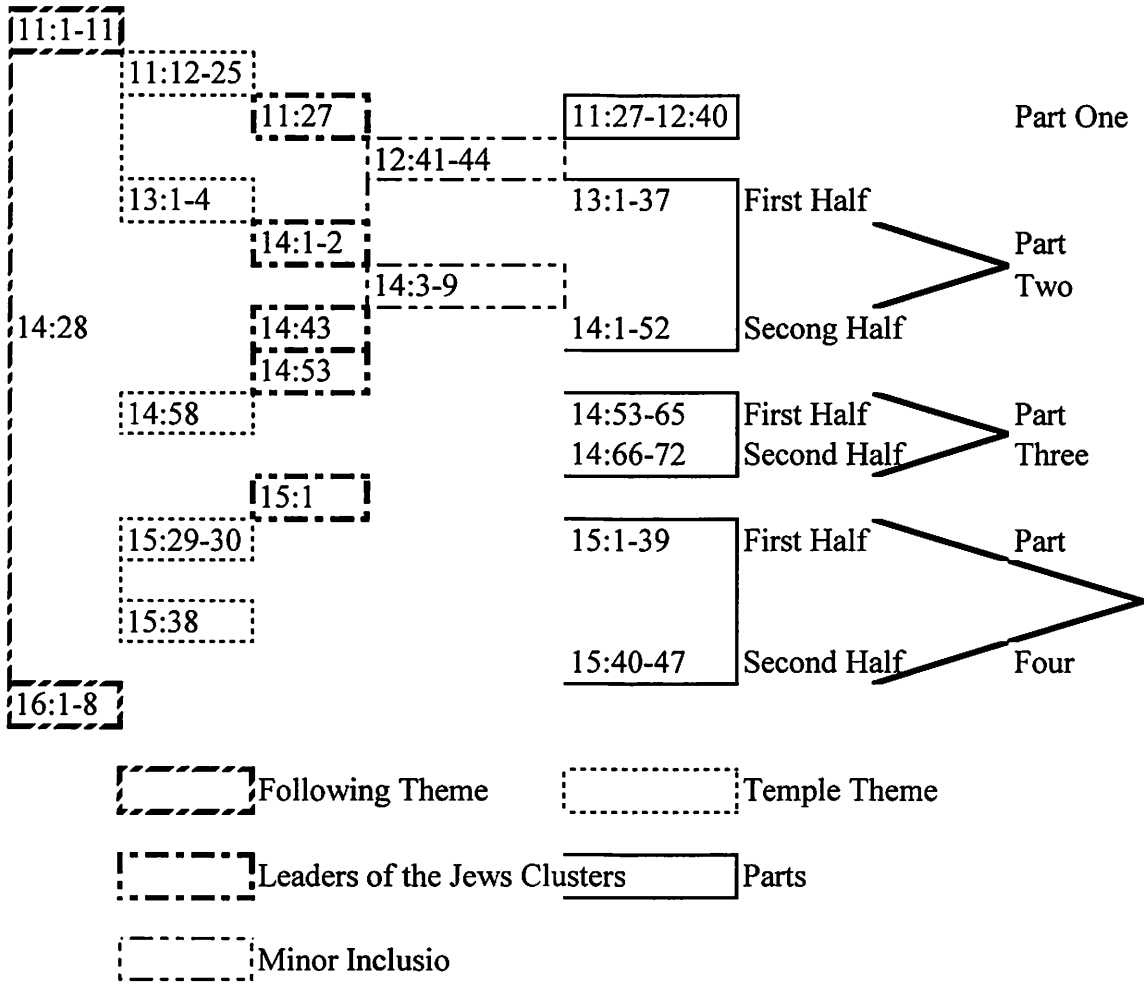

Figure 4. Outline for Section Four

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