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Christologie Markova evangelia 1.2-3  
se zaměřením na starozákonní intertextualitu

**Christological aspects of the Gospel of Mark 1.2-3 with the  
focus on Old Testament Intertextuality**

Diplomová práce

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### **Prohlášení**

Prohlašuji, že jsem předkládanou diplomovou prací “Christologie Markova evangelia 1.2-3 se zaměřením na starozákonní intertextualitu” vypracoval samostatně. Dále prohlašuji, že všechny použité prameny a literatura byly řádně citovány a že tato práce nebyla využita k získání jiného nebo stejného titulu.

V Praze dne 3.7.2018

Oleg Gricyk

### **Declaration**

I declare that I developed this presented work, “Christological aspects of the Gospel of Mark 1.2-3 with the focus on Old Testament Intertextuality,” individually using the sources listed below. I also declare that this work was not used to obtain a different or the same university title.

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Oleg Gricyk

## **Anotace**

Tato diplomová práce se skládá ze čtyři hlavních částí. První sekce se skládá z první kapitoly a soustředí se na intertextualitu. Druhá část tvoří kapitoly druhou a třetí. Dává přehled Markova evangelia a jeho použití Starého zákona. Také se soustřeďuje na intratextualitu u Marka a ukazuje, jak jeho úvodní citace 1.2-3 řídí své evangelium a jeho hlavní témata. Třetí část obsahuje kapitoly čtyři, pět a šest. Zabývá se referenčními pasážemi v Exodu, Izajáše a Malachiáše. V této části se primární pozornost věnuje Izajášovi 40.1-11 a zvláště veršům, které cituje Mark. Kapitola šestá je třetí část a týká se toho, jak Mark rozšiřuje a ukazuje na splnění Izajášova a Malachiášov prorocství. Závěrečná čtvrtá část je kapitola sedma, a hlavně uvádí některé závěrečné výroky a reaguje na hlavní argumenty proti Christologie ze shora.

## **Klíčová slova**

Intertextualita, Markův prolog, Markova úvodní citace, Novozákonní použití Starého zákona, vysoký a nízký Christologický pohled, Christologie shora, Christologie zesponu.

## **Annotation**

This diploma work consists of four main parts. The first section, consists of first chapter and concentrates on intertextuality. The second part consists of chapters two and three. It gives an overview to Mark's Gospel and his use of the Old Testament. It also concentrates on intratextuality of Mark's prologue and shows how his introductory quotation 1.2-3 controls and drives his Gospel and its main themes. The third section includes chapters four, five and six. It deals with referential passages in Exodus, Isaiah and Malachi. In this part primary attention is given to Isaiah 40.1-11 and especially to the verses that Mark quotes. Chapter six is the third section and is concerned with Mark's extension and fulfilling explanation of Isaiah, Exodus/Malachi prophecies. It shows how Christology from above is introduced in this early Gospel. The fourth section is chapter seven and mainly gives some concluding statements and draws from main arguments against high Christology as well as for it.

## **Keywords**

Intertextuality, intratextuality, Mark's prologue, Mark's introductory quotation, New Testament use of Old Testament, high and low Christological view, Christology from above, Christology from below

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## **List of abbreviations**

Cf: Compare

Ibid: Citation same as the proceeding reference

Vv: Verses

NASB: New American Standard Bible

## Introduction

I have a personal interest in the thesis I chose. As a preacher and teacher of the Bible I am trying to do my best in interpreting and transmitting the God's truth to his church. Being introduced to the method of intertextuality I was attempting to understand if this new method of interpretation can help in understanding Bible better or if this method is another confusing strategy of Christ's enemy.

In my thesis I will discuss the intertextual method of interpretation. I will attempt to show the negative sides of this method and its positive use in interpreting the New Testament that has the Old Testament etched into it. I would also be questioning if the intertextual method brings to biblical hermeneutics anything new or if it is just an old method with a new name. We will see that in scholarly circles there is no one general concept of what intertextuality is. Different authors use this term differently. For clarity's sake I would divide term intertextuality into two main categories. This would be my personal way of seeing how this term is used and what might be the essential problem with it. I will also give some suggestions on whether we should use this term in biblical theology or not. I will further examine how far one can go with this modern hermeneutical method and how it can lead to absurdity.

We repeatedly find in the Gospel of Mark the question: "*who Jesus is?*" An outsider might think that after 2000 years of Christianity this is not an actual question. But the insider knows that the quest for who is Jesus is still alive and brings much debate, speculation and division. The first time I became interested in how Mark's Gospel answers the question of who Jesus is was in the year 2013 when one the members of my church stopped believing in Jesus as eternal God. After watching a debate on YouTube between professors Sir Anthony Buzzard and Joseph Good on the one side and Dr. Michael Brown and Dr. James White on the opposing side<sup>1</sup>. It was left side's argumentation that the earliest Gospel does not present Jesus to us as the divine being. The right side had nothing to say against this argumentation and immediately brought the argument from John's Gospel. It was after watching this debate, plus conflict in my church when I started to-consider seriously if the Gospel of Mark really represents Jesus as God.

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<sup>1</sup> Trinity Debate: Is Jesus God or the Son of God? Youtube [online]. [cit. 2018-07-05]. Dostupné z: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yn-grOfPDi0&t=165s>

My main concern will be with Mark's introductory quotation. I will examine how his starting quotation directs his whole Gospel. Then I will concentrate on Old Testament texts that Mark uses. We will try to see passages in their own context. I will attempt to show that Mark interprets those Old Testament texts according to their original meaning. In my last section I will draw some conclusions showing that the deity of Jesus is the natural reading of Mark and that it is not the Gospel of John, as the late Gospel, that introduces us to Jesus as God but that this truth is incorporated in the very early Gospel of Mark.

# 1. Intertextuality and the Gospel of Mark

How exactly did Mark, the Gospel writer, use Old Testament texts? Such a question is not new but has always been asked by interpreters of Scripture. Today, however, it seems like we have found a new answer to the old question – a solution that previous generations of interpreters did not realize. The new answer is grounded in a new term – *intertextuality*. In this chapter, I will discuss precisely what new considerations came with the term and what could be the main division in applying the term *intertextuality*.

First of all, we need to clarify how exactly the term 'intertextuality' is used. It could be shown that there is no final agreement on how scholars use this term. I will attempt to explain that there are two primary ways the term might be used. I also hope to show the main difference between those two. We also will look at how far in our modern thought we can go and how a logical train of thought might bring us to irrational conclusions. We will also look at some theories on how the modern term *intertextuality* came into existence and how it is that it became so well-known and widely used. Briefly, we will also examine a few authors in their practical use of *intertextuality* and finally come to some conclusions and assumptions.

## 1.1. Introductory thoughts on *intertextuality*

*“The concept of *intertextuality* is grounded in the ideas of the Russian philosopher and literary theorist Mikhail Bakhtin, who worked in the early part of the twentieth century and recognized that language use is “filled with dialogic overtones.” By dialogic, Bakhtin does not merely mean instances of discourse that are externally structured as dialogue. Rather, he wishes to emphasize the “internal dialogism of the word” that permeates all forms of speech, including forms externally structured as monologues... In other words, as Bakhtin writes, “in real life people talk most of all about what others talk about – they transmit, recall, weigh and pass judgment on other people's words, opinions, assertions,*

*information.” As a result, we continually “assimilate, rework, and re-accentuate” what has come before us and anticipate what may come ahead of us in “subsequent links in the chain of speech communion” (Bakhtin 1986:94).”<sup>2</sup>*

Though Bakhtin speaks about how spoken language works, we can apply it to a written text as well. From the given quotation, we might stress that no text is an island and that each text is in constant dialog with other texts. That leads us to the notion that such dialog would never end and any final interpretations of a given text are impossible to achieve. Therefore, much would depend on a reader's creativity and desire to come up with something new and original. The more texts a reader knows, the more possible interpretations and interactions he/she can offer. And it does not matter if the author of the given text knows himself of those other texts or not. After the text was written, the author loses all control over it. *“Hodges (2015) explains why the term intertextuality is first associated with Kristeva (1980) who introduced Bakhtin’s ideas to French audiences and after being translate to English speaking community.”<sup>3</sup>*

## **1.2. Two types of intertextuality**

I make the following two-type division on intertextuality through my research and the impressions I got from reading different authors on the subject of intertextuality. I realize that we may divide the use of the term intertextuality into many more types and subtypes. This suggested division, however, is built on the fundamental difference of how term intertextuality can be used.

The first type of intertextuality is described as traditional awareness that any new text builds on previously written or orally transmitted texts. Examples might be allusions, echoes, citations, explicit and implicit, or unconscious references that younger texts have toward an older one.

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<sup>2</sup> TANNEN, Deborah, Heidi Ehernberger HAMILTON a Deborah SCHIFFRIN. *The handbook of discourse analysis*. Second edition. Malden, MA: John Wiley, 2015. ISBN 9780470670743. Pg. 43.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. Pg. 43-44.

The second type of intertextuality differs from the first type mainly due to the death of the author of the text. With author's death his (or her) intended meaning in the text also dies. Killing the author's intentionality, we fundamentally change the purpose of reading any text. “*All the reader can do is discover relations among texts, since that is all meaning really is according to intertextuality.*”<sup>4</sup>

### **1.3. First type – Intertextuality as an old practice**

Piégay-Gros in her book “Introduction to intertextuality” insists that in many classical texts, it is easy to see that intertextuality, as a rule, is just a 'modern' word, with the help of which one means an utterly traditional theory of sources.

When Julia Kristeva introduced the term 'intertextuality' at the end of the 60's, it quickly became the important part of any literal analysis. Some confusion comes whether one might think that this is a purely modern concept, or it covers the oldest and most important practices of writing. No text can be written without regarding what was written before it; any text carries, in a more or less visible form, traces of a certain heritage and memory of tradition. In this sense, the idea of intertextuality is a simple and even banal statement of the fact that any text is surrounded by many previous works. In this sense intertextuality is the old concept.<sup>5</sup>

Intertextuality is a device by which one text rewrites another text, and intertext is the whole body of texts reflected in a given work. Thus, intertextuality is a general concept that encompasses such diverse forms as parody, plagiarism, rewriting, collage, etc. Such a definition covers not only those relationships that a particular kind of quotation, parody or allusion can acquire, or act as points and insignificant intersections but also such links between the two texts that are based more on feeling than on strict formal evidence.

Intertextuality, therefore, is a fundamental principle of literature. However, if any work is of an intertextual nature, it is still possible to distinguish between the degrees and subtleties of intertextuality. In some works, there is a distinct seal of a previous work, but in

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<sup>4</sup> *Philosophy and Literature* [online]. 2004, **28**(2) [cit. 2018-04-17]. ISSN 1086-329X. Dostupné z: [http://muse.jhu.edu/content/crossref/journals/philosophy\\_and\\_literature/v028/28.2irwin.html](http://muse.jhu.edu/content/crossref/journals/philosophy_and_literature/v028/28.2irwin.html). Pg. 234.

<sup>5</sup> ПЬЕГЕ-ГРО, Натали, КОСИКОВА, Г. К., ed. *Введение в теорию интертекстуальности*. Москва: ЛКИ, 2008, 240 s. ISBN 9785382004617 (рус.). ISBN 2-10-003518-5 (фр.). Pg. 43.

others, it is not so evident.<sup>6</sup> *“Everything has been said, and we have come too late, now that men have been living and thinking for seven thousand years and more.”*<sup>7</sup>

Intertext might remain unnoticed, and that is why, when it is discovered and understood, the reader feels obvious pleasure – the pleasure that he caught a hint, shared a humorous view of things with the author. The reader feels pleasure and then when he understands the text from a half-word, can enter into a dialogue with the memory and knowledge of the author, get access to the library of books that the author read. The interaction between reader and author is seen and shared. We will see however that in the new type of intertextuality is not a case.

*“Traditional biblical categories, like allegory, typology, and Midrash often assume the source text is entirely malleable to what is being done with it. When the interpretation has been made, there is no further role for the “voice” of the source text.”*<sup>8</sup>

In this form of usage, we might see that intertextuality existed long before the theoretical context of the sixties and seventies developed, when intertextuality became the subject of reflexion and lively introduction into the literary-critical discourse of the era. Intertextuality, thus, does not reveal a new phenomenon to us but allows us to reinterpret and master the forms of the explicit and implicit intersection of two texts. Meanwhile, the goal of intertextuality was not at all to substitute the theory of sources, but to offer a new way of reading and interpreting texts.<sup>9</sup>

#### **1.4. Second type – Intertextuality as the new method of reading**

Now let’s look at another use of the term intertextuality and how it differs from a traditional way of reading texts.

*“Drawing on the work of Mikhail Bakhtin, Kristeva suggested a dialogical relationship between “texts,” broadly understood as a system of codes or*

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid. Pg. 44.

<sup>7</sup> *From Characters by Jean De La Bruyère* [online]. 1688 [cit. 2018-04-16]. Dostupné z: <https://www.ourcivilisation.com/smartboard/shop/bruyere/chap1.htm>

<sup>8</sup> OROPEZA, B. J. a Steve MOYISE. *Exploring intertextuality: diverse strategies for New Testament interpretation of texts*. Eugene, Oregon: Cascade Books, 2016. ISBN 978-149-8223-119. Pg. 4.

<sup>9</sup> ПЬЕГЕ-ГРО, *Введение в теорию интертекстуальности*. Pg. 43.

*signs. Moving away from traditional notions of agency and influence, she suggests that such relationships are more like an intersection of textual surfaces rather than a point (a fixed meaning).”<sup>10</sup>*

According to Piégay-Gros, the notion of intertextuality (first of all, Kristeva and Barthes) arose in controversy with a traditional approach, the method called 'source theory,' wanting to replace it. That is why for Kristeva it was very important to react to the notion that intertextuality is simply a version of the traditional theory of sources. In the book “*The Revolution of the Poetic Language*” (1974), Julia Kristeva emphasizes the importance of transposition as a characteristic feature of intertextuality, which makes it possible to distinguish it from the theory of sources. The point is that the concept of the source puts forward the idea of a static starting point, which in one way or another plays the role of a cause and is subject to deciphering on the part of the reader. Thus, it is assumed that this source can be fully recognized and identified. So that source is a particularly stable object that can be detected. On the other hand, intertextuality is considered as a diffusive force capable of dissolving imperceptible traces in the text.

Further, the concept of a source refers to a text considered as an organism, continuously developing from a specific first principle. The concept of intertextuality, on the contrary, highlights the idea of a split, heterogeneous and fragmentary text.

The very idea of intertextuality differs in all respects from the problems of source theory. To determine the sources of the text means to establish the influences exerted on it, to include the work in this or that literary tradition and, in the final analysis, to show what the originality of this author is. But intertextuality breaks with the very idea of filiation and influence.<sup>11</sup>

*“According to Hirsch’s intentionalism, the author does indeed supply meaning, but this does not really restrict the reader, who can read the text however she likes as long as she does not represent her personal reading as the author’s intention... Whereas the traditional notions of allusion and source study direct us to the intentions of the authors under consideration,*

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<sup>10</sup> OROPEZA, *Exploring intertextuality: diverse strategies for New Testament interpretation of texts*. Pg. 3.

<sup>11</sup> ПЬЕГЕ-ГРО, *Введение в теорию интертекстуальности*. Pg. 73-76.



*intertextual theory declares those intentions unnecessary, unavailable, and irrelevant.*"<sup>12</sup>

Intertextuality does not offer any guiding principle and does not allow you to establish a cause-effect relationship between works. *"The metaphors of development, organism, and evolution, with which the work is described, give way to metaphors of textile and fabric, giving an idea of what a text is."*<sup>13</sup> In this sense, intertextuality does not require a method of reading that would allow establishing its genealogy or substitute in the author's place a critic who can determine the range of his reading. It is the depths of collective, impersonal memory that inform the text of its intertextuality. On the other hand, the theory of sources assumes the presence of individual-specific memory.<sup>14</sup>

Intertext is not limited to the localization of the traces left by it. The reader must also fulfil the role assigned to him by the text. He can become an accomplice of the narrator or the author and can be involved as an interpreter able to discern the real meaning behind the parable, to understand the indirect way of expression. Intertext is used as a mask to be torn down, or like a code to be decrypted. Intertext performs many different functions, and they cannot in advance be envisaged by trying to compile a complete list of them. Just as the way in which intertext invites the reader to be active in the performance which will be changed each time, so also these methods will vary not only depending on the strategy used in the text, but also on the type of reader.

*"Within the paradigm of intertextuality... the meaning potential of both texts is altered through the very intertextual reference itself. Since a text can be brought into relationship not only with one but also with many other texts, intertextuality involves the exploration of the decentralization of meaning through references to other texts."*<sup>15</sup>

Therefore, the task is not to determine how to read intertextuality, but to show how different levels of reading coexist in the same work.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> *Philosophy and Literature* [online]. Pg. 234-235, 236.

<sup>13</sup> ПЬЕГЕ-ГРО, *Введение в теорию интертекстуальности*. Pg. 75.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.* Pg. 77.

<sup>15</sup> OROPEZA, *Exploring intertextuality: diverse strategies for New Testament interpretation of texts*. Pg. 130.

<sup>16</sup> ПЬЕГЕ-ГРО, *Введение в теорию интертекстуальности*. Pg. 132-133.

*“The word's original meaning and its typical ongoing definition is the synchronic study of multiple linkages among texts that are not the result of authorial intent but are often considered only from the readers' viewpoint. Accordingly, intertextuality associates at least two texts (and their context), which creates a new context in which to understand a text (often the earlier text); this also means that texts are open to the influence of past texts and the contexts of present readers. According to many, intertextuality entails that the reader and reader's new context is what gives most meaning to these linkages. Others would see a fusion of the author's and reader's meanings being combined to produce a new meaning, often a completely new and different meaning.”<sup>17</sup>*

Piégay-Gros further affirms that intertext is primarily a product of the act of reading. She says that we obviously provide complete freedom to the reader. The reader not only gets the right to identify the intertext, but his awareness and memory become the only criteria that allow speaking about the availability of intertext. Intertextuality, thus, is any trace of one's guessing, whether it's an exact quote or a vague reminiscence. And there is no need to prove the objectivity of the texts intersection that are found. This means that the intertextuality has no limits in any way for the reader, nor to any chronology.<sup>18</sup>

The philosophy behind this concept could also be found in the idea of Wilhelm von Humboldt that recently has gained more and more new supporters; he states that *“any understanding is a misunderstanding.”* This idea continues to repeat itself in virtually every work devoted to the perception of the text. *“The modern researchers of the text maintain that any understanding is the “subtraction” of one's meanings in the text.”<sup>19</sup>* If this is true, then, of course, any attempt to understand the intended meaning of the author is a fiasco from the very beginning. Why bother with someone's intentions and not directly go to the personal interpretation – *“what does this or that text mean to me.”*

Kuzmina further shows how Barthes sees and describes the text. She describes that for Barthes the text has a semantic plurality, and the text *crosses* meanings, *moves through*

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<sup>17</sup> BEALE, Greg K., *Seeing the Old Testament in the New: Definitions of and Criteria for Discerning Old Testament Quotations and Allusions*, in BEALE, Greg K., *A Handbook on the Use of the Old Testament in the New* (Grand Rapids, Baker Book House 2012). Pg. 13-14.

<sup>18</sup> ПЬЕГЕ-ГРО, *Введение в теорию интертекстуальности*. Pg. 56-57.

<sup>19</sup> КУЗЬМИНА, Н.А. *Интертекст и его роль в процессах эволюции поэтического языка*. Екатеринбург-Омск: Омский государственный университет, 1999. ISBN 5-7779-0150-6. Pg. 23.

*them, in the text an explosion occurs, the scattering of meaning.* The text is interweaved from a set of similar codes – the languages of culture. Every text is an intertext concerning some other text. The text is formed from the anonymous, elusive and at the same time already read quotations that are citations without quotes. In the text, we cannot find any record of its fatherhood. Therefore, there is no organic wholeness in it. The text can be broken up and read without taking the author into account. “*The text requires the reader to engage in active cooperation. The reader plays the text (as in a game) and plays the text (like a musical score), and is its co-author (does not reproduce but supplements from himself)*”<sup>20</sup>

### **1.5. To where such an approach can lead**

Initially, I did not plan on giving Breed's book much attention as he does not speak explicitly about intertextuality. But it seems to me that in this work I should show where philosophical presupposition about an author's death can lead us. Behind any method, we can find the basis for such thinking that influences the process of biblical interpretation. Reading Breed, one might start to wonder if indeed there is anything left to interpret or if everything just comes to a dead end.

Breed, speaking about different approaches to textual criticism, asks a provocative question: “*can one imagine what the world would look like if the concept of the original text had never been born?*”<sup>21</sup> From the very beginning, one gets the impression that Breed would love such a world and would be happy to live in it if only one could exist. As argumentation follows Breed continues to describe how beautiful the world could be without the original text. “*If there were no original text, then there would be a general acceptance that a biblical text could appear in various nonidentical guises.*”<sup>22</sup>

Reflecting on the world without the original text, Breed, however, uses terms like *mistakes*. Though it is hard to imagine any mistake in a text without original text to which we can compare it to, nonetheless we continue to read as follows.

*“Yet what about copying mistakes—surely poorly copied manuscripts are considered lesser beings...?” and the response will be that “perhaps*

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid. Pg. 24.

<sup>21</sup> BREED, Brennan W. *Nomadic text: a theory of biblical reception history*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2014. ISBN 978-0-253-01252-4. Pg. 55.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid. Pg. 55.

*spelling errors or metalepsis exhibit or coping skills, but a text that is copied poorly may still be—and may sometimes be even more—authoritative for a particular community precisely because of its alterations.”<sup>23</sup>*

For me, it is tough to imagine any community that will take any text as uniquely authoritative precisely because of the accurate knowledge in the community that the text has spelling errors.

Breed continues to paint a new reality where some community has a distinctive gourmet taste for scribal errors. “What is from one perspective a scribal error can be, from the perspective of a community reading that text, divine writ. What is metalepsis from the perspective of the copyist might be beauty from the perspective of the poet.”<sup>24</sup> Though I am not a poet or artist myself, I can suppose that such people have a unique view and insight into a particular matter. But again, it is hard to imagine any, well thoughtful community, where people would take a scribal error as the divine writ. They might do it because they do not know about a mistake but surely not because of it.

By the end of the section, Breed reveals that such an imaginary world is the very world we are living in. There is no need to imagine; we need to accept the reality that

*“there is no original biblical text, and any thought that has ever been thought about the biblical text has emerged in its absence. We have always been thinking without the original text: now we have to think without thinking about the original text.”<sup>25</sup>*

Though historically we can think at least about some thoughts about the existence of the original text. For example, the first recipients of Mark’s Gospel could be one. But Breed probably would make the point that *in our century* (including many previous centuries) such thoughts are mostly unrealistic as it is very improbable that we could find the manuscript that came out of Mark’s hand. But even if we could find such a scroll with all the objective proves that it is the one, for Breed it would make no difference.

After waking up from dreaming and coming to Breed’s scholarly reality the chapter is concluded with his thesis.

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid. Pg. 56.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid. Pg. 56.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid. Pg. 57.

*“There is no more authentic version of the text, no more pristine version, no primary version, no necessary preference for earlier or later or finished forms, nor is there a version with more integrity, and there is no such thing as a corruption. There are scribal misspellings, to be sure, but even these are not bad per se. There are just differences.”<sup>26</sup>*

Looking closely at Breed’s thinking, I am hoping to show how far philosophical presuppositions about an author’s death can lead today’s scholarship. We need to remember that it is not the method per se that leads one to described conclusions but acceptance of a specific philosophical worldview that makes us invent new ways that lead to radically new findings. To biblical scholars, it took almost 2000 years from the resurrection of Jesus to realize that it is not only the author who is dead but also: *“the Bible is not and furthermore never was.”<sup>27</sup>* Next, I guess, should be the scholar him/herself.

Fortunately, I am wrong on my last guess. Though, as we continue to read Breed’s book, we will face many other deaths, but the scholar is not one of them.

*“First, scholars create contexts by choosing their boundaries, selecting “important” elements, and interpreting them and must take responsibility for doing so. Furthermore, scholars must respect the fact that there are plausible justifications for drawing the lines differently. There is no scholarship without drawing lines, but there are no natural, self-justifying lines to simply respect. Second, even after drawing lines, reading a text “in its historical context” does not naturally lead to the discovery of “an original meaning,” since the originating context is always already a multiplicity, not a unity.<sup>28</sup> Here we can see how “the context” is unrecoverably dead. “Thus, if a scholar claims that the original context fixes the original meaning of a text, one may respond that the original context is not original since, after all, it derives its identity from the past. And the context is always not yet determined since its meaning is open to the future in general.”<sup>29</sup>*

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid. Pg. 67.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid. Pg. 72.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid. Pg. 99.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid. Pg. 102.

The next question that Breed asks that eventually will bring things to a new and final death is as follows.

*“What does “meaning” mean?... meaning is not a definite property of particular phonemes, words, or even phrases, and neither is meaning something inside a word or a phrase. Rather, like context, the meaning is “a set of relations” between parts and wholes, “not a possession.”*<sup>30</sup>

Here we see the iron logic. Context brings and makes meaning to the words but because the context is dead, logically meaning is also gone. *“Derrida, Wittgenstein, and Stout are correct: “meaning” as Hirsch understands it does not exist.”*<sup>31</sup> And on this note, I am going to finish quoting Breed's book as it seems enough as an example. One thing though remains mysterious for me. Why would anyone want to write a book with 300 pages of texts that have no meaning?

## **1.6. Probable reasons behind the new type of intertextuality**

Though not every scholar, of course, would agree with Breed's view, *“I also take the point that one should not assume that all juxtapositions are democratic and that all ‘voices’ should be given equal weight.”*<sup>32</sup> Let us, however, try to understand what historical events could influence Kristeva and others to develop their new interpretational approach.

*“Broadly defined, poststructuralism is an umbrella term for a diverse set of critical responses to the crisis of humanism following World War II... The intertextual theory was one facet of a wider effort to reconfigure the relationship of literature to society, and the journal *Tel Quel* served as a crucible for the work.”*<sup>33</sup>

The concept of intertextuality could arise only when the very thought of the autonomy of the text was admitted. The fact that the text ceased to be correlated with history

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid. Pg. 111.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid. Pg. 113.

<sup>32</sup> ED. BY THOMAS L. BRODIE a DENNIS R. MACDONALD AND STANLEY E. PORTER. *The intertextuality of the Epistles: explorations of theory and practice*. Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2006. ISBN 19-050-4862-9. Pg. 31.

<sup>33</sup> OROPEZA, *Exploring intertextuality: diverse strategies for New Testament interpretation of texts*. Pg. 107.

and, most importantly, with its author, with author's psychology and author's design. Piégay-Gros says that it is R. Barthes, who through intertextuality gave sanction to the author's death.<sup>34</sup>

*“Barthes’ announcement of the “death of the author” represents his attempt to displace the historical author as the origin and foundation of textual meaning in favor of a more sophisticated understanding of the sense-event, both past, and present... he argued that a text's sense lies not in its author but its readers and interpreters: its meaning “lies not in its origins” but in its “destination,” which is us.”*<sup>35</sup>

William Irwin takes us behind the veil and shows the political motivation that seeks the redistributive power. He insists that for Kristeva and Barthes it is the social and political change that is the main motivation for forming this new method of reading.

*“They compose their text with the intention of making communication difficult. They do not write in a confusing way because they are themselves confused. Rather, they see communication itself as an evil, used by the power elite to forge consensus for its conservative capitalist agenda.”*<sup>36</sup>

For Irwin, it is Kristeva who laid the foundational standing on which Barthes declares the death of the author and the new birth of the reader.

*“What the author intended matters not at all, since not an author, but only other texts, can supply meaning... Power shifts from the author, who becomes a scriptor, to the reader, who is given hedonistic sanction for unfettered freedom in reading.”*<sup>37</sup>

Irwin continues his discussion and asks why intertextuality has found such a welcome reception in America? He gives a few reasons answering his question. From a student's perspective, it was natural to receive *“ideas in rebellious tone and with exotic French*

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<sup>34</sup> ПЬЕГЕ-ГРО, *Введение в теорию интертекстуальности*. Pg. 78-79.

<sup>35</sup> MCLEAN, Bradley H. *Biblical interpretation, and philosophical hermeneutics*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012. ISBN 978-110-7683-402. Pg. 51.

<sup>36</sup> *Philosophy and Literature* [online]. 2004, 28(2) [cit. 2018-04-17]. ISSN 1086-329X. Dostupné z: [http://muse.jhu.edu/content/crossref/journals/philosophy\\_and\\_literature/v028/28.2irwin.html](http://muse.jhu.edu/content/crossref/journals/philosophy_and_literature/v028/28.2irwin.html). Pg. 232.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid. Pg. 233.

*terminology and personae.*”<sup>38</sup> From a literature professor’s perspective, it is the need and probably even requirement of saying something new.

*“The stage was set for the New Criticism with its emphasis on interpretive pluralism and the text itself. And just as the New Criticism was beginning to look hackneyed it was re-suited in fine French garb courtesy of Foucault, Barthes, Kristeva, Derrida, and company. While a freshman can see that the emperor has no clothes, professors of modern languages reconfronted by the question of justification that greeted the birth of their discipline, gladly donned Parisian apparel.”*<sup>39</sup>

McClean sees the death of an author as something positive. He insists that when the reader/interpreter appeals to an author of the text, he or she limits the textual meaning and imposes their power on it.

*“In the estimation of Michael Foucault, Roland Barthes did not fully resolve the problem of the author... Foucault challenges the romanticist practice of appealing to historical persons as a way of controlling and limiting textual meaning.”*<sup>40</sup>

Irwin, on another hand, debates that the author has all rights to be read and understood in the context of his or her intended meaning. He insists that ethics does not allow us to misrepresent an author's intended meaning and whether or not it is an utterance of a literary text.

*“To treat a text as if its meaning were essentially independent of authorial intent is to treat the text as if it were not a text at all, but merely an entity like a monkey’s randomly and accidentally typed Hamlet. The truth is that we could not make use of such a text at all without making certain basic assumptions about the author and what he or she intended.”*<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> Ibid. Pg. 238.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid. Pg. 239.

<sup>40</sup> MCLEAN, *Biblical interpretation, and philosophical hermeneutics*. Pg. 51, 53.

<sup>41</sup> *Philosophy and Literature* [online]. 2004, **28**(2) [cit. 2018-04-17]. ISSN 1086-329X. Dostupné z: [http://muse.jhu.edu/content/crossref/journals/philosophy\\_and\\_literature/v028/28.2irwin.html](http://muse.jhu.edu/content/crossref/journals/philosophy_and_literature/v028/28.2irwin.html). Pg. 240.



## 1.7. Intertextuality and its use in the books and publications

Let us now take a look at how different authors use the term intertextuality. Mainly I will choose books that have something to do with biblical studies. By this observation, I would like to show that many authors use intertextuality in the old fashion way, namely as the source theory and not as Barthes' new theory.

In the book "Exploring intertextuality" edited by Oropeza and Moyise, it seems that not all authors are acutely clear on what intertextuality is and how to use it. Or it may be better to say that some authors use the term intertextuality just for the sake of the term, not putting much thought to it. In my view, some use this term only because their essay must deal with a book on intertextuality. Let me show in the following examples how the term intertextuality is used.

A. Gignac giving five benefits of the use of enunciation, lists the fourth advantage as follows: "*It shows that Paul intertextuality, namely, Paul's use of citations, often favors passages in which enunciation has an important role.*"<sup>42</sup> This seems like an excellent example when the author does not make much sense from intertextuality and easily interchanges the term for simple "citation."

Gil Rosenberg writing on Gerard Genette says that he uses the term intertextuality in the sense of quotations and plagiarism. "*Making things more confusing, he uses "intertextuality" in a more restrictive sense. It is the first of his five broad categories of transtextuality.*"<sup>43</sup>

Another example would be from P. S. Perry who speaks about intertextuality in two ways. On the one hand, he states that "*the author makes it easier to detect an intertext by using a citation formula.*" On the other hand, Perry claims that "*there is no theoretical limit to the kinds of intertextual relationships that an abstract reader may make with a given text... meaning is liberated by the limitless number of connections a reader may make between one text and the whole universe of texts.*"<sup>44</sup> So it is not what Kristeva adopted from Saussure's key concepts saying that "*literary networks and social systems, not an author's intentions, are key to understanding textual production and meaning.*"<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> OROPEZA, *Exploring intertextuality: diverse strategies for New Testament interpretation of texts*. Pg. 205.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid. Pg. 17.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid. Pg. 219.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid. Pg. 113.

Let us see how Perry, trying to be modern, gives a practical example of what one can do with the text; literarily understood there is “*no theoretical limit to the kinds of intertextual relationships.*”<sup>46</sup> He offers us

*“to hear the Beatles’ “Hey, Jude” in the relationship with the epistle of Jude... one could hear this in at least two ways (and probably many more) in the relationship with the epistle of Jude... The possibilities are limitless, and one can imagine situations in which either interpretation may be used.”*<sup>47</sup>

As weird as it might sound it still seems that Perry did not use postmodern intertextuality to its full potential. His usage is still within the boundaries of citation. It looks like the referential point for choosing this particular song is the name “Jude.” The epistle of Jude then is somehow connected to “Hey, Jude.” Both use the same name as reference point. Being cynical, I would suggest to open oneself to a much wider use. We should choose a song that has no word reference to connect the song with a biblical text. So, I would suggest hearing the Beatles’ song “*Lucy in the sky with diamonds*” in interrelationship with the epistle of Jude. This song historically had many insane interpretations so why not read it saintly so that all potentiality of intertextuality could be revealed.

Evans makes a further outstanding examination of how the term intertextuality is used by various biblical exegetists'. I find it useful and important to quote him more extensively.

*“For the most part, it seems that intertextuality is being used in the way that others of the terms mentioned are used, such as echo or allusion. For example, Gail O’Day, although offering the proper references to those who developed the term intertextuality, equates it with M. Fishbane’s “inner-biblical exegesis,” which she utilizes in her study. Sylvia Keesmaat defines intertextuality in terms of recent literary theory, seeing it as concerned with the ongoing dialogue that texts in a culture have in creating social and ideological systems. Nevertheless, when Keesmaat applies intertextuality to the discussion of the New Testament, she employs an only very slightly modified set of the seven criteria used by Hays. In*

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<sup>46</sup> Ibid. Pg. 219.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid. Pg. 219.

*other words, intertextuality appears to be the same as echo, which closely resembles allusion. Robert Brawley seems to use the term intertextuality as an inclusive term, at times to be equated with allusion, echo and a host of other relations. As a final example, William Kurz simply uses “intertextual” to describe how the plot of Luke-Acts was influenced by the structure of Sir. 48.1-16. He admits: “My use of intertextuality is that of traditional literary studies, not a poststructural deconstruction.” As Stephen Moore rightly observes in his discussion of poststructuralism, “Intertextuality is not what it used to be; the term now trips off the tongues even of conservative biblical scholars discussing the Synoptic problem.”<sup>48</sup>*

Porter considers the use of the term “intertextuality” in biblical studies to be a fad and to be an unnecessary introduction into the field of biblical studies since the term is typically used differently than in postmodern literary studies.

*“Therefore, it may be better to use the phrase “inner-biblical exegesis” or “inner-biblical allusion” instead of “intertextuality,” since the former two nomenclatures are less likely to be confused with postmodern reader-oriented approaches to interpretation, where the term “intertextuality” had its origin.”<sup>49</sup>*

So, we can see how problematic and ill-defined it is. In my view, scholars tried to be modern in using modern language but could not fully apprehend how to use it and what new insight it brings. Is it really the case that for generations Jewish and Christian scholars missed something significant and even essential in biblical interpretation something that now intertextuality can cover?

*“The term intertextuality is at best a rhetorical flourish intended to impress, at worst it is the signifier of an illogical position. And so, intertextuality is a term that should be shaved off by “Dutton’s Razor,” - the principle that jargon that does not illuminate or elucidate but rather*

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<sup>48</sup> EVANS, Craig A. a James A. SANDERS. *Early Christian interpretation of the scriptures of Israel: investigations and proposals*. Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press, c1997. ISBN 18-507-5679-1. Pg. 84-85.

<sup>49</sup> BEALE, *Seeing the Old Testament in the New: Definitions of and Criteria for Discerning Old Testament Quotations and Allusions*. Pg. 15.

*mystifies and obscures should be stricken from the lexicon of sincere and intelligent humanists.*"<sup>50</sup>

## 1.8. Some conclusions

As we have already seen different authors use and present intertextuality differently. Though some try to show that intertextuality always existed, others recognize its newness. *"Although the text references and allusions are clearly evident in ancient texts, the term "intertextuality" is relatively new, penned by literary critic and philosopher Julia Kristeva."*<sup>51</sup>

By now we should get a strong awareness that whenever the term intertextuality is used, we need to make sure that we understand what such and such author means by it. For example, when someone says that *"ancient Jewish exegesis relies upon a notion of intertextuality"*<sup>52</sup>; we need to realize that it would not be the new use of the late twentieth century, though an author himself might use the term in his work in a new sense. That brings some confusion for the reader, but we should be aware of such unpredictable and confusing uses of the term.

Though G.A. Phillips thinks that *"a poststructural intertextual reading for citations, conflicts, and differences is key to opening up Matthew's text and readers"*<sup>53</sup> I am staying with the notion that it opens only readers and not the Gospel of Matthew. My main reason for thinking like that is the accepted reality that post-structural intertextuality is a postmodern invention and therefore not known to Matthew or Mark. That's mean that we need to read Mark's quotations and references in the mode as Stanley described it. We need to look at the text with the eyes of its author. And if the first-century author knew nothing about post-structural intertextuality, we should not read it as if he did.

*"Many, if not most of the writers of the various documents contained within the New Testament, were Jewish, and therefore it is not surprising that they use typically Jewish ways of expressing the message... These writers frequently cite or allude to the Jewish Scriptures... Their use of*

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<sup>50</sup> *Philosophy and Literature* [online]. 2004, 28(2) [cit. 2018-04-17]. ISSN 1086-329X. Dostupné z: [http://muse.jhu.edu/content/crossref/journals/philosophy\\_and\\_literature/v028/28.2irwin.html](http://muse.jhu.edu/content/crossref/journals/philosophy_and_literature/v028/28.2irwin.html). Pg. 240.

<sup>51</sup> OROPEZA, *Exploring intertextuality: diverse strategies for New Testament interpretation of texts*. Pg. xiv.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid. Pg. 67.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid. Pg. 125.

*the Jewish Scriptures is often puzzling to modern readers.”<sup>54</sup> The answer to this issue is not understanding in the postmodern way of reading a text but “an understanding of ancient Jewish hermeneutical methods.”<sup>55</sup>*

I recognize that a new intertextuality might bring more fun and new interpretations of the text. But I prefer truth to hedonism. For now, I am not persuaded that a biblical scholar should use the term intertextuality as if traditional words like allusions, echoes, reference, etc., would not do the good work of interpretation. Though Irwin says that “*allusion died along with the author. It is now naïve and reactionary to speak of allusion, as it had been displaced by intertextuality.*”<sup>56</sup> I see no need for such a senseless death of allusion, or author, or even context with text meaning. For now, I am not persuaded that Kristeva’s absorption with the transformational ideas of Russian literary critic and semiotician Mikhail Bakhtin bring us anything new that we were missing in biblical exegesis and hermeneutics. Furthermore, let us remember that intertextuality is still evolving in its final meaning. “*It is not surprising that intertextuality itself might be reconfigured during the immediate decades that followed the term’s origin.*”<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> Ibid. Pg. 63.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid. Pg. 63.

<sup>56</sup> *Philosophy and Literature* [online]. 2004, **28**(2) [cit. 2018-04-17]. ISSN 1086-329X. Dostupné z: [http://muse.jhu.edu/content/crossref/journals/philosophy\\_and\\_literature/v028/28.2irwin.html](http://muse.jhu.edu/content/crossref/journals/philosophy_and_literature/v028/28.2irwin.html). Pg. 229.

<sup>57</sup> OROPEZA, *Exploring intertextuality: diverse strategies for New Testament interpretation of texts*. Pg. xiv.

## 2. Introduction to Mark 1.2-3

We have already seen that “*There are, numerous ways of how “intertextuality” is used and understood.*”<sup>58</sup> Also Lukeš states that

*“z předchozích přístupů k intertextualitě patrné, společný koncept intertextuality prakticky neexistuje... Obecně lze říci, že je termín intertextualita jakýmsi zastřešujícím deštníkem pro řadu všelikých modifikací a podkategorií.”*<sup>59</sup>

In the following chapter my rare use of the term intertextuality will be in the sense of the source theory – intertextuality that reveals the relationship between the Old Testament and the New Testament by means of allusion, echo, citation, quotation or any other direct or indirect references. Just as Lukeš states

*“Intertextualita je dnes i přes veškerá (převážně metodologická a pojmová) úskalí s ní spjatá (dle S. E. Portera se stala módním pojmem) důležitým exegetickým krokem (v rámci vnitřní biblické exegeze “inner-biblical exegesis”), který má zásadní význam pro biblickou teologii, neboť odhaluje (mimo jiné) vztahy provázanosti Starého a Nového zákona.”*<sup>60</sup>

Also, as Donahue puts it

*“we use “intertextuality” to note the links of the text of Mark’s Gospel to other texts (especially the Old Testament) ... From the very beginning (Mark 1.2–3) the evangelist tells us that the Old Testament is an authoritative text and is being fulfilled in the story of Jesus.”*<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> ED. BY G.K. BEALE AND D.A. CARSON. *Commentary on the New Testament use of the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2007. ISBN 978-184-4741-960. Pg. 14.

<sup>59</sup> BENEŠ, Jiří, ed. *Otevřené dveře: Leviticus 19*. Chomutov: L. Marek, 2012. Pontes pragenses (L. Marek). ISBN 978-80-87127-57-5. Pg. 4,7.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid. Pg. 6.

<sup>61</sup> DONAHUE, John R. a Daniel J. HARRINGTON. *The Gospel of Mark* [Logos]. Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, c2002. Sacra pagina series, 2. ISBN 0-8146-5804-0.

Speaking in such terms I also need to add that I do accept that New Testament is a ‘traces’ of the Old Testament texts. No New Testament text can be fully understood in isolation from Old Testament. Basically, I agree that

*“in language structure, it is now generally recognized that discourse is more than an autonomous level beyond the sentence. Grammar provides speakers with tools for packaging information. And how information is packaged depends on the larger discourse context, the flow of thought through time, the communicative and social goals of the speaker, the presumed knowledge state of the audience, and more.”*<sup>62</sup>

I will also use a corresponding term intratextuality. By this, I will use following simple definition.

*“By “intratextuality” we mean reading Mark as Mark and by Mark. In reading Mark as Mark, we express our interest in the final form of the gospel (not its sources or literary history) and its words and images, literary devices, literary forms, structures, characterization, and plot. In reading Mark by Mark we want to give particular attention to the distinctive vocabulary and themes that run throughout the gospel and serve to hold it together as a unified literary production.”*<sup>63</sup>

## **2.1. Importance of the introductory quotation in Mark’s Gospel**

Does Mark take care in structuring his Gospel or, on the contrary, does he from the very beginning of his writing misquote the prophet Isaiah showing himself to be unreliable in his Old Testament knowledge and interpretation? How relevant is this introductory citation that we find right at the beginning of the Gospel? In this section, we will try to discuss these matters and come to some conclusion.

*“The technique of ancient book production, the physical nature of the volume did not allow the reader easily to scan the body of the work to ascertain its subject. The first sentence and first paragraph performed*

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<sup>62</sup> TANNEN, *The handbook of discourse analysis*. Pg. 12.

<sup>63</sup> DONAHUE, *The Gospel of Mark* [Logos].

*much of the function of the title page and list of contents in a modern codex.*"<sup>64</sup>

In the first three verses of Mark's Gospel, we find very saturated and compactly structured thoughts that prepare a reader for new horizons of God's movement and actions. The reader is straightforwardly introduced to the beginning of the gospel of Jesus which is rooted in the prophetic tradition. It is Isaiah who is referred to, and it is Isaiah's prophecy that gives the primary interpretive key for the Torah (Exodus 23.20) and became the basis for other prophetic writings (Malachi 3.1). Grounding the gospel of Jesus in Isaiah's sayings, Mark shows that Jesus' gospel is not a new invention but Yahweh's faithfulness in bringing his word into fulfillment. When 'the voice' in Isaiah does not know what to cry about, Yahweh says that "*the word of our God will stand forever*" (Isaiah 40.8). "*Observing along with R. Guelich that Mark casts his beginning 'in the light of Isaiah', stress this as setting the general 'eschatological tone' of what follows.*"<sup>65</sup> So that to miss the point of Mark's introduction is to miss the main point of what the gospel of Jesus is. "*Only here in the Gospel does the narrator introduce a scripture quotation (most are on the lips of Jesus) making it likely that this quotation is a key to the understanding of the Gospel.*"<sup>66</sup>

The critical mind, though, might ask if Mark himself put such an emphasis into his introductory quotation. If yes, why would not he then give careful analysis to each quotation he makes and not just put it all under the Isaiah headings? "*The quote given by Mk consists of two parts. The first part of the OT quote, verse 2, is probably from Mal 3.1, although not word by word... Only the second part of the Markan quote, verse 3 is from Isaiah.*"<sup>67</sup> Does Mark realise that his "*ascription is technically incorrect.*"<sup>68</sup> Or as Boring puts it: "*It is remotely possible that this is simply a mistake.*"<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> Earl, 'Prologue', 856; cf. Smith, 'Theory', who notes four categories.

<sup>65</sup> WATTS, Rikki E. *Isaiah's New Exodus in Mark*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Books, 2000. ISBN 0-8010-2251-7. Pg.54.

<sup>66</sup> PAINTER, John. *Mark's Gospel: worlds in conflict*. New York: Routledge, 1997. ISBN 04-151-1365-2. Pg. 26.

<sup>67</sup> WILLKER, Wieland. *A Textual Commentary on the Greek Gospels: Mark*[online]. 12. Bremen, online published, 2015 [cit. 2018-07-07]. Dostupné z: <http://www.willker.de/wie/TCG/TC-Mark.pdf>

<sup>68</sup> MARCUS, Joel. *Mark 1-8: a new translation with introduction and commentary*. New York: Doubleday, 2000-. Bible, v. 27. ISBN 03-854-2349-7. Pg. 147.

<sup>69</sup> BORING, M. Eugene. *Mark: a commentary*. Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox Press, c2006. ISBN 978-066-4221-072. Pg. 36.



To answer whether Mark makes a mistake from the very beginning of his Gospel, we need to discuss the citational method that was common in the first-century context and not to impose our way of citation on the first-century writer. “Stanley surveyed citational techniques and tendencies in both Jewish and Graeco-Roman authors and concluded that Paul generally adhered to the accepted practices of his day.”<sup>70</sup>

From Stanley, we can learn four common ways of the citational method. First, it was common to join several different verses into one single quotation. Second, “*whether the author uses verbatim or adapted citations seems determined solely by 'how well the original wording coincided with the point that the later author wanted to make in adducing the passage'.*”<sup>71</sup> Thirdly, when an author wants to make a point and help a reader to understand and fully comprehend the author's thoughts, it was common practice for an author to change the grammar or even mix or replace a word or phrase. The author also could omit some elements that seemed to him as not crucial to what he wanted to stress. Finally, the simplistic way of adaptation and even naivete with which many authors put different sources together, the sheer obviousness with which they could change the meaning and use of the original quotation suggests that such practices were socially acceptable. “*Stanley then proposes that 'interpretive renderings' are thus an integral part of every public presentation of a written text, a reality well understood and perhaps even anticipated by ancient audiences.*”<sup>72</sup>

Stanley gives the reason why to quote from Old Testament texts at all.

*“From Paul’s quotations we can see that he, like other Jews, regarded the Jewish Scriptures as the final authority on any subject that they addressed. He also expected his non-Jewish audience to share this opinion, which they would have learned by participating in one of his house-churches.”*<sup>73</sup>

Also, according to Marcus, the conflation of OT texts that Mark used in his opening citation is familiar from postbiblical Judaism and is especially common in the Dead Sea Scrolls.<sup>74</sup> By this, I tried to show that for Mark to put different sources under the heading of

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<sup>70</sup> WATTS, Pg. 51-52.

<sup>71</sup> WATTS, Pg. 51-52.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid. Pg. 51-52.

<sup>73</sup> OROPEZA, *Exploring intertextuality: diverse strategies for New Testament interpretation of texts.* Pg. 49.

<sup>74</sup> MARCUS, Joel. *The Way of the Lord: Christological Exegesis of the Old Testament in the Gospel of Mark.* Westminster John Knox Press, 1992. ISBN 0-664-22169-6. Pg. 12.

Isaiah is not irresponsibility or even ignorance from Mark's side but again well-thought out introduction that finds its authority in highly respected Isaiah's prophecy.

*“It is difficult not to agree with Guelich’s conclusion that when Mark refers to Isaiah by name in 1.2a, he is not only classifying the source for what follows in 1.3, but rather is hinting more broadly that his whole story of 'the beginning of the gospel' is to be understood against the background of Isaiah themes. Guelich points to other examples of such themes in Mark...”<sup>75</sup>*

Now can we find in Mark's Gospel any examples of well-thought structure that will give us more reasons to trust in Mark's thought through introduction?

*“Granted that Mark is probably not a first-rate literary genius, it seems untenable to attribute this lack of consensus to Markan ineptitude given the skill evident in, for example, his carefully constructed 'Way' section and thoughtful placement and combination of OT texts. Taken together with Mark's apparent awareness of contemporary literary techniques (e.g., his use of chiasm and hinge structures), these factors suggest that he also understood the importance of his prologue.”<sup>76</sup>*

We also may note that *“Mark's only editorial OT citation, occurs in his opening sentence.”<sup>77</sup>* That also seems programmatic for his Gospel that it was thoughtfully introduced and creatively performed.

## **2.2. Conclusion**

The Mark's Isaiah quotation is the entrance door to the understanding of what the gospel of Jesus is all about. Or putting it into Aristotle's words, it gives: *“an indication of what is to be said so that hearers can know beforehand what the work is about.”<sup>78</sup>* We see that the citation that Mark used is not a misquoting issue but carefully thought through, putting the old Jewish prophecy about Yahweh's coming in the story and proclamation of

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<sup>75</sup> Ibid. Pg. 20.

<sup>76</sup> WATTS, *Isaiah's New Exodus in Mark*. Pg. 4.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid. Pg. 53.

<sup>78</sup> Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, 1414b, cited after Watts, *New Exodus*, 54.

the gospel of Jesus. This method of conflation was common for first and second-century readers and less common in later centuries as scribes erased the name of Isaiah and rewrote the word 'prophet' in the plural.<sup>79</sup> “Several MSS (A L W) read *τιῶς προφήταις* for *τῷ Ἰσαίᾳ τῷ προφήτῃ* in an attempt to adapt this introduction to the mixed citation of 1.2b–3.”<sup>80</sup> Origen in his interpretation wrote: “Mark took two prophecies spoken in different places by two prophets and conflated them into one.”<sup>81</sup> Also, Jerome recognizes that “the quotation is made up of two prophets, Malachi and Isaiah.”<sup>82</sup> We will discuss the importance of the prophet Isaiah in the next section of this work. At this moment we are introduced into the intertextual significance to Mark's Gospel. Though the wording structure in the Gospel starts with 'the gospel of Jesus' plus his identity, the roots of this gospel are found in the dictum of Yahweh himself.

### 2.3. The use of Isaiah in the Gospel of Mark

In the following section, I want to concentrate on the use of Isaiah in the Gospel of Mark. How does Mark use this prophet and what might be the main driven thought that will influence the whole Gospel from 1.2-3 and on?

*“Mark is deliberately setting his story in an Isaian context... he is the only OT author mentioned by name in the Gospel (1.2 and 7.6), and the prologue is full of allusions to Deutero-Isaiah.”*<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> On the other hand, it might be said that: “in the prophets' was originally in Mk, it might have been changed to Isaiah to be more specific. This happened also at other places...” (WIELAND WILLKER, A Textual Commentary on the Greek Gospels, Vol. 2 Mark.). But using the Origen's commentary on Mark we may be sure that this early church father was using manuscript with “Isaiah” version. See ODEN, Thomas C. a Christopher A. HALL. *Mark*. Rev. ed. Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 2005. ISBN 978-083-0814-183.

<sup>80</sup> GUELICH, Robert A. *Word biblical commentary: Mark 1–8:26* [Logos]. [1st ed.]. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1989. Word biblical commentary. ISBN 0-8499-0233-9.

<sup>81</sup> ODEN, Thomas C. a Christopher A. HALL. *Mark*. Rev. ed. Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 2005. ISBN 978-083-0814-183. Pg. 4.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid. Pg. 4.

<sup>83</sup> MARCUS, *Mark 1-8: a new translation with introduction and commentary*. Pg. 147.

## 2.4. Isaiah's evident influence in the Gospel of Mark

*“Mark’s narrative is deeply influenced by his Bible... The Markan story is thus bracketed with references to Scripture.”*<sup>84</sup> According to Logos software, we find 109 references to Old Testament Scripture, 66 allusions, 23 echos, 12 citations and 8 quotations.<sup>85</sup> *“In addition there are at least scores (Kee says “hundreds”; Community, 45) of other instances where Mark echoes the language of the Old Testament, or biblical imagery influences his narrative.”*<sup>86</sup> At a minimum what this shows us is that for a better understanding of Mark the reader must have a broad knowledge of Scripture. Not only this but the reader should always be aware that in any episode in any parable or any teaching or rebuke there might be something from what was already written. As Boring puts it *“here, too, the reader must have “ears to hear” (4.9).”*<sup>87</sup>

Beavis insists that Mark's central theme is the fulfilment of Isaiah's prophecy. It is sad that by the end of the twentieth century she could state that: *“the influence of Isaiah on Mark’s Christology and plotting has not generally been recognized.”*<sup>88</sup> Though in a sense it is not surprising as all that Bowman could find in the connection to the Scripture are only *“63 allusion references to the Old Testament.”*<sup>89</sup> For Boring when Mark uses the word 'gospel', he takes it from Deutero-Isaiah. *“Thus, Mark can be appropriately read as “The Gospel according to Isaiah the prophet.””*<sup>90</sup> Richard Schneck gives wide argumentation on how much Mark is influenced by Isaiah.

*“Schneck finds connections between Isaiah 49 and Mark 3 and concludes that ‘the surrounding context in Isaiah 49 was intended as a help for the catechist in order to explain the mission of Jesus as the servant of God portrayed in Deutero-Isaiah’ ... Schneck concludes that Isaiah was Mark's most important scriptural source and that by quotation and allusion, Mark*

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<sup>84</sup> BORING, *Mark: a commentary*. Pg. 404.

<sup>85</sup> Jackson, J.G. ed., 2015. *New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, Bellingham, WA: Faithlife.

<sup>86</sup> BORING, *Mark: a commentary*. Pg. 405.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid. Pg. 405.

<sup>88</sup> BEAVIS, Mary Ann. *Mark's audience: the literary and social setting of Mark 4.11-12*. Sheffield: JSOT Press, c1989. Journal for the study of the New Testament. Supplement series. ISBN 1-85075-215-X. Pg. 110.

<sup>89</sup> BOWMAN, John. *The gospel of Mark: the new Christian Jewish Passover Haggadah*. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1965. Studia post-Biblica. Pg. 9.

<sup>90</sup> BORING, *Mark: a commentary*. Pg. 406.

*intends to evoke this important salvation-history background for understanding the story of Jesus.*”<sup>91</sup>

We already saw

*“the position of Mark 1.2-3, occurring immediately after the introductory verse and it shows the importance of the quotation. After mention is made of “the beginning of the gospel”, Mark is concerned to show how the gospel is rooted in Old Testament prophecy, especially in the later chapters of Isaiah.*”<sup>92</sup>

And again, for the Gospel of Mark, the prophet *“Isaiah is particularly influential.”*<sup>93</sup> According to Logos Bible Software, we find that the most references in Mark come from Isaiah. By comparison Mark has 13 references to Deuteronomy and 13 references to Psalms, 11 to Exodus and 6 to Genesis. Leviticus, 1 Samuel, Zechariah have 5 references to each of them. The prophet Isaiah has 17 references in the Gospel of Mark.<sup>94</sup> It is interesting to note that just as Mark mostly quoted from Isaiah and Deuteronomy, also *“the Dead Sea Scrolls from Qumran refer to Isaiah and Deuteronomy more than to any other books.”*<sup>95</sup>

We need to mention further that Qumran’s community not only used Isaiah in general terms but was quite specific in finding themselves in Isaiah’s prophecy. We know that

*“at Qumran (1QS 8.12b-16a; 9.17b-20a) Isaiah 40.3 functioned as a programmatic statement of the community's self-understanding in fulfilling the necessary preparations for the 'way' of God's return. Similarly, in 4QTanh, immediately following a prayer (or prophecy) modelled on Psalm 79 where God acts to reverse the calamity of his people, there occurs a series of consolations from the book of Isaiah in*

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<sup>91</sup> MOYISE, Steve. *Evoking Scripture: seeing the Old Testament in the New*. New York: Westminster John Knox Press, c2008. ISBN 978-056-7033-246. Pg. 15-16.

<sup>92</sup> ROWE, Robert D. *God's kingdom and God's son: the background in Mark's christology from concepts of kingship in the Psalms*. Boston: Brill, 2002. *Arbeiten zur Geschichte des antiken Judentums und des Urchristentums*, Bd. 50. ISBN 9004118888. Pg. 117.

<sup>93</sup> BEALE, *Commentary on the New Testament use of the Old Testament*. Pg. 111

<sup>94</sup> JACKSON, J.G. ed., 2015. *New Testament Use of the Old Testament* [Logos], Bellingham, WA: Faithlife.

<sup>95</sup> JOHN D.W. WATTS. *Isaiah*. Rev. ed. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2005. ISBN 0785250107.

*which 40.1-3 is given first place (40.1-3(5); 41.8-9; 49.7, 13-17; 43.1-2, 4-6; 51.22-23; 52.1-3; 54.4-10; 52.1-2). ”<sup>96</sup>*

The use of Isaiah by Mark seems to be in bounds of his contemporary expectations that Isaiah 40ff is still to be fulfilled. In this work I suppose that the exodus from Babylon is not the actual fulfillment of Isaiah’s prophecy, even though there are some (rather many) who think that Isaiah 40ff was already fulfilled in the Babylonian exodus. As Blenkinsopp wrote: *“the message is an assurance of a proximate return to the homeland addressed to Judeo-Babylonians.”*<sup>97</sup> Or as Rabbi Moses Hakkohen suggested and *“reported by Ibn Ezra, that these early stanzas include an allusion to the eventual rebuilding of the Jerusalem temple.”*<sup>98</sup> But as already quoted above, the Qumran community was taking Isaiah 40ff as still to be fulfilled. Later in this work at Isaiah section I will discuss this issue more from the perspective of Ezra and Nehemiah.

*“In the original context, heavenly beings are commanded (plural imperative) to prepare the way for God to lead the captives from Babylon back to Judah for the grand eschatological restoration. This eschatological hope was not realized in Deutero-Isaiah’s time, but the text continued to be understood eschatologically.”*<sup>99</sup>

Also, Pokorny says that *“in Jesus’ time the opinion had already got abroad among the Pharisees that the whole of Old Testament prophecy relates to the last times.”*<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>96</sup> WATTS, *Isaiah’s New Exodus in Mark*. Pg.82-84.

<sup>97</sup> BLENKINSOPP, Joseph. *Isaiah 40-55: a new translation with introduction and commentary*. New York: Doubleday, 2002. Bible, v. 19A. ISBN 03-854-9717-2. Pg. 180.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid. Pg. 181.

<sup>99</sup> BORING, *Mark: a commentary*. Pg. 36.

<sup>100</sup> POKORNÝ, Petr. *The genesis of Christology: foundations for a theology of the New Testament*. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1987. ISBN 0567094502. Pg. 45

### 3. Intratextuality of Mark's introductory quotation

Following Alkier's suggestion: *"before one can jump into an intertextual perspective, it is advisable to do some preparatory work. Texts that are to be evaluated intertextually should always be analyzed intratextually first."*<sup>101</sup> I am going to analyze how vital for Mark's Gospel is his introductory quotation using the definition of intratextuality mentioned at the beginning of this chapter. However, I would not go thematically but for word use only. For example, in the case of the "way" theme I will only analyse all uses of **ὁδὸν** with no mention of those texts that presuppose Jesus as on the way without word specifically being used. One of the reasons I will only study specifically mentioned words is explained well by Alkier: *"one could certainly spend one's whole life in the academic study of intertextual links in Mark's Gospel and never finish or achieve a degree!"*<sup>102</sup>

Doing intratextuality of the Gospel of Mark we might see that though Jesus is in its center, it is the whole Gospel together with the disciples, Herod, the crowd, the high priest and many others who are part of the Scripture. *"It is not merely that particular events are "prophesied" or "predicted," but that the Christian story as such unfolds in accord with Scripture, that is in accord with the will and plan of God."*<sup>103</sup> As Boring shows, we can find this in the style in which Mark writes his Gospel. As an example, we can compare Mark to the other 3 Gospel writers and discuss how Mark uses the story of Jesus feeding the crowd. Matthew, Luke and John explicitly state that this story is paralleling the Exodus story of feeding the multitudes in the wilderness. On the other hand, Mark is never citing or even using the word 'manna' but still expect his readers to make this connection on their own without commenting it himself. *"The narrative throughout is resonated with subtle allusions to Scripture that Markan readers familiar with their Bible will recognize without having it made obvious."*<sup>104</sup>

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<sup>101</sup> OROPEZA, *Exploring intertextuality: diverse strategies for New Testament interpretation of texts*. Pg. 135.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid. Pg. 136-137.

<sup>103</sup> BORING, *Mark: a commentary*. Pg. 407.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid. Pg. 407.

### 3.1. Behold *I send* (ἀποστέλλω) my messenger

The quotation in Mark starts with God who sends his messenger. Looking at the whole Gospel, we will see that the theme of “sending out” has its essential place in Mark. The theme that God explicitly sent Jesus we can read in Mark 9.37. The idea when Jesus sends his disciples to prepare him the way repeats many times. Further we see when other powers send their messengers to stop Jesus from his mission. He who tries to stop Jesus might be even the closest one to him.

#### 3.1.1. Six occasions when Jesus “sends out” to prepare for him the way

In Mark's Gospel, we can find how Jesus himself 'send out' different people and spirits at separate occasions. These repeated “sending” are explicitly connected with preparation for Jesus' arrival.

We can start with the text when Jesus sent his disciples out, where He was going to go, to preach with the authority to cast out demons (Mk. 3.14-15; 6.7).

*“The content of their preaching, ‘Repent’, has more in common with the preaching of John (the Baptist) than Jesus, though it should be remembered that Mark summarised Jesus' preaching as ‘Repent and believe the gospel’. What is missing from the summary is any reference to believing the gospel. Because the twelve concentrated only on the message of repentance, it may be that we are to think of their ministry as preparatory, presupposing that Jesus himself was to follow them as he had followed John.”<sup>105</sup>*

Future more the ability to cast out demons ““*makes the way*” for the Lord's coming triumph over the powers of the *daimonia*, whose sway over the world – with all its sickness and suffering – is nearing its demise.”<sup>106</sup>

The second instance was when two of his disciples were sent to find a tied colt (Mk. 11.1-2) so that the questioner about the colt would send it immediately to Jesus (Mk. 11.3).

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<sup>105</sup> PAINTER, *Mark's Gospel: worlds in conflict*.Pg. 96.

<sup>106</sup> HENDERSON, Suzanne Watts. *Christology and discipleship in the Gospel of Mark*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006. Monograph series (Society for New Testament Studies), 135. ISBN 978-052-1859-066. Pg. 165.



*“Given that Jesus’ itinerant mission had been conducted on foot, it is an important occasion when he chooses to ride on a colt. The reader is not permitted to miss the point...”*<sup>107</sup> The colt is needed to prepare for Jesus’ special entrance into Jerusalem.

The third occasion Mark describes is when later another two (or the same?) disciples were sent to meet a man carrying a jar of water and then follow him (Mk. 14.13). This was done to prepare the Passover for Jesus to eat.

*“The description of the sending out of the two disciples foretelling exactly what they would find closely echoes the sending out of the two disciples to prepare for Jesus’ initial entry to Jerusalem (11.1–7). The point of both of these prophetic fulfillments is to stress the divine purpose in these events.”*<sup>108</sup>

It seems that his disciples were sent out so often that on one occasion those whom Jesus sent out became οἱ ἀπόστολοι (Mk. 6.30). *“From 3.13 the twelve were ‘with Jesus’ as disciples or learners until Jesus sent them out on their mission (6.7–13). They returned as apostles (6.30)”*<sup>109</sup>

Fourth, we read about unclean spirits that were sent out into the pigs after earnestly begging Jesus not to send them out of the country (Mk. 5.10-14). Though not explicitly but implicitly from the story, we can see this happening as the preparation for Jesus' future coming. *“Therefore, according to Mark, Jesus not only made inroads into gentile territory to heal this man but the impact of the man’s witness spreads throughout the Decapolis and prepares for Jesus’ further ministry there in 7.31–8.9.”*<sup>110</sup>

The fifth occasion is when Jesus sent home a healed man who previously was blind (Mk. 8.26) giving him direct instructions not to go anywhere else except to his house.

*“This injunction has generally been assigned to Mark’s redaction as a variation of his secrecy commands. Read in conjunction with Jesus’ having taken the man outside the village before healing him (8.23) and*

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<sup>107</sup> PAINTER, *Mark’s Gospel: worlds in conflict*. Pg. 149.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid. Pg. 177.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid. Pg. 65.

<sup>110</sup> GUELICH, *Word biblical commentary: Mark 1–8:26* [Logos].

*now sending him home without the chance to enter the village, it supposedly supports Mark's "secrecy motif".*<sup>111</sup>

It is generally recognized that Mark organizes his Gospel using a progressive revelation of who Jesus is. The consciousness of the identity of Jesus gradually grows in the disciples' minds.

*"Jesus prohibited public profession by those who experienced miraculous healing (1.43–44; 5.43; 7.36; 8.26). The parables of Jesus were offered to keep 'outsiders' from learning the secret (4.11–12). Even the disciples, once they related that they understood the 'secret of the kingdom of God' (4.11), were sworn to silence (8.30; 9.9) ... No immediate messianic profession would possess any depth of understanding (especially demonic confession). Jesus wanted the disciples to think about the secret until they could articulate the secret."*<sup>112</sup>

Lastly, in chapter 13 of Mark's Gospel Jesus prepares his disciples for future eschatological events and eventually for his 'second' coming. So, when they see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory, Jesus will send out the angels and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven (Mk. 13.26–27). This seems to be the final sending out of the messengers. There will be no need to send messengers anymore.

### **3.1.2. The sending theme in the parable of the vineyard (Mk. 12.1-12)**

In the parable of the tenant, we find the 'sending' theme five times. That is quite a concentrated repetition of the sending theme in just one short parable. Further we might see direct connection to Isaiah's the so-called Vineyard Song (Is. 5.1-7). *"Although using the*

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<sup>111</sup> GUELICH, *Word biblical commentary: Mark 1–8:26* [Logos]. On how 'the messianic secret' prepare the way for Jesus' coming see W. Wrede, *The Messianic Secret* (trans. J. C. G. Greig; Cambridge: James Clarke, 1971; 1st Germ. ed. 1901). The original German title was *Das Messiasgeheimnis in den Evangelien*. See also J. L. Blevins, *The Messianic Secret in Markan Research, 1901-1976* (Washington: University Press of America, 1981); J. D. Kingsbury, *The Christology of Mark's Gospel*, (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983), 1-23; H. Räisänen, *The 'Messianic Secret' in Mark* (trans. C. M. Tuckett; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1990), 38-75.

<sup>112</sup> GENERAL EDITORS CHAD BRAND, Charles DRAPER a Archie ENGLAND. *Holman illustrated Bible dictionary*. Nashville, Tenn: Holman Bible Publishers, 2003. ISBN 9780805428360. Pg. 1116.

*imagery of the 'vineyard song' in Isaiah 5, there is a change of emphasis. No longer is the concern about the quality of the fruit nor is the vineyard en toto to be destroyed, but rather the tenants.”<sup>113</sup>*

Three times the owner of the vineyard sends different servants to get some of the fruit of the vineyard from his tenants. The first time, after beating a servant, the tenants sent him away empty-handed. In all the other instances, the tenants killed the servants that were sent by the vineyard owner. The last one whom the owner sends is his son. He will be executed as other servants were.

The sending here brings no desirable results. Only the tenants' act in sending the servants away empty-handed brings a clear, and by tenants desired, message to the owner. But from the owner's side, he cannot accomplish what he wants by merely sending his servants or even his son. Only when the owner himself comes to his vineyard, can he finally establish justice thorough dealing harshly with the tenants and giving the vineyard to others.

### **3.1.3. The parable of the Sower**

A sower scatters seed on the ground and then sleeps and rises not knowing how the seed sprouts and grows. But when the harvest has come, he sends the sickle to the ripe grain (Mk. 4.29). This eschatological parable that mentions sending the sickle is parallel to Jesus' sending his angels on the day of his second coming.

*“The verb apostellei, which normally means 'send out', is here translated 'wields,' since the verse is a virtual quotation of Joel 3.13: “put in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe.” Since the verb is used in 3.14 and 6.7 in a missionary context and since harvest has overtones of eschatological urgency (see Joel 3.13), these nuances may well be present here.<sup>114</sup>”*

### **3.1.4. The mother and brothers of Jesus send word to him**

We start with Jesus' mother and brothers who sent their messengers to Jesus to call him outside from a crowd that was sitting around him (Mk. 3.31). Jesus' reacts to this by sending the message back to his family explicitly stating that his real family is sitting around

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<sup>113</sup> WATTS, *Isaiah's New Exodus in Mark*. Pg. 342.

<sup>114</sup> DONAHUE, *The Gospel of Mark* [Logos].

him and listening to his words. Even closest relatives have no authority over Jesus since it is God alone who can send him wherever he wishes. “*We find here a redefinition of family akin to Jesus’ teaching on discipleship.*”<sup>115</sup> Probably by such a harsh answer to his mother and brothers Jesus prepares his biological family for accepting him not as son or brother but as their Lord and Savior. They too must have a starting point in rethinking what kind of relationship they will have with Jesus.

### **3.1.5. Herod who sends his servants**

In the following story, we face two leaders who accomplish their will through sending others to a specific task. While Jesus is sending his twelve disciples to cast out unclean spirits, Herod Antipas, on the other hand, had sent his servants to seize John the Baptist (Mk. 6.17). Should we read this as the failure of God's coming kingdom? Should not Herod's head instead be brought to Jesus' feet? But it is Herod who is sending an executioner with orders to bring John's head (Mk. 6.27). We already read that “*after John had been taken into custody, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of God*” (Mk. 1.14). It seems that John’s death is another step, in preparation for John’s disciples to receive Jesus, since before John’s death his disciples were quite skeptical about Jesus’ ministry and identity.<sup>116</sup> Another preparational motif that might be more faithful to Mark’s text is

*“the passion of the Forerunner being a pointer to the subsequent passion of the Messiah (cf. 2.19f.). The parallels between 6.17-29 and 15.1-47 are interesting: e.g. Herod's fear of John as righteous and holy man (v. 20) and Pilate's attitude to Jesus (15.5, 14); Herodias' implacable hatred of John and the Jewish leaders' implacable hatred of Jesus; Herod's and Pilate's yielding to pressure; the details of the burials of John and Jesus.”*<sup>117</sup>

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<sup>115</sup> GUELICH, *Word biblical commentary: Mark 1–8:26* [Logos].

<sup>116</sup> See Gospel of John 3.26 and Matthew 11.2-3.

<sup>117</sup> CRANFIELD, C. E. B. *The Gospel according to Saint Mark: an introduction and commentary* by C.E.B. Cranfield. Reprinted 2000. New York, N.Y.: Cambridge University Press, 1974. ISBN 05-210-4253-4. Pg. 209.

### **3.1.6. The chief priests, the scribes, and the elders send out to Jesus**

After the chief priests together with the elders and the scribes unsuccessfully tried to challenge Jesus, they sent some of the Pharisees and some of the Herodians, to trap him in his speech (Mk. 12.13).

*“The verb agreuein (“to catch” as in hunting or fishing) occurs only here in the NT. The opponents hope to catch Jesus by means of his own words. This notice warns the reader that the flattering introduction to the question in 12.14 is insincere and is intended to ‘set up’ Jesus for a fall”<sup>118</sup>*

### **3.1.7. Conclusion**

We have seen that on all six occasions when Jesus sends out it is always connected with the preparation of the way for his future coming. We read how Jesus sent his disciples to cast out demons so that he could go there. Two disciples were sent to bring him a colt so that he could enter the Jerusalem gate and two other disciples were sent to prepare the Passover meal for Jesus to come and eat it with his followers. Unclean spirits were sent out to the pigs partly as a judgment but also as preparation for Jesus' future return to this region. Jesus also sent home the previously blind man with the strict order not to go to the village as a form of 'messianic secret' motive. Lastly, when the heavens are shaken, the Son of Man will send forth his angels to gather together His elect. These sending motifs are related to Mark's quotation in his prologue. Just as the messenger was sent to prepare the way of the Lord so also Jesus himself sent others to prepare the way for himself.

The sending theme in the parable of Vineyard also has a connection to the first quotation though it opens up a different perspective on the matter. The one who has power himself to destroy tenants, naively or mercifully sent his servants and eventually his son hoping for his tenants to act justly according to the original agreement they had. In all instances, such sending failed in its purpose. Only when the tenants send back one of the servants, only then their message is clear. The same situation is with Herod and Jesus. When Herod sends out his servant to kill John, it works perfectly well, and no one can stand against it. On the other hand, when Jesus sent out his disciples, we read nothing about how successful they were in bringing to pass the purpose of their mission. We might suppose that they had

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<sup>118</sup> DONAHUE, *The Gospel of Mark* [Logos].

some success, but there is nothing in the text that describes how much and complete their success was. So, just as in the parable we will see the final results of the Lord's sending out, but only at the end of the story. For the moment, it seems like the tenants have all the power toward the desired results. They do what they want and no one (till the owner's return) can stop them.

Following the sending theme, we find a particular group that is hard to define. They are neither outsiders nor disciples; they are the biological mother and brothers of Jesus. We can genuinely suppose that in the life of Jesus it happened many times when his mother and brothers told Jesus what to do, and he obeyed them. The very notion that Jesus' relatives tried to make Jesus do what they thought was right gives us the impression that on previous occasions it worked out for them. This time, however, it does not work, and they suddenly became part of the outsider's group. This again shows us that Mark's Gospel is about Jesus' way and not about human ways. Previous insiders might become outsiders, and those who are outside are called to do the will of God and be Jesus' brother and sister and mother.

Jesus himself knows his messianic role and he gradually reveals this to his disciples. No matter how amazingly dangerous and deadly it is, to be trapped (*agreuin*) by others is not part of it that role. Even when high authorities, in order to trap Jesus, send two groups that in regular life have nothing in common, they failed to do so. So, when the Pharisees and Herodians say in front of a crowd that Jesus is truthful and teaches the true way of God, in order to accuse him lately, they were unable to ensnare him. In the end, they were amazed and just went away, leaving others with the impression that they were actually on Jesus' side. Just as the apostle Paul says: "*every fact is to be confirmed by the testimony of two or three witnesses.*" So, through the mouth of Pharisees and Herodians, those who sent them confessed Jesus' truthfulness.

### **3.2. Prepare the way (τὴν ὁδὸν) of the Lord**

The other theme that is repeated in Mark's Gospel and comes from the introductory quotation is the 'way'. The word is repeated 16 times in the Gospel. Twice the word 'way' is used in introductory quotation. And twice it is used in the Parable of the Sower in the ordinary literal sense. Here I can agree with J. Painter that theology is not packaged in single words, just as the parable of the sower proves.<sup>119</sup> But it is not by chance that Mark's Gospel uses

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<sup>119</sup> PAINTER, *Mark's Gospel: worlds in conflict*. Pg. 26.

'the way' in a specific mode everywhere else. Together with Kelber, I see that “*The central section is placed into the framework of the 'way'... The way motif appears in exclusively redactional verses; both Matthew and Luke eliminate this Markan hodos with telling regularity.*”<sup>120</sup> Also Boring state that “*from the opening Isaian epigraph onward, the word hodos, translated variously in the NRSV as 'way,' 'path,' 'road,' 'journey,' is a key theological term in Mark... Mark uses it only in the singular.*”<sup>121</sup>

### **3.2.1. Jesus is Lord of the Sabbath**

We can see that in Mark's Gospel many revealing things are taking place on the way. Going through the text, we find Jesus and his disciples making their way through the grain fields and plucking heads of grain. That situation gave an excellent opportunity for Jesus to compare himself with king David and make a great statement that the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath (Mk. 2.23-28).

*“Naturally, this David/Jesus typology takes on clear messianic tones in Christology... Creation is but the paradigm of the new order of salvation, especially as depicted by Isaiah... Jesus claimed the authority to do God’s work of the age of salvation (see 3.1–5) and to provide for his own (2.23–26) in conjunction with his ministry even when such actions came into conflict with the sabbath law.”*<sup>122</sup>

### **3.2.2. Jesus commissions his disciples**

Receiving the authority over unclean spirits, the disciples were charged to take nothing on their way except a staff—no bread, no bag, no money in their belts nor to put on two tunics (Mk. 6.7-9). Such a way was an experiment for the disciples to see whether they could learn to trust in Jesus’ sending authority without relying on common preparation for their long way. Later in my chapter 'Mark – Isaiah theme connections' we will see how this sending out with specific details “*points beyond a simple injunction to trust in God’s*

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<sup>120</sup> KELBER, Werner H. *The kingdom in Mark: a new place and a new time*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1974. ISBN 08-006-0268-4. Pg. 69.

<sup>121</sup> BORING, *Mark: a commentary*. Pg. 37.

<sup>122</sup> GUELICH, *Word biblical commentary: Mark 1–8:26* [Logos].

*provision toward a more implicit summons to the enacting of God's long-awaited victorious return.*"<sup>123</sup> But for now, I would only add that *"with these instructions, the Twelve stand equipped both spiritually and physically for their authorized participation 'on the way' in a wilderness wandering that vividly demonstrates God's power unleashed on the earth."*<sup>124</sup>

### **3.2.3. Jesus' abundant provision in a desert place**

Jesus would not let go a great crowd on their way without feeding them first (Mk. 8.1-3). *"They cannot be sent away without food because they will faint on the way."*<sup>125</sup> From personal experience, we know that the way home is an essential one. There we reflect on what has happened, and there, on the way home after a conference or any other significant event, we sort out and evaluate what was heard and seen.

### **3.2.4. Jesus confessed as the Christ**

*"Of major importance is the central section of the Gospel (8.27-10.45) where a combination of various stories and sayings on the subject of discipleship are set within the context of Jesus' journey or pilgrimage to Jerusalem, his instructions to his disciples taking place 'on the way' or 'on the road' (8.27; 9.33, 34; 10.17, 32, 46, 52) to his appointment with death ('the way of the cross')."*<sup>126</sup>

The central question that Jesus asked his disciples was on the way to the villages of Caesarea Philippi (Mk. 8.27). *"Peter's confession in 8.29 that Jesus is the Messiah and not merely a prophet or a resurrected John the Baptist"*<sup>127</sup> has the central position in the Mark's Gospel. After this particular confession Jesus *"began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again"* (Mk. 8.31).

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<sup>123</sup> HENDERSON, *Christology and discipleship in the Gospel of Mark*. Pg. 156-157.

<sup>124</sup> *Ibid.* Pg. 157.

<sup>125</sup> PAINTER, *Mark's Gospel: worlds in conflict*. Pg. 114.

<sup>126</sup> TELFORD, W.R. *The theology of the Gospel of Mark*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999. ISBN 05-110-0934-8. Pg. 219

<sup>127</sup> EVANS, Craig A. *Word biblical commentary: Mark 8:27-16:20* [Logos]. Volume 34B. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2001. ISBN 0-8499-0253-3.



### **3.2.5. The quest for the greatest disciple**

Another revealing conversation took place on the way to Capernaum, but this time it was not about who Jesus is but what kind of disciples they are. Namely, it was on the way to Capernaum that the disciples were arguing with one another about who was the greatest (Mk. 9.33-34).

*“Just when the Markan Jesus has made his most profound and revealing teaching to his disciples, they show themselves to be blind and devoid of any understanding of Jesus’ vocation as Son of Man and how this should involve them.”<sup>128</sup>*

### **3.2.6. The rich man takes seriously the search for the way to eternal life**

On Jesus' way, another peculiar event happened. The rich man ran to Jesus (as if Jesus was running away from him) knelt before him and asked a spiritual question that no one else ever asked in this Gospel (Mk. 10.17). His quest for the way to eternal life appeared to be unsuccessful. It was revealed that the rich man has a great obstacle that he cannot overcome to have eternal life. The cost is too high for him for it will take all his property. *“The reader knows that Jesus taught that any cause of stumbling which might prevent a person from entering life, wealth stood between him and discipleship, between him and eternal life.”<sup>129</sup>* This is a great example of what might happen when someone with great intentions and deep questions yet unprepared comes to Jesus. *“Jesus’ answer was a cause of grief for him, and his quest for eternal life failed.”<sup>130</sup>*

### **3.2.7. Jesus and awe that overwhelms his followers**

*“Jesus holds another important conversation with his disciples ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ, 'on the way,' in 10.32.”<sup>131</sup>* The description of feelings and emotions of those who followed Jesus on the way to Jerusalem are specifically peculiar. This description is found only in the Gospel of Mark and is taking place on the way. Painter notices and briefly specifies the main events

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<sup>128</sup> PAINTER, *Mark's Gospel: worlds in conflict*. Pg. 131.

<sup>129</sup> Ibid. Pg. 139.

<sup>130</sup> Ibid. Pg. 139.

<sup>131</sup> EVANS, *Word biblical commentary: Mark 8:27–16:20* [Logos].

concerning Jesus' teaching on his death and resurrection that took place specifically on the way. "The teaching occurred on the journey is carefully noted by Mark using the words 'on the way', 8.27. The second occasion was coming down from the mountain of transfiguration (9.9, 12). The third was journeying through Galilee (9.30) and the fourth 'on the way' going up to Jerusalem (10.32). The journey motif expresses the acceptance of suffering and death as the fulfillment of the will and purpose of God."<sup>132</sup>

In Painter's view, however, the scene in 10.32 is not at all clear. Those who followed Jesus to Jerusalem were amazed and were even fearful. Evans, however, sees that scene with the reference to the Old Testament's fear of the divine rather than of mere life danger.

*"The fear here should be understood in the OT sense of awe that overwhelms humans in the presence of the divine... Here in 10.32 the readers of Mark would understand that the awesomeness of Jesus is once again a cause of fear."*<sup>133</sup>

### **3.2.8. Jesus heals the blind confessor**

In this Gospel Jesus had already made some parallels between him and King David but the first one who proclaimed Jesus as the son of David was a blind beggar named Bartimaeus. It happened when Jesus was leaving Jericho, and Bartimaeus was sitting by the way (Mk. 10.46-47). This both political and religious exclamation was not one that particular crowd liked<sup>134</sup>.

*"The central section is enclosed by two stories, each dealing with the healing of a blind man: 8.22-26, the healing of the blind man of Bethsaida, and 10.46-52, the healing of the blind Bartimaeus... What Jesus does at the beginning and end of the trip, open the eyes of blind men: this he is in effect doing all along his way to the city. He opens the eyes of the disciples and initiates them into a new dimension of his messiahship."*<sup>135</sup>

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<sup>132</sup> PAINTER, *Mark's Gospel: worlds in conflict*. Pg. 141.

<sup>133</sup> EVANS, *Word biblical commentary: Mark 8:27-16:20* [Logos].

<sup>134</sup> Mark 10.48: *Many rebuked him, telling him to be silent.*

<sup>135</sup> KELBER, *The kingdom in Mark: a new place and a new time*. Pg. 70.

Immediately after the beggar's sight was recovered, he started to follow Jesus on his way (Mk.10.52).

### **3.2.9. Jesus is honored by the crowd at his entrance to Jerusalem**

The last two occasions the word ὁδὸν is used by Mark are unexpectedly revealing. Jesus received special honor<sup>136</sup> by the crowd in the act of spreading their garments before Jesus at his entrance seating on a colt to Jerusalem (Mk. 11.8). *“You don't spread cloaks on the road—especially in the dusty, stony Middle East!—for a friend, or even a respected senior member of your family. You do it for royalty. And you don't cut branches off trees, or foliage from the fields, to wave in the streets just because you feel some-what elated; you do it because you are welcoming a king.”*<sup>137</sup>

### **3.2.10. The ironical and true confession about Jesus**

The last time Mark used τὴν ὁδὸν in his Gospel was when the Pharisees and Herodians were sent by the chief priests, scribes and elders of Jerusalem to trap Jesus. What they meant for evil against Jesus, God meant for good to bring special honor to Jesus. The plan was that by the end of the conversation it would be shown to people who were gathered around Jesus that he is not trustworthy. So, in the beginning of the conversation they claimed that Jesus *truly teaches the way of God* (Mk. 12.14).

### **3.2.11. Conclusion**

As Watts states, there are several alternatives among scholars' writings regarding Mark's intention in using the *hodos* term,<sup>138</sup> though all would agree that the main emphasis would still be on Yahweh's saving action and not human deeds or response. *“Thus Mark's 'Way' section is not 'about the human way to the basileia but rather about God's way, which is his basileia, his own extension of kingly power”*<sup>139</sup>

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<sup>136</sup> EVANS, *Word biblical commentary: Mark 8:27–16:20* [Logos].

<sup>137</sup> WRIGHT, N. T. *Mark for everyone* [Logos]. 2nd ed. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, c2004. ISBN 978-0-281-05299-8.

<sup>138</sup> See Marcus' analysis of the meaning of Mark's 'Way'. Pg. 29-45.

<sup>139</sup> WATTS, *Isaiah's New Exodus in Mark*. Pg. 128.

As we have seen, for the disciples it would be law breaking to pick the heads of grain without Jesus being with them. Without Jesus' commission, they would not be able to go to extended locations without bread, bag, money and being able to cast out demons. On the other hand, in a similar situation with the multitude needing to be fed the disciples failed to share Jesus' concern and provide food for the crowd. Later on, although Peter recognized Jesus as Christ he could not grasp the meaning of Christ's mission. After all, if Jesus were to die one of his disciples would take his place and the sooner the greatest disciple was found, the better for everyone. There are even people who would be anxious to find out what they should do to inherit eternal life. For sure, the rich man of high ethical standards knows exactly what he wants but has no power to accomplish it, finding out that eternal life is quite expensive for him. Indeed, everyone pays the same price in following after the one who is going to be condemned to death and who will be handed over to the Gentiles and will be mocked and spit and scourged and killed. The price is always the whole and only life one has. The one who continues to call on the name of Jesus confessing him as the King no matter what will eventually be healed from his blindness and with the clear sight. Such can follow Jesus, giving him honor and praise, feeling unworthy to untie the thong of Jesus sandals and spreading personal coats on the road as he is passing by. Even his enemies will proclaim with their mouth that Jesus *truly teaches the way of God.*<sup>140</sup> *"It would be no exaggeration, then, to say that 'the way of Jesus/the way of the Lord' is not only the double theme of Mark's Gospel but also the controlling paradigm for his interpretation of life of his community."*<sup>141</sup>

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<sup>140</sup> Personally, I am not sure why Hatina could not see theological coherence of the *hodos* theme. He states: *"When all 16 uses of hodos in Mark are examined, a variety of nuances emerge. Some refer to a road (4.4,15; 10.46; 11.8), some to journeys whose destinations are other than Jerusalem (Caesarea Philippi in 8.27; Capernaum in 9.33, 34), some to journeys which exclude Jesus (disciples in 6.8; the 4000 in 8.3), one refers to God's teaching (12.14), and one simply refers to movement (2.23) ... The use of hodos in 1.2-3 hardly coheres semantically or theologically with each use in the central section, let alone with every other use in the Gospel."* (HATINA, Thomas R. *In search of a context: the function of scripture in Mark's narrative*. London ; New York: Sheffield Academic Press, c2002. ISBN 978-0826460677. Pg. 168).  
 Moyise, Steve. *Evoking Scripture : Seeing the Old Testament in the New*, Bloomsbury Publishing PLC, 2008. ProQuest Ebook Central, <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/cuni/detail.action?docID=711074>.  
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<sup>141</sup> MARCUS, *The Way of the Lord*. Pg. 47.

### 3.3. One crying in the wilderness (ἐρήμῳ)

Immediately after the introductory quotation, the wilderness theme continues to be used by Mark.

*“Mauser stresses the high profile that the wilderness has in Mark, especially in the first chapter of the gospel. Wilderness is insignificant as an image in John’s gospel and receives scant attention in Matthew and Luke.”<sup>142</sup>*

We are introduced to John the Baptist who appears in the wilderness preaching and baptizing (Mk. 1.4). Further in the same prologue we read about Jesus’ baptism and how the Spirit drove him into the wilderness (Mk. 1.12). Jesus stayed in the wilderness for forty days having negative and positive experiences there. On the one hand, he was tempted by Satan, but on the other hand, the angels were ministering to him (Mk. 1.13).

During his ministry, Jesus used to go into the wilderness to pray (Mk. 1.35). Also, after becoming popular and searched by many people to be healed, Jesus no longer could enter a city but stayed in the wilderness (Mk. 1.45). So, we can see that alongside the introductory quotation Mark uses the word wilderness for six times in the first chapter.

The other three times when Mark uses term wilderness in a short passage is in chapter six. When his apostles came back from their mission, Jesus invited them to go to the wilderness to take some rest (Mk. 6.31). And then we read that they went to the wilderness in the boat (Mk. 6.32). After spending some time there, the large crowd came to listen to Jesus’ teaching. The disciples or better said 'apostles'<sup>143</sup> tried to practice their apostolic power over Jesus. They came to him with the instructions of what to do with the crowd that was listening to Jesus’ teaching till the late hour, and they said: *“this is wilderness, and it is already quite late; send them away...”* (Mk. 6.35-36a). *“Jesus instructed them to continue their mission by providing food for the crowd. 'You give them [what they need] to eat'. If they could give instructions like apostles, let them act like apostles.”<sup>144</sup>*

Seeing apostles’ failure, we should mention few details about Jesus. Here in the wilderness he is presented as the shepherd (6.34). He cares for people as the shepherd cares

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<sup>142</sup> LEAL, Robert Barry. *Wilderness in the Bible: toward a theology of wilderness*. New York: P. Lang, c2004. ISBN 08-204-7138-0. Pg. 51.

<sup>143</sup> KELVER: “Apparently, it was the missionary journey which actualized their advancement from discipleship to apostleship.” Pg. 54.

<sup>144</sup> PAINTER, *Mark's Gospel: worlds in conflict*. New York: Routledge. Pg. 101.

for his sheep. Also, there is surprising mention of the green grass on which people are commanded to sit down. These motives are important when we will see how Mark is connected to other Old Testament books.

The last time the wilderness theme is mentioned is in a similar situation as the one described in chapter six. This time Jesus does not follow the directive in saying that disciples should feed the crowd as he did it in the previous chapter. This time Jesus shares his concern that people will faint on the way home if they are not fed. His disciples again are skeptical about the possibility of finding enough bread in this wilderness (Mk. 8.4). Through their skepticism, Jesus' miracle in feeding the crowd is underlined.

### **3.3.1. Conclusion**

From this short analysis, we can see that apart from John the Baptist it is Jesus who made the full use of the wilderness. Seven times out of nine 'wildernesses' is connected directly to Jesus. Though Mark himself does not explain how important this theme is, it seems like he wants the reader to make some serious intertextual connections.

Some scholars hint on how the wilderness is connected to the messianic theme. We find in Acts 21.38 and also when Jesus warns his disciples that many false Christ will come, and people will say that “*behold, He is in the wilderness*” (Matt. 24.26).

*“Revolutionary leaders lead their followers out to the wilderness with the promise that there they would see miraculous signs of God’s redemption... The religious basis of these actions was probably in large measure motivated by the hope that God would fulfill the ancient promises of eschatological victory in the wilderness contained in the scriptures, notably in Isaiah 40.”<sup>145</sup>*

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<sup>145</sup> MARCUS, *The Way of the Lord*. Pg. 23.

## 4. Mark – Isaiah themes

In this chapter I will give general, brief ideas on the book of Isaiah. My main concern will be with the passage that Mark quotes in his Gospel and its surrounding context. We will also see how themes that we saw in Mark are interrelated with Isaiah and Exodus/Malachi.

### 4.1. General Overview of the book

The book of Isaiah bears its name from the first verse 'The Vision of Isaiah the Son of Amoz.' It consists of sixty-six chapters and has not only information about Isaiah, the prophet, but much more.

*“Isaiah is the great Central-Prophet who, stationed at a decisive turning-point, detects with a clear eye all the principal points of the perspective that open out from it, and becomes thereby to his people the prophetic mediator both of exhortation and warning, and also of consolation and instruction as occasion demanded. And by this means he becomes, at the same time, the one on whom all later prophets lean as on their greatest exemplar and highest prophetic authority.”<sup>146</sup>*

First of all, the book contains the verdicts and deeds of Yahweh. Everything else has little importance in comparison to God’s word. *“Surely the people are grass. The grass withers, the flower fades, But the word of our God stands forever”* (Isa. 40.7-8). Secondly, we find in the Vision a heavenly perspective that changes the earthly perspective. It is Yahweh who is sitting on the throne and all other kings are not kings. *“The Vision portrays Isaiah as a prophet who looked with equanimity upon the violent political changes of his day because YHWH was in charge and was making things work out for good.”<sup>147</sup>* Thirdly, we find the responses of the people of GOD. *“Israel and Jerusalem, who 'like the nations,' prefer to follow human ideals so they, 'like the nations,' run the risk of God’s wrath.”<sup>148</sup>* And

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<sup>146</sup> NÄGELSBACH, Carl. *A commentary on the Holy Scriptures: Isaiah* [Logos]. Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software.

<sup>147</sup> JOHN D.W. WATTS. *Isaiah* [Logos].

<sup>148</sup> Ibid.

finally, this book more than any other gives strong characterization of Yahweh describing his numerous roles.

*“He is father to the Israelites, his children (11.2–3). He is vineyard builder, owner, and keeper to the land of Palestine (5.1–7; 27.2–6). As a military leader for heavenly forces and the nations he has the title YHWH of Hosts (יהוה צבאות; 1.12–21; 5.26–30; 13.1–16; 63.1–6). He is shepherd to his returning people (40.11). He is patron for the temple in Jerusalem (1.10–20; 66.1–24) ... He is also like a lover, a husband, a mother, a shepherd, a gardener, a king, and—categories never heard before—a redeemer and the Holy One of Israel.”*<sup>149</sup>

Donald Gowan also add to this list: *“Creator, Judge, Savior, Comforter, and Teacher.”*<sup>150</sup> He is patient and persistent in accomplishing his goals specifically for Jerusalem and Israel in general.

Structurally, this book is recognized by main stream of scholars as having three distinct literary units. *“Chapters 1-39 deal primarily with the events prior to Judah’s exile, chapters 40-55 cover events toward the end of that exile, and chapters 56-66 apparently concern sometime after the return.”*<sup>151</sup> Our main concern will be with the second unit the so-called Deutero-Isaiah part.

Of course, we can say much more on Isaiah’s book as John Watts in his Word Biblical Commentary in the general bibliography lists more than 90 modern scholars who have written on the book of Isaiah. There is such a huge volume of material that my desire to write more is almost irresistible. But let the main thesis of this work be decisive in sorting the material. The book as the whole could be taken as *“a great drama in which YHWH is the principal character and speaker.”*<sup>152</sup>

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<sup>149</sup> Ibid.

<sup>150</sup> GOWAN, Donald E. *Theology of the prophetic books: the death and resurrection of Israel*. Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox Press, c1998. ISBN 978-0664256890. Pg. 161.

<sup>151</sup> WATTS, *Isaiah's new Exodus in Mark*. Pg. 76.

<sup>152</sup> JOHN D.W. WATTS. *Isaiah* [Logos].



## 4.2. Surrounding context of Isaiah 40.3

The specific context of Isaiah 40.3 is the unit consisting of chapters 40 - 55. *“The main issues in Isa 40– 55 are deliverance from the exile, the return of YHWH to his people and the return of the exiles to their land.”*<sup>153</sup> However, we need also remember that

*“no part of Isaiah can be understood without considering its relation to other parts and the whole. The first chapters and the last chapters must be read together. Each of the parts develops with interrelations to the other parts. The roles of authors and editors overlap, and there can be no clear distinction between them.”*<sup>154</sup>

It is considered that for Isaianic salvation within Judaist tradition a locus classicus is Isaiah 40.1-11. The chapter begins with the promise of deliverance. Looking backward Israel received punishment in a double portion. Now is the time when almighty Lord will gently lead his flock like a shepherd. On their return they are promised everlasting joy, gladness and singing with no sorrow or sighing (51.11). The problem however remains with a people who do not trust the Lord and think of him as a distant God (40.27).

*“The explicit terminology used in Isa 40–55 clarifies the question of who is responsible for the break of relationship between YHWH and his people on the one hand, while, on the other hand, it also serves to announce YHWH’s readiness to restore that relationship.”*<sup>155</sup>

Speaking to the precise context of Isa. 40.3 that is chapters 40-55 we have to mention another theme that is quite essential. The Servant of the Lord is a specific part of prophesy that some scholars say appears from nowhere and disappears to who knows where.

*“Too often interpreters on both the right and the left have treated it as a 'sport,' something unique, emerging from nowhere, and disappearing again without making a recognizable difference in its surroundings.”*<sup>156</sup>

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<sup>153</sup> SCHEUER, Blaženka. *The return of YHWH: the tension between deliverance and repentance in Isaiah 40-55* / Blaženka Scheuer. 2008. ISBN 9783110190342. Pg. 3.

<sup>154</sup> JOHN D.W. WATTS. *Isaiah* [Logos].

<sup>155</sup> SCHEUER, *The return of YHWH*. Pg. 127.

<sup>156</sup> OSWALT, John. *The Holy One of Israel: studies in the book of isaiah*. Eugene: Cascade Books, 2014. ISBN 978-159-7526-593. Pg. 151.

The theme of the Servant of the Lord, according to Oswalt, is recognized as dominant and directly to the message of the book itself. He is the one in whom Yahweh's soul delights and Yahweh's Spirit is upon him. This servant will bring justice to the nations, will be covenant to the people and open blind eyes of Israel (42.1-7).

*“This is surely not the nation healing itself. This conclusion becomes even surer in chapters 49– 55 where the idea is put forward that God will find a way of reconciling himself to his people and of restoring them to fellowship. Here the unidentified servant comes into much sharper relief and it is clear he is not Israel personified.”<sup>157</sup>*

Unlike Israel, the Servant is not corrupt, rebellious or self-protective but pure-hearted, obedient and self-surrendering. Israel is invited to come eat and drink, to buy without money wine and milk because all is already paid for. *“Clearly the substitutionary suffering of the servant in 52.13— 53.12 is the operative element making invitation in chapters 54-55 possible.”<sup>158</sup>*

### **4.3. Isaiah 40.3**

We will look at Isaiah 40.3 in its unit. Together with Melugin I concur that “v. 1— 8 are without doubt a unity... The function or intention of these verses is, however, somewhat ambiguous. Though it reminds us of the type of prophetic commissioning found in Isaiah 6.”<sup>159</sup> Verse 1 begins with a divine decree from the heavenly court.<sup>160</sup> We saw that Melugin compares it to the Isaiah 6 passage where the prophet sees and hears heavenly decrees. In 40.1 we hear Yahweh's voice but do not know from where or through whom. There is no prophet or angel or any other messenger who would proclaim God's decrees. Yahweh himself is speaking and we hear his direct voice without any mediator. Actually, Yahweh is looking for someone (plural), just as in chapter 6, who would bring his word and “*speak*

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<sup>157</sup> OSWALT, *The Holy One of Israel: studies in the book of isaiah*. Pg. 18-19.

<sup>158</sup> Ibid. Pg. 19.

<sup>159</sup> MELUGIN, Roy F. *The formation of Isaiah 40-55*. New York: W. de Gruyter, 1976. ISBN 31-100-5820-0. Pg. 84.

<sup>160</sup> GOLDINGAY, John. *The message of Isaiah 40-55: a literary-theological commentary*. New York, c2005. ISBN 05-670-3038-5. Pg. 11.

*kindly to Jerusalem*” (40.2). A difference is that in chapter 6 He seeks a singular person, but in chapter 40 Yahweh is looking for plural personalities.

In 40.3 we meet 'a voice' that is not further identified. In the whole book of Isaiah, it happens only twice (40.3 and 40.6) that we do not know whose voice is speaking. Is it Yahweh's voice, or the prophet's, or the servant's or “*another member of the heavenly court who speaks... Yhwh's heavenly or earthly aides?*”<sup>161</sup> The text does not identify it and there no need to speculate.

Just as in 40.1 so also in 40.3 we hear a commission to do a specific task, but to whom is it said? There is no direct answer to this question. In chapter 6, it is Isaiah who hears and responds to the commission of the Lord but here it seems as if there is a job opening with nobody applying for the position.

The second time we hear this unidentified voice there is a response, but we do not know who is responding. “*Once again, the identity of the speaker is unsure, on this occasion because the textual tradition is unclear whether the verb is 'I say' or 'someone says' (cf. NRSV).*”<sup>162</sup> For Goldingay and Melugin it is the prophet or the people who respond, for me it makes more sense that again we have a vacant position. We do not know who but surely *someone* will surely hear this voice and respond to it, though for now we do not know who and when it will be.

*“We must eventually ask why the prologue does not provide us with a concrete setting to give a well-defined context for interpretation. For the moment we content ourselves with the recognition that the poet uses the images of a prophetic commissioning but that the identity of the personae is ambiguous.”*<sup>163</sup>

I cannot agree with Watts that “*it is the message not the messenger which is most important as is borne out by the veiled and ambiguous language surrounding his identity.*”<sup>164</sup> It would be true on any other occasion but not now. Without knowing exactly who is speaking and who responding we need to be careful not to ignore too quickly the messenger. What if no one will be found who could take this vacant role except of Yahweh himself? And indeed, who is able to “*let every valley be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be*

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<sup>161</sup> Ibid. Pg. 17, 23.

<sup>162</sup> Ibid. Pg. 24.

<sup>163</sup> MELUGIN, *The formation of Isaiah 40-55*. Pg. 84.

<sup>164</sup> WATTS, *Isaiah's new Exodus in Mark*. Pg. 77.

*made low; And let the rough ground become a plain, and the rugged terrain a broad valley*” (Isa. 40.4)? Does anyone have the power to change God’s created order?<sup>165</sup>

If we read 40.3 and 40.6-7 as one sentence it might help us to understand something important. A voice is calling: “*clear the way for the LORD in the wilderness; Make smooth in the desert a highway for our God...*” A voice says: “*Call out.*” Then he answered: “*What shall I call out?*” [A voice answered:]<sup>166</sup> “*All flesh is grass, and all its loveliness is like the flower of the field. The grass withers, the flower fades, When the breath of the LORD blows upon it; Surely the people are grass.*”

So, is it really possible for any human to accomplish the task of preparing the highway for the Lord in the desert? The voice seems to be highly sceptical about a human. Who can really respond to the voice’s first call? Can anyone stand firm when Yahweh walks on the prepared way, when his Spirit will flow? Will the prepared way together with the one who made the preparation be able to stand up? “*The characteristic of grass and flowers that dominates the comparison is their inability to withstand the 'spirit of YHWH' that blows against it.*”<sup>167</sup> Who then will react at the voice’s cry and complete the humanly impossible task?

#### **4.4. The Spirit of the Lord**

Many English translations translate verse 40.7 as “the grass withers, the flower fades when *the breath of the Lord* blows on it”. *The breath* of the Lord is found in the New American Standard Bible, English Standard Version, New King James Version, Holman Christian Standard Version and many others. *The spirit* of the Lord is used in the Bible Translated from the Latin Vulgate, The Cambridge Paragraph Bible, King James Version. “*The image plays on the double meaning of רוח as both 'wind' and 'spirit.'* It implies that because one is unable to stand against God one also cannot or should not be asked to stand with God. Because the people are only grass, the task is useless or hopeless.”<sup>168</sup>

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<sup>165</sup> See Isaiah 40.12, 49.11, Job 9.5, Psalm 97.5, Micah 1.4, Nahum 1.5, Habakkuk 3.6, 10.

<sup>166</sup> I added

<sup>167</sup> JOHN D.W. WATTS. *Isaiah* [Logos].

<sup>168</sup> JOHN D.W. WATTS. *Isaiah* [Logos].

## 4.5. Conclusion

In Isaiah 40.1-8 we hear Yahweh asking *someone* (in plural) to comfort his people. Later we meet 'a voice' calling to prepare the way for the Lord in the wilderness. Then again 'a voice' is calling out and *someone* reacts to (his/her/it?) the call by asking what to speak. In my research, I have found that this *someone* is mainly ignored by the interpreters. It seems like 'he' does not play any important role. Some even think that 'he' objects to the voices' call and plays a rebellious role. My view, however, is that Mark uses this mysterious persona in his introductory quotation. We need to pay attention to details and probably even more so on personas that appear and disappear enigmatically. As an example, think of how Psalm 110 following the book of Hebrews uses Melchizedek, who in Genesis appears without being announced and disappears without parting.

## 5. Mark – Isaiah, Exodus/Malachi themes connections

We already discussed that Mark's introductory quotation has a *“pivotal position at the beginning of the Gospel suggesting that the author has adopted a stream of tradition which will summarize immediately what his gospel is about.”*<sup>169</sup> Moyise, referring to Richard Schneck, further asserts that

*“significant quotation or allusion to Isaiah can be found in each of Mark's first eight chapters. He begins by asserting that the prologue to Mark's Gospel, which he considers to be Mk 1.1-15, has a number of similarities to the prologue of Deutero-Isaiah (Isa. 40.1 -11). These are: (1) reference to a 'voice in the wilderness'; (2) the role both texts play as 'prologues' to larger works; (3) the use of evangelion or evangelizomenos for God's joyful intervention; (4) stress on the power of the one who is to come; (5) focus on the rule or reign of God, especially in the Targumic reading of Isa. 40.9 ('The kingdom of your God is revealed'); (6) the need for the word of God to be jubilantly proclaimed; and (7) a concern for the forgiveness of sins (Isa. 40.2; Mk 1.4). Schneck concludes from this that 'the whole unit of Isa 40.1-11 was intended by Mark to be taken into account for a full and proper understanding of the Markan prologue'.”*<sup>170</sup>

Recognizing the importance of the whole of Mark's prologue I however will try to concentrate only on his introductory quotation and themes that are connected to it. We will discuss now how the themes described in Mark's section are connected to themes that the book of Isaiah has.

### 5.1. 'Sending out' with a walking stick

We have seen that in Mark the ἀποστέλλω theme is important. Let us briefly see how this theme would work on the broader basis of Isaiah and Exodus. Though we would not be able to look in detail at all 'sending' texts, we are going to discuss one particular and quite central event to show a pattern.

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<sup>169</sup> MOYISE, *Evoking Scripture: seeing the Old Testament in the New*. Pg. 14.

<sup>170</sup> Ibid. Pg. 15.

In Mark we read that when Jesus sent his disciples who eventually become the apostles, he allowed them to take on their way only a staff. When we read similar accounts in Mathew and Luke we find that their Jesus specifically says that they should *not* take a rod with them. So, putting this into a wider context let us try to understand why Mark's Jesus says to take a stick with them.

*“The particular items Jesus permits the Twelve to take 'on the way' together indicate that Mark means to portray their mission in terms of Israel's anticipated New Exodus. Particularly illuminating is the fact that, in Mark's account, Jesus deliberately amends his instructions to take 'nothing' by allowing the Twelve to carry 'a single stick' (ῥάβδον μόνον). Since even this item is forbidden in the Q account, Mark would appear to intend its inclusion. But why?”<sup>171</sup>*

In the books of Exodus and Isaiah (no stick theme in Malachi) we find thirty times in total when the word staff is used. It begins with Yahweh's question to Moses: *“What is that in your hand?”* And he said, *'A staff'* (Ex. 4.2). After some further talk Yahweh ends the conversation with Moses saying his last word: *“You shall take in your hand this staff, with which you shall perform the signs”* (Ex. 4.17). Then we read that Moses not only has his stick but also Aaron use his rod to perform a miracle. The theme of Yahweh saying to take a staff and perform a miracle repeats itself again and again in the story of Moses.

*“Vital clues about the implied role for the missionaries' 'single stick' can be found in the sacred stories of Israel which serve as backdrop for so much of Mark's gospel story. Within the Exodus narrative, the ῥάβδον serves as a vehicle of authoritative power wielded by both Moses and Aaron. For these noted figures, the staff provides an emblem of their divinely ordained calling as God's chosen leaders. The staff provides an emblem not just of human leadership but also of God's prerogative in selecting Israel's leaders.”<sup>172</sup>*

In the Septuagint version of Isaiah 11.1 we find a very interesting text: *“And there shall come forth a rod out of the root of Jesse, and a blossom shall come up from his root.”* *“In the mystery of God's purpose after the hardening, after the destruction of the land, and*

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<sup>171</sup> HENDERSON, *Christology and discipleship in the Gospel of Mark*. Pg. 154.

<sup>172</sup> Ibid. Pg. 155.

*after the unbelief of Ahaz, true Israel still has a future because of Immanuel.*”<sup>173</sup> ”Not a shoot (as in Hebrew) but a rod will spring out of Jesse. That reminds us of *the rod of Aaron that had sprouted and put forth buds and produced blossoms, and it bore ripe almonds* (Num. 17.8). So, what has happened to Aaron, Isaiah promises will happen again. There will be someone who will blossom like a stick of Aaron. The staff’s almonds mean that there are seeds from the staff that can produce new sticks grown from the seeds of almonds.

In Mark we do not read that Jesus himself had a stick. But paralleling to Yahweh he sends his disciples with twelve staffs.

*“While Mark makes no mention of the missionaries’ use of the staff to perform miracles, they do wield its symbolic power as, in the tradition of Moses and Aaron, they become vessels of God’s power at work on a formative journey... Such a lexical convergence confirms the underlying Exodus motif discussed above and further depicts this set of instructions as equipping the Twelve for their own participation in God’s miraculous deliverance.”*<sup>174</sup>

We may see the exodus motive in the life of Jesus and his disciples. In the same way that Yahweh sent Moses and Aaron with the staff in their hands, so Jesus sends his disciples with only a staff. But a parallel is also made in Isaiah’s prophecy that has allusion to exodus as well. The rod out of Jesse has *“charismata suitable to the Messiah’s high office. He is endowed by the spirit of God to be the bearer of the whole fullness of divine powers.”*<sup>175</sup> So Jesus, the blossom staff himself, multiplies his power by sending his disciples with their staffs.

*“In Mk. 6.7 Jesus has appointed and empowered the group as collective agents of God’s in-breaking kingdom; here Jesus continues to wield magisterial authority as he sets the terms of their mission. With these instructions, the Twelve stand equipped both spiritually and physically for*

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<sup>173</sup> CHILDS, Brevard S. *Isaiah* [Logos]. Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox Press, c2001. ISBN 978-0-664-22143-0.

<sup>174</sup> HENDERSON, *Christology and discipleship in the Gospel of Mark*. Pg. 155-156.

<sup>175</sup> CHILDS, *Isaiah* [Logos].



*their authorized participation 'on the way' in a wilderness wandering that vividly demonstrates God's power unleashed on the earth.*"<sup>176</sup>

## **5.2. The way**

The previous sending out theme is directly interconnected to 'the way' theme. We find many common moments. We saw some concrete examples of how the Gospel writers "used selected texts from Isaiah to shape their and our view of Jesus and his role."<sup>177</sup> 'The way' theme is no exception. We can find many interpolations from Isaiah and Exodus/Malachi. Mark structured his book in such a way that the reader will find clear connection to what is already known and long awaited.

*"Klyne Snodgrass notes particularly the way that hodos ('way') is later used for the 'way of God' (Mk 12.14) and the 'way of discipleship' (Mk 10.52), and so 'the composite quotation provides a link with the Old Testament.'*"<sup>178</sup>

The book of Exodus contains the notion of the way already in its title. Larry Perkins shows many conceptual linkages between Mark and the book of Exodus.

*"The ways of God in Exodus and Mark appear strange and confusing. In Exodus and in Mark God establishes new covenantal ways for his people to relate to him. Following God continues to be difficult and requires confidence in God's power, purpose, and goodness."*<sup>179</sup>

Not only this but Perkins also insists that due to Mark we can much better understand Exodus as Mark provides his reader the hermeneutical key that explains, past and future, God's ultimate purpose. He also describes how Exodus and Isaiah deliberately conflating with each other, which indicates that "*the author wanted his readers to see the new exodus of Isaiah as a revised exodus paradigm.*"<sup>180</sup>

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<sup>176</sup> HENDERSON, *Christology and discipleship in the Gospel of Mark*. Pg. 157.

<sup>177</sup> JOHN D.W. WATTS. *Isaiah* [Logos].

<sup>178</sup> MOYISE, *Evoking Scripture: seeing the Old Testament in the New*. Pg. 14.

<sup>179</sup> PERKINS, Larry. Kingdom, Messianic Authority and the Re-constituting of God's People – Tracing the Function of Exodus Material in Mark's Narrative' in Hatina (ed.), *Biblical Interpretation in Early Christian Gospels Volume 1: The Gospel of Mark*. Pg. 115.

<sup>180</sup> *Ibid.* Pg. 104.

The book of Isaiah has many prophecies connected not only to the new exodus or Yahweh's way. *"Isaiah is a book about movement and change. Israel is a people 'on the way' from Canaan into exile and from exile back to Judah. The nations are on the move. God has plans for these movements, a 'way' in which he wants them to move."*<sup>181</sup>

In Malachi 'the way' theme is not developed. It used only three times, twice in a sense of the Lord's way of living and once in 3.1. The Jewish people are home now, worshiping in their temple and safe behind Nehemiah's wall. All bad things are behind them now and they can enjoy the presence of Yahweh. Or is it really so? *"The historical setting of Malachi is one of disappointment and frustration in the light of the Return having failed to meet the expectations fuelled by the pictures of new exodus redemption offered in Isaiah 40- 55/66 and the prophecies of Haggai and Zechariah."*<sup>182</sup> It seems like they had a deep struggle with their fidelity to God as it seems that all Yahweh's promises were not fulfilled in their life. We may think so due to the questions they ask and the statements they make:

*"The table of the Lord is defiled, and as for its fruit, its food is to be despised. My, how tiresome it is. It is vain to serve God. Everyone who does evil is good in the sight of the LORD, and He delights in them. How have You loved us? How have we wearied Him? Where is the God of justice? What profit is it that we have kept His charge, and that we have walked in mourning before the LORD of hosts?" (1.2,12-13; 2.17; 3.14).*

Watts shows that Malachi thinks in terms of the new exodus due to some contextual parallels and some verbal similarities. For Malachi Isaiah's prophecy is not fulfilled yet. There is still a way to go. *"The verbal similarities between Malachi 3.1 and Exodus 23.20 which, according to Beth Glazier-McDonald, are too striking to be accidental and suggest that the former is a re-working of the latter."*<sup>183</sup> Though, for Israel, technically there is nowhere else to go, but spiritually there is still a long distance being far from full fidelity to Yahweh. Though Watts also admits that he cannot find unequivocal evidence that Malachi thinks in terms of Isaiah's new exodus.

*"But there is much to suggest that Isaiah's new exodus had become a pervasive hope and if so then Malachi would not need to be overly explicit.*

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<sup>181</sup> JOHN D.W. WATTS. *Isaiah* [Logos].

<sup>182</sup> WATTS, *Isaiah's new Exodus in Mark*. Pg. 67.

<sup>183</sup> *Ibid*. Pg. 71.

*A single key word or phrase would suffice as a symbol or icon to evoke that hope.*"<sup>184</sup>

In Mark's Gospel we discussed how many different things might happen while one is on the way. In Jesus' case we saw that on his way he was becoming more and more glorious; revealing himself to his disciples in an unexpected way; being beyond the circumstances and always knowing where he is going and why. On the other hand, those who were following him were revealing their ignorance, competition and unpreparedness to commit the will of God. At their best moments they still were misunderstanding Jesus' teaching. At their worst moments they appeared to be natural as they really are. So that the way was a magnifier through which it was possible to see who Jesus is and who all others are.

In Isaiah we find similar categories. Again, and again we read of people's failure and about Yahweh's glory.

*"In Isaiah itself, 'the way of the Lord' is not so much the way in which the Lord intends people to walk as it is the Lord's own way, his triumphant march through the wilderness and into the holy city as he leads his people back from exile in a magnificent demonstration of saving power.*"<sup>185</sup>

The same is in Mark *"the true fulfilment of the prophesy of Yahweh's triumphant march through the wilderness lies not in the military campaigns of the revolutionaries but the weary trek of Jesus and his disciples up to Jerusalem."*<sup>186</sup>

Many other authors recognized that Mark makes many connections with Isaiah 'way' in his Gospel. It was expected from the reader to recognize and connect Mark 8-10, that is the way through the desert to Jerusalem with

*"the promised 'way' quoted in Mk 1.2-3 and so deduce that 'the fearful trek of the befuddled, bedraggled little band of disciples is the return of Israel to Zion, and Jesus' suffering and death there are the prophesied apocalyptic victory of the divine warrior'."*<sup>187</sup>

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<sup>184</sup> Ibid. Pg. 73.

<sup>185</sup> MARCUS, *Mark 1-8*. Pg. 148.

<sup>186</sup> MARCUS, *The Way of the Lord*. Pg. 37.

<sup>187</sup> MOYISE, *Evoking Scripture: seeing the Old Testament in the New*. Pg. 15.

### 5.3. Wilderness

We have seen all the uses of the wilderness theme in Mark. The Exodus use it much more intensely. Some spent most of their lives in the wilderness. In the wilderness God became Israel's God through the covenant that he made with them. There, in the wilderness, Lord gave them Tora. People were also tempted by God for forty years (Deuteronomy 8). They entered the wilderness through crossing the sea and went out from it through crossing the Jordan river. "*Accordingly, these settings are highly symbolical of God's saving purposes and new beginnings.*"<sup>188</sup> By now it should be not a surprise that Mark deliberately use wilderness with "*association with the kerygma*"<sup>189</sup> and take Exodus as the model for his story.

In Mark we find two episodes when Jesus provides food for people in the wilderness. These two stories are very well interconnected to Exodus and Isaiah's prophecy. I mentioned earlier that Jesus was shown as the shepherd and crowd as his sheep. "*The sheep without a shepherd*" (6.34; cf. Exod 34.5) *have received a shepherd.*"<sup>190</sup> Though some think that it is too much "*to take the 'green grass' (τῶ χλωρῶ χόρτῳ; cf. John 6.10) as an allusion to the messianic age when the 'desert will blossom' (Friedrich, TZ 20 [1964] 18–20)*"<sup>191</sup> it would not surprise me if Mark actually intended us to make such connection. Even more, in Isaiah 50.2 Yahweh demonstrates his power by making the rivers a wilderness and *their fish stink for lack of water and die of thirst.* Why would not Mark demonstrate positively that Jesus' hand is not short and that he can ransom. Jesus' way of acting, is similar to God's conduct with his people. In Isaiah we read that

*"Yahweh will shepherd them (40.11; cf. Ex 15.13; Pss 77.20; 78.52f) providing food and water (49.9f; cf. 48.21) in a miraculous transformation of the wilderness (43.19; 49.9ff; cf. Ex 17.2-7; Num 20.8), and there will again be a revelation of his glory (40.5; cf. 52.10)."*<sup>192</sup>

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<sup>188</sup> KIRSTEN MARIE HARTVIGSEN. *Prepare the Way of the Lord: Towards a Cognitive Poetic Analysis of Audience Involvement with Characters and Events in the Markan World.* Berlin: De Gruyter, 2012. ISBN 31-102-5347-X. Pg. 113.

<sup>189</sup> WATTS, *Isaiah's new Exodus in Mark.* Pg. 11.

<sup>190</sup> GUELICH, *Word biblical commentary: Mark 1–8:26* [Logos].

<sup>191</sup> Ibid.

<sup>192</sup> WATTS, *Isaiah's new Exodus in Mark.* Pg. 80.

Even though the word 'wilderness' does not appear in Mark too often, nevertheless Marcus says that “*our investigation affirms Mauser’s central thesis of the importance of the wilderness theme for Mark... specifically the Deutero-Isaian form of this theme, with its hope of eschatological victory in the wilderness, that is crucial for Mark.*”<sup>193</sup>

Melugin gives a more detailed description of Isaiah’s use of the desert in his second unit.

*“First of all, the image of the highway through the desert (v. 3— 5) is a recurring theme in chapters 41— 48. Indeed, it is the theme of the new Exodus: Yahweh will create an oasis in the desert (41, 17— 20), a ‘way’ in the desert (43, 19.20). When the people of Israel are commanded to leave Babylon (48, 20— 21), they are reminded that they did not thirst when they went through the desert.”*<sup>194</sup>

So, we might think that when Jesus as the Shepherd twice feeds people in the wilderness, the reader should know that Isaiah’s prophecy is being fulfilled.

*It came about as Aaron spoke to the whole congregation of the sons of Israel, that they looked toward the wilderness, and behold, the glory of the LORD appeared in the cloud (Exodus 16.10).*

#### **5.4. Ezra and Nehemiah as pointers to the future fulfilment of Isaiah 40.3**

As we might see, Isaiah 40.3-8 presupposes such an exodus that will be significant for the whole world and not just for Israelites.

*“The restoration of the exiles and of Jerusalem is to be the occasion and the means of Yhwh’s universal self-revelation... It is supremely God that the prophet cares about, not the exilic community or Zion-Jerusalem or the nations... The focus here is not on ‘News of the returning exiles’ (NEB) but on news of the returning God.”*<sup>195</sup>

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<sup>193</sup> MARCUS, *The Way of the Lord*. Pg. 26.

<sup>194</sup> MELUGIN, *The formation of Isaiah 40-55*. Pg. 85.

<sup>195</sup> GOLDINGAY, *The message of Isaiah 40-55: a literary-theological commentary*. Pg. 22, 18.

As I have already mentioned in my section of Isaiah's influence on Mark, I do not consider Isaiah's prophecy 40 – 55 as fulfilled in the historical Babylon-Jerusalem exodus of the Jews. Here I will give some more supporting reasons for such a view. My view is that this prophecy was fulfilled in Jesus's coming. The books of Ezra and Nehemiah show us that the act of deliverance from Babylon was not as glorious as Isaiah's language describes it. Of course, we can always say that Isaiah writes in poetic language. But does this mean that a poet describes in glorious terms something that is not so glorious after all? When the poet writes about love in a high hyperbolic way that only means that love in reality is much higher than the love of his description.

From the book of Ezra, we know that Israel's way from Babylon to Jerusalem could not be taken as something extraordinary. There is no presence of the Lord in a way as it was with Israel on the way from Egypt. On the one hand, it is the Lord who stirred up the spirit of Cyrus, king of Persia, to make the proclamation that people may go and build a house to him. And they could collect a great amount of gold.

*“In the light of the positive statements of Isa 41, 44, and 45, God's whole purpose in raising up Cyrus was to assure that the temple in Jerusalem might be rebuilt and the exiles returned to their homeland. In this way our writer, no less than the prophet of Isa 40–55, brings the whole of Cyrus's rise into subservience to God's will for his exiled people.”<sup>196</sup>*

But on the other Israel were terrified because of the peoples of the lands. They made a great preparation for the way through continual burnt offerings but on the way to Jerusalem there is no revealed glory of the Lord as Isaiah has promised (Isa. 40.5); nothing even close or similar to what we may read in Exodus 16.10.

Further, we read about joy and singing after the temple's foundation was laid. But at the same time, we hear weeping with a loud voice.

*“A final specific point of continuity between the first and second temples is provided by a reference to the older members of the congregation whose long lives further helped to bridge the interrupted worship on this site.*

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<sup>196</sup> WILLIAMSON, H. G. M. *Word biblical commentary: Ezra, Nehemiah* [Logos]. [1st ed.]. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1985. Word biblical commentary. ISBN 0-8499-0215-0.

*Based, no doubt, on Hag 2.3, some clearly found the comparison bitterly disappointing.*"<sup>197</sup>

By the end of temple construction, we read: *"for the Lord had caused them to rejoice and had turned the heart of the king of Assyria toward them to encourage them in the work of the house of God, the God of Israel"* (Ezra 6.22). And also, it is recognized that the Lord, the God of Israel has put in the king's heart to adorn the house of the Lord which is in Jerusalem (Ezra 7.27). But at the same time the book of Ezra concludes with a list of offenders who *had married foreign wives, and some of them had wives by whom they had children* (Ezra 10.44).

*"Instead of frontal opposition from external enemies, the danger now comes from within, from those of the community who have married outsiders. While this is, from the writer's point of view, successfully overcome (Ezra 10), the section ends abruptly and without celebration."*<sup>198</sup>

Reading the subsequent book of Nehemiah, we find that the situation in Jerusalem is far from being ideal.

*"The book thus points to its own failure in some respects and indicates by its narrative shape that need which is expressed more clearly elsewhere (cf. Jer 31.31–34) for a radically new approach, an approach which was inaugurated by the events recorded in the NT (e.g., Heb 8 and 10)."*<sup>199</sup>

Both books, Ezra and Nehemiah, speak of a restoration that is not yet finished. Reading the promises in Isaiah 40-55 and comparing them to what has happened (already theologically interpreted by those who wrote these books) we might see that Deutero-Isaiah speaks after all about some other event than this particular one, *"the narrative structure itself points to past achievement as a model for future aspiration."*<sup>200</sup>

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<sup>197</sup> WILLIAMSON, *Word biblical commentary: Ezra, Nehemiah* [Logos].

<sup>198</sup> Ibid.

<sup>199</sup> Ibid.

<sup>200</sup> Ibid.

## 6. Mark's interpretation of Isaiah and Malachi

We might create different theories and draw interesting presuppositions on why Mark quotes from the Septuagint and not from the Hebrew Bible. Why does he change the meaning of the original text of Malachi? Why does he mention only Isaiah as a prophet and not Malachi also? My approach to these questions is as follows. I suppose that Mark knew the Jewish Bible much better than I do (together with all modern commentaries), and that he had full access to the Hebrew and Septuagint Bible. For me, the way he structures his quotation does not suggest that he made a mistake or would do it differently if only he had better access to the original text. I do not think that it is less scholarly to take Mark as the ideal author who has all the necessary text and knows Hebrew and Greek, then to think that he missed something and that today we know better. If we do not know for sure what was Mark's intention to quote as he did why then not take him as an ideal author and not the one who has some kind of handicap. Having this perspective, let us see what Mark's text may teach us.

First, we need to say that for Mark, the fulfilment of the Isaiah prophecy in 40.3 is not indeed fulfilled until the very occasion he describes after his quotation. Neither Ezra nor Nehemiah quotes Isaiah's text to show that their time is the time of fulfilment.

Second, the reason that he is heading Isaiah as the prophet under his two texts is that Isaiah was first one who started to prophecy about two vacant positions. That is one of 'a voice' and another of 'someone' who responded to the voice's second calling. Later, Malachi brings new clarification from the Lord on Isaiah's matter.

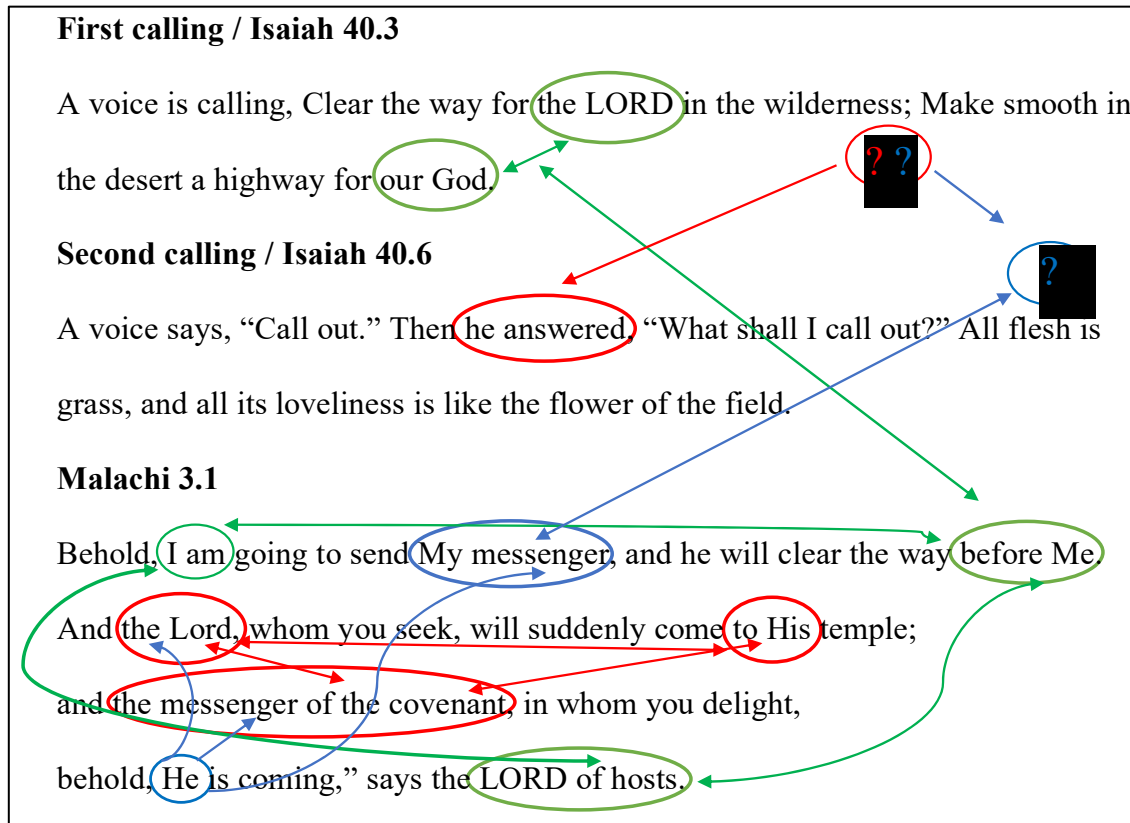
Thirdly, I think that Mark has all legitimacy, in his quoting, to make some changes that give final interpretation and clarification to Isaiah and Malachi. Granting that he lived in the generation in which this prophecy was fulfilled, Mark knows better what the Isaiah prophecy is and how it should be interpreted.

Those are my presuppositions and I see no reasons why I cannot have them. To say that these are confessional beliefs and not scholarly ones could be as confessional. Unless it is proved otherwise, I think one has every right to stay with those ideas.



## 6.1. Isaiah 40.3; 40.6, Malachi 3.1

Realizing that what follows might be confusing reading as I find it hard to explain, I will first provide a visualisation of the discussed texts and give a brief description to each. We will take a close look now to Isaiah 40.3, 6, Malachi 3.1 and Mark 1.2-3.



*Malachi 3.1a* implies that the Yahweh (the LORD) himself will come and his messenger will clear the way for Yahweh.

*Malachi 3.1b* implies that Adon (the Lord) will come. His is the temple and people are seeking him while worshipping in the temple.

*Malachi 3.1c* implies that the messenger of the covenant will come, and he is the one in whom the people delight.

*Malachi 3.1d* speaks about 'he' who is coming and by 'he' we might think of 3 possibilities. 'He' might stand for 'my messenger' or 'the messenger of the covenant' or 'Adon'.

*Isaiah 40.3* uses two terms for God to whom the way should be prepared. It is Yahweh and Elohim. By red and blue question marks I mean that no one has responded to the call of the voice in this verse. Please note that here the voice is calling for more than one character to do the task, it is in plural imperative form, that is why I have two question marks. We

need at least two characters who would be able to prepare the way for the Lord. One will respond in 40.6 and another one is still missing in Isaiah.

*Isaiah 40.6* has ‘he’ or also names him as ‘someone’ who is responding to the voice’s calling out.

## 6.2. Connecting points of Isaiah and Malachi

Visually we see three categories that are clearly interconnected. Three characters who have one or more names in those verses.

*Malachi 3.1* Malachi starts from an implication that Yahweh will come and then follows that Adon will come. The parallelism in 3.1b and 3.1c imply that Adon and the messenger of the covenant are one and same figure. Malachi 3.1d speaks about ‘he’ that is coming implying that Adon and the messenger of the covenant are not two but one figure. Adon of the temple is the messenger of the covenant. *“This blurring of identity between Yhwh and angels and/or messengers is not uncommon in the HB.”*<sup>201</sup>

‘My messenger’ (3.1a) and ‘the messenger of the covenant’ (3.1c) do not seem to be the same character. We can find numerous *the* messengers in the Bible but only a few ‘my messenger’ – indeed only twice in the Old Testament, in Isaiah 42.19 and Malachi 3.1, and three times in the New Testament in Matthew, Mark and Luke. My *“messenger is not identified by name or origin. We do not know if he was a man or an angel.”*<sup>202</sup>

Further, I cannot agree with Vriezen and Elliger that ‘my messenger’ in Malachi 3.1 is the prophet Malachi himself. *“The prophet realizes that he is being called upon to prepare his people for the imminent coming of Yahweh, as is evident from 3.1a. ... He is the messenger sent by Yahweh to prepare the way (Vriezen, Grace upon Grace 132).”*<sup>203</sup> Malachi prophecies about Yahweh’s messenger in expectation of its fulfilment and not as being the fulfilment himself.

Malachi 3.1 seems to make the connection between Yahweh whose is the temple and Adon who will suddenly come to *his* temple. Yahweh who is going to come and Adon will

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<sup>201</sup> FOX, Michael R. *A message from the Great King: reading Malachi in light of ancient Persian royal messenger texts from the time of Xerxes*. Winona Lake, Indiana: Eisenbrauns, 2015. ISBN 978-1-57506-394-2. Pg. 125.

<sup>202</sup> SMITH, Ralph. *Word biblical commentary: Micah-Malachi* [Logos]. Volume 32. Dallas, Texas: Word Books, 1984. ISBN 0-8499-231-2.

<sup>203</sup> Ibid.

come. Both seem to refer to the same temple of worship. “*Upon the messenger’s arrival, several things will happen. First, the messenger and ‘Lord’ (יְהוָה) will make his/their way to the temple (3.1).*”<sup>204</sup>

We face well known difficulties in understanding who is who in Malachi 3.1. Different suggestions were made.

*“Isbell believes that all three could be ‘a single being’ referred to ‘by three different titles.’ In this case the Lord (יְהוָה) would not refer to Yahweh, but “to a person of noble station socially.”*<sup>205</sup>

However due to parallelism in the passage it is highly improbable that it is someone else than the messenger of the covenant. Also, we find passages in Scripture where יְהוָה 'lord' refer to Yahweh. “*The messenger of the covenant is a synonym of ‘the Lord’ (יְהוָה), — notice ‘whom ye desire,’ parallel to ‘whom ye seek’—i.e. Yahweh, not in Himself, however, but in a representative form.*”<sup>206</sup> Another possibility is that ‘my messenger’ is Elijah from Malachi 4.5 as he is also sent by Yahweh. Watts, however insists that the focus is not Yahweh’s coming and there is no “*specific mention of any messianic figure in Malachi... as per Sirach 48.10, where the task of Elijah is ‘to calm the wrath of God before it breaks out in fury’ by turning the heart of the father to the son and restoring the tribes of Jacob.*”<sup>207</sup> This, however, is a general prophetic task to prepare human ways to the Lord but not the Lord’s way. We can go on and find an enormous amount of interpretations. My view on this is that we cannot know for ourselves. We need another prophet to interpret it for us. And as we all very well know, scholars are far from being prophets. So, let us wait for Mark’s interpretation of these passages.

We need also to mention that most interpreters would agree that Isaiah 40.3 is directly connected to Malachi 3.1. The connection points to Yahweh to whom the way should be prepared. In Isaiah 40.3,6 we have Yahweh, ‘he’ who responded to the voice and a missing character as we need more than one response. As Yahweh in Isaiah 40.3 needs plural not a singular character, we still have one vacant place. Malachi, in this sense, does not come with

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<sup>204</sup> FOX, *A message from the Great King*. Pg. 125.

<sup>205</sup> SMITH, *Word biblical commentary: Micah-Malachi* [Logos].

<sup>206</sup> Ibid.

<sup>207</sup> WATTS, *Isaiah’s new Exodus in Mark*. Pg. 76.

a new prophecy but with interpretative prophecy. Malachi explains that the Lord has his own messenger whom he will send to prepare the Lord's way.

### **6.3. Malachi and Isaiah's 'voice' and its first call**

When Malachi 3.1 speaks about the messenger whom Yahweh is going to send to prepare the way before Yahweh, he builds on what the prophet before him had said.

*“Malachi 3.1 appears already to be a reworking of Exod. 23.20, but at the same time in its appeal to an eschatological messenger and the preparation of Yahweh's way (pnh-drk), it echoes key ideas found in Isa. 40.3.”<sup>208</sup>*

By this Malachi interpreted that no one reacted to the voice's first call, no one could prepare the way for the Yahweh. No one could say that I will prepare the way for Yahweh. So now, Malachi says, Yahweh himself will choose the messenger and Yahweh himself will send *his* messenger to prepare way for Yahweh.

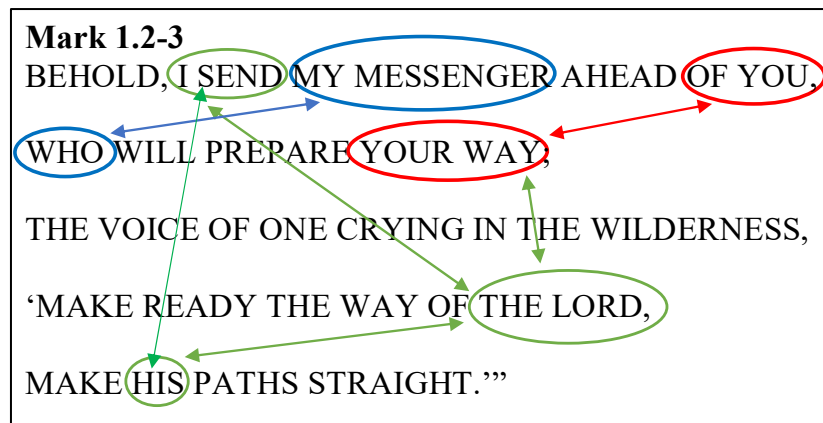
### **6.4. The second call of the voice and Malachi's application**

When the voice in Isaiah 40.6 called out for the second time we read that someone responded. In Isaiah it is not clear who is it. Though one respondent is not enough as Yahweh asked for plural. We can illustratively say that till Malachi God waited for someone to volunteer for the unoccupied position. No one did as no one could. From Malachi on people can expect that Lord has *his* own person whom he will send to prepare the way for himself.

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<sup>208</sup> BEALE, *Commentary on the New Testament use of the Old Testament*. Pg. 114.

## 6.5. Mark's adaptation



In Mark 1.2 we read that (i) the Lord send his (ii) messenger ahead (iii) *of you*, the messenger will prepare (iii) *your way*. It seems to be similar to Malachi 3.1 where we find (i) Yahweh, (ii) my messenger, (iii) Adon or the messenger of the covenant. And in Isaiah 40.3,6 we have (i) Yahweh, (ii) the 'he' response and (iii) the unoccupied position.

Isaiah 40.6 describes the second call of 'a voice'. When the voice is calling for a second time we see the reaction of *someone* who is not identified. It seems like, after all, Isaiah's voice did find someone who volunteered to prepare the way for Yahweh. From endless possibilities of what one can cry about this 'someone' is asking what to cry about. The voice says that from all the possible themes the 'someone' should cry that the spirit of Yahweh destroys all flesh whenever his Spirit is breathed out by Yahweh. So, this 'someone' should differ from all flesh. This someone should be able to stand still and not to be burnt away from Yahweh's Spirit. This 'someone' should be able to stand still while everything else fades and withers. And that is the quality, as Isaiah says, of the word of God. As it is the word of God that stands forever (Isa. 40.8).

When Mark adapts his quotation so as to prepare the way to 'you' and not to Yahweh, he speaks about this 'someone' who volunteered to prepare the way for Yahweh. As I already discussed here and in the previous passage that the one who could prepare the way for Yahweh should have some qualities of Yahweh. Yahweh's Spirit is dangerous for all flesh. Who can prepare a way by which Yahweh himself can walk? Can anything endure and survive from Yahweh's feet? Does any creature have the building materials and ability to do so? So, we have here Yahweh, his Spirit and his Word. Those three can bear with each other. Yahweh can bear his own Spirit and the Word of Yahweh stands forever.

This 'someone' should be someone should have same quality as these three or might be one of them. The logic is, because we do not know yet who is this 'someone' but we

know that he should have special qualities to endure Yahweh's Spirit, this someone should be either Yahweh himself, or his Spirit or the Word of Yahweh.

In Mark we see that to prepare the way ahead of 'you' and prepare the way to the Lord is identical. From Yahweh's perspective, the way should be prepared for 'someone' else, the 'you' term. But from the voice's perspective the way should be prepared for Yahweh. That is why I am saying that from quotation 'you' and Yahweh are identical. But at the same time, they are different as Yahweh speaks about someone else and not of himself. *"As in 1.11 Jesus hears (and the audience overhears) the voice of God speaking to Jesus, so already the audience (over-) hears the voice of God speaking to 'the Lord' in 1.2– 3,"*<sup>209</sup> though the voice is crying out about Yahweh.

I also need to clarify that in my view that would be contrary to most scholars' views<sup>210</sup>, I do not think that in Mark 1.2-3 the voice and the messenger are the same. The messenger in Mark 1.2 and the voice in Mark 1.3 are different actors. The probable notion that Matthew and Luke recognize John the Baptist as Isaiah's messenger might be correct, but we already saw in the example of the walking stick that Mark writes differently than the other two synoptic writers. *"Matthew and Luke cite Isaiah 40.3 and the combined Exodus/Malachi passages in different contexts."*<sup>211</sup> Let us therefore hear Mark in his own terms.

Mark thinking carefully about the Isaiah/Malachi prophecy, is giving us the results of his thinking and interpretation. Hidden in those two verses is a deep and serious meditation on who is 'a voice', and who is responding to that voice. Who can respond to such an unearthly calling, who is this 'he' or 'someone', who is this messenger whom Yahweh calls 'my'. All this, each iota, is important. And for Mark, each iota is fulfilled.

*"This transcendent prelude to the action of the narrative itself reveals to the audience that the story about to begin is in line with the Scriptures of Israel, with Isaiah in particular, that the one God of Israel addresses another transcendent being as 'the Lord' (cf. Phil 2.5– 11) and that this Lord has a way... Jesus is the 'way of the Lord'."*<sup>212</sup>

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<sup>209</sup> BORING, *Mark: a commentary*. Pg. 36.

<sup>210</sup> I hope that having Bc., title in theology I have rights for my own view with giving no support of other scholars. Unfortunately, I could not find yet anyone who would support my view.

<sup>211</sup> WATTS, *Isaiah's new Exodus in Mark*. Pg. 57.

<sup>212</sup> BORING, *Mark: a commentary*. Pg. 37.

## 6.6. Mark's prologue

Let's test my view by the story that is told in Mark's prologue. Most scholars recognize that 'a voice' is John the Baptist who *appeared* in the desert and I hold the same view. John the Baptist is the one who provided tongue and mouth for Isaiah's 'a voice' so that it will cry out not only in the Isaiah text but also in first century Judea. It is John the Baptist who is crying out now, sending voice's message to all Jerusalem. And indeed, all people of Jerusalem came to him but not to prepare the way for Yahweh but to repent from their sin. By this they recognize the danger of Yahweh's Spirit who may burn them away, like grass. So, no one from Judea was able to accomplish the task of the voice, namely: "*make ready the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.*" No one, till the one who is so much greater that John the Baptist is οὐκ ἰκανὸς κύψας.

In the Septuagint, in the book of Isaiah the word *hikanos* is used only twice in one verse. Isaiah 40.16, "*Even Lebanon is not enough to burn, nor its beasts enough for a burnt offering.*" This directly speaks about the greatness of Yahweh who could not be satisfied by anything that his created world can offer. The word *kypto* is used three times (Is. 2.9, twice in my unit 46.6, 51.23), mainly in a sense of deep humiliation whether before Yahweh, other gods or people. So, speaking by Isaiah's terms, John the Baptist could not satisfy that someone who is coming after him just as all Lebanon and all beasts could not satisfy Yahweh. Even if John were to *lie down that the one may walk over him, even if John had made his back like the ground and like the street for the one to walk over him* (51.23), even such worship will be not enough for the one who is coming after the John the Baptist.

In addition, John the Baptist cannot be the messenger who could prepare the way for Yahweh because he himself is not worthy of this task, he is not fitting, he cannot provide satisfaction. Putting John's confession into the terms of Isaiah this someone who is mightier than John seems to be really dangerous to him as he will baptise with the Holy Spirit. And from Isaiah we know what happens when Yahweh blows his upon people. So, who is he (how much dangerous is he) that is not only immune against the Spirit of Yahweh but he himself will baptise with the Holy Spirit?

Reading further and remembering Isaiah's prophecy that "*the grass withereth, the flower fadeth: Because the spirit of the LORD bloweth upon it*" (40.7, KJV) we want to test Jesus on strength. What will happen to his flesh when the Spirit of the Lord blows upon him? In Mark we read that for Jesus, this death bringing Spirit, is as dangerous as the descending dove. Furthermore, we hear the voice from heaven who should be the Father because he is

speaking to Jesus as His Son. In the Father's speech we hear the 'you' term again. This 'you' term is used for the second time in Mark as the first time it was in Mark's quotation.

## 6.7. Messenger in Mark's prologue

Who is this messenger then? If the messenger from Mark 1.2 is not the voice from Mark 1.3, the messenger is not identified yet. Mark 1.2 speaks about Yahweh's messenger *πρὸ προσώπου σου* that is 'at your face'. We read that after the Spirit descended upon Jesus, *immediately* the Spirit compelled Him *to go* out into the wilderness (Mark 1.12). So, the messenger at Jesus' face is the Spirit descendent upon him who immediately takes an action and ἐκβάλλει Jesus to the wilderness. That is the τὸν ἄγγελόν in Mark 1.2 is the Spirit of Yahweh. This Spirit drove Jesus to the wilderness as it is he who should prepare the way for Jesus in the wilderness, just as Isaiah 40.3 implies. In the desert the Spirit should prepare the way amidst Satan and the wild beasts.

I hope that I have shown how all the figures from Isaiah and Malachi are fitting together in Mark. Not one is omitted. Although we have become unaccustomed to the fact that traditions are intertwined and often we try to see each tradition as totally separate from another, the positive side of intertextuality is that it reminds us that texts and traditions are not so far separated as biblical theology sometimes tries to impose on us.

*"The concept of intertextuality affords discourse analysts important insights into language and social interaction that the examination of isolated speech events does not. As Bauman (2005) summarizes, intertextuality "gives us a vantage point on social formations larger than those of the immediate interaction order, and it gives us ways of thinking of power and authority in discourse-based terms larger than those that are immediately and locally produced in the bounded speech event (interactional power)."*"<sup>213</sup>

I hope it is not *kacířství*<sup>214</sup> when one sees that Mark's prologue is very similar to John's prologue. Many others before me saw this similarly.

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<sup>213</sup> TANNEN, *The handbook of discourse analysis*. Pg. 56.

<sup>214</sup> A word heresy in English does not seem to be as loaded as Czech word *kacířství* is.



*“Therefore, when it comes to the heart of the matter, that is, Jesus’ relationship to God, Mark’s prologue may not be so far behind the Johannine (1.1-18) as is often assumed. The major difference is the way the Evangelists choose to communicate their respective understandings of Jesus. Where John prefers the logos concept and incarnation language, Mark is more implicit, uses the Scripture, and applies texts about the one God of Israel to Jesus, and attributes to him the fulfillment of the promises of an eschatological giving of God’s Spirit. In fact, Mark’s application of God’s personal name YHWH to Jesus may not be less remarkable than John’s statement that ‘the Word was God’.”<sup>215</sup>*

### **6.7.1. Objections on who the messenger is**

As I have already mentioned, in my research, I could not find anyone who would support my view that the messenger who will prepare the way before Jesus is the Holy Spirit. Marcus states:

*“In Exodus the words refer to the angel whom God promises to send before the Israelites in the desert... contrary to the sense of the original, Mark understands it as a reference to a human envoy, John the Baptist.”<sup>216</sup>*

In Exodus 23.21 we read that the angel whom Yahweh promises is not just an 'ordinary'<sup>217</sup> one. We read what Yahweh says about this angel: *“Pay careful attention to him and obey his voice; do not rebel against him, for he will not pardon your transgression, for my name is in him.”* Some authors speak about a second Yahweh at this point.<sup>218</sup> Marcus is right in saying that Exodus' promise is someone more than a mere man. But, in my view, he is wrong to say that Mark understands the messenger contrary to the sense of original meaning. Marcus gives no proof but just follows the line of many interpreters before him

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<sup>215</sup> JOHANSSON, Daniel. *Jesus and God in the Gospel of Mark: unity and distinction*. UK, 2011. The degree of PhD. University of Edinburgh. Vedouci práce Larry W. Hurtado. Pg. 40

<sup>216</sup> MARCUS, *Mark 1-8: a new translation with introduction and commentary*. Pg. 142.

<sup>217</sup> Whatever this word might mean.

<sup>218</sup> *There are two Yahweh figures in Old Testament thinking—one invisible, the other visible and human in form. Judaism before the first century, the time of Jesus, knew this teaching. That’s why ancient Jewish theology once embraced two Yahweh figures the “two powers”.* Heiser, M.S., *The Unseen Realm: Recovering the Supernatural Worldview of the Bible*, Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2015. ISBN 9781577995562.

who insist that it is John the Baptist who prepares the way for the Lord. Though he agrees that

*“In Isa 40.3 itself, 'the way of the Lord' is not so much the way in which the Lord intends people to walk as it is the Lord's own way, his triumphant march through the wilderness and into the holy city as he leads his people back from exile in a magnificent demonstration of saving power.”*<sup>219</sup>

A similar view has Watts saying as follows.

*“Granted that John is authorized to communicate God's word of repentance and to perform it (hence his baptism), Mark makes it clear that he is but a preparatory figure who is heralding and clearing the way for no one less than 'strong' Yahweh himself (1.7) (this a key motif already in Isa. 40-55 and an emphasis in some sections of Judaism; cf. Pesiq. Rab. 36, where God himself will go ahead of Israel at their return...”*<sup>220</sup>

Here again, even though Watts recognizes whose way should be prepared he also follows the common interpretive line. A similar view on who prepares the way for Jesus is also held by Knight, Boring, Moyise, Pokorny and all others whom I quote in this work.

### **6.7.2. Concluding remarks on the messenger**

In Mark 1.2 we find three persons. The one who sends, the sent one and the one before whom one is sent. In 1.10-11 we hear the voice came out of the heavens, we see Spirit descending from the ripped heavens and we see Jesus to whom it all happens. So, what was promised in 1.2 came to its fulfilment in 1.10-11.

It is hard to understand why interpreters does not see that not only John the Baptist as the voice in the wilderness is predicted by the prophecy but also coming of the Spirit of God to earth is also predicted by Isaiah and not merely spoken out loud by John. On the one hand commentators see the eschatological meaning and importance of the Spirit. But on the other hand, they miss to see that Spirit's coming as also predicted by the prophets. It would be more than strange that the coming of John was grounded in the Old Testament prophecy but the coming of the Spirit was not. Though I was not discussing the issue of what is the

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<sup>219</sup> MARCUS, *Mark 1-8: a new translation with introduction and commentary*. Pg. 148.

<sup>220</sup> BEALE, *Commentary on the New Testament use of the Old Testament*. Pg. 119.

Old Testament ground for John to speak of someone who will baptise with the Spirit, but it would be more than suspicious that Mark introduce John with the prophecy but not the Spirit.

Just as in Isaiah 40.3 so also in Mark 1.3 the voice is calling to prepare the way and make Lord's path straight. But John himself does not see his mission as the one who do the preparation. He baptises people and it is *their* ways that should be corrected through repentance. Though John testify that after him someone comes but that does not mean that John prepared way to him as the one who is coming after him is mightier than John. Actually, so much mightier that John even not worthy strap his sandals not to speaking about way preparation.

## 6.8. Servant of the Lord

In my previous section on the surrounding context of Isaiah 40.3 I have mentioned the importance of the Servant of the Lord. This theme, I suppose, could be another extensive work. Here I will mention just briefly the connection between the Servant and *someone* who responded to the voice's second cry and eventually appeared as Jesus. Watts commenting on Mark 1.11, interprets the voice from heaven as follows.

*“Isaiah 42.1ff presents an unidentified 'servant' as the agent who inaugurates Yahweh's sovereign universal rule over the nations and who, delivering the exiles from their prison, restores 'sight' to 'blind' Jacob-Israel. The same understanding of this 'servant' as agent is present in a number of witnesses to Tg. Isaiah 42. 1ff. In expansionist references to the return from the jail-like exile and opening of blind eyes (v. 7), the 'servant' is identified as the Spirit-anointed and victorious Messiah (cf. Tg. Isa 53).”<sup>221</sup>*

Watts connects the voice from heaven who names Jesus as his Son with Isaiah 42.1 where we find similar context and content. However, that cannot be enough as we do not find the term ‘son’ in Isaiah 42.1. That is why other scholars connect Mark 1.11 to Psalm 2.7. Guelich connects both Isaiah and the Psalm to Mark, seen that one text is speaking about role and another about relationship.

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<sup>221</sup> WATTS, *Isaiah's new Exodus in Mark*. Pg. 115.

*“The voice consistently addresses Jesus both in terms of his role (Ps 2.7, 'son' = the anointed king; Isa 42.1, 'my chosen' = the servant) and his relationship to the Father ('my son, the only/beloved one,' cf. Gen 22.2; 'very pleased,' εὐδόκησα instead of the more explicit ἐκλεκτός of Isa 42.1).”<sup>222</sup>*

The attempt is made by many scholars to specify exactly what kind of relationship this is. In what sense is God the father to Jesus?

Let us first ask a simple following question. Can anyone really fully identify the relationship between a loving couple in human relationships? If the answer is no, then would not it be too arrogant to attempt to identify the relationship between God and Jesus? Should not a scholar realize his/her limits here and instead of identification rather begin with confession and worship?<sup>223</sup>

*“The juxtaposition of role and relationship in the words of the heavenly voice leaves open the enigmatic nature of that role and relationship... The special 'filial' relationship ('beloved son,' cf. Gen 22.2; and 'very pleased,' Isa 42.1) remains unspecified. Yet it is precisely this enigma in Jesus' role and relationship with the Father that marks his earthly ministry as depicted in the Gospels. The focus from here on in Mark's narrative, as in the other Gospels, turns ultimately to Jesus' ministry (1.12–13, 14–15) to address this enigma.”<sup>224</sup>*

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<sup>222</sup> GUELICH, *Word biblical commentary: Mark 1–8:26* [Logos].

<sup>223</sup> See Romans 1.21ff

<sup>224</sup> GUELICH, *Word biblical commentary: Mark 1–8:26* [Logos].

## 7. Christological aspects of the Gospel of Mark 1.2-3

My attempt in this section will be to make some concluding statements on Mark's 1.2-3 Christological aspects. During the whole work I was trying to show that Jesus in Mark's view is someone much bigger than merely human. My attempt was to show the importance of Mark's use of Isaiah and how the prophetic development from Exodus to Malachi were influential in Mark's introductory quotation. We saw how the book of Exodus influenced some of Isaiah's prophetic statements and how Malachi used both and extended his vision and clarified the prophetic details. Neither Isaiah nor Malachi sees that their prophecy was fulfilled in their own time as they leave their readers with the expectations that one day it will be fulfilled.

*“Isaiah 40-55 is, in fact, an apologetic for the failure of the return to realize its full glory... the INE<sup>225</sup> in its fullness was delayed until, according to one reading of the second half of the book of Isaiah, the enigmatic 'servant' would arise as Yahweh's agent of deliverance. In the meantime, however, the hopes of the INE continued to shape expectations of the future.”<sup>226</sup>*

When we come to Mark's Gospel we clearly see that what was prophesied before is fulfilled now. For Mark, Isaiah's future is right now, and it is coming with Jesus. Just as in the very first sentences as well as in the quotation, it is Jesus and his identity that plays the primary role. *“Before readers learn anything about Jesus's career and life, they are informed in the prologue that Jesus is the transcendent Lord who has a 'way' in this world.”<sup>227</sup>* So, concerning Jesus' Christology, together with Knight and many others, I think of Jesus as God himself. *“Jan Křtitel připravuje cestu ne pro Mesiáše v podobě lidského krále, ale pro samotného Boha – Ježíše Nazaretského.”<sup>228</sup>*

Though for Mark, Jesus' mission and life has high value, nevertheless the importance of Jesus' deeds comes from who he actually is a not vice versa. That is probably why Mark's

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<sup>225</sup> INE – Israel's New Exodus.

<sup>226</sup> WATTS, *Isaiah's New Exodus in Mark*. P. 82.

<sup>227</sup> BIRD, Michael F. *Jesus the eternal son: answering adoptionist Christology* [Logos]. Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2017. ISBN 978-0-8028-7506-8.

<sup>228</sup> KNIGHT, George R. *Marek: evangelium Ježíše Krista, syna Božího*. Praha: Advent-Orion, spol. s r.o., 2017. Bible pro dnešek. ISBN 978-80-7172-687-6. Pg. 23-24.

introduction starts from a high Christology that can only be compared to the prologue of John's Gospel.

*“Mark’s opening sentence implies in some mysterious way the very presence of God himself (1.1-2).”*<sup>229</sup> Also, Watts insists that *“particular interest for Mark's use is the fact that the emphasis... on the coming of the eschatological deliverance... namely, Yahweh's coming himself.”*<sup>230</sup>

The identity of Jesus is the main reason why Mark quotes Isaiah's prophecy. Though not only in the prologue but Watts shows that in Mark *“the great majority of the OT references concern Jesus’ identity.”*<sup>231</sup> The citation with which Mark opens his Gospel should shock those Jews who are expecting and waiting for the fulfilment of Isaiah's prophecy showing that Jesus himself is *“the central focus of Mark's 'good news'.”*<sup>232</sup>

Let me share just a few more quotations that support my conclusion on Jesus' high Christology. I do it mainly because of a well-supported view in some scholarly circles that Mark presents a low Christology in his Gospel.<sup>233</sup>

*“Christologically speaking, the striking identification of Jesus (1.1) with Yahweh’s coming (1.2-3) can hardly be missed.”*<sup>234</sup>

*“Before the action ever begins on the this-worldly narrative stage, before the readers have ever seen the earthly Jesus in the story line of the Gospel, they have (over-) heard God declare that Jesus is transcendent Lord who has a 'way' in this world and is conditioned to hear the whole story within this framework.”*<sup>235</sup>

*“the application of these texts to Jesus suggests that he is to be identified in some way, not so much with 'the Messiah', but with none other than the יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ and יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ of Malachi and, in terms of Isaiah 40.3, the presence of Yahweh himself”*<sup>236</sup>

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<sup>229</sup> BEALE, *Commentary on the New Testament use of the Old Testament*. Pg. 112

<sup>230</sup> WATTS, *Isaiah's New Exodus in Mark*. Pg. 84.

<sup>231</sup> BEALE, *Commentary on the New Testament use of the Old Testament*. Pg. 111

<sup>232</sup> WATTS, *Isaiah's New Exodus in Mark*. Pg. 59.

<sup>233</sup> See Bart D. Ehrman.

<sup>234</sup> BEALE, *Commentary on the New Testament use of the Old Testament*. Pg. 120.

<sup>235</sup> BORING, *Mark: a commentary*. Pg. 36.

<sup>236</sup> WATTS, *Isaiah's new Exodus in Mark*. Pg.87.

## 7.1. Objections to high Christology view

Though it seems like a clear message from Mark's introductory quotation on who Jesus is let us examine some of the objections to it.

*“In Mark 1.2-3 God initiates a project which prepares for his arrival, but in the subsequent narrative, plans and projects to achieve this goal are drawn up and carried out primarily by John the Baptist, Jesus, and those who join them in their efforts. In the Gospel of Mark, the arrival of the Lord is not accomplished.”<sup>237</sup>*

Kirsten is a good example of those authors who does not even consider the high Christology view of Jesus in Mark. She speaks of Jesus as the one of the many who attempted to prepare the Lord's arrival but failed just as many other before and after him. Giving no evidence for such a view, she asserts a kind of thinking as a convenient assumption that many holds today.

Henderson gives more evidence of why the reader should not think of Jesus as someone as unique as Yahweh himself. She writes: *“readers of Mark’s gospel encounter a Jesus who barely addresses the matter of his Christological identity.”<sup>238</sup>* Though she speaks about privileged relationship that Jesus has with God nevertheless there is no notion on his divinity or any high Christological identity. For Henderson Jesus' mission gives much more meaning than Jesus' identity. *“The Christology of Mark’s gospel, fully grasped, does concern Jesus’ identity as God’s son, but it also entails a broader interest in his mission as harbinger of God’s coming reign upon the earth, in both power and passion.”<sup>239</sup>*

The reason for such a view she finds in contrasting Mark's Gospel to John's.

*“Indeed, Jesus’ reticence about his own identity contrasts strikingly with his posture in John’s gospel, since Mark lacks statements such as the ‘I am’ sayings (see, e.g., Jn. 8:58; 10:7, 14; 11:25; 15:1, 5), claims to preexistence with God (see, e.g., Jn. 1:1–17; 17:5, 24), and the direct imperative to trust in him (see, e.g., Jn. 14:1). Readers of Mark’s gospel*

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<sup>237</sup> KIRSTEN, *Prepare the Way of the Lord: Towards a Cognitive Poetic Analysis of Audience Involvement with Characters and Events in the Markan World*. Pg. 2.

<sup>238</sup> HENDERSON, *Christology and discipleship in the Gospel of Mark*. Pg. 247.

<sup>239</sup> *Ibid.* Pg. 249.

*encounter a Jesus who barely addresses the matter of his Christological identity.*"<sup>240</sup>

Furthermore, Henderson quotes C.D. Marshall and gives three main reasons for Jesus' low Christology. She shows that in Mark's Gospel Jesus is never represented as the object of one faith.

*"(1) nowhere does the narrative overtly mention Jesus as the object of faith; (2) where faith's object is specified, it designates God (e.g. Mk. 11.22), or the 'gospel' [of God] (Mk. 1.14) as that object; and (3) where 'faith' finds no object, it obliquely refers to faith in Jesus only insofar as he is the one who 'discloses God's sovereignty'. Put negatively, the nature of 'faith' in Mark is never confined to belief in Jesus' identity.*"<sup>241</sup>

Henderson sees Jesus as the protagonist of Mark's Gospel, the Son of God and Christ but not as God or Yahweh. She explains that Mark's introductory quotation "*concerns not Jesus himself but the call to repentance and forgiveness that is characteristic of prophetic exhortation in preparation for God's coming redemption.*"<sup>242</sup>

Speaking about Mark's introductory statement she makes a shift. Henderson does not speak about Yahweh's coming but about the dominion of God that is coming. "*Jesus stakes his claim as both leading harbinger and protagonist of the promised 'dominion of God'.*"<sup>243</sup> So, it is not a personal coming of Yahweh but his mere Lordship that could be accomplished without his very presence by through a Davidic-like figure. As she nicely puts it "*if Mark's story is about Jesus, it is about a Jesus who consistently points away from himself and toward 'what the Lord has done' (Mk. 5.19).*"<sup>244</sup>

We can conclude that for her Jesus represented by Mark is nothing more than God's messenger. That is exactly what the audience will recognize reading Mark and realizing that readers will "*commit themselves to, or to renew, a joint project with God and Jesus in order to prepare for the Lord's arrival.*"<sup>245</sup>

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<sup>240</sup> Ibid. Pg. 246-247.

<sup>241</sup> Ibid. Pg. 247.

<sup>242</sup> Ibid. Pg. 37.

<sup>243</sup> Ibid. Pg. 48.

<sup>244</sup> Ibid. Pg. 39.

<sup>245</sup> KIRSTEN MARIE HARTVIGSEN. *Prepare the Way of the Lord*. Pg 117-118.



## 7.2. Objections to the low Christology argumentations

It seems that the hardest argument for the low Christology in Mark is Jesus' self-disclosure. If he points only to God and not to himself why should we point to him?

The reason why Jesus does not call his disciples to believe in him, as he does it in John's Gospel, might be found in the very fact that during Jesus' ministry, that Mark presents us, Jesus again and again makes his disciples ask the same question – “*who he is?*” The secret motive that I have mentioned in a previous section, repeats itself again and again in Mark. If neither the people nor the disciples understand who Jesus is, how can he start explicitly pointing to himself. Would not it be a form of idolatry for the disciples to believe in Jesus if in their mind he is merely a messenger of God? Jesus' self-revelation was in progress. Therefore, the call to believe in him could not be accomplished before the disciples get to really know who he is.

The central reason I put so much energy into disclosing Mark's introductory quotations lies at this very point. Even if Jesus in Mark's Gospel does not speak of himself very much nevertheless the author of the Gospel introduces his reader from the very beginning to who he is and what the reader should think about him. “*These verses serve as the lens through which all of Mark is to be viewed and prepare the reader for the story of Jesus of Nazareth found in 1.14-16.8.*”<sup>246</sup> Even though the disciples are quite slow to grasp Jesus' identity, the reader of the Gospel is not. Though Jesus' words of himself are vital we cannot and should not read them without the background that Mark provides us, since we do not have the words of Jesus apart from the Gospel about Jesus. Just as we might trust Mark in the mediation of Jesus' words so also, we should trust Mark in the contextualization of his words. Otherwise we are in danger of losing Jesus' words and Jesus' meaning of his own words. But let us also see that Henderson's view is not as consistent as it might first appear.

Stein gives us several reasons that contradict Henderson's position. “*For Mark, to believe the gospel is another way of saying to believe in Jesus (8.35, 10.29).*”<sup>247</sup> In both passages we find an explicit call to believe in Jesus from his own teaching. In both passages we hear a radical call to follow Jesus. For Jesus' sake the follower is called to lose his own life (in contrast to celebrating his God-given life); to not be ashamed of Jesus (in contrast to not be ashamed of God and his words), to leave relatives and parents (in contrast to the fifth

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<sup>246</sup> STEIN, Robert H. *Mark*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Academic, c2008. Baker exegetical commentary on the New Testament. ISBN 9780801026829. Pg. 38.

<sup>247</sup> *Ibid.* Pg. 74.

commandment to care for parent), to leave children (in contrast to God's blessing to be fruitful and multiple), to leave the promised land (in contrast to the Torah to care and be on the God given land).

Realizing what Jesus' call actually is we can agree that “*Jesus is not merely a prophet announcing the arrival of the kingdom but its 'effector.'* It is because the King (15.2,9,12,18,26,32) has come that the kingdom is present.”<sup>248</sup> Furthermore the Mark story plot shows that we should have a high Christological view of Jesus.

*“That Jesus does not begin to preach until after the arrest of John the Baptist (1.14-15) indicates that the good news of 1.1, which introduces 1.2-8, must be understood as the good news concerning/about Jesus Christ found in these opening verses.”*<sup>249</sup>

Telford points out another explicit call of Jesus to believe in him. “*In both writers, Mark and Paul, it is faith in Jesus, in the context of discipleship, which enables the believer to appropriate his divine power (Mk 9.20±4 and Rom. 1.16±17; Phil. 4.13).*”<sup>250</sup>

Thinking about those passages it appears that Henderson's points find no ground in Mark's Gospel. We need to exclude some passages in order for her view to work out well. Though the titles of Jesus are way beyond the interest of this work, Stein goes on and provides us a bold statement that comes out of his scholarship: “*In Mark the title 'Son of God' ... is the favourite title of Mark for identifying Jesus, and when Mark was written, it conveyed to the Christian community the idea of both pre-existence and deity.*”<sup>251</sup>

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<sup>248</sup> Ibid. Pg. 74

<sup>249</sup> Ibid. Pg. 41.

<sup>250</sup> TELFORD, *The theology of the Gospel of Mark*. Pg. 167.

<sup>251</sup> STEIN, *Mark*. Pg. 41.

## Conclusion

In my work I had different thematic blocks that I tried to explain. I have shown that intertextuality has broad uses among biblical scholars. Different scholars use the term differently. I have shown that there are two main division that we might have when use the intertextual method. We can use intertextuality as an old method named 'the theory of sources'. This presupposes that the author puts some meaning into the text and reader can discover this meaning for himself/herself. Even if the author tried to hide some meaning he/she would still leave us a key to discover it. The presupposition is that author wants to communicate something, and the diligent reader can discover it and have joy in this discovery.

The second way of using intertextuality builds on a presupposition of the author's death, that means that we cannot discover what the author's intentions were. That is why the reader can then construct a meaning that is relevant to him/her. It is further encouraged not to even attempt to look for the author's meaning since after the writer wrote, he/she lost all control over it. It is the reader alone who can decide what to do with the text. There is no need in trying to know or understand what author's intentions were, but it is the reader and his intentions that matter.

The use of intertextuality with the presupposition of the author's death and along with it, the original meaning is the philosophical question rather than theological. Though I cannot prove it in my conclusion, but it seems to me that many theologians and biblical scholars just do not realize that many of their assumptions are actually philosophical problematics. And trying to debate philosophical cases using theological words brings more confusion than clarification. Non-reflected philosophical assumptions do much harm to biblical hermeneutics.

On the other hand, intertextuality has its strong points. I do admit that in my first chapter I did not describe intertextuality in all its forms because this was not my goal. Many others before me have already done a good job in describing it. My attempt was to bring something new to the discussion and to set out some points. Intertextuality reminds us that we cannot read Mark as Mark only and not to see that Mark's tradition intertwined with John's tradition. We cannot and should not speak of any text as some strictly independent

entity as many biblical scholars have attempted to do.<sup>252</sup> For example, we often might hear that Mark knew nothing about Jesus' birth or his ascension to heaven. But such scholarly presuppositions are just as good as the notion that Mark did not write about Jesus' birth and ascension because everyone already knew it and he just did not want to describe events that were already well known and well accepted. So, intertextuality reminds us that we should not look at a text as an island, that is as isolated texts but remember there are social interactions behind the text.

Though I think that an author is able to inform his later readers of his/her planned meaning in such a way that the reader has the ability to grasp the intended meaning, nevertheless New Testament writers have all rights to extend and explain what the thought of God is behind the prophesied earlier Word of God. In this sense the intertextuality in the Bible is different from what we might find in regular literature (though it goes against the philosophical notion of Schleiermacher that Biblical text should be read as any other text<sup>253</sup>). When it comes to the quotation of an Old Testament text, it does not destroy the new context of the original identity of the text, but redefines the primary use within another linguistic, historical and cultural context.<sup>254</sup>

With the knowledge of the original texts Isaiah, Exodus/Malachi and the fact that the biblical canon is made up of the Old and New Testament, it is possible to analyze the entirety of the relationships by which the text is embedded in its (literary, religious, social, etc.) context. Recognizing intertextuality significantly helps to uncover and describe the facts of a synchronous and also diachronic nature. It creates a new context and offers a fuller view of prophetic fulfillments.

Applying the intertextual and intratextual methods to the Gospel of Mark I was able to come with some new interpretations. After showing the importance that prophet Isaiah has in Mark's writing I was concentrated on intratextuality. It was shown that introductory quotations in Mark have influence on all his Gospel. Many themes from Mark 1.2-3 were repeated and extended in the story of John the Baptist, Jesus and the Spirit. As for example we saw how voice in the desert from Isaiah was John the Baptist who was crying out in the desert. We saw how the Spirit prepared the way for the Lord Jesus impelling Him to go out

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<sup>252</sup> “Někdy se naopak pojednání intertextuality omezí na pouhé konstatování faktu, že pozdější biblický text odkazuje k textu dřívějšímu, avšak jak pozdější text rozvíjí význam dřívějšího, to již není předmětem pozornosti.” LUKEŠ, *Otevřené dveře: Leviticus 19*. Pg. 6.

<sup>253</sup> MCLEAN, *Biblical interpretation, and philosophical hermeneutics*. Pg. 37.

<sup>254</sup> LUKEŠ, *Otevřené dveře: Leviticus 19*. Pg. 36.

into the wilderness. We saw how Jesus is represented as shepherd who cares for his followers in the desert. So that the quotation from Isaiah was not only as mere introduction but as direction for the Gospel.

I further have shown how Mark's themes are used in the original texts. In a sense Mark does not come up with anything new. The only newness is that the old prophecy has found its fulfillment in the person and life of Jesus.

Using the intertextual method, I came up with a new interpretation about who is the one who will prepare the way for the Lord. I was trying to show that we should not confuse 'the voice in a desert' with the one who prepares the way for the Lord in the desert. That is not one and the same person. I insisted that for Mark it is Spirit who prepare the way for Lord Jesus and not John the Baptist as all known to me commentaries said.

I also showed that Jesus has to be divine in order to fulfill Isaiah's and Malachi's prophecies as both of these prophets spoke about someone who should have the same qualities as Yahweh himself. I further showed many similarities between the way of Yahweh and the way of Jesus. In Mark it is Jesus who sends, never being sent himself. When Jesus sent anybody to accomplish something it always can be interpreted as preparation of his future coming.

The Gospel of Mark has a high view of Jesus and surely presents him as divine having same qualities as Yahweh has. There is no need to speculate that only the Gospel of John, the latest Gospel, draws us Jesus as God. The very first Gospel has the same notion and we can clearly know and have faith in the One who is much worthier than house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or lands or even life itself.

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## **Abstract**

Intertextuality as a method of biblical interpretations is well known and often misused in theological circles. This thesis critically describes how intertextuality is used and what are the main issues with this term and method. The main conclusion is that intertextuality as the modern method is for no much use in biblical hermeneutics though it can be used as an old and well know method of source theory. Intertextuality in the modern view appears to be as a confusing and an unstable term. Philosophical presuppositions of a modern hermeneutics might lead to self-contradictory conclusions. It is not that the attempt to come to original meaning is fulfilled through new interpretational methods, but anyone can introduce any new meaning to old texts. This work shows that the reasons to believe in the death of the original meaning is based on shaky and uncertain grounds.

The main concern of this work is introductory citation of the Gospel of Mark. It shows that Mark bases his high Christological understanding on the prophecy of Isaiah and Malachi. Though Mark's Gospel is often considered as the earliest manuscript containing non-high Christological notion, this work shows that Mark from the very beginning introduced us to Jesus who possesses the same qualities as the Yahweh in the books of Isaiah and Malachi. Exploring how Mark uses Isaiah and Malachi, we can also see that the classical interpretation that John the Baptist is the one who should prepare the way for the Lord, is not necessarily the right one. This thesis shows that it is the Holy Spirit who prepares the way for Jesus as he is the only one who can be qualified for such a task.

This work shows the importance of reading Mark not only in its own context but also in the context of prophetic books. The introductory citation gives the direction of how the Gospel should be read. Jesus' identity appears to be much more essential then Jesus' mission. The story bases and develops on not what Jesus did and said but first of all on who he is. That is why his personality and identity should be the main quest while reading Mark's Gospel. The given work shows that the understanding of the identity of Jesus grows out of prophecies of Isaiah and Malachi. Mark gives careful and extended explanation of what was expected and long awaited to be fulfilled. From the very beginning of the Gospel a reader is introduced to Jesus as the one who should come. High Christology is built into the prologue of the Gospel of Mark probably not less than in the prologue of Gospel of John.

## Abstrakt

Intertextualita jako metoda biblických interpretací je dobře známá a často se zneužívá v teologických kruzích. Práce kriticky popisuje, jak se používá intertextualita a jaké jsou hlavní problémy tohoto termínu a metody. Hlavním závěrem je, že intertextualita jako moderní metoda není moc vhodná pro biblicky studium, jelikož má spíše matoucí a nestabilní přístupy. Na druhou stranu, intertextualita ve smyslu staré a dobře známé metody teorie zdrojů může se používat i nadále, avšak nepřináší nic výjimečně nového. Filozofické předpoklady moderní hermeneutiky by mohly vést k protichůdným závěrům. Již nejde především o pochopení a dosažení původního významu, ale každý může do starých textů uvádět nový význam a smysl. Tato práce ukazuje, že přístup založený na smrti původního významu, se zakládá na pochybných předpokladech a převádí k nejistým záměrům.

Hlavním zájmem této práce je úvodní citace Markova Evangelia. Jelikož Markovo Evangelium je považováno za nejstarší, uvádí se, že jeho Christologie není vyvinuta, a radikálně se liší od Christologie v pozdějších evangeliích. Nicméně v této práci je zřejmé, že Ježíš u Marka má stejné kvality jako Jahve u Izajáše a Malachiáše. Dále, při bližším zkoumání toho, jak Mark používá proroky Izajáše a Malachiáše, můžeme vidět, že klasický výklad o tom, že Jan Křtitel je ten, kdo by měl připravit cestu pro Pána, není moc správný. Tato práce ukazuje, že je to Duch svatý, který připravuje cestu pro Ježíše, a ne Jan.

Důležité je číst Mark ne jenom v kontextu samotného Marka ale taky v kontextu prorockých knih, které Markovou zvěst formují. Právě úvodní citace uvádí směr, jakým má být Evangelium čteno a jak mu má být rozuměno. Vidíme, že Ježíšova identita je mnohem podstatnější pro Marka než Ježíšova misie jako taková. Nebo správněji řečeno, že jeho misie má význam jenom kvůli jeho identity. Proto Ježíšova osobnost je hlavní bod při čtení Markova Evangelia. Tato práce ukazuje, že pochopení identity Ježíše vyrůstá z proroctví Izajáše a Malachiáše. Mark dává pečlivé a podrobné vysvětlení toho, jak to, co bylo dlouho očekávané, se konečně je naplněno v tom, kdo Ježíš je. Od samého začátku tohoto Evangelia je Christologie shora hluboce v něm zakořeněna a snad ani neustupuje Christologii prologu Janova Evangelia.