

Miracles and the Kingdom of God in Mark and Q:
Christology and Identity Among Jesus' Early Followers

By

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To Jennifer,
Thank you for everything.

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INTRODUCTION

Ivan paused. He had grown flushed from talking, and talking with passion; now that he had stopped, however, he suddenly smiled.

Alyosha, who had listened to him all this time without saying anything, though towards the end, in a state of extreme agitation, he had several times attempted to interrupt the flow of his brother's speech, but had evidently held himself in check, suddenly began to speak as though he had leapt into motion.

"But...that is preposterous!" he exclaimed, turning red.
—Dostoyevsky, *The Brothers Karamazov*¹

Like many passionate disagreements, the conflict between Ivan and Alyosha Karamazov arises from biblical exegesis. Ivan, the world-weary intellectual, tells his story of the Grand Inquisitor to Alyosha, the pious novice in an Orthodox monastery. Ivan upsets Alyosha because his Grand Inquisitor, while glossing Jesus' Temptation (Matt 4:1-11//Luke 4:1-13), claims that Jesus rejects miracles as a means of demonstrating his divine power, while the Church has adopted such a use of miracles. This present book argues for a modified version of the Grand Inquisitor's claim: Mark uses miracles to demonstrate the divine power resident in Jesus, while Q, the hypothetical source for Matthew and Luke, instead uses miracles to demonstrate the triumph of the kingdom of God over the kingdom of Satan. To see why the Grand Inquisitor's distinction between Jesus and the Church should be transposed to a distinction between Mark and Q, it is necessary to examine Ivan Karamazov's story in detail. In Ivan's tale, Jesus appears in sixteenth-century Seville and performs several miracles for an astonished public. Investigating the ado, the Cardinal Grand Inquisitor finds Jesus and arrests him. That night the Inquisitor comes to Jesus' cell alone to talk. Jesus says nothing, and the

¹ Dostoyevsky, Fyodor, *The Brothers Karamazov: A Novel in Four Parts and an Epilogue*, trans. David McDuff (London: Penguin, 1993), 299.

Grand Inquisitor delivers a monologue interpreting Christian history in light of Jesus' three-fold Temptation by the devil.

The Inquisitor views Jesus' responses to the Temptation as a triple refusal to assume coercive power over humanity. After Jesus spent forty days and nights fasting in the desert, Satan approached the famished Jesus and tempted him to turn stones into bread. The Inquisitor rephrases this temptation, "Look, see those stones in that naked, burning hot wilderness? Turn them into loaves and mankind will go trotting after you like a flock, grateful and obedient, though ever fearful that you may take away your hand and that your loaves may cease to come their way."² Jesus refused. Next, the devil took him to the pinnacle of the temple in Jerusalem.³ There, Satan tempted Jesus to test God by leaping to certain death so that God would send angels to save him. Jesus again refused, which the Inquisitor takes as evidence for a faith in God that is "able to reject the miracle, and to make do...with only a free decision of the heart."⁴ Finally, the devil led Jesus up a mountain overlooking all the kingdoms of the world and offered to give Jesus all their power if Jesus would bow down to him. According to the Inquisitor, accepting this offer to become a universal king would have given humanity "someone to bow down before, someone to entrust one's conscience to, and a way of at last uniting everyone into an undisputed, general and consensual ant-heap."⁵ For a third time Jesus refused. In the Inquisitor's telling, Jesus rejected these temptations because he "did not want to enslave man with a miracle and...thirsted for a faith that was free, not miraculous...thirsted for

² Ibid., 290.

³ This order of temptations follows that in Matthew, which the Inquisitor follows as well. Luke inverts the order of the second and third temptations.

⁴ Dostoyevsky, *Brothers*, 294.

⁵ Ibid., 296.

a love that was free, not for the servile ecstasies of the slave before the might that has inspired him with dread once and for all.”⁶ Jesus, according to the Inquisitor, offered humanity freedom.

The Inquisitor goes on to say that humanity cannot bear the burden of such freedom. Servile by nature, humans seek a power that awes them into obedience. Jesus’ great deed in rejecting Satan’s temptations encapsulates his general program of giving humanity the terrible gift of freedom, a program which the Inquisitor disavows. Speaking for and about the Church, the Inquisitor tells Jesus, “We corrected your great deed and founded it upon *miracle, mystery,* and *authority*. And people were glad that they had once been brought together into a flock and that at last from their hearts had been removed such a terrible gift.”⁷ While Jesus avoided coercion, the Church adopts coercion in his name. While Jesus promoted the decision of the individual, the Church rejects independent thought in favor of its own authority. Since the Church nullifies Jesus’ gift of freedom, the Inquisitor cannot allow Jesus to wander the streets of Seville. When the Inquisitor announces that he will execute Jesus, Ivan pauses, and so gives Alyosha the chance to object.

Alyosha objects, but he cannot refute the Inquisitor’s argument. His agitation shows how the Inquisitor’s monologue strikes at the foundation of Alyosha’s life of devotion—maybe the Church has betrayed the true message of Jesus so that it could rule in his name, maybe the Inquisitor is right. Examinations of whether the Inquisitor was right about the church’s infidelity to Jesus could fill a library—the argument about whether the Christ of faith is true to the historical Jesus goes on. This current book has a more modest aim: to investigate in what

⁶ Ibid., 294.

⁷ Ibid., 295.

sense the Inquisitor is right about the significance of Jesus rejecting miracles in the Temptation story.

The Grand Inquisitor does not say what he means by miracle, but John Meier has given a very useful definition of miracle as an action that satisfies three criteria: “(1) an unusual, startling, or extraordinary event that is in principle perceivable by any interested and fair-minded observer, (2) an event that finds no reasonable explanation in human abilities or in other known forces that operate in our world of time and space, and (3) an event that is the result of a special act of God, doing what no human power can do.”⁸ Under this definition, Jesus did not repudiate miracles wholesale. Whatever rejection comes in the Temptation narrative does not carry on to the rest of Matthew and Luke. Even in Ivan’s story, Jesus performs miracles. Before the Inquisitor arrests him, Jesus has healed a blind man and raised a little girl from the dead. The palpable healing power emanating from Jesus attracted the crowd, which attracted the Inquisitor’s attention. Ivan clearly models these miracles on the similar stories that Matthew, Mark, and Luke share. Although all three Synoptic Gospels share these miracle stories, only Matthew and Luke share the Temptation narrative, so the Temptation forms part of the hypothetical source Q. The Inquisitor’s claim that Jesus rejects miracles in the Temptation suggests we examine Q for other indications of such rejection.

Mark also tells a story of Jesus encountering the devil after his baptism, but a much shorter

⁸ John P. Meier, *A Marginal Jew: Rethinking the Historical Jesus*, vol. 2, *Mentor, Message, and Miracles* (New York: Doubleday, 1994), 512. Such a definition coheres with that used recently by other authors: “an astonishing event, exciting wonder in the observers, which carries the signature of God, who, for those with the eye of faith, can be seen to be expressing his powerful eschatological presence,” Graham H. Twelftree, *Jesus the Miracle Worker: A Historical and Theological Study* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1999), 350; “a wonderful rescue or salvation of someone [that] takes place by the overturning of the ‘canons of the ordinary’ through the intervention of a deity or hero,” Wendy J. Cotter, *Miracles in Greco-Roman Antiquity: A Sourcebook for the Study of New Testament Miracle Stories* (London: Routledge, 1999), 2.

one: “He was in the wilderness forty days, tested by Satan; and he was with the wild beasts; and the angels waited on him” (Mark 1:13). Mark lacks Jesus’ repudiation of miracles, and elsewhere in the gospel Mark uses miracles as just the sort of proofs of Jesus’ divine identity that the Inquisitor claims the Church uses. What the Inquisitor thought was a distinction between Jesus and the Church is a distinction between Q and Mark: the former rejects the use of miracles to claim a divine identity for Jesus, and the latter embraces miracles for just this purpose.

Such a distinction between Mark and Q echoes the sentiments of Bultmann:

The difference between Mark and Q is characteristic. If miracle stories are almost entirely absent from Q we must not explain that by saying that Q contains no narrative of events; for the edifying, parnetic and polemic-apologetic purposes of Q could have introduced miracle stories very easily. The deeper reason for their absence is the different light in which Jesus appears. In Q he is above everything else the eschatological preacher of repentance and salvation, the teacher of wisdom and the law. In Mark he is...the very Son of God walking the earth.⁹

This distinction between Mark and Q might tempt one to view Jesus’ encounter with Satan in the Temptation as Q’s straightforward rejection of miracles and the identity of Jesus they imply. However, as Bultmann notes, miracles are *almost* entirely absent from Q—that is, Q does contain miracles. Besides the Temptation, Q has six pericopae where Jesus performs miracles or talks about performing miracles:

- 1) The Healing of the Centurion’s Child/Servant (Matt 8:5-13//Luke 7:1-10)
- 2) The Commissioning of Disciples (Matt 10:7-8//Luke 10:9)
- 3) The Response to John the Baptist (Matt 11:2-6//Luke 7:18-23)

⁹ Rudolf Bultmann, *History of the Synoptic Tradition*, trans. John Marsh (New York: Harper & Row, 1968), 240-241.

- 4) The Woes on Chorazin and Bethsaida (Matt 11:21-22//Luke 10:12-14)
- 5) The Beelzebul Controversy (Matt 12:22-31//Luke 11:14-26)
- 6) The Refusal to Give a Sign (Matt 12:38-42//Luke 11:16,29-33)

The Inquisitor's distinction between a miracle-rejecting Jesus and a miracle-embracing Church cannot be mapped onto Q and Mark. Rather, to determine the truth in the Inquisitor's interpretation of the Temptation Narrative requires investigating why and to what effect both Mark and Q tell stories about miracles. In Q's Temptation, Jesus rejects Satan's inducement to perform miracles and Satan's offer of kingdoms. Similar connections between miracles and kingdoms—either the kingdom of God or the kingdom of Satan—occur also in Q's version of the Commissioning of the Disciples and the Beelzebul Controversy. In the Q version of these stories, miracles indicate the victory of God's kingdom over Satan's. Mark also has versions of the Commissioning and the Beelzebul Controversy, but in Mark these stories lack the connection between miracle and kingdom, just as Mark's Testing narrative lacks these elements. For the sake of convenience, I will refer to these three stories shared by Mark and Q—the Temptation, the Commissioning, and the Beelzebul Controversy--as the miracle overlaps. Closely examining these miracle overlaps allows us to test the modified version of the Inquisitor's claim, that Mark uses miracles to demonstrate the divine power resident in Jesus while Q instead uses miracles to demonstrate the triumph of the kingdom of God over the kingdom of Satan.

Mark and Q use the same basic stories about miracles to depict Jesus' relation to God differently—the former to blur the distinction between Jesus and God and the latter to reject such blurring. In the past few decades, many biblical scholars have grappled with the question

of how the earliest Christians conceived of Jesus vis-à-vis God. Typically, scholars couch the debate in terms of Christology, with a prominent group offering the view that high Christology (usually defined as attributing divinity to Jesus) developed very early and was ubiquitous among Jesus-followers. Other scholars argue that high Christology developed more slowly in the first hundred years (or more) following Jesus' death.¹⁰ Students of early Christology have frequently availed themselves of Mark and Q's miracle stories as sources of data.

Miracles and Christology in Q

Siegfried Schulz's 1972 monograph on Q attends to miracles in Q and their relationship to the miracle traditions in Mark.¹¹ Schulz posits a two-stage redaction history of Q. The first stage of Q developed in a primarily Jewish milieu in Judea and/or Galilee, while the second stage developed in a Gentile environment in Syria.¹² Schulz locates the miracle passages in this second stage of Q's development.¹³ He also believes that Mark influenced the redactor(s) of Q at this second stage. Thus, he sees the inclusion of the miracle material in the second stratum of Q as a reaction to Mark's use of miracles. Schulz posits that Mark's miracle stories serve a *theios aner*, or divine man, Christology. He owes this concept of the *theios aner* to Gillis Wetter, Hans Windlich, and, especially, Ludwig Bieler, all of whom argued that Gentile

¹⁰ For a review of the *status quaestionis* see Andrew Chester, "High Christology: Whence, When, and Why?" *Early Christianity* 2, no. 1 (2011): 22-50.

¹¹ Siegfried Schulz, *Q: Die Spruchquelle der Evangelisten* (Zurich: Theologischer Verlag Zurich, 1972).

¹² *Ibid.*, 45-54.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 177-269.

religions promoted a wonder-working divine man pattern: the hero has a special connection to the gods that manifests itself in wondrous portents surrounding his birth and death; he displays preternatural knowledge as a child; his deep wisdom attracts followers, as does his ability to perform miracles; he secures his position through posthumous appearances to his followers.¹⁴ Based on the work of these scholars, Schulz views Mark as using miracles to demonstrate that the pre-resurrection Jesus possessed divine power, that he was a *theios aner*.

On the other hand, Schulz claims that the earliest Q community's experience of Jesus' resurrection convinced them that he would come again in glory as the son of man. However, they did not initially see any salvific significance in his earthly ministry. Jesus predicted the coming of the saving son of man, and his resurrection convinced his disciples that Jesus himself would return as this saving figure.¹⁵ The later Q community, aware of Mark's use of miracles, began to believe that Jesus' earthly ministry indicated his eschatological destiny.¹⁶ The miracles in Q show that "he is the bringer of salvation, with whom the eschatological time of salvation becomes a reality before the immanent end."¹⁷ Under Mark's influence, Q uses miracles to demonstrate that Jesus was God's eschatological agent even before the resurrection.

¹⁴ Gillis Wetter, "Der Sohn Gottes" Eine Untersuchung über den Charakter und die Tendenz des Johannes-Evangeliums. Zugleich ein Beitrag zur Kenntnis der Heilandsgestalten der Antike (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1916); Hans Windlich, *Paulus und Christus. Ein biblisch-religionsgeschichtlicher Vergleich* (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1934); Ludwig Bieler, *Theios aner. Das Bild des "Gottlichen Menschen" in Spätantike und Frühchristentum*, 2 vols. (Vienna: Oskar Hofels, 1935-36).

¹⁵ Schulz, *Q*, 196.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 195-96.

¹⁷ "Er ist der Heilbringer, mit dem die eschatologische Heilszeit Wirklichkeit vor dem nahen Ende geworden ist" (*Ibid.*, 196).

The later Q community, however, did not uncritically accept Mark's interpretation of miracles. Schulz claims that they shaped their miracle stories to reject a *theios aner* Christology. In Q, "the indirect rejection of the *theios aner* Christology comes to expression in that the miracle-working of Jesus is interpreted not as a demonstration of divine being, but as command and authority, even sacred power, conferred to him from God."¹⁸ Jesus exercises this divinely conferred authority by bringing God's eschatological promises to fruition, but such exercises do not imply that Jesus is divine. For Schulz, Q critiques the use of miracles that establishes a divine man Christology.

Schulz recognizes the same difference between Mark and Q's use of miracles that this book does: miracles in Mark demonstrate the divine power resident in Jesus, while miracles in Q demonstrate the eschatological salvation that Jesus brings. However, Schulz bases his analysis on two questionable assumptions. First, he assumes that the author(s) of Q had access to the Gospel of Mark, but few scholars currently believe that Mark influenced Q. Second, he assumes that there existed in the Hellenistic world of the first century a *theios aner* paradigm that Mark adopted and Q rejected. The latter assumption has lost most scholarly acceptance as more recent reassessments have shown that the *theios aner* pattern existed more in modern scholarly imagination than in late antique religions; Jesus of Nazareth is the earliest figure that fits this pattern in more than just a few particulars.¹⁹ This current book revisits Schulz's

¹⁸ "Die indirekte Ablehnung der *theios-aner*-Christologie kommt darin zum Ausdruck, daß die Wunderkraft Jesu nicht als Demonstration göttlichen Wesens, sondern als ihm von Gott verliehene Befehlsgewalt und Vollmacht, eben als Exousia, interpretiert wird" (Ibid., 241).

¹⁹ Barry Blackburn, *Theios Aner and the Markan Miracle Traditions: A Critique of the Theios Aner Concept as an Interpretive Background of the Miracle Traditions Used by Mark* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1991); Carl R. Holladay, *Theios Aner in Hellenistic-Judaism: A Critique of the Use of This Category in New Testament Christology* (Missoula: Scholars Press, 1997); Eriikki Koskeniemi, "Apollonius of Tyana: A Typical ΘΕΙΟΣ ΑΝΗΡ?" *JBL* 117.3

comparison of miracles in Mark and Q to examine whether the distinction Schulz sees between the miracles' Christological implications in Mark and Q can stand without his two questionable assumptions.

The analysis of miracles forms a small portion of Schulz's sweeping study of Q, and Schulz emphasizes more the negative function of Q's miracles (rejecting *theios aner* Christology) than their positive function (expressing Jesus' identity as fulfiller of God's eschatological promises). In contrast, Martin Hüneburg focuses entirely on miracles in Q and frames his work as a counterpoint to Schulz's emphasis on Q's critical stance toward miracles.²⁰ Not simply a response to Schulz, Hüneburg's monograph addresses what he views as an unwarranted neglect of miracles in Q. Against Schulz, he argues that Q contains no traces of a miracle critique; rather, Hüneburg argues that Q's miracles establish Jesus' identity as bringer of eschatological blessing and depict how this state of eschatological blessing manifests through the elimination of suffering.²¹ Jesus' miracles actualize the kingdom of God and tie Jesus' person to this actualization. As indicated by his work's subtitle, "A Contribution to the Christology of Q," Hüneburg asserts that Q's linking Jesus' actions to the realization of the kingdom of God reveals an important aspect of Q's Christology: that for Q Jesus is the bringer of eschatological salvation.

Although Hüneburg presents his work as an argument against Schulz's identification of Q as a *wunderkritik* (critique of miracles), these two authors have more in common than

(1998): 455-67. Apollonius of Tyana, in the telling of Philostratus of the 3rd century, is the next best fit.

²⁰ Michael Hüneburg, *Jesus als Wundertäter in der Logienquelle: Ein Beitrag zur Christologie von Q* (Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2001).

²¹ Hüneburg, *Jesus*, 226.

Hüneburg might admit. Both see miracles in Q presenting Jesus as the fulfiller of God's eschatological promises. Where they differ is Schulz's claim that such a depiction functions primarily to deny Jesus' divine identity. Hüneburg sees no such polemical function in Q's presentation of miracles. By comparing the miracle overlaps in Mark and Q, this book provides a way to examine Q's deployment of Jesus' miracles to see what critical function the miracles serve in Q.

Hüneburg correctly recognizes that in Q miracles instantiate the state of eschatological blessing that Jesus often calls the kingdom of God. Jesus ushers in the kingdom through these miracles, by which Q implies that Jesus has a crucial role within the unfolding eschatological drama, even though Q does not identify Jesus with God. In claiming that Q assigns to Jesus an eschatological role, Hüneburg joins others in challenging the once dominant conviction among Q scholars about its non-eschatological and non-Christological stance. This consensus about Q's non-eschatological and non-Christological nature coalesced in the 1990s and was articulated primarily by members of the Society of Biblical Literature's Seminar on Ancient Myths and Modern Theories of Christian Origins. These scholars saw in Q, and especially its putative earliest redactional level, evidence for a group of early Jesus followers concerned less with the person of Jesus and more in the subversive wisdom he taught.²²

In the 1990s and early 2000s, this picture of a non-eschatological, non-Christological Q (along with the hypothetical community constructed on the basis of this hypothetical

²² Burton L. Mack, *The Lost Gospel: The Book of Q and Christian Origins* (San Francisco: Harper San Francisco, 1993); Leif E. Vaage, *Galilean Upstarts: Jesus' First Followers According to Q* (Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press International, 1994); John S. Kloppenborg-Verbin, *Excavating Q: The History and Setting of the Sayings Gospel* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2000). For a more recent articulation of this stance, see William Arnal, "The Q Document," in *Jewish Christianity Reconsidered: Rethinking Ancient Groups and Texts*, ed. Matt Jackson-McCabe (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2007), 119-154.

document) came under scrutiny. Daniel Smith has argued that Q does envision a post-mortem vindication of Jesus, specifically an assumption into heaven, in which he disappears but will return in an eschatological role. Smith argues that Jesus' lament over Jerusalem (Matt 23:37-39//Luke 13:34-35) contains language reminiscent of assumptions from other ancient texts, especially the Wisdom of Solomon.²³ Smith has gone on to argue that the idea of Jesus undergoing an assumption that anticipates a future coming as an eschatological figure may have been a widespread conception of Jesus' post-mortem vindication among his early followers. Smith offers the lack of a resurrection appearance in Mark as evidence for such an assumption. Q's stance toward Jesus' vindication would fit with the vindication that the canonical Gospels and Paul envision for Jesus.²⁴

Stephen Hultgren has argued that the Double Tradition includes much more narrative material and background than usually thought; thus, if Q exists, its categorization as a "Sayings Source" is inaccurate.²⁵ Hultgren contends that elements of Matthew and Luke's passion properly belong to the Double Tradition, so that if Q exists, it would also include passion material. According to Hultgren, the Double Tradition gives evidence not of a diversity of early Jesus traditions, but of a high amount of agreement about the importance of Jesus' words,

²³ Daniel Smith, "The 'Assumption' of the Righteous Dead in the Wisdom of Solomon and the Sayings Gospel Q," *SR* 29, no. 3 (2000): 287-299.

²⁴ Daniel Smith, "Revisiting the Empty Tomb: The Post-Mortem Vindication of Jesus in Mark and Q," *NovT* 45, no. 2 (2003): 123-136; *Revisiting the Empty Tomb: The Early History of Easter* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2010).

²⁵ Stephen Hultgren, *Narrative Elements in the Double Tradition: A Study of Their Place within the Framework of the Gospel Narrative* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2002).

deeds, crucifixion and resurrection.²⁶ Hultgren denies that Q evinces a strand of early Christianity not particularly interested in the deeds of Jesus or in his death and resurrection.

Working independently of Hultgren but at approximately the same time, Larry Hurtado makes a similar argument for the continuity of the Christology of Q with that found in the Pauline epistles and the canonical gospels.²⁷ Hurtado surveys the first two centuries of Christian literature to argue three points: 1) that a striking devotion to Jesus emerged early among his followers; 2) that this devotion to Jesus manifested itself with an intensity, including reverencing him as divine, unparalleled in the religious environment of the time; and 3) that this intense devotion to Jesus occurred mostly within a firm commitment to exclusivist monotheism.²⁸ Hurtado offers Q as a manifestation of this early high Christology. As evidence of Q's adherence to the pattern of devotion to Jesus that he identifies in other New Testament literature, Hurtado presents the centrality of Jesus in Q in the sense that it is Jesus who proclaims the message and it is acceptance or rejection of Jesus that determines one's eschatological fate (e.g., Matt 10:32-33//Luke 12:8-12). Moreover, he argues that Q presents Jesus as Lord (e.g. Matt 7:21//Luke 6:46) and Son of God (e.g. Matt 11:25-26//Luke 10:21-22), which represent high Christological stances. In several places Hurtado uses Q's miracle pericopae as evidence of his claims—the Beelzebul Controversy, the Commissioning of the Disciples, and the Response to John the Baptist point toward the centrality of accepting Jesus;

²⁶ Ibid., 256-309.

²⁷ Larry W. Hurtado, *Lord Jesus Christ: Devotion to Jesus in Earliest Christianity* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003).

²⁸ Ibid., 2-3. For a challenge that such a thing as exclusivist monotheism existed in the first century, see Paula Fredriksen, "Mandatory Retirement: Ideas in the Study of Christian Origins Whose Time Has Come to Go," *SR* 35.2 (2006): 231-246.

the Temptation illustrates Jesus' divine sonship.²⁹ For Hurtado, Q's handling of the miracle material manifests Q's early high Christology. Unlike Hultgren, Hurtado accepts Q as primarily a sayings source. He goes on to claim that what scholars such as Mack and Kloppenborg have identified as Q's silence with regard to Jesus's divine identity results from its genre as a sayings source meant to transmit the teachings of Jesus. Hurtado claims that the constraints of Q's genre, rather than the limits of its composers' belief in Jesus' exalted status, best explains why Q does not explicitly attribute divinity to Jesus.³⁰

These recent attempts to align Q with more traditional Christian doctrine about Jesus have not met with great approval from those who viewed Q as evidence of a distinctive band of early Jesus-followers.³¹ Hurtado's argument, in particular, suffers from several weaknesses. His argument that Q's genre as a sayings source explains the absence of overtly high Christological statements does not withstand scrutiny. There is no reason to think that the sayings genre would preclude such statements. For instance, one could imagine a sayings collection containing the words of Jesus recorded in the Gospel of John, a collection that would have very strong Christological statements (e.g., "I am the way, the truth, and the life," John 14:6). Even if such a collection never existed, the genre of sayings collections certainly could have accommodated it. Also, Hurtado's argument that Q's presentation of Jesus' divine sonship and lordship speaks to a high Christology suffers from the difficulty of determining just how exalted an identity the terms "Lord" and "Son of God" (or, perhaps, "lord" and "son

²⁹ Hurtado, *Lord*, 247-49, 253.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 254.

³¹ Kloppenborg's student William Arnal, for instance, equates Hurtado's stance on Q with a rearguard action on the part of Christian apologists to domesticate Q (Arnal, "Q Document," 122).

of God”) imply.³² Hurtado’s strongest argument is for the centrality of Jesus in Q, which he accurately identifies. Nevertheless, Q presenting Jesus as the central figure in the unfolding eschatological drama does not necessarily provide evidence for the type of devotion in which Jesus’ followers revered him as divine, a devotion that Hurtado claims to find throughout the New Testament, including in Q.

This book’s study of the miracle overlaps allows us to approach the vexed question of what the Double Tradition implies about Jesus’ identity. Since so much of the debate on Q centers on how distinctive it is from other forms of early Christianity, the comparison of the Q and Mark versions of these stories opens one window into what makes Q distinctive. Moreover, examining versions of the same stories controls the issue of genre difference that Hurtado raises.

Miracles and Christology in Mark

Just as the significance of miracles for Q’s Christology has engaged scholars, so has the relationship between miracles and Christology in Mark. The year before Schulz wrote that Q rejects a *theios aner* Christology implicit in miracles, Theodore Weeden made a similar argument with regard to Mark.³³ Weeden posited two Christologies expressed in Mark: the Christology of Jesus (which Mark endorses) and the Christology of Peter and the disciples (which Mark rejects). The Christology of Jesus centers on his salvific suffering and death, and

³² For instance, Luke speaks of Adam as son of God (3:38) without any apparent inclusion of Adam within the divine identity; similarly, “Lord” can refer to a merely human master (e.g. Matt 18:25) in addition to referring to the God of Israel.

³³ Theodore J. Weeden, *Mark—Traditions in Conflict* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1971).

it is this Christology that the evangelist intends to inculcate. The disciples, with Peter as representative, serve as foils because they express an inadequate Christology. When Peter confesses to Jesus, “You are the Messiah” (Mark 8:29), he does so on the basis of the miracles he has witnessed in the first half of Mark’s Gospel, miracles that make Jesus appear to be a *theios aner*. Peter, operating with this *theios aner* Christology, cannot comprehend Jesus’ statement that the son of man will suffer and die, and his incomprehension spurs Peter to take Jesus aside and rebuke him (Mark 8:31-32). In rebuking Peter (8:33), Jesus also rebukes the *theios aner* Christology that focuses on the divine power the miracles demonstrate.³⁴ In Weeden’s model, the miracles, concentrated so heavily in the first half of Mark, develop an inadequate Christology that the second half of the Gospel, with its focus on Jesus’ suffering and death, corrects.

Edwin Broadhead’s monograph on miracles in Mark challenges Weeden’s assertion that Mark corrects an inadequate Christology.³⁵ Like Weeden, Broadhead affirms that Mark develops his Christology around the theme of redemptive suffering and death. Unlike Weeden, Broadhead recognizes strong thematic linkages between the miracles and Jesus’ suffering.³⁶ In Broadhead’s view, the miracles demonstrate that Jesus has power but nevertheless suffers and dies. He sees Mark’s narrative developing a crescendo in the identity of Jesus. In the beginning of the Gospel, the miracles show Jesus to be a powerful teacher and preacher whose opponents will ultimately kill him. As the miracles accumulate they show that Jesus is God’s

³⁴ Ibid., 52-69.

³⁵ Edwin Keith Broadhead, *Teaching With Authority: Miracles and Christology in the Gospel of Mark* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1992).

³⁶ Ibid., 213.

Son and Messiah who will nevertheless suffer and die.³⁷ For Broadhead, Mark develops not a corrective Christology against the *theios aner*, but an exalted Christology of divine power laid aside for salvific suffering, almost a narrative version of the Christ hymn in Philippians 2:6-11. The comparison of Markan and Q versions of miracle stories undertaken in the following pages will further demonstrate just how Mark's version emphasizes Jesus' divine power and divine identity compared to other possible ways of telling these stories.

Precisely how exalted a Christology the miracles convey remains debated among Markan commentators. Jesus' walking on water (Mark 6:45-52) illustrates the range of contemporary interpretations of a miracle's Christological implications. The story contains several theophanic elements. Walking on water recalls the God who "alone stretched out the heavens and trampled the waves of the sea" (Job 9:1) and "trampled the sea...churning the mighty waters" (Hab 3:15). Mark says that as Jesus approached the disciples in the boat, "He intended to pass them by (*παρελθεῖν*)" (6:48). This detail, superfluous for the narrative, echoes God's manifestation to Moses on Mt. Sinai when God reveals the divine glory to Moses by hiding him in a rock as God passes by (*παρέλθῃ*, Exod 33:22) as well as God's revelation when God promises to pass by (*παρελεύσεται*) Elijah on the mountain (1 Kgs 19:11).³⁸ The word *παρελθεῖν* finds its way into God's appearance to Jacob (Gen 32:32) and in Michael's angelophany (Dan 12:1) where no parallel word in the Hebrew is present. When Jesus appears to the disciples, they do not recognize him, so he identifies himself, "I am (*ἐγώ εἰμι*)" (6:50), which is the same self-identification that God used at the burning bush (Exod 3:14) and elsewhere (Deut 32:39; Isa 41:4; 43:10-11).

³⁷ Ibid., 208.

³⁸ Here and throughout, when a Greek word appears in an OT citation, it is from the LXX unless otherwise specified.

Though commentators recognize these strong echoes of scriptural theophanies, they disagree on their significance. Joel Marcus claims, “Although...Mark never explicitly says that Jesus is divine, he comes very close to doing so here [in the water walking], and this high evaluation of Jesus is consonant with indicators elsewhere in the Gospel.”³⁹ Adela Collins similarly finds it “likely that...members of the audience of Mark would have understood that the passage [i.e. the water walking] implies the divinity of Jesus.”⁴⁰ Mary Ann Beavis is more reticent to attribute divinity to Jesus in his water walking. She warns, “it is important not to project later doctrines about the divinity of Christ onto Mark’s Jesus, who is shown as praying to God at the beginning of the story (6:46), and not as divine himself.”⁴¹ J.R. Daniel Kirk and Stephen L. Young similarly suggest that the proper background for the sea-walking is Psalm 88, in which the Davidic king participates in God’s sovereignty over the sea while remaining a human, not divine, figure.⁴² The comparative project of this book will show what is distinctive about Mark’s depiction of Jesus vis-a-vis Q’s. Such a comparison contributes to the debates about Mark’s Christology by highlighting the choices that Mark made; the comparison throws Mark’s depiction of Jesus into high relief and makes it clear that Mark elides Jesus and God.

³⁹ Joel Marcus, *Mark 1-8: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, The Anchor Bible (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 432.

⁴⁰ Adela Yarbro Collins, *Mark: A Commentary*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2007), 333.the Hermeneia

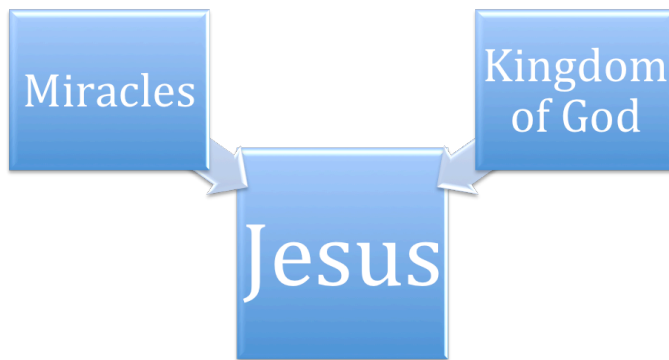
⁴¹ Mary Ann Beavis, *Mark* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2011), 108.

⁴² J.R. Daniel Kirk and Stephen L. Young, “‘I Will Set His Hand to the Sea:’ Psalm 88:26 LXX and Christology in Mark,” *JBL* 133.2 (2014): 333-40.

Conclusion

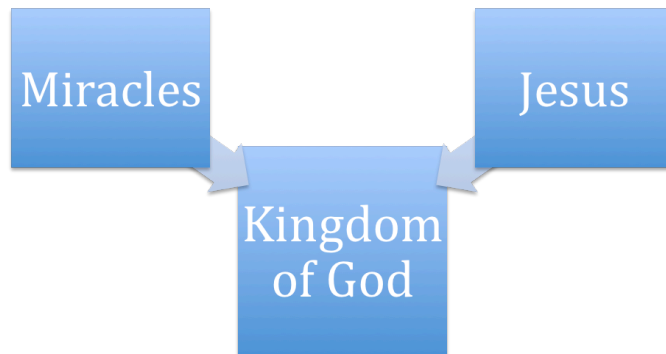
Although comparing the miracle overlaps contributes to debates about New Testament Christology, this comparison also contributes to the study of Christian origins beyond the subfield of New Testament theology. The comparison illustrates one aspect of the diverse ways that early Jesus followers constructed both their memory of him and their identity as his followers. Telling the stories of the miracle overlaps was a means to remember two aspects of Jesus' ministry: his miracle working and his proclamation of the coming kingdom of God.⁴³ Mark and Q demonstrate two different ways of conceptualizing the relationship between Jesus and these two aspects of his ministry:

Mark:



⁴³ For arguments in favor of the historicity of Jesus' proclamation of the kingdom of God, see Dale C. Allison, Jr., *Constructing Jesus: Memory, Imagination, and History* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2010), 164-204; Marinus De Jonge, *God's Final Envoy: Early Christology and Jesus' Own View of His Mission* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 34-43; Meier, *Marginal Jew*, 2:237-508; for arguments in favor of the historicity of Jesus' miracles see Allison, *Constructing* 17-19; Meier, *Marginal Jew*, 2:509-970; Twelftree, *Jesus the Miracle Worker*; Eric Eve, *The Healer from Nazareth: Jesus' Miracles in Historical Context* (London: SPCK, 2009).

Q:



In Mark, the miracles and the kingdom of God point to Jesus, whereas in the Double Tradition Jesus and the miracles point to the kingdom of God. These two alternate configurations reflect different ways that early Jesus followers conceptualized their identity as a group: as the community participating in the in-breaking kingdom of God that Jesus announced and that will ultimately overcome the kingdom of Satan (Q) or as the group whose fidelity to Jesus will allow them to live in the state of eschatological blessedness, which Jesus calls the kingdom of God, when Jesus ultimately returns with his divine identity made manifest to all as he overcomes Satan and judges the world (Mark). Demonstrating how the miracle overlaps illustrate these two distinct ways of constructing memory and identity among Jesus' early followers will be the task for this book.

CHAPTER I

PRELIMINARY OBJECTIONS

No character effectively refutes the Grand Inquisitor's interpretation of the Temptation. Ivan Karamazov's Jesus sits silently as the Grand Inquisitor talks about the Church abandoning Jesus' true message. On hearing the story, Alyosha calls it absurd, but he offers no substantive objection to gainsay the claims of Ivan's protagonist. Within the novel, Dostoyevsky allows the Grand Inquisitor's claims to stand essentially unchallenged.

In contrast, the first step in testing this book's thesis, that Mark tells miracle stories to affirm a divine identity for Jesus while Q tells the same stories to illustrate the kingdom of God rather than Jesus' exalted nature, will be to examine potential objections. One objection is that Q is a hypothetical document, and so there is little value in examining what it has to say since it might not exist. By adopting comparison to investigate Mark and Q, this book opens itself to a second objection: that comparison is passé and not conducive to worthwhile scholarship. This book uses comparison to investigate attitudes about Jesus' identity, what is usually termed "Christology." Thus, a third possible objection is that speaking about Christology in the New Testament is anachronistic, that this sort of sustained theological reflection was a later development. To demonstrate how this book will meet these objections, this chapter uses an example from the study of folklore to illustrate this book's methods. Using folkloristic methodology opens this study to another objection: such a methodology is not appropriate to study the written texts of the Bible. To address these objections, this chapter starts with the example, the folkloristic analysis of a famous urban legend.

The Kentucky Fried Rat

In the 1970s a story began circulating in North America about a person who inadvertently ate a rat from a fast-food restaurant.⁴⁴ Many versions of the story exist, but one representative example goes as follows:

The story begins with a local woman on her way home from work one evening. She decided to stop at Kentucky Fried Chicken and pick up some dinner, rather than cooking. Upon arriving at her home, she disposed of the packaging and attempted to pass off the meal as home-cooked. When her family returned home for dinner, they all agreed it was the best fried chicken that Mom had ever made. The mother basked in their compliments while enjoying the meal herself. When she bit into her piece of chicken, however, she noticed an unpleasant taste and texture. She spat the mouthful into her napkin and discovered that she had been chewing on a ball of hair and a rat's tail. Her family was horrified and she, of course, fainted on the spot. When she came to, she was at the hospital where she had just had her stomach pumped. She had to tell the doctors where she had purchased the "chicken," and thus her secret was revealed to the family.⁴⁵

While the setting of this story is decidedly contemporary, stories of contaminated foodstuffs have a long pedigree. In medieval Europe, stories of Jews poisoning the water supply circulated as explanations of the plague.⁴⁶ In the 1930s as Sino-Japanese tensions rose, rumors circulated in China that Japanese manufacturers were adding ground glass to canned goods

⁴⁴ Gillian Bennett and Paul Smith, *Urban Legends: A Collection of International Tall Tales and Terrors* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2007), 217; Jan Harold Brunvald, *The Vanishing Hitchhiker: American Urban Legends and Their Meaning* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1981), 81-90. For the development of urban legends, see Richard K. Beardsley and Rosalie Hankey, "A History of the Vanishing Hitchhiker," *California Folklore Quarterly* 2.1 (1943): 13-25. The classic catalogue of urban legends and other American folklore may be found in Ernest W. Baughman, *Type and Motif-Index of the Folktales of England and North America* (The Hague: Mouton & Co., 1966).

⁴⁵ Cylin Busby, "'This is a True Story': Roles of Women in Contemporary Legend," *Midwestern Folklore* 20, no. 1 (1994): 6.

⁴⁶ Joseph Byrne, *Encyclopedia of the Black Death* (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2012), 194-95.

destined for China.⁴⁷ In early twentieth-century America, stories about restaurants serving a noxious meat (rat, mouse, cat, dog) circulated, but in these cases the offending restaurants were Chinese or Italian. In the 1970s similar stories were told of ethnic minority restaurants in Europe.⁴⁸ By the 1980s and 1990s the Kentucky Fried Rat made its way to the United Kingdom and other European countries, as well.⁴⁹

In the vast majority of accounts from contemporary North America, Kentucky Fried Chicken is the offending restaurant. In almost all other cases it is an outlet of another national fast-food chain. The ubiquity of the food contamination stories across cultures speaks to a widespread human anxiety about the safety of our food supply, an essential ingredient in our survival. Those viewed as somehow foreign but who nevertheless have access to societies, like Jews in medieval Europe or Japanese manufacturers in 1930s China, pose an especial threat and recur as the perpetrators of food contamination. As people's fears vary over time and regionally, the perpetrators of the contamination change. When ethnic minorities are the feared threat to national cohesion, ethnic restaurants serve the fried rat, as in the European stories and the American stories from the early 20th century. The corporate villain in the Kentucky Fried Rat story speaks to a different set of anxieties present in late 20th century America.

The rise of fast-food restaurants conspicuously manifested how American society changed in the twentieth century. Certain basic societal needs remained constant, such as preparing food, acquiring clothing, consuming entertainment, and supporting the needy. The source of meeting these needs had traditionally been local institutions, such as the home, the

⁴⁷ Gary Alan Fine, "The Kentucky Fried Rat: Legends and Modern Society," *Journal of the Folklore Institute* 17.2/3 (1980): 228.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 231.

⁴⁹ Bennett and Smith, *Urban Legends*, 217.

small business, and the Church. Over the course of the twentieth century these responsibilities increasingly shifted from local to supra-local institutions, especially governments and national corporations. The Kentucky Fried Rat story gives voice to anxiety about the transfer of food preparation from the home to the corporation, a manifestation of the more general anxiety about the shift from the local to the supra-local.⁵⁰ The fast food corporation becomes the insidious foreigner contaminating the local food supply.

The rise of fast-food reflected not only the greater role of the corporation in American culture, but also the changing pace of American life. In the version above, the purchaser of the tainted food dishonestly presents it as a home-cooked meal, a detail shared by many other variants.⁵¹ This recurrent theme indicates anxiety about how fast-food displaced home-cooked meals. However, a number of other variants present the setting not as a faked family meal, but as some dark place where the eater is distracted—in a car while driving, or in a movie theater, or in front of the television. On one level the darkness and distraction add plausibility to the eater's failure to notice the battered rodent until it was too late. Yet these settings also highlight the decline of eating as a communal, leisure activity.⁵² Eating happens while doing something else, and not as a dedicated activity that the household undertakes together. Consuming the Kentucky Fried Rat occurs either in an ersatz family dinner or in the family dinner's replacement, the distracted meal on the go.

That families could traditionally rely on their food to be prepared at home and have the leisure to eat it together depended on women accepting food preparation as their primary roles

⁵⁰ Fine, "Kentucky Fried," 230-231

⁵¹ Busby, "True Story," 26.

⁵² Fine, "Kentucky Fried," 233-34.

and staying at home to prepare it so the family could eat together after the men had returned from work and the children from school. Given the anxieties the Kentucky Fried Rat story expresses, it should come as no surprise that when a storyteller includes the gender of the victim, it is a woman over 80% of the time.⁵³ After all, one of the most significant changes in the twentieth century was the shift in gender expectations and gender roles. Indeed, the 1970s, when these stories first arose and proliferated, was a period of especially vocal protest against the constraints of traditional gender roles. Many variants of the story that specify a woman as victim also note that she was on her way home from work, as the one quoted above does. The specification of a woman as a victim provides an implicit reactionary moral to the story: women should cook and not work outside the home.⁵⁴

Objection 1: Folklore is Irrelevant to the Bible

Adapting the methodology of folklorists in studying multiple variants of similar stories calls to mind the work of classical form critics, like Bultmann and Dibelius, who drew upon the academic study of folklore of their time.⁵⁵ In studying the Kentucky Fried Rat story, folklorists examine a discrete bit of lore transmitted orally within a community to see how it

⁵³ Fine, "Kentucky Fried," 232.

⁵⁴ Busby, "True Story," 42-43.

⁵⁵ Martin Dibelius, *From Tradition to Gospel*, tr. Bertram Lee Woolf (Cambridge: James Clarke, 1971); Rudolf Bultmann, *History of the Synoptic Tradition*, tr. John Marsh (New York: Harper&Row, 1968). Dibelius and Bultmann were both influenced by the work of Scandanavian folklorist Axel Olrik, especially his essay "Epic Laws of Folk Narrative," reprinted in *The Study of Folklore*, ed. Alan Dundes, 129-141 (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1965). For a discussion about the origins of form criticism, see David E. Aune, "Form Criticism, in *The Blackwell Companion to the New Testament*, ed. David E. Aune, 140-155 (Chichester, UK: Wiley-Blackwell 2010).

fits the situation of its telling. Form critics adopted a similar approach with the material from the gospels: they identified discrete units of oral tradition within the gospel texts, assigned these units to more comprehensive groups of similar material (forms), and then examined these forms for information about the *Sitz im Leben* (setting in life) which would account for telling these stories, all with the ultimate aim of understanding the life of early Jesus followers based on the stories they told. Form critics focused on the oral traditions reconstructed on the basis of the gospel texts rather than on the gospel texts themselves. Indeed, Bultmann and Dibelius viewed the gospels as somewhat haphazard written collections of originally discrete oral elements.⁵⁶

Few today would argue that the gospel writers were merely collectors of oral tradition rather than authors who shaped narratives to suit their own purposes.⁵⁷ It might seem odd then to study written texts, like Mark and Q, by adopting methodologies from the study of folklore which analyze short units of oral lore that are repeated and modified by innumerable tellers.⁵⁸ However, authors composing a written text do so on the basis of their psychological response to the conditions in which they write, just as a teller of a tale does. Every use of language is influenced by the setting in which it occurs, and literature does not constitute a unique set of

⁵⁶ Dibelius, *From Tradition*, 59.

⁵⁷ Nevertheless, form criticism remains a vital form of Biblical scholarship and has taken into account the fact that the biblical texts are not merely compilations of discrete oral units. See Martin J. Buss, *The Changing Shape of Form Criticism: A Relational Approach* (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix, 2010); Werner H. Kelber and Samuel Byrskog, eds., *Jesus in Memory: Traditions in Oral and Scribal Perspectives* (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2009); Roland Boer, ed., *Bakhtin and Genre Theory in Biblical Studies* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2007); Marvin A. Sweeney and Ehud Ben Zvi, eds., *The Changing Face of Form Criticism for the Twenty-First Century* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003).

⁵⁸ In what sense we can consider Q a text will occupy us in the next objection.

linguistic phenomena uninfluenced by their social milieu.⁵⁹ One can apply to gospel texts a similar analysis as folklorists apply to the Kentucky Fried Rat story to investigate how the respective verbal acts (written text or oral story) reflect the environment in which they take place and the psychology of the tellers. One of the key aspects of a unit of folklore that allows folklorists to investigate how it reflects the situation of its telling is the existence of variants of the story that reflect concerns common to the multiple tellers; the miracle overlaps represent variants of the same stories that allow a similar analysis. The folklorist Alan Dundes has argued that the existence of multiple variants is the defining factor of folklore and that the Bible should be studied as folklore, since on so many occasions it contains multiple versions of the same story.⁶⁰

However, there remain a few key differences between studying variants of gospel stories and studying variants of a piece of folklore. Folklorists interested in the Kentucky Fried Rat story have as many variants to examine as they can collect, whereas our study of the miracle overlaps provides only two variants of each story. The folklorist is usually not as interested in what any one individual variant says as in the collective weight of the elements that are repeated in multiple versions of the story. Having only two variants of each story to examine, this book is much more focused on what these two individual versions say.

Although studying the gospels limits the number of variants available to examine, Mark and Q provide another resource for studying these variants: the surrounding text of Mark and Q themselves. The rest of Mark and Q provide context for the miracle overlaps; borrowing a

⁵⁹ Todd Klutz, *The Exorcism Stories in Luke-Acts: A Sociostylistic Reading* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 17-22.

⁶⁰ Alan Dundes, *Holy Writ as Oral Lit: The Bible as Folklore* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 1999).

phrase from Todd Klutz, I will refer to the remainder of Mark and Q as the co-texts for the miracle overlaps, and I will use the most relevant aspects of these co-texts to illuminate what Mark and Q accomplish in their respective variants of the miracle overlaps.⁶¹

Studying variants of biblical stories also calls to mind the analysis of biblical type-scenes, most famously carried out by Robert Alter.⁶² The type scene is a literary convention, such as meeting one's wife at a well, that provides the framework within which biblical authors could create variations. Alter's study of the variations within the framework allows him to illustrate the narrative artistry of the authors as they shape the conventional scene to develop their characters. Alter, however, eschews what he terms the excavative function of biblical analysis through which the scholar uses the text to learn about the world in which the texts were produced, as classical form criticism does. This current book too shares the excavative aim to use the variants of the miracle overlaps as windows through which better to see the early Jesus followers who produced these texts, much as folklorists use variants of tales to learn about the tellers and their world.

Objection 2: There is No Q

Scholars posit the existence of Q as one way to solve the so-called Synoptic Problem: Matthew, Mark, and Luke (the Synoptic Gospels) share so many parallels and verbatim repetitions that they must share written sources. Additionally, when there are differences among the three in the telling of a story, Matthew and Mark tend to agree against Luke or Mark and Luke agree against Matthew, but Matthew and Luke rarely agree against Mark. Mark must

⁶¹ Klutz, *Exorcism Stories*, 28.

⁶² Robert Alter, *The Art of Biblical Narrative*, rev. ed. (New York: Basic Books, 2010), 55-78.

be the common term between Matthew and Luke. However, Matthew and Luke share stories and sayings not included in Mark. Solutions to the Synoptic Problem must therefore account for the existence of this Double Tradition (the material shared by Matthew and Luke) as well as for Mark's place as middle term between Matthew and Luke.

The most commonly held solution posits Mark as the earliest of the three Synoptics and a direct source for Luke and Matthew. The Double Tradition results from Matthew and Luke independently using another non-Markan source, dubbed "Q" from *Quelle*, the German word for source. Once they accept this Two Source Hypothesis, scholars can reconstruct Q based on the material that Matthew and Luke share that does not come from Mark. Although this hypothesis easily accounts for why Matthew and Mark would agree against Luke and why Luke and Mark would agree against Matthew, it must also account for the rarer instances of Matthew and Luke agreeing against Mark. Defenders of the Two Source Hypothesis account for these agreements against Mark in two ways. If the agreements are small and could have reasonably arisen from the coincidence of Matthew and Luke independently altering their Markan source material in the same way, then source critics assume just such coincidences and call these "Minor Agreements." However, sometimes the agreements between Matthew and Luke against Mark are just too extensive to attribute to coincidence. It strains credulity to claim, for instance, that Matthew and Luke independently expanded the terse Markan Tempting into the expansive three-fold Temptation narrative that they share. Defenders of the Two Source Hypothesis therefore explain these more extensive agreements by positing their presence in Q. Mark and Q occasionally present the same story or saying with different wording, and these Mark-Q overlaps gave rise to some agreements of Matthew and Luke against Mark.

To the extent that scholars have attended to these overlaps, they have often done so to establish a literary relationship between Mark and Q. For instance, Harry Fleddermann's *Mark and Q: A Study of the Overlap Texts* examines all the instances of Mark-Q overlap to argue that Mark was dependent on Q.⁶³ Frans Neiryck, in a lengthy assessment appended to Fleddermann's work, points out the inadequacies of Fleddermann's arguments for Markan dependence on Q and asserts Markan independence from Q.⁶⁴ A number of articles and essays undertake more limited analyses of overlap texts to argue for or against a literary relationship between Mark and Q.⁶⁵

Another goal of comparing Mark and Q besides determining their literary relationship has been to study the evolution of various elements in the Jesus tradition and to recover their

⁶³ Harry T. Fleddermann, *Mark and Q: A Study of the Overlap Texts* (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1995).

⁶⁴ Frans Neiryck, "Assessment," in Fleddermann, *Mark and Q*, 263-304. Neiryck's assessment coheres with the widely held view that Mark and Q are independent. Previous monographs that had examined these overlaps to come to the same conclusion on mutual independence are Rudolf Laufen *Die Doppelüberlieferungen der Logienquelle und des Markusevangeliums* (Bonn: Peter Hanstein, 1980) and Joachim Schülling, *Sudien zum Verhältnis von Logienquelle und Markusevangelium* (Würzburg: Echter, 1991).

⁶⁵ Burton L. Mack, "Q and the Gospel of Mark: Revising Christian Origins," *Semeia* 55 (1991): 15-39; David R. Catchpole, "The Beginning of Q: A Proposal," *NTS* 38 2 (1992): 205-21; M. Eugene Boring, "The Synoptic Problem, 'Minor' Agreements and the Beelzebul Pericope," in *The Four Gospels 1992: Festschrift Frans Neiryck* ed. F. Van Segbroeck, C.M. Tuckett, G. Van Belle, and J. Verheyden (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1992): 1:587-619; M. Eugene Boring, "The 'Minor Agreements' and Their Bearing on the Synoptic Problem," in *New Studies in the Synoptic Problem: Oxford Conference, April 2008: Essays in Honor of Christopher M. Tuckett* (Leuven: Peeters, 2011), 227-51; Timothy A. Friedrichsen, "'Minor' and 'Major' Matthew-Luke Agreements Against Mk 4,20-32," in Van Segbroeck *et al.*, *Four Gospels*, 1:541-61; Jan Lambrecht, "Three More Notes in Response to John P. Meier; Mark 1,7-8; 3,27 and 10,1-12," *ETL* 89.4 (2013): 397-409; Jan Lambrecht, "John the Baptist and Jesus in Mark 1:1-15: Markan Redaction of Q?" *NTS* 38.3 (1992): 357-84.

earliest forms and/or their origins in the life of the historical Jesus.⁶⁶ Such endeavors rely on the timeline that the Two Source Hypothesis lays out: Mark and Q are the earliest recoverable versions of these elements and therefore are the most informative for reconstructing the original form of any saying or story of Jesus.

As scholars reconstructed Q, a difference between this hypothetical document and the extant documents in the New Testament became clear: Q has very little to say about the resurrection or Jesus' role as Messiah. On this basis, some hypothesized that Q reflected the beliefs and practices of a very early group of Jesus followers who had a decidedly non-messianic, non-eschatological outlook, an outlook that the later Christian tradition successfully marginalized. Thus, many studies of Q have been more or less explicit comparisons of the kind of Christianity illustrated by Q and the kind represented by the other gospels or the Pauline corpus.⁶⁷

However, sustained attention to the Mark-Q overlaps has been a relatively neglected activity among Q scholars interested in studying the distinct theology of the putative Q community. Michael Humphries's *Christian Origins and the Language of the Kingdom of God* marks an exception to this scholarly pattern.⁶⁸ Humphries claims the Mark and Q versions of the Beelzebul Controversy represent two conceptions of the kingdom of God held by the different communities of early Jesus followers that created Mark and Q. He argues that in the Beelzebul Controversy Mark presents the kingdom of God eschatologically as the community

⁶⁶ David R. Catchpole, "The Mission Charge in Q," *Semeia* 55 (1991): 147-74; Risto Uro, *Sheep Among the Wolves: A Study on the Mission Instructions of Q* (Helsinki: Suomalainen Tiedeakatemia, 1987), 98-110.

⁶⁷ For instance Mack, *Lost Gospel*; Kloppenborg, *Excavating and Formation*; Vaage *Upstarts*.

⁶⁸ Michael L. Humphries, *Christian Origins and the Language of the Kingdom of God* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1999).

of the saved that will replace Israel in the end times.⁶⁹ On the other hand, Humphries argues that the Beelzebul Controversy in Q belongs to the earliest recoverable stratum of that document and shows that the early Q community conceived of the kingdom of God as a way of living in the world consonant with the wisdom that Jesus taught.⁷⁰

The Two Source Hypothesis has attained dominance in Synoptic studies. However dominant this hypothesis might be, it is not the only one. For instance, the Farrar-Goulder theory posits Mark as the earliest Synoptic, determines that Mark was a source for Matthew, and has Luke coming even later and relying on both Mark and Matthew. The Griesbach theory places Matthew earliest, being a source for Luke, with Mark using Matthew and Luke as sources. The Augustinian theory also has Matthew earliest as a source for Mark, with Luke using Mark and Matthew. None of these theories requires the existence of Q.⁷¹ Thus, one

⁶⁹ Ibid., 57-61.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 39-45. For the stratigraphy of Q on which Humphries bases his argument, see Vaage, *Upstarts*, 55-65; Kloppenborg *Formation*, 171-245, *Excavating* 112-165. For an alternative schema of the strata of Q, see Dale C. Allison, Jr., *The Jesus Tradition in Q* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 1997), 1-66. C.M. Tuckett, *Q and the History of Early Christianity: Studies on Q* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1996), 41-82 gives an extended discussion of the problems of scholarly reconstructions of Q's compositional history, and Larry W. Hurtado, "Fashions, Fallacies, and Future Prospects in New Testament Studies," *JSNT* 36.4 (2014): 315 criticizes the attempts to trace the history of a hypothetical community based on the hypothetical strata of a hypothetical document.

⁷¹ Advocates of the Farrar-Goulder theory include Mark S. Goodacre, *The Case Against Q: Studies in Markan Priority and the Synoptic Problem* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 2002) and Francis Watson, *Gospel Writing: A Canonical Perspective* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2013), 156-216. A modified version of the Griesbach theory finds support from Allan J. McNicol, David L. Dungan, and David B. Peabody, eds., *Beyond the Q Impasse—Luke's Use of Matthew: A Demonstration by the Research Team of the International Institute for Gospel Studies* (Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press International, 1996) and David B. Peabody, Lamar Cope, and Allan J. McNicol, eds., *One Gospel from Two—Mark's Use of Matthew and Luke* (Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press International, 2002). The Augustinian theory also has a supporter in J.W. Wenham, *Reading Matthew, Mark, and Luke: A Fresh Assault on the Synoptic Problem*, (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1991). For a recent

could argue that the entire premise of this current book is flawed—it makes no sense to compare stories in Mark and Q because Q might not exist.

Certainly this objection holds if the purpose of the comparison is to determine the relationship between Mark and Q. If Q does not exist, it is vain to investigate whether Mark used it as a source or vice versa. The diachronic approaches that trace the development of shared traditions in Mark and Q rely on the timeline and source relationships presupposed by the Two Source Hypothesis—change these timelines and the analysis changes with it. Finally, if the Q document did not exist, then investigating the beliefs of the putative Q community that produced it becomes vacuous. Comparing the Mark-Q overlaps to discover the earliest version of the story, or Mark and Q’s literary relationship, or the nature of the Q community rests on accepting the validity of the Two Source Hypothesis.

Nevertheless, comparing the Mark and Q versions can generate productive insights even when one remains agnostic regarding the existence of Q as an independent document. The analysis of the Kentucky Fried Rat demonstrates how scholars can analyze different versions of the same story without presupposing the relationships among versions. Folklorists can delineate source relationships among different variants or trace the development of a story through time, but they need not do so. Comparing the different food contamination tales from different times and different cultures reveals the ubiquity of human anxiety about the food supply and fear of foreigners, even as the differences reveal the various foreigners that different communities fear. The different versions of the Kentucky Fried Rat story reveal the discomfort that the societal changes in 20th century America engendered. The analysis of the

assessment of the *status quaestionis* in the Synoptic Problem see C.M. Tuckett, “The Current State of the Synoptic Problem,” in Foster *et al.*, *New Studies*, 9-50.

Kentucky Fried Rat does not require positing any theory about the genetic relationship among these various versions. All it requires is the existence of multiple versions to examine.

Whether or not Q exists, the Double Tradition does exist. Matthew and Luke manifestly do share material not contained in Mark, and occasionally Matthew and Luke just do agree substantially against Mark in pericopae that all three share. Even if there is no independent document behind these agreements, one can still recover this Double Tradition and compare it to Mark. Therefore, comparing the overlaps in and of itself does not require accepting the Two Source Hypothesis. Why the Double Tradition and Mark should be worth comparing if there was no Q will be our concern in answering the next objection.

Remaining agnostic about Q's existence raises some nomenclature issues that potentially bedevil the discussion. Most of the time when people discuss the material shared between Matthew and Luke but not with Mark, they call it "Q" because the Two Source Hypothesis has become the default position in New Testament Studies. Calling this material "Q" is highly prejudicial against other solutions to the Synoptic Problem. "Double Tradition" is a more neutral term, but has not become standard, and sometimes people who accept the Two Source Hypothesis refer to material shared by Mark and Q as "Double Tradition." In a rigorous attempt to remain agnostic about the Synoptic Problem, one might avoid "Q" altogether and stick to "Double Tradition," as cumbersome as this phrase can be. However, "Q" has become such a ubiquitous and conveniently brief term for this material that I have chosen to use it interchangeably with "Double Tradition" and will alternate between the two of them. Partisans of the Two Source Hypothesis will have no problem with this nomenclature; to doubters or opponents of this hypothesis, I can only offer my apologies for not rigorously sticking with a more neutral nomenclature for the sake of convenience and style.

Maintaining neutrality with respect to Synoptic Problem solutions complicates the use of co-text in the analysis of the miracle overlaps because using co-texts to understand a pericope assumes that the co-texts and the pericope in question form a unified text in which one can discover an authorial voice. In the case of the Markan variants of the miracle overlaps, the appropriate co-text is obvious: the Gospel of Mark. For the Q versions, the co-text is somewhat problematic. If Q did exist independently, scholars cannot be sure of its extent or ordering. However, even if Q did not exist as an independent text, the Double Tradition arose from a sequence of authorial choices. Under both the Griesbach and Augustinian hypotheses, the Double Tradition consists of those elements of Matthew that Luke chose to include and Mark chose to excise; for the Farrar-Goulder hypothesis, it consists of those elements Matthew chose to add to Mark that Luke also chose to include. In whatever way the Double Tradition came about, it did so as the result of a sequence of authorial choices, and one would expect these choices to have some coherence. Thus, the other pericopae from the Double Tradition serve as the appropriate co-text for the overlap texts, even if this co-text never existed as an independent text.

The attempt at source hypothetical neutrality raises another methodological question: how to determine the contents of the Double Tradition. When Matthew and Luke agree verbatim and Mark has no parallel, assigning that material to the Double Tradition is uncontroversial. However, when verbatim agreement does not occur, the decision of what belongs to the Double Tradition is influenced by whether or not one posits the Two Source Hypothesis. For instance, in the context of the Beelzebul Controversy, both Matthew and Luke share the following saying that Mark lacks:

But if by the spirit of God I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. (Matt 12:28)

But if by the finger of God I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. (Luke 11:20)

This verse belongs to the Double Tradition, but it is not obvious what to do about the one word difference of “finger” vs. “spirit.” If Q existed then it must have said that Jesus cast out demons by the finger of God or by the spirit of God or by the something else of God, or there could have been multiple very similar versions of Q that differed in this one word, but this could not just be a blank space—Q must have had something there even if it is not shared by Matthew and Luke. Q and the Double Tradition are not coextensive.

In the effort to remain neutral with regard to the Synoptic source hypotheses, this book will take a strict view of the Double Tradition as that material common to Matthew and Luke but not Mark. This effort means excluding from the comparisons some elements that reconstructions of Q would include. Such a definition of the Double Tradition still involves some judgment when Matthew and Luke’s sharing is not verbatim. So, for instance, when this study examines the Beelzebul Controversy, it will say that the Double Tradition includes Jesus claiming that if his exorcisms come by God’s power (the sentiment Matthew and Luke express with different words), then the kingdom of God is present. The study can then compare a version of the story that contains this claim (the Double Tradition) with one that does not (Mark). Explaining why such a comparison is worthwhile leads to the next objection.

Objection 3: Comparison is Passé

Though comparison was a favored method for the study of religion in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, in the course of the 20th century it fell into disrepute as “the sign of unscientific procedure, abjured in the name of responsibility towards the concrete specificity of their objects of study.”⁷² Comparative studies have come under suspicion because they distract from historical and cultural particularity in favor of totalizing views of reality.⁷³ This anti-comparativist stance proceeds from the shortcomings of earlier comparative work in religious studies that strung together isolated characteristics of different religions in a “parataxis of ‘likeness’” without regard for “the differences that would render such a chain of comparisons interesting.”⁷⁴ For instance, early twentieth-century scholars, such as Alfred Loisy, would simply list the similarities between Jesus and the subjects of mystery cults, such as Attis, Osiris, and Mithras, to argue that early Christianity was a mystery cult.⁷⁵ Such decontextualized concatenations of superficial similarities flattened out the differences between traditions and called forth a countervailing apologetic trend within comparative scholarship of Christianity to illustrate the supposed uniqueness of Christianity vis-à-vis its surroundings.⁷⁶

⁷² Jonathan Z. Smith, *Drudgery Divine: On the Comparison of Early Christianities and the Religions of Late Antiquity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), vii.

⁷³ Jeffrey R. Carter, “Comparison in the History of Religions: Reflections and Critiques,” *MTSR* 16 (2004): 3.

⁷⁴ Smith, *Drudgery*, 43.

⁷⁵ Alfred Loisy, “The Christian Mystery,” *The Hibbert Journal* 10 (1911): 45-64

⁷⁶ Smith, *Drudgery*, 42.

For instance, Karl Schmidt claimed that the Gospels represented a novel form of literature completely *sui generis* and not related to existing literature of the time.⁷⁷

The shortcomings of previous comparative scholarship do not invalidate comparison as a useful method in the study of religion. Indeed, comparison is intrinsic to most scholarly endeavors.⁷⁸ The fundamental scholarly task of describing an entity involves recognizing those features that make it different from other entities and its environment; description always involves comparison, at least implicitly.⁷⁹ Another fundamental scholarly activity, explanation, involves recognizing the similarities and correspondences among various phenomena to give a coherent account of them; drawing such connections inherently requires comparison of the phenomena to illuminate the similarity.⁸⁰

The issue is not whether to compare, but how to compare well. For comparison to function, the items to be compared must be similar and different. The absolutely unique is absolutely incomprehensible since human processes of description and explanation are comparative; on the other hand, the absolutely identical admits of no comparison because there must be two different things to compare. An adequate comparison must therefore balance difference and similarity, must involve “a discourse of ‘difference,’ a complex term that invites negotiation, classification, and comparison, and, at the same time, avoids too easy a discourse

⁷⁷ Karl Ludwig Schmidt, *The Place of the Gospels in the General History of Literature*, trans. Byron R. McCane (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2002).

⁷⁸ Jonathan Z. Smith, “Adde Parvum Parvo Magnus Acervus Erit,” *HR* 11.1 (1971): 67.

⁷⁹ Jeffrey R. Carter, “Description is Not Explanation: A Methodology of Comparison,” *MTSR* 10 (1998): 134-35.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 136-37.

of the ‘same.’”⁸¹ The particular scholarly goals determine the extent to which difference or similarity is stressed, but difference and similarity must exist in tension to avoid falling into the discourse of uniqueness or sameness, both of which render intelligible description or explanation impossible and which can easily devolve into apologetic.⁸²

That comparison is fundamental to human understanding and inquiry does not imply that a comparison is natural. One can view any two entities as similar and different and thus compare them.⁸³ Why two entities, rather than others, should be compared does not depend on the intrinsic qualities of the entities. The choice of entities to compare depends rather on the mindset of the comparer: “comparison... brings differences together within the space of the scholar’s mind for the scholar’s own intellectual reasons...A comparison is a disciplined exaggeration in the service of knowledge. It lifts out and strongly marks certain features within difference as being of possible intellectual significance.”⁸⁴ A scholarly comparison is worthwhile to the extent that it illustrates the possible intellectual significance of the things it compares, that it helps describe and explain the phenomena of interest.⁸⁵

For folklorists who have examined the Kentucky Fried Rat story, the phenomena of interest are the societal anxieties that explain why this urban legend gained such traction. Comparing different versions of the contemporary American story has revealed the commonly repeated elements (the fast food restaurant, the absence of a home cooked meal, the gender of

⁸¹ Smith, *Drudgery*, 42.

⁸² Carter, “Comparison,” 6.

⁸³ *Ibid.*

⁸⁴ Smith, *Drudgery*, 51-52.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 53; Carter, “Description,” 139. This corresponds to what Smith elsewhere calls the use of comparison as a “hermeneutic device” (“Adde,” 71).

the victims) which folklorists can explain by the social transformation of the twentieth century and the discomfort changing patterns of food preparation engendered. Comparing the Kentucky Fried Rat story to other stories of food contamination reveals the unease that communities feel about those they view as foreign yet who have access to the community's resources.

The phenomena of interest for this study are early Christian attitudes toward miracles, and its goal is to describe a subset of these attitudes, those that find expression in Mark and Q, to give the features from which they may be differentiated from each other. I consider attitudes to miracles an interesting subject in the historical study of Christianity both in itself and as part of a broader examination of how his first followers thought about Jesus. The miracle overlaps provide a means of exploring the differences because they are so similar; the different agendas shine through in the telling of similar stories.⁸⁶

It would be disingenuous, however, to maintain that this question interests me simply for historical reasons. The material from Mark and Q appears in a canon of sacred literature that informs attitudes for Christians today. Thus, the study of diverse attitudes toward miracles in Mark and Q invites theological consideration of how these differences have, could, and should inform Christian belief and practice. From this theological perspective, the comparison in this book serves as a prolegomenon for reflection on miracles and the person of Jesus. While the book will engage this theological task only briefly, this task, in addition to the

⁸⁶ Such an approach mirrors that of some contemporary text critics, who have shifted their agenda from determining the original form of texts by stripping away corrupted variants to examining the implications of the variants themselves and what they can tell scholars about the development of Christianity, e.g., D.C. Parker, *The Living Text of the Gospels* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

historical one, makes worthwhile the description of the distinctive features of attitudes toward miracle in Mark and Q.

Comparing the miracle overlaps to delineate the distinctive features of Mark and Q has methodological affinities with Phillip F. Esler and Ronald Piper's *Lazarus, Mary, and Martha*, which uses a comparative approach to analyze John's story of the raising of Lazarus vis-à-vis Synoptic resuscitations.⁸⁷ They differentiate their concerns 1) from source criticism, in which comparison helps determine literary relationships among John and the Synoptics, 2) from historical Jesus study, in which comparison helps delineate earlier forms of tradition, and 3) from narrative criticism, which eschews comparison and focuses solely on what John wrote. As they put it,

We are certainly interested in the final form of the Fourth Gospel.... Nevertheless, because our methodology involves the assessment of how John develops and maintains an identity for the members of his version of the Christ-movement, in large part through the exploration of the distinctive manner in which he has contested shared memories concerning Jesus and his first followers, it is essential that we look to other evidence for the evolving collective memory of the movement close to him in time.⁸⁸

They find the other evidence for this evolving collective memory in the Synoptic Gospels, especially their stories of resuscitations. Therefore, in analyzing John's distinctive shaping of the collective memory of his audience, Esler and Piper attend to the similarities and the differences between Johannine and Synoptic material.⁸⁹

⁸⁷ Philip F. Esler and Ronald Piper, *Lazarus, Mary, and Martha: Social-Scientific Approaches to the Gospel of John* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2006).

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 46.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 46-74.

This current book's comparative approach mirrors Esler and Piper's comparative analysis of John and the Synoptic tradition. Like the stories of Mary, Martha, and Lazarus, the stories in the miracle overlaps shape Christian collective memory by telling events in the life of Jesus. The variants in Mark and Q represent different ways of contesting collective memory. Comparing these variants allows the scholar to see the distinctive agendas of each text in this contest.

However, this book's method differs from that of Esler and Piper in two significant ways. Esler and Piper pay special attention to how John shapes Christian identity by casting Mary, Martha, and Lazarus as prototypes for Jesus' followers; they pay relatively little attention to how John characterizes Jesus. The miracle overlaps of Mark and Q do not develop the characters of Jesus' followers as extensively; thus this study will not share with Esler and Piper the focus on the followers. Second, Esler and Piper take the Synoptic tradition as prior to John and investigate how John altered this tradition to suit his own agenda. The Synoptic tradition serves as the baseline against which Esler and Piper measure John's shaping of Christian collective memory. This study of Mark and Q, on the other hand, will not presuppose or address questions of whether and how the versions of the overlap stories depend on each other. The question under investigation is not how Mark altered the Q version or vice versa, but rather, what differing strategies for shaping Christian memory of Jesus' miracles these versions represent.

Objection 4: There is No New Testament Christology

It might seem ridiculous to question whether Mark and Q have Christologies. New Testament Christology is a major area of contemporary New Testament Scholarship, as the subtitles of several monographs, including this one, reveal.⁹⁰ Mark and Q certainly talk about Jesus in ways that imply the importance of his identity and his work, so they must each propound some Christology, i.e., a theological articulation of the significance of Jesus' identity and his work within the larger contexts of Christian beliefs. This section argues that the way biblical scholars routinely discuss New Testament Christology is problematic in that it supposes theological reflection and articulation as logically prior to the production of texts. This presupposition manifests a larger assumption in the study of religion that beliefs are primary and that expressions of religion, such as texts, flow from these beliefs. The study of ritual has begun to question the assumption that religious actions flow from beliefs, and this section will use an analogous argument to suggest that it is more satisfying to see beliefs and texts as mutually implicating rather than seeing one as necessarily the result of the other. Thus, this study will not attempt to discover the Christology operative behind Mark and Q, but it will argue that Mark and Q do give evidence of what early Jesus followers thought and felt about Jesus.

⁹⁰ E.g., Marinus De Jonge, *God's Final Envoy: Early Christology and Jesus' Own View of His Mission* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998); Richard B. Hays, *Reading Backwards: Figural Christology and the Fourfold Gospel Witness* (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2014); Elizabeth Struthers Malbon, *Mark's Jesus: Characterization as Narrative Christology* (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2009); Michael Tait, *Jesus the Divine Bridegroom in Mark 2:18-22: Mark's Christology Upgraded* (Manchester: University of Manchester Press, 2008); Richard Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel: God Crucified and Other Studies on the New Testament's Christology of Divine Identity* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009); Broadhead, *Teaching With Authority*.

Talking about New Testament Christology involves some anachronistic thinking about the New Testament. One of Richard Buckram's most forceful statements of his perspective reveals the problems:

The earliest Christology was already the highest Christology. I call it a Christology of divine identity, proposing this as a way beyond the standard distinction between 'functional' and 'ontic' Christology, a distinction which does not correspond to early Jewish thinking about God and has, therefore, seriously distorted our understanding of New Testament Christology.... This Christology of divine identity is not a mere stage on the way to the patristic development of ontological Christology in the context of a Trinitarian theology. It is already a fully divine Christology, maintaining that Jesus Christ is intrinsic to the unique and eternal identity of God. The Fathers did not develop it so much as transpose it into a conceptual framework more concerned with the Greek philosophical categories of essence and nature.⁹¹

Setting aside for a moment the substantive contents of Bauckham's claim, I attend to its presuppositions: there is such a thing as Christology that existed among the earliest Jesus followers and specifically among the authors of the New Testament. Bauckham presumes that the earliest followers of Jesus engaged in ways of thinking that can accurately be described as Christology. He presumes that the theological reflection and disputation of the fourth century has an analogue in the first century such that the earliest followers of Jesus have something (a Christology) that is comparable to the set of statements about Jesus' identity that the later church fathers developed.

Bauckham is not alone in asserting that early Jesus-followers had a Christology (or Christologies). Those investigating early Christologies find evidence for them in the New Testament texts. The relationship between Christology and the New Testament texts is conceptualized in remarkably consistent ways, even if scholars disagree on the nature of the

⁹¹ Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel*, x.

Christologies for which the texts provide evidence. A handful of examples from recent treatments demonstrate this conception (all emphases added):

The main thesis of the present chapter offers an explanation for both the great age of this Christology and its prevalence *in our sources*.⁹²

New Testament Christology is the Christology *embedded in the text of the New Testament*.⁹³

Christology...at the same time *formed the core* of the new faith.⁹⁴

Christology, which may generally be defined as theological interpretation of the person and work of Jesus of Nazareth, was the focus of early Christian proclamation and is *at the heart of the New Testament witness*.⁹⁵

To *discover Mark's Christology*, therefore, we can only consider the Gospel as it stands today.⁹⁶

The New Testament texts *reveal the late first-century Christological developments* that underlie, accompany, or express this evolution.⁹⁷

It has been a commonplace of Gospel studies in modernity to set John apart as a late text that *reflects* a more advanced stage of doctrinal development and a 'higher' Christology.⁹⁸

⁹² Allison, *Constructing*, 303.

⁹³ Frank J. Matera, *New Testament Christology* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1999), 2.

⁹⁴ "Die Christologie...bildete dabei das herstück des neuen Glaubens" (Hengel, *Studien*, Vorwort, vii).

⁹⁵ Richard N. Longenecker, Introduction to *Contours of Christology in the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005), xii.

⁹⁶ Morna D. Hooker, "'Who Can This Be?' The Christology of Mark's Gospel," in Longenecker, *Contours*, 80.

⁹⁷ Paula Fredriksen, *From Jesus to Christ: The Origins of the New Testament Images of Jesus*, 2nd ed. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 134.

⁹⁸ Hays, *Reading*, xii.

Our detailed examination...revealed...a context where eschatology and Christology are *just below the surface*.⁹⁹

...Christology *presupposed in formulas* used by Paul.¹⁰⁰

When scholars talk about New Testament Christology, they tend to talk about it as something that exists within the texts themselves, embedded there at the heart or core of the message, ready to be discovered just below the surface. The Christology exists in these texts because it existed in the communities that the authors inhabited, so that Christology forms the presuppositions of the texts. The texts reflect and reveal the Christology of the early Christians who created them.

The scholars quoted might rightly object that I am taking their metaphorical language over-literally. Nevertheless, the metaphors with which we – all of us, from the scholar at the lectern to the preacher in the pulpit to the person in the pew – speak about religion constrain the way we think about religion and determine the assumptions we bring to the study of religion.¹⁰¹ The metaphors with which we talk about New Testament Christology incline us to treat a system of beliefs as the fundamental substance of early Christianity, with the texts that early Christians produced being products of these beliefs.

This idea that religious text flows from religious belief finds a parallel in the assumptions that have historically undergirded the study of ritual. As Catherine Bell has noted and criticized, the study of ritual has often operated on the tacit assumption of the dichotomy between thought and action, with thought occupying the position of primacy. Rituals were

⁹⁹ Tait, *Jesus*, 328.

¹⁰⁰ de Jonge, *Envoy*, 132.

¹⁰¹ Robert Ford Company, “On the Very Idea of Religions (In the Modern West and in Early Medieval China),” *HR* 52.2 (2012): 287-319.

seen as expressing underlying beliefs, and the investigators who studied rituals treated them as if they were texts to be interpreted to understand the beliefs they expressed.¹⁰² However, a number of ritual theorists, Bell included, have found the idea that rituals express meaning in this way to be untenable.¹⁰³ We can no longer presume to study a ritual as a manifestation of a deeper set of beliefs; rituals do not function like texts.

Maybe texts themselves do not function like texts, at least the ways religious texts are frequently conceived, that is, as secondary expressions of beliefs, which are the primary stuff of religion. Rather than seeing texts as the record of a system of thought, we can instead view texts as the record of an activity—storytelling. Indeed, it is likely that the biblical texts were originally read aloud in communities, and this performative aspect of the texts has become a focus of scholarly attention.¹⁰⁴ Performances, such as storytelling or rituals, can develop as a means of communicating and inculcating a pre-existent set of beliefs, but they do not necessarily do so. Just as easily can these actions come first and then lead to the development of beliefs, as in the principle of *lex orandi lex credendi*.

Along these lines, Larry Hurtado has argued:

¹⁰² Catherine Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 19-54.

¹⁰³ Ann Baranowski, “A Psychological Comparison of Ritual and Musical Meaning,” *MTSR* 10.1 (1998): 3-29; Jenny Blain and Robert J. Wallis, “Ritual Reflections, Practitioners Meanings: Disputing the Terminology of Neo-Shamanic ‘Performance,’” *JRitSt* 20.1 (2006): 21-36; Daniel B. Lee, “Ritual and Social Meaning and Meaninglessness of Religion,” *Soziale Welt* 56.1 (2005): 5-16; Hans H. Penner, “Language, Ritual and Meaning,” *Numen* 32.1 (1985): 1-16; Frits Staal, “The Meaninglessness of Ritual,” *Numen* 26.1 (1979): 2-22.

¹⁰⁴ David Rhoads, “Performance Criticism: An Emerging Methodology in Second Testament Studies—Part 1,” *BTB* 36.3 (2006): 118.

...behind the debates of councils and the framing of creeds, there were the binitarian devotional practices of generations of Christians who revered the exalted Christ along with God...The Christological rhetoric of the New Testament and of the later Christological controversies and creeds reflects the attempt to explain and defend intellectually a development that began in human terms in profound religious experiences and in corporate worship.¹⁰⁵

Hurtado here identifies religious experience and worship as the raw materials out of which Christology was developed, and he views the New Testament texts as part of this reflective activity. I suggest that we adjust Hurtado's schema by viewing worship, texts, and Christological reflection as potentially mutually implicating and stop viewing texts necessarily as secondary results of theological reflection.

Certainly people can tell a story that reflects or illustrates a prior theological stance. *The Pilgrim's Progress*, for instance, clearly illustrates a Puritan view about the nature of Christian life, a view that is the product of theological reflection. If Bunyan were here, it seems pretty reasonable that he could give a coherent and expansive answer about how a Christian should live, and we can reasonably infer what this answer would look like from reading *The Pilgrim's Progress*. However, religious stories need not reflect pre-existent theological stances. We should not assume that a New Testament writer would have been able to answer the question, "Was Jesus God, and, if so, in what sense?" much less that we can infer how he would answer this question from the text he produced

Even if the authors of these texts did not have answers to these questions, the texts they produced can still point to such answers. If one asked tellers of the Kentucky Fried Rat story whether national corporations are nefarious intruders into local communities or whether women should not work outside the home, it is possible that some would say yes, but it is also

¹⁰⁵ Larry W. Hurtado, *One God, One Lord: Early Christian Devotion and Ancient Jewish Monotheism* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1998), 128.

likely that many tellers would not have given these issues much explicit thought. Some might even answer these questions in the negative. Although the story presents an example of the deleterious effects of the changing culture of twentieth century America, tellers of the story may not have articulated for themselves a stance on the merits and demerits of this cultural change. Indeed, some anxiety about these changes could exist even among people who would overall rate these changes positively. Telling the story could be a way for people to give voice to their own anxieties, or to entertain people who shared these anxieties, or to convince people that they should share these anxieties. However, it would be unwarranted to assume that all who told the story of the Kentucky Fried Rat opposed the cultural shifts of the twentieth century.

Similarly, New Testament authors could have made statements that point toward answers to the question whether Jesus is God without the authors themselves necessarily having formulated explicit answers. For instance, early followers of Jesus might have found the confession, “Jesus is Lord,” psychologically appealing in expressing their devotion to Jesus. They might have desired that other members of the group express their devotion in a similar way and encouraged them to do so in their speech and writing. It is likely that part of the psychological appeal of this confession lay in the strong associations of “Lord” with “God of Israel,” even if those who made the confession did not make this link explicit for themselves. The use of this confession in New Testament texts can provide evidence for the psychological appeal among some of Jesus’ early followers of speaking about him in ways that assimilated him to the God of Israel, an appeal that could have been operative even in the absence of a conscious attempt to identify Jesus and God. This tendency to blur the distinction between Jesus and God is relevant to people using the New Testament as a document on which

to reflect theologically about the identity and work of Jesus, but it does not necessarily provide evidence that the earliest followers of Jesus were engaging in this sort of explicit reflection themselves.

Looking at Mark and the Double Tradition without assuming that there existed a well-articulated Christology to which the texts give voice frees us from the task of trying to discover a systematic theological point of view in their distinct depictions of Jesus.¹⁰⁶ The Christology one could develop based on the texts' depictions of Jesus would be inchoate, perhaps even incoherent or contradictory, but that does not mean that the way the authors depict Jesus is random. We would expect the authors of the texts to talk about Jesus in ways that they thought their audiences would have found appealing or in ways that would convince their audiences to think about Jesus the way the authors wanted. In other words, the authors would depict Jesus in ways that they judged maximally rhetorically effective to reinforce the views of audiences with which they agreed while changing the views of audiences with which they disagreed.¹⁰⁷ Thus, examining depictions of Jesus reveals patterns of what early followers of Jesus found appealing or convincing even if they do not show that these early followers had definite, articulable ideas about precisely how Jesus was related to God.

¹⁰⁶ Elizabeth Malbon, *Mark's Jesus*, has examined the Gospel of Mark freed from the assumption of a logically prior and uniform Christology.

¹⁰⁷ For an analysis of miracles as a rhetorical strategy, see Duane F. Watson, ed., *Miracle Discourse in the New Testament* (Atlanta: SBL, 2012).

Conclusion

The study of folklore provides an example of how one can profitably compare variant versions of a story to see how the disseminators of those variants responded to their environment, even if their responses were not the result of conscious reflection. Such analysis recognizes four interconnected objects of study for the folklorist: 1) the narrative content of the story itself; 2) the internal state of the narrator, including memory, mood, and personality; 3) the immediate setting in which the story is told, including audience expectations; and 4) the larger social and cultural structures in which the narrator and audience find themselves. One way to visualize the relationship among these four elements is that the societal and cultural structures partially condition both the internal state of the narrator and the immediate setting in which the narration takes place; the internal state of the narrator and the immediate setting, in turn, condition whether and how the story is told.¹⁰⁸ This model conceptualizes how folktales indirectly reflect the psychological state of the tellers, the immediate setting of their telling, and the larger social structures active in the time and place the story is told. The analysis of the Kentucky Fried Rat story has focused on how the narrative content of the story reflects the social forces of change in the twentieth century and the psychological results of these changes, chiefly anxiety, which condition the telling of the story. The studies of the Kentucky Fried Rat story have focused less on the immediate setting of the telling of this story, but one could certainly investigate in what settings and to what audiences this story is told and how this context of telling is conditioned by larger social forces at the same time as it conditions how the story is told. This model allows one to use folktales to study the setting in which they arise

¹⁰⁸ Gary Alan Fine, *Manufacturing Tales: Sex and Money in Contemporary Legends* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1992), 5-6.

by assuming that the content of a folktale is conditioned by who does the telling, to whom, and in what setting.

Todd Klutz has used a similar model to study Gospel miracle stories (specifically exorcisms in Luke-Acts), although he bases his model primarily on linguistic, rather than folkloristic, theory. Klutz names his method “sociostylistics.”¹⁰⁹ Drawing on the work of linguist Nils Enkvist, Klutz defines style as situationally conditioned linguistic choice. Any use of language involves choices: in writing this sentence, I choose the words that I am using to express my ideas, and I could have done so in countless other ways. I combine these words to form sentences, and then combine these sentences to form larger units of my argument, such as paragraphs, chapters, and even the book as a whole. Every word, sentence, paragraph, and larger unit represent choices that I have made, choices about what ideas to express and how to express them. The situation in which the writer writes influences these choices. For instance, I chose to open this book with a quotation from Dostoyevsky as a way to grab the reader’s interest; this need to attract interest in the opening of a book affected the choice I made there. Stylistics is the method of analyzing a text with attention to the situationally conditioned choices of words, phrases, sentences, and stories that the text represents. A stylistic analysis of this book might attempt to infer the reasons why I chose the excerpt from *The Brothers Karamazov* in the opening.

Klutz appends the prefix “socio-“ to “stylistics” to emphasize that the situation conditioning the choices found in a text includes extratextual factors in the text’s environment of production and reception.¹¹⁰ In other words, the context of the surrounding culture

¹⁰⁹ Klutz, *Exorcism Stories*.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 3-4.

influences the creation of a text. A number of cultural factors influenced my choice in how I opened this book: *The Brothers Karamazov*'s status within my society's canon of great literature, the cultural expectation that a book's opening should entice the reader, and the widespread inability of English speakers to read Russian (hence the quoting Dostoyevsky in translation), to name a few. Because the context of culture affects the production of a text, an historian can examine the style of a text to infer characteristics of the culture in which the author wrote.¹¹¹

Klutz divides this social context that influences a text's production into two realms: the context of culture, which describes the setting of the text on a macro level of cultural and social expectations, and the implied situation, which describes the setting on the micro level of the specific situation in which the author produced and audience consumed the text. The context of culture includes the entire system of knowledge, beliefs, and meanings that determine the range of options available to an author in composing a text. The context of culture for this book would include the current state of scholarship in biblical studies, the beliefs about causation and inference that our culture recognizes, and the current meaning of English words and syntax. A future historian examining this book would need to have some understanding of these factors in order to understand the choices I have made in composing the text, but studying this book could allow the historian to enlarge her knowledge of the cultural system in which I have written; for instance, a future historian might be able to infer from the opening of this book that *The Brothers Karamazov* is a well-known and respected work of literature in our society if she did not already know that. This cultural system provides the patterns of linguistic arrangement, i.e., ways of arranging words into larger units, with which the author must work

¹¹¹ Ibid., 27.

to achieve communicative goals. These patterns of arrangement correspond to different genres. The culture in which I write has provided the scholarly monograph as one pattern of linguistic arrangement, and the expectations of this genre condition how I have chosen to order my writing. For the future historian to understand how the excerpt from *The Brothers Karamazov* functions in this book, she would likely need to compare the opening of my book with the openings of several other academic monographs to understand our culture's expectations for this genre, expectations that influence the choices I have made. For Klutz, comparing other texts from the ancient Mediterranean world about exorcisms provides insight into the choices Luke made in composing his exorcism stories.¹¹² Comparing variants of stories, as this book proposes to do, provides a more focused exploration of such choices; rather than illustrating different ways of telling the same *type of story*, the comparison of variants illustrates different ways of telling the *same story*. Attention to how different tellers relate the same story highlights the particular choices each teller makes.

In assuming that broad cultural forces and expectations influence the shape of a text, Klutz's model agrees with the folkloristic model described above. The folklorist, however, has an advantage over the historian in the ability to do field work to investigate the immediate setting of a story's telling. The folklorist can directly observe the telling of a tale to investigate how the immediate setting conditions the telling. Klutz also assumes that the immediate setting of a text's production and reception conditions the choices the author makes in composing the text, but he recognizes that for the historian the text itself is often the only evidence we have of this immediate setting. Thus, Klutz refers to the micro level of a text's social context as the text's "implied situation," which he defines as "the type of social context

¹¹² Ibid., 27.

in which the combined emphases of the stories would have been optimally relevant.”¹¹³ For Klutz, as for me, the immediate context of interest is the groups of early Jesus followers who told stories about his miracles. We can use the texts of miracle stories to make reasonable conjectures about early Jesus followers by trying to determine what conditions would make them most likely to tell the miracle stories in the ways that they did.

¹¹³ Ibid., 28.

CHAPTER II

THE PURPOSES OF NARRATING MIRACLE STORIES

The Inquisitor suggests that the Church's purpose in telling miracle stories is to arrogate to itself the coercive power that Jesus refused to accept in the Temptation. This chapter will examine the purposes that narrating miracle stories might have served for the compilers of Mark and Q. It will look at what positive function miracles could serve as the authors constructed their pictures of Jesus, but it will also examine how miracle stories could function negatively to discredit the doers of such deeds. The analysis of this negative function will be of use in studying two of the miracle overlaps, the Beelzebul Controversy and Q's version of the Temptation, that link miracles with service to Satan.

Investigating these positive and negative functions of miracle stories involves exploring the context of Mark and Q: religious communities in the ancient Mediterranean world striving to create identities for themselves. This investigation will somewhat artificially divide the context into two separate aspects for analysis. The first aspect is that of a religious community creating its own identity, and I will use some insights from both social psychology and the study of religion to investigate how telling miracle stories can develop positive group identity as well as negative evaluations of other groups. The second aspect of Mark and Q's context of composition is their location in the Roman Empire near the turn of the era. I will investigate this aspect using insights from the study of other literature from the Roman Empire that shows how people at this time used miracles to extol the excellence of some while labeling other people who did such deeds as deviant.

Miracles and Identity Formation

It is uncontroversial that the Roman Empire around the turn of the era was the context in which the composers of Mark and the Double Tradition worked; it is not so immediately obvious that their context of composition was nascent religious communities constructing an identity for themselves. The material of Mark and Q eventually came to be included in the Christian canon and in that sense came to define Christian identity, but this eventual fate does not mean that the authors of Mark and the Double Tradition wrote their texts in situations where the need for communal identity formation influenced their composition. We do not know that the authors of Mark and Q were writing for specific communities, and if they were, we do not know what these communities were like. Whatever the setting in which the authors of Mark and the Double Tradition wrote, we can reasonably assume that these texts would have been read, copied, and distributed among groups of early Jesus followers—it is hard to imagine another setting in which they would have been preserved, for it seems unlikely anyone else would have been interested enough in the words and deeds of a crucified Jew to preserve their record.

Thus, we have a reasonable assumption about the context of these works' preservation, even if we cannot know that they were produced in this context. This difference would be decisive if our interest were only the process of composition of a work, if our sole purpose were to investigate the creative process that occurred when the author created the text. However, our goal is not only to see what the texts of Mark and the Double Tradition tell us about the specific authors but also to see what they can tell us about early Jesus followers more broadly. Any time these early Jesus followers read, recited, copied, or distributed these texts,

they were making a choice to do so with these texts rather than others. Although we typically view texts as the record of the choices and efforts of one or a few people who first combined those specific words in that order, i.e., the author(s), texts are also the record of countless other choices and exertions that allowed their continued existence. The variants of the miracle overlaps exist for us to examine because early Jesus followers chose to preserve the texts in which they are embedded.

The motivations for these early Jesus followers to produce and preserve these texts could have been myriad, but that these texts centered on the figure who defined their group suggests that at least some of the motivation sprung from their desire to generate a positive identity for the group. Insights from social psychology can therefore illuminate the context of these stories' early promulgation.

Social-identity theory within the field of social psychology emerged with Henri Tajfel's experiments. Tajfel demonstrated that merely assigning individuals to a group engendered positive feelings toward fellow members of the group. In the experiment, subjects were randomly assigned to groups that the experimenters falsely told the subjects were based on similar quantitative acuity or aesthetic judgment. When the subjects were allowed to choose rewards for other subjects, they consistently gave larger rewards to the subjects in their own group at the expense of subjects in other groups. Merely informing a subject that he belonged to a group predisposed that subject to reward members of his own group preferentially.¹¹⁴ This work suggested that human psychology predisposes us to develop groups in which members share positive feelings toward fellow members (termed the in-group) vis-à-vis members of

¹¹⁴ Henri Tajfel, "Experiments in Intergroup Discrimination," *Scientific American* 223.2 (1970): 96-102.

other groups (termed out-groups). This model explains various intragroup and intergroup interactions that demonstrate bias, prejudice, and stereotyping.¹¹⁵

Social-identity theory implies that belonging to a group creates a psychological drive both to develop an identity for the in-group that distinguishes it from out-groups and to make this distinguishing identity as positive as possible. The concept of collective or social memory explains one means by which groups develop such identities. Maurice Halbwachs developed the idea that groups have something analogous to individual memories.¹¹⁶ While individuals store important past events in their brains the recollection of which forms the individual's identity, groups have practices, such as storytelling, monument construction, and rituals, that allow current members to connect with the past and help define the group's identity.¹¹⁷ This analogy does not imply that the group is some organic unity that in and of itself remembers. Only individuals remember, and the social memory results from the group members' individual memories and how they communicate these memories to each other and to new members.

Because social memory results from individual acts of remembering, certain homologies exist between individual and corporate acts of remembering. The life of an individual or group generates experiences too numerous to remember in their totality—there is a limit to the neural capacity of an individual just as there is a limit to the number of stories, rituals, or monuments a society can construct and transmit. Thus, remembering and forgetting

¹¹⁵ Marilynn B. Brewer, "The Social Psychology of Intergroup Relations: Social Categorization, Ingroup Bias, and Outgroup Prejudice," in *Social Psychology: Handbook of Basic Principles*, 2nd ed., eds. Arie W. Kruglanski and Tory E Higgins (New York: Guilford Press, 2007), 697-715.

¹¹⁶ Maurice Halbwachs, *The Collective Memory*, trans. Francis J. Ditter, Jr. and Vida Yazdi Ditter (New York: Harper & Row, 1980).

¹¹⁷ In addition to Halbwachs, see Paul Connerton, *How Societies Remember* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989).

are always mutually implicating—most things must be forgotten, and only with effort can certain aspects be preserved in memory.¹¹⁸ On the individual level, this process of remembering and forgetting involves the often subconscious sifting of everyday experience into items to be stored in the long-term memory and thus preserved.¹¹⁹ Similarly, on the group level, this process involves picking from the ephemera of a group’s existence those elements to be commemorated and transmitted widely among the group and to future group members.¹²⁰ Within the group there may exist different sub-groups who have selected what to remember differently.¹²¹ For both the individual and the group remembering is always a process of selection.¹²²

This selection involves events of the past, but it always occurs in the present. Thus, remembering is not a recapitulation of the past, but it is rather an interaction of the present and past.¹²³ What items are remembered and in what way depend both on the nature of the events

¹¹⁸ Aleida Assmann, “Canon and Archive,” in *Cultural Memory Studies: An International and Interdisciplinary Handbook*, ed. Astrid Eril, Ansgar Nünning, and Sara B. Young (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2008), 97-108.

¹¹⁹ Thomas J. Anastasio *et al.*, *Individual and Collective Memory Consolidation: Analogous Processes on Different Levels* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2012).

¹²⁰ Jan Assmann, “Collective Memory and Cultural Identity,” trans. John Czaplichka, *New German Critique* 65 (1995): 126-28; Jan Assmann, “Communicative and Cultural Memory,” in Eril, Nünning, and Young, *Cultural Memory Studies*, 109-118.

¹²¹ Bernd Steinbock, *Social Memory in Athenian Public Discourse: Uses and Meanings of the Past* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2012), 12-13; Barbara A. Misztal, *Theories of Social Remembering* (Philadelphia: Open University Press, 2003), 120.

¹²² Ilja Srubar, “Lifeworld and Trauma: Selectivity of Social Memories,” in *Theorizing Social Memory: Concepts and Contexts*, ed. Gerd Sebald and Jutin Wagle (London: Routledge, 2016), 17-31.

¹²³ Steinbock, *Social Memory*, 11.

that occurred in the past and on the exigencies of the present moment of remembering.¹²⁴

Some past events are so forceful or traumatic as to impress themselves into individual or social memory even when remembering them is not advantageous to the present. At other times, the needs of the present determine, either consciously or subconsciously, what is remembered even if that memory diverges radically from the events as they occurred. Away from these two extremes lies what probably occurs in most processes of remembering—the qualities of both the past event and of the present moment determine the memory.¹²⁵

In the case of miracles, the very nature of the events themselves incline them to memorability. The striking violation of expectations evident in these acts of power embed them in the memories of those who witness them and make them captivating subjects for retelling.¹²⁶ However, only certain aspects of an event can be remembered and retold, so even in remembering there is also forgetting. In addition to deletion, there is addition: motivations are supplied, gaps are filled, explanations are added.¹²⁷ It is the present state of the individual rememberer that determines how this editing process of the memory unfolds. Even though the miracles might have imprinted themselves on individual and social memories by their striking nature, the needs of the individual or society at the time of remembering influences the

¹²⁴ Assmann, “Collective Memory,” 130; Allison, *Constructing Jesus*, 5-6.

¹²⁵ Mary B. Spaulding, *Commemorative Identities: Jewish Social Memory and the Johannine Feast of Booths* (London: T&T Clark, 2009), 10-14. Misztal, *Theories*, 50-74.

¹²⁶ István Czachesz, “Explaining Magic; Earliest Christianity as a Test Case,” in *Past Minds: Studies in Cognitive Historiography*, ed. Luther H. Hartin and Jesper Sørensen (London: Equinox, 2011), 151-55.

¹²⁷ Allison, *Constructing Jesus*, 2-3.

memory. Telling a story, choosing what words to use and what events to include, provides a way to shape the memory of an event to meet present needs.¹²⁸

Such remembering satisfies the need to create identity. The creation of long-term memories forms a coherent life-story and stable identity for the individual. Similarly, the social memory of a group creates an identity for the group that is stable over time.¹²⁹ The social memory encodes and transmits the values and ethos of the group, and the values and ethos of a group influence what items individuals and the group select to build their individual and social memories.¹³⁰ This social memory is one means by which the group identifies itself and marks itself as distinct from other groups.¹³¹ Social-identity theory suggests that a group will develop its collective memory in ways that emphasize the group's positive and distinct identity. Telling stories of a group's founder or early members performing miracles is one way to shape the group's collective memory.¹³² Social-identity theory further suggests that in analyzing these stories we should attend to those elements of the story that would help early Jesus followers form a positive and distinctive identity for themselves since those elements

¹²⁸ Gerald Echterhoff, "Language and Memory: Social and Cognitive Processes," in Eril, Nünning, and Young, *Cultural Memory Studies*, 263-74.

¹²⁹ Nina Leonhard, "Memory as a Means of Social Integration," in Sebald and Wagle, *Theorizing Social Memory*, 109-21; Spaulding, *Commemorative Identities*, 8-10; Misztal, *Theories*, 2003.

¹³⁰ Gabriele Rosenthal, "The Social Construction of Individual and Collective Memory," in Sebald and Wagle, *Theorizing Social Memory*, 32-55; James Fentress and Chris Wickham, *Social Memory* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992), 7; Steinbock, *Social Memory*, 14.

¹³¹ Assmann, "Collective Memory," 128.

¹³² For an application of these social scientific approaches to a Gospel miracle (the raising of Lazarus in John 11) see Esler and Piper, *Lazarus*, 23-44, 104-130.

could account for why early Jesus followers found the telling, retelling, and preservation of these stories worthwhile.

Social-identity theory provides one lens through which to view the function of miracles stories in generating positive evaluations of the in-group. However, the negative function of miracles in stigmatizing out-groups does not flow automatically from this tendency to foster positive in-group evaluation. Psychological experiments as well as fieldwork have borne out that in-group positivity and out-group negativity are separate and sometimes not correlated with each other.¹³³ The tendency toward in-group positivity recognized by social-identity theory does not imply a correlative tendency toward out-group negativity. In-group identification is not sufficient to explain disdain for or conflict with out-groups.¹³⁴

One team of researchers has developed a theory that uses the perception of threat as a mediator of out-group hostility; they separate the perception of threat into realistic threats, which are perceived threats to the in-group's material well being, and symbolic threats, which are perceived threats to the in-group's worldview occasioned by differences in the out-group's worldview.¹³⁵ These investigators demonstrated that both realistic and symbolic threats

¹³³ Marilynn B. Brewer, "Ingroup Bias in the Minimal Intergroup Situation: A Cognitive-Motivational Analysis," *Psychological Bulletin* 86.2 (1979): 307-24; J.A. Cameron, J.M. Alvez, D.N. Ruble, and A.J. Fullgani, "Children's Lay Theories about Ingroups and Outgroups: Reconceptualizing Research on Prejudice," *Personality and Social Psychology Review* 5.2 (2001): 118-28; Naomi Struch and Shalom H. Schwartz, "Intergroup Aggression: Its Predictors and Distinctness from In-group Bias," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 56 (1989): 364-73.

¹³⁴ Marilynn B. Brewer, "The Social Psychology of Intergroup Relations: Social Categorization, Ingroup Bias, and Outgroup Prejudice," in *Social Psychology: Handbook of Basic Principles*, 2nd Edition, eds. Arie W. Kruglanski and Tory E. Higgins (New York: Guilford Press, 2007), 702.

¹³⁵ W.G. Stephan and C.W. Stephan, "An Integrated Threat Theory of Prejudice," in *Reducing Prejudice and Discrimination*, ed. S. Oskamp (Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum, 2000), 23-45.

independently predicted negative feelings toward out-groups.¹³⁶ That both realistic and symbolic threats predict out-group negativity implies that polemic directed at an out-group is not necessarily the result of the realistic threat posed by the out-group. Often biblical scholars assume that New Testament polemic arises in situations of realistic threat, especially in studies of the Gospel of John, where the anti-Jewish polemic has been taken as reflecting the viewpoint of a church ejected from and persecuted by the synagogue.¹³⁷ Such realistic threat can explain polemic against an out-group, but such realistic threat is not a prerequisite for out-group hostility. Symbolic threat provides an alternative motivation for polemic.¹³⁸ Although realistic and symbolic threat may coincide, it is possible that a group perceives symbolic threat from an out-group that poses little realistic threat.

One way out-groups can pose such symbolic threats is by effacing the boundaries that the in-group sets for itself.¹³⁹ In-group positivity relies to some extent on the distinctiveness of the in-group from other groups; when the in-group shares similar experiences and beliefs with out-groups, the clarity of intergroup boundaries blurs, which threatens the integrity of the in-group.¹⁴⁰ An out-group can pose a serious symbolic threat to the in-group by having a worldview that is similar enough to cause the in-group to question the validity of its own distinct

¹³⁶ W.G. Stephan *et al.*, “The Role of Threats in the Racial Attitudes of Blacks and Whites,” *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* 28 (2002): 1242-54.

¹³⁷ J. Louis Martyn, *History and Theology in the Fourth Gospel* (New York: Harper & Row, 1968).

¹³⁸ For refutations of Martyn’s hypothesis, see Adele Reinhartz, “Judaism in the Gospel of John,” *Interpretation* 63.4 (2009): 387-91; Raimo Hakola, *Identity Matters: John, the Jews and Jewishness* (Leiden: Brill, 2005).

¹³⁹ J. Jetten, R. Spears, and T. Postmes, “Intergroup Distinctiveness and Differentiation: A Meta-Analytic Integration,” *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 86.6 (2004): 862-79.

¹⁴⁰ Brewer “Social Psychology,” 703.

identity. The in-group would then develop out-group negativity as a protective mechanism to defend these threatened ideological boundaries. Here we would expect to encounter what Freud calls the narcissism of minor differences, as the in-group seizes on small differences to distinguish itself from the otherwise similar out-group.¹⁴¹

The tendency to generate identity through magnifying such small differences has been a major focus of Jonathan Z. Smith's comparative work. He notes, "rather than the remote 'other' being perceived as problematic and/or dangerous, it is the proximate 'other,' the near neighbor, who is most troublesome.... The deepest intellectual issues are not based upon perceptions of alterity, but rather, of similarity, at times, even, of identity."¹⁴² Major differences do not engage much intellectual energy, while minor differences become the subject of a great deal of thought. Smith provides the example of the Hua people of Papua New Guinea.¹⁴³ The Hua live in eleven villages that are divided into several overlapping groupings in a complex topography of opposition and affinity. Within the villages themselves, kinship groups have similarly complex and overlapping taxonomies. At the same time, intermarriage with other peoples is so common that almost all of the Hua are multilingual. Smith notes, "'Real' difference, here represented by language, is negotiated with ease. Specific, different languages are learned when it is socially valuable to do so.... Differences that are 'there' are simply overcome when it is necessary to do so; differences that are

¹⁴¹ Sigmund Freud, *Group Psychology and the Analysis of Ego*, trans. James Strachey (New York: W.W. Norton, 1959), 42-43 and *Civilization and Its Discontents*, trans. James Strachey (New York: W.W. Norton, 1961), 61.

¹⁴² Jonathan Z. Smith, "Differential Equations: On Constructing the Other," in Idem, *Relating Religion: Essays in the Study of Religion* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), 245.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, 242-45.

constructed [i.e., different village or kinship groups] are thought about and thought away.”¹⁴⁴

Minor differences among otherwise similar people (such as differences in village) require a complex intellectual and cultural system of differentiation while major differences (such as mutually unintelligible languages) become an issue only when one needs to surmount them for some other goal.

As a comparativist of religion, which itself is a constructed category, Smith says, “the issue of problematic similarity or identity seems to be particularly prevalent in religious discourse and imagination.”¹⁴⁵ Smith notes that in religious thought remoteness correlates with indifference. Christian thinking about otherness directs itself toward other Christians and near-Christian groups such as Jews and Muslims. Rarely has Christian thought about otherness concerned itself with Daoists, except when missionizing brings Christians and Daoists into proximity. The near-other poses a much greater problem for self-identification than the far-other—the difference with the far-other is obvious, while the near-other challenges the conception of one’s identity as distinctive.¹⁴⁶

One effective way that communities create distinctive and positive identities for themselves is by telling stories of miracle workers who operate within their group. The tellers can shape the story to show how the power made evident in the miracle reflects the group’s power to access the supernatural. They also allow the community to demonstrate how its miracle workers have legitimate power, whereas similar deeds done by outsiders constitute illegitimate and dangerous exercises of power. Miracle stories allow religious communities

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., 245.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid.

¹⁴⁶ Jonathan Z. Smith, “What a Difference a Difference Makes,” in Idem, *Relating Religion*, 276; Smith, “Differential Equations,” 246.

both to articulate their own positive identity and to distinguish themselves from other groups whose proximity and similarity make them symbolically threatening.

We will come to examine how the stories of Jesus' vanquishing of demons could function for such a community; a story of an unsuccessful bid to vanquish a demon that comes from a medieval Chinese Buddhist source illustrates how these insights from social psychology and religious studies bear fruit in analyzing such Gospel accounts. The example comes from a fifth-century collection of pro-Buddhist Chinese miracle tales called the *Mingxiang ji* or *Records of Signs from the Unseen Realm*. At this time Buddhism was a relatively recent entrant in the Chinese religious landscape, and early Chinese Buddhists, including those who composed and preserved the stories collected in the *Mingxiang ji*, lived alongside practitioners of many indigenous Chinese religious traditions, including Daoism. Story 67 from the *Minxiang ji* tells of a certain He Danzhi who did not believe in Buddhist teaching and who fell ill. While ill, he saw a demon with a bull's head and a human body standing over him with a pitchfork. He commissioned a Daoist to save him from this demon; the Daoist performed the ritual actions that Daoism prescribed, such as making petitions and talismans, but the demon continued tormenting Danzhi. Danzhi then received a visit from a Buddhist monk. When Danzhi told him about the demon he saw, the monk recognized it as one of the demons from Buddhist purgatory punishing Danzhi in karmic retribution for prior bad acts. The monk encouraged Danzhi to turn toward Buddhist teaching, because if he did so the demon would vanish, but Danzhi would not listen to the monk and died a little later.¹⁴⁷

This story implicitly contrasts Daoism and Buddhism through the characters of the Daoist and the Buddhist monk. The Daoist, acting as his tradition instructs, fails to save the

¹⁴⁷ Robert Ford Campany, "Religious Repertoires and Contestation: A Case Study Based on Buddhist Miracle Tales," *HR* 52.2 (2012): 115.

man from the demon, but the monk, enlightened by the insights of his tradition, correctly recognizes what could have saved Danzhi if only he would have listened. Such a contrast creates a positive sense of identity for its Buddhist tellers as it implies that the teachings of Buddhism overcome supernatural threats; at the same time it creates a negative identity for the out-group as it shows that Danzhi's reliance on Daoist's practices cost him his life. For Chinese Buddhism, Daoism is a near other, a rival tradition whose existence is symbolically threatening.¹⁴⁸ It makes sense that Buddhist tellers and hearers found a story demonstrating Buddhism's superiority to Daoism appealing. Moreover, the Buddhist tale demonstrates the narcissism of minor differences by framing Danzhi's death as a result of his failure to recognize how his suffering was the result of the specifically Buddhist idea of karma, an idea that distinguished Buddhism from Daoism.¹⁴⁹ If he had understood karma better and taken the actions the monk proscribed to ameliorate his karmic suffering, Danzhi might have survived.

Social-identity theory and the narcissism of minor differences conceptualize the appeal of such a story to a Buddhist audience, and this appeal provides one explanation for early Buddhists' composition and dissemination of this story. However, this story not only reminded Buddhists how superior Buddhism is to Daoism, but it could also persuade Daoists or those potentially drawn to Daoism to turn instead to Buddhism; if Danzhi had done so, he might have survived. The teller of such a tale could have in mind both an audience of committed Buddhists and people he or she might convince to become Buddhists. The Buddhism

¹⁴⁸ For the rivalry and interactions between Buddhism and Daoism in early Medieval China, see Christine Mollier, *Buddhism and Taoism Face to Face: Scripture, Ritual, and Iconographic Exchange in Medieval China* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2009).

¹⁴⁹ Karma, and the recognition of its consequences, recurs as a theme throughout the *Minxiang ji* in stories that show the superiority of Buddhism to indigenous Chinese traditions (Campany, "Religious Repertoires," 112-14).

represented by the stories of the *Minxiang ji* competes with alternative traditions, such as Daoism, for influence and adherence. Such narratives form part of the repertoire of religious actions and beliefs that adherents use to make sense of and navigate their world. As Robert Company has noted, “religious repertoires and the ways people use them can be seen as contestation fields in which diverse groups make claims and try to persuade others to their points of view...each repertoire element can be seen as a response—whether by intention or effect—to alternatives; each is, in part, contrastive.”¹⁵⁰ The amenability of stories to these contests explains their telling and retelling.

These various concepts brought to bear on Danzhi’s story—social identity, collective memory, the narcissism of minor differences, religious repertoires as fields of contestation—provide ways of looking at religious texts that I find useful in examining the miracle overlaps, but they cannot *a priori* be demonstrated to be the best ways of looking at these texts. These concepts belong to the realm of theory, or better *theoria*, literally “beholding.” They are ways of beholding a set of data (miracle stories) in light of generalizations based on observations of other sets of data (psychological studies of group phenomena and the analysis of religious groups by scholars of religion). I cannot justify beforehand that the groups who created and preserved Mark and the Double Tradition can only properly be understood by beholding them in these ways. Rather, the justification of this type of beholding comes from the insight that it provides, a value that can only be proven after the fact. Taking the stories of the *Minziang ji* to represent the efforts of countless men and women who composed and preserved them, scholars can then apply these ways of beholding the record of their activity to provide insight into what

¹⁵⁰ Company, “Religious Repertoires,” 109.

motivated early Chinese Buddhists.¹⁵¹ The extent that beholding the story of Danzhi from these vantage points allows one to articulate how this story illustrates wider phenomena (the formative period of Chinese Buddhism, the priorities of groups we describe as religious, or the dynamics of human groups in general) justifies using these theoretical stances.

This book examines how the miracle stories preserved in their various forms in Mark and Q represent two distinct ways of configuring the relationships among Jesus, his miracles, and the kingdom of God. As discussed above, it takes the existence of the variants of Mark and Q to represent the choices of their authors and early tradents, the majority of whom were early Jesus followers. Part of this book's theoretical stance is to look at these early Jesus followers as constituting a religious group and to analyze the texts of interest as evidence of this group's dynamics by beholding them from the viewpoint that these concepts from religious studies and social psychology provide. From this viewpoint, this book will examine the miracle overlaps to see what purposes the elements shared by Mark and Q could serve for such a group, but it will also look at how the different configurations of Jesus, miracle, and kingdom of God might have functioned in the context of this religious group.

Miracles in the Ancient Mediterranean

Although the previous section focused on how to view early Jesus followers as an instance of the cross-cultural category of religious groups, such religious groups exist in specific times and places, and the cultural milieu in which they exist influence how the dynamics of such groups find expression. In the case of early Jesus followers, this setting is

¹⁵¹ See Campany, "Religious Repertoires," 111-12.

the Mediterranean world of the first century, and they told their stories of miracles as they forged their identity within a society that had many other stories about miracle workers. This brings us to investigate the second aspect of the miracle overlaps' context, their setting in this time and place.

In the early Common Era, authors wrote many stories featuring heroes presented as figures worthy of emulation and allegiance, and they often described these heroes working miracles. Marc van Uytfanghe has recognized in these stories a pattern that he has termed "hagiographical discourse."¹⁵² The stories adhering to this pattern depict human heroes who have some special connection to the divine, and the stories have the pretension of recording actual events in the style of ancient historiography.¹⁵³ Unlike Bieler, Wetter, and Windlisch, who presented the *theios aner* paradigm as a Hellenistic pattern that was well-formed enough to constrain the Gospel writers' presentation of Jesus, van Uytfanghe recognizes hagiographic discourse as a Jewish, Christian, and pagan phenomenon that developed in the first century of the Common Era and continued into late antiquity. Philo's *Life of Moses* represents the first complete development of this discourse, which continued among Christians in the Gospels and various acts of apostles and martyrs as well among pagans, for instance in Philostratus's *Life of Apollonius of Tyana*.¹⁵⁴ Van Uytfanghe argues that this widespread discourse manifested the shared cultural environment of the Roman Empire.¹⁵⁵ In this setting, hagiographical discourse intended not merely to provide information about the protagonist, but also to defend the hero

¹⁵² Marc van Uytfanghe, "La *Vie d'Apollonius de Tyane* et le discours hagiographique," in *Theios Sophistes: Essays on Flavius Philostratus' Vita Apollonii*, eds. Danny Praet and Kristoffel Demoen (Leiden: Brill, 2008): 335-74.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*, 354-61.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 349-50.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 347.

from rival interpretations, to create veneration of the hero, and to induce the hearers to live after the inspiring example of the protagonist. These hagiographies would often draw on local myths and patriotism to present the hero as particularly worthy of veneration by a group tied to the hero geographically or ethnically.¹⁵⁶ As van Utyfanghe puts it, the purpose of the narration is “performative,” not merely informative.

Philostratus’s *Life of Apollonius of Tyana* provides ample material to illustrate how miracles could figure in such hagiographical discourse. At one point in the narrative, Apollonius travels to Rome, where the following scene unfolds:

A girl seemed to have died at the hour of her marriage and her bridegroom followed the bier bitterly weeping over the unfinished marriage, and Rome wept with him too, for the girl belonged to a most highly accomplished family. But when Apollonius came upon this misfortune, he said, “Put down the bier, for I will put a stop to your tears over the girl.” And then he asked what the girl’s name might be. While the crowd supposed that he was going to give such an oration as belongs at a funeral and raises lamentations, he did nothing of the sort, but rather, touching her and speaking imperceptibly, he awoke the girl from seeming death, and the child spoke and returned to the house of her father, just as Alcestis was revived by Heracles. When the girl’s relatives presented him with 150,000 sesterces,¹⁵⁷ he said to give it to the child as a dowry. Now whether he found some spark of life in her that eluded those who attended her—for it is said how it was raining and steam was coming off from her face—or whether he rekindled her extinguished life and brought her back, the grasp of this has become unattainable not only for me, but even for those who were there. (*Vit. Apoll.* 4.45)

¹⁵⁶ Ibid., 360.

¹⁵⁷ The Greek here leaves the unit of currency implicit, and I, agreeing with Conybeare’s translation, have supplied “sesterces” in keeping with the setting in Rome (*The Life of Apollonius of Tyana, the Epistles of Apollonius and the Treatise of Eusebius*, Vol 1. Trans. F.C. Conybeare [London: W. Heinemann, 1912], 459). Jones’s more recent translation supplies “drachmas” instead, more in keeping with Greek idiom (*Life of Apollonius of Tyana*, Vol. 1. Trans. Christopher Jones [Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005], 419). The drachma was closer in value to a denarius (the equivalent of four sesterces), so my translation gives a more conservative estimate of the size of the gift. In whatever currency, the gift is extravagant (as discussed below), which is the main point.

Philostratus carefully narrates the story so that the reader thinks the girl might be in a coma, rather than dead, saying the girl “seemed to have died,” and that Apollonius “awoke the girl from seeming death.” In his direct address to the reader at the end of this story, he makes this point explicit. Although he admits the possibility that the girl might actually have died, he also keeps the option that she was still alive and that only Apollonius noticed, perhaps seeing a clue in the vapor coming from her face due to her faint breathing. Throughout the *Life*, the miraculous activities of Apollonius frequently stem from a similar diagnostic acumen. He averts a plague in Ephesus by having the citizens stone the demon who brought the plague and who was disguised as an old man (4.10); similarly, when the women of an Egyptian town are being raped and murdered by a mysterious force, Apollonius recognizes it as the work of a satyr and tells the townspeople how they can overcome the satyr with wine and stop his rampaging (6.27). His penetrating insight also allows Apollonius to predict the future or to know what is happening concurrently very far away.¹⁵⁸ Apollonius is a bit like Sherlock Holmes—his powers of observation allow him to do things that seem incredible to other people, even though his feats are, in principle, available to others if they had been able to see as clearly as Apollonius and interpret the evidence correctly.¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁸ He predicts Nero’s unsuccessful attempt to dig a canal on the isthmus of Corinth (4.24), and he recognizes an omen of the year of the four emperors (5.13). He understands strange tidal phenomenon as the signs of a distant earthquake (4.34), and while in Greece he recognizes the moment when Domitian is murdered in Rome (8.25-27).

¹⁵⁹ Apollonius’s power of correct interpretation extends also to literature, art, and religious practices, and throughout the work Philostratus presents him providing the correct and persuasive interpretation of the phenomena he encounters. See Graeme Miles, “Reforming the Eyes: Interpreters and Interpretation in the *Vita Apollonii*,” in *Theios Sopheistes: Essays on Flavius Philostratus’ Vita Apollonii*, eds. Danny Praet and Kristoffel Demoen (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 130-39.

Philostratus presents these powers of observation as the result of Apollonius's tremendous wisdom. He writes the *Life* to provide an accurate portrayal of Apollonius "with regard to the habits of wisdom by which he gained god-like status and was considered divine (τοῖς τε τῆς σοφίας τρόποις, ὑφ' ὧν ἔψαυσε τοῦ δαιμόνιός τε καὶ θεῖος νομισθῆναι)" (1.2). Wisdom is the source of Apollonius's power. To be sure, this wisdom is supernatural, made possible by Apollonius's particular aptitude, but the same could be said of Pythagoras or Plato, those paragons of Greek philosophy with whom Philostratus counts Apollonius.¹⁶⁰ Apollonius's wisdom is a divine endowment, traceable to his supernatural parentage, so that his insight is truly superhuman. These divinely endowed proclivities, along with the moderate asceticism prescribed by Pythagoras, give Apollonius access to a special wisdom that manifests itself as unusually penetrating insight into the way the world works.¹⁶¹ Thus, Philostratus labors to make Apollonius's miracles result from the powers of observation his divinely endowed wisdom brings. In the case of the Roman girl, Philostratus explains that Apollonius saw what others had missed and recognized the life left in the girl.

In this story Philostratus also emphasizes the ease with which Apollonius moves in the circles of the rich and powerful, as the girl's relatives are influential enough that Rome wept with her highly accomplished family. Although Apollonius himself eschews riches and luxuries, he is at home in the midst of the wealthy. His reaction to the family's proffered gift makes this relation clear. This is a family that is wealthy enough to bestow a gift of 150,000

¹⁶⁰ Philostratus makes this comparison explicit in *Vit. Apoll.* 1.1-2, and implicit throughout the rest of the work.

¹⁶¹ Graham Anderson, *Philostratus: Biography and Belles Lettres in the Third Century A.D.* (London: Croom Helm, 1986), 138-39; Erkki Koskenniemi, "The Function of the Miracle Stories in Philostratus's *Vita Apollonii Tyanensis*," in *Wonders Never Cease: The Purpose of Narrating Miracle Stories in the New Testament and its Religious Environment*, eds. Michael Labahn and Bert Jan Lietaert (London: T&T Clark, 2006), 76.

sesterces, equivalent to a farm laborer's daily wage for one hundred years¹⁶² and more than a third of the net worth required to attain equestrian rank.¹⁶³ Apollonius, being a true philosopher, has no interest in acquiring wealth, and so he gives the money away without batting an eye. Nevertheless, his outlook aligns with the upper class. He does not give the money to the poor, but rather gives it as a dowry for the wealthy girl. Thus, Philostratus allows Apollonius to participate in the extravagant, reciprocal gift giving of the upper class while at the same time remaining a philosopher, indifferent to the accumulation of wealth.

Philostratus explicitly compares Apollonius's raising of this girl with Heracles's wresting Alcestis from death, as recounted in Euripides's play bearing her name. Throughout the *Life* Philostratus makes Apollonius the epitome and champion of Greek culture.¹⁶⁴

Apollonius is like the great Greek heroes of mythology (e.g., Heracles) and like the great Greek philosophers (e.g., Pythagoras). In another setting, Achilles's ghost recognizes Apollonius as a peer, and together they discuss various obscurities about the Trojan War (4.15-16).¹⁶⁵ This connection to classical Greek culture also expressed itself in Apollonius's attention to the worship of the gods. Shortly before raising the Roman girl, Apollonius had

¹⁶² Taking a denarius (which is the equivalent of 4 sesterces) as a typical daily wage for a laborer as in Matt 20:2, 150,000 sesterces would be 37,500 times a daily wage.

¹⁶³ 400,000 sesterces was the minimum net worth required for equestrian status in first-century Rome. Susan Treggiari, "Social Status and Social Legislation," in *The Cambridge Ancient History Volume 10: The Augustan Empire, 43 BC-AD 69*, 2nd Edition, eds. Alan K. Bowman, Edward Champlin, and Andrew Lintott (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 879-80.

¹⁶⁴ Simon Swain, *Hellenism and Empire: Language, Classicism, and Power in the Greek World AD 5-250* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1996), 381-95.

¹⁶⁵ Philostratus may have modeled the meeting with Achilles's ghost on a similar story of Homer meeting Achilles's ghost and thus have intended further to link Apollonius to Homer and further to cement Apollonius's connection with Greek culture. See Peter Grossardt, "How to Become a Poet? Homer and Apollonius Visit the Mound of Achilles," in Demoen and Praet, *Theios Sophistes*, 76-80.

been having such persuasive discussions about the importance of piety that there is a spike in religious devotion in Rome (4.41). In addition to miracles, this attention to proper cult worship marks Apollonius's travels. He restores shrines and corrects corrupt temple practices.

Philostratus makes special effort to connect Apollonius with traditional polytheism. Miracles, such as the raising of the Roman girl, show how Apollonius embodies the best aspects of Hellenic culture.

Philostratus's *Life* shares with other hagiographic discourses the performative purpose of creating veneration of the hero and inducing hearers to celebrate the intellectual and cultural tradition of which Apollonius is the epitome. Like many other such discourses it uses miracles to accomplish these goals. The miracles serve many purposes throughout the work. On one level, they help create an entertaining story that appeals to erudite readers' knowledge of literary traditions, along with mythology, geography, and history. The miracles of Apollonius further demonstrate the power and excellence of *paedeia*, for it is Apollonius's deep familiarity with and participation in the traditions of Greek learning, especially philosophy, that give him his power. In addition, the miracles of Apollonius demonstrate the virtues of a cultured man of learning—his devotion to Greek history, his piety and zeal for proper cult worship, his comfort with the upper class even as he eschews material gain. The miracles also show Apollonius to be divinely gifted, sharing a close connection with the gods, and thus to be worthy of veneration. Such miracle working was not a requirement for hagiographical literature, but it was a cultural idea available for authors to use to demonstrate the virtues and supernatural powers of their protagonists.¹⁶⁶

¹⁶⁶ For examples of how Jesus' miracles illustrate the virtues of *philanthropia* (concern for humanity) and *proates* (kindness when one has the power and right to act unkindly), see

Although miracles stories served broadly similar purposes of demonstrating power and virtue across hagiographical discourses, authors used miracles to demonstrate different virtues and different conceptions of supernatural power at work in their heroes. Moreover, miracle stories did not appear only in such stories about human miracle workers, for miracles could be the direct work of God or the gods in ancient Mediterranean literature. In his *Miracle in the Early Christian World*, Howard Clark Kee devotes his attention to this diversity of miracle stories in turn-of-the-Era Mediterranean culture. Kee's book seeks to demonstrate the inadequacies of the *religionsgeschichtliche Schule* approach to miracles, which Kee views as imposing a totalizing, ahistorical interpretation on the meaning of miracles.¹⁶⁷ Kee challenges this totalizing approach by demonstrating the diverse aims in the telling of miracle stories in the early Common Era.

In the case of Philostratus's Apollonius, Kee recognizes the miracles promoting stability and maintaining order by attesting to the divine approval of a leading figure in a religious tradition, which in Apollonius's case was classical polytheism. Kee groups the apocryphal gospels and acts as similar efforts to promote stability by having miracles attest the legitimacy of leaders of the Jesus tradition. Miracle stories could also demonstrate the solicitude of a healing God, as in cult tales of Asklepios and Isis, or they could show how devotion to a god gave access to mystical union with the divine, as in the revelations that Aelius Aristides received from Asklepios or that Apuleius received from Isis. Miracles could

Wendy J. Cotter, *The Christ of the Miracle Stories: Portrait Through Encounter* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2010), 11-13.

¹⁶⁷ Howard Clark Kee, *Miracle in the Early Christian World: A Study in Sociohistorical Method* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983), 1-42.

appear as portents in stories that showed how the divine purposes operated in history, as in the historians Tacitus, Suetonius, Dio Cassius, and Josephus.¹⁶⁸

Philostratus's *Life* thus provides an example of one way that miracle stories could positively characterize miracle working humans and deities. However, the *Life* also evidences the negative way that ancient authors could construe miracle workers. Philostratus writes his account of Apollonius to refute those who “hold him to be a magician and libel him as an illegitimate sage” (μάγον ἡγοῦνται αὐτὸν καὶ διαβάλλουσιν ὡς βιαίως σοφόν) and who “take credit away from Apollonius for predicting things by virtue of wisdom and say that he did these things by craft as a magician (ἀφαιροῦνται τὸν Ἀπολλώνιον τὸ κατὰ σοφίαν προγιγνώσκειν καὶ φασιν, ὡς μάγῳ τέχνη ταῦτ' ἔπραττεν)” (*Vit. Apoll.* 1.2). In one sense the *Life* serves as an apologia, rehabilitating Apollonius's reputation from detractors who would label him a charlatan or a magician.¹⁶⁹ The wondrous deeds that Apollonius accomplishes are a double-edged sword for his reputation: to a supporter, they represent his divinely endowed power as a master of Greek wisdom, but to detractors they demonstrate his taking part in the forbidden art of magic. To protect him from the charge of magic, Philostratus works assiduously to make clear that Apollonius's power comes from his wisdom.¹⁷⁰ In the story of his resuscitation of the Roman girl, one can see an implicit rejection

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 293-95.

¹⁶⁹ Although we do not have access to the other accounts of Apollonius to which Philostratus had access, it is clear that Apollonius's miracles made him disreputable in some literary circles. D.H. Raynor, “Moeragenes and Philostratus: Two Views of Apollonius of Tyana,” *The Classical Quarterly* 34.1 (1984): 222-26; Francis, *Subversive Virtue*, 90-98.

¹⁷⁰ Anderson, *Philostratus*, 139-42.

of the category of magic for Apollonius as his willingness to forego such a hefty reward demonstrates that he is no magician who performs miracles for his own enrichment.¹⁷¹

After examining the positive function of miracle stories in *Miracle in the Early Christian World*, Kee turned his attention to the negative valence of such deeds in *Medicine, Miracle, and Magic in New Testament Times*.¹⁷² This work surveys healing activities in the literature of the Jewish and Greco-Roman worlds to discover how people in New Testament times would have differentiated among miracle, magic, and medicine. Kee proposes that the mechanism by which the healers achieve their goal substantively distinguishes the three categories. Medicine, he argues, bases its cures on the idea of a natural order. Through careful observation and study, the physician can determine the patterns by which the properly functioning human body operates. When disease disrupts this proper functioning, knowledge allows the physician to prescribe courses of action that will restore the pattern of health.

In Kee's formulation, miracles restore health not through the manipulation of nature, but by the will of God or the gods. Miracles occur when a divine figure restores health in line with some divine purpose, be that purpose to show mercy, to reward good behavior, or to illustrate divine power.

Magic, like miracle and unlike medicine, effects its cures through supernatural power. However, unlike miracle, where the will of the divine figure is the determining factor, magic involves manipulation of supernatural power by human agents without particular attention to the will of the gods. As Kee puts it, "The magician has at his disposal a kind of operator's

¹⁷¹ Andy M. Reimer, *Miracle and Magic: A Study in the Act of the Apostles and the Life of Apollonius of Tyana* (London: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002), 137.

¹⁷² Howard Clark Kee *Medicine, Miracle, and Magic in New Testament Times* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986).

manual, by means of which he can bend the forces to serve his own will, whether for his own benefit or for the defeat of his opponents.”¹⁷³ Magicians do not need to understand how the supernatural forces work or to align themselves with the will of the gods; magicians need only to know how to manipulate the supernatural forces that permeate the universe.

For Kee the distinctions among magic, miracle, and medicine are socially constructed, but well defined. When someone speaks of manipulating natural forces to achieve healing, it is medicine; when someone speaks of healing resulting from the will of a god, it is miracle; when someone speaks of healing through manipulating supernatural forces, it is magic. To the extent that the exegete can determine the mechanism a writer believes underlies an event, the exegete can determine if the event is magical or not. This distinction between miracle and magic is still used by some scholars. Lee M. Jefferson, in his study of whether early Christian art depicted Jesus as miracle worker or magician, asserts, much like Kee, “Miracles were products of divine agents while magic involved the human manipulation of the divine for personal means.”¹⁷⁴

As attractive as such distinct boundaries among medicine, miracle, and magic may be, they do not stand up to scrutiny. In Kee’s taxonomy, both medicine and magic entail manipulation, and the difference lies in what type of forces are manipulated, natural or supernatural. While it is clear that Greek medicine developed distinctions between the natural and supernatural world, these distinctions developed in response to widespread beliefs that the

¹⁷³ Ibid., 127.

¹⁷⁴ Lee M. Jefferson, “The Image of Christ the Miracle Worker in Early Christian Art” (Ph.D. Dissertation, Vanderbilt University, 2008), 18. For a critical assessment of Jefferson’s acceptance of a simple division between miracle and magic as well as of other aspects of his thesis, see Richard I. Pervo, review of *Christ the Miracle Worker in Early Christian Art* by Lee M. Jefferson, *Sewanee Theological Review* 57.2 (2014): 206-207.

natural and supernatural were intertwined.¹⁷⁵ With respect to miracle and magic, both operate by divine power, but the distinction depends on whether the human manipulates this power. However, the distinction between a magical incantation and a prayer for a miracle is not clear—both cases could be interpreted as attempts to manipulate divine power.¹⁷⁶ Moreover, the evaluation of practices Kee labels magic are more heterogenous than Kee’s schema admits. Such practices could be labeled as *goetia*, which could roughly be translated as “sorcery.” Such a labeling consistently indicated a negative evaluation, but the nature of the negative evaluation varied. In some instances, it indicates nefarious manipulation of supernatural forces, but it could just as often indicate fraud.¹⁷⁷ The related term *magia*, magic, could carry both positive or negative connotations, although the negative valence was operative more often.¹⁷⁸ Magic was not a uniform concept with uniform meaning.

Another influential and problematic approach to magic in this time period comes in Morton Smith’s *Jesus the Magician*.¹⁷⁹ As the title suggests, Smith argues that the historical

¹⁷⁵ The best example of this debate comes from the Hippocratic *On the Divine Disease*, which argues that epilepsy has natural causes rather than supernatural; this point implies that there were people claiming a supernatural cause of epilepsy against which the author argues. For discussion of the debate between the Greek medical and popular traditions about the relationship of natural and supernatural in disease, see R.J. Hankinson, “Magic, Religion and Science: Divine and Human in the Hippocratic Corpus,” *Aperion* 31.1 (1998): 1-34.

¹⁷⁶ Fritz Graf, “Prayer in Magic and Religious Ritual,” in *Magika Hiera: Ancient Greek Magic and Religion*, eds. Christopher A. Faraone and Dirk Obbink (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 188-213.

¹⁷⁷ Georg Luck, “Witches and Sorcerers in Classical Literature,” in *Witchcraft and Magic in Europe: Ancient Greece and Rome*, eds. Bengt Ankarloo and Stuart Clark (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999), 99.

¹⁷⁸ Naomi Janowitz, *Magic in the Roman World: Pagans, Jews, and Christians* (London: Routledge, 2001), 10.

¹⁷⁹ Morton Smith, *Jesus the Magician* (New York: Harper & Row, 1978). The following summary and critique of Smith’s work parallels that of Susan R. Garrett, *The Demise of the*

Jesus was a magician. Taking a functionalist approach, Smith defines a magician as someone who does the things that magicians do, as evidenced by magical papyri and artifacts.¹⁸⁰ Smith posits that magicians represented a distinct “social type” that went by different names—*goes*, *magos*, divine man, or son of God-- depending on social status and the attitudes of whoever was doing the naming.¹⁸¹ He argues that Jesus’ miracles fit him into this social type of magician, and that the Gospel writers attempted to downplay the magical elements in Jesus’ activity. However, these magical elements were so integral to his activities that the Gospel writers could not excise all traces of them; thus elements of Jesus’ identity as a magician remain despite the whitewashing of the evangelists.¹⁸² Smith privileges the perspective of the opponents of Jesus and Christianity, such as Celsus, in retaining the memory of Jesus as a magician.¹⁸³

Smith errs not in recognizing the similarities between Jesus’ miracles and activities described as magic, but in collapsing all wonder-workers into the single category of “magician.” Smith claims that this “magician” category was a distinct social type, but in defining the category he brackets the social features such as the practitioner’s social status, the attitudes of the audience doing the labeling, and the setting of the events. By engaging in this bracketing, Smith leaves behind only the actions of the miracle-worker as the facts to examine.

Devil: Magic and the Demonic in Luke’s Writings (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1989), 23-25. Other similar critiques can be found in Jacob Neusner, *Rabbinic Literature and the New Testament: What We Cannot Show, We Do Not Know* (Valley Forge: Trinity Press International, 1994), 173; Meier, *Marginal Jew*, 2.538-39; Seán Freyne, review of Smith, *Magician*, *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 41.4 (1979): 658-61.

¹⁸⁰ Smith, *Magician*, 81-93.

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 68-80.

¹⁸² *Ibid.*, 21-44.

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*, 45-67.

As Susan Garrett puts it, “we are left with a ‘social type’ that has nothing ‘social’ about it, because all social factors and characteristics have been disqualified.”¹⁸⁴ Smith’s definition of magic makes it synonymous with wonder-working actions as he ignores its property as an evaluative category used within the culture to delineate one type of wonder-working from others.

In the wake of Smith and Kee’s work and the problems with their deployment of the category of magic, scholars have been reluctant to grant “magic” a substantive content. In ancient magico-religious discourses, labeling an event “magic” usually served a very sharp polemical purpose, as the categorization labeled its practitioners as deviant.¹⁸⁵ Thus, many scholars studying deeds labeled magic have shifted focus from action to accusation.¹⁸⁶ In this way of thinking, “magic” or “magician” become terms essentially empty of substantive content and serve only to label the practitioners as deviant. Thus, “magic” is not a matter of what the practitioner has done, but of how the accuser feels about the practitioner.

Viewing accusations of magic as pejoratives empty of substantive content hinders scholarly investigation in two ways. First, such a view of magic cannot account for positive associations in conceptions of magic. For instance, one of the Greek Magical Papyri addresses its reader, “O blessed initiate of sacred magic (ὦ μα[κάρι]ε μύστα τῆς ἱερᾶς μαγείας)” (PGM 1.127), an address that makes little sense if magic is conceived as a category with only pejorative implications.¹⁸⁷ Second, as Jonathan Z. Smith puts it, “by focusing scholarly

¹⁸⁴ Garrett, *Demise*, 24.

¹⁸⁵ Klutz, *Exorcism Stories*, 6-7.

¹⁸⁶ Jonathan Z. Smith, “Trading Places,” in Idem, *Relating Religion*, 219.

¹⁸⁷ At the same time as the Papyri present magic as good, they also evince a recognition that what the practitioner is doing may be illegitimate. Hans Dieter Betz, “Magic and Mystery in

attention on the accusation...it is all too easy to reduce the charge of ‘magic’ to one of mere social placement.”¹⁸⁸ Smith’s objection is that this reduction to social placement does not allow the scholar to investigate whether the accused actually practiced magic, as defined by the society. Similarly, emptying “magic” of substantive content obscures how the accused could defend themselves from these charges by appealing to a substantive definition within the culture.

The 2nd century C.E. *Apology* of Lucius Apuleius illustrates the problems that arise when magic is viewed as a pejorative empty of content. Apuleius marries a wealthy older widow named Pudentia; Pudentia’s family, upset at the marriage and the subsequent loss of their inheritance to a man they viewed as an upstart, accuses Apuleius of practicing magic.¹⁸⁹ Apuleius’s esoteric interests in biology and philosophy make him a target of the accusation that he is a magician, and the accusation suggests that he has crossed beyond the bounds of social acceptability.¹⁹⁰ If the accusers cannot achieve a legal sanction against Apuleius, they can at least impugn his character and oust him from the realm of respectable society. As part of his rhetorical strategy to defend himself, Apuleius brings up the positive associations of magic, its derivation from Persian wisdom and religious practice, and he mentions Plato’s approval of this Persian custom. Apuleius says that “magic...is an art acceptable to the immortal gods and well-versed in honoring and reverencing them; it is piety and knowledge of the divine, noble

the Greek Magical Papyri,” in *Magika Hiera: Ancient Greek Magic and Religion*, eds. Christopher A. Faraone and Dirk Obbink (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 248.

¹⁸⁸ Smith, “Trading Places,” 221.

¹⁸⁹ Vincent Hunink, *Apuleius of Madauros Pro Se De Magia (Apologia) Edited With a Commentary* (Amsterdam: J.C. Gieben, 1997), 2.9-10.

¹⁹⁰ James A. Francis, *Subversive Virtue: Asceticism and Authority in the Second-Century Pagan World* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1995), 92-94.

since it arose from its inventors Zoroaster and Oromazes, and it is the high-priestess of heavenly things.”¹⁹¹ The defense here relies on the ambiguity of *magia*; while his opponents use it to label him a deviant, Apuleius can draw on positive connotations to counter this pejorative use.¹⁹²

However, the bulk of Apuleius’s defense depends not on emphasizing the positive aspects of magic, but on rejecting the label of *magia* for his deeds altogether. His defense primarily focuses on relabeling as “philosophy” those deeds which his accusers have labeled “magic” and on showing that his actions lie within the bounds of social acceptability.¹⁹³ For instance, one of the specific accusations is that Apuleius tried to procure unusual fish to make magical charms. Apuleius’s first refutation of this charge is that fish have nothing to do with making magic charms; other material, such as herbs and wax, are well known from literature to be the material from which charms are constructed (30-31). Second, he tells his accusers that his interest in the fish was to examine it for his work as an ichthyologist, and that they can read the treatise which he was composing to verify his claim (36). Both defenses rely on the presupposition that magic is more than just an accusation; for Apuleius, magic is a category with definable characteristics against which certain actions can be measured to determine whether or not they belong. If this were not the case, if magic were simply a label empty of content besides polemical intent, Apuleius would have had no means to rebut the accusation.

¹⁹¹ “magiam...artem esse dis immortalibus acceptam, colendi eos ac uenerandi pergnaram, piam scilicet et diuini scientem, iam inde a Zorastre et Oromaze aucttoribus suis nobilem, calitum antistitam.” *Apol.* 26.

¹⁹² Janowitz, *Magic in the Roman World*, 10.

¹⁹³ James B. Rives, “Magic in Roman Law: The Reconstruction of a Crime,” *Classical Antiquity* 22.3 (2003): 322-28.

Thus, while magic in the ancient world certainly was not a sharply defined construct conducive to objective categorization, neither was it completely devoid of meaning beyond its deviance labeling function. There were conventional ways of distinguishing magic from more legitimate practices: magic involved manipulating spirits, magic was used for selfish or trivial purposes, magic was secretive and not associated with the civic cult, or magic involved injuring people.¹⁹⁴ None of these criteria was used with absolute consistency, which makes the definition of magic very nebulous, but not completely empty of content. Along with the instability of meaning lies a contradiction in the evaluation of magic. Officially, magic was treated as a threat to the social order and was forbidden, yet there is evidence of magical practices in all levels of Roman society, evidence that it was, in fact, condoned even as it was forbidden and that suppression of these practices was sporadic.¹⁹⁵ That magic lacks a stable definition and status in ancient Mediterranean society does not imply that it is a vacuous concept. Such a lack of a fixed meaning potentially makes a concept useful within a society. As anthropologist Ernest Gellner observed, for a native concept, “its use may depend on its lack of meaning, its ambiguity, its possession of wholly different and incompatible meanings in different contexts, *and* on the fact that, at the same time, it as it were emits the impression of possessing a consistent meaning throughout.”¹⁹⁶ Magic in the ancient world is just such a

¹⁹⁴ Craig Keener, *Miracles: The Credibility of the New Testament Accounts* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2011), 1:47-48.

¹⁹⁵ Ramsay MacMullen, *Enemies of the Roman Order: Treason, Unrest and Alienation in the Empire* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1966), 126-27; C.R. Phillips III, “*Nullum Crimen sine Lege*: Socioreligious Sanctions on Magic,” in *Magika Hiera: Ancient Greek Magic and Religion*, eds. Christopher A. Faraone and Dirk Obbink (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 260-76; Rives, “Magic,” 334-6; Francis, *Subversive Virtue*, 90-92.

¹⁹⁶ Ernest Gellner, “Concepts and Society,” in *Selected Philosophical Themes*, Vol. 1, *Cause and Meaning in the Social Sciences* (London: Routledge, 2003), 41.

concept; it has a definite enough meaning to function as a coherent label but enough ambiguity to allow accusers to deploy it to suit their interests.¹⁹⁷

Descriptions of wonder workers in the ancient world thus represent two simultaneous contests: a contest to place the wonder worker in the author's preferred category (a preference that depends on the author's stance toward the wonder worker) and a contest to define the parameters of the chosen category. This book will examine Mark and Q as two ways that early Jesus followers engaged in this double contest to define who Jesus was and illustrate the import of his deeds.

Conclusion

The last chapter used the Kentucky Fried Rat story and its analysis by folklorists to illustrate how one can examine variant forms of stories to gain insight into the situation of their telling and retelling. This chapter has laid out what I presuppose to be the situation of the composition and dissemination of the Mark and Q versions of the miracle overlaps: a religious group creating its identity in the early common era Roman empire. This set of presupposition necessarily conditions the results of investigating the texts—having assumed such a context, I will inevitably find it in the text. The texts cannot prove the context that I have presupposed. However, the texts can prove how useful the assumed context is in understanding what is at stake for the authors and readers of the texts. Thus, the fruits of studying the miracle overlaps as products of this context in the next few chapters justify assuming this context and employing the methods adopted from psychology, religious studies, folkloristics, and history.

¹⁹⁷ Garrett, *Demise*, 18.

This eclectic borrowing from many disciplines opens this study to the charge of theoretical inconsistency, or even incoherence. However, the goal of this book is not to present a unifying theoretical approach to biblical texts, but rather to examine a set of biblical texts as evidence of the activities of early Jesus followers. The different disciplinary and theoretical approaches provide complementary vantage points from which to behold this object of inquiry. Which complementary vantage point to use at any given point in the investigation will depend on its usefulness in generating insight and how the presuppositions of that theoretical approach match with the data at hand.

Compared with the folkloristic approach discussed in the last chapter, the approaches discussed in this chapter presuppose contestation in the actions they study. In the first section we viewed Danzhi's story through the lens of the rivalry between different religious groups, and in the second section we saw Apollonius's story as a contest to portray his miracles as the results of *paideia* rather than of magic. The folkloristic approach to the Kentucky Fried Rat, on the other hand, did not view the variants as evidence of a contest. Folklorists view the story as reflecting anxiety about certain aspects of twentieth century change, but not necessarily as attempts to contest this change, nor do they view the variants as reflecting a contest to control the shape of the narrative, to produce the definitive version of the Kentucky Fried Rat story.

Looking at the differences in how the miracle overlaps construct the relationships of miracles, Jesus, and the kingdom of God could adopt either approach: viewing the differences as reflecting diverse views of miracles that co-existed (as folklorists tend to view stories) or as reflecting a competition to define the group against others (as the approaches reviewed in this chapter would suggest). Therefore, as this book examines these overlaps, it will attend to which approach does the most justice to the data at hand. This issue of contestation will come

to the fore especially in the chapter on the Temptation. The Inquisitor claimed that in this story Jesus repudiated the use of miracles that the Church ultimately adopted. We will examine whether the Q Temptation story repudiates the view that miracles signify Jesus' divine identity or if it simply provides a different construction of the significance of miracles to the one found in Mark.

CHAPTER III

THE KINGDOM OF GOD AND THE KINGDOM OF SATAN

According to the Inquisitor, by rejecting Satan's temptations to adopt miracle, mystery, and authority Jesus wasted the opportunity to establish a universal kingdom that would usher in universal peace.¹⁹⁸ The idea of a universal kingdom appears also in the biblical texts. The Q version of each overlap brings up either the kingdom of God or the kingdom(s) of Satan, or both. Although Mark's versions of these stories do not mention either of these kingdoms, the kingdom of God appears elsewhere in that Gospel, and Mark makes mention of Satan without reference to Satan's kingdom in both the Testing and the Beelzebul Controversy. To assess how Mark and the Double Tradition each relate the kingdoms of God and Satan to Jesus and his miracles requires first determining what the kingdom of God and Satan could have meant to the audience of these texts. The previous chapter looked to Greek and Latin literature of the early Common Era to provide the background for miracles in Mark and the Double Tradition. Miracles were widely enough attested to allow such a broad basis of comparison. In contradistinction, the concepts of the kingdom of God and Satan draw on a particularly Jewish idiom. This chapter will therefore explore the background of these ideas in Jewish¹⁹⁹ literature to illuminate their use in Mark and Q.

¹⁹⁸ Dostoyevsky, *Brothers*, 296.

¹⁹⁹ In this category I am including literature that may have been composed by early Jesus followers, who may not have been ethnically Jewish, since these works share a worldview shaped by the history of the God of Israel.

It is necessary to review this background material to respond to the previous work whose aim most nearly parallels that of the current study: Michael Humphries's *Christian Origins and the Language of the Kingdom of God*. As mentioned briefly in Chapter 1, Humphries's work compares the Beelzebul Controversy in Mark and Q to delineate two rival interpretations of the kingdom of God among early Jesus' followers, much as my project does. I argue that for both Mark and Q, the kingdom of God has an eschatological dimension, but the two texts differ in how Jesus fits into the eschatological scheme. Humphries agrees that for Mark the kingdom of God indicates an eschatological hope.²⁰⁰ However, Humphries sees the kingdom of God in Q having no eschatological dimension: rather, it represents a way of life that included voluntary poverty and obedience to the radical wisdom Jesus taught.²⁰¹ Humphries bases this assertion on the connection between the kingdom of God and wisdom in Jewish sapiential literature, such as the Wisdom of Solomon. A review of the kingdom of God in Jewish literature as well as in Mark and Q is necessary to show the eschatological valence this phrase carries in the miracle overlaps.

The debate over the eschatological nature of the kingdom of God also touches on issues of temporality and spatiality that have engendered much academic discussion. One of the major scholarly debates in the twentieth century about the kingdom of God was its temporal register: whether it is a present reality available to those who internalize the message of Jesus

²⁰⁰ Humphries, *Christian Origins*, 57-60.

²⁰¹ Ibid., 39-44. Humphries's assessment of the non-eschatological nature of the kingdom of God in Q draws on that of Leif Vaage, "Q: The Ethos and Ethics of an Itinerant Intelligence" (Ph.D. Dissertation, Claremont Graduate School, 1987), 403-14. For an argument that the kingdom sayings in Mark represented an ethos of living in the present rather than an eschatological reality, see Burton L. Mack, "The Kingdom Sayings in Mark," *Foundations and Facets Forum* 3.1 (1987): 16.

or a future reality that will be come to pass in the eschaton.²⁰² Most scholarly treatments now recognize that the kingdom of God is a multivalent symbol that includes both present and future elements.²⁰³ More recent scholarly work has focused on the spatial nature of the kingdom of God.²⁰⁴ Many twentieth-century treatments interpreted the kingdom as God's activity of reigning without any implied locality.²⁰⁵ Twenty-first century scholarship has instead focused on the spatial aspect of kingdom language, that it implies a realm where God's sovereignty comes to expression and so carries connotations of the eschatological displacement of earthly political powers who must make room for the realm of God's sovereignty.²⁰⁶ The

²⁰² This scholarly debate was inaugurated by Johannes Weiss's advocacy for an eschatological interpretation of the kingdom in his 1892 publication, *Die Predigt Jesu vom Reiche Gottes*, available in English translation as *Jesus' Proclamation of the Kingdom of God*, trans. Richard Hyde Hiers and David Larrimore Holland (Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1971). The translators' introduction to this work surveys the debates up to the middle of the twentieth century. See also Wendell Willis, ed., *The Kingdom of God in 20th Century Interpretation* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1987); H. Leroy Metts, "The Kingdom of God: Background and Development of a Complex Discourse Concept," *CTR* 2.1 (2004): 51-82. For non-eschatological interpretations of the kingdom of God, see Humphries and Vaage above as well as John Dominic Crossan, *Jesus: A Revolutionary Biography* (San Francisco: Harper, 1994), 121; Marcus Borg, "Jesus and Eschatology: A Reassessment," in *Images of Jesus Today*, eds. James H. Charlesworth and Walter P. Weaver (Valley Forge: Trinity Press International, 1994), 42-67.

²⁰³ The influential work that argued for the kingdom of God as a multivalent symbol with multiple temporal referants is Norman Perrin, *Jesus and the Language of the Kingdom: Symbol and Metaphor in New Testament Interpretation* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980); for arguments that the kingdom of God refers both to present and future, see Karl Allen Kuhn, *The Kingdom According to Luke and Acts: A Social, Literary, and Theological Introduction* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2015), 22-23; Meier, *Marginal Jew*, 2.237-88.

²⁰⁴ Giovanni B. Bazzana, *Kingdom of Bureaucracy: The Political Theology of Village Scribes in the Sayings Gospel Q* (Leuven: Peeters, 2015), 19.

²⁰⁵ For an influential assertion of the non-spatial nature of the kingdom of God, see Gustaf Dalman, *The Words of Jesus Considered in the Light of Post-biblical Jewish Writings and the Aramaic Language* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1902), 134-35, 148

²⁰⁶ Halvor Moxnes, *Putting Jesus in His Place: A Radical Vision of Household and Kingdom* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2003); Alan Storkey, *Jesus and Politics: Confronting the*

spatial aspect of the kingdom of God also ties it to the concept of the world to come, which was also conceived of spatially, as something into which one enters²⁰⁷. Thus, both time and space have become important topics in research on the eschatological nature of the kingdom of God.

In conversation with these debates about time, space, and eschatology, this chapter examines the deployment of kingdom of God language in Mark and Q, along with its use in other Jewish literature, to show that in the miracle overlaps the kingdom of God carries an eschatological connotation. Next, the chapter will examine the development of the idea of Satan in Jewish literature to argue that in both Mark and Q, Satan serves as the eschatological opponent that God has promised to overcome.

The Kingdom of God: Background

The exact phrase “kingdom of God” never appears in the Hebrew or Aramaic documents that would become the Tanakh.²⁰⁸ Nevertheless, biblical authors do occasionally speak of kingship or a kingdom that belongs to God, and even more frequently the biblical authors speak of God reigning as king. Several times does the Psalmist speak of God’s kingdom or kingship:

Powers (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2006), 111-32; Mary Ann Beavis, *Jesus and Utopia: Looking for the Kingdom of God in the Roman World* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2006).

²⁰⁷ Allison, *Constructing*, 164-203.

²⁰⁸ Meier, *Marginal Jew*, 2.241.

For the kingdom belongs to the Lord (ליהוה המלוכה / τοῦ κυρίου ἡ βασιλεία), and God rules over the nations. (Ps 22:28)²⁰⁹

The Lord has established God's throne in heaven, and God's kingdom (מלכות/הַ βασιλεία αὐτοῦ) rules over all. (Ps 103:19)

They shall speak of the glory of your kingdom (מְדַבְּרֵי כְבוֹדֵךָ / τῆς βασιλείας σου), and tell of your power. (Ps 145:11)

God's kingdom in the Psalms indicates the divine sovereignty over the earth that God has exercised since creation.²¹⁰ Elsewhere the Psalmist describes God as a king who reigns over all the earth:

For the Lord, the Most High, is awesome, a great king (גָּדֹל / βασιλεύς) over all the earth. (Ps 47:2)²¹¹

The Lord is king (מֶלֶךְ יְהוָה / Ο κύριος ἐβασίλευσεν)! Let the earth rejoice; let the many coastlands be glad! (Ps 97:1)²¹²

The Lord is king (מֶלֶךְ יְהוָה / Ο κύριος ἐβασίλευσεν); let the peoples tremble! God sits enthroned upon the cherubim; let the earth quake! (Ps 99:1)

These enthronement Psalms depict God as universal king in connection with God's status as the creator of all, and these same enthronement Psalms connect these statements of God's kingship to God's special relationship with Israel:²¹³

²⁰⁹ Ps 22:29 in the MT and LXX.

²¹⁰ Kuhn, *Kingdom*, 27.

²¹¹ Ps 47:3 in MT and LXX.

²¹² Ps 96:1 LXX.

²¹³ Robert D. Rowe, *God's Kingdom and God's Son: The Background to Mark's Christology From Concepts of Kinship in the Psalms* (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 17-20; Meier, *Marginal Jew*, 2:245.

For the Lord, the Most High, is awesome, a great king over all the earth. God subdued peoples under us, and nations under our feet. God chose our heritage for us, the pride of Jacob whom God loves. (Ps 47:2-4)

The Lord is king! Let the earth rejoice; let the many coastlands be glad!... All worshipers of images are put to shame, those who make their boast in worthless idols; all gods bow down before God. Zion hears and is glad, and the towns of Judah rejoice, because of your judgments, O God. (Ps 97:1, 7-8)²¹⁴

The Lord is king; let the peoples tremble! God sits enthroned upon the cherubim; let the earth quake!... Moses and Aaron were among God's priests, Samuel also was among those who called on God's name. They cried to the Lord, and God answered them. God spoke to them in the pillar of cloud, they kept God's decrees, and the statutes that God gave them. (Ps 99:1, 6-7)

Similarly, the canticle of Moses (Exod 15:1-18) describes the events of the Exodus from Egypt and conquest of the Promised Land and then closes with, "The Lord will reign (יהוה ימלך/κύριος βασιλεύων) forever and ever" (Exod 15:18). In the poetry of ancient Israel, the concept of God's kingdom indicates both God's universal sovereignty as well as the special exercise of this universal sovereignty in God's election of Israel.

The Chronicler similarly uses God's kingship to indicate both God's universal power and God's special relationship to Israel, specifically to the Davidic line. Much as in the Psalms, the Chronicler extols God's kingdom as extending throughout all of creation: "Yours, O Lord, are the greatness, the power, the glory, the victory, and the majesty; for all that is in the heavens and on the earth is yours, yours is the kingdom, O Lord, (לך יהוה הממלכה)²¹⁵ and you are exalted as head above all" (1 Chr 29:11).²¹⁶ At the same time, the Chronicler virtually

²¹⁴ Ps 96:1, 7-8 LXX

²¹⁵ The LXX here is slightly different: "To You, O Lord, are majesty and power and pride and victory and strength, because you rule over all that is in heaven and upon the earth, before your face every kingdom (πᾶς βασιλεύς) trembles."

²¹⁶ Gary N. Knoppers, *1 Chronicles 10-29: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (New York: Doubleday, 2004), 893.

conflates God's kingdom with the kingdom of Israel ruled by a Davidic king.²¹⁷ God tells the prophet Nathan to reassure David, "I will confirm him in my house and in my kingdom (במלכותי)²¹⁸ forever, and his throne shall be established forever" (1 Chr 17:14). Later, when David announces his successor, he proclaims, "of all my sons, for the Lord has given me many, he has chosen my son Solomon to sit upon the throne of the kingdom of the Lord (המלכות יהוה/βασιλείας κυρίου) over Israel" (1 Chr 28:5). The throne of David becomes virtually synonymous with the throne of the kingdom of God.²¹⁹

Just as the concept of God's kingdom can operate on different spatial registers, from the cosmic to the national, so can the concept take on various temporal implications, including an eschatological dimension, which features prominently in the miracle overlaps. God's sovereignty is eternal, as Daniel notes:

How great are God's signs, how mighty God's wonders! God's kingdom (מלכותה) is an everlasting kingdom, and God's sovereignty is from generation to generation. (Dan 4:3)²²⁰

I blessed the Most High, and praised and honored the one who lives forever. For his sovereignty is an everlasting sovereignty, and God's kingdom (המלכות) endures from generation to generation. (Dan 4:34)²²¹

²¹⁷ Knoppers, *1 Chronicles*, 673, 928.

²¹⁸ The LXX here has "in my house and in his kingdom (ἐν οἴκῳ μου καὶ ἐν βασιλείᾳ αὐτοῦ)."

²¹⁹ Raymond Kuntzmann, "Le Trône de Dieu dans l'Oeuvre du Chroniste," in *Le Trône de Dieu*, ed. Marc Philonenko (Tübingen: Mohr, 1993), 19-27; Sara Japhet, *The Ideology of the Book of Chronicles and Its Place in Biblical Thought* (Frankfurt am Main: Lang, 1989), 403.

²²⁰ Dan 3:33 in the MT.

²²¹ Dan 4:31 in the MT.

While God's kingdom has always existed, the kingdom has a decidedly future dimension. Daniel also foresees, "The kingship and dominion and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the holy ones of the Most High; God's kingdom (מלכותה) will be an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions will serve and obey God" (Dan 7:27).²²² For Daniel, God's kingdom becomes especially manifest in the eschatological vindication of God's people. Obadiah similarly connects God's kingdom with eschatological fulfillment: "Those who have been saved will go up to Mount Zion to rule Mount Esau, and the kingdom will be the Lord's (מלכותה המלוכה/τῷ κυρίῳ ἡ βασιλεία)" (Obad 21).²²³

God's reigning as king became a favorite way for prophets to speak of God's promised restoration of Israel. God commits to bring Israel out of exile with the promise, "I will be king (אמלך/βασιλεύσω) over you" (Ezek 20:33). In Micah, God promises to gather a remnant of Israel and to lead them as king (Mic 2:12-13).²²⁴ Zephaniah assures his hearers, "The king (מלך/βασιλεύς) of Israel, the Lord, is in your midst; you shall fear disaster no more. On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem: 'Do not fear, O Zion, do not let your hands grow weak. The Lord, your God, is in your midst, a warrior who gives victory'" (Zeph 3:15-17). The future culmination of God's kingship will extend beyond the restoration of Israel, as Zechariah avers, "the Lord will become king (יהוה למלך) יהוה יהוה/ἔσται κύριος εἰς βασιλέα) over all the earth; on that day the Lord will be one and his name one" (Zech 14:9). Isaiah extends this domination to the

²²² The LXX here has "and the kingdom and the authority and their majesty and the rule of all kingdoms under heaven God has given to the holy people of the Most High to rule as an eternal kingdom (βασιλεῦσαι βασιλείαν αἰώνιον)."

²²³ Paul R. Raabe, *Obadiah: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (New York: Doubleday, 1996), 271.

²²⁴ Francis I. Andersen and David Noel Freedman, *Micah: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (New York: Doubleday, 2000), 341.

heavenly bodies: “On that day the the Lord will punish the hosts of heaven in heaven and the kings of the earth on earth...then the moon will be abashed, and the sun ashamed; for the Lord of hosts will reign (מֶלֶךְ) on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem” (Isa 24:21, 23).²²⁵ Although God always has been king of all creation, in the eschaton this kingship will become particularly manifest.

In the Targumim, the Aramaic translations of the Tanakh that emerged in the early Common Era, God’s kingdom appears in many places where the MT speaks of God as king. For instance, where Exod 15:18 in the MT says that God will reign, Targum Onkelos says, “The Lord’s kingdom (יְיָ מַלְכוּתִיהָ) is eternal, forever and ever.” Targum Pseudo-Jonathan interprets this verse with a stronger eschatological thrust: “And God is the king of kings in this age and God’s is the kingdom (מַלְכוּתָא) in the age to come, and it is God’s and will be forever and ever.” The eschatological predictions of God’s reigning as king from the Prophets often come into Targum Pseudo-Jonathan as predictions that God’s kingdom will be revealed. While Zech 14:9 (MT) predicts God becoming king, Targum Pseudo-Jonathan renders the corresponding verse, “the kingdom (מַלְכוּתָא) of the Lord shall be revealed over all the inhabitants of the earth.” Similarly, where the MT of Isa 24:23 speaks of God reigning on Zion and in Jerusalem, Targum Pseudo-Jonathan has, “the kingdom (מַלְכוּתָא) of the Lord of Hosts shall be revealed on the mountain of Zion and in Jerusalem.”²²⁶ Targum Pseudo-Jonathan also introduces the concept of God’s kingdom in an Isaianic text that speaks of God’s ultimate vindication of Israel even though the MT lacks *mlk* vocabulary. In the MT Isa 31:4 promises,

²²⁵ Joseph Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 1-39: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (New York: Doubleday, 2000), 355.

²²⁶ Rowe, *God’s Kingdom*, 112.

“the Lord of Hosts will come down to fight upon Mount Zion and upon its hill.” The Targum renders the promise, “the kingdom (מלכותא) of the Lord of Hosts will be revealed to dwell on the mountain of Zion and on his hill.” The Targumim preserve and expand the idea of God’s kingdom and its particular eschatological orientation developed in the MT.²²⁷

The kingdom of God’s presence and futurity find expression also in the Wisdom of Solomon. This book contains the only mention of the βασιλεία θεοῦ in the Septuagint.²²⁸ The author conceptualizes this kingdom as the teaching of personified Wisdom: “She [i.e., Wisdom] guided him [i.e., the righteous man] on straight paths; she showed him the kingdom of God, and gave him knowledge of holy things; she prospered him in his labors and increased the fruit of his toil” (Wis 10:10). Here, the kingdom of God points to a life lived in the present according to the precepts of divine Wisdom. While this βασιλεία θεοῦ appears here as a present reality, the kingdom brought by divine Wisdom also has an eternal dimension: “The desire for Wisdom leads to a kingdom (βασιλείαν). Therefore, if you delight in thrones and scepters, O monarchs over the peoples, honor wisdom, so that you may reign forever” (Wis 6:20-21). This eternal kingdom is the lot of the just who will govern the world, “and the Lord will reign over (βασιλεύσει) them forever” (Wis 3:8). For the author of Wisdom, God’s kingship/kingdom indicates both a present blessedness in a life lived consistent with God’s Law and the future blessed state where the just will be rewarded.²²⁹

²²⁷ Klaus Koch, “Offenbaren wird sich das reich Gottes,” *NTS* 25.2 (1979): 158-65 argues that Targum Pseudo-Jonathan’s deployment of מלכותא represents a distinct theological orientation similar to Jesus’ use of “kingdom of God.” For an argument against Koch that the Targum’s use of this term represents not so much a novel theological stance vis-à-vis the MT but rather the Targum’s tendency to clarify the MT and reduce anthropomorphism, see Geert Wouter Lorein, “מלכותא in the Targum of the Prophets,” *AS* 3.1 (2005): 15-42.

²²⁸ Meier, *Marginal Jew*, 2:243.

²²⁹ Rowe, *God’s Kingdom*, 106-6; Meier, *Marginal Jew*, 2:250.

The promise of this eschatological kingdom surfaces in several other works from around the turn of the Common Era. The *Psalms of Solomon* (ca. 63 BCE) speak of the “kingdom of our God (ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν)” (17.3) being forever over the nations, and then connect this perpetual kingship with God’s promise to raise a Davidic king who will rule over all the earth with justice (17.4). The third book of the *Sibylline Oracles*, thought to date from approximately the second century BCE, contains the promise that God will “raise up a kingdom (βασιλῆιον) for all ages among men,” in which peace and blessedness will reign eternally (3.767-69).²³⁰

In the *Testament of Moses*, likely written in the first century CE, the author links the emergence of God’s eschatological kingdom with the defeat of the devil, the end of sorrow, and judgment of the wicked: “Then God’s kingdom (*regnum illius*) will appear throughout God’s whole creation. Then the devil will have an end, and sorrow will be led away with him.... The Heavenly One will arise from the throne of God’s kingdom (*regni sui*) and will go out from God’s holy habitation with indignation and wrath on account of God’s children, and the earth will tremble” (10.1-4).²³¹ The link between God’s kingdom and the eschatological defeat of evil appears also in the *War Scroll* of Qumran, which describes how the Sons of Light will defeat the Sons of Darkness in battle: “So the kingship (המלוכה) shall belong to the God of Israel, and by the holy ones of His people He shall act powerfully” (1QM 6.6).²³²

²³⁰ For the dating, see J.J. Collins’ introduction in *OTP* 1:355.

²³¹ For dating, see J. Priest’s introduction in *OTP* 1:921. The text is extant only in a single Latin palimpsest, but it is likely a translation of Greek, which itself is likely a translation of a Semitic original.

²³² Rowe, *God’s Kingdom*, 102-103.

In Jewish literature, God's kingdom/kingship evokes a wide-ranging story of God's sovereignty that stretches from creation to the last days and that is simultaneously universal and specially present in the history of Israel.²³³ An author can use kingship language to emphasize one or more aspects of this wide-ranging story of God's powerful rule over creation. For instance, when Philo talks about God reigning as king, he does so to emphasize the sovereignty God exercises as creator of all.²³⁴ The Mishnah, similarly, uses the kingdom of Heaven to describe God's universal sovereignty.²³⁵

Despite the ubiquity and everpresence of God's kingship, the concept of God's kingdom takes on a particularly eschatological focus in the prophets and in much Jewish literature near the turn of the Era.²³⁶ Therefore, when Mark or the Double Tradition speaks of the kingdom of God, the reader should be alert for possible eschatological dimensions. For Mark and Q, the kingdom of God indicates a state of eschatological blessedness for God's faithful and punishment for God's enemies just as the concept does in so much other Jewish literature.

²³³ Meier, *Marginal Jew*, 2:241.

²³⁴ Cf. *Plant.* 47, 51; *Mut.* 28; *Somn.* 2.100, 2.289; *Spec.* 1.207.

²³⁵ As in *m. Ber.* 2:1-2, where accepting the yoke of the kingdom of Heaven precedes accepting the specific yoke of the commandments. For the relatively minor role the kingdom of God/heaven plays in Rabbinic thought, see Jacob Neusner, "The Kingdom of Heaven in Kindred Systems, Judiac and Christian," *BBR* 15.2 (2005): 279-305.

²³⁶ James D.G. Dunn, "Jesus and the Kingdom: How Would His Message Have Been Heard?" in *Neotestamentica et Philonica: Studies in Honor of Peder Borgen*, eds. David E. Aune, Torrey Seland, and Jarl Henning Ulrichsen (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 3-7; Meier, *Marginal Jew*, 2:269.

The Kingdom of God: Q

In several places the Double Tradition leaves the nature of the kingdom of God amorphous. Jesus instructs his followers to seek first the kingdom of God (Matt 6:33//Luke 12:31) without specifying the nature of this kingdom, whether it is a present reality or a future aspiration, or both, and whether it is something spatially present or distant. Similarly, Jesus assures that the least in the kingdom of God is greater than John the Baptist (Matt 11:11//Luke 7:28), but again Jesus leaves vague what this kingdom represents and who the least in it would be. In an even more cryptic statement, Jesus claims that some are attempting to enter the kingdom by violence (Matt 11:12//Luke 16:16).

The use of the phrase “kingdom of God” elsewhere in the Double Tradition confirms the eschatological dimension of the concept. The first beatitude promises the kingdom of God/heaven to the poor (Matt 5:3//Luke 6:3). Both Matthew and Luke frame this beatitude in the present tense, but the following beatitudes speak of future states of blessedness. The kingdom of God is a present reality that also connects to the future rewards awaiting those who suffer in the present.²³⁷

The second petition in the Lord’s Prayer, “your kingdom come (ἐλθέτω)” (Matt 6:10//Luke 11:2) emphasizes the futurity of the kingdom. The prayer makes no mention of the presence of God’s kingdom; rather, it pictures the kingdom as a reality that is yet to come. While prophetic and apocalyptic literature does not specifically speak of God’s kingdom as coming, the idea that God would come on the last day was well established:

²³⁷ George Raymond Beasley-Murray, *Jesus and the Kingdom of God* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986), 162; Mark Allan Powell, “Matthew’s Beatitudes: Reversals and Rewards of the Kingdom,” *CBQ* 58 (1996): 465; Meier, *Marginal Jew*, 2:331.

God will come (יבוא)²³⁸ with vengeance, with terrible recompense. God will come (יבוא/יָצֵי) and save you. (Isa 35:4)

See, the Lord God comes (יבוא/יָרָג) with might, and God's arm rules for God; God's reward is with God, and God recompense before God. (Isa 40:10)

So those in the west shall fear the name of the Lord, and those in the east, God's glory; for God will come (יבוא/יָצֵי) like a pent-up stream that the wind of the Lord drives on. (Isa 59:19)

For see, the Lord will come (יבוא/יָצֵי) in fire, and God's chariots like the whirlwind, to pay back God's anger in fury, and God's rebuke in flames of fire. (Isa 66:15)

For God comes (יבוא/יָרָג) to judge the earth. God will judge the world with righteousness, and the peoples with God's truth. (Ps 96:13)

Then the Lord my God will come (יבוא/יָצֵי), and all the holy ones with God. (Zech 14:5)

The petition for God's kingdom to come in the Lord's Prayer expresses the hope that God will come to judge the world and save God's people.²³⁹

The eschatological nature of the kingdom of God in Q comes to fullest expression in the logion of many coming from east and west to dine with the patriarchs in the kingdom:

Λέγω δὲ ὑμῖν ὅτι πολλοὶ ἀπὸ ἀνατολῶν καὶ δυσμῶν ἤξουσιν καὶ ἀνακλιθήσονται μετὰ Ἀβραὰμ καὶ Ἰσαὰκ καὶ Ἰακώβ ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ τῶν οὐρανῶν, οἱ δὲ υἱοὶ τῆς βασιλείας ἐκβληθήσονται εἰς τὸ σκότος τὸ ἐξώτερον· ἐκεῖ ἔσται ὁ κλαυθμὸς καὶ ὁ βρυγμὸς τῶν ὀδόντων. (Matt 8:11-12)

ἐκεῖ ἔσται ὁ κλαυθμὸς καὶ ὁ βρυγμὸς τῶν ὀδόντων, ὅταν ὀψησθε Ἀβραὰμ καὶ Ἰσαὰκ καὶ Ἰακώβ καὶ πάντα τοὺς προφῆτας ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ τοῦ θεοῦ, ὑμᾶς δὲ ἐκβαλλομένους ἔξω. καὶ ἤξουσιν ἀπὸ ἀνατολῶν καὶ δυσμῶν καὶ ἀπὸ βορρᾶ καὶ νότου καὶ ἀνακλιθήσονται ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ τοῦ θεοῦ. (Luke 13:28-29)

²³⁸ The LXX lacks a verb "to come" in this clause.

²³⁹ Bazzana, *Kingdom*, 165-201; Meier, *Marginal Jew*, 2:299; Beasley-Murray, *Kingdom*, 151.

I tell you, many will come from east and west and will recline at table with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of the heavens, but the children of the kingdom will be thrown into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. (Matt 8:11-12)

There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrown out. Then people will come from east and west, from north and south, and will recline at table in the kingdom of God. (Luke 13:28-29)

In this statement, Jesus links the kingdom of God with an eschatological banquet and the judgment of the unfaithful.²⁴⁰

Although the kingdom of God refers to this future state, the Double Tradition makes clear that Jesus' activities somehow foreshadow this eschatological fulfillment and make the kingdom of God partially present. The presence of the kingdom of God comes out in Q's parables of the Mustard Seed and Leaven (Matt 13:31-33//Luke 13:18-21). In these parables Jesus compares the kingdom of God to items (a mustard seed, leaven) that are small but that have tremendous results. The parables indicate that the kingdom of God, though inconspicuous, is at work in the world and will manifest itself fully in the future.²⁴¹ The

²⁴⁰ Whether the many from east and west are the gathered Gentiles (as in Isa 25:6-8) or the lost tribes of Israel (as in Zech 8:7-8) divides scholars. For arguments in favor of Gentiles, see Beasley-Murray, *Kingdom*, 173-74; Meier *Marginal Jew* 2:314. For lost tribes, see George Wesley Buchanan, *Jesus: The King and His Kingdom* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1984), 34-5; Dale C. Allison, Jr., *The Jesus Tradition in Q* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 1997), 177-79. Whoever the many from east and west are, it is clear that an eschatological banquet is imagined; see Barry D. Smith, *Jesus' Twofold Teaching about the Kingdom of God* (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix, 2009), 128-31.

²⁴¹ Kyle Snodgrass, *Stories with Intent: A Comprehensive Guide to the Parables of Jesus* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), 226-27; W.G. Kümmel, *Promise and Fulfillment: The Eschatological Message of Jesus*, trans. Dorthea M. Barton (Naperville, IL: Allenson, 1957), 130-31; Nils Dahl, "The Parables of Growth," in Idem, *Jesus in the Memory of the Early Church* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1976), 155; C.H. Dodd, *The Parables of the Kingdom* (New

kingdom of God for Q represents God's eschatological rule that is simultaneously present in history. Harry Fleddermann nicely summarizes the temporal nature of the kingdom in Q: "For Q the kingdom unfolds in time—the kingdom has a past, a present, and a future. The fullest manifestation of the kingdom lies in the future, but Jesus inaugurated the kingdom in the past in his ministry of healing and teaching."²⁴²

The Double Tradition thus draws on the multivalent symbol of God's kingdom to speak of God's eschatological consummation that is also present, at least embryonically, in Jesus' activity. These appearances of kingdom of God language in Q provide contexts to help interpret the miracle overlaps. When the study turns to each of the overlaps, it will show how the Beelzebul Controversy, the Commissioning, and the Temptation depict the eschatological reality of the kingdom of God being present in Jesus' miracles—with the miracles as foretastes of the eschatological blessing to come.

The Kingdom of God: Mark

Mark makes the kingdom of God a major theme of Jesus' preaching throughout the Second Gospel. Early in the Gospel, Mark offers a summary of Jesus' proclamation: "The time is fulfilled (πεπλήρωται ὁ καιρὸς fix accent), and the kingdom of God has come near (ἤγγικεν). Repent and believe in the good news" (Mark 1:15). Because ἐγγίζω denotes approach,²⁴³ scholarly debate has arisen over whether the perfect form ἤγγικεν in Mark 1:15

York: Scribner, 1961), 190-91; W.D. Davies and Dale C. Allison, *Matthew 8-18* (London: T&T Clark, 1991), 417; Smith, *Twofold Teaching*, 29-36; Beasley-Murray, *Kingdom*, 123-25.

²⁴² Harry T. Fleddermann, *Q: A Reconstruction and Commentary* (Leuven: Peeters, 2005), 145.

²⁴³ *BDAG* 213, ἐγγίζω.

refers to the kingdom of God as having drawn near, but not yet arrived, or as having already arrived.²⁴⁴ Despite the scholarly insistence that ἤγγικεν be taken either as “has drawn near” or as “has arrived,” Mark’s phrasing likely indicates a purposeful vagueness as to whether the kingdom of God is imminent, yet still in the future, or is already present in Jesus’ ministry.

Indeed, throughout the Gospel, Mark’s Jesus speaks of the kingdom of God as both present and future. Mark’s Jesus depicts the kingdom of God as a future reality when he instructs his followers to pluck out the offending eye because “it is better to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye than to have two eyes and be thrown into Gehenna” (Mark 9:47). Here the kingdom of God is a future reward, contrasted with the future punishment of Gehenna.²⁴⁵ Similarly, when Jesus speaks of the difficulty of the rich entering the kingdom of God, he speaks of it in the future: “With such great difficulty will those having wealth enter (εἰσελεύσονται) into the kingdom of God” (Mark 10:23). Again, the kingdom of God refers to salvation in the age to come.²⁴⁶ Jesus’ final reference to the kingdom of God in Mark’s Gospel similarly uses the kingdom as shorthand for future reward. At the last supper, Jesus promises his disciples, “Amen I say to you that no longer will I drink from the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it anew in the kingdom of God” (Mark 14:25). This prophecy announces both Jesus’ imminent death and the eschatological reward that will follow.²⁴⁷

²⁴⁴ For arguments in favor of “has arrived,” see Smith, *Twofold*, 5; Beasley-Murray, *Kingdom*, 72-73; Dodd, *Parables*, 36-37. For “has come near,” see Rowe, *God’s Kingdom*, 120-1; Marcus *Mark* 1:173.

²⁴⁵ Beasley-Murray, *Kingdom*, 175; Collins, *Mark*, 454.

²⁴⁶ Beasley-Murray, *Kingdom*, 177.

²⁴⁷ Marinus De Jonge, “Mark 14:25 among Jesus’ Words about the Kingdom of God,” in *Sayings of Jesus Canonical and Non-Canonical: Essays in Honour of Tjitze Baarda*, eds. William L. Petersen, Johan S. Vos, Henk J. De Jonge (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 130-35; Beasley-Murray, *Kingdom*, 263; Collins, *Mark*, 657.

While Mark's Jesus uses the term "kingdom of God" to indicate future blessings, he also speaks about the kingdom of God as already present. The kingdom of God is a repeated theme in the parable chapter, Mark 4. After a brief introduction (4:1-2), the chapter begins with the lengthiest parable, that of the sower sowing seed among the different types of soil (4:3-9). Jesus gives the disciples a lengthy interpretation of the parable, in which he explains that the growth of the seeds in the various soils represents differing responses to the proclamation (4:13-20). Between the parable and its explanation, Mark has Jesus tell his disciples, "To you the mystery of the kingdom of God has been given, but to those outside, everything comes in parables" (4:11). The mystery of the kingdom of God involves understanding that the way people in the present respond to the word of God as proclaimed by Jesus will determine their ultimate fate.²⁴⁸

The fourth chapter of Mark contains two other parables that link seeds with the kingdom of God. After explaining the parable of the Sower, Jesus likens the kingdom of God to a seed growing:

The kingdom of God is like a man who scattered seed on the ground, and he would sleep and rise night and day, and the seed would sprout and grow even as he does not know; by itself the earth produces fruit, first the stalk then the ear, then the full grain in the ear, but when the grain is ripe, immediately he sends out the sickle, because the harvest is present. (Mark 4:26-29)

²⁴⁸ Aloysius M. Ambrozic, *The Hidden Kingdom: A Redaction Critical Study of the References to the Kingdom of God in Mark's Gospel* (Washington, DC: Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1972), 106; Madeline Boucher, *The Mysterious Parable* (Washington, DC: The Catholic Biblical Association, 1977), 83-84; Rowe, *God's Kingdom*, 133; Snodgrass, *Stories*, 164.

Jesus here indicates that the kingdom of God will come to fruition in time (at the harvest) and without human intervention, but at the same time the kingdom of God is incipiently present in the form of the seeds.²⁴⁹

Mark's Jesus, like Q's Jesus, further stresses the incipient presence of the kingdom of God in the parable of the Mustard Seed (4:30-32).²⁵⁰ Again, the kingdom of God will become fully manifest in the future, just as the mustard seed will grow into a tree in which the birds can nest, but the kingdom is also inconspicuously present now.²⁵¹ For Mark, the full manifestation of the kingdom belongs to the future, but the kingdom also exists in the present, just in a hidden form.²⁵²

Mark shares with Q the idea of the kingdom of God as a state of eschatological blessing that is already somehow present in Jesus' ministry but whose full manifestation lies in the future. Therefore, one cannot explain the absence of the kingdom of God from Mark's version of the miracle overlaps by claiming that Mark, unlike Q, was uninterested in demonstrating how God's kingdom came to expression in Jesus' ministry. Rather, it seems that Mark was not interested in linking the healing and exorcistic miracles of Jesus with the kingdom.

Nevertheless, Mark does link the kingdom of God with one of Jesus' miracles: the Transfiguration.²⁵³ For Mark, the miracle that reveals the incipient presence of the kingdom of

²⁴⁹ Ernst Fuchs, *Studies in the Historical Jesus*, trans. Andrew Scobie (Naperville, IL: Allenson, 1964), 134, 180; Snodgrass, *Stories*, 186-87; Beasley-Murray, *Kingdom*, 196; Smith, *Twofold*, 31.

²⁵⁰ See the note on the Q version above; additionally, R.T. France, *The Gospel of Mark: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), 216.

²⁵¹ Smith, *Twofold*, 35.

²⁵² Ambrozic, *Kingdom*, 135.

²⁵³ Rowe, *God's Kingdom*, 134.

God is the Transfiguration, not the exorcisms or healing. In 9:1, Mark's Jesus tells his disciples, "Amen I say to you that there are some standing here who will not taste death until they see the kingdom of God having come (ἐληλυθυῖαν) in power (δυνάμει)." This verse parallels 13:30, which concludes the apocalyptic discourse of chapter 13: "Amen I say to you that this generation will not pass until all these things [i.e. the predictions Jesus has made in chapter 13] have happened." Both verses share the "Amen I say to you" formula, followed by a promise that people will not die before witnessing an event. Among the things Jesus predicts in the apocalyptic discourse is "the son of man coming (ἐρχόμενον) on the clouds with great power (δυνάμει) and glory." These verbal similarities tie 9:1 to the prediction of the coming son of man in chapter 13 and indicate that 9:1 refers to the coming of the son of man in glory as the manifestation of the kingdom of God.²⁵⁴ The preceding verse further strengthens the association between the kingdom of God in 9:1 and the parousia by speaking of the son of man "when he comes (ἔλθῃ) in the glory of his Father with the holy angels" (8:31).²⁵⁵ Mark makes the coming of the son of man in glory synonymous with the coming of the kingdom of God.²⁵⁶

However, the promise in 9:1 also has a more proximate referent. The following verse reads, "And after six days Jesus took Peter and James and John and took them up a high mountain by themselves. And he was transfigured before them" (9:2). Through this narrative sequence Mark connects the promise of seeing the kingdom of God with Peter, James, and

²⁵⁴ Collins, *Mark*, 413.

²⁵⁵ Ernest van Eck, "Eschatology and Kingdom in Mark," in *Eschatology of the New Testament and Some Related Documents*, ed. Jan G. van der Watt (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), 81; Marcus, *Mark*, 2:622

²⁵⁶ Kuhn, *Kingdom*, 46-47.

John witnessing the Transfiguration.²⁵⁷ The Transfiguration demonstrates the divine power emanating from Jesus, his connection with Israel's ancient heroes, and his status as God's son:

And his clothes became radiantly white, such as no fuller on earth could bleach them, and then Elijah with Moses appeared to them and they were talking with Jesus. And Peter replied to Jesus, "Rabbi, it is good for us to be here. Let us make three tents, one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah," for he did not know what to say, for they were terrified. Then a cloud came, casting a shadow over them and a voice came from the cloud: "This is my beloved son, listen to him." Suddenly, looking around they no longer saw anyone there except Jesus alone with them. (Mark 9:3-8)

The Transfiguration narrative closes with Jesus charging the three witnesses not to tell what they had seen, "until the Son of Man had risen from the dead" (Mark 9:9), a phrase that links the Transfiguration to Jesus' resurrection as well. The promise in 9:1 that some would see the kingdom of God connects to several points in Mark's narrative. As Joel Marcus puts it, "By the time they reached 9:9 therefore, Mark's audience would probably understand 'the dominion [i.e. kingdom] of God fully come in power' telescopically, as a reference to the resurrectional glory of Jesus prefigured in the Transfiguration and soon to be publicly displayed at the parousia."²⁵⁸

²⁵⁷ Beasley-Murray, *Kingdom*, 188; Collins *Mark* 412.

²⁵⁸ Marcus, *Mark*, 2:622. For other treatments that have detailed the connections Mark's Transfiguration has with Jesus' parousia, resurrection, and status as God's son, see Howard Clark Kee, "The Transfiguration in Mark: Epiphany or Apocalyptic Vision?" in *Understanding the Sacred Text: Essays in honor of Morton S. Enslin on the Hebrew Bible and Christian Beginnings*, ed. J. Reumann, 135-52 (Valley Forge: Judson Press, 1972); H.P. Müller, "Die Verklärung Jesu: Ein motivgeschichtliche Studie" *ZNW* 51 (1960): 61-62; F.R. McCurley, Jr., "And After Six Days (Mark 9:2): A Semitic Literary Device," *JBL* 93 (1974): 67-81; G.H. Boobyer, *St Mark and the Transfiguration Story* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1942); Candida R. Moss, "The Transfiguration: An Exercise in Markan Accommodation," *Biblical Interpretation* 12.1 (2004): 70-73.

Mark views the kingdom of God as the eschatological reality that will be revealed when Jesus comes again in glory to execute God's judgment on the earth.²⁵⁹ The kingdom is incipiently present in Jesus' ministry to the extent that Jesus' power and future role as eschatological judge manifest themselves in his earthly activities.

Satan and His Kingdom

The coming of the kingdom of God was one way to express the widespread idea that God would win the definitive victory over evil. The opponents over whom God would win this victory could be various. Zechariah, for instance, describes God's becoming king as involving victory over all the nations that war against Judah (Zech 14:1-20). Isaiah envisions God's future victory not only over Israel's human opponents, but also over abstract entities, such as death and sorrow: "God will swallow up death forever. Then the Lord God will wipe away the tears from all faces, and the disgrace of God's people God will take away from all the earth" (Isa 25:7-8). Such abstract forces of evil can also be joined to a personified, supernatural opponent whom God will conquer, as in the *Testament of Moses*: "Then God's kingdom will appear throughout God's whole creation. Then the devil will have an end, and sorrow will be led away with him" (10.1-2). This supernatural opponent of God, known by many names, appears also in the Beelzebul Controversy and the Temptation, and Mark and the Double Tradition both presume their audiences are familiar with this figure.

The evil supernatural figure whose existence the Synoptic Gospels presuppose entered the Jewish worldview through a long process of development. Satan, one of the more common

²⁵⁹ Rowe, *God's Kingdom*, 160.

names for this figure, traces its origin in the Hebrew word *satan*, adversary. A supernatural *satan* appears but rarely in the books that would become the Scriptures of Israel. The angel of the Lord acts as a *satan* (שָׂטָן) in blocking the path of Balaam's donkey (Num 22:22). In other instances, the *satan* appears as a supernatural entity distinct from the angel of the Lord. It is the *satan* who, as one of the members of God's heavenly court, receives permission from God to inflict calamities on Job (Job 1-2). In Zech 3:1, the *satan* stands before the Lord to accuse the high priest Joshua. In these cases, the *satan* is a divine functionary who tests and accuses humans in the exercise of divine justice. In 2 Sam 24:1, God influences David to undertake a census because God is angry with Israel. In the Chronicler's retelling of David's census, *satan* appears outside the context of a heavenly court and without the definite article: "Satan [or a satan] stood up against Israel, and incited David to count the people of Israel" (1 Chr 21:1). The Chronicler declines to clarify whether the anarthrous *satan* here indicates the name of a character or merely identifies an adversary.

In other literature of the Second Temple period, the character of this superhuman adversary (or adversaries) of God's people develops as does the idea of a host of demons under his command.²⁶⁰ Whereas the Tanakh tends to assign most supernatural causation, whether for human benefit or detriment, to God (such as God's sending of the evil spirit to torment King

²⁶⁰ For the development of Jewish demonology, see Andrei A. Orlov, *Dark Mirrors: Azazel and Satanael in Early Jewish Demonology* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2011); Bernard J. Bamberger, *Fallen Angels: Soldiers of Satan's Realm* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 2006), 1-59; Angela Kim Harkins, Kelley Coblenz Bautch, and John C. Endres (eds.), *The Watchers in Jewish and Christian Traditions* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2014); Idem, *The Fallen Angels Traditions: Second Temple Developments and Reception History* (Washington, DC: Catholic Biblical Association, 2014); Archie T. Wright, *The Origin of Evil Spirits: The Reception of Genesis 6.1-4 in Early Jewish Literature* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005); Armin Lange, Hermann Lichtenberger, and Diethard Römheld (eds.), *Die Dämonen Demons: die Dämonologie der israelitisch-jüdischen und frühchristlichen Literatur im Kontext ihrer Umwelt* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003).

Saul in 1 Sam 16:14), post-exilic Judaism adopted dualistic systems that separated God's good purposes from those of hostile supernatural agents.²⁶¹ In Second Temple Jewish literature, authors inserted these agents into their retellings of biblical stories. The author of *I Enoch*, for instance, expands on a brief story that precedes the account of Noah in Genesis:

When people began to multiply on the face of the ground, and daughters were born to them, the sons of God saw that they were fair; and they took wives for themselves of all that they chose... The giants (פנלים/γίγαντες) were on the earth in those days when the sons of God went in to the daughters of humans, who bore children to them. These were the heroes that were of old, warriors of renown. (Gen 6:1-4)

The Genesis story does not indicate that the sons of God erred or sinned in mating with human women. In the retelling of this story in *I Enoch*, this conduct of the “Watchers” is described as sinful by their leader Semyaz, who nevertheless consents to it (6.3). The offspring of the Watchers and the human women are bloodthirsty giants who prey on humans and despoil the land (7:1-6). One of the most devious of the Watchers, Azazel, teaches human beings the corrupting skills of warfare, which instigates conflict among the peoples on earth (8.1). In response to the carnage that Semyaz, Azazel, and their compatriots cause, God sends the angels Raphael, Michael, and Gabriel to destroy the giants and to bind the Watchers until the final judgment, when they will be imprisoned forever (10.1-22). The Epistle of Jude alludes to this host of fallen angels bound until the final judgment: “The angels who did not keep their authority but left their own dwelling place he has kept in eternal chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day” (Jude 6).

²⁶¹ T.J. Wray and Gregory Mobley, *The Birth of Satan: Tracing the Devil's Biblical Roots* (Gordonsville, VA: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 165.

Jubilees tells a similar story of how the Watchers caused corruption on the earth when they mated with human women (5.1-2). In *Jubilees*, the offspring of the Watchers and the women become demons who torment and kill human beings. After the flood, Noah asks God to restrain these demons (10.1-6). Before God can grant Noah's prayer, Mastema, "the chief of the spirits," importuned God, "O Lord, Creator, leave some of them before me, and let them obey my voice. And let them do everything which I tell them, because if some of them are not left for me, I will not be able to exercise the authority of my will among the children of men" (10.7-8). God agrees to leave one tenth of the demons free "so that they might be subject to Satan upon the earth" (10.11). In *Jubilees*, Mastema does not act contrary to God's will, but rather he serves as a divine functionary who tests God's people, much as the *satan* does in Job. However, unlike the *satan* in Job, Mastema has a retinue of demonic underlings.

In the Qumran literature, yet another name for the leader of the forces opposed to God appears. The War Scroll describes the final battle between the Sons of Light (בני אור) and the Sons of Darkness (בני חושך). The author also refers to "The Sons of Darkness" as "the army of Belial" (1QM 1.1). Although the *War Scroll* describes Belial's army as a human force made up of Israel's neighbors as well as of apostate clans from the twelve tribes of Israel, it also refers to God driving away Belial's "spirits of destruction (רוחי חבלו)" (14.10). Another Qumran fragment mentions Belial alongside the spirits under him: "[t]he[y] shall denounce Belial and all his guilty lot. And they shall say in response: 'Cursed is [B]elial because of his malevolent [pu]rposes, and he is damned for his guilty dominion. Cursed are all the spirits of his [lo]t for their wicked purpose'" (4Q286 7.2.1-3).²⁶² The Belial of the Qumran literature,

²⁶² The reconstruction is that of Michael Wise, Martin Abegg, and Edward Cook, *The Dead Sea Scrolls: A New Translation* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 2006).

like Mastema in *Jubilees* and Azazel in *I Enoch*, leads hostile spiritual forces against God's people.

Beelzebul, the prince of the demons, appears in the *Testament of Solomon*, a work of the early Common Era. This *Testament* tells of Solomon summoning, interrogating, and enslaving a number of demons during the construction of the temple in Jerusalem. Among Solomon's demonic interlocutors is "Beelzebul, the ruler (ἑξάρχος) of the demons" (3.6). Beelzebul tells Solomon, "I bring destruction by means of tyrants; I cause the demons to be worshipped alongside men; and I arouse desire in holy men and select priests. I bring about jealousies and murders in a country, and I instigate wars" (6.4). Beelzebul's role in instigating human strife recalls Azazel's troublemaking activities in *I Enoch*.

With the idea of a chief demon that functions as God's cosmic opponent came the belief that God's definitive eschatological actions would include vanquishing this opponent.²⁶³ Belial is one such opponent, destined for defeat, in 1QM's war of God's Sons of Light against the Sons of Darkness. Similarly, God's temporary binding of Azazel and the other Watchers will be made permanent in the end time (*I Enoch* 10.1-22). *Jubilees* likewise predicts a glorious future of life and abundance when Satan shall be no more (23.29, 50.5). The *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*, another work of the early Common Era, predicts the defeat of Beliar, a variant of Belial, at the end of time (*T. Levi* 18.12, *T. Zeb.* 9.8, *T. Dan.* 5.11, *T. Benj.* 3.8).

Revelation similarly predicts the conquest of Satan and his host. At one point in the vision, a dragon appeared in the sky, "and a war occurred in heaven so that Michael and his

²⁶³ James D.G. Dunn "Jesus and the Kingdom: How Would His Message Have Been Heard?" in *Neotestamentica et Philonica: Studies in Honor of Peder Borgen*, ed. David E. Aune, Torrey Seland, and Jarl Henning Ulrichsen (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 6.

angels waged war against the dragon, both the dragon and his angels waged war” (12:7). A little later the author reveals that the dragon “is called the Devil and Satan” (12:8). Michael succeeded in throwing this dragon out of heaven down to earth, where the dragon gave power to the two beasts (13:1-18). Although this dragon made mischief for a while, eventually an angel came down from heaven, “and seized the dragon, who is the ancient serpent, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years and cast him into the abyss and shut and sealed it over him” (20:2-3). Like the Watchers in *1 Enoch*, the dragon, who is the Devil and Satan, suffers bondage at the hands of God’s angel. Revelation envisions a two-stage conquest of the Devil, first in heaven and then on earth. In the heavenly contest, the angels under the leadership of Michael fight the angels following the dragon. In the subsequent fight on earth, it is a single angel who meets the dragon and binds him.

A one-on-one combat with the eschatological opponent features also in 2 Thessalonians. This letter claims that the appearance of “the person of lawlessness (ὁ ἄνθρωπος τῆς ἀνομίας)” will precede the day of the Lord (2:3). The author leaves the identity of this person of lawlessness ambiguous, and it is not clear whether this figure is a human being or some supernatural opponent. Whoever this ἄνθρωπος is, he is clearly connected with Satan: “his coming is by the activity of Satan” (2:9). The author assures the readers that once this ἄνθρωπος appears Jesus will destroy him by the breath of his mouth (2:8). Here the eschatological victory again appears as single combat between God’s agent and an eschatological opponent connected with Satan.

The literature here reviewed shows that the concept of a supernatural adversary to God had widespread currency in Second Temple Judaism, but a tremendous amount of variability existed in how authors depicted this figure. The most obvious index of variability is the sheer

number of names for this figure: the devil, the dragon, Satan, Mastema, Azazel, Belial/Beliar, Beelzebul. Moreover, the relationship of this figure to God can vary from that of a divine functionary who puts the faithful to the test (e.g. Mastema in *Jubilees*), to a figure fighting against God (e.g. Belial in the War Scroll). This figure also frequently appears in the final confrontation between good and evil, but his role in this confrontation can take many forms. He can appear as the leader of a demonic host that God defeats with his army of angels, as in Revelation's war in heaven (12:7-9) or in the War Scroll. These texts do not speak of a kingdom of Satan, but many of them speak of Satan as the leader of a band of demons. It would not be a far leap to describe this evil host as Satan's kingdom, as occurs in the Q version of the Beelzebul Controversy (Matt 12:26//Luke 11:18). However, the eschatological victory can also appear as the vanquishing of Satan without reference to his retinue, as in *Jubilees*'s promise of a time when Satan will be no more (23.29, 50.5) or in the kingdom of God's appearance in the *Testament of Moses* (10.1-2). When Mark and the Double Tradition told stories about Jesus and Satan, they could draw on the idea of God (or God's agent) vanquishing Satan alone or of the forces of God overcoming the forces of Satan. Mark chooses imagery of Satan acting individually, while the Double Tradition chooses the group imagery of the kingdom of Satan arrayed against the kingdom of God.

Conclusion

Both Satan and the kingdom of God were concepts alive within the thought world of Second Temple Judaism, and early Jesus followers seized upon them to help articulate the importance of what Jesus did and who he was. Each term provides a way to refer to aspects of

the story of Israel's God. The kingdom of God conjures up God's sovereignty enacted in creation, the election of Israel, and the final conquest over evil that is to come. The mention of Satan evokes the forces of evil that seem to thwart God's purposes in the short term but that will ultimately come to an end in the eschaton. Although both terms stood in for a larger story, there was enough flexibility in how that story was told that neither term had a single meaning. There was no one conception of God's kingdom to which every author who used the term referred. The contours of the story of how God's sovereignty came to expression through history were stable enough, but authors had freedom in painting the details. Much less was there any singular conception of Satan's role in God's story, especially in how Satan figured in God's eschatological victory over evil. Both Mark and the Double Tradition can speak of Satan and the kingdom of God within the same conceptual background, but they can do so in ways that draw on different aspects of the stories to relate Satan and the kingdom of God in two distinct ways to Jesus and his miracles. In the miracle overlaps we see this difference most clearly.

CHAPTER IV

THE BEELZEBUL CONTROVERSY

The Grand Inquisitor unabashedly claims that the Church has allied itself with Satan by accepting miracles as means of exercising power. The idea that miracles may result from a pact with the devil surfaces in the Gospel narratives when Jesus faces the accusation in the Beelzebul Controversy that some of his miracles, the exorcisms, prove that he is in league with Satan (Mark 3:22-30; Matt 12:22-31; Luke 11:14-23). Beginning with the common elements in the two versions, this chapter will demonstrate that both Mark and the Double Tradition portray Jesus disputing with other Jews about how Jesus fits into the Second Temple eschatological scheme of God's ultimate victory over evil. Based on the concepts of identity formation discussed in chapter 2, this chapter will argue that the depiction of Jesus in conflict with other Jews about his eschatological significance helped early Jesus followers to distinguish themselves from non-Jesus followers and, in so distinguishing themselves, create a positive identity for their group. The differences between the Mark and Q versions evince two similar, but distinct, ways of making such delineations between Jesus followers and non-Jesus followers: for the Double Tradition the crucial distinction is recognizing that God's eschatological victory is present in Jesus' ministry, while for Mark that distinction lies in recognizing that Jesus himself will realize God's eschatological victory. Thus, the Double tradition depicts Jesus as a participant alongside others in God's victory, whereas Mark depicts Jesus alone accomplishing God's victory.

Performing these tasks requires first looking at the texts from Mark, Matthew, and Luke to determine what elements the Double Tradition version of this story contains, what the Double Tradition version has in common with Mark's, and how Mark's and the Double Tradition's versions differ. The comparison will show that Q depicts God's victory in corporate terms that envision participation by Jesus and Jesus' followers, while Mark depicts this victory in terms of Jesus' single combat with the devil.

Mark's version, 3:22-30, goes as follows:

Καὶ οἱ γραμματεῖς οἱ ἀπὸ Ἱεροσολύμων καταβάντες ἔλεγον ὅτι Βεελζεβούλ ἔχει καὶ ὅτι ἐν τῷ ἄρχοντι τῶν δαιμονίων ἐκβάλλει τὰ δαιμόνια. Καὶ προσκαλεσάμενος αὐτοὺς ἐν παραβολαῖς ἔλεγεν αὐτοῖς· πῶς δύναται σατανᾶς σατανᾶν ἐκβάλλειν; καὶ ἐὰν βασιλεία ἐφ' ἑαυτὴν μερισθῆ, οὐ δύναται σταθῆναι ἢ βασιλεία ἐκείνη· καὶ ἐὰν οἰκία ἐφ' ἑαυτὴν μερισθῆ, οὐ δυνήσεται ἢ οἰκία ἐκείνη σταθῆναι. καὶ εἰ ὁ σατανᾶς ἀνέστη ἐφ' ἑαυτὸν καὶ ἐμερίσθη, οὐ δύναται στῆναι ἀλλὰ τέλος ἔχει. ἀλλ' οὐ δύναται οὐδεὶς εἰς τὴν οἰκίαν τοῦ ἰσχυροῦ εἰσελθὼν τὰ σκεύη αὐτοῦ διαρπάσαι, ἐὰν μὴ πρῶτον τὸν ἰσχυρὸν δῆσῃ, καὶ τότε τὴν οἰκίαν αὐτοῦ διαρπάσει. Ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν ὅτι πάντα ἀφεθήσεται τοῖς υἱοῖς τῶν ἀνθρώπων τὰ ἁμαρτήματα καὶ αἱ βλασφημίαι ὅσα ἐὰν βλασφημήσωσιν· ὅς δ' ἂν βλασφημήσῃ εἰς τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον, οὐκ ἔχει ἄφεσιν εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα, ἀλλὰ ἔνοχός ἐστιν αἰωνίου ἁμαρτήματος. ὅτι ἔλεγον· πνεῦμα ἀκάθαρτον ἔχει.

And the scribes coming down from Jerusalem were saying, "He has Beelzebul," and "By the prince of the demons he casts out demons." And calling them together he was speaking to them in parables: "How is Satan able to cast out Satan? And if a kingdom were divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand, and if a house were divided against itself, that house could not stand, and if Satan rose up against himself and is divided, he cannot stand but has his end. But no one is able to enter the house of a strong man to steal his property unless he first binds the strong man and then he can plunder his house. Amen I say to you that all sins will be forgiven to the sons of men and whatever blasphemies they may have blasphemed, but whoever blasphemed against the Holy Spirit will not have forgiveness eternally, but is guilty of an eternal sin." Because they were saying, "He has an unclean spirit." (Mark 3:22-30)

Mark begins with an accusation that Jesus performs exorcisms by the power of Beelzebul, the prince of demons. Jesus denies this charge with two arguments. First, he uses the parables of the divided house and divided kingdom to argue that if the accusation were true, then Satan would be divided against himself and would fall. The second argument comes in the form of the parable of the strong man: Jesus' exorcisms are akin to plundering a strong man's house, an action possible only if the strong man has been overpowered. By implication, Jesus cannot be in league with Satan, the referent of the "strong man"; Jesus must have overpowered him. Jesus concludes with the condemnation of those who blaspheme against the Holy Spirit, which Mark explains is due to the opponents' charge that Jesus has an unclean spirit.

The Q version contains many of the same elements, with a few notable additions and deletions. Matthew's and Luke's versions are reproduced below. Elements common to Matthew and Luke but different from Mark (i.e., the Double Tradition) are underlined:

Τότε προσηνέχθη αὐτῷ δαιμονιζόμενος τυφλὸς καὶ κωφός, καὶ ἐθεράπευσεν αὐτόν, ὥστε τὸν κωφὸν λαλεῖν καὶ βλέπειν. καὶ ἐξίσταντο πάντες οἱ ὄχλοι καὶ ἔλεγον· μήτι οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ υἱὸς Δαβὶδ; οἱ δὲ Φαρισαῖοι ἀκούσαντες εἶπον· οὗτος οὐκ ἐκβάλλει τὰ δαιμόνια εἰ μὴ ἐν τῷ Βεελζεβούλ ἄρχοντι τῶν δαιμονίων. εἰδὼς δὲ τὰς ἐνθυμήσεις αὐτῶν εἶπεν αὐτοῖς· πᾶσα βασιλεία μερισθεῖσα καθ' ἑαυτῆς ἐρημοῦται καὶ πᾶσα πόλις ἢ οἰκία μερισθεῖσα καθ' ἑαυτῆς οὐ σταθήσεται. καὶ εἰ ὁ σατανᾶς τὸν σατανᾶν ἐκβάλλει, ἐφ' ἑαυτὸν ἐμερίσθη· πῶς οὖν σταθήσεται ἡ βασιλεία αὐτοῦ; καὶ εἰ ἐγὼ ἐν Βεελζεβούλ ἐκβάλλω τὰ δαιμόνια, οἱ υἱοὶ ὑμῶν ἐν τίνι ἐκβάλλουσιν; διὰ τοῦτο αὐτοὶ κριταὶ ἔσονται ὑμῶν. εἰ δὲ ἐν πνεύματι θεοῦ ἐγὼ ἐκβάλλω τὰ δαιμόνια, ἄρα ἔφθασεν ἐφ' ὑμᾶς ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ. ἢ πῶς δύναται τις εἰσελθεῖν εἰς τὴν οἰκίαν τοῦ ἰσχυροῦ καὶ τὰ σκευῆ αὐτοῦ ἀρπάσαι, ἐὰν μὴ πρῶτον δῆσῃ τὸν ἰσχυρόν; καὶ τότε τὴν οἰκίαν αὐτοῦ διαρπάσει. ὁ μὴ ὦν μετ' ἐμοῦ κατ' ἐμοῦ ἐστιν, καὶ ὁ μὴ συνάγων μετ' ἐμοῦ σκορπίζει. Διὰ τοῦτο λέγω ὑμῖν, πᾶσα ἁμαρτία καὶ βλασφημία ἀφεθήσεται τοῖς ἀνθρώποις, ἡ δὲ τοῦ πνεύματος βλασφημία οὐκ ἀφεθήσεται.

Then a demon possessed man, blind and deaf, was brought to him, and he healed him so that the deaf man spoke and saw, and the whole crowd were beside themselves and were saying, “Is this not the son of David?” But the Pharisees hearing this said, “This man does not cast out demons except by Beelzebul the prince of demons.” But Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said to them, “Every kingdom divided against itself is laid waste, and every city or house divided against itself will not stand. And if Satan casts out Satan, he has been divided against himself. How then will his kingdom stand? And if I cast out demons by Beelzebul, by whom do your sons cast them out? Because of this they will be your judges. But if by the spirit of God I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. Or how is someone able to enter the house of a strong man and steal his property unless he first should bind the strong man? Then he plunders his house. Whoever is not with me is against me, and whoever does not gather with me scatters. Because of this I say to you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven for humans except the blasphemy of the holy spirit will not be forgiven.” (Matt 12:22-31)

Καὶ ἦν ἐκβάλλων δαιμόνιον [καὶ αὐτὸ ἦν] κωφόν· ἐγένετο δὲ τοῦ δαιμονίου ἐξελθόντος ἐλάλησεν ὁ κωφὸς καὶ ἐθαύμασαν οἱ ὄχλοι. τινὲς δὲ ἐξ αὐτῶν εἶπον· ἐν Βεελζεβούλ τῷ ἄρχοντι τῶν δαιμονίων ἐκβάλλει τὰ δαιμόνια· ἕτεροι δὲ πειράζοντες σημεῖον ἐξ οὐρανοῦ ἐζήτουν παρ’ αὐτοῦ. αὐτὸς δὲ εἰδὼς αὐτῶν τὰ διανοήματα εἶπεν αὐτοῖς· πᾶσα βασιλεία ἐφ’ ἑαυτὴν διαμερισθεῖσα ἐρημοῦται καὶ οἶκος ἐπὶ οἶκον πίπτει. εἰ δὲ καὶ ὁ σατανᾶς ἐφ’ ἑαυτὸν διμερίσθῃ, πῶς σταθήσεται ἡ βασιλεία αὐτοῦ; ὅτι λέγετε ἐν Βεελζεβούλ ἐκβάλλει με τὰ δαιμόνια. εἰ δὲ ἐγὼ ἐν Βεελζεβούλ ἐκβάλλω τὰ δαιμόνια, οἱ υἱοὶ ὑμῶν ἐν τίνι ἐκβάλλουσιν; διὰ τοῦτο αὐτοὶ ὑμῶν κριταὶ ἔσονται. εἰ δὲ ἐν δακτύλῳ θεοῦ [ἐγὼ] ἐκβάλλω τὰ δαιμόνια, ἄρα ἔφθασεν ἐφ’ ὑμᾶς ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ. ὅταν ὁ ἰσχυρὸς καθωπλισμένος φυλάσῃ τὴν ἑαυτοῦ αὐλήν, ἐν εἰρήνῃ ἔστιν τὰ ὑπάρχοντα αὐτοῦ· ἐπὶ δὲ ἰσχυρότερος αὐτοῦ ἐπελθὼν νικῆσῃ αὐτόν, τὴν πανοπλίαν αὐτοῦ αἶρει ἐφ’ ἣ ἐπεποίθει καὶ τὰ σκῦλα αὐτοῦ διαδίδωσιν. Ὁ μὴ ὦν μετ’ ἐμοῦ κατ’ ἐμοῦ ἔστιν, καὶ ὁ μὴ συνάγων μετ’ ἐμοῦ σκορπίζει.

And he was casting out a demon that was deaf. And it happened that as the demon went out the deaf man spoke, and the crowd was amazed. But some of them said, “By Beelzebul the prince of demons he casts out demons.” And others testing him were asking for a sign from heaven from him. But Jesus, knowing their minds, said to them, “Every kingdom divided against itself is laid waste and house falls upon house. And if Satan has been divided against himself, how will his kingdom stand? Because you said that by Beelzebul I cast out demons. And if I cast out demons by Beelzebul, by whom do your sons cast them out? Because of this, they will be your judges. But if by the finger of God I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. Whenever a strong man, fully armed, guards his castle, his possessions are at peace. But if a stronger man comes near and should conquer him, he takes

away the armor on which he relied and will distribute his booty. Whoever is not with me is against me, and whoever does not gather with me scatters. (Luke 11:14-23)

Common elements in the Mark and Q versions include:

- 1) an accusation that Jesus exorcises by the power of Beelzebul, the prince of demons
- 2) Jesus' rebuttal of this accusation with an analogy of the destruction of a divided kingdom
- 3) Jesus' assertion that if Satan were divided against himself he would be playing a part in his own downfall.

Luke and Matthew do not agree against Mark with regard to the sayings about a divided house or the binding of the strong man. Thus, I do not assign these elements to the Double Tradition, although if Q existed as an independent document, it could very well have contained these elements.

The major differences between the Markan and Q versions are as follows:

- 1) Q introduces the Controversy by having Jesus exorcise a deaf demon to the amazement of the crowd (Matt 12:22-23//Luke 11:14), while Mark does not introduce the story with an immediately preceding exorcism.
- 2) The accusation in Q lacks the statement that Jesus "has (ἔχει)" Beelzebul and the resulting linking of this wording of the accusation with the sin against the Holy Spirit as in Mark (3:22, 29-30).
- 3) Q does not use "parables (παραβολαῖς)" to describe Jesus' response as Mark (3:23) does.

- 4) In Q, Jesus knows what his opponents are thinking (Matt 12:25//Luke 11:17), while Mark does not credit this insight to Jesus.
- 5) Q's analogy about the divided kingdom speaks of the kingdom being "laid waste (ἐρημοῦτα)" (Matt 12:25//Luke 11:17) rather than simply unable to stand, as in Mark 3:24.
- 6) According to Mark, because Satan is divided against Satan, Satan cannot stand (Mark 3:26); the Q version states that Satan's *kingdom* cannot stand (Matt 12:26//Luke 11:18).
- 7) Q has Jesus ask the rhetorical question about the exorcisms performed by the sons of his opponents (Matt 12:27//Luke 11:19), while Mark's Jesus does not recognize other exorcists in this story.
- 8) In Q, Jesus asserts that his exorcisms indicate the coming of the kingdom of God (Matt 12:28//Luke 11:20); this assertion has no parallel in Mark.
- 9) Unlike in Mark, Q's Jesus asserts after the saying about binding the strong man that whoever is not for him is against him (Matt 12:30//Luke 11:23).

Controversy and Identity

The disseminators of Mark and the Double Tradition likely found it worthwhile to share their respective versions of the Beelzebul Controversy because this story satisfied the need that Jesus followers felt to distinguish themselves from non-Jesus following Jews. To demonstrate that the story would serve such differentiation, this section will proceed by 1) demonstrating that the Beelzebul Controversy depicts Jesus and his opponents disputing on the basis of a

specifically Jewish conception of demonic forces; 2) demonstrating that early Jesus followers felt a need to distinguish themselves from non-Jesus following Jews; and 3) making the case that depicting Jesus arguing with opponents on the basis of their shared Jewish conception of demonic forces would have helped satisfy the need of early Jesus followers to distinguish themselves from non-Jesus following Jews.

The Jewish Outlook of the Beelzebul Controversy

The last chapter showed how the idea of Satan as the head of a legion of demons developed in Jewish literature, and Jesus and his opponents in the Beelzebul Controversy all assume that such an array of evil demonic forces under Satan's command exist, that these forces are active in demonic possessions, and that Jesus' exorcisms truly represent the expulsion of these demons. To demonstrate the specifically Jewish character of a controversy in which the disputants share these presuppositions we will look to other literature of the turn of the Era as well as to a cross-cultural anthropological model of demon possession to see other ways of construing the nature of demons and the reality of exorcisms, ways that neither Mark nor the Double Tradition adopts.

Both Jesus and his opponents accept that Jesus accomplishes his exorcisms by supernatural power, so at issue in the dispute is whether Jesus' power is legitimate or illegitimate. Neither Mark nor the Double Tradition has characters question either the reality of demonic possession or of the exorcisms Jesus performs, which distinguishes them from the skeptical tradition of the ancient Mediterranean that doubted supernatural events and sought to

expose beliefs in such events as credulous and superstitious.²⁶⁴ The second-century CE satirist Lucian of Samosta epitomizes this tradition. In Lucian's *Lover of Lies*, the narrator, Tychiades, tells of a meeting he had with an esteemed elder citizen and several philosophers. In an attempt to overcome Tychiades's skepticism, the philosophers describe various folk-remedies as well as their encounters with supernatural creatures, but their stories only fuel his ridicule of their credulity (23). One of the "empty, foolish lies" (40) that Tychiades recounts concerns a "Syrian from Palestine," who helps those "who fall down in the light of the moon and roll their mouths with foam" by expelling the possessing spirit, after which the sufferers return to health with normal minds and pay the exorcist a hefty fee (16). Such exorcisms belong among the silly superstitions that Lucian ridicules. Those who believe in such feats deserve scorn, which Lucian is only too happy to provide.

Lucian's critique of wonder-workers and those who believe in them stems not so much from his desire to define and defend a religious identity as from his longing to protect the well-educated imperial upper class from what he views as vulgar superstitions and the social climbers who would use them to infiltrate respectable society.²⁶⁵ However, this skeptical approach to wonder workers could feature in more explicitly religious contexts as authors defined outsiders as frauds and insiders as true miracle workers. Such an attempt to delineate true supernatural power from human artifice can be found in Josephus's re-telling of the story of Moses' competition with the Egyptian magicians. To prove the power of God before Pharaoh, Moses has Aaron throw down his staff, which transforms into a snake. Pharaoh's

²⁶⁴ Christopher P. Jones, *Culture and Society in Lucian* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1986), 148.

²⁶⁵ Daniel Ogden, *In Search of the Sorcerer's Apprentice: The Traditional Tales of Lucian's Lover of Lies* (Swansea: Classical Press of Wales, 2007), 12-15; Jones, *Culture and Society*, 149-59.

magicians are able perform a similar feat, but Aaron's snake devours these other snakes and demonstrates the superior power of Israel's God (Exod 7:10-12). The biblical version does not give much detail as to the nature of the magicians' power. In *Antiquities*, Josephus has Moses give a fuller explanation of the difference between the magicians' power and that which he and Aaron wield: "the good things accomplished by me differ so strongly from those accomplished by their magic and craft (μαγείας καὶ τέχνης), as divine things differ from human things (τὰ θεῖα τῶν ἀνθρωπίνων): but I will demonstrate that what I do is not done by sorcery or counterfeit of the truth (κατὰ γοητείαν καὶ πλάνην τῆς ἀληθοῦς), but that what I do appears by the foreknowledge and power of God (κατὰ δὲ θεοῦ πρόνοιαν καὶ δύναμιν)" (2.286). Although Moses and Aaron do similar deeds as the Egyptian magicians, the magicians use human artifice (τέχνη) and deceit (πλάνη) while Moses and Aaron use divine power.

Philo of Alexandria likewise differentiates the divine power of Moses and Aaron from the tricks of the Egyptian magicians. In his *Life of Moses*, Philo gives the reaction of the Egyptian magicians when Aaron's snake swallows all of theirs: "they no longer fancied that what was done was the sophistry or craft of men (ἀνθρώπων σοφίσματα καὶ τέχνας), devised merely for deceit (ἀπάτην); but they saw that it was a more divine power (δύναμιν θειοτέραν) which was the cause of these things" (1.94). Like Josephus, Philo presents the magicians working through artifice (τέχνη) and deceit (ἀπάτη), while Moses wields authentic divine power. Both Josephus and Philo attempt to present Moses as a cultural hero of the Jews in an intellectual climate that included the skeptical tradition that would produce Lucian a century later. They therefore had to demonstrate how Moses was not a fraud, while his Egyptian opponents who did similar, but inferior deeds, belonged to the class of charlatans.

The Synoptic tradition betrays no such awareness of the challenges skeptics of Lucian's ilk would have mounted to claims that Jesus accomplished his feats through supernatural power. Mark and the Double Tradition could have had Jesus' opponents challenge the reality of his miracles; the Gospel of John gives one example of how to do so. John's Jesus heals a man born blind, and the reaction of Jesus' opponents, whom John labels 'the Jews,' is incredulity: "The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and received his sight until they called the parents of the man who received his sight" (9:18). In this story, Jesus' opponents begin by doubting the reality of Jesus' miracle and must have it proven to them. Mark and the Double Tradition could easily have presented Jesus' opponents claiming he was a fraud. At issue in the Beelzebul Controversy is not the reality of the supernatural power Jesus manifests (as it is in Philo and Josephus' portrayal of Moses), but the legitimacy of the supernatural power that all parties to the Controversy presuppose Jesus wields.

Just as the Beelzebul Controversy sought to characterize Jesus' deeds by categories not of real and fake but of legitimate and illegitimate power, so Jewish writers in addition to Philo and Josephus sought to differentiate Moses and the Egyptian magicians in cases where both parties were acknowledged to have exercised true supernatural power. In *Jubilees*, an angel recalls to Moses how "Prince Mastema stood up before you and desired to make you fall into the hand of Pharaoh. And he aided the magicians of the Egyptians, and they stood up and acted before you" (48.9). The Damascus Document gives a similar account of the difference between Moses and the Egyptian magicians, here with the name Jannes²⁶⁶ attached to their leader: "For in ancient times, Moses and Aaron arose by the hand of the Prince of Lights and

²⁶⁶ The MT does not name the Egyptian magicians, although the names do appear in Targum Pseudo-Jonathan to Exod 7:11. 2 Tim 3:8 mentions that "Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses." For the development of the tradition of Jannes and Jambres, see John G. Gager, *Moses in Greco-Roman Paganism* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1972), 137-39.

Belial in his cunning raised up Jannes and his brother when Israel was first delivered” (5.17-19). Like Jesus’ opponents in the Beelzebul Controversy, these Jewish authors attribute the activity of opposing miracle workers to the malevolent leader of the demons.

Early Jesus followers who wanted to tell a story about opponents accusing Jesus of malfeasance in performing his miracles could have framed the dispute over the reality of Jesus’ miracles. Both Jewish and non-Jewish authors in antiquity sought to delineate true miracle workers from charlatans. In both versions of the Beelzebul Controversy, the storytellers instead choose to frame the dispute around what the exorcisms prove about Jesus’ relationship to the prince of demons.

Another way of conceptualizing a dispute over the legitimacy of those who manipulate possessing spirits comes from the cross-cultural model of spirit-possession developed by I.M. Lewis and frequently employed by New Testament scholars to understand the Beelzebul Controversy as evidence of Jesus’ solidarity with the excluded and downtrodden in their struggle against their society’s elites.²⁶⁷ However, the value that Lewis’s theory has for understanding the Beelzebul Controversy is in highlighting the extent to which it does *not* fit with the model.

Based on his fieldwork with several sub-Saharan African peoples, Lewis observed that spirit possession and the manipulation of possessing spirits allowed the socially downtrodden

²⁶⁷ I.M. Lewis, *Ecstatic Religion: A Study of Shamanism and Spirit Possession* (London: Routledge, 2003). For applications to the NT and the Beelzebul Controversy in particular, see Paul W. Hollenbach, “Jesus, Demoniacs, and Public Authorities: A Socio-Historical Study,” *JAAR* 49.3 (1981): 567-88; Ched Myers, *Binding the Strong Man: A Political Reading of Mark’s Story of Jesus* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1988), 164-65; Santiago Guijarro, “The Politics of Exorcism: Jesus’ Reaction to Negative Labels in the Beelzebul Controversy,” *BTB* 29.3 (1999): 118-29; Amanda Witmer, *Jesus the Galilean Exorcist: His Exorcisms in Social and Political Context* (London: T&T Clark, 2012), 27, 116-17; Cheryl S. Pero, *Liberation from Empire: Demonic Possession and Exorcism in the Gospel of Mark* (New York: Peter Lang, 2013), 25.

to protest their plight. Lewis noted that in the societies he examined possession phenomena tended to occur among women and low-status men. He further noted that possession gave these oppressed people a way to inconvenience and challenge their oppressors without fear of repercussions, since the behavior was attributed to the possessing spirit, rather than the person.²⁶⁸ The sub-Saharan societies Lewis studied often identified these afflicting spirits as the gods of their neighbors, gods who opposed their own central pantheon. This observation led Lewis to label this type of spirit possession “peripheral.”²⁶⁹

Lewis also observed that in societies in which these possessions occurred there frequently existed a group of people with the shamanistic ability to control these spirits to some extent. He further observed that these shamans tended to be drawn from the same oppressed groups that suffered spirit possession. Usually these shamans would have experienced possession by these spirits themselves. Although the powerful men in the society would seek the services of these shamans in order to expel the spirit from the possessed subordinate, usually such exorcisms were not possible and the possession could only be mitigated or controlled. Thus, the possessed person would need the shaman’s repeated services and would also need to participate in rituals with others who suffered from such chronic possession. From the perspective of the dominant males, these activities were viewed as the necessary actions to control these unruly spirits. In reality, however, the low-status participants in these rituals created what amounted to a cult devoted to these peripheral spirits, a cult that allowed them to continue protesting, up to a point, the oppression they faced from their societies’ power

²⁶⁸ Lewis, *Ecstatic Religion*, 59-89, 90-113.

²⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 27.

structures. The spirit-possessed were in reality connivers in a subversive cult that the dominant forces of society sanctioned without fully recognizing its subversive potential.

Though influential for a generation in anthropological investigation of spirit possession, Lewis's theory is now regarded as a totalizing model that reduces the varieties of possession phenomena across societies to a manifestation of social pathology.²⁷⁰ Neither the Beelzebul Controversy nor Jesus' exorcistic activity in general fits this model. In Lewis's model, a successful exorcism would further the goals of the elites since it would remove the powerful avenue of protest that spirit possession provided. For Lewis's model to work, the shamans must ensure that spirit possession is a chronic problem so that they and the possessed can repeatedly participate in the ostensibly exorcistic ceremonies that, in fact, constitute the peripheral cult that empowers them. In successfully exorcizing demons, Jesus takes the side of the dominant social forces in Judaism. Further, if the Beelzebul Controversy were to occur along the lines of Lewis's model, the story would have shown how Jesus is in fact aligned with Satan in creating a cult that challenges the officially sanctioned cult of Israel's God. The story as told in Mark and Q does nothing of the sort; rather, it portrays both Jesus and his opponents aligning themselves with the God of Israel.

Jesus and his opponents agree more than they disagree. They all agree that Jesus' exorcisms truly show him wielding supernatural power and not simply fooling the credulous with tricks and artifice. They agree that the spirits that Jesus exorcises are malevolent servants of Satan. They differ only on the point of where Jesus obtains the supernatural power to vanquish Satan's minions. The dispute takes place wholly within the thought world of Second Temple Judaism and centers on Jesus' place in the conflict between God and Satan.

²⁷⁰ Janice Boddy, "Spirit Possession Revisited: Beyond Instrumentality," *Annual Review of Anthropology* 23 (1994): 410-14.

That the Beelzebul Controversy takes place wholly within this Jewish worldview indicates that the early tellers and hearers strove to make sense of Jesus' place within the traditions of Judaism, especially in the face of Jews who claimed these traditions as well but who did not follow Jesus.

Jesus Followers and Non-Jesus Following Jews

Jonathan Z. Smith observed that religious groups expend a great deal of intellectual energy discussing the groups most similar to themselves and what makes them different from these near-others. The idea that an out-group with a similar worldview would pose a symbolic threat to the in-group's self-identity helped explain why the near-other so engages the thoughts of religious groups: groups need to articulate their distinctiveness vis-à-vis the near-other to maintain their own identity. Smith takes as his paradigmatic example the extent to which Judaism, compared to other non-Christian groups, has been the object of Christian discourse. For first-century texts, it would be anachronistic to speak of Christianity as an entity that existed in distinction from Judaism.²⁷¹ However, the early Jesus followers would have confronted a similar symbolic threat in non-Jesus following Jews as later Christians did in Judaism. One challenge that early Jesus followers faced would have been explaining to themselves and others how it is that so many Jews would fail to follow Jesus if Jesus were the fulfillment of God's promises to these same Jews. Telling the story of the Beelzebul Controversy allowed early Jesus followers to articulate for themselves what made Jesus

²⁷¹ For the indistinct boundaries between early Jesus followers and other Jews, see Daniel Boyarin, *Borderlines: The Partition of Judaeo-Christianity* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004).

distinct from other Jews and why his followers were distinctly correct in following him when so many other Jews did not. Two other examples from early Jesus followers, specifically Paul and Justin Martyr, show how acutely they felt this need to account for themselves and to explain the continued existence of non-Jesus following Jews.

Paul demonstrates this need in Romans. One of Paul's aims in Romans is to explain how both Jews and Gentiles require the redemption that Christ brings. He claims, "Jews and Greeks all are under sin" (Rom 3:9). Being in the same condition of sinfulness, both Jews and Gentiles have the same need of redemption: "for there is no distinction, for all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God; they are justified in his grace as a gift through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ" (3:22-24). However, at the same time as Paul casts Jews and Gentiles together in sin and in need of Christ's redemption, he views Jesus through the history of the God of Israel, so he affirms the value of the Jewish tradition: "to them [i.e., Jews] belong the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law and the worship and the promises, theirs are the patriarchs and from them is Christ according to the flesh" (Rom 9:4-5). Paul is deeply troubled that so many of his fellow Jews have failed to recognize their own Messiah (9:2-3). He then accounts for the situation of the non-Jesus following Jews.

Paul turns to Jewish Scripture to explain why many Jews have not recognized Jesus as the Jewish Messiah. First he observes that Isaac alone of Abraham's sons received the inheritance as an analogy for the fact that even though all Jews are physical descendants of Abraham, only some among them are receiving the fulfillment of God's promises to Abraham, which for Paul occurs in Christ (9:7-9). Next, Paul argues that God's prenatally choosing Jacob and rejecting Esau indicates that God can select only a portion of Israel to receive redemption in Christ (9:10-13). Paul also points both to Isaiah's prediction (Isa 10:22) that

only a remnant of Israel would be saved (Rom 9:27) and to the persistence of only seven thousand in Israel who did not worship Baal in the time of Elijah (Rom 11:2-5, referring to 1 Kings 19:18) as evidence that sometimes God's plan involves saving only a fraction of Israel. Paul additionally refers to Hosea's promise (Hos 2:23) that God will accept as a people those that were formerly not God's people as evidence that God's plan also involves saving some who were not part of Israel (Rom 9:25-26). For Paul, the receipt of God's redemption by only some Jews along with some Gentiles is explicable in terms of God's promises from Israel's Scripture.²⁷²

Writing in the second century, Justin Martyr devotes his entire *Dialogue with Trypho* to differentiating Christianity from Judaism and to explaining why Christianity is the true heir to the traditions of Israel. Justin's Jewish dialogue partner, Trypho, personifies the symbolic threat Judaism posed to Christianity. Trypho raises objections to Christian practice and belief, objections that Justin then refutes. Both Trypho and Justin argue on the basis of the Scriptures of Israel. The *Dialogue* represents Justin's attempt to give Christianity legitimacy within the worldview it shares with the symbolically threatening Judaism. For instance, after Justin interprets Daniel's vision of the Ancient of Days and the son of man (Dan 7:9-14) as referring to Jesus, Trypho objects, "These and such like Scriptures, sir, compel us to wait for him who, as Son of Man, receives from the Ancient of Days the everlasting kingdom. But this so-called Christ of yours was dishonorable and inglorious, so much so that the last curse contained in the

²⁷² Paula Fredriksen, "The Question of Worship: Gods, Pagans, and the Redemption of Israel," in *Paul Within Judaism: Restoring the First-Century Context to the Apostle*, eds. Mark D. Nanos and Magnus Zetterholm (Fortress: Minneapolis, 2015), 195-8; James M. Scott, *Paul and the Nations: The Old Testament and Jewish Background of Paul's Mission to the Nations with Special Reference to the Destination of Galatians* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1995), 73, 133-5; Terence L. Donaldson, *Judaism and the Gentiles: Jewish Patterns of Universalism* (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2007), 505, 509.

law of God fell on him, for he was crucified” (32). Justin then explains that the prophecies of a glorious Messiah refer to Christ’s second coming, and he offers scriptural justification for the first, lowly coming of Christ. The *Dialogue* does not present a balanced debate between a Jesus follower and non-Jesus following Jew; rather, it attempts to explain Jesus following vis-à-vis non-Jesus following Judaism. Trypho serves as the proximate other against which Justin defines himself. The *Dialogue* is, in essence, an extended controversy that seeks to neutralize the threat that Jews, as proximate others, posed to the self-understanding of early Jesus followers.²⁷³

Both Justin and Paul need to explain Jesus’ importance in terms of Israel’s Scriptures and to demonstrate why non-Jesus following Jews are wrong. In their efforts, these non-Jesus following Jews are not true dialogue partners, but rather objects to be thought about and thought with. Paul addresses his letter to the Romans to the Jesus-followers in Rome, and there is no attempt here to convince non-Jesus following Jews to change their minds, only hope that they will. Similarly, Trypho’s anemic responses to Justin’s argument do not bespeak a serious effort to engage with those who do not follow Jesus. The authors’ aim is not to convince non-Jesus following Jews about Jesus; rather, it is to convince Jesus followers that Jesus does fulfill the promises of Israel and that non-Jesus following Jews are wrong not to recognize this fulfillment. Although they talk about the out-group (non-Jesus following Jews), both authors seem more interested in creating an identity for the in-group (Jesus followers) and

²⁷³ Tess Rajak, “Talking at Trypho: Christian Apologetic as Anti-Judaism in Justin’s *Dialogue with Trypho the Jew*,” in *Apologetics in the Roman Empire: Pagans, Jews, and Christians*, eds. Mark Edwards, Martin Goodman, and Simon Price (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 61-62; Jennifer Wright Knust, “Roasting the Lamb: Sacrifice and Sacred Text in Justin’s *Dialogue with Trypho*,” in *Religion and Violence: The Biblical Heritage*, eds. David A. Bernat and Jonathan Klawans (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix, 2007), 100-103.

perhaps even of fending off rivals within the in-group (Jesus relates to the traditions of Israel in this way, not in that way). Similar dynamics are at work in the Beelzebul Controversy.

The Beelzebul Controversy and Self-Definition

The Beelzebul Controversy serves much the same function as Justin's *Dialogue*. The Jewish opponents exist not to provide Jesus with substantive debate partners but to provide a brief objection that serves as the pretext for Jesus' self-justification. Telling this controversy story would have been a way to shape early Christian collective memory in terms of conflicts with non-believing Jews from the very beginning of the movement. Jesus' response to his opponents also provides the tellers an opportunity to articulate how he fits into the worldview that early Jesus followers shared with other Jews. Much as Trypho's objection quoted above provides Justin the opportunity to discuss how Jesus fits in the eschatological schema of Hebrew prophecy, the opponents in the Beelzebul Controversy provide Jesus an opportunity to interpret his ministry in light of the eschatological expectations for Satan's defeat. The tellers of this story emphasized that the proper understanding of Jesus' place in the eschatological drama marks the difference between Jesus and his opponents, and, by extension, between Jesus followers and other Jews.

Both Mark and the Double Tradition have Jesus' opponents begin the Controversy with the accusation that Jesus' exorcistic power comes from Beelzebul, the prince of the demons. We previously met Beelzebul the prince of demons among the demons conjured in the *Testament of Solomon*, a work roughly contemporaneous with the Synoptics. This name for the prince of demons is unknown in earlier Jewish literature, although it does sound similar to

Baalzebub, known from 2 Kings when the injured King Ahaziah orders his messengers, “Go inquire of Baal-zubub (בעל זבוב), the god of Ekron, whether I shall recover from this injury” (2 Kings 1:2). *Zebub* (זבוב) means fly in Hebrew, and the Septuagint translates the name of this god as “Baal of flies (Βααλ μῦτᾶν).” *Baal* (בעל) is the name of a Canaanite deity, but it also means “lord” in Hebrew. The Semitic root זבל could mean “prince,” or it could mean “heaven.”²⁷⁴ Thus, “Beelzebul” could be an alternate spelling of the Baalzebub of 1 Kings 1:2, or it could be a different entity known as “Baal the prince,” or “Lord of heaven.”²⁷⁵ Whatever Beelzebul might have meant to Hebrew or Aramaic speakers, in the Greek text of Mark and the Double Tradition Jesus equates this figure with Satan, one of the names or titles of the evil supernatural entity that opposes God. The defeat of Satan had become a common feature in eschatological depictions of God’s ultimate victory.

Jesus thus implies that his exorcisms are eschatological signs of God’s impending victory when he responds to his opponents’ accusation by claiming that his exorcisms demonstrate the defeat of Satan. The idea that exorcisms somehow manifested this eschatological victory does not occur in much early Jewish literature. A fragmentary Qumran document (11Q11.4) preserving an apotropaic prayer to ward off demons uses the threat of God’s eschatological punishment to deter an attacking demon, but this is as close as most Jewish literature gets to assigning eschatological significance to exorcisms.²⁷⁶ Jewish

²⁷⁴ W.E.M. Aitken, “Beelzebul,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 31 (1912): 34-53; Lloyd Gaston, “Beelzebul,” *Theologische Zeitschrift* 18 (1962): 247-55.

²⁷⁵ For various proposals on the etymology of this name, see Humphries, *Christian Origins*, 30; Witmer, *Exorcist*, 113-114; Graham H. Twelftree, *Jesus the Exorcist: A Contribution to the Study of the Historical Jesus* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1993), 105-106; William Manson, *The Gospel of Luke* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1930), 138.

²⁷⁶ Collins, *Mark*, 271.

literature prior to or contemporary with the New Testament does not interpret exorcisms as prefiguring God's ultimate victory over the ruler of the demons.²⁷⁷ Jesus' response that his exorcisms demonstrate Satan's defeat interprets the Jewish traditions about Satan's leadership of a hoard of demons and his ultimate defeat in a creative way that asserts his own eschatological significance.

Telling this controversy story would have been one way that early Jesus followers could account for the fact that not all Jews accepted Jesus as their lord or even as a legitimate teacher. Such Jews, like Jesus' opponents, failed to recognize how Jesus' exorcisms manifested God's promised defeat of evil. The story suggests that those who follow Jesus have joined the victorious side in the eschatological battle between God and the forces of Satan. By depicting a dispute that occurs in the context of Jewish traditions about Satan, his cohorts, and their ultimate fate, the authors could bolster the distinctive identity of Jesus followers as those who have recognized in his ministry God's fulfillment of the promised defeat of evil even as many Jews continued to believe in these promises, but not in Jesus as their fulfillment.

The Beelzebul Controversy in Mark

The two versions of the Beelzebul Controversy link Jesus' miracles to the eschatological defeat of Satan, but they construe the nature of this eschatological victory in different ways by envisioning different roles for Jesus and his followers in the unfolding eschatological drama. Q presents Jesus and his followers participating together in the corporate victory of the kingdom of God. For Mark, the miracles demonstrate that Jesus is the

²⁷⁷ Hüneburg, *Jesus*, 212.

powerful figure who bests Satan in single combat. The role of Jesus' followers in Mark therefore is to recognize that Jesus is this important eschatological figure; Jesus' opponents, by failing to recognize that Jesus is overcoming Satan, place themselves on the wrong side of the eschatological struggle.

The Controversy

Mark opens the Beelzebul Controversy by identifying the opponents as "the scribes who had come down from Jerusalem" (3:22). The scribes have appeared before in the Gospel. In Jesus' inaugural teaching at the Capernaum synagogue, Mark had the people exclaim that Jesus teaches with authority, in contradistinction to the scribes (1:22). By the time the Beelzebul Controversy arises, the scribes have already accused Jesus of blasphemy (2:6-7) and have challenged his table fellowship with tax collectors and sinners (2:16). After the Beelzebul Controversy, scribes from Jerusalem join the Pharisees in challenging Jesus about his disciples' eating with unwashed hands (7:1-5). In both the Beelzebul Controversy and the hand washing pericope, Mark has Jesus using Jewish traditions (the idea of Satan's eschatological defeat; observance of the Torah) to argue for the legitimacy of his or his disciples' actions against scribes noted to be from Jerusalem. The added detail of the scribes' Jerusalem origin highlights the paradox that those most connected to the traditions of Israel fail to see Jesus' identity as the savior those traditions promised.

The reference to Jerusalem also foreshadows the fate that awaits Jesus. As the Gospel progresses towards the cross, the scribes appear alongside the chief priests and the elders as the instigators of Jesus' death. The first passion prediction connects Jesus' rejection by the

scribes, along with the chief priests and elders, to his death and rising again (8:31); later Jesus makes the scribes' agency in his death with Jerusalem as its locale explicit: "We are going up to Jerusalem and the Son of Man will be handed over to the chief priests and to the scribes, and they will condemn him to death and hand him over to the Gentiles" (10:33). In Jerusalem, the scribes, along with the chief priests, look for a way to kill Jesus (11:18, 14:1). It is the scribes, chief priests, and elders who send the mob with Judas to arrest Jesus (14:43), and the scribes sit with the chief priests and the elders in judgment of Jesus (14:53). Once they have condemned Jesus, the scribes help the chief priests and elders lead Jesus to Pilate (15:1). By specifying Jesus' opponents as "scribes who had come down from Jerusalem," Mark positions the Beelzebul Controversy as an early note in the scribes' crescendo of hostility that will end with Jesus' death in Jerusalem. The mention of the scribes and Jerusalem subtly connects the human opposition that leads to Jesus' death with the supernatural opposition over which Jesus is victorious.

These hostile scribes in Mark make two parallel accusations: "He has Beelzebul," and "By the prince of the demons he casts out demons" (3:22). The first accusation implies that Jesus is possessed by the devil, while the second implies that Jesus is in league with him. The Q version provides just one accusation, which parallels Mark's second: that Jesus exorcizes by the power of Beelzebul, the prince of demons (Mt 12:24//Lk 11:15); this one accusation is a sufficient prompt for Jesus' response that his exorcisms demonstrate the downfall of the devil. Mark's added accusation provides an opportunity to make a point about the origin of Jesus' power: it comes from the Holy Spirit. Mark connects the accusation of demonic possession to Jesus' statement about the unforgiveable sin: "Amen I say to you that all sins will be forgiven to the sons of men and whatever blasphemies they blaspheme, but whoever blasphemes against

the Holy Spirit will not have forgiveness eternally, but is guilty of an eternal sin.’ Because they said, ‘He has an unclean spirit’” (3:28-30). That the logion about the unforgivable sin comes in response to the accusation that Jesus has an unclean spirit implies that Jesus is not possessed by an unclean spirit, but by the spirit of God. Thus, when the scribes accuse Jesus of having Beelzebul, they are committing the unforgivable sin of blaspheming the Holy Spirit by calling it Beelzebul.²⁷⁸ The accusation that Jesus has Beelzebul allows Mark to show that the scribes are not merely wrong, but guilty of an eternal sin. If the saying about the unforgivable sin originally circulated freely, then Mark’s joining it to the Beelzebul Controversy via the accusation of demonic possession represents a redactional strategy designed to link the scribes with the unforgivable sin.²⁷⁹

Jesus responds to this two-fold accusation “in parables” (3:23). This authorial description of the upcoming argument is accurate, but hardly necessary. In the course of the narration, the reader will come to see the technique of parable by which Jesus answers the accusation. The explicit mention of parables links the Beelzebul Controversy to Jesus’ discussion of parables in the following chapter.²⁸⁰ There Jesus tells his disciples, “To you has been given the secret of the kingdom of God, but for those outside, everything comes in parables; in order that ‘they may indeed look, but not perceive, and may indeed listen, but not understand; so that they may not turn again and be forgiven’” (4:11-12, echoing Isa 6:10). The

²⁷⁸ Marcus, *Mark* 1:284; Collins *Mark* 234-5. For more on Mark’s interpretation of the unforgivable sin logion, see James G. Williams, “Note on the Unforgivable Sin Logion,” *New Testament Studies* 12.1 (1965): 75-77; John Cochrane O’Neill, “The Unforgivable Sin,” *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 19 (1983): 37-42.

²⁷⁹ For claims that the saying about the unforgivable sin was a floating logion, see Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:344; Collins, *Mark*, 234-5; François Bovon, *Luke 2: A Commentary on the Gospel of Luke 9:51-19:27*, trans. Donald S. Deer (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2013), 184.

²⁸⁰ Humphries, *Christian Origins*, 51.

parables allow Jesus to proclaim his message in a way that guarantees a lack of understanding. They separate outsiders, to whom the message comes only indirectly, from the insiders, who receive the explanation of Jesus' message (see also Mark 4:34; 7:17). The only time Mark presents the hearers understanding a parable without Jesus' interpretation comes in the parable of the Vineyard, which Jesus tells against the chief priests, scribes, and elders (11:27-12:12). Parables in this Gospel delineate insiders, who receive eschatological reward, from the outsiders who will eventually pay for their rejection of Jesus' message.

Jesus' response begins with a rhetorical question, "How is Satan able to cast out Satan?" (3:23). This rhetorical question implies that the scribes' accusation is ridiculous. The accusation envisions Jesus' exorcisms as a gambit in which Satan sacrifices a pawn in order to lead people astray by having them place their faith in Jesus. Jesus elsewhere offers a similar idea of deceivers empowered to perform signs: "False messiahs and false prophets will appear and produce signs and omens, to lead astray, if possible, the elect" (Mark 13:22, see also Rev 13:13-14). In the case of the Beelzebul Controversy, Jesus does not countenance such a possibility. His rhetorical question posits a unity in the demonic world. He does not recognize the possibility of Satan sustaining a tactical loss to gain a long-term advantage.

Jesus illustrates the absurdity of the scribes' accusation by a set of comparisons: "if a kingdom were divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand, and if a house were divided against itself, that house could not stand, and if Satan rose up against himself and is divided, he cannot stand but has his end" (3:23-25). The momentum of these three parallel sayings moves from large corporate entity (kingdom) to smaller corporate entity (house) to individual (Satan). Jesus does not mention a Satanic kingdom or household, just Satan and his

individual end.²⁸¹ Mark's interest lies in the victory of Jesus over Satan, not God's kingdom over Satan's.

Jesus proceeds immediately to the saying about the strong man: "No one is able to enter the house of a strong man to steal his property unless he first binds the strong man and then he can plunder his house" (Mark 3:27). The picture here is of a thief tying up a householder and then stealing the possessions in the house. Jesus does not explain how this statement is relevant to the argument at hand. Nevertheless, in the context of the controversy, the implication is clear: Jesus' exorcisms are analogous to plundering the possessions of a strong man, so Jesus' success must mean that Satan's power has been overcome.²⁸² The analogy construes the combat between Jesus and Satan on a personal, rather than corporate, level—it is a one-on-one conflict between the strong man and the thief, and between Jesus and Satan.²⁸³

The description of the overcoming of the strong man as "binding" (δήση) further links this metaphor with the eschatological defeat of Satan. Jewish literature often depicts the binding of Satan and his minions as the prelude to their ultimate judgment. In *Jubilees*, when Noah seeks relief from demonic attacks on humanity, he prays that God bind and shut up the demons (10.3-8). Similarly, in *1 Enoch*, God orders Raphael to bind Azazel until the judgment day (10.4). Such binding often becomes the demons' eschatological fate. Isaiah speaks of the day when "the Lord will punish the host of heaven in heaven, and on earth the kings of the earth. They will be gathered together like prisoners (אסיר, from אסר, "to bind") in a pit; they

²⁸¹ Humphries, *Christian Origins*, 52.

²⁸² Marcus, *Mark*, 1.282.

²⁸³ Humphries, *Christian Origins*, 53.

will be shut up in a prison” (Isa 24:21-22). The Septuagint at this point lacks the etymologic connection with binding but keeps the idea of confinement: “God will lay his hand upon the inhabitants of heaven and the kings of the earth; and they will gather them and confine them in a fortress and a prison (ἀποκλείσουσιν εἰς ὄχυρῶμα καὶ εἰς δεσμωτήριον)” (Isa 24:21-22 LXX). God will imprison both terrestrial and heavenly foes. In his *Testament*, the patriarch Levi promises the coming of a new priest by whom Beliar will be bound (δεθήσεται) (18.12). New Testament authors also depict God binding Satan and/or the demons to await their eschatological judgment (Jude 6; 2 Pet 2:4) or God binding them as ultimate punishment (Rev 20:1-3). The language of binding locates the metaphor of the strong man in this apocalyptic stream of thinking; with this metaphor Jesus claims that “through...exorcisms the God of Israel is even now exercising his rule in the end time by breaking the power of Satan and/or demons and thus liberating his people.”²⁸⁴

Mark’s version of the Beelzebul Controversy makes Jesus, battling personally against Satan and Satan’s agents, the key figure in this eschatological struggle. Mark also frames the story to make Jesus’ interlocutors guilty of committing the unforgivable sin against the Holy Spirit by defaming Jesus. Recognition of Jesus’ singular status as eschatological agent is the crux of the dispute. Such a story would have had maximum relevance among hearers who shared the eschatological schema of conflict between God and Satan that developed in Second Temple Judaism. This conflict story could help maintain group integrity vis-à-vis proximate out-groups (i.e., Jews who did not follow Jesus) by emphasizing the distinctiveness of Jesus’ role in this eschatological drama as opposed to those who did not recognize Jesus having such a role. Telling the story in the way Mark does shapes collective memory of Jesus as God’s

²⁸⁴ Meier, *Marginal Jew*, 2.421.

special agent in battling Satan. It also fosters a memory of Jesus disputing with other Jews who failed to recognize him as such.

Co-text 1: The Surrounding Pericopae

The entire Gospel of Mark provides the literary context in which the Beelzebul Controversy occurs. Any act of interpretation requires that certain aspects be emphasized and other aspects be downplayed, or even ignored, depending on their relevance to the interpretive question being asked. Given my focus on the Beelzebul Controversy, I limit my co-texts to the immediate narrative setting of the Controversy along with Mark's other stories about Jesus' exorcisms.

Mark intercalates the Beelzebul Controversy within the story of Jesus' redefining his family.²⁸⁵ Before the Beelzebul Controversy, Mark relates, "And he came home; and the crowd came together again, so that they could not even eat bread. When his family (οἱ παρ' αὐτοῦ) heard it, they went out to restrain (κρατῆσαι) him, for they were saying, 'He has gone out of his mind (ἐξέστη)'" (Mark 3:19-22). The Beelzebul Controversy then interrupts this brewing family conflict. After Jesus has refuted the scribes and accused them of an unforgivable sin, Mark resumes the story about Jesus' family seeking him, which prompts Jesus to ask and answer his famous question, "Who are my mother and my brothers?... Whoever does the will of God is my brother and sister and mother" (3:33,35).

Intercalation is one of Mark's favored narrative techniques in which "the two related stories illuminate and enrich each other, commenting on and clarifying the meaning of the

²⁸⁵ Elizabeth Struthers Malbon, "Narrative Criticism: How Does the Story Mean," in *Mark and Method*, eds. Janice Capel Anderson and Stephen D. Moore (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2008), 39.

other.”²⁸⁶ By placing the Beelzebul Controversy in the midst of the story of Jesus’ family, Mark invites the reader to read the two stories in light of one another.

The family’s perception that Jesus has gone out of his mind parallels the scribes’ accusation that Beelzebul has possessed him.²⁸⁷ Like the scribes, Jesus’ family does not understand the significance of his actions and interprets them negatively. They seek to restrain him, but he is the one who does the restraining by binding the strong man and plundering his possessions. As they seek to restrain Jesus, the natal family cannot even approach Jesus, so dense does the crowd throng. The crux of the story comes in Jesus’ redefinition of his family as those who do the will of God. One’s relationship to Jesus is crucial; the reward for doing God’s will is being part of Jesus’ family, and Jesus’ natal family, by misconstruing the agent of God’s redemption as a madman, have their closeness to Jesus discounted. The locations reenforce this point. Jesus comes “home (εἰς οἶκον),” which is where the crowds convene and where Jesus is trying to eat, an activity that takes place inside, at home. To talk to him his natal family “went out (ἐξῆλθον),” emphasizing that Jesus is not eating with them and that his home is not with his natal family, who is not Jesus’ “real” family at all. While the natal family is making their way out to him, Mark introduces another set of outsiders, the scribes from Jerusalem, who also misunderstand who Jesus is. By embedding the Beelzebul Controversy in

²⁸⁶ David Rhoads and Donald Michie, *Mark as Sotry: An Introduction to the Narrative of a Gospel* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983), 51. Also see Robert M. Fowler, *Let the Reader Understand: Reader-Response Criticism and the Gospel of Mark* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1991), 143, and Scott G. Brown, “Mark 11:1-12:12: A Triple Intercalation?” *CBQ* 64.1 (2002): 78-79.

²⁸⁷ The NRSV seeks to soften the attitude of Jesus’ family by translating 3:21, “When his family heard it, they went out to restrain him, for *people* were saying, ‘He has gone out of his mind’” (emphasis mine). The Greek does not provide an explicit subject for the last independent clause (ἔλεγον γὰρ ὅτι ἐξῆστῃ). The nearest plural antecedent is Jesus’ family (οἱ παρ’ αὐτοῦ), and they are the most natural referents as the ones saying this about Jesus.

this story of Jesus' family, Mark directs attention to the importance of relating to Jesus correctly—recognizing him as the eschatological victor over Satan.

Co-text 2: The Exorcism in the Capernaum Synagogue

The exorcisms in the rest of Mark's narrative also point to Jesus' identity as the one who overcomes Satan. After calling his first disciples, Jesus' initial public action is to teach in the Capernaum synagogue. Just as the Beelzebul Controversy places Jesus' way of thinking and arguing within the thought world of Judaism, so this pericope physically locates Jesus in the practices of Judaism by having him in a synagogue on the Sabbath. Jesus amazes the people with his teaching, and

Immediately there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit that cried out, saying, "What is it to us and to you, Jesus Nazarene? Have you come to destroy us (ἤλθεσ ἀπολέσαι ἡμᾶς)? I know who you are, the Holy One of God (ὁ ἅγιος τοῦ θεοῦ)." And Jesus rebuked (ἐπετίμησεν) him saying, "Be muzzled and come out from him." And the unclean spirit, wrenching (σπαράξαν) him and crying out in a loud voice, came out from him. And all were amazed (ἐθαμβήθησαν) and asked one another saying, "What is this? A new teaching with authority (κατ' ἐξουσίαν)! He commands even the unclean spirits and they obey him! (Mark 1:23-24)

Like a moth to a flame, the unclean spirit approaches the power that will be its undoing. His question, "What is it to us and to you, Jesus Nazarene? Have you come to destroy us?," might refer to Jesus' coming to Capernaum, but the plural objects ("us" vs. "me") suggests a more programmatic insight into Jesus' mission to overcome all demons, as both the demon and the

narrator refer the demon in the singular throughout the rest of the pericope.²⁸⁸ The unclean spirit identifies Jesus as “the Holy One of God,” with the definite article emphasizing Jesus’ special status as premier agent of God’s victory over evil spirits.²⁸⁹ Throughout Mark, the unclean spirits have insight into Jesus’ identity and recognize him as the Son of God (Mark 3:11), a recognition that no human character makes until the centurion at the foot of the cross (15:39). Jesus expels the unclean spirit with a rebuke that echoes the rebuke of God in overcoming the powers of chaos in creation: “The pillars of heaven tremble and are astonished by his rebuke (רָעַר/ἐπιτιμήσεως)” (Job 26:11). Similarly, God will rout his enemies with a rebuke: “The nations roar like the roaring of many waters, but he will rebuke (רָעַר) them, and they will flee far way, chased like chaff on the mountains before the wind and whirling dust before the storm” (Isa 17:13).²⁹⁰ Jesus, like God, overcomes his cosmic opponents by the power of his rebuke.²⁹¹ The rebuke includes the command to come out, but also the command to be muzzled, a sort of binding.

Jesus’ rebuke overcomes the demon, who departs violently. The violent departure emphasizes the struggle that is occurring as Jesus overcomes the demon, and it proves that the demon has really left. The crowd’s amazement is a stock feature of many ancient miracle stories, and it emphasizes both just how wonderful the miracle is and that it was witnessed.²⁹²

²⁸⁸ Marcus, *Mark*, 1:188.

²⁸⁹ Collins, *Mark*, 173.

²⁹⁰ LXX lacks rebuking: “many nations as so much water, as so much water falling violently, he will condemn them and pursue them as the dust of chaff when men winnow in the wind and as a storm carries dust in a circle.”

²⁹¹ Howard Clark Kee, “The Terminology of Mark’s Exorcism Stories,” *NTS* 14.2 (1968): 242-45.

²⁹² Gerd Theissen, *The Miracle Stories of the Early Christian Tradition*, tr. John Kenneth Riches (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1983), 70.

The episode as a whole demonstrates Jesus' special status as God's agent in the eschatological war against Satan's demons, of which this exorcism is the first sortie.²⁹³

Co-text 3: The Gerasene Demoniac

Mark's next extended narration of Jesus' encounter with demons comes when Jesus crosses the Sea of Galilee and arrives in Gerasa:

And when he had exited the boat, immediately a man with an unclean spirit came from the tombs to meet him. He had his dwelling in the tombs and no longer was anyone able to bind (δῆσαι) him with chains because he had been bound (δεδέσθαι) many times with fetters and chains and he had ripped free from his chains and broken the fetters, and no one was strong enough (ἴσχυεν) to subdue him. (Mk 5:2-4)

This demoniac receives a much fuller introduction than the man in the Capernaum synagogue. Mark emphasizes how difficult this man has been to control, which makes all the more remarkable Jesus' curing him and all the more astonishing when the townspeople find him calmly seated at Jesus' feet (5:15). Mark twice emphasizes the impossibility of binding the man with the same word (δέω) used in the binding of the strong man (3:27). Just as Jesus was able to overcome the strong man (ἰσχυρόν) Satan, so can he also subdue the demoniac when no one else was strong enough (ἴσχυεν) to do so.

Like the demoniac in Capernaum who could not help but confront Jesus, the Gerasene demoniac rushes toward him: "and seeing Jesus from afar, he ran and bowed down (προσεκύνησεν) to him and crying out in a loud voice he said, 'What is it to me and to you,

²⁹³ Marcus, *Mark*, 1:190-92; Collins, *Mark*, 173.

Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I adjure you by God, do not torture me!” (Mk 5:6-7). The demon recognizes Jesus’ power and status and does obeisance to him.²⁹⁴ Like the demon in Capernaum, this demon recognizes Jesus’ special relationship with God and gives him a title connecting him to God. He also recognizes Jesus’ mission to fight against demonic powers and therefore begs Jesus not to torture him. The demon knows his opponent when he sees him.

Taking control of the situation, Jesus asks the demon its name to which it responds, “My name is Legion, for we are many” (5:9). This legion of demons recognizes that Jesus will expel it and therefore requests that he allow it to enter a herd of nearby pigs. Jesus accedes to their foolish request, and the possessed swine promptly rush into the lake and drown (5:12-13). The demons’ self-identification as Legion suggests an anti-imperial subtext to this story, especially given the role of Legion X Fretensis, whose sigil was a boar, in fighting the insurgents in the First Jewish Revolt.²⁹⁵ However plausible this political reading of the story may be, Mark does not develop the theme of opposition to Rome; in its Markan context, the military title of the demon calls to mind the battle between Jesus and Satan rather than between Jesus and Rome.²⁹⁶ Jesus himself can best a legion of demons, much as he can overcome their prince.

In relating the ensuing reaction to this exorcism, Mark effaces the distinction between Jesus and God, which demonstrates how the exorcisms function in Mark to reveal Jesus’ divine identity. Jesus’ victory over this Legion causes no little uproar amongst the populace, who beseech Jesus to leave their area (5:14-18). Before doing so, Jesus charges the formerly

²⁹⁴ Collins, *Mark*, 267.

²⁹⁵ Markus Lau, “Die Legio X Fretensis und der Besessene von Gerasa. Ammerkungen zur Zahlenangabe ‘ungefähr Zweitausend’ (Mk 5,13),” *Biblica* 88.3 (2013): 351-64.

²⁹⁶ Collins, *Mark*, 270.

possessed man, “Go home to your friends, and tell them how much the Lord has done for you (ὄσα ὁ κύριός σοι πεποίηκεν), and what mercy he has shown you” (5:19). Jesus does not make clear whether by “the Lord” he means God or himself, but the man clearly takes it to mean Jesus as “he went out and began to proclaim in the Decapolis how much *Jesus* did for him (ὄσα ἐποίησεν αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς), and all were amazed” (5:20). This subtle shift in subject assimilates Jesus to God—proclamation about Jesus substitutes for proclamation about God. Elsewhere in the Gospel, Mark uses ὁ κύριός to talk about Jesus. In 11:3, Jesus clearly uses ὁ κύριός as a self-referent. Mark takes the Isaianic prediction of a voice crying in the wilderness to prepare the way of the Lord as representing John the Baptist’s preparation for Jesus, which would imply that Jesus is the Lord (1:2-4). Mark’s Jesus also proclaims that “the son of man is lord even of the Sabbath” (2:28). The Geresene Demoniac, like the demons themselves, recognizes the lordship (or Lordship) of Jesus. As Joel Marcus puts it, “The alteration of the object of proclamation from ‘the Lord’ to ‘Jesus’ expresses an important Markan insight about the role and identity of Jesus in relation to God: Where Jesus acts, there God is acting. This does not mean that, for Mark, Jesus is God...but neither can the two be absolutely separated.”²⁹⁷ In Mark, Jesus acts as God’s agent in conquering Satan and his forces of evil, and Mark blurs the distinction between Jesus and God. This blurring is of a piece with the way Mark talks about Jesus throughout the Gospel: as the divine agent who overcomes Satan and not as one participant alongside others in the larger victory of God’s kingdom.

²⁹⁷ Marcus, *Mark*, 1:354.

Co-text 4: The Syro-Phoenician Woman and Her Daughter

After demonstrating that he can best the demons face to face, Mark's Jesus next shows that he can exorcize even at a distance. The Syro-Phoenician woman begs Jesus to expel the demon who torments her daughter (7:25-26). Jesus does not have an encounter with the demon; rather, the narrative focuses on his encounter with the mother of the possessed child. In response to her request, Jesus replies, "Let the children be satisfied first, for it is not right to take the children's bread and cast it to the dogs" (7:27). The woman cleverly replies, "Lord, even the dogs under the table eat from the children's crumbs" (7:28), which impresses Jesus enough that he agrees to perform the exorcism. Although he does not recount the exorcism, Mark states that when the woman returns home, she finds her daughter cured of the demon (7:29-30).

Joel Marcus finds a parallel to this exchange in the Rabbinic *Midrash on Psalms*, which speaks of Gentiles' presence at the eschatological banquet with the metaphor of dogs collecting scraps at the table.²⁹⁸ Marcus suggests that dogs at the banquet might have been a stock image for Gentile participation in Israel's eschatological blessedness. On Marcus's reading, the story of the Syro-Phoenician woman serves primarily to illustrate the opportunity Gentiles have to enjoy the blessings promised to Israel in the eschaton. Support for Marcus's reading is scant. The midrash is several centuries younger than the Gospels, and there is no way to tell if the tradition about dogs at the table goes back to the early Common Era. Marcus suggests that dogs might have been a common Jewish metaphor for Gentiles, but in support of this he can adduce only the example of *1 Enoch* 89 in which the Philistines are spoken of as dogs.

²⁹⁸ Marcus, *Mark*, 1:464.

However, even this single example does not provide the evidence that Marcus claims. This chapter presents an allegory for the monarchy under Saul, David, and Solomon who appear as rams ruling over a flock of sheep, who represent Israel. The Philistines appear as dogs, foxes, and wild boars attacking this flock. This allegory in which Philistines appear as a variety of predators does not serve as evidence for any widespread identification of Gentiles with dogs.

Amy-Jill Levine has identified several more plausible parallels to the story of Jesus' contest of words with the Syro-Phoenician woman.²⁹⁹ Dio Cassius tells a story of a woman accosting the emperor Hadrian with a request. Hadrian protests that he is too busy with his duties as emperor to help her, to which the woman responds, "Then stop being emperor." Hadrian then granted her a hearing (69.6.3). Similarly, Macrobius relates a story of a veteran asking Augustus to appear for him in court. Augustus offered to send one of his functionaries to represent him; the veteran showed Augustus his scars and loudly reminded the emperor that at Actium he did not seek a substitute, but fought for the future Augustus in person. Chastened, Augustus appeared in court himself on the veteran's behalf (*Saturnalia* 2.4.27). A similar narrative appears in the Babylonian Talmud where Rabbi Judah the Prince opens his storehouse in a famine only to those with rabbinic learning. When Jonathan ben Amram asks for food, he pretends that he is unlearned so that Judah will rebuff him. After Judah refuses, Jonathan replies, "Give me food, for even a dog and a raven are given food." Abashed, Judah allows all, the learned and the unlearned, to eat from his storehouse (*b. Baba Batra* 8a). The authority figure whom a petitioner chastens into providing aid he initially refused is a trope in ancient literature. These stories demonstrate the virtue of *praotes*, conventionally translated "meekness," which denotes a willingness to forego a prerogative to which one is entitled in

²⁹⁹ Amy-Jill Levine, "Matthew's Advice to a Divided Readership," in *The Gospel of Matthew in Current Study*, ed. David E. Aune (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001), 37-38.

order to help someone else.³⁰⁰ Mark's story of this exorcism furthers the characterization of Jesus: he is a *praos* authority figure. The exorcism again focuses attention on Jesus and his personal excellence.

Co-text 5: The Convulsed Boy

Mark's next exorcism story occurs as Jesus is coming down the mountain after his Transfiguration; he is accompanied by Peter, James, and John. A crowd has gathered and has witnessed the other disciples' failure to exorcize a demon that convulses a boy, and now some scribes are arguing with the disciples (9:14-18). Jesus responds, "O faithless generation (*γενεὰ ἄπιστος*), how much longer (*ἕως πότε*) must I be with you? How much longer (*ἕως πότε*) must I endure you?" (9:19). Jesus' complaint against his contemporaries echoes Moses' complaint about the Israelites in the wilderness who were "a perverted and twisted generation" (*לְדֹר וּפְתִלְתָּל עֲקֹשׁ וְגֵנְעָא סְכוּלִיָּא וְדִיִּסְטְרָאֻמְמֵנָה* Deut 32:5). God makes a similar complaint about the wilderness generation, calling them "a generation of perversity (*לְדֹר וְתִפְכָּת וְגֵנְעָא עֲזָזֻסְטְרָאֻמְמֵנָה*)" (Deut 32:20). God, like Jesus, also asks rhetorically how long these people will vex him: "How long (*עַד־אֵינָה / ἕως τίνοϛ*) will this people provoke me and how long (*עַד־אֵינָה / ἕως τίνοϛ*) will they not believe (*יִאֱמִינֻ / πιστεύουσίν*) in me, in spite of all the signs that I have done among them?" (Num 14:11). The lack of faith of the wilderness generation has vexed God just as the lack of faith on the part of Jesus' contemporaries vexed him. By having Jesus complain about a faithless generation, Mark both echoes the Pentateuchal trope of God's displeasure with the Israelites in the wilderness and also puts Jesus into the role of God in this

³⁰⁰ Wendy J. Cotter, *The Christ of the Miracle Stories: Portrait Through Encounter* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2010), 10-12.

reply.³⁰¹ Even apart from the scriptural echoes, the complaint against his contemporaries as a “faithless generation” makes it seem that Jesus does not belong in the same categories as other people, that he is not part of this generation, that he longs to be done with them and perhaps go to the divine world where he belongs.³⁰² Again, Mark’s exorcism story separates Jesus from the rest of humanity and suggests that he and God are somehow the same.

Mark further portrays Jesus as divine in his depiction of the exorcism itself and Jesus’ ensuing discussion of prayer. Unlike the previously encountered demons, who speak with Jesus before he expels them, this demon reacts to Jesus’ presence by convulsing the boy (9:20). Instead of talking with the demon, Jesus speaks with the boy’s father, which leads to the famous exchange:

“If you can do anything, have pity on us and help us.”
But Jesus said to him, “If you can!” All things are possible for the one who believes.”
Immediately the father of the child cried out saying, “I believe, help my unbelief!” (9:22-24)

In response to the father’s plea, Jesus expels the demon (9:25). When the disciples ask why they failed, Jesus answers, “This kind can come out in no way except by prayer” (9:29). Mark, however, does not narrate Jesus praying for the demon to come out; Jesus simply commands the demon to do so.³⁰³ Where the disciples require prayer to give them power, Jesus simply possesses the requisite power. The only place in the pericope where anything like a prayer

³⁰¹ Marcus, *Mark*, 2:653.

³⁰² Collins, *Mark*, 437.

³⁰³ *Ibid.*, 439.

occurs is in the father's request to Jesus.³⁰⁴ Jesus again functions in the role of God, the one to whom prayers for help are addressed.

The description of the exorcism itself foreshadows Jesus' future suffering. Mark makes some effort to describe the process of the demon's expulsion: "Crying out and convulsing much, it came out. And he [the child] was like a dead person (νεκρός) so that the crowd said that he had died (ἀπέθανεν). But Jesus, grasping his hand, raised (ἤγειρεν) him and he arose (ἀνέστη)" (9:26-27). To advance the plot, all that Mark needed was to show that the exorcism succeeded. Narratively, these details are extraneous and therefore invite consideration as to why Mark included them. Moreover, Mark's description is doubly redundant—the boy seemed so dead that people thought he was dead, but Jesus raised him and he rose. These pleonasm create a density of references to dying and rising, a theme of Mark's Gospel:

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

And when they came down from the mountain, he ordered them not to tell anyone what they saw until the Son of Man had risen from the dead (ἐκ νεκρῶν ἀναστῆ). And they kept the word amongst themselves discussing what rising from the dead (ἐκ νεκρῶν ἀναστῆναι) might be. (9:9-10)

He was teaching his disciples and was saying to them that the Son of Man would be betrayed into the hands of men and they would kill him and having been killed after three days he would rise (ἀναστήσεται). (9:31)

And they will mock him and spit on him and scourge him and kill him, and after three days he will rise (ἀναστήσεται). (10:34)

When they rise from the dead (ἐκ νεκρῶν ἀναστῶσιν) they do not marry nor are they given in marriage, but they are as the angels in heaven. But about the dead that they are raised (τῶν νεκρῶν ὅτι ἐγείρονται), have you not read in the Book of Moses how God said to him, 'I am the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac

³⁰⁴ Marcus, *Mark*, 2:665.

and the God of Jacob.’ He is not the God of the dead (νεκρῶν), but of the living.” (12:25-26)

But after I have been raised (ἐγερθῆναι) I will go ahead of you into Galilee. (14:28)

He said to them, “Do not be amazed. You seek Jesus of Nazareth who was crucified. He has been raised (ἠγέρθη); he is not here. Behold the place where they laid him.” (16:6)

The superfluous references to dying and rising in this pericope parallel the passion predictions that surround the story of this exorcism. The boy suffers, seems to die, and rises, which, *mutatis mutandis*, prefigures Jesus’ own passion experience. Another link to Jesus’ passion comes at the beginning of the pericope, where Mark has even introduced the scribes as spectators to the disciples’ failed exorcism (9:14). Like the description of the boy’s apparent dying and rising, the mention of the scribes does not advance the plot of the pericope, but their presence provides another thematic link between the story of this exorcism and the story of Jesus’ death and rising. This exorcism maintains a Christocentric focus—it demonstrates Jesus’ power relative to that of his disciples and foreshadows the death and resurrection that Jesus will undergo.

Exorcism and Identity in Mark

These co-texts reveal a pattern in Mark’s deployment of exorcism stories. Though not displaying a uniform eschatological outlook, these four exorcism stories are consistent in their Christological focus, whether depicting Jesus as the opponent of Satan’s host, as the meek ruler, or as the one who overcomes death. The exorcisms reveal different facets of Jesus’ identity, but they all point to Jesus’ special identity. The Beelzebul Controversy in turn

provides an interpretive key for these four stories by showing that exorcisms demonstrate Jesus acting as God's eschatological champion in conquering Satan. This cosmic conflict between Jesus and Satan has an earthly parallel in Jesus' conflict with the scribes and the other human opponents who will bring about Jesus' death. The exorcisms allow Mark to demonstrate Jesus as the powerful, perhaps divine, figure who undergoes death but conquers Satan in the process. The Beelzebul Controversy in its Markan form differentiates Jesus followers from non-Jesus followers on the basis of their ability to see in his exorcisms evidence of Jesus' identity as this powerful figure who conquers Satan.

The Beelzebul Controversy in the Double Tradition

In Mark's version of the Beelzebul Controversy, the exorcisms demonstrate Jesus' personal victory over Satan. In the Q version of this story, the focus is not on Jesus' defeat of Satan, but on the kingdom of God's defeat of the kingdom of Satan, a victory of which Jesus' miracles are a part. The Double Tradition uses corporate metaphors for the conflict between good and evil that invite readers to imagine themselves taking a place alongside Jesus in this fight. Those who recognize Jesus' exorcisms as signs of the dawning kingdom of God can join the winning side of the decisive eschatological conflict. Whereas in Mark being on the winning side meant recognizing Jesus as the one who overcomes Satan, the winning side in Q are those who participate with Jesus in the victory of God's kingdom over Satan's. While Mark strives to demonstrate the uniqueness of Jesus, Q depicts Jesus as one combatant among many in the fight against Satan's kingdom.

While Mark narrates a number of exorcisms that serve as co-texts for the Beelzebul Controversy, the Q material contains only one exorcism. The account, which immediately precedes the Q version of the Beelzebul Controversy, depicts Jesus amazing a crowd by exorcizing a demon that causes deafness (Luke 11:14) or deafness and blindness (Matt 12:22-23). In distinction from the Markan exorcisms, this lone Q exorcism provides no repartee between Jesus and the demon, no opportunity for the demon to recognize Jesus' divine mandate or for Jesus to talk with petitioners and demonstrate his authority. Rather, Q tells the exorcism succinctly; the emphasis in the telling is the effect that the exorcism has on the formerly deaf person (he can now hear and talk) and on the crowd (they are amazed).

The exorcism demonstrates Jesus' power, but the Q version does not expand the story to highlight the specialness of that power the way Mark so often does. Also in contrast to Mark, Q briefly mentions that Jesus could read the thoughts of the hostile accusers (Matt 12:25// Luke 11:17) while Mark makes no such indication. Although the narration in Q does not explore the nature of Jesus' power the way Mark so often does, Q nevertheless portrays Jesus as possessing supernatural ability.

As in Mark, so in both Matthew and Luke, Jesus begins to refute the accusation that he is in league with Beelzebul by comparing the fate of a divided Satan to that of divided human institutions (underlines represent Double Tradition material):

And if a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand, and if a house is divided against itself, that house cannot stand, and if Satan rises up against himself and is divided, he cannot stand but has his end. (Mark 3:24-26)

But Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said to them, "Every kingdom divided against itself is laid waste, and every city or house divided against itself does not stand. And if Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself. How then will his kingdom stand? (Matt 12:25-26)

But Jesus, knowing their minds, said to them, “Every kingdom divided against itself is laid waste and house falls upon house. And if Satan is divided against himself, how will his kingdom stand?” (Luke 11:17-18)

Rather than the narrowing from kingdom to house to Satan as an individual, Matthew and Luke both begin with the fall of a generic kingdom and then return to the fall of Satan’s *kingdom*.

As noted in the last chapter, the specific idea of a kingdom of Satan was not widely attested in Jewish literature. However, the idea that Satan had dominion over the other demons was widespread. The Double Tradition has here taken a familiar idea from Second Temple Jewish thought and created a novel term for it. This idea of Satan’s kingdom focuses attention on evil as a corporate entity. The Double Tradition also differs from Mark in saying that the fate of a divided kingdom to be “laid waste (ἐρημοῦται)” rather than simply being unable to stand. The Q version gives a heightened sense of destruction that this kingdom has undergone. The logical force of the argument also differs. In Mark the argument works by analogy: just as a divided kingdom cannot stand, so too could a divided Satan not stand. In the Double Tradition, the argument goes from the general to the specific: any kingdom divided is destroyed, so if Satan’s kingdom is divided it must fall. The defeat of evil thus comes in the destruction of this corporate entity rather than in the defeat of an individual spiritual entity.

Envisioning the defeat of evil as the corporate downfall of Satan’s dominion finds its closest analogy in the Qumran War Scroll.³⁰⁵ In describing the great eschatological battle, it predicts, “In three lots the Sons of Light shall stand firm so as to strike a blow at wickedness, and in three the army of Belial shall strengthen themselves so as to force the retreat of the forces [of Light. And when the] banners of the infantry cause their hearts to melt, then the might of God will strengthen the he[arts of the Sons of Light.] In the seventh lot the great hand

³⁰⁵ Collins, *Mark*, 232-3

of God shall overcome [Belial and al]l the angels of his dominion” (1QM 1.13-15). Repeating a similar sentiment later in the document, the author assures the readers “the great hand of God shall be lifted up against Belial and against all the fo[rc]es of his dominion for an eternal slaughter” (1QM 18.1). The victory can be alternatively attributed to God acting directly or by God strengthening the army of the Sons of Light. Since Sons of Light is elsewhere a way for the Qumran sectarians to refer to themselves, such as in 1QS 2.16 and 3.23-24, the implication of the War Scroll is that God’s true followers, the Qumran sectarians, participate in the supernatural battle with Belial’s dominion.³⁰⁶

The Double Tradition does not make such an explicit connection between its presumed readers and God’s forces fighting the kingdom of Satan. However, envisioning the ultimate victory over evil as the defeat of an army or kingdom creates a heightened metaphorical level of participation in evil’s defeat as compared to the metaphor of Satan’s defeat in single combat. If God, or Jesus, or a single angel defeats the devil in single combat, others can participate only vicariously in the victory. However, if the victory is a war between the forces of good and the forces of evil, then widespread direct participation in this victory is possible. The corporate metaphor shifts focus from the individual victory of God or God’s agent to the shared victory of all those on God’s side. Compared to Mark, Q deemphasizes the unique role of Jesus to emphasize the role of those who follow him as participating in the group victory that is the kingdom of God’s conquest of the kingdom of Satan.

This more corporate and participatory paradigm, along with its attendant deemphasis on Jesus’ uniqueness, appears in the rest of the Q version of the Beelzebul Controversy. After the

³⁰⁶ Collins, *Mark*, 232-3.

analogies of the divided kingdom and houses, the Double Tradition contains a rebuttal to the Beelzebul accusation that has no parallel in Mark:

And if I cast out demons by Beelzebul, by whom do your sons cast them out?
Because of this they will be your judges. But if by the spirit of God I cast out
demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. (Matt 12:27-28)

And if I cast out demons by Beelzebul, by whom do your sons cast them out?
Because of this, they will be your judges. But if by the finger of God I cast out
demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. (Luke 11:19-20)

Jesus here puts himself in the company of exorcists of whom his opponents do approve, and by so doing, he shows their inconsistency in opposing him.³⁰⁷ A number of commentators have pointed out that this linking of Jesus to the other exorcists implies that the other exorcists are also manifesting the kingdom of God.³⁰⁸ Twelftree, on the other hand, argues that Q's Jesus differentiates himself from these other exorcists by attributing his own power to the spirit of God. Grammatically, he sees the adversative $\delta\epsilon$ and the emphatic $\epsilon\gamma\omega$ in Matt12:28//Luke 11:20 as strongly marking the contrast between the nature of Jesus' exorcisms and those of the other exorcists whom he has just mentioned.³⁰⁹ However, the adversative force of $\delta\epsilon$ is not absolute, and the Double Tradition does not explicitly distinguish Jesus' exorcisms in v. 28//19

³⁰⁷ Fledderman, *Q*, 506.

³⁰⁸ Humphries, *Christian Origins*, 33; Fledderman, *Q*, 506; Huneburg, *Jesus*, 212.

³⁰⁹ Twelftree, *Jesus the Exorcist*, 109; Graham H. Twelftree, *In the Name of Jesus: Exorcisms among Early Christians* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007), 92-94.

from those of the sons of v. 27//20. If the authors of the Double Tradition had meant to qualify the relationship of other exorcists to Jesus, they could have done so.

Mark provides an example of how an author could imply a difference between Jesus' exorcisms and those of other exorcists. John reports to Jesus, "Teacher, we saw someone casting out demons in your name (ἐν τῷ ὀνόματί σου), and we stopped him, because he did not follow us" (Mark 9:38). An exorcist not attached to Jesus exists and can do what Jesus' disciples failed to do with the convulsed boy (9:14-29), but his exorcisms are clearly derivative of Jesus' power.³¹⁰ The Double Tradition makes no such explicit qualification about the exorcisms of the "sons" in Matthew 12:27//Luke 11:19. Indeed the force of the argument relies on the similarity of Jesus and the sons, for Jesus here is telling his opponents that consistency would demand that Satan empowered the sons' exorcisms if Satan empowered his. An accusation against Jesus is an implicit accusation against the sons, and so the sons will be the judges in this dispute. Unlike in Mark, where Jesus is the font of the unknown exorcist's power, here in Q Jesus exists alongside other exorcists who likewise participate in the victory of the kingdom of God.

This note that the sons will be the judges (κρίται) of Jesus' opponents is a clever double entendre. Within the scope of the dispute, it can be taken to mean that the sons will judge who is in the right, Jesus or his opponents. However, in a pericope infused with such eschatological overtones, the promise that his opponents will be judged calls to mind also the final judgment.

³¹⁰ Joseph Vlcek Kozar, "Meeting the Perfect Stranger: The Literary Role and Social Location of the Encounter Between Jesus and the Strange Exorcist in Mark 9:38-41," *Proceedings of the Eastern Great Lakes and Midwestern Biblical Society* 24 (2004): 103-23; Harry Fleddermann, "The Discipleship Discourses (Mark 9:33-50)," *CBQ* 43.1 (1981): 64-66; Robert H. Gundry, *Mark: A Commentary on His Apology for the Cross* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993), 510; Richard A. Horsley, *Hearing the Whole Story: The Politics of Plot in Mark's Gospel* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2001), 96.

Elsewhere in the Double Tradition Jesus promises that other human beings, namely his disciples, will serve as eschatological judges:

You will sit upon twelve thrones judging (κρίνοντες) the twelve tribes of Israel
(Matt 19:28)

You will sit on thrones judging (κρίνοντες) the twelve tribes of Israel
(Luke 22:30)

In the Double Tradition, it is not only Jesus who is the eschatological judge, but those who side with him also get to be judges. Those who participate in the eschatological battle with the forces of Satan participate in the subsequent judgment. The double entendre thus claims the opponents' sons as co-workers with Jesus. Q does not show much concern here to emphasize the uniqueness of Jesus' power.

Rather than emphasize Jesus' uniqueness, the Q version emphasizes the exorcisms as signals of the coming of the kingdom of God. The kingdom of God counters the kingdom of Satan mentioned in the prior verse. Thus, whereas the Markan version of the Beelzebul Controversy frames the conflict as an encounter between Jesus and Satan, the Q version maintains a more corporate emphasis and frames the conflict as a clash of two kingdoms, of which Jesus and Satan are the key figures. The last chapter noted that the kingdom of God could symbolize the whole story of God's sovereignty, but that in much turn-of-the-Era literature it had a strong eschatological thrust. The review of the kingdom of God elsewhere in the Double Tradition confirmed its eschatological nature, especially when it is spoken of as coming. Here in the Beelzebul Controversy the kingdom of God is again spoken of as coming, but in this case the coming is not in the future. Jesus says that the kingdom of God "has come

(ἐφθάσεν)” in his exorcisms. In classical Greek, φθάνω has a range of meanings that includes “anticipate,” “precede,” “overtake,” or “arrive at.”³¹¹ In New Testament Greek the word almost exclusively is used to denote arrival.³¹² The use of the aorist tense in Matt 12:28//Luke 11:20 denotes an action that has been completed. Thus, the most natural meaning of Jesus’ statement is that his exorcisms demonstrate that the kingdom of God has arrived and is therefore already present.³¹³ Some commentators, wishing to avoid the implication that Jesus viewed the kingdom of God as a present entity, have argued that the sense of the verse is that the exorcisms show that the kingdom of God is approaching.³¹⁴ The aorist tense and the usual New Testament connotation of φθάνω as “arrive” militate against such a reading. Moreover, the review of Q’s use of the kingdom of God showed that the Double Tradition does speak of the kingdom being in some sense present in Jesus’ ministry, even as it remains in the future as well. In the Q version of the Beelzebub Controversy, the exorcisms make the kingdom of God present to those who experience them.³¹⁵

Whereas Mark’s version emphasizes the exorcisms as demonstrations of Jesus’ overcoming Satan, the version from the Double Tradition claims that the exorcisms demonstrate the arrival of the kingdom of God, a kingdom that will conquer the kingdom of Satan. Throughout the Q version of the Controversy, the emphasis has been on this battle

³¹¹ BDAG 856-7, φθάνω. Also, Meier, *Marginal Jew*, 2:412; Beasley-Murray, *Kingdom*, 78.

³¹² e.g. Rom 9:31, 2 Cor 10:14, Phil 3:16, 1 Thess 2:16. Only in 1 Thess 4:15 does it carry the meaning “to precede.”

³¹³ Meier, *Marginal Jew*, 2:412; Twelftree, *Jesus the Exorcist*, 92.

³¹⁴ E.P. Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism* (London: SCM Press, 1985), 134; Reginald Fuller, *The Mission and Achievement of Jesus* (London: SCM Press, 1967), 25-26, 37-38; for a summary of other such interpretations, see Beasley-Murray, *Kingdom*, 76.

³¹⁵ Twelftree, *Jesus the Exorcist*, 92.

between the forces of good and the forces of evil in which Jesus is one participant among others.

Although Jesus is one participant among others, he still claims a position of importance in the struggle, but even as Q's Jesus emphasizes his own eschatological importance he simultaneously emphasizes his follower's participation in his eschatological task. At the end of the dispute, Q's Jesus makes his importance clear: "Whoever is not with me is against me, and whoever does not gather (συνάγων) with me scatters (σκοπίζει)" (Matt 12:30//Luke 11:23). The saying focuses on allegiance to Jesus as the critical decision and in good apocalyptic fashion gives only two options, for or against.³¹⁶ Jesus repeats this binary in two ways: being with Jesus or against Jesus, gathering or scattering. Gathering (συνάγω) language appears elsewhere in Q in the mouth of John the Baptist predicting eschatological judgment:

His winnowing fork is in his hand and he will clear his threshing floor and will gather (συνάξει) his wheat into the barn, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire. (Matt 3:12)

His winnowing fork is in his hand to clear his threshing floor and to gather (συναγαγεῖν) the wheat into his barn, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire. (Luke 3:17)

The Baptist uses the agricultural metaphor of winnowing and collecting grain to speak of the eschatological gathering of the saved by the one coming after John, which the text implies is

³¹⁶ Jacques Schlosser, "Q et la christologie implicite," in *The Sayings Source Q and the Historical Jesus*, ed. Andreas Lindemann (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2001), 314.

Jesus. However, when Jesus uses this same gathering language to speak of separating the good from the wicked, he broadens the participation in this task. Jesus does not speak of those who are gathered by him versus those who are scattered, but those who gather with him and those who scatter. Where John's language envisions Jesus working alone to separate the saved from the condemned, Jesus' language paints the binary as those working with him and those working against him. Jesus is the key figure about whom a decision is demanded, but the decision in the Beelzebul Controversy is whether to be Jesus' coworker or Jesus' opponent.

Throughout the Q version of the Beelzebul Controversy, Jesus construes his miracle working in the context of the eschatological victory over Satan, just as Mark does. However, in the Double Tradition, Jesus uses metaphors—the kingdoms of God and Satan—that emphasize the corporate nature of the opposing forces of good and evil, and Jesus strongly implies that others, such as the other exorcists and those who gather with him, participate alongside him in the conquest of Satan. The exorcisms show that this conquest is occurring, and these miracles invite others who recognize them as indicators of this conquest to join with Jesus in the victory of the kingdom of God over the kingdom of Satan.

Conclusion

Chapter 2 looked at accusations of magic in the ancient world and found that the accusers and respondents were engaged in a double contest both to place the miracle worker in a category of deviance or of social acceptability and also to define these categories. Someone who tells the story of such a dispute gets to determine how these contests play out. Both Mark and the Double Tradition construct their contests so that the disputants do not define their

categories in terms of evil magic versus legitimate miracle working or in terms of fraud versus actual supernatural occurrence, categories with widespread currency in turn-of-the-Era literature among both Jews and non-Jews. Rather, the authors have Jesus and his opponents define their categories in terms of alliance with or opposition to Satan, and so they draw on the specifically Jewish story of the arch-fiend who opposes the God of Israel. The authors have Jesus emphasize the eschatological significance of such alliance or opposition. In both versions Jesus turns the accusation back on the accusers by implying that their failure to locate Jesus in the proper category shows that they are the deviant ones: in Mark the accusers are guilty of the eternal sin, while in Q they will be judged by their sons.

Jesus and his opponents share belief in the existence of a chief demon who opposes Israel's God and will meet his doom in the eschaton. Within their shared worldview the difference between Jesus and his opponents is slight: they locate Jesus differently in the combat between God and the devil. Just because this distinction is slight, does not mean it is unimportant. This distinction in where Jesus fits into the grand eschatological drama makes the difference between those who are right and those who are wrong. The narrative serves the narcissism of minor differences in magnifying this distinction into the crucial boundary between right and wrong. In repudiating his opponents in the Beelzebul Controversy, Jesus symbolically repudiates those who share the belief in the victory of Israel's God over the forces of evil but who fail to see that this victory is occurring in Jesus' ministry, such as non-Jesus following Jews. The Controversy also implies that recognition of Jesus' eschatological role is one aspect of the identity of Jesus followers, so this story could also marginalize fellow followers who did not recognize an eschatological role for Jesus. Telling the story would have been one way for early Jesus followers to create identity for themselves by explaining why the

difference between following Jesus and not following Jesus was so important: because to follow Jesus meant to be on the right side of the coming eschatological victory over evil.

Claiming a singular eschatological role for Jesus is a way to create a group identity for Jesus followers, but this singularity comes at a price. The more singular Jesus' role becomes, the less and less do his followers participate directly in this victory. Mark, by framing the exorcisms as evidence of Jesus' conquest of Satan, makes Jesus central to God's eschatological victory. The early Jesus followers that told this version of the story could see themselves as the beneficiaries of the eschatological victory. Their recognition of Jesus as the eschatological victor clearly marked them off against those who did not share this recognition. The Double Tradition, by framing the exorcisms as evidence of the victory of the kingdom of God over the kingdom of Satan, makes Jesus the key participant in the battle between God's forces and Satan's. The early Jesus followers who told this version of the story could envision themselves as Jesus' co-workers in this victory and see that allegiance to Jesus marked which side one took in this battle. The major distinction is between viewing Jesus as winning the eschatological victory, from which his followers benefit, and viewing Jesus working together with his followers in this victory.

CHAPTER V

THE COMMISSIONING OF THE DISCIPLES

According to the Grand Inquisitor, the Church claims to be acting as Jesus' successor while it wields the power of miracle that Jesus actually rejected. The relationship among Jesus, his successors, and the power of miracles features also in Mark and the Double Tradition; both describe Jesus delivering the power to heal in his Commissioning of the Disciples. Telling such a story could generate a positive group identity for Jesus followers by affirming that Jesus' healing power persisted among them even when Jesus was physically gone. Mark and Q, however, differently construe how healings demonstrate the continuity between Jesus and his followers. For the Double Tradition, the healings manifest the presence of eschatological blessings; in their healings the disciples make present the Kingdom of God as Jesus did. In Mark, however, the healings demonstrate the power of Jesus, and the disciples' healings show that they derive their power from Jesus.

To make this argument, this chapter begins by laying out the Mark and Double Tradition versions and then moves on to examine them using Max Weber's concept of charisma in the context of religious groups handling successions. Weber's framework helps demonstrate how the telling of Jesus handing over healing power would have allowed the tellers to inculcate a positive identity for the group of early Jesus followers. The chapter then turns to the Markan and Q versions of the Commissioning along with their relevant co-texts to demonstrate the distinct ways these two versions depict the relationship between the disciples' healings and those of Jesus.

Mark's brief version comes in the sixth chapter:

And he called the twelve and he began to send them two by two and gave them authority over unclean spirits. And he ordered them to take nothing on the road except only a staff, neither bread, nor a bag, nor copper in their belts, but to bind their sandals and not wear two tunics. And he said to them, "Whenever you enter into a house, stay there until you leave from that place. And whatever place does not receive you or does not hear you, when you leave from there shake off the dust from under your feet as a testimony against them." And going out they proclaimed that people should repent, and they cast out many demons, and they anointed many sick people with oil and healed them. (Mark 6:7-13)

Luke has two versions of Jesus sending out his disciples. The first, similar to Mark's, features Jesus sending out the Twelve:

And calling the twelve together he gave them power and authority over all the demons and to cure diseases, and he sent them to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal the sick. And he said to them, "Do not take anything on the road, neither a staff, nor a sack, nor bread, nor silver nor two tunics to have at hand. And into whatever house you enter, stay there and go out from there. And whoever does not receive you, when you go out from that city, shake off the dust from your feet as testimony against them." And going out, they passed through the villages, proclaiming the good news and healing everywhere." (Luke 9:1-6)

Luke contains a further sending of a group of seventy (or seventy-two) with similar instructions:

And after these things the Lord appointed another seventy-two and sent them two by two before him into all the cities and places where he was about to go. He said to them, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Pray then that the Lord of the harvest send out workers into his harvest. Go. Behold I send you as sheep in the midst of wolves. Do not carry a purse, nor a sack, nor sandals, and do not greet anyone along the road. Into whatever house you enter, say first, 'Peace to this house.' And if there is a son of peace is there, let your peace rest

on him, but if not, let your peace turn back to yourselves. Remain in that house eating and drinking whatever is from it, for the worker is worthy of his wages. Do not go about from house to house. And into whatever city you enter and they receive you, eat what is set before you and heal the sick in it and say to them, 'The kingdom of God has come near to you.' But into whatever city you enter and they do not receive you, go out into its main street and say, 'Even the dust of your city that clings to our feet, we wipe off in protest against you. Yet know this, that the kingdom of God has come near.' I tell you, on that day it will be more tolerable for Sodom than for that city." (Luke 10:1-12)

Matthew presents a single set of mission instructions that combines elements found in both

Lukan versions:

Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Pray then that the Lord of the harvest send out workers into his harvest." And calling his twelve disciples, he gave to them authority over unclean spirits to cast them out and to heal all illness and every malady. These are the names of the twelve apostles: first Simon called Peter and Andrew his brother, and James the son of Zebedee and John his brother. Philip and Bartholomew, Thomas and Matthew the tax collector, James the son of Alphaeus and Thaddeus. Simon the Cananaean and Judas Iscariot who betrayed him. These twelve Jesus sent, ordering them, saying "Do not go into the way of Gentiles nor enter a city of Samaritans, but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And as you go, proclaim, saying that the kingdom of heaven has come near. Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those with leprosy, cast out demons. Freely you received, freely give. Do not put gold or silver or copper into your belts, nor a sack for the road nor two tunics nor sandals nor a staff, for the worker is worthy of his food. Into whatever city or town you enter, inquire who in it is worthy. Stay there until you leave. When you enter into the house, greet it and, if the house is worthy, let your peace come upon it, but if it is not worthy, let your peace return to you. And whoever does not receive you or hear your words, when you go out from that house or that city, shake off the dust from your feet. Amen I say to you, it will be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah on the day of judgment than for that city. Behold I send you as sheep in the midst of wolves. Become then as wise as serpents but as innocent as doves." (Matt 9:38-10:16)

These passages present another example of overlap between Mark and the Double Tradition. Among supporters of the Q hypothesis, the consensus has been that Luke 9:1-6 (the sending of the Twelve) represents Luke's rendering of the Markan version, while Luke 10:1-11

represents a rendering of the Q version; Matthew has combined elements of the Markan and Q versions in one discourse.³¹⁷

Examining the pericopes from Matthew and Luke reveals features found in these Gospels, but absent from Mark, so they therefore fit our definition of Double Tradition material:

- 1) The link between the disciples' healing the sick and proclaiming the kingdom of God (Matt 10:7//Luke 9:2, 10:9)
- 2) Jesus' saying about the harvest and the laborers (Matt 9:37-38//Luke 10:2)
- 3) Jesus forbidding the disciples from taking silver, sandals, or a staff on their journey (Matt 10:9-10//Luke 9:3, 10:4)
- 4) The disciples' peace resting on a house or returning to them (Matt 10:12//Luke 10:5)
- 5) The saying that it will be more tolerable for Sodom than for a town that rejects the disciples (Matt 10:15//Luke 10:12)
- 6) Jesus' saying about sheep in the midst of wolves (Matth 10:16//Luke 10:3)
- 7) Jesus' saying about laborers being worthy of their wages or food (Matt 10:10//Luke 10:7)

³¹⁷ For efforts to determine what belongs to Q, see Risto Uro, *Sheep Among the Wolves: A Study of the Mission Instructions in Q* (Helsinki: Suomalainen Tiedeakatemia, 1987), 25, 73-226; Fledderman, *Q*, 403-437. For a helpful delineation of the overlaps among the four sets of mission instructions, see Robert E. Morosco, "Matthew's Formation of a Commissioning Type-Scene out of the Story of Jesus' Commissioning of the Twelve," *JBL* 103.4 (1984): 540.

For the purposes of studying how early Jesus-followers deployed language about miracles, the linking of the disciples' healing miracles and the kingdom of God in the Double Tradition is the most salient:

πορευόμενοι δὲ κηρύσσετε λέγοντες ὅτι ἤγγικεν ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν.
ἀσθενοῦντας θεραπεύετε, νεκροὺς ἐγείρετε, λεπροὺς καθαρίζετε, δαιμόνια
ἐκβάλλετε· δωρεὰν ἐλάβετε, δωρεὰν δότε.

And as you go, proclaim saying that the kingdom of heaven has come near. The sick heal, the dead raise, those with leprosy cleanse, demons cast out. Freely you received, freely give. (Matt 10:7-8)

καὶ θεραπεύετε τοὺς ἐν αὐτῇ ἀσθενεῖς καὶ λέγετε αὐτοῖς· ἤγγικεν ἐφ' ὑμᾶς ἡ
βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ.

And heal the sick in it [i.e., the city the disciple has entered] and say to them:
the kingdom of God has come near to you. (Luke 10:9)

Both Matthew and Luke put in Jesus' mouth the command to heal the sick, and both combine that command with a second: proclaim that the kingdom of God/heaven has come near.

Mark's Jesus does not include a command to heal in his instructions, but in the narrative framework around the instructions Jesus empowers the disciples to perform miracles: "[He] gave them authority over the unclean spirits (ἐδίδου αὐτοῖς ἐξουσίαν τῶν πνευμάτων τῶν ἀκαθάρτων)" (Mark 6:7). Mark's brief resumé of the disciples' subsequent activities also mentions miracle working: "And going out they proclaimed that people should repent, and they cast out many demons, and they anointed many sick people with oil and healed them (Καὶ ἐξελθόντες ἐκήρυξαν ἵνα μετανοῶσιν, καὶ δαιμόνια πολλὰ ἐξέβαλλον, καὶ ἤλειπον ἐλαίῳ πολλοὺς ἀρρώστους καὶ ἐθεράπευον)" (Mark 6:12-13). Scholarly reflection on the mission discourse in both Mark and Q has focused primarily on the prohibition against taking supplies and on the injunction to rely on hospitality as reflections of a wandering charismatic tradition

in the early Jesus movement.³¹⁸ The miracle working of the disciples has attracted less sustained attention. The investigation of the disciples' miracle working in Mark and Q will begin with what they share: Jesus empowering the disciples to perform miracles.

Charisma and Succession

The commissioning of the disciples illustrates Jesus passing on the ability to perform miracles to the people who would lead his movement after his death. Telling this story would have generated a sense of continuity among Jesus followers by portraying their lord's charismatic authority persisting beyond his death.

The succession of charismatic authority frequently becomes an issue of contention for New Religious Movements (NRMs) when the founder dies and the group tries to create an identity that persists in the founder's absence. Examples from modern NRMs show that claims regarding a second-generation leader's access to the charismatic authority of the founder run on a spectrum from depicting the second-generation leaders with nearly equal charisma as the founder to restricting second-generation leadership to sharing only a small portion of the founder's charisma. Biblical examples of explicit or implicit claims to succession of charismatic leadership demonstrate that concerns about succession are not solely the preserve of modern NRMs, and these biblical examples also show that the stories of succession of charismatic authority have resonance as boosters of communal self-identity even after any

³¹⁸ See, e.g., C.M. Tuckett, *Q and the History of Early Christianity: Studies on Q* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1996), 355-92; Allison, *Jesus Tradition*, 104-19; Dieter T. Roth, "Missionary Ethics in Q 10:2-12," *HTS* 68.1 (2012); pages? David R. Catchpole, "The Mission Charge in Q," *Semeia* 55 (1991): 147-74; T.J. Rogers, "Shaking the Dust off the Markan Mission Discourse," *JSNT* 27.2 (2004): 169-92.

conflict over proper succession had been settled. The Mark and Q versions of the Commissioning represent similar attempts to demonstrate the continuity of charismatic authority even as they differ in their position on the spectrum of shared or restricted charisma between the founder and the second generation.

Charismatic leadership is a common, but by no means universal, feature of NRMs, and the concept of charisma has proven useful for the study of succession in NRMs. The concept of charismatic leadership was first developed by Max Weber in his analysis of political power, and it came to prominence among sociologists and historians analyzing 20th-century political movements that relied on the personality of their leaders, such as National Socialism.³¹⁹ Although Weber developed the concept of charismatic leadership to describe a certain kind of political leadership in the modern West, investigators of NRMs have found charismatic leadership to be a useful concept in their field as well.³²⁰

Weber sought to understand how groups legitimized the authority of leaders such that members voluntarily followed the leaders' commands. He developed a three-part typology of legitimating authority. (1) *Legal authority* bases its legitimacy on a set of laws that grant the right to command to those empowered under the laws. (2) *Traditional authority* bases its legitimacy on the traditions of a community that grant power to a certain subset of that community. Finally, (3) *charismatic authority* legitimizes itself by "devotion to the exceptional sanctity, heroism or exemplary character of an individual person, and of the

³¹⁹ Theodore Abel, *Why Hitler Came into Power* (New York: Prentice Hall, 1938); Hans Gerth, "The Nazi Party: Its Leadership and Composition," *American Journal of Sociology* 45 (1940): 517-41. For analysis and further examples of the penetration of Weber's idea of charisma into political and sociological scholarship, see Joshua Derman, "Max Weber and Charisma: A Transatlantic Affair," *New German Critique* 38.2 (2011): 51-88.

³²⁰ Stephan Feuchtwang, "Suggestions for a Redefinition of Charisma," *Nova Religio: The Journal of Alternative and Emergent Religions* 12.2 (2008): 90-105.

normative patterns or order revealed or ordained by him.”³²¹ Weber is quick to point out both that this typology is a conceptual tool whose worth is to be judged by its usefulness in analysis and that any existing authority will not strictly conform to only one type.³²² For instance, Jesus’ leadership is based on his extraordinary personal qualities, but he also connects his authority with the traditions of Israel; thereby he mixes charismatic and traditional modes of legitimation.

To the extent that leadership is charismatic, succession of leadership will cause problems. Weber noted that charismatic leadership is fundamentally unstable because it is based on the force of the leader’s personality. The charismatic leader must constantly give evidence of his charisma, and if the group is to outlive its original leader, the charismatic authority must somehow be transferred to successors in ways that the group perceives as valid. Weber believed charismatic authority to be so unstable that to persist it must be transformed into either traditional or legal authority, a process that Weber called the “routinization of charisma.”³²³ NRMs that survive the death of their charismatic leaders have had to find some way to routinize charisma so that the charismatic authority can persist in the absence of the original leader’s compelling personality.

The Oneida Community of New York provides an example of the consequences of failing to transmit charismatic authority. Founded in 1848 and dissolved in 1881, the Oneida Community was a group of Christian perfectionists who practiced communal possession of goods and communal sexual relations. The group depended on the charismatic leadership of

³²¹ Max Weber, *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology*, ed. Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), 215.

³²² Weber, *Economy and Society*, 216.

³²³ Weber, *Economy and Society*, 246-49.

John Humphrey Noyes, whose force of personality won him the obedience of the Community members and allowed his perfectionist doctrines to structure the Community.³²⁴ In 1875, Noyes named his son Theodore as his successor, but the Community largely rejected such hereditary transmission of power, and they did not recognize in Theodore the charisma of his father.³²⁵ This failed transference of charismatic power began a period of dissension in which Noyes's power faced increasing challenges and in which dissident factions broke away from the Community.³²⁶ External pressures also hampered John Noyes's exercise of authority: he fled to Canada in 1879 to avoid statutory rape charges stemming from the group's practice of communal sexual relations. In 1881 the Oneida Community dissolved itself as a utopian community and reformed as a for-profit joint stock company. Although failed succession of charismatic authority was not the sole cause of the Oneida Community's collapse, this failure nevertheless was an important reason why it was not able to endure under the internal pressures of factionalism and the external pressures of legal sanctions.

New Religious Movements that outlive their founders must find a way to routinize the founder's charisma so that subsequent leaders can also exercise authority. Though NRMs accomplish this task in various ways, one way has been to recognize a successor who shares the founder's charisma. For example, "Mother" Ann Lee, founder of the Shakers, won the allegiance of a large group of followers by the power of her personality, the almost magical quality of her speaking, and her vision of a celibate, sinless Christian community. Shakers

³²⁴ Spencer C. Olin, Jr., "The Oneida Community and the Instability of Charismatic Authority," *The Journal of American History* 67.2 (1980): 287-88.

³²⁵ *Ibid.*, 293.

³²⁶ *Ibid.*, 294-96.

experienced a similar power in her young follower James Whitaker.³²⁷ At Lee's funeral in 1784, Whitaker spoke so powerfully that, according to one Shaker source, "[i]t was clearly seen and felt that Mother's mantle had fallen upon him, and that God had chosen him to lead and protect his people."³²⁸ With the group recognizing Whitaker's sharing of Lee's charismatic authority, the Shakers persisted under Whitaker's second-generation leadership.

The Amana Society of Amana, Iowa similarly survived the death of its leader by identifying a successor that shared the leader's charismatic gifts. Founded in 1855 by members of a German pietist sect, the Amana Society made Christian Metz its leader due to his gift of divine inspiration that made him an instrument (*Werkzeug*) of God. Metz recognized another member of the community, Barbara Landmann, as a fellow *Werkzeug*, and she, like Metz, proclaimed truths that the community took as divinely inspired.³²⁹ Although the community considered Landmann a *Werkzeug*, she did not have a significant leadership role in the community during Metz's lifetime. When Metz died in 1867, Landmann was able to provide leadership that the community accepted as divinely sanctioned.³³⁰ However, she did not exercise the same level of authority that Metz had. Metz had a strong hand in regulating the community's organization with the help of the Society's Board of Trustees, whose meetings he convened. After Metz's death, the Board took more authority by setting up regular meetings and arrogating to itself the power to legislate for the community. Landmann, as the divinely

³²⁷ Diane Sasson, "The Shakers: The Adaptation of Prophecy," in *When Prophets Die: The Postcharismatic Fate of New Religious Movements*, ed. Timothy Miller (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1991), 14-15.

³²⁸ *Ibid.*, 20.

³²⁹ Jonathan G. Andelson, "Postcharismatic Authority in the Amana Society: The Legacy of Christian Metz," in Miller, *When Prophets Die*, 30-31.

³³⁰ *Ibid.*, 38.

inspired *Werkzeug*, could address the Board, but she was never a member.³³¹ Thus, although Landmann shared in Metz's charisma, she exercised a much more limited authority.

The Shakers and the Amana Society provide examples of religious communities in which the original leader shares charismatic authority with successors.³³² The charisma shared by the founder and the second-generation leader provides group continuity. However, such shared charisma can be a disintegrative force if multiple claimants to this shared authority arise. This kind of conflict can be seen in the fate of the Theosophical Society after the death of its visionary, Madame Blavatsky. Founded in 1875 in New York, the Theosophical Society devoted itself to discovering the secret laws of the universe. It encouraged free thought among its members and professed no set of dogmas or creeds, but relied instead on members to search for the universal wisdom latent in their own humanity. Despite the lack of formal creeds, the Society also recognized the existence of "Masters," ascended beings possessing this universal wisdom. Madame Blavatsky reported visionary communication with these Masters, who revealed the deep truths of the universe to her, truths that she then shared with the Society. On Blavatsky's death in 1891, multiple claims to leadership arose among various members who also asserted that they had been visited by the Masters, and the society fragmented.³³³

Such shared charisma can lead not only to fragmentation with multiple claimants to authority, but it can also diminish the status of the original leader's revelation as new partakers of that authority add to or modify the founder's teachings. Some NRMs therefore restrict

³³¹ Ibid., 34-37.

³³² Catherine Wessinger, "Charismatic Leaders in New Religions," in *The Cambridge Companion to New Religious Movements*, eds. Olav Hammer and Michael Rothstein (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 84-85.

³³³ Catherine Wessinger, "Democracy vs. Hierarchy: The Evolution of Authority in the Theosophical Society," in Miller, *When Prophets Die*, 93-106.

charisma to the founder and maintain continuity in the group by loyalty to the founder's vision.³³⁴ Different NRMs adopt various strategies in sharing or restricting charisma in the second-generation leadership. The several offshoots of the Latter Day Saints (LDS) movement that arose after Joseph Smith's death in 1844 illustrate the various ways NRMs can transfer charismatic authority. Although many of these offshoots were relatively short-lived, at least six separate movements were able to organize themselves and persist into the twentieth century. These successor movements illustrate the spectrum of strategies available to connect second-generation leadership to the charismatic power of the founder.

Brigham Young emerged as the leader of what would become the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints based on claims of procedural legitimacy according to the rules of the community laid down by Smith. Charismatic authority in this branch of Mormonism remained highly restricted to Smith, with subsequent leaders claiming a legal authority according to the norms that Smith promulgated. In this branch of the Mormon movement, although leaders retained the status of prophet, there was a great reluctance to add much authoritative teaching to that promulgated by Smith.³³⁵

The nascent leadership of another branch of the LDS movement, the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (RLDS), kept a more charismatic form of leadership. In 1851, Jason Biggs received a revelation from God that Joseph Smith's son, Joseph Smith III, was the prophetic successor, a role Smith ultimately accepted when he became leader of the RLDS Church. In the RLDS Church, succession is determined by the current prophet naming his successor, and the successor prophets have been much more willing

³³⁴ Ibid., 85-86.

³³⁵ Steven L. Shields, "The Latter Day Saint Movement: A Study in Survival," in Miller, *When Prophets Die*, 62-65.

to add authoritative teaching to that of the original founder Joseph Smith.³³⁶ Charisma is routinized in that there is a well-established rule of succession, but the current holder of the charismatic authority, rather than a set of rules, determines who will assume authority. Moreover, charisma is shared among the successor prophets, rather than restricted to Joseph Smith.

James J. Strang spearheaded yet another LDS successor movement after Smith's death. Strang bolstered his claims to authority by producing a document, allegedly written by Smith, that named Strang as Smith's successor. Strang also claimed to have direct revelation from angelic messengers, and he produced a translation of a set of ancient metal plates given him by an angel.³³⁷ Strang claimed charismatic authority by recapitulating Smith's prophetic actions and set himself up almost as a second Smith.

Another branch was directed by another follower who claimed direct divine warrant. William Bickerton organized his Mormon Church by claiming charismatic authority for himself even though he had not had a connection to Joseph Smith. Bickerton was baptized in 1845, the year after Smith died. Bickerton claimed that he received visions from God validating him as the restorer of true Mormon teaching that Smith had originally proclaimed, but that had become corrupted. In 1862, Bickerton organized a branch of Mormonism that recognized his teachings as the reestablishment of the pure Church.³³⁸

These successors to Joseph Smith demonstrate the spectrum of strategies available for NRMs to maintain continuity in their second generation. On one end of the spectrum,

³³⁶ Ibid., 71-73.

³³⁷ Ibid., 66-68.

³³⁸ Ibid., 74-75.

charismatic authority is almost entirely restricted to the founder, and succession is therefore not based on sharing this charisma, as in the case of Brigham Young. On the other end of the spectrum, the second-generation leadership shares the charisma of the founder and recapitulates his striking deeds, as Strang did. The RLDS represents a middle point, with successor prophets claiming charismatic authority in continuity with Smith, but not claiming the sort of direct angelic revelation that Smith and Strang claimed for themselves. Bickerton's success reveals that charismatic succession can occur even when the second-generation leader never met the living founder if the successor can convince followers that he or she shares the same source of charismatic authority, which in the LDS case was visionary access to God.

Early followers of Jesus after his death faced a similar dilemma to those faced by these modern NRMs on the deaths of their founders. These Jesus followers needed a way to transfer his charismatic authority to the the nascent movement's leadership. In achieving this transfer, they faced the same tension of whether to restrict charisma to Jesus or to impute the same charisma to subsequent leaders. One way that these modern NRMs imputed charismatic authority to the second generation was to represent second-generation leaders as sharing the same manifestations of charisma as the founder: the power of Whitaker's speaking recapitulated that of Mother Ann; Landmann was a *Werkzeug* just as Metz; Strang received ancient texts from angels just as had Smith. Many of these second-generation leaders claimed their charismatic authority also on the basis of a commissioning either by the original leader, as in the case of Metz recognizing Landmann as a *Werkzeug* or Strang's claim that Joseph Smith named him as successor, or by a divine decree, as when Biggs claimed that a divine revelation named Joseph Smith III as the leader of the RLDS Church.

The Pauline epistles reveal similar dynamics at work in the claiming of charismatic authority among early Jesus followers. Like William Bickerton, Paul had to convince others of his authority even though he was not part of the movement during the founder's lifetime. Throughout his letters, Paul burnishes his own authority vis-à-vis his opponents, and nowhere does he do so more clearly than in the narration of his calling in the beginning of Galatians:

For I make known to you, brothers, that the good news that is proclaimed by me is not of human origin, for I did not receive it from a human being nor was I taught it, but I received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ...when God, who had set me apart from my mother's womb and called me through his grace, was pleased to reveal his Son to me, so that I might proclaim his good news among the nations, immediately I did not consult with flesh and blood nor did I go up into Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me, but I went into Arabia and again returned to Damascus. Then after three years I went up into Jerusalem to visit Cephas and stayed with him fifteen days. I did not see other apostles except James the brother of the Lord. (Gal 1:11-12, 15-19)

Paul here makes clear that his authority comes from God, not from Peter, James, or any other of the Jerusalem apostles. The series of negatives (“not of human origin,” “not...from a human being,” “not...with flesh and blood,” “nor...up to Jerusalem,” “not...other apostles”) emphasizes that his message, and hence his authority, does not have a human source.³³⁹

Rather, Paul owes his calling to a divine commissioning. To use Weber's terminology, Paul claims for himself a charismatic authority that sets him at least as an equal to Peter and the other apostles and not as an inheritor of a traditional authority handed down to him.³⁴⁰

³³⁹ Ian J. Elmer, “Setting the Record Straight at Galatia: Paul's *Narratio* (Gal 1:13-2:14) as Response to the Galatian Conflict,” in *Religious Conflict from Early Christianity to the Rise of Islam*, eds. Neil Bronwen and Wendy Mayer (Berlin: Walter De Gruyter, 2012), 37.

³⁴⁰ John Howard Schutz, *Paul and the Anatomy of Apostolic Authority* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2007), 264-78.

Elsewhere in his letters, Paul appeals to his miracle-working powers to substantiate his charismatic authority.³⁴¹ Regarding his dispute with the super-apostles in Corinth, Paul assures the Corinthians, “I am in no way inferior to the super-apostles...the signs of an apostle were performed among you in all endurance, signs and wonders and deeds of power” (2 Cor 12:11-12). Miracles here function to verify apostolic authority. Similarly, Paul tells the Romans of “what Christ has accomplished through me toward the obedience of the Gentiles,” which includes “signs and wonders” (Rom 15:18-19). Paul reminds this community that he has led Gentiles in part by the power of his miraculous deeds. Paul defends his legitimacy as a leader with reference to the miracles that manifest his charismatic authority.³⁴²

The claims to charismatic authority that Paul, or any other leader, makes are certainly self-serving, but such claims also serve the interests of his hearers. Recognizing a charismatic leader legitimizes the group that follows that leader, and the divine warrant of the leader generates a positive social identity for the group that follows him.³⁴³ Thus, although a story of a second-generation leader receiving the charisma of the group’s founder may bolster that leader’s claim to authority vis-a-vis rival claims, as in the case of Paul’s call narration from Galatians, the story can continue to enhance in-group positivity even in the absence of an active conflict over leadership. In other words, the *Sitz im Leben* of such stories can be a situation of rival leaders, but it does not have to be.

The Tanakh provides several examples of such commissioning stories without the polemical edge Paul’s autobiographical narration displays. Moses serves as a charismatic

³⁴¹ James A. Kelhoffer, “The Apostle Paul and Justin Martyr on the Miraculous: A Comparison of Appeals to Authority,” *GRBS* 42.2 (2001): 163-75.

³⁴² *Ibid.*, 170.

³⁴³ Philip F. Esler, *Galatians* (London: Routledge, 1998), 120.

leader of the Israelites during the Exodus in that he receives his call to leadership from God and performs signs and wonders to liberate God's people. Upon his death, Moses, with God's prompting, commissions Joshua as his successor to lead the Israelites into the Promised Land (Num 27:18-23, Deut 31:7-23). God chooses Joshua as Moses' successor, and Moses duly recognizes Joshua's legitimacy and makes it known to the Israelites. While the Pentateuch connects Moses and Joshua via the commissioning story, the author of the Book of Joshua does so by means of parallel miracles: just as Moses led the Israelites through the parted Red Sea (Exodus 14), so does Joshua lead them through the parted waters of the Jordan River (Joshua 3). The author makes this connection explicit in depicting God telling Joshua, "This day I will begin to exalt you in the sight of all Israel, so that they may know that I will be with you as I was with Moses" (Josh 3:7). The miracle evidences God's continuing presence both with Joshua as Moses's heir and with the whole community of Israel.

This motif of charismatic power to part the Jordan reappears in the Deuteronomistic History. As Elijah is about to be taken up by the Lord, he with his successor Elisha comes to the Jordan River: "Then Elijah took his mantle and rolled it up, and struck the water; the water was parted to the one side and to the other, until the two of them crossed on dry ground" (2 Kings 2:8). Elisha then asks and receives a double share of Elijah's spirit as the latter goes up to heaven in a fiery chariot; Elisha picks up the mantle that Elijah dropped and uses it to part the Jordan on his way back (2 Kings 2:14). Elisha then performs several miracles that replicate those of Elijah, such as the raising of a dead child (1 Kings 17:22-23, 2 Kings 4:32-37) and multiplying insufficient foodstuffs (1 Kings 17:14-16, 2 Kings 4:42-44). Such parallel miracles form part of a dense intercalation of words, motifs, and stories that relate Elisha to

Elijah.³⁴⁴ The parting of the Jordan in particular links Elisha and Elijah not just to each other, but also to Joshua and Moses, and it creates a sense of continuity, of God's ongoing presence with Israel, throughout the careers of these charismatic leaders.

The results of this brief survey of charismatic succession can now be brought to bear on Jesus' commissioning of the disciples. NRMs face a crisis of continuity when the original charismatic leader dies. In such environments, stories that show the second-generation leadership receiving the charismatic gifts that characterized the founder help the groups maintain identity and cohesion. The examples of Moses and Joshua and Elijah and Elisha show that attributing miraculous powers to the successors of miracle workers illustrates the continuance of this charismatic power. Similarly, the evangelists portray Jesus' power at work in his disciples and so in the group that follows his successors. Such a portrayal would have had maximum relevance for people that were forming their group identity by envisioning themselves as the heirs of Jesus' charisma. However, as noted above, such a group must strike a delicate balance in the extent to which its founder's charisma is shared or restricted. The Mark and Q versions of the commissioning of the disciples present slightly different strategies in this balancing act, and it is to the specifics of each variant that this chapter now turns.

The Commissioning in Mark

In depicting the Commissioning of the Twelve, Mark heavily restricts Jesus' charisma so that the disciples share only a derivative form of it. Mark describes the disciples as engaging in three primary activities in their mission: exorcising demons, healing the sick, and

³⁴⁴ Nachman Levine, "Twice as Much of your Spirit: Pattern, Parallel and Paranomasia in the Miracles of Elijah and Elisha," *JSOT* 85 (1999): 25-46.

proclaiming repentance. All three activities replicate an aspect of Jesus' ministry, but in each case Mark depicts the disciples' work in a way that emphasizes Jesus' preeminence. Only a portion of Jesus' charisma is evident in his followers' activities.

Although Jesus has many disciples, Mark restricts the commissioning to the inner circle of the Twelve (3:14-19). Twelve, the number of the tribes of Israel, was pregnant with meaning in Second Temple Judaism where the restoration of all twelve tribes of Israel was an eschatological hope; thus by choosing twelve followers, Jesus symbolizes the restoration of the twelve tribes that would take place soon.³⁴⁵ Displaying similar symbolism, the eschatological king of the Qumran Temple Scroll has as his advisors twelve princes, twelve priests, and twelve Levites (11QT 57:2-15). The twelve disciples prefigure the eschatological community of which Jesus' followers saw themselves a part; these followers can regard themselves as the new or true Israel, an identity that even Mark's Gentile readers can adopt. Telling the story of these Twelve receiving power from Jesus reinforces the idea that Jesus' power remains at work in the community he founds.

At the same time, these Twelve in Mark are far from perfect. James and John seek their own aggrandizement (10:35-37), Peter tries to dissuade Jesus from his divinely appointed suffering (8:32-33), Judas betrays him (14:10), and the remaining eleven desert him at his arrest (14:50). Mark's lack of resurrection appearances leaves no opportunity for rehabilitation of the disciples, as the reader last sees them abandoning Jesus. The disciples fall well short of the example set by Jesus. Despite their imperfection, in their mission the disciples demonstrate their connection with their leader. The disciples' activities mirror those of Jesus and demonstrate the continuity between Jesus and the community that he founds, as epitomized by

³⁴⁵ Meier, *Marginal Jew*, 3.128-147; Collins, *Mark*, 297.

the Twelve.³⁴⁶ How Mark links and differentiates the activity of the disciples and the activity of Jesus reveals how the evangelist interprets Jesus' power at work among his followers.

Exorcising Demons

Mark reports that Jesus gave his disciples “authority (ἐξουσία) over unclean spirits” (6:7). Mark could have told of Jesus' transferring power (δύναμις) to his disciples, but he instead uses ἐξουσία. Although these words have similar connotations, there is a subtle difference between them that is most apparent in the verbal forms to which they are both related: ἐξουσία is related to ἔξεστιν (it is allowed) while δύναμις is related to δύναμαι (I am able). At root, to have ἐξουσία indicates that one can do something because a higher entity (laws, society, a deity) allows it, or because no higher entity forbids it, whereas to have δύναμις indicates that one can do something because he or she possesses the ability to do so.³⁴⁷ This distinction is subtle, and in some cases, such as with God or gods, the distinction is meaningless—in such cases ἐξουσία and δύναμις are synonymous. However, this nuance of ability due to lack of constraint lends ἐξουσία a number of meanings in the political and legal spheres. Among the meanings ἐξουσία can carry are a right granted by law,³⁴⁸ the rights of superiors with regard to inferiors (such as parents over children³⁴⁹ and masters over slaves),³⁵⁰

³⁴⁶ Collins, *Mark*, 302; Marcus, *Mark*, 1:388.

³⁴⁷ *TDNT* 2:562-563.

³⁴⁸ E.g., Plato *Symp.* 182e

³⁴⁹ e.g., P. Oxy. 2.237; 8.162.3.

³⁵⁰ e.g., P. Oxy. 8.1120.17.

or the rights of a political office.³⁵¹ From the political realm, philosophers could extrapolate and use ἐξουσία to signify control over one's actions. Epictetus, for instance, uses ἐξουσία several times in this sense linked closely with the concept of being lord (κύριος) over oneself.³⁵² For Epictetus, the political nature of the term rings through even in metaphor: the one exercising ἐξουσία is κύριος.

This political nuance also comes through in the Septuagintal use of ἐξουσία. The MT does not have a fixed term that the LXX consistently translates with ἐξουσία; rather ἐξουσία in certain situations translates ממשלה (authority, dominion) or שליט (ruler) and their cognates.³⁵³ In the LXX, the word most frequently refers to the authority of God or to the authority God gives to human agents, especially kings.³⁵⁴ In the Pseudepigrapha, ἐξουσία also refers to divine authority or the authority of God's agents, but it is also used to describe Satan's rule over his legions of demons.³⁵⁵

In both its classical and Septuagintal uses, ἐξουσία has a distinctly hierarchical character. Typically, one exercises ἐξουσία to the extent that it is vested by a higher power,

³⁵¹ Aristotle *Eth. nic.* 1095b.

³⁵² Epictetus *Ench.* 14.2; *Diatr.* 2.2.26, 4.1.59, 4.12.8.

³⁵³ As a translation for ממשלה: 2 Kgs 20:13, Ps 113:2, Ps 135:8, Dan 7:14, Dan 7:26. As a translation for שליט: Eccl 8:8, Dan 3:2. Klaus Scholtissek, *Die Vollmacht Jesu: Tradition- und redaktionsgeschichtliche Analysen zu einem Leitmotiv markinischer Christologie* (Munster: Achendorf, 1992), 30-31; James R. Edwards, "The Authority of Jesus in the Gospel of Mark," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 37 2 (1994): 218.

³⁵⁴ References to kingship/magistracy: 2 Kings 20:13; Wisdom 10:14. References to God's authority or authority God gives to surrogate: 1 Esdras 4:28,40, Psa 113:2; Sir 10:4; 17:2; 24:11; 45:17, Dan 4:27,31, 37; 5:4; 7:14. Edwards, "Authority," 218; Scholtissek, *Vollmacht*, 47-8.

³⁵⁵ For divine or divinely sanctioned authority: *1 Enoch* 9.5; *T. Levi* 3.8; 18.12, *T. Job* 3.6; *T. Abr.* 2.11; 9.8; 13.11; *T. Sol.* 5.13; 8.1; 13.7; 15.11; 18.3. For demonic authority: *1 Enoch* 9:7; *T. Job* 8.2; 16.2, 4; 20.3, *T. Sol.* Incipit. Edwards, "Authority," 218.

either God, a god, or the laws of a land. This ἐξουσία denotes an authority over some entity or set of entities, be they inanimate, human, or supernatural. The wielders of ἐξουσία thus often occupy a middle position in a hierarchy—they have received this ἐξουσία from a superior to exercise over a set of subordinates. Such a tripartite schema does not hold universally; God does not receive ἐξουσία from some higher power. In the Commissioning, however, the disciples fit this tripartite scheme: they receive ἐξουσία from Jesus to exercise over unclean spirits.

The hierarchical character of ἐξουσία appears elsewhere in the New Testament. Sometimes the emphasis is on the superior granting authority to the wielder as when John’s Jesus claims God “has given him [i.e. the Son] authority (ἐξουσίαν) to make judgment” (John 5:27) or when Paul speaks about “receiving authority (ἐξουσίαν) from the chief priests” (Acts 26:10). In other cases the emphasis rests on how the wielder of ἐξουσία has authority over his subordinates, as when Paul asks, “Does the potter have no authority (ἐξουσίαν) over the clay?” (Rom 9:21), or when the author of Colossians speaks of God, “who delivered us from the authority (ἐξουσίας) of darkness” (Col 1:13). Sometimes all three ideas of granter, wielder, and subordinate appear together in the use of ἐξουσία, as when Paul tells the Corinthians, “I will not be ashamed if I boast too much about the authority (ἐξουσίας) which God has given for building you up and not destroying you” (2 Cor 10:8). God grants Paul authority, and Paul wields authority over the Corinthians for their edification. Although all three elements in such hierarchies do not appear in every use of the word, this three-way model of granter-wielder-subject nevertheless displays the full range of relationships involved in the exercise of ἐξουσία.

New Testament writers could use the word δύναμις similarly to denote an ability granted, as when the author of Hebrews notes how Abraham in his old age “received the power

(δύναμιν) for the creation of offspring” (Heb 11:11). However, δύναμις more frequently refers to the power to do something rather than indicating from whom this power derived or over whom this power was exercised.³⁵⁶ The word could refer to the abstract quality of power without specific reference to what the possessor was empowered to do, as when Paul speaks about the “power (δύναμις) of Christ” that dwells within him (2 Cor 12:9) or about God’s “eternal power (δύναμις)” manifest in creation (Rom 1:20). The word can also refer to miracles, which are concrete manifestations of power (e.g., Acts 2:22; 8:13; 19:11; 1 Cor 12:10, 28-29; 2 Cor 12:12).³⁵⁷ Mark similarly uses δύναμις to refer to miracles (6:2,5; 9:39) and to the power that either Jesus (5:30; 6:14; 13:26) or God possesses (9:1; 12:24; 14:62). Mark does not use δύναμις in the context of the hierarchical relationship of granter-wielder-subordinate that ἐξουσία denotes. Instead of showing the disciples as possessing δύναμις within themselves, Mark chooses to locate them within the granter-wielder-subordinate hierarchy of ἐξουσία.

Mark places the disciples in the middle of this hierarchy, which emphasizes their subordination to Jesus. The disciples receive their ἐξουσία from Jesus. This ἐξουσία resides within Jesus, and it is his to grant, although Mark’s Jesus does not make clear whether this ἐξουσία is innately his or whether God granted it to him. This ἐξουσία subjects the unclean spirits to those who exercise it. The previous chapter discussed how Jesus’ exorcisms demonstrate his victory over Satan and his demons. In the commissioning of the disciples, Mark describes Jesus’ victory over the demons as ἐξουσία that Jesus is able to dispense to his followers. Mark reports the effectiveness of the disciples’ authority over unclean spirits in

³⁵⁶ TDNT 2.562-563, δύναμις.

³⁵⁷ BDAG 207-8, δύναμις.

noting that “they cast out many demons” (Mark 6:13). The disciples recapitulate the actions of Jesus in casting out demons, but they do so through the authority Jesus granted them.

The Markan co-texts further illustrate the nature of this authority that Jesus gives to his disciples. In the naming of the Twelve, Mark states that Jesus called them “to be with him and to send them out to proclaim and to have authority (ἐξουσίαν) to cast out demons” (3:14-15). The sending of the Twelve on mission in Mark 6 clearly echoes their initial naming in Mark 3; the sending fulfills the function for which Jesus called them. In Mark 3, the authority is again Jesus’ to grant to the disciples whom he chooses. The authority of the Twelve is fundamentally the authority of Jesus.³⁵⁸

The word ἐξουσία also appears in the apocalyptic discourse after Jesus predicts his future coming as the Son of Man. He tells his disciples, “Beware, keep alert, for you do not know when the time is. It is as when a man on a journey leaves his house and gives authority (ἐξουσία) to his slaves, to each his work, and the doorman he orders to keep watch” (Mark 13:33-34). In the context of Mark 13, this short parable illustrates the situation that Jesus’ followers face as they await the parousia.³⁵⁹ In the absence of the charismatic leader, the disciple exercises ἐξουσία given by him, but the disciple will also be accountable to that leader upon his return. Just as in the naming and sending of the Twelve, in this parable ἐξουσία again indicates the authority that the disciple exercises in Jesus’ name.

Mark’s other uses of ἐξουσία refer to the authority that Jesus himself exercises. The word occurs twice in the pericope of Jesus’ teaching and exorcism in the Capernaum synagogue (Mark 1:21-27). Jesus begins by teaching, which amazes his auditors: “And they

³⁵⁸ Scholtissek, *Vollmacht*, 285.

³⁵⁹ Marcus, *Mark* 2.921; Collins, *Mark*, 617-18.

were astonished at his teaching, for he was teaching them as one having authority (ἐξουσία) and not as the scribes” (Mark 1:22). Jesus’ teaching manifests his ἐξουσία, which compares him favorably to the scribes, who will become major opponents throughout the second Gospel, as discussed in the previous chapter. The ἐξουσία manifested in Jesus’ teaching comes to expression in the exorcism that immediately follows in the synagogue. This exorcism further amazes the people and convinces them of Jesus’ authority: “And all were astounded and asked each other, “What is this? A new teaching with authority (κατ’ ἐξουσίαν)! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him” (Mark 1:27). That unclean spirits bend to Jesus’ command demonstrates the authority that he wields. In the Capernaum synagogue, this authority shows Jesus’ superiority to his supernatural opponents (the demons subject to his ἐξουσία) and to his human opponents (the scribes whose teaching does not carry ἐξουσία).³⁶⁰

The issue of Jesus’ authority returns in connection with the scribes in the healing of the paralytic (Mark 2:1-12). When the four people bring the paralytic to Jesus, he tells the paralytic that his sins are forgiven. Overhearing this, some scribes begin to say to themselves, “Why does he speak this way? He blasphemes! Who can forgive sins except God alone (εἰ μὴ εἶς ὁ θεός)?” (Mark 2:7). The scribes’ question, with the logically superfluous “alone,” emphasizes that Jesus’ claims to forgive sins set him as divine.³⁶¹ Such a claim, according to the scribes, amounts to blasphemy, the same trumped-up charge that will ultimately lead to Jesus’ conviction (14:64). Just as the scribes in the Beelzebul Controversy attempt to label

³⁶⁰ Aloysius M. Ambrozic, “New Teaching with Power (Mk 1:27),” in *Word and Spirit: Essays in Honor of David Michael Stanley, S.J. on his 60th Birthday*, ed. Joseph Plevnik (Willowdale, ON: Regis College Press, 1975), 124-25.

³⁶¹ Joel Marcus, “Authority to Forgive Sins upon the Earth: The *Shema* in the Gospel of Mark,” in *The Gospels and the Scriptures of Israel*, eds. William Richard Stegner and Craig A. Evans (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993), 197-98.

Jesus as deviant by linking him with Satan, so here the scribes impugn Jesus with a different type of deviance, that of blasphemy.

Just as Jesus is able to apply eschatological categories to parry the scribes' attack in the Beelzebul Controversy, so does Jesus in the pericope of the paralytic reframe the issue of forgiving sins in an eschatological idiom that neutralizes the scribes' accusation. Jesus reads their thoughts, heals the paralytic in front of them, and tells the scribes that the healing occurs "so that you might know that the son of man (ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου) has authority (ἐξουσία) to forgive sins on earth (ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς)" (Mark 2:10). Jesus' ability to heal vindicates his claim to a divine prerogative. Jesus' self-reference as "son of man" with "authority" alludes to Daniel 7 in which the prophet sees the Ancient of Days approached by "one like a son of man (אִישׁ כְּבָר/ὡς υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου)" (Dan 7:13). Once the one like a son of man has presented himself, "to him was given "authority (שׁלְטָן/ἐξουσία)," and the LXX version adds that "all the nations of the earth (τῆς γῆς)...will serve him" (Dan 7:14). Daniel sees the son of man acting with God's authority on the earth, fulfilling God's function of ruling and judging the world while remaining distinct from God. The vision of the son of man and the Ancient of Days provides a model whereby Mark can claim divine authority for Jesus without compromising the authority that belongs solely to God.³⁶² The authority that Jesus has received as the son of man allows him to act as God on earth. Jesus therefore does not blaspheme in claiming the power to forgive sins, but rather he exercises divinely granted authority.

This issue of authority again becomes a point of contention between Jesus and his opponents in Jerusalem. The chief priests, scribes, and elders approach Jesus and ask, "By what authority (ἐξουσία) do you do these things? Who gave you this authority (ἐξουσία) to do

³⁶² Ibid., 200.

these things?” (Mark 11:28). Just the day before, Jesus had overturned the tables in the Temple, so the opponents’ question could refer to this incident, but the vagueness of the reference to “these things” allows the reader to see the opponents questioning the whole of Jesus’ actions in Jerusalem, or the entirety of his public career.³⁶³ Jesus counters this question by asking the opponents whence came John’s baptism, from heaven or from humans. The opponents refuse to answer Jesus’ question, so he refuses to answer theirs. Having seen Jesus’ authority in action throughout the Gospel, the reader can answer the question even if Jesus refuses: Jesus’ authority comes from God, not from human beings.

In Mark, authority centers on Jesus: Mark uses ἐξουσία to refer only to the authority wielded by Jesus or granted by Jesus.³⁶⁴ Mark connects this authority to the conflicts Jesus faces against supernatural and human opponents. Indeed, Mark juxtaposes Jesus’ exercise of authority over the demons with his subjection to the human opponents who deny his authority. The paradox of Jesus laying aside his authority to serve and to die runs throughout the Gospel.³⁶⁵ In the commissioning of the disciples, the emphasis lies more heavily on the side of power rather than on laying power aside. The story shows that the disciples share in Jesus’ power over demonic forces and thus have a share in Jesus’ eschatological victory over the demons. Yet the disciples’ power is decidedly qualified: they receive their authority from Jesus, while Jesus, as the Son of Man, exercises his authority directly from God.

³⁶³ Collins, *Mark*, 539.

³⁶⁴ Ambrozic, “New Teaching,” 122.

³⁶⁵ Demetrios Trakatellis, *Authority and Passion: Christological Aspects of the Gospel According to Mark*, tr. George K. Duvall and Harry Vulopas (Brookline, MA: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 1987), 138; Narry F. Santos, *Slave of All: The Paradox of Authority and Servanthood in the Gospel of Mark* (London: Sheffield Academic Press, 2003), 272.

The inferiority of the disciples' authority compared to Jesus' comes to expression also in their failures in the rest of the Gospel. Although Mark presents the success of the exorcisms of the Twelve on their mission (6:13), he elsewhere qualifies the disciples' exorcistic prowess. The previous chapter examined the pericope of the boy convulsed by the mute demon (9:14-29) in which the disciples failed to exorcise the demon. Jesus' explanation of why the disciples failed ("this kind can come out only through prayer" [9:29]) was not reflected in Jesus' exorcism, in which he utters no prayer. The story emphasizes that the disciples' ability to exorcise demons remains inferior to that of Jesus, even though Jesus granted the disciples this power.

Shortly after this account, Mark also qualifies the disciples' exclusive claim to Jesus' exorcistic power:

John said to him, "Teacher, we saw someone casting out demons in your name and we forbade him, because he was not following us." But Jesus said, "Do not forbid him, for there is no one who does a work of power (δύναμις) in my name and who will soon be able to malign me, for whoever is not against us is with us." (Mark 9:38-40)

Here, Jesus' name has so much power that it can be used as an powerful, much as the name of a deity is invoked in the *Greek Magical Papyri*.³⁶⁶ This power is effective even in the hands of someone who is not part of Jesus' group. John's complaint against the man is that "he was not following *us*," but Jesus reframes the issue in terms of himself—"one who does a work of power in *my* name and who will soon be able to malign *me*." This alternation of pronouns emphasizes that it is the relationship to Jesus, not to the disciples, that determines whether one

³⁶⁶ E.g., PGM IV.3019-20 features a conjuration through "Jesus, god of the Hebrews." For further examples of the invocation of a divine figure's name to exorcise or work miracles, see Collins, *Mark*, 446-47.

is “with us” or “against us.”³⁶⁷ The power to exorcise comes not from membership in the group, but from Jesus himself, and it is the relationship to Jesus that determines membership in the group. The disciples’ power to exorcise demons derives from Jesus, is not as great as that of Jesus, and is paralleled by that of others who also have access to Jesus’ power. The exorcisms show that the disciples share in Jesus’ charismatic authority, but only in a derivative and partial way.

Healing the Sick

In contrast to the explicit granting of authority to exorcise demons, Mark does not narrate Jesus investing the disciples with the power to heal the sick. Nevertheless, Mark reports that “they anointed with oil many sick people and healed them (ἤλειφον ἐλαίῳ πολλοὺς ἀρρώστους καὶ ἐθεράπευον)” (Mark 6:13). The reference to anointing differentiates the disciples’ healings from those of Jesus, who never heals by this method in Mark’s Gospel.³⁶⁸ Healing by anointing implies the inferiority of the disciples’ healings to those of Jesus.

Anointing the sick with oil appears only one other time in the New Testament, near the close of the Epistle of James:

ἀσθενεῖ τις ἐν ὑμῖν, προσκαλεσάσθω τοὺς πρεσβυτέρους τῆς ἐκκλησίας καὶ προσευξάσθωσαν ἐπ’ αὐτὸν ἀλείψαντες αὐτὸν ἐλαίῳ ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι τοῦ κυρίου. καὶ ἡ εὐχὴ τῆς πίστεως σώσει τὸν κάμνοντα καὶ ἐγερεῖ αὐτὸν ὁ κύριος.

³⁶⁷ Marcus, *Mark*, 2.685.

³⁶⁸ Jeffrey John, “Anointing in the New Testament,” in *The Oil of Gladness: Anointing in the Christian Tradition*, eds. Martin Dudley and Geoffrey Rowell (London: SPCK, 1993), 51.

Is someone among you sick? Let him call upon the elders of the church and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of the faithful will save the sick person and the Lord will raise him. (James 5:14).

Both Mark and James assume that the practice of anointing with oil for healing requires no explanation for their audience.³⁶⁹ In the ancient Mediterranean world, oil was renowned for medicinal efficacy in addition to having magical and apotropaic properties.³⁷⁰ Despite the lack of an explanation for the role of the oil in the healing, it seems reasonable to see the oil, with its widespread use in magical rituals, as mediating divine power in both Mark and James.³⁷¹

The use of oil and reliance on prayer to save the sick, without clarification about whether this salvation involves physical healing, differentiates the Jacobean elders from the kind of charismatic healer to which Paul alludes in 1 Cor 12:9 in his catalogue of the various gifts of the spirit.³⁷² James frames the aim of the ritual as saving (σώζω) and raising (ἐγείρω), terms that could just as well apply to ultimate salvation as immediate physical healing. Moreover, the elders in James seem to derive their role in the ritual from their station as elders in the assembly rather than from their idiosyncratic and individualized charisma.³⁷³ Thus,

³⁶⁹ Dale C. Allison, Jr., *James: A Critical and Exegetical Commentary* (London: T&T Clark, 2013), 760.

³⁷⁰ John, "Anointing," 50; Allison, *James*, 760. Examples of oil's medicinal properties are to be found in Plato, *Menex.* 238A; Theophrastus, *Hist. Plant.* 9.11.1-2; Menander, *Georg.* 60; Philo, *Aet.* 63, *Somn.* 2.58; Josephus, *War* 1.657, *Ant.* 17.172. For magical and apotropaic uses, see *T. Sol* 18:33-34, *Eccl. Rab.* 1.8.4, PGM IV.3209-54; VII.211-212; VIII.200.

³⁷¹ Allison, *James*, 759.

³⁷² Bernd Kollman, *Jesus und die Christen als Wundertäter: Studien zu Magie, Medizin und Schamanismus in Antike und Christentum* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1996), 345.

³⁷³ Helge Kjaer Nielsen, *Heilung und Verkündigung: Das Verständnis der Heilung und ihres Verhältnisses zur Verkündigung bei Jesus und in der ältesten Kirche* (Leiden: Brill, 1987), 213; Sigurd Kaiser, *Krankenheilung: Untersuchungen zu Form, Sprache, traditionsgeschichtlichem*

James may represent the institutionalization of the power to heal. Such institutionalization represents a type of routinization of charisma into legal authority--the physical healings of charismatic wonder workers are transformed into a ritual framed in terms of metaphorical healing with officiants chosen based on office.³⁷⁴ To the extent that the Markan story of the disciples' healing by anointing reflects this practice in the early church, the story represents the same routinization of charisma.

The disciples' use of oil differentiates their healings from those of Jesus in Mark.³⁷⁵ Mark narrates Jesus healing nine individuals.³⁷⁶ In two of these stories (the paralytic [2:1-12] and the man with the withered hand [3:1-6]) Jesus heals by his word, just as he commands demons with his powerful word. In the other seven stories, Jesus heals by touch with or without words. The power to heal resides in Jesus, in his words and in his body. The story of the woman with the flow of blood most clearly displays the power resident in Jesus, ready to be activated by touch:

Having heard about Jesus and coming up behind him in the crowd she touched his cloak, for she said, "if only I might touch even his cloak I will be saved." Immediately her flow of blood was dried up, and she knew in her body that she was healed from her affliction, and immediately Jesus realized that power (*δύναμιν*) had gone out from him. (Mark 5:27-30)

Hintergrund und Aussage von Jak 5, 13-18 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 2006), 134; Allison, *James*, 758.

³⁷⁴ John, "Anointing," 54; Allison, *James*, 758.

³⁷⁵ John, "Anointing," 51.

³⁷⁶ Peter's mother-in-law 1:29-31; the man with leprosy 1:40-45; the paralytic 2:1-12; the man with the withered hand 3:1-6; Jairus's daughter 5:21-24, 35-43; the woman with the flow of blood 5:25-34; the deaf man 7:31-37; the blind man 8:22-26; Bartimaeus 10:46-52.

Jesus is so filled with power that it overflows the bounds of his body, ready for the woman to access it. Much as in the Transfiguration where Jesus' divine brightness shines for the disciples to see (9:2-3), here the divine power of Jesus seeps out of the body that cannot contain it.³⁷⁷

In two of these instances Jesus uses material besides his touch and word to effect the healing. To heal a deaf man with a speech impediment, Jesus “put his fingers into his [i.e. the man’s] ears and spitting, touched his tongue, and looking up to heaven he groaned and said, ‘Ephphatha,’ that is ‘Be opened’” (7:33-34). In addition to Jesus’ word and touch, his spittle activates the healing. Similarly, Jesus restores the sight of a blind man by “spitting into his eyes” (8:23). There is some precedent in ancient literature for viewing spittle as endowed with healing power in general and useful as a folk remedy.³⁷⁸ However, there are also examples of limiting the therapeutic power of spittle. To emphasize the power of the emperor Vespasian, both Tacitus and Suetonius recount an episode in which the emperor restored the sight of a blind man with his saliva.³⁷⁹ The Babylonian Talmud reports, “There is a tradition that the spittle of the firstborn of a father is healing, but that of the firstborn of a mother is not healing” (*b. B. Bat.* 126b). The healing power of spittle marks the firstborn of fathers as special, and Vespasian is so endowed with power that even his spittle has miraculous healing properties. So with Jesus, the power of his saliva reflects the power resident in him, a power that pours out from his body.³⁸⁰

³⁷⁷ Candida R. Moss, “The Man with the Flow of Power: Porous Bodies in Mark 5:25-34,” *JBL* 129.3 (2010): 518.

³⁷⁸ Galen, *Natural Faculties* 3.7; Pliny the Elder, *Nat.* 28.4.35-39; 28.5.25; 28.6.30-31; 28.7.36.

³⁷⁹ Tacitus, *Hist.* 4.81; Suetonius, *Vesp.* 7.

³⁸⁰ Marcus, *Mark I*, 473-74; Collins, *Mark*, 371.

The disciples, on the other hand, possess no such intrinsic healing power. Rather, Mark presents them using the symbolically charged medium of oil to effect their cures in a way that perhaps reflects a nascent ritual in Christian communities as they sought to routinize the charismatic authority enacted by healing. The disciples' healing ministry reflects that of Jesus, which links the disciples to the power of Jesus, but at the same time their ministry reflects their inferior and derivative power. The disciples recapitulate Jesus, but with a difference, a difference that enforces their subordination to him. Jesus' healings show Jesus' power, while his disciples' healings demonstrate that Jesus' healing power is greater than theirs.

Proclaiming Repentance

In addition to casting out demons and curing the sick, Mark reports that the disciples “proclaimed (ἐκήρυξαν) that people should repent (μετανοῶσιν)” (6:12). This report echoes Mark's programmatic description of Jesus' ministry: “Jesus came into Galilee proclaiming (κηρύσσων) the good news of God and saying, “The time has been fulfilled and the kingdom of God has come near. Repent (μετανοεῖτε) and believe in the good news” (1:14-15). The disciples repeat Jesus' proclamation of repentance, but they do not announce the good news of the imminent kingdom of God. Chapter 3 discussed how Mark uses the “kingdom of God” to refer to Jesus' exercise of divine authority, incipiently present in Jesus' earthly ministry and to be realized fully when he comes as the Son of Man in the future. Where Jesus is, there the kingdom of God is. When Mark's Jesus announces that the kingdom of God has arrived, he is speaking of his own presence. When the disciples go out on their mission, the kingdom of God has not arrived with them.

The disciples share with John the Baptist a proclamation of repentance without mention of the good news of the kingdom of God, and this shared proclamation speaks to the disciples' shared role with John as preparers of Jesus' way. The reader met John the Baptist who "appeared in the desert proclaiming (κηρύσσων) a baptism of repentance (μετανοίας) for the forgiveness of sins" (1:4). John's message of repentance prepared the way for Jesus: "Behold, I send my messenger before your face who will prepare your way" (Mark 1:2). Jesus in turn adds a proclamation of the presence of God's kingdom to the proclamation of repentance. Rather than proclaiming the fullness of this message as Jesus does, John instead makes the more limited proclamation of repentance as preparation for Jesus. Since the disciples proclaim the same limited message of repentance that John does, they are preparing the way for Jesus as well. The disciples are not co-heralds of the kingdom of God along with Jesus; they are co-heralds of Jesus along with John, proclaiming the repentance that prepares for the approach of Jesus and the kingdom of God he personifies.

Markan Co-texts

In proclaiming repentance, healing the sick, and exorcizing demons, the disciples imitate the ministry of Jesus, but they do not replicate it. The disciples' authority derives from Jesus, their healings require an extrinsic factor, and their proclamation lacks the fullness of Jesus' kerygma. Mark demonstrates that though the disciples share some aspects of Jesus' charismatic authority, in other ways charisma is tightly restricted to Jesus and the disciples lack important aspects of his power. The pericopae surrounding the commissioning of the Twelve

further juxtapose power and powerlessness to reenforce how power and its lack function in both Jesus' ministry and that of his followers.

The commissioning of the disciples comes in the aftermath of Jesus' rejection in his hometown:

And he went from there and came into his hometown and his disciples followed him. And when the Sabbath came he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were astounded, saying, "Whence did these things come to this man, and what wisdom has been given to him, and such deeds of power (δυνάμεις) have been accomplished through his hands! Is this not the carpenter, the son of Mary and the brother of James and of Joses and Judas and Simon and are his sisters not here with us?" And they were scandalized by him. And Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honor except in his hometown and among his relatives and in his house." And he was powerless to do any deed of power there (οὐκ ἔδύνατο ἐκεῖ ποιῆσαι οὐδεμίαν δύναμιν), except he healed a few sick people by laying hands on them. And he was amazed by their lack of faith (ἀπιστία). And he went about the neighboring villages teaching. (Mark 6:1-6)

Mark's sequence makes the sending of the Twelve Jesus' response to his unfavorable reception in Nazareth. The previous chapter examined the strained relationship between Jesus and his natal family and his redefinition of his family (3:21, 31-35). In the Nazareth synagogue, Jesus' "relatives" (συγγενεῦσιν) are those among whom a prophet has no honor. The juxtaposition of the rejection at Nazareth to the mission of the disciples recapitulates the contrast between Jesus' biological family and his redefined family, those who do the will of God (3:35). The story of Jesus' rejection in his hometown could comfort those whose choice to follow Jesus caused them to separate from their families.³⁸¹ The story can also help reconcile its hearers to the failure of the Jesus movement to gain widespread traction among Jews—even Jesus' neighbors and relatives rejected him. In contrast, the disciples, who prefigure the future

³⁸¹ Marcus, *Mark 1*, 379.

Christian community, share in Jesus' power even though they are hardly ideal followers in Mark's narrative.

Although to this point in the narrative Jesus' power has seemed nearly limitless, in Nazareth he finds his power constrained: "he was powerless to do any deed of power there" (6:5a). Mark presents Jesus as powerless to perform miracles in the face of his compatriots' "lack of faith" (ἀπιστία).³⁸² Jesus does not elaborate on what faith and its lack mean in this setting. Elsewhere, Mark connects healing and faith and thereby suggests that Jesus heals because of a petitioner's faith (πίστις) (2:5; 5:34, 36; 9:23-24; 10:52). Mark implies that faith in these cases consists in the petitioners' belief that Jesus could heal them. In Jesus' homecoming, the Nazarenes' lack of faith is their unwillingness to believe that the Jesus whom they knew from childhood could perform these deeds. However, just as quickly as Mark points out Jesus' powerlessness, he qualifies it by reporting that he healed "a few sick people" (6:5b). Jesus' power cannot totally be blocked by a lack of faith.³⁸³ Jesus' power remains at work, even in attenuated form, in the face of ἀπιστία. The issue of ἀπιστία comes up again in a failure of the miracle-working of the disciples. When the disciples have failed to exorcise the convulsed boy, Jesus complains of the "faithless (ἄπιστος) generation" (9:19). The lack of faith merely attenuates Jesus' power, but it obliterates the lesser power of his disciples.

After the episode in Nazareth, Jesus commissions the Twelve and sends them out. While the disciples carry on their mission, the narrator shifts to flashback to relate the death of John the Baptist in a lengthy intercalation (6:14-29). The extensive description of Herod's banquet and John's execution gives the impression that a long time has passed while the

³⁸² Christopher D. Marshall, *Faith as a Theme in Mark's Narrative* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 195.

³⁸³ Collins, *Mark*, 292.

disciples are out ministering, but this pericope does not merely kill time.³⁸⁴ The death of the Baptist foreshadows that of Jesus: both men are arrested and bound (6:17; 14:46; 15:1), both men have their fate in the hands of a ruler who is reluctant to execute them (6:20; 15:10), but both reluctant rulers are weak or foolish enough to be manipulated into issuing the decree of condemnation (6:23-26; 15:11-15), and each man's body is placed in a tomb (6:29; 15:46).³⁸⁵ The description of the interments also forms a point of contrast: the Baptist's disciples come and inter John's body, while Jesus' disciples flee and leave the body to be cared for by an outsider. The same disciples who have been healing, exorcizing, and proclaiming through Jesus' authority will lack the devotion that John's disciples show.

Two stories of rejection and powerlessness (Jesus in Nazareth and John in Herod's court) frame the account of the disciples' success and power. Such rejection and powerlessness also operate within the story of the sending of the disciples. After giving them authority over unclean spirits, Jesus "ordered them not to take anything on the road except a staff, not bread, not a sack, nor money in their belts" (6:8). Even while the disciples have power over demons and disease, they are to make themselves reliant on the hospitality of strangers for their food. Such reliance implies vulnerability to rejection, which Jesus warns will happen: "Whatever place does not receive you nor hear you, when you leave from there shake the dust from your feet as a testimony against them" (6:11). The disciples' itinerant ministry, reliance on hospitality, and susceptibility to rejection correspond to Jesus' own

³⁸⁴ Joachim Gnilka, "Das Martyrium Johannes des Täuflers (Mk 6,17-29)," in *Orientierung an Jesus: Zur Theologie der Synoptiker*, ed. Paul Hoffman (Freiburg: Herder, 1973), 80.

³⁸⁵ Francis J. Moloney, "Mark 6b-30: Mission, the Baptist, and Failure," *CBQ* 63.4 (2001): 659.

ministry.³⁸⁶ The disciples' ministry, both in power and in vulnerability, reflects the ministry of Jesus so much so that the report of the disciples work redounds to Jesus' credit: "and king Herod heard, for Jesus' name had become known and they were saying that John the Baptist had risen from the dead and because of this these powers were working in him" (6:14).³⁸⁷ The surrounding pericopes of Jesus in Nazareth and John before Herod illustrate the similarity of Jesus and his disciples even as they show Jesus as the leader and pattern for the disciples and not simply as their colleague.

Miracles and Succession in Mark

By telling the story of the mission of the Twelve, Mark shows that the ministry of Jesus lives on in his followers, though in an attenuated form. Jesus' charisma is uniquely his own, but he can transmit it to his followers. Mark's telling combines the restriction of charisma with the sharing of charisma in a way that allows Jesus' authority to remain distinct from that of the disciples even if they share some aspects of it. Jesus intrinsically possesses the power to heal and exercise demons, while the disciples merely receive this authority from Jesus. Moreover, it is not membership in the group of disciples that grants one authority, but rather it is one's relationship to Jesus, as the story of the other exorcist (9:38-40) demonstrates. Mark also presents several characters outside the group of disciples as developing the correct attitude toward Jesus in contrast to the disciples. The disciples scorn the woman who anoints Jesus in Jerusalem for an action that Jesus lauds (14:3-9). While the disciples have deserted him, it is

³⁸⁶ Moloney, "Mark 6b-30," 652-53.

³⁸⁷ Marcus, *Mark*, 1.388.

the centurion at the cross who is the first human in the narrative to recognize that Jesus is the Son of God (15:39). The evangelist sharply distinguishes the fallible and often blameworthy disciples from Jesus even though the disciples have some small share of Jesus' charismatic authority. As seen in the survey of modern NRMs, such a mix of restricting charisma to the founder and sharing some aspects of this charisma with successors is one strategy whereby groups maintain cohesion in the wake of their founders' deaths.

The Commissioning in the Double Tradition

Mark's version of the Commissioning depicts the continuity between Jesus and his followers but nevertheless restricts much of the charisma to Jesus alone. The Q version, on the other hand, portrays the disciples sharing much more equally with Jesus in charismatic authority. When the disciples are charged to heal, their healings parallel those of Jesus in making present God's eschatological fulfillment. In Q, healing miracles, both Jesus' and the disciples', manifest the presence of the kingdom of God.

The Commissioning

In the Double Tradition, Jesus opens the Commissioning by saying, "The harvest (θερισμός) is plentiful, but the workers (ἐργάται) are few. Pray then that the Lord of the harvest (θερισμοῦ) send out workers (ἐργάτας) into his harvest (θερισμὸν)" (Matt 9:37-38//Luke 10:2). The harvest is a well-attested metaphor for the eschaton:

Send out the sickle for the harvest (ῥιζῖκ/τρύγητος) is ripe. Go in, tread, for the wine press is full. The vats overflow, for their wickedness is great. Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision! For the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision. (Joel 4:13)³⁸⁸

Then I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud sat one like a son of man who had a gold crown upon his head and a sharp sickle in his hand. Another angel went out from the temple calling out in a loud voice to the one seated on the cloud, “Send out your sickle and reap (θέρισον), because the hour to reap (θερίσαι) has come, because the harvest (θερισμός) of the earth has ripened. (Rev 14:14-15)

Behold, the days are coming and it will happen when the time of the world has ripened and the harvest of the seed of the evil ones and the good ones has come. (2 Bar. 70.2)

If you are alive, you will see, and if you live long, you will often marvel, because the age is hastening swiftly to its end. For it will not be able to bring the things that have been promised to the righteous in their appointed times, because this age is full of sadness and infirmities. For the evil about which you ask me has been sown, but the harvest of it has not yet come. If therefore that which has been sown is not reaped, and if the place where the evil has been sown does not pass away, the field where the good has been sown will not come. (4 Ezra 4.26-29)

A similar agricultural metaphor for the eschaton appears in the Double Tradition on the lips of the Baptist when he predicts the coming of the stronger one who will clear the threshing floor and gather wheat into barns (Matt 3:12//Luke 3:17). The previous chapter showed that in the Beelzebul Controversy, Q’s Jesus includes others in the work of this eschatological gathering (Matt 12:30//Luke 11:23). Similarly, Jesus’ statement about the laborers in the harvest at the beginning of the Commissioning conceptualizes the subsequent mission of the disciples in an eschatological framework, with the disciples participating as laborers in the eschatological task of harvesting.³⁸⁹ The Double Tradition emphasizes the identity of the disciples as workers

³⁸⁸ Joel 3:13 in the English Bible.

³⁸⁹ Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2.148-149.

(ἐργάται) in the eschatological harvest by repeating this identity in the justification of their receiving hospitality on their mission: “for the worker (ἐργάτης) is worthy of his food/wages” (Matt 10:10//Luke 10:7). While the disciples thus participate as workers in the eschatological harvest, Q’s Jesus does not make clear how he fits into this eschatological metaphor. He tells the disciples to pray to the Lord of the harvest to send out workers, but then he himself sends them out into the harvest. The Double Tradition declines to make explicit whether Jesus is the Lord of the harvest, or whether he is acting on behalf of the Lord of the harvest—i.e., God—in sending out the disciples. Unlike Mark, who presents a sharp distinction between Jesus and the disciples, the Double Tradition presents them as working together in the eschatological harvest.

The eschatological import of the disciples’ mission in Q receives further expression in Jesus’ warning about what will happen to a city that does not receive their message:

It will be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah on the day of judgment than for that city. (Matt 10:15)

On that day it will be more tolerable for Sodom than for that city. (Luke 10:12)

The failure to receive the disciples and accept their message makes a city liable to eschatological judgment. For the Double Tradition, the message the disciples are to proclaim is that the kingdom of God/heaven “has come near (ἤγγικεν),” which they are to announce alongside their ministry of healing (Matt 10:7//Luke 10:9). The Double Tradition here uses the same verb in the same perfect tense, ἤγγικεν, as Mark does in describing Jesus’ proclamation (Mk 1:15). The examination of Mark 1:15 in the previous chapter reviewed the scholarly debate as to whether the perfect tense of ἤγγικεν in Mark 1:15 reflected the nearness or the presence of God’s kingdom. A similar debate exists about the nuance of this verbal form in the

Q context.³⁹⁰ As in the case with Mark, it seems wiser to view the word's nuance in Q as vague and allowing either interpretation.³⁹¹ Indeed, chapter 3 showed that Q material presents the kingdom of God both as incipiently present and also as coming in the near future.

The preceding chapter showed that the Q version of the Beelzebul Controversy interpreted Jesus' exorcisms as evidence of the dawning of the kingdom of God. By linking Jesus' command to proclaim the kingdom to his command to heal, the Q version of the commissioning implies a similar link between healing and the presence of the kingdom.³⁹² Unlike the Beelzebul Controversy, however, the commissioning of the disciples does not make this connection explicit. The paratactic positioning of the command to heal and the command to proclaim the kingdom leaves it up to the reader to draw the connection. The importance of healing in other Q contexts provides clues to the connection between healing and the kingdom of God by showing that healings manifest the eschatological blessing that Jesus' ministry makes present.

Co-text 1: The Baptist's Question

The clearest indication of the eschatological significance of healing in Q comes from the episode of John the Baptist's questioning of Jesus' identity. Via his disciples, John asks Jesus who he is, to which Jesus responds by pointing to his healings:

³⁹⁰ For instance, Huneburg, *Jesus*, 164-65 argues that in the context of Q, ἤγγικεν indicates that the kingdom has already arrived. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1.392 argue that ἤγγικεν indicates the extreme nearness, but not yet arrival, of the kingdom.

³⁹¹ With Meier, *Marginal Jew*, 2.433.

³⁹² Fledderman, *Q*, 434; Schulz, *Q*, 417; Huneburg, *Jesus*, 163.

And while he was in prison, John heard of the works of the Christ and sent his disciples to say to him, “Are you the one who is to come or should we look for another?” And answering them Jesus said, “Go, tell John what you have heard and seen: Blind people receive sight (τυφλοὶ ἀναβλέπουσιν) and lame people walk (χωλοὶ περιπατοῦσιν), those with leprosy are cleansed (λεπροὶ καθαρίζονται), and deaf people hear (κωφοὶ ἀκούουσιν), and dead people are raised (νεκροὶ ἐγείρονται) and poor people have good news preached to them (πτωχοὶ εὐαγγελίζονται). And blessed is whoever is not scandalized by me. (Matt 11:2-6)

And his disciples told John about all these things and John called two of his disciples and sent them to the Lord saying, “Are you the one who is to come or should we look for another?” And when the men came to him they said, “John the Baptist sent us to you saying, ‘Are you the one who is to come or should we look for another?’” In that hour Jesus healed many from illnesses and scourges and evil spirits and to many blind people he gave sight. And answering them Jesus said, “Go, tell John what you have seen and heard: blind people receive sight (τυφλοὶ ἀναβλέπουσιν), lame people walk (χωλοὶ περιπατοῦσιν), those with leprosy are cleansed (λεπροὶ καθαρίζονται) and deaf people hear (κωφοὶ ἀκούουσιν), and dead people are raised (νεκροὶ ἐγείρονται), poor people have good news preached to them (πτωχοὶ εὐαγγελίζονται). And blessed is whoever is not scandalized by me. (Luke 7:18-23)

The shared material consists of John’s question to Jesus, delivered by John’s disciples, about whether Jesus is “the one who is to come,” followed by Jesus’ response. John’s question presupposes that Jesus, and the readers, will understand what is meant by “the one who is to come.” The Baptist here refers to the apocalyptic figure who will thresh the people, separating the wheat from the chaff that is to be burnt in the final judgment (Matt 3:12//Luke 3:17). That John’s message pointed to a more powerful figure yet to come is a common feature throughout the gospels (Mark 1:7; John 1:27).

John’s question might more expansively be paraphrased, “Are you the eschatological judge whom I have been predicting?” Jesus answers only indirectly, by giving a list of occurrences in his ministry: 1) blind receiving sight; 2) lame walking; 3) people with leprosy

being cleansed; 4) deaf receiving hearing; 5) dead being raised; and 6) poor having good news proclaimed to them. John asks who Jesus is, and Jesus responds with a list of (primarily) miraculous accomplishments in his ministry.

This list of accomplishments draws heavily on Isaiah's predictions of God's glorious blessings to come:

Isaiah 26:19 (LXX): The dead (νεκροί) will rise and those in the tombs shall be raised (ἐγερθήσονται) and those in the earth shall rejoice for the dew from you is healing for them but the land of the godless will fall.

Isaiah 29:18 (LXX): And on that day the deaf (κωφοί) will hear (ἀκούσονται) the words of a book and those who are in darkness, even the eyes of the blind (τυφλῶν) which are in fog, shall see (βλέψονται).

Isaiah 35:5-6 (LXX) Then the eyes of the blind (τυφλῶν) will be opened and the ears of the deaf (κωφῶν) will hear (ἀκούσονται), then the lame person (χωλός) will leap like a deer and the tongue of those with speech impediments will be clear because water has broken forth in the desert and a channel in the thirsty land.

Isaiah 42:7 (LXX): "To open the eyes of blind people (τυφλῶν), to lead prisoners out of chains and from the those living in darkness out of the prison house"

Isaiah 61:1 (LXX): "The spirit of the Lord is upon me on account of which he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor (εὐαγγελίσασθαι πτωχοῖς), he has sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to proclaim release to captives and recovery of sight to the blind (τυφλοῖς ἀνάβλεψιν)."

This confluence of allusions to eschatological fulfillment in Jesus' answer has led many scholars to interpret Jesus' answer as an indirect assertion of his messianic identity.³⁹³ In this

³⁹³ Bovon, *Luke 1*, 282; Craig S. Keener, *The Gospel of Matthew: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009), 336; Hanna Stettler, "Die Bedeutung der Täuferanfrage in Matthäus 11,2-6 par Lk 7,18-23 für die Christologie," *Biblica* 89 (2008): 173-200; John J. Collins, "The Works of the Messiah," *DSD* 1.1 (1994): 98-112.

way of thinking, Jesus answers John the Baptist's question about his identity with a checklist of messianic expectations he has accomplished.

Strack and Billerbeck argued that widespread expectation of a miracle working Messiah existed in Second Temple Judaism and that Jesus' listing of miracles in Matt 11:5//Luke 7:22 asserts his messianic identity.³⁹⁴ However, the evidence that they supplied for this claim, which ranges from the Bible to the Talmud, consists of general predictions of eschatological freedom from suffering, disease, and death without any reference to a miracle-working, divine agent.³⁹⁵ Frankfurter has more recently claimed that in Second Temple Judaism there existed a list of deeds that the expected prophet like Moses would accomplish.³⁹⁶ As evidence for this widespread expectation, Frankfurter adduces only two sources: *Sibylline Oracles* 8.205-8 (despite its late second-century dating) and Isa 35:5-6, which has no reference to a human intermediary, Moses or otherwise. Such attempts to discover a widespread expectation of an eschatological figure fitting Isaiah's prophecies are not convincing, and most biblical scholars have rightly abandoned them.

Nevertheless, a Qumran document has convinced some scholars that there existed an expectation of a figure who would do the things Jesus lists in his reply to the Baptist, even if this expectation was not widespread.³⁹⁷ 4Q521 is preserved only in fragments, but the largest

³⁹⁴ Hermann L. Strack and Paul Billerbeck, *Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrasch* (Munich: Beck, 1922), 1.593.

³⁹⁵ For a point-by-point refutation see Hans Kvalbein, "The Wonders of the End-Time: Metaphoric Language in 4Q521 and the Interpretation of Matthew 11.5 par.," *JSP* 18 (1998): 102-106.

³⁹⁶ David T.M. Frankfurter, "The Origin of the Miracle-List Tradition and Its Medium of Circulation," *SBLSP* 29 (1990): 344-74.

³⁹⁷ L. Novakovic, *Messiah, the Healer of the Sick* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003), 181; Graham Stanton, *Gospel Truth? New Light on Jesus and the Gospels* (Valley Forge: Trinity

fragment references God's Messiah (משיח) (4.1) and then ten lines later says, "He will heal the wounded, and revive the dead and bring good news to the poor" (4.12). This passage shows a pastiche of Isaiaian prophecies similar to Jesus' answer to the Baptist. However, it is not clear that the Messiah of the first line is the agent of these wondrous deeds. In the intervening lines, God becomes the focus of the account, and God seems to be the most likely subject for these verbs.³⁹⁸ While 4Q521 does envision an eschaton with a Messiah and the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy, it offers at best equivocal evidence that fulfilling these prophecies was part of the Messiah's job description.

Looking for a specific pre-Christian tradition of messianic expectation that Jesus fulfilled has not proven very fruitful. There were many images of eschatological fulfillment for which Second Temple Jews could hope, including liberation from foreign powers, return of the lost tribes, conquest of enemies, the world-wide acceptance of Israel's God, the end of war, preternatural fecundity of the land, the cessation of human suffering, and the raising of the dead. Eschatological hopes could attach themselves to God's accomplishment of such fulfillment or upon a human intermediary, envisioned in many possible terms: as conquering warrior, as royal descendant of David, as righteous priest, as a prophet like Moses, as Elijah *redivivus*, as anointed one of God (Messiah), or as Son of Man. Those who expected God's

Press Internations, 1995), 186-87; James D. Tabor and Michael O. Wise, "4Q521 'On Resurrection' and the Synoptic Gospel Tradition: A Preliminary Study," *JSP* 10 (1992): 149-62; Micheal O. Wise and James D. Tabor, "The Messiah at Qumran," *BAR* 18 (1992): 60-63; Benjamin Wold, "Agency and Raising the Dead in 4QPseudo-Ezekiel and 4Q521 2 ii," *ZNW* 103 (2012): 1-19; Collins, "Works," 98-112.

³⁹⁸ Joseph Fitzmyer, *The One Who is to Come* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 97; Rafael Rodriguez, "Re-framing End-Time Wonders: A Response to Hans Kvalbein," *JSP* 20 (2011): 237-38; F. Neirynek, "Q 6,20b-21; 7,22 and Isaiah 61" in Idem, *Evangelica III: 1992-2000. Collected Essays* (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2001), 129-66; Huneburg, *Jesus*, 66-67; Kvalbein, "Wonders."

decisive action in the world could draw on these traditional images and combine them in distinct ways to express their hopes.³⁹⁹ Jesus' answer to John is one such combination of these eschatological themes. Examination of just how Jesus modifies and combines the traditional material throws more light on the answer's possible meaning than does the search for some pre-existent messianic checklist to which it conforms, especially since the evidence for such a list rests on the vexed interpretation of a single fragmentary text from Qumran. The list of actions in Jesus' response to the Baptist is not a messianic resumé; rather, it is a catalogue of the blessings God has promised for the eschaton.

Jesus' answer conforms most closely in form and content to the list of healings from Isa 35:5-6:

blind people receive sight (τυφλοὶ ἀναβλέπουσιν),
lame people walk (χωλοὶ περιπατοῦσιν),
those with leprosy are cleansed (λεπροὶ καθαρίζονται)
and deaf people hear (κωφοὶ ἀκούουσιν),
and dead people are raised (νεκροὶ ἐγείρονται),
poor people have good news preached to them (πτωχοὶ εὐαγγελίζονται).
(Matt 11:5// Luke 7:22)

Then the eyes of the blind (τυφλῶν) will be opened and the ears of the deaf (κωφῶν) will hear (ἀκούσονται), then the lame person (χωλός) will leap like a deer and the tongue of those with speech impediments will be clear because water has broken forth in the desert and a channel in the thirsty land. (Isaiah 35:5-6 (LXX))

Both lists consist of short clauses relating the benefits various groups receive. The subjects of the clauses are the beneficiaries, and the verbs either describe the newly acquired abilities of the subjects in the active voice or the healing of the subjects in the passive voice. The agent of these deeds remains unnamed. In Isa 35:5-6, the agent is clearly God. The imitation of this

³⁹⁹ Dunn, "Kingdom," 5.

divine passive style in Jesus' reply similarly points attention toward God as the agent of these deeds.

Though Isa 35:5-6 provides the framework for Jesus' answer, the wording and content differ conspicuously. The Isaiah passage presents the healing of four groups: the blind, the deaf, the lame, and those with speech impediments. Jesus' reply includes the first three of these and adds three more types of occurrences: people with leprosy being cleansed, dead being raised, and the poor having good news announced to them. The raising of the dead, though not present in Isa 35:5-6, has Isaianic background in 26:19: "the dead (νεκροί) will rise and those in the tombs shall be raised (ἐγερθήσονται)." This verse has a similar style of narration as Isa 35:5-6, and the agent of this miracle, though unnamed, is clearly God. The incorporation of the other two elements, cleansing of people with leprosy and evangelization of the poor, however, involves more extensive modification of Isaiah's models.

Jesus' announcement of good news to the poor clearly alludes to Isa 61:1, in which the prophet claims this announcement as part of his mission. Unlike in Isa 35:5-6, here a human agent accomplishes the divine work. This prophetic agent also, in the LXX version, will give sight to the blind, similar to the action of God's servant in Isa 42:7, among whose charges is to open the eyes of the blind. This connection to healing the blind explains why the announcement of good news to the poor lends itself to inclusion in a list in the style of Isa 35:6-7. Merging the themes of Isa 61:1 and 35:5-6 into a stylistically unified list involves a choice: the elements of 35:5-6 could be added to the mission of the one anointed by God in 61:1, or the elements of 61:1 could be added to the list of deeds God accomplishes without mention of a human agent in 35:5-6. That Jesus' response to John uses the latter strategy diminishes the emphasis on the human agent. Jesus takes the well-known action of the prophet

from Isa 61:1 and changes it into a deed accomplished in the divine passive; thereby, he distances it from its original context as the act of God's human agent.⁴⁰⁰

Unlike the other five elements in Jesus' reply, the cleansing of people with leprosy has no obvious antecedent in Isaiah. Although several possible explanations for its inclusion exist, the simplest is that healing of people with leprosy was included simply because it was a part of Jesus' ministry.⁴⁰¹ This may be true, but setting this particular cure in the midst of such allusions to Isaiah begs closer scrutiny to determine its significance. A proposed connection to Isaiah can be found at Isa 35:8 (LXX): "There will be a clean way and it will be called a holy way, and no unclean person will pass there, nor will there be an unclean way, but those who have been scattered will walk upon it and they will not be led astray."⁴⁰² Such a connection has the advantage of making Jesus' response to the Baptist consistently based on eschatological hopes in Isaiah. However, the ties are tenuous: there is no mention of people with leprosy in Isaiah, nor do the unclean become clean.

Looking at the broader OT context beyond Isaiah, the infliction and cure of leprosy appear frequently as divine prerogatives. The story of Naaman the Syrian from 2 Kings 5:1-27 is perhaps the most famous: the prophet Elisha tells the leprous Naaman that his leprosy will be cured if he bathes in the Jordan; after Elisha is proved correct, Naaman is so impressed with the God of Israel that he promises to serve the Lord only. God's power is frequently manifest through the affliction and removal of leprosy: God gives Moses the ability to make his hand leprous and return it to normal as a sign so that the Israelites will believe God sent him (Exod

⁴⁰⁰ Hüneburg, *Jesus*, 75.

⁴⁰¹ For a summary of various proposals, see Hüneburg, *Jesus*, 62-63.

⁴⁰² *Ibid.*, 62.

4:6); as a punishment for speaking against Moses, God inflicts leprosy on Miriam and then heals her at Moses' behest (Num 12:1-15); God similarly punishes King Uzziah with leprosy for being angry with the priests (2 Chr 26:19). Cleansing people with leprosy thus fits very well within Jesus' list of God's redemptive accomplishments, even if it does not find expression in the Isaianic materials that form the background of the rest of Jesus' response.

Jesus' answer modifies the model from Isa 35:5-6 not just by adding the three elements of raising of the dead, cleansing people with leprosy, and evangelizing the poor. Jesus' response changes Isaiah's verb tenses.⁴⁰³ Whereas Isaiah's list has all the verbs in the future, Jesus' verbs are all in the present. What exists as a prediction for Isaiah becomes for Jesus a present reality. In Jesus' miracles, Isaiah's hopes for God's redemption come true. How exactly this fact answers the Baptist's question, "Are you the one who is to come or should we look for another?" is left to the reader to determine.

Ulrich Luz trenchantly expresses the incongruence between the question and the answer: "Jesus' answer evades the question of John's disciples. He responds to their question about the *person* of Jesus by referring to the present *time* of salvation that the questioners may experience."⁴⁰⁴ However, Jesus' answer is not so much evasive as indirect, because his response does presume a connection between the person in the question and the time in the answer. After describing this time of salvation, Jesus does not say, "Blessed is whoever is not scandalized by *this*," but rather, "Blessed is whoever is not scandalized by *me*." The macarism implies that Jesus has said something about his identity by listing the accomplishments of Matt 11:5//Luke 7:22.

⁴⁰³ Huneburg, *Jesus*, 64.

⁴⁰⁴ Ulrich Luz, *Matthew 8-20: A Commentary* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2001), 134.

Indeed, for Jesus' answer to connect to John's question, readers and hearers must draw on a narrative framework to link the agentless list of Jesus' response to the question of his identity. Matthew and Luke provide this narrative framework explicitly; Jesus himself has accomplished the miracles enumerated in his response to the Baptist. In the Q material, Jesus heals deafness via an exorcism in the opening of the Beelzebul Controversy, but if the Q material ever existed independently, readers/hearers would have to supply the rest of the narrative framework. Given Jesus' reputation as a miracle worker at various levels within the Gospel tradition, an early hearer of this tradition would likely make the connection that Jesus here is speaking about his own miracle working.

The indirectness of Jesus' answer is not merely a way of being evasive; it also qualifies the Baptist's question.⁴⁰⁵ John has predicted the imminence of eschatological judgment in the person of one who is to come. When John asks if Jesus is that figure, Jesus uses his miracles to point out the arrival of eschatological blessing. Care must be taken in seeing too strong an opposition between eschatological judgment and blessing in Jesus' response, as these are closely linked in the traditions upon which Jesus draws.⁴⁰⁶ Just before predicting the blooming of the desert and the healing of the blind, deaf, and lame, Isaiah predicted God's wrathful judgment against the nations (Isa 34:1-17). The one the Lord anointed to announce good news to the poor will proclaim "the year of the Lord's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God" (Isa 61:2). Stories of leprosy can reveal God's punishment in its infliction as well as God's blessing in its cure. Blessing of the righteous and punishment of the wicked are two sides of the eschatological coin.

⁴⁰⁵ Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:246; Meier, *Marginal Jew*, 2:134; R.T. France, *The Gospel of Matthew* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 424.

⁴⁰⁶ Tuckett, *Q*, 127.

Jesus' response to John the Baptist's question consists of a three-part argument, of which Jesus gives only the first part explicitly. When the Baptist (through his disciples) asks if Jesus is the eschatological judge John has been predicting, the answer is that (1) God's eschatological promises of blessing are fulfilled in the miracles they have seen, and because (2) Jesus has been performing these miracles, one should conclude that (3) Jesus is God's eschatological agent ushering in both the promised blessings and the promised judgment. The miracles here are used to demonstrate Jesus' identity, but that identity is premised on the miracles illustrating the eschatological fulfillment that Jesus elsewhere calls the kingdom of God.⁴⁰⁷ The miracles demonstrate Jesus' special identity only insofar as they instantiate the kingdom he is proclaiming. It therefore makes sense that as the disciples' perform healing miracles in the Double Tradition they are to proclaim the incipient presence of the kingdom of God, for the disciples' healings also manifest the kingdom's presence. Though their healings, the disciples participate with Jesus in demonstrating the present eschatological blessings.

Co-text 2: The Healing of the Centurion's Servant

The other healing narrative in Q concerns the centurion and his dependent, an account that does not emphasize the eschatological import of Jesus' healing. However, the exchange between Jesus and the centurion reflects the Double Tradition's positioning of Jesus as an agent of God. Luke and Matthew differ on quite a few of the narrative details, but the words of Jesus and the centurion agree extensively in the two versions:

⁴⁰⁷ With Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:245; Meier, *Marginal Jew*, 2:134-135; Hüneburg, *Jesus*, 79.

And when he entered Capernaum, a centurion approached him, begging him and saying, “Lord (κύριε), my servant (παῖς) lies paralyzed at home, afflicted terribly.” Jesus said to him, “I will come and heal him.” And the centurion answered saying, “Lord (κύριε), I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only speak a word, and my servant (παῖς) will be healed. For I too am a man under authority (καὶ γὰρ ἐγὼ ἄνθρωπός εἰμι ὑπὸ ἐξουσίαν), having under myself soldiers, and I say to one, ‘Go,’ and he goes, and to another, ‘Come,’ and he comes, and to my slave (δούλω), ‘Do this,’ and he does it.” When he heard this, Jesus was amazed and said to those following, “Amen, I say to you, from no one in Israel have I found such faith (πίστιν). But I say to you that many will come from east and west and recline with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, but the sons of the kingdom will be thrown out into the outer darkness where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth.” And Jesus said to the centurion, “Go. Let it happen for you as you believed (ἐπίστευσας).” And his servant (παῖς) was healed at that very hour. (Matt 8:5-13)

When he had finished all these words in the hearing of the people, he entered Capernaum. And a certain centurion’s slave (δοῦλος), who was valuable to him, was deathly ill. Hearing about Jesus, he sent elders of the Jews to him to ask him to come and save his slave (δοῦλον). When they came to Jesus, they begged him urgently saying, “He is worthy that you do this thing for him, for he loves our people, and he built the synagogue for us.” Jesus went with them, but when he was already not far from the house, the centurion sent friends saying to him, “Lord (κύριε), do not trouble yourself. For I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof. Therefore, I did not consider myself worthy to approach you, but speak a word and my servant (παῖς) will be healed. For I too am a man placed under authority (καὶ γὰρ ἐγὼ ἄνθρωπός εἰμι ὑπὸ ἐξουσίαν τασσόμενος), having under myself soldiers, and I say to one, ‘Go,’ and he goes, and to another, ‘Come,’ and he comes, and to my slave (δούλω), ‘Do this,’ and he does it.” When he heard these things, Jesus was amazed at him and turning to the crowd following him he said, “I say to you, not in Israel have I found such faith (πίστιν).” And when the elders returned to the house, they found the slave (δοῦλον) healed. (Luke 7:1-10)

The narrative frameworks in Matthew and Luke show marked differences: (1) in Matthew the sick person is consistently called the centurion’s παῖς (which can be translated child or servant),⁴⁰⁸ but Luke refers to him as a slave (δοῦλος) except in the centurion’s address

⁴⁰⁸ Whether the παῖς in Matthew’s version or his source is the centurion’s child or servant has been the subject of much scholarly debate. The word can mean either “child” or “servant” (BDAG 604-5, παῖς). Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2.21 argue for “servant.” Amy-Jill Levine, *The Social and Ethnic Dimensions of Matthewan Salvation History* (Lewiston, NY: Mellen,

to Jesus where he, like Matthew, uses *παῖς*; (2) in Matthew the affliction is paralysis, whereas in Luke it is an undefined, but almost fatal, illness; (3) in Matthew the centurion encounters Jesus directly, while in Luke the centurion himself never enters the scene, but communicates solely through intermediaries. These differences have led some supporters of the Q-hypothesis to claim that Q contained only the words of Jesus and the centurion without any narrative material.⁴⁰⁹ This proposal has not found widespread acceptance among those reconstructing Q both because the words of Jesus and the centurion make little sense apart from some narrative context and because Matthew and Luke's narrative framework does share some striking similarities: both versions feature a centurion from Capernaum with a sick dependent on whose behalf he seeks out Jesus' help. In whatever way one explains the origin of the Double Tradition, it here consists of the words of Jesus and the centurion embedded in a narrative.

In this narrative, the actual performance of the miracle is almost an afterthought. The story focuses instead on Jesus' interaction with the centurion (or his proxies) and Jesus' amazement at the centurion's faith. The healing itself is never described. The narrative weight thus lies on the interaction between Jesus and the centurion/his proxies.⁴¹⁰ The interaction

1988), 108 argues for "son." The identity of the centurion's *παῖς* can have some implications for the social relations depicted in Matthew's version, e.g., Theodore W. Jennings and Tat-Siong Benny Liew, "Mistaken Identities but Model Faith: Rereading the Centurion, the Chap, and the Christ in Matthew 8:5-13," *JBL* 122.3 (2004): 862-79. However, the precise relationship of the sick person to the centurion does not impact the investigation of the significance of Jesus' miracles in the Q pericopes. I have translated it consistently as servant so that the verbal similarity between Matt 8:8 and Luke 7:7 (where the translation "servant" is demanded) is more apparent in English.

⁴⁰⁹ Dibelius, *From Tradition*, 33-34, 244-45.

⁴¹⁰ Bultmann, *History*, 38 held that the pattern of a miracle story was so violated that this pericope should be categorized not as a miracle story, but as an apothegm. Huneburg, *Jesus*, 125-7 argues that, violations of pattern notwithstanding, this story belongs properly to the miracle story genre. In whatever way one might define the exact genre, the story still features

between these characters foregrounds the faith of the centurion, but it does not give a clear description of the content of this faith beyond the belief that Jesus can perform a healing. His faith precedes the miracle. The idea of faith as a precursor, or even precondition, to Jesus' performing miracles is familiar from Mark. Indeed, the concept of faith as a prerequisite for miracle separates the Synoptic tradition from John, where faith is often the result of a miracle, as it is in the similar story of Jesus' healing a royal official's son at a distance, so that when the royal official realized that Jesus had healed from a distance, "he believed (ἐπίστευσεν) as well and so did his whole household" (John 4:53).⁴¹¹ Mark and Q thus share the idea that faith precedes healing miracles, and they also share a vagueness about the content of this faith.

Whereas the centurion clearly believes that Jesus can heal from afar with a mere word, what this power implies about Jesus' identity remains unclear. The centurion makes no explicit confession about who he believes Jesus to be. He does address Jesus as "Lord" (κύριε), which could carry implications of divinity from its LXX use as a translation of the Tetragrammaton, but it could also simply represent a polite form of address, equivalent to "sir."⁴¹² Similarly, the centurion's confession that he is not worthy to receive Jesus could imply a status for Jesus ranging from honored person to divine avatar.⁴¹³ Jesus' ability to

a miracle, though the focus is more on the dialogue surrounding the miracle than on the miracle itself.

⁴¹¹ Theissen, *Miracle Stories*, 130-32.

⁴¹² For arguments that κύριος in the context of Q means, "Sir," see Kloppenborg, *Formation*, 117-20; Cotter, *Christ*, 107. For arguments that the κύριε address implies a high Christology, see David R. Catchpole, "The Centurion's Faith and Its Function in Q," in *Four Gospels 1992*, eds. F. Segbroeck, C.M. Tuckett, G. van Belle, and J. Verheyden (Louvain: Peeters, 1992), 1.519 and Uwe Wegner, *Der Hauptmann von Kafarnaum* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1985), 381-83. For the range of meanings associated with the term, see give term *BDAG* 458-60, κύριος.

⁴¹³ On the basis of several LXX and NT passages (Exod 4:10; Ruth 1:20-21; Job 21:15; 31:2; 39:32; Joel 2:11; 1 Cor 15:9; 2 Cor 2:6, 16; 3:5-6) that link worthiness/unworthiness with the

perform miracles make him a person of importance, to whom the centurion shows respect and even faith, but the Q passage does not go further in addressing Jesus' identity.⁴¹⁴

The centurion does express a belief in Jesus' authority (ἐξουσία), another theme familiar from Mark. The last section showed that ἐξουσία often involves a three-level hierarchy of granter-wielder-subordinate and that Mark places Jesus in the position of granter. The centurion's response in the Double Tradition depicts this same three-level hierarchy, but with Jesus in the position of wielder rather than granter. The centurion expresses his belief in Jesus' authority by his own experience of commanding his soldiers and slaves. This analogy implies that Jesus also has authority to command with a word. However, the centurion introduces this analogy not by saying, "I too am a man *with* authority," but by saying, "I too am a man (placed) *under* authority" (Matt 8:9//Luke 7:8). The incongruence between the statement of his subordination and his examples of command has bothered many interpreters. Some Syriac manuscripts translate the centurion's response as, "I am a man *having* authority," in an apparent effort to smooth over this awkwardness.⁴¹⁵ A popular modern explanation has been to assert that Matt 8:9//Luke 7:8 mistranslates an Aramaic original; in this construction, the first Greek translator misunderstood the paratactic Semitic style of the original and did not

human-divine relationship, Catchpole, "Centurion's Faith," 535, claims that the centurion's statement "necessarily resonates with a sense of the great gulf fixed between the human and the divine." Tuckett, *Q*, 217 argues that *ικανός* need not imply anything further than the centurion's respect for Jesus. For another interpretation of merely social inferiority, see John T. Carroll, *Luke: A Commentary* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2012), 162. None of these arguments is probative, and the Double Tradition leaves it up to the reader to infer why the centurion felt unworthy with respect to Jesus.

⁴¹⁴ Against Hüneburg, *Jesus*, 134-35 who sees in this story further confirmation of Jesus' identity as the divine agent of eschatological redemption. Hüneburg's argument rests not so much on the content of the pericope itself, but its position and relationship to other pericopes in the hypothetical Q document.

⁴¹⁵ See Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2.23.

see that the first clause was concessive: “*Although* I am a man under authority, I have soldiers under myself...”⁴¹⁶ A *qal v’homer* (*a minore ad maius*) argument follows: if the centurion, who is a person under authority, has the power to command with a word, how much more must Jesus, who is under no authority, have the power to command with a word.

Hypothetical sources notwithstanding, the task of understanding the Q story requires understanding the Greek text with which it was told. David Catchpole has developed an argument that honors the Greek text but that gives the same *ad maius* implication.⁴¹⁷ He compares the centurion’s statement of Matt 8:9//Luke 7:8 with the similar statement of Peter in Acts 10:26, “καὶ ἐγὼ αὐτὸς ἄνθρωπός εἰμι,” whereby Peter assures Cornelius that he (Peter) is merely human and not the proper object of worship. Catchpole sees the first clause of Matt 8:9//Luke 7:8 as a parallel assertion of mere humanity with the following participle as adversative, so that the meaning runs, “I am just a man under authority, but I have soldiers under myself...” Taking a different tack in explaining the Greek text, Hüneburg claims that the centurion is not setting up an analogy between himself and Jesus, but rather that he is illustrating that he understands the power of a verbal command, since he is himself both a subordinate and superior.⁴¹⁸

⁴¹⁶ E.g. Julius Wellhausen, *Das Evangelium Matthaei* (Berlin: Georg Reimer, 1904), 36; Wegner, *Hauptmann*, 388-89.

⁴¹⁷ Catchpole, “Centurion’s Faith,” 534-37. Bovon, *Luke 1*, 262 offers a similar solution.

⁴¹⁸ Hüneburg, *Jesus*, 131-134. Also Daniel Marguerat *Le Jugement dans l’Evangile de Mattieu* 2nd ed. (Geneva: Labor et Fides, 1995), 246, and France, *Matthew*, 315.

The problem with both of these arguments is that they fail to take sufficient account of the associative connotation of *καί*.⁴¹⁹ The centurion sets his authority as analogous to that of Jesus. Catchpole's example of Acts 10:26 actually makes the associative character of the statement clear. Peter is telling Cornelius, in effect, "I am a man, *just like you*, so you should not worship me." The construction *καὶ ἐγὼ...ἄνθρωπός εἰμι* expresses the speaker's similarity to the addressee, which in Acts is the shared human status. In Q, the centurion highlights Jesus' similarity to him.⁴²⁰ Jesus is like the centurion in that he is "under authority," i.e., in a chain of command such that he can issue orders and have them obeyed. Just as the centurion is an agent of a higher authority, so is Jesus.⁴²¹ The centurion acts on the emperor's behalf, and Jesus acts on God's. Even as the centurion likens the authority granted him by the emperor to the authority granted Jesus by God, the superiority of God's authority to Caesar's is apparent. The centurion as the emperor's agent can command soldiers and slaves, but Jesus as God's agent can command illness. The agent of Caesar must seek help from the agent of God. The Q story only indirectly makes this evaluation of Jesus' identity as the recipient of authority over sickness granted him by God; it is by no means the focus of the pericope. The centurion's statement primarily demonstrates his faith in the authority that Jesus wields as God's agent, and the narrative climaxes in Jesus' wonder at this faith.

⁴¹⁹ Used as an adverb, as in this verse, *καί* fix accent takes the meaning "also," or, "likewise." *BDAG* 393. It can also take the meaning "even," which heightens and specifies a quality already stated.

⁴²⁰ Catchpole, "Centurion's Faith," 534-37 does recognize the associative nuance of *καί*, but he argues that the centurion is associating himself with other humans vis-à-vis Jesus. However, since the centurion is addressing Jesus and talking about Jesus' ability to heal with a word, the most natural reading is that the centurion is comparing his own position to that of Jesus.

⁴²¹ With Tuckett, *Q*, 217; T.W. Manson, *The Sayings of Jesus* (London: SCM, 1949), 64; H.E. Tödt, *The Son of Man in the Synoptic Tradition* (London: SCM, 1965), 257; Schulz, *Q*, 243.

The narrative subverts the typical pattern of a miracle story in which the audience wonders at the power of the miracle worker; the pattern is well demonstrated in Mark when the congregants in the Capernaum synagogue are amazed at Jesus' exorcism (1:27) or when those gathered around Jesus' house are amazed at the healing of the paralytic (2:12). Here in the Double Tradition, instead, the miracle worker wonders at the faith of the petitioner.⁴²² This breaking of the miracle-story paradigm arrests the reader's attention and makes Jesus' reaction the climax of the story. The centurion's profession of faith in the authority God has granted Jesus stands in the position that the performance of the miracle would stand in a typical miracle story, for it is the centurion's speech that inspires the wonder that closes the story.

Jesus expresses his amazement at the centurion's faith by exclaiming that he has not seen such faith in Israel. The word here translated "centurion," *ἐκατοντάρχης*, typically refers to the officer in the Roman legions who commanded a century.⁴²³ However, this word can have a more generic meaning of "officer," not necessarily of the Roman army, as when Josephus refers to the *ἐκατοντάρχους* that the prophet Samuel predicts will work for the king of Israel (*Ant.* 6.40). On the basis of such uses to describe officers in a non-Roman context, Catchpole argues that the readers should not assume that the *ἐκατοντάρχης* in the Q pericope was a Gentile.⁴²⁴ However, the typical use of *ἐκατοντάρχης* was to describe a Roman army officer, and the contrast between the centurion's faith and that of Israel makes the most sense if the centurion is a Gentile.⁴²⁵ The Double Tradition pericope shows that a Gentile recognizes

⁴²² Wegner, *Hauptmann*, 344-61, 430.

⁴²³ *BDAG* 237, *ἐκατοντάρχης*.

⁴²⁴ Catchpole, "Centurion's Faith," 527-28.

⁴²⁵ Carroll, *Luke* 160; France, *Matthew*, 309. For a refutation of Catchpole's argument, see Tuckett, *Q*, 395-97.

Jesus' power and reacts appropriately, whereas Israel does not. The appropriate reaction that the centurion demonstrates is deference to Jesus as the bearer of authority granted by God.

Co-text 3: The Woes on Chorazin and Bethsaida

In the Commissioning, Jesus warns that the cities who do not welcome the disciples as they make the kingdom of God present in their healing miracles will be liable to eschatological judgment (Matt 10:15//Luke 10:12). This condemnation of cities who do not react appropriately to the miracles appears also in the woes against Chorazin and Bethsaida, which again demonstrates that in the Double Tradition the miracles indicate the dawning of the eschaton. Channelling the biblical prophets, Jesus puts his miracles in the place of the prophetic oracle of salvation that should lead to repentance.

Woe to you, Chorazin; woe to you, Bethsaida, because if the deeds of power (αἱ δυνάμεις) which happened in you had happened in Tyre and Sidon, long ago would they have repented (μετενόησαν) in sackcloth and ashes. But I say to you, in the day of judgment it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon than for you. (Matt 11:21-22)

Woe to you, Chorazin; woe to you, Bethsaida, because if the deeds of power (αἱ δυνάμεις) which happened in you had happened in Tyre and Sidon, long ago would they have repented (μετενόησαν), sitting in sackcloth and ashes. But in the judgment it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon than for you. (Luke 10:13-14)

Here Jesus blasts cities in Galilee for their lack of response to the δυνάμεις that have been performed among them.⁴²⁶ While in the singular, δυνάμις is most naturally translated as “power,” in the plural, as here, it carries the meaning of outward expressions of power, specifically miracles.⁴²⁷ As in his response to the Baptist, Jesus is coy about the agency of these miracles. He does not refer to them as “my deeds of power” or “the deeds of power *that I did*,” but rather as “the deeds of power that happened (αἱ δυνάμεις αἱ γινόμεναι) in you.” The reader/hearer is left to infer that Jesus is speaking of the miracles he has performed in these Galilean cities, miracles that the Double Tradition does not recount. Again, Jesus draws attention not to the significance of his performing the miracles, but to the occurrence of the miracles themselves.

The style of Jesus’ pronouncement against the cities bears the hallmarks of the prophetic oracle of doom. The occurrence of these miracles should have led to repentance; the miracles are part of Jesus’ message to these cities, a message the cities do not heed. The theme of the rejection of a prophet’s message and the ensuing punishment is a commonplace in the traditions of Israel.⁴²⁸ The woe oracle is a familiar prophetic trope,⁴²⁹ as is the theme of

⁴²⁶ In both Matthew and Luke, Jesus goes on to rebuke Capernaum as well, but only Matthew links this chastisement explicitly with Capernaum’s failure to respond to the δυνάμεις; in Luke such a link remains implicit given what Jesus has just said about Chorazin and Bethsaida. Since the Double Tradition, defined as what is shared by Matthew and Luke, does not explicitly link Capernaum’s fate with its response to the δυνάμεις, I do not include the pronouncement against Capernaum in this discussion. The Matthean version does not give any new insight into the link among δυνάμεις, repentance, and judgment as it simply repeats the stereotyped formula of 11:21. For the purposes of this study, nothing is lost by confining attention to the woes against Chorazin and Bethsaida.

⁴²⁷ *BDAG* 208, δυνάμις.

⁴²⁸ O.H. Steck, *Israel und das gewaltsame Geschick der Propheten: Untersuchungen zur Überlieferung des deuteronomistischen Geschichtsbildes im Alten Testament, Spätjudentum, und Urchristentum* (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 1967) traces the development of this theme of prophetic rejection leading to doom. Examples of this motif can be found in Neh

repentance. Especially in the Exilic and post-Exilic prophets, the call to repentance was grounded in the promise of salvation.⁴³⁰ For instance, in the LXX of Second Isaiah God tells the Israelites, “Remember these things and groan, repent (μετανοήσατε), you that have been deceived, and return in your hearts...I have brought near (ἤγγισα) my righteousness and I will not delay the salvation (σωτηρίαν) that is from me. I have given salvation (σωτηρίαν) to Israel in Zion for glory” (Isa 46:8, 12). The potential for salvation motivates the repentance: if the people turn away from their wickedness and toward God, they will reap God’s rewards. Jesus’ miracles function similarly to the prophetic oracle of salvation which should prompt the people to repent.⁴³¹

Even Tyre and Sidon, those prophetic paragons of Gentile godlessness,⁴³² would have turned from their wicked ways had they witnessed Jesus’ miracles. The image of pagan cities repenting in sackcloth and ashes calls to mind Nineveh’s response to Jonah.⁴³³ Jesus’ miracle-working activity functions essentially the same as the proclamation of a prophet—those who

9:26; 1 Kings 18:4; 19:10; 2 Chr 36:14-15; Jer 2:30. For a discussion of how this theme is present in the Q material, see Tuckett, *Q*, 168-70, who concludes that Q has carried through the idea of Israel rejecting the opportunity to turn to God in Q 11:49-51, which tells of the people killing the prophets.

⁴²⁹ See Isa 5:8-24; 28:1-31:9; Jer 13:27; Amos 5:18-29; 6:1-7; Micah 2:1-5; Hab 2:6-19.

⁴³⁰ *TDOT* 14.497. See also Jer 3:22; 15:19; 36:3; Ezek 18:30-32.

⁴³¹ Hüneburg, *Jesus*, 172.

⁴³² For the two cities as targets of prophetic invective and oracles of doom see Isa 23:1-18; Ezek 28:1-26; Jer 25:22; 27:3; 47:4; Joel 3:4; Zech 9:2-4.

⁴³³ “And the people of Nineveh believed in God and they called a fast and they put on sackcloth from the great to the small. And the word touched the king of Nineveh and he stood up from his throne and took off his robe and covered himself with sackcloth and sat upon the ashes” (Jon 3:5-6).

respond rightly to these miracles can be saved from God's punishment for their previous wickedness.

The prophetic message, however, did not always instill hope for salvation through repentance; the prophets could also announce that continued intransigence foreclosed the possibility of salvation. The pre-Exilic prophets frequently mentioned repentance as a missed opportunity, as when Amos predicts punishment for Israel's failure to turn back to God (4:6-12) or when Isaiah points out that turning back to God would have saved Judah if they had not refused to do so (Isa 30:15).⁴³⁴ The people could have repented, but now their doom is sealed. Thus, Amos recounts the wickedness of the people of Judah (5:1-13), then exhorts them to desist from evil and do good (5:14-17), but his pessimism about their ability to change their ways comes through in his woe oracle that immediately follows: "Woe to you who desire the day of the Lord! Why do you want the day of the Lord? It is darkness, not light" (5:18). For a people who will not repent, God's visitation brings condemnation, not blessing.

The oracles of woe in the Hebrew prophets imply that the judgment they announce is inescapable.⁴³⁵ As in the case of Amos, these woe oracles frequently attach to the threatened day of the Lord, when God will save God's people and punish God's enemies.⁴³⁶ Jesus' proclamation against Chorazin and Bethsaida carries this same finality. Chorazin and Bethsaida's culpability lies not in their intrinsic wickedness, but in their failure to respond to

⁴³⁴ *TDOT* 14.496. See also Hos 2:8-9; 5:15; 6:4; 7:14-16; 11:7; Isa 9:12.

⁴³⁵ *TDOT* 3.362.

⁴³⁶ Waldemar Janzen, *Mourning Cry and Woe Oracle* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1972), 81-90.

the message of God's salvation enacted in Jesus' miracles.⁴³⁷ The miracles present an opportunity to turn to God, but this opportunity carries with it the obligation to respond appropriately. Thus, for both Jesus and his disciples, miracles announce the presence of God's eschatological blessing and judgment, which makes those who witness them liable to condemnation if they do not respond with the appropriate repentance.

Miracles and Succession in Q

The Double Tradition frequently interprets Jesus' miracles as eschatological signs. In the Beelzebul Controversy, exorcisms instantiate the kingdom of God. In the woes on the Galilean cities, the miracles demonstrate that the time of judgment is at hand. The response to the Baptist shows that Jesus' healings make eschatological blessings present. When the Double Tradition's mission instruction juxtaposes a command to heal with a command to proclaim the kingdom, the implication is clear: the healings signify the presence of the kingdom.

Although the disciples and Jesus share a ministry of announcing and making present the kingdom through healing, their ministries are not equivalent. It is Jesus who orders the disciples to undertake their ministry, and their ministry follows his pattern. As Kloppenborg puts it, the activities assigned in the Q version of the mission discourse "yield, by the algebra of association, a Christocentric conclusion: it is the specific lifestyle, therapeutic practice and kingdom message of *Jesus* that defines the activities of the 'workers,' and these are traced back

⁴³⁷ Luz, *Matthew 8-20*, 153; Marguerat, *Jugement*, 263; Ilija Cabraja, *Der Gedanke der Umkehr bei den Synoptikern: Eine exegetisch- religionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung* (Sankt Ottilien: EOS Verlag, 1985), 45-46.

ultimately to the ‘sending’ of God.”⁴³⁸ The pericope of the centurion’s servant also focuses attention on the specific role of Jesus in effecting God’s plan through healing as it is the centurion’s faith in Jesus’ divinely appointed authority that sets him apart from Israel. The closing macarism of Jesus’ response to the Baptist also emphasizes that it is the correct attitude toward Jesus himself that makes one blessed.

The Double Tradition gives Jesus an elevated role as the bearer of God’s healing authority, but a comparison of the disciples’ mission in Q with that in Mark demonstrates that there is greater correspondence between Jesus and the disciples in Q than in Mark. In Q the disciples are to heal, and the Q commissioning does little to differentiate the disciples’ healings from those of Jesus. Q’s disciples proclaim the nearly present kingdom of God just as Jesus does; they do not proclaim simply the repentance that prepares for the coming kingdom. In Q, the charisma of healing and preaching the kingdom are shared more evenly between Jesus and his successors. However, Jesus remains the source of whatever charisma the disciples possess: they minister according to Jesus’ commands and they follow the pattern his ministry established.

Conclusion

Jesus’ miracles demonstrate his authority as the bringer of God’s eschatological blessing and judgment, and so define the community of his followers as those on the right side of the coming judgment. By telling about the disciples performing similar miracles, early Jesus followers emphasized that as a group they shared in the eschatological power present in

⁴³⁸ Kloppenborg, *Excavating Q*, 393.

Jesus. In telling the Beelzebul Controversy, these Jesus followers make Jesus' eschatological role the reason why following him is so crucial. In so doing, they define their identity as Jesus followers against any Jesus followers who might not recognize their Lord's eschatological role. By demonstrating an eschatological role for Jesus, the miracle overlaps define the identity of Jesus followers as those who recognize Jesus' eschatological importance and who therefore follow him. Early Jesus followers did not make these assertions about Jesus' identity as they contemplated this identity in the abstract; they did so rather as they forged their own identity as a group in contrast and competition with other groups of Jesus followers.⁴³⁹

Mark and Q differ in how they conceptualize Jesus' identity as God's eschatological agent, conceptualizations that generate group identity in different ways. The previous chapter showed that the Double Tradition presented Jesus' exorcisms as evidence of the corporate victory of the kingdom of God over the kingdom of Satan, a victory in which those who followed Jesus could participate. Consistent with this participatory image of eschatological victory, the Commissioning in Q presents the disciples as co-workers with Jesus in the task of making God's eschatological blessings present through miracles, the task of instantiating the kingdom of God. These stories would inculcate an identity among early Jesus followers that their group was defined by its participation alongside Jesus in God's eschatological victory.

While the Double Tradition versions of the Beelzebul Controversy and the Commissioning present the healings and exorcisms as evidence of the incipient kingdom of God, of which Jesus is the preeminent figure, in the Markan versions of these pericopes, the healings and exorcisms show the divine authority of Jesus who single-handedly conquers Satan. Such an identity for Jesus leaves little opportunity for his followers' direct participation

⁴³⁹ Molina and Neyrey, *Calling*, 135-36.

in the eschatological victory he brings. Indeed, in Mark's version, the disciples' mission only palely reflects that of Jesus, and the eschatological proclamation of the kingdom of God is missing from their mission. It might seem that this less participatory paradigm would not be as effective at generating group identity. However, in Mark's case group identity is promoted not by an allegiance to the kingdom of God that is shared by Jesus and his followers, but by an allegiance to Jesus as God's special eschatological agent. The more Mark talks of Jesus in ways that blur the distinction between Jesus and God, the sharper the distinction becomes between those who follow Jesus and those who do not.

The investigation so far broadly supports a modified version of the Grand Inquisitor's thesis advanced in the first chapter: Q represents an early interpretation of Jesus' miracles which eschewed their use to authenticate Jesus' divine identity, while Mark demonstrates an early tradition that used miracles as just such tools. Yet to be examined is the pericope that inspired the Grand Inquisitor's discourse in the first place. It is finally time to take up the Temptation.

Chapter VI

The Testing of Jesus

The Grand Inquisitor describes two conflicting attitudes toward miracles. Jesus rejects miracles as instruments of coercive power, while the Church rejects Jesus' rejection of miracles. So far, this study has investigated the distinct ways that Mark and the Double Tradition talk about Jesus' miracles in relation to his role in God's promised defeat of evil and in relation to the role Jesus' followers play in this eschatological drama. We have seen that Mark consistently speaks about Jesus' miracles as indicators of his exalted status, indicators that efface the distinction between Jesus and God while highlighting the distinction between Jesus and his followers. Mark thus emphasizes Jesus' unique, God-like role in the eschatological script. Conversely, the Double Tradition speaks of Jesus' miracles as indicators of the incipient presence of eschatological blessing, indicators that emphasize the shared participation of Jesus and his followers in ushering in this kingdom of God. Further, we have looked at how framing Jesus' miracles in these ways could generate group identity for Jesus' followers. However, we have not yet seen evidence that these two ways of talking about Jesus' miracles were in competition to define Jesus' identity for his followers. Now we at last come to the Temptation, which the Grand Inquisitor saw as the confrontation between two views of miracles. This chapter will examine the two versions of Jesus' encounter with Satan to ascertain whether the Q version rejects the Markan view of miracles and whether the absence of the three-fold Temptation represents Mark's rejection of this rejection.

To understand the function of the Testing narratives in Mark and Q, this chapter begins with a cross-cultural comparison of narratives of a hero's early testing to understand the appeal

of such stories. To supplement the evidence from tales of a hero's early trials, it also looks at various rites of passage to explore the function of initiatory testing. The chapter then turns to the Q version to see how Jesus' threefold Temptation fits into the pattern of stories and rites of initiation. We will see that the refusal to perform miracles fits at best awkwardly into this schema; instead, we will argue that these refusals make the most sense as the effort of some early Jesus followers to challenge the memory of Jesus as one who performed miracles to prove his divine identity. Turning to Mark, the chapter argues that Mark's laconic narrative of Jesus' desert encounter with Satan fits with the Second Gospel's pattern of depicting miracles as evidence of Jesus' status.

It is typical to refer to this encounter between Jesus and Satan as the "Temptation." Both Mark and the Double Tradition refer to Satan's action with the verb *πειράζω*, which denotes tempting, but which can also denote testing.⁴⁴⁰ The connotations are related, but distinct. "Tempting" implies inducing someone to do something wrong, an inducement that the person should resist. The tempter tests the person's resolution in adhering to norms of behavior. "Testing" implies putting someone in a situation that gauges ability or some aspect of character. Thus, not all tests are temptations. One can undergo a test of strength or of courage, for example. When the Israelites in the wilderness cry out for water, Moses asks them, "Why do you test (ינסו/πειράζετε) the Lord?" (Exod 17:2). Moses here is not accusing the people of tempting God to do something God should not, but rather of demanding God prove God's power and solicitude. The encounter between Jesus and the devil in the Double Tradition clearly involves temptation, as the devil fails to induce Jesus to perform actions that the Torah forbids. Because the "Q" version of the story is the more famous, the pericope is

⁴⁴⁰ *BDAG* 640, *πειράζω*.

commonly called the Temptation. However, in Mark, there is no indication that the devil tempts Jesus, and Mark uses πειράζω elsewhere to describe situations of testing rather than temptation, as we will see. Thus, both Mark and Q depict the devil testing Jesus, but only Q presents this testing as temptation. This chapter will therefore refer to the devil's actions as the Testing of Jesus unless the topic is specifically the Temptations that the devil uses to test Jesus in the Double Tradition.

Mark has Jesus encounter the devil's testing immediately after the baptism:

Καὶ εὐθὺς τὸ πνεῦμα αὐτὸν ἐκβάλλει εἰς τὴν ἔρημον. καὶ ἦν ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ τεσσαράκοντα ἡμέρας πειραζόμενος ὑπὸ τοῦ σατανᾶ, καὶ ἦν μετὰ τῶν θηρίων, καὶ οἱ ἄγγελοι διηκόνουν αὐτῷ.

And immediately the spirit cast him out into the wilderness, and he was in the wilderness forty days, being tested by Satan, and he was with the wild animals, and the angels were serving him. (Mark 1:12-13)

Both Matthew and Luke give substantially longer descriptions of Jesus' post-baptismal encounter with Satan. They also narrate similar events, but in a different order. To make the parallelism more apparent below, I have rearranged the order in Luke to follow that of Matthew (underlines represent material common to Matthew and Luke not shared by Mark):⁴⁴¹

⁴⁴¹ I have followed Matthew's order because 1) that is the order the Grand Inquisitor follows in interpreting the pericope and 2) Matthew groups the two temptations having to do with miracles consecutively, and structuring the discussion in this order streamlines the analysis of these two temptations.

Τότε ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἀνήχθη εἰς τὴν ἔρημον ὑπὸ τοῦ πνεύματος πειρασθῆναι ὑπὸ τοῦ διαβόλου, καὶ νηστεύσας ἡμέρας τεσσεράκοντα καὶ νύκτας τεσσεράκοντα, ὕστερον ἐπείνασεν. καὶ προσελθὼν ὁ πειράζων εἶπεν αὐτῷ· εἰ υἱὸς εἶ τοῦ θεοῦ, εἰπὲ ἵνα οἱ λίθοι οὗτοι ἄρτοι γένωνται. ὁ δὲ ἀποκριθεὶς εἶπεν· γέγραπται· οὐκ ἐπ’ ἄρτω μόνῳ ζήσεται ὁ ἄνθρωπος, ἀλλ’ ἐπὶ παντὶ ῥήματι ἐκπορευομένῳ διὰ στόματος θεοῦ.

Τότε παραλαμβάνει αὐτὸν ὁ διάβολος εἰς τὴν ἁγίαν πόλιν καὶ ἔστησεν αὐτὸν ἐπὶ τὸ πτερύγιον τοῦ ἱεροῦ καὶ λέγει αὐτῷ· εἰ υἱὸς εἶ τοῦ θεοῦ, βάλε σεαυτὸν κάτω· γέγραπται γὰρ ὅτι τοῖς ἀγγέλοις αὐτοῦ ἐντελεῖται περὶ σοῦ καὶ ἐπὶ χειρῶν ἀροῦσίν σε, μήποτε προσκόψῃς πρὸς λίθον τὸν πόδα σου. ἔφη αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς· πάλιν γέγραπται· οὐκ ἐκπειράσεις κύριον τὸν θεόν σου.

Πάλιν παραλαμβάνει αὐτὸν ὁ διάβολος εἰς ὄρος ὑψηλὸν λίαν καὶ δείκνυσιν αὐτῷ πάσας τὰς βασιλείας τοῦ κόσμου καὶ τὴν δόξαν αὐτῶν καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ· ταῦτά σοι πάντα δώσω, ἐὰν πεσῶν προσκυνήσῃς μοι. τότε λέγει αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς· ὕπαγε, σατανᾶ· γέγραπται γάρ· κύριον τὸν θεόν σου προσκυνήσεις καὶ αὐτῷ μόνῳ λατρεύσεις. Τότε ἀφίησιν αὐτὸν ὁ διάβολος, καὶ ἰδοὺ ἄγγελοι προσῆλθον καὶ διηκόνουν αὐτῷ.

Then Jesus was brought up into the wilderness by the spirit to be tempted by the devil. And after fasting forty days and forty nights, he hungered greatly. And approaching, the tempter said to him, “If you are God’s son, say that these stones become bread.” But Jesus answering said, “It is written, ‘Not by bread only shall a person live, but upon every word coming from the mouth of God.’”

Then the devil led him into the holy city and stood him on the pinnacle of the Temple and said to him, “If you are the son of God, cast yourself down. For it is written, ‘His angels he will command concerning you, and they will bear you on their hands lest your foot strike a stone.’” Jesus said to him, “Again it is written, ‘You shall not test the Lord your God.’”

Again the devil took him onto a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. And he said to him, “All these I will give to you if you fall down and worship me.” Then Jesus said to him, “Depart, Satan. For it is written, ‘Worship the Lord your God and serve him only.’” Then the devil left him, and, behold, the angels came and served him. (Matt 4:1-11)

Ἰησοῦς δὲ πλήρης πνεύματος ἁγίου ὑπέστρεψεν ἀπὸ τοῦ Ἰορδάνου καὶ ἦγετο ἐν τῷ πνεύματι ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ. ἡμέρας τεσσαράκοντα πειραζόμενος ὑπὸ τοῦ διαβόλου. Καὶ οὐκ ἔφαγεν οὐδὲν ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις ἐκεῖναις καὶ συντελεσθεισῶν αὐτῶν ἐπεινάσεν. εἶπεν δὲ αὐτῷ ὁ διάβολος· εἰ υἱὸς εἶ τοῦ θεοῦ, εἰπέ τῷ λίθῳ τοῦτῳ ἵνα γένηται ἄρτος. καὶ ἀπεκρίθη πρὸς αὐτὸν ὁ Ἰησοῦς· γέγραπται ὅτι οὐκ ἐπ' ἄρτῳ μόνῳ ζήσεται ὁ ἄνθρωπος.

Ἦγαγεν δὲ αὐτὸν εἰς Ἱερουσαλὴμ καὶ ἔστησεν ἐπὶ τὸ πτερύγιον τοῦ ἱεροῦ καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ· εἰ υἱὸς εἶ τοῦ θεοῦ, βάλε σεαυτὸν ἐντεῦθεν κάτω· γέγραπται γὰρ ὅτι

τοῖς ἀγγέλοις αὐτοῦ ἐντελεῖται περὶ σοῦ τοῦ διαφυλάξαι σε καὶ ὅτι ἐπὶ χειρῶν ἀρουσίν σε, μήποτε προσκόψῃς πρὸς λίθον τὸν πόδα σου. καὶ ἀποκριθεὶς εἶπεν αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς ὅτι εἴρηται· οὐκ ἐκπειράσεις κύριον τὸν θεόν σου.

Καὶ ἀναγαγὼν αὐτὸν ἔδειξεν αὐτῷ πάσας τὰς βασιλείας τῆς οἰκουμένης ἐν στιγμῇ χρόνου καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ ὁ διάβολος· σοὶ δώσω τὴν ἐξουσίαν ταύτην ἅπασαν καὶ τὴν δόξαν αὐτῶν, ὅτι ἐμοὶ παραδέδοται καὶ ὃ ἐὰν θέλω δίδωμι αὐτήν. σὺ οὖν ἐὰν προσκυνήσῃς ἐνώπιον ἐμοῦ, ἔσται σοῦ πᾶσα. καὶ ἀποκριθεὶς ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν αὐτῷ· γέγραπται· κύριον τὸν θεόν σου προσκυνήσεις καὶ αὐτῷ μόνῳ λατρεύσεις. Καὶ συντελέσας πάντα πειρασμὸν ὁ διάβολος ἀπέστη ἀπ' αὐτοῦ ἄχρι καιροῦ.

And Jesus, filled with the holy spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led up by the spirit into the wilderness. He was tempted by the devil forty days. And he did not eat anything in those days and when they ended he hungered. And the devil said to him, “If you are God’s son, say to this stone that it becomes bread.” And Jesus answered him, “It is written that not by bread only shall a person live.”

And he led him into Jerusalem and stood on the pinnacle of the Temple and said to him, “If you are the son of God, cast yourself down from here. For it is written, ‘His angels he will command concerning you to guard you,’ and, ‘they will bear you on their hands lest your foot strike a stone.’” And, answering, Jesus said to him, “It is said, ‘You shall not test the Lord your God.’”

And leading him up, he showed him all the kingdoms of the world at a moment in time. And the devil said to him, ‘To you I will give all this authority and their glory, because it has been handed over to me and I give it to whomever I want. If then you worship before me, all this will be yours.’ And, answering, Jesus said to him, “It is written, ‘Worship the Lord your God and serve him only.’” And having finished all his tempting, the devil went away from him until the right time. (Luke 4:1-13)

The Double Tradition includes the threefold temptation of Jesus to turn stones into bread, to jump off the Temple, and to worship Satan. Both Matthew and Luke also set this testing after Jesus’ baptism and in the wilderness, features they share with Mark’s briefer version. Whether this temporal and geographic location belongs to Q has been a subject of

debate among scholars who hold the Two-Document Hypothesis.⁴⁴² In the effort to remain neutral with respect to solutions to the Synoptic Problem, this study adopts a strict definition of the Double Tradition: the material common to Matthew and Luke but absent in Mark. Since Mark locates the testing in the wilderness and after Jesus' baptism, these elements do not belong to the Double Tradition, thus narrowly defined. What Mark and the Double Tradition do share is a story of Jesus being tested by the devil. This chapter will demonstrate how the Double Tradition narrates this testing to repudiate the use of miracles as markers of Jesus' divine identity and to repudiate the worship of Jesus that his divine identity would allow. It will further demonstrate how Mark's silence on the nature of the testing fits with his use of miracles to illustrate Jesus' superhuman status. To accomplish these tasks, this chapter begins by looking at the function of narratives and rites of testing cross-culturally.

⁴⁴² A number of Q scholars argue for an account of Jesus' baptism leading into the temptation; see Adolf Harnack, *Sprüche und Reden Jesu: Die zweite Quelle et Matthäus und Lukas* (Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs, 1907), 216; B.H. Streeter, *The Four Gospels: A Study of Origins* (London: Macmillan, 1924), 143, 188, 276, 291; Athanasius Polag, *Fragmenta Q: Textheft zur Logienquelle* (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1979), 30-31; and James M. Robinson, "The Sayings Gospel Q," in *Four Gospels 1992: Festschrift Frans Neirynck*, eds. F. Van Segbroeck, C.M. Tuckett, G. Van Belle, and J. Verheyden (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1992), 1.382-85. Other Q proponents deny the presence of a Baptism account (Fleddermann, *Q*, 233-35) or are agnostic about its presence, e.g., C.M. Tuckett, "The Temptation Narrative in Q," in *Four Gospels 1992*, eds. Van Segbroeck *et al.*, 483. Most Q scholars agree that the temptations are set in the wilderness, such as Polag, *Fragmenta Q*, 30; Milton C. Moreland and James M. Robinson, "The International Q Project Work Sessions 31 July-2 August, 20 November 1992," *JBL* 112.3 (1992): 502; James M. Robinson, Paul Hoffmann, and John S. Kloppenborg, *The Critical Edition of Q: Synopsis Including the Gospels of Matthew and Luke, Mark and Thomas with English, German, and French Translations of Q and Thomas* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2000), 22-23; Dale C. Allison, Jr., "Behind the Temptation of Jesus: Q 4:1-13 and Mark 1:12-13," in *Authenticating the Activities of Jesus*, eds. Bruce M. Metzger and Bart D. Ehrman (Boston: Brill, 1999), 199; Ulrich Luz, "Q 3-4," in *Society of Biblical Literature 1984 Seminar Papers*, ed. K.H. Richards (Missoula: Scholars Press, 1984), 376; Leif E. Vaage, "Q 4," in *SBL 1984 Seminar Papers*, ed. K.H. Richards, 347-73; C. Michael Robbins, *The Testing of Jesus in Q* (New York: Peter Lang, 2007), 153. For a reconstruction that omits the reference to the wilderness, see Fleddermann, *Q*, 235-38.

Testing and Initiation

In both Mark and the Double Tradition, Jesus undergoes testing at the hands of his adversary, the devil. A hero's early testing by an adversary is a recurrent theme in literature across cultures. The appeal of such narratives also finds evidence in the widespread pattern of testing within rites of initiation. Exploring the similarities of Jesus' testing with the testing of other heroes explains the appeal of these kind of stories and helps to determine why early followers of Jesus might have found the story of Jesus' testing worth telling. The appeal of testing appears to be multifaceted, but there is a clear pattern across cultures showing that testing endears heroes to their followers and groups to their members.

God famously tests (ἰδοὶ/πειράζω Gen 22:1) the faithfulness of Abraham by commanding him to sacrifice his son Isaac. In several Second Temple and rabbinic retellings, it is Satan or Mastema who instigates this test, but it remains God who does the testing.⁴⁴³ Abraham does, however, face direct testing from an evil spirit in the *Apocalypse of Abraham*, an early Common Era expansion of the call of Abraham in Genesis 12. This Apocalypse opens with Abraham living in his father's house. God sends the angel Iael to give Abraham a revelation of the future, but first Iael leads Abraham to climb Mount Horeb and sacrifice to God. They walk together forty days and nights and Abraham does not eat or drink (12.1-2). When they climb the mountain, Abraham prepares to make the required sacrifice, but an

⁴⁴³ *Jub.* 17:15-18 and 4Q225 show Mastema as instigator; in *b. Sanh.* 89b it is Satan. For the development of this tradition see J.T.A.G.M. van Ruiten, *Abraham in the Book of Jubilees: The Rewriting of Genesis 11:26-25:10 in the Book of Jubilees 11:14-23:8* (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 211-12. For an analysis of how the Akedah was interpreted by Church Fathers and Rabbis, see Edward Kessler, *Bound by the Bible: Jews, Christians, and the Sacrifice of Isaac* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

unclean bird flies down onto the carcasses and tries to dissuade Abraham from his task by saying,

What are you doing, Abraham, on the holy heights, where no one eats or drinks, nor is there upon them food for men. But these all will be consumed by fire and they will burn you up. Leave the man who is with you and flee! For if you ascend to the height, they will destroy you. (*Ap. Abr.* 13.4-5)

With the help of the angel, Abraham drives the bird away and completes his assigned sacrifice. Iael goes on to explain that this bird was actually the evil spirit Azazel who was tempting Abraham to abandon the sacrifice God commanded (13.6-14.14). Having successfully resisted this temptation, Abraham goes on to receive the vision that God has promised him.

Stories of confrontations between a hero and an evil spirit are also part of the Zoroastrian tradition. Chapter 19 of the *Vindidad*, a part of the the scriptures of Zoroastrianism, which was probably committed to writing in the 3rd to 5th centuries of the Common Era, tells the story of Zarathustra's encounter with Angra Mainyu (the Evil Spirit, known also as Ahriman).⁴⁴⁴ Zarathustra announces his intention to vanquish Angra Mainyu and his host of demons, so Angra Mainyu offers to make him a ruler of many nations if he will renounce the religion of Ahura Mazda (the Zoroastrian good principle).⁴⁴⁵ Zarathustra refuses and promises to conquer Angra Mainyu by the word of Ahura Mazda.

In Buddhist literature the evil spirit Mara appears in a number of guises: as a deity, ruling over a sensual sphere, who seeks to obstruct human enlightenment; as a personification

⁴⁴⁴ Mahnaz Moazami, "The Confrontation of Zarathustra with the Evil Spirit: Chapter 19 of the *Pahlavi Vindidad*," *East and West* 52.1 (2002): 151.

⁴⁴⁵ *Vendidad* 19:6.

of death; and as an allegorization of the power of temptation.⁴⁴⁶ The Pali Canon, which dates from the first century before the Common Era, along with subsequent Buddhist literature, represents Mara on several occasions as testing the Buddha by trying to break his equanimity, incline him toward sensual desires, or frighten him from continuing on the path of Enlightenment.⁴⁴⁷ Such temptations to desist from the path of Enlightenment occur at many points in the Buddha's life, but they are most frequently associated with Mara's trying to prevent major milestones, such as the Buddha's renunciation of his family, his attainment of Enlightenment, or his efforts to bring others to Enlightenment.⁴⁴⁸ Several of these accounts have strong parallels to Jesus' testing. For example, one Pali text has Mara approaching the pre-enlightened Buddha, lamenting how emaciated he has become during his meditations, and suggesting he return to society.⁴⁴⁹ In another story, Mara tries to convince the pre-enlightened Buddha to become a king and establish universal peace rather than continue to strive for Enlightenment.⁴⁵⁰

The folklorist Vladimir Propp discovered a similar pattern of heroes undergoing testing in folktales, and his analysis established a paradigm for examining such folkloristic motifs as reflections of the cultures that produced them. Propp's *Morphology of the Folktale* (*Morphologija Volshebnoi Skazki*) provides a structural analysis of fairy tales. Using Russian examples, Propp builds his morphology around functions, which he defines as the characters'

⁴⁴⁶ Ananda W.P. Guruge, *The Buddha's Encounters with Mara* (Kandy, Sri Lanka: Buddhist Publication Society, 1997), 2-3.

⁴⁴⁷ James W. Boyd, *Satan and Mara: Christian and Buddhist Symbols of Evil* (Leiden: Brill, 1975), 77-92.

⁴⁴⁸ Guruge, *Buddha's Encounters*, 14-15.

⁴⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 6.

⁴⁵⁰ Boyd, *Satan and Mara*, 144.

actions viewed in light of their significance for the plot. These functions, Propp claims, serve as stable elements across various tales (although not all functions necessarily appear in all tales) and comprise the fundamental elements of the tales.⁴⁵¹ Propp identifies 31 discrete functions that follow in sequence from the creation of the problem that the hero must overcome to the hero's marriage and attaining the throne.⁴⁵² The first ten functions develop the problem that requires the hero of the story to take action. After this stage, the hero leaves home and soon thereafter meets the testing character, often in a forest or other deserted place. The tester can be friendly or hostile, and the tasks proposed can include an act of service, performing feats of strength, or resisting a temptation.⁴⁵³ Folklorists have applied Propp's morphology to stories from beyond Russia and demonstrated the cross-cultural relevance for Propp's work.⁴⁵⁴

Morphology adopts a purely formalist approach by examining the text of the stories themselves without attention to the historical context in which the stories arose. In *Morphology*, Propp discerned the quasi-syntactical rules that governed how a teller organizes elements within a tale. Propp saw this work as a prolegomenon to studying the origins and social settings of the folktales, a task to which he devoted himself in his later work, *The*

⁴⁵¹ Vladimir Propp, *Morphology of the Folktale*, 2nd Edition, ed. Louis A. Wagner, trans. Laurence Scott (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1968), 21.

⁴⁵² *Ibid.*, 25-65

⁴⁵³ *Ibid.*, 39-40.

⁴⁵⁴ For application to African stories, see Denise Paulme, "Le garçon travesti ou Joseph en Afrique," *L'Homme* 3.2 (1963): 5-21. For application to American Indian stories, see Alan Dundes, *The Morphology of North American Indian Folktales* (Helsinki: Suomalainen Tiedekatemia Academia Scientiarum Fennica, 1964). For application to Africa, the Americas, Asia, and Europe, see Peter Gilet, *Vladimir Propp and the Universal Folktale: Recommissioning an Old Paradigm—Story as Initiation* (New York: Peter Lang, 1998), 59-120. The testing of the hero soon after his departure also features in Joseph Campbell's theory of the monomyth, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1949), 97-108.

Historical Roots of the Folktale (Istoricheskie Kornj Volshebnoj Skazki).⁴⁵⁵ In this study, Propp identifies the folktales as the remnants of ancient Slavic rituals of puberty and death.⁴⁵⁶ Much in the style of James George Frazer and other myth-ritualists, Propp largely views these stories as the scripts of long-defunct rituals.⁴⁵⁷

Although most modern anthropologists and folklorists have discarded the myth-ritualist paradigm, the correspondences between stories and rituals can still provide useful insights.⁴⁵⁸ Rather than adopting an etiologic approach that locates the origins of a story in a certain ritual, or vice versa, one can view rituals as folk practices, just as telling folktales is a folk practice. Much as one can study different versions of a folktale to understand their appeal and significance, so too can one widen the comparative view to include rituals as a folk practice that offers fodder for better comparative understanding. Telling stories and performing rituals are both ways by which groups form their identities and shape a collective memory.⁴⁵⁹ To

⁴⁵⁵ Jack Zipes, "Forward: Toward Understanding the Complete Vladimir Propp," in Vladimir Propp, *The Russian Folktale by Vladimir Yakolevich Propp*, tr. Sibelan Forrester (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2012), ix-xi.

⁴⁵⁶ Gilet, *Propp*, 134.

⁴⁵⁷ Zipes, "Forward," xi; for Propp's integration of the formalistic approach of *Morphology* with the historical approach of the *Historical Roots* along with comparisons to stories from other cultures, see Propp, *Russian Folktale*, 147-224.

⁴⁵⁸ Criticisms of the myth-ritualist paradigm include William Bascom, "The Myth-Ritual Theory," *Journal of American Folklore* 70 (1970): 103-14; S.G.F. Brandon, "The Myth and Ritual Position Critically Examined," in *Ritual and Myth*, ed. Robert Segal (New York: Garland Press, 1996), 13-43; Joseph Fontenrose, *The Ritual Theory of Myth* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996); Geoffrey S. Kirk, *Myth* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1970), 12-31. For the positive contributions of the myth-ritualist paradigm, see Robert A. Segal, "The Myth-Ritualist Theory of Religion," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 19.2 (1980): 173-85.

⁴⁵⁹ Connerton, *How Societies Remember*, 54, 70.

understand the wide appeal of stories of a hero's testing, analysis of rituals that involve some form of testing can be productive.

Many of the elements common to stories of the hero's testing, including Jesus' testing, appear also in rites of passage.⁴⁶⁰ The separation from society and the endurance of some form of hardship feature prominently in many such rites. Anthropologist Victor Turner, in his fieldwork with the Ndembu of central Africa, observed that before his investiture, the chief-elect was secluded in a hut a mile outside the village; there he had to perform menial tasks, such as fetching firewood, and to submit himself to verbal and physical abuse from other members of the tribe.⁴⁶¹ Anthropologists studying North American Plains Indians have noted the Vision Quest as a widespread feature attached to various rites of passage.⁴⁶² These Vision Quests almost always involve the isolation of the subject from society as well as self-inflicted mortification, often including fasting, as components of the seeker's attempt to obtain a vision from a spirit.⁴⁶³ The spirits encountered in rites of initiation, however, are not always benign. Mircea Eliade catalogued a wide range of shamanic initiation practices from Asia, Australia, and the Americas that involved physical isolation and deprivation that brought on attacks from hostile spirits; the aspiring shaman endured these assaults to gain competence in manipulating

⁴⁶⁰ Gilet, *Propp*, 131-54, sees the entirety of Propp's morphological paradigm corresponding to the form of a rite of passage. Campbell, *Hero*, 382-86, similarly connects his monomyth with rites of passage. Mark McVann, "One of the Prophets: Matthew's Testing Narrative as a Rite of Passage," *BTB* 23.1 (1993): 14-20, interprets Matthew's version of the Temptation as enacting a rite of passage.

⁴⁶¹ Victor Turner, *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure* (New York: de Gruyter, 1969), 100-102.

⁴⁶² Kathleen Margaret Dugan, *The Vision Quest of the Plains Indians: Its Spiritual Significance* (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen, 1985), 132-34.

⁴⁶³ *Ibid.*, 143-44.

the spirit world.⁴⁶⁴ Rites of passage that involve enduring hardship also exist in modern society. Collegiate fraternity and sorority initiations often involve periods of isolation and endurance, as does military bootcamp.⁴⁶⁵

Eliade viewed the shamanic initiations as just one example of a larger category of rites of passage in which a symbolic death, manifested by isolation and ordeal, was followed by a symbolic resurrection or new birth, manifested by the participant's return to society.⁴⁶⁶ Eliade was not the first to recognize a pattern of separation followed by reintegration in rites of passage. Arnold Van Gennep's pioneering work on rites of passage identified a threefold pattern: an act of separation whereby the participants remove themselves from normal society, followed by a period of liminality wherein the participants exist on the margins of society and undergo a transformation from one state to another, and finally an incorporation into society when the transformed individuals return to society with new roles, responsibilities, and relationships.⁴⁶⁷ Similar to Eliade, Van Gennep noted that the liminal period often involved hardships or tests that the participant had to overcome.⁴⁶⁸ Turner similarly recognized the

⁴⁶⁴ Mircea Eliade, *Shamanism: Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy*, trans. Willard R. Trask (New York: Pantheon, 1964), 33, 35-45, 45-50, 58-60.

⁴⁶⁵ Neil J. Smelser, *Odyssey Experience: Physical, Social, Psychological, and Spiritual Journeys* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009), 182-90.

⁴⁶⁶ Mircea Eliade, *Rites and Symbols of Initiation: The Mysteries of Birth and Rebirth*, trans. Willard R. Trask (New York: Harper&Row, 1958), xii, 2-3, 21-40, 90-91.

⁴⁶⁷ Arnold Van Gennep, *The Rites of Passage* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960), 21, 191, *et passim*. Nikki Bado-Fralick, *Coming to the Edge of the Circle: A Wiccan Initiation Ritual* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 143 *et passim* has criticized Van Gennep's tripartite model for implying an overly linear pattern to processes that are often more cyclical and multidimensional, yet his recognition of the phases of separation, liminality, and incorporation can still be helpful even if they can occur multiple times within a rite of passage.

⁴⁶⁸ Van Gennep, *Rites*, 65-115.

liminal phase of a rite of passage, with its attendant hardships and ordeals, as crucial in the process of ritual transformation of participants from one social state to another.⁴⁶⁹

This widespread predilection for testing in initiation practices has caught the attention not just of anthropologists and students of religion, but also of psychologists. One strand of psychological research has examined how the perception of having passed a test as prerequisite for joining a group generates positive feelings for the group; the more difficult the initial test is perceived to be, the more positive the feeling of group membership becomes. Aronson and Mills famously demonstrated the link between difficulty of initiatory testing and liking for a group by inviting their experimental subjects to join groups that discussed sex.⁴⁷⁰ Aronson and Mills crafted three different initiation requirements to which the subjects were randomly assigned: a control condition, a mild initiation condition, and a severe initiation condition. In the control condition, subjects simply had to affirm that they were comfortable talking about sex; subjects in the other two conditions had to undergo an embarrassment test, ostensibly to prove that they could talk about sex openly. In the mild initiation condition, subjects read aloud five non-obscene words related to sex (e.g. prostitute, virgin, petting). In the severe initiation condition, the subjects read obscene words (e.g. fuck, cock, screw) and vivid descriptions of sex from contemporary novels. In both the mild and severe initiation conditions, investigators told the subjects that they passed the test and were allowed to join the group. Subjects in all three conditions were then allowed to listen to the conversation of the

⁴⁶⁹ Victor Turner, "Betwixt and Between: The Liminal Period in *Rites de Passage*," in Idem, *The Forest of Symbols: Aspects of Ndembu Ritual* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1967), 101.

⁴⁷⁰ Elliot Aronson and Judson Mills, "The Effect of Severity of Initiation on Liking for a Group," *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology* 59 (1959): 177-81.

group into which they had just been initiated, a conversation about sex in lower animals that was designed to be “one of the most worthless and uninteresting discussions imaginable.”⁴⁷¹

At the end of this dull conversation, subjects rated their liking for both the discussion and the group members. Subjects in the control and mild initiation conditions rated the discussion and the group similarly, but subjects in the severe initiation condition rated both the discussion and the group more highly than those in the other two conditions. The perception of having passed a strenuous admission test induced more positive feeling for the group and its activity. Aronson and Mills attributed this observation to the psychological propensity to minimize cognitive dissonance, i.e., the holding of two incongruent cognitions simultaneously. Subjects in the severe initiation condition encountered the cognition that they had passed a difficult initiation test to enter the group simultaneously as they realized that the group discussion was actually boring. According to Aronson and Mills, the subjects in the severe initiation group convinced themselves that the discussion and the group were better than they were in order to align with their expectation that a difficult entry test would correspond to membership in a desirable group.

Further experimental studies and fieldwork examining the difficulty of initiatory testing have shown it to be just one of many interrelated factors that affect strength of group affiliation; moreover, such studies reveal that initiation severity does not uniformly correlate with increased liking for a group.⁴⁷² When severity of initiation does increase positive feelings

⁴⁷¹ Ibid., 179.

⁴⁷² Harold B. Gerard and Grover C. Mathewson, “The Effects of Severity of Initiation on Liking for a Group; A Replication,” *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology* 2 (1966): 278-87; Caroline Kamau, “What Does Being Initiated Severely Into a Group Do? The Role of Rewards,” *International Journal of Psychology* 48.3 (2013): 399-406; Ward D. Finer, Jacob E. Hautaluoma, and Larry J. Bloom, “The Effects of Severity and Pleasantness of Initiation on Attraction to a Group,” *Journal of Social Psychology* 111 (1980): 301-2; Caroline F. Keating *et*

for the group, reduction of cognitive dissonance might not be the only mechanism at work. Keating *et al.* suggest that undergoing harsh initiation increases dependency on the group as the group becomes an ironic source of protection from the harshness of the initiation that the group is imposing.⁴⁷³ Another possible explanation is that the sense of pride in accomplishing a severe initiation task serves as a reward for group affiliation and thus increases positive feelings toward the group. Although the exact psychological mechanisms still remain a subject of debate, severe initiations often heighten the positive in-group feelings among members that have passed these tests. Such a psychological effect helps account for the persistence and ubiquity of testing, deprivation, and ordeals as fundamental parts of so many rites of passage across cultures and times.

Put another way, these severe initiations call attention to the desirability of group membership. Such an interpretation fits well with Jonathan Z. Smith's understanding of the function of religious rituals. Smith rejects the idea that rituals arise in response to the experience of some objective sacred reality; rather, he argues that rituals create sacredness.⁴⁷⁴ Rituals accomplish this task by asserting difference: ritual actions create an environment that is marked off from the normal flow of ordinary life and signify that something extraordinary is occurring.⁴⁷⁵ "Ritual is, first and foremost, a mode of paying attention. It is a process for

al., "Going to College and Unpacking Hazing: A Functional Approach to Decrypting Initiation Practices Among Undergraduates," *Group Dynamics: Theory, Research, and Practice* 9.2 (2005): 104-26; Hein F.M. Lodewijkx and Joseph E.M.M. Syroit, "Severity of Initiation Revisited: Does Severity of Initiation Increase Attractiveness in Real Groups?" *European Journal of Social Psychology* 27 (1997): 275-300.

⁴⁷³ Keating *et al.*, "Going," 123; Gerard and Mathewson, "Effects," 291.

⁴⁷⁴ Jonathan Z. Smith, *To Take Place: Toward Theory in Ritual* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), 105.

⁴⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 109.

marking interest.”⁴⁷⁶ Severe initiations mark off the experience of joining a group from normal daily activity; they draw attention to the significance of joining the group, and they endow group membership with a special character.

Telling stories serves a similar function to such rituals. Listening to a story is, like participating in a ritual, a way of paying attention. The act of telling and listening to a story implies that what is told is worth hearing about, that it differs from run-of-the-mill events, and that it carries some significance making the telling and the hearing worth the effort.

Narratives of a hero’s testing have a psychological appeal similar to the endurance of severe initiations. The difficulty of the hero’s test heightens the sense that what the hero accomplishes is important, just as a strenuous initiation heightens the sense of group importance. The preparatory testing of the Russian folk hero sets the tone for the story and emphasizes that the hero will accomplish something important. In a hero’s passing a test, the reader or hearer can also vicariously experience the satisfaction of completing a difficult task. For example, Abraham’s encounter with Azazel emphasizes that the revelation he is about to receive is meaningful, for why else would the evil spirit try to dissuade him? The reader then can share in Abraham’s triumph over Azazel and have access along with Abraham to the revelation that follows. The testing also shows that Abraham is someone who deserves to receive such a revelation as he is able to persevere in obeying God’s command even as Azazel tries to frighten him off.

Similarly, the Buddha’s encounters with Mara and Zarathustra’s meeting with Angra Mainyu demonstrate their commitment, respectively, to the pursuit of Enlightenment and to adherence to Ahura Mazda. Because they are founders of religious groups, their stories of

⁴⁷⁶ Ibid., 103.

testing have an even greater significance. If their missions were important enough to arouse the opposition of evil forces, then the movements they founded must be important indeed. Another analogy exists here between these stories and initiation rituals: difficult initiations for new members and the founding hero's overcoming hardships both emphasize the worth of the group. Thus, telling stories of the founder's testing can increase in-group positivity just as harsh initiations can.

The founder, in overcoming the test, also serves as an exemplar for group members. Just as his followers face pressures to swerve from the Middle Way, so too did Buddha have to endure Mara's temptations. The Buddha faces the same struggles as do his followers, and his success shows that they too can succeed. Portrayal of such an exemplar performs an important task for group identity formation. Social psychologists have postulated that human beings form their understanding of group identity using prototypes and exemplars.⁴⁷⁷ In this context, prototypes are ideal group members abstracted from the characteristics of actual group members, whereas exemplars are actually existing group members who somehow typify the group. For example, when people categorize an animal as a bird, they can do so by comparing the animal to an imaginary entity that typifies "birdness" (a prototype) or they can compare it to an actual bird, like a robin, that they feel typifies "birdness" (an exemplar). Both processes likely function in identifying groups.⁴⁷⁸ Groups can therefore promote a sense of their identity by emphasizing exemplars and showing the exemplars' similarity to other members of the group.⁴⁷⁹ Individual Buddhists recognize themselves as part of a community of people who

⁴⁷⁷ Eliot R. Smith and Michael Zarate, "Exemplar and Prototype in Social Categorization," *Social Cognition* 8.3 (1990): 243-62.

⁴⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 256-260.

⁴⁷⁹ Esler and Piper, *Lazarus*, 34-38.

struggle to resist the temptations of fear and sensuality and to remain on the path to Enlightenment, a community exemplified by the Buddha, who faced such a struggle with Mara.

The story of Jesus' temptations would have had analogous appeal to early Jesus followers—Jesus' temptations make him an exemplar for his followers. Such appeal as an example is manifested in patristic interpretations of the Temptation. For instance, John Chrysostom says of Jesus in the wilderness, “since with a view to our instruction he both did and underwent all things, he endures to be led up there and to wrestle against the devil in order that each of those who are baptized, if after baptism should have to endure greater temptations, may not be troubled as if the result were unexpected” (*Homilies on Matthew* 13.1). Similarly, Augustine sees Christ undergoing temptation by the devil “in order to be a mediator to overcome temptations, not only by succor, but also by example” (*De Trinitate* 4.13). Although these examples come several centuries after the initial telling of the story, there is every reason to suppose that earlier followers of Jesus would have seen in his withstanding the devil's tempting an example for themselves as well.

The Double Tradition's Temptation narrative, with its rich description of the temptations Jesus faced in his testing by the devil, lends itself to this exemplary function as it shows just how Jesus faced these temptations. Indeed, in the other examples of the testing of a hero, we see that it is not some generic testing the hero faces, but a specific challenge that the hero overcomes: Abraham perseveres through the threats of Azazel; Zarathustra resists the lure of kingship; the Buddha faces a number of specific threats and inducements at the hands of Mara. Mark, however, presents only a summary of Jesus' testing by Satan. The Gospel records no details of the content, difficulty, and outcome of the test. The analysis of this

version must therefore account for Mark's vagueness. This chapter will show that this vagueness about the nature of the Markan testing fits with Mark's overall pattern of characterizing Jesus in ways that maximize the distinction between Jesus and his followers.

The stories of Abraham, Zarathustra, and the Buddha show the hero facing a hostile spirit trying to dissuade him from carrying forward his mission, be it to receive God's revelation (Abraham), to assist in the victory of Ahura Mazda over Angra Mainyu (Zarathustra), or to gain Enlightenment (the Buddha). In the confrontation with the evil spirit, the hero proves his fidelity either to his god, in the case of Zarathustra and Abraham, or to the quest for Enlightenment, in the Buddha's case. According to this pattern, one would expect that the story of Jesus' testing would involve testing of Jesus' fidelity to God, and the Q version of the Temptation provides just such a test in the devil's inducement to worship him. However, the other two temptations that involve doing miracles do not fit so obviously into this type of temptation. It is not immediately clear how performing miracles would be a betrayal of Jesus' mission since miracles elsewhere in Q fit into this mission. In Propp's analysis of folktales, the testing often involved feats of strength, but in refusing to perform miracles Jesus refuses to demonstrate his power. Moreover, a temptation to perform miracles was not likely to be a temptation to which many of Jesus' followers could relate, and so the centrality of miracles in these temptations lessens their exemplary effectiveness. Thus, the analysis of the Double Tradition's Temptation narrative will address what function these odd temptations might have served and suggest that their inclusion repudiates the use of miracles to authenticate Jesus' divine identity.

The Testing of Jesus in the Double Tradition

This section proposes that the Double Tradition rejects the use of miracles as proofs of Jesus' singular status in relation to God. Unless authors explicitly lay out a position against which they argue, to demonstrate that a text rejects a position involves a circumstantial argument that a polemical agenda of rejection makes the most sense of the textual data. In the case of the Double Tradition, there is circumstantial evidence that the composer(s) had the opportunity, motive, and means to reject miracles as indicators of Jesus' exalted status.

The opportunity to reject a viewpoint exists when an authors are aware of a position that differs from their own. The last few chapters have demonstrated that Mark told stories of Jesus' miracles in ways that effaced the distinction between Jesus and God and that emphasized Jesus' special role in fulfilling God's eschatological promises. Mark gives evidence that some early Jesus followers interpreted Jesus' miracles as indicators of Jesus' exalted status. We have seen previously that the Double Tradition prefers to talk about miracles in ways that emphasize Jesus' participation along with his followers in the in-breaking kingdom of God. Thus, the Double Tradition promotes a view of Jesus' miracles that differs from that held by some other early Jesus followers. We do not have direct evidence that the author(s) of the Double Tradition were aware of this differing view of Jesus' miracles, but Mark shows that this view held currency among early Jesus followers. Thus, those who told and retold the stories that make up the Double Tradition could have been aware of this way of telling miracle stories.

The motive for an author writing to refute a viewpoint would be some problem that the author sees with that viewpoint. In our review of Markan miracles, we have examined the appeal of using miracles as evidence of Jesus' unique connection to God. However, using

miracles in this way carries liabilities. The review of miracles and magic in Chapter 2 showed that one way to impugn those who perform such deeds is to imply that they did so for their own self-aggrandizement. Lucian, who ridiculed the gullible philosophers in *Lover of Lies*, also wrote a scathing broadside, *Alexander the False Prophet*, against Alexander of Abonoteichus, who gained renown as a miracle worker and leader of the cult of the deity Glycon. Lucian's invective centers around the accusation that Alexander used his astounding deeds to enrich himself and establish a cult from which he could profit. By depicting Jesus as performing miracles to demonstrate his divine identity, early Jesus followers would have opened Jesus to a similar accusation. For instance, Celsus claimed that Jesus, "having hired himself out as a servant in Egypt on account of his poverty, and having there acquired some miraculous powers...returned to his own country, highly elated on account of them and by means of these proclaimed himself a god" (Origen, *Contra Celsum* 1.28). In the ancient world, using miraculous powers to convince others of one's divinity was disreputable. It is therefore understandable that some early Christians would wish to portray Jesus as rejecting such a use of miracles to protect him from such accusations.

One means by which the Double Tradition effects this rejection is by having Jesus reject the devil's temptations to perform miracles. The rest of this section will examine Q's Temptation to show how this is the case. It will show that in many ways the three-fold Temptation presents Jesus as an exemplary hero enduring a testing in a way that affirms the values of the community that follows him, just as the testings of Zarathustra and the Buddha do. However, the inducements to perform miracles fit awkwardly with this exemplary function, and the best explanation for the presence of these temptations is as an attempt to repudiate the use of miracles serving as Jesus' divine credentials.

Turning Stones into Bread

The devil opens his dialogue with the protasis, “If you are God’s son (εἰ υἱὸς εἶ τοῦ θεοῦ)” (Matt 4:3//Luke 4:3). What exactly the devil means by “God’s son” the storyteller leaves vague. In the Tanakh and Septuagint, being a son or child of God indicates an especially close, but not necessarily unique, relationship to God.⁴⁸⁰ Christians later came to use the idea of sonship to speak of the unique relationship Jesus had with God. The Double Tradition, on the other hand, presents the parent/child relationship with God as not exclusive to Jesus. Jesus teaches his followers to pray to God as their father (Matt 6:9//Luke 11:2) and encourages them to rely on God as their father (Matt 7:11//Luke 11:13; Matt 6:32//Luke 12:30).⁴⁸¹ The anarthrous υἱός in the devil’s statement fits this pattern of seeing divine sonship as not exclusive to Jesus. While the NRSV translates the devil’s opening, “If you are the Son of God,” one could just as well translate, “If you are *a* son of God.”⁴⁸² By leaving out the definite article, the storyteller avoids having the devil imply that Jesus is God’s son in a unique way.

⁴⁸⁰ Robbins, *Testing*, 97-98. The idea of a parent/child relationship with God could be applied to kings (2 Sam 7; 1 Chr 17:13; 22:10; 28:6; Ps 2:7; 89:26-27), the people of Israel (Exod 4:22-23; Deut 32:6-18; Jer 3:4,19; 31:9, 20; Hos 11:1; 2 Esdr 6:58; Wis 18:13; Sir 36:17), angels (Gen 6:2; Job 1:6; 2:1; 38:7; Dan 3:25) and righteous people (Wis 2:12-20; Sir 4:10).

⁴⁸¹ Tuckett, “Temptation,” 495-96. For God’s solicitude as a father as a major theme in Q, see Ickhard Rau, “Unser Vater im Himmel: Eine These zur Metaphorik der Rede von Gott in der Logienquelle” *NT* 53.3 (2011): 242.

⁴⁸² Alfred M. Perry, “Translating the Greek Article,” *JBL* 68 4 (1949): 330. Arguing for a translation with the definite article are Bovon, *Luke I*, 143 and Jacques Schlosser, “Les Tentations de Jésus et la Cause de Dieu,” *RevScRel* 76.4 (2002): 409-10; For an in-depth study of how the Greek definite article does not correspond exactly to the English one, see Ronald D. Peters, *The Greek Article: A Functional Grammar of ὁ-items in the Greek New Testament with Special Emphasis on the Greek Article* (Boston: Brill, 2014). Although these authors are correct in asserting that the anarthrous υἱός could carry a definite meaning, they fail to

Although the devil does not imply that Jesus's filial relationship with God makes him unique, he does first stipulate that Jesus possesses great power based on this relationship to God and next tempts him to deploy that power.⁴⁸³ The storyteller gives no indication why Jesus should reject the invitation to turn stones into bread; the problem is less obviously the temptation than the one doing the tempting. On one level, the devil's instruction to produce bread from rocks simply gives Jesus an opportunity to parry with a quotation from Deuteronomy and thus to create a parallelism between Jesus and Israel.⁴⁸⁴ In all three of the temptations, Jesus rejects the devil's inducements with quotations from Deuteronomy 6-8. In these chapters Moses speaks to the Israelites just before they cross the Jordan into the Promised Land. Moses reminds the Israelites that God provided them manna in the wilderness to teach them that "one does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord" (Deut 8:3). The Israelites' demand that God provide them water at Massah, according to Moses, should teach them, "Do not put the Lord your God to the test" (Deut 6:16). Moses also instructs the Israelites not to stray from exclusive devotion to the Lord after they enter the Promised Land: "the Lord your God you shall fear; him you shall serve, and by his name alone you shall swear" (Deut 6:13). Jesus' responses to the devil prove that he is faithful

demonstrate that in this case it should be viewed with this meaning. Had the author(s) of the Double Tradition wished to assert the uniqueness of Jesus' sonship, a definite article could have been inserted.

⁴⁸³ Although Jeffrey B. Gibson, "A Turn on 'Turning Stones to Bread.' A New Understanding of the Devil's Intention in Q 4.3," *Biblical Research* 41 (1996): 38 rather idiosyncratically argues that the devil is really tempting Jesus to ask God to turn the stones into bread rather than implying that Jesus has such power resident within himself, I do not find this analysis persuasive as there is no indication in the apodosis that Jesus is to petition God. Instead, Jesus is to order the stones to become bread, which implies that they will obey his word.

⁴⁸⁴ Robbins, *Testing*, 157-61; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1.361.

to the instructions that Moses gave God's people, and thus they show that Jesus is an example for others to follow.

Jesus' affirmation that one does not live by bread alone not only illustrates his commitment to the teaching of Moses, but it also demonstrates how Jesus lives his own teaching as presented in Q. A major theme of Jesus' teaching in Q is exhortation to rely on God for everyday needs rather than striving to acquire them. Jesus teaches his followers not to worry about striving for food and clothing by offering them the example of the ravens and the lilies, for whom God provides (Matt 6:25-31//Luke 12:22-39). Instead, Jesus' followers are to rely on God's paternal solicitude and to strive for God's kingdom:

πάντα γὰρ ταῦτα τὰ ἔθνη ἐπιζητοῦσιν· οἶδεν γὰρ ὁ πατήρ ὑμῶν ὁ οὐράνιος ὅτι
χρηΐζετε τούτων ἀπάντων. ζητεῖτε δὲ πρῶτον τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ τὴν
δικαιοσύνην αὐτοῦ, καὶ ταῦτα πάντα προστεθήσεται ὑμῖν.

For the Gentiles strive after all these things. For your Heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. (Matt 6:31-32)

ταῦτα γὰρ πάντα τὰ ἔθνη τοῦ κόσμου ἐπιζητοῦσιν, ὑμῶν δὲ ὁ πατήρ οἶδεν ὅτι
χρηΐζετε τούτων. πλὴν ζητεῖτε τὴν βασιλείαν αὐτοῦ, καὶ ταῦτα προστεθήσεται
ὑμῖν.

For the Gentiles of the world strive after all these things, but your Father knows that you need them. Then seek His kingdom and all these things will be added to you. (Luke 12:30-31).

When Jesus refuses the devil's first temptation with a quotation from Deuteronomy, he models a trust in the fatherly care of God that renders concern for material needs superfluous.

Jesus also teaches his followers to rely on God for their material needs, specifically for bread, when he teaches his followers how to pray:

Πάτερ ἡμῶν ὁ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς· ἁγιασθήτω τὸ ὄνομά σου· ἐλθέτω ἡ βασιλεία σου... τὸν ἄρτον ἡμῶν τὸν ἐπιούσιον δὸς ἡμῖν σήμερον· καὶ ἄφες ἡμῖν τὰ ὀφειλήματα ἡμῶν, ὡς καὶ ἡμεῖς ἀφήκαμεν τοῖς ὀφειλέταις ἡμῶν· καὶ μὴ εἰσενέγκῃς ἡμᾶς εἰς πειρασμόν

Our Father who is in heaven, let Your name be sanctified, let Your kingdom come... Give us today our daily bread and forgive us our debts as even we have forgiven our debtors, and do not lead us into testing (Matt 6:9-13).

Πάτερ, ἁγιασθήτω τὸ ὄνομά σου· ἐλθέτω ἡ βασιλεία σου· τὸν ἄρτον ἡμῶν τὸν ἐπιούσιον δίδου ἡμῖν τὸ καθ' ἡμέραν· καὶ ἄφες ἡμῖν τὰς ἀμαρτίας ἡμῶν, καὶ γὰρ αὐτοὶ ἀφίομεν παντὶ ὀφείλοντι ἡμῖν· καὶ μὴ εἰσενέγκῃς ἡμᾶς εἰς πειρασμόν.

Father, let Your name be sanctified, let Your kingdom come. Give us our daily bread each day, and forgive us our sins, for we ourselves have forgiven all who owe us, and do not lead us into testing (Luke 11:2-4).

The prayer shares a number of keywords and ideas with the Temptation narrative: a filial relationship with God and concern about bread (ἄρτος), testing (πειρασμός), and a kingdom (βασιλεία). With regard to the first temptation, the prayer offers a parallel outlook about reliance on God. In the prayer, Jesus teaches his followers to rely on God as a father for their bread. In the first temptation, Jesus shows that as God's son he will rely on God's providence rather than his own ability to procure his bread. By responding to the devil's inducement with the quotation of Deut 8:3, Jesus demonstrates the reliance on God for bread that he instructs his followers to have in the rest of the Double Tradition.

However, Jesus' first quotation from Deuteronomy could have come as a response to a number of other possible temptations: the devil could have offered to give Jesus bread, much as he later offers to give Jesus the kingdoms of this world; the devil could have tempted Jesus to return to civilization much as Mara attempted with the hungry Buddha; or, to make the connection with Israel even tighter, the devil could have suggested that Jesus pray for God to

provide manna during his time of hunger.⁴⁸⁵ Instead, the devil suggests Jesus perform a miracle to feed himself, by which the storyteller indicates that there is something untoward in Jesus performing such a miracle. Since Jesus elsewhere performs miracles in the Double Tradition without the storyteller attaching opprobrium to such acts, the first temptation cannot be taken as an outright rejection of miracle on Jesus' part.⁴⁸⁶ Rather, the temptation implies that there is something wrong with performing a miracle in the way the devil suggests.

One possibility for the unacceptable element is the use of a miracle to gratify Jesus' material needs. However, the devil presents Jesus with another temptation about miracles beginning with the phrase, "If you are God's son," that has nothing to do with satisfying Jesus' physical needs. It is therefore preferable to view the unacceptable element in the first temptation as the use of a miracle to demonstrate Jesus' identity as God's son. For the Double Tradition, Jesus' miracles should not serve as proofs of his identity.

Leaping from the Temple

The second temptation (in Matthew's order) again centers on the miraculous, in this case a miraculous rescue from certain death. Again the devil links the miraculous to Jesus' identity as God's son, and again Jesus refuses to validate his identity with a miracle.

This vignette starts as the devil leads Jesus into Jerusalem and stands him on top of the Temple. For the temptation that follows, this detail is inconsequential—any sufficiently high

⁴⁸⁵ As it stands, the parallelism is not exact as it is Jesus who is both the one who is hungry and the one with the power to provide the food, whereas in the Exodus it was the people who were hungry and God who had the power to provide food. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1.361.

⁴⁸⁶ Against Schulz, *Q*, 177-90.

place would have served the narrative function of providing the setting for the devil to urge Jesus to jump. One possible explanation is that by placing the encounter on the Temple, there is an audience of onlookers below, onlookers who would be amazed to see angels flying down to catch Jesus should he jump. Thus, the devil's temptation is essentially that Jesus provide a sign to convince the onlookers of his close relationship to God, paralleled by Jesus' refusal to provide a sign from heaven, a pericope with a Double Tradition version (Mt 12:38-42//Lk 11:29-32) in addition to the Markan version.⁴⁸⁷ However, there is no mention of an audience in the Temptation, so the location must serve some other function.⁴⁸⁸

Listeners familiar with the basics of Jesus' story will recall, when they heard a story about Jesus risking death in Jerusalem, the danger Jesus faced in Jerusalem at the end of his life.⁴⁸⁹ Although the Double Tradition does not include a narrative of Jesus' death in Jerusalem, it nevertheless does depict Jerusalem, and the Temple in particular, as a place of danger. Q's Jesus chastises his contemporaries as complicit with their ancestors in the shedding of righteous blood from Abel until Zechariah, whom Q describes as dying between the altar and the sanctuary (Matt 23:35//Luke 11:51), apparently referring to Zachariah the priest who condemned Judah's apostasy and who was killed within the Temple precincts during the reign of King Joash (2 Chr 24:17-22).⁴⁹⁰ In Zachariah's story, the Temple is a place of danger to those loyal to God. This idea of Jerusalem as a place of danger for the prophets surfaces again in the Double Tradition's account of Jesus' lament: "Jerusalem,

⁴⁸⁷ Tuckett, "Temptation," 500.

⁴⁸⁸ Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1.367.

⁴⁸⁹ Harry T. Fleddermann, "The Plot of Q," *ETL* 88.1 (2012): 47-48, 56.

⁴⁹⁰ Kyu Sam Han, *Jerusalem and the Early Jesus Movement: The Q Community's Attitude Toward the Temple* (London: Sheffield Press, 2002), 177-81.

Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those sent to it” (Matt 23:37//Luke 13:34). According to Q’s Jesus, the Jerusalemites’ failure to turn from their murderous ways has consequences for the Temple at its center: “Behold, your house is abandoned” (Matt 23:38//Luke 13:35). According to the Double Tradition, Jerusalem is the site of the people’s abandonment of God, evidenced by their killing God’s messengers, so God in return abandons the Jerusalem Temple.⁴⁹¹

In these passages the Double Tradition develops the irony that the Temple should be a place of refuge, but it is in fact a place of danger for prophets. This juxtaposition of actual danger and supposed safety also finds expression in the Double Tradition’s note that the devil sets Jesus “upon the pinnacle of the Temple (ἐπὶ τὸ πτερύγιον τοῦ ἱεροῦ)” (Matt 4:5//Luke 4:9). Exactly where this site is in the Temple Complex is unclear since the phrase “pinnacle of the Temple” is unknown in literature prior to the Gospels.⁴⁹² The word πτερύγιον, however, means not only pinnacle, but also wing, and the related form πτέρυξ appears in a number of Psalms describing God’s protection:

In the shelter of your wings (πτερύγων) you cover me. (Ps 16:8 LXX)

The people’s children will hope in the shelter of your wings (πτερύγων). They will drink from the abundance of your house (οἴκου). (Ps 35:8-9 LXX)

I will hope in the shadow of your wings (πτερύγων). (Ps 56:2 LXX)

⁴⁹¹ Han, *Jerusalem*, 189-90.

⁴⁹² Davies and Allison *Matthew 1-7* 365. For an attempt to add more specificity based on subsequent Christian literature, see Christian Blumenthal, “Zur ‘Zinne des Temples,’” *ZNW* 96.3 (2005): 274-83. The story does not give any further indication that the author expects the readers to be familiar with the layout of the Temple complex, so there is no reason to posit interpretive significance to a putative location within the complex.

I will dwell in your tabernacle (σκηνώματι) forever, I will be covered in the shelter of your wings (πτερύγων). (Ps 60:5 LXX)

In the shelter of your wings (πτερύγων) I will rejoice. (Ps 62:8 LXX)

You hope under God's wings (πτέρυγας). (Ps 90:4 LXX)

Just like the Temple, the wings of God should be a place of protection and security, but Jesus faces temptation and danger on the wing of God's Temple.⁴⁹³ By locating this temptation "upon the pinnacle of the Temple," Q creates an environment charged with symbolism of putative divine protection and actual danger.

In this symbolically charged locale, the devil opens his second temptation with the same phrase used in the first, "If you are God's son (εἰ υἱὸς εἶ τοῦ θεοῦ)" (Matt 4:6//Luke 4:9). Again, the protasis implies that Jesus, based on his relationship to God, has immense power, and the apodosis again gives the devil's suggestion of how to use this power. In this instance, rather than tempting Jesus to use his power to satisfy his hunger, the devil suggests Jesus put his life at risk by jumping off the Temple. Having been rebuked by Scripture before, the devil now resorts to Scripture by quoting the LXX of Psalm 90 (91 in the MT) to explain how God will send angels to rescue Jesus.⁴⁹⁴ The Psalm explains how the person who has a close relationship with God, who "hope[s] under God's wings" (90:4), can expect divine protection.

⁴⁹³ Han, *Jerusalem*, 141.

⁴⁹⁴ William Richard Stegner, "The Use of Scripture in Two Narratives of Early Jewish Christianity (Matthew 4.1-11; Mark 9.2-8)," in *Early Christian Interpretation of the Scriptures of Israel: Investigations and Proposals*, eds. James A. Sanders and Craig A. Evans (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), 100. There may be some irony in the devil's use of Psalm 91, as there is evidence from Qumran and from the Targums that Psalm 91 was used apotropaically to ward off demons, Craig A. Evans, "Jesus and Evil Spirits in Light of Psalm 91," *Baptistic Theologies* 1.2 (2009): 47-55. Whether the Greek-speaking audience would catch such irony is debatable.

Satan uses this promise of protection as an inducement for Jesus to test the degree of God's protection.

Jesus stands ready again to respond from Deuteronomy and counter the devil's attack. His quoted passage is Moses' admonition to the Israelites not to test God the way they had at Massah. In Deuteronomy Moses refers to Massah, but the story is told in Exod 17:1-7—the Israelites in the wilderness thirsted and demanded Moses give them something to drink, which Moses interprets as their testing God. God instructs Moses to strike a rock, from which water flows. In Deuteronomy, Massah becomes a byword for the Israelites' unwarranted testing of God. In the context of the Double Tradition, the quotation from Deut 6:16 repudiates the devil's suggestion that Jesus provoke God to provide the protection promised in LXX Psalm 90. The Temple temptation provides an entertaining battle of wits and scriptural citations, which allows Jesus once again to get the best of the devil.

The quotation from Deuteronomy shows Jesus modeling an obedience to God that does not test God's faithfulness, an obedience that Moses commands the Israelites to maintain when they enter the Promised Land. In the course of his Deuteronomic speech, Moses reminds the Israelites that God tested (ἐκπειράση) them in the wilderness (8:2), but forbids them from testing (ἐκπειράσεις) God in return (6:16). It is God's prerogative to test the people, but the people should not test God. The Double Tradition inculcates just this attitude toward testing. The Temptation demonstrates that humans should not test God. The Lord's Prayer, with its petition "do not lead us into testing (πειρασμόν)" (Matt 6:13//Luke 11:4), reflects the idea that God has the right to test humans, but humans can petition God not to do so. In the Temple temptation, Jesus demonstrates the attitude toward testing God that Moses laid down in Deuteronomy.

What the Temple temptation does not provide, however, is any insight into why the devil's offer was tempting in the first place. In the case of turning stones into bread, the appeal directly responds to Jesus' hunger. Why Jesus should want to leap from the temple and invoke a divine rescue is less clear. As mentioned above, there is no notice of an audience to imply that the devil is tempting Jesus impress observers. Nor is there any indication that Jesus might wish to prove his power to the devil or to himself. Furthermore, the author could have chosen another temptation to which Jesus could have responded from Deut 6:16. Instead of taking Jesus to the pinnacle of the Temple and tempting him to jump, the devil could have suggested that Jesus ask God to provide water in the wilderness. Such a temptation would have formed a nice complement to the bread temptation, and it would have made the connection between Jesus and the Israelites in the Exodus even tighter by recapitulating the scene at Massah. Instead, The Double Tradition poses the temptation as regarding a miraculous divine rescue.

The bread and Temple temptation have complementary lacunae in addressing questions of psychology. The appeal of the bread temptation is obvious, but why Jesus should resist it is not evident—just because one does not live by bread alone does not mean that getting bread is forbidden. Nor does the story indicate why turning stones to bread would be illegitimate, although the fact that Satan offers the temptation points to its illegitimacy. On the other hand, the Temple temptation does not clarify why jumping off the temple should appeal to Jesus, but it makes very clear why Jesus should feel compelled to resist—because doing so would violate a prohibition from Deuteronomy. Neither temptation presents Jesus wrestling with his desire to do something or with his commitment to norms that prohibit him from doing so. The two events do not present Jesus as a figure to whose inner anguish readers can relate in their own struggles with temptation. Instead, the temptations present Jesus as an exemplar in following

God's commandments, commandments that are as valid for all of God's people as they are for Jesus.⁴⁹⁵ Jesus models the principles by which the hearers of the stories should live—principles of reliance on God.⁴⁹⁶

However, as we have seen above, there were other ways aside from having him decline to perform two miracles which the storyteller could have presented to make Jesus an exemplary figure. Indeed, having the temptations center around miracles (rather than on obtaining food and water by more mundane, but illicit means), weakens the narrative's exemplary force for Jesus followers who lack miraculous power. Nor did the storyteller need to have Satan introduce both temptations with, "If you are God's son..." As noted above, the narrative does not detail the exact nature of the relationship between God and Jesus that the devil presupposes, but by introducing the two temptations with this phrase the devil anchors them in Jesus' close relationship with God. The devil proposes that Jesus draw on this close relationship and perform miracles. The storyteller thus connects miracles to Jesus' identity as God's son.⁴⁹⁷ Jesus' refusal to perform miracles here cannot be read as a more general repudiation of miracles, for the Double Tradition elsewhere views Jesus' miracles positively.⁴⁹⁸ What the refusal of miracles does demonstrate is that Jesus rejects the use of miracles to prove his relationship to God. In the Temple temptation, the devil takes Jesus to a place where divine

⁴⁹⁵ Tuckett, "Temptation," 488-89; Thomas Hieke "Schriftgelehrsamkeit in der Logienquelle: Die Alttestamentlichen Zitate in der Versuchungsgeschichte Q 4,1-13," in *From Quest to Q: Festschrift James M. Robinson*, eds. Jon Ma Asgeirsson, Kristin de Toyer, and Marvin W. Meyer (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2000), 70.

⁴⁹⁶ Luigi Schiavo, "The Temptation of Jesus; The Eschatological Battle and the New Ethic of the First Followers of Jesus in Q," *JSNT* 25.2 (2002): 163; Tuckett, "Temptation," 506; Kloppenborg, *Formation*, 250-53; Bultmann, *History*, 256.

⁴⁹⁷ Hüneburg, *Jesus*, 113.

⁴⁹⁸ Kloppenborg, *Formation*, 253-254; Schlosser, "Tentations," 420.

protection should be most in effect, but where those who have remained faithful to God have found danger. Jesus refuses to claim a special privilege of protection that has been denied to the prophets who have met their end in Jerusalem. The Father-Son relationship does not exempt Jesus from the strictures about putting God to the test.

Worshiping Satan

The temptation to bow down to Satan breaks the pattern established in the other two temptations. There is no, “If you are God’s son,” from the devil. Instead of urging Jesus to use his own power, the devil here offers to grant Jesus power. In a rather pessimistic statement on political power, the storyteller suggests that Satan has possession over all the kingdoms of the world and can transfer possession to whom he chooses.⁴⁹⁹ The catch is that to access this power, Jesus must bow down to Satan. Unlike the previous two temptations, here the devil is clearly attempting to convince Jesus to do something illicit (worship someone other than God) with the offer of something desirable (power over all the kingdoms of the world). At this point, the episode reverts to the pattern of the other two: Jesus rebuffs the Devil’s advance with an apposite quotation from Deuteronomy.

Jesus shares with Zarathustra and the Buddha the experience of being tempted by an offer of earthly political power. All three figures led influential movements but did not exercise political power. Such stories of temptation show that these leaders could have taken a

⁴⁹⁹ Although the idea of Satan having disposition over the world’s kingdoms would seem to conflict with God’s sovereignty, in the book of Daniel, especially in chapters 1-6, one can see the idea that God has handed over authority over the entire world to Nebuchadnezzar, who is capable of great wickedness himself, and a similar line of thinking might be at work here. See Dominic Rudman, “Authority and Right of Disposal in Luke 4.6,” *NTS* 50.1 (2004): 77-86.

short-cut to their ultimate positions of influence, but such a path would have required them to betray their fidelity respectively to God, Ahura Mazda, or the pursuit of Enlightenment. By telling stories of their temptations to political power, followers emphasized that these figures came by their influence because they committed themselves to the right cause and taught others to do the same. All three figures could have obtained political power, but they chose instead to adhere to their respective goals.

In the context of the Double Tradition, the offer of kingdoms for Jesus to rule is juxtaposed with Jesus' commitment to the dawning kingdom of God.⁵⁰⁰ Jesus teaches his followers to pray that God's kingdom come (Matt 6:10//Luke 11:2) and to seek first God's kingdom (Matt 6:22//Luke 12:31). As the previous chapters have shown, Jesus' miracles indicate the partial presence of God's kingdom and presage the fullness of God's kingdom to come. In the Beelzebul Controversy, Q's Jesus claims that God's kingdom is in the process of overcoming Satan's kingdom (Matt 12:25-28//Luke 11:18-20). In Q's Temptation narrative, Jesus refuses to align himself with the kingdom of Satan and provides an implicit example of allegiance to the kingdom of God which he proclaims elsewhere in the Q material.

Despite this implicit contrast between allegiance to the kingdom of God and the kingdom of Satan, the focus of the temptation is on worship of God versus worship of Satan. The offer of kingdoms is merely the bribe Satan proffers to induce Jesus to worship him, and Jesus' response from Deuteronomy focuses on violating monolatry rather than on the offer of kingdoms. In the context of Deuteronomy, the injunction to worship God alone comes as a warning as the Israelites are about to enter the Promised Land and live among people who worship other gods. The possibility exists that they will abandon their exclusive worship of the

⁵⁰⁰ Tuckett, "Temptation," 504-505.

God who brought them out of Egypt and assimilate to Canaanite practices. Moses enjoins the people to remember what the God of Israel has done for them in liberating them from Egypt so that they will worship God alone. Jesus again shows himself obedient to the Torah by refusing to worship anyone other than God.

Monolatry was a well-established feature of Second Temple Judaism, so it seems odd that the tellers of the Double Tradition version of the Temptation would have felt a need to inculcate exclusive devotion to God through Jesus' example. It could be that such authors envisioned a Gentile audience that would still feel the pull of the polytheistic worship practices that they abandoned in becoming Jesus-followers.⁵⁰¹ In that case, this temptation would impress upon this audience Jesus' adherence to the monolatry commanded by Deuteronomy. An alternative explanation for the felt need to demonstrate Jesus' commitment to monolatry comes from the devotional practices within some early groups of Jesus-followers. If the worship of Jesus arose within the Jewish matrix of the earliest followers of Jesus, then these early followers had to contend with the Jewish insistence on exclusive worship of God.⁵⁰² One way to square worship of Jesus with monolatrous commitment would be to assimilate Jesus to the God of Israel and include worship of him within exclusive devotion to Israel's God. Another response could have been to repudiate the worship of Jesus altogether, and the third temptation would have been an implicit repudiation. We have seen in Mark evidence for early

⁵⁰¹ Fleddermann, *Q*, 262-263. For the argument that this temptation specifically arose in the context of early Christian disapproval of the Emperor Caligula, see Gerd Theissen, *The Gospels in Context: Social and Political History in the Synoptic Tradition*, trans. Linda M. Maloney (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991), 206-21. N.H. Taylor, "The Temptation of Jesus on the Mount: A Palestinian Christian Polemic Against Agrippa I," *JSNT* 83 (2001): 27-49, modifies Theissen's thesis slightly and sees Caligula's client Agrippa I as the target of the implied polemic.

⁵⁰² E.g., Hurtado, *Lord*, 50-53.

Jesus-followers blurring the distinction between Jesus and God through miracles, and we have seen in the first two temptations an attempt by the Double Tradition to distance Jesus from such a use of miracles. Similarly, this last temptation would have been useful as a way to demonstrate that Jesus worshipped only the one valid object of worship, and that Jesus' identity was not to be included within the divine identity such that Jesus became a valid object of worship himself. Telling this temptation story would have been a way for some early Jesus followers to distance Jesus from devotional practices among other Jesus-followers that the Double Tradition tradents found problematic.

Co-text: The Refusal of a Sign

Jesus' refusal to provide a sign (Matt 12:38-42//Mark 8:11/13//Luke 11:29-32) represents another Mark-Q overlap. We will examine the Markan version in its own right as a co-text for the Markan Testing narrative, but here we will look at it only to determine what elements belong to the Double Tradition:

Τότε ἀπεκρίθησαν αὐτῷ τινες τῶν γραμματέων καὶ Φαρισαίων λέγοντες· διδάσκαλε, θέλομεν ἀπὸ σοῦ σημεῖον ἰδεῖν. ὁ δὲ ἀποκριθεὶς εἶπεν αὐτοῖς· γενεὰ πονηρὰ καὶ μοιχαλὶς σημεῖον ἐπιζητεῖ, καὶ σημεῖον οὐ δοθήσεται αὐτῇ εἰ μὴ τὸ σημεῖον Ἰωνᾶ τοῦ προφήτου. ὡσπερ γὰρ ἦν Ἰωνᾶς ἐν τῇ κοιλίᾳ τοῦ κήτους τρεῖς ἡμέρας καὶ τρεῖς νύκτας, οὕτως ἔσται ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ τῆς γῆς τρεῖς ἡμέρας καὶ τρεῖς νύκτας. Ἄνδρες Νινευῖται ἀναστήσονται ἐν τῇ κρίσει μετὰ τῆς γενεᾶς ταύτης καὶ κατακρινοῦσιν αὐτήν, ὅτι μετενόησαν εἰς τὸ κήρυγμα Ἰωνᾶ, καὶ ἰδοὺ πλεῖον Ἰωνᾶ ὧδε. βασιλίςσα νότου ἐγερθήσεται ἐν τῇ κρίσει μετὰ τῆς γενεᾶς ταύτης καὶ κατακρινεῖ αὐτήν, ὅτι ἦλθεν ἐκ τῶν περάτων τῆς γῆς ἀκούσαι τὴν σοφίαν Σολομῶνος, καὶ ἰδοὺ πλεῖον Σολομῶνος ὧδε.

Then some of the scribes and Pharisees replied to him, saying, “Teacher, we wish to see a sign from you.” And Jesus answered and said to them, “A wicked and adulterous generation seeks a sign, but a sign will not be given to it except the

sign of Jonah the prophet. For just as Jonah was in the belly of the sea-monster three days and three nights, so will the son of man be in the heart of the earth three days and three nights. The men of Nineveh will rise in the judgment with this generation and they will condemn it, because they repented at the proclamation of Jonah, and look, something greater than Jonah is here. The Queen of the South will be raised in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, because she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and look, something greater than Solomon is here.” (Matt 12:38-42)

Τῶν δὲ ὄχλων ἐπαθροισομένων ἤρξατο λέγειν· ἡ γενεὰ αὕτη γενεὰ πονηρὰ ἐστίν· σημεῖον ζητεῖ, καὶ σημεῖον οὐ δοθήσεται αὐτῇ εἰ μὴ τὸ σημεῖον Ἰωνᾶ. καθὼς γὰρ ἐγένετο Ἰωνᾶς τοῖς Νινευίταις σημεῖον, οὕτως ἔσται καὶ ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου τῇ γενεᾷ ταύτῃ. βασίλισσα νότου ἐγερθήσεται ἐν τῇ κρίσει μετὰ τῶν ἀνδρῶν τῆς γενεᾶς ταύτης καὶ κατακρινεῖ αὐτούς, ὅτι ἦλθεν ἐκ τῶν περάτων τῆς γῆς ἀκοῦσαι τὴν σοφίαν Σολομῶνος, καὶ ἰδοὺ πλεῖον Σολομῶνος ὧδε. ἄνδρες Νινευῖται ἀναστήσονται ἐν τῇ κρίσει μετὰ τῆς γενεᾶς ταύτης καὶ κατακρινουῦσιν αὐτήν· ὅτι μετενόησαν εἰς τὸ κήρυγμα Ἰωνᾶ, καὶ ἰδοὺ πλεῖον Ἰωνᾶ ὧδε.

When the crowds increased, he began to say, “This generation is a wicked generation. It seeks a sign, but a sign will not be given to it except the sign of Jonah. For just as Jonah became a sign to the Ninevites, thus too will the son of man be to this generation. The Queen of the South will be raised in the judgment with the men of this generation and condemn them, because she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and look, something greater than Solomon is here. The men of Nineveh will rise in the judgment with this generation and they will condemn it, because they repented at the proclamation of Jonah, and look, something greater than Jonah is here.” (Luke 11:29-32)

Καὶ ἐξῆλθον οἱ Φαρισαῖοι καὶ ἤρξαντο συζητεῖν αὐτῷ, ζητοῦντες παρ’ αὐτοῦ σημεῖον ἀπὸ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ, πειράζοντες αὐτόν. καὶ ἀναστενάξας τῷ πνεύματι αὐτοῦ λέγει· τί ἡ γενεὰ αὕτη ζητεῖ σημεῖον; ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν, εἰ δοθήσεται τῇ γενεᾷ ταύτῃ σημεῖον. καὶ ἀφείς αὐτούς πάλιν ἐμβὰς ἀπῆλθεν εἰς τὸ πέραν

And Pharisees came out and began to dispute with him, seeking from him a sign from heaven, testing him. And groaning in his spirit he said, “Why does this generation seek a sign? Amen I tell you, if a sign should be given to this generation....” And leaving them, he again embarked and came to the other side. (Mark 8:11-13)

In the Double Tradition, Jesus responds to a request for a sign by calling those who ask for it a wicked generation and saying that this generation will receive only the sign of Jonah. Jesus follows with the sayings about the men of Nineveh and the Queen of the South condemning this generation for not responding appropriately to that which is greater than Jonah and Solomon.

As in the Temptation, so too in this pericope Jesus refuses an inducement to action. The Double Tradition stipulates neither the nature of the requested sign nor what that sign would indicate. Although not synonymous with miracle, σημεῖον (“sign”) has a range of meanings that includes a miracle or wonder.⁵⁰³ In refusing to give the people a sign, Jesus refuses to provide some noteworthy action, including a miracle.⁵⁰⁴ In Q, Jesus performs miracles when confronted by the need for healing or exorcism, but he does not perform a miracle to prove himself, either to Satan or to his contemporaries. The only sign the contemporaries will receive is the cryptic sign of Jonah.

Jesus does not explain what this sign is, but it does serve as a segue to his further condemnation of his contemporaries. Instead of seeking a sign, they should have recognized what was occurring in Jesus’ ministry. Just as he does in the woes on the Chorazin and Bethsaida (Matt 11:21-22//Luke 10:13-14), Q’s Jesus castigates his contemporaries for failing to recognize the importance of what is occurring in his ministry, a failure which makes them liable to eschatological judgment. The Queen of the South and the Ninevites will rise in judgment against those who failed to recognize “something greater” (πλεῖον) than Solomon and Jonah.

⁵⁰³ *BDAG* 747-48, σημεῖον.

⁵⁰⁴ Huneburg, *Jesus*, 214-215; Luz, *Luke*, 2:215. Other scholars see the request for a sign as equivalent to a request for a miracle, see Schulz, *Q*, 255; Cabraja, *Gedanke*, 110.

Jesus blames his contemporaries for their failure to recognize *something* greater, rather than *someone* greater. Although it is the actions of Jesus' ministry that his contemporaries should recognize, the significance of these actions does not lie in indicating that Jesus is greater than Solomon and Jonah. Rather, Jesus' ministry indicates something is happening, something with eschatological significance, and elsewhere the Double Tradition refers to this thing present in Jesus' actions as the kingdom of God. In the refusal to give a sign, Q's Jesus deflects attention from his own person and toward what God is doing through him. In the Temptation Narrative, this deflection is even more explicit: Jesus refuses miraculous actions that would verify his status as God's son, actions that would distance him from the rest of humanity. Instead, Jesus chooses to exemplify the obedience and allegiance humans owe God.

Testing and Miracles in Q

In the Double Tradition, Jesus teaches his followers that not one stroke of a letter of the Law will pass away before heaven and earth pass away too (Matt 5:18//Luke 16:17). In the Temptation, the Double Tradition shows that Jesus considers the Law binding on himself as he quotes the Torah against the devil. However, the devil could have come up with any number of inducements for which a refutation from Deuteronomy would have been just as apposite. Temptations to perform or call for miracles were not necessary to show that Jesus relied on God for his material needs, refused to put God to the test, and sought God's kingdom. The Temptation Narrative sets Jesus as an example of the principles he teaches elsewhere in the Double Tradition, but by including miracles among the temptations, the storytellers do more

than make Jesus an example: they also make Jesus a spokesperson for the rejection of miracles as proofs of a special identity he has with God.

For Q, Jesus may be God's son, but this sonship does not exempt Jesus from obedience to and reverence for God. Jesus' ability to perform miracles does not place him in a position of equality with God. In the rest of the Double Tradition material on miracles, we have seen that miracles serve the positive function of indicating the presence of eschatological blessedness in Jesus' ministry. Because Jesus plays such a key role in making the kingdom of God present, he is important, but the miracles demonstrate Jesus' importance precisely as the one who is manifesting the kingdom of God. The Temptation Narrative rejects any implication that Jesus' miraculous powers indicate that he is a God-like figure.

The Testing of Jesus in Mark

The three-fold Temptation of Jesus by Satan in the Double Tradition both establishes Jesus as an exemplar for his followers and repudiates the use of miracles as authenticating signs of Jesus' special relationship with God, so it is not surprising that Mark does not narrate these temptations. As we have seen, Mark tells stories of Jesus' miracles in ways that emphasize Jesus' identity with God and that make Jesus distinct from his followers rather than a co-worker with them. It is impossible to know whether the absence of this narrative from Mark stemmed from Mark's ignorance of the tradition or from Mark's choice to exclude a story that would have undercut his depiction of Jesus elsewhere in the Gospel. Whatever the explanation for this absence, it does not explain why Mark included a mention of Jesus' testing at all. The Gospel of John features no mention of Jesus being tempted by Satan, and Mark

similarly could have ignored this encounter. There must have been a reason to include the brief mention that Jesus, after his baptism, “was in the wilderness forty days, being tested by Satan, and he was with the wild animals, and the angels were serving him” (Mark 1:13).

A hero’s testing serves other functions besides establishing the hero as an exemplar. As we saw earlier in this chapter, testing demonstrates the excellence of the hero and the difficulty and importance of the hero’s accomplishment. By briefly mentioning Jesus’ encounter with Satan early in the narrative, Mark indicates that what Jesus does in his subsequent ministry is important without specifying what that importance is. By omitting any details about the nature of this satanic testing, Mark invites readers to interpret it in light of the only full discussion Jesus gives about his encounter with Satan: the Beelzebul Controversy (Mark 3:22-30). The lack of detail in Mark’s telling of Jesus’ Testing focuses attention on the bare fact that Jesus encountered Satan before Jesus started his ministry, and the later Beelzebul Controversy then explicates the outcome and significance of this encounter.

To demonstrate that the Beelzebul Controversy is the interpretive key for Mark’s brief mention of Jesus “being tested by Satan,” this section turns to the other details in 1:13 concerning the Testing. The discussion will show that these details create a web of connections between Jesus’ Testing and various events and figures from the Scriptures of Israel, but they do not specify what happened during the Testing. To look at what Mark implies about the encounter between Jesus and Satan, the section will next turn to the other appearances of Satan and testing in the Gospel to argue that Jesus’ parable of the Binding of the Strong Man in the Beelzebul Controversy is best seen as illustrating what occurred when Jesus met Satan shortly after the baptism.

Mark's lack of detail about how Satan tested Jesus has led many interpreters to look for clues in the other details given in 1:13 to indicate what occurred in the Testing and what Mark saw as its significance. From the facts that Jesus was in the wilderness for forty days, with wild beasts, and served by angels, various scholars have come up with interpretations that see Jesus as a new Adam or Israel, and then have interpreted the content and significance of Jesus' testing based on such typologies.⁵⁰⁵ Rather than creating a strong correspondence between Jesus and any particular biblical figure, Mark has in fact used the polysemy inherent in the details of 1:13 to link Jesus in many ways with figures from Israel's Scriptures without narrowly defining the content of the testing.

The wilderness (ἡ ἔρημος) in which Jesus' baptism and testing take place was a symbolically important locale in the traditions of Israel. In the Septuagint, ἡ ἔρημος consistently translates *המדבר* of the Exodus wandering, and Mark's use of it calls to mind the wilderness traditions of Israel.⁵⁰⁶ The Pentateuch depicts the wilderness wanderings as a time of punishment for the disobedient Exodus generation (e.g., Num 14:32-33), but it is through the deprivations of the wilderness that the Israelites are disciplined and purified (e.g., Deut

⁵⁰⁵ For the Adam typology, see Allison, "Behind," 196-98; Pablo Tena Monteros, "Los Relatos Sinopticos de la Tentacion de Jsus: Redaccion y Teologia," *Estudios Biblicos* 49 (1991): 297; Schlosser, "Tentations," 403; Marcus, *Mark*, 1.169-170. For the Israel typology, see A.B. Caneday, "Mark's Provocative Use of Scripture in Narration: 'He was with the Wild Animals and Angels Ministered to Him,'" *BBR* 9 (1999): 30; Jeffrey B. Gibson, "Jesus' Wilderness Temptation According to Mark," *JSNT* 53 (1994): 17; John Paul Heil, "Jesus with the Wild Animals in Mark 1:13," *CBQ* 68 (2006): 73; Jan Willem Van Henten, "The First Testing of Jesus: A Rereading of Mark 1.12-13," *NTS* 45 (1999): 360; Susan R. Garrett, *The Temptation of Jesus in Mark's Gospel* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 57.

⁵⁰⁶ Gibson, "Temptation," 15.

8:5).⁵⁰⁷ Testing also figures heavily in the wilderness traditions, as God tests the Israelites (Exod 16:4, 20:20, Deut 13:3), but the Israelites also test God (Exod 17:2-7, Num 14:22, Deut 6:16, 9:22). Mark's mention of a testing in the wilderness thus could bring to mind Jesus as a recapitulation of Israel, but it could also set up Jesus in the position of God, who was also tested in the wilderness. In addition to testing and hardship, the wilderness was also an abode of evil spirits: Azazel lives in the wilderness ready to consume the scapegoat (Lev 16:10), and the wilderness is the place of Azazel's temporary confinement in *I Enoch* 10.4-5.

Testing, hardship, and evil spirits do not exhaust the biblical implications of the wilderness. The wilderness could also be a place of special nearness to God. Many of the theophanies of Genesis and Exodus occur in the wilderness: Hagar's encounter with the angel of the lord "by a spring of water in the wilderness" (Gen 16:7); Moses' encounter with the burning bush on Horeb "beyond the wilderness" (Exod 3:1); the congregation of the Israelites seeing God appear in the cloud as they look "toward the wilderness" (Ex 16:10).⁵⁰⁸ Similarly, Enoch receives some of his visions "in the wilderness" (*I Enoch* 28.1, 29.1). Hosea speaks of the time in the wilderness as a honeymoon between Israel and God (2:14-15), and Ezekiel speaks of the wilderness as the place where God will renew the covenant with the gathered people of Israel (20:33-38).⁵⁰⁹ The idea of the wilderness as a place that allows a greater connection to God finds expression in later Jewish literature as well. Qumran's Community Rule instructs the faithful to "separate from the session of perverse men to go to the wilderness,

⁵⁰⁷ Robert Barry Leal, *Wilderness in the Bible: Toward a Theology of Wilderness* (New York: Peter Lang, 2004), 223; Richard Dormandy, "Jesus' Temptations in Mark's Gospel: Mark 1:12-13," *ExpTim* 114.6 (2003): 183.

⁵⁰⁸ Leal, *Wilderness*, 150.

⁵⁰⁹ Terry L. Burden, *The Kerygma of the Wilderness Traditions in the Hebrew Bible* (New York: Peter Lang, 1994), 179-80.

there to prepare the way of truth” (1QS 8.13). Similarly, in the *Martyrdom of Isaiah*, the prophet Isaiah flees the corruption in the cities and goes to live in the wilderness (2.8-12). Elsewhere in Mark’s Gospel the wilderness carries such positive valence. The wilderness is where John the Baptist appears with his baptism of repentance and his preparation of the way for Jesus (1:3-4), and it is where Jesus goes to pray (1:35) or to be alone with his disciples after their mission (6:31-32). By placing the testing in the wilderness, Mark allows the reader to see Jesus’ activity as part of this broad matrix of wilderness traditions, but Mark does not fix a particular significance to the wilderness in this case.

Mark chooses a time period similarly rife with possible significations: forty days. Given the wilderness setting, one parallel for Jesus’ forty days is Israel’s forty-years wandering, with Jesus’ wilderness experience recapitulating Israel’s.⁵¹⁰ Other parallels also exist. Moses spent forty days on Sinai receiving the Torah from God (Exod 24:18), and Elijah spent forty days fasting as he traveled to Horeb to receive his theophany (1 Kings 19:8), which allows the reader to link Jesus with these figures.⁵¹¹ Perhaps the most famous forty-day period is the flood that Noah endured. In the ark, Noah is also with wild beasts (Gen 8:1) and receives a sign in the form of a dove over water (Gen 8:8-12), elements present in the baptism of Jesus that immediately precedes the testing (Mark 1:9-10). Forty-day periods occur in less well-known cases as well: the spies sent by Moses spend forty days in the Promised Land (Num 13:25); during Antiochus’s rule an apparition of cavalry appeared in the air in Jerusalem for forty days (2 Macc 5:2); the people of Bethulia put God to the test by deciding that they would surrender to Holofernes if God did not deliver them from the siege before forty days had

⁵¹⁰ Caneday, “Provocative Use,” 30; Gibson, “Temptation,” 17; Heil, “Jesus,” 73; Van Henten, “Testing,” 352; Garrett, *Temptation*, 57.

⁵¹¹ Allison, “Behind,” 202.

passed (Jdt 7:19-8:17).⁵¹² Forty days also figures in extra-biblical traditions about Adam. In *Jubilees* 3.9, God places Adam in Eden forty days after his creation. In *The Life of Adam and Eve* 6.1, Adam spends forty days fasting in penance for his disobedience to God.⁵¹³ Just as the wilderness location does not specify a single meaning for the Testing but rather invites the reader to connect Jesus' story with various stories of Israel, so does the duration of forty days similarly offer a panoply of connections between Jesus and figures and events from Israel's history.

The forty days in the wilderness were a time not only for Jesus to be tested, but also for him to be with wild animals and served by angels. Mark does not specify whether the beasts and angels appeared after Jesus had completed his testing or whether their presence overlapped with it. In the Septuagint, wild animals (θηρία) are most often presented as forces of destruction and death.⁵¹⁴ Jesus' being with the wild animals could thus indicate his exposure to danger during his stay in the wilderness.⁵¹⁵ However, within the prophets there also existed visions of a future when humans and wild animals would live in harmony (Isa 43:20; Ezek

⁵¹² Van Henten, "Testing," 360. In the book of Judith, on the thirty-fourth day of the siege, Uzziah decides they will hold out five days more and then surrender should God not deliver them by the fortieth day. Judith upbraids Uzziah and the rest of the people for putting such a timetable on God's action, which she equates with testing (ἐπειράσατε) God (Jdt 8:12).

⁵¹³ Allison, "Behind," 198 n.13.

⁵¹⁴ Gen 27:20; Exod 23:29; Lev 26:6, 26:22; Deut 7:22, 28:26, 32:24; Josh 23:5; 1 Sam 17:46; 2 Macc 9:15; Ps 73:19, 78:2; Wis 12:9, 16:5; Hos 2:12, 13:8; Zeph 2:14, 3:1; Isa 5:29, 46:1; Jer 7:33, 12:9, 15:3, 16:4, 19:7, 41:20; Ezek 5:17, 14:15, 14:21, 29:5, 33:27, 34:5, 34:8, 34:29, 39:3; Dan 7:5-7

⁵¹⁵ Heil, "Jesus," 65, 74; Dormandy, "Temptations," 184.

31:6; Hos 2:18). Thus, Mark leaves the passage open to the interpretation that Jesus lives in eschatological harmony with the wild animals.⁵¹⁶

The combination of angels and wild animals can suggest the situation envisioned in Psalm 91, which is made explicit in the Q version:

For he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways. On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone. You will tread on the lion and the adder, the young lion and the serpent you will trample under foot. (Ps 91:11-13)

The psalmist depicts the one under God's protection going unharmed by hostile animals while angels guard him. Mark's placement of Jesus with the wild animals and the angels invites, but does not demand, a link between Jesus and the figure in the Psalm.⁵¹⁷ For a reader (or author) familiar with the Double Tradition version of the Testing, a contrast based on Psalm 91 suggests itself. In Mark's Testing, Jesus enjoys the protection promised by the Psalm, whereas in the Q version, Jesus refuses to invoke this same protection when the devil quotes Psalm 91 on the pinnacle of the Temple. Whether Mark intended this contrast or not, the presence of the angels suggests that in Mark's version Jesus has the support of God, mediated through the angels, during his time in the wilderness.

Rather than adding specificity about the content, result, or significance of Jesus' testing, the other elements in Mark 1:13 connect the testing to a multitude of events and figures from

⁵¹⁶ Allison, "Behind," 196; Monteros, "Relatos," 295; Marcus, *Mark*, 1.168; Dormandy "Temptations" 184; Martin Hasitschka, "Der Sohn Gottes—geliebt und geprüft: Zusammenhang von Taufe und Versuchung Jesu bei den Synoptikern," in *Forschungen zum Neuen Testament und seiner Umwelt: Festschrift für Albert Fuchs*, ed. Christoph Niemand (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2002), 74.

⁵¹⁷ Collins, *Mark*, 151; Garrett *Temptation*, 57; Caneday "Provocative Use," 34; Gibson, "Temptation," 21-22.

the history of Israel. This verse creates an expansive network of allusions within which to situate the testing, but it lacks sufficient detail to demand that any one single allusion is the overriding interpretive key. To determine what specific ideas, if any, Mark has about what happened in this encounter between Jesus and Satan, we must look to the rest of his Gospel for clues.

Testing and Satan in the Markan Co-texts

Given the Double Tradition's Temptation, it is difficult to avoid seeing in Mark's mention of Jesus' Testing some sort of demonic temptation to act in ways not in accordance with God's commands. However, the mere mention of a testing by Satan need not recollect the sort of Temptation narrated by Q. As noted in the introduction to this chapter, *πειράζω* can indicate temptation, but its connotation is broader. In the LXX, the verb is very often used to describe actions that test people's devotion to God, such as when God commands Abraham to sacrifice Isaac (Gen 22:1), or when God allows other nations to afflict the Israelites to determine if they would remain faithful (Judg 2:22). Nevertheless, this Septuagintal usage does not demand that Mark's readers take Jesus' testing to be one of proving his faithfulness to God.⁵¹⁸ The Queen of Sheba comes to test Solomon's wisdom, not Solomon's fidelity to God (1 Kgs 10:1; 2 Chr 9:1). The noun form, *πειρασμός*, also appears in the LXX to describe the plagues God sent on the Egyptians, which were not ways of proving the Egyptians' fidelity (Deut 4:34, 7:19). This example from Deuteronomy shows that this family of words could also

⁵¹⁸ *Contra* Gibson, "Wilderness Temptation," 13.

denote a hostile action that had to be endured without reference to a test of one's character or devotion to God.⁵¹⁹

In the rest of Mark, the verb is used to describe actions of Jesus' opponents without reference to any attempt on their part to make him swerve from his devotion to God. In the Markan version of the Refusal of a Sign, a group of Pharisees approaches Jesus, "seeking from him a sign from heaven, testing (πειράζοντες) him" (Mark 8:11). Mark does not elaborate on what the Pharisees thought they were testing, but the most straightforward reading is that they were testing Jesus' ability to perform a sign on demand. Jesus simply refuses to perform a sign, and he leaves without elaborating on his refusal (8:12-13). One misguided way to interpret his refusal to give a sign is that Mark's Jesus views his ministry as self-authenticating and that therefore a miraculous sign would be superfluous.⁵²⁰ This interpretation is countered by the fact that Mark uses miracles extensively to demonstrate Jesus' identity. Indeed, Jesus heals the paralytic to prove his authority to the scribes who doubted him (Mk 2:10) with just the sort of authenticating sign that Jesus refuses to give to the Pharisees in 8:12. Moreover, the Transfiguration provides a striking sign from heaven to Peter, James, and John of Jesus' identity as Son of God (9:7). A more profitable way to interpret Mark 8:12-13 is to see it demonstrating that Jesus acts on his own initiative. If he had tried and failed to produce a sign, the Pharisees' opposition would be vindicated; if he succeeded he would have shown that his

⁵¹⁹ LSJ 1354, πειρασμός.

⁵²⁰ See Jeffrey B. Gibson, "Jesus' Refusal to Produce a Sign (Mk 8.11-13)," *JSNT* 48 (1990): 37 n.3 for an exhaustive list of commentators who have adopted this interpretation. Gibson, "Refusal," 45-53 and Jonathan Draper, "The Development of the Sign of the Son of Man in the Jesus Tradition," *NTS* 39 (1993): 1-21 both argue that the refusal is a narrower refusal of a triumphalistic messianic sign, but the connection Mark makes between the Transfiguration and Jesus' predicted coming in power speaks against Jesus having a problem with demonstrations of his eventual triumph.

opponents could manipulate him into acting as they demanded. Instead, Jesus chooses not to participate.

The Pharisees again test Jesus when they ask him about divorce: “Pharisees came and, testing (πειράζοντες) him, asked if it is lawful for a man to divorce his wife” (10:2). Instead of answering the question, Jesus responds by asking another question: what did Moses command? When the Pharisees respond that Moses allowed divorce, Jesus begins his attack on his interlocutors by saying that Moses allowed divorce because of their hardness of heart. Jesus goes on to use the creation story from Genesis to show that divorce was not God’s intention, Moses’ allowance notwithstanding. The story does not detail what quality of Jesus the Pharisees thought they were testing, but the testing that they instigate ends with Jesus accusing them of being hard of heart.

Jesus similarly deflects the attack the third time the Pharisees test him. In Jerusalem, some Pharisees and some Herodians attempt “to trap him with a word,” by asking him whether one should pay taxes to the emperor (12:13). Jesus, “knowing their hypocrisy, said to them, why do you test (πειράζετε) me?” (12:15). He then asks them whose bust appears on a denarius, and when they answer that Caesar’s head appears on the coin, Jesus responds with the non-answer “Give to Caesar what is Caesar’s and to God what is God’s” (12:17). The Pharisees and Herodians come to trap him, but Jesus recognizes the trap and escapes it.

In these three instances of testing, the Pharisees present Jesus with challenging demands or questions, and the test seems to concern how Jesus responds. Mark does not indicate that these are tests of Jesus’ loyalty to God, nor does Mark focus much on what quality of Jesus these tests are supposed to illustrate. Rather, Mark focuses on Jesus’ response to these tests, and in all three cases Jesus refuses to participate in the test as the opponents present it.

The tests show Jesus' ability to avoid entrapment and to turn the Pharisees' hostile questions back on them. Mark is less interested in showing Jesus passing a test than he is in showing Jesus confounding those who try to test him.

These tests provide one set of co-texts for the Testing; the other useful set of cotexts are those about Jesus encountering Satan. The rest of Mark describes only two other encounters between Jesus and Satan. Following Peter's confession at Caesarea Philippi, Jesus tells his disciples that he will suffer, die, and rise again, at which Peter rebukes him. In response Jesus says to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan, because you do not think the things of God but the things of humans" (8:33). Jesus calls Peter Satan for trying to prevent him from undergoing his passion. The most likely reason for Mark to include this equation of Peter with Satan is that it provides a strong way for Mark's Jesus to rebuke the idea that Jesus should avoid his passion. It seems much less likely that this brief rebuke functions instead to indicate Satan's agenda throughout the Gospel. Satan is very much absent from Mark's account of the Passion, and the one time when Mark presents Jesus as genuinely conflicted about whether or not to undergo his divinely appointed suffering, his prayer in Gethsemane (14:35-36), Satan does not figure as instigator. There is therefore no compelling reason to read into Jesus' Testing after the baptism an attempt to dissuade him from taking his path to the cross.⁵²¹

The other description of an encounter between Jesus and Satan occurs in the Beelzebul Controversy, and this encounter provides the key to interpreting the Testing: the Testing is the occasion for Jesus' victory over Satan that he describes with the parable of the Strong Man. After Jesus refutes the scribes' accusation that he performs exorcisms through a pact with Satan, Jesus tells them in a parable what the exorcisms really demonstrate about his

⁵²¹ *Contra* Gibson, "Temptation," 33.

relationship with Satan: “no one is able to enter the house of a strong man to steal his property unless he first binds the strong man, and then he can plunder his house” (3:27). Although Jesus does not interpret this parable, the context clarifies its meaning: Jesus’ exorcisms indicate that Jesus has conquered Satan. In Mark’s telling, exorcisms are a feature of Jesus’ public ministry from its inception (1:21-28), so the victory over Satan must have come before Jesus began his ministry. Mark thus implies that the encounter in the wilderness resulted in Jesus’ conquest of the devil, a conquest that allowed him to perform his subsequent exorcisms.⁵²² In the tests that the Pharisees present, Jesus usually turns the test back on the testers and gains the upper hand. So also the Beelzebul Controversy shows that when Satan came to test Jesus, Jesus ensnared Satan.

The brevity of Mark’s account of the testing speaks to Mark’s purpose. Mark is not interested in telling how Jesus passes some particular test as a way to highlight a particular Christological virtue. Rather, Mark’s interest lies in the fact that Jesus encountered and conquered Satan before he began his ministry. Because the Beelzebul Controversy makes clear that Jesus has bested Satan, the evangelist had no need to make the outcome of the testing explicit in chapter 1. The mention of the testing puts into the reader’s mind that Jesus and Satan have encountered each other, and the lack of detail about the outcome creates suspense and invites the reader to infer what the outcome could be. The exorcisms provide evidence that Jesus has been victorious over Satan, and once the reader reaches the Beelzebul Controversy, the victory is made explicit.

⁵²² Ernst Best, *The Temptation and the Passion: The Markan Soteriology*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965), 15.

Conclusion

The detailed telling of the Temptation in the Double Tradition shows Jesus repudiating the use of miracles to demonstrate his divine identity. By omitting details about the Testing, Mark allows the Beelzebul Controversy to describe the encounter between Jesus and Satan, so that the Testing in 1:13 becomes the genesis of Jesus' exorcistic miracles. Since the exorcisms and other miracles in Mark provide just the sort of demonstration of Jesus' divine identity that Q's Jesus rejects, it makes sense that Mark lacks an extended Temptation narrative similar to that of the Double Tradition. As mentioned above, we cannot know whether Mark was familiar with the version of the story that the Double Tradition preserves, but if he were, it would have fit with his agenda to omit it. That Mark's Gospel was preserved indicates that other early Jesus followers found its presentation of Jesus' life appealing and worth retelling and rerecording, and eventually some of these followers became aware of the Gospels of Matthew and Luke as well. That Mark continued to be copied and read speaks to the ongoing appeal of a depiction of Jesus using miracles to efface the distinction between himself and God, a depiction where such use of miracles is not a demonic temptation that Jesus must reject.

The inclusion of miracles within Q's Temptation narrative makes the most sense when viewed as a way of rejecting miracles as proofs of Jesus' divine identity. The absence of this narrative from Mark is consistent with a rejection of this rejection. Both Mark and the Double Tradition use the Testing to show the excellence of Jesus in overcoming a challenge from the devil early in his career, but it is a different type of excellence that each propounds. Q shows the exemplary excellence of Jesus as one faithful to God's commands and who subjects himself to God; Mark shows Jesus as the one who conquers Satan and enacts the eschatological victory promised by God as he leaves the implications of the Testing vague and invites the

reader to view its significance through the lens of the Beelzebul Controversy. In Mark's way of depicting Jesus' excellence, miracles efface the distinction between Jesus and God, while such a function of miracles is anathema in Q's depicting Jesus' excellence. These two different ways of remembering Jesus and his miracles came into competition, and the Testing stories in Mark and the Double Tradition bear the marks of this competition.

Chapter VII

Conclusion: Miracles as Power, Miracles as Signs

To the Grand Inquisitor, miracles signify power, the power to control and coerce human beings, a power that Jesus foolishly abjured in his Temptation. The link between power and miracle is by no means foreign to the Synoptic tradition. When Matthew, Mark, or Luke speak about a generic miracle, their word of choice is δύναμις, “power.”⁵²³ Jesus’ miracles show that the normal rules of day-to-day life do not apply to him, that he is above the constraints that bind most people. As we have seen throughout this study, both Mark and the Double Tradition recount miracles to show the power at work in the ministry of Jesus. Both present Jesus’ miracles as foretastes of the eschatological power that will become fully manifest in the near future—for Mark, when Jesus appears on the clouds in glory, and for the Double Tradition, when the kingdom of God comes in full. These accounts are not merely descriptions of power, but exercises of power as well. In telling the stories about Jesus’ miracles, Mark and the Double Tradition exert their power to shape the collective memory of early Jesus followers. They are able to configure Jesus, his miracles, and his proclamation of the kingdom of God in ways amenable to their purposes and then encourage other early followers of Jesus to remember him in these ways.

As this study has shown, these ways of forging collective memory were simultaneously ways of forging group identity for early Jesus followers. The miracles showed the power of Jesus, which redounded to the positive group-image that his early followers generated for themselves. The storytellers could show how the power of Jesus was still active

⁵²³ Matt 7:22; 11:20-23; 13:54, 58; Mark 6:2, 5; 9:39; Luke 10:13; 19:37.

among his followers and that Jesus' power indicated his eschatological role, which explains the importance of following him. Their depictions of Jesus' power allowed the storytellers to exercise their power to define what it meant to be a follower of Jesus.

The power evident in the miracle points toward something special about the one who bears this power. Miracles are signs, as the Gospel of John and the Hebrew Bible so often remind us.⁵²⁴ The miracles of Jesus signify how he relates to the eschatological power, but Mark and the Double Tradition make this signification differently. Mark's miracles assign to Jesus divine activity and blur the distinctions between Jesus and God. Moreover, the miracles point to the distinctions between Jesus and his followers, and any similar power that the followers have comes by Jesus' delegation of it. The Double Tradition displays a much greater willingness to depict Jesus and his followers as sharing in a common mission to make manifest the kingdom of God; the Double Tradition also offers many fewer narrative elements conflating Jesus and God. Nevertheless, in these Double Tradition versions, along with their co-texts, Jesus retains primacy in the instantiation of the kingdom of God—Jesus is not merely one messenger among many.

These differing significations of Jesus' miracles imply different identities for Jesus. Mark's use of miracles involves talking about Jesus in ways that depict him as somehow divine, while Q's use of miracles involves talking about Jesus in ways that depict him as first among equals, among those other people who share his allegiance to the kingdom of God. While it goes beyond the evidence to impute to Mark and the Double Tradition full-fledged Christologies that their stories express, the elements in their stories nevertheless suggest

⁵²⁴ For authors referring to miracles as signs, see, for instance, Exod 4:8,30; 7:9; Num 14:11; Deut 4:34; 11:3; 2 Kgs 20:8; Neh 9:10; Ps 77:43; John 2:18; 3:2; 4:48,54.

differing ways of thinking about Jesus vis-à-vis God, even if these ways of thinking were still nascent.

The final chapter argued that the Double Tradition's famous Temptation narrative showed these two ways of thinking about Jesus to be in competition with each other. The evidence shows the tradents of Q being aware of and reacting to the way of talking about Jesus and his miracles that we find in Mark's Gospel, even if the creators of the Double Tradition were not familiar with the text itself. Were Mark aware of the story of the three-fold Temptation, then its absence in the Second Gospel speaks to the evangelist's rejection of the view of miracles it represents. Early Jesus followers contested the collective memory of Jesus, and Mark and the Double Tradition provide traces of this contest.

This contest to shape the collective memory of Jesus and his miracles was also a contest to shape the group identity of his followers. Why some followers would want to tell stories of Jesus in ways that effaced the distinction between him and God while others would tell the same stories in ways that emphasized Jesus' subservience to God and God's kingdom and his similarity to his followers probably owed much to their personal experiences. Although these preferences were likely highly personal and idiosyncratic, they are not inscrutable to us. How effective these different ways of remembering Jesus were in creating a positive and distinctive identity for Jesus followers likely influenced these preferences. The different ways of configuring the memory of Jesus, his miracles, and his proclamation of the kingdom of God each had benefits and liabilities in forming such an identity.

The configuration presented in the Double Tradition, in which Jesus and his miracles both point toward the kingdom of God, creates a sense of identity for Jesus followers by imagining them as his co-fighters in the confrontation between the kingdom of God and the

kingdom of Satan. The configuration in Mark, in which the miracles and the kingdom of God point to Jesus, creates a sharper distinction between Jesus and the rest of humanity, which generates a more distinctive identity for the followers of the one who acts as God on earth. Mark and the Double Tradition can tell the same stories, but these different configurations allow them to shape both the memory of Jesus and the identity of his followers in distinct ways.

Ivan Karamazov's Grand Inquisitor was onto something. This long investigation has shown that there were at least two different ways of conceptualizing the miracles of Jesus at the heart of the Synoptic tradition. Mark, like the Inquisitor's Church, emphasized the power of Jesus, whereas the Double Tradition made Jesus much more the messenger of the powerful kingdom of God. Neither view, however, managed to carry the day, at least as the process of canonization was concerned. By the inclusion of all three Synoptic Gospels, the canon grants both the Markan and Double Tradition versions of these stories a place in a grander narrative. The miracles represent both the power of Jesus and the presence of the kingdom of God that he represents. At the same time, the canonical form presents an ambivalence about miracles: in the temptations of Matthew and Luke, Jesus rejects miracles as a way to prove his divine identity, while Mark's Jesus is only too happy to use miracles in such a way. Ultimately, canonization did not resolve the competition between these two ways of remembering Jesus and his miracles but instead enshrined this competition within the Christian tradition for thinkers such as Dostoyevsky to wrestle with for generations to come

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