

EDITORIAL BOARD

Editor

PAUL E. DAVIES

Old Testament Readers

REIDAR B. BJORNARD

F. W. BOELTER

J. COERT RYLAARSDAM

New Testament Readers

WILHELM C. LINSS

NORMAN PERRIN

GRAYDON F. SNYDER

Business Manager

ROBERT G. BOWLING

PUBLICATION NOTICES

BIBLICAL RESEARCH is published by the Chicago Society of Biblical Research, and its contents are given over to papers and articles contributed by members of the Society. It is issued annually in the Fall of the year. Manuscripts should be sent to the editor, Paul E. Davies, 81 Salem Lane, Evanston, Illinois 60203. An index of contents is provided with every fifth volume. BIBLICAL RESEARCH is indexed by the American Theological Library Association.

Subscriptions should be sent to the business manager, Robert G. Bowling, 800 West Belden Avenue, Chicago, Illinois, 60614. The subscription rate is \$9.00 for five years. Back issues of vols. I-VII, IX-X, and XII-XVI may be ordered from the business manager at the rate of \$2.00 per volume. There will be no handling charge (\$0.25) if payment accompanies orders for back issues.

No part of this issue may be reproduced in any form by print, photograph, microfilm, or any other means without permission of the publisher.

Printed in the United States of America

Dynameis and Sēmeia in Mark

VERNON K. ROBBINS

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Recent investigations of Mark have renewed an interest in dimensions of the Marcan narrative which reflect a conceptual framework similar to that within "divine man" stories in Hellenistic culture. This interest has led to interpretations of Mark in which the mighty works of Jesus represent the axis upon which the interpretation turns. This paper probes the terminology connected with mighty works for the purpose of assessing Marcan christology and theology within this hermeneutical context.

In 1965 U. Luz argued that it is important to distinguish between "messianic secret" and "miracle secret" in Marcan christology.¹ The miracle secret, he proposes, stands within the first half of Mark, i.e., that portion which is dominated by a Hellenistic *theios anēr* conception of Jesus. The key passages, which Luz considers to be redactional, are 1:44a, 45; 6:53-56; 7:36. The occurrence of the miracle cannot be kept secret even though it be performed in a house (1:29-31; 2:1-12; 5:21-43; cf. 7:24-30), in a synagogue (3:1-6; cf. 1:21-28), or away from people (7:31-37). This is the traditional "scenery of hiddenness" which Mark extends into the theme that, though miracles be performed in secrecy and a command be given to keep them secret, by their nature they become public knowledge which attracts crowds to Jesus. The function of these commands to secrecy is to emphasize that in spite of any measures which are taken, miracles become known about because their effect is so self-evident.² In contrast to the miracle secret, the exorcisms contain commands to secrecy designed to still the demons who persistently perceive and confess the true nature of Jesus.³ When this is correlated with the Marcan theme of misunderstanding by the disciples, the rebuke of Peter by Jesus in 8:30 is an indirect affirmation of Peter's confession that Jesus is the Messiah.⁴ Analysis of 8:27-10:45 in the light of

1. Ulrich Luz, "Das Geheimnismotiv und die markinische Christologie," ZNW 56 (1965) 9-30.

2. Luz, *ibid.*, pp. 11-17.

3. *Ibid.*, pp. 18-20. Mark 1:24-25; 1:34b; 3:11-12 (cf. 9:20).

4. *Ibid.*, pp. 20-23.

these observations reveals that Marcan christology consists of the attempt to combine the *theios anēr* christology of the Hellenistic community with the kerygma of the cross without destroying the force of either.⁵

Likewise in 1965, an article written by L. E. Keck placed qualifications upon the extent of *theios anēr* materials in the first half of Mark.⁶ While Keck's article proceeds from an analysis of Mark 3:7-12, the import of the analysis is directed at J. Schreiber's view of Marcan christology.⁷ In opposition to Schreiber's view that Marcan redaction competes with the Hellenistic *theios anēr* christology in the traditional materials through a theology which stems from the gnostic redeemer myth, Keck argues that only one strand of the Marcan narrative contains such a *theios anēr* conception of Jesus while another strand presents Jesus in a more Jewish manner as "the strong man."⁸ Consequently, Keck's analysis represents a substantive critique of the positions advanced by Luz and Schreiber. Keck also mentions that P. Vielhauer does not distinguish between those stories which do and those which do not contain a *theios anēr* emphasis in Mark,⁹ and, therefore, he concludes that work on Mark has not sufficiently taken into consideration these different streams of tradition.

Keck's analysis has not really been heeded. In the intervening period the vigorous American discussion of the relationship of the Gospel of Mark to "aretalogies" in the ancient world has produced articles which do not deal with "the strong man" aspect of the Marcan narrative. On the one hand, J. M. Robinson, H. Koester, and M. Smith have championed the viewpoint that underlying Mark was an aretalogical narrative consisting mainly of miracle stories which portrayed Jesus in terms of a firmly established *theios anēr* conception.¹⁰

5. *Ibid.*, pp. 28-30.
6. Leander E. Keck, "Mark 3:7-12 and Mark's Christology," JBL 84 (1965) 341-58.
7. See *ibid.*, pp. 341, n. 1; 355-58. Referring to Johannes Schreiber, "Die Christologie des Markusevangeliums," ZTK 58 (1961) 154-83; now available in expanded form as *Theologie des Vertrauens: Eine redaktionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung des Markusevangeliums* (Hamburg: Furche, 1967).
8. Keck, *op. cit.*, pp. 348-58.
9. Philipp Vielhauer, "Erwägungen zur Christologie des Markusevangeliums," *Zeit und Geschichte, Dankesgabe an Rudolf Bultmann* (ed. E. Dinkler; Tübingen: Mohr, 1964) 155-69 = *Aufsätze zum Neuen Testament* (München: Kaiser, 1965) 199-214. Keck, *op. cit.*, p. 352, n. 69.
10. The articles by James M. Robinson and Helmut Koester have been collected together in *Trajectories through Early Christianity* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1971), and a discussion of *theios anēr* conception and aretalogies is found esp. on pp. 46-65, 187-93, 216-19. Morton Smith, "Prolegomena to a Dis-

On the other hand, H. C. Kee has persistently argued that "aretalogies" in the ancient world were collections of a deity's work which were compiled at cultic communities, and that an "aretalogy" does not correspondingly imply a *theios anēr* conception.¹¹

The detailed analyses of Mark which have appeared make Keck's analysis of the first half of the gospel all the more urgent to consider. T. J. Weeden has proposed a forceful interpretation which presupposes that the miracle tradition in Mark contains a *theios anēr* christology.¹² In the formulation of his hypothesis, Weeden asserts that the *pseudochristoi* and the *pseudoprophētai* referred to in Mark 13:22 are opponents of the Marcan evangelist who have come into his community proclaiming Jesus in terms of a *theios anēr*.¹³ Their gospel, which they call *logos*, consists of the amazing feats which Jesus accomplished during his lifetime along with "secret" teaching, *mystērion*, which Jesus gave to a special circle of disciples.¹⁴ The activity of these imposters consists not only of proclaiming these matters but also of performing miraculous feats to attract the community to their type of Christian belief. By drawing special attention to the role in which the evangelist casts the disciples, Weeden argues that the disciples reflect the *theios anēr* conceptions of the opposing group in Mark's community. When Jesus rebukes Peter's messianic confession (8:29-30), he is rejecting the christological view which has arisen naturally out of the thaumaturgic activity in the preceding narrative. To oppose this *theios anēr* position within his community, Mark casts the disciples in the role of misunderstanding and finally even of rejecting Jesus, while, on the other hand, Jesus teaches the proper christology and understanding of discipleship which entails suffering and willingness to die as it is portrayed especially in 8:31-10:45.

Weeden's interpretation raises new questions concerning the materials contained in Mark. On the one hand, one must admit that at least a strand of mighty works of Jesus in the first half of the narrative most likely comes from a Christian community (or communities) which viewed Jesus as a powerful thaumaturge, and the term *theios*

- cussion of Aretalogies, Divine Men, the Gospels and Jesus," JBL 90 (1971) 174-99.
11. Esp. Howard C. Kee, "Aretalogy and the Gospel," JBL 92 (1973) 402-22.
12. Theodore J. Weeden, "The Heresy that Necessitated Mark's Gospel," ZNW 59 (1968) 145-58; *Mark—Traditions in Conflict* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1971).
13. Weeden, "Heresy," pp. 150-65; *Mark*, pp. 73-81.
14. Weeden, *Mark*, pp. 139-58.

anēr functions rather well as a means of referring to the image which those Christians held of Jesus. But two recent articles by P. Achtemeier illustrate the detailed analysis necessary to reach a substantial basis for describing the function of the miracle stories in 4:35-8:26.¹⁵ It is generally recognized that the Marcan narrative interprets the mighty works of Jesus in the direction of his suffering and death and opposes any attempt to understand Jesus without an emphasis upon his willingness to suffer and die. On the other hand, this agreement does not bring clarification to the precise correlation of elements within Marcan christology and discipleship. Weeden's assertion that Mark's warning against false Christs and false prophets in 13:22 refers to people who perform signs, wonders, and miracles is so vigorously argued that his attempt then to state that "Mark was not totally opposed to the presentation of Jesus as a miracle worker"¹⁶ is probably not successful in giving an adequate assessment of Marcan christology.

Dynamis in Marcan Vocabulary

A major clue to Mark's interest in mighty works resides in the vocabulary which emerges around that activity in the gospel narrative. Mark uses *dynamis* in a distinctly positive sense in relation to Jesus and never connects it with *sēmeion* or *teras*, the terms used to describe the activity of the false Christs and false prophets in chapter 13. In Mark the term *dynamis* occurs eleven times; eight of these instances most likely stem from pre-Markan tradition while three are formulations of the evangelist. For our purpose it will be helpful to distinguish two main categories of use for *dynamis*: (a) connected generally with God and his powers in an apocalyptic context; (b) connected with healing by Jesus. Though these two categories merge in the evangelist's conceptions, it is necessary to distinguish them to gain a proper view of the evangelist's redaction.

In five instances the term *dynamis* is connected with God and his powers in an apocalyptic framework for his end-time activities. First, in 14:62 *hē dynamis* is used as a substantive to refer to God—the Power. This is a traditional use of the term as a circumlocution for

God¹⁷ which has come down to Mark through an exegetical tradition.¹⁸ Second, *hai dynamis* is used in 13:25 to refer either to cosmic beings or angels.¹⁹ This use of the term existed in Jewish writings and comes into Mark through his use of a tradition in which this scriptural terminology was embedded.²⁰ Third, in 13:26 power is connected with the activity of the Son of man at the parousia. Mark has received this verse from an apocalyptic tradition which was permeated with scriptural allusions and included the term *dynamis* (likely from Dan. 7:14).²¹ In 12:24 a statement is made concerning the power of God to renew life in resurrection. While it is doubtful that this scene was created by Mark, it may reveal important dimensions of Marcan perspective on the resurrection of Jesus.²² Last of all in this general category, Mark 9:1 contains the use of *dynamis* with reference to the coming of the Kingdom of God. It is likely that this verse is the product of Marcan redaction²³ and represents a bridge between the powerful activity of Jesus and the return of the Son of man "in power and glory."²⁴ These five passages contain the term *dynamis* in a generally apocalyptic context with reference to God and his activity or to God's heavenly representatives. All of these uses stem from Jewish or Christian tradition except for 9:1 which is likely the product of Marcan composition.

The other usage of the word *dynamis* is connected with healing—a linguistic phenomenon which the synoptic gospels share with healing terminology in the Hellenistic world.²⁵ There are three different stages of usage to be detected in Mark. First, the term refers "dynamically"

15. Paul J. Achtemeier, "Toward the Isolation of Pre-Markan Miracle Catenae," *JBL* 89 (1970) 265-91 [hereafter, "Toward the Isolation"]; "The Origin and Function of the Pre-Markan Miracle Catenae," *JBL* 91 (1972) 198-221.
16. Weeden, "Heresy," p. 156; cf. *Mark*, p. 165, n. 5: "... it is certainly accurate to say that these traits have been reduced to a low key, if not neutralized entirely, by the strong emphasis upon Jesus' messianic commitment to suffering servanthood."

17. Norman Perrin, *Rediscovering the Teaching of Jesus* (New York: Harper, 1967), 178.
18. Norman Perrin, "Mark 14:62: End Product of a Christian Peshet Tradition?" *NTS* 12 (1965-66) 150-55; *Rediscovering*, pp. 173-85. Cf. Heinz E. Tödt, *The Son of Man in the Synoptic Tradition* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1965) 36-40.
19. See Vincent Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark* (London: Macmillan, 1963), 518.
20. Walter Grundmann, "Dynamai/Dynamis," *TDNT* II, p. 225.
21. Barnabas Lindars, *New Testament Apologetic* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1961) 49, 124; Tödt, *Son of Man*, pp. 33-36.
22. See e.g., Neill Q. Hamilton, "Resurrection Tradition and the Composition of Mark," *JBL* 84 (1965) 418.
23. Perrin, *Rediscovering*, pp. 18-20; "The Composition of Mark IX.1," *NovT* 11 (1969) 67-70.
24. Cf. Mark 1:15 with 9:1; notice that Perrin *Rediscovering*, p. 19) considers "the use of 'power' and 'glory' in this connection" to be "a feature of Mark."
25. Grundmann, *op. cit.*, pp. 289, 301, 303. The term *dynamis* is never used in the Fourth Gospel.

to the powers within a healer which give him the capacity to heal.²⁶ This usage is coherent with manistic conceptions in the Greek world,²⁷ and is represented in Mark 5:30 and 6:14. In 6:14 reference is made to "the powers" at work in Jesus,²⁸ and in 5:30 the *dynamis* is conceived as a substance which can effect a cure by flowing out of Jesus. Both of these instances represent a pre-Marcian usage for the term and indicate the type of understanding which resided in these stories before their incorporation into the gospel narrative.

Outside of these instances, the term *dynamis* refers objectively to a mighty work which has been performed. Within that objective usage, however, there appear to be a Marcian and a pre-Marcian formulation. In 6:2 "many" remark that *dynameis . . . ginōntai (ginomenai)*, "mighty works occur," through his hands. The use of *ginesthai* with *dynamis* in this way is reflected also in Q materials (Matt. 11:20, 21, 23/Luke 10:13). This usage is Semitic in force since *ginesthai* establishes Jesus as the agent of God's action. This is supported by *dia tōn cheirōn autou* which should be interpreted as compliant with the common OT idiom indicating instrumental action.²⁹ Further supportive evidence that this phrasing belies a Semitic formulation may come from the ecbatic use of *hina* in the clause—a usage possibly reflecting Aramaic influence.³⁰ Therefore, the linguistic elements and the conceptions around Jesus as the agent of God's action suggest a pre-Marcian Hellenistic Jewish Christian *Sitz-im-Leben* for these formulations.³¹

26. Cf. Emil Wendling, *Die Entstehung des Marcus-Evangeliums* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1908) 59.

27. Grundmann, *op. cit.*, pp. 300-301 based on F. Preisigke, *Die Gotteskraft der frühchristlichen Zeit* (1926).

28. Unless one follows Gustaf Dalman's suggestion that this passage reflects a mistranslation of an Aramaic original meaning "mighty deeds are done by him," *The Words of Jesus* (Edinburgh: Clark, 1902) 201; also C. C. Torrey, *The Four Gospels* (New York: Harper, 1933) 293, followed by Ernst Lohmeyer, *Das Evangelium des Markus*, Meyer 12 (17th ed.; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1967) 116. It is highly possible that Mark understood it in this way, but likely that it was understood "dynamically" in the pre-Marcian tradition which was probably connected with the healing of the Woman with the Hemorrhage. Thus, the formulation represents the pre-Marcian "dynamic" stage of usage, while the Evangelist's understanding of it would be compatible with his own formulations.

29. Cf. Taylor, *Mark*, p. 299.

30. Matthew Black, *An Aramaic Approach to the Gospels and Acts* (3d ed.; Oxford: Clarendon, 1967) 81.

31. Contrast, e.g., the Marcian formulations in 8:31; 9:9, 31; 10:34 where the Son of man "shall arise" rather than "be raised (by God)."

The last stage of usage for *dynamis* in Mark is its objective usage

with *poiein*. This use of the term was common in Hellenistic culture when referring to healings by physicians, gods, or heroes.³² The first instance in Mark occurs in the concluding verses of the Nazareth pericope in 6:1-6. The force of the usage is most apparent from the immediate pericope and the emphases in the surrounding Marcian narrative.

Recently Mark 6:1-6, the rejection of Jesus in Nazareth, has been examined in detail.³³ The force of the examination has been to suggest the pervasiveness of Marcian redaction within the composition of the entire scene. E. Grässer begins with the assertion that three elements have been combined within the pericope:

- (a) a proverb of popular wisdom, vs. 4a;
- (b) a probably trustworthy historical note in vs. 3a and b; which
- (c) may be connected with a probably historical rejection of Jesus in Nazareth, vs. 5a.³⁴

Throughout his study, then, he reveals the compositional dimensions of vss. 1-2, 3c, 4b, 5b, 6. It is our purpose to give special consideration to the occurrence of *poiein dynamin* in 6:5. The story in its Marcian form moves toward the concluding statement that Jesus could do no *dynamis* there, except that he laid his hands upon a few sick people and healed them.

Of key importance is the form of the proverb in vs. 4 and its relation in the history of tradition to the double saying in P Oxy I.6 and Gos Thom 31. For some time it was suggested that the Marcian form was dependent upon the Papyrus logion, and that the evangelist's modification of the double saying was significant for ascertaining the Marcian force of this passage.³⁵ Recently, however, the Oxyrhynchus saying has been identified as the Greek form of Gos Thom 31.³⁶ The tendency in Thomas to expand a single saying into a two-member

32. Cf. Grundmann, *op. cit.*, p. 289, 301.

33. The most comprehensive study has been, Erich Grässer, "Jesus in Nazareth (Mark VI, 1-6a)," NTS 16 (1969/70) 1-23 [appeared subsequently in German, *Jesus in Nazareth*, BZNW 40 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1972), 1-37.].

34. Grässer, *ibid.*, p. 7.

35. Wendling, *op. cit.*, p. 54; E. Preuschen, "Das Wort zum verachteten Propheten," ZNW 17 (1916) 40-48; followed by R. Bultmann, *History of the Synoptic Tradition* (New York: Harper, 1963) 31.

36. Grässer, *op. cit.*, p. 8; Ernst Haenchen; "Historie und Verkündigung bei Markus und Lukas," *Die Bibel und Wir*, Gesammelte Aufsätze 2 (Tübingen: Mohr, 1968) 160.

saying weighs heavily on the side of possibility that the earliest form of the saying possessed one member.³⁷

E. Grässer, who follows this understanding of the history of the tradition, indicates that redactionally the Marcan saying represents a three-part form:

- (a) *ouk estin prophētēs atimos*
- (b) *ei mē en tēi patriđi autou*
- (c) *kai en tois syggeneusin kai en tēi oikiai autou.*

It is necessary, however, to look more closely at the form of 6:4-5. The peculiar part of the Marcan form of the proverb is the use of the *a*-privative *atimos* followed by *ei mē*. While Matt. 13:57 follows this construction, Luke alters it to *dektos* without *ei mē*, and the traditions in John 4:44; P Oxy I.6; Gos Thom 31 do not use *ei mē*. This means that the *atimos ei mē* is found only in Mark and in one instance in dependence upon Mark. The observation grows in importance when it is discovered that the following verse in Mark is constructed in parallel fashion—negation of the last word in the preceding clause succeeded by *ei mē*. Thus Mark 6:5 receives a three-part form parallel to 6:4:

- (a) *kai ouk edynato ekei poiēsai oudemian dynamin*
- (b) *ei mē oligois arrōstois epithēis tas cheiras etherapeusen*
- (c) *kai ethaumazen dia tēn apistian autōn kai periēgen tas kōmas kyklōi didaskōn.*

This manner of construction in Mark is frequent enough to suggest that the evangelist not only accepts it from tradition but uses it in his own composition. There are sixteen occurrences of *ei mē* in Mark, of which at least eleven seem to play a role in Marcan theology.³⁸ Matthew follows Mark's use seven times: three times it occurs in parallel with Luke in Q material, and four times it occurs in Q material where it appears to have been omitted by Luke. Finally, in the saying in 15:24, "I was not sent except to the lost sheep of the house of Israel," *ei mē* occurs without any parallel. Therefore, *ei mē* occurs in Matthew fifteen times in twenty-four chapters, and Matthew seems to receive most occurrences from Mark and Q. Luke follows Marcan usage only six times, and twice (maybe three times) it occurs in Q material. Six times (maybe seven) *ei mē* occurs in special Lucan material. Luke may therefore have composed inde-

pendently with *ei mē* more than Matthew, yet in his gospel *ei mē* also occurs only fifteen times in twenty-four chapters. This would indicate that Mark has a greater propensity for using *ei mē* as he composes, and the ease with which it can be used to add items to tradition is compatible with Marcan style of composition.

The double occurrence within Mark 9:8, 9 illustrates well the evangelist's use of *ei mē*. Since Wrede, Mark 9:9 has been seen to be a forthright example of Marcan composition in which the three disciples are instructed to recount to no one what they had seen *ei mē hotan ho huios tou anthrōpou ek nekron anastēi*, "except when the Son of man rises up from the dead." Mark 9:8 also ends with an *ei mē* clause, "except Jesus alone with themselves." Though Matthew follows this construction, Luke avoids it by substituting *heurethē Iēsous monos*. At this point we can only query if Mark had a story which ended with the disappearance of Jesus from the disciples and then changed it into a Transfiguration story in the center of Jesus' activity by, among other alterations, adding this *ei mē* clause.³⁹

The importance of *ei mē* clauses within Mark aids in discovering the full import of Marcan composition in 6:4-5. Mark has received a single-membered saying, "a prophet does not have honor in his own country." For Mark "prophet" is related to the healing activity of Jesus for two reasons. First, Jesus' miracles are being misunderstood in relation to the activity and death of the prophet John the Baptist.⁴⁰ Second, the rejection and death of Jesus must be incorporated into Jesus' miracle activity. From this perspective, Mark has inserted the episode of Jesus as the "rejected prophet" in his homeland just after a climactic sequence of mighty works and before the death of John the Baptist. This "rejected prophet" is unable to perform miracles because of the faithlessness of the people. These *ei mē* clauses were introduced to expand both the saying and the inability to heal into statements which include fuller dimensions of Marcan theology. In the proverb Mark changed *timē* to the *a*-privative *atimos* in order that he could introduce the *ei mē* clause with a fuller description of the rejection. In the *ei mē* clause he included not only the traditional *ei tēi patriđi* but also *en tois syggeneusin* and *en tēi oikiai autou*. Through these additions the saying was interconnected with 3:20-21,

37. Haenchen, *ibid.*, p. 160, n. 10; Wolfgang Schrager, *Das Verhältnis des Thomas-Evangeliums zur synoptischen Tradition*, BZNW 29 (Berlin: Töpelmann, 1964) 76; Grässer, *op. cit.*, p. 8.

38. Mark 2:7; 5:37; 6:4, 5; 8:14; 9:8, 9, 29; 11:13; 13:20, 32.

39. For a recent assertion of this view of the Transfiguration story see Weedon, *Mark*, 118-24.

40. Mark 6:14-16; 8:28.

31-35 (*eis oikon; hoi par' autou, hē mētēr autou kai hoi adelphoi autou*).

This analysis suggests that the evangelist is responsible for Mark 6:5. It may well be, as Achtemeier suggests,⁴¹ that Mark had a tradition of a successful appearance of Jesus in Nazareth in which people marvelled at his wonders and words. But Mark also has traditions which indicate a less than happy relationship between Jesus and his family. He set these traditions in a narrative sequence which climaxes in a scene of rejection of Jesus in his homeland. This compositional procedure interweaves the theme of rejection into the narrative section in which miracles are the characteristic of Jesus' activity. In the double saying in P Oxy 1.6 the word used for mighty work is *therapeia*. The noun *therapeia* never occurs in Mark; instead Mark 6:5, which is the product of Marcan composition, uses the term *dynamis* for a healing or mighty work performed by Jesus.⁴²

This dimension of Marcan vocabulary is also present in Mark 9:38-40, the story of the strange exorcist—a pericope important with regard to wording since it reflects a Marcan formulation in which an exorcism is a matter of *poiein dynamin*. T. J. Weeden argues that the crucial dimension of 9:38-41 lies within the insight that the strange exorcist is Christian rather than non-Christian. From this perspective the story reflects antagonism between two Christian groups within Mark's community.⁴³ It is clear from our point of view, that the disciples' complaint derives from the fact that the exorcist does not follow their particular ideology. However, whether or not this exorcist is Christian or non-Christian, the crux of the passage is that Mark presents a lenient response by Jesus toward any exorcist who performs a healing in his name and argues that there can justly be no rejection of such a healer.⁴⁴ The name of Jesus functions powerfully within healing, and anyone who uses Jesus' name in that manner will not speak evilly against him (curse Jesus)⁴⁵ and is therefore to be viewed with favor. The openness of Mark toward healings is verified by the saying in 9:39. This verse is clearly a composition of the evangelist with a *gar* clause,⁴⁶ his *poiein dynamin*, and a future tense which

is to point from Jesus' ministry to the Marcan community.

The problem with Weeden's analysis is that he does not follow out the implications in 9:38-41. He notices that in vs. 41 Jesus' inclusiveness "extends to someone outside the community who performs a merciful act for a Christian."⁴⁷ Then by focusing upon the question of whether these people are members of the Christian community, Weeden fails to complete the analysis. Mark is open toward those who perform healings, and anyone who performs a healing within Christianity is for Jesus, not against him (and for the disciples, not against them). This assertion stands in a direct line with Jesus' performance of healings throughout the first part of the Marcan narrative, and this element is constitutive for Marcan christology.

Sēmeion in Marcan Vocabulary

The importance of these observations emerges when we discover that Jesus regularly performs *dynameis* in Mark, yet in 8:11-13 Jesus claims that there will be no *sēmeion* given to the people. Since Jesus' refusal to give a sign falls directly after three accounts of mighty works (7:24-8:10), the *dynameis* which he performs are not considered to be *sēmeia* by Mark. For Mark, therefore, a *sēmeion* is a phenomenon of a different kind from *dynamis*. To emphasize this Mark presents the Pharisees as explicitly requesting a sign *apo ouranou*, "from heaven."⁴⁸ When Jesus is asked in this manner to give a sign, the request is for a sign from God which authenticates the status of Jesus as the end-time prophet.⁴⁹ The nearest thing to a sign in Mark occurs only before Peter, James, and John—the Transfiguration. Mark does not call this a *sēmeion* but it would come the closest to being such a phenomenon—a wonder performed directly by God.

But our concern is to call attention to Marcan vocabulary in 8:11-13. In the refusal, the verb *didonai* is used in relation with *sēmeion*. In other words, the request is for Jesus to "give" a sign, and Jesus responds to them that no sign shall be "given" to them. Thus the Marcan evangelist distinguishes between giving a sign and performing a mighty work. In contexts where a healing is referred to Mark uses the verb *poiein*; in chapter 8 the verb *didonai* accompanies the discussion about sign.

41. Achtemeier, "Toward the Isolation," 267.

42. *Therapeia* occurs three times in the NT: Luke 9:11; 12:42; Rev. 22:2.

43. Weeden, *Mark*, 63.

44. See Robin Scroggs, "The Exaltation of the Spirit by Some Early Christians," JBL 84 (1965) 363-64.

45. *Ibid.*, 365.

46. For the suggestion that *gar* clauses play a role in Marcan theology, see C. H. Bird, "Some *gar* Clauses in St. Mark's Gospel," JTS 4 (1953) 171-87.

47. Weeden, *Mark*, 63, n. 17.

48. See Richard A. Edwards, *The Sign of Jonah*, SBT 18 (London: SCM, 1971) 75-80.

49. See Karl Kertelge, *Die Wunder Jesu im Markusevangelium*, SANT 23 (München: Kösel, 1970) 23-27.

This observation is crucial for analysis of Mark 13 and the warnings attributed to Jesus in that context. The only other Marcan occurrences of the term *sēmeion* stand in 13:4, 22. In 13:4 the inner group of disciples asks what the *sēmeion* (notice the singular) will be when the consummation of all things takes place. Mark juxtaposes a warning by Jesus that some will come saying *egō eimi* to lead people astray. As R. Pesch has argued, the people referred to here are most likely people who claim to be the "returned Son of man."⁵⁰ They point to the Jewish wars, and probably the recent destruction of the Temple, as the sign of the end-time. In 13:22 false christs and false prophets are associated with *sēmeia kai terata*. These apocalyptists, by claiming that the events of the Jewish wars and the destruction of the Temple are the *sēmeia kai terata* of the end, lead the elect members of the community astray. Mark breaks up this apocalyptic interpretation by indicating that wars and earthquakes are only the beginning of the "birth pangs" because the end is not yet (13:7-8).⁵¹ Therefore, the *sēmeia kai terata* will be fully cosmic in dimension when the end truly comes (13:24-27).

Of special interest is the meaning of *sēmeia kai terata* in 13:22. Weeden has asserted that the false christs and false prophets depicted in this verse are imposters in Mark's community who consider themselves to possess the power of the Resurrected Lord.⁵² This, for Weeden, stems from their conception of Jesus as *theios anēr* during his ministry. Because of this conception of Jesus, they perform mighty healings and wonders to prove their powers and lead members of the community away from the task of winning the Gentiles (13:10), an activity which brings persecution upon them.⁵³ One must notice that Mark's discussion of "signs and wonders" given by messianic pretenders resides directly within an apocalyptic context and that within that context he speaks only of *sēmeia kai terata* and not of *dynameis*. Such a linguistic phenomenon opens the possibility that Mark's polemic is more directly concerned with an eschatological challenge than Weeden has suggested. In this regard it is relevant that the preferred

textual reading for Mark 13:22 is probably *dōsousin sēmeia kai terata* rather than *poiēsousin sēmeia kai terata*.⁵⁴

It is essential to correlate Mark 9:38-41 with these statements in chapter 13 when seeking the nuances of Marcan christology and theology. Weeden does not pursue this in the context of his discussion of chapter 13.⁵⁵ Instead, his concern lies with *epi tōi onomati mou* as a phrase which indicates that the imposters are confessing Christians. This interest leads him away from the insight that Mark distinguishes between those who perform healings (*poiein dynameis*) and those who give signs and wonders (*didonai sēmeia kai terata*). Since Weeden does not return to a discussion of 9:38-41, he presupposes that the signs and wonders referred to in chapter 13 include *dynameis*—something which Mark is careful not to suggest.

Weeden has properly suggested that Mark is struggling to overcome Christian leaders who are preaching a gospel which directs the Christians in his community away from the activities which he would consider central. The leaders whom Mark is opposing are suggesting that the days of difficult struggle are over, the end is upon them, and the concern with winning the Gentile community is past. It is inaccurate for Weeden to claim that the controversy centers on the performance of healings and wonders. It is important in our view that Mark does not refer in 13:22 to false christs and false messiahs who *poiein dynameis*. He does not accuse them on the grounds that they perform healings. They are "giving *sēmeia kai terata*"—an activity which claims the sanction of God by pointing to wars, earthquakes, and strange phenomena in the heavens.

The Marcan Miracle Narratives

The noticeable characteristic of Mark's redaction is that while he rejects *didonai sēmeia kai terata* (8:11, 13; 13:4, 22), he places Jesus' healing stories so that they embrace the first ten chapters of Mark. Jesus heals people almost up to the gates of Jerusalem itself (10:46-52). Also we have noticed that Mark remains open to those who perform healings (9:38-40). But he walks a very tight rope. Over-enthusiastic apocalyptists extend powerful activity into cosmic assertions. This occurred in the Marcan community in connection with the Jewish wars,

50. Rudolf Pesch, *Naherwartungen: Tradition and Redaktion in Mk 13*, KBANT (Düsseldorf: Patmos, 1968) 111; Pesch's work has been extended in Werner Kelber, *Kingdom and Parousia in the Gospel of Mark* (University of Chicago Dissertation, 1970).

51. Hans Conzelmann, "Geschichte und Eschaton nach Mk 13," ZNW 50 (1959) 210-21.

52. Weeden, *Mark*, 72-76.

53. *Ibid.*, 82-84, 93-97.

54. C. H. Turner, "Western Readings in the Second Half of St. Mark's Gospel," JTS 29 (1928) 9-10; Taylor, *Mark*, 516; Bruce M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament* (New York: United Bible Societies, 1971) 112.

55. Weeden, *Mark*, 70-100.

and these apocalyptists have pointed to these events as "signs" of the end, and some have even claimed to be the returned Son of man. In the face of this, Mark has composed a gospel which thoroughly grounds the activity of his community in healing, forgiving, and winning the nations to belief. At the same time he forcefully counters the over-enthusiastic apocalyptists who have attempted to disrupt his community and its activities amongst the Gentiles.

How did Mark achieve this? He had a series of healing stories in which Jesus is depicted as "the strong man." L. E. Keck has pointed to this strand of materials in Mark.⁵⁶ Primarily it is found within the materials in 1:21-3:6 and includes the Beelzebul discussion in 3:22-29. From this section and its polemic with Jewish leaders, it is obvious that Mark asserts that in the process of healing forgiveness takes place, and that the disciples in the Marcan community have the right to heal and forgive on the Sabbath day. Jesus' authority validates the calling, healing, and forgiving activity in Mark's community. Yet for Mark that collection of healing stories does not contain a christological conception strong enough to undergird the assertion that Jesus rose up from the dead. Therefore, to this collection of miracle stories he added episodes which possess a view of Jesus much more compatible with Mark's conception of the power which Jesus had to perform mighty works.⁵⁷

As he strengthened this conception of power within Jesus, however, Mark redacted and arranged his materials to leave no doubt that the performance of healings is dependent upon faith in God, and that rejection and death are part of the dynamic of that activity. This is achieved, first of all, by 6:1-6 where, after his mightiest works—stilling the storm, casting out a legion of demons, healing a woman by power which flowed out through *her* touch, and raising a young girl from the dead—he is *unable* to perform a mighty work where people disbelieve. Again, after the Transfiguration, when one would imagine that anyone who receives the blessing of Jesus could heal, the epileptic boy story emphasizes the necessity of faith and prayer for a significant healing (*dynamis*) to take place. The healing of blind Bartimaeus is directly dependent upon his faith (10:52), and after the fig tree has withered, Jesus tells his disciples that "if they have faith in God that what they say will happen, then it will be so for them" (11:22-23).

56. Keck, "Mark 3:7-12," 344-50.

57. The major parts of this strand are found in 3:19; 4:35-5:43; 6:31-56; see *ibid.*, 349.

Mark has not rejected healings and mighty works, but he has made them directly dependent upon faith. Likewise, his own depiction of the authority and power of Jesus' activity makes belief in Jesus' resurrection conceivable. The Sadducees, of course, could never see the *dynamis* of God in the resurrection (12:24), but others should be able to see it. Yet Mark's depiction of the resurrection does not allow the apocalyptic expectation which was crucial for his conception of Jesus to be used to lead the people in the community away from the activities which often led them before Jewish and Gentile courts.

Our investigation therefore suggests that the linguistic usage in Marcan redaction and the force of overall composition and structure indicate that the Marcan evangelist distinguishes between *didonai semeion*, "giving a sign," and *poiein dynamin*, "performing an exorcism or healing." This indicates that the christological problem which the evangelist faced was based fundamentally upon an eschatological viewpoint rather than a direct problem with performance of exorcisms and healings. The errant Christian viewpoint within the Marcan context is not so much connected with divine-man emphases as misconstrued eschatology. The evangelist incorporates divine-man dimensions decisively and climactically within his narrative. This dimension especially undergirds the theme that the Son of man will rise up after three days. The overall structure and content of the gospel suggest that eschatology is somehow misunderstood in relation to the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple and the relationship of Jesus' activity to that of John the Baptist. Only an analysis of the overall structure, content, and final form of the narrative can lead to the precise dimensions of the problem which the evangelist faced and reoriented as he composed the gospel of Mark.

Recent study of the Fourth Gospel supports the view that the connection of the term *semeion* with healings or other mighty works performed by Jesus came about in a specific context related to the collection of miracle stories which underlies that gospel. In that context Christians had collected miracle stories for the express purpose of winning Jewish converts to Christianity.⁵⁸ Their viewpoint may be related to the Pauline statement in 1 Corinthians that the Jews seek a

58. W. Nicol, *The Semeia in the Fourth Gospel*, SNVT 32 (Leiden: Brill, 1972) esp. 77-79; R. T. Fortna, *The Gospel of Signs*, SNTS 11 (Cambridge: University Press, 1970) 225, 228-34; W. C. van Unnik, "The Purpose of the Fourth Gospel," TU 73 (1959) 395-400; F. L. Cribbs, "A Reassessment of the Date of Origin and the Destination of the Gospel of John," JBL 89 (1970) 49-51.

sign, and on this basis they collected stories which they considered to be signs which proved that Jesus was *Christos*. The strands of miracle tradition in Mark and the terminology show independence from that specific context. Thus healing activity in Mark, with *poiein dynamin*, is connected to the terminology of the Hellenistic world. To seek a sign or to give a sign is distinguished by Mark as a particular act or phenomenon of the end-time. Jesus rejects such a sign in Mark 8:11-13, and in Mark 13 false prophets and false messiahs are accused of that activity. This means, therefore, that healing tradition and performance of exorcisms are an integral part of Marcan christology and discipleship. Perhaps the pretensions of the false claimants can be discerned through a correlation of the expectations around the fall of Jerusalem as depicted in chapters 11-13 with misunderstanding that has developed over the role of Jesus and John the Baptist within the Christian tradition.

Balaam: Sinner or Saint?

GEORGE W. COATS

Lexington Theological Seminary

Balaam was a sinner. Biblical tradition leaves no doubt about the severity of his violations (cf. Num. 31:8-16; Deut. 23:5-6; Josh. 13:22; 24:9-10; Judg. 11:25; Micah 6:5; Neh. 13:2; II Peter 2:15; Jude 11; Rev. 2:14). Indeed, two distinct channels of tradition, deriving perhaps from a single original kernel, depict the scarlet character of Balaam's sin. On the one hand, Balaam bears the guilt for seducing Israel into the debacle at Baal Peor (cf. Num. 31:16; Rev. 2:14). The juxtaposition between the Balaam story, Num. 22-24, and the account of Israel's apostasy at Baal Peor in Num. 25 may reflect that wing of the traditions. On the other hand, the tradition describes Balaam as a man who sold his divination skills for profit to Balak the king of Moab (cf. Deut. 23:5-6; Josh. 24:9-10; Neh. 13:2; II Peter 2:15; Jude 11). In this facet of the tradition Balak hires Balaam to curse Israel, and Balaam agrees, even though Yahweh shows that the people carry his blessing. The digression in Num. 22:21-35, a secondary element in the Balaam story itself,¹ may reflect this stage in the development of the tradition.

The negative traditions about Balaam, however, do not readily parallel the story in Num. 22-24. In the story Balaam does not seduce Israel. He does not curse them. He blesses them. The point can, of course, be very easily harmonized with the second pole of the negative tradition. Those texts making some allusion to Balaam's plan to curse Israel explain that Yahweh turned his curse into a blessing. Deut. 23:4-6 and Josh. 24:9-10 make the conflict of goals between Balaam and Yahweh quite explicit. In Deut. 23:5-6: ". . . they hired against you Balaam the son of Beor from Pethor of Mesopotamia to curse you. Nevertheless, the Lord your God was not willing to listen to Balaam, but the Lord your God turned the curse into a blessing for you because the Lord your God loved you." Josh. 24:9-10 follows the same pattern: "Then Balak . . . sent and invited Balaam the son of Beor to curse you. But I was not willing to listen to Ba-

1. Martin Noth, *Numbers, a Commentary*, trans. James D. Martin, (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1968) 171-172, 178.