

THE MESSIANIC SECRET IN MARK'S GOSPEL AS FULFILLMENT OF THE REVELATIONS OF GOD

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen!

At the end of today's conference on the various aspects of the revelation of Jesus Christ in the New Testament, let us turn to an important issue from the Gospel of Mark:

"The Messianic Secret in Mark's Gospel as Fulfillment of the Revelations of God"

This is to address the question, how the person and work of Jesus Christ have been revealed through the incarnation, as presented, documented and interpreted by the Evangelist Mark:¹

1. Introduction

2. The limitation of the knowledge of Jesus Christ through the mystery of the Messiah

2.1 The historical and theological background of the Messianic Secret

2.2 The development of the Messianic Secret in Mark's Gospel

3. The revelation of the knowledge of Jesus Christ through the power of the Messiah

3.1 The testimony of authority in word and deed

3.2 The proclamation of the Son of Man through the resurrection

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1. Introduction

Today's topic has a long tradition in theology, and at the same time is still relevant and current in our understanding of the New Testament even in the second decade of the new millennium. It is about the Gospel of Mark, specifically, about the "messianic secret" in it. This question is under discussion already for 110 years, since W. Wrede published his famous book *The Messianic Secret in the Gospels* in 1901.² Compared to the numerous theological fads in Protestant Christianity during the past 30 years,³ which proved to be rather short-lived, Wrede's biblical-theological basic concern did at least survive the whole past century.⁴ In fact, the question regarding the Messianic Secret is the most frequently discussed Christological problem in the 20th Century, as M. Karrer remarks: "Did the earthly Jesus understand and confess himself to be the Messiah?"⁵

This question in turn must be related to the approach of the Gospel of Mark, as well as the Gospel of John to present Jesus' identity. Why do the Gospels present a *Messias incognitus*, an unrecognized Messiah, and what is his contribution to salvation before his resurrection?⁶ The question for the evangelists is to explain how they can ensure that the earthly Jesus of Nazareth is at the same time the risen Lord.⁷ Because here is the dilemma or paradox that Jesus is indeed presented as Messiah and Lord in word

and deed before the resurrection. But his real identity remains hidden until after the end of his earthly life.⁸ That is, the texts of the Gospels, which were written after the resurrection, speak of a Messiah before the resurrection.⁹ This paradox of continuity and discontinuity between the earthly ministry of Jesus and the faith in the risen Lord just provides the unique characteristic of the Gospels as a literary genre.¹⁰

Wrede saw the solution to this problem of understanding in the connecting element of the Messianic Secret.¹¹ Jesus had hidden his true identity as Messiah and Son of God before the people who encountered him in unbelief. Instead, Jesus revealed his true identity as Messiah to the inner circle of his disciples who recognized him by faith. This personal revelation of his identity the disciples would then have continued to spread after Jesus' death. Accordingly, Gnllka aptly remarks:

“Wrede’s interpretation has often been modified, has also been partially rejected, but has influenced the exegesis of Mark until today in a defining way.”¹²

Likewise O. Merk notices that Wrede had worked on issues which are still unresolved regarding the history of problems and effects of New Testament science.¹³ Not only that, but the question of the messianic secret even presents today’s theology with the challenge to find new answers to the problem of revelation and concealment of Jesus Christ in the Gospels of the New Testament.¹⁴ This is a foundational task of theology for church and mission, because the current Jesus-images and Jesus-perceptions and Jesus-understandings are in great danger.¹⁵ Because due to the Aristotelian distortion of our knowledge grid and the subsequent “logical dualism”¹⁶, parts of Western Christianity have begun to

detach from the Biblical revelation of Jesus Christ.¹⁷ To put it in the words of W. Härle, it’s about “the presupposed understanding of the reality of God and knowledge of the world in the Christian faith”.¹⁸

But immediately the second question follows: Are the current images of Jesus still soteriologically valid at all? That is, in other words: “Is the modern Jesus of the 21. Century still capable of bringing salvation¹⁹ to humans?”²⁰ What are the current images of Jesus which are even still in the judicial succession of Jesus Christ? And what is still - in the words of M. Volf - the “Christian identity and difference”²¹ in our modern society? Where can the legitimation of the person and work of Christ be seen from the promises of the Old Testament and from the fulfillment of the New Testament?

This question is dealt with by K. Berger in his study of the person of Jesus, pointing to the mystery of Jesus’ character:

“I would like to tell modern people what they benefit from Jesus. ... The sense for the hidden secret I have been able to apply well, especially as a later New Testament scholar, in view of the fact that the approach of the Gospel of Mark is the Messianic secret. Its meaning is that only with the resurrection of Jesus, completely at his return, the darkness upon his identity is cleared.”²²

With this Christological perspective, let us now turn to some important aspects of the question of the Messianic Secret.²³

2. The limitation of the knowledge of Jesus Christ through the mystery of the Messiah

Foundational to our approach to the Messianic secret is the realization that

this is done from a literary point of view²⁴ through a “gospel”²⁵, and that from a theological perspective, the concept of the “Kingdom of God” is of central importance in it. This means that Jesus proclaimed the Gospel, which consists in the fact that God’s reign is just around the corner.²⁶ The literary genre of “gospel”, however, is not just any formal text form which the Jewish-Christian missionary John Mark has used.²⁷ As G. Stanton noted he has not simply compiled a collection of texts from different traditions under a certain topic. Instead, he has written a lively report, with several turning points and climaxes, whose themes are almost entirely already introduced in Chapter 1 and later developed further.²⁸

This means that this gospel is probably the first early Christian book which in a certain way coherently presents the life and proclamation of Jesus Christ.²⁹ Thus we have a narration, a narrative text before us, connecting today’s readers through an interpreted documentation with the experiences of the first Christians.³⁰ Thus U. Wilckens aptly notes regarding the author of the Gospel:

“He wrote it not as a collector and >>redactor << but as a theological author of high power and quality. This is reflected in the very headline: >> Beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God << (1.1).”³¹

It is important to see that this gospel is a written report, an action which describes the reality that Jesus did and suffered.³² This report begins with the words: “Beginning of the Gospel.” Jesus has thus realized the beginning of a salvation-historical action in his life. What then is the “end” or the “fulfillment” of the Gospel?

2.1 The historical and theological background of the Messianic Secret

If we look at the literary and thus the theological-biographical development of Mark’s Gospel³³, the Messianic secret unfolds in three directions. Thus J. Gnllka, following W. Wrede, emphasizes the following three elements:

- (1) silence commandments toward the healed, demons and disciples³⁴
- (2) comments on the lack of understanding and unbelief of the disciples
- (3) parabolic teaching for the people³⁵

Here it is already clear that the appearance of Jesus in his words and in his deeds encountered a definite spiritual resistance. For the Evangelist Mark, it is very important to emphasize Jesus’ power over demons and unclean spirits. Therefore, one of the first public acts of Jesus is exorcising a demon and thus performing the first miracle in the Gospel of Mark at all.³⁶ Although Jesus commands the demons to be silent, the demons announce who Jesus is: the Son of God (Mk 1:1,24-25,34; 3:11-12; 5:7). Here we see the structure of correlation, the mutual correspondence of light and darkness, as it becomes visible again and again in the Gospels. Wherever Jesus preaches the coming of the kingdom of God, at the same time the spiritual resistance of the demonic dimension of the kingdom of darkness is stirring. Wherever only a secularized form of culture and religion exists, there the contrast of light and darkness generally occurs less clear in appearance.

This middle area of spiritual indefiniteness is penetrated by the proclamation of Jesus and the call to repentance, when he says: “The kingdom of God is at hand” (Mt 4:17). This proclamation of Jesus meets the spiritual ignorance of the people, preventing the disciples and the people from knowing the heavenly and messianic nature of Jesus. In other

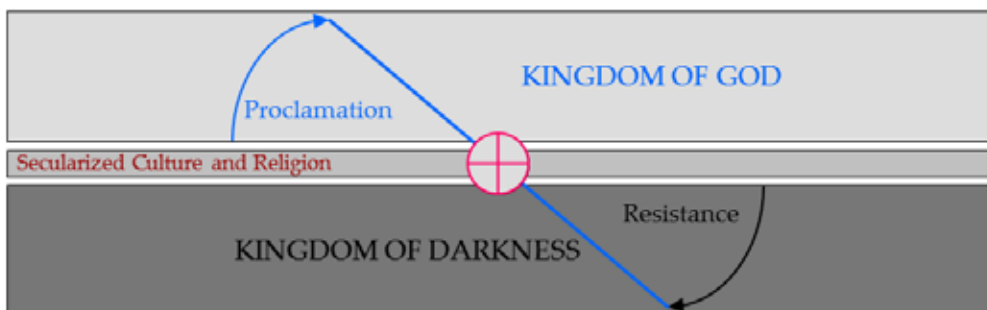
words, the persons in the invisible world understand partially more of who Jesus is than the characters of the visible world.³⁷ Therefore it was important for Jesus to avoid an open proclamation of himself as Son of Man and Messiah, so on the one hand there would be no misconception of his ministry in the visible world. On the other hand it was important that the disciples would be able to recognize his divine origin and nature as the Son of man (cf. Mt 16:13-16: “Son of the living God”).³⁸

If we look at the development of the teaching of Jesus in Mark’s Gospel, we see that Jesus first meets the individual person and presents to him the good news of faith and God’s rule. The reign of God is the coming of the Son of Man in order to establish the will of God on earth, as he is the word of God. The faith is realized through the Messiah, who is risen from the dead and thus actualizing the mes-

sianic salvation history. This realization of the messianic salvation history will no longer be perishable, but eternal – like the bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ, which through the incarnation of the eternal one, the Son of Man, came into our physical world. This kingdom of God is given no other nation or other people, because it will be directly under God, which manifests itself in the person of Jesus Christ (Dan 2:44).

In this phase, people have acknowledged the saving power of Jesus but only in limited ways. They have not yet understood the full salvation-historical significance of Jesus as the “Christ”, the “Messiah”.³⁹ For the full knowledge of Jesus could only take place after the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus.⁴⁰ As Gnllka observes, the revelation comes only at the end with the passion and resurrection to its valid conclusion.⁴¹

Correlation of Light and Darkness



It was therefore a matter that from the beginning of his ministry Jesus wanted to be recognized by the faith⁴² of humans, that is, by a perception that was given by God himself. He did not want to be elevated through the impression of visible healings to become the earthly messianic savior. Accordingly, Gnllka aptly remarks:

“Because the mystery has to do with the revelation that affects the teaching, ministry, suffering, death and resurrection of Jesus, its meaning can be ascertained: the revelation that was in Jesus, is unfinished and ambiguous before the passion and resurrection. ... The Messianic Secret proves to be a literary device that became necessary with the form of the Gospel created by Mark..⁴³”

In this context, the observation of R.T. France is helpful, highlighting the concept of the “secret” (gr. μυστήριον) in the Gospel of Mark in several dimensions.⁴⁴ While the term as such appears only in Mark 4:11,⁴⁵ the concept becomes increasingly clear through the silence commandments etc. in the course of the gospel. France shows how in the time between the Testaments of the Old and New covenants, especially in the Jewish Targums (Aramaic translations of Hebrew texts of the Old Testament or Greek texts of the LXX)⁴⁶ the hopes of a spiritual restoration, and the hopes of a national liberation intermixed among the common people.⁴⁷ Also Daniel 9:26 and the use of “Christ” in the Septuagint (LXX) bring no unambiguous clarity.⁴⁸ Hence the title “the Christ” (gr. ὁ χριστός) was during the lifetime of Jesus theologically very ambivalent, because it was not yet an absolute concept for the coming saviour. Accordingly, M. Bockmuehl aptly remarks:

“The hope for the final redemption of Israel was almost universally present in Judaism, though in many different

forms. It was not connected anytime and anywhere with a single savior figure, called Messiah.⁴⁹”

As I. Wandrey explains, there were very differently accentuated messianic expectations in early Judaism, which were formed from the expectations of the Davidic kingdom of 2 Sam 7:12-19, from the savior figure of Isaiah 9:1-6, 11:1-9, and the eschatological priest figure according to Zech 6:9-15.⁵⁰ Also, in the apocryphal and pseudepigraphic⁵¹ literature and in the Qumran writings⁵² appear a variety of messianic ideas that predominantly arise from certain historical situations.⁵³ Thus Wandrey aptly remarks:

“In this context belong the Psalms of Solomon (Ps 17 and 18; ...), where the hope for a restoration of the political conditions and the restoration of the Davidic kingdom are expressed. In the later apocalyptic writings the Mashiach ben David⁵⁴ is in the foreground.”⁵⁵

Here it is important to notice that the expectation of the Messiah is rooted in the understanding of the Old Testament kingship and in the royal theology of the Davidic dynasty.⁵⁶ Mark’s Gospel thus uses the prophecy of the ideal king of the end times (PsSal 18:5), who as the Messiah is also related to the Son of Man⁵⁷ of Daniel 7:13.⁵⁸ What is new is the Gospel of Mark, is that the Messiah as a military king is surpassed by the Messiah as the revealer, who brings salvation through his incarnation, death and resurrection.⁵⁹ When the Son of Man who is God himself, is killed,⁶⁰ he is treated unjustly, for he was without sin. Now God who is just, would have to punish mankind that has killed this righteous one from God. Jesus foregoes the lawsuit against humanity in his famous phrase, “Father forgive them, for they know not what they do” (Lk 23:34). Thus, the charge of all charges, the highest

charge, is dropped by Jesus and thus his blood which would actually cry to God for vengeance, becomes a blood which pronounces the forgiveness for us. This is the paradigm shift: no longer is the law of retaliation, but the law of grace valid. Only God himself could realize this here on earth, because even the prophets were not able to obtain justification for us humans through their suffering and death. Let us look at these aspects in detail:

2.2 The development of the Messianic Secret in Mark's Gospel

Foundational to our approach is the understanding from literary science that the revelation of God⁶¹ in the form of Holy Scripture is disclosed only to the participants in the community of faith.⁶² The eminent literary scholar of the Hebrew Old Testament, M. Sternberg, coined the term "foolproof composition" for this.⁶³ By this he means that a reader can not read the Bible against its own purpose. For the community of believers unanimously understands the plot line, the world order and the value system.⁶⁴ Any reader who understands that the Bible moves foundationally from truth to whole truth, from expressed truth to unspoken truth, will understand the wealth of knowledge in the Bible.⁶⁵

One aspect of this form of "clarity of Scripture" (M. Luther), however, is the distinction between the people inside and the people outside the community of faith. Therefore Luther distinguishes two clarities of Scripture, on the one hand the external clarity, on the other hand the internal clarity.⁶⁶ Already in 1525 he aptly remarks:

"There are two kinds of clarity in Scripture ...: one external and pertaining to the ministry of the Word, the other located in the understanding of the heart. If you speak of the internal clarity, no man perceives one iota of

what is in the Scriptures unless he has the Spirit of God. All men have a darkened heart, so that even if they can recite everything in Scripture, and know how to quote it, yet they apprehend and truly understand nothing of it. ... For the Spirit is required for the understanding of Scripture, both as a whole and in any part of it. If, on the other hand, you speak of the external clarity, nothing at all is left obscure or ambiguous, but everything there is in the Scriptures has been brought out by the Word into the most definite light, and published to all the world."⁶⁷

Here we see how Luther already saw in a systematic way what Sternberg later argued and confirmed in a literary way.

In Mark's Gospel the two following dimensions of the fulfillment of God's revelations become visible:

- (a) that Jesus' work of redemption on the one hand is mainly addressed to Israel as God's covenant people⁶⁸
- (b) but that the redemption is also addressed to the people of the nations⁶⁹, if they participate through faith in God's kingdom

This dual incarnational structure of the reign of God is reflected in the following three dimensions of exorcisms, parable stories and miracles of healing.⁷⁰

Exorcisms:

The reports of Mark's Gospel present the demons as real spiritual powers, which operate into this world of space and time. Through the logical dualism of the Western theological knowledge grid, however, an impact of forces from the transcendent to the immanent reality is largely ignored.⁷¹ Symptomatic of this interpretation of the demonic is the recent study by L. Wilkens, in which the author sees the demonic as a wrong state of consciousness.

Wilkens remarks on the concept of the demonic:

“The demonic is the distorted awareness of God, not accepting itself, denying itself, perverted into self-hatred. Demonism is sort of a false ontology: One does not want to accept Being, but only effect as Being. The ‘obsessed’ knows that his consciousness of God is wrong.”⁷²

Here, we have a reduction of the demonic reality to the level of the subjective perception of man, i.e. an anthropocentric distortion.⁷³

Accordingly, in contemporary theology much of this dimension is understood as mythological language, which can be explained in the context of the Jewish environment at that time.⁷⁴ It is significant that in the Gospel of Mark Jesus’ first miracle is the liberation of a man with an unclean spirit (Mk 1:24-25).⁷⁵ Thus, the healing power of Jesus over the forces has an important role, which is emphasized by the authoritative commanding word of Jesus toward the unclean spirit. On this, W. Härle aptly remarks:

“Devils and demons act as opposing powers and counter-forces to the self-revelation of God in Jesus Christ. The New Testament emphasizes both their danger and threat, but also - and especially - the superiority of Jesus Christ over these forces of evil.”⁷⁶

Jesus orders the unclean spirit with the command: “Be quiet, and come out of him!” (Mk 1:25). Jesus expresses no opinion in this case, but he speaks a word of power in the authority of the Son of man (cf. Mk 2:5,17,28) in order to prevent an unwanted remark. Likewise, he proceeds in Mk 3:12 and 9:25. Regarding the consistently used term “to threaten” (gr. ἐπιτιμάω), R.T. France aptly remarks that the Old Testament background lies in the Hebrew root ga’ar. This word is used in

the Old Testament for God’s subjecting word that not only represents a verbal protest, but effectively brings under control the enemies of God.⁷⁷ For example, where Yahweh is fighting against the forces of chaos and commands them to stop,⁷⁸ so that the word ga’ar can also be parallel to the wrath of God.⁷⁹ Here, however, not only powers opposed to God are in focus, but also the covenant people of Israel may be the object of God’s rebuke.⁸⁰

Parables:

The parables comprise about one third of the teaching of Jesus in the Gospels, and thus represent a theologically significant literary genre.⁸¹ This is evident from literary studies, for example, as emphasized by F. Kermode, and particularly applied to the parable stories in the Gospel of Mark.⁸² The people within the faith community understand the parables⁸³, the people outside do not understand them.⁸⁴ Thus the faith of the audience is the decisive criterion of understanding who Jesus is. Whoever wants to understand and conceive who Jesus is, will not be able to do it without faith. For him the parables conceal the understanding of God’s kingdom.⁸⁵ Accordingly, the parabolic theory says that the parables are riddle speeches in Mark’s Gospel, as J. Gnifka elaborates.⁸⁶ They are intended to conceal the truth, as a judgement for the stubborn people. Conversely, therefore, the “grace character of revelation and calling”⁸⁷ is highlighted, which enables man to know the mystery of God’s kingdom.

Healing Miracles:

In connection with the Messianic secret it is to be noted regarding the miracles of Jesus that the Synoptic Gospels consistently distinguish between “proofs of power” (gr. δυνάμεις)⁸⁸ and the spectacular-supernatural „signs“ (gr. σημεῖα).⁸⁹ Jesus rejects such signs as an expression

of unbelief (Mk 8:11-12). Rather, Jesus wants to be known by the faith - which God himself provides - in his saving power in spiritual and physical terms.⁹⁰ The key expression of this saving power is the power to forgive sins (Mk 2:1-12). As O. Betz notes, Psalm 103 provides the background for the unified understanding and the inner logic of Mk 2.⁹¹ According to the Old Testament and Semitic background in Ps 103:3, the forgiveness of sins and the merciful healing work of God toward his children belong together, in the sense of a necessary unity.⁹² With reference to Mk 2:11, Betz aptly remarks: "... the objectively proved capacity to heal - in this story it is demonstrated by the carrying home of the stretcher (v. 11), - the invisible power of forgiveness is made obvious."⁹³

This is therefore central to the revelatory quality of the authority of Jesus as Messiah, by which he is also the person of the Son of Man, by implementing the reign of God from the Old Testament⁹⁴ in word and deed now on earth in his person, for he is to be worshiped.⁹⁵ We want to highlight this aspect in more detail below.

3. The revelation of the knowledge of Jesus Christ through the power of the Messiah

The motif of Jesus' authority⁹⁶ is already prevalent in the opening chapters 1-3. Although this authority comes from God, it becomes only visible in the struggle with the opponents of Jesus.⁹⁷ In his fight against the demons and Satan himself, as well as against diseases and Pharisees, Jesus is not concerned with the demonstration of power for its own sake. Rather, the motif of purity is of central importance, as it is clearly visible in the healing of the leper (Mk 1:40-45). On this issue K. Berger aptly remarks:

"With the theme of purity Jesus takes into account a messianic motif from the expectation of Judaism. According to Psalms of Solomon 17 the Messiah will ritually cleanse Israel. Jesus accomplishes this through exorcisms and healings, but then at the temple-cleansing in Jerusalem (Mk 11)."⁹⁸

This purification of God's people through the power of the Messiah is evident in Jesus' authority in word and deed. Thus O. Betz correctly remarks that the earthly Jesus is the Messenger of God, who has the authority to forgive humans their sins, and to certify this word of power by his miracles of healing (Mk 2:5-12).⁹⁹

3.1 The testimony of authority in word and deed

The authority (gr. ἐξουσία) of Jesus is the central motif, which is the basis of the mystery of the kingdom of God. This secret is revealed, however, only to the extended circle of followers, including the 12 disciples, while those who are "outside", are told "everything" in parables (Mk 4:10-11). As M. Hengel points out, in this authority of Jesus is the key to understanding his ministry and his passion (cf. Mk 10:45).¹⁰⁰ However, Hengel underestimates the importance of the resurrection hope and resurrection fact as the final dimension of the revelation of the Messiah, which only completed and thus legitimized the final messianic claim of authority of Jesus on earth.¹⁰¹ The messianic works that are also addressed by the other Synoptics in Mt 11:2-3 and Lk 7:20-23 show already during the earthly life of Jesus, that he had to be the Redeemer announced in the Old Testament. But only in the resurrection the revelation of Jesus as the Messiah is completed, and his power to bring salvation, is finally established. Here the threefold salvation-historical revelation of the word of God shows the authority for salvation.

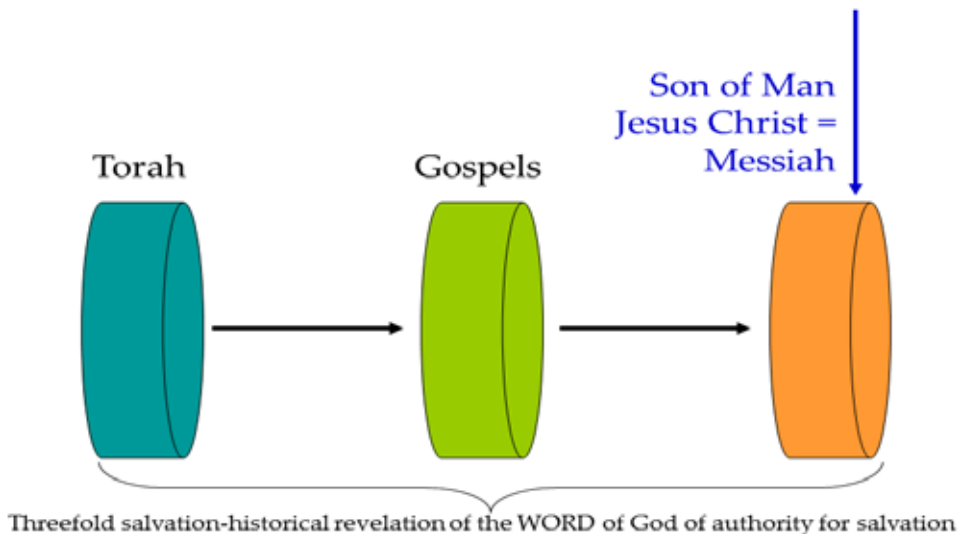
First, God reveals his word in the form of the Torah, as an expression of his covenant relationship with his people in the Old Testament. This form of the Word of God is further revealed and differentiated in the Gospels of the New Testament. The Word of God is disclosed through the coming and acting of Jesus Christ. He is the Son of man, because the Word was with God - according to Dan 7:13,14 - and the word became flesh. Here we see the second form of revelation, namely, the rule of God over the people in the body of the offspring of David according to 2 Sam 7:14. Jesus is the "Immanuel" which means "God with us", who inaugurates the coming of the Kingdom of God. The resurrection of Jesus from the dead is the unexpected and final form of revelation. It is - like God - eternal (cf. Is 9:5 "mighty God, everlasting Father"). Thus the Son of God is the beginning of the Gospel. This form then leads to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. This is the third form of revelation (cf. Rom 5:5,21; 6:4,23; 8:11), namely the ongoing gospel. Jesus is the incarnate Word of God, proclaiming de-

liverance from the power of sin and the way of life in the kingdom of God.

3.2 *The proclamation of the Son of Man through the resurrection*

As G. Beale¹⁰² elaborates, the hope of Old Testament Judaism was that at the end of history, the resurrection of Christ would take place, which brings about the end times.¹⁰³ This perspective of the eschatological resurrecting work of God is indicated, for example, in the apocalyptic¹⁰⁴ prophecy of Daniel in Dan 12:2,4,13, as also in Is 26:19 and Ez 36:26-35; 37:1-14. In this context, Beale aptly emphasizes that the resurrection of the spirit is inextricably linked to the resurrection of the body, so a dualism and thus a separation of spirit and body is excluded in the prophetic perspective of Ezekiel.¹⁰⁵ Also in inter-testamental Judaism there was a strong hope in the resurrection, as in 4 Ezra, 2 Baruch, Jubilees and the Qumran writings.¹⁰⁶ Into this climate of early Jewish perceptions of the resurrection¹⁰⁷ the Gospel of Mark unfolds the messianic

Revelation and Authority



expectation with respect to the person and work of Jesus.

However, the messianic secret is not released before the climax of the self-revelation of Jesus in his passion.¹⁰⁸ Because during the interrogation of Jesus¹⁰⁹ the High Priest asks him if he was the Son of God. Jesus says yes, but he also adds that the Son of Man will return from heaven (Mk 14:62).¹¹⁰ This is the resolution of the messianic secret by Jesus himself, as he also claimed the authority of the kingdom and therefore speaks with the authority of the Son of Man.¹¹¹ Hence the central message, the kerygma of the Gospel of Mark, as P. Wassermann aptly remarks:

“This sentence states ... that the MS and GS are the one and same person in one person, and that ... the GS is not only in the sense of David’s descendants an “earthly” Messiah, but at the same time, a “heavenly”, since he is the MS, who in accordance with Daniel 7 stands in heaven before God.”¹¹²

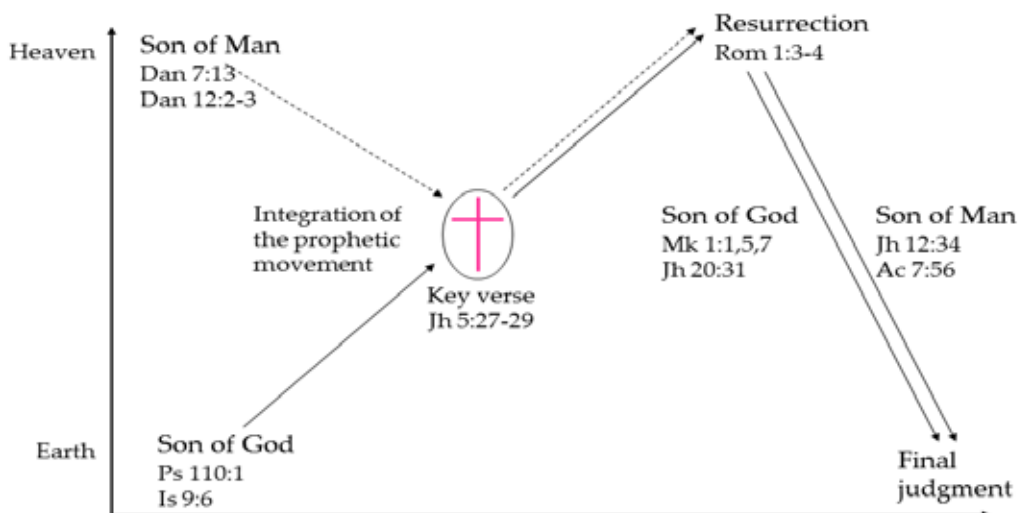
Thus, in the resurrection a reversal of meaning or a synchronization of honorary titles¹¹³ of Jesus is created.

In the cross, resurrection and second coming of Jesus, the Son of Man is united to the Son of God (Mk 16:6). This is the fulfillment of the dual prophecy, which was initially set up by the messianic secret in a progressive way, only to be dissolved and revealed in the passion, resurrection¹¹⁴ and parousia of Jesus. Also in the inter-religious discussion, for example, with Islam, it should be noted that in the Qur’an, the honorary title “Messiah” is applied to Jesus, but not the honorary title “Son of Man”. In the following nine verses of the Quran the Arabic term “the Christ” al-masih (المسيح) is used:¹¹⁵

- (1 time): Sura 4:172
- (4 times): Sura 5:17,72,75; 9:31
- (3 times): Sura 3:45; 4:157,171
- (1 time): Sura 9:30¹¹⁶

The term Son of Man does not appear in the Qur’an. Thus, the honorary title “Son of Man” is a very specific and

Son of Man and Son of God



decisive unique proposition of biblical Christology.¹¹⁷ Therein lies the resolution of the Messianic Secret, because the Judeo-Semitic expectations of the pre-Easter community were exceeded by the apocalyptic, eschatological reign of Jesus at His return¹¹⁸ in power and glory, not in humility and poverty, as in his first coming. Therefore, the report of Mark's gospel is only the beginning the gospel of Jesus Christ (Mk 1:1 Ἀρχὴ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ). However, the completion only takes place in his crucifixion and resurrection, and his return at the end of times (Mk 16:6).¹¹⁹ The resurrection is consistently emphasized by the Gospels as a physical event, and is emphasized by the eyewitness of the disciple Simon Peter who saw Jesus appearing to him as the Lord (Lk 24:34).¹²⁰ From a biblical-Semitic perspective, this also means that Jesus was raised by God himself, so that his identity was confirmed and legitimized during his earthly life. On this point, H.-J. Eckstein aptly remarks:

"In the Old Testament Jewish context, it goes without saying that the >resurrection from the dead< can be effected solely by God, the Creator ...".¹²¹

Through the resurrection of Jesus the messianic secret is resolved and the Lordship of Jesus as the Son of David is fulfilled (cf. Mk 12:35-37; 14:3-9).¹²² Thus Jesus discloses himself from being the suffering Messiah to being the royal Messiah.¹²³ Between the beginning and completion, however, is the gracious condescension of God who came to earth in the Son of Man to reveal himself as the Father in heaven, to whom the Christian may pray.¹²⁴ Because the exalted Son of Man - according to Rom 1:1-4 the Son of God - sends the Spirit of God, by whose vitality also the believing followers will partake of the resurrection (cf. Jh 6:63; 7:39).¹²⁵ The Son of Man - the Word of God - becomes flesh in the body of the

descendant of David, who according to the Davidic promise is the Messiah, the Son of God, and thus obtains the resurrection of the dead. Accordingly, M. Luther aptly remarks in his interpretation of the Lord's Prayer:

"For no one can help us to go to heaven as the Father alone, as it is written in John 3:13, >>No one ascends into heaven, except the only one who came down from heaven, the Son of Man.<< In his shell and on his back we have to ascend."¹²⁶

The resurrection of Christ is thus revealed as a trinitarian event, which begins with Christ himself, continues in his church and will be completed at the end of salvation history with the eschatological new creation (1 Cor 15:45-47; Rom 8:18-23).¹²⁷

4. Results

Four propositions summarize our topic:

- (1) Jesus reveals himself as the risen and exalted Messiah and LORD, who through the ages continues to work powerfully in order to establish the Kingdom rule of God until the end of time
- (2) Faith is both promise and claim, gift and task toward people to recognize and to receive Jesus as the exalted Son of Man, Son of God and Saviour
- (3) Jesus physically continues his work of salvation in word and deed through his followers in the Christian community until the gospel has been preached to all nations
- (4) The completion of the revelation of the Son of Man Jesus takes place in the final Holy Communion with his followers in the eschatological kingdom of God, when God's rule will be fully established

Thank you very much!

ENDNOTES

¹ From the relationship between documentation and interpretation of Jesus' life - especially the words of Jesus - in the Gospels, arises the question of the relationship between direct expression and indirect written form. See McIver, Robert K. *Memory, Jesus and the Synoptic Gospels* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2011); Bock, Darrell L., „The Words of Jesus in the Gospels: Live, Jive, or Memorex?“, in: Wilkins, Michael J.; Moreland, J.P. (ed.). *Jesus under Fire. Modern Scholarship Reinvents the Historical Jesus* (Carlisle: Paternoster, 1996): 73-99.

² Wrede, William. *Das Messiasgeheimnis in den Evangelien. Zugleich ein Beitrag zum Verständnis des Markusevangeliums* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1901); digitally available on the internet archive of the University of Toronto - www.archive.org/details/dasmessiasgeheim00wred

³ See e.g. in the 1980s: (1) The „Lordship Salvation Theology“ by John MacArthur, which claims that a person needs to accept Christ as Lord over his life in order to receive saving faith. See MacArthur, John F. *The Gospel according to Jesus* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1988), pp. 28-29. In contrast, the „Free Grace Position“, advanced the argument that sanctification follows as a consequence after salvation, and therefore could not be a prerequisite for it. See Bock, Darrell L., „Jesus as Lord in Acts and in the Gospel Message“, *Bibliotheca Sacra* 143 (1986): 152. (2) The „Homogenous Unit Principle“ in church growth by Donald McGavran, which states that the growth of Christian churches is more successful if it takes place under the same conditions of language, culture, tribe etc. - See McGavran, Donald A. *Understanding Church Growth* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987). This approach is related to the church growth movement in the USA: See Wagner, C. Peter, et al., „Church Growth State of the Art“,

Liberty University (1986) - http://digitalcommons.liberty.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1018&context=towns_books; Wagner, C. Peter. *Your Church can Grow: Seven Vital Signs of a Healthy Church* (Ventura: Regal, 1984). In the 1990s: (1) The „Spiritual Warfare“, also popularized by C. Peter Wagner: Wagner, C. Peter. *Confronting the Powers: How the New Testament Church Experienced the Power of Strategic-Level Spiritual Warfare* (Ventura: Regal, 1996). (2) The „Willow Creek“- concept of church growth, extensively applied to the German context: Schacke, Rainer. *Learning from Willow Creek? Church Services for Seekers in German Milieu Contexts* (Göttingen: Cuvillier, 2009). In the 2000s: (1) The „Emerging Church“- movement: Kimball, Dan A.; Altson, Renee N.; Beckwith, Ivy. *The Emerging Church. Vintage Christianity for New Generations* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003). (2) The concept of the „missional church“: Hirsch, Alan. *The Forgotten Ways. Reactivating the Missional Church* (Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2006).

⁴ Accordingly, K. Iverson remarks: „William Wrede continues to exert a controlling influence over the question of Markan secrecy. Although contemporary scholarship has effectively minimized the importance of the theme, its prominence and unity are rooted firmly in the text.“ - Iverson, Kelly R.; Skinner, Christopher W. (ed.). *Mark as Story: Retrospect and Prospect* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2011), p. 209.

⁵ Karrer, Martin. *Der Gesalbte. Die Grundlagen des Christustitels. Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments, Bd. 151* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1991), p. 37; on the development of the theological evaluation of the term „Messiah“, cf. pp. 34-47.

⁶ Cf. Lindars, Barnabas. *New Testament Apologetic. The Doctrinal Significance of the Old Testament Quotations* (London: SCM, 1961), p. 139; from a systematic-

apologetic perspective Lindars aptly remarks: "Thus just as a redemptive efficacy was immediately realized in the death of Jesus, so positive value was soon felt to belong to the preparatory work. That was also a messianic act, though not openly declared to be so. This is to see Wrede's theory of the 'messianic secret' as a stage in the Church's apologetic." (p. 139)

⁷ Ashton, John. *Understanding the Fourth Gospel*. Second Edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), p. 334.

⁸ Ashton, *Understanding*, p. 330.

⁹ This relational definition is explained by Luke and Paul in the Son-of-God-Christology from the perspective after the resurrection (Acts 2:36, Rom 1:4) - Ashton, *Understanding*, S. 331.

¹⁰ Ashton, *Understanding*, pp. 332-333, aptly remarks: "A gospel is not a theological treatise, certainly, but it is not a biography either; .. it is sui generis. ... For on the face of it this story is recounting the events of Jesus' earthly life whilst urging on every page that this same Jesus is the object of Christian worship. He is not yet risen: but he is, so the writer implies and expects his readers to believe, our Risen Lord."

¹¹ Ashton, *Understanding*, p. 331, comments on this: „Mark's contribution was to gather together a mass of dissimilar material, some of which may have been put together in sizeable units before him, and to give it some measure of shape and consistency. To establish the continuity between the time of the early Christian community and the life of Jesus that preceded it he had to provide his readers with a guiding-thread. He found what he needed in the secrecy theory."

¹² In German: „Wredes Interpretation ist vielfach modifiziert, teilweise auch abgelehnt worden, hat aber bis heute die Markus-Exegese bestimmend beeinflusst.“ - Gnllka, Joachim. *Das Evangelium nach Markus*. EKK Studienausgabe, 1.

Aufl. (Neukirchen/Mannheim: Neukirchener/Patmos, 2010), p. 167.

¹³ Merk, Otto, „Wrede, Friedrich Georg Eduard William“, *Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, 4. Aufl., Band 8 (Tübingen: Mohr, 2005), Sp. 1713.

¹⁴ See Luz, Ulrich, „Das Geheimnismotiv und die markinische Christologie“, *Das Markusevangelium*, hg. Pesch, Rudolf (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1979), pp. 211-237.

¹⁵ A significant threat to Christian missions is given due to the lack of structural thinking in theology, resulting in missionary proclamation which is made more "reactive" than "revelation based". This means that the questions taken from other religions are used too much to adapt the mode of communication of the Gospel. - Cf. Scott, Robert. *Questions Muslims Ask: What Christians Actually Do (and Don't) Believe* (Downers Grove: IVP, 2012). Cf. Glaser, Ida, „Das Genesis-Buch im Kontext des Islam: Fenster zu den Texten“, *Stuttgarter Theologische Themen*, Band 5 (2010): 7.

¹⁶ See the succinct definition by H.-G. Kippenberg: „Dualismus heißt im Gegensatz zum Monismus die Vorstellung, dass zwei antagonistische Prinzipien dem Dasein zugrunde liegen. Der D[ualismus] hat klassische Ausprägung im Zoroastrismus, in einigen Strömungen des antiken Judentums sowie im Gnostizismus ... erhalten.“ - Kippenberg, Hans G., „Dualismus“, *Evangelisches Kirchenlexikon. Internationale theologische Enzyklopädie*, ed. Fahlbusch, Erwin, et al. Dritte Aufl., Band 1 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1986), p. 948; cf. in biblical-theological perspective the definition of Gloege, G., „Dualismus. II. Theologisch“, *Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, 3. Aufl. (Tübingen: Mohr, 1958), II: 274: „Die biblische Botschaft von Gottes Willenszuwendungen schließt den D[ualismus] in strengem Begriff grundsätzlich aus. Bereits im AT bedeutet Israels Erwählung

... ebenso wie das Zeugnis von der Schöpfung ... seine Überwindung. Der Glaube an den einen Herrn der Geschichte und den einen Schöpfer der Welt schließt ... den D[ualismus] aus.“ – See also Stroumsa, Guy G., „Dualismus. I. Religionswissenschaftlich“, *Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, 4. Aufl., Band 2 (Tübingen: Mohr, 1999), p. 1004.

¹⁷ Cf. Piennisch, Markus, „Der biblisch-semitische Aspekt der Hermeneutik: Eine Einführung in das Studiengebiet“, *Stuttgarter Theologische Themen*, Band 5 (2010): 101-137.

¹⁸ Härle, Wilfried. *Dogmatik* (Berlin/New York: de Gruyter, 1995), p. 195; cf. Härle's extensive presentation of his epistemological approach (pp. 195-232), as well as his subsequent unfolding of salvation (pp. 493-532).

¹⁹ The understanding of salvation is on the one hand determined by Christology, on the other hand by anthropology determined, especially in the understanding of the human soul. Foundational to the Western theological grid of understanding is the philosophical approach of Plato, which continued theologically during the period of scholasticism and solidified the logical dualism of “form” and “matter” as the distinction between “soul” and “body”. – Cf. Dennison, William D., „The Christian Academy: Antithesis, Common Grace, and Plato's View of the Soul“, *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 54 (2011): 116-124; Wassermann, Peter, „Einfluss der Scholastik auf die theologische Entwicklung des Christentums und Islam“, *Stuttgarter Theologische Themen*, Band 4 (2009): 89-95.

²⁰ Regarding the discussion in the horizon of the current intercultural and interreligious dialogue, cf. Piennisch, Markus, „Religionen in der Perspektive christlicher Mission: Historische und theologische Aspekte“, *Missionarisch-hermeneutische Aspekte der Systematischen Theologie* (Berlin: Logos, 2011): 251-279.

²¹ Volf, Miroslav, „Christliche Identität und Differenz. Zur Eigenart der christlichen Präsenz in den modernen Gesellschaften“, *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche* 92 (1995): 357.

²² In German: „Ich möchte modernen Menschen sagen, was sie von Jesus haben. ... Den Sinn für das verborgene Geheimnis habe ich gerade als späterer Neutestamentler oft gut anwenden können, ist doch der Ansatz des Evangeliums nach Markus das Messiasgeheimnis. Dessen Sinn ist, dass erst mit der Auferstehung Jesu, vollends bei seiner Wiederkunft, das Dunkel über seine Identität gelichtet wird.“ – Berger, Klaus. *Jesus* (München: Pattloch, 2004), pp. 13, 18.

²³ For an introduction into the subject, see Bird, M., „'Jesus is the Christ': Messianic Apologetics in the Gospel of Mark“, *The Reformed Theological Review* 64 (2005): 1-14; Beck, Johannes U. *Die Messiasgeheimnis-Theorie als Zugang zum Markusevangelium* (München: Akademische Verlagsgemeinschaft, 2010); Johansson, D., „The Identity of Jesus in the Gospel of Mark: Past and Present Proposals“, *Currents in Biblical Research* 9 (2011): 364-393; Räisänen, Heikki. *The „Messianic Secret“ in Mark's Gospel*. Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1994; Weber, R., „Christologie und 'Messiasgeheimnis': ihr Zusammenhang und Stellenwert in den Darstellungsinentionen des Markus“, *Evangelische Theologie* 43 (1983): 108-125.

²⁴ Cf. Iverson, Kelly R.; Skinner, Christopher W. (ed.). *Mark as Story; on the literary approach in Gospel studies since the 1970s*, see Fritzen, Wolfgang. *Von Gott verlassen? Das Markusevangelium als Kommunikationsangebot für bedrängte Christen* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 2008), p. 53; Lang, Friedrich Gustav, „Kompositionanalyse des Markusevangeliums“, *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche* 74 (1977): 1-24.

²⁵ Regarding the background of the term in the Old Testament and early

Judaism, cf. Stuhlmacher, Peter. „Evangelium. 1. Biblisch“, *Evangelisches Kirchenlexikon. Internationale theologische Enzyklopädie*, ed. Fahlbusch, Erwin, et al. Dritte Aufl., Band 1 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1986), pp. 1217-1218.

²⁶ Lindemann, Andreas, „Herrschaft Gottes/Reich Gottes. IV. Neues Testament und spätantikes Judentum“, *Theologische Realenzyklopädie*, Band 15 (Berlin: deGruyter, 1986), pp. 208-209 (Lit.); cf. Runia, Klaas, „The Kingdom of God in the Bible, in History and Today“, *European Journal of Theology* 1 (1992): 37-48.

²⁷ Cf. the sources from the early church regarding authorship in Stuhlmacher, Peter. *Biblische Theologie des Neuen Testaments*. Band 2 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1999), pp. 131-133.

²⁸ Stanton, Graham. *The Gospels and Jesus*. Second Edition, Oxford Bible Series (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), p. 40.

²⁹ Cf. Rhoads, David; Dewey, Joanna; Michie, Donald. *Mark as Story: An Introduction to the Narrative of a Gospel*. 3rd ed. (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2012).

³⁰ Cf. Piennisch, Markus, „Einführung in den literarischen Ansatz: Der Monotheismus der alttestamentlichen Erzähltexte“, *Stuttgarter Theologische Themen*, Band 6 (2011), p. 26.

³¹ In German: „Er schrieb es nicht als Sammler und >>Redaktor<<, sondern als ein theologischer Autor von hoher Kraft und Qualität. Das zeigt sich gleich in der Überschrift: >>Anfang des Evangeliums Jesu Christi, des Sohnes Gottes<< (1,1).“ - Wilckens, Ulrich. *Theologie des Neuen Testaments*. Band 1: *Geschichte der urchristlichen Theologie*. Teilband 4 (Neukirchen: Neukirchener, 2005), p. 19.

³² Cf. Wilckens, *Theologie*, p. 47: „Die marikanische Christologie hat ganz und gar narrativen Charakter: In der Geschichte Jesu erweist sich, wer er ist.“ Cf. Schreiber,

Johannes, „Die Christologie des Markusevangeliums“, *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche* 58 (1961): 154-183.

³³ Regarding the biographical dimension of the Gospels, see Dihle, Albrecht, „Die Evangelien und die biographische Tradition der Antike“, *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche* 80 (1983): 46.

³⁴ E.g. demons: Mk 1:25,34; 3:12; disciples: Mk 8:30; 9:2-9; healed: Mk 1:43-45; 5:37-43; 7:33-36; 8:23-26; cf. Iverson, *Mark as Story*, p. 182.

³⁵ Gnllka, Markus, S. 167; cf. Schulz, Siegfried, „Markus und das Alte Testament“, *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche* 58 (1961): 186.

³⁶ As G.H. Twelftree explains, Mark uses the term „demon“ 13 times, as well as „unclean spirit“ 11 times, partially synonymous (Mk 3:22,30; 7:25-26); out of the 13 healing stories the exorcisms are the largest group (Mk 1:21-28; 5:1-20; 7:24-30; 9:14-29). - Twelftree, G.H., „Demon, Devil, Satan“, *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels*, ed. Green, Joel B; McKnight, Scot (Leicester: IVP, 1992), pp. 169-170.

³⁷ Twelftree, „Demons“, p. 169.

³⁸ Cf. Cullmann, Oscar. *The Christology of the New Testament* (London: SCM, 1975), p. 125; on the discussion of the messianity of Jesus, cf. pp. 111-136.

³⁹ See Berger, Klaus, „Zum Problem der Messianität Jesu“, *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche* 71 (1974): 1-30.

⁴⁰ See Schweizer, Eduard, „Zur Frage des Messiasgeheimnisses bei Markus“, *ZNW* 56 (1965): 1-8.

⁴¹ Gnllka, Markus, p. 169.

⁴² On the biblical-semitic background of the concept of faith in the New Testament, see Lührmann, Dieter. „Glaube. 2. Neues Testament“, *Evangelisches Kirchenlexikon. Internationale theologische Enzyklopädie*, hg. Fahlbusch, Erwin, et al. Dritte Aufl., Band 2 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1989), p. 190.

⁴³ In German: „Weil das Geheimnis mit der Offenbarung, die das Lehren, Wirken, Leiden, Sterben und Auferstehen Jesu betrifft, zu tun hat, kann als sein Sinn festgestellt werden: die Offenbarung, die in Jesus erfolgte, ist vor der Passion und Auferstehung eine unabgeschlossene und mißverständliche. ... Das Messiasgeheimnis erweist sich als ein literarisches Mittel, das mit der von Markus geschaffenen Form des Evangeliums notwendig wurde.“ - Gnllka, Markus, pp. 169-170.

⁴⁴ France, R.T. *The Gospel of Mark. A Commentary on the Greek Text. The New International Greek Testament Commentary* (Grand Rapids/Carlisle: Eerdmans/Paternoster, 2002), pp. 31-32, draws the following conclusion: „... the pattern is not monochrome. ... any simple theory of a Marcan secrecy motif is likely to be inadequate. Secrecy is not an issue in itself. It is rather a function of the nature of Jesus' message and ministry ...“ (p. 31).

⁴⁵ It is striking to observe that out of 28 occurrences of *musthriōn* in the NT, the term appears in Mark, Matthew and Luke only once each (Mk 4:11; Mt 13:11; Lk 8:10 – cf. *Computer-Konkordanz zum Novum Testamentum Graece*, ed. Institut für neutestamentliche Textforschung (Berlin/New York: deGruyter, 1985), pp. 1280-1281.

⁴⁶ Cf. Veltri, Giuseppe, „Bibelübersetzungen. I. Übersetzungen in antike Sprachen. 4. Übersetzungen ins Aramäische“, *Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, 4. Aufl., Band 1 (Tübingen: Mohr, 1998), p. 1497.

⁴⁷ Cf. France, Mark, p. 331.

⁴⁸ Cf. France, Mark, p. 331.

⁴⁹ In German: „Die Hoffnung auf die endgültige Erlösung Israels war im Judentum fast allgemein gegenwärtig, wenn auch in vielen verschiedenen Ausprägungen. Sie wurde nicht immer und überall mit einer einzigen Erlösergestalt verbunden, die Messias genannt wurde.“ - Bockmuehl, Markus. *Jesus von Nazareth – Messias*

und Herr (Wuppertal: Brockhaus, 1999), p. 70.

⁵⁰ Wandrey, Irina, „Messias/Messianismus. III. Judentum. 1. Antike“, *Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, 4. Aufl., Band 5 (Tübingen: Mohr, 2002), Sp. 1146.

⁵¹ For definitions, see Walter, Nikolaus, „Pseudepigraphen. 1. Altes Testament“, *Evangelisches Kirchenlexikon. Internationale theologische Enzyklopädie*, ed. Fahlbusch, Erwin, et al. Dritte Aufl., Band 3 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1992), p. 1376; cf. Klauck, Hans-Josef et al., „Apokryphen/Pseudepigraphen“, *Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, 4. Aufl., Band 1 (Tübingen: Mohr, 1998), pp. 600-604.

⁵² On the relationship between God's Son and Messiah in the theology of the Qumran community, see Betz, Otto. *Was wissen wir von Jesus? Der Messias im Licht von Qumran. 3.*, erw. Aufl. (Wuppertal: Brockhaus, 1999), p. 142.

⁵³ Wandrey, „Messias/Messianismus“, pp. 1146-1147.

⁵⁴ English: the „Messiah-Son of David“.

⁵⁵ In German: „In diesen Zusammenhang gehören die Psalmen Salomos (Ps 17 und 18; ...), in denen die Hoffnung auf eine Restauration der polit. Verhältnisse und die Wiedererrichtung des davidischen Königtums zum Ausdruck kommt. In den späteren apokalyptischen Schriften steht der M.[ashiach] ben David im Vordergrund.“ - Wandrey, „Messias/Messianismus“, pp. 1147.

⁵⁶ Cf. Bockmuehl, *Jesus von Nazareth*, p. 72.

⁵⁷ On the state of research regarding the Aramaic background (*bar enash*) of the “Son of Man”, cf. Lukaszewski, Albert L., „Issues Concerning the Aramaic Behind ο υιοV tou anqrwpou: A Critical Review of Scholarship”, in: Hurtado, Larry W.; Owen, Paul L. (ed.), ‘Who is this Son of Man?': *The Latest Scholarship on a Puzzling Expression of the Historical Jesus*. Library

of New Testament Studies 390 (London: T&T Clark, 2011), pp. 1-27.

⁵⁸ Cf. Collins, Adela Yarbro, „Markusevangelium. V. Christologie“, Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart, 4. Aufl., Band 5 (Tübingen: Mohr, 2002), p. 845: cf. 1 Hen 46, 1-6 with 48,10 and 52,4; cf. 4 Esr 13, 1-4 with 13, 26-38.

⁵⁹ Regarding the discussion of the “Son of Man” as a title or idiom for Jesus, cf. Burkitt, D. The Son of Man Debate: A History and Evaluation (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); Caragounis, Chrys C. The Son of Man: Vision and Interpretation. WUNT 38 (Tübingen: Mohr, 1986; Kim, Seyoon. The ‘Son of Man’ as the Son of God. WUNT 30 (Tübingen: Mohr, 1983).

⁶⁰ Collins, „Markusevangelium“, Sp. 845.

⁶¹ The revelation of God contains the foundational structural elements of historical facticity and human testimony, as B. Kaiser aptly remarks. – Kaiser, Bernhard. Studien zur Fundamentaltheologie. Band 1: Offenbarung (Nürnberg: Verlag für Theologie und Religionswissenschaft, 2005), p. 195. On the biblical-semitic background of the concept of revelation, cf. Sykes, Stephen W., „Offenbarung, Offenbarungsreligion. 2. Systematisch-theologisch“, Evangelisches Kirchenlexikon. Internationale theologische Enzyklopädie, ed. Fahlbusch, Erwin, et al. Dritte Aufl., Band 3 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1992), p. 811.

⁶² This is particularly important in the context of the fact that the circle of readers and recipients of the Gospels did not just consist of people who believed in Jesus as Messiah, but also of those who were socially close to the early Christian churches. – Cf. Aune, David E. The New Testament in its Literary Environment (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1987), p. 60; Collins, Adela Yarbro, „Mark and His Readers: The Son of God among Jews“, Harvard Theological Review 92 (1999): 393-408; Collins, Adela Yarbro, „Mark

and His Readers: The Son of God among Greeks and Romans“, Harvard Theological Review 93 (2000): 85-100.

⁶³ Sternberg, Meir. The Poetics of Biblical Narrative. Ideological Literature and the Drama of Reading (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985), p. 50.

⁶⁴ Sternberg, Poetics, p. 50. He offers numerous examples of OT narrative texts where the structure of „foolproof composition“ is operative: cf. Sternberg, Meir. Hebrews Between Cultures. Group Portraits and National Literature (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998), p. 694.

⁶⁵ Sternberg, Poetics, p. 52, aptly remarks: „... if the biblical truth is explicit, then the whole truth is implicit; and the more you bring to this art of implication, the more secrets and prizes it yields. No one goes away empty-handed.“

⁶⁶ In his writing Vom unfreien Willen, 1525: Martin Luther, De Servo Arbitrio, 1525, Weimarer Ausgabe 18 : 609, 4-9, 11-14 – www.archive.org/details/werkekritischege18luthuoft

⁶⁷ Luther, Martin. „Vom unfreien Willen (1525)“, in: Aland, Kurt (ed.). Luther Deutsch. Die Werke Martin Luthers in neuer Auswahl für die Gegenwart. Band 3: Der neue Glaube. UTB 1656 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1991), p. 164. English translation by Hayden-Roy, Priscilla A., „Hermeneutica gloriae vs. Hermeneutica crucis: Sebastian Franck and Martin Luther on the Clarity of Scripture“ (1990). German Language and Literature Papers 24, p. 63. – <http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1023&context=modlanggerman>: “There are two kinds of clarity in Scripture ...: one external and pertaining to the ministry of the Word, the other located in the understanding of the heart. If you speak of the internal clarity, no man perceives one iota of what is in the Scriptures unless he has the Spirit of God. All men have a darkened heart, so that even if they can

recite everything in Scripture, and know how to quote it, yet they apprehend and truly understand nothing of it. ... For the Spirit is required for the understanding of Scripture, both as a whole and in any part of it. If, on the other hand, you speak of the external clarity, nothing at all is left obscure or ambiguous, but everything there is in the Scriptures has been brought out by the Word into the most definite light, and published to all the world.”

⁶⁸ For a definition of the term covenant in the New Testament, see – Backhaus, Knut, „Bund. III. Neues Testament“, Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart, 4. Aufl., Band 1 (Tübingen: Mohr, 1998), p. 1865.

⁶⁹ On the various aspects of the concept of the Gentiles in the New Testament, see Berger, Klaus, „Heiden, Heidenchristentum“, Evangelisches Kirchenlexikon. Internationale theologische Enzyklopädie, ed. Fahlbusch, Erwin, et al. Dritte Aufl., Band 2 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1989), p. 408.

⁷⁰ Regarding the connection of God’s kingdom and God’s covenant, cf. - Bockmuehl, Jesus von Nazareth, p. 76.

⁷¹ This is a consequence of the scholastic division of nature and grace, resulting in an Aristotelic concept of science also in theology. Cf. Piennisch, Markus, „Der biblisch-semitische Aspekt der Hermeneutik“, pp. 104-107, 116-117.

⁷² In German: „Dämonie ist das verzerrte, sich selbst nicht annehmende, sich verleugnende, in Selbsthaß verkehrte Bewußtsein von Gott. Dämonie ist sozusagen eine falsche Ontologie: Man will nicht Sein, sondern nur Wirkung als Sein gelten lassen. Der ‚Besessene‘ weiß, daß sein Bewußtsein von Gott falsch ist.“ - Wilkens, Lorenz. „Deine Treue hat dich geheilt“. Studien über die Heilungsmacht Jesu und die apokalyptische Erwartung im Markusevangelium (Frankfurt/M.: Lang, 2011), p. 30.

⁷³ In contrast to this, the „tripolar under-

standing of religions“ by P. Beyerhaus emphasizes the sphere of influence of God, man and the demonic in the creational reality. Cf. Piennisch, Markus, „Apologetik im interreligiösen Kontext“, Missionarisch-hermeneutische Aspekte der Systematischen Theologie (Berlin: Logos, 2011), p. 53; cf. Freytag, Walter. „Das Dämonische in den Religionen. Ein vergessener Faktor in der Diskussion über die Religionen“, in: Reden und Aufsätze, zweiter Teil, ed. Jan Hermelink, Hans Jochen Margull (München: Kaiser, 1961): 13-21.

⁷⁴ E.g. Roehl, Wolfgang G., „Dämonen“, Evangelisches Kirchenlexikon. Internationale theologische Enzyklopädie, ed. Fahlbusch, Erwin, et al. Dritte Aufl., Band 1 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1986), pp. 783-784.

⁷⁵ Cf. Schulz, Siegfried. Das Evangelium nach Johannes. NTD 4 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1972), p. 47.

⁷⁶ In German: „Teufel und Dämonen treten auf als Gegenmächte und Gegenkräfte zu der Selbsterschließung Gottes in Jesus Christus. Dabei betont das Neue Testament sowohl deren Gefährlichkeit und Bedrohlichkeit als auch – und vor allem – die Überlegenheit Jesu Christi gegenüber diesen Mächten des Bösen.“ - Härle, Dogmatik, p. 490.

⁷⁷ France, Mark, p. 104. Against this biblical-theological background the approach of E. Schweizer is not convincing. Although he acknowledges the mystery of Jesus’ authority, he still wants to explain it in psychological terms. – Schweizer, Eduard. Das Evangelium nach Markus. NTD 1 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1967), p. 28.

⁷⁸ E.g. Ps 104:7; Hi 26:11; Nah 1:4; Jes 50:2 ; Mal 3:11; Sach 3 :2 et al.

⁷⁹ E.g. Nah 1:4ff; Hi 26:11.

⁸⁰ E.g. Jes 51:20; 54:9. – cf. Liedke, G., „g’r schelten“, Theologisches Handwörterbuch zum Alten Testament, Band

1, hg. Jenni, Ernst; Westermann, Claus (München/Zürich: Kaiser/Theologischer Verlag, 1984), pp. 430-431.

⁸¹ For a survey chart of the parables in the Gospels, see Snodgrass, K.R., „Parable“, Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels, ed. Green, Joel B; McKnight, Scot (Leicester: IVP, 1992), pp. 594-595.

⁸² Kermode, Frank. *The Genesis of Secrecy. On the Interpretation of Narrative* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1979), p. XI.

⁸³ Cf. Harnisch, Wolfgang. „Gleichnis“, Evangelisches Kirchenlexikon. Internationale theologische Enzyklopädie, hg. Fahlbusch, Erwin, et al. Dritte Aufl., Band 2 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1989), p. 214.

⁸⁴ Cf. Kermode, *Secrecy*, pp. 23-47.

⁸⁵ Regarding the relationship of the parables and the kingdom of God, cf. Massa, Dieter. *Verstehensbedingungen von Gleichnissen. Prozesse und Voraussetzungen der Rezeption aus kognitiver Sicht* (Tübingen: Francke, 2000); Blomberg, Craig L. *Die Gleichnisse Jesu. Ihre Interpretation in Theorie und Praxis* (Wuppertal: Brockhaus, 1998); Rau, Eckhard. *Reden in Vollmacht. Hintergrund, Form und Anliegen der Gleichnisse Jesu* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1998); Baudler, Georg. *Jesus im Spiegel seiner Gleichnisse. Das erzählerische Lebenswerk Jesu – ein Zugang zum Glauben* (Stuttgart: Calwer, 1986); Harnisch, Wolfgang. *Die Gleichniserzählungen Jesu. Eine hermeneutische Einführung*, 4. Aufl. (Stuttgart: UTB, 2001).

⁸⁶ Gnilka, *Das Evangelium nach Markus*, p. 170.

⁸⁷ Gnilka, *Das Evangelium nach Markus*, p. 171.

⁸⁸ The term *δύναμις* occurs 10 times (Mk 5:30; 6:2,5,14; 9:1,39; 12:24; 13:25-26; 14:62), the term *shmeion* occurs 7 times (Mk 8:11,12(2x); 13:4,22; 16:17,20) in the Gospel of Mark. - Computer-Konkordanz

zum *Novum Testamentum Graece*, ed. Institut für neutestamentliche Textforschung (Berlin/New York: deGruyter, 1985), pp. 442, 1694-1695.

⁸⁹ Böcher, Otto, „Wunder. 2. Neues Testament“, *Evangelisches Kirchenlexikon. Internationale theologische Enzyklopädie*, ed. Fahlbusch, Erwin, et al. Dritte Aufl., Band 4 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1996), pp. 1338. It must be noted, however, that the signs (gr. *σημεῖα*) of Jesus in the Gospel of John receive a positive meaning: here they support the divine authentication of Jesus as Messiah and Son of God (Jh 4:48; 20:31). - Böcher, „Wunder“, p. 1338.

⁹⁰ This includes the motif of the rest in God's presence, which Jesus indicates in his redeeming work on the Sabbath. For he healed on the Sabbath out of the necessity to preach salvation as a restoration of communion with God in the creation sabbath; cf. Lincoln, Andrew T., „Sabbath, Rest and Eschatology in the New Testament“, in: Carson, D.A. (ed.). *From Sabbath to Lord's Day. A Biblical, Historical and Theological Investigation* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1982), pp. 197-220; cf. Götz, Friedrich, „Vom biblischen Sinn des Sabbat“, *Theologische Beiträge* 9 (1978): 243-256; Link, Christian. *Schöpfung. Handbuch Systematischer Theologie*, Band 7/2 (Gütersloh: Mohn, 1991), p. 386.

⁹¹ Betz, Otto. *Jesus. Der Messias Israels. Aufsätze zur biblischen Theologie* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1987), p. 199.

⁹² Cf. Weiser, Artur. *Die Psalmen. ATD 14/15*, 4. neubearb. Aufl. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1955), p. 451.

⁹³ In German: „... das objektiv aufgewiesene Vermögen zu heilen -, es wird in dieser Geschichte durch das Heimtragen der Bahre demonstriert (V. 11),- macht die nicht nachweisbare Vollmacht der Sündenvergebung offenbar.“ - Betz, *Jesus*, p. 199.

⁹⁴ See Koch, Klaus, „Reich Gottes. I. Altes Testament“, Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart, 4. Aufl., Band 7 (Tübingen: Mohr, 2004), pp. 202-203.

⁹⁵ Cf. Betz, Jesus, p. 199.

⁹⁶ The term *exousia* in connection with the person of Jesus occurs in Mark 10 times (Mk 1:22,27; 2:10; 3:15; 6:7; 11:28(2x),29,33; 13:34), in Matthew also 10 times, in Luke 16 times and in John 8 times. Therefore this term as used in the Gospels takes the significant share of 43% of the entire NT (102 times). Since Mark provides by far the shortest text of the Gospels, the relative narrative significance of the term is the highest with him. - Computer-Konkordanz zum Novum Testamentum Graece, ed. Institut für neutestamentliche Textforschung (Berlin/New York: deGruyter, 1985), pp. 642-644.

⁹⁷ Cf. Berger, Klaus. Kommentar zum Neuen Testament (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 2011), p. 131.

⁹⁸ In German: „Mit dem Thema Reinheit greift Jesus ein messianisches Motiv aus der Erwartung des Judentums auf. Nach Psalmen Salomonis 17 wird der Messias Israel kultisch reinigen. Jesus vollzieht dieses durch Exorzismen und Heilungen, dann aber bei der Tempel-Reinigung in Jerusalem (Mk 11).“ - Berger, Kommentar, p. 131.

⁹⁹ Betz, Otto, „Kraft/Macht. *exousia*“, Theologisches Begriffslexikon zum Neuen Testament. Band 2. Neubearbeitete Ausgabe, ed. Coenen, Lothar; Haacker, Klaus (Wuppertal: Brockhaus, 2000), p. 1187.

¹⁰⁰ Hengel, Martin. Studies in the Gospel of Mark (London: SCM, 1985), p. 45.

¹⁰¹ Hengel, Studies, pp. 44-45: “We have no indication whatsoever from the history of tradition that the status of Messiah in Judaism was connected in any way with the resurrection of a righteous man or prophet from the dead. Therefore it is hard to derive the messianic status of Jesus simply from the resurrection ap-

pearances. Appearances of the dead in a transfigured form and messianic status are two completely different things. Christology cannot be derived solely from the resurrection event - no matter how it is interpreted. The root must be sought in Jesus' conduct and execution.”

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¹⁰³ Beale, Gregory K. A New Testament Biblical Theology. The Unfolding of the Old Testament in the New (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2011), p. 227.

¹⁰⁴ On the apocalyptic aspect of the Book of Daniel, see Kratz, Reinhard Gregor, „Apokalyptik. II. Altes Testament“, Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart, 4. Aufl., Band 1 (Tübingen: Mohr, 1998), p. 591.

¹⁰⁵ Beale, A New Testament Biblical Theology, pp. 229-230; cf. Wright, N.T. The New Testament and the People of God (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992), p. 332.

¹⁰⁶ See 4 Esra 7:95-96; 2 Baruch 44:12-15; Jubiläen 1:29; 1QS IV:7,23,25; 1QH^a XIX:11-14; cf. Beale, A New Testament Biblical Theology, pp. 232-233.

¹⁰⁷ Cf. Stuhlmacher, Peter. Biblische Theologie des Neuen Testaments. Band 1 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1997), pp. 175-176.

¹⁰⁸ On the relationship between passion and discipleship, cf. Schweizer, „Das Evangelium nach Markus, p. 30.

¹⁰⁹ Regarding the theological background of the passion narratives, see Reinbold, Wolfgang, „Passion / Passionsüberlieferung / Passionsgeschichte“, Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart, 4. Aufl., Band 6 (Tübingen: Mohr, 2003), p. 975.

¹¹⁰ Cf. Wassermann, „Gottes Sohn und Menschen-Sohn, Teil 2“, p. 60.

¹¹¹ On this aspect, D. Bock remarks: „So Jesus' evocation of Son of Man before

the Jewish leadership raises the issue of kingdom authority. Who speaks for God, Jesus or the leadership? The reaction of the Jewish leadership to Jesus in this scene shows that they got Jesus' point. What Jesus saw as vindication pointing to the support of his mission from God, they viewed as blasphemous, giving them a reason to take a political charge to Pilate. ... The central role of Jesus in the kingdom's disclosure and presence stands at the heart of what became the message of the emerging Jesus movement that eventually became the church."

– Bock, Darrell L., "The Use of Daniel 7 in Jesus' Trial, with Implications for His Self-understanding", in: Hurtado, Larry W.; Owen, Paul L. (ed.), 'Who is this Son of Man?': The Latest Scholarship on a Puzzling Expression of the Historical Jesus. Library of New Testament Studies 390 (London: T&T Clark, 2011), p. 99; cf. p. 87.

¹¹² In German: „Dieser Satz ... besagt, dass der MS und der GS die eine und gleiche Person in Personalunion sind, und dass ... der GS nicht nur im Sinne der davidischen Nachkommenschaft ein „irdischer“ Messias ist, sondern zur gleichen Zeit auch ein „himmlischer“, da er der MS ist, der gemäß Daniel 7 im Himmel vor Gott steht.“ - Wassermann, „Gottes Sohn und Menschen-Sohn, Teil 2“, pp. 60-61.

¹¹³ See Tuckett, Christopher, „Hoheitstitel, christologische“, Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart, 4. Aufl., Band 3 (Tübingen: Mohr, 2000), pp. 1832-1833.

¹¹⁴ This dimension of the fulfillment of the Old Testament apocalyptic messianic secret in the resurrection is missing in the interpretation of J. Alsup. He sees the origin of the resurrection traditions in the appearance accounts of the Gospels, as well as in the environment of early Christianity. – Alsup, John, „Auferstehung. 1. In den Schriften des NT“, Evangelisches Kirchenlexikon. Internationale theologische Enzyklopädie, ed. Fahlbusch, Erwin, et al. Dritte Aufl., Band 1. Göttingen:

Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1986, p. 311.

¹¹⁵ The term occurs in four terminological variants:

al-Massih الْمَسِيحُ (1): Surah 4:172

al-Massihu ibnu Mariam الْمَسِيحُ ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ (4): Surah 5:17,72,75; 9:31

al-Massihu Issa ibnu Mariam الْمَسِيحُ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ (3): Surah 3:45; 4:157,171

al-Massihu ibnu al-lahi الْمَسِيحُ ابْنُ اللَّهِ (1): Surah 9:30

¹¹⁶ Cf. Wassermann, Peter, "Christus im Koran in Auseinandersetzung mit den Zeugnissen der Bibel". Vortrag Eusebia Missionsdienste Stuttgart, 2011, p. 3-4.

¹¹⁷ On the interpretation of the title Messiah in 11 occurrences in the Qur'an (Surah 3,45; 4,157.171.172; 5,17(2x).72(2x).75; 9,30.31), see Bauschke, Martin. Jesus – Stein des Anstoßes. Die Christologie des Korans und die deutschsprachige Theologie. Kölner Veröffentlichungen zur Religionsgeschichte, Bd. 29 (Köln/Weimar/Wien: Böhlau, 2000), pp. 107-109.

¹¹⁸ Cf. Braumann, Georg, „Gegenwart/Zukunft. parousia“, Theologisches Begriffslexikon zum Neuen Testament. Band 1. Neubearbeitete Ausgabe, ed. Coenen, Lothar; Haacker, Klaus (Wuppertal: Brockhaus, 1997), p. 692.

¹¹⁹ Cf. Wassermann, „Gottes Sohn und Menschen-Sohn, Teil 2“, pp. 62-63.

¹²⁰ Cf. Eckstein, Hans-Joachim, "Die Wirklichkeit der Auferstehung Jesu", in: Eckstein, Hans-Joachim; Welker, Michael (ed.). Die Wirklichkeit der Auferstehung, 4. Aufl. (Neukirchen: Neukirchener, 2010), pp. 2-3.

¹²¹ In German: „Im alttestamentlich-jüdischen Kontext versteht es sich von selbst, dass die >Auferstehung von den Toten< allein von Gott, dem Schöpfer, bewirkt werden kann ...“ - Eckstein, "Die Wirklichkeit der Auferstehung Jesu", pp. 6-7; zur Literatur zu Lk 24:34, cf. pp. 1-2.

¹²² Thus G. Osborne aptly remarks: „Mark thus proclaims the end of messianic

misunderstanding. Jesus' refusal to accept his role of Messiah ceases with his death and resurrection. Others may have recognized, even anointed Jesus in this role (14:3-9), but Jesus always projected these forward to his coming death when his work would be complete. In Mark the suffering Messiah precedes the Messiah King; Christ alone is the Son of God." - Osborne, Grant R. *The Resurrection Narratives. A Redactional Study* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1984), p. 66.

¹²³ Cf. Osborne, *Resurrection Narratives*, p. 66: „Although the Davidic royal sonship is not a central theme in Mark, it is sufficiently present (10:47f.; 11:10; 12:35f.) to support the belief that the victorious vindication of the Messiah in Mark includes a royal motif. In 12:35-37 Jesus denies that the royal lordship is his primary role; he is first the suffering Messiah. After he has completed his suffering he will become royal Messiah.”

¹²⁴ Regarding the gracious condescension of God the Father in the incarnation of the Son as a communication process toward humans, carried by the spirit of God, cf. Terrien, Samuel. *The Elusive Presence. The Heart of Biblical Theology* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1978), pp. 411-428; Moltmann, Jürgen. *Der Geist des Lebens. Eine ganzheitliche Pneumatologie* (München: Kaiser, 1991), pp. 73-78; Prenter, Regin, „Der Gott, der Liebe ist. Das Verhältnis der Gotteslehre zur Christologie“, in: idem. *Theologie und Gottesdienst. Gesammelte Aufsätze* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1977), pp. 275-291.

¹²⁵ Cf. Grundmann, Walter. *Das Evangelium nach Markus. Theologischer Handkommentar zum Neuen Testament. Band 2* (Berlin: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1989), pp. 288-289; Brown, Raymond E. *The Gospel According to John, I-XII. The Anchor Bible 29* (New York: Doubleday, 1987), p. 300.

¹²⁶ In German: „Denn niemand kann uns

zum Himmel helfen als der Vater allein; wie Joh. 3,13 geschrieben steht: >> Niemand steigt auf in den Himmel, als allein der, der vom Himmel herabgestiegen ist, der Sohn des Menschen<<. In dessen Hülle und auf seinem Rücken müssen wir hinaufsteigen.“ - Luther, Martin. „Deutsche Auslegung des Vaterunsers (1519)“, in: Aland, Kurt (Hg.). *Luther Deutsch. Die Werke Martin Luthers in neuer Auswahl für die Gegenwart. Band 5: Die Schriftauslegung. UTB 1656* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1991), p. 208.

¹²⁷ See J. Moltmann, *Der Geist des Lebens*, p. 79.

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