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THE BAPTISM OF JESUS ACCORDING TO THE GOSPEL OF MARK

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In a mere fifty-three words in Greek, Mark relates the story of Jesus' baptism (Mark 1:9–11). The brevity of the story, however, is disproportionate to its significance for Markan Christology, for beneath this terse account lies a wealth of OT and intertestamental imagery, drawn upon to indicate that in Jesus the inbreaking of the eschatological kingdom has arrived. The baptism functions as the cornerstone of Mark's Christological understanding—a stone that is not undressed, as we shall see.

Mark introduces Jesus abruptly in v. 9. *Kai egeneto*[1] provides a transition into the story; "Nazareth of Galilee" gives Jesus a history and setting; "in those days" anchors the event to the period of John the Baptist's ministry (summarized in vv. 4–8). According to Mark, the first event of Jesus' public ministry was not something he did but something that happened to him—namely, his baptism by John,[2] which prefaced his public ministry.

The significance of the baptism is signaled by the events surrounding it. Mark switches from the aorist tense (v. 9) to a present active participle (*anabainōn*, v. 10) to draw his readers into the impending drama. Coming up from the water Jesus experienced three things that in Jewish tradition signified the inauguration of God's eschatological kingdom: The heavens were opened above him, the Spirit descended on him, and the heavenly voice spoke to him. These three events—rending of heaven, descent of the Spirit, voice of God—indicate the inauguration of God's eschatological kingdom. Their concurrence at the baptism indicates that Jesus is the inaugurator of that kingdom.

Two passages in the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs* witness to the eschatological hope echoed in the baptism. Referring to the messianic priest (18:2), *T. Levi* says:

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[1] In Mark here and at 2:23; 4:4, 39; 9:7(!), 26. The first six words in Greek are Hebraisms; see E. Lohmeyer, *Das Evangelium des Markus* (MeyerK 17; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1951) 20 n. 4.

[2] *Ebaptisthē*, the Greek passive rendering of the Aramaic *ṭĕbal*, means "being immersed" or "immersing oneself"; see J. Jeremias, *New Testament Theology* (New York: Scribner's, 1971) 51. *Eis ton Iordanēn* is the same as *en tō Iordanē* (v. 5 above). Luke 3:21 links Jesus' baptism with "all the people." Mark associates Jesus' baptism with the populace (v. 5) but heightens his profile (vv. 9–11). In distinction from Matthew, for whom John the Baptist plays a significant role (Matt 3:14–15; see A. Schlatter, *Der Evangelist Matthäus* [Stuttgart: Calwer, 1959] 86–91), Mark mentions John only as the mediator of baptism (v. 9).

> The heavens will be opened,
> and from the temple of glory sanctification will come upon him,
> with a fatherly voice, as from Abraham to Isaac.
> And the glory of the Most High shall burst forth upon him.
> And the spirit of understanding and sanctification
> shall rest upon him [in the water].
> For he shall give the majesty of the Lord to those who are his
> sons in truth forever (18:6-8).[3]

A second passage refers to the messianic king and reads:

> And after this there shall arise for you a Star from Jacob in peace: And a man shall arise from my posterity like the Sun of righteousness, walking with the sons of men in gentleness and righteousness, and in him will be found no sin. And the heavens will be opened upon him to pour out the spirit as a blessing of the Holy Father. And he will pour the spirit of grace on you. And you shall be sons in truth, and you will walk in his first and final decrees (*T. Jud.* 24:1-3).[4]

Although the exact provenance of the *Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs* is undecided,[5] of significance for our study is the clear mention of the three eschatological signs: opening of heaven, descent of the spirit, heavenly voice (absent in the *Testament of Judah*). Since the three signs are present in Mark 1:9-11 we cannot fail to see in them interpretive keys to the meaning of Jesus' baptism.

I. THE RENDING OF HEAVEN

Immediately coming out of the water, Jesus "saw the heavens rent" (Mark 1:10). Matthew and Luke cast the phrase into the passive voice, thereby diluting Mark's vigor and lessening Jesus' involvement in the event.[6] In Mark, Jesus sees (*eiden*) the event, but in Matthew and Luke it simply happens above him. Jewish literature is familiar with the opening of heaven as a sign of revelation and/or bestowal of divine blessing.[7] "O that thou wouldst rend the heavens and come down," reads Isa 64:1 (63:19 LXX). The rending of heaven at the baptism thus signifies that a period of grace has begun.

[3] Except for "[in the water]," reasons for a supposed Christian interpolation in the passage are wanting; contra G. Vermes, *Jesus the Jew: A Historian's Reading of the Gospels* (New York: Macmillan, 1973) 263 n. 64.

[4] For both passages see J. Charlesworth, ed., *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1983), 1. 795 and 801 respectively.

[5] H. C. Kee suggests a composition by a hellenized Jew sometime following the publication of the LXX in 250 B.C. (see Charlesworth, *Pseudepigrapha*, 1. 777-778), although he admits the possibility of R. H. Charles' view (*APOT* 282, 314) that the prophetic, priestly and kingly roles in the Testaments may refer to John Hyrcanus (137-107 B.C.).

[6] Matt 3:16, *ēneōchthēsan hoi ouranoi*; Luke 3:21, *aneōchthēnai ton ouranon.*

[7] Ezek 1:1; *2 Apoc. Bar.* 22:1; 3 Macc 6:18; *T. Levi* 2:6; 5:1; 18:6; *T. Jud.* 24:2; NT, John 1:51; Acts 7:56; Rev 4:1; 11:19; 19:11.

Many Jews in the second temple period apparently believed that the Spirit had ceased to speak directly to people until the endtime.[8] The absence of the Spirit quenched prophecy, and God spoke to the faithful only in a distant echo, a *bat-qôl* ("daughter of a voice"). The opening of heaven at the baptism thus inaugurated the long-awaited return of God's Spirit.[9] A period of God's grace had begun. In Jesus, God was present in the world in an unparalleled and consummate manner.

Especially significant is Mark's *schizein*[10] ("to tear, rend"), which Matthew and Luke soften with *anoigein* ("to open"). *Schizein* is the proper rendering of *qāra*^{c} ("to tear") at Isa 64:1, although the LXX (63:19) renders it with the less forcible *anoigein*, which doubtless accounts for Matthew's and Luke's wording at the baptism (see *Herm. Vis.* 1.1.4). *Schizein* is noteworthy for two reasons. First, it is the Greek word that translates the Hebrew of *T. Levi* 18; *T. Jud.* 24, which we cited earlier. Since *schizein* occurs infrequently in the LXX,[11] Mark's use of the word is probably a conscious reference to those two passages. Moreover *schizein* is often associated with cataclysmic events: Moses dividing the waters of the Red Sea (Exod 14:21), Moses cleaving the rock (Isa 48:21), the Mount of Olives being rent asunder on the day of the Lord (Zech 14:4). Mark employs the term with similar impact at the baptism. *Schizein* appears but twice in his gospel, once at the baptism and once at the rending of the temple veil at the crucifixion (Mark 15:38). In both instances Jesus is revealed as the Son of God. The splitting of heaven prefaces God's pronouncement of Jesus' divine Sonship, and the splitting of the temple curtain occurs at the climax of the gospel when the centurion confesses Jesus as the Son of God.

[8] Ps 74:9; *T. Benj.* 9:2; *2 Apoc. Bar.* 85:3; 1 Macc 4:46; 9:27; 14:41; Josephus *Ag. Ap.* 1:41; see Jeremias, *New Testament Theology* 80–81. See also Str-B, 1. 126: "Als die letzten Propheten Haggai, Sacharia, u Maleachi gestorben waren, entschwand der heil. Geist (Geist der Prophetie) aus Israel, so dass sie sich jetzt der Bath-Qol bedienen" (see further Str-B, 1. 127–134; 2. 128–134). Qumran was an exception to this belief, however. F. Greenspahn ("Why Prophecy Ceased," *JBL* 108/1 [1989] 17–35) maintains that this belief is overexaggerated. He argues that the rabbis did not deny the presence of the Holy Spirit in second temple Judaism but only that they were ambivalent toward it, partly to defend their authority from being challenged by Christianity.

[9] A. Feuillet, "Le bapteme de Jesus d'apres l'evangile selon St. Marc (1:9–11)," *CBQ* 21 (1959) 469–470; F. Hahn, *Christologische Hoheitstitel: Ihre Geschichte im frühen Christentum* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1963) 343. Some suggest that the rending of heaven permitted the divine voice to speak rather than the Spirit to descend. But this is doubtful since the *bat-qôl* is heard elsewhere in Jewish tradition apart from the rending of heaven (*2 Apoc. Bar.* 13:1; Mark 9:7; John 12:28; Rev 1:10). G. Richter ("Zu den Tauferzählungen Mk 1,9–11 und Joh 1,43–34," *ZNW* 65 [1974] 48–49) argues that the purpose of the rending was so that Jesus could see heaven. Even the passages Richter cites, however, argue for more than a vision of heaven. Mark 1:10 does stress seeing (*eiden*; *ēkousthē* [O, 28, 565, geo^{1}] suggests a later development of hearing also), but the object of sight was the Spirit as well as the open heaven (i.e. Jesus saw not only heaven opened but also the Spirit descending from it).

[10] On *schizein* see Feuillet, "Le bapteme" 471; I. Buse, "The Markan Account of the Baptism of Jesus and Isaiah 63," *JTS* 7–8 (1956/57) 74; C. Mauer, "*Schizō*," *TDNT*, 7. 962.

[11] OT, eight times: Gen 22:3; Exod 14:21; 1 Sam 6:14; Eccl 10:9; Isa 36:22; 37:1; 48:21; Zech 14:4. NT, nine times: Matt 27:51; Mark 1:10; 15:38; Luke 5:36; 23:45; John 19:24; 21:11; Acts 14:4; 23:7. For references in the apocrypha and pseudepigrapha see C. Mauer, "*Schizō*," *TDNT*, 7. 959–960.

II. THE DESCENT OF THE SPIRIT

At the baptism Jesus saw the Spirit descend "as a dove." For those Jews who believed that the Spirit had withdrawn (and with it prophecy), the return of the long-awaited Spirit was a quintessential event. The baptism does not mean that the Spirit has returned in a general sense but specifically on Jesus (*eis auton*), anointing him uniquely as God's Son. All four evangelists focus the return of the Spirit on Jesus.[12]

Scholars used to assert that the absolute use of "the Spirit," and its equation with a dove, were unknown in Judaism and therefore were of hellenistic origin.[13] They suggested that Mark's *to pneuma* (Mark 1:10; so also John 1:32) has been reworded by Matthew (*pneuma theou*, Matt 3:16) and Luke (*to pneuma to hagion*, Luke 3:22) to suit Jewish sensibilities. Jewish literature, of course, is full of instances where the Spirit of the Lord comes upon people to equip and empower them for a given task.[14] Above all it was believed that in the eschatological age the Messiah would possess the Spirit.[15] For example, "God made him (Messiah) powerful in holy spirit" (*en pneumati hagiǭ*, *Ps. Sol.* 17:37). In the following chapter the Messiah is anointed "in wisdom of spirit" (*en sophia pneumatos*, 18:7). Especially important is Isa 11:1-3, which is echoed in *1 Enoch* 49:3; 62:2:

> There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse,
> and a branch shall grow out of his roots.
> And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him,
> the spirit of wisdom and understanding,
> the spirit of counsel and might,
> the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord.
> And his delight shall be in the fear of the Lord.

[12] Matt 3:16; Mark 1:10; Luke 3:22; John 1:32-33. Richter ("Tauferzählungen" 56) believes that only the descent of the Spirit is the central point of the baptism and the oldest stratum of tradition (i.e. John 1:32-34). But surely one must account for John's polemic against the Baptist and his sect (1:20!) as an influence on his account of the baptism. A confession of divine Sonship is present in John—indeed, stronger than in the synoptics (*ho huios tou theou*, 1:34)—but from the mouth of the Baptist rather than God (but see 12:28). What more effective means could John have employed to convince his readers, Christian and "Baptist," that Jesus—and not John—was Messiah, than to put the supreme Christological pronouncement (*houtos estin ho huios tou theou*) in the mouth of the Baptist himself? The descent of the Spirit and proclamation of Sonship are thoroughly anchored not only in the four gospels but also in *Gos. Eb.* and *Gos. Heb.*, although in the latter the proclamation comes from the Spirit rather than from the Father. See also *Assumption of Isaiah* 6:6, where the "voice of the Spirit" spoke to Isaiah and Hezekiah.

[13] R. Bultmann (*The History of the Synoptic Tradition* [New York/Evanston: Harper, 1963] 249-251) and P. Vielhauer (*Aufsätze zum Neuen Testament* [München: Chr. Kaiser, 1965] 191, 205-206) both quote Dalman's statement in *The Words of Jesus* (Edinburgh: T and T Clark, 1909) 203: "In Jewish literature it is so unheard of to speak of 'the Spirit' (*hārûaḥ*) when the spirit of God is meant, that the single word 'spirit' would much rather be taken to mean a demon or the wind." Schlatter (*Matthäus* 91) calls *to pneuma* Christian rather than Palestinian.

[14] Exod 31:3; 35:31; Num 24:2; Judg 3:10; 6:34; 13:25; 1 Sam 10:6, 10; 19:20, 23; Isa 11:2; 42:1; 61:1; 63:11, 14; Zech 4:6.

[15] E. Schweizer, "*Pneuma*," *TDNT*, 6. 384.

This was a vital text for the rabbis of Jesus' day because they equated the Spirit that moved over the waters at creation with the Spirit that would come upon the Messiah at the endtime.[16]

Mark's baptismal account then clearly agrees with the function of God's Spirit in Jewish thought. Moreover there is an absolute use of the Spirit in *T. Jud.* 24:2: "And the heavens will be opened upon him to pour out the spirit as a blessing of the Holy Father" (see also 1QS 4:6). There is no need to attribute Mark's absolute use of "the Spirit" to hellenistic thought. Rather, it reflects his faithfulness to the imagery and terminology of the eschatological signs of the *Testament of Levi* and the *Testament of Judah.*

Portraying the Holy Spirit as a dove—whether in form, sound, or manner of flight—remains without exact parallel in Jewish thought.[17] In the Bible the dove symbolizes simplicity and innocence (Matt 10:16), reconciliation and peace (Gen 8:8, 12), and the faithful in Israel (Pss 55:6; 68:13; 74:19; Hos 11:11).[18] In Philo the dove symbolizes the wisdom and word of God. Judaism did not normally liken the dove and the Holy Spirit, but there are a few exceptions. In Gen 1:2, for example, the Spirit brooding over the water is seen as a dove (*b. Ḥag.* 15a). The Targum on Canticles reads: "The sound of the turtledove which is heard in the land is like the sound of the Holy Spirit of salvation." Likewise, in *Ber.* 3a the sound of the divine voice, the *bat-qôl*, is likened to the cooing of a turtledove.[19] Mark's statement that "the Spirit descended as (*hōs*) a dove" is obviously a simile; he does not say that the Spirit was a dove. Two of the three passages above liken the Holy Spirit to the sound (cooing) of a dove, but that is scarcely Mark's meaning. "The Spirit . . . descending" (Mark 1:10, *to pneuma . . . katabainon*, accusative) is still the object of "saw" (*eiden*), and this implies form, or perhaps manner of flight. The earliest interpreters regarded it thus. Luke 3:22 expands the simile to "bodily form" (*sōmatikō̄ eidei*). *Gos. Eb.* says that Jesus "saw the Holy Spirit descending in the form (*en eidei*) of a dove."[20] The descent of the Spirit "as a dove," therefore, is best understood as a visible form.[21]

[16] See Lohmeyher, *Markusevangelium* 25-26. That Mark has the Holy Spirit in mind is certain, for "the Spirit" (v. 10) refers back to "Holy Spirit" in v. 8.

[17] Str-B: "Dagegen tritt der Gedanke, dass der Adler oder die T(aube) oder sonst ein Vogel das Symbol des göttlichen Geistes sei, nirgends hervor" (1. 124); "Jedenfalls gibt es in der älteren Literatur keine Stelle, in der die Taube klar u. deutlich ein Symbol des heiligen Geistes wäre" (1. 125). See, however, Richter ("Tauferzählungen" 46 n. 13), who thinks this judgment too categorical.

[18] Rabbinic literature often associated the symbol of the dove with Israel; see Str-B, 1. 123. Note that Hosea 11 is also an important sonship passage in the OT.

[19] See the material gathered in Str-B, 1. 123-125; cf. also Lohmeyer, *Markusevangelium* 22-23; E. Klostermann, *Das Markusevangelium* (4th ed.; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1950) 9.

[20] Quoted in Epiphanius *Pan. Haer.* 30.13.7-8. A quotation from Justin Martyr (*Dial.* 88.3) is identical to Mark's *hōs peristeran*, whereas in 88.8 he adds "in the form of a dove" (*en eidei peristeras*).

[21] So Klostermann, *Markusevangelium* 9; Lohmeyer, *Markusevangelium* 21; Richter, "Tauferzählungen" 45; but Jeremias (*NT Theology* 52) understands it to mean "with a gentle sound."

Mark 1:10, along with the other evangelists (Matt 3:16; Luke 3:22; John 1:32), emphasizes that the object of the Spirit's return is to descend (*katabainein*) on Jesus. Only at the baptism is the Spirit linked with *katabainein*. Its closest OT parallel is Isa 63:19 (LXX): *katebē pneuma para kyriou*. Elsewhere we read of angels, the Son of Man, or the Lord descending, but only at the baptism does the Spirit descend, signifying Jesus' empowerment for ministry and his uniqueness as God's Son. The other evangelists, relying presumably on Isa 42:1 (*edōka to pneuma mou ep' auton*), record that the Spirit came "upon him" (*ep' auton*). But Mark says the Spirit entered "into him" (*eis auton*), intensifying the union of the Spirit and Jesus.[22] Jesus was thus filled with the Spirit and completely equipped for ministry. A later apocryphal account said, "The whole fount of the Holy Spirit descended on him."[23]

The other evangelists stress the objectivity of the signs at the baptism, but Mark, who says that only Jesus saw the first two signs and was alone addressed by the heavenly voice, stresses the meaning of the event for Jesus.[24] Mark of course does not think of the baptism as only a subjective experience of Jesus. The baptism is different from other Biblical call stories or visions.[25] Mark's emphasis on seeing and hearing, and the lack of mention of an inner experience of Jesus,[26] leave no doubt of the objectivity of the story: An eternal power has acted, God has sent his Spirit and has himself spoken; Jesus is now God's Son *incognito*.[27]

As the object of God's favor Jesus is the eschatological consummator, but the descent of the Spirit also links him with God's people. The dove, as we have noted, was often a symbol for the faithful in Israel. Alighting on Jesus, the Spirit designates him as the new Israel, binding him to God's people. Luke especially emphasizes a corporate sense for Jesus' baptism (Luke 3:21). Feuillet, noting the references to the servant who suffers for others in Isaiah 40–55, also recognizes the corporate sense of the baptism: "Jesus' submission to a rite not made for him joins his cause with that of

[22] Hahn, *Hoheitstitel* 301 n. 5: "Das *eis auton* ist ganz konkret zu verstehen und darf nicht abgeschwächt werden." See also Isa 63:11. *Gos. Eb.* intensifies Mark by reading *eiselthousēs eis auton* (Epiphanius *Pan. Haer.* 30.13.7–8).

[23] *Gos. Heb.*: "Descendet super eum fons omnis Spiritus Sancti" (quoted from Jerome *Comm. in Isa 11:2*).

[24] The poorly attested *ēkousthē* (v 11; O, 28, 565, geo[1]) was probably added to correct perceived subjectivist leanings in Mark's account with an audible voice.

[25] E.g. Jeremiah's call (Jer 1:5–19), Peter's vision (Acts 10:10, *egeneto ep' auton ekstasis*), John's vision (Rev 1:10, *egenomēn en pneumati*). For a discussion of the differences see A. Feuillet, "The Baptism of Jesus," *TD* 14 (1966) 210.

[26] Bultmann (*Synoptic Tradition* 247–248) says, "There is not so much as a word about the inner experience of Jesus.... Matthew and Luke are quite right to take Mark's story as the description of an objective happening." Schlatter (*Matthäus* 92) says, "Zur Vision und Mystik ist der Vorgang das volle Gegenteil."

[27] V. Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark* (2d ed.; London: Macmillan; New York: St. Martin's, 1966) 160; E. Schweizer, *The Good News According to Mark* (Richmond: John Knox, 1970) 37–38; Klostermann, *Markusevangelium* 9; R. P. Martin, *Mark: Evangelist and Theologian* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1972) 128. Feuillet ("Baptism" 210) says the baptism is like "the vision at the transfiguration which the Gospels clearly indicate is visible to the three apostles who witness it."

other men."[28] Mark may imply what Paul later taught in Rom 8:29, that Jesus is the "firstborn" among God's eschatological people.[29]

III. THE VOICE FROM HEAVEN

The final eschatological sign and the climax of the baptism is the declaration from heaven: "You are my beloved Son; in you I am well pleased."[30] Mark and Matthew signal this climax by the syntax of v. 11: The voice (*phōnē*) is no longer the object of "saw" (*eiden*), as are the first two signs. It is in the nominative case and the subject of what follows.[31] The rending of heaven and descent of the Spirit were seen by Jesus, but the heavenly voice speaks to him: "You are my beloved Son; in you I am well pleased." Only here and at the transfiguration (excepting John 12:28) do we hear direct divine discourse to Jesus, and in each instance God addresses him as "my Son."

The closest Jewish analogy to the voice from heaven is the *bat-qôl*. Prophecy in the Spirit was regarded as direct discourse between Yahweh and his people, but following the withdrawal of the Spirit God spoke only occasionally through a *bat-qôl*, a distant echo or "daughter of a voice."[32] This phenomenon is absent in the OT, but it occurs occasionally in the intertestamental literature (*2 Apoc. Bar.* 13:1-2) and more frequently in rabbinic literature. The *bat-qôl* varied from exhortation to admonition and often expressed divine pleasure and confirmation.[33]

[28] Feuillet, "Baptism" 208-209. For Feuillet ("Le bapteme," 472-473) the descent of the Spirit was an epoch-making event. In addition to the crossing of the Red Sea (Exod 14:21-29) and the Jordan (Josh 3:16; 4:15-19), he believes the baptism is a third and final sequel to these epochal events, in which God, in the manner of Isaiah 63-64, gives his Spirit to create a new people.

[29] See B. Gerhardsson, "Gottes Sohn als Diener Gottes: Messias, Agape und Himmelsherrschaft nach dem Matthäusevangelium," *ST* 27 (1973) 76.

[30] Schweizer, *Mark* 40: "The focal point of the whole story is the voice of God which designates Jesus as the 'Son.'"

[31] Thus necessitating a full stop between vv. 10 and 11. Luke's account (Luke 3:21-22) differs from Mark and Matthew. "Heaven," "the Holy Spirit" and "voice" are found in parallel form, subjects of the aorist infinitives "to be opened," "to descend" and "to come." Thus Luke does not accentuate the voice as do Matthew and Mark. Other aspects are also unique to his account. Luke omits the name of John and says that Jesus was baptized with "all the people" (soo too *Gos. Eb.*, which combines many details of the first three evangelists). This emphasizes Jesus' identification with humanity. Luke also replaces some of the Hebraisms of Matthew and Mark with classical expressions (e.g. *egeneto*, genitive absolutes, infinitives, and "heaven" in the singular rather than plural). Luke heightens the profile of the Spirit: Not merely "the Spirit" (Mark), nor "the Spirit of God" (Matthew), but "the Holy Spirit" descends bodily (*sōmatikō*) on Jesus. Luke links the baptism to Jesus' Messiahship in a way that Matthew and Mark do not (see A. George, "Jesus Fils de Dieu dans l'Evangile selon Saint Luc," *RB* 72 [1965] 187; Hahn, *Hoheitstitel* 318). Finally, Luke portrays Jesus in prayer when the Spirit descends (see also Luke 6:12; 9:29!; 22:41). The Christian rite of baptism may have exerted some influence on Luke's account at this point; see Jeremias, *New Testament Theology* 51-52; Bultmann, *Synoptic Tradition* 253.

[32] See Str-B, 1. 125-134.

[33] Vermes (*Jesus the Jew* 206-210) attempts to argue on evidence of the *bat-qôl* that Jesus' Sonship was analogous to famous rabbis who were considered sons of God. He says, "It was a firmly held rabbinic conviction that saints and teachers were commended in public by a heavenly Voice. Furthermore, when such a commendation is directly accredited to God, the

It is doubtful, however, whether Mark has a *bat-qôl* in mind at the baptism. He records that "a voice came from heaven," whereas most rabbis regard the *bat-qôl* as an impersonal omen—for example, "a *bat-qôl* went out." Nor do we find the *bat-qôl* accompanied by an epiphany in Judaism as we do at the baptism.[34] Above all, the voice at the baptism is neither an echo of a transcendent utterance nor a return of divine prophecy. It is the voice of the Father speaking personally to Jesus in filial intimacy.[35] No prophet ever heard what Jesus hears. Along with the previous signs, the voice launches the eschatological age with Jesus as its archetype.

The climax of the baptism is contained in the words "You are my Son." Jesus is not called a friend of God as was Abraham (Isa 41:8), nor a servant of God as was Moses (Deut 34:5), nor an apostle of God as was Paul (Titus 1:1), nor one of the prophets. He is called a "Son"—beloved and pleasing to God. We need to consider what this means.

The words from heaven are normally understood to combine Ps 2:7 ("You are my son") and Isa 42:1 ("my beloved in whom I am well pleased"). Psalm 2 speaks of the enthronement of the king, thus revealing that Jesus is the royal Son of God. Isa 42:1 introduces Isaiah's first servant hymn and hence designates Jesus as the servant of Yahweh. Scholars who argue for the priority of Ps 2:7 tend to accept an adoptionist understanding of Jesus' Sonship, whereas those who argue for Isa 42:1 normally envision a functional understanding of servanthood (as opposed to Sonship carrying metaphysical connotations). Both positions have merit, but neither alone nor combined do they do full justice to Mark's understanding of the baptism.

IV. THE SON AS SERVANT

It is often argued that the Greek *pais* (Isa 42:1), which translates the Hebrew *ʿebed*, can mean either "son" or "servant." Dalman notes that in Wis 2:13-18 *pais* (2:13) and *huios* (2:18) occur together and that the background for both is the servant typology of Isaiah 40-55.[36] It is suggested that *huios* ("son") developed from an original *pais* at the baptism either because of a development in Christology or because *pais* needed to be avoided in a hellenistic milieu.[37] It is further argued that "my chosen" (*bĕḥîrî*), rendered by *eklektos* in the LXX, could also be rendered by "beloved" (*agapētos*), as it is in Matt 12:18; Luke 9:35; John 1:34 (textual variant). Finally, it is argued, the phrase "my soul delights" (*rāṣtāh napšî*),

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person in whose favour it is made is alluded to as 'my *son*'." By no means was every *bat-qôl* a commendation; some were reprimands and condemnations (e.g. *Giṭ.* 56b; *B. Meṣ.* 85b). Nor were many rabbis addressed as "my son." The story of Hanina that Vermes quotes (*Ber.* 17b) is the only example in seven pages of quotations in Str-B. At any rate, the evangelists do not envision a *bat-qôl* at the baptism but a direct word from God.

[34] Lohmeyer, *Markusevangelium* 22.

[35] See also Hahn, *Hoheitstitel* 341.

[36] Dalman, *Words of Jesus* 276-280; C. Mauer, "Knecht Gottes und Sohn Gottes im Passionsbericht des Markusevangeliums," *ZTK* 50 (1953) 25 ff.

[37] Jeremias, "*Pais*," *TDNT*, 5. 701.

which in the LXX reads "my soul received him" (*prosedexato auton hē psychē mou*), can equally be translated by "pleased" (*eudokein*), as the baptismal accounts, and particularly Matt 12:18, evince.[38] According to these arguments the dominant idea (and to some extent the wording) behind Mark 1:11 stems from Isa 42:1.

But the case for *pais*-Christology at Mark 1:11 is far from watertight. In itself *pais* means either "son" or "servant" (better, "child"), but at Isa 42:1 it means "servant." According to Zimmerli *ʿebed* occurs 807 times in the MT, but in only one instance (Deut 32:43) is it translated by "son" (*huios*).[39] Thus the servant idea controls the semantic field of *pais*: Where *pais* means both "son" and "servant" as in Wis 2:13-18 it must derive from the Greek text of Isaiah and not from the Hebrew.[40] This makes it much more difficult to argue that *pais* evolved to *huios*. In Matt 12:18, the only NT passage that quotes Isa 42:1, *pais* is not replaced by *huios* even though the text supplies *agapētos* and *eudokein* in conformity with our previous argument. These two alterations likely resulted from the influence of the baptismal narrative.[41] At any rate the author of Matthew did not confuse *pais* and *huios*, nor is there any evidence that the wording of Mark 1:11 ever read *pais* instead of *huios*.[42] Arguments to the contrary are hypothetical.[43] Had *pais*-Christology foreshadowed *huios* at the baptism we would expect more emphasis on *pais* in NT Christology.[44]

V. THE SON AS KING

This web of argumentation does not deny that the servant motif plays a role at the baptism but only that it plays the sole or dominant role. The first part of Mark 1:11 (*sy ei ho huios mou*) is identical (other than word order) with Ps 2:7 (LXX *huios mou ei sy*), and this demonstrates that the enthronement of the Israelite king is a leading referent of Jesus' divine Sonship. In the OT, divine sonship terminology was first applied to Israel (Exod 4:22-23). But in the course of its history Israel failed to live up to the filial relationship and obedience inherent in its sonship. A narrowing process then begins to occur—not of the ideal of sonship but of the parties to whom it is applied. During the monarchy the king becomes the representative of Israel and is called "son of God" at his coronation (Ps 2:7), thereby receiving authority from God to subdue the enemies of his reign. Other psalms

[38] For a thorough review of these matters see I. H. Marshall, "Son of God or Servant of Yahweh?—A Reconsideration of Mark 1.11," *NTS* 15 (1965) 326-332.

[39] W. Zimmerli, "*Pais*," *TDNT*, 5. 673 ff. Marshall ("Son or Servant" 329) argues that this exception vanishes because the LXX followed a different text, since found at Qumran.

[40] Marshall, "Son or Servant" 329 n. 4.

[41] Ibid. 333; Schweizer, "*Huios*," *TDNT*, 8. 367-368.

[42] Marshall, "Son or Servant" 332; Vielhauer, *Aufsätze* 191; M. Hengel, *The Son of God* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1976) 66.

[43] See Bousset, *Kyrios Christos* 97; R. H. Fuller, *The Foundations of New Testament Christology* (New York: Scribner's, 1965) 30.

[44] Schweizer, "*Huios*," *TDNT*, 8. 368. On the use of *pais* in NT Christology see Marshall, "Son or Servant" 330-332.

help define his royal sonship further: He is handsome (Ps 45:2), happy (45:8), blessed (21:6). He receives his life from God (21:4), his throne is eternal (45:6), he rules the nations (2:8; 18:43), he is the high king of the earth (89:29).

In the course of time the monarchy suffered the same fate as the people of Israel had earlier: It failed to live up to the ideal of sonship, and the narrowing process progressed further. Finally, at the baptism the ideal of sonship is identified with one person: Jesus. He is Israel reduced to one. The filial intimacy and obedience of the Son are now centered fully and purposefully on Jesus. Chief among Jesus' attributes as God's Son is his authority to identify his cause with God's, and not only to speak for God but to speak as God. This powerful stewardship of God's might to accomplish God's will not only dominates the meaning of divine sonship in Psalm 2 but also plays a critical role in Mark's portrayal of Jesus. It is this authority that Jesus receives at the proclamation: "You are my beloved Son."

It is of course true that the baptism is concerned with the endowment of the Spirit in the manner of Isa 42:1, "I put my spirit on him" (*edōka to pneuma mou ep' auton*). This theme is also present in Psalm 2 (although to a lesser extent than Isa 42:1), for it designates the king as the Lord's "anointed" (v. 2). Nevertheless the purpose of the baptism is not simply to convey that Jesus was empowered by the Spirit for ministry but to convey who was empowered. The clear echo in the baptism of the three eschatological signs from *T. Levi* and *T. Jud.* designates Jesus as the fulfiller of the eschatological kingdom, thus linking him with royal expectations. The *Gospel of the Ebionites*, interestingly, also recalls royal sonship imagery from the OT: "You are my firstborn son [Ps. 2:7; Exod 4:22; Jer 31:9], who reigns forever" [Ps 89:19].

In connection with this, "beloved" deserves further consideration. Proponents of *pais*-Christology maintain that *agapētos* as well as *eklektos* may translate the original *bāḥar*. Although this occurs when Isa 42:1 is quoted in Matt 12:18, it is the only instance in Scripture where *bāḥar* is rendered by *agapētos*.[45] This probably indicates that Matt 12:18 has been influenced by the baptismal account rather than the reverse. Two further observations weaken the link between "beloved" in the divine proclamation and "my chosen" (*bĕḥîrî*) in Isa 42:1. First, "my chosen" is an independent subject, whereas in the divine proclamation "beloved" is adjectival. *Gos. Eb.* subtly changes the synoptic wording to enforce this point.[46] Second, C. H. Turner's comprehensive study of *agapētos huios* in Greek literature suggests that the proper translation is not "beloved son" but

[45] *Bāḥar* occurs thirteen times in the MT, and in each instance the LXX translates it by *eklektos*.

[46] Note the shift of the *mou* in an otherwise verbatim quotation, bringing "son" and "beloved" into unity: *sy ei ho huios mou ho agapētos* (Mark); *sy mou ei ho huios ho agapētos* (*Gos. Eb.*; similarly Gen 22:2).

"only son."[47] The LXX seems to confirm this by rendering *yāḥîd* (twelve times in MT) with *agapētos* (Gen 22:2, 12, 16; Prov 4:3 [*agapan*]; Jer 6:26; Amos 8:10) as well as with *monogenēs* (Judg 11:34; Pss 22:20; 25:16; 35:17; 68:6 [*monotropos*]).

VI. THE ONLY SON

This leads us to search for a more compelling antecedent of *agapētos* than Isa 42:1. The strongest possibility is surely the Abraham-Isaac typology. The similarities between Genesis 22 and the voice at the baptism surpass, in fact, their near-identical wording (*ho huios sou ton agapēton*, Gen 22:2, 12, 16), for Abraham's love is echoed in the familiar quotation from *T. Levi* 18:6:

> And from the temple of glory shall come upon him sanctification,
> With the Father's voice from Abraham to Isaac.

Abraham's intimate love for Isaac appears to have offered Mark, along with the tradition before him, a clear reference for understanding the heavenly voice at the baptism. The divine proclamation expresses the steadfast love of the Father for the Son as well as their essential unity. Other NT writers (Heb 11:17-19; Rom 4:24; 8:32) and early Church fathers (*Barn.* 7:3 onward) saw the sacrifice of Isaac as a prefiguration of the sacrifice of Jesus, and this is also true of extra-Biblical sources (Josephus, intertestamental literature, targums, Philo, the rabbis). The sacrifice of Isaac was regarded "as the one perfect sacrifice by which the sins of the people of Israel were forgiven."[48] There can be little doubt that Genesis 22, with its twin motifs of filial intimacy and sacrifice, formed a field of signification within which to understand Mark 1:11.

We may summarize the foregoing by saying that the divine proclamation, "You are my Son," is more than a functional designation. It relates not only to Jesus' doing but to his being. It must first be communicated who Jesus is in relationship to God before his suffering servanthood will have any ultimate, salvific meaning.[49] Above all, it is from his oneness with the Father that Jesus derives his radical authority (*exousia*) to forgive

[47] C. H. Turner, "Ho Huios Mou ho Agapētos," *JTS* 27 (1926) 113-129. "From Homer to Athanasius the history of the Greek language bears out, I venture to say, the argument . . . that *agapētos huios* is rightly rendered 'only Son'" (p. 129). In addition to the hellenistic background, Turner investigates its OT antecedents (Gen 22:2; Judg 11:34; Prov 4:3 [*agapan*]; Jer 6:26; Amos 8:10; Zech 12:10; cf. also Tob 3:10) to show that the term is practically synonymous with *monogenēs*, "only." Athanasius (*Oratio IV Contra Arianos*, c. 24), Eusebius (six passages) and Irenaeus (*Adv. Haer.* 4.5.3) also use the terms interchangeably.

[48] See E. Best (*The Temptation and the Passion: The Markan Soteriology* [Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1965] 169-172) for an excellent review of the influence of Genesis 22 on the baptismal accounts. Best is followed by many scholars on this point. See W. R. Stegner, "The Baptism of Jesus: A Story Modeled on the Binding of Isaac," *BR* 1/3, (1985) 36-46.

[49] Klostermann, *Markusevangelium* 9; J. Bieneck, *Sohn Gottes als Christusbezeichnung der Synoptiker* (Zürich: Zwingli, 1951) 60; G. Schrenk, "*Eudokeō*," *TDNT*, 2. 740-741.

sins (Mark 2:5), to accept sinners (2:15), to call tax collectors into discipleship (2:13), to heal the sick (1:40-41) and cast out demons (1:24), to recover the true intent of the Sabbath (2:28), and to challenge the entire oral tradition (7:1-13), the temple (11:12-20) and the Sanhedrin (14:61-62). It was no coincidence that when Jesus was confronted by a delegation of the Sanhedrin asking "In what authority (*exousia*) do you do these things?" he drove his questioners back to his baptism by John (11:27-33). What Jesus does as God's servant ultimately has meaning only because of who he is as God's Son.

It is clear, then, that Psalm 2 and Genesis 22 provide a background for understanding the baptism of Jesus. Let us consider the servant passages of Isaiah again briefly and conclude with a look at Exod 4:22-23. The second half of the divine proclamation, "in you I am well pleased," although not identical to Isa 42:1, surely recalls it.[50] The main problem lies in the transition from *prosdechesthai* ("to receive, welcome") in Isa 42:1 to *eudokein* ("to be pleased with") in Mark 1:11. There are indications, however, that this transition was not uncommon in the tradition. Theodotion, Aquila and Symmachus read *eudokein* instead of *prosdechesthai* (LXX). The targum renders *bāḥar* (to choose) by *ʾitrĕʿi* ("to be well pleased with") at Isa 43:10; 41:8; 44:1-2.[51] The third-person construction of *rāṣtāh* (MT) and *prosedexato* (LXX) does not correspond with the first-person construction of *eudokēsa* in the baptismal record, but that simply may be due to a free rendering of the MT.[52]

Highly significant, however, is the use of *eudokein*. Stronger than all other expressions of God's affection (e.g. *hairetizein, eklegesthai, prosdechesthai, thelein*), *eudokein* accentuates God's favor toward his people (2 Sam 22:20; Pss 43:3; 146:11). Whether *eudokēsa* means that God's favor rests on Jesus beginning at the baptism or sometime prior to it is less certain.[53] At any rate *eudokein* designates Jesus as the object of God's favor and love, irrevocably chosen to fulfill the role of the servant as God's eschatological anointed one.

The second half of Mark 1:11, then, clearly reflects the suffering servant motif of Isaiah. Servanthood is the means by which Jesus is to make his divine Sonship known. Divine sonship is rightly expressed through suffering servanthood.[54]

[50] Isa 42:1 (LXX), *prosedexato auton hē psychē mou*; Mark 1:11, *en soi eudokēsa*.

[51] Dalman, *Words of Jesus* 277. If Matt 12:18 is not influenced by the baptismal account, it too is an example of such a transition.

[52] Marshall, "Son or Servant" 335. Marshall says that *napšî* is a circumlocution for the first person singular, e.g. Job 30:25 (p. 335 n. 2).

[53] Taylor (*St. Mark* 161) and Cranfield (*Saint Mark* 56) call the term a "timeless aorist," indicating God's eternal pleasure in Jesus. J. H. Moulton (*A Grammar of New Testament Greek, 1. Prolegomena* [3d ed.; Edinburgh: T and T Clark, 1908]), on the other hand, renders it "I have just set my favor" on him. Both conclusions, however, rest more on dogmatic than exegetical considerations. The aorist form alone argues for neither position. See Lohmeyer, *Markusevangelium* 24 n. 1; Schrenk, "*Eudokeō*," *TDNT*, 2. 740-741.

[54] Mark 1:11 finds an intriguing parallel in Isa 49:3: *Doulos mou ei sy, Israēl, kai en soi doxasthēsomai*. Israel is God's servant who will be glorified; Jesus is God's Son in whom he is

Thus far our investigation suggests that the kingly office of Psalm 2, the fatherly love and filial obedience of Genesis 22, and the suffering servant of Isaiah 42 and 49 are the motifs against which the divine voice is to be understood. There remains one further consideration, and that is Yahweh's announcement that Israel is his firstborn son (Exod 4:22-23). Paul Bretscher has examined the connection of this text with the baptism.[55] His reconstruction of the verbal similarities between Exod 4:22-23 and Mark 1:11 is less than compelling, but he successfully demonstrates a thematic relationship between the two passages.

In two respects his thesis compares favorably with ours. First, the idea of divine sonship began as a corporate image in Israel, and the baptism of Jesus includes this corporate sense. At the baptism of Jesus God is creating a new people. We noted in connection with the descent of the Spirit that in Judaism the dove frequently symbolized Israel. The alighting of the dove upon Jesus would then designate him as the new Israel, the one in whom God forms a new people, the "firstborn among many brethren," to use Paul's terminology (Rom 8:29). Second, Exod 4:22-23 defines the nature of the Father-son relationship between God and Israel. In calling his people into existence, God first defines who they are in relation to him and only subsequently calls them to worship and serve him. This aligns with our understanding of the divine proclamation at the baptism. The Father first clarifies Jesus' relationship with him and only consequently commissions Jesus after the image of the servant of Yahweh.

VII. IS MARK 1:11 ADOPTIONIST?

Did Mark understand Jesus to become the Son of God at his baptism, or did the divine proclamation confirm an existing relationship? Many scholars believe that the early Church worked backwards to the idea of Jesus' preexistence. Briefly stated, the argument runs that the earliest stratum of the *kērygma*, as it is represented in Acts 2:36, 13:33, or Rom 1:4, implies that Jesus was first exalted to the status of Son of God either at the resurrection or ascension. This understanding was subsequently transposed onto Jesus' earthly life and ministry by the early Church, resulting in such passages as Luke 1:32-35; John 1:1-2; Phil 2:6-7; Heb 13:8; Rev 1:8.

One must exercise caution in reading too much into texts with an adoptionist ring. Rom 1:3-4, for example, although often cited as evidence of early adoptionist Christology, scarcely means that Jesus received the status of Sonship at the resurrection. Rather, it was at the resurrection that

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pleased. The theme of hiddenness in Isa 49:1-6 is important for an understanding of Jesus' ministry. The Son accomplishes God's will through hiddenness. His hiddenness is essential, for self-disclosure would destroy his work. Refusing to use his filial relationship with the Father for his own advantage, the Son divests himself of his rightful prerogatives and in hiddenness treads the road of suffering and death. The Son expresses his filial unity and obedience by taking on the role of a *doulos*, "hidden in the shadow of [God's] hand" (Isa 49:2), allowing God to glorify himself and accomplish his purpose through a humble, powerless servant.

[55] P. G. Bretscher, "Exodus 4:22-23 and the Voice from Heaven," *JBL* 87 (1968) 301-312.

he received the rightful honor and glory that he had not known as Son of God in (his earthly) humiliation.[56]

In the gospel of Mark, at any rate, the resurrection is not related to "Son of God." The proclamation of divine Sonship comes at the outset of Jesus' ministry and concludes at the centurion's confession at the cross (Mark 15:39). The only question that remains is whether Mark's baptismal account is to be understood adoptionistically. There is little in the divine proclamation to support adoptionism.[57] The voice says "You are my Son," not "You have become my Son." If one recalls the vigor with which Paul advanced the preexistence of Christ (e.g. Phil 2:6-7) it would not seem very likely that Mark, Paul's disciple, would argue for adoptionism at the baptism.[58] Nor is the declaration of divine Sonship at the baptism Mark's first mention of the subject. If one accepts the originality of "Son of God" in 1:1, as I am inclined to do, then one has Mark's personal testimony that Jesus is the Son of God.[59] Finally, Luke's story of the annunciation (Luke 1:32-35) evinces that he, the one evangelist who might imply adoptionism (see the western reading at 3:22), rejected an adoptionist Christology. Moreover the Church fathers, many of whom accepted the western reading at Luke 3:22, rejected adoptionist Christology as well.[60]

[56] The evidence for and against adoptionism in Rom 1:3-4 is rather evenly divided until we consider the meaning of "in power." I strongly suspect that "in power" was a Pauline addition to an existing confessional formula. First, "power" and "in power" are characteristically Pauline (Rom 1:16; 15:13, 19; 1 Cor 5:4; 15:43; 2 Cor 13:4; Phil 3:10; 1 Thess 1:5). Second, "in power" breaks the otherwise uniform parallelism of the structure. Moreover it is probable that "in power" is to be understood adjectivally to refer to "Son of God," not adverbally to refer to "appoint." Thus Cranfield is right in saying, "The meaning of the first six words of this clause then is probably 'who was appointed Son-of-God-in-power' (that is, in contrast with His being Son of God in apparent weakness and poverty in the period of His earthly existence)" (*The Epistle to the Romans* [ICC: Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1975-1979], 1. 62).

[57] I can see only two possible arguments for adoptionism at Mark 1:11. First, Mark and Luke cast the divine proclamation in the second person as an address to Jesus; only Matthew renders it in the third person, as an announcement to those present. Matthew's wording corresponds with the heavenly words at the transfiguration and 2 Pet 1:17. *Gos. Eb.*, incidentally, includes both renderings—i.e. the second person addressed to Jesus and the third (to John the Baptist). See Epiphanius *Pan. Haer.* 30.13.7-8. But neither the more objective third person nor the more subjective second person suggests that Jesus became Son of God at the baptism. At the most he might have become aware of his divine Sonship then. Second, if one were to accept Luke's textual variant, "Today I have begotten you" (Luke 3:22), the idea of adoption would be difficult to avoid. But this is a very poorly attested western reading derived from Ps 2:7; see *TCGNT* 136.

[58] M.-J. Lagrange, *Evangile selon Saint Marc* (Paris: J. Gabalda, 1966) 10-11. See Schweizer's comment (*Mark* 358): "There is no indication that Jesus was any other than the Son of God in the fullest sense from the very beginning."

[59] The manuscript support for *huiou theou* in 1:1 in terms of sheer number, diversity and weight of witnesses (e.g. B, D), favors its inclusion (Sinaiticus notwithstanding). Moreover it can be demonstrated that the entire prologue stems from Mark's hand and that "Son of God" is Mark's most important title for Jesus (e.g. Mark 15:39). "Son of God" rightly belongs in the prologue.

[60] Lohmeyer, *Markusevangelium* 23; J. G. Machen, *The Virgin Birth of Christ* (New York: Harper, 1932) 51-55; L. Legrand, "L'arriere-plan neotestamentaire de Lc 1,35," *RB* 70 (1963) 167; B. M. F. van Iersel, *'Der Sohn' in den synoptischen Jesus Worten* (2d ed.; Leiden: Brill, 1964) 88-89.

The baptism of Jesus does not imply adoption. Rather, it defines the uniqueness of the Father-Son relationship. The baptism presupposes Jesus' Sonship, but it initiates his public ministry. Jesus does not become God's Son at the baptism. He already is the Son of God who at his baptism embarks upon his eschatological office as the Messiah, the servant of the Lord. Rengstorf aptly says, "Die Gottesstimme setzt nicht erst Jesu Sohnschaft, sondern setzt sie voraus."[61]

VIII. CONCLUSION

It is sometimes assumed that "Son of God" is synonymous with "Christ" at Mark 1:11. This is supported primarily by the targum of Isa 42:1, which identifies the servant of the Lord with the Messiah.[62] We have shown, however, that Jesus' messianic role as servant of the Lord (Isa 42:1; 49:3) is but one of several referents of the divine proclamation and is contingent upon eschatological kingship (Ps 2:7) and filial intimacy and obedience (Genesis 22; Exod 4:22-23). At the baptism "my Son" is not accompanied by *christos* (as in Mark 1:1) but by *agapētos*, an adjective describing a filial relationship. Jesus is God's anointed, God's Messiah, only because he first is the Son who is cherished by the Father and pleasing to him. The status of Sonship therefore precedes the function of Messiahship.[63]

At the baptism the heavenly voice declares first of all who Jesus is: God's Son, who as such is anointed and equipped with God's Spirit to express his filial status in terms of servanthood—indeed, suffering servanthood. The baptism signals the confirmation of Jesus' Sonship and the commencement of his servanthood.

[61] K. H. Rengstorf, *Das Evangelium nach Lukas* (NTD; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1965) 27.

[62] Str-B, 1. 630; 3. 17; Bultmann, *Synoptic Tradition* 248.

[63] I. H. Marshall, "The Divine Sonship of Jesus," *Int* 21 (1967) 99-100: "Jesus is the Messiah because he is the Son of God rather than vice-versa. Sonship is the supreme category of interpretation of the person of Jesus in the Gospels and messiahship occupies a subordinate place. . . . Jesus was confirmed as the Son of God in carrying out the tasks of the Messiah and Servant of Yahweh." T. W. Manson (*The Teaching of Jesus: Studies in its Form and Content* [Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1963] 103-104) expresses the idea this way: "With the vision and voice at the Baptism . . . Jesus receives an assurance, the essence of which is contained in the declaration, 'Thou art my Son.' What is given here is not a task to be performed or a message to be delivered, but a status and a relationship. At the very outset it is indicated that the central thing in his ministry will be what he is rather than what he says." See also Taylor, *St. Mark* 162; Rengstorf, *Lukas* 59-60; E. Lövestam, *Son and Savior* (ConNT 18; Copenhagen: Ejnar Munksgaard, 1961) 92-93, 110; Bieneck, *Sohn Gottes* 48, 60-62.