

WAS UR-MARKUS THE SOURCE FOR LK 19:45 - 20:47?

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There is a growing consensus that the literary relationship of Luke to the other gospels is more complicated than previously thought. This was clearly evidenced by the Trinity College Colloquy of 1977 which first brought into focus the discontent that exists with the so-called two document, and Griesbach hypotheses.¹ Now, a decade later, there is widespread unease among New Testament scholars with the accepted theories explaining the literary relationship of Matthew, Mark, and Luke.²

One possibility that was once generally rejected, but which might in fact be worth resurrecting is the idea that Luke used as a source an earlier form of Mark

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- 1 William O. Walker, Jr., (ed.) *The Relationships Among the Gospels* (San Antonio 1978). Some of the more significant studies leading up to the Trinity College Colloquy were: George Wesley Buchanan, "Has the Griesbach Hypothesis Been Falsified?" *JBL* (1974); B.A. Butler, *The Originality of St. Matthew* (1951); "St. Luke's Debt to Matthew," *HTR* (1939); David Dungan, "Mark--The Abridgement of Matthew and Luke," *Jesus and Man's Hope*, I (1970); William R. Farmer, "The Lachmann Fallacy," *NTS* (1967/8); "Modern Developments of Griesbach's Hypothesis," *NTS* (1977); *The Synoptic Problem* (1964, reprint 1976); Austin Farrar, "On Dispensing with 'Q'," *Studies in the Gospels*, ed. D.E. Nineham (1957); Robert L. Lindsay, "A Modified Two-Document Theory of Synoptic Dependence and Interdependence," *NovT* (1963); *A New Approach to the Synoptic Gospels* (1971); Thomas R.W. Longstaff, *Evidence of Conflation in Mark?* (1977); Frans Neirynck, (ed.), *The Minor Agreements of Matthew and Luke Against Mark* (1974); Pierson Parker, *The Gospel Before Mark* (1953); R.T. Simpson, "The Major Agreements of Matthew and Luke against Mark," *NTS* (1966); W. Philip West, "A Primitive Version of Luke in the Composition of Matthew," *NTS* (1967/8).
- 2 See the collection edited by William R. Farmer concluding the work of the Cambridge Conference and anticipating the Jerusalem Conference *New Synoptic Studies* (Macon; Georgia 1983). In my estimation, one of the most important books on the Synoptic problem to have appeared in recent years is Hans-Herbert Stoldt's *History and Criticism of the Marcan Hypothesis*, trans. and ed. Donald L. Biewyk (Macon; Georgia 1980), originally published as *Geschichte und Kritik der Markushypothese* (Göttingen 1977). See also Arthur J. Bellinzoni, Jr., (ed.), *The Two-Source Hypothesis: A Critical Appraisal* (Macon; Georgia 1985). This work provides an extensive bibliography.

which was slightly different from canonical Mark. In his very fine article on "The Case for the Priority of Mark," Joseph Fitzmyer indicated "some recent studies that have been supporting one or other aspect of (Ur-Markus)".³ It will be my purpose in the following essay to add to these one section of Luke (Lk 19,45 - 20,47) that seems to be pre-Markan. I hope to show that the parallel section in Mark (Mk 11,11 - 12,40) is a later redaction of an earlier version of the gospel that is better preserved by Luke. To do this, I plan to draw on the six principles of criticism set forth by Ernest De Witt Burton.⁴ These have been generally accepted by synoptic scholars,⁵ and seem to me to be particularly valid when applied to questions of plot and characterization--that is to the story elements of narratives. These principles affirm that when two documents are compared, evidences of a secondary character are: "(1) manifest misunderstanding of what stands in one document on the part of the writer of the other; (2) insertion by one writer of material not in the other, and clearly interrupting the course of thought or symmetry of plan in the other; (3) clear omission from one document of matter which was in the other, the omission of which destroys the connection; (4) insertion of matter the motive for which can be clearly seen in the light of the author's general aim, while no motive can be discovered for its omission by the author if he had had it in his source; (5) vice versa omission of matter traceable to the motive natural to the writer when the insertion (of the same matter in the other Gospel) could not thus be accounted for; (6) alterations of other kinds which conform the matter to the general method or tendency of the author."

The Markan Story

A generation or two ago, scholars generally held that the Markan narrative was confused and thus did not represent a unified piece of writing.⁶ Today, however, a new community of Markan literary critics has helped us modify this stark perception of the second gospel by successfully identifying a coherent

3 Joseph A. Fitzmyer, "The Priority of Mark," from the "Priority of Mark and the 'Q' Source in Luke," *Jesus and Man's Hope*, I (Pittsburg Theological Seminary; Pittsburg 1970) 134-47, 164-66; reprinted in Bellinzoni, *The Two-Source Hypothesis*, 37-52. Fitzmyer did not indicate, however, as I do that Ur-Markus stands behind Lk 19:45 - 20:47.

4 Ernest De Witt Burton, *Some Principles of Literary Criticism and Their Applications to the Synoptic Problem* (Chicago 1904). The quotation of these principles is taken from Farmer, *The Synoptic Problem*, 229.

5 See Farmer, *The Synoptic Problem* 229; Joseph B. Tyson, "The Two-Source Hypothesis," 450-51.

6 In fact, Form Criticism was in part based on the view that the Markan account does not represent a unified narrative. See Rudolf Bultmann, *The History of the Synoptic Tradition*, trans. John Marsh (New York 1963); Martin Dibelius, *From Tradition to Gospel*, trans. Bertram Lee Woolf (New York 1965) 280, n. 1; Willi Marxsen, *Mark the Evangelist*, trans. James Boyce et al. (New York 1969) 73, n. 71; Mgr. de Solages, *La composition des evangiles*

narrative, built systematically by an author whose style included specific types of openings and conclusions, repetitions, and parenthetical remarks.⁷ Werner Kelber, for example, in his popular study entitled *Mark's Story of Jesus*, shows how the section of the gospel with which we are concerned, Mk 11,11-12,40, plays an important part in the gospel story as a whole.⁸ After an early ministry in Galilee and a journey "on the way," Jesus arrives at the temple in Jerusalem.

The gospel's author showed some artistry in this section, as he worked with his materials to portray "Jesus' strained relationship with the temple and the temple mount".⁹ Kelber reminds us that the author purposefully presented Jesus making three visits to the temple. During the first one "he merely looks at everything in the temple, then leaves at nightfall."¹⁰ During the second visit, Jesus shuts down "the business and religious functions of the temple."¹¹ This visit is framed by the story of "The Cursing of the Fig Tree" (Mk 11,12-14; 11,20-25) which the author used to interpret Jesus' activity (Mk 11,15-19). The literary device of breaking up one story with another occurs elsewhere in Mark and was used here to show that "as the tree has withered 'from the roots up,' so is the temple adjudged by Jesus to be beyond hope."¹² In his third visit to the temple Jesus "holds up his own authority over against that of the temple and its authorities";¹³ he sets "himself up as the cornerstone of the new temple, the Kingdom of God" which is antithetical to the old temple;¹⁴ and continues his "critique of the temple which has failed to serve the needs of all the people."¹⁵

According to Kelber, the purpose of Jesus' three visits is to dissociate the kingdom of God from the temple. That perhaps is why Jesus is portrayed as

(Leiden 1973) 35-36. 41. Perhaps the most common view regarding this section of Mark (Mk 11.11-12.40), however, is that the author appropriated a collection of controversy stories that had already been assembled and used them for his own purpose. See Eduard Schweizer, *The Good News According to Mark*, trans. Donald H. Madvig (Richmond; Virginia 1970) 243.

7 For recent surveys of Markan interpretation see Sean P. Kealy, *Mark's Gospel: A History of its Interpretation* (New York 1982), and William Telford (ed.) *The Interpretation of Mark* (Philadelphia 1985). Vernon K. Robbins' *Jesus the Teacher: A Socio-Rhetorical Interpretation of Mark* (Philadelphia 1984) is especially helpful in identifying patterns in the Gospel.

8 Werner H. Kelber, *Mark's Story of Jesus* (Philadelphia 1979), divides the narrative into five parts. He entitles section four, Mk 11,1-13,37, "The End of the Temple."

9 Ibid., 59

10 Ibid., 58-59.

11 Ibid., 60.

12 Ibid., 62.

13 Ibid.

14 Ibid., 63.

15 Ibid., 64.

coming and going from the temple, spending his nights away. Since the temple and its custodians are irreconcilably opposed to the kingdom, they are disqualified.

Literary Difficulties with the Markan Account

As Kelber helps us see, the Markan account is not a motley collection of separate pericopes roughly sewn together, but is a narrative which has been constructed with some literary sensitivity. Nevertheless, even a superficial reading of Mk 11,11-12,40 discloses a variety of problems with the account, some of which are of peculiar concern to the story-line. As I hope to show, these raise doubts about the priority of canonical Mark. As a way of concentrating attention on the Markan plot, I will focus attention on three types of difficulties.

1) *There are statements in Mark that assume a different setting or context than is offered by the story.* For instance, the question that the chief priest and the scribes and the elders ask Jesus at Mk 11,28 does not exactly fit the Markan setting. "By what authority are you doing these things, or who gave you this authority to do them?" they say. Of course, as readers who have followed the story from the beginning, we realize that this question refers to all the things that Jesus has been doing in Mark from Mk 1,21-28 until this point in the temple. Thus, the question fits within the theological framework of the gospel as a whole. But, if we think in terms of the characters in the narrative and their knowledge of Jesus, then why did the author have the temple-authorities ask Jesus concerning what he is doing (*poieis, poies*) when the only thing that he is doing is walking in the temple?¹⁶ Certainly they did not have the walking itself in mind. Kelber's answer is that in context, "these things' can only refer back to Jesus' condemnation of the temple"¹⁷ -- and this must certainly be right. But if that is the case, why did the author have the temple-authorities use the present indicative, *poieis*, when the violent activity disqualifying the temple had occurred on the day before?

Also, the narrator's statement that "no one dared ask Jesus any question" in Mk 12,28-34). But why should Jesus' approval - or perhaps his good answer to an honest question--have discouraged further questions?¹⁸

16 Rudolf Bultmann, *The History of the Synoptic Tradition*, trans. John Marsh (New York 1963) 19-20.

17 Kelber, *Mark's Story*, 63.

18 Ernest Best thought that Mark joined this incident with several others with the purpose of showing "the discomfiture of those who approach Jesus" *The Temptation and the Passion*

2. *The motivation of Jesus' enemies is not clear in this section of Mark.* It is almost incomprehensible, for instance, that Jesus' enemies who want to kill him and who obviously do not believe in his authority should ask him a sincere question concerning his authority.¹⁹ Thus, the question is perhaps insincere. But if that is the case, why would they question him at all? Likewise, it is strange that Sadducees who do not believe in the resurrection should ask Jesus a question about the resurrection.²⁰

It is especially difficult to discern what occasions the fear of Jesus' enemies. According to Mk 11,18, the chief priests and the scribes wished to kill Jesus because "they feared him because all the multitude was astonished *ekseplesseto* at his teaching". But, why should the people's astonishment have led the leaders to fear Jesus? Moreover, the explanation of Mk 11,18 seems weak, since the supporting crowd is not introduced into the story until later (cf. Mk 12,37).²¹

The difficulty with this "fear motif" is even more apparent in Mk 11,32 where the chief priests, scribes, and elders are described as being afraid of the people. Why should they be afraid when the author has given no evidence that their exchange with Jesus (Mk 11,27-33) had been overheard?

These same problems re-occur at Mk 12,12. The author's comment leads the reader to believe that the only reason that the leaders did not immediately arrest Jesus was their fear of the crowd. But up to this point in the story Jesus has been described only as walking in the temple (Mk 11,27). The author had not yet provided a frightening multitude to the temple setting.²²

(Cambridge 1965) 86-87. Thus theology would have been more important than the story-line to the author.

19 John R. Donahue, *Are You the Christ?* (SBLDS 10: 1973) 117-119 suggested that the author of Mark was responsible for placing the debate in its temple setting. The motive behind the question would have been secondary to Mark's purposes.

20 To my mind, Kelber's answer that the Sadducees are "trying to convince Jesus of the absurdity of belief in the resurrection" (*Mark's Story*, 64) makes too little of the violent opposition of the temple aristocrats to Jesus (cf. Mk 12,12-13).

21 The crowd's amazement seems to be attached to the episode as an afterthought. Why would the author have introduced the main motive explaining the "leaders'" desire to kill Jesus in such a way? The difficult phrasing of the passage has been taken to indicate that it was Mark who first tied the plot to kill Jesus with the "cleansing" of the temple (cf. Werner H. Kelber, *The Kingdom in Mark* (Philadelphia 1974) 101).

22 Theodore J. Weeden showed that Mark often redacted his sources in order to contrast the response of the Jewish hierarchy with the response of the crown to Jesus *Mark - Traditions in Conflict* (Philadelphia 1971). 21, n. 7, 22-23. Also, the phrasing of Mk 12,12 is somewhat peculiar. One would expect that the statement that Jesus told the parable against the leaders

3. *The supporting cast is not well defined in the Markan account.* I have already noted that the multitude features in a confusing way in this section of Mark. Sometimes the author seems to have assumed what is never stated in the story, namely that Jesus was at all times surrounded in the temple by a large group of supporters.

But there are other instances of poorly defined character groups in Mk 11,11-12,41. For example, the author wrote in Mk 11,19 that “when evening came *they* went out *ekseporeuonto* of the city.” But, who went out of the city? Mk 11,18 would indicate that the chief priests and scribes left. The next pericope, however, makes it clear that it was Jesus and the disciples who left (Mk 11,20-21; 11,14).²³ Thus, we are able to stumblingly follow the story even though the grammar and, to a certain extent, the context misinform us.

Later, Jesus and the disciples return to Jerusalem. As Jesus is walking in the temple, he is approached and questioned by the chief priests, scribes, and elders (Mk 11,27-33). There is a shift in the story from the third person plural, “they,” to just Jesus. But what happened to the disciples?

The confusion surrounding the definition of the characters in the narrative is perhaps greatest with the scribes. The episode where the scribe asks Jesus about the most important commandment (Mk 12,28-34) presents several problems. The transition into the passage (Mk 12,28a) is very awkward.²⁴ Moreover, the positive opinion of the author concerning the scribe contradicts Mark’s usual view, and is without parallel in this section of the gospel. Oddly, this positive view is sandwiched in between some very negative statements about scribes (cf. Mk 11,27; 12,12. 35. 38-40).

Very strangely, Jesus asks in Mk 12,35-37, “How can the scribes say that Christ is the son of David?”²⁵ He then answers his own question by reminding

of the temple would have been placed in the sentence immediately after what it explains, that is their desire to arrest Jesus (D.E. Nineham, *Saint Mark*, 314). Why then did the author place the motive after the second clause in the sentence?

- 23 Later copiers noted the difficulty and substituted a third person singular for the plural *ekseporeuonto*.
- 24 There are too many third person pronouns in the sentence, and the material that follows has little (or nothing) to do with the disputes (H. Anderson, *The Gospel of Mark* (London 1976) 280; Nineham, *Saint Mark*, 323-324; Eduard Schweizer, *The Good News According to Mark*, trans. Donald H. Madvig (Richmond; Virginia 1970) 250).
- 25 D. Daube has suggested that this section makes part of a fourfold pattern sometimes found in Talmudic literature, cf. *The New Testament and Rabbinic Judaism* (London 1956) 158-163.

his hearers that David himself had called the messiah “Lord.”²⁶ But what in the preceding section could have triggered Jesus’ question?

In Mk 12,38-40. Jesus intensifies his attack on the scribes, but there is no explanation of what caused the assault.²⁷ At last, the author has introduced a great crowd into the narrative (Mk 12,37b), and this crowd hears Jesus gladly. But what is it about Jesus’ strange words that makes the crowd happy?²⁸ Could they be happy with the claim that the messiah was not the son of David? Could they be happy, then, that Jesus was attacking the scribes? But why would they hear such an attack gladly?

The Lukan Account

Many of the difficulties just identified in Mk 11,11 - 12,40 are not present in Lk 19,45 - 20,47. Actually, this section of the Gospel of Luke represents a tighter narrative than does the parallel section of Mark. I have shown the unity of this section of Luke at length in an article for *Perspectives*, “Confrontation in the Temple,” and will here only rehearse some of the main elements of the plot.²⁹

- 26 What in the preceding section could have triggered Jesus’ question? Why is Jesus re-introduced in this section? Further, what sense is there to the saying in Mark? Is Jesus implying that he is not descended from David? (C. Burger, *Jesus als Davidsohn* (Göttingen 1970) 52-59). Or, is Jesus implying that he is not the Christ? (Vincent Taylor thought that there was perhaps a connection between Mk 12,35-37 and the theme of the messianic secret, *The Gospel According to St. Mark*, (London 2 1977)492-493: “(The saying) half conceals and half reveals the ‘Messianic Secret’. It suggests, but does not state the claim, that Jesus is supernatural in dignity and origin and that his sonship is no mere matter of human descent.”) Can Jesus be offering an insoluble riddle meant to befuddle his audience. (perhaps D. Daube, *Rabbinic Judaism*, 158-163)? But why would the author have included such a theologically difficult passage in his gospel? And why would he have done so immediately following the one instance in his narrative where a scribe appears in a favourable light?
- 27 Some have suggested that the author collected his material around the catchword “scribe(s)” (VV.32, 35, 38). Cf. Anderson, *The Gospel*, 280.
- 28 Etienne Trocme’s suggestion that the scribes in Mark, do not have the “ear of the crowd” seems speculative. *The Formation of the Gospel According to Mark*, trans. Pamela Gaughan (Philadelphia 1975) 98, n. 1. Ernest Best has perhaps been more helpful in *The Temptation and the Passion* (Cambridge 1965) 87-89. He suggested that the author had christian believers in mind. Thus, the conflict in Mark is really between Jesus and the Jewish leaders, and the crowd is not among Jesus’ enemies. Vincent Taylor suggested that the delight of the crowd should not be read in conjunction with the discomfiture of the scribes (*The Gospel*, 494). Thus, C. F. D. Moule, *The Gospel According to Mark* (Cambridge 1965) 100 translates v. 37b as: “There was a great crowd and they listened eagerly.” Could they be happy with the claim that the messiah was not the son of David? Could they be happy, then, that Jesus was attacking the scribes? But why would they hear such an attack gladly?
- 29 “Confrontation in the Temple: Luke 19:45-20:47,” *Perspectives in Religious Studies* 11,2 (1984)153-165.

The cleansing of the temple is more closely associated with Jesus' teaching in Luke than in Mark. Thus, in Luke, Jesus drives out the sellers from the temple by reminding the people of Isaiah's message of salvation and Jeremiah's message of judgment. Whereas, in Mark, the message of the prophets is joined to the cleansing episode with a conjunction, *kai*, in Luke it is joined with a participle (Lk 19,45-46./ 11,15-17). Jesus' teaching is the means by which the temple is cleansed.

The event in Luke is eschatological, and matches what had been foretold by the prophecies of Zech 14,21 and Mal 3. It was expected that God would purify his house at the time that He brought his rule to earth. It is because of this end-time content that all of the people in Lk 19,48 hang on Jesus' words. It is good news to their ears. To the leaders of the temple, however, the message of the coming time of judgment and salvation seems dangerous (Lk 19,47). They set out then, not only to oppose Jesus, but also to disprove his message. This is the setting for the confrontation that follows (Lk 20,1-45).

The confrontation is of three parts. First, the temple authorities ask Jesus concerning his authority (Lk 20,2; see Mk 11,28). The question is not an honest question, for the chief priests and the scribes and the elders do not believe in Jesus' authority. The purpose of the question, rather, is to discredit Jesus and his message before the people. Thus, different from Mark, the confrontation is carefully staged in front of Jesus' audience in the temple, as the sanhedrin sets its official authority off against Jesus. Jesus recognizes the trap, however, and escapes it by appealing to the prophetic authority of John the Baptist (Lk 20,3-4). The leaders of the temple fall silent because the people believe that John was a prophet (Lk 20,5). Jesus then takes the question concerning authority and reverses it against his accusers by telling the people the parable of the wicked tenants (Lk 20,9-18). As the leaders of the temple themselves understand the parable, they are the ones whose authority should be questioned (Lk 20,19).

There is a pattern to this episode that will be twice repeated in Lk 20. The sanhedrin confronts Jesus with the purpose of discrediting his message in front of the people. They ask him a trick question. But Jesus escapes the trap, and in such a way that his enemies fall silent. Moreover, Jesus reverses the hidden accusation of the question back upon his opponents.

The sanhedrin watches Jesus and sends spies to trap him (Lk 20,20-26) by asking a question concerning the giving of tribute. "Is it lawful for us to give tribute to Caesar, or not?" Jesus perceives that it is a crafty question (Lk 20,23). If he were to answer that it was not lawful to give tribute to Caesar, he would

give the sanhedrin an accusation that could be taken to the governor (Lk 20,20). But, if he were to answer that it was lawful to give tribute to Caesar, he would in effect undermine his own message of the in-breaking kingdom of God, for in the mind of the people the reign of God meant also the end of foreign rule in Israel. Jesus escapes the trap by asking for a Roman coin and by saying “render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s” (Lk 20,25). But this answer represents more than a clever escape from a difficult situation. Seen within the context of first century Israel, Jesus is perhaps accusing the temple authorities of being too much involved in Caesar’s business and not enough involved in God’s business. After all, Jesus is the one in Luke who is about God’s business (cf. Lk 2,49). That is why his accusers then fall silent at his answer (Lk 20,26).

Some Sadducees come forward and ask Jesus concerning the resurrection (Lk 20,27-38). Again, the question is not an honest one, for the author makes clear that the Sadducees do not believe in a resurrection (Lk 20,27). Likewise, the Sadducees do not represent a new group of opponents. They are simply one faction from the sanhedrin, namely that of the high priests. The pattern holds up, as Jesus answers in such a way that his opponents fall silent (Lk 20,40). Jesus then turns the hidden accusation of the Sadducees’ question back on his opponents (Lk 20,41-44). Their purpose had really been to disprove Jesus’ proclamation of the coming kingdom. Did not the Law itself disprove a resurrection such as Jesus was announcing? Jesus turns this accusation around and asks, how is it possible for the Sadducees to believe in a coming messiah of the lineage of David, and not believe in the type of kingdom that he is announcing?

The scribes participate in this exchange. In the manner of Paul in Acts 23, Jesus is successful at this point in dividing his enemies over the question of the resurrection. The scribes perhaps forget for the moment their opposition to Jesus in delight at his answer to their ancient rivals, the Sadducees (Lk 20,39). But, Jesus does not allow the moment to slip, and very carefully makes clear to his audience that the whole sanhedrin stands opposed to God’s will. Thus, while the Sadducees will receive condemnation, the scribes will receive the greater condemnation (Lk 20,40).

The Question of Dependence

It is noteworthy that not a single one of the earlier mentioned difficulties in the plot of Mark are present in Luke. Thus, 1) the statements that seem out of place in Mark fit snugly in their Lukan context. For example, the present tense used in the temple leaders’ question concerning authority makes more sense in Luke than it does in Mark, because the cleansing of the temple is closely related

to Jesus' teaching and is something of a process in Luke (Lk 20,2/Mk 11,28). And although the statement that "no one dared ask Jesus any question" has little meaning appended to the end of Jesus' saying to the scribe in Mk 12,34, it does fit nicely with its context in Lk 20,40 where it refers back to the silence of the Sadducees following Jesus' answer to the question concerning the resurrection.

2) The motivation of Jesus' enemies is also much clearer in Luke than it is in Mark. In Luke, the leaders of the temple want to kill Jesus because of his teaching, which again is eschatological and inseparable from his activity in cleansing the temple. They do not kill him because of support from "all of the people" (Lk 19,45-48/Mk 11,18). In part, the difficulties in Mark are difficulties of staging. Thus, the episode concerning authority in Mark appears to be a private exchange between Jesus and his enemies. On the other hand, in Luke, Jesus' enemies ask the question in front of "the people" with the purpose of discrediting Jesus' authority (Lk 20,1-8/Mk 11,27-33). The motives of the temple authorities in Luke are also clear at the end of the parable of the wicked tenants. Jesus and his opponents are in front of an audience which supports Jesus, so that there is good reason for the sanhedrin's fear (Lk 20,19/Mk 12,12).

3) Along with a better explanation for the actions of Jesus' enemies, one also encounters a much more careful definition of the character groups in the Lukan story. As the episode concerning the most important commandment is not located in this section of Luke, but rather falls much more appropriately before the parable of the good Samaritan (Lk 10,25-28/Mk 12,28-31; Lk 10,29-37), the characterization of the scribes becomes clear in Luke. The scribes make part of the sanhedrin. In an attempt to discredit Jesus, they have allied themselves with the elders and with their traditional enemies, the Sadducees. The Markan section where Jesus asks "How can the scribes say that Christ is the son of David?" comes off with a very different meaning in Luke where Jesus asks the scribes "How can they (i.e., the Sadducees) say that the Christ is David's son?" (Lk 20,41/Mk 12,35). The following attack on the scribes is also appropriate in Luke, although not in Mark, since it brings back into focus the united opposition of the sanhedrin to Jesus.

Thus, there is some contrast in the movement of the story in Mark and in Luke. Although both gospels tell a story, their story lines are different, and in Mark the transitions from one scene to another are rougher, the character groups are not as well defined, and the plot itself is not always as clear as in Luke.

It has often been argued that the roughness of the Markan story is an indication that it was original to Luke.³⁰ Luke, then, according to this way of thinking would have smoothed out of difficulties of Mark and polished the gospel story.

This is a possible explanation of what one encounters when comparing this section of the two gospels, but in my estimation, not the best explanation. Again, the story lines are different. The author of the third gospel would have had to have unsurpassed writing ability to have changed so few things in the Markan account and yet have made it into such a tightly knit narrative - but yet one with a different story line than Mark. More importantly, however, the evidence in this case does not seem to be of the type which cuts two ways. The difficulties in Mark seem to have arisen because its author was interested in making a point that was different from that of his source(s). In this sense, Luke is the hidden reference that explains difficulties in Mark. This perhaps is what is most significant. It is not a matter of a rough plot which Luke has polished. Rather Mk 11,15 - 12,40 seems to depend (for its plot) on a story akin to that found in Lk 19,45 - 20,47, and the difficulties in Mark exist because its author changed the story to make an entirely different point.

The different intentions of the gospels are most easily seen with reference to the temple. The emphasis on the temple is central to Luke, which begins and ends there. As a boy, Jesus teaches in the temple. In Luke, Jesus comes fulfilling the prophecies made in Malachi, taking back God's house for God.³¹ The story builds from the beginning towards Jesus' manifestation in the temple, and the confrontation in the temple leading up to Jesus' death is an essential element in Luke's story.

Mark's gospel, however, emphasizes the rejection of Jesus. Already in Mk 3,6, the Pharisees and Herodians search for a way to kill Jesus. Their role is taken up in the temple by the chief priests and the scribes (Mk 11,18). Controversies surround Jesus throughout his ministry but build as he heads to Jerusalem. He is opposed by his family (Mk 3,20-21. 31-35), his home town (Mk

30 Examples are extensive and a sampling include many worthwhile studies: William A. Beardslee, *Literary Criticism of the New Testament* (Philadelphia 1971) 68-69; Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *The Gospel According to Luke (I-IX)* (New York 1981) 66-72; *The Gospel According to Luke (X-XXIV)* (New York 1985) 1260-1319; Werner G. Kümmel, *Introduction to the New Testament*, trans. Howard Clark Kee (Nashville 1975) 60-62. Also some very find older works, such as Henry J. Cadbury's *The Style and Literary Method of Luke* (Cambridge 1920) and W.L. Knox, *The Sources of the Synoptic Gospels* (Cambridge 1953-57), draw heavily of this criterion.

31 Rene Laurentin, *Jesus au temple: Mystère de Pâques et foi de Marie en Luc 2, 48-50* (Paris 1966).

6,1-6), and Peter (Mk 8,32) among others, and in the temple the controversies continue with the chief priests, scribes, and elders (Mk 11,27), the Pharisees and Herodians (Mk 12,13), and the Sadducees (Mk 12,18). Jesus is misunderstood throughout the gospel. Group after group rejects him, until finally he goes to the cross alone.

Thus, our difficulty: there is no room in the Markan story for a supporting crowd, soon before Jesus' death. The supporting crowd in the Markan account presupposes a plot more like what we encounter in Luke.

To me, it seems likely that the difficulties in the Markan account arose from certain insertions that the editor of Mark made into Ur-Markus. I tend to think of two principal insertions, the episode of the withered fig tree (Mk 11,12-14, 20-25), and the episode of the most important commandment (Mk 11,28-34).³² Both insertions, perhaps, would have been occasioned by the desire to show that temple worship was something of the past. Thus, again the meaning of Jesus' temple activity is different in canonical Mark from that in Luke. In Luke, the meaning is to be found in the Jewish expectation that God would someday come and purify His house. But in Mark, the meaning is to be found in God's rejection of Israel.³³ The temple is being replaced by the Church. The meaning is more closely aligned with what one encounters in John. Thus, the cleansing episode becomes briefer and more violent. The temple cult is being destroyed.

This fundamentally different outlook concerning the significance of what occurred in the temple explains several changes in the narrative. Jesus' citation from Isaiah in the temple is fleshed out in Mark so that the emphasis falls on the promise of a place for the gentiles--"My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations" (Mk 11,17/Lk 19,46). Also the description of the vineyard is fleshed out in terms of Is 5,2 so that the evil tenants become in Mark the people of Israel (Mk 12,1/Lk 20,9).³⁴ Thus, Jesus' teaching gives the motive for what he does in the temple. In a sense, he is destroying it to make room for the gentiles. But in Luke, the teaching is also the means by which the temple is being purified. Since this particular eschatological function of the proclamation is lost in

32 Most often, it has been thought that Luke omitted or displaced these passages (cf. de Solages, *La composition*, 75,78).

33 Hugh Anderson, *The Gospel of Mark*, 267; John Bowman, *The Gospel of Mark* (Leiden 1965) 241; Etienne Trocme, "L'expulsion des marchands du temple," *NTS* 15 (1968/69):3-5.

34 Joachim Jeremias also took the connection with Is 5:1-2 as a secondary addition to the original parable, *The Parables of Jesus*, trans. S.H. Hooke (New York 1963) 70-71.

canonical Mark, the part that the crowd plays in the narrative becomes unimportant.

The confrontation in Luke between Jesus and the leaders of the temple played against the backdrop of an audience that is hanging on Jesus' message of impending judgment and salvation is replaced in canonical Mark by a confrontation concerning true worship. Faith in God is much more important than sacrifice. The fig tree is cursed in Mark and dries up. Prayer takes the place of sacrifice (Mk 11,20-25). And loving God and one's neighbour are affirmed to be much more than burnt offerings (Mk 12,28-34).

With these Markan emphases in mind one can almost trace the steps by which the editor changed the Ur-Markan account that in this instance is better preserved in Luke and which led to the difficulties enumerated earlier. Thus, 1) the editor introduced the account of the fig tree, lessened the importance of Jesus' teaching activity, and shortened the purification of the temple into a quick symbolic destruction, but left the question "By what authority are you doing these things?" in the present indicative (Mk 11,27/Lk 20,2).

In a similar manner, Mk 12,38-40 represents an appropriation of the words of Lk 20:46-47, but without the Ur-Markan story line that is preserved in Luke. Thus, *perissoteron* as a comparative comparing the scribes with the Sadducees (Lk 20,47) is out of place in Mk 12,40 and takes on the vernacular meaning of a superlative.³⁵

Lk 20,39-40 allowed for the strange introduction of Mk 12,28-34 into the narrative. The Markan episode is an illustration of the approval indicated by the scribes' statement in Luke that Jesus had spoken well (*Kalos*, Lk 20,39/Mk 12,28). Since the editor omitted the concept of an audience in the temple which is, in Luke and I imagine Ur-Markus, the real subject of the exchanges between Jesus and his opponents, and since the editor also had the scribes leave and go away after Jesus told the parable of the wicked tenants, canonical Mark's introduction of the scribe is awkward. The very odd closing in Mk 12,34 "And after that no one dared to ask him any question," was simply taken from the earlier form of the gospel preserved in Lk 20,40, where it makes sense--especially if referring back to the Sadducees.

35 For the superlative meaning of the comparative forms in the New Testament see F. Blass and A. Debrunner, *A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and other Early Christian Literature*, trans. R.W. Funk (Chicago 1961) 32-33. J.D.M. Derrett suggested that the comparative *perissoteron* is used this way to mean something like "all the greater." See "Eating up the houses of the widows: Jesus' comment on lawyers?" *NovT*14(1972) 1-9.

2) Since the editor of Mark changed the emphasis on the eschatological purification of the temple seen in Luke to its destruction and its replacement with the Church, he also changed the position of the crowd in the story. From hanging on Jesus' words (Lk 19,48), they become astonished at his teaching (Mk 11,18). Thus, the motive explaining why the leaders of the temple do not destroy Jesus becomes very difficult in canonical Mark.

The confrontation in Mark, as it now stands, is between Jesus and the temple cult. Room is being made for the Gentiles. Therefore, there is a sense in which a supporting cast for Jesus in the temple is irrelevant to the editor's message. But the function of the multitude in protecting Jesus is still necessary in Mark, as in Luke. Because of this tension between the story and the editor's use of it, the reasoning of the temple authorities becomes at points hard to follow.

3) The roughness of the transitions at Mk 11,19-20 and Mk 11,26-27 results from the editor's insertion of the episode of the withered fig tree into the Ur-Markan narrative. Also the roughness of the story at Mk 12,28-30 stems from the author's reworking of Ur-Markus. These difficulties are not in Luke. Because of the insertion of the episode of the great commandment into canonical Mark, the question about David's son is separated from the Sadducee's question concerning the resurrection and loses its original meaning. In Mark there is no longer an audience of approving scribes who hear Jesus' answer to the Sadducees. Therefore, Jesus' direct statement to the scribes was changed into teaching before a vague audience (Lk 20,41/12,35). The "scribes" in turn became for the editor the subject of Jesus' saying. In this way, the saying about David's son was made part of the attack on the scribes which follows (Lk 20,45-47/Mk 12,37-40).

By applying the saying about David's son to the scribes instead of the Sadducees, the editor of Mark has made this section of the story very hard to understand (Mk 12,35/Lk 20,41). The editor might have understood this passage as indicating that Jesus' message was open to the Gentiles. Thus, the messiah, was not Israel's Christ, but Israel's Lord--and by extension, the Lord of other peoples too.³⁶ Certainly, the meaning found in Luke which is tied in with the Sadducees' question concerning the resurrection completely disappears in Mark. But, the Markan change was probably not so much occasioned by theology at this point, as by the introduction of Mk 12,28-34 into the narrative.

36 Kelber, *Mark's Story*, 65 suggests that the editor related the question to the scribes because they were "experts in matters of Davidic messiahship."

The scene of David's son was thus separated from the scene of the Sadducees' question about the resurrection, and sandwiched between materials pertaining to the scribes. It then was made to apply to the scribes also.

The Place of Matthew's Account

Although the purpose of this study is to examine the relationship of Lk 19,45-20,47/Mk 11,11-12,40 in light of the possibility of Ur-Markus, it would be inappropriate to close without a few remarks concerning Mt. 21,10-23,39. Matthew's account, like Luke's is much less difficult than Mark's. The story line remains episodic, however, and the smoothness of the first gospel seems to me to result from the author's editing of canonical Mark. On the one hand the author seems to have eased the story by such stylistic artifices as unifying Mark's episode of the withered fig tree (Mt 21,18-22/Mk 11,12-14, 20-25),³⁷ having Jesus cleanse the temple at the time of his first visit (Mt 21,10-17/Mk 11,11,15-19),³⁸ and toning down Jesus' approval of the man who asks him about the great commandment (Mt 22,34-40/Mk 12,28-34).³⁹

On the other hand, the confrontation scenes completely lose their purpose as confrontation scenes in Matthew. As preserved in Luke, the conflict centres on Jesus' message of the in-breaking kingdom. In canonical Mark, this conflict was redirected toward the Church and the Gentiles. As I have already pointed out, this change by the editor of Mark left some rough edges to his plot. One of these concerns the fear of Jesus' opponents. It is never quite clear in the second gospel why the crowd supports Jesus. In Matthew, however, this difficulty is cleared up. The people recognize that he is a prophet (Mt 21,12. 28-32. 46; 23, 37-39).⁴⁰ Opposition to Jesus centres on the indignation of the temple's leaders at Jesus' message that they were not producing fruits befitting the kingdom and that some people of low religious status would enter the kingdom before them (Mt 21,28-32. 43-45; 22,1-14). Jesus in Matthew, like the prophet that he is, denounces the duplicity of the religious leaders of Israel (Mt 23,1-36).

37 John C. Fenton, *Saint Mathew* (London 1978) 336; David Hill, *The Gospel of Mathew* (London 1978) 294.

38 Eduard Schweizer, *The Good News According to Mathew*, trans. David E. Green (Atlanta 1975) 406.

39 Ibid.

40 Trocme, "L'expulsion," 5; p. Bonnard, *L'évangile selon saint Matthieu* (Neuchatel 1963) 305-306.

The confrontation in Matthew is over ethics in the kingdom. But the subject matter of the exchanges between Jesus and his opponents does not really fit this concern that the author has transported into this section of the story. Thus, the exchanges become in Matthew clever repartees proving Jesus' superiority over his opponents. His opponents marvel (Mt 22,22), the crowd is astonished (Mt 22,33)--and finally, no one dares to ask him anymore questions (Mt 22,46).

Conclusion

It seems to me that the two document and Griesbach hypotheses do not adequately explain the literary relationship of Mt 21,10-23,39/Mk 11,11-12,40/Lk 19,45-20,47. The two document hypothesis, especially, seems highly unlikely once one begins to think in terms of character groups and the plot of the story--that is, unless one hypothesize an earlier version of Mark which was used by Luke. Then, many of the difficulties with the Markan account become understandable. In any event, it is my view that in this particular section of the synoptic gospels Luke represents the more original of the three accounts. Certainly, I do not enjoin with this the formulation of a Lukan (or Proto-Lukan) hypothesis. There are too many other sections in the synoptics which seem to point to a Markan original. It seems rather that in this instance Luke has preserved a more original form of the story than has Mark. Lk 19,45-20,47 points to Ur-Markus.

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