The PASSION in MARK

Studies on Mark 14–16

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FORTRESS PRESS
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The Mkan Passion Narrative is no longer the neglected child of redaction criticism. It can no longer be viewed as a rather traditional and historical account which Mt and Lk adopt and adapt to their own purpose. It is itself the end product of a varied and complicated development, but a text which owes its final form and coherent structure and meaning to Mk. Nor is it a section of the Gospel which can be considered in isolation from other sections of the Gospel. The Passion Narrative as a whole and, to a certain extent, each individual part of it bears the imprint of the theology of the whole work. In this sense the exegete of the Passion Narrative is in a "hermeneutical circle." On the basis of the study of one part of the Mkan narrative certain tentative judgments will have to be made about the theology of the whole work, at a time when there is no consensus about the theology of the whole. Therefore judgments about Mk as author and theologian must be continually refined and revised in light of the ongoing study of the whole Gospel. The essays in this volume are an attempt to see the whole in the part and to contribute to this ongoing study.

II.

Last Meal: Preparation, Betrayal, and Absence

(Mark 14:12–25)

Vernon K. Robbins

Mk presents the Last Supper (LS) in three scenes, and the unfolding drama reaches its highpoint as the cup gives meaning to Jesus' absence. My thesis is that this final meal completes the drama of the Feeding Stories (Mk 6:30–44; 8:1–10). The purpose of this dramatization is to defuse a view that Jesus' miraculous powers are the basis for belief and to link the Christian meal with Jesus' suffering and death and resurrection into heaven.1

The eucharistic dramatization portrayed by Mk 14:12–25 is distinctive in the New Testament. In contrast, the Pauline LS (1 Cor 11:23–26) contains only sayings about bread and the cup, and after

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each saying is a command to repeat this act "in remembrance." The Johannine LS (Jn 13:1–30) does not speak of "bread" and "cup"; instead, a poignant footwashing episode leads to a scene where Jesus dips a morsel and gives it to Judas, his betrayer. Unique eucharistic language is found in the setting of the Feeding of the 5,000 (Jn 6), where Jesus delivers a discourse in which he refers to "bread which came down from heaven" (Jn 6:41) and eating the flesh and drinking the blood of the Son of Man (Jn 6:53–57). The Mk account (22:7–23) is partly dependent upon the Mkan account, yet its singularity is so evident that some interpreters propose that it stems from an independent tradition. Only the Matthew account (26:17–29) is like the Mkan drama, but the verbal agreement indicates direct copying.

Each scene in the Mkan portrayal of the LS reflects Mkan theology. The preparation (14:12–16) forecasts Passover Day as the period of time in which the meal, arrest, trial, and crucifixion occur; the meal (14:17–21) delineates betrayal as the act of a disciple who fulfills scripture but evokes the judgment of God; and the bread and cup (14:22–25) interpret the death of Jesus and anticipate his return. Jesus' explanation of the meaning of the bread and the cup contrasts with Mk 6–8, where the disciples never grasp the significance of Jesus' distribution of bread and fish to large crowds. Therefore the drama of the LS, in which eating is linked with Jesus' death, resurrection, and absence, completes the drama of the Feeding Stories; without the LS, Mk would contain eucharistic overtones more compatible with Johannine language than Mkan thought.

1. PREPARATION FOR ENTRANCE INTO THE PASSION

The first scene in the Mkan LS (14:12–16) is initiated by the disciples as they ask Jesus, "Where will you have us go and prepare for you to eat the passover?" The occasion for the question is presented in

14:12: it was the day when the passover lambs were being slaughtered to be eaten after sundown. But as the scene unfolds, the actual preparation of the passover is an addendum—"and they prepared the passover." Entering into Jerusalem, finding the man carrying a water jar, and following him to a guest room comprise the scene. Since these actions constitute an extraordinary prelude to a meal which interprets Jesus' arrest, death, and resurrection, the scene highlights Jesus' foreknowledge and authority rather than the food which must be prepared for the meal.

The structure of this scene is parallel to the preparation for Jesus' entry into Jerusalem (11:1–6). The parallel construction of the stories makes it obvious "that the two stories are composed by the same writer." The common features emerge when the scenes are placed in parallel columns:

| 11:1–6                                      | 14:13–16                                      |
| 1: he sent two of his disciples             | 13: he sent two of his disciples              |
| 2: and said to them,                        | and said to them,                            |
| "Go into the village..."                    | "Go into the city..."                        |
| and you will find                           | and you will find                            |
| 3: Say, 'The Lord...'                      | 14: Say..., 'The Teacher...'                 |
| 4: And they went away,                       | 16: And they went out...                     |
| and they found                               | and found                                     |
| 6: as Jesus had said,                        | as he had told them;                         |
| and...                                      | and...                                        |

The parallels draw attention to three common elements: (a) in 14:13, 14a and 11:2 the two disciples are given a promise that they will encounter a phenomenon through which they can fulfill their instructions; (b) in 14:14b and 11:3b Jesus gives them a special formula to use so that the people whom they meet will cooperate with them; and (c) in 14:16 and 11:4–6 the disciples come upon the circumstances, act according to the instructions, and everything works out well because they do "just as he said."

The imprint of the hand of Mk, visible in the parallel features, is

2. 1 Cor 10:16–21 discusses "the bread" and "the cup of blessing" in relation to the table of the Lord and the table of demons.
4. Taylor, 536.
pervasive in the first LS scene. The author linked eleven clauses simply with "and." The final verse (14:16) discloses its thoroughly Mkm character not only by this but also by the exit and entry statements which reflect Mkm patterning throughout the Gospel. The opening verse of the story proper (14:13) reflects Mkm composition as it introduces the action of Jesus through clauses containing historical present verbs. But the particular features of the story—the man carrying the jar of water, the formula "The Teacher says..." and the large upper room—point to tradition. A story, perhaps available to Mk from oral tradition, has been written down in Mkm format.

For Mk the instruction to the disciples for the preparation of the passover (14:13–16) has the same introductory function for the passion as 11:1–10 has for the Jerusalem entry of Jesus. In both scenes the foreknowledge implied by the instructions, the titles "Lord/ "Teacher" in the formulaic response they are to use, and the fulfillment of the incidents "just as he said" depict Jesus as authoritative. Not only the conflicts which arise after Jesus' initial entry into Jerusalem, but also the arrest, trial, and death of Jesus are interpreted through prefatory scenes that evoke an authoritative aura around Jesus. Although there is conflict and death, investment of Jesus with authority assures the reader of some resolution of the tragedy.

One feature, however, is remarkably different between the entry into Jerusalem and the first LS scene. In the first story a promised encounter (11:2–3) is recapitulated with detail (11:4–6), and this narration leads directly to the Jerusalem entry on the colt (11:7–10). In the opening LS scene, no detailed recapitulation follows the promise (14:13–15), and no continuous narration leads directly to the meal: narration is suppressed so that an abrupt change takes us to the evening meal. Detailed narration would describe the food that they found and prepared, and the room in which the food was to be eaten. The comment, "and they prepared the passover" (14:16d), must be compared with the actions in 11:7–8 which elongate the scene into the Jerusalem entry: "and they brought the colt to Jesus and they threw their garments on it; and he sat upon it. And many spread their garments on the road..." With striking contrast, once the comment in 14:16d is made, the scene shifts to Jesus "with the twelve" in the evening.

As a result of the abrupt change in scene, "the passover" is not mentioned in the entire Passion Narrative. If an account of a passover celebration ever existed (fragments have been suggested in Mk 14:25, 26), the scenes which now succeed it do not develop naturally out of it. The eating scenes which stand at 14:17–21 and 14:22–25 do not recount passover activities for two major reasons: (a) no bitter herbs are mentioned, and (b) there is no recitation of liturgy related to eating the passover lamb. A third possible reason is that the LS presupposes a common bowl rather than an individual dish for each participant, although it is impossible to verify the existence of this tradition as early as first century A.D.

For Mk, therefore, passover presents a general framework for the last meal, but direct interest in passover traditions is lacking. Perhaps it is well to recall that in the entire New Testament only Lk 22:15 recounts a saying that suggests a passover narrative may have existed with Jesus as the leader of the meal. Even though the Fourth Gospel refers to three occasions when Jesus went to Jerusalem for passover—(1) 2:13, 23; (2) 6:4; (3) 13:1—it does not contain a narrative recounting eating of the lamb and recitation of the passover liturgy. In all likelihood Jesus did participate in a passover celebration at some point

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6. This paratactic style, the alignment of clauses in a sequence through the use of kai, "and," is one of the most striking characteristics of Mk's composition; see Hawking, 150–52; Zerwick, 1–21; Taylor, 57–58; Donahue, 55–56.
8. The use of the historical present, i.e., the use of the present tense in place of the sort, is another characteristic of Mkm style; see Hawking, 144–49; Blasis-debrunner, 167; Taylor, 46–47; Donahue, 54–55.
10. To passover occurs only five times in Mk, and these instances are localized within 14:1, 12 (twice), 14, 16.
11. Num 9:11 requires the presence of bitter herbs and unleavened bread at the meal; Pes 10:3 attributes to R. Gamaliel (first century A.D.) a tradition that whoever does not mention the lamb, unleavened bread, and bitter herbs at the meal has not fulfilled his passover obligations; cf. Y. Pes 9:3 (364).
12. R. Pes 115b (fifth century) interprets Pes 10:3 as requiring that unleavened bread, herbs, and haroseth be set in individual dishes before each person. Cf. Bultmann, 264.
13. For the importance of distinguishing between a general reference to an event and a narrative account of that event, see J. D. Crossan's essay in the present volume, "Empey Tomb and Absent Lord."
in his life (or many times), but the Evangelists have little interest in such a thoroughly Jewish activity. This opens the possibility that the eucharistic stories which they recount are fashioned by Christian practice and theological concerns.

From this perspective the beginning of the scene has special significance. When the disciples ask Jesus if they should go away to prepare the passover, they are mimicking their action in the Feeding of the 4,000 when they asked Jesus if they should go away to buy food for the crowd (6:37). The disciples take an active role in both Feeding Stories (6:30–44; 8:1–10), and this activity entrains discipleship with eating.

Still another feature links this first scene with the Feeding Stories: the Feast of Unleavened Bread referred to in 14:12. This verse places the first day of the Unleavened Bread Festival on Nisan 14, the day of preparation, although the majority of Jewish traditions assign it to Nisan 15, the day of passover. Its importance is signaled by the discrepancy it creates with Mk 14:1, which presupposes, correctly, that the festival begins with the passover. This discrepancy shows Mk's specific interest in unleavened bread as he presents the LS, and he creates a chronological conflict by emphasizing the Unleavened Bread Festival in the opening sentence of the first scene. Why did such a contradiction arise in Mk's narration?

Although Mk uses passover day as the setting for the death of Jesus, he uses the Festival of Unleavened Bread for polemical imagery. In the context of the Feeding Stories, where the meaning of bread is being discussed with the disciples, the imperceptiveness of the disciples is linked with "the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod" (8:15). The difficulty in ascertaining the meaning of these phrases is well documented by Q. Quesnell. In order to discover the meaning, he found it necessary to move outside the Gospel context into the eucharistic overtones surrounding 1 Cor 5:7. I suggest that the leaven-bread

imagery be construed in the setting of the overall Mk narrative. References to leaven occur in the section of Mk which not only recounts the two Feeding Stories but also contains statements about bread in six of the ten episodes (6:7–8:13). The concern over bread in Mk 6–8 represents a development of the leitmotif of eating which is introduced in controversy stories in Mk 2–3. These controversies culminate in a meeting of "the Pharisees with the Herodians" to plot the death of Jesus (3:6). In like manner, the episodes in Mk 6–8 reach their zenith in a scene in which the disciples are warned: "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod" (8:15). In other words, Mk's sequential arrangement of the narrative produces two clusters of episodes which correlate eating with conflict. In Mk 2–3 the conflict includes the scribes, the Pharisees, and the Herodians; in Mk 6–8 the conflict expands to the disciples.

Controversy with the Pharisees has been focused through 7:1–23 where Jesus pronounces "all foods clean" and through 8:1–13 where a request for "a sign from heaven," juxtaposed with the Feeding of the 4,000, is refused by Jesus. The controversy about "clean food" reveals Mk's concern for preaching the Gospel to the whole world, including Gentiles; Jesus' refusal to give a sign in this setting points to a rejection of manifestation of the risen Lord in miraculous feedings. The community must accept the absence of Jesus until the true "sign from heaven" occurs, i.e., Jesus' return as Son of Man (13:24–27).

Correspondingly, the problem with Herod is indicated in 6:14–29. Herod not only created the setting for the death of the Baptist, but also proposed an erroneous view of the person of Jesus: Jesus was John the Baptist raised from the dead, and for this reason the powers were at work through him (6:14). The "leaven of Herod" appears to peak

15. See J. D. Crossan, "Redaction and Citation in Mark 11:9–10, 17 and 14:27," *SBL Proceedings* (n.p., 1972) I, 18; a feature within the Markan text "can be probably judged as redactional which (i) creates some awkwardness, discrepancy, contradiction, anomaly, etc., by its presence . . . ; and (ii) this awkwardness is signalled as such by its absence (removal?) in the parallel passages of Matthew and/or Luke, and sometimes even by scribal corrections in the Markan textual tradition . . . ."
17. The term *artos*, "bread," occurs in Mk 6:8; 6:37, 38, 41, 44; 6:52; 7:2; 7:27; 8:1, 5, 6—in six of these six episodes.
in this view about Jesus, since Mk emphasizes it through repetition in 6:14, 16 and puts it on the lips of the disciples as the most prominent conception "among men" concerning the identity of Jesus (8:28). Mk discredits such a view of Jesus by placing it on the lips of a confused and manipulated Herod—confused over the identity of Jesus and manipulated into killing the Baptist.

Mk associates the disciples with the misunderstanding promulgated by Herod and the Pharisees through the scene in 8:14–21. The leitmotif of eating bread is the literary medium through which the association is made. The disciples’ anxiety about forgetting to bring bread is countered by the warning, "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod." The misunderstanding by the disciples implicates them along with the Pharisees and Herod.

In Mk 6–8, therefore, leaven pervades mistaken perceptions held by the Pharisees, Herod, and the disciples. In contrast, the LS takes place on the first day of " unleavened bread." Evidently for Mk leaven signifies power which inflicts death upon others but refuses to internalize the meaning of suffering and death. The urge for immediate transformation of death into life pervades their theology. The leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod are thoroughly removed when Jesus eats with disciples in the setting of betrayal and death.

In summary, the prefatory scene to the LS (14:12–16) harks back to the first Feeding Story (6:30–44). When the disciples ask Jesus if they should go away to prepare the food for the passover (14:12), the reader begins the drama of the Feeding Stories again (6:37). But this time the setting is demarcated by " unleavened bread." In other words, in the LS the power of Jesus is qualified. Mk 14:12–16 portrays Jesus’ sovereignty over the passion events, as the preparation for entry into Jerusalem (11:1–6) depicts his authority over the Jewish Temple and its cult. However, this is not the miraculous power which Herod and the Pharisees envision; such a perspective contains leaven. The setting for the proper (" unleavened") view about Christian eating and about Jesus takes us into a meal which evokes the arrest, death, and resurrection of Jesus.

2. "TABLE-INTIMATE" AS BETRAYER

The second scene takes us abruptly to an evening meal. At this meal the betrayer, with the other disciples, eats with Jesus. The name Judas never appears in the scene, because scripture passages furnish the language to identify the betrayer. Ps 41:9 says, "Even my bosom friend in whom I trusted, who ate of my bread, has lifted his heel against me." The dramatic portrayal of this scriptural verse during the last night of Jesus’ earthly life concludes with a pronouncement of "woe" which interprets the act of betrayal as evil but the result of the action as a fulfillment of the will of God. This scene depicts conflict which arises out of the circle of discipleship itself. It is only rivaled by Peter’s denial of Jesus (14:66–72) and encounters between Jesus and Pharisees. If discipleship as portrayed by Mk relates to discipleship in Mk’s own community, then the community in which he lives experiences bitterness. Misunderstanding, dissension, and even betrayal reside within the Christian community itself, and these acts are evil. In this arena of conflict, however, the sovereign purpose of God is fulfilled.

After the preparation, only one more scene is expected—a meal. There is only one meal, as the clauses in 14:18, 22 indicate: "while they were reclining and eating" Jesus spoke about the betrayer, and "while they were eating" Jesus took the bread and the cup. But the author created two scenes by repeating the statement that they were eating a meal. Such repetition of a phrase or clause to add a scene is a common feature of Mkan composition called "the Markan insertion technique." Mk inserted a scene about Jesus’ betrayer (14:18–21) into a story about a special meal Jesus ate with his disciples (14:22–25).

Before we ask why Mk inserted this scene, we need to make some

21. DONAHUE, 242: the clause Kai anakainomai auton kai exthisontan in 14:18 is intentionally reiterated with kai exthisontan in 14:22. He suggests that this technique is "used by Mark for a variety of functions, and not simply to call attention to 'inserted' material" (241). Cf. DORMBYER, 101, who calls exthisontan au'ton in 14:22a a dobbler of 14:18, and therefore designates it as redactional.

22. This is a rare instance in which the "insertion" technique coincides with Mkan “intercalation” (DONAHUE, 59). Following Best (91), Donahue speaks of a "double sandwich" here because comments about the betrayer (14:10–11, 18–21) frame the preparation just as preparation and distribution (14:12–16, 22–25) frame the scene about the betrayer. However, 14:10–11 relates directly to 14:1–2, and these passages frame the anointing of Jesus at Bethany (14:3–9). Therefore, it is preferable to describe 14:1–25 in terms of two intercalated episodes in sequence: (1) 14:1–2, 3–9, 10–11, and (2) 14:12–16, 17–21, 22–25. In the second episode the Mkan "insertion technique" is employed to create the intercalation.
estimation concerning the form of the scene as he knew it. This short scene, perhaps from oral tradition, features the saying, "Verily I say to you, one of you will betray me." This saying, which is common to Jn 13:21, Mk 14:18, and Mt 26:21, was part of a tradition in which Jesus confronted his disciples with betrayal from within the group. The story portrays the disciples' inquiry about the identification of the betrayer (Jn 13:25; Mk 14:19; Mt 26:22), and Jesus identifies the betrayer as one who participates in the table fellowship (Jn 13:26; Mk 14:20; Lk 22:21; Mt 26:23).

It is impossible to know if the meal was construed to be the last one Jesus ate with his disciples. But this story attracted, probably already before Mk, part of an exegetical tradition which furnished a scriptural basis for betrayal from within the group. This apologetic, based on scriptural fulfillment, has influenced the last part of 14:18, which contains wording from Ps 41:9. The Qumran community's use of the same psalm verse, which states that "a friend who ate my bread turned against me," reveals an interest in this passage by groups who were reading the Old Testament. Since the Christian community was especially interested in its potential for explaining the betrayal of Jesus by a close associate, this passage occurs, with different wording, in Jn 13:18. The difference in wording indicates that Ps 41:9 had given rise to a Christian exegetical tradition, so that Christians in different locations reflected on the interpretational Christian form of the passage rather than the actual Old Testament passage in its context.

Mk's redaction within 14:17–21 suggests that Mk wove the scriptural wording into the scene. Mk composed 14:17 as a transition from the preparation to the meal. Since two disciples had already been sent into the city for preparation, technically only ten would accompany Jesus in the evening. But Mk brings "the twelve," an important concept within his theology, into the meal scene through verse 17, and he adds "one of the twelve" to the saying in 14:20. The first part of

14:18 is traditional except for the clause "and eating," but the last clause, "he who eats with me," appears to be a redundant insertion by Mk. The opening words in 14:19 are redactional, but the last part comes from the traditional scene. Therefore, Mk himself appears to introduce the allusion to Ps 41:9, "he who eats with me," as he depicts the conflict arising within the inner circle.

Through this redactional activity, Mk composed a balanced pair of sayings in a chiasic pattern. The result is that 14:18b–20 form an ABA' pattern:

A Jesus said, "Verily I say to you, one of you will betray me, who eats with me."
B They began to grieve and to say to him one by one, "Is it I?"
A' And he said to them, "one of the twelve, who dips with me in the bowl."

The function of chiasic composition is twofold: it emphasizes the center part and distributes parallel ideas in the outer parts. Emphasis on the center makes the betrayal by Judas the medium for placing the possibility of betrayal before anyone who enters discipleship. Parallelism between the outer parts identifies "one of you" as "one of the twelve." In addition to being balanced pairs, these statements present a linear lightening of the identification. The progression to "one of the twelve," a specific identification of the betrayer within the inner circle of disciples, contributes to the dramatic portrayal of the scene.

The formula, "as it is written," continues the idea of scriptural fulfillment in 14:21. Moreover, it provides the rationale for the specific identification of one of the twelve as the betrayer. This feature gives the story a dynamic similar to the story in which Jesus asks the disciples about his own identity (Mk 8:27–30; Mt 16:13–20; Lk 9:18–21; Jn 6:67–71). As Mk interprets the scene concerning Jesus' identity with the saying, "that the Son of man must suffer many things and be rejected . . ." (8:31), so Mk interprets the scene concerning the betrayer's identity with the oracle, "For the Son of man goes as it is written of him,

25. DOXMEYER, 83, considers dōdeka, "twelve," to be redactional in every instance in Mk except 3:16.
but woe..." (14:21). In both instances Mk interprets the story through a passion statement which indicates that these things must happen.

But the "woe-oracle" in Mk 14:21 is unique; there is no other like it in the biblical tradition. The peculiar force is evident when it is compared with the basic structure of biblical woe-oracles. The opening sentence of such an oracle customarily contains "woe" or "alas" and identifies the recipient of the oracle, the second part contains an explanatory sentence specifying the offense (usually introduced by "for" or "because"), and the third part is the announcement of divine judgment. In Mk 14:21 the woe statement and the explanatory sentence specifying the offense are reversed from the traditional order. Mk has adapted the oracle to make it a fitting conclusion for the scene identifying the betrayer.

Why has Mk given this woe-oracle a peculiar twist? If the betrayer is a disciple, then an unusual situation arises. The recipient of the woe-oracle in the Old Testament is characteristically haughty: he acts in self-reliant independence of Yahweh. This action leads to false security, defiance of covenant obligations, and disloyalty to Yahweh, and therefore he must fear the "greater sovereignty of Yahweh in a terrifying visitation." Although Judas appears to be self-reliant in Mk, his action fulfills the sovereign purpose of God. In other words, it is necessary to separate the action (which is judged as wrong) from the result of the action (which fulfills the plan of God). This is expressed by introducing two subjects in the oracle rather than one---"that man" (who does the evil deed) and "the Son of man" (who fulfills the sovereign will of God). The proper subject of the woe-oracle is "that man," and the evidence of such an oracle is implied in Mk 14:21b, c:

"Table-Intimate" as Betrayer

woe to that man,
for he betrayed the Son of Man;
better if that man had not been born.

But the second line of the oracle could never have taken this form, because the tradition which linked the Son of Man with betrayal uses the verb "in the passive which expresses the divine activity." Introduction of the betrayal of the Son of Man into the oracle brings with it the passive form of the verb and implies God as the one who causes the betrayal. This brings two subjects into the oracle and allows the cause for the woe to be stated only implicitly. The oracle has to be couched in the form which it has in Mk 14:21b, c.

My view is that Mk found an independent woe-oracle in the tradition with this form, and he added a preceding clause to make it a conclusion to this scene. There are three reasons why I conclude this. First, in this form the saying has individual autonomy requiring no special context for it to be understood; especially the catchword construction ("that man") would help it to live on in oral tradition. Second, the phrase "the Son of man" in the second member presents the natural occasion for prefixing the oracle with "for the Son of man goes as it is written of him." Third, this oracle may well have arisen in connection with a pesher on Ps 22:6, 9–10 (RSV). In these verses the psalmist cries out:

But I am a worm, and no man (šeb) the scorn of man (‘adam) and contempt of a people. ...

Yet thou art he who took me from the womb; thou didst keep me safe upon my mother’s breasts. Upon thee was I cast from my birth, and since my mother bore me thou hast been my God.

The play upon šeb and ‘adam in MT Ps 22:7 (RSV 22:6) in the setting of Ps 22:7–8 (RSV), which plays such an important role in crucifixion apologetic, and the direct reflection upon 22:9–10 (RSV) could well have been the occasion for the origin of the woe-oracle:

30. Because of the reversal, this is the only "woe-oracle" in the biblical tradition which contains men...de (on the one hand...on the other hand) at the beginning of the first two members. The only exception is its parallel in Mt 26:24.
33. Lindars, Apologetic, 89–93.
But woe to that man (θύμος) by whom the Son of Man (μισθωτός) is betrayed:
... better if that man (θύμος) had not been born.

Mk composed 14:21a to link the woe-oracle (14:21b, c) with the eating scene which defines the betrayer on the basis of Ps 41:9. In this clause (14:21a) Mk uses the exact formula for citing scripture that he did with the Baptist in Mk 1:2 (“as it is written”). The saying is an embellishment of the last half of 14:21b, “by whom the Son of man is betrayed.” When it precedes the woe-oracle it produces a strange sequence of thought, because it belongs to the sphere of “because” or “for” clauses which customarily stand after the “woe” clause.

The purpose of the Mkan adaptation of the woe-oracle is to intensify the scriptural necessity for the betrayer to be one who “shared table” with Jesus. But more than this is at stake. We must ask why Mk inserted this scene into the LS. The answer, I suggest, brings up an earlier observation. If the LS scene is completing the drama of the Feeding Stories, then the conflict that builds around the eating scenes from Mk 2–8 is interpreted in this scene. Mk is saying that a person cannot eat with Jesus without also facing the possibility that he might betray him, and, as soon as this possibility is faced, eating with Jesus includes an emphasis upon his death, resurrection, and absence. If there is conflict in Mk’s community over the meaning of eating with Jesus, and I suggest there is, then the conflict itself indicates that eating with Jesus must include the theology connected with his death, resurrection, and absence. The “betrayal-tradition” in the center of the LS interprets the conflict which Mk faces in his own community. The acts of conflict are evil and the perpetrators of this action are judged by God, but the will of God will be fulfilled in the arena of this conflict.

3. THE CUP OF THE SON OF MAN

The last scene in the LS portrays Jesus’ taking bread and blessing it, then passing a cup from which all drink. The descriptive words in the first verse (14:22) are amazingly close to the narration of Jesus’ acts with the bread and fish in the Feeding Stories (6:41; 8:6–7). Most noticeable is the sequence of “take,” “bless,” “break” and “give.” Through these words, the LS recaptures the drama of the Feeding Sto-
body is interpreted through death and burial. This understanding is reinforced through the saying in 14:7 which ends with the comment that "you do not always have me [with you]." In this way Mk asserts the absence of Jesus from the community, which is the basis for his expectation of the Son of Man "coming in clouds with great power and glory" (13:26). (b) In 14:9 Jesus speaks of "remembrance." A remarkable difference between Mk's LS and the Pauline account (1 Cor 11:23–26) is the lack of instructions in the Mkan account to eat and drink "in remembrance of me." In the anointing story the reader discerns the overriding interest of Mk. Remembrance is to take place in the context of "preaching the Gospel to the whole world." Further, the act of anointing "my body for burial" represents the specific item to "be remembered." Did Mk know the Pauline "in remembrance of me" statements? We can surely never have this information. But the effect of Mkan composition is to construe "remembrance" in "Gospel framework" which ends in crucifixion rather than the "meal setting" which may cause misunderstanding with its focus upon "the bread" (qua 8:14–21).

The short description of bread distribution in 14:22 effects a direct movement to the cup distribution which is elaborated to present Mkan theology. First, Mk constructs a description of thanksgiving for the cup which parallels the blessing and breaking of bread. Such a description does not occur in the Pauline LS since the cup is introduced "in like manner after supper." The Pauline account gives the impression that "thanksgiving" is said over both the bread and the cup. Pre-Mkan tradition of the Feeding Stories seems to have linked "thanksgiving" with the breaking of the bread (8:6), but, in contrast, Mkan redaction links bread (and fish) with "blessing" (6:41; 8:7; 14:22) and cup with "thanksgiving." Second, the CW is structured in imagery parallel to the BW:

This is my body . . .
this is my blood . . .

This is a variation from the basic Pauline sayings which lack this parallelism:

This is my body . . .
this cup is the new covenant . . .

The Pauline sayings indicate a direct interest in the church as a "covenant of fellowship." In this setting the bread as the "body of Christ" and the cup as the "new covenant" connote special communal significance. But the Mkan sayings have emerged through direct reflection on the relation of the bread and cup to the passion events: "Body and blood" are now the two 'components' of the Christ who gave himself in death." Third, interest in the passion events is also present in the descriptive clause "which is poured out for many." With this addition the CW evokes a full image of the crucifixion as the event which furnishes the covenant. The fourth feature is perhaps the most important: the bread and cup scene has the form of an apodtism. Jesus tradition in this form contains a saying near the end, and the main emphasis culminates in the saying. In this scene, Mk 14:25 expresses the most important aspect for the Evangelist. As Jesus solemnly swears not to drink of the fruit of the vine until the final Messianic banquet, the weight of the entire scene falls on the cup. With this saying, Jesus refers to his approaching absence from the community and the reunion which will occur with his return as Son of Man. The saying in 14:25 has no introductory phrase which suggests that Mk was the first to combine this saying with the BW and the CW. However, this saying was not an integral feature of the tradition which transmitted the words about the bread and the cup. This suggests that Mk is recounting the liturgical practice of the portion of the church which he represents. He recalls this tradition in its oral form and composes it in Mkan style. Accordingly, Mkan style is apparent in 14:22 not only in the opening clause, "and as they were eating," but also in the participial sequence, "having taken bread having blessed" and the phrase, "and he gave to them." Mk has composed the first half of 14:25 by analogy to his description of the bread in 14:22 ("having taken a cup having given thanks he gave to them"), then he

34. Marxsen, Lord's Supper, 15, cf. 4–16.
37. Ibid., 197.
38. Both the asymmetric participial construction and the phrase "and he gave to them" are absent in 1 Cor 11:23-24 and avoided in Mt 26:26.
adds "and they all drank of it." The saying in 14:25, however, has no Mkian introductory formula like "and he said to them"; it represents the climactic logion in the form of the tradition as it is recounted orally in Mk's community. Overall Mkian composition places the scene in tensive relationship with the Feeding Stories and in direct relationship with the passion events. Moreover, when Mk adds, "and they all drank of it" (14:23b), his community fully shares in the destiny of Jesus. In 10:39 Jesus tells James and John that they will drink the cup which he drinks, and in 14:56 Jesus refers to the passion events as "the cup." Drinking the cup therefore evokes the entire "Gospel story" which ends in death, resurrection into heaven, and anticipated return of Jesus as Son of Man.

In summary, the last scene links the bread with "the body of Jesus" which undergoes death. "Remembrance" of this is to take place in the activity of "preaching the Gospel to the whole world" (14:9). Drinking the cup represents the emphatically Mkian emphasis, for this activity unites the believer with the fate of Jesus, and it evokes anticipation of the coming of the Son of Man. The cup gives meaning to the absence of Jesus; he will not drink again until he drinks anew in the Kingdom of God.

4. MARKAN "MEAL" CHRISTOLOGY

In this study I have taken the position that Mk arranges and redacts stories and sayings about Jesus to produce emphases different from those which some Christians within his purview were making. One of the differences centers on Christian ceremonial eating. Analysis of the miracle stories in Mk 6–8 indicates that Mk knows Christians who recount miracles of Jesus in the setting of ceremonial eating and focus upon breaking bread as the act through which the powers of the risen Lord are manifested in their midst. Mk places these stories in the first half of his Gospel and portrays the result of participation in them in terms of misunderstanding. Disciples who participate in these events do not properly comprehend the meaning of the breaking of the bread. Understanding can only be attained through awareness of the entire "Gospel story" as narrated by Mk. The bread must be perceived in the context of the passion events where Jesus' body is prepared for death and burial; and the bread is subservient to the cup which poignantly evokes the crucifixion and absence of Jesus, and anticipation of his return as Son of Man when he will drink "anew" with them.

Mk introduces the entire LS account with a reference to "the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread." The irony is that Mk seems to have no interest in this feast per se. We have discovered that Mk has no direct interest in the passover feast either, but he has great interest in it as a general framework for emphasizing the importance of the death of Jesus. I suggest that the reference to unleavened bread is a polemical feature. The LS scenes present the unleavened view of "eating with Jesus" as opposed to the leaven of the Pharisees and of Herod by which Mk is countering christological views within Christian circles of his own time. If some Christians believe that Jesus is the Baptist raised from the dead, then they are still looking for the Messiah at the end of time. In Mk's time some are making a claim to come "in the name of Jesus" saying "I am he" (13:6), and they are successfully leading members of the Christian community astray. These Messianic claimants have an especially strong appeal within Christian circles, because they base their activity not on "new Moses" typology (as those reported in Josephus) but on "new Jesus" typology. A highpoint of their leadership has its locus in miraculous "breaking and distribution of bread" through which the powers of the resurrected Baptist-Jesus are again evident.

The LS scenes will not allow anyone to be misled by "false Christs and false prophets" who come "in my name" saying "I am he." On its own terms, the meal signifies that the Son of Man goes as it is written, and Jesus will no longer be present with the community "as they all drink the cup." His presence will be unmistakably "seen" when "the Son of man comes in clouds with great power and glory" (13:26); then he will drink it anew in the Kingdom of God.

Perhaps the greatest achievement of Mk lies in his interpretation of the conflict within his Christian community by the second scene. In this scene the conflict between Jesus' purpose and the disciples' view of him becomes calamitous; the intimate act of eating with Jesus is forever
slandered by Jesus' betrayal to death. Or is it slandered? After Mk, no Christian can eat the holy meal without asking himself, "Am I myself a betrayer of Jesus?" As soon as this question is asked, there is no way to avoid the story of Jesus' arrest, death, and absence as the meal is celebrated. 

III.

The Hour of the Son of Man and the Temptation of the Disciples

(Mark 14:32-42)

Werner H. Kelber

Interpreters are widely agreed that the text of Mk 14:32–42 features an unusual amount of doublets and contradictions. The most striking double features are: the introduction of two groups of disciples (14:32, 33), Jesus' prayer in both indirect and direct discourse (14:35, 36), and two climactic sayings of Jesus (14:38, 41). Among logical, theological discrepancies, the following three are frequently pointed out: an eschatological use of the "hour" motif (14:35, 41) versus a profane use (14:37), Jesus’ reproach of Peter being abruptly deflected toward the disciples (14:37–38), and the disciples’ reported failure to “answer” (14:40) without antecedent reprimand or questioning.

These observed duplicate features and thematic inconsistencies became the basis for complex source and tradition theories which in turn contributed to an understanding of the text as a product of sources or a blending of tradition and redaction. Methodologically, all these studies share the conviction that the Mkan text is ideally interpreted in dialogue with pre-Mkan stages or sources.