

“Who Struck You?” Jesus as a Messianic Prophet Understanding a Gospel Text with African Help

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The story of the mocking of Jesus after his “trial” before the Sanhedrin presents an interesting problem for the reader of Mark’s gospel, that is, “why did his tormentors cover Jesus’ face?” Several possible reasons have been suggested. This paper will attempt to accomplish the following: first, we will outline briefly two christological themes in the Markan passion narrative which are relevant to understanding the meaning of Jesus’ blindfolding and mocking; second, we will discuss some of the suggestions which have been put forward as to the reason that Jesus was blindfolded during this process. Reasons will be given for the choice of a particular reading. The argument for this reading will be bolstered by giving some attention to an African cultural practice which may be a parallel to a biblical idea. Finally, we will suggest implications of this reading.

Jesus as Messiah and Prophet

Messiah

It is well known, of course, that Mark’s gospel is particularly concerned with the theme of Jesus as Messiah. The reader of Mark is aware of Jesus’ messianic identity from the opening sentence of the gospel.¹ However, many of the characters in the story, especially the disciples, either do not understand that Jesus is the messiah, or misunderstand the meaning of his messianic vocation.² The demons understand, of course, and are silenced by Jesus (e.g., 1:25). Many of the minor characters³ understand the power of Jesus and have faith⁴ in him, even if this faith does not usually express itself in messianic terms.

By the time we reach the passion narrative, however, the so-called “secret” of Jesus’ messianic identity has leaked out.⁵ In successive episodes Mark lets us know that the secret of Jesus being “the Christ” is now an open secret: a blind man asks Jesus for healing by twice calling him “Son of David” (Mk 10:46-52); Jesus rides into Jerusalem in explicit fulfillment of messianic prophecy (11:1-11; cf. Zechariah 9:9) and the crowd associates this entry with David’s kingdom (11:10); Jesus curses the fig tree and disrupts the temple worship – actions which imply his royal right to take authority in the temple (11:12-25)⁶; a series of disputes follows which centre around the question of whether Jesus has Davidic or “Son of God” authority (chapter 12); the so-called little apocalypse associates soon-to-come earth shattering events with warnings not to follow the wrong messiah and predictions of the coming of the “Son of Man” (chapter 13).

The passion narrative proper, chapters 14 and 15, is filled with royal imagery and messianic allusions. Jesus’ apparent claim to have authority over the temple (14:58; 15:29, 38; cf. 13:1-2) is implicitly messianic. Jesus affirms the high priest’s direct question about his messianic identity in the strongest terms (14:61-62). Jesus’ trial before Pilate puts the Jewish messianic language into terms that a Roman governor would understand: “the King of the Jews” (15:2, 9, 12, 18, 26; cf. v.32: “King of Israel”). Mark’s narration of the mocking by the Romans and of the crucifixion itself are replete with ironic royal imagery: he is robed in purple (15:17) and crowned with thorns (15:17); he is saluted as King (15:18); homage is done to him as to a king with kneeling (15:19); he is led in a royal procession (15:20-21), crucified between two royal attendants “on his right and on his left” (15:27; cf. 10:37 where James and John request this kingdom privilege), and identified for the world to see by an inscription reading “the King of the Jews” (15:26). Finally, Jesus is acknowledged to be “Son of God” by the centurion who witnesses his death (15:39) thus providing a fitting narrative “inclusio” with 1:1: “The gospel of Jesus the Messiah, the Son of God.”⁷

As we shall see shortly, the brief scene of Jesus being mocked by the Sanhedrin⁸ in 14:65 is itself messianic. There can be little doubt that Mark wishes his readers to be very aware that the conspiracy surrounding Jesus' death resulted in the crucifixion of the one who was the rightful King of Israel, the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One.

Prophet

"Messiah" and its cluster of synonyms ("Son of God," "Son of David," "Son of Man," "King of the Jews," "King of Israel"), is not the only term used in the passion narrative to provide Mark's readers with clues to understanding the identity of the Gospel's main character. Mark also portrays Jesus as a prophetic figure. In fact, if there is any theme which all of the gospels seem to agree on it that Jesus was considered by the people to be a prophet and that his opponents considered him to be a false prophet. Richard Horsley has recently suggested that the entire gospel of Mark can be seen as an exposition of Jesus' prophetic ministry over against Israel's rulers and the Empire of Rome which those rulers represent.⁹ Speaking not just about Mark, but about the historical Jesus, N.T. Wright puts it well,

All the evidence... suggests that he was perceived as a *prophet*. His speech and action evoked, even while they went beyond, contemporary pictures of prophetic activity. Furthermore, we must conclude that Jesus was conscious of a vocation to be a *prophet*... In particular, he acted in ways that had some analogy at least to the praxis of other "leadership" prophets in second-Temple Judaism.¹⁰

Jesus' prophetic vocation is highlighted in several ways in the final chapters of Mark's gospel which are set in Jerusalem. In several cases, Jesus is not explicitly called a prophet but he acts in a distinctively "prophetic" manner. For example, the destination of Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem is quite obviously the temple: "And he entered Jerusalem and went into the temple" (11:11). Jesus inspects the temple on the day of his arrival, but the next day Jesus performs two symbolic actions, actions which can only be described as "prophetic": he curses the fig tree, and then he stages a demonstration in the temple, disrupting the normal proceedings thereby interrupting the regular worship. Just as Isaiah walked around Israel naked (Isaiah 20:1-4), just as Jeremiah smashed pottery (Jeremiah 19), just as Hosea married an unfaithful woman (Hosea 1:2-3), so Jesus acts prophetically to demonstrate that Israel is unfaithful and under God's judgement. The fig tree (an Old Testament symbol of Israel: Jeremiah 24:1-10; 9:17; Hosea 9:10; Joel 1:7), is fruitless and therefore worthless, just as Israel is barren and therefore under God's wrath (cf. Hosea 2:12; Isaiah 34:4; Jeremiah 5:17; 8:13). In a similar fashion, Jesus' demonstration in the temple is not a "cleansing" but a proleptic act of judgement against the central symbol of Israel's life. Just as Jeremiah the prophet warned Israel not to rely on the temple for protection (Jeremiah 7), so Jesus warns Israel that the house of the Lord has become a den of "revolutionaries" [note] a fact which will lead the people into the tribulation of war and destruction. The "sandwiching" [NOTE] of the story of the temple action within the story of the barren fig tree is evidently a device used by Mark to help the reader interpret these two incidents as prophetic acts of judgement.¹¹

Once we have understood the temple incident as a prophetic action it is easier for us to notice the other prophetic dimensions of the passion story. The question first asked of Jesus regarding his authority to speak and act in this way is manipulated by Jesus into a question of the authority of prophets, such as John the Baptist, in Israel's life (11:29-32). Jesus' discourse in chapter 13 is a prophetic warning about the time of tribulation to come if the people refuse to heed Jesus' call to repentance. His use of apocalyptic imagery should alert us to the prophetic nature of this passage, as should Jesus' warning to avoid "false Christ's and *false prophets*" since he is the true Christ and the *true prophet* (13:21).

Chapter 14 includes a further Markan "sandwich" which illuminates Jesus' prophet ministry. Although the narrative of Jesus' hearing before the Sanhedrin is obviously centred on the question of Jesus' messianic vocation, the story also illustrates Jesus' prophetic vocation in a number of ways. First of all, the structure of the story leads us to see Jesus as a prophet. The story of the Sanhedrin "trial" is embedded within the story of Peter's denial thus:

- A Prophetic prediction of Peter's denial: 14:27-31
(Interlude: Gethsemane and Arrest: 14:32-51)
- B Sanhedrin Hearing (climax: "prophecy"): 14:52-65
- A' Prophetic fulfillment of Peter's denial: 14:66-72

Although the story of Jesus' prayer and his arrest in the garden interrupts the "sandwich" it in no way disrupts the lesson to be learned. In a highly ironic twist, Mark displays Jesus' prophetic gift by showing Jesus being mocked as a false prophet by the Sanhedrin at the very moment that Peter, below in the courtyard, is himself fulfilling Jesus' dire prediction and denying his Master.¹²

Second, the content of the accusation against Jesus reveals his prophetic ministry. Jesus is accused by "false witnesses" of prophesying the demise of the temple and the raising of a new temple in three days. This two-sided prediction is, of course, found not only in Mark but in several layers of the tradition (Mark 14:58, 15:29; Matthew 26:61, 27:40; Acts 6:14, 7:48; John 2:19). In addition to the words about destroying and raising the temple are Jesus' words to his disciples that there would "not be left one stone upon another that will not be thrown down" (13:2). It is evident that Jesus had spoken against the temple. That the witnesses are described as "false" (14:57) is probably not because Jesus never said anything like this, but because "their witness did not agree" (14:59). Perhaps one of the problems that the witnesses had in giving testimony was that they misunderstood the nature of Jesus' warning, that is, they may have thought that Jesus himself had threatened the temple. Given the strong tendency throughout Mark's gospel to see Jesus as a prophet, perhaps we are meant to read Jesus' warning as a prophet oracle in the divine first person. That is, perhaps Jesus did not say that *he* would destroy the temple and raise it in three days, but rather, speaking in the manner of the classical prophets of Israel, Jesus may have said something like "*Thus says the Lord*: 'I will destroy this temple made with hands [note on Isaiah's use of this word] and raise another in three days.'" Thus, Jesus' word against the temple was probably a prophetic oracle predicting God's judgement on the temple.¹³

Chapter 15 does not put as much stress on the prophetic nature of Jesus' ministry as we find up to that point, but several things should be noted. First of all, Jesus had made three prophetic predictions of his suffering and death (Mark 8:31-33, 9:30-32; 10:32-34), predictions which are now shown to be fulfilled in chapter 15. Jesus had also prophesied to James and John that there would be a time when he would come in his glory and that there would be "one on his right and one on his left," a prediction which comes to pass when the two "lhsthj" are crucified with him. Finally, we should not miss the allusion to the story of the prophet Elijah in 15:34-35. Evidently some of the bystanders were aware of the prophetic nature of Jesus' ministry and were still thinking of Jesus in prophetic terms even as he is about to die.

Mark portrays Jesus as a prophet in two senses. First, Jesus is a "classical" prophet: one who hears the word of the Lord and speaks and acts in a way that calls Israel to remember and obey the covenant. Clearly Jesus' cursing of the fig tree, his demonstration in the temple, and his oracle warning of the temple's destruction fall into this category. Jesus was a prophet who engaged in social criticism which called Israel to repentance. But, second, Jesus is also portrayed as a prophet in the more popular sense of the word: one who makes predictions about the future which come true – predictions of his own suffering, death, and resurrection, predictions of Peter's denial, predictions of a future time of tribulation for Jerusalem and about his own vindication as the Son of Man. In Mark's view Jesus was a prophet who engaged in both foretelling and "forthtelling."

Messiah and Prophet

The Markan passion narrative presents the reader with a picture of Jesus which highlights both his messianic and his prophetic vocations. Are there precedents for this combining of prophetic and royal offices, or is this a Markan or early Christian innovation?

The answer appears to be that although the combination of messianic and prophetic roles is not common in OT or Jewish texts, it is not totally unheard of. It is perhaps more common to think of prophets and

kings in competition or in tension.¹⁴ Some examples of the pairing of vocations do come to mind, however. Saul, the first king of Israel seems to have had at least one episode in his career in which he experiences prophetic trance which provokes some witnesses to exclaim “Is Saul also among the prophets?” (1 Samuel 10:10-11). One might also consider David, who is, of course, almost the ideal king in the Old Testament, but as the writer of the Psalms could also be seen as a prophetic poet.¹⁵ It should be admitted, however, that the mixing of the offices of the vocations of Prophet and king is a rather rare phenomenon in the Hebrew Bible.

There are more examples of the pairing of the vocations of king and prophet in one person to be found in the second-Temple period. In John 6:14, after Jesus has performed the miracle of the multiplication of the loaves, the crowd recognize him as “the prophet who is coming into the world.” Jesus finds it necessary to flee, because he is aware that they are going to seize him in an attempt to make him king. Similarly, in John 19:37 Jesus affirms that Pilate is correct in calling him a king, but it is clear that the purpose of Jesus being in the world is “to bear witness to the truth” – his kingship is a prophet one. Evidently John believed that there was some expectation among the people that one was coming who would be both prophet and king – one who would be “a prophet like Moses” (Deuteronomy 18:18). Wayne Meeks has discovered documentation for such “Mosaic” hopes in Philo, Josephus, Pseudepigraphal writings, and Qumran as well as Rabbinic, Samaritan and Mandaean sources so we need not rehearse them here.¹⁶ It is enough to say that the hope for a messiah who would also be a prophet had precedent in the second-Temple period and is clearly reflected in the gospel of John. It seems that the passion narration of Mark has also brought these themes together in the one person of Jesus, although this has not previously, it seems, been noted by scholars.

The Blindfolding of Jesus

We come now to the question of why Jesus was blindfolded. As we have noted Mark does not explicitly give us a reason for this action. Scholars, however, are rarely without suggestions as to how such a gap should be filled!

Protection from the Evil Eye?

It has been suggested by O. Böcher¹⁷ that Jesus was blindfolded because the Sanhedrin considered Jesus to be involved with sorcery and they wanted to avoid being victims of a curse from his “evil eye.” It is certainly true that Jesus was accused of being in league with Satan during his ministry (Mark 3:20-27) and it is also true that there was concern about the evil eye through the Mediterranean world in this period.¹⁸ The evidence which Böcher puts forward for the possibility that people suspected of the evil eye were blindfolded does not prove his case.¹⁹ Perhaps the strongest argument against the evil eye being a concern is that there is no evidence that Jesus was blindfolded at his arrest or during his interrogation – why wait until this point in the proceedings?

A Game?

A more likely scenario is that blindfolding was simply a part of a cruel game that the Sanhedrin was playing with Jesus.²⁰ Jesus was known as a prophet, so their blindfolding him and requesting a prophecy on demand may simply have been a form of mocking and nothing more. After all, in their minds Jesus has just insulted the high priest by making yet another of his prophetic predictions, declaring that he would be seen to be the vindicated Son of Man who would come with the clouds of heaven (Mark 14:62). There can be little doubt that the mocking has the quality of a cruel game.²¹ It could be that there is more to this scene, however: it may be a test as well as a game.

A Test?

A number of scholars have suggested understanding the scene in Mark 14:65 as a test.²² The most important evidence is a rabbinic text about the life of Bar Kochba. Simon Bar Kochba, of course, was a leader of the Judean Jews in the early second century A.D. Bar Kochba, which means “son of a star” was messianic designation. In Rabbinic literature he was called Bar (or Ben) Kosiba (or Koziba), meaning “son

of a lie," which reflects the rabbinic rejection of Simon's messianic pretensions. Bar Kochba and his followers staged a revolt against Roman rule, and fought the Roman forces from A.D.132-135.²³

The text in question is from the Babylonian Talmud *Sanhedrin* 93b:

Bar Koziba reigned three and a half years, and then said to the Rabbis, "I am the Messiah." They answered, "Of the Messiah it is written that he smells and judges. Let us see whether he can do so." When they saw that he was unable to judge by the scent, they slew him.

This Bar Kochba story does not mention blindfolding. However, the scene implies a judgement setting which involved some sort of test being set for the rabbi / messianic pretender to ascertain whether or not he had the qualifications to be Messiah. The Talmudic text only tells us that such a test was performed to see whether Bar Kochba could judge by smelling, that he failed the test, and so was executed.²⁴

For our purposes the most important piece of evidence from this Talmudic text is the mention of the biblical basis for testing a messianic claim: "Of the Messiah it is written that he smells and judges." Most readers without access to a Hebrew Bible would have difficulty locating this biblical text, since most translators have amended the text finding the obvious translation to be (literally) non-sensical. I shall argue, following an important study by Ian Ritchie, that the practice of amending this text simply betrays a Western bias which could be corrected with some help from an African cultural understanding.²⁵ Before we turn to the African evidence we must first examine the text in question – Isaiah 11:3 - and the perceived translation problem.

The NRSV translates Isaiah 11:3-4 in this way:

3. His delight shall be in the fear of the Lord.
He shall not judge by what his eyes see,
Or decide by what his ears hear;
4. But with righteousness he shall judge the poor,
and decide with equity for the meek of the earth.

The RSV, ESV, and NIV are virtually identical to the NRSV. It should be noted that the NRSV sets the first clause of verse 3 apart from the second and third lines. The first line of v.3 is thereby placed with the previous paragraph. This signals to the reader that a new thought is beginning with the second line of the verse. The NEB simply omits the first clause of the Hebrew text of v.3 entirely and adds a footnote stating: "*Prob rdg.*; Heb. *adds* and his delight shall be in the fear of the Lord."

What is rather amazing about all this is revealed if we look at a literal translation of the Hebrew text of v. 3 into English:

He shall smell in the fear of the Lord;
He shall not judge by what his eyes see,
Or decide by what his ears hear.

It is clear that the verb in the first clause of Isaiah 11:3 is the verb *ruach*, "to smell." There are no textual variants. And yet generations of Bible translators in the English-speaking world have stumbled when they have reached this line of text, apparently because few had enough cultural sensitivity or imagination to conceive of what it might mean for the Messiah to judge or decide on the basis of his sense of smell.²⁶ As Ritchie reports, the opinion of B. Duhm in 1914 has become the standard explanation of the verse "He tells us that the verse is 'a variant with meaningless text.'"²⁷ Apparently the text is to be considered "meaningless" because, from a Western perspective, one does not "know" or perceive through the nose, but through the eyes or possibly the ears. If I were to comprehend an opinion of a colleague I might nod my head in agreement and say "I see what you mean." In Western society the sense which "makes sense" of things is sight. To say that the Messiah will make decisions on the basis of his sense of smell is, therefore, literally "nonsense."²⁸

I should hasten to add that Ritchie tells us that this Western propensity towards turning up one's nose at the idea of judging by smelling is a relatively new phenomenon.

Most of the exegetes of the ancient world, the Middle Ages and Renaissance had no problem with the idea that the Messiah would "smell." The Protestant reformer John Calvin wrote in his Isaiah commentary: "We ought to attend, first of all, to the metaphor in the verb *smell*, which means that Christ will be so shrewd that he will not need to learn from what he hears, or from what he sees; for by *smelling* alone he will perceive what would otherwise be unknown."²⁹

Although there are traces of olfactory language used for the process of discernment (one might think of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*: "there is something rotten in Denmark"), for the most part thinking of the nose as an organ of knowing has all but disappeared in Western culture.

This is not necessarily the case in Africa, however. Ritchie notes that the use of olfaction is sometimes used in Africa in initiation or transition rites. For example, the Azande of Sudan fumigate newborn babies and some African Instituted Churches (AICs) use incense or perfume to battle witchcraft.³⁰ Most importantly, Ritchie discovered that some African cultures have people which he calls "Chief Sniffers" who are able to discern good or evil by the sense of smell. This seems to have been a tradition among the Luo people of western Kenya. Ritchie discovered that an AIC called the Legio Maria, which had its origins among the Luo, has incorporated sniffing into its church life.

I have witnessed chief sniffers or "Jucheckos" (*ngwecho* in the original Luo) of the Legio Maria AIC in Nairobi, Kenya. They stand at a distance of two to eight feet and sniff the air in front of worshippers who kneel at the entrance. Anyone harboring ill-will towards the group, or bringing in evil objects, would be detected and turned away. The Legio Maria hold that the power to detect evil through sniffing is bestowed on believers by Saint Joseph.³¹

Apparently the biblical idea of the Messiah judging by smelling is not as non-sensical as Western scholars and translators have assumed. There are cultures that attribute the ability to discern good and evil to the power of sniffing. Applied to the text in Mark, it now becomes possible for us to say those scholars who understand the mocking of Jesus as more than a game, but as test of his messianic status, are probably correct. When the Sanhedrin blindfolded Jesus and ordered him to "Prophecy!" they were applying a test known to them from Isaiah – the true Messiah will have the prophetic gift of being able to discern right from wrong, good from evil, not in a superficial, arbitrary way like seeing or hearing, but in the way of a true prophet – through the sense of smell.

A Conclusion and an Implication

Very briefly, two implications must be noted from the reading presented above. First, we have argued that the blindfolding and testing of Jesus' prophetic abilities by the Sanhedrin, while at the same time his prophetic gift is revealed to the reader as genuine in the fulfillment of the prediction of Peter's denial, reveals that Jesus' messianic identity is tied to a prophetic vocation. He is not a king who rules as a dictator who oppresses the poor, but as one "who decides with equity for the meek the earth" (Isaiah 11:4). Just as the prophets of Israel spoke the word of God as a message of righteousness and justice, even so Jesus' messianic rule will be characterized by his siding for the poor and against all who oppress the weak. The royal, kingly majesty of Jesus the coming Son of Man is prophetic: he will judge according to his supernatural god-given ability to sniff out evil by what he smells, not by the outward appearance of things.

Second, I believe that African biblical scholars can be encouraged in their work by the reading above. Africa has comparatively little of what are normally considered exegetical resources, compared with the wealth of books and exegetical tools in the West. African culture, however, contains a wealth of resources which not only help to throw the light of scripture on the African context, but also throw the light of the African context on scripture. The continent which was for so long denigrated as "the dark continent" has amazing gifts of light to share with the world.

Footnotes

¹ “The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, Son of God.” There is a textual problem with Mark 1:1 as some manuscripts leave out the words “Son of God.” See Bruce M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament* (third ed.; London, New York: UBS, 1971). The possible absence of the phrase certainly does not alter the essence of any argument made here.

² This feature of the Gospel is often called the “Messianic Secret.” One does not need to agree with the arguments of William Wrede [*The Messianic Secret* (E.T., J.C.G. Greig; Greenwood, S.C.: The attic Press 1971[1901])] to note that there is a tendency within Mark’s work to see Jesus’ messianic identity as something which is often misunderstood and which Jesus wants kept quiet.

³ On the importance of these characters see Joel F. Williams, *Other Followers of Jesus: Minor Characters as Major Figures in Mark’s Gospel* (JSNTSup, 102; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994).

⁴ On faith as a feature of Mark see Christopher D. Marshall, *Faith as a Theme in Mark’s Narrative* (SNTSMS, 64; Cambridge: CUP, 1989).

⁵ It should be noted that I consider “Son of David,” “Son of God,” and “Son of Man” to be messianic terms. The case cannot be argued here but see N.T. Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God* (Christian Origins and the Question of God, 2; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1996).

⁶ For a discussion of the connection between the king and the temple see Donna Runnalls, “The King as Temple-Builder: A Messianic Typology,” pp. 15-37 in E.J. Furcha, ed. *Spirit Within Structure: Essays in Honor of George Johnston on the Occasion of His Seventieth Birthday* (Allison Park: Pickwick, 1983).

⁷ For a thorough discussion of the royal language and imagery in Mark 15 see, Frank Matera, *The Kingship of Jesus: Composition and Theology in Mark 15* (SBL dissertation series, 66; Chico: Scholars Press, 1982).

⁸ Note that, at least in Mark’s gospel it is the Sanhedrin, not guards or those holding Jesus who are the abusers.

⁹ Horsley, *Jesus and Empire: The Kingdom of God and the New World Disorder* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2003), especially p. 94.

¹⁰ Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God*, 196-97.

¹¹ The recent secondary literature on the temple incident is formidably large. See especially William Telford, *The Barren Temple and the Withered Tree: A Redaction-Critical Analysis of the Cursing of the Fig-Tree Pericope in Mark’s Gospel and Its Relation to the Cleansing of the Temple Tradition* (JSNTSup, 1; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1980); E.P. Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism* (London: SCM, 1985), 61-76; N.T. Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God*, 490-93.

¹² It should be noted that, contrary to most translations which imply that Peter’s curse was “on himself” (RSV, NIV) it is likely that the grammar is not to be taken in a reflexive sense, but that the curse was actually directed at Jesus, a fact which would no doubt have made Peter’s remorse (14:72) all the more significant. Mark reports that Peter did what both Paul and Pliny say it is not possible for true Christians to do (1 Cor 12:1; Pliny Ep. 10.96.5). For the argument see R.T. France, *The Gospel of Mark* (NIGTC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), 617-18.

¹³ This suggestion was first made, as far as I can tell, by Gustaf Dalman: “It is possible to understand the ‘I’ in a prophetic sense, i.e. as referring to God, as in Jeremiah’s announcement of the destruction of the temple (Jer vii.14), and like the ‘I’ in our Lord’s *logion* concerning Jerusalem’s children (Mt. xxii.37). If so, then Jesus referred to God as the builder of the temple of the future.” [*Sacred Sites and Ways: Studies in the Topography of the Gospels*. (E.T., P. Levertoff; London: SPCK, 1935), 306-307]. Apparently

independently of Dalman, the thesis that Jesus' announced of the temple's destruction and rebuilding as a prophet speaking in the name of God has also been advocated by Richard Horsley [*Jesus and Empire*]: "The clever Markan narrator may be portraying the high priests and elders as thick-headed, unacquainted with the form of prophetic pronouncements and uncomprehending of their ominous import. In their density they think that in saying something like 'I will destroy the temple' he meant that he himself would do so. But if he had delivered such an utterance in prophecy, then he would have been speaking as the mouthpiece of God, in the same way that earlier Israelite prophets had done" (p. 96).

¹⁴ One immediately thinks of the anointing of David as king by Samuel while Saul is still in office (1 Samuel 16) and of Nathan's denunciation of David after his adultery with Bathsheba and his murder of Uriah (2 Samuel 11-12).

¹⁵ James L. Kugel, "David the Prophet," pp. 45-55 in James L. Kugel, ed. *Poetry and Prophecy: The Beginnings of a Literary Tradition* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990).

¹⁶ Meeks, *The Prophet-King: Moses Traditions and the Johannine Christology* (Supplements to *Novum Testamentum*, 14; Leiden: Brill, 1967).

¹⁷ *Dämonenfurcht und Dämonenabwehr* (BWANT, 90; Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1970), 298-306; *Das Neue Testament und die dämonischen Mächte* (SBS, 58; Stuttgart: KBW, 1972), 49.

¹⁸ It is possible that other texts in the NT reveal belief in the evil eye. When Paul asks the Galatians, "Who has bewitched you?" (Gal 3:1) it is likely that the rhetoric has its origins in such a concept. H.D. Betz point out that the verb 'baskainō' is "related to magic, especially the 'evil eye'." [*Galatians: A Commentary on Paul's Letter to the Churches in Galatia* (Hermeneia; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979).]

¹⁹ See the rebuttal of Böcher's evidence in Robert H. Gundry, *Mark: A Commentary on His Apology for the Cross* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993), 919.

²⁰ Note that it is likely that the "some" who abuse Jesus in 14:65 are members of the Sanhedrin, although it is possible that the abusers, or some of the abusers, may have been the "false witnesses" of 14:57. Luke appears to distance himself from the implication of Mark (and Matthew 26:66-67) by saying that the abuse came from "those who were holding Jesus" (Luke 22:63).

²¹ For parallels to the game of "blind man's bluff" see, D.L. Miller, "EMPAIZEIN: Playing the Mock Game," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 90 (1971): 309-13.

²² J.D.M. Derrett, in *Law in the New Testament* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1973), Otto Betz, *Aufstieg und Niedergang der Römischen Welt II* 25/1, 637-39; J.C. O'Neill, "The Mocking of Bar Kochba and Jesus," *Journal for the Study of Judaism* 31/1 (2000): 39-41.

²³ See Emil Shürer, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ (175 B.C. – A.D. 135)*, I (Revised and Edited by Geza Vermes and Fergus Millar; (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1973), 534-537.

²⁴ J.C. O'Neill points out that the only other evidence we have about the death of Bar Kochba (Eusebius *Ecclesiastical History* 4,6,3) points to his execution at the hands of the Romans in AD 134/135 (the eighteenth year of Hadrian). O'Neill concludes from this that the Talmud has transformed a story which was originally about Jesus into a story about Bar Kochba. O'Neill's suggestion is intriguing, but its veracity really has no effect on the argument made in the present paper.

²⁵ Ritchie, "The Nose Knows: Bodily Knowing in Isaiah 11.3," *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 87 (2002): 59-73.

²⁶ It would be fascinating to do a survey of African translations to see if any have preserved the olfactory language of the Hebrew text. My suspicion is that most African translations have simply followed an English or French exemplar.

²⁷ B. Duhm, *Das Buch Jesaja* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1914), 106; quoted in Ritchie, "The Nose Knows," 69.

²⁸ See the article of Jeremiah Untermann, "The (Non)Sense of Smell in Isaiah 11.3," *Hebrew Studies* 33 (1992), 17-23. Untermann is unable to "make sense" of the text the way it stands and so he attempts to trace how the supposed textual variant of Isaiah 11:3 came to be.

²⁹ Ritchie, "The Nose Knows," 68; quoting Calvin, *Isaiah Commentary* (Edinburgh: Calvin Translation Society, 1850), 250.

³⁰ Ritchie, "The Nose Knows," 63.

³¹ Ritchie, "The Nose Knows," 64-65.

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