



eCOMMONS

Loyola University Chicago
Loyola eCommons

Dissertations

Theses and Dissertations

2013

John the Baptist and the Jewish Setting of Matthew

Brian C. Dennert
Loyola University Chicago

Follow this and additional works at: https://ecommons.luc.edu/luc_diss



Part of the [Religious Thought, Theology and Philosophy of Religion Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Dennert, Brian C., "John the Baptist and the Jewish Setting of Matthew" (2013). *Dissertations*. 719.
https://ecommons.luc.edu/luc_diss/719

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Theses and Dissertations at Loyola eCommons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Dissertations by an authorized administrator of Loyola eCommons. For more information, please contact ecommons@luc.edu.



This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial-No Derivative Works 3.0 License](#).
Copyright © 2013 Brian C. Dennert

LOYOLA UNIVERSITY CHICAGO

JOHN THE BAPTIST AND THE JEWISH SETTING OF MATTHEW

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO
THE FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL
IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

PROGRAM IN THEOLOGY

BY

BRIAN C. DENNERT

CHICAGO, IL

DECEMBER 2013

Copyright by Brian C. Dennert, 2013
All rights reserved.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

There are many people without whose support I would neither have started nor completed this project. First of all, I would like to thank the Theology Department of Loyola University Chicago for admitting me into the doctoral program and securing funding for me. The faculty and students in the Department created an atmosphere that both encouraged me and challenged me in my studies, and I thank them for their influence on my development as a scholar. I am also grateful for the administrative help provided by Catherine Wolf and Marianne Wolfe throughout my time at Loyola.

I want to thank each of the members of my dissertation committee. My director, Dr. Edmondo Lupieri, deserves a special thank you for serving as a great director for this project and for being a mentor to me throughout my studies at Loyola. Dr. Thomas H. Tobin, SJ and Dr. Nicholas Perrin offered helpful critiques of my argumentation and style, and I am thankful for their willingness to serve on my committee.

The men, women, and children at Trinity Presbyterian Church have cared for me over the past four years and continually reminded me why I undertook this endeavor in the first place. I have been blessed with wonderful parents, Rick and Lea Dennert, who have supported every venture in my life. Finally, I must thank my wife, Beth, and our children, Emma and Micah. Beth believed in my ability to complete this dissertation even more than I did, and I would not have done it without her support.

To Beth

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iii
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	ix
ABSTRACT	xiv
CHAPTER 1: <i>STATUS QUAESTIONIS</i> AND OVERVIEW OF PROJECT	1
Introduction	1
History of Research and <i>Status Quaestionis</i>	2
Matthew and Judaism	2
John the Baptist	12
John the Baptist in Matthew	23
<i>Status Quaestionis</i> and the Contribution of This Project	31
Approach of the Project	33
Positions Regarding Sources, Date, and Intended Audience	33
Methodology	40
Summary of Argument and Chapters	44
CHAPTER 2: JOHN THE BAPTIST IN FOUR FIRST- OR EARLY SECOND- CENTURY TEXTS	47
Introduction	47
The Baptist in Mark	48
Evidence	49
Mark 1:1–15	50
Mark 2:18–22	54
Mark 6:14–29	55
Mark 8:28	57
Mark 9:11–13	58
Mark 11:27–33	60
Evaluation	61
The Baptist in Luke-Acts	64
Evidence	65
Luke	65
Luke 1:5–80	66
Luke 3:1–22	70
Luke 5:33–39	76
Luke 7:18–35	77
Luke 9:7–9	81
Luke 9:18–21	82
Luke 11:1–4	83
Luke 16:16	83
Luke 20:1–8	85
Acts	85

Acts 1:4–5	86
Acts 1:21–22	87
Acts 10:34–43	87
Acts 11:15–17	88
Acts 13:23–25	88
Acts 18:24–19:7	90
Evaluation	94
The Baptist in John	96
Evidence	99
John 1:6–8, 15	99
John 1:19–42	102
John 3:22–4:3	107
John 5:33–36	112
John 10:40–41	114
Evaluation	115
The Baptist in Josephus’ <i>Jewish Antiquities</i>	117
Evidence	121
Evaluation	127
Conclusion: Synthesis and Summary	130
CHAPTER 3: MATTHEW 21:23–32 AND 17:10–13	134
Introduction	134
Matthew 21:23–32	136
Introduction	136
Redaction and Context	137
The Crowd’s View of John as a Prophet	143
The Jewish Leaders’ Failure to Believe John	145
John Came in the “Way of Righteousness”	152
The Belief of Tax Collectors and Prostitutes	160
Summary of Matthew 21:23–32	167
Matthew 17:10–13	168
Introduction	168
Redaction and Context	169
The Understanding of the Disciples and the Failure of the Religious Leaders to Understand	173
The Rejection of the Promised Elijah	176
The Role of the Passage in the Dispute with Matthew’s Jewish Opponents	181
Summary of Matthew 17:10–13	185
Conclusion	186
CHAPTER 4: MATTHEW 3:1–17	188
Introduction	188
Content and Redaction	188
Introduction	188
Matthew 3:1–6	189

Matthew 3:7–12	211
Matthew 3:13–17	228
The Depiction of the Baptist in Matthew 3:1–17 in Relation with 17:10–13 and 21:23–32	238
The Relationship of Themes in Matthew 3:1–17 to the Jewish Setting of Matthew	242
Introduction	242
The Similarities between John and Jesus	243
Jesus’ Ministry as the Culmination of John’s Ministry	249
Summary	251
Conclusion	252
CHAPTER 5: MATTHEW 9:14–17 AND 11:2–19	254
Introduction	254
Matthew 9:14–17	255
Introduction	255
Content and Redaction	257
Implications for the Role of the Matthean Baptist in the Gospel’s Setting	269
Matthew 11:2–19	271
Introduction	271
Context	273
Matthew 11:2–6	277
Matthew 11:7–15	285
Matthew 11:16–19	300
Summary and Synthesis of Matthew 11:2–19	312
Implications for the Role of the Matthean Baptist in the Gospel’s Setting	313
Conclusion	316
CHAPTER 6: MATTHEW 4:12, 14:1–13a, AND 16:14	318
Introduction	318
Matthew 4:12	319
Matthew 14:1–13a	327
Introduction	327
Context	328
Matthew 14:1–2	331
Excursus: John the Baptist in Matthew 16:14	335
Matthew 14:3–13a	339
Implications for the Role of the Matthean Baptist in the Gospel’s Setting	355
Conclusion	357
CHAPTER 7: SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS	360
Synthesis of Study	360
Significance in Dialogue with Previous Studies	365
Suggestions for Further Research	366
BIBLIOGRAPHY	372

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Modern Bible Editions and Translations

Abbreviations for modern editions and versions of the Bible are those of *The SBL Handbook of Style: For Ancient Near Eastern, Biblical, and Early Christian Studies* (ed. Patrick H. Alexander et al.; Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1999) with the following additions:

ESV	English Standard Version. Wheaton, IL, 2001
HCSB	Holman Christian Standard Bible. Nashville, 1999, 2000, 2002, 2003, 2009
NET	New English Translation. Garland, TX: 1996–2006
SBLGNT	Holmes, Michael, ed. <i>The Greek New Testament: SBL Edition</i> . Atlanta, 2010

Primary Sources: Ancient Texts

Abbreviations of primary sources (ancient texts) are those of *The SBL Handbook of Style: For Ancient Near Eastern, Biblical, and Early Christian Studies* (ed. Patrick H. Alexander et al.; Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1999), with the following addition:

<i>Op. imp. Matt.</i>	<i>Opus imperfectum in Matthaeum</i>
-----------------------	--------------------------------------

Secondary Sources

AB	Anchor Bible
ABD	<i>Anchor Bible Dictionary</i> . Edited by D. N. Freedman. 6 vols. New York, 1992
ABRL	Anchor Bible Reference Library
ACCSNT	Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture: New Testament
ACT	Ancient Christian Texts
AJT	<i>American Journal of Theology</i>
AnBib	Analecta biblica

ANRW	<i>Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt: Geschichte und Kultur Roms im Spiegel der neueren Forschung.</i> Edited by H. Temporini and W. Haase. Berlin, 1972–
ANTC	Abingdon New Testament Commentaries
ASE	<i>Annali di Storia dell'Esegesi</i>
AsSeign	<i>Assemblées du Seigneur</i>
ASTI	<i>Annual of the Swedish Theological Institute</i>
ATANT	Abhandlungen zur Theologie des Alten und Neuen Testaments
ATDan	Acta theologica danica
AThR	<i>Anglican Theological Review</i>
AUSS	<i>Andrews University Seminary Studies</i>
BBR	<i>Bulletin of Biblical Research</i>
BDAG	Bauer, W., F. W. Danker, W. F. Arndt, and F. W. Gingrich. <i>Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature.</i> 3d ed. Chicago, 1999
BDF	Blass, F., A. Debrunner, and R. W. Funk. <i>A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature.</i> Chicago, 1961
BECNT	Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament
BETL	Bibliotheca ephemeridum theologiarum lovaniensium
BG	Biblische Gestalten
Bib	<i>Biblica</i>
BIS	Biblical Interpretation Series
BJRL	<i>Bulletin of the John Rylands Library</i>
BJS	Brown Judaic Studies
BR	<i>Biblical Research</i>
BT	<i>The Bible Translator</i>
BWANT	Beiträge zur Wissenschaft vom Alten und Neuen Testament
BZ	<i>Biblische Zeitschrift</i>
BZNW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft
CBQ	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>
CBQMS	Catholic Biblical Quarterly Monograph Series
CNT	Commentaire du Nouveau Testament
Colloq	<i>Colloquium</i>
CTR	<i>Criswell Theological Review</i>
CurTM	<i>Currents in Theology and Mission</i>
DJG	<i>Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels.</i> Edited by J. B. Green and S. McKnight. Downers Grove, IL, 1992
DSD	<i>Dead Sea Discoveries</i>
ECC	Eerdmans Critical Commentary
EuroJTh	<i>European Journal of Theology</i>
ETL	<i>Ephemerides theologicae lovanienses</i>
EvQ	<i>Evangelical Quarterly</i>
EvT	<i>Evangelische Theologie</i>

<i>ExpTim</i>	<i>Expository Times</i>
FC	Fathers of the Church. Washington, 1947–
<i>FO</i>	<i>Folia orientalia</i>
FRLANT	Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments
GBS	Guides to Biblical Scholarship
<i>HALOT</i>	Koehler, L., W. Baumgartner, and J. J. Stamm, <i>The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament</i> . Translated and edited under the supervision of M. E. J. Richardson. 4 vols. Leiden, 1994–99
HBS	Herders biblische Studien
<i>HBT</i>	<i>Horizons in Biblical Theology</i>
HNT	Handbuch zum Neuen Testament
<i>HTR</i>	<i>Harvard Theological Review</i>
HTS	Harvard Theological Studies
<i>HUCA</i>	<i>Hebrew Union College Annual</i>
<i>HvTst</i>	<i>Hervormde teologiese studies</i>
IBC	Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching
IBT	Interpreting Biblical Texts
ICC	International Critical Commentary
<i>IDB</i>	<i>The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible</i> . Edited by G. A. Buttrick. 4 vols. Nashville, 1962
<i>Imm</i>	<i>Immanuel</i>
<i>Int</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>
IRT	Issues in Religion and Theology
<i>JBL</i>	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
<i>JBR</i>	<i>Journal of Bible and Religion</i>
<i>JES</i>	<i>Journal of Ecumenical Studies</i>
<i>JETS</i>	<i>Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society</i>
<i>JJS</i>	<i>Journal of Jewish Studies</i>
<i>JQR</i>	<i>Jewish Quarterly Review</i>
<i>JSHJ</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the Historical Jesus</i>
<i>JSJ</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic, and Roman Periods</i>
JSJSup	Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic, and Roman Periods: Supplement Series
<i>JSNT</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the New Testament</i>
JSNTSup	Journal for the Study of the New Testament: Supplement Series
<i>JSP</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha</i>
JSPSup	Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha: Supplement Series
<i>JSSR</i>	<i>Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion</i>
<i>JTS</i>	<i>Journal of Theological Studies</i>
<i>JTSA</i>	<i>Journal of Theology for Southern Africa</i>
<i>JWSTP</i>	<i>Jewish Writings of the Second Temple Period: Apocrypha, Pseudepigrapha, Qumran Sectarian Writings, Philo, Josephus.</i>

	Edited by M. E. Stone. <i>Compendia rerum iudaicarum ad Novum Testamentum</i> 2.2. Assen/Philadelphia, 1984
<i>Jud</i>	<i>Judaica</i>
KEK	Kritisch-exegetischer Kommentar über das Neue Testament (Meyer-Kommentar)
LCL	Loeb Classical Library
LNTS	Library of New Testament Studies
LSJ	Liddell, H. G., R. Scott, H. S. Jones, <i>A Greek-English Lexicon</i> . 9th ed. with revised supplement. Oxford, 1996
MBI	Methods in Biblical Interpretation
MM	Moulton, J. H., and G. Milligan. <i>Illustrated from Papyri and Other Non-Literary Sources</i> . 1930. Reprint, Grand Rapids, 1972
NAC	New American Commentary
NCB	New Century Bible
NCBC	New Cambridge Bible Commentary
<i>Neot</i>	<i>Neotestamentica</i>
<i>NIB</i>	<i>The New Interpreter's Bible</i>
NICNT	New International Commentary on the New Testament
<i>NIDNTT</i>	<i>New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology</i> . Edited by C. Brown. 4 vols. Grand Rapids, 1975–85
NIGTC	New International Greek Testament Commentary
<i>NovT</i>	<i>Novum Testamentum</i>
NovTSup	Novum Testamentum Supplements
<i>NPNF¹</i>	<i>Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Series 1</i>
NTAbh	Neutestamentliche Abhandlungen
NTL	New Testament Library
<i>NTS</i>	<i>New Testament Studies</i>
<i>NTT</i>	<i>Norsk Teologisk Tidsskrift</i>
ÖBS	Österreichische biblische Studien
OLA	Orientalia lovaniensia analecta
OTL	Old Testament Library
PTS	Paderborner Theologische Studien
<i>R&T</i>	<i>Religion and Theology</i>
<i>ResQ</i>	<i>Restoration Quarterly</i>
RNT	Regensburger Neues Testament
<i>RTL</i>	<i>Revue théologique de Louvain</i>
<i>RTR</i>	<i>Reformed Theological Review</i>
SANT	Studien zum Alten und Neuen Testaments
SBB	Stuttgarter biblische Beiträge
SBLDS	Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series
SBLBS	Society of Biblical Literature Sources for Biblical Study
<i>SBLSP</i>	<i>Society of Biblical Literature Seminar Papers</i>
SBLSymS	Society of Biblical Literature Symposium Series
<i>ScEs</i>	<i>Science et esprit</i>
<i>SJT</i>	<i>Scottish Journal of Theology</i>

SNT	Studien zum Neuen Testament
SNTI	Studies in New Testament Interpretation
SNTSMS	Society of New Testament Studies Monograph Series
<i>SNTSU</i>	<i>Studien zum Neuen Testament und seiner Umwelt</i>
SP	Sacra pagina
SR	<i>Studies in Religion</i>
SSEJC	Studies in Scripture in Early Judaism and Christianity
ST	<i>Studia theologica</i>
StBib	Studi Biblici
STDJ	Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah
StPB	Studia post-biblica
Str-B	Strack, H. L., and P. Billerbeck. <i>Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrasch</i> . 6 vols. Munich, 1922–61
<i>StudLit</i>	<i>Studica Liturgica</i>
TC	<i>TC: A Journal of Biblical Textual Criticism</i>
TDNT	<i>Theological Dictionary of the New Testament</i> . Edited by G. Kittel and G. Friedrich. Translated by G. W. Bromily. 10 vols. Grand Rapids, 1964–1976
<i>Theol</i>	<i>Theologica</i>
<i>ThViat</i>	<i>Theologia viatorum</i>
TLNT	Spicq, C. <i>Theological Lexicon of the New Testament</i> . Translated and edited by J. D. Ernest. 3 vols. Peabody, MA, 1994
TLZ	<i>Theologische Literaturzeitung</i>
TNTC	Tyndale New Testament Commentary
TSAJ	Texte und Studien zum antiken Judentum
TTZ	<i>Trierer theologische Zeitschrift</i>
<i>TynBul</i>	<i>Tyndale Bulletin</i>
TZ	<i>Theologische Zeitschrift</i>
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary
WMANT	Wissenschaftliche Monographien zum Alten und Neuen Testament
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
WW	<i>Word and World</i>
ZDPV	<i>Zeitschrift des deutschen Palästina-Vereins</i>
ZECNT	Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament
ZNW	<i>Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche</i>
ZTK	<i>Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche</i>

ABSTRACT

Although recent discussions on the Gospel of Matthew have emphasized the document's setting within first-century Judaism, these studies have not analyzed how the figure of John the Baptist functions within this setting. The failure to address the significance of the Baptist for the Gospel's Jewish setting is striking because recent study on the historical Baptist has emphasized his ministry and place within first-century Judaism. Therefore, this dissertation places a perennial topic within a new framework, believing that attention to the Jewish setting of the Gospel may prompt fresh observations and explanations of the role of John the Baptist within the Gospel of Matthew.

The overarching argument of this work is that Matthew presents Jesus to be the continuation and culmination of John's ministry in order to strengthen the claims of Matthew's group within its Jewish setting and to vilify the opponents of his group. This argument is developed upon both external (texts roughly contemporaneous with Matthew showing respect given to John the Baptist at the time of Matthew's composition) and internal grounds (the distinctive portrait of John offered by Matthew in which the Baptist is more closely connected to Jesus and rejected by Jewish authorities). The connections made between John and Jesus would encourage Jews yet to align with Matthew's group, particularly those who see the Baptist to be a figure who spoke the will of God, to gravitate towards Matthew's group and away from the opponents of Matthew's group.

CHAPTER 1

STATUS QUAESTIONIS AND OVERVIEW OF PROJECT

Introduction

In examining the role of John the Baptist within the Jewish setting of the Gospel of Matthew, the present project stands at the intersection of two burgeoning areas of scholarship (Matthean studies and study of John the Baptist) that can be surprisingly isolated from each other due to scholarly specialization and the glut of works produced within each field.¹ Therefore, rather than tackling a new issue, this study is an attempt to revisit a topic by placing it within a new framework and context, believing that attention to the Jewish setting of the Gospel of Matthew may prompt fresh observations and explanations for the role of the Matthean Baptist. After examining the developments of the research on Matthew and the figure of John the Baptist and revealing how the advances in each area have not yet been applied to the study of the Matthean Baptist, an overview of the project's approach (positions regarding sources, date, and intended audience; methodology) will appear, followed by a summary of the overarching argument of the work and the individual chapters.

¹ The sharp divide between the work of scholars doing "Jesus research" and commentators on the Gospels noted by Craig S. Keener may therefore also apply to studies in John the Baptist and Matthew (see *The Historical Jesus of the Gospels* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009], xxviii–xxx).

History of Research and *Status Quaestionis*

Since this dissertation integrates two areas of scholarship, it is important to note the developments in each area and survey the insights of those who have previously stood at this scholarly intersection. Therefore, this examination of the history of research will discuss research on Matthew and Judaism, research on John the Baptist in general, and discussions on the Matthean John, and it will conclude with an overview of the *status quaestionis* and contribution of this project.

Matthew and Judaism

Discussion of the audience and setting of Matthew begins with the earliest writers on Matthew.² Eusebius' *Ecclesiastical History* includes Irenaeus' statement that Matthew published a written gospel "among the Hebrews" (ἐν τοῖς Ἑβραίοις) (*Hist. Eccl.* 5.8.2=*Haer.* 3.1.1) and Origen's belief that Matthew wrote "to believing people from Judaism" (τοῖς ἀπὸ Ἰουδαϊσμοῦ πιστεύουσιν) (*Hist. Eccl.* 6.25.4). Eusebius himself advocates a similar position, stating that Matthew had first preached to the "Hebrews" (Ἑβραίοις) and wrote his gospel as a way to continue to be present with them when he traveled to other

² The survey of Matthean research will remain limited to the question of the Jewish audience and setting of the Gospel. Of continuing value for the history of Matthean scholarship are Graham N. Stanton, "The Origin and Purpose of Matthew's Gospel: Matthean Scholarship from 1945–1980," *ANRW* II.25.3 (1985): 1889–951 (with updates appearing in idem, "Introduction: Matthew's Gospel in Recent Scholarship," in *The Interpretation of Matthew* [ed. Graham N. Stanton; 2d ed.; SNTI; Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1995], 1–26); Donald Senior, *What Are They Saying about Matthew?* (rev. ed.; New York: Paulist, 1996). For examinations of current trends in Matthean studies, see Daniel M. Gurtner, "The Gospel of Matthew from Stanton to Present: A Survey of Some Recent Developments," in *Jesus, Matthew's Gospel, and Early Christianity* (ed. Daniel M. Gurtner, Joel Willitts, and Richard A. Burridge; LNTS 435; London: T & T Clark, 2011), 23–38; Donald Senior, "Matthew at the Crossroads of Early Christianity: An Introductory Assessment," in *Matthew's Gospel: At the Crossroads of Early Christianity* (ed. Donald Senior; BETL 243; Leuven: Peeters, 2011), 3–23.

peoples (*Hist. Eccl.* 3.24.6). Therefore, the “traditional” position views Matthew as written for Jews.³

While the emergence of critical scholarship challenged ideas such as the priority of Matthew, its Hebrew origin, and its apostolic authorship, this scholarship seems to have continued to believe that Matthew was written by a Jew and emphasized a Jewish background to the first Gospel. For example, Benjamin W. Bacon highlighted the Jewish background of the Gospel in arguing that Matthew features five “books” in imitation of the Pentateuch to reflect a new law.⁴ The Jewish setting of the Gospel also emerges in Ernst von Dobschütz’s discussion of Matthew, as he posits that the “first evangelist is plainly a Jewish Christian who has undergone a rabbinic schooling.”⁵

Günther Bornkamm’s “Die Sturmstillung im Matthäusevangelium” (1948) marks an important methodological turning point in the study of Matthew in its use of redaction criticism,⁶ but the nearly contemporaneous *The Origins of the Gospel according to St. Matthew* by George D. Kilpatrick (1946) serves as a watershed regarding the issue of the Gospel’s relationship to Judaism. In this work, Kilpatrick notes that “the opposition

³ Also see Irenaeus, *Fragments from the Lost Writings of Irenaeus* 29; Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 1.22–23, 6.162. The view that Matthew wrote for Jews also appears in John Chrysostom, *Hom. Matt.* 1.3; Jerome, *Prol. in Mt.*; Gregory of Nazianzus, *Carmina dogmatica* 1.12.6–9 (for Gregory’s text, see Margaret Mitchell, “Patristic Counter-Evidence to the Claim that ‘The Gospels Were Written for All Christians,’” *NTS* 51 [2005]: 36); *Op. imp. Matt.* 1. While most writers discuss both the Hebrew original and Jewish audience of the Gospel (an exception of those listed above being Gregory of Nazianzus), some describe Matthew writing in Hebrew without discussing the audience of the work (see Augustine, *Cons.* 1.2.4; cf. Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.* 3.39.16; 5.10.3).

⁴ See Benjamin W. Bacon, *Studies in Matthew* (New York: Holt, 1930). Bacon’s theory first appears in his “The Five Books of Moses against the Jews,” *The Expositor* 15 (1918): 56–66.

⁵ Ernst von Dobschütz, “Matthew as Rabbi and Catechist,” in *The Interpretation of Matthew* (ed. Graham Stanton; IRT 3; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983 [German orig. 1928]), 19–29, esp. 24–26 (quotation on 24).

⁶ An English translation appears in Günther Bornkamm, Gerhard Barth, and Heinz Joachim Held, *Tradition and Interpretation in Matthew* (trans. Percy Scott; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1963), 52–57.

between the Christian and the Pharisee is for the evangelist an opposition *within* Judaism.”⁷ Bornkamm would affirm this perspective in “Enderwartung und Kirche im Matthäusevangelium” (1956), stating that “Matthew’s Gospel confirms throughout that the congregation which he represented had not yet separated from Judaism. . . . The struggle with Israel is still within its own walls.”⁸ A number of scholars would follow Bornkamm’s lead and also advocate an *intra muros* setting for the Gospel.⁹ This position was not universal, as others (including Bornkamm in his later work) argue for an *extra muros* setting.¹⁰ This contrasting position, however, still underscores a Jewish context for Matthew since the community sought to define itself in relation to other Jewish groups.¹¹

⁷ George D. Kilpatrick, *The Origins of the Gospel according to St. Matthew* (rev. ed.; Oxford: Clarendon, 1950 [orig. 1946]), 122 (emphasis added). Although some scholars place Kilpatrick within the *extra muros* camp (e.g., Gurtner, “The Gospel of Matthew,” 29 n. 35), it seems best to interpret Kilpatrick’s analysis as a precursor to the *intra muros* position (Stanton, “The Origin and Purpose,” 1911–12). The dispute over Kilpatrick’s view may stem from the fact that Kilpatrick was one of the first writers to explore this issue and might lack some precision in comparison to later writers.

⁸ An English translation appears in Bornkamm, Barth, and Held, *Tradition and Interpretation*, 15–51 (quotation on 39).

⁹ E.g., William D. Davies, *The Setting of the Sermon on the Mount* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1964); Reinhart Hummel, *Die Auseinandersetzung zwischen Kirche und Judentum im Matthäusevangelium* (Munich: Kaiser, 1966); Michael D. Goulder, *Midrash and Lection in Matthew* (London: SPCK, 1974).

¹⁰ See Günther Bornkamm, “The Authority to ‘Bind’ and ‘Loose’ in the Church in Matthew’s Gospel,” in *The Interpretation of Matthew* (ed. Graham Stanton; IRT 3; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983 [German orig. 1970]), 83–97, esp. 95. For other arguments for *extra muros*, see e.g., Krister Stendahl, *The School of St. Matthew and its Use of the Old Testament* (2d ed.; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1968 [orig. 1954]), xiii–xiv; Douglas R. A. Hare, *The Theme of Jewish Persecution of Christians in the Gospel of Matthew* (SNTSMS 6; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967); David E. Garland, *The Intention of Matthew 23* (NovTSup 23; Leiden: Brill, 1979).

¹¹ See Stanton, “The Origin and Purpose,” 1914–15, who notes that this view is a bit of a “mediating position.” A similar view appears in the classification of the works by C. F. D. Moule and Eduard Schweizer in Boris Repschinski, *The Controversy Stories in the Gospel of Matthew: Their Redaction, Form and Relevance for the Relationship between the Matthean Community and Formative Judaism* (FRLANT 189; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2000), 28.

A parallel development during this period was the view that Matthew was written by a Gentile.¹² The seminal work in this direction is Kenneth W. Clark's "The Gentile Bias of Matthew" (1947), in which he claims that belief in the "Jewishness" of Matthew stems more from tradition than study of the Gospel because "the customary arguments [for Jewish authorship] beg the question for Jewish authorship."¹³ In his study, Clark points out a "gentile bias" in Matthew and argues that the Evangelist "was a gentile Christian who wrote his gospel in Syria."¹⁴ Clark's opinion found supporters in Poul Nepper-Christensen (1958), Wolfgang Trilling (1959), and Georg Strecker (1962).¹⁵ A number of scholars in the 1970's and early 1980's would further espouse this theory.¹⁶

¹² There had been earlier attempts to posit a Gentile setting of Matthew; see Repschinski's discussion of Eduard Reuss in *The Controversy Stories*, 15.

¹³ *JBL* 66 (1947): 165–72 (quotation on 171).

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 172.

¹⁵ Poul Nepper-Christensen, *Das Matthäusevangelium, Ein judenchristliches Evangelium?* (ATDan 1; Aarhus: Universitetsforlaget, 1958); Wolfgang Trilling, *Das wahre Israel: Studien zur Theologie des Matthäus-Evangeliums* (3d ed.; SANT 10; Munich: Kösel, 1964 [orig. 1959]); Georg Strecker, *Der Weg der Gerechtigkeit: Untersuchung zur Theologie des Mätthaus* (3d ed.; FRLANT 82; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1971 [orig. 1962]). Nepper-Christensen's work challenges the traditional view that the recipients of Matthew were Jewish, Trilling maintains that a Gentile community uses the Jewish tradition to contend that they are the "true Israel," and Strecker distinguishes between an early Jewish Christian phase and a Gentile redaction at the time of the Gospel's composition.

¹⁶ See esp. Sjef van Tilborg, *The Jewish Leaders in Matthew* (Leiden: Brill, 1972), 171; John P. Meier, *Law and History in Matthew's Gospel* (AnBib 71; Rome: Biblical Institute, 1976), 14–21. Others who maintain Gentile authorship of Matthew include David Flusser, "Two Anti-Jewish Montages in Matthew," *Imm* 5 (1975): 37–45; Lloyd Gaston, "The Messiah of Israel as Teacher of the Gentiles: The Setting of Matthew's Christology," *Int* 21 (1975): 24–40; Michael J. Cook, "Interpreting 'Pro-Jewish' Passages in Matthew," *HUCA* 54 (1983): 135–46. William D. Davies and Dale C. Allison (*A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to Saint Matthew* [3 vols.; ICC; Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1988–1997], 1:10–11) also cite Rolf Walker (*Die Heilgeschichte im ersten Evangelium* [FRLANT 91; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1967]), Wilhelm Pesch ("Theologische Aussagen der Redaktion von Matthäus 23," *Orientierung an Jesus: Zur Theologie der Synoptiker. Für Josef Schmid* [ed. Paul Hoffman, Norbert Brox, and Wilhelm Pesch; Freiburg: Herder, 1973], 286–99), Hubert Frankemölle (*Jahwebund und Kirche Christi* [NTAbh 10; Münster: Aschendorff, 1974]), and Schuyler Brown ("The Matthean Community and the Gentile Mission," *NovT* 22 [1980]: 193–221) as advocates for Gentile authorship, although Brown does not explicitly declare Matthew to be a Gentile (see *ibid.*, 217–18 n. 18). A hybrid authorship view of an initial Jewish author and a later pro-Gentile author appears in F. M. Abel, "Who Wrote Matthew?" *NTS* 17 (1971): 138–52.

Although this view remained a minority position, it was a “vocal minority” and the theory was enshrined in John P. Meier’s article on Matthew in the *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, which states that “the theory of Matthew as a gentile Christian who had belonged to the Antiochene church ... , who revered the Jewish Christian tradition of his church, and who intended to preserve while interpreting them in his gospel seems to be able to explain all the data more easily.”¹⁷ The past twenty years have witnessed few advocating for Gentile authorship of Matthew, but Christopher M. Tuckett has recently revisited the question, claiming that Matthew’s misreading of the *Shema* in 22:37 raises the question of “how far Matthew had in fact participated in the (daily?) recital of the *Shema* within a Jewish context” and thus may indicate that Matthew “had not been ‘Jewish’ very long (if at all).”¹⁸ While raising the possibility that a Gentile wrote Matthew, Tuckett ultimately thinks that the audience was “predominantly Jewish” and maintains “that Matthew certainly stakes a claim to be very ‘Jewish,’ and hence perhaps implicitly not ‘Gentile.’”¹⁹

¹⁷ John P. Meier, “Matthew, Gospel of,” *ABD* 4:625–26 (quotation on 626). Meier himself acknowledges that this view is held by a “vocal minority of exegetes” (625). On the position remaining a minority one, see Robert K. McIver, “Twentieth Century Approaches to the Matthean Community,” *AUSS* 37 (1999): 32.

¹⁸ Christopher M. Tuckett, “Matthew: The Social and Historical Context – Jewish Christian and/or Gentile?” in *Matthew’s Gospel: At the Crossroads of Early Christianity* (ed. Donald Senior; BETL 243; Leuven: Peeters, 2011), 108–16 (quotation on 116). Tuckett seeks to refute the explanation for the treatment of the *Shema* in Matthew appearing in Paul Foster, “Why Did Matthew Get the Shema Wrong? A Study of Matthew 22:37,” *JBL* 122 (2003): 309–33, a work that defends the position that Matthew was a Jew against the arguments in Strecker, *Der Weg der Gerechtigkeit*, 25–26. Further supports for Tuckett’s challenge to the “standard position” are that “a strong concern for continuity with the Jewish tradition, and with Jewish scripture, need not be the preserve of a Jewish Christian alone” and that the lack of explanation of Jewish customs in Matthew “may say something about Matthew’s *readers* (or perhaps better his ‘implied readers’)” rather than the author (see “Matthew: The Social and Historical Context,” 109–10, [quotations on 109]). These factors do not necessarily point to Gentile authorship, but show that these arguments for Jewish authorship are ambiguous and that authorship and audience are different topics, as a Gentile could write to Jews.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 116, 128.

The argument for a Gentile orientation to the Gospel of Matthew appears to have waned with the rise of sociological approaches at the end of the twentieth century.²⁰ The scholar often seen as the pioneer in the use of sociological insights alongside of redactional and literary approaches in study of Matthew and its social context is Graham N. Stanton, whose work on Matthew using the social sciences culminated in *A Gospel for a New People* (1992).²¹ In this collection of essays, Stanton utilizes sociological insights concerning sects, social conflict, and legitimation as he compares Matthew with the *Damascus Document*, noting that both documents “explain and sustain the separate identity of communities which have parted company painfully with parent bodies.”²² Throughout the volume, Stanton argues that Matthew reflects a community recently separated from Judaism (*extra muros*).

²⁰ McIver, “Twentieth-Century Approaches,” 37 (cf. Gurtner, “The Gospel of Matthew,” 26). On the use of sociological approaches to help settle the impasse concerning the Gospel’s relation to Judaism, see Repschinski, *The Controversy Stories*, 28–56.

²¹ Graham N. Stanton, *A Gospel for a New People* (Louisville: John Knox, 1992). Stanton was by no means the first New Testament scholar to utilize the insights of the social sciences, particularly insights concerning sects, as scholars such as John G. Gager (*Kingdom and Community: The Social World of Early Christianity* [Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1973]) and Robin Scroggs (“The Earliest Christian Communities as Sectarian Movement,” in *Christianity, Judaism, and Other Greco-Roman Cults: Studies for Morton Smith at Sixty, Part II: Early Christianity* [ed. Jacob Neusner; Leiden: Brill, 1975], 1–23) had analyzed early Christianity in sociological terms. In many ways, Stanton’s work builds upon the approach of Philip F. Esler in *Community and Gospel in Luke-Acts: The Social and Political Motivations of Lucan Theology* (SNTSMS 57; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987). While working in the wake of these studies, Stanton does so critically, noting the limits of models and approaches used by others (*A Gospel for a New People*, 87–89).

²² See esp. Stanton, *A Gospel for a New People*, 85–107 (quotation on 107). Important works for Stanton’s analysis include Joseph Blenkinsopp, “Interpretation and Sectarian Tendencies: An Aspect of Second Temple History,” in *Jewish and Christian Self-Definition, Volume 2: Aspects of Judaism in the Greco-Roman Period* (ed. E. P. Sanders; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1981), 1–26; L. Michael White, “Shifting Sectarian Boundaries in Early Christianity,” *BJRL* 70 (1988): 7–24; Lewis Coser, *The Functions of Social Conflict* (New York: Free, 1956); Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1967). Stanton does not find Bryan Wilson’s typology and analysis of sects (found in e.g., *Magic and the Millennium: A Sociological Study of Religious Movements of Protest among Tribal and Third World Peoples* [London: Heinemann, 1973]) as useful as other writers maintain (e.g., Esler, *Community and Gospel*, 46–70), noting that Wilson’s

The use of sociological methods to help understand the Gospel's relationship to Judaism would appear in numerous works after Stanton's but with conclusions differing from his. Most notable among these studies are the monographs of J. Andrew Overman (1990), Anthony J. Saldarini (1994), David C. Sim (1999), and Boris Repschinski (2000), who all largely argue that the community was a sectarian movement within Judaism and thus *intra muros*.²³ Just when it seemed that a consensus may be emerging around the *intra muros* position, however, a number of writers have recently questioned this stance and argued that the community was *extra muros*.²⁴ Nonetheless, others continue to advocate for an *intra muros* perspective.²⁵ Meanwhile, those adopting the tools of literary

work is based on contemporary pluralistic cultures that would not match the realities of first-century Judaism (*A Gospel for a New People*, 90 n. 1).

²³ J. Andrew Overman, *Matthew's Gospel and Formative Judaism: The Social World of the Matthean Community* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1990); Anthony J. Saldarini, *Matthew's Christian-Jewish Community* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993); David C. Sim, *The Gospel of Matthew and Christian Judaism: The History and Social Setting of the Matthean Community* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1999); Repschinski, *The Controversy Stories*.

²⁴ E.g., Petri Luomanen, *Entering the Kingdom of Heaven: A Study of the Structure of Matthew's View of Salvation* (WUNT 2/101; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1998); Douglas Hare, "How Jewish is Matthew?" *CBQ* 62 (2000): 264–77; J. R. C. Cousland, *The Crowds in the Gospel of Matthew* (NovTSup 102; Leiden: Brill, 2002); Donald A. Hagner, "Matthew: Apostate, Reformer, Revolutionary?" *NTS* 49 (2003): 193–209; Paul Foster, *Community, Law and Mission in Matthew's Gospel* (WUNT 2/177; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004); Roland Deines, "Not the Law but the Messiah: Law and Righteousness in the Gospel of Matthew: An Ongoing Debate," in *Built Upon the Rock* (ed. John Nolland and Daniel Gurtner; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), 53–84; Elian Cuvillier, "Torah Observance and Radicalization in the First Gospel. Matthew and the First Century Judaism: A Contribution to the Debate," *NTS* 55 (2009): 144–59. Tuckett would also seem to fit within the *extra muros* camp; see "Matthew: The Social and Historical Context," 99–129, esp. 116–29.

²⁵ Those arguing for an *intra muros* position since the publication of some of the works listed in n. 24 that challenge the *intra muros* position include Frederick J. Murphy, "The Jewishness of Matthew: Another Look," in *When Judaism and Christianity Began: Essays in Memory of Anthony J. Saldarini* (ed. Alan Jeffery Avery-Peck, Daniel Harrington, and Jacob Neusner; 2 vols.; JSJSup 85; Leiden: Brill, 2004), 2:377–403; Jonathan A. Draper, "Do the *Didache* and Matthew Reflect an 'Irrevocable Parting of the Ways' with Judaism?" in *Matthew and the Didache: Two Documents from the Same Jewish-Christian Milieu?* (ed. Huub van de Sandt; Minneapolis: Fortress, 2005), 217–41; Warren Carter, "Matthew's Gospel: Jewish Christianity, Christian Judaism, or Neither?" in *Jewish Christianity Reconsidered: Rethinking Ancient Groups and Texts* (ed. Matt Jackson-McCabe; Minneapolis: Fortress, 2007), 155–79; Anders Runesson, "Rethinking Early Jewish-Christian Relations: Matthean Community History as Pharisaic Intragroup Conflict," *JBL* 127 (2008): 95–132; idem, "Judging Gentiles in the Gospel of

criticism avoid the debate, focusing on issues such as the implied author, implied reader, and narrative world rather than the actual author and audience.²⁶

A reason for the continuation of the *intra/extra muros* debate may be because the seemingly simplistic question of whether Matthew is “inside” or “outside” Judaism is actually tremendously complicated. Subtleties seem to separate the positions, and writers with similar discussions can come to different conclusions, making it difficult to classify the views of some scholars.²⁷ Furthermore, point of view can drastically alter one’s conclusions, as the community may be *intra muros* from the vantage point of Matthew

Matthew: Between ‘Othering’ and Inclusion,” in *Jesus, Matthew’s Gospel, and Early Christianity* (ed. Daniel M. Gurtner, Joel Willitts, and Richard A. Burridge; LNTS 435; London: T & T Clark, 2011), 133–51.

²⁶ E.g., David B. Howell, *Matthew’s Inclusive Story: A Story in the Narrative Rhetoric of the First Gospel* (JSNTSup 42; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1990); Janice Capel Anderson, *Matthew’s Narrative Web: Over, and Over, and Over Again* (JSNTSup 91; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1994); Richard A. Edwards, *Matthew’s Narrative Portrait of Disciples: How the Text-Connoted Reader Is Informed* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 1997); Jeanine K. Brown, *The Disciples in Narrative Perspective: The Portrayal and Function of the Matthean Disciples* (Atlanta: SBL, 2002). At times, writers using literary tools enter into discussion of the Matthean community’s historical and social setting; see Jack Dean Kingsbury, *Matthew as Story* (2d ed.; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1986), 147–60, who supports an *extra muros* position. Kingsbury’s discussion, however, emerges from his earlier work in composition criticism.

²⁷ Dispute over the placement of Amy-Jill Levine’s *The Social and Ethnic Dimensions of Matthean Salvation History* (Studies in the Bible and Early Christianity 14; Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen, 1988) illustrates the difficulty in classifying a scholar within a camp, as this work appears in the *intra muros* camp in the list in Deines, “Not the Law,” 53 n. 2, but in the *extra muros* camp in the list in Runesson, “Rethinking Early Jewish-Christian Relations,” 97 n. 4. Interestingly, Hare refers to comments of Levine appearing in *The Social and Ethnic Dimensions*, 10–11 as standing in agreement with his statements in *The Theme of Jewish Persecution*, a work traditionally placed in the *extra muros* camp, but Hare places her in the “growing consensus” of the Matthean community as a Jewish group (see “How Jewish is Matthew?” 264, 273). In “Between Two Worlds: Gentiles and Jews in Matthew’s Gospel,” *CBQ* 61 (1999): 4, Donald Senior places Levine among those who think the Matthean community would still identify itself as Jewish (*intra muros*), but he does not place her in this category in a later article (“Directions in Matthean Studies,” in *The Gospel of Matthew in Current Study: Studies in Memory of William G. Thompson, S. J.* [ed. David E. Aune; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001], 10). Levine’s more recent statement that Matthew “is, finally, a Christian, not a Jewish, text” (“Matthew’s Advice to a Divided Readership,” in *The Gospel of Matthew in Current Study: Studies in Memory of William G. Thompson, S. J.* [ed. David E. Aune; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001], 30) confirms her proper placement in the *extra muros* camp.

but *extra muros* in the eyes of rising Formative Judaism.²⁸ These complications have led some scholars to adopt mediating positions, such as claiming that the community is “within Judaism” but “on its way out”²⁹ or that “Matthew’s community is neither *intra-muros* nor *extra muros* but caught in between.”³⁰ The range of possibilities for the relationship of the Matthean community to Judaism offered on the basis of Matthew’s portrayal of Judaism serves as a reminder of the limits of reconstructing a social-historical context from a narrative text.³¹ In addition to these challenges, others highlight the complexity of the question in the historical setting of the Gospel (e.g., What would constitute a “break” with Judaism? How could one detect this in a document like Matthew?) and wonder if the question is possible to answer,³² especially in light of recent research calling into question an early date for the so-called “parting of the ways.”³³

²⁸ See Repschinski, *The Controversy Stories*, 343–47. Foster notes this tension in Repschinski’s work and uses it as part of his argument for an *extra muros* position (*Community, Law, and Mission*, 65–77).

²⁹ Evert Jan Vledder and A. G. van Aarde, “The Social Location of the Matthean Community,” *HvTSt* 51 (1995): 388–408.

³⁰ Senior, “Matthew at the Crossroads,” 6–15 (quotation on 15).

³¹ Cf. Amy-Jill Levine, “Matthew’s Portrayal of the Synagogue and Its Leaders,” in *Matthew’s Gospel: At the Crossroads of Early Christianity* (ed. Donald Senior; BETL 243; Leuven: Peeters, 2011), 192.

³² See e.g., Senior, “Directions in Matthean Studies,” 10–11; Donald A. Hagner, “Determining the Date of Matthew,” in *Jesus, Matthew’s Gospel, and Early Christianity* (ed. Daniel M. Gurtner, Joel Willitts, and Richard A. Burridge; LNTS 435; London: T & T Clark, 2011), 88–89; Gurtner, “Matthew from Stanton,” 29–31. Tuckett highlights the problematic nature of the terms “Jew,” “Gentile,” and “Jewish Christian” (“Matthew: The Social and Historical Context,” 100–8).

³³ On the questioning of the model of the “Parting of the Ways” between Christianity and Judaism, see Judith Lieu, “‘The Parting of the Ways’: Theological Construct or Historical Reality?” *JSNT* (1994): 101–19; Adam H. Becker and Annette Yoshiko Reed, eds., *The Ways That Never Parted: Jews and Christians in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages* (TSAJ 95; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003); Daniel Boyarin, *Border Lines: The Partition of Judaeo-Christianity* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005).

The ongoing debate concerning whether the community was *intra muros* or *extra muros* and the “scholarly instinct to differentiate one’s views from others”³⁴ may conceal an issue about which there does seem to be a consensus: the Gospel of Matthew belongs in a Jewish milieu, with the group debating and differentiating itself from other Jewish groups. Therefore, the issue is not whether the group is Jewish but “what *kind*” of Jewish group it is and how it perceives itself vis-à-vis other Jewish groups.³⁵ The current scholarly opinion is in a sense a refinement of the “traditional” position, as the document is once again being read in light of a Jewish social matrix and viewed as written by a Jewish believer in Jesus³⁶ in an attempt to relate his group’s beliefs about Jesus to its Jewish heritage and current situation.

³⁴ Senior, “Directions in Matthean Studies,” 11.

³⁵ Gurtner “The Gospel of Matthew,” 26 (emphasis original). Also see McIver, “Twentieth-Century Approaches,” 38; Senior, “Directions in Matthean Studies,” 11.

³⁶ This project will avoid the frequently-used label “Jewish Christian” for two reasons. First, the terms “Jewish Christian” and “Jewish Christianity” have been used in a variety of ways in scholarship, often without careful consideration of their meaning (see Matt Jackson-McCabe, “What’s in a Name? The Problem of ‘Jewish Christianity,’” in *Jewish Christianity Reconsidered: Rethinking Ancient Groups and Texts* [ed. Matt Jackson-McCabe; Minneapolis: Fortress, 2007], 7–38; James Carleton Paget, “The Definition of the Term ‘Jewish Christian’/‘Jewish Christianity’ in the History of Research,” in idem, *Jews, Christians, and Jewish Christians in Antiquity* [WUNT 251; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010], 289–324). Second, the use of the word “Christian” to describe people in the first century is problematic in light of the term’s later associations (see Philip F. Esler, *Galatians* [London: Routledge, 1998], 3–5); the term “Christian” will also be avoided or used with quotation marks. While a consensus does not seem to have gathered around a substitute term for “Jewish Christian” (see suggested terms in Jackson-McCabe, “What’s in a Name,” 30–31), this work will use the term “Jewish believers in Jesus” or “Jesus-believing Jews” as suggested in e.g., Magnus Zetterholm, *The Formation of Christianity in Antioch: A Social Scientific Approach to the Separation between Judaism and Christianity* (London: Routledge, 2003), 6, 16–17 n. 21, preferring this over the term “Christ-believing Jews” (Mark Nanos, *The Irony of Galatians: Paul’s Letter in First-Century Context* [Minneapolis: Fortress, 2002], 20 n. 5) because the latter title would seem applicable to other Jewish groups with messianic beliefs. Even the phrase “Jewish believer in Jesus,” however, necessitates qualification, as the phrase can reflect an ethnicity or an approach to the law (see Oskar Skarsaune, “Jewish Believers in Jesus in Antiquity—Problems of Definition, Method, and Sources,” in *Jewish Believers in Jesus: The Early Centuries* [ed. Oskar Skarsaune and Reidar Hvalvik; Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1997], 3–16). This study will utilize the term “Jewish believer” in line with Skarsaune’s use of it to describe ethnic Jews who believe in Jesus.

This perspective on the background and audience of Matthew has opened up new avenues in the study of Matthew. Recent studies have examined issues such as Christology, eschatology, Torah, and mission in the Gospel in light of its Jewish setting.³⁷ These topics, however, have in many ways dominated the discussion concerning the relationship between the Gospel of Matthew and Judaism. An important element not yet examined within this new paradigm is the role of the figure of John the Baptist in the Gospel, a remarkable omission in light of the way recent scholarship on John has sought to study him as a figure within Judaism.

John the Baptist

Long a figure of interest for Christians,³⁸ study of the Baptist increased with the “quest” for the historical Jesus and began to experience its own life in the twentieth century. Ironically, it was during the so-called “no quest”³⁹ period of Jesus research from Wrede to Käsemann that the first major critical monographs about John appeared in German (Martin Dibelius, 1911; Ernst Lohmeyer, 1932), French (Maurice Goguel, 1928),

³⁷ See e.g., Joel Willitts, *Matthew's Messianic Shepherd-King: In Search of the 'Lost Sheep of the House of Israel'* (BZBW 147; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2007); David C. Sim, *Apocalyptic Eschatology in the Gospel of Matthew* (SNTSMS 88; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); Foster, *Community, Law, and Mission*.

³⁸ In addition to the innumerable popular and devotional works on John the Baptist, see discussions of the Baptist in e.g., J. M. Rife, “The Standing of John the Baptist,” in *Festschrift to Honor F. Wilbur Gingrich* (ed. E. H. Barth and R. E. Cocroft; Leiden: Brill, 1972), 205–8; Edmondo Lupieri, “John the Baptist: the First Monk: A Contribution to the History of the Figure of John the Baptist in the Early Monastic World,” in *Monasticism: A Historical Overview* (Word and Spirit 6; Still River, MA: St. Bede, 1984), 11–23; Sergius Bulgakov, *The Friend of the Bridegroom* (trans. Boris Jakim; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003). John also plays a prominent role in Gnostic texts; see Edmondo Lupieri, “John the Gnostic: The Figure of the Baptist in Origen and Heterodox Gnosticism,” *StPatr* 19 (1989): 322–27.

³⁹ A skepticism concerning the historical value of the earliest account of John does appear in Joshua Starr, “The Unjewish Character of the Markan Account of John the Baptist,” *JBL* 51 (1932): 227–37, but there have been few who have called into question the whole quest for the “historical John”; see discussion in John Reumann, “The Quest for the Historical Baptist,” in *Understanding the Sacred Text: Essays in Honor of Morton S. Enslin on the Hebrew Bible and Christian Beginnings* (ed. John Reumann; Valley Forge, PA: Judson, 1972), 181–99.

and English (Carl H. Kraeling, 1951).⁴⁰ These form-critical studies sought to determine the most reliable sources for information about John, leading to numerous images of the “historical John” that differed from the biblical portraits. The influence of history-of-religion methods caused scholars of this era to posit various influences on John, such as mystery religions, Palestinian baptizing movements, or Persian thought.⁴¹

The use of form criticism also led scholars to detect ways in which the Baptist and his followers influenced the development of the New Testament traditions as well as “Baptist sources” embedded in the New Testament. Building upon the tenet of form criticism that “only those traditions are preserved which are preached about,” Clayton R. Bowen noted that the New Testament’s interest in John the Baptist shows that “John the Baptist is still much preached about; he is a live topic, not a dead issue” at the time of the

⁴⁰ Martin Dibelius, *Die urchristliche Überlieferung von Johannes dem Täufer* (FRLANT 15; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1911); Ernst Lohmeyer, *Das Urchristentum 1: Johannes der Täufer* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1932); Maurice Goguel, *Au seuil de l'évangile: Jean-Baptiste* (Paris: Payot, 1928); Carl H. Kraeling, *John the Baptist* (New York: Scribner, 1951). Adolf von Schlatter’s 1880 dissertation on John the Baptist was a work of uneven quality that he wrote in the span of a few weeks and would not be published until 1956 (*Johannes der Täufer* [ed. Wilhelm Michaelis; Basel: Verlag Friedrich Reinhardt, 1956]), so the 1911 work of Martin Dibelius marks a new era in the study of John (as maintained in Goesta Lindeskog, “Johannes der Täufer,” *ASTI* 12 [1983]: 56). This period also featured the dubious proposal of a “revolutionary” Baptist based upon the Slavonic text of Josephus in Robert Eisler, *The Messiah Jesus and John the Baptist according to Flavius Josephus’ Recently Rediscovered ‘Capture of Jerusalem’ and Other Jewish and Christian Sources* (trans. A. H. Krappe; New York: L. MacVeagh, 1931). This proposal was widely criticized, as the Slavonic Josephus appears to be from the Byzantine period (see Robert L. Webb, *John the Baptizer and Prophet* [JSNTSup 62; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1991], 43–44). Some scholars of this period also sought to see if the Mandaean traditions about John the Baptist had any historical connection to the figure and whether the Mandaeans had links to the historical Baptist, questions that have now been answered largely in the negative (see Charles H. H. Scobie, *John the Baptist* [London: SCM, 1964], 23–31; Edmondo Lupieri, *The Mandaeans: The Last Gnostics* [trans. Charles Hindley; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002], 122–26).

⁴¹ Reumann, “The Quest for the Historical Baptist,” 185. A prime example of such analysis is the discussion of John the Baptist in light of the “baptizing movement” in Joseph Thomas, *Le mouvement baptiste en Palestine et Syrie (150 AV. J.-C. – 300 AP. J.-C.)* (Gembloux: Duculot, 1935), 63–139.

composition of the Gospels.⁴² Bowen posited a polemic in Luke against the followers of John, building upon the thesis of Wilhelm Baldensperger concerning a polemic against the followers of the Baptist in the Gospel of John.⁴³ Bowen also found Baptist writings adapted into the Gospels, arguing that the opening chapters of Luke were “a Baptist document, a primitive Baptist gospel, whose extent we do not know, but which contained a birth-story” and that Luke 3:1–20 was “an original document from the school of John” that potentially predates Q.⁴⁴ Bowen was not alone in his opinion about the influence of the Baptist’s followers upon the traditions of the canonical gospels, with Rudolf Bultmann among others making similar claims about competing Baptist communities and Baptist sources.⁴⁵ On the whole, the discussions in this period about Baptist communities

⁴² “Prolegomena to a New Study of John the Baptist,” in *Studies in the New Testament: Collected Papers of Dr. Clayton R. Bowen* (ed. Robert J. Hutcheon; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1936 [orig. 1928]), 30–48 (quotations on 48).

⁴³ Idem, “John the Baptist in the New Testament,” *AJT* 16 (1912): 90–106; Wilhelm Baldensperger, *Der Prolog des vierten Evangeliums. Sein polemisch-apologetischer Zweck* (Freiburg: Mohr Siebeck), 1898. Bowen briefly discusses whether Matthew may also show a reaction to Baptist sources in its genealogy (“John the Baptist,” 103), but does not find a polemic against a Baptist movement in Matthew.

⁴⁴ Bowen, “John the Baptist,” 95–103 (quotations on 95 and 96). Bowen’s views built upon the discussions in D. Völter, “Die Apokalypse des Zacharias im Evangeliums des Lucas,” *Theologisch Tijdschrift* 30 (1896): 244–69; J. C. Todd, “Logia of John,” *ExpTim* 21 (1910): 173–75.

⁴⁵ Rudolf Bultmann, *History of the Synoptic Tradition* (trans. John Marsh; rev. ed.; Oxford: Blackwell, 1972 [German orig. 1921]), 23–24, 164–66, 246–47, 301–2. Bultmann claimed that the prologue of John was a Baptist hymn rewritten by a former follower of John when “his eyes were opened to perceive that not John, but Jesus was the Revealer sent by God” (*The Gospel of John: A Commentary* [trans. George Beasley-Murray; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1971 (German orig. 1941)], 17–18. In addition to the works of Todd and Völter arguing for Baptist sources within Luke (see above, n. 44), Gustav Hölscher argued that Luke 16:16–18 was of Baptist origins; see discussion in Ernst Bammel, “Is Luke 16,16-18 of Baptist Provenance?” *HTR* 51 (1958): 101–6. Ernest W. Parsons explored how the practices and beliefs of the Baptist movement explain Christians practices and beliefs in “The Significance of John the Baptist for the Beginning of Christianity,” in *Environmental Factors in Christian History* (ed. John Thomas McNeill, Matthew Spinka, and Harold R. Willoughby; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1939), 1–17, esp. 6–17.

and documents emphasized tension and competition between the followers of Jesus and John, often finding a “polemic-apologetic” purpose at work in the New Testament.⁴⁶

The 1950’s saw a significant surge in study of the Baptist, with scholarship essentially divided into two types, which one may label as study of the “historical Baptist” and study of the “literary Baptist.” The discovery of the Qumran scrolls stimulated further studies on the “historical Baptist,” as writers sought to determine how the Qumran texts could illuminate John’s life and ministry and if there was a direct connection between John and the community at Qumran.⁴⁷ The rise of redaction criticism led to study of the “literary Baptist,” with the landmark redactional studies of Hans Conzelmann on Luke (1954) and Willi Marxsen on Mark (1956) analyzing the importance of the Baptist for these Evangelists.⁴⁸ Interest in the redactional portraits of the Baptist in many ways reached its climax with Walter Wink’s *John the Baptist in the Gospel Tradition* (1968), a work that discusses the unique description of the Baptist in

⁴⁶ The opinion of Oscar Cullman that the followers of the Baptist were “the most dangerous rival to the early church” is a good representative of a popular view in the first part of the twentieth century (see “Ο ὀπίσω μου ἐρχόμενος,” in *The Early Church: Studies in Early Christian History and Theology* [ed. A. J. Higgins; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1956], 177–82 [quotation on 177]).

⁴⁷ E.g., William Brownlee, “John the Baptist in the New Light of the Ancient Scrolls,” *Int* 9 (1955): 71–90; A. S. Geysler, “The Youth of John the Baptist: A Deduction from the Break in the Parallel Account of the Lucan Infancy Story,” *NovT* 1 (1956): 70–75; John A. T. Robinson, “The Baptism of John and the Qumran Community,” in idem, *Twelve New Testament Studies* (London: SCM, 1962 [orig. 1957]), 11–27; Jean Steinmann, *Saint John the Baptist and the Desert Tradition* (New York: Harper, 1958); John Pryke, “John the Baptist and the Qumran Community,” *ResQ* 4 (1964): 483–96; Scobie, *John the Baptist*; Roland Schütz, *Johannes der Täufer* (ATANT 50; Zurich/Stuttgart: Zwingli, 1967); Jürgen Becker, *Johannes der Täufer und Jesus von Nazareth* (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 1972).

⁴⁸ Hans Conzelmann, *The Theology of St. Luke* (trans. Geoffrey Buswell; New York: Harper & Row, 1961), 18–27; Willi Marxsen, *Mark the Evangelist: Studies on the Redaction History of the Gospel* (trans. James Boyce et al; Nashville: Abingdon, 1969), 30–53. The comparable study on the Baptist in Matthew is Wolfgang Trilling, “Die Täufertradition bei Matthäus,” *BZ* 3 (1959): 271–89. For discussion on Trilling’s work, see below.

each gospel.⁴⁹ These two approaches to study of John are not necessarily mutually exclusive, as some engage in extensive study of the “literary Baptist” in their efforts to study the “historical Baptist,”⁵⁰ and scholarship has continued on these two levels.

While some writers would continue to emphasize intense opposition between the Baptist’s followers and the early church,⁵¹ other scholars became skeptical of such claims. For example, Wink continually objects to the presence of a polemic-apologetic against Baptist communities in the New Testament.⁵² John A. T. Robinson expresses even stronger doubt, noting that he “cannot find a shred of reliable historical evidence for ... the mere existence of disciples of John after his death who were not in some way Christians, let alone for those who were actively anti-Christian” and that the reality of a competing Baptist sect is “simply deduced, by circular argument, from the supposed

⁴⁹ (SNTSMS 7; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968). Wink discusses Acts with Luke and also includes a section on Q. A number of studies over the past twenty-five years have shown less interest in the historical figure of John and chosen to focus on the role of the Baptist in a particular gospel: Martin Stowasser, *Johannes der Täufer im vierten Evangelium* (ÖBS 12; Klosterneuburg: Österreichisches Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1992); Peter Böhle, *Jesus und der Täufer: Schlüssel zur Theologie und Ethik des Lukas* (SNTSMS 99; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997); Christoph Gregor Müller, *Mehr als ein Prophet: Die Charakterzeichnung Johannes des Täufers im lukanischen Erzählwerk* (HBS 31; Freiburg: Herder, 2001); Jaroslav Rindoš, *He of Whom It is Written: John the Baptist and Elijah in Luke* (ÖBS 38; Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2010). For works focused on Matthew, see discussion below.

⁵⁰ E.g., Ernst Bammel, “The Baptist in Early Christian Tradition,” *NTS* 18 (1971–72): 95–128; Edmondo Lupieri, *Giovanni Battista fra Storia e Leggenda* (Brescia: Paideia, 1988); idem, *Giovanni Battista nelle tradizioni sinottiche* (StBib 82; Brescia: Paideia, 1988); idem, “John the Baptist in New Testament Traditions and History,” *ANRW* 2.26.1 (1992): 430–61; Josef Ernst, *Johannes der Täufer: Interpretation, Geschichte, Wirkungsgeschichte* (BZNW 53; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1989). Webb also features redactional analysis in his attempt to study the historical John (*John the Baptizer*, 47–91).

⁵¹ E.g., Scobie, *John the Baptist*, 187–202; Morton S. Enslin, “John and Jesus,” *ZNW* 66 (1975): 1–18. A new theory of a “Baptist source” appears in this period in J. Massyngberde Ford, *Revelation: Introduction, Translation, Commentary* (AB 38; Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1975), 28–56, as Ford argues that the “Baptist school” produced Revelation. This idiosyncratic view was widely criticized (see Adela Yarbro Collins, review of J. Massyngberde Ford, *Revelation: Introduction, Translation, Commentary*, *CBQ* 38 [1976]: 555–57), and Ford has abandoned significant aspects of it (see David E. Aune, *Revelation 1–5* [WBC 52a; Dallas: Word Books, 1994], cxi). A more plausible discussion of the influence of the Baptist in the Jesus movement from this period appears in John K. Elliott, “Did the Lord’s Prayer Originate with John the Baptist?” *TZ* 29 (1973): 215.

signs of polemic within the Gospels themselves.”⁵³ While Ernst Käsemann essentially agrees with Robinson’s evaluation of previous studies on the subject of followers of the Baptist, he comes to a much different position, believing that the “Gospels themselves presuppose the existence of a Baptist community in competition with the young Church” but that Luke did not personally know this group and that it was not competing with his community since Luke turns the Baptist’s followers into “an odd species of Christians” as a way to show the need for Christians to be connected to the church.⁵⁴ Käsemann appears to reflect a moderate view concerning the influence of followers of the Baptist, acknowledging the existence of a group but not overstating its influence or competitiveness with early churches. A similar tempered perspective would appear in leading discussions on John and Luke.⁵⁵

⁵² Wink, *John the Baptist*, 11–13, 40–41, 82–86, 98–105, 107–9.

⁵³ “Elijah, John, and Jesus: An Essay in Detection,” in *Twelve New Testament Studies* (London: SCM, 1962 [orig. 1958]), 49–51 n. 49 (quotations on 49, and 50 n. 49, respectively). J. A. T. Robinson, however, does acknowledge the existence of followers of the Baptist who did not join the followers of Jesus and in fact thinks that the Gospel of John originated from a group or individual who formerly followed the Baptist as an attempt to persuade Baptist followers to believe in Jesus (see “Elijah, John, and Jesus,” 30 n. 4, 50 n. 49).

⁵⁴ Ernst Käsemann, “The Disciples of John the Baptist in Ephesus,” in *Essays on New Testament Themes* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1982), 136–148 [original essay, 1952]. After surveying previous approaches (136–40), Käsemann remarks that these proposals to Acts 19:1–7 demonstrate “every even barely conceivable variety of naiveté, defeatism, and fertile imagination which historical scholarship can display, from extremely ingenuous on the one hand to extremely arbitrary on the other hand” (140). J. A. T. Robinson shows no awareness of Käsemann’s study.

⁵⁵ Raymond E. Brown finds no concrete support for the idea that a Baptist group made messianic claims about John in the first century. He does note, however, that there are some passages in the Gospel of John that seem aimed at curtailing false beliefs about the Baptist, but he highlights that a polemic against John is not a central aspect of the Gospel’s message (*The Gospel according to John I–XII: Introduction, Translation, and Notes* [AB 29; New York: Doubleday, 1966], lxvii–lxx). Joseph A. Fitzmyer thinks that Luke 1 may reflect Baptist sources but that the movement was not “anti-Christian,” with many disciples of John joining the early church (*The Gospel according to Luke: Introduction, Translation, and Notes* [2 vols.; AB 28, 28A; New York: Doubleday, 1981, 1985], 1:309, 316–17). Others would reject the theory of a “Baptist source”; see e.g., Wink, *John the Baptist*, 60–82; Raymond E. Brown, *The Birth of the Messiah* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1977), 244–45, 265–79.

The so-called “third quest” for the historical Jesus has profoundly affected the study of the historical Baptist, as scholars interested in studying Jesus within first-century Judaism have considered John in a similar light. Because of the voluminous amount of publications on the historical Jesus, we will only discuss three representative works to show how prominent studies of the historical Jesus discuss the person and work of John within the context of first-century Judaism. A prime example is John P. Meier, who, in his protracted study of the historical Jesus as a “marginal Jew,” argues that John was a charismatic Jewish prophet with an eschatological message that featured a vague expectation of a coming figure and a baptism rite to prepare Israel for judgment.⁵⁶ Similarly, Craig S. Keener notes that the portrayal of the canonical gospels of John as a prophetic of renewal fits within Jewish expectations of the time and conforms to the ministry of earlier prophets challenging “individual Jewish people’s special status in order to secure their repentance.”⁵⁷ Even John Dominic Crossan, who has often received criticism for a failure to make Jesus’ Jewish identity prominent in his study of the historical Jesus, describes the Baptist as an apocalyptic Jewish teacher and draws attention to the meaning of John’s baptizing ministry at the Jordan within his social context, noting that it “would have cast negative aspirations, be they explicit or implicit, on the Temple cult.”⁵⁸

⁵⁶ John P. Meier, *A Marginal Jew: Rethinking the Historical Jesus* (4 vols.; ABRL; New York/New Haven, CT: Doubleday/Yale University Press, 1991–2009), 2:19–223; summary on 2:7–9.

⁵⁷ Keener, *The Historical Jesus*, 165–77 (quotation on 168).

⁵⁸ John Dominic Crossan, *The Historical Jesus: The Life of a Mediterranean Peasant* (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1991), 227–65, esp. 230–38 (quotation on 235). For a view that Crossan does not pay enough attention to Jesus’ Jewishness, see e.g., Keener, *The Historical Jesus*, 26.

The emphasis on studying the historical John as a first-century Jew has also manifested itself in works devoted to the figure of John.⁵⁹ In focusing on John's roles as a baptizer and a prophet, Robert Webb's "socio-historical" study of John analyzes his baptism against the backdrop of the Old Testament and Second Temple Judaism and utilizes Richard Horsley's typology of Jewish prophets to examine John's prophetic activity.⁶⁰ Michael Tilly builds upon Webb's analysis and discusses the outward appearance of the Baptist in light of the biblical prophets, noting that John's appearance as well as his message would have caused his Jewish contemporaries to consider him a prophet.⁶¹ Catherine M. Murphy applies the method of social-scientific criticism of the New Testament to the figure of the Baptist by analyzing John's ministry in light of models of purity and pollution and first-century Jewish purification movements, further placing him within his social context as a first-century Jew.⁶²

Perhaps the strongest example of this emphasis on the Jewishness of John appears in Joan E. Taylor's *The Immerser: John the Baptist within Second Temple Judaism*.⁶³ The

⁵⁹ Such a survey cannot address the strengths and weaknesses of each work; discussion will focus on the methodology employed or results produced rather than an evaluation of the work. In addition, this brief survey will not discuss the Jesus Seminar's portrait of the historical John (W. Barnes Tatum, *John the Baptist and Jesus: A Report of the Jesus Seminar* [Sonoma, CA: Polebridge, 1994]), as this group does not seem as attuned to the Jewish milieu of John.

⁶⁰ Webb, *John the Baptizer*.

⁶¹ Michael Tilly, *Johannes der Täufer und die Biographie der Propheten: Die synoptische Täuferüberlieferung und das jüdische Prophetenbild zur Zeit des Täufers* (BWANT 7/17; Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1994). An emphasis on John as a Jewish prophet also appears in Ulrich B. Müller, *Johannes der Täufer: Jüdischer Prophet und Wegbereiter Jesu* (BG 6; Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2002).

⁶² Catherine M. Murphy, *John the Baptist: Prophet of Purity for a New Age* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical, 2003), 85–156. The analysis of Paul Hollenbach, ("Social Aspects of John the Baptist's Preaching Mission in the Context of Palestinian Judaism," *ANRW* 2.19.1 [1979]: 850–75) focuses more on the social impact of the teachings of John and how he addressed different social groups than social-scientific analysis.

⁶³ (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997).

subtitle of this work displays the author's distinctive approach and emphasis. Chapters discuss John's possible connections with Qumran, the nature of his baptism and teachings, his death, and his relationship with Jesus in light of contemporary knowledge of Second Temple Judaism. Taylor also offers a discussion of his relationship with the Pharisees, noting the affinity that would likely exist between John and the Pharisees and that John's place in the tradition of emerging Christianity may have led the omission of John in rabbinic discussions.⁶⁴

Articles by Colin Brown and Edmondo Lupieri serve as other key examples of studying John's work and message within his Jewish setting. Brown understands John's ministry against the backdrop of Jewish expectations and beliefs by arguing that John's use of the Jordan River shows him to be "organizing a symbolic exodus from Jerusalem and Judea" to return as a "renewed Israel."⁶⁵ Meanwhile, Lupieri explores the *halakah* of John, noting that John was "an observant Jew, with his own halakhah" that appears to differ from the *halakah* of the leadership and Essenes while being similar to the Pharisees in areas other than tithing.⁶⁶

⁶⁴ On John and the Pharisees, see *ibid.*, 155–211.

⁶⁵ Colin Brown, "What Was John the Baptist Doing?" *BBR* 7 (1997): 37–50, esp. 44–47. Brown's work seeks to respond to the questioning of John's use of the Jordan found in Jerome Murphy-O'Connor, "John the Baptist and Jesus: History and Hypothesis," *NTS* 36 (1990): 359–74; Bruce Chilton, "John the Purifier," in *idem*, *Judaic Approaches to the Gospels* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1994), 1–37.

⁶⁶ Edmondo Lupieri, "The Law and the Prophets Were until John: John the Baptist between Jewish Halakhot and Christian History of Salvation," *Neot* 35 (2001): 49–56 (quotation on 54). Lupieri's work differs from others who have sought to show John's diet and practices as Essene-like; e.g., Stevan L. Davies, "John the Baptist and Essene Kashruth," *NTS* 29 (1983): 569–71; James H. Charlesworth, "John the Baptizer and Qumran Barriers in Light of the *Rule of the Community*," in *The Provo International Conference on the Dead Sea Scrolls* (ed. D. W. Parry and E. Ulrich; STDJ 30; Leiden: Brill, 1999), 353–75. A rejection of John's practice as similar to the Essenes also appears in James Kelhoffer, "Did John the Baptist Eat Like a Former Essene? Locust-Eating in the Ancient Near East and at Qumran," *DSD* 11 (2004): 294–314.

While scholars continue to explore the question of whether Jesus was in fact a disciple of John,⁶⁷ interest in the topic of John's disciples and their influence in early Christianity appears to have declined.⁶⁸ Overall, it seems that current opinion acknowledges the existence of individuals influenced by John without overplaying the competition between these individuals and groups of believers in Jesus.⁶⁹ Such a

⁶⁷ Studies devoted to the topic include Josef Ernst, "War Jesus ein Schüler Johannes des Täufer?" in *Vom Urchristentum zu Jesus für Joachim Gnlika* (ed. Hubert Frankenmölle and Karl Kertelge; Freiburg/Basel/Vienna: Herder, 1989), 13–33; William B. Badke, "Was Jesus a Disciple of John?" *EvQ* 62 (1990): 195–204; Robert L. Webb, "John the Baptist and His Relationship to Jesus," in *Studying the Historical Jesus: Evaluations of the Current State of Current Research* (ed. Bruce D. Chilton and Craig A. Evans; Leiden: Brill, 1994), 211–29; Daniel S. Dapaah, *The Relationship between John the Baptist and Jesus of Nazareth: A Critical Study* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2005). Perspectives range from the view that John and Jesus never met (Enslin, "John and Jesus," 1–18) to Jesus being a disciple of John who apostatized from John's movement (Paul Hollenbach, "The Conversion of Jesus: From Jesus the Baptizer to Jesus the Healer," *ANRW* 2.25.1 [1982]: 196–219), to the view that Jesus was part of the following of John who separated from John but retained important elements of John's teaching, particularly baptism (Meier, *A Marginal Jew*, 2:117–28).

⁶⁸ In addition to the work of Clare Rothschild (see below), the only other recent study of note by an English-speaking scholar with an explicit interest in the followers of the Baptist is Anthony Ash, "John's Disciples: A Serious Problem," *ResQ* 45 (2003): 85–93, a "reflective essay" without footnotes or engagement of previous scholarship. For summary of German scholarship on this issue, see the following note.

⁶⁹ Hermann Lichtenberger argues that tensions between communities of John the Baptist and communities of Jesus increased throughout the first century, with groups having parallel developments concerning messianic beliefs about their founders (see "Täufergemeinden und frühchristliche Täuferpolemik im letzten Drittel des 1. Jahrhunderts," *ZTK* 84 [1987]: 36–57; idem, "Reflections on the History of John the Baptist's Communities," *FO* 25 [1988]: 45–49). Although differing from Käsemann's work on the central function and theme of the account of the disciples of John in Acts 19:1–7 in highlighting the rivalry between Paul and Apollos (cf. 1 Cor 1–4), Michael Wolter's analysis of the passage similarly notes how the passage assumes the existence of followers of the Baptist while being primarily interested in another issue ("Apollos und die ephesinischen Johannesjünger [Acts 18,24–19,7]," *ZNW* 78 [1987]: 49–73). Josef Ernst cautiously concludes that John did not form a school or community during his lifetime but that his followers formed a group after his death, with some of these followers joining the Jesus movement (Acts 18:24–28; 19:1–7; John 1:35–37) or "official" Judaism (*Ant.* 18.116–19; John 5:52) while others continued as an independent sect (*Ps.-Clem., Hom.* 2.23–24; *Rec.* 1.35–36, 60) (see the chapter "Nachgeschichte Johannes des Täufer in der Täufer Schule und in den Täufersekten," in Ernst, *Johannes der Täufer*, 349–84). While these three writers all affirm the existence of Baptist communities, Knut Backhaus' monograph on the "Jüngerkreise" of John presents a different perspective, as he concludes that the New Testament passages that traditionally have been seen as reflecting the existence of a Baptist circle or a polemical interest towards the Baptists do not actually give evidence for a Baptist circle. Backhaus concedes that a group that venerated the Baptist appears behind the Fourth Gospel but does not find this group to have been linked to the historical Baptist (see *Die "Jüngerkreise" des Täufer Johannes: Eine Studie zu den religionsgeschichtlichen Ursprüngen des Christentums* [PTS 19; Paderborn: F. Schöningh, 1991]).

balanced perspective appears in Clare Rothschild's *Baptist Traditions and Q* (2005),⁷⁰ a fresh contribution to the study of John the Baptist that revisits the issue of "Baptist sources" and the role followers of the Baptist may have played in the development of early communities of believers in Jesus. In arguing that Q originated as Baptist traditions and that Mark assimilates Baptist traditions, Rothschild highlights that a connection to the Baptist would be "desirable pedigree" for the budding "Christian" movement.⁷¹ Along these lines, Rothschild maintains "that the four evangelists aspired not simply to harness, but as much to exploit John's influence within their circles" as these writers "exhibit reverence toward John – a tactic playing into the hand of not just Baptists or Baptist followers of Jesus, but of any Jew who held John in respect."⁷² Rothschild therefore revives perspectives about the influence of the Baptist but reverses the earlier tendency to emphasize a polemic against followers of the Baptist by stressing convergence rather than conflict between the followers of the Baptist and the followers of Jesus.

Three insights emerge from this overview of research on John the Baptist that are relevant for the present study. First, there is a growing awareness of the fact that study of John must examine him within the context of first-century Judaism. Second, the rise of redaction criticism has highlighted that each Evangelist's portrayal of the Baptist is tied to his purposes and aims, with the Baptist having a distinctive role in each gospel. Third,

⁷⁰ See Clare K. Rothschild, *Baptist Traditions and Q* (WUNT 190; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005), 4–6 n. 5, 52–56.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 33–34, 52–56, 80–81. Cf. E. P. Sanders and Margaret Davies, *Studying the Synoptic Gospels* (London: SCM, 1989), 312–13, 352 n. 8, who note how John's popularity may have surpassed Jesus during the time of their respective ministries.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 79, 80.

there has been a question of whether the followers of the Baptist may have influenced the early communities of believers in Jesus and composition of the canonical gospels, with proposals for their influence ranging from competition to convergence, from viewing John as a rival to the Jesus movement or a useful ally to “Christians.” Little attention, however, has been devoted to the influence of John’s followers on Matthew, as demonstrated in the survey of research on the Baptist in Matthew in the following section.⁷³

John the Baptist in Matthew

The first study of note devoted to the Matthean Baptist is James L. Jones’ “References to John the Baptist in the Gospel according to St. Matthew” (1959).⁷⁴ In this article, the author argues that “a careful study of the Gospel according to St. Matthew indicates a concern for the Baptist movement at least as great as that shown by Luke and the author of the Fourth Gospel.”⁷⁵ Jones’ analysis notes that each of the five major sections in Matthew feature a discussion of the relationship between Jesus and the Baptist at their beginning or at the turning point of the section, which he argues serves a polemic-apologetic purpose against a Baptist movement.

⁷³ Because the “renaissance” in Matthean studies that occurred at the end of the twentieth century and into the twenty-first century (see Senior, “Directions in Matthean Studies,” 6–7) has prompted the publication of a massive number of commentaries on the first Gospel, analysis of discussions on the Baptist in the commentaries on Matthew is neither feasible nor practical in this overview of scholarship on the Matthean Baptist. The most important commentaries will be consulted and cited within the discussion of particular passages appearing in chapters 3–6 of this dissertation, and attention here is limited to works focusing on the *role and significance* of the Baptist within the Gospel, thus excluding works that discuss the Baptist in Matthew for other purposes, such as Wilhelm Wilkens, “Die Täuferüberlieferung des Matthäus und ihre Verarbeitung durch Lukas,” *NTS* 40 (1994): 542–57.

⁷⁴ *ATHR* 41 (1959): 298–302.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 299.

Wolfgang Trilling's "Die Täufertradition bei Matthäus" also appeared in 1959.⁷⁶

In this article, Trilling highlights an "assimilation" of John and Jesus by Matthew, noting central elements of this assimilation are that John and Jesus both suffer the "fate of the prophets" and face opposition from the same opponents (*die gottfeindliche Front*), particularly the Jewish leadership.⁷⁷ Trilling finds the Matthean Baptist standing in the time of fulfillment.⁷⁸ In addition, the author highlights a tendency in Matthew to differentiate between Jesus and John in order to safeguard Jesus' unique position.⁷⁹ Trilling explicitly rejects any form of a polemic towards the Baptist in Matthew and does not think that any competition existed between the Matthean community and the followers of the Baptist,⁸⁰ arguing that the tie that unites all elements of Matthew's description of the Baptist is the Evangelist's desire to show that Israel is no longer the true people of God and that the Matthean community is the "true Israel."⁸¹

While some writers rejected Trilling's views, his work proved to be more important than Jones' work of the same year and became a key starting point for future discussion of John the Baptist in Matthew.⁸² Walter Wink explicitly notes his dependence

⁷⁶ Full citation in n. 48.

⁷⁷ Trilling, "Die Täufertradition," 274–75, 282–86. The emphasis on assimilation perspective countered Kilpatrick's view that Matthew emphasizes the differences between John and Jesus rather than the similarities (*The Origins of the Gospel*, 90, 107).

⁷⁸ Trilling, "Die Täufertradition," 275–82.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 286–87.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 286.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 288–89.

⁸² One of the few scholars to discuss Jones' work is Backhaus, *Die "Jüngerkreise" des Täufers Johannes*, 338–40, who strongly rejects Jones' conclusions. Bammel also explicitly notes Jones' work in rejecting his position, but Bammel rejects Trilling's position as well, in spite of the fact that Bammel applauds Trilling's study as a whole ("The Baptist in Early Christian Tradition," 96, 104).

on Trilling for his discussion of Matthew in *John the Baptist in the Gospel Tradition* (1967).⁸³ Building upon Trilling's emphasis on the "Christianization" of John as a polemic against the "the portion of Israel which rejected Jesus" and "have lost the keys of the kingdom (21:43),"⁸⁴ Wink adds that "Matthew's point of departure in adapting and modifying his sources is the Elijah-concept," noting that John's Elijanic identity makes his murder inexcusable and helps to validate belief in Jesus as the Messiah.⁸⁵ Wink's discussion also highlights the absence of a polemic against a group following the Baptist in Matthew, implicitly refuting Jones' claim.⁸⁶

John P. Meier similarly utilizes Trilling as the starting point for discussion in "John the Baptist in Matthew's Gospel" (1980), but he offers a different structure and alternative explanation for the phenomena of assimilation and differentiation.⁸⁷ Meier rejects a polemic against "non-Christian Baptist sectarians" in the text and seeks to go further than Trilling by relating the Matthean Baptist to Matthew's understanding of salvation history. Building upon a three-stage vision of Matthean salvation history (prophets; Jesus; church),⁸⁸ Meier argues that the Matthean tendency is a way to place John within the second stage of salvation history, so that "Matthew's pattern of parallelism-yet-subordination thus proves to be a function of his ecclesiology as well as

⁸³ Wink, *John the Baptist*, 27–41.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 40.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.* Trilling does briefly discuss John as Elijah in his article, placing it within the discussion of John's place in salvation history (see Trilling, "Die Täufertradition," 279–82).

⁸⁶ While Wink includes Jones' work in his bibliography, he does not explicitly cite Jones.

⁸⁷ *JBL* 99 (1980): 383–405. A further difference from Trilling is that Meier analyzes the text according to the "order of the data in the gospel" rather than "according to certain set themes" (387).

his christology.”⁸⁹ Meier’s discussion also notes that Matthew retains the subordinating themes present in his sources but does not advance them in the same way that Matthew develops the theme of parallelism.⁹⁰

The influence of Trilling and Meier appears in Edgar Krentz’s “None Greater among Those Born from Women: John the Baptist in the Gospel of Matthew” (1983).⁹¹ Krentz’s study concludes that John “is the counterpart figure in whom the course of Jesus is writ in advance: proclamation of righteousness, rejection by the religious leaders and the people, and death at their hands. He also prefigures the eschatological newness in Jesus’ words.”⁹² Thus, Krentz largely reiterates Trilling’s focus on the Matthean assimilation of John and Jesus and echoes Trilling’s and Meier’s placement of John in the time of fulfillment. The contribution of Krentz may be a deeper emphasis on John as a preacher of righteousness than reflected in the works of scholars before him.

A different approach to the topic of the Matthean Baptist appears in Poul Nepper-Christensen’s “Die Taufe im Matthäusevangelium im Lichte der Traditionen über Johannes den Täufer,” in which the author uses the figure of the Baptist to help understand the function of baptism in Matthew.⁹³ This article argues that Matthew’s

⁸⁸ See idem, “Salvation-History in Matthew: In Search of a Starting Point,” *CBQ* 37 (1975): 103–15.

⁸⁹ Meier, “John the Baptist in Matthew’s Gospel,” 403–5 (quotation on 405).

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 401, 404.

⁹¹ *CurThM* 10 (1983): 333–38.

⁹² *Ibid.*, 338.

⁹³ *NTS* 31 (1985): 189–207. The distinctiveness of Nepper-Christensen’s focus upon John the Baptist in understanding Matthew’s view of baptism can be seen when his work is compared with a nearly contemporaneous article discussing baptism in Matthew: Eduoard Cothenet, “Le baptême selon S. Matthieu,” *SNTU* 9 (1984): 79–94.

account describes Jesus' baptism as (1) being according to the will of God and (2) revealing that baptism continues even after John concludes his baptizing work with his baptism of Jesus. Because of the heavy emphasis on the function of baptism within his theory of the situation of the Matthean community,⁹⁴ this study has not proved as influential as those of Trilling and Meier in considerations of the Matthean Baptist. However, Nepper-Christensen's work does indicate how the Baptist may play a role in Matthew's understanding of critical issues and that the historical setting of the Gospel may greatly influence its portrayal of John.

Edmondo Lupieri and Josef Ernst published works discussing the Baptist in tradition and history nearly simultaneously, with each author offering an extended examination of the Baptist in Matthew.⁹⁵ Since Ernst's assessment does not present significantly different conclusions from those previously noted,⁹⁶ his contribution to study of the Matthean Baptist lies more in the thoroughness of his examination than in his explanation.⁹⁷ Meanwhile, Lupieri's work offers two distinctive elements in comparison with earlier studies. One concerns the description of the Baptist in Matthew, as Lupieri's analysis argues that the Matthean John "had no part in the gospel and ... was not a

⁹⁴ Nepper-Christensen, "Die Taufe im Matthäusevangelium," 195–98. He thinks that the Matthean community had left the Jewish milieu and had settled in Syria, with this move causing the community to look back to the Baptist tradition and establish baptism as a sign for the community.

⁹⁵ Lupieri's *Giovanni Battista fra Storia e Leggenda* and *Giovanni Battista nelle tradizioni sinottiche* were published in 1988, while Ernst's *Johannes der Täufer* appeared in 1989. An English condensation of Lupieri's ideas would later appear in 1992 in "John the Baptist in New Testament Traditions."

⁹⁶ See esp. the synthesis of Ernst's analysis (*Johannes der Täufer*, 182–85), in which Ernst highlights elements such as the Elijah theme, the likeness of John and Jesus in relation to salvation history, and the differentiation that also remains between the Baptist and Jesus in Matthew.

⁹⁷ This is a common critique of Ernst's work, as seen in e.g., Walter Wink, review of Josef Ernst, *Johannes der Täufer: Interpretation, Geschichte, Wirkungsgeschichte*, *JBL* 111 (1992): 145.

Christian, at least not in the Lucan sense,” causing John to be the last of the prophets rather than the first “Christian” preacher.⁹⁸ Another contribution of Lupieri’s work is methodological, as it starts its discussion with the last tradition about the Baptist in a Gospel rather than John’s first appearance in a work.

Gerd Häfner has produced the most comprehensive discussion of the Matthean Baptist to date with his 1994 publication, *Der verheißenen Vorläufer. Redaktionskritische Untersuchung zur Darstellung Johannes des Täufers im Matthäus-Evangelium* (1994).⁹⁹ Somewhat reminiscent of Wink’s discussion but going further than this earlier writer, Häfner deems the discussion of the Baptist as Elijah as “*die Mitte des mt Taufersbildes*” since the image of John as Elijah can explain all elements of Matthew’s portrayal of the Baptist.¹⁰⁰ As Elijah, John is the forerunner of Jesus, which explains both the similarities between John and Jesus as well as the differentiation because John must preach the same message as the forerunner but also be surpassed by Jesus. Thus, Häfner maintains that the depiction of John in Matthew primarily has a Christological function and explains the phenomena identified by Trilling.¹⁰¹ In line with most previous treatments on the subject, Häfner rejects any polemic directed at Baptist followers.¹⁰²

The rise of literary critical approaches offered a new methodology to employ in the study of the Matthean Baptist, with three notable studies explicitly utilizing literary

⁹⁸ “John the Baptist in New Testament Traditions,” 449.

⁹⁹ (SBB 27; Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1994).

¹⁰⁰ See *ibid.*, 401–11 (quotation on 405, emphasis original).

¹⁰¹ As noted in e.g., *ibid.*, 404: “*Die Identifizierung des Täufers mit Elija bedeuten für Mt damit einen wesentlichen Gewinn für die Christologie, insofern sie auf das Erscheinen des Messias vorausweist*” (emphasis original).

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, 403–4. Once again, Jones’ article does not appear in his bibliography.

methods to analyze the Matthean Baptist. The first of these studies is Janice Capel Anderson's *Matthew's Narrative Web: Over, and Over, and Over Again* (1994),¹⁰³ which discusses John within its focus on repetition in Matthew. The work concludes that John is a "forerunner" and "foreshadower" of Jesus since "the character of John is introduced in order to *establish the identity and character of Jesus* as well as to foreshadow the fate of Jesus (and secondarily of the disciples)."¹⁰⁴ Hubert Frankemölle's 1996 article "Johannes der Täufer und Jesus im Matthäusevangelium: Jesus als Nachfolger des Täufers"¹⁰⁵ adopts a reader-oriented approach to the Matthean passages relating to John.¹⁰⁶ The opinion of Frankemölle's study is that the Baptist is neither "Christianized" nor theologically downgraded. Rather, Matthew's group views John the Baptist as an object of veneration since his Elijanic identity helps show how Jesus' appearance upholds the Law and the Prophets and is a signal for the appearance of God himself.¹⁰⁷ An "audience-oriented" approach appears in Gary Yamasaki's *John the Baptist in Life and Death: Audience-Oriented Criticism of Matthew's Narrative* (1998).¹⁰⁸ In this monograph, Yamasaki notes that the Matthean Baptist does not play a prominent role on the level of story but does have an important role in the level of discourse by being cast as the forerunner, serving as a point for retrospection, revealing Jesus' role of judge, and showing the wickedness of

¹⁰³ Full citation in n. 26, with discussion of John appearing in 83–90, 172–74. While published in 1994, this work is a revision of Anderson's 1985 dissertation at the University of Chicago.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 87.

¹⁰⁵ *NTS* 42 (1996): 196–218.

¹⁰⁶ For an explanation of his method, see *ibid.*, 202–4.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 216–18.

¹⁰⁸ (JSNTSup 167; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1998).

the Jewish leaders.¹⁰⁹ These literary studies indicate how the use of literary techniques may help further the insights developed through redaction-critical studies, showing that this method may prompt new insights concerning the Matthean Baptist. These literary approaches, however, have not drawn attention to the reason for the portrayal of the Matthean Baptist within the historical and social setting of the First Gospel and fail to differentiate between Matthew's position and those of his sources.

The most recent work addressing John the Baptist in the Gospel of Matthew is Lisa M. Bowens' 2010 essay in *Word and World*.¹¹⁰ Using Anderson's insight that John is a model both for Jesus and the disciples as its starting point, this work continues the pattern of analyzing John through the lens of literary criticism. It argues that the Evangelist presents John as an "exemplary" disciple who shows both "great faith" and "wavering faith" in order "to embody perfectly the spectrum of faith illustrated in the Gospel" and demonstrate the struggle of a disciple in times of crisis and the necessity to suffer.¹¹¹ In the course of her discussion in this essay, Bowens proposes that the depiction of John as a disciple is the reason for the themes of parallelism and subordination in the Gospel, returning to the themes discussed by Trilling nearly fifty years earlier.

A number of important observations can be made about the work on the Matthean Baptist chronicled above. The earliest studies emerged in the period in which debate swirled around the Jewish background to the Gospel and were often written by those at

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., 143–48.

¹¹⁰ "The Role of John the Baptist in Matthew's Gospel," *WW* 30 (2010): 311–18. This essay appeared as the 2009–10 winner of the journal paper competition for doctoral candidates.

¹¹¹ Ibid., 312.

the forefront of the “Gentile hypothesis” for the Gospel (Trilling, Meier).¹¹² These early studies continue to set the agenda, as some writers essentially adopt their findings (Wink, Krentz) while others offer alternative explanations for the parallelism and subordination of John noted in these works (Häfner, Bowens) or challenge the idea of the “Christianization” of John in Matthew (Lupieri, Frankemölle). More recent studies on the Baptist (Anderson, Frankemölle, Yamasaki, Bowens) have utilized literary approaches, approaches that do not consider the connection and significance the figure of John the Baptist had for the first audience of the Gospel in its social-historical setting. Those interested in the setting of the Gospel have dismissed the presence of a polemic against the Baptist argued by Jones, but this has not been a key area of consideration in studies of the Matthean Baptist. No scholar has seriously explored other possible relationships between Matthew’s Gospel and those who followed or revered the Baptist and the question of the Baptist’s role in the Gospel has not been revisited in light of recent developments concerning the Jewish setting of the Gospel.

Status Quaestionis and the Contribution of This Project

Recent studies on the Baptist and the Gospel of Matthew have examined the historical figure of John and the Gospel of Matthew within a setting of first-century Judaism. Previous examinations on John the Baptist in Matthew, however, have not drawn attention to the relevancy of the Matthean Baptist for its Jewish setting.

Furthermore, little attention has been devoted to how the perception of the Baptist within

¹¹² While Frankemölle argues for Gentile authorship, his study on the subject appears at the time in which a consensus had begun to emerge regarding the Jewish setting of the Gospel and focuses more on literary issues. Nepper-Christensen was also a member of the “vocal minority” advocating Gentile authorship of Matthew.

Judaism might play a role in the intra-Jewish discussion of the Gospel of Matthew. This study will step into this gap by focusing its attention on the Matthean Baptist within the Jewish historical and social setting of the first Gospel, a setting which seems to include some individuals or groups who had continued respect for the Baptist. This analysis of the Matthean Baptist in light of the Gospel's historical and social setting argues that Matthew portrays Jesus as the continuation and culmination of John's ministry as a way to strengthen the claims of his own group within its Jewish setting and vilify the Jewish opponents of his group.

Before proceeding, it seems wise to draw attention to three areas beyond the scope of this study and the relevant positions taken regarding these issues. First, this study will not seek to address questions concerning the historical Baptist. Instead, its focus is on the figure as constructed by Matthew. Accordingly, discussion of other texts referencing the Baptist does not look for data to understand the historical John but for beliefs about him in circulation around the time of the composition of Matthew. Second, while working from a point of view that there is a conflict between Matthew's group and other Jews, this study will not explore whether the Matthean community was *intra muros* or *extra muros*, and its argument neither assumes nor advocates for one of these positions.¹¹³ Finally, this project does not seek to reconstruct the beliefs, history, or practices of a group of Baptist-followers that existed independently of the Jesus movement in the first century. While working from a point of view that there were

¹¹³ For my position of Matthew standing at the beginning of a process of separation between Jewish believers in Jesus and the Pharisees, see Brian C. Dennert, "Constructing Righteousness: The «Better Righteousness» of *Matthew* as Part of the Development of a Christian Identity," *ASE* 28/2 (2011): 57–80.

individuals and possibly even groups of Jews in the first century that held John in high regard in light of traditions about the Baptist, it does not assume a full-fledged “Baptist sect.”

Approach of the Project

Positions Regarding Sources, Date, and Intended Audience

This work adopts a form of the Two-Source Hypothesis concerning the sources used by Matthew, deeming this theory as offering the best explanation and having the fewest weaknesses among the proposals for the “Synoptic Problem.” Therefore, it operates from a belief that Matthew used Mark and written and oral traditions (“Q”) that Luke also possessed.¹¹⁴ While finding the Double Tradition to point to Matthew and Luke using the same traditions and source(s), this study is in agreement with Martin Hengel in questioning whether these traditions can be assumed to come from a unified document and in rejecting the attempts to find strata, communities, and theologies in these sources.¹¹⁵ Therefore, the study draws attention to Matthew’s redaction of Markan and Q materials but will not compare the Matthean Baptist to a “Q Baptist.”

Although one cannot reconstruct a shared document for study, knowledge of Matthean and Lukan tendencies may still allow one to reconstruct particular written

¹¹⁴ On the existence of oral traditions as part of Q traditions, see James D. G. Dunn, “How Did Mathew Go About Composing His Gospel,” in *Jesus, Matthew’s Gospel, and Early Christianity* (ed. Daniel M. Gurtner, Joel Willitts, and Richard A. Burridge; LNTS 435; London: T & T Clark, 2011), 41–43.

¹¹⁵ See Martin Hengel, *The Four Gospels and the One Gospel of Jesus Christ* (trans. John Bowden; Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 2000), 173–75. For helpful discussions questioning whether a Q document can be reconstructed in its entirety and studied for its theology and original *Sitz im Leben*, also see C. S. Rodd, “The End of the Theology of Q?” *ExpTim* 113 (2001): 5–11; Michael Wolter, “Reconstructing Q?” *ExpTim* 115 (2003–4): 115–17; Eric Eve, “Reconstructing Mark: A Thought Experiment,” in *Questioning Q: A Multidimensional Critique* (ed. Mark Goodacre and Nicholas Perrin; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2004), 89–114; Nicholas Perrin, “The Limits of a Reconstructed Q,” in *Questioning Q: A Multidimensional Critique* (ed. Mark Goodacre and Nicholas Perrin; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2004), 71–88.

traditions utilized by both Evangelists.¹¹⁶ Most of the passages of the Double Tradition featuring John the Baptist are so close in wording that these passages were most likely shared written traditions, making it possible to discuss how Matthew redacts these traditions.¹¹⁷ One must bear in mind, however, the potential fluidity in exact wording of traditions at this early stage and the possibility that Matthew and Luke knew these traditions in slightly different forms,¹¹⁸ causing one to exercise caution when making arguments from minor alterations in wording.

Adopting a form of the Two-Source Hypothesis has implications for the date assigned to the Gospel of Matthew. Scholars generally maintain that the Gospel of Mark was written in the late 60's or early 70's C.E.¹¹⁹ Although some Matthean scholars who adopt the Two-Source Hypothesis advocate for a pre-70 C.E. date for the Gospel,¹²⁰ it

¹¹⁶ See John Kloppenborg Verbin, *Excavating Q* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 2000), 101–4.

¹¹⁷ In his discussion of written traditions (which he calls “Q”) and oral tradition (which he labels “q”), Dunn places most of the John material (Matt 3:7–10, 12//Luke 3:7–9, 17; Matt 11:2–11, 16–19//Luke 7:18–19, 22–28, 31–35) in Q, only placing Matt 11:12–13//Luke 16:16 in q; see “How Did Matthew,” 41–42. The passages most difficult to determine their relationship to the sources of Matthew and Luke are Matt 21:32 and Luke 7:29–30, which share many themes but feature many divergences and seems best viewed as different traditions (see Meier, *A Marginal Jew*, 2:167–70).

¹¹⁸ As discussed in Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:121.

¹¹⁹ While some scholars favor a date slightly before 70 C.E. (e.g., Adela Yarbro Collins, *Mark* [Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress, 2007], 14), others argue for a date slightly after 70 C.E. (e.g., Joel Marcus, “The Jewish War and the *Sitz im Leben* of Mark,” *JBL* 111 [1992]: 460). John Donahue and Daniel Harrington take a more general approach and simply say a date “around 70” (*The Gospel of Mark* [SP 2; Collegeville, MN: Liturgical, 2002], 44, 46). The remarks of Irenaeus in *Adv. Haer.* 3.1.2 may point to a date in the late 60's C.E. For further discussion on the date of Mark, see Daniel J. Harrington, *What Are They Saying About Mark?* (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist, 2005), 50–51.

¹²⁰ The list of advocates for a pre-70 C.E. date appearing in Hagner, “Determining the Date,” 77–78 n. 5 includes some other writers who hold to a Two-Source Hypothesis, while others are less confident in the Two-Source Hypothesis. Perhaps most notable is Gundry, who holds to a pre-70 C.E. date for Matthew based upon internal arguments (*Matthew: A Commentary on His Handbook for a Mixed Church under Persecution* [2d ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994], 599–609) and believes Mark was written between 60–62 C.E. (*Mark: A Commentary on His Apology for the Cross* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993], 1042). For a recent argument for a pre-70 C.E. date for Matthew by a proponent of the Two-Source Hypothesis that is more cautious than Gundry's, see Hagner, “Determining the Date,” 76–93. Willitts essentially brackets

seems best to view Matthew as written post-70 C.E., as this date allows some time for Matthew to receive and rewrite Mark.¹²¹ The details and perspective of the Gospel easily fit within a post-70 C.E. context, including the so-called “anachronistic” references to the Sadducees, temple priests, and other related topics often cited in arguments for a pre-70 C.E. date.¹²² The gradual and uneven process in which the rabbis emerged as the leaders of Judaism and a separation developed between the synagogue and believers in Jesus calls into question whether one can determine a more definite date for the Gospel’s setting in the post-70 period.¹²³ Because of these factors, the work will use the broad range of 70–100 C.E. for the date of Matthew.¹²⁴

the question of the date of Matthew but favors a pre-70 C.E. date (see *Matthew’s Messianic Shepherd-King*, 35).

¹²¹ Hagner may be correct in that a year or two rather than a decade may be sufficient for Matthew to receive and rewrite Mark (“Determining the Date,” 83), but even this period would place the date of Matthew close to, if not after, 70 C.E.

¹²² E.g., Hagner, “Determining the Date,” 89–90. On these groups and issues continuing after 70 C.E., see Martin Goodman, “Sadducees and Essenes after 70 CE,” in *Crossing the Boundaries: Essays in Biblical Interpretation in Honour of Michael D. Goulder* (ed. Stanley E. Porter, Paul Joyce, and David E. Orton; BIS 8; Leiden: Brill, 1994), 347–56; Philip S. Alexander, “What Happened to the Jewish Priesthood after 70?” in *A Wandering Galilean: Essays in Honor of Sean Freyne* (ed. Zuleika Rodgers, Margaret Daly-Denton, and Anne Fitzpatrick-McKinley; JSJSup 132; Leiden: Brill, 2009), 5–33. For discussion of the possibility of the continuation of the temple cult after 70 C.E., see Kenneth W. Clark, “Worship in the Jerusalem Temple after A.D. 70,” *NTS* 6 (1960): 272; Alexander Guttman, “The End of the Jewish Sacrificial Cult,” *HUCA* 38 (1967): 137–48; Emil Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ* (rev. and ed. Geza Vermes, Fergus Millar, and Martin Goodman; 4 vols.; Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1986), 1:521–23 (cf. *m. Ed.* 8.6; *m. Sheb* 8.8).

¹²³ A belief that things did not immediately change after 70 C.E. appears in Petri Luomanen, “The ‘Sociology of Sectarianism’ in Matthew: Modeling the Genesis of Early Jewish and Christian Communities,” in *Fair Play: Diversity and Conflicts in Early Christianity: Essays in Honor of Heikki Räisänen* (ed. Ismo Dunderberg, Christopher Tuckett, and Kari Syreeni; NovTSup 103; Leiden: Brill, 2002), 124–25; Runesson, “Rethinking Early Jewish-Christian Relations,” 111. For discussions and proposals for the rise of the rabbis, see Jacob Neusner, “The Formation of Rabbinic Judaism: Yavneh from A.D. 70–100,” *ANRW* 2.19.2 (1979): 3–42; Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People*, 1:521–537; Stuart Cohen, *The Three Crowns: Structures of Communal Politics in Early Rabbinic Jewry* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990); Martha Himmelfarb, *A Kingdom of Priests: Ancestry and Merit in Ancient Judaism* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006), 160–86; Shaye J. D. Cohen, *From the Maccabees to the Mishnah* (2d ed.; Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2006), 205–24; Peter Schäfer, “Rabbis and Priests, or: How to Do Away with the Glorious Past of the Sons of Aaron,” in *Antiquity in Antiquity* (ed. Gregg Gardner and Kevin L. Osterloh; TSAJ 123; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008), 155–72.

A final area in which to discuss premises for the present study concerns the intended audience of the Gospel of Matthew. There have been recent attempts to discount the notion of a specific community from which the Gospel originated and for which the work was written in favor of the view that the Gospel had a general audience.¹²⁵ While numerous scholars have criticized these arguments against the existence of gospel “communities,”¹²⁶ this recent challenge to the study of gospel “communities” calls for

Pivotal works rethinking the traditional understanding of the so-called “Council of Jamnia” include Jack P. Lewis, “What Was ‘Jamnia’?” *JBR* 32 (1964): 12–32; Peter Schäfer, “Die sogenannte Synode von Jabne. Zur Trennung von Juden u. Christen im ersten/zweiten Jh. N. Chr.,” *Jud* 31 (1975): 54–64; 116–24; Günther Stemberger, “Die sogenannte ‘Synode von Jabne’ und das frühe Christentum,” *Kairos* 19 (1977): 14–21; Shaye J. D. Cohen, “The Significance of Yavneh,” *HUCA* 55 (1984): 27–53; Jack P. Lewis, “Jamnia after Forty Years,” *HUCA* 70–71 (2000–1): 233–59. For works highlighting the gradual separation between the synagogue and the believers in Jesus, see n. 33 above.

¹²⁴ External evidence makes 100 C.E. a *terminus ad quem*; see Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:128–30.

¹²⁵ See Richard Bauckham, ed., *The Gospels for All Christians: Rethinking the Gospel Audiences* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998); Michael F. Bird, “Bauckham’s *The Gospel for All Christians* Revisited,” *EuroJTh* 15 (2006): 5–13; idem, “The Markan Community, Myth or Maze? Bauckham’s *The Gospel for All Christians* Revisited,” *JTS* 57 (2006): 474–86; Edward W. Klink III, *The Sheep of the Fold: The Audience and Origin of the Gospel of John* (SNTSMS 141; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007); cf. Dwight N. Peterson, *The Origins of Mark: The Markan Community in Current Debate* (BIS 48; Leiden: Brill, 2000), 199–202. A similar proposal as that offered in *The Gospels for All Christians* was independently developed in Hengel, *Four Gospels*, 106–16. For an overview of the development of, response to, and issues surrounding Bauckham’s work, see Edward W. Klink III, ed., *The Audience of the Gospels: The Origin and Function of the Gospels in Early Christianity* (LNTS 353; London: T & T Clark, 2010).

¹²⁶ See Philip F. Esler, “Community and Gospel in Early Christianity: A Response to Richard Bauckham’s *Gospels for All Christians*,” *SJT* 51 (1998): 235–48; Joel Marcus, *Mark* (2 vols.; AB 27, 27A; New York/New Haven, CT: Doubleday/Yale University Press, 2000, 2009), 1:25–28; Ernest van Eck, “A Sitz for the Gospel of Mark? A Critical Reaction to Bauckham’s Theory on the Universality of the Gospels,” *HvTst* 54 (2000): 973–1008; David C. Sim, “The Gospel for All Christians: A Response to Richard Bauckham,” *JSNT* 84 (2001): 3–27; Brian Incigneri, *The Gospel to the Romans: The Setting and Rhetoric of Mark’s Gospel* (BIS 65; Leiden: Brill, 2003), 32–34; Hendrik N. Roskam, *The Purpose of the Gospel of Mark in Its Historical and Social Context* (NovTSup 114; Leiden: Brill, 2004), 17–22; Mitchell, “Patristic Counter-Evidence,” 36–79; Thomas Kazen, “Sectarian Gospels for Some Christians? Intention and Mirror Reading in the Light of Extra-Canonical Texts,” *NTS* 51 (2005): 561–78; Christopher M. Tuckett, “Gospels and Communities: Was Mark Written for a Suffering Community?” in *Jesus, Paul, and Early Christianity: Studies in Honour of Henk Jan de Jonge* (ed. Rieuwerd Buitenwerf, Harm W. Hollander, Johannes Tomp; NovTSup 130; Leiden: Brill, 2008), 377–84. For Bauckham’s responses to these criticisms, see Richard Bauckham, “Response to Philip F. Esler,” *SJT* 51 (1998): 249–53; idem, “Is there Patristic Counter-Evidence? A Response to Margaret Mitchell,” in *The Audience of the Gospels: The*

more carefulness in considerations of gospel “communities” by drawing attention to two problematic issues in these discussions.¹²⁷ First, scholars often fail to recognize that the term “community” is a “notoriously ambiguous, even ‘loaded’ term” in the social sciences,¹²⁸ with some sociologists calling into question the “concept of community ... because it is so ill defined.”¹²⁹ Therefore, it is wiser to use a less problematic term, with the more general term “group” a better choice.¹³⁰ Second, one must remember that the gospels are primarily interpretations of the story of Jesus, not allegorical pictures and windows into the life of the group and its history.¹³¹ Therefore, while one is able to make some statements about the group from which a gospel originated, it is a more limited

Origin and Function of the Gospels in Early Christianity (ed. Edward W. Klink III; LNTS 353; London: T & T Clark, 2010), 68–110.

¹²⁷ For an evaluation of *The Gospels for All Christians* as essentially a refinement of the consensus view, see Adele Reinhartz, “Gospel Audiences: Variations on a Theme,” in *The Audience of the Gospels: The Origin and Function of the Gospels in Early Christianity* (ed. Edward W. Klink III; LNTS 353; London: T & T Clark, 2010), 134–52.

¹²⁸ See Stephen C. Barton, “Can We Identify the Gospel Audiences?” in *The Gospel for All Christians: Rethinking the Gospel Audiences* (ed. Richard Bauckham; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 174–76, who notes that the “theory of community has been very contentious” (174, see Anthony P. Cohen, *The Symbolic Construction of Community* [Chichester: Ellis Horwood, 1985], 11–15). On the many uses of “community” within sociological discussions, see Allan G. Johnson, *The Blackwell Dictionary of Sociology: A User’s Guide to Sociological Language* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2000), 48–49.

¹²⁹ Amitai Etzioni, “Community,” *The Cambridge Dictionary of Sociology* (ed. Bryan S. Turner; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 83. For a sustained discussion questioning the usefulness of the term “community,” see Margaret Stacey, “The Myth of Community Studies,” in *The Sociology of Community: A Selection of Readings* (ed. Colin Bell and Howard Newby; New Sociology Library 5; New York: Frank Cass and Company Limited, 1974), 13–26.

¹³⁰ In social-scientific discourse, the term “group” is “[t]he most generically inclusive term denoting a set of two or more individuals who are in reciprocal communication” (John H. Elliott, *What is Social-Scientific Criticism?* [GBS; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993], 130). Saldarini is one of the few writers to use the term “group” rather than “community,” although the title of Saldarini’s work contains the term “community” (*Matthew’s Christian-Jewish Community*).

¹³¹ As pointed out by in Barton, “Can We Identify,” 176–78; Francis Watson, “Toward a Literal Reading of the Gospels,” in *The Gospel for All Christians: Rethinking the Gospel Audiences* (ed. Richard Bauckham; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 195–217.

sketch than the discussions of a group's life and history found in many studies of "gospel communities."¹³²

The approach taken in this study is that the Gospel of Matthew originated in a certain group, whose situation affected the writing of the work, but that the work was also written in hopes of reaching a wider audience.¹³³ From the contents of the Gospel, it seems that the work originated in a sectarian Jewish group, when the term "sect" is defined as "a deviant or separatist movement within a cohesive and religious defined dominant culture" that "shares the same basic constellation of beliefs or 'worldview' of the dominant cultural idiom."¹³⁴ The text was most likely addressed to agreeable or

¹³² For a representative example of a fairly detailed discussion of the history and social setting of the Matthean community, see Wim Weren, "The History and Social Setting of the Matthean Community," in *Matthew and the Didache: Two Documents from the Same Jewish-Christian Milieu?* (ed. Huub van de Sandt; Minneapolis: Fortress, 2005), 51–62. The more cautious and general approach of Graham Stanton seems more appropriate (see "The Communities of Matthew," *Int* 46 [1992]: 379–91; "Revisiting Matthew's Communities," *HvTst* 52 [1996]: 376–94).

¹³³ This view is similar to that expressed in Isak J. du Pleiss, "The Lukan Audience—Rediscovered? Some Reactions to Bauckham's Theory," *Neot* 34 (2000): 234–61; Craig L. Blomberg, "The Gospel for Specific Communities and All Christians," in *The Audience of the Gospels: The Origin and Function of the Gospels in Early Christianity* (ed. Edward W. Klink III; LNTS 353; London: T & T Clark, 2010), 111–33, and utilized in other recent studies of Matthew (e.g., Foster, *Community, Law, and Mission*, 2–6; Willitts, *Matthew's Messianic Shepherd-King*, 36–37). Stanton similarly argued for Matthew being written for a "cluster" of communities (*A Gospel for a New People*, 50–51). Often overlooked in discussions concerning whether the gospels had an internal or wider audience is that Paul's letters were "addressed to particular Christian communities (not merely congregations), but with the awareness that they have a wider relevance" (M. Eugene Boring, *Mark* [NTL; Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2006], 16).

¹³⁴ As defined in White, "Shifting Sectarian Boundaries," 14; cf. Blenkinsopp, "Interpretation and Tendency," 1–2. In addition to general criticisms of the use of the term "sect" in the study of the New Testament and Christian origins (see e.g., Bengt Holmberg, *Sociology and the New Testament: An Appraisal* [Minneapolis: Fortress, 1990], 77–117; Stephen C. Barton, "Early Christianity and the Sociology of Sect," in *The Open Text* [ed. Francis Watson; London: SCM, 1993], 140–62), objections have been raised to its usefulness in studying Matthew (see e.g., Luomanen, "The 'Sociology of Sectarianism' in Matthew," 107–30). The term "sect," however, does seem to fit Matthew in that the group was a "minority religious movement" within the context of another religious tradition, matching the definition of a sectarian work noted in Philip A. Harland, *Associations, Synagogues, and Congregations: Claiming a Place in Ancient Mediterranean Society* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2003), 191. While Bryan Wilson's typology of sects certainly offers some helpful improvements to the definition of "sect" advanced by Weber and Troeltsch through making the term more applicable in cross-cultural setting, Wilson's focus on "response to the world" and attention to third-world settings, however, means that it may not be as effective as the more

sympathetic groups of Jews, as it presupposes familiarity with Jewish customs and traditions and a group would have to be somewhat sympathetic to the Jesus movement to receive and interact with this document. Therefore, it was most likely written by a Jewish believer in Jesus for other Jews.¹³⁵ Since nothing *necessitates* an Antiochene provenance for the work, it seems best not to assume this as the specific location from which the Gospel emerged; its place of origin is uncertain.¹³⁶ In addition, the name “Matthew” will be used to describe the Evangelist without making a claim for apostolic authorship.

“traditional” understanding of a sect reflected in the development of the term in Weber and Troeltsch, particularly since first-century Judaism may have functioned in ways analogous to the modern European setting reflected in the Weber-Troeltsch definition (see Luomanen, “The ‘Sociology of Sectarianism’ in Matthew,” 120–21; cf. Stanton, *A Gospel for a New People*, 90 n. 1. For a recent reevaluation on the usefulness of Weber’s discussion of sect, see David J. Chalcraft, “The Development of Weber’s Sociology of Sects: Encouraging a New Fascination,” in *Sectarianism in Early Judaism: Sociological Advances* [ed. David J. Chalcraft; London: Equinox, 2007], 26–51). Other terms that could potentially be used rather than “sect” are “reform movement” (Esler, *Community and Gospel*, 65–70), or “faction” (John H. Elliott, “The Jewish Messianic Movement: From Faction to Sect,” in *Modelling Early Christianity: Social Scientific Studies of the New Testament in Its Context* [ed. Philip F. Esler; London: Routledge, 1995], 75–95). I have avoided the term “cult” advocated by Luomanen (following the distinction between “sect” and “cult” proposed in Rodney Stark and William S. Bainbridge, *A Theory of Religion* [Toronto Studies in Religion 2; New York: Peter Lang, 1987], 124), since the use of this term seems to imply too much discontinuity between Judaism and the Matthean group and ignores the Matthean emphasis on “fulfillment,” which would match Stark and Bainbridge’s idea that sects “present themselves to the world as something *old*” as they “claim to be the authentic, purged, refurbished version of the faith from which they split” (eidem, “Of Churches, Sects, and Cults: Preliminary Concepts for a Theory of Religious Movements,” *JSSR* 18 [1979]: 125).

¹³⁵ The ongoing interaction that seems to have existed at the time between Jews and “Christians” makes it likely that Jewish believers in Jesus would speak to Jews outside of the Jesus movement, as noted in James Carleton Paget, “The Four among Jews,” in *The Written Gospel* (ed. Markus Bockmuehl and Donald A. Hagner; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 207. The emphasis on mission in Matthew also points to it being a document missionaries would use in their preaching of the gospel; see Daniel Ulrich, “The Missional Audience of the Gospel of Matthew,” *CBQ* 69 (2007): 64–83 (cf. Esler’s discussion of “colonization” in “Community and Gospel,” 242–43). The text eventually seem to have gone beyond those interested in the Jesus movement, as shown by the familiarity of Celsus with the text (Origen, *Cels.* 1.34, 40; cf. 2.11, 24, 34, 74).

¹³⁶ Davies and Allison perceptively note that the oft-proposed Antiochene provenance of this work stems from more information being available about Antioch than other possible locations (*Matthew*, 1:147).

Methodology

The variety of approaches employed in contemporary study of Matthew creates the need to clarify the approach adopted in this study.¹³⁷ Acknowledging the limitations and deficiencies inherent within each particular methodology and believing that different approaches can complement each other in the context of a historical-critical investigation, this study will use an eclectic method that draws upon redactional, literary, and social-scientific approaches.¹³⁸

While often maligned, redaction criticism is still a highly useful methodology when bearing in mind its limits and the way it has been refined in practice.¹³⁹ For example, while earlier redaction critics focused upon editorial changes and “horizontal readings” across a synopsis of the gospels,¹⁴⁰ the rise of “composition criticism,” highlighted the need to pay attention to “vertical readings,” that is the structure and

¹³⁷ For consideration of various approaches employed in contemporary study of Matthew, see Matthew Allan Powell, ed., *Methods for Matthew* (MBI; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

¹³⁸ On the use of redaction, literary, and social-scientific methods with a historical approach, see Donald A. Hagner and Stephen E. Young, “The Historical Critical Method,” in *Methods for Matthew* (ed. Matthew Allan Powell; MBI; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 29–30. Many deem the integration of social-scientific and literary approaches as part of “rhetorical criticism,” see e.g., Vernon Robbins, “Social-Scientific Criticism and Literary Studies: Prospects for Cooperation in Biblical Interpretation,” in *Modelling Early Christianity: Social Scientific Studies of the New Testament in Its Context* (ed. Philip F. Esler; London: Routledge, 1995), 274–89.

¹³⁹ For a discussion of the criticisms of redaction criticisms and its abiding value, see John R. Donahue, “Redaction Criticism: Has the *Hauptstrasse* Become a *Sackgasse*?” in *The New Literary Criticism and the New Testament* (ed. Elizabeth Struthers Malbon and Edgar V. McKnight; JSNTSup 109; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1994), 27–57.

¹⁴⁰ This common criticism of redaction criticism (see e.g., Stanley E. Porter, “Literary Approaches to the New Testament,” in *Approaches to New Testament Study* [ed. Stanley E. Porter and David Tombs; JSNTSup 120; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1995], 82) may be a partial misrepresentation of the method, as Norman Perrin’s classic discussion explicitly notes that redaction criticism pays attention how material is arranged and how the narrative is shaped (*What is Redaction Criticism?* [GBS; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1969], 65–66).

placement of traditions within the wider work.¹⁴¹ Contemporary redaction critics thus recognize the need to pay attention to unchanged traditions as well as the changes an evangelist introduces.¹⁴² Discussion of issues such as plot, setting, and characterization highlighted in literary criticism can also help illuminate the significance of the way an author has shaped a narrative and is consequently useful in redactional study.¹⁴³ Therefore, this study's redactional approach draws attention to Matthean changes, the placement and use of unchanged traditions, and literary features of the text.

Social-scientific and literary methods are also helpful in historical study as a means to help understand the way a text would communicate to its original audience in its socio-historical context. In many ways, the design of social-scientific study is to aid the historical-critical model by giving knowledge of the “social and cultural systems inhabited by both authors and intended audiences,” viewing the “text as both a reflection of and a response to the social and cultural settings in which the text was produced.”¹⁴⁴ Therefore, social-scientific models and theories may provide heuristic and explanatory tools that offer the constraints and limits which are often missing in historical

¹⁴¹ See the comments in William G. Thompson, *Matthew's Advice to a Divided Community: Mt. 17,22–18,35* (AnBib 44; Rome: Biblical Institute, 1970), 4–13, and the outworking of this approach in that monograph and in idem, “Reflections on the Composition of Mt 8:1–9:34,” *CBQ* 33 (1971): 365–88. On “composition criticism” as a variation of redaction criticism that still focuses on theology, see Stephen D. Moore, *Literary Criticism and the Gospels: The Theoretical Challenge* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1989), 3–13.

¹⁴² See e.g., Stephen S. Smalley, “Redaction Criticism,” in *New Testament Interpretation: Essays on Principals and Methods* (ed. I. Howard Marshall; Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 1977), 188; Stanton, *A Gospel for a New People*, 52; cf. Norman Perrin, “The Evangelist as Author: Reflections on Method in the Study and Interpretation of the Synoptic Gospels and Acts,” *BR* 17 (1972): 15.

¹⁴³ S. Moore, *Literary Criticism*, 56–68; Mark Allan Powell, *What is Narrative Criticism?* (GBS; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1990), 8–10, 97–98. The importance of plots and characters was recognized by No. Perrin in “The Evangelist as Author,” 16–17.

¹⁴⁴ Jo. H. Elliott, *What is Social-Scientific*, 7–8 (quotations on 8).

observations based solely on form and redaction criticism.¹⁴⁵ Literary methods are inherently “ahistorical” in their attention to the “world of the text” rather than the circumstances that produced the text and the text addressed, but elements of the approach may help one uncover the meaning of the text for its original audience. For example, reader-response criticism’s “temporal model of reading” presents “an understanding of language that has affinities with the language of oral culture,” a culture more in line with that of the original audience.¹⁴⁶ Furthermore, discussion of the “implied reader” may help one garner insights about the “real-reader,”¹⁴⁷ and narrative methods may serve as a check for theories of how a text was understood in its original context.¹⁴⁸ Because the “ideal reader” would know important social and cultural elements related to the text in addition to the information within the “narrative world,”¹⁴⁹ it seems best to integrate social-scientific and literary insights.¹⁵⁰

Redactional analysis will be at the forefront of this eclectic approach since the material concerning the Baptist in Matthew features parallels in Mark and Luke and therefore is conducive to redactional study. This redactionally-led approach, however,

¹⁴⁵ See Esler, *Community and Gospel*, 2–12.

¹⁴⁶ See Robert M. Fowler, “Who is ‘the Reader’ in Reader Response Criticism,” *Semeia* 31 (1985): 20.

¹⁴⁷ Jack Dean Kingsbury, “Reflections on ‘The Reader’ of Matthew’s Gospel,” *NTS* 34 (1988): 458–59.

¹⁴⁸ Powell, *What is Narrative*, 86–87, 98.

¹⁴⁹ Porter, “Literary Approaches,” 116–17; Warren Carter, “Narrative/Literary Approaches to Matthean Theology: The ‘Reign of Heavens’ As an Example,” *JSNT* 67 (1997): 9–14.

¹⁵⁰ See discussion of the need to integrate literary analysis within historical settings in Porter, “Literary Approaches,” 121–28. One could label the approach of this study as an “audience-centered” approach with the “audience” chosen being the original audience of the text. Powell would deem such an approach as “rhetorical criticism” (*What is Narrative*, 14–15, 19).

will keep in mind both the wider composition of the gospel as well as the overall shape and experience created in the reading of the text, recognizing that the text's historical audience was not necessarily encountering these traditions for the first time.¹⁵¹ Because of this eclectic approach, commentaries of various methodological positions will be of value and therefore consulted and considered, particularly those that analyze Matthew using literary methods or with explicit awareness of social-scientific insights. In addition, this study will also draw upon the analysis of Matthew offered by patristic and pre-modern writers.

There is one other important note to clarify regarding the methodology employed in this study, which is the choice of the work to begin the analysis of the references to the Baptist in Matthew with the last passages that discuss him. This method differs from most previous studies on the Matthean Baptist, which have largely been structured according to the narrative order of the Gospel or chosen different texts as starting points.¹⁵² There is value in beginning with the final statements an author makes, as they can provide key statements and tie together important themes of a work.¹⁵³ Moreover,

¹⁵¹ This is a significant difference to the narrative approach taken in Richard A. Edwards, *Matthew's Story of Jesus* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1985), which assumes a "first-time reader." An approach that assumes multiple readings appears in the approaches of Robert Tannehill on Luke-Acts and Jack Kingsbury on Matthew (see S. Moore, *Literary Criticism*, 21; Powell, *What is Narrative*, 20).

¹⁵² A narrative order appears in J. Jones, "References to John the Baptist"; Meier, "John the Baptist"; Krentz, "None Greater among Those Born from Women"; Häfner, *Der verheißen Vorläufer*; Ernst, *Johannes der Täufer*, 155–85; Yamasaki, *John the Baptist*. Frankemölle largely discusses the Baptist in narrative order, but also groups some passages in "Johannes der Täufer." Discussion of the Matthean Baptist commences with examination of 14:1–12 in Trilling, "Die Täufertradition" and Wink, *John the Baptist*, while Nepper-Christensen begins at 9:14–17 in "Die Taufe im Matthäusevangelium."

¹⁵³ The idea of beginning study of the Matthean Baptist with the last references to him comes from the discussion of the Markan Baptist in Lupieri, "John the Baptist in New Testament Traditions," 433. Studies on Matthew have often placed an emphasis on the last passage of the gospel (28:16–20) for understanding the whole work as a whole; see Otto Michel, "The Conclusion of Matthew's Gospel: A Contribution to the History of the Easter Message," in *The Interpretation of Matthew* (ed. Graham N. Stanton; IRT 3; Fortress: Philadelphia, 1983 [German orig. 1950]), 30–41; Trilling, *Das wahre Israel*, 21–

knowing the conclusion to which the narrator leads his audience can clarify ambiguities in earlier passages and reveal aspects of previous passages that one may overlook. Finally, later passages will influence the reading of earlier passages when an audience re-engages a text.¹⁵⁴ A secondary reason for beginning study of the Matthean Baptist with the last passages that discuss this figure is the minimal attention paid to these passages in previous studies, perhaps indicating that the value of these passages has not been fully recognized.

Summary of Argument and Chapters

The overarching argument of this work is that Matthew presents Jesus to be the continuation and culmination of John's ministry in order to strengthen the claims of Matthew's group within its Jewish setting and to vilify the opponents of his group. This argument will be developed upon both external (the respect given to John the Baptist at the time of Matthew's composition) and internal grounds (the distinctive portrait of John offered by Matthew).

Chapter 2 focuses on the external grounds by presenting conceptions of the Baptist in four extant texts (Mark, Luke-Acts, John, and Josephus' *Jewish Antiquities*) that are roughly contemporaneous with Matthew. The traditions recorded in these texts indicate that John the Baptist remained a respected Jewish figure at the end of the first century and that his influence and appeal was not contained to the Jesus movement.

51; Ulrich Luz, *Matthew* (trans. James Crouch; 3 vols.; Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress, 2001–7), 3:616. The approach employed here explores whether the last passage on a particular subject might similarly prove helpful for understanding an issue in the Gospel.

¹⁵⁴ My belief that the audience will repeatedly read or hear the text is a reason that I prefer this approach to a strict literary one which examines the text from the perspective of one who encounters the text for the first time (cf. the approach in Frankemölle, "Johannes der Täufer"). On the richness of Matthew requiring re-reading the text, see John Nolland, *Matthew* (NIGTC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005), 22.

Moreover, other writers within the Jesus movement seek to highlight links between John and Jesus while showing Jesus to be the superior figure, revealing that Matthew is not alone or original in his attempt to link John and Jesus while also differentiating between them to Jesus' advantage. It would seem, however, that Matthew develops links between Jesus and John and differentiates in a distinctive way for his own purposes.

The internal grounds derive from the analysis of the passages in Matthew, which consists of thematically linked groupings and commences with the last passages that discuss John the Baptist.¹⁵⁵ The examination of 21:23–32 and 17:10–13 in chapter 3 reveals how both passages highlight the failure of the Jewish religious leaders to recognize John's important role in salvation history as a unique messenger before Jesus and the kingdom. Matthew's narrative shows that his group has the correct teaching about John, with John's Elijanic identity pointing to his essential role in salvation history that makes him greater than the prophets. Matthew's view of John elevates him above the view of the crowds in the narrative of the Gospel, an opinion that appears to remain present at Matthew's time.

The fourth chapter analyzes the presentation of John the Baptist in 3:1–12 and his role in Jesus' baptism in 3:13–17. The links between the Baptist's ministry and the activity of Jesus portrays Jesus' work as the continuation of John's ministry. At the same time, John's words point beyond his ministry, with Jesus as the one who fulfills John's predictions and therefore being the culmination of John's message and ministry. The interaction between John and Jesus at Jesus' baptism reaffirms John's significance while

¹⁵⁵ The links and connections between the passages analyzed in each chapter, which explain and justify their groupings, will appear in the introduction of each chapter.

also showing that Jesus will fulfill John's words in a way that John would not have foreseen, with John submitting to Jesus' teaching.

Chapter 5 discusses two passages featuring questions posed to Jesus by John's disciples (9:14–17) and John himself (11:2–19). Both passages reveal Jesus to be the fulfillment of John's message, but they also address the incongruences between John's message and Jesus' ministry. This disjunction leads to confusion rather than conflict, as John and his disciples inquire of Jesus rather than reject him like the Pharisees and the Jewish leaders. Jesus affirms John's role as the eschatological Elijah but also highlights the fact that suffering continues in the present age, with the opposition that John faced and those that Jesus' followers face as the fulfillment of the promise of eschatological enemies.

Chapter 6 considers the passages describing John's imprisonment (4:12) and death (14:1–12) as well as the reference to John the Baptist in 16:14. These passages reveal that John's suffering is not in contrast to his role as Elijah but rather is part of his role, as it continues the suffering of the prophets but also furthers it as the eschatological Elijah who foreshadows the suffering of the one who comes after him. In addition, Matthew connects the opposition to John from Herod with the opponents of Jesus, indicting the opponents of Matthew's group since they correspond to those who rejected and killed this popular Jewish prophet.

The concluding chapter features a synthesis of the study's findings, the significance of the argument of this work in comparison to other discussions on the Matthean Baptist, and suggestions for further areas of research.

CHAPTER 2

JOHN THE BAPTIST IN FOUR FIRST- OR EARLY SECOND-CENTURY TEXTS

Introduction

This examination of the portrayal of John the Baptist in four extant, first- or early second-century texts (Mark, Luke-Acts, John, Josephus' *Jewish Antiquities*)¹ has a twofold purpose. First, it seeks to set a historical backdrop for the present study of the Matthean Baptist by presenting ideas and perceptions about the Baptist around the time of the composition of Matthew. Second, these texts offer points of comparison with Matthew. Therefore, this chapter does not attempt to present exhaustive discussions of the figure of the Baptist in these works nor discuss their value for the historical Baptist. Rather, it looks to what others believed or were taught about the Baptist around the time of Matthew's composition. In this way, one can understand what is distinctive about the Matthean Baptist and the relevance this portrait of the Baptist would have for Matthew's group and his intended audience.

After highlighting factors that cause a particular work to offer a distinctive point of comparison for the Gospel of Matthew, the discussion of each respective text will

¹ While I hold to a first-century date for all four of these texts, some scholars maintain an early second-century date for certain texts examined in this chapter. Because a late first-century or early second-century date for these works makes little difference for the purposes of this study, these texts are labeled as texts "roughly contemporaneous" with the Gospel of Matthew and the question of their dating will not be discussed.

consist of two sections. The first section will offer an overview of the *evidence*, that is, the passage(s) concerning the Baptist within the particular text. The second section will be an *evaluation* of the Baptist in this work, summarizing the work's description of the Baptist and bringing these ideas into dialogue with previous proposals concerning the Matthean Baptist. A synthesis of ideas concerning the Baptist found in these texts and their relevancy for studying the Matthean Baptist concludes the chapter.

The Baptist in Mark

Before examining the Markan Baptist, it is important to consider the background of Mark and the relationship between Mark and Matthew.² Although the Gospel is often seen to be a product of "Gentile Christianity" and written for Gentiles,³ some scholars have argued that Mark was most likely written by a Jewish believer in Jesus who

² For discussions on the Markan Baptist, see Joshua Starr, "The Unjewish Character of the Markan Account of John the Baptist," *JBL* 51 (1932): 227–37; Willi Marxsen, *Mark the Evangelist: Studies on the Redaction History of the Gospel* (trans. James Boyce et al.; Nashville: Abingdon, 1969), 30–53; Walter Wink, *John the Baptist in the Gospel Tradition* (SNTSMS 7; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968), 1–17; Ernst Bammel, "The Baptist in Early Christian Tradition," *NTS* 18 (1971–72): 96–99; Petros Vassiliadis, "The Function of John the Baptist in Q and Mark: A Hypothesis," *Theol* (1975): 405–13; Christian Wolff, "Zur Bedeutung Johannes der Täufer im Markusevangelium," *TLZ* 102 (1977): 857–65; Josef Ernst, *Johannes der Täufer: Interpretation, Geschichte, Wirkungsgeschichte* (BZNW 53; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1989), 4–38; Robert L. Webb, *John the Baptizer and Prophet* (JSNTSup 62; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1991), 51–55; Edmondo Lupieri, "John the Baptist in New Testament Traditions and History," *ANRW* 2.26.1 (1992): 432–42; W. Barnes Tatum, *John the Baptist and Jesus: A Report of the Jesus Seminar* (Sonoma, CA: Polebridge, 1994), 27–34; Michael Tilly, *Johannes der Täufer und die Biographie der Propheten: Die synoptische Täuferüberlieferung und das jüdische Prophetenbild zur Zeit des Täufers* (BWANT 7/17; Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1994), 31–68; Ulrich B. Müller, *Johannes der Täufer: Jüdischer Prophet und Wegbereiter Jesu* (BG 6; Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2002), 112–22; Clare K. Rothschild, *Baptist Traditions and Q* (WUNT 190; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005), 129–72; Joan E. Taylor and Federico Adinolfi, "John the Baptist and Jesus the Baptist: A Narrative Critical Approach," *JSHJ* 10 (2012): 247–84.

³ As noted in Adela Yarbro Collins, *Mark* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress, 2007), 6. For examples, see e.g., Pheme Perkins, "Mark," *NIB* 8:514; M. Eugene Boring, *Mark* (NTL; Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2006), 16, 20. Some view the Evangelist as Jewish but writing for Gentiles; e.g., Dieter Lüthmann, *Markusevangelium* (HNT 3; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1987), 6–7; Robert A. Guelich, *Mark 1:1–8:26* (WBC 34a; Dallas: Word, 1989), xxviii; cf. Robert A. Stein, *Mark* (BECNT; Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008), 10, who posits that the Gentiles are "god-fearers."

“thought he was advancing the heritage of Israel” and “grounds the story of Jesus within the Hebrew Scriptures.”⁴ Details of the differences between “form” of Judaism advocated for by Mark and Matthew are beyond the scope of this study, but it is important to point out that the picture of the Baptist in Mark is not fundamentally “unjewish.”⁵ As a source for Matthew, Mark’s portrayal of the Baptist is a starting point for the Matthean Baptist. While the themes and ideas that Matthew retains fit into his aim, one should recognize which aspects are pre-Matthean and thus less tied to the particular purposes of the first Gospel. Moreover, the similarities and differences between Mark and Matthew point to agreement or dispute since Matthew is aware of the Markan traditions and seems to have reacted to them.

Evidence

References to John the Baptist appear in Mark 1, 2, 6, 8, 9, and 11. Chapters 1 and 6 feature the most extensive discussion, as chapter 1 describes John’s ministry and chapter 6 depicts John’s death. The references to John in chapters 9 and 11 are also important since they appear at key points in the narrative and the latter seems to feature

⁴ See esp. Daniel J. Harrington, “How Jewish Was Mark’s Gospel?” in *When Judaism and Christianity Began: Essays in Memory of Anthony J. Saldarini* (ed. Alan J. Avery-Peck, Daniel Harrington, and Jacob Neusner; 2 vols.; JSJSup 85; Leiden: Brill, 2004), 2:343–59 (quotations on 343 and 359, respectively). An emphasis on the writer’s knowledge of Judaism also appears in the works of Martin Hengel (*Studies in the Gospel of Mark* [trans. John Bowden; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1985], 46) and Guelich (*Mark 1:1–8:26*, xxviii). Cf. A. Collins, *Mark*, 6, 8–9. Joel Marcus has been especially vocal in the need to study Mark against the backdrop of first-century Judaism, a stance articulated in “The Jewish War and the *Sitz im Leben* of Mark,” *JBL* 113 (1992): 441–62.

⁵ As argued in Starr, “The Unjewish Character.”

Markan redaction.⁶ The discussion of John in chapter 2 potentially offers insight into Mark's configuration of John and salvation history. Each passage will now be discussed in turn.

Mark 1:1–15

The opening sentence offers a framework to interpret John's ministry, locating the Baptist at "the beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ" (1:1) and portraying him as the fulfillment of prophecies from the Hebrew Scriptures (1:2–3).⁷ John the Baptist is the messenger described in Exod 23:20 and Mal 3:1 and the one who cries in the wilderness to prepare the way for YHWH's arrival (LXX Isa 40:3), making John the "prophesied preparer."⁸ The quotation from Isaiah places John's arrival in an eschatological context, as he comes before the time of the New Exodus.⁹

The details about the person and work of John depict him as the fulfillment of the prophecies. The text notes that John appears in "the wilderness" (1:4), and the description of John's dress and diet in 1:6 also points to his wilderness location.¹⁰ In "preaching

⁶ These passages are surprisingly overlooked in Marxsen's discussion, as noted in Vassiliadis, "The Function of John the Baptist," 409; Wolff, "Zur Bedeutung Johannes der Täufer," 857. While Wolff criticizes Marxsen for an incomplete analysis of the Baptist in Mark, Wolff ignores 2:18–22.

⁷ Rather than viewing 1:1 as the title, I view 1:1–3 as one sentence, with the correlative clause introduced by *καθώς* closely related to what follows and referring back to what precedes it (Guelich, *Mark 1:1–8:26*, 7; Robert Gundry, *Mark: A Commentary on His Apology for the Cross* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993], 30–31).

⁸ Ralph A. Martin, *Mark: Evangelist and Theologian* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1972), 66.

⁹ See Joel Marcus, *Mark* (2 vols.; AB 27, 27A; New York/New Haven, CT: Doubleday/Yale University Press, 2000, 2009), 1:139–40 on this "apocalyptic" opening. On the theme of a New Exodus in Mark, see Rikki E. Watts, *Isaiah's New Exodus and Mark* (WUNT 88; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1997).

¹⁰ Guelich, *Mark 1:1–8:26*, 20–21; Gundry, *Mark*, 37. On John's diet as that of a "wilderness herald," see James Kelhoffer, *The Diet of John the Baptist: "Locusts and Wild Honey" in Synoptic and Patristic Interpretation* (WUNT 176; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005), 121–23; cf. Eve-Marie Becker,

(κηρύσσω) a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins” (1:4), John “the Baptizer” prepares Israel for the time of salvation.¹¹ His location in the wilderness and ministry at the Jordan River points to the dawning of a new age in Israel.¹² In his baptism, the Markan John offers a new way for the “forgiveness of sins” that is outside the temple order and apart from Yom Kippur.¹³

“Kamelhaare ... und wilder Honig”: Der historische Wert und die theologische Bedeutung der biographischen Täufer-Notiz (Mk 1,6),” in *Die bleibende Gegenwart des Evangeliums: Festschrift für Otto Merk zum 70. Geburtstag* (ed. Roland Gebauer and Martin Meiser; Marburger Theologische Studien 76; Marburg: N. G. Elwert, 2003), 13–28. While many scholars see a link to Elijah in the description of John’s dress and diet (e.g., Wink, *John the Baptist*, 3; R. T. France, *The Gospel of Mark* [NIGTC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002], 69; A. Collins, *Mark*, 136), the description does not seem to be an exact correspondence to LXX 2 Kings 1:8 and LXX Zech 13:4 or 2 Kings 1:8 (MT) nor exclusive to Elijah among the prophets (see discussion in John A. T. Robinson, “Elijah, John, and Jesus: An Essay in Detection,” in *Twelve New Testament Studies* [London: SCM, 1962], 29 n. 2; Judith Wentling, “A Comparison of the Elijan Motifs in the Gospels of Matthew and Mark,” *Proceedings: Eastern Great Lakes Biblical Society* 2 [1982]: 111) and his diet does not correspond to any detail of Elijah (see Kelhoffer, *The Diet of John the Baptist*, 4–5). Viewing John’s dress as tied to his wilderness location rather than Elijanic identity does not deny the Markan portrait of John as Elijah, as the wilderness and Elijah themes may both be present and work together (see e.g., Marcus, *Mark*, 1:156–57; Kelhoffer, *The Diet of John the Baptist*, 4–5).

¹¹ I favor the reading ὁ βαπτίζων, which renders the participle as a title rather than as a description of John’s activity like κηρύσσω, in Mark 1:4; see John K. Elliott, “*Ho baptizōn* and Mark 1.4,” *TZ* 31 (1975): 14–15.

¹² Guelich, *Mark 1:1–8:26*, 18; France, *Mark*, 56–58. On the wilderness as the place of eschatological hope and renewal, see Isa 40:3–4; 41:18–19; 43:19–20; 48:20–21; 51:9–11; Jer 2:22; Hos 2:14; 12:9; Acts 5:36; 21:38; Josephus, *J.W.* 2.261–63; *Ant.* 20.97–98, 169–72. The use of the Jordan may also have connections with renewal, as it was associated with the entry into the Promised Land in Josh 3. The potential link between the Jordan and Elijah and Elisha (2 Kings 2:6–14; 5:10–14) “is most likely coincidental” (Guelich, *Mark 1:1–8:26*, 20).

¹³ See Lupieri, “John the Baptist in New Testament Traditions,” 440; Boring, *Mark*, 40. Cf. Ben Witherington III, “Jesus and the Baptist—Two of a Kind?” *SBL Seminar Papers, 1988* (SBLSP 27; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988), 228; Mauro Pesce, *Da Gesù al cristianesimo* (Antico e Nuovo Testamento 11; Brescia: Morcelliana, 2011), 85–119. This does not mean that an abolishment of Judaism is in mind here, as John’s ministry pioneers the new order that appears with the New Exodus just as the Exodus established the temple system. In line with the focus of this work, this observation deals with the Markan John and not the historical John; for competing proposals on the meaning and value of the historical John’s baptism, see Webb, *John the Baptizer*, 163–216; Joan E. Taylor, *The Immerser: John the Baptist within Second Temple Judaism* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 49–100. On the possibility that the historical John’s baptism was for the forgiveness of sin, see e.g., Hartwig Thyen, “ΒΑΠΤΙΣΜΑ ΜΕΤΑΝΟΙΑΣ ΕΙΣ ΑΦΕΣΙΝ ΑΜΑΡΤΙΩΝ,” in *The Future of Our Religious Past: Essays in Honour of Rudolf Bultmann* (ed. James M. Robinson; trans. Charles E. Carlston and Robert P. Scharlemann; New York: Harper & Row, 1971 [German orig. 1964]), 131–68.

John's preaching in 1:7–8 further explains his preparatory ministry. John speaks of one who is stronger than he who will "come after" him (1:7).¹⁴ This one will surpass John's baptismal work, as "he will baptize with the Holy Spirit" (1:8). The "baptismal" language need not mean that the coming figure will literally "baptize," as John uses his ministry as a way to describe the ministry of the eschatological messenger.¹⁵ The Markan John's work therefore is penultimate, pointing to another figure that will bring in the new eschatological age.¹⁶

The events surrounding Jesus' baptism affirm John's work of preparation. Immediately after Jesus' baptism,¹⁷ the heavens are split, the Spirit descends upon Jesus (1:10), and a voice from heaven declares, "You are my son, the Beloved, with you I am well pleased" (1:11). These events reveal Jesus to be the one described by John while relegating John's baptism to the age before the Spirit-empowered ministry of Jesus.¹⁸ Having fulfilled his role, John disappears from the narrative.¹⁹ Jesus' conflict with Satan

¹⁴ While "after me" (*ὀπίσω μου*) can be a technical term for discipleship (see Kendrick Grobel, "He Who Cometh After Me," *JBL* 60 [1941]: 397–401), the phrase in Mark seems to have a temporal meaning (Guelich, *Mark 1:1–8:26*, 24; France, *Mark*, 70–71).

¹⁵ With e.g., France, *Mark*, 71–72; Boring, *Mark*, 42. On Jesus' ministry of casting out demons as the fulfillment of this prophecy, see Jo. Taylor and Adinolfi, "John the Baptist," 270–78; cf. Craig A. Evans, "The Baptism of John in Typological Context," in *Dimensions in Baptism: Biblical and Theological Studies* (ed. Stanley E. Porter and Anthony R. Cross; JSNTSup 234; London: Sheffield Academic, 2002), 64–65.

¹⁶ Guelich, *Mark 1:1–8:26*, 25; Boring, *Mark*, 42.

¹⁷ The baptism of Jesus is completed in 1:9, with the vision of 1:10 following it and the Spirit coming as Jesus leaves the water, separating Jesus' reception of the Spirit from his baptism (with e.g., Gundry, *Mark*, 47–48; Tilly, *Johannes der Täufer*, 43. Against France, *Mark*, 76).

¹⁸ Guelich, *Mark 1:1–8:26*, 31; cf. Ernst, *Johannes der Täufer*, 18. That John only prepares the way while Jesus ushers in a new age is confirmed by the quotations from the Scriptures respectively applied to John (1:2–3) and Jesus (1:11), as noted in e.g., Guelich, *Mark 1:1–8:26*, 31; Boring, *Mark*, 33.

¹⁹ Cf. Tilly, *Johannes der Täufer*, 45.

in the “wilderness” (1:12–13) offers a contrast between the two figures, reflecting Jesus’ eschatological importance in the desert and John’s preparatory work in the same locale.²⁰

The shift from John’s work of preparation to Jesus’ work of preaching the kingdom becomes clear in 1:14–15. John is “handed over” (*παραδίδωμι*) while Jesus goes to a new place (Galilee) and preaches a new message (“the gospel of God”), issuing a call for repentance and faith in the gospel because “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand (*ἤγγικεν*).” Jesus’ message shows the fulfillment of the coming of the Lord described in Isa 40:3 and the fulfillment of John’s words concerning a later messenger (1:7).²¹ John’s fate offers another point of preparation for Jesus’ ministry, however, as Jesus will similarly be “handed over” after declaring the forgiveness of sins outside of the temple order.²² They both provide an example for the disciples, who also will preach and then suffer.²³

Overall, Mark’s opening shows John’s ministry actualizing the promises of the Scriptures and his place at the beginning of the eschatological fulfillment that occurs with Jesus’ ministry. John ministers before Jesus and prepares the people for Jesus’ arrival

²⁰ Boring, *Mark*, 33.

²¹ A. Collins, *Mark*, 137, 153. On Jesus’ miracles showing him to fulfill 1:7, see Marcus, *Mark*, 1:157–58.

²² See e.g., Lupieri, “John the Baptist in New Testament Traditions,” 433–35. On the link to being “handed over,” see 3:19; 9:31; 10:33; 14:10, 11, 18, 21, 41, 42, 44; 15:1, 10, 15. On the link to forgiveness of sins, see 2:5, 7, 9, 10; cf. 11:25.

²³ Marcus, *Mark*, 1:148. The disciples, however, will preach a different message from John and Jesus, as they preach “the gospel of Jesus Christ” (1:1) (see John Painter, *Mark’s Gospel* [London: Routledge, 1997], 27–28).

with his baptism and message, and his fate is a preview of Jesus' fate as well as his followers.

Mark 2:18–22

A reference to John's disciples occurs in the central story of a section featuring a series of controversy stories (2:1–3:6),²⁴ as unnamed questioners ask Jesus why his disciples do not fast when “the disciples of John and the disciples of the Pharisees fast” (2:18). John's disciples and the Pharisees exhibit similar behaviors, as nothing in the text differentiates between the fasts of the two groups.²⁵ This similarity is surprising, as John's ministry prepares the way for Jesus while the Pharisees have already exhibited hostility toward Jesus (2:16, 18) and will soon plot to kill Jesus (3:6). The question does not reveal hostility between the disciples of John and the disciples of Jesus, however, as it merely notes that some individuals noticed different practices amongst the followers of each man.

Jesus' response points to the implications that emerge from the day of salvation arriving in his ministry. The discussion of the garments and wineskins centers upon the incompatibility of old and new systems, implying that the fast of John's disciples during Jesus' ministry does not recognize the salvation-historical significance of Jesus' ministry. They thus do not properly understand the preparatory work of John nor see Jesus as the

²⁴ There are five units in this section: 2:1–12; 2:13–17; 2:18–22; 2:23–28; 3:1–6, with 2:18–22 the center unit.

²⁵ While scholars often explore the possible reasons for John's disciples fasting (e.g., Tilly, *Johannes der Täufer*, 50), none is given in the text. That there was a different motivation or reason for the similar practices of each might be implied by the fact that John's baptism is different from the “baptisms” of the Pharisee (7:1-4) as well as the fact that John supports Jesus while the Pharisees oppose Jesus, but this issue receives no emphasis here.

fulfillment of John's preaching.²⁶ The day of salvation that comes with Jesus therefore overturns the customs of the old order, customs which John followed and taught.²⁷ This passage shows that John belongs to the older order, before Jesus' proclamation about the kingdom.²⁸

Mark 6:14–29

The next reference to John in Mark is “sandwiched” between the sending of the Twelve (6:6b–13) and their return (6:30).²⁹ In recounting popular opinions about Jesus (6:14–16), the first possibility is that “John the Baptizer has been raised from the dead and on account of this, the powers are at work in him [Jesus]” (6:14). While others thought Jesus was Elijah or a prophet “like one of the prophets” (6:15), Herod considers whether Jesus might be the resurrected John (6:16). This statement attributes honor to John and Jesus by linking them with Elijah and the prophets and reflects a link between John and Jesus in the mind of some individuals.³⁰

²⁶ Starr, “The Unjewish Character,” 228.

²⁷ Cf. Marcus, *Mark*, 1:238.

²⁸ See Painter, *Mark's Gospel*, 60; A. Collins, *Mark*, 200.

²⁹ On this as an example of Mark's “sandwiches,” see James R. Edwards, “Markan Sandwiches: The Significance of Interpolations in Markan Narratives,” *NovT* 31 (1989): 198, 205–6. On John's death as helping to fill in a gap in the narrative to account for the mission of the disciples, see Vincent Taylor, *The Gospel according to St. Mark* (London: Macmillan, 1952), 307.

³⁰ On the associations with the other figures showing potential honor to John, see Michael Hartmann, *Der Tod Johannes des Täufers: Eine exegetische und rezeptionsgeschichtliche Studie auf dem Hintergrund narrative, intertextueller, und kulturanthropologischer Zugänge* (SBB 45; Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 2001), 41–100, esp. 99–100. On the text showing a link between John and Jesus, even if Mark as a whole seeks to lessen some of the connections between the figures, see Jo. Taylor and Adinolfi, “John the Baptist,” 257–58, 280–82.

Herod's opinion prompts a flashback that recounts the death of John (6:17–29).

The Markan description of John's death has sparked numerous studies examining it in various ways,³¹ but it will suffice for the purposes of this study to point out six issues.

First, the discussion of John after his death shows his continuing importance in the narrational world of the text as well as in the world in which the text was composed.

Second, while elements of the story are similar to secular stories as well as the biblical book of Esther, the focus on Herodias' desire to kill John and Herod's ambivalence towards John recalls the story of Elijah, Jezebel, and Ahab.³² Third, even if it is not an

³¹ See the diverse approaches and conclusions of articles on the topic in the last twenty years: Jean Delorme, "John the Baptist's Head—The Word Perverted: A Reading of a Narrative Mark 6.14–29," *Semeia* 81 (1998): 115–29; Francis J. Moloney, "Mark 6.6b–30: Mission, the Baptist, and Failure," *CBQ* 63 (2001): 647–63; Nicole Wilkinson Duran, "Return of the Disembodied or How John the Baptist Lost His Head," in *Reading Communities, Reading Scripture: Essays in Honor of Daniel Patte* (ed. Gary A. Phillips and Nicole Wilkinson Duran; Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 2002), 277–91; S. Anthony Cummins, "Integrated Scripture, Embedded Empire: The Ironic Interplay of 'King' Herod, John and Jesus in Mark 6.1–44," in *Biblical Interpretation in Early Christian Gospels Volume 1: The Gospel of Mark* (ed. Thomas Hatina; LNTS 304; London: T & T Clark, 2006), 31–48; Regina Janes, "Why the Daughter of Herodias Must Dance," *JSNT* 28 (2006): 443–67; Ross S. Kraemer, "Implicating Herodias and Herod in the Death of John the Baptist: A (Christian) Theological Strategy?" *JBL* 125 (2006): 321–49; Christos Karakolis, "Narrative Funktion und christologische Bedeutung der markinischen Erzählung vom Tod Johannes des Täufers (Mk 6:14–29)," *NovT* 52 (2010): 134–55; R. Alan Culpepper, "Mark 6:17–29 in Its Narrative Context: Kingdoms in Conflict," in *Mark as Story: Retrospect and Prospect* (ed. Kelly R. Iverson and Christopher W. Skinner; Resources for Biblical Studies 65; Atlanta: SBL, 2011), 145–63; Gabriella Gelardini, "The Contest for a Royal Title: Herod versus Jesus in the *Gospel According to Mark* (6,14–29; 15,6–15)," *ASE* 28/2 (2011): 93–106. For an analysis drawing upon narrative theory, intertextuality, and cultural anthropology, see Hartmann, *Der Tod Johannes des Täufers*, 49–246.

³² Joachim Gnllka, "Das Martyrium Johannes' des Taufers (Mk 6,17–29)," in *Orientierung an Jesus. Zur Theologie des Synoptiker. Für Josef Schmid* (ed. Paul Hoffmann, Norbert Brox, and Wilhelm Pesch; Freiburg: Herder, 1973), 78–93, esp. 87–89. On the importance of the story of Elijah for this pericope, see esp. David M. Hoffeditz and Gary E. Yates, "Femme Fatale Redux: Intertextual Connection to the Elijah/Jezebel Narratives in Mark 6:14–29," *BBR* 15 (2005): 199–221. A major difference with the Elijah story, however, is that the prophet is killed here. Rather than calling into question whether a link to Elijah is intended, however, this difference is one that the audience should notice through the comparison. For special attention on the connections to Esther, see Roger Aus, *Water into Wine and the Beheading of John the Baptist* (BJS 150; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988), 39–74; James G. Crossley, "History from the Margins: The Death of John the Baptist," in *Writing History, Constructing Religion* (ed. James G. Crossley and Christian Karner; Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005), 147–61. Secular parallels include Herodotus, *Hist.* 9.108–13; Josephus, *Ant.* 18.289–304; Livy, *History of Rome* 39.43 (Marcus, *Mark*, 1:402). For further discussion of the folkloric parallels, see Hans Windisch, "Kleine Beiträge zur evangelischen Überlieferung. 1. Zum

exact literary counterpart, there are connections between John's death and Jesus' death, showing John's execution to foreshadow Jesus' fate.³³ Fourth, a significant difference between John's death and Jesus' death is that Jesus is raised from the dead while John is not.³⁴ Fifth, at least partly at the root of Herodias' contempt for John (6:19) was his criticism of Herod's marriage to her, as John declared that "it is not lawful (οὐκ ἔξεστί)" for Herod "to have his brother's wife" (6:18), painting John as one zealous to uphold the Jewish law (Lev 18:16; 20:21).³⁵ Finally, the placement of John's death between the commissioning of the twelve (6:6b–13) and their return from mission (6:30) indicates not only that John and Jesus have similar deaths, but that the disciples can expect similar suffering in their commitment to preaching.³⁶

Mark 8:28

Jesus' disciples mention possible identifications for Jesus as John the Baptist, Elijah, or one of the prophets in 8:28. While recalling the discussion in 6:14–16, the identity of Jesus is made explicit here, as the passage ultimately sets up the declaration of

Gastmahl des Antipas," *ZNW* 18 (1917–18): 73–81. Hartmann's recent study features helpful discussion on a variety of parallels, with special focus on the parallels to Herodotus (*Der Tod Johannes des Täufers*, 228–34).

³³ For the connections between John's death and the Passion Narrative, see Ernst, *Johannes der Täufer*, 28–29; Karakolis, "Narrative Funktion," 134–55. On the lexical similarities between John's death and Jesus' death, see esp. Wolff, "Zur Bedeutung Johannes der Täufers," 859–60.

³⁴ Delorme, "John the Baptist's Head," 128. On the way that John's fate points to Jesus' resurrection in light of its links to the preceding story of Jairus' daughter, see Janes, "Why the Daughter of Herod," 443–67. The emphasis on John being beheaded in the story would seem to render the claim that Jesus was "John raised from the dead" impossible, as John's head and body were divided (see Kraemer, "Implicating Herodias," 341–45).

³⁵ Marcus, *Mark*, 1:400. Cf. Tilly, *Johannes der Täufer*, 58–59; Hartmann, *Der Tod Johannes des Täufers*, 170.

³⁶ J. Edwards, "Markan Sandwiches," 206; Moloney, "Mark 6:6b–30," 660.

Peter that Jesus is the Christ (8:29).³⁷ Moreover, the confession climaxes with the first Passion prediction (8:31–33), linking Jesus’ identity as the Messiah with his suffering and noting that his followers must suffer (8:34–38). This passage therefore contrasts John and Jesus by showing Jesus to be the Messiah and refers to John in the midst of a discussion of the suffering of Jesus and his followers.

Mark 9:11–13

After witnessing the Transfiguration (9:2–8) and hearing Jesus refer to the resurrection of the Son of Man (9:9–10), James, John, and Peter ask Jesus why the scribes say it is necessary (δεῖ) for Elijah to come first (9:11). The complexity involved in the syntactical construction and historical background of Jesus’ answer has prompted many attempts at explanation.³⁸ Space does not permit discussion of all these issues, but a number of observations are particularly relevant.

It seems best to view Jesus as supporting the idea that Elijah “restores all things (ἀποκαίστανει πάντα)” (9:12a; cf. Sir 48:10), but then redefining this “restoration” in light of the suffering of the Son of Man (9:12b).³⁹ This redefinition indicates that Elijah has

³⁷ A. Collins, *Mark*, 402.

³⁸ These attempts range from historical explanations of the development of the traditions (see Justin Taylor, “The Coming of Elijah, Mt 17,10–13 and Mk 9,1–13: The Development of the Texts,” *RB* 98 [1991]: 117) to the claim that the “Son of Man” in this passage is actually John (Wink, *John the Baptist*, 13–16, and more recently in Rothschild, *Baptist Traditions*, 189). While this could be true of an original saying, Mark’s audience would think that the “Son of Man” is Jesus (Craig A. Evans, *Mark 8:22–16:20* [WBC 34b; Dallas: Word, 2001], 43) and would read the text as a unity.

³⁹ For a similar viewpoint that the passage prevents a certain understanding of restoration, see Martin Dibelius, *Die urchristliche Überlieferung von Johannes dem Täufer* (FRLANT 15; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1911), 30. Wolff states that the restoration does not happen because John’s work was hindered (“Zur Bedeutung Johannes der Täufer,” 861), but the discussion of “all” coming to John in 1:5 points to his restoration of all things occurring here (see Kent Brower, “Elijah in the Markan Passion Narrative,” *JSNT* 18 [1983]: 87). Therefore, Mark does not point to a future restoration or

restored all things but also suffered (9:13) in accordance with the Scriptures (9:13) and like the Son of Man (9:12).⁴⁰ Therefore, the passage affirms John's ministry as the fulfillment of the Scriptures but also challenges traditional expectations by stating that he suffers.⁴¹ A further way that the passage may rework traditional expectations about Elijah concerns his identity here as a forerunner of the Messiah, an idea that does not seem to be widely held at the time.⁴² The placement of this discussion after the Transfiguration shows John's lesser role, as the Transfiguration reveals that Jesus will be resurrected,⁴³ Jesus will suffer and be raised while John will only suffer.

In addition to redefining the ministry of Elijah, Jesus disagrees with the scribes and addresses any possible confusion amongst his disciples in proclaiming that Elijah has already come (9:13). The disciples do not seem to have recognized John as Elijah, as

appearance of Elijah. While 9:12 could be either a question or a statement, it seems better to view it as a statement (e.g., C. A. Evans, *Mark 8:22–16:20*, 43) rather than a question (e.g., Marcus, *Mark*, 1:644–45).

⁴⁰ The insertion of 9:12 is abrupt, but 9:13 helps explain its meaning, showing that the rejection of Elijah and the rejection of the Son of Man are alike and correspond to Scripture. On the suffering of John as Elijah as part of the tribulation that brings about the restoration of Israel, see Brant Pitre, *Jesus, the Tribulation, and the End of Exile: Restoration Eschatology and the Origin of the Atonement* (WUNT 2/204; Tübingen/Grand Rapids: Mohr Siebeck/Baker Academic, 2005), 188–97.

⁴¹ Wink, *John the Baptist*, 16; Martin, *Mark*, 68. No Jewish text outside of the Jesus movement discusses Elijah suffering, as the killing of Elijah in Rev 11 is likely originates from a group of believers in Jesus (see Richard Bauckham, "Martyrdom of Enoch and Elijah: Jewish or Christian?" *JBL* 95 [1976]: 447–58). Another element that reconfigures traditional expectations is that Elijah restores "all things" and not just "hearts" (see A. Collins, *Mark*, 430).

⁴² See Morris M. Faienstein, "Why Do the Scribes Say That Elijah Must Come First?" *JBL* 100 (1981): 75–86; Joseph A. Fitzmyer, "More about Elijah Coming First," *JBL* 104 (1985): 295–96; Markus Öhler, "The Expectation of Elijah and the Presence of the Kingdom of God," *JBL* 118 (1999): 461–64. Dale C. Allison's attempt to refute Faienstein is not compelling, but he does help remind scholars about our limited information of this time period ("Elijah Must Come First," *JBL* 103 [1984]: 256–58). It seems best to say that the idea of Elijah as the forerunner of the Messiah was not common, recognizing that some groups might have had such a belief, as noted in Joel Marcus, *Mark*, 2:646.

⁴³ On the Transfiguration prefiguring the Resurrection, see Margaret E. Thrall, "Elijah and Moses in Mark's Account of the Transfiguration," *NTS* 16 (1970): 305–17.

their question points to a belief that Elijah has not yet come.⁴⁴ While Jesus does not explicitly name John as Elijah, the description that “they did to him whatever they wanted” (9:13) combined with the allusions to Elijah in the death of John and use of Mal 3:1 to introduce John identifies him as the “Elijah to come.” The passage thus defends the Elijahic identity of John, affirming him to be Elijah and using the suffering of the Son of Man to substantiate a suffering Elijah.⁴⁵

Mark 11:27–33

The final reference to John occurs in a dispute in Jerusalem. After the demonstration in the temple (11:15–19) and the incident of the fig tree (11:12–14, 20–25), the chief priests, scribes, and elders, ask Jesus to tell them what authority he has to do “these things”⁴⁶ and who gave him this authority (11:28).⁴⁷ Jesus responds to the question intended to trap him with a question that traps his opponents, as he asks about the origin of the “baptism of John” (11:29–30). The dialogue among Jesus’ opponents reveals that they did not believe in John (11:31) and that they “fear” the “crowd” because the crowd believes John to have been a prophet (11:32). Their silence causes Jesus to

⁴⁴ Brower, “Elijah,” 88; Öhler, “The Expectation of Elijah,” 469.

⁴⁵ Cf. Joel Marcus, “Mark 9,11-13 ‘As It Has Been Written,’” *ZNW* 80 (1989): 42–63. While Wink labels John as “Elijah *incognito*” as a way to match the “messianic secret” about Jesus (*John the Baptist*, 16), it seems better to view this passage as showing John is unrecognized and rejected as the promised Elijah, as there is no secrecy to his identity. The lack of explicit reference is not part of the “messianic secret” but an indirect way that narrative makes its point, a technique common in Mark (Ernst, *Johannes der Täufer*, 34).

⁴⁶ “These things” seems to refer not just to the events in the temple, but also the teaching in the temple described in 11:27 and potentially Jesus’ entire ministry.

⁴⁷ While these could be two different questions, it seems best to view the two parts of 11:28 as asking the same thing in two different ways (see C. A. Evans, *Mark 8:22–16:20*, 199–201).

refuse to answer their question (11:33) and to tell them the parable of the Wicked Tenants (12:1–12).

A number of insights about the Markan Baptist emerge from this final passage. First, there is a difference of opinion about John between the religious leaders and the people, particularly in Jerusalem since “all Jerusalem” went out to John (1:5) and held John to be a prophet while the religious leaders did not believe him (11:31). The crowd does not seem to have played a role in John’s execution, as they still hold him to be a prophet after his death. The passage also highlights similarities between the ministries of Jesus and John, as both challenge the religious establishment.⁴⁸ While there are similarities in their ministries and John’s ministry is used as a way to defend Jesus’ work, the ministry of John is subordinated under that of Jesus.⁴⁹ In fact, the reference to John’s baptism would seem to recall this difference, as John’s baptismal ministry looked forward to Jesus’ ministry in the Spirit.

Evaluation

In Mark’s Gospel, John is the promised Elijah. As Elijah, he is Jesus’ precursor who ministers before Jesus and prepares the way for the ministry of the Son of God. Two

⁴⁸ Tilly, *Johannes der Täufer*, 65. On a link in the purification of the cult in the ministry of both figures, see Christine E. Joynes, “A Questions of Identity: ‘Who Do People Say That I Am?’ Elijah, John the Baptist, and Jesus in Mark’s Gospel,” in *Understanding, Studying, and Reading: New Testament Essays in Honour of John Ashton* (ed. Christopher Rowland and Crispin H. T. Fletcher-Louis; JSNTSup 153: Sheffield: Sheffield, 1998), 25.

⁴⁹ See Lupieri, “John the Baptist in New Testament Traditions,” 433. The subordination of John’s ministry throughout the Gospel and the parable that follows indicate that Jesus is not only not inferior but the fulfillment of John’s ministry (see France, *Mark*, 453). Therefore, Jesus’ use of John here is consecutive as well as parallel.

important facets of this preparatory work are the prototypical and provisional elements of John's ministry.

The many similarities between John and Jesus noted above show John as a prototype for Jesus' ministry. The ministries of John and Jesus are both in accordance with the Scriptures, with prophecies of Isaiah explaining the ministry of each figure. John and Jesus each prompt reexaminations of the traditional expectations for eschatological figures, as John is a suffering Elijah and Jesus a suffering Messiah, and the crowds and the disciples have problems recognizing the true identity of each figure in light of the way that they do not cohere to the traditional expectations. John also foreshadows Jesus' ministry that offers forgiveness of sins outside the temple by presenting a change from the status quo of Judaism and the Mosaic Law in his offer of forgiveness of sins in baptism (1:4). John's popularity with the people and opposition from the leaders of Israel as well as the Roman-appointed ruler (Herod Antipas) prefigures the response Jesus' ministry receives.⁵⁰ The suffering of each figure also serves as an example of the fact that the followers of Jesus will suffer. Finally, the identification of Jesus as the resurrected John as well as Jesus' use of John in his confrontation with the religious leaders in Jerusalem shows the similarity between the two figures in the eyes of some individuals.

Alongside of these similarities, however, are a number of differences that point to Jesus' superiority and the provisional nature of John's ministry. John preaches baptism (1:4) but Jesus calls for faith in the gospel because of the kingdom (1:14–15). Moreover, John notes that his baptism will be surpassed by "the mightier one" who will baptize with

⁵⁰ Note that Herod puts John to death (6:16) and that the Herodians seek to kill Jesus (3:6).

the Holy Spirit (1:7–8), therefore showing John’s practice to be temporary. In fact, Jesus rejects the idea of “baptisms” (7:1–19)⁵¹ and offers the forgiveness of sins by his word (2:1–12), thus supplanting John’s ministry. While John advocates fasting like the Pharisees (2:18–22), Jesus alters the call to fast due to the salvation-historical importance of his presence and his absence (2:18–22); Jesus’ ministry creates a radical shift in behavior and ritual practice. John and Jesus both discuss marriage laws, but John’s teaching reflects the teaching of the Sinaitic law concerning marriage (6:18) while Jesus grounds his teachings in the account of creation (10:2–12). There are similarities in the sufferings of each, but Jesus is the only one who is raised from the dead and whose death has salvific qualities (10:45). John’s ministry still stands closer to the “old” form of Judaism than that advanced by Jesus. This is not due to a failure in John but rather to his place at “the beginning of the gospel”; John stands on the cusp of the eschatological fulfillment that occurs in Jesus’ ministry, making John one who stands “between the times.”⁵² The chronological separation of John and Jesus in Mark affirms that John’s ministry occurs before Jesus’ commences. While preparing for Jesus, John’s work thus remains provisional, and once Jesus’ ministry begins, John’s ministry is surpassed.

Many of the key elements previously discussed concerning the Matthean portrayal of John appear in his Markan source. First, there are a number of ways in which John and Jesus parallel each other in Mark while also being differentiated, with John being

⁵¹ While 7:4 uses *βαπτισμός* rather than *βάπτισμα*, the latter term the one used to describe John’s ministry (1:4), there seems to be some similarity between John’s practices and those of the Jews in line with their similar practices of fasting (cf. 2:18–22). The use of different words could be a way to separate John from the practice of other Jews.

⁵² Ernst, *Johannes der Täufer*, 37.

subordinated to Jesus. As well, John also serves as an example for Jesus' followers in Mark. Furthermore, the Markan Baptist appears to stand "between the times," reflecting the divergent proposals concerning the Matthean Baptist's placement with the prophets or the church. Finally, the Elijah image is a key element in the Markan portrayal. Matthew might develop these issues for his own purposes, but they do not appear to have originated with Matthew or his special traditions.

The Baptist in Luke-Acts

While Luke-Acts⁵³ features unique material concerning the Baptist (e.g., Luke 1–2; Acts), much of its material is an independent development of some of the sources also used by Matthew (Mark and Q traditions).⁵⁴ Analysis of Luke-Acts therefore reveals the

⁵³ This study assumes a narrative unity between Luke-Acts. While there have been challenges to the unity of Luke-Acts (see Mikael C. Parsons, and Richard I. Pervo, eds., *Rethinking the Unity of Luke and Acts* [Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993]; Patricia Walters, *The Assumed Authorial Unity of Luke and Acts: A Reassessment* [SNTSMS 145; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009]; Andrew F. Gregory and C. Kavin Rowe, eds., *Rethinking the Unity and Reception of Luke and Acts* [Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2010]), a "narrative unity" of Luke-Acts still seems the most reasonable position (see Robert Tannehill, *The Narrative Unity of Luke-Acts: A Literary Interpretation* [2 vols.; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1986, 1990]). For rebuttals to challenges to the unity of Luke-Acts from 1993–2007, see Michael F. Bird, "The Unity of Luke-Acts in Recent Discussion," *JSNT* 29 (2007): 425–48, esp. 425–39.

⁵⁴ In addition to the monographs on the Lukan Baptist (Peter Böhle, *Jesus und der Täufer: Schlüssel zur Theologie und Ethik des Lukas* [SNTSMS 99; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997]; Christoph Gregor Müller, *Mehr als ein Prophet: Die Charakterzeichnung Johannes des Täufers im lukanischen Erzählwerk* [HBS 31; Freiburg: Herder, 2001]; Jaroslav Rindoš, *He of Whom It is Written: John the Baptist and Elijah in Luke* [ÖBS 38; Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2010]), also see the discussions in Hans Conzelmann, *The Theology of St. Luke* (trans. Geoffrey Buswell; New York: Harper & Row, 1961), 18–27; Wink, *John the Baptist*, 42–86; S. G. Wilson, "Lukan Eschatology," *NTS* 15 (1970): 330–36; Bammel, "The Baptist in Early Christian Tradition," 105–109; Otto Böcher, "Lukas und Johannes der Täufer," *SNTSU* 4 (1979): 27–44; Michael Bachmann, "Johannes der Täufer bei Lukas: Nachzügler oder Vorläufer," in *Wort der Zeit: Festgabe für Karl Heinrich Rengstorf zum 75. Geburtstag* (ed. Wilfrid Haubeck and Michael Bachmann; Leiden: Brill, 1980), 123–55; I. Howard Marshall, *Luke: Historian and Theologian* (3d ed.; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1988), 145–47; Robert J. Miller, "Elijah, John, and Jesus in the Gospel of Luke," *NTS* 34 (1988): 611–22; Ernst, *Johannes der Täufer*, 81–154; Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *Luke the Theologian* (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1989), 86–116; Webb, *John the Baptizer*, 60–70; Lupieri, "John the Baptist in New Testament Traditions," 442–46; Tatum, *John the Baptist*, 54–72; U. Müller, *Johannes der Täufer*, 134–61. The discussion of Luke in Tilly, *Johannes der Täufer*, 105–44, only focuses on his *Sondergut*, omitting Luke's redaction of Markan and Q traditions.

way that a different writer developed similar traditions for his own purposes at a comparable point in time.

Evidence

Among the canonical gospels, Luke-Acts contains the most material about John the Baptist. While some scholars have separated the perspective on the Baptist in the Lukan infancy narratives from the perspective offered in the rest of Luke-Acts,⁵⁵ this study will not assume a disjunction between Luke 1–2 and the rest of the work. While not ruling out the possibility of a source discussing the birth of the Baptist lying behind Luke 1, the numerous thematic connections between the birth narratives and the rest of the Luke-Acts shows that any potential sources have been thoroughly integrated into the rest of the work.⁵⁶

Luke

Before examining the Lukan data about the Baptist, one must note the omission of Mark 9:11–13. While this omission could lead to the conclusion that Luke does not view

⁵⁵ Conzelmann, *The Theology of St. Luke*, 22–24 and Böcher, “Lukas,” 28–29 explicitly maintain divergences between the perspective of the Baptist in Luke 1–2 and Luke 3–24. Both Wink (*John the Baptist*) and Ernst (*Johannes der Täufer*) analyze the infancy narrative separately from the rest of Luke’s work.

⁵⁶ On the numerous thematic connections between the birth narratives and the rest of Luke-Acts, see H. H. Oliver, “The Lukan Birth Stories and the Purpose of Luke-Acts,” *NTS* 10 (1963–64): 202–26; Joseph P. Tyson, “The Birth Narratives and the Beginning of Luke’s Gospel,” *Semeia* 52 (1991): 103–20. There are stylistic differences between Luke 1–2 and Luke 3–24 that point to 1–2 deriving from a source (see Tilly, *Johannes der Täufer*, 109–10), but it is difficult if not impossible to determine what elements are pre-Lukan sources or traditions and in what context such traditions might have originated (see Böhlemann, *Jesus und der Täufer*, 10–44). For discussions on the issue of a possible Baptist source in Luke 1, see Raymond E. Brown, *The Birth of the Messiah* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1977), 244–53; I. Howard Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (NIGTC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978), 46–50; Ernst, *Johannes der Täufer*, 113–20.

John as Elijah *redivivus* and suppresses this idea in his redaction of Mark,⁵⁷ the difficulties found in this Markan text point to other plausible reasons for its omission.⁵⁸ Moreover, the appearance of Elijanic themes elsewhere in Luke, as discussed below, also points against the absence of 9:11–13 being due to a desire to eliminate Elijanic imagery in Luke’s texts discussing the Baptist.

Luke 1:5–80

Luke begins his “orderly account” about Jesus with a record of John’s lineage and birth, a description that emphasizes his pious roots and extraordinary origin. The first thing described about John is his priestly heritage, as his father was a priest and his mother was also from the priestly line (1:5).⁵⁹ Since Zechariah and Elizabeth are “righteous before God” and “blameless” (1:6), John’s parents are part of the faithful people of Israel.⁶⁰ The miraculous circumstances of his birth recall numerous birth stories in the Jewish Scriptures.⁶¹ The announcement of joy, gladness, and the rejoicing of many

⁵⁷ As maintained in e.g., Conzelmann, *The Theology of St. Luke*, 101, n. 1; Wink, *John the Baptist*, 42–43.

⁵⁸ One stylistic reason could stem from the “rabbinic” questioning that takes place in Mark 9:9–13 (Bammel, “The Baptist in Early Christian Tradition,” 106). Another is that the passage is redundant in light of the suffering of the Son of Man in 9:31 (Öhler, “The Expectation of Elijah,” 467 n. 26). Luke’s use of ἐλῆλυθεν in 7:33 (“For John the Baptist has come” [ἐλῆλυθεν]) could also allude to the reference in Mark 9:13 that Elijah “has come” (ἐλῆλυθεν), presenting another reason for the omission of Mark 9:11–13 (Ernst, *Johannes der Täufer*, 86). Also see S. Wilson, “Lukan Eschatology,” 333.

⁵⁹ C. Müller, *Mehr als ein Prophet*, 93; Rindoš, *He of Whom*, 41.

⁶⁰ C. Müller, *Mehr als ein Prophet*, 94, 102, 297. Against J. Massyngberde Ford, “Zealotism and the Lukan Infancy Narrative,” *NovT* 18 (1976): 280–92, there is no need to associate John’s family with the Zealots, as Luke uses the term “righteous” to refer to those who do the will of God (1:17; 2:25; 23:50; Acts 3:14; 7:52; 22:14).

⁶¹ In particular, the story recalls the births of Isaac, Samson, and Samuel. The reversal of barrenness also appears in the births of Jacob and Esau and Joseph and the reference to John being filled

(1:14) and description of Gabriel as “proclaiming good news” (εὐαγγελίζω) (1:19)

situates John’s birth as part of the fulfillment of the hope of restoration.⁶² That the birth announcement occurs while his father performed his priestly work in the temple (1:8–14) shows John standing in continuity with the temple.

John’s ministry fulfills the promises of Malachi, as “he will go before [the Lord their God] in the spirit and power of Elijah” to prepare the people (1:17).⁶³ This statement identifies John’s ministry with that of the expected Elijah.⁶⁴ The text has a different emphasis on John’s work as Elijah, as the focus on “turning” (ἐπιστέφω) (1:16, 17) and “preparing” (ἐτοιμάζω) a people (1:17) portrays John as an “ethical” forerunner who

with the Spirit is reminiscent of Jeremiah. The reference to Gabriel also recalls the figure in Daniel 9–10 (see R. Brown, *The Birth of the Messiah*, 270–71 for more on the “echoes” of Daniel).

⁶² Isa 40:9; 52:7; 60:6; 61:1. The announcement of the birth by an angel may also point to an eschatological context for John (Tilly, *Johannes der Täufer*, 127).

⁶³ See Mal 2:6; 3:1; 4:5–6; cf. Sir 48:10. The use of ἐτοιμάζω in 1:17 also recalls Isa 40:3, although the allusion to Isa 40:3 is not as prominent as the allusion to that passage in 1:76 or in Mark 1:2–3 and the concept of “preparing a people” found here also appears in 2 Kgdms 7:24 (see Thomas R. Hatina, “The Voice of Northrop Frye Crying in the Wilderness: The Mythmaking Function of Isaiah 40:3 in Luke’s Annunciation of the Baptist,” in *Biblical Interpretation in Early Christian Gospels Volume 3: The Gospel of Luke* [ed. Thomas Hatina; LNTS 376; London: T & T Clark, 2010], 61–64).

⁶⁴ While some contend that this reference to John as one “like” Elijah rather than as Elijah indicates that Luke has removed the idea of John as Elijah (see e.g., Wink, *John the Baptist*, 42–43. Cf. Luke Timothy Johnson, *Gospel of Luke* [SP 3; Collegeville, MN: Liturgical, 1991], 33, 35; Fitzmyer, *Luke the Theologian*, 109), J. A. T. Robinson rightly notes that the reference to John as one like Elijah can hardly function as a denial that John is Elijah and that the identification of John as one like Elijah makes Mark’s indirect remarks comparing John to Elijah unnecessary (“Elijah,” 46). In addition to R. Miller, “Elijah,” 616, see Rindoš, *He of Whom*, 39–76 for a recent defense of John as Elijah. A link to Elijah may also appear in the idea that John is great in light of Sir 48:22 (François Bovon, *Luke 1: A Commentary on the Gospel of Luke 1:1–9:50* [trans. Christine M. Thomas; Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992], 36).

brings repentance and obedience.⁶⁵ This statement is programmatic for the ministry of the Lukan Baptist.

After recounting the announcement of John's birth, the narrative switches to the announcement of Jesus' birth (1:26–38). While there are many similarities between the description of John and Jesus in the opening chapter, there is “step-parallelism” that highlights the superiority of Jesus.⁶⁶ The visit between Mary and Elizabeth (1:39–56) further reflects the superiority of John over Jesus, as John leaps within Elizabeth's womb and the Spirit-filled Elizabeth proclaims Mary “the mother of my Lord” (1:41–43), indicating that Jesus is the “Lord” for whom John prepares.⁶⁷ John commences his prophetic work while in his mother's womb, as Elizabeth shows belief in Jesus as the Messiah because of John's presence in her womb.

John's birth and Zechariah's song (1:57–80) are also programmatic for John's ministry in Luke-Acts.⁶⁸ Through the Spirit, Zechariah declares that John's birth marks God's coming for his people and that John's ministry stands in fulfillment with the

⁶⁵ See U. Müller, *Johannes der Täufer*, 147. Cf. Bovon, *Luke*, 37. The ethical meaning, however, does not completely eliminate the eschatological elements of John's ministry (Ernst, *Johannes der Täufer*, 87).

⁶⁶ On the idea of “step-parallelism,” see esp. R. Brown, *The Birth of the Messiah*, 248–53; Joel B. Green, *The Theology of the Gospel of Luke* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 51–55.

⁶⁷ See Karl A. Kuhn, “The Point of the Step-Parallelism in Luke 1–2,” *NTS* 47 (2001): 38–49.

⁶⁸ While the song itself does not show Lukan style and would seem to come from a traditional source (see Böhlemann, *Jesus und der Täufer*, 13), one must note that the themes of the Spirit, salvation, and the fulfillment of God's promises connect the Benedictus to the rest of the narrative of Luke-Acts (Christopher F. Evans, *Saint Luke* [TPINTC; Philadelphia: Trinity Press International, 1990], 140) and the statements about the Baptist reflect Lukan themes (R. Brown, *The Birth of the Messiah*, 389–90), though these could easily be Lukan additions to a source. A pre-existing song or source need not be from a Baptist group (as argued in Richard Dillon, “The Benedictus in Micro and Macro Context,” *CBQ* 68 [2006]: 457–80), as a “Jewish Christian” context is also plausible (R. Brown, *The Birth of the Messiah*, 377–78).

promises of the Jewish Scriptures (1:68–75). Zechariah also describes John as a “prophet of the Most High” (1:76) who “will go before the Lord to prepare his ways,” alluding to the promises of Isa 40:3 in addition to the reference to Mal 3:1 already made. Zechariah gives a further description of the purpose of John’s work: John will “give knowledge of salvation to his people in the forgiveness of their sins” (1:77).⁶⁹ Luke’s description of John’s ministry shows how these words are fulfilled.

John then disappears, going into the wilderness until his reappearance as an adult (1:80).⁷⁰ Simeon’s words about Jesus point to his ministry amongst the Gentiles (2:32), but John’s ministry centers upon Israel, as he is hidden until “the day of his public appearance to Israel.” Zechariah’s faithful ministry in the temple and Jesus’ annual treks there makes it unlikely that the Lukan John’s departure into the wilderness is a polemic against the temple.⁷¹

The opening chapter sets up a frame through which to interpret John and his ministry in Luke-Acts. While John and Jesus are similar, Jesus surpasses John as the Messiah. Nonetheless, John is important, as he is named by God Himself and prepares

⁶⁹ The mention of “forgiveness of sins” makes this a preview of John’s baptizing ministry (Bovon, *Luke*, 75) and uses a key theme of Luke to describe John as Jesus’ forerunner (Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *The Gospel according to Luke: Introduction, Translation, and Notes* [2 vols.; AB 28, 28A; New York: Doubleday, 1981, 1985], 1:386). While John “gives knowledge of salvation” (1:77), Jesus brings salvation (1:69, 71) (see Dibelius, *Die urchristliche Überlieferung*, 73; Bovon, *Luke*, 75–76).

⁷⁰ Luke exhibits no concern to link John with the Essenes and/or Qumran (with Tilly, *Johannes der Täufer*, 133–34), as this verse simply sets up John’s appearance in the wilderness (Ernst, *Johannes der Täufer*, 137, 277).

⁷¹ C. Müller, *Mehr als ein Prophet*, 164–66. It remains possible that the historical Baptist’s baptizing work was a rural priest’s protest against the temple establishment (see Webb, *John the Baptizer*, 203–5).

the people for Jesus.⁷² As one who comes from a pious, priestly family, John shows continuity with the Scriptures and the ritual practices of Israel. At the same time, John stands at the beginning of the fulfillment of God's promises to Israel and points to the "salvation" comes through Jesus.

Luke 3:1–22

Luke follows Mark in placing John within the context of the Isaianic promises but introduces this quotation differently through additions, omissions, and connections to the birth narrative. Rather than introducing John's ministry with words from the Scriptures, Luke places it within its historical framework, noting both the Roman rulers (Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate, Herod, Philip, Lysanias) and the Jewish leaders (Annas and Caiaphas) of the time in 3:1–2.⁷³ The designation of John as the "son of Zechariah"⁷⁴ and the place of his revelation "in the wilderness" recall the events and descriptions of the opening chapter (1:5, 80), showing John's ministry as the fulfillment of the prophecies concerning him in the birth narrative. The use of the phrase "the word of God came" utilizes a phrase commonly used in describing the Jewish prophets, making John a prophetic figure. The Lukan John is an itinerant prophet, as he no longer ministers in the

⁷² On the divinely given name for John, see C. Müller, *Mehr als ein Prophet*, 101, 297.

⁷³ The synchronism of John's ministry with historical events would seem to make John "the inaugurator of this decisive period" (Wink, *John the Baptist*, 51, followed in Ernst, *Johannes der Täufer*, 88).

⁷⁴ Luke never uses the designation "the Baptizer" (*βαπτίζων*) that appears in Mark 1:4 and rarely uses the title "Baptist" (*βαπτιστής*) (5:33; 7:20, 33; 9:19). All appearances likely come from his sources, and no references are in his special material or Acts. This tendency may indicate less of an emphasis on John's work of baptism, focusing on his proclamation rather than on his rite.

wilderness as in Mark but rather in “all the region of the Jordan” (3:3).⁷⁵ Finally, Luke omits any reference to John’s diet or dress (cf. Mark 1:6).⁷⁶

Luke’s use of Isa 40:3 features some differences from Mark’s use of the same passage. Luke portrays John as the forerunner of the Lord Jesus by using *ἀπ’ αὐτοῦ* rather than the LXX’s *τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν* as in Mark. Luke does not connect Isa 40:3 with Exod 23:20 and Mal 3:1,⁷⁷ and he extends the quotation of Isaiah to include 40:4–5 with the result that the text ends by noting that “all flesh shall see the salvation of God” (Luke 3:6).⁷⁸ This statement further grounds John’s ministry as one of renewal of Israel and the dawning of salvation, with the return of the people from exile leading to the inclusion of the Gentiles.⁷⁹ While John’s ministry is towards Israel (1:80), it thus has a universal scope as a final goal.

John’s message features a note of coming judgment (3:7) and a call to holy living (3:8), with proper actions rather than proper lineage the means to escape the imminent

⁷⁵ For a rebuttal to Conzelmann’s argument that the Jordan is the area of John and Judea and Galilee the domain of Jesus (*The Theology of St. Luke*, 18–26), see Wink, *John the Baptist*, 48–51.

⁷⁶ While often seen as a way to avoid Elijah typology, other plausible explanations exist for this absence, e.g., a focus on John’s preaching of ethical reforms and social order (Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 1:469).

⁷⁷ The absence of Mal 3:1 could stem from the fact that Mark cites Isaiah, from its appearance in Luke 7:27, a Mark/Q overlap here, or because of its absence in Luke’s *Vorlage* due to the complicated textual history of Mark. The connections between Mal 3:1 and Isa 40:3 in 1:17 could also allow for it to be omitted here (see R. Brown, *The Birth of the Messiah*, 277–78).

⁷⁸ On the way that the expansion of the quotation alters the meaning of Isa 40:3 in Luke, see David W. Pao, *Acts and the Isaianic New Exodus* (WUNT 2/138; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000; repr. Biblical Studies Library; Grand Rapids: Baker, 2002), 38–40.

⁷⁹ The use of Isaiah 40 would link John’s message with the return from exile, as John prepares them to return from exile. See discussion in Michael E. Fuller, “Isaiah 40.3–5 and Luke’s Understanding of the Wilderness of John the Baptist,” in *Biblical Interpretation in Early Christian Gospels Volume 3: The Gospel of Luke* (ed. Thomas Hatina; LNTS 376; SSEJC 16; Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 2010), 43–58.

judgment (3:8b–9). There is a greater focus on ethics than ritual in John’s message as well, as baptism is effective only if joined with “fruits” (καρπούς), the nature of which 3:10–14 elucidate. John’s exhortations to ethical behavior to the crowds, the tax collectors, and the soldiers (3:10, 12, 14) are in line with the interests of the Evangelist and the Lukan Jesus.⁸⁰ This focus on proper actions fulfills the description of John’s work as “turning hearts” in the opening chapter (1:16–17).⁸¹ The emphasis on ethics also points to the possibility of inclusion of the Gentiles, with the presence of soldiers indicating that Gentiles were influenced by John’s ministry to Israel.⁸²

While many of the differences between Luke 3:16–17 and Mark 1:7–8 also appear in Matthew and thus could be found in a tradition before Luke,⁸³ he has thoroughly

⁸⁰ See Böcher, “Lukas,” 31 on Lukan interests here. However, one must not overstate the interests being peculiar to Luke in contrast to other writings of Jesus believers (Ernst, *Johannes der Täufer*, 94–95; Tilly, *Johannes der Täufer*, 138) and Jewish teachers (Marshall, *Gospel of Luke*, 142). On links to Greco-Roman ideas, see Bammel, “The Baptist in Early Christian Tradition,” 105–6, with special reference to the connection between John’s statements to the soldiers and Greco-Roman ethics in Brent Kinman, “Luke’s Exoneration of John the Baptist,” *JTS* 44 (1993): 595–98. John’s teaching, therefore, is not entirely new, and could indicate it is the fulfillment of the Jewish Law as well as Greco-Roman virtues (Bovon, *Luke*, 125).

⁸¹ On the meaning of 1:17b as living “in peace and righteousness with one another,” see Marshall, *Gospel of Luke*, 59–60

⁸² While the text does not explicitly state that the soldiers were Gentiles, it seems best to view them as Gentile in light of the difficulties one would have being a faithful Jew and a soldier (see Wendy J. Cotter, “Cornelius, the Roman Army, and Religion,” in *Religious Rivalries and the Struggle for Success in Caesarea Maritima* [ed. Terence L. Donaldson; Studies in Christianity and Judaism 8; Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier, 2000], 279–301) and the presence of “god-fearing” Gentile centurions elsewhere in Luke-Acts (Luke 7:1–9; Acts 10:1–2).

⁸³ This could be a place of Mark/Q overlap, as Matthew and Luke differ from Mark in portraying the baptism of “the mighty one” as a “Holy Spirit-and-fire” baptism, interweaving the comments of the superiority of the coming one vis-à-vis John with the comparison of their respective baptisms while omitting the Markan idea of “stooping down” (κύψας), and including a reference to the gathering of grain and the burning of the chaff in light of the coming one having his “winnowing shovel” in hand to clear the “threshing floor” (3:17). In contrast to Matthew, however, Luke also omits the fact that the “mighty one” comes “after” (ὀπίσω) John. The omission of this phrase could be a way to avoid the impression that Jesus was a disciple of John (on ὀπίσω μου referring to a teacher-student relationship, see Grobel, “He That

adapted his sources into his work. Luke places this teaching of John within the people's pondering of whether John is the Messiah (3:15), showing John's popularity and that the people interpreted John's teaching in conjunction with eschatological ideas such as the appearance of the Messiah.⁸⁴ John's response affirms the preparatory nature of his work in three ways. First, John explicitly denies that he is the messiah, showing that there is not a dual messianism in Luke-Acts; there is a single messianic figure (Jesus) for whom John prepares the people.⁸⁵ Second, John compares his baptismal work with the coming one, showing that he prepares with water but that the coming one will give purification through the Holy Spirit and fire.⁸⁶ Third, the image of the "threshing floor" reveals John's

Cometh," 397–401), particularly since Acts 13:25 (cf. Acts 10:37) uses the more temporal term *μετά* in recounting a saying similar to that which appears here (see Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 1:472–73). Luke does not exhibit the same concern to show Jesus to be John's successor that appears in Mark 1:14, with Luke 3:21–22 leaving open the possibility that John and Jesus had some overlap in ministry.

⁸⁴ Joel B. Green, *The Gospel of Luke* (NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 180.

⁸⁵ The familial connection between Mary and Elizabeth could actually be a way to show Jesus as from both the line of David and Aaron (cf. Böhlemann, *Jesus und der Täufer*, 41).

⁸⁶ The meaning of John's description of a baptism in Holy Spirit and fire is a complex issue; see esp. discussions in Ernst Best, "Spirit-Baptism," *NovT* 4 (1960): 236–43; James D. G. Dunn, "Spirit-and-Fire Baptism," *NovT* 14 (1972): 81–92; Harry Fleddermann, "John and the Coming One (Matt 3:1–12/Luke 3:16–17)," *SBL Seminar Papers, 1984* (SBLSP 23; Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1984), 377–84; Webb, *John the Baptizer*, 289–95; Archie W. D. Hui, "John the Baptist and Spirit-Baptism," *EvQ* 72 (1999): 99–115. While the reference to fire in 3:17 could suggest that "fire" is used in a negative sense of judgment in 3:16, both John's baptism and the baptism of the one who will come seem to have a positive meaning (with e.g., Paul Hollenbach, "Social Aspects of John the Baptist's Preaching Mission in the Context of Palestinian Judaism," *ANRW* 2.19.1 [1979]: 867–68). The fulfillment of this baptism at Pentecost and at the "extensions of the event" in Acts (see Schuyler Brown, "Water Baptism and Spirit-Baptism in Luke-Acts," *ATHR* 59 [1977]: 141–51) also points to a positive meaning of this baptism. While often used for imagery of judgment, fire can have the meaning of purification (see e.g., Isa 1:25; Ezek 22:18–22; Zech 13:9; Mal 3:1–3; 1QS 4.20–21), with water also having a meaning of purification and connected to the Spirit in Isa 32:15, 44:3; Ezek 36:25–27; 37:14, 23; 39:29; Joel 2:28–29; John 3:5), providing a point of contact between water baptism and the baptism in Spirit and fire (for connections between the Holy Spirit and fire, see Isa 4:4, 40:24; 41:16, Jer 23:19; 30:23; Ezek 13:11–13; 1QSb 5.24–25). Therefore, the baptism described in 3:16 is neither two baptisms (Webb, *John the Baptizer*, 289–95) nor a single baptism with two elements (Dunn, "Spirit-and-Fire Baptism," 81–92), but a single baptism of purification (for similar view, see Hui, "John the Baptist," 109–11; cf. Marshall, *Gospel of Luke*, 146–48). The use of judgment (fire) and salvation (gathering into the granary) in 3:17 makes that reference a

ministry to be one of separation of the repentant and unrepentant in preparation for the one who is coming, who will give blessing (“into his granary”) or judgment (“burn with unquenchable fire”) in light of the separation already made.⁸⁷

The section on John’s ministry concludes by noting it to be a summary of John’s preaching and that he also “was preaching good news to the people” (εὐαγγελίζετο τὸν λαόν) (3:18). Therefore, John’s preaching is in continuity with the preaching of the angels (1:19; 2:10), of Jesus (e.g., 4:18, 43; 8:1; 20:1), and of Jesus’ disciples (e.g., 9:6; Acts 5:42; 8:4, 12; 11:20).⁸⁸ John thus stands as a prototype for the preaching of Jesus and the preaching of the disciples. Moreover, the audiences of John and Jesus are similar, as John preaches to groups that later appear in Jesus’ ministry.⁸⁹ John’s baptismal ministry and the proclamation of the “forgiveness of sins” will also be elements of the proclamation of the apostles in Acts.⁹⁰ Even the description of John as an itinerant preacher has links with

summary of John’s message of judgment and salvation, with the reference to baptism in 3:16 only highlighting the positive elements of John’s message. This understanding of John’s message and recognition of its fulfillment might only be apparent upon re-reading(s) of the text.

⁸⁷ See Robert L. Webb, “The Activity of John the Baptist’s Expected Figure at the Threshing Floor (Matthew 3.12 = Luke 3.17),” *JSNT* 43 (1991): 103–11.

⁸⁸ Ernst, *Johannes der Täufer*, 88–89. Against Conzelmann, *The Theology of St. Luke*, 23 n. 1 (followed by e.g., Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 1:475). Luke’s use of εὐαγγελίζω would seem to be a mistake if he intended to exclude John from the time of fulfillment (Marshall, *Luke: Historian*, 146).

⁸⁹ On John as a “prototype” for Jesus in Luke, see esp. Ernst, *Johannes der Täufer*, 111. For a recent challenge to Böcher’s claim that outside of Luke 1–2 there is no parallelism between John and Jesus, see C. Müller, *Mehr als ein Prophet*.

⁹⁰ One should also note the link between John’s preaching of (1) judgment, (2) repentance, and (3) exhortation as a pattern for the preaching of the early church observed in Conzelmann, *The Theology of St. Luke*, 26; cf. Green, *Luke*, 170 who notes a link between (1) proclamation, (2) repentance, and (3) forgiveness with the commissioning of the followers of Jesus in 24:47.

the ministry of the early church.⁹¹ John's message differs from that of Jesus and his disciples, however, in that John's message declares that one *will come* rather than that one *has come*. There is also discontinuity in particular elements. For example, John proclaims that the tree will receive judgment soon (3:9) while Jesus speaks about a fig tree being given more time (13:6–9).⁹²

Although scholars have sought to argue that the description of John's fate before Jesus' baptism and the omission of explicit reference to John at Jesus' baptism are part of Luke's attempt to locate John and Jesus in different salvation-historical eras or to diminish the figure of the Baptist in light of a competition with his followers,⁹³ it seems more likely that this sequence has an explanation tied to Luke's narrative style. That is, Luke seeks to summarize John's ministry in a single unit, after which he removes John so that Jesus is the only figure on stage.⁹⁴ Like the birth narratives, there are a number of other similarities occurring between the ministry of John in 3:1–19 and the ministry of Jesus in 3:20–4:44, substantiating that the removal of John in 3:20 has a similar function

⁹¹ See Carl H. Kraeling, *John the Baptist* (New York: Scribner, 1951), 10.

⁹² See Lupieri, "John the Baptist in New Testament Traditions," 443–44; Böhlemann, *Jesus und der Täufer*, 160–74.

⁹³ The separation of John and Jesus into different salvation-historical epochs has been most famously argued in Conzelmann, *The Theology of St. Luke*, 21. For critique of Conzelmann's view, see S. Wilson, "Lukan Eschatology," 331–32; Bachmann, "Johannes der Täufer," 123–55; Ernst, *Johannes der Täufer*, 100–1. A helpful catalogue of different theories appears in Richard J. Erickson, "The Jailing of John and the Baptism of Jesus: Luke 3:19–21," *JETS* 36 (1993): 457–59, with Erickson adopting the position that an anti-Baptist polemic stands behind Luke's construction.

⁹⁴ On the separation of John and Jesus as part of a narrative technique of Luke, see e.g., C. F. Evans, *Luke*, 230; R. Brown, *The Birth of the Messiah*, 391–92; Green, *Luke*, 162; cf. C. Müller, *Mehr als ein Prophet*, 198–99. That John reappears in the Gospel indicates that there is not a firm separation between the two, making a narrative purpose more likely than a salvation-historical one (Böhlemann, *Jesus und der Täufer*, 54).

to that of 1:80.⁹⁵ In addition, the reference to Herod as the figure who opposes John foreshadows the way that Herod will oppose Jesus (13:31; 23:6–12) and a different person named Herod will oppose the apostles (Acts 12:1–5). A significant difference between Luke and Mark seems to be that the reception of the Spirit is what starts the Lukan Jesus' ministry (3:23), not John's imprisonment as in Mark 1:14, indicating that Luke does not highlight Jesus' ministry as chronologically following John's.

In sum, Luke depicts John fulfilling the prophecies about him, as he calls Israel to repentance as one who prepares for another. While reference still appears to his baptizing work, the focus of Luke's description is on his preaching, which announces judgment, exhorts ethical behavior, and points to one who is to bring salvation. In effect, he preaches the gospel message before Jesus ministers, and therefore is able to serve as a model for Jesus' followers.

Luke 5:33–39

Luke includes the Markan story in which an unnamed group asks Jesus about his disciples eating while the disciples of John and the Pharisees fast.⁹⁶ The most noteworthy alterations are the comment about the frequent nature of the fasting of John's disciples

⁹⁵ Both John and Jesus go to the wilderness (3:2; 4:1), have a passage from Isaiah define their ministry (3:4–6; 4:18), issue warnings to their audience (3:7–9; 4:24–27), are questioned about their identity (3:15; 4:34), and preach good news (3:18; 4:43); see R. Brown, *The Birth of the Messiah*, 250 n. 44 and extended discussions in Böhlemann, *Jesus und der Täufer*, 44–62; C. Müller, *Mehr als ein Prophet*, 181–95. The introduction of explicit opposition to John at this point, which prompts his removal, also serves to create a parallelism between John and Jesus, as Jesus faces opposition in 4:16–30 (Erickson, “The Jailing of John,” 456).

⁹⁶ The use of “the disciples of the Pharisees” makes it unlikely it is the Pharisees asking the question (against Johnson, *Luke*, 98).

and the grouping of fasting with prayers (5:33).⁹⁷ It seems best to view the additional comment in Jesus' response about not desiring new wine after drinking old wine because "The old is good" (5:39) as an affirmation of the "old" roots of Jesus' teaching, making the Pharisees innovators of new ideas.⁹⁸ John's disciples are in danger of misunderstanding the teaching of the Scriptures in that they behave more like the Pharisees than Jesus' followers.

Like its Markan source, the passage is more about salvation history than fasting.⁹⁹ John has preached about one who is to come, but his disciples do not recognize that this figure is Jesus. The failure for John's disciples to see Jesus as the figure to come introduces the fact that Jesus may not appear to match the figure John described and that not all properly understand John's message.

Luke 7:18–35

While the previous passage dealt with the failure of John's disciples and comes from Mark, the next reference to the Baptist derives from Q traditions and focuses on the failure of the Baptist to understand Jesus' teaching.¹⁰⁰ John's disciples report to him about Jesus' actions (7:18), prompting John to ask whether Jesus is the one to come (7:19–20). While Matt 11:2 notes that John heard about these deeds in prison, no

⁹⁷ That 5:33 states Jesus' disciples "eat and drink" (Mark 2:18: "do not fast") offers a better connection to the previous story, where Jesus "eats and drink" (Luke 5:30); see C. Müller, *Mehr als ein Prophet*, 213.

⁹⁸ For the argument of the position adopted here, see Green, *Luke*, 249–50; cf. Bovon, *Luke*, 193.

⁹⁹ That fasting will occur in the future (Luke 5:35; see Acts 9:8–11; 13:1–3; 14:23) would indicate that the issue is not about fasting but having a proper salvation-historical perspective.

¹⁰⁰ With the exception of 7:29–30, the rest of 7:18–35 has a parallel in Matthew, making it likely that such material comes from a shared written tradition (Q).

reference to John's imprisonment occurs here and contemporaneous ministries of John with Jesus may be implied.¹⁰¹

The question that John asks Jesus, whom Luke labels as the Lord (7:19),¹⁰² through two of his disciples indicates a failure of John to understand who Jesus is and highlights the contrast between the expectations of John about “the coming one” (ὁ ἐρχόμενος) and the ministry of Jesus. While John had proclaimed a figure that would bring both salvation and judgment, Jesus' ministry only seems to be offering salvation.¹⁰³ The miraculous proofs of Jesus (7:21–22) recall Isa 61, the passage Jesus quoted in Luke 4:17–19 up until its reference to “the day of the vengeance of our God” (Isa 61:2b).¹⁰⁴ The contrast between the behavior of the disciples of John and those of Jesus (5:33–39) indicates John's failure to understand Jesus' role and identity at the time of Jesus' ministry; he prepares for Jesus' ministry but does not fully recognize its meaning. That the acceptance of the truth that Jesus is the “coming one” is difficult seems acknowledged by the concluding beatitude (7:23). Rather than diminishing John because of his struggles, Luke utilizes it as an attempt to move the audience to believe in Jesus.

¹⁰¹ See C. F. Evans, *Luke*, 350; Tilly, *Johannes der Täufer*, 85.

¹⁰² The reference to Jesus as “the Lord” recalls John's work in preparing the way for the Lord, who is Jesus. C. Müller, *Mehr als ein Prophet*, 224 thinks that use of Lord in 7:19 and the Baptist in 7:20 is a way to subordinate John under Jesus here, a plausible idea in light of the fact that neither word appears in the Matthean parallel.

¹⁰³ John's overemphasis on judgment is also true of Jesus' own disciples in 9:51–56 (Lupieri, “John the Baptist in New Testament Traditions,” 444).

¹⁰⁴ In addition to Isa 61:1, Jesus' answer also alludes to 29:18–19; 35:5–6; 42:18; 43:8, but the allusion to 61:1 is strongest because of its use in Luke 4:18–19.

In spite of John's misunderstanding, Jesus affirms John's ministry and highlights his importance by noting that he is a prophet (7:24–26a), recalling the fact that the people have recently seen Jesus as a prophet (7:16). Jesus goes on to say that John is “more than a prophet,” as he is the one spoken of in Exod 23:20 and Mal 3:1 (Luke 7:26b–27). While John is identified as the eschatological Elijah here, Luke also shows Jesus to be Elijah with the two preceding miracle stories recalling the ministries of Elijah and Elisha.¹⁰⁵ Rather than the use of Elijanic imagery with Jesus as a sign that Luke seeks to erase the Elijanic portrait of John, it appears as a way to show similarities between John and Jesus while at the same time also highlighting Jesus' superiority over John, as Jesus' performs miracles like Elijah and has a universal ministry.¹⁰⁶ The passage as a whole reveals John's importance, as he is the greatest “among those born of women.” Rather than an attempt to degrade John, the statement that “the least in the kingdom of God is greater than he” (7:28) highlights the importance of Jesus' arrival and the preaching of the kingdom.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁵ See 1 Kings 17:17–24; 2 Kings 4:8–37. The healing of the centurion's son (Luke 7:1–10) also would seem to recall Elijah and Elisha's ministry outside of Israel, highlighted in Jesus' sermon at the synagogue in Nazareth (Luke 4:25–27). On the use of Elijah typology with John and Jesus, see R. Miller, “Elijah,” 611–22. One can differentiate between a “prophetic Elijah” (Elijah 1) and the “eschatological Elijah” (Elijah 2), with Jesus as the former and John as the latter in the Synoptic tradition (J. Severino Croatto, “Jesus, Prophet Like Elijah and Prophet-Teacher Like Moses in Luke-Acts,” *JBL* 124 [2005]: 454).

¹⁰⁶ Cf. the discussions in Rindoš, *He of Whom*, 170–71; Böhlemann, *Jesus und der Täufer*, 250–53, 256–61.

¹⁰⁷ While a comparison would be made between John and Jesus if one interprets *μικότερος* as referring to Jesus, it is better to view *μικότερος ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ* as referring to the “least” in the new order (Marshall, *Gospel of Luke*, 293; Johnson, *Luke*, 123. See BDF §60–61 for the decline of the superlative and the use of the comparative as a superlative in Koine Greek). This hyperbolic statement, however, should not be used to make decisions about whether John is included or excluded from the kingdom (C. F. Evans, *Luke*, 354; Marshall, *Gospel of Luke*, 296–97).

The parenthetical remarks of 7:29–30 portray John’s ministry in continuity with and as preparation for Jesus’ ministry.¹⁰⁸ In addition to recalling individuals in John’s ministry (“tax collectors”: 3:12; “all the people”: 3:15; cf. 3:21), the groups noted as participating in the “baptism of John” (7:29) will also appear in Jesus’ ministry. Furthermore, Pharisees and lawyers refuse John’s baptism just as they oppose Jesus. The differing responses to John fulfill the idea that his work will create a division in the people (cf. 3:17). In addition, the connection that 7:29–30 makes between accepting John’s baptism and “acknowledg[ing] the justice of God” (NRSV) and refusing John’s baptism and rejecting “God’s purpose” reinforces John’s importance and his identity as a special prophet sent by God.

The following parable highlights the differences between John and Jesus while also connecting them. Their eating habits are different, in line with the discussion of 5:37–39, and the use of “Son of Man” to describe Jesus (7:34) elevates him over John. While different, they both face opposition from “this generation,” who stand as childish judges condemning both John and Jesus.¹⁰⁹ The parallelism that occurs in 7:29–35 (7:29=7:35, 7:30=7:31–34) connects the acceptance and rejection of Wisdom with the acceptance and rejection of John, with those who respond to God’s call spoken through

¹⁰⁸ One can see this complex as Luke’s commentary on John’s ministry, see Green, *Luke*, 299–300; Johnson, *Luke*, 125. These verses also set up the story of the sinful woman and the Pharisee in Luke 7:36–50, as discussed in John J. Kilgallen, “John the Baptist, the Sinful Woman, and the Pharisee,” *JBL* 104 (1985): 675–79.

¹⁰⁹ On the imagery of the parable portraying “this generation” as “childish judges,” see Wendy J. Cotter, “The Parable of the Children in the Marketplace, Q (Lk) 7:31–35: An Examination of Its Significance,” *NovT* 29 (1987): 289–304.

John being the children of Wisdom.¹¹⁰ This unit therefore shows John to be a messenger of Wisdom. This classification of John means that his fasting actions of John are affirmed in contrast to the fasting actions of his disciples; his practice of fasting is a symbol of his message in line with the symbolism present in Jesus' eating with tax collectors and sinners, showing John to be faithful in his time of preparation.¹¹¹ The link between their ministries here also indicates that Jesus will face a fate similar to that experienced by John, as both figures are rejected by "this generation."

Luke once again connects John and Jesus while distinguishing them in a way that shows John's work to prepare for the ministry of Jesus. Like his disciples before him, John is not able to understand the ramifications of Jesus' ministry, which reconfigures John's preaching about the "coming one" in proclaiming salvation and delaying judgment. This failure, however, does not lead to a rejection of John but rather recognition of his ministry as Elijah who points to a greater one. Luke indicates that John's work prepares for Jesus' ministry, with John's failure to grasp Jesus' identity as the one to come stemming from his limited vantage point rather than from disbelief.

Luke 9:7–9

As in Mark, news of the mission of the twelve reaches Herod and leads to a catalogue of explanations for Jesus' work, including a reference to Jesus as John "raised from the dead" (Mark 6:14–16//Luke 9:7–9). There are a number of important

¹¹⁰ Green, *Luke*, 304.

¹¹¹ Tilly, *Johannes der Täufer*, 102–3.

divergences from the Markan account in Luke's version.¹¹² First, Luke yet again omits the title "the Baptizer" (Luke 9:7). Second, Luke explicitly separates Herod's opinion of John from the opinion that Jesus is the resurrected John, indicating that Herod rejects this view (9:9). Third, Herod's fascination with John (Mark 6:20) becomes a fascination with Jesus (Luke 9:9), setting up the uniquely Lukan encounter between Jesus and Herod (23:7–12; cf. 13:31) and his responsibility in Jesus' death (Acts 4:27).¹¹³ Finally, the absence of the narrative of John's death makes the Christological purpose of this discussion more clear, showing that it is primarily a discussion of Jesus' identity.¹¹⁴

Luke 9:18–21

All that stands between the references to John in the discussion of Jesus' identity sparked by Herod's hearing about Jesus' actions and in Jesus' question before Peter's confession is the feeding of the 5,000. While the discussion of 9:7–9 ends by noting who Jesus *is not* (John raised from the dead), this passage presents who Jesus *is*: "The Christ of God" (9:20).¹¹⁵ As in Mark, Jesus' suffering is closely linked with his identity as the Christ (9:22) and indicates that his followers (9:23–27) will suffer.

¹¹² Some differences, such as calling Herod a "tetrarch" instead of a "king" (Luke 9:7; cf. Mark 6:14), may be attempts to improve aspects of Mark's account.

¹¹³ C. Müller, *Mehr als ein Prophet*, 266. The lack of reference to Herodias, in contrast to the accounts of Mark, Matthew, and Josephus further indicates the story's preview to the Jesus-Herod encounter.

¹¹⁴ See e.g., Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 1:756–58; Bovon, *Luke*, 350; cf. C. F. Evans, *Luke*, 399. Explanations for Luke's omission of the Baptist's death are speculative (Ernst, *Johannes der Täufer*, 111). Possible reasons include dislike of Mark's style, knowledge of other sources, or a theological disdain of Mark's account.

¹¹⁵ It seems that Luke uses the feeding of the 5,000 in part to reveal how Jesus is not the resurrected John but rather the Christ of God; cf. U. Müller, *Johannes der Täufer*, 146.

Luke 11:1–4

A passing reference to John appears in the Lukan account of the Lord's Prayer, as Jesus' disciples request him to teach on prayer "just as John also taught his disciples" (11:1). In light of the connection between prayer and fasting in 5:33–39 and the contrast between John's practice of fasting and Jesus' teaching on fasting in that passage, the prayer Jesus offers his disciples would seem to differ from that which John taught his disciples.¹¹⁶ No form of the "Baptist's prayer," however, appears, so one is not able to compare Jesus' prayer with John's.¹¹⁷ The passage does indicate a similarity between the relationship John had with his disciples and that which Jesus enjoyed with his own.¹¹⁸ While the recording of Jesus' prayer shows Jesus to be more important than John, the passage does not defame John since it shows him as having access to God.¹¹⁹

Luke 16:16

Hans Conzelmann's threefold scheme of Lukan salvation history (Israel, the ministry of Jesus, the church) hinges upon 16:16 describing John as the last and greatest prophet, but he offers little support for his reading of this long-contested verse.¹²⁰ The whole of Luke-Acts does not support his position since John is placed at the beginning of

¹¹⁶ On this prayer as a boundary marker between Jesus' followers and the disciples of the Baptist, see Green, *Luke*, 440.

¹¹⁷ Some still try to discuss a contrast; see esp. Böhleemann, *Jesus und der Täufer*, 88–92, 203–4, 206–7.

¹¹⁸ See C. Müller, *Mehr als ein Prophet*, 216.

¹¹⁹ Johnson, *Luke*, 179

¹²⁰ See Conzelmann, *The Theology of St. Luke*, 16–23. The lack of argument for Conzelmann's claim is pointed out in Paul Minear, "Luke's Use of the Birth Stories," in *Studies in Luke-Acts* (ed. L. E. Keck and J. Louis Martyn; Nashville: Abingdon, 1966), 122; Johnson, *Luke*, 250.

the gospel message throughout Luke's two volume work, and the statement of 16:16 can be read to exclude John from the era of the Law and the Prophets.¹²¹ That 16:16b uses the verb *εὐαγγελίζω*, which appears in the angelic proclamation of John's birth (1:19) and in John's ministry (3:18), points to John being included in this preaching.¹²² Therefore, this passage actually places John in the time of fulfillment. That John's preaching points beyond himself (3:16–18) and his fasting and prayer practices are replaced by the teachings of Jesus (5:33–39; 11:1–4), however, also indicates that John's message only finds completion in Jesus; he is a forerunner in the epoch of fulfillment.¹²³

The focus on the relationship between John the Baptist and the kingdom of God in 16:16 can obscure the broader point of the passage, which is the continuity between the teaching of Jesus and the Jewish Scriptures. The preaching of the kingdom is the fulfillment of the Law and Prophets and therefore does not nullify the Law (16:17). In addition to being the fulfillment of the Scriptures, the kingdom also moves beyond it, as shown by the discussion of divorce (16:18). Once again, Luke stresses the ancient roots of the Jesus movement while also portraying Jesus as fulfilling the hopes of Israel in a

¹²¹ On John at the beginning of the gospel message throughout Luke-Acts, see Wink, *John the Baptist*, 46–56. For a thorough study of the grammar of this verse, see Bachmann, "Johannes der Täufer," 140–50. Not only is grammatical analysis of 16:16 inconclusive, one must recognize that a grammatical discussion such as this one is greatly influenced by theological ideas, as noted in Ernst, *Johannes der Täufer*, 109.

¹²² With Marshall, *Gospel of Luke*, 628–29; Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 2:1115; C. F. Evans, *Luke*, 607; Green, *Luke*, 603. For a discussion of how John's preaching is linked to the kingdom, see Tilly, *Johannes der Täufer*, 98–99.

¹²³ Wink, *John the Baptist*, 55–58. Those that find John to stand uneasily between the times (Ernst, *Johannes der Täufer*, 107–10) or on both sides (Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 2:1115–16) rightly wrestle with the tension in that John is part of the time of fulfillment while also serving as a point of continuity with the old. Cf. S. Wilson, "Lukan Eschatology," 335–36.

passage discussing John, indicating that John serves as a bridge to hold together the old and new.¹²⁴

Luke 20:1–8

Minimal changes occur in the Lukan form of the question of authority from Mark 11:27–33.¹²⁵ Luke does not directly connect the question to the demonstration in the temple, as the incident occurs on “one of the days” when Jesus was teaching (20:1). In explicitly stating that Jesus “was teaching” (*διδάσκοντας*),¹²⁶ Luke presents Jesus’ instruction as a further challenge to the authority of the priests. In addition to teaching, Jesus is “proclaiming the gospel” (*εὐαγγελιζομένου*) (20:1), a word also used to describe John’s ministry (3:18). The fear of stoning by the crowd (20:6) presents the crowd’s devotion to John more strongly than the Markan passage. One can conclude that Luke has no problem with Jesus’ use of John to defend his own ministry, as Luke creates more similarities between John and Jesus and stresses the crowd’s support for John.

Acts

References to the Baptist in Acts occur in the speeches of Jesus, Peter, and Paul, often at key junctures in the narrative. There are also implicit reminders of John, as

¹²⁴ Cf. Ernst, *Johannes der Täufer*, 112.

¹²⁵ For a list of the changes, see C. F. Evans, *Luke*, 692. Most changes appear to be stylistic. There is also a difference in context, as Mark places it immediately following the conclusion of the incident of the withering of the fig tree (11:20–26), which Luke omits. Jesus’ teaching about faith and prayer in Mark 11:22–23 does find some parallel in Luke 17:6, and Luke uses a fig tree in 13:6–7 to discuss delayed judgment.

¹²⁶ The Markan “was walking” may be interpreted as “teaching.”

disciples are also imprisoned by a figure named Herod (12:3) and preach a similar message (2:38; 26:20).¹²⁷

Acts 1:4–5

The risen Jesus recalls the words of John the Baptist in stating that “John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit” (1:5). Since Jesus claims these words as his own rather than as John’s words by saying it “is what you have heard from me” (1:4), Jesus and John make the same promise. The omission of “fire” is also notable in light of its promise in Luke 3:16, most likely being an ellipsis but also showing that the emphasis falls upon the presence of the Spirit rather than on “fire.”¹²⁸ In addition to serving as a link to Luke’s previous narrative (cf. Luke 24:49), this statement points forward to events in Acts, as the baptism of the Holy Spirit finds its fulfillment at Pentecost and associated events. Baptism in the name of Jesus for the forgiveness of sins is introduced as well at Pentecost (2:38), showing continuity with John’s ministry of baptism (forgiveness of sins) while also some discontinuity (in the name of Jesus).¹²⁹ Of note is that baptism of the Spirit does not replace water baptism; the early church

¹²⁷ See Lupieri, “John the Baptist in New Testament Traditions,” 443–44. For discussion of the influence of the Baptist on the Lukan Paul, see J. Ramsey Michaels, “Paul and John the Baptist: An Odd Couple?” *TynBul* 42 (1991): 245–60, esp. 250–54. On the possible influence of the historical Baptist on Acts, see Böcher, “Lukas,” 40–41. Böhlemann’s discussion features a dubious proposal that Stephen’s speech reflects Baptist traditions (*Jesus und der Täufer*, 309–13).

¹²⁸ Green, *Luke*, 181; Richard I. Pervo, *Acts: A Commentary* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress, 2009), 38.

¹²⁹ Lupieri, “John the Baptist in New Testament Traditions,” 443. There does not seem to be a Lukan polemic against John in the contrast between water and Spirit baptism, as this contrast was already in the tradition and John’s baptism serves as a precursor to baptism in the name of Jesus (Ernst, *Johannes der Täufer*, 142).

continues water baptism, though it now does so in Jesus' name.¹³⁰ This reference to John thus connects his ministry with that of Jesus and his followers while also indicating that it is surpassed by Jesus.¹³¹

Acts 1:21–22

The idea of John standing at the beginning of Jesus' ministry appears in Acts 1:21–22. Judas' replacement must have followed Jesus "from the baptism of John until the day when he was taken up from us" (1:22), a phrase more likely describing John's baptizing work in general than Jesus' baptism by John.¹³² Such a statement points to the eleven apostles participating in John's ministry and indicates that they understand John's ministry to mark the beginning of the Jesus' earthly ministry just as Jesus' ascension marks the end.

Acts 10:34–43

In explaining the "preaching of peace (εὐαγγελιζόμενος εἰρήνην) through Jesus Christ" (10:36) to the god-fearing Gentile Cornelius and his household, Peter notes the

¹³⁰ S. Brown, "Water Baptism," 141–42. Peter's words in 2:38 closely link water baptism with reception of the Spirit.

¹³¹ Another connection to the Baptist is that the announcement of the Baptist's birth in Luke 1 occurs in the Jerusalem temple and this speech happens in Jerusalem (C. Müller, *Mehr als ein Prophet*, 269–70).

¹³² While Joseph A. Fitzmyer cautiously discusses the possibility that this phrase refers to Jesus' baptism by John (*The Acts of the Apostles: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* [AB 31; New York: Doubleday, 1998], 228) and Pervo translates the phrase "his [Jesus'] baptism" (*Acts*, 48, 54), most scholars maintain that the phrase "the baptism of John" refers to his ministry (Ernst, *Johannes der Täufer*, 143–44; F. F. Bruce, *The Book of Acts* [rev. ed.; NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998], 46; C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles* [2 vols.; ICC; Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1998], 1:101, 2:888).

events “beginning from Galilee after the baptism which John preached” (ἐκῆρυξεν).¹³³ In line with Luke’s emphasis elsewhere, the focus here is upon the preaching of John rather than his actions as a baptizer, as Peter refers to his ministry as “preaching baptism.” Moreover, Peter’s words render John’s ministry as the starting point of the church’s message.

Acts 11:15–17

Peter recalls the words of Jesus in Acts 1:5 that evoke John’s teaching on his water baptism and Jesus’ Spirit baptism (11:16) as he explains the events at Cornelius’ house. Peter then associates the events at Cornelius’ house with the events of Pentecost, pointing out that Gentiles have received the Spirit just like the Jews (11:15). While the Gentiles receive the Spirit baptism apart from baptism in water in the name of Jesus, they receive water baptism as well (10:47–48; cf. 11:17), showing that Spirit baptism does not nullify the water baptism introduced by John. John’s influence and memory continues as the gospel moves from Jews to Gentiles, as Gentile individuals also receive water baptism along with the Spirit baptism that John predicted.

Acts 13:23–25

The apostle Paul had no connections to John but refers to John while preaching in Antioch of Pisidia, even quoting the Baptist. In declaring Jesus to be the promised Savior of Israel (13:23), Paul notes that John preached (προκηρύσσω) a baptism of repentance to

¹³³ While 10:37 at first glance appears to substantiate Conzelmann’s view that John and Jesus belong in different epochs of salvation history, it need not be understood this way; see the alternative proposal in Wink, *John the Baptist*, 56 and the discussion in Ernst, *Johannes der Täufer*, 144–45. The reference to John at the house of a centurion could recall John’s ministry, as he preached to soldiers (Luke 3:14)

all the people of Israel before the coming of Jesus (13:24) and concluded his work by pointing to a greater one to come after him, whose sandals John said he was not worthy to untie (13:25). Although using slightly different words, Paul's statement recalls the Lukan description of the Baptist having a baptism of repentance (3:3), denying his messianic identity in response to the thoughts of some (3:15), and describing himself as unworthy to untie the sandal of the coming one (3:16b).¹³⁴ Like Peter in Acts 10, Paul locates John's ministry at the beginning of Jesus' work and notes both its preparatory nature and its proclamation of baptism.¹³⁵ Paul makes more explicit, however, that John's baptism was for repentance and that John's work was aimed at Israel.¹³⁶ This comment about John appears at an important juncture, as Paul is rejected by the synagogue and turns to the Gentiles (13:46). Since Peter mentions John in his message to Cornelius (10:34–43) and his explanation of the events that happened at Cornelius' house to apostles and brothers in Jerusalem (11:15–17), Luke repeatedly evokes the memory of John in chronicling the transition to the mission to the Gentiles.

¹³⁴ The statement about the sandal here is closer to the wording of John 1:27 than Luke 3:16b.

¹³⁵ The placement of John after the reference to Jesus would seem to locate John more closely with Jesus than with the time of the prophets (with Wink, *John the Baptist*, 56; C. Müller, *Mehr als ein Prophet*, 279).

¹³⁶ As also noted in e.g., Luke Timothy Johnson, *The Acts of the Apostles* [SP 5; Collegeville, MN: Liturgical, 1992], 233. A further contrast between Paul and Peter's preaching about John in Acts is that Peter emphasizes the message of the Spirit (11:15) while Paul focuses on John as a witness (13:24–25; 19:4) (see Michaels, "Paul and John the Baptist," 253).

Acts 18:24–19:7

The references to John in Acts that have drawn the most attention are the passages describing the ministry of Apollos (18:24–28) and Paul’s encounter with some disciples at Ephesus (19:1–7).¹³⁷ While these are separate episodes, both feature references to Ephesus (18:24; 19:1), Apollos (18:24; 19:1), and the baptism of John (18:25; 19:3), indicating that the juxtaposition of them seems intentional rather than accidental or incidental.¹³⁸

The first passage depicts Apollos as an effective and helpful minister in spite of some deficiencies. Apollos, an Alexandria Jew,¹³⁹ is “mighty in the Scriptures” (18:24),

¹³⁷ In addition to the examinations of this passage appearing in studies of the Baptist, Luke-Acts, and the Baptist movement, see esp. Ernst Käsemann, “The Disciples of John the Baptist in Ephesus,” in idem, *Essays on New Testament Themes* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1982 [orig. 1952]), 136–48; Eduard Schweizer, “Die Bekehrung des Apollos (Apg 18,24–26),” *EvT* 15 (1955): 247–54; J. K. Parratt, “The Rebaptism of the Ephesian Disciples,” *ExpTim* 79 (1967–68): 182–83; C. K. Barrett, “Apollos and the Twelve Disciples of Ephesus,” in *The New Testament Age* (ed. W. C. Weinrich; 2 vols.; Mercer, GA: Mercer University Press, 1984), 1:29–39; Hermann Lichtenberger, “Täufergemeinden und frühchristliche Täuferpolemik im letzten Drittel des 1. Jahrhunderts,” *ZTK* 84 (1987): 47–51; Michael Wolter, “Apollos und die ephesinischen Johannesjünger (Acts 18,24–19,7),” *ZNW* 78 (1987): 49–73; Knut Backhaus, *Die “Jüngerkreise” des Täufers Johannes: Eine Studie zu den religionsgeschichtlichen Ursprüngen des Christentums* (PTS 19; Paderborn: F. Schöningh, 1991), 190–229; Anthony Ash, “John’s Disciples: A Serious Problem,” *ResQ* 45 (2003): 85–93; Erickson, “The Jailing of John,” 461–66; Randall J. Hedlun, “A New Reading of Acts 18:24–19:7: Understanding the Ephesian Disciples Encounter as Social Conflict,” *R&T* 17 (2010): 40–60. For a helpful overview of major perspectives on the passages, see Ernst, *Johannes der Täufer*, 148–51.

¹³⁸ C. Barrett also notes that reference to Holy Spirit links the two passages (“Apollos and the Twelve Disciples,” 36), though this depends in large part upon one’s interpretation of 18:25 (see n. 141 below). Since it is difficult to know what is pre-Lukan and what is Lukan (see discussion in Wolter, “Apollos und die ephesinischen Johannesjünger,” 52), it does not seem possible to determine if these stories were first connected by Luke or if a connection already existed in the tradition.

¹³⁹ The term “Jew” seems to be an ethnic term in line with Luke’s concerns (Ben Witherington III, *The Acts of the Apostles: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998], 564), but there is no need to see the reference to Apollos as a “Jew” indicating that he is not a believer in Jesus (as argued in Schweizer, “Die Bekehrung des Apollos,” 251). Luke’s reference to Apollos’ ethnicity, however, may indicate that part of the issue at work in this passage concerns inclusion of the Gentiles (see Hedlun, “A New Reading,” 44). His Alexandrian origin could also explain his lack of understanding of events in Palestine.

had been “instructed in the way of the Lord,” and “was teaching accurately the things about Jesus” (18:25).¹⁴⁰ Luke describes Apollos as “being fervent in Spirit” (ζέων τῷ πνεύματι), showing Apollos to possess the Spirit.¹⁴¹ That Apollos “knew only (ἐπιστάμενος μόνον) the baptism of John” (18:25) makes the accuracy of his teaching surprising.¹⁴² This deficiency in Apollos requires Paul’s ministerial colleagues Priscilla and Aquila to explain “the way” more accurately (ἀκριβέστερον) to him (18:26).¹⁴³ After this time of instruction, Apollos departs to Achaia, where his ministry helps the community (18:27–28). Therefore, Apollos’ connection to John offers a point for growth but does not cause Apollos to stand outside of the community of Jesus believers. In fact,

¹⁴⁰ The comment that Apollos “was teaching accurately the things about Jesus” rules out Schweizer’s view that Apollos’ instruction “in the way of the Lord” refers for Judaism (Schweizer, “Die Bekehrung des Apollos,” 251–52. For similar criticisms, see C. Barrett, “Apollos,” 29–30; Fitzmyer, *Acts*, 638; Pervo, *Acts*, 459).

¹⁴¹ The use of the phrase in Rom 12:11 and the material given in the surrounding verses point to Apollos as possessing the Spirit (with Käsemann, “Disciples of John,” 143; C. Barrett, “Apollos and the Twelve Disciples,” 29–30; against Schweizer, “Die Bekehrung des Apollos,” 252). The phrase, however, is not “the stereotypical prophetic characterization” and thus could come from Luke’s source or could present Apollos as inferior (see Johnson, *Acts*, 332–35. Cf. Wolter, “Apollos und die ephesinischen Johannesjünger,” 72).

¹⁴² The use of ἐπιστάμενος makes it a bit unclear whether Apollos received the baptism of John or was preaching about the baptism taught by John. While Käsemann (“The Disciples of John,” 143) thinks that the expression “can only mean that [Apollos] had been baptized into [the baptism of John],” the emphasis on Apollos’ teaching activity in the passage makes it more likely that this refers to the content of Apollos’ teaching (Hedlun, “A New Reading,” 48–49). This view, however, does not rule out the possibility that Apollos had received “the baptism of John,” but simply notes this is not the point of this phrase. There is no need to see the expression as indicating that Apollos was a disciple of John.

¹⁴³ In light of the comment about Apollos’ lack of knowledge about baptism in the name of Christ, the teaching of baptism in the name of Christ would seem to be part of the content of this message (Fitzmyer, *Acts*, 639), as well as the “distinctive Pauline doctrines” (I. Howard Marshall, *Acts* [TNTC; Leicester/Grand Rapids: InterVarsity/Eerdmans, 1980], 304. Cf. Hedlun, “A New Reading,” 47–49). This is not a “conversion” of Apollos, as he was already a believer in Jesus. Moreover, Apollos is not baptized since he possesses the Spirit. It seems that he knew the gospel message about Jesus but not the events after Acts 2 (Hans Conzelmann, *Acts of the Apostles* [ed. Eldon Jay Epp; trans. James Limburg, A. Thomas Kraabel, and Donald H. Juel; Hermeneia; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1987], 158).

Apollos seems to be a bit like John himself, as he faithfully expounds the Scriptures, has the Spirit, and points to Jesus but does so imperfectly.¹⁴⁴

The reference to Apollos in 19:1 and Paul's appearance in Ephesus leads to the perspective that the "disciples" Paul encounters are connected to Apollos' ministry in Ephesus.¹⁴⁵ Luke uses a term (*μαθητής*) that typically refers to followers of Jesus in Luke-Acts in describing these men, showing them to be believers in Jesus.¹⁴⁶ While "disciples," Paul asks these men if they had received the Holy Spirit when they believed (*πιστεύσαντες*) (19:2). Their answer is remarkable, as they did not receive the Spirit and had not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit (19:2).¹⁴⁷ The revelation that they had been baptized "into John's baptism" (*εἰς τὸ Ἰωάννου βάπτισμα*) causes further surprise, as John had preached on the Holy Spirit (Luke 3:16) and Apollos, who knew only the baptism of

¹⁴⁴ Cf. Pervo, *Acts*, 470; C. Müller, *Mehr als ein Prophet*, 291.

¹⁴⁵ See Wolter, "Apollos und die ephesinischen Johannesjünger," 60–61; Hedlun, "A New Reading," 51.

¹⁴⁶ In addition to the numerous references to Jesus' disciples in Luke, also see Acts 6:1, 2, 7; 9:10, 19, 26, 38; 11:26, 29; 13:52; 14:20, 22, 28; 15:10; 16:1; 18:23, 27; 19:9, 30; 20:1, 30; 21:4, 16; cf. 9:1. While *μαθητής* can be used in regards to followers of other teachers (e.g., Luke 5:33–39; 7:18; cf. Acts 8:19), Luke notes these teachers when seeking to differentiate these groups from the disciples of Jesus, but no term appears here to associate them with the Baptist (Bruce, *Acts*, 363; Pervo, *Acts*, 468). In fact, the account rules out viewing them as disciples of John, as it seems to assume that they had believed and been incorporated into the Jesus movement (see Hedlun, "A New Reading," 52–53). For further criticisms of the view that these "disciples" are John's disciples, see Backhaus, *Die "Jüngerkreise" des Täufers*, 195–97. While not disciples of the Baptist, these individuals would reflect the wide circle of people over whom the Baptist seems to have had an influence (*Ibid.*, 209).

¹⁴⁷ The claim that the understanding of the phrase the phrase *ἀλλ' οὐδ' εἰ πνεῦμα ἅγιον ἔστιν ἠκούσαμεν* offered above makes no sense in light of the teaching of the Jewish Scriptures as well as John the Baptist (see e.g., Käsemann, "The Disciples of John," 138) and suggestion that the phrase thus refers to their lack of knowledge of the availability of the Spirit (e.g., Witherington, *Acts*, 571) may actually miss the point. The disciples' answer shows that they had not understood the teaching of John. Their lack of knowledge of the Spirit, and thus of its availability, could point to them being Gentiles, as suggested in Fitzmyer, *Acts*, 643. Cf. Hedlun, "A New Reading," 56.

John, possessed the Spirit.¹⁴⁸ Therefore, while receiving “John’s baptism,” they do not actually understand John’s message, as Paul has to explain the meaning of John’s “baptism of repentance” in 19:4.¹⁴⁹ Whereas Apollos’ deficiency did not necessitate him being baptized, the lack of experience of the Holy Spirit and lack of understanding concerning John leads to the baptism of these men into the name of the Lord Jesus (19:5).¹⁵⁰

The similarity to the events in Samaria presents these disciples in a manner reminiscent of the Samaritans, as a “fringe” group with some theological misunderstandings that is joined to the central group.¹⁵¹ Unlike the Samaritans, however, these men speak in tongues and prophesy, recalling the events of Pentecost and at Cornelius’ house.¹⁵² The connections to Pentecost and Cornelius’ household indicate that the comparison announced by John and Jesus concerning water baptism and Spirit baptism is evoked, with John’s water baptism not replaced but transformed into baptism “into the name of Jesus” and connected with Spirit baptism.¹⁵³ The note that the number

¹⁴⁸ The construction εἰς τὸ Ἰωάννου βάπτισμα is odd but need not point to a Lukan attempt to avoid saying that these men were baptized into “the name of John,” as though they had been baptized believing John to be the Messiah (as argued in Conzelmann, *Acts*, 159). Rather, it points to a baptism in line with the baptism that John preached (see e.g., C. Barrett, “Apollos and the Twelve Disciples,” 37; Marshall, *Acts*, 306).

¹⁴⁹ See Tannehill, *The Narrative Unity of Luke-Acts*, 2:234; Parratt, “The Rebaptism of the Ephesian Disciples,” 182. Cf. Hedlun, “A New Reading,” 55.

¹⁵⁰ Parratt, “The Rebaptism of the Ephesian Disciples,” 182–83.

¹⁵¹ Like the Samaritans, they first are baptized in the name of Jesus (19:5) and then receive the Holy Spirit when hands are laid upon them (19:6). A stress on the connection between Peter and Paul also appears as both convey the Spirit through the laying on of hands. See discussion in Bruce, *Acts*, 364 n. 14.

¹⁵² Cf. Hedlun, “A New Reading,” 56.

¹⁵³ See S. Brown, “Water Baptism,” 143–49.

of disciples was “about 12” (19:7) could be a way to connect these disciples to Israel; these “disciples” are similar to Jews who know about John and Jesus but do not understand their works in their entirety.

As elsewhere in Luke-Acts, Luke portrays John as a preparatory point which one must move past to achieve full understanding of the message about Jesus.¹⁵⁴ The Lukan John’s message is in one sense a “Christian” message that points to Jesus, but it is not a fully developed “Christian” message, much like Judaism, as John points to one who brings about fulfillment of his message.¹⁵⁵ The way that Luke constructs the passage makes it unlikely that he is seeking to confront competing groups of followers of the Baptist,¹⁵⁶ but the premise of the stories presuppose that John had an influence outside of the immediate area and time of his ministry.

Evaluation

Luke’s portrayal of the Baptist in Luke-Acts is one that modifies a number of the themes that appear in Mark. The Elijah theme from Mark is present in Luke, and numerous parallels between John and Jesus present John to be a prototype for Jesus. Similarities between John and Jesus’ followers also show John to be a prototype for them. Luke’s portrayal of the Baptist places him at the threshold of salvation history, the

¹⁵⁴ Cf. Tannehill, *The Narrative Unity of Luke-Acts*, 2:233–34; Johnson, *Acts*, 338.

¹⁵⁵ See discussions in Lupieri, “John the Baptist in New Testament Traditions,” 444–45; Schweizer, “Die Bekehrung des Apollos,” 253–54.

¹⁵⁶ Luke’s lack of concern with a Baptist group appears in the discussions of Käsemann, “The Disciples of John,” 136–48; Schweizer, “Die Bekehrung des Apollos,” 248; Wink, *John the Baptist*, 84; Wolter, “Apollos und die ephesinischen Johannesjünger”; Backhaus, *Die “Jüngerkreise” des Täufers*, 190–229; Lupieri, “John the Baptist in New Testament Traditions,” 444–45. Even if the text originally concerned with Baptist groups, it seems to have lost this purpose by the time of Luke (C. Barrett, “Apollos and the Twelve Disciples,” 37–39).

first event in the fulfillment of the Scriptures that comes with Jesus; John is the precursor to Jesus in Luke as he was in Mark.

Luke also adjusts these themes and overlays them with many of his distinctive ideas. Rather than portraying John as a suffering Elijah who prepares the way for Jesus and his followers, Luke focuses more on the ethical teaching of the Baptist as one who “restores hearts.” Luke also has John prepare the way for Jesus in teaching his disciples on prayer, and his practice of water baptism is adapted by Jesus’ disciples. Like Jesus and his disciples, the Baptist preaches to fringe groups and outsiders and is opposed by Jewish leaders and a figure named Herod. John prefigures the message of Jesus and his disciples by preaching good news (εὐαγγελίζω). John thus stands firmly at the “beginning” of the gospel message, aptly reflected in the fact that John is mentioned at the beginning of both Luke and Acts and at key points in the narrative of Acts.

The Lukan Baptist also shows continuity between the Jesus movement and the Jewish people. John comes from priestly family whose piety is exemplary. His ministry focuses upon Israel and points to the arrival of the promises of Scripture. While the people of Israel before him essentially uphold the same faith, John stands in a special place as the first “Christian” preacher, as he has faith in Jesus while still in his mother’s womb. His position as one who comes before Jesus, however, causes his knowledge to be imperfect, so while the first “Christian,” John is not yet the ideal follower of Christ; he is an ideal Jew but an “immature Christian.” The misunderstanding of John, his disciples, and those who heard his message at a later time reflects the struggle that even faithful Jews can have in grasping the entirety of Jesus’ message.

Like Mark, Luke is careful to maintain distinctions between John and Jesus. Jesus and John are similar but not equals, as Jesus surpasses John. John's baptism has a limited purpose, pointing to one that will come later. John turns hearts back to God but Jesus' work brings complete restoration. Finally, John's ministry is one of preparation to Israel, while the work of salvation that Jesus accomplishes is proclaimed to the ends of the earth.

Many of these themes found in Luke already appear in Mark and also are present in Matthew's portrayal of John the Baptist. Therefore, one should pay attention to the significance of Matthew's use and transformation of the themes that he inherited from Mark in comparison to the Lukan adaptation. Luke's use of the Baptist to show the continuity between the religion of the Jews and Jesus' teachings shows that John was a figure not just associated with the Jesus movement but with Jewish thought; while seen as part of the Jesus movement and even made into a believer in Jesus, the Baptist has a foot still planted in Judaism that helps Jesus' followers be rooted in the Scriptures, beliefs, and practices of Israel. Moreover, Luke-Acts seems to presuppose that John had wide influence both during his life and after his death.

The Baptist in John

Even a cursory reading of the Fourth Gospel reveals significant variations on details between its portrayal of the Baptist and that in the Synoptics.¹⁵⁷ The Gospel of

¹⁵⁷ Although the title "the Baptist" never appears in the Gospel of John, this section will exclusively use the title "the Baptist" to describe John the Baptist in order to avoid confusion with John the Evangelist. For discussions of the Baptist in John, see Raymond E. Brown, "Three Quotations from John the Baptist in the Gospel of John," *CBQ* 22 (1960): 292–98; Wink, *John the Baptist*, 87–106; Morna Hooker, "John the Baptist and the Johannine Prologue," *NTS* 16 (1969–70): 354–58; Bammel, "The Baptist in Early Christian Traditions," 109–13; Peter von der Osten-Sacken, "Der erste Christ: Johannes der Täufer als Schlüssel zum Prolog des vierten Evangelium," *ThViat* 13 (1975/76): 155–73; Ernst, *Johannes der Täufer*, 186–219; Webb, *John the Baptizer*, 70–77; Lupieri, "John the Baptist in New Testament

John thus provides a distinct image of John the Baptist by a group of believers in Jesus,¹⁵⁸ offering additional insight on perceptions of the Baptist around the time Matthew was written. Of further significance is that John appears to bring together his traditions in a context with similarities to the background of the Gospel of Matthew, as John's portrayal of the "Jews" and the Pharisees points to a setting in which Jewish believers in Jesus found themselves in competition and conflict with Jews who did not believe in Jesus and who exerted control over the synagogues.¹⁵⁹

The role that the Johannine Baptist plays within the conflict with the Jewish leaders, however, has often been obscured because of Wilhem Baldensperger's argument

Traditions," 455–59; Tatum, *John the Baptist*, 73–81; Martin Stowasser, *Johannes der Täufer im vierten Evangelium* (ÖBS 12; Klosterneuburg: Österreichisches Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1992); D. G. van der Merwe, "The Historical and Theological Significance of John the Baptist as He is Portrayed in John 1," *Neot* 33 (1999): 267–92; Cornelius Bennema, "The Character of John in the Fourth Gospel," *JETS* 52 (2009): 271–84.

¹⁵⁸ I adopt the hypothesis that John is essentially literarily independent of the Synoptics and uses some traditions that are independently developed from those found in the Synoptics (e.g., C. H. Dodd, *Historical Tradition in the Fourth Gospel* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1963]; Raymond E. Brown, *The Gospel according to John I–XII: Introduction, Translation, and Notes* [AB 29; New York: Doubleday, 1966], xlv; Rudolf Schnackenburg, *The Gospel according to St. John* (trans. Kevin Smyth; 3 vols.; vol. 1: New York: Herder and Herder, 1966; vols. 2, 3: New York: Crossroad, 1980–82), 1:26–43; Robert Kysar, *John: The Maverick Gospel* [rev. ed.; Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1993], 3–14; Dwight Moody Smith, *John among the Gospels* [2d ed.; Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2001], 195–241). While literarily independent of the Synoptics, it seems likely that there is some awareness of the Synoptic traditions before the completion of the final form of the Gospel (see Craig S. Keener, *The Gospel of John* [2 vols.; Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2003], 1:40–42), but not enough influence to posit that John is principally an attempt to replace, correct, or supplement the Synoptic traditions (Schnackenburg, *John*, 1:26–43). For a thorough overview of the relationship between the traditions of the Synoptics and the Fourth Gospel, see D. M. Smith, *John among the Gospels*, with discussion of recent contributions appearing in Francis D. Moloney, "Recent Johannine Studies: Part Two: Monographs," *ExpTim* 123 (2012): 422–24. Therefore, it would seem that the image of the Baptist in John comes from traditions mostly independent of those appearing in Matthew.

¹⁵⁹ See e.g., John 9:22; 12:42; 16:2. On the similarities in situations between Matthew and John, see John Painter, "Matthew and John," in *Matthew and His Christian Contemporaries* (ed. David C. Sim and Boris Repschinski; LNTS 333; London: T & T Clark, 2008), 66–86. The work usually seen as sparking the interest in reading John against the background of Jewish conflict is J. Louis Martyn, *History and Theology in the Fourth Gospel* (3d ed.; NTL; Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2003) [1st ed. 1968].

that the Fourth Gospel features a polemic directed against rival group of followers of the Baptist who believed the Baptist to be the Messiah, as scholars have focused on refuting, refining, or reaffirming his proposal.¹⁶⁰ The lack of concrete data on such a group existing in the first century and the ability to construct the beliefs of the group only through mirror readings of denials and negations in John casts doubt on the wisdom of assuming such a group is at work in the background of the Gospel or should play a prominent role in the interpretation of the text.¹⁶¹ Rather than introducing an additional and admittedly hypothetical group into the discussion of the Johannine Baptist, it seems more prudent to understand the role of the Baptist in the conflict with the Jewish leaders since this group appears to be the primary opponent of the Evangelist's group.¹⁶²

¹⁶⁰ *Der Prolog des vierten Evangeliums. Sein polemisch-apologetischer Zweck* (Freiburg: Mohr Siebeck, 1898). J. D. Michaelis advanced a similar position at an earlier date (see Wink, *John the Baptist*, 98 n. 2). An immediate criticism of Baldensperger's thesis was that he overstates the importance of the polemic (see C. W. Rishell, "Baldensperger's Theory of the Origin of the Fourth Gospel," *JBL* 20 [1901]: 45), a criticism that has been heeded by more recent proponents of a Baptist group in the background of the Gospel (e.g., R. Brown, *John*, lxiii–xx). A modified version of Baldensperger's hypothesis is argued in Stowasser, *Johannes der Täufer*, as he finds a polemic against the followers of the Baptist but notes it is not a central theme.

¹⁶¹ Cf. Wink, *John the Baptist*, 102. The references to the Baptist in the *Pseudo-Clementines* (esp. *Rec.* 1.54, 60, 63; also see *Hom.* 2.15, 23–24; 3.22) could indicate that a group did exist that claimed the Baptist was the Messiah (for discussion, see Charles H. H. Scobie, *John the Baptist* [London: SCM, 1964], 190–95), but this is from a later period and could be a marginal group. Therefore, the references in the *Pseudo-Clementines* cannot be used to justify the existence of such a group in the first century nor that this group stands in the background of the Gospel of John. Furthermore, the origin and existence of such a group can be debated in light of the numerous questions surrounding the *Pseudo-Clementines*; see Ernst, *Johannes der Täufer*, 363–69; Backhaus, *Die "Jüngerkreise" des Täufers*, 275–98. Justin Martyr gives no information about the "Baptists" in *Dial.* 80, merely mentioning the group, so one cannot use this to understand a potential Baptist "sect."

¹⁶² For others who note the importance of the conflict with the "Jews" rather than a hypothetical Baptist sect, see Wink, *John the Baptist*, 90, 93; Lupieri, "John the Baptist in New Testament Traditions," 457; Webb, *John the Baptizer*, 76–77; cf. Urban C. von Wahlde, *The Gospel and Letters of John* (3 vols.; ECC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010), 1:51–52, 214–17. Keener tries to place the followers of the Baptist within the conflict with the synagogue, thinking that the followers of the Baptist might be seeking a middle course between the ideas and practices of Jesus' group and their opponents, leading to a focus on water purification and a diminished view of Jesus while stressing the importance of the Baptist (*John*, 1:388–91).

Evidence

An overview of the passages mentioning the Baptist reveals similarities between John and the Synoptics. As in Mark and Luke, the opening chapter makes a reference to the Baptist and discusses his significance (1:6–8, 15), and the first narrated events concern the Baptist rather than Jesus (1:19–34). The Baptist does not completely disappear after Jesus' arrival (1:35–36, 3:22–30). Furthermore, he is remembered even when his activity ceases, as the narrator (4:2; 10:40–41) and Jesus (5:33–36) refer to his ministry. The final reference to the Baptist occurs right before the climatic healing of Lazarus (10:40–41), an event that mirrors the last reference to John in Mark in that the healing of Lazarus precipitates the plot to kill Jesus in John akin to the way that the temple demonstration leads to Jesus' arrest and execution.

John 1:6–8, 15

The figure of the Baptist is introduced in the prologue of 1:1–18 as one with a divine commission to give testimony to the one who is the light.¹⁶³ As one “sent from God” (*ἀπεσταλμένος παρὰ θεοῦ*), the Evangelist uses a term for the Baptist that elsewhere

Kysar also seeks to place the discussions of the Baptist in the context of them, finding that the charges often thought to come from the hypothetical Baptist rivals (e.g., the Baptist preceding Jesus) came from the synagogue as a way to undercut the Christological claims of the Evangelist's group (*John*, 38). While Stowasser argues that the work was against Baptist followers, he also notes that the Baptist has a function against the Jewish opponents (*Johannes der Täufer*, 138). Even Baldensperger tries to link his discussion of a Baptist “sect” with the conflict with the Jews, noting that the Baptists could be moving back into Judaism (*Der Prolog des vierten Evangeliums*, 108–10).

¹⁶³ While often labeled a “hymn,” such a title may be misleading since some argue that the text is “rhythmical prose” rather than formal poetry (see D. A. Carson, *The Gospel according to John* [The Pillar New Testament Commentary; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991], 112; Keener, *John*, 1:347) and there is debate on whether this text originally was a hymn. Therefore, the term “prologue” will be used to describe 1:1–18. For discussions of the structure and background, see R. Brown, *John*, 3–37; R. Alan Culpepper, “The Pivot of John's Prologue,” *NTS* 27 (1981): 1–31.

is applied to Jesus and one that evokes memories of the Jewish prophets.¹⁶⁴ He has a singular mission, as he is one who testifies (*μαρτυρέω*) concerning the light with the purpose of bringing people to faith, and the description of his mission introduces the important concept of “witness” and matches the overarching purpose of the Gospel to bring people to faith (20:31).¹⁶⁵ A forensic idea may also be present in the idea of the Baptist “testifying,” introducing the Baptist as a figure in the lawsuit motif of the Gospel and foreshadowing his “testimony” in dialogue with Jewish delegates in 1:19–28.¹⁶⁶ The comment that the Baptist is not the light but merely testifies (*μαρτυρέω*) about the light (1:8) could counter claims that the Baptist indeed was the light, but the opening description of the Baptist has been uniformly positive and the statement that John is not the “light” might be tied to the literary context.¹⁶⁷ Moreover, the repeated use of the *μαρτυρ*- root shows that the theme of witnessing is a more important theme in the prologue than a polemic against the Baptist.

¹⁶⁴ See Carson, *John*, 120; Francis J. Moloney, *John* (SP 4; Collegeville, MN: Liturgical, 1998), 37, 43. On links to Hellenistic philosophers like Epictetus, see C. K. Barrett, *The Gospel according to St. John* (London: SPCK, 1955), 133. The term also connects the Baptist to Jesus’ “apostles.”

¹⁶⁵ See Merwe, “The Historical and Theological Significance,” 270; Wahlde, *John*, 2:5–6. On the way that the idea of “witness” emerges in the prologue as a key issue for the Johannine group, see Keener, *John*, 1:391–93.

¹⁶⁶ Carson, *John*, 120. For the Baptist’s function within the “cosmic lawsuit” of the Fourth Gospel, see Andrew T. Lincoln, *Truth on Trial: The Lawsuit Motif in the Fourth Gospel* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2000), 58–65.

¹⁶⁷ See e.g., Wink, *John the Baptist*, 88. The negative construction could also serve as a way to connect 1:6–8 with 1:19–28 and the Baptist’s denial of certain titles (cf. Hooker, “John the Baptist,” 355–56). Baldensperger’s attempt to find other polemical notes in the prologue related to comments such as the description of John as a man while Jesus is God (see *Der Prolog des vierten Evangeliums*, 6–9), though followed by others (see e.g., Stowasser, *Johannes der Täufer*, 37–44), does not prove to be compelling, as shown by the immediate criticism of Baldensperger’s claims appearing in Rishell, “Baldensperger’s Theory,” 42–47 as well as the later criticism in e.g., Wink, *John the Baptist*, 87–88, 102.

A snapshot of how the Baptist testifies appears in 1:15 in the form of a quotation describing his relationship to the Word which became flesh (1:14).¹⁶⁸ Although Jesus appears to come after the Baptist (*ὀπίσω μου*), the latter notes that Jesus has in fact preceded him (*πρῶτός μου*) and therefore deserves a higher rank (*ἔμπροσθέν μου*).¹⁶⁹ With these words, the Baptist testifies to the pre-existence of the incarnate Word described in the opening words of the prologue. The remark in 1:15 indicates that the Baptist still does come before Jesus and thus may be considered a “forerunner,” though this point is not emphasized or made through a quotation to Isa 40:3 or Mal 3:1.¹⁷⁰

Regardless of whether these remarks are indeed insertions into a pre-existing source or were included in the composition of the opening,¹⁷¹ they “contextualise the appearance of the Baptist in chapter 1 and prepare the audience for what it can expect from the ministry of the Baptist.”¹⁷² Both references to the Baptist in the prologue have a similar function in that they portray the Baptist as a witness to Jesus, first as the “light”

¹⁶⁸ There is no need to see the Baptist’s witness extending to 1:16–18 as argued in Sief van Tilborg, *Imaginative Love in John* (BIS 2; Leiden: Brill, 1993, 62–68); see discussion in Bennema, “The Character of John,” 272 n. 4.

¹⁶⁹ The use of *ὀπίσω μου* here seems to be temporal rather than a reference to Jesus as the Baptist’s disciple since the text deals with the fact that the Baptist’s ministry chronologically preceded Jesus’ ministry (R. Brown, *John*, 56; Stowasser, *Johannes der Täufer*, 50).

¹⁷⁰ Cf. Schnackenburg, *John*, 1:251. While Keener (*John*, 1:393) argues that the idea that John is “sent from God” could correspond to the image of Mal 3:1, such a connection seems too subtle.

¹⁷¹ Many scholars view these remarks as insertions into an originally independent composition (e.g., R. Brown, *John*, lxix, 22; Schnackenburg, *John*, 1:223–24, 249–50, 273; Wahlde, *John*, 2:21, 23) and even those skeptical of a pre-existing source incorporated into the Gospel and those who argue for the prologue as an unified composition still note the way that these statements stand out in the context as planned comments or literary clues (e.g., Carson, *John*, 112–13; Moloney, *John*, 34, 47).

¹⁷² Merwe, “The Historical and Theological Significance,” 268.

(1:6–8) and then as the preexistent Logos coming to earth (1:15).¹⁷³ These two claims are pivotal for the Gospel and create conflict with Jews who did not believe in Jesus.¹⁷⁴

Rather than stressing his work as the promised forerunner, the prologue therefore highlights his role as a witness to the claims of John's group.

John 1:19–42

The Evangelist next describes the Baptist's testimony before the Jewish leaders (1:19–28), Israel (1:29–34), and his disciples (1:35–42) on three consecutive days.¹⁷⁵ The section as a whole reflects the Prologue's description of the Baptist's work in 1:6–8, as he describes who he is not (1:19–28), testifies to the light (1:29–34), and leads people to believe in Jesus (1:35–42).¹⁷⁶

The first incident described is a conversation the Baptist has with some priests and Levites from Jerusalem (1:19) sent (*ἀπέστειλαν*) to speak with him by the "Jews," a term likely referring to the religious leaders.¹⁷⁷ At this point in the narrative, there is no direct indication that these religious leaders will be hostile to Jesus, although the Prologue hints at opposition to the message (1:11) and those reading the Gospel multiple

¹⁷³ See Hooker, "John the Baptist," 356–58; cf. Osten-Sacken, "Der erste Christ," 155–63.

¹⁷⁴ See Osten-Sacken, "Der erste Christ," 166.

¹⁷⁵ Merwe, "The Historical and Theological Significance," 271.

¹⁷⁶ Dodd, *Historical Tradition*, 248. Also see Hooker, "John the Baptist."

¹⁷⁷ While Wahlde's most recent work views these "Jews" as being Judeans interested in religious issues like in 3:25 (*John*, 2:34–35), he earlier had argued that "the Jews" here was a hostile group of religious authorities in line with the use of the term elsewhere in John ("The Johannine 'Jews': A Critical Survey," *NTS* 28 [1982]: 47–48). His earlier opinion seems correct and receives wider support (e.g., Dodd, *Historical Tradition*, 264; Schnackenburg, *John*, 1:286; R. Brown, *John*, 42–43; C. Barrett, *John*, 143; Carson, *John*, 142; Keener, *John*, 1:430). These delegates are later connected to the Pharisees in a comment inserted in the dialogue (1:24).

times would recognize the “Jews” to be opponents. The question concerns the Baptist’s identity (1:19: “Who are you”), and Jesus will face similar questions concerning his identity in 8:25 and 10:24.¹⁷⁸ Rather than identifying who he is, the Baptist states who he is not, as he denies three messianic titles in 1:20–22.¹⁷⁹ The use of the term *ὁμολογέω* in 1:20 is important, as this word is used throughout the Johannine corpus (John 9:22; 12:42; 1 John 2:23; 4:2–3, 15; 2 John 7) concerning the confession of Jesus’ identity.¹⁸⁰ Therefore, the Baptist denies being the Messiah so he can confess that Jesus is the Messiah. The Baptist then embraces the role of forerunner by identifying himself as the one fulfilling Isa 40:3 (John 1:23).¹⁸¹ Even after pointing away from himself, the religious leaders remain interested in him, asking John why he is baptizing if he is not one of the aforementioned figures (1:25).¹⁸² Two significant differences appear between

¹⁷⁸ Schnackenburg, *John*, 1:288.

¹⁷⁹ For how the title of “Elijah” and the “Prophet” are messianic rather than a denial of the Baptist’s as a forerunner, see Georg Richter, “‘Bist du Elias?’ (Joh. 1,21),” *BZ* 6 (1962): 79–92, 238–56; 7 (1963): 63–80, esp. 70–80. The Baptist’s denial stands in contrast to Jesus’ confessions about himself as “I AM” (Keener, *John*, 1:434), with the Baptist’s words *ἐγὼ οὐκ εἰμι ὁ Χριστός* mirroring Jesus’ *ἐγὼ εἰμι* statements (Wink, *John the Baptist*, 89).

¹⁸⁰ R. Brown, *John*, 46. Moloney (*John*, 58) and Keener (*John*, 1:434) both highlight the connection between this passage and the dispute with the synagogue. The term *ὁμολογέω* also appears in 1 John 1:9 in reference to sin. Therefore, the Baptist’s denial paves the way for a right confession of Jesus (Ernst, *Johannes der Täufer*, 199).

¹⁸¹ G. Richter, “‘Bist du Elias,’” 242–56, 63–70, followed by Ernst, *Johannes der Täufer*, 191. Against e.g., Wink, *John the Baptist*, 89–90; M. J. J. Menken, “The Quotation from Isa 40,3 in John 1,23,” *Bib* 66 (1985): 203–4. The lack of reference to the Baptist’s location means that the emphasis of this quotation from Isaiah is the fact that the one coming after the Baptist is the Lord himself, fitting the Prologue’s description of Jesus as the pre-existent Word equal with God (see Osten-Sacken, “Der erste Christ,” 163–64).

¹⁸² Cf. Stowasser, *Johannes der Täufer*, 139. The comment in 1:24 that the envoys were sent by the Pharisees does not mark a new dialogue but connects the ones dialoguing with Jesus to the Pharisees (Carson, *John*, 144; cf. Ernst, *Johannes der Täufer*, 198–202. Against Webb, *John the Baptizer*, 72 who views 1:19–23 and 24–28 as separate incidents). Whether it indicates that the delegation included Pharisees

the Baptist's answer and the similar statement made in the Synoptics (see Mark 1:7–8//Luke 3:16).¹⁸³ First, the Baptist's baptism points to Jesus rather than a future baptism.¹⁸⁴ Second, rather than referring to the might (*ὁ ἰσχυρότερός*) of the one who comes (Mark 1:7//Luke 3:16), the Baptist points to the presence of this one (“among you stands”) and the lack of recognition of him by the Jewish leaders (“whom you do not know”).¹⁸⁵ The phrases unique to John seem to function as part of the Gospel's portrayal of the Jewish leaders' failure to accept God's revelation in Jesus.¹⁸⁶ Thus, the Baptist's statement is self-effacing while also indicting the religious leaders. The concluding geographic note about the conversation occurring in Bethany “across the Jordan”¹⁸⁷ foreshadows Jesus' ministry at a different Bethany.

or that the delegation was simply sent from the Pharisees may not be possible to determine from the text, as the construction is ambiguous (Wahlde, *John*, 2:37).

¹⁸³ The use of the plural *ὑποδημάτων* in the Synoptic saying and the singular *ὑποδήματος* in John 1:27 does not seem to have much, if any, significance. For detailed discussions of the differences between the sayings in the Synoptics and in John, see Dodd, *Historical Tradition*, 255–57; R. Brown, *John*, 52.

¹⁸⁴ Schnackenburg, *John*, 1:294; Ernst, *Johannes der Taüfer*, 201.

¹⁸⁵ It is unclear at this point, however, if the Baptist himself knows that Jesus is the one about whom he is speaking; the text only indicates that the priests and Levites do not know him. Determining the timing of the Baptist's knowledge of Jesus is mere speculation, as the text does not specify it (leading to differences in opinion between Schnackenburg, *John*, 1:294 and Osten-Sacken, “Der erste Christ,” 164–65).

¹⁸⁶ With e.g., Wink, *John the Baptist*, 90; Schnackenburg, *John*, 1:294–95; Webb, *John the Baptizer*, 72–73; Keener, *John*, 1:448; Wahlde, *John*, 2:38. Against Dodd, *Historical Tradition*, 266–69; R. Brown, *John*, 53, both of whom favor an interpretation of the passage as pointing to a hidden Messiah.

¹⁸⁷ The reading “Bethany” seems best among the possible variants, as noted in Bruce M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament* (2d ed.; Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1994), 171. While the exact location of this place is elusive and it is unclear if this is a historical remembrance or a note that solely has theological value (or some combination of the two), the remark that this Bethany is “across the Jordan” would place the Baptist's ministry in Perea. For discussion, see Rainer Riesner, “Bethany Beyond the Jordan (John 1:28): Topography, Theology, and History in the Fourth Gospel,” *TynBul* 38 (1987): 29–63.

When Jesus appears on the next day, his role is peripheral, as the words of the Baptist dominate 1:29–34.¹⁸⁸ Once again, the Baptist’s speech falls into two parts, as he first identifies Jesus as the one for whom he prepares the way (1:29–31) and then discloses how he came to such knowledge (1:32–34). Since the delegation of the previous day is now absent, the Baptist speaks to an unidentified audience here.¹⁸⁹ Upon seeing Jesus “coming toward him” (ἐρχόμενον πρὸς αὐτόν),¹⁹⁰ the Baptist declares that he is “the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.”¹⁹¹ This is the first identification of Jesus as the figure to come and is the first reference to Jesus’ ministry addressing the issue of sin. The next words of the Baptist repeat 1:15 almost verbatim in describing Jesus as being superior to him because “he was before me” (πρῶτός μου),¹⁹² a statement that also recalls the Baptist’s words in 1:27 speaking about the great figure that is

¹⁸⁸ Moloney, *John*, 53.

¹⁸⁹ Stowasser, *Johannes der Taüfer*, 140. The note that the Baptist’s ministry was aimed at Israel (1:31) could indicate that the general audience should be construed as Israel, but the failure to identify an audience explicitly would seem to indicate that the words are directed towards the Gospel’s audience (cf. Schnackenburg, *John*, 1:296–97; Keener, *John*, 1:429).

¹⁹⁰ The use of ἐρχόμαι here could allude back to the Baptist’s words in 1:27 about ὁ ὀπίσω μου ἐρχόμενος (Keener, *John*, 1:451).

¹⁹¹ The phrase “Lamb of God” has been seen to be a reference to the servant of God in Isaiah, the Passover Lamb, or an apocalyptic figure who defeats sin, with scholars typically positing that the meaning of a (possible) historical reference of the Baptist has been altered by the Evangelist. There is also a growing tendency to state that the Evangelist may intentionally draw upon more than one meaning in light of the Gospel’s propensity for double entendre and intentional ambiguity. See C. K. Barrett, “The Lamb of God,” *NTS* 1 (1954–55): 210–18; R. Brown, “Three Quotations,” 295–97; E. W. Burrows, “Did John the Baptist Call Jesus ‘The Lamb of God?’” *ExpTim* 85 (1974): 249; D. Brent Sandy, “John the Baptist’s ‘Lamb of God’ Affirmation in Its Canonical and Apocalyptic Milieu,” *JETS* 34 (1991): 447–60; Stowasser, *Johannes der Taüfer*, 100–9.

¹⁹² The differences are underlined: 1:15: ὁ ὀπίσω μου ἐρχόμενος ἔμπροσθέν μου γέγονεν, ὅτι πρῶτος μου ἦν. 1:30: ὀπίσω μου ἔρχεται ἀνὴρ ὃς ἔμπροσθέν μου γέγονεν, ὅτι πρῶτος μου ἦν. While R. Brown (*John*, 15) thinks that the Evangelist copied 1:30 into 1:15, the literary relationship between the two seems more complicated (Ernst, *Johannes der Taüfer*, 203).

unknown to the religious leaders.¹⁹³ There is no link to repentance or forgiveness in the baptism of the Johannine Baptist, as the Baptist states that the purpose of his baptizing ministry is so that (ἵνα) the one coming after him “might be revealed to Israel” (φανερωθῆ τῷ Ἰσραῆλ) (1:31b). The Baptist’s knowledge about Jesus’ identity came through an encounter with Jesus that fulfilled divine words given to the Baptist about the one who would come (1:32–33). While reminiscent of the events occurring after the baptism in the Synoptics, no reference is made to a baptismal event, and the Baptist, not Jesus, sees the dove here (1:32). In addition, the Baptist, not a voice from heaven, declares Jesus to be the Son of God (1:34).¹⁹⁴ God’s words to the Baptist add another element to Jesus’ work: baptism in the Holy Spirit (1:33). This experience leads the Baptist to testify (μαρτυρέω) that Jesus is the “Son of God,”¹⁹⁵ the first reference to this important title in John. Therefore, on the second day the Baptist declares Jesus to be fulfillment of his statements from the previous day while also noting two aspects of Jesus’ ministry (Jesus will take

¹⁹³ On the link to 1:27, see Dodd, *Historical Tradition*, 271; Schnackenburg, *John*, 1:274.

¹⁹⁴ There is no need to see this account as a deliberate contrast to the account of the Synoptics (see Schnackenburg, *John*, 1:303–4), particularly since the Baptist’s interpretation of the events is exactly what the Synoptic writers do with the event (see R. Brown, *John*, 65–66). The Johannine description of the event could also seek to eliminate any sort of Adoptionistic Christology (Stowasser, *Johannes der Täufer*, 143).

¹⁹⁵ While R. Brown (*John*, 57), Schnackenburg (*John*, 1:305–6), and Stowasser (*Johannes der Täufer*, 59–61, 144) adopt the variant reading ὁ ἐκλεκτός, external (age and geographical distribution) and internal (a common term in John) evidence favors ὁ υἱός (Metzger, *A Textual Commentary*, 172) and this reading is followed in e.g., Carson, *John*, 152; Moloney, *John*, 59; Keener, *John*, 1:463–64; Wahlde, *John*, 2:42–43.

away the sin of the world and he will baptize with the Holy Spirit) as well as Jesus' pre-existence ("he was first") and his identity as God's Son ("This is the Son of God").¹⁹⁶

The Baptist's testimony gets more specific on the third day, causing the Baptist to take less of a role on the events of this day. As on the second day, the Baptist declares that Jesus is the "Lamb of God" upon seeing Jesus' walking in his presence (1:35–36).¹⁹⁷ This time, however, two of the Baptist's disciples are present, and the Baptist's declaration prompts these disciples to follow Jesus (1:37). The Baptist moves towards the background and does not appear in the next day's events (1:43). This third day shows the success of the Baptist's witness to Jesus, as the Baptist's disciples become the first disciples of Jesus at the encouragement of the Baptist.¹⁹⁸

John 3:22–4:3

After remarks relating Jesus' baptizing work to that of the Baptist (3:22–24), the Baptist has a dialogue with some of his disciples prompted by their argument with a "Jew" (3:25–30), which is the only time outside of chapter 1 in which the Baptist speaks in the Gospel of John. Comments by the narrator follow this conversation (3:31–36),¹⁹⁹

¹⁹⁶ For slightly different taxonomies, see Merwe, "The Historical and Theological Significance," 282; Bennema, "The Character of John," 277. On the connection between these claims and the disputes that John's group has within itself as well as with its Jewish opponents, see Lincoln, *Truth on Trial*, 63.

¹⁹⁷ In addition to the abbreviated form of the title "Lamb of God," the vocabulary is slight different here, as 1:29 uses a present finite verb for the Baptist seeing Jesus (βλέπει) while 1:35 has an aorist participle (ἐμβλέψας) and 1:35 uses περιπατοῦντι rather than ἐρχόμενον for Jesus' movement as in 1:29. Furthermore, Jesus is simply moving around in 1:35, whereas he was coming toward the Baptist (πρὸς αὐτὸν) in 1:29.

¹⁹⁸ Merwe, "The Historical and Theological Significance," 272.

¹⁹⁹ Older exegesis often viewed 3:31–36 as the words of the Baptist (see Ernst, *Johannes der Täufer*, 209), with some modern exegetes holding this view (e.g., C. Barrett, *John*, 182; Wahlde, *John*, 2:163). The connections to the speech with Nicodemus lead some commentators to suggest that 3:31–36

with a reference to the Baptist then appearing in the introduction to Jesus' encounter with the Samaritan woman (4:1–3).

Since nothing in the text indicates that the baptizing ministries of the Baptist and Jesus are different in content or meaning, Jesus' baptismal activity reveals parallels between the Baptist and Jesus.²⁰⁰ Jesus appears to minister in the Judean countryside²⁰¹ while the Baptist works in Aenon near Salim, which is probably a location in Samaria.²⁰² He remains popular and his location shows his influence spreading to new areas, as he has moved from Bethany beyond the Jordan to Aenon.²⁰³ The text does not describe why the Baptist changed locations, but the note of his imprisonment (3:24) as well as the

has been displaced (see e.g., Schnackenburg, *John*, 1:380–92), while R. Brown suggests that the words of Jesus conclude the whole section and that the Baptist's words in 3:25–30 originally were connected to the material in chapter 1 (*John*, 154–55, 159–60). It seems best to view them as the words of the narrator (with e.g., Moloney, *John*, 111; Carson, *John*, 212), as the passage shifts here from dialogue to monologue, which also happens in Jesus' conversation with Nicodemus (3:12–21) (see Stowasser, *Johannes der Täufer*, 158 n. 25).

²⁰⁰ See R. Brown, *John*, 151; Stowasser, *Johannes der Täufer*, 202; cf. Schnackenburg, *John*, 1:411–12. It is unclear if this was the first time that Jesus had a baptismal ministry, as the imperfect ἐβαπτίζεν could have ingressive force (“he began to baptize”) or could show the resumption of a habitual practice (as suggested in Moloney, *John*, 105). Perhaps it is best to view it as portraying an activity of long duration, indicating not whether Jesus begins or resumes baptizing but that he did it for an extended period of time (see Stowasser, *Johannes der Täufer*, 202). Other similarities are that Jesus and the Baptist both possess disciples and are called “rabbi.”

²⁰¹ Since Jesus was last seen in Jerusalem (2:23), the note that he traveled “into the Judean land” (εἰς τὴν Ἰουδαίαν γῆν) is best interpreted as a movement from the urban center of Judea into the surrounding rural areas (see e.g., C. Barrett, *John*, 183; Schnackenburg, *John*, 1:410; Carson, *John*, 209; Wahlde, *John*, 2:150), though the possibility remains that there was travel between 2:23 and 3:23 that is not explicitly mentioned (see Keener, *John*, 1:576) or that the text links differences sources (see Moloney, *John*, 104).

²⁰² As supported in e.g., Schnackenburg, *John*, 1:412; Carson, *John*, 209; Moloney, *John*, 108.

²⁰³ C. Barrett, *John*, 184; Bennema, “The Character of John,” 275.

explanation Jesus' later movement (4:1–3) suggest that he changed locations because of opposition or persecution.²⁰⁴

The Baptist's disciples engage in a dispute (ζήτησις) with a "Jew" (Ἰουδαῖος),²⁰⁵ a person from the area in which Jesus is baptizing and hostile to the work of Jesus and John,²⁰⁶ in a discussion that links this dispute with the previous comments about Jesus' baptizing activity. The Baptist's disciples learn about Jesus' growing influence in Judea in the midst of this dispute over purification (κάρισμός). The Baptist and Jesus are thus allies against the Jewish establishment in advancing a different purity system.²⁰⁷ By alluding to the Baptist's testimony about Jesus across the Jordan, the statement of the

²⁰⁴ In addition to reconciling the overlapping ministries of Jesus and the Baptist in John with their sequential ministry portrayed in the Synoptic traditions (as noted in e.g., Carson, *John*, 162; Stowasser, *Johannes der Täufer*, 204; Wahlde, *John*, 2:157, 162), the reference to his imprisonment shows the Baptist will suffer (see Keener, *John*, 1:577; Lincoln, *Truth on Trial*, 65).

²⁰⁵ While an early papyrus (P⁶⁶), the original hand of Ⲁ, and some later majuscules (G, Θ, 0141) and minuscules (f¹, f¹³, 565, 597, 1071, 1342) read Ἰουδαίων, there is also early and widespread support for Ἰουδαίου, and the fact that this is the only reference to a singular makes it more likely to be the original that was changed by scribes to the plural term, which is more common in John (Metzger, *A Textual Commentary*, 175). Baldensperger and others (see Bammel, "The Baptist in Early Christian Tradition," 110; Ernst, *Johannes der Täufer*, 208) conjecture that the text originally read "Jesus" based upon internal grounds (with others suggesting τῶν Ἰησοῦ referring to the disciples of Jesus), but the lack of evidence for this reading presents a major challenge for this proposal. For a thorough discussion of this topic and the view that the Evangelist is responsible for the change from "Jesus" to "a Jew," see John W. Pryor, "John the Baptist and Jesus: Tradition and Texts in John 3.24," *JSNT* 66 (1997): 15–26.

²⁰⁶ See Schackenburg, *John*, 1:413–41; Moloney, *John*, 109. While the partner in debate with the Baptist's disciples could be a Jew who was baptized by Jesus (see Stowasser, *Johannes der Täufer*, 204), the fact that this term elsewhere often refers opponents of Jesus casts doubt on such a possibility (cf. Keener, *John*, 1:577, who notes that this person was a Jew of "Pharisaic, Jerusalemite persuasion").

²⁰⁷ Since the issue is "purification" and not "baptism," the issue is not the respective baptisms of Jesus and the Baptist but the different approach to purification between the Baptist's disciples and other Jews (cf. Carson, *John*, 210). The use of κάρισμός, may also recall Jesus' miracle at Cana, where he shows his superiority to the Jewish purification system (2:6). Such a link may indicate that there is something slightly different about the teachings of the Baptist and Jesus concerning purity, as the Baptist advocates a type of purification system that is "the best of all Jewish purifications" but Jesus's works is "far superior" (Keener, *John*, 1:577) and surpasses it.

Baptist's disciples about Jesus' popularity (3:26) serves as one more opportunity for the Baptist to testify to Jesus.²⁰⁸

The Baptist's final testimony in 3:27–30 links many themes surrounding the Baptist in the Fourth Gospel and adds several others. The Baptist first affirms that Jesus' success comes from God (3:27).²⁰⁹ He then refers back to his earlier testimony that he is not the Christ but has been sent before him (1:20–23) and goes beyond his earlier comments by noting that he was sent (*ἀπεσταλμένος*) by God, recalling 1:6 (3:28).²¹⁰ The Baptist also uses a new picture to describe himself, as he is the “friend of the bridegroom” while Jesus is the bridegroom.²¹¹ Because of this role, the Baptist is overjoyed at Jesus' success, with the Baptist's remark in 3:30 indicating that the surpassing of the Baptist's ministry by Jesus is in accordance with the will of God.²¹² In

²⁰⁸ Bennema, “The Character of John,” 279. Cf. Pryor, “John the Baptist,” 19.

²⁰⁹ While it is possible that this statement is being applied to the Baptist rather than to Jesus, it seems better to view it as describing Jesus. See discussion in R. Brown, *John*, 155–56; Stowasser, *Johannes der Täufer*, 207–8.

²¹⁰ Cf. R. Brown, *John*, 152.

²¹¹ While this imagery may not reflect traditional views of the Messiah, the use of the bride/bridegroom imagery to describe Jesus would point to Jesus' divine identity in light of its use with God and Israel (Carson, *John*, 211). It also would have salvation-historical significance tied to wedding feast imagery of the eschatological age (see Stowasser, *Johannes der Täufer*, 187–90; cf. Ernst, *Johannes der Täufer*, 209). For discussion of the imagery here, see esp. Keener, *John*, 1:579–80; Bennema, “The Character of John,” 280–88.

²¹² The focus on the relationship of this passage to the Christian calendar (see e.g., R. Brown, *John*, 152) and the fact that the progressively shortening sections describing the Baptist may correspond to the statement (as noted in T. F. Glasson, “John the Baptist in the Fourth Gospel,” *ExpTim* 67 [1955–56]: 245–46) can cause one to overlook the fact that the text uses *δεῖ* to speak of divine necessity (see C. Barrett, *John*, 186; Carson, *John*, 212).

fact, the Baptist has participated in this process by directing his disciples towards Jesus (1:35–37).²¹³

The Baptist's name reappears in remarks (4:1–3) that transition to Jesus' time in Samaria (4:4–42).²¹⁴ The Pharisees have shown interest in both the Baptist (1:19–28) and Jesus (3:2), but they now have a growing (suspicious) interest in Jesus. This occurrence corresponds to the report of 3:22–26 and the words of the Baptist in 3:30, as people are more interested in Jesus than in the Baptist. Jesus' travel also recalls that of the Baptist, who had previously moved his baptizing ministry, with Jesus' time in Samaria paralleling the location of the Baptist's work.

This section (3:22–4:3) reveals numerous similarities between Jesus and the Baptist (both are baptizers, have disciples, are in conflict with other Jewish groups, minister in Samaria) while also stressing the way that Jesus surpasses the Baptist (baptizing more) in light of their respective roles (friend of the bridegroom and bridegroom). While some scholars posit that the speech of the Baptist is directed towards his disciples,²¹⁵ it would also have a function towards individuals elevating the Baptist as a way to navigate the conflict between the followers of Jesus and the Jewish leaders.²¹⁶ In addition, his words about decreasing could have an apologetic tone to them, explaining that the Pharisees' lack of interest in him was not just anticipated but embraced by the

²¹³ Bennema, "The Character of John," 280.

²¹⁴ Keener, *John*, 1:587. For another perspective, see Backhaus, *Die "Jüngerkreise" des Täufers*, 250–65.

²¹⁵ See esp. Stowasser, *Johannes der Täufer*, 153–219.

²¹⁶ Cf. Keener, *John*, 1:575.

Baptist. The positive remarks about the Baptist suggest that he was still popular at the time of the Gospel's composition.

John 5:33–36

Jesus calls upon the Baptist's witness in 5:33–36 as the first of four witnesses to his divine claims (5:31–47).²¹⁷ In referring back to the delegation sent to the Baptist in 1:19–28 (5:33), Jesus declares that the Baptist's words were a testimony that the religious leaders should have accepted (5:33).²¹⁸ After highlighting the Baptist's testimony, however, Jesus diminishes its importance, as it comes from a human source (5:34, 36), causing the Baptist's witness to have less worth than Jesus' works (5:36), the Father's word (5:37–38), and Scripture (5:39–40). The introduction of the Baptist as a witness serves less as a justification for Jesus' claims here than as a sign that he is arguing on the terms of his opponents; he does not invoke the Baptist to prove his claims about his identity but so that his opponents might believe (5:34).²¹⁹ In addition, the rejection of the Baptist's value as a witness to Jesus does not devalue him specifically but seems related

²¹⁷ See Urban C. von Wahlde, "The Witnesses to Jesus in John 5:31–40 and Belief in the Fourth Gospel," *CBQ* 43 (1981): 385–404.

²¹⁸ Because the Baptist's witness to the delegation from the Jewish leaders only points away from himself and never identifies Jesus (Stowasser, *Johannes der Täufer*, 226–27), the testimony of the Baptist here may refer to all of the Baptist's testimony by drawing upon the first narrative describing him (Bennema, "The Character of John," 281–82).

²¹⁹ Cf. Moloney, *John*, 186. On the use of the Baptist, also see Ernst, *Johannes der Täufer*, 211; Lincoln, *Truth on Trial*, 78.

to the Gospel's attempt to show the Jesus' superiority over and independency of all things human.²²⁰

A new image for the Baptist appears in 5:35, as Jesus calls him a “burning and shining lamp.” While the Baptist is not the light of the world, he is a “lamp” that gives off light by testifying to the true light, with the use of the “lamp” imagery potentially referring to one who prepares for the final age.²²¹ The Baptist's light is derived and limited as temporal messenger rather than inherent and boundless like the Son of God.²²² The “lamp” imagery is positive, affirming the Baptist and indicting the “Jews” who did not ultimately believe him.

There is also new information related about the Baptist in that the “Jews” are said to have “rejoiced for an hour in his light” (5:35), showing them to have accepted the Baptist's testimony initially as a fulfillment of eschatological promises.²²³ This excitement over the Baptist was short-lived, as it was only for “an hour.” The question from the delegation in 1:19–28 about the Baptist's messianic identity stemmed from

²²⁰ See Wahle, *John*, 2:255. Drawing upon a witness only to deny its importance also was an established rhetoric and not necessarily a way to disparage a figure; for examples of this technique, see Keener, *John*, 1:657.

²²¹ The use of “lamp” may have connotations with Elijah in line with Sir 48:1, as noted by e.g., Dodd, *Historical Tradition*, 265; R. Brown, *John*, 224; Keener, *John*, 1:657. Such a connotation would draw upon slightly different imagery of Elijah than John 1:21. The use of joy here could link the image of the lamp to Psalm 132:17 (LXX 131:17) which connects the lamp to the anointed one (e.g., Carson, *John*, 261). These suggestions are by no means certain or acknowledged by all, as C. Barrett (*John*, 220) denies any sort of reference to the Scriptures, and Stowasser notes that the image's background is not clear (*Johannes der Täufer*, 230–31).

²²² As noted in e.g., Moloney, *John*, 190–91.

²²³ The use of ἀγαλλάω has eschatological overtones (see Bammel, “The Baptist in Early Christian Tradition,” 111 n. 11; Moloney, *John*, 191). This need not mean that the people saw the Baptist as the Messiah, but rather that his ministry was one that prompted the idea that the messianic age was imminent.

excitement in his message, but his answers, which point away from his own work and to the one who existed before him, seem to have prompted him to fall into disfavor with the religious leaders within the narrative. The claims the Baptist makes are similar to those that lead to exclusion from the synagogue (9:22; 12:42; 16:2), putting the Baptist in continuity with Jesus' followers and the group from which the Gospel emerged.

The Baptist serves as a witness towards the “Jews.”²²⁴ It seems that the Jewish leaders had an undue focus on the Baptist and were unable to look past his work to see his testimony about Jesus; they were excited about elements of his work but did not understand nor accept its true meaning.²²⁵ In fact, when they hear John testify about Jesus and seek to direct people toward Jesus and away from himself, the Johannine “Jews” reject and dismiss the Baptist.

John 10:40–41

The last reference to the Baptist in John is 10:40–41, as Jesus responds to the opposition he faces from the “Jews” at the Feast of Rededication by retreating to the place where the Baptist had first baptized (10:40). The ministry of the Baptist at Bethany beyond the Jordan is evoked before the Fourth Gospel's pivotal miracle, the raising of Lazarus, an event that occurs at another place called Bethany (11:1). While some see the statement that the Baptist did not perform any miracles (10:41a) as countering claims that

²²⁴ Note that the text shows John to testify against the “Jews” rather than a group of followers of the Baptist (as noted in e.g., Wink, *John the Baptist*, 97; Ernst, *Johannes der Täufer*, 211; Luperi, “John the Baptist in New Testament Traditions,” 456). Even those who find a polemic against Baptist followers find this discussion to be focused on the Jews (e.g., Schnackenburg, *John*, 2:122; Stowasser, *Johannes der Täufer*, 221–31).

²²⁵ See C. Barrett, *John*, 221; Moloney, *John*, 187. Cf. Stowasser, *Johannes der Täufer*, 238.

he did, no extant first-century source describe the Baptist as working miracles.²²⁶

Furthermore, the lack of miracles performed by the Baptist could work against him in Jewish settings, undercutting the Baptist's credibility.²²⁷ Therefore, this passage may have an apologetic for the Baptist, as Jesus' miracles prove the veracity of the Baptist's testimony in light of the fact that the Baptist did not perform miracles.²²⁸ Once again, the Baptist's testimony leads people to believe in Jesus (10:42).²²⁹

Evaluation

Two elements are important about the Johannine Baptist. First, the Baptist is a witness in the conflict between the Evangelist's group and the "Jews" who provides a model for the Evangelist's group. Second, there is important continuity between the Baptist and Jesus and Jesus' followers.

As highlighted in previous studies, the preeminent role for the Baptist in the Gospel of John is that of witness.²³⁰ An important aspect of his role as a witness is

²²⁶ On the statement countering claims that the Baptist did miracles, see Wink, *John the Baptist*, 98. On the lack of miracles attributed to the Baptist, see John P. Meier, *A Marginal Jew: Rethinking the Historical Jesus* (4 vols.; ABRL; New York/New Haven, CT: Doubleday/Yale University Press, 1991–2009), 2:170–71. For a differing opinion, see Graham N. Twelftree, "Jesus the Baptist," *JSHJ* 7 (2009): 112–14.

²²⁷ Ernst Bammel, "John Did No Miracle," in *Miracles: Cambridge Studies in Their Philosophy and History* (ed. C. F. D. Moule; London: Mowbray, 1965), 199–200. Jesus' discourse at the Feast of Rededication uses his miracles to justify his claims (10:25, 32).

²²⁸ In addition to Bammel, "John Did No Miracle," cf. R. Brown, *John*, 414; Ernst, *Johannes der Täufer*, 212.

²²⁹ There is no indication that the people who believe in Jesus formerly were followers or disciples of the Baptist, so there does not seem to be a polemic against the Baptist here as suggested in Stowasser, *Johannes der Täufer*, 231–39.

²³⁰ See e.g., Dibelius, *Die urchristliche Überlieferung*, 102–9; Wink, *John the Baptist*, 105; Bammel, "The Baptist in Early Christian Tradition," 109; Osten-Sacken, "Der erste Christ"; Webb, *John the Baptizer*, 75; Tatum, *John the Baptist*, 79; Bennema, "The Character of John."

testifying as a witness for the Evangelist's group against the Jewish group with which it is in conflict. Since the Baptist trumpets the group's beliefs about Jesus, including his pre-existence and salvific work, he serves as a model of proper belief as well as helping indict the "Jews" for their rejection of Jesus. He also serves as a model for the audience in that he leads others to believe in Jesus.²³¹

A second theme that emerges in regards to the Johannine Baptist is that of continuity not just between the Baptist and Jesus but also between the Baptist and followers of Jesus. While the Evangelist emphasizes the superiority of Jesus over the Baptist, the narrative reveals a strong connection between the two figures, as they have contemporaneous baptizing ministries and the Baptist's words about Jesus echo the exalted claims the Johannine Jesus speaks about himself. In addition to these continuities in ritual and in theology, there is also a social continuity between the Baptist and Jesus, as the Gospel depicts the disciples of the Baptist becoming disciples of Jesus and people who hear the Baptist's message becoming believers in Jesus. These places of continuity, however, should not eclipse the fact that there is also discontinuity between the Baptist and Jesus in the Fourth Gospel, most notably that Jewish water purification such as that practiced by the Baptist (and Jesus) would be displaced by Jesus' ministry, as he turns

²³¹ While others have seen the self-depreciation of the Baptist as evidence for a polemic against a "Baptist community," his words could be a way to further heighten the Christological claims as well as appeal to the fact that the Baptist had popularity with Jews who were not necessarily "disciples" or "followers" of the Baptist, perhaps even Jews who were part of the group with which John's group found itself in opposition.

water into wine and will baptize with the Holy Spirit.²³² The Johannine Baptist is a forerunner, but as a forerunner he is a “Christian” in that he confesses proper belief.

The image of the Baptist in John has three implications for the study of the Matthean Baptist. First, one sees yet another way in which the Baptist is made to parallel Jesus and his followers, indicating that parallelism is a common strategy. Second, the Baptist is a mouthpiece for a writer, advocating key elements of the writer’s thought. Third, the use of the Baptist within the conflict between John’s group and the “Jews” points to a positive perception of the Baptist within Jewish circles, as the use of the Baptist as a witness for Jesus would not be effective if the Baptist was widely dismissed as an eccentric Jewish teacher or was so associated to believers in Jesus at the time that opponents of these groups repressed or marginalized the memory of him.

The Baptist in Josephus’ *Jewish Antiquities*

The final description of John the Baptist in an extant text from the first or early second century is in Josephus’ *Ant.* 18.116–19.²³³ Unlike the historian’s reference to

²³² This discontinuity does not point to an attempt to diminish the Baptist but rather places him on par with a figure like Moses, who also testifies to Jesus (5:45–47) but who is surpassed by Jesus (1:16–17; 6:22–59).

²³³ On John the Baptist in Josephus, see Adolf Schlatter, *Johannes der Täufer* (ed. Wilhelm Michaelis; Basel: Verlag Friedrich Reinhardt, 1956), 56–66; Scobie, *John the Baptist*, 17–22; Ellis Rivkin, “Locating John the Baptizer in Palestinian Judaism,” *SBL Seminar Papers, 1983* (SBLSP 22; Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1983), 79–85; Louis H. Feldman, *Josephus and Modern Scholarship (1937–80)* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1984), 673–79; Étienne Nodet, “Jésus et Jean-Baptiste selon Josèphe,” *RB* 92 (1985): 321–48; Ernst, *Johannes der Täufer*, 253–58; Lupieri, “John the Baptist in New Testament Traditions,” 449–55; Hermann Lichtenberger, “The Dead Sea Scrolls and John the Baptist: Reflections on Josephus’ Account of John the Baptist,” in *The Dead Sea Scrolls: Forty Years of Research* (ed. Devorah Dimant and Uriel Rappaport; STDJ 10; Leiden: Brill, 1992), 340–46; John P. Meier, “John the Baptist in Josephus: Philology and Exegesis,” *JBL* 111 (1992): 225–37; Webb, *John the Baptizer*, 31–43; Tatum, *John the Baptist*, 95–100; Hartmann, *Der Tod Johannes des Täufers*, 254–344; Bruce Chilton, “John the Baptist: His Immersion and Death,” in *Dimensions of Baptism: Biblical and Theological Studies* (ed. Stanley E. Porter and Anthony R. Cross; JSNTSup 234; London: Sheffield Academic, 2002), 25–44; Steve Mason, *Josephus and the New Testament* (2d ed.; Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2003), 213–25; Kraemer, “Implicating Herodias,”

Jesus in *Ant.* 18.63–64,²³⁴ there is widespread acceptance of the remark about John the Baptist being an original part of Josephus' work.²³⁵ That it is not a Christian interpolation,²³⁶ however, does not mean that it is straightforward description of the

324–40; Craig A. Evans, "Josephus on John the Baptist and Other Jewish Prophets of Deliverance," in *The Historical Jesus in Context* (ed. Dale C. Allison, John Dominic Crossan, and Amy-Jill Levine; Princeton Readings in Religion; Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), 55–63; Morten Hørning Jensen, *Herod Antipas in Galilee: The Literary and Archaeological Sources on the Reign of Herod Antipas and Its Socio-Economic Impact on Galilee* (WUNT 2/215; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006), 96–97; Johannes Tromp, "John the Baptist according to Flavius Josephus, and His Incorporation in the Christian Tradition," in *Empsychoi logoi—Religious Innovations in Antiquity: Studies in Honour of Pieter Willem van der Horst* (ed. Alberdina Houtman, Albert de Jong, and Magdalena Wilhelmina Misser-van de Weg; Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity 73; Leiden: Brill, 2008), 135–49.

²³⁴ The amount of scholarship on the reference to Jesus in *A.J.* 18.63–64 is extraordinary, with monographs devoted to the issue: Serge Bardet, *Le Testimonium Flavianum. Examen historique, considérations historiographiques* (Paris: Cerf, 2002); Alice Whealy, *Josephus on Jesus: The Testimonium Flavianum Controversy from Late Antiquity to Modern Times* (Studies in Biblical Literature 36; New York: Peter Lang, 2003). Perhaps the most thorough and insightful recent study on the topic is James Carleton Paget, "Some Observations on Josephus and Christianity," in idem, *Jews, Christians, and Jewish Christians in Antiquity* (WUNT 251; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010), 199–248. I would affirm that there is some mention of Jesus in this passage, but any attempt to reconstruct the original reading, whether minimal or maximal, is too speculative.

²³⁵ For discussion affirming the authenticity of Josephus' comment about John, see Henry St. John Thackeray, *Josephus: The Man and the Historian* [1929; repr. New York: Ktav, 1967], 131–33; Emil Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ* (rev. and ed. Geza Vermes, Fergus Millar, and Martin Goodman; 4 vols.; Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1986), 1:346 n. 24; Nodet, "Jésus et Jean-Baptiste," 322–31; Webb, *John the Baptizer*, 39–41; Meier, *A Marginal Jew*, 1:57–59. Even Per Bilde, who doubts the authenticity of all of *Ant.* 18.63–64, affirms that the reference to John the Baptist is original (see *Flavius Josephus between Jerusalem and Rome: His Life, His Works, and Their Importance* [JSPSup 2; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1988], 223). A critique of the usual arguments for authenticity has recently appeared in Clare K. Rothschild, "Echoes of a Whisper: The Uncertain Authenticity of Josephus' Witness to John the Baptist," in *Ablution, Initiation, and Baptism: Late Antiquity, Early Judaism, and Early Christianity* (ed. David Hellholm, Tor Vegge, Øyvind Norderval, and Christer Hellholm; BZNW 176; 3 vols.; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2011), 1:255–90. Rothschild notes, however, that authenticity and historicity are two different issues, as an interpolation could still preserve historical data or views at a particular time. Another recent attempt to call into question the authenticity of Josephus' discussion of John the Baptist appears in Rivka Nir, "Josephus' Account of John the Baptist: A Christian Interpolation?" *JSHJ* 10 (2012): 32–62. Nir's argument that the passage about the Baptist comes from a Jewish-Christian source since the type of baptism that Josephus attributes to John only appears in "sectarian" Jewish circles seems to discount the possibility that Josephus' words reflect John's own teaching, which may have corresponded to "sectarian" groups such as at Qumran. Moreover, Nir seems to overstate how John's baptism, as well as the washings of Qumran, would be anti-temple.

²³⁶ As part of Henry St. John Thackeray's theory that Josephus' assistants produced *Ant.* 15–19 (see *Josephus*, 100–25), Thackeray argued that this reference did not come from the pen of Josephus but rather from the "the hack employed for this portion of the *Antiquities*" (132). However, Thackeray still

“historical John,” as Josephus’ writings reflect his efforts to be an advocate and apologist for the Jewish people and for himself. Therefore, one must consider the person of Josephus and the goals of his work in order to understand this passage, paying special attention to Josephus’ relationship to believers in Jesus and the historian’s place within the Judaism of his day.²³⁷

While Josephus’ works were preserved by Christians, his stance and relationship towards believers in Jesus is a point of dispute. Some scholars view Josephus’ brief references to Jesus and his followers in *Ant.* 18.63–64 and 20.200 as reflecting sympathy for Jesus’ followers.²³⁸ Others see Josephus as more antagonistic towards Christianity, which may have led to interpolated elements in *Ant.* 18.63–64 to tone down harsh words about Jesus.²³⁹ Ultimately, it is impossible to know whether the original reading was

concedes that the passage reflects Josephus’ ideas, noting “[t]he hand is the hand of the secretary; the voice that prompts it is that of Josephus” (132). While Thackeray’s view has been largely rejected in recent scholarship (e.g., Tessa Rajak, *Josephus: The Historian and His Society* [Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983], 233–36; Bilde, *Flavius Josephus*, 142–44. For a reevaluation of the response to Thackeray’s view, noting that scholars commonly see some intervention in Josephus’ text, see Rothschild, “Echoes of a Whisper,” 1:257–58 n. 9, 260–61), the passage about John the Baptist does feature some peculiarities which could stem from the incorporation of a source (see Nodet, “Jésus et Jean-Baptiste,” 324–28; cf. Harold Hoehner, *Herod Antipas* [SNTSMS 17; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972], 122). Even if the words themselves do not come from Josephus’ pen, they reveal his ideas.

²³⁷ Though dated, Thackeray, *Josephus*, remains a classic on the person and work of Josephus. Also see Rajak, *Josephus*; Harold W. Attridge, “Josephus and His Works,” in *JWSTP*, 185–232; Louis H. Feldman, “Flavius Josephus Revisited: The Man, His Writings, and His Significance,” *ANRW* 2.21.2 (1984): 763–862; Bilde, *Flavius Josephus*; Mason, *Josephus and the New Testament*.

²³⁸ E.g., Giorgio Jossa, “Jews, Romans and Christians: From the *Bellum Judaicum* to the *Antiquitates*,” in *Josephus and Jewish History in Flavian Rome and Beyond* (ed. Joseph Sievers and Gaia Lembi; JSJSup 104; Leiden: Brill, 2005), 341–42. The approach of Jesus’ followers towards Rome would have been a potential point of agreement with Josephus (Louis H. Feldman, “Introduction,” in Louis H. Feldman and Gohei Hata, eds., *Josephus, Judaism, and Christianity* [Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1987], 54).

²³⁹ Scholars in this camp vary to the extent of how negative the original text would have been towards Jesus and his followers; see e.g., Thackeray, *Josephus*, 137–38; Albert Bell, “Josephus the Satirist: A Clue to the Original Form of the *Testimonium Flavianum*,” *JQR* 67 (1976): 16–22. For proposals that

negative or neutral with the evidence currently available. The reference to James speaks positively of him, but this portrayal may stem from Ananus' unjust action concerning James.²⁴⁰ Although one may not be able to make a definitive case for Josephus having a positive or negative stance towards the followers of Jesus,²⁴¹ Origen (*Cels.*, 1.47; *Comm. Matt* 10.17) and Eusebius (*Hist. Eccl.* 1.11.9, 2.23) highlight that Josephus was not a follower of Jesus.²⁴² Josephus thus offers the perspective of a Jew who did not believe in Jesus and was probably unfamiliar with many of traditions in the Jesus movement.²⁴³

Josephus wrote from Rome and was favorable to the Romans, but he continued to identify with his native people and sought to relate his traditions to Greco-Roman practices. He devotes much space to express his admiration for the Essenes (see *J.W.* 2.119–61; *Ant.* 18.18–22) and claims to have followed a man named Bannus for three years (*Life* 11–12), but Josephus shows a preference for the Pharisees in *Life* 12.²⁴⁴ Even

Josephus' work had a polemical agenda directed towards followers of Jesus, see A. Paul, "Flavius Josephus' 'Antiquities of the Jews': An Anti-Christian Manifesto," *NTS* 31 (1985): 473–80; Nodet, "Jésus et Jean-Baptiste." For a more cautious view that Josephus is "quietly skeptical," see Paget, "Some Observations on Josephus and Christianity," 246–65.

²⁴⁰ Jossa, "Jews, Romans, Christians," 332, 340.

²⁴¹ In agreement with Paget, "Some Observations on Josephus and Christianity," I think a slightly negative view towards Christianity is more likely than a positive one, but I recognize such a perspective may be derived from presuppositions in light of the limited evidence that we have.

²⁴² Other texts describe Josephus as a Jew who was not a follower of Jesus: Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.* 1.5.3, 1.11.9, 3.9.1–2; Jerome, *Vir. ill.*, 13; Clement of Alexandria, *Strom.*, 1.21; Tertullian, *Apol.*, 19.6; cf. Minucius Felix, *Oct.*, 33; Chrysostom, *Hom. Matt.* 76.1 (for these citations and discussion of these texts, see Paget, "Some Observations on Josephus and Christianity," 188–89).

²⁴³ On Josephus' lack of knowledge of "Christian" sources and claims, see Feldman, *Josephus and Modern Scholarship*, 677–79; Meier, *A Marginal Jew*, 1:64–68.

²⁴⁴ Steve Mason has argued that Josephus does not actually declare himself to be a Pharisee in *Flavius Josephus on the Pharisees: A Composition-Critical Study* (StPB 39; Leiden: Brill, 1991), 300–5, 341–56. Mason presents some good arguments, but his view seems to ignore or underplay Josephus' intention to associate himself with the Pharisees in *Life* 12 (see Attridge, "Josephus," 186). Perhaps

if his commitment to the Pharisees is an opportunistic exaggeration rather than evidence of lifelong allegiance to this sect, this comment indicates that Josephus seeks to associate himself with the Pharisees, making it likely that he would offer opinions that cohere as much as possible with the ideas of the Pharisees. As a Jew who shares or adopts much Pharisaic thought, Josephus' portrayal of the Baptist offer insights into perceptions of the Baptist outside of the Jesus movement and potentially of the group in conflict with Matthew's group.

Evidence

John the Baptist appears as a secondary figure in Josephus' discussion of Herod Antipas (*Ant.* 18.101–25).²⁴⁵ Like Herod the Great, Archelaus, and Pilate, Josephus' description of Antipas is largely negative, portraying Antipas as one who is hostile to the practices of the Jews and an unjust ruler.²⁴⁶ This negative picture of Antipas is contrasted by the positive figures surrounding him, including his brother Philip, his brother-in-law

Josephus' ambiguous language is intentional, pointing to the fact that Josephus had not been a Pharisee from his youth nor during his time in Judea. For a critique of Mason's position on this passage and a similar conclusion, see Meier, *A Marginal Jew*, 3:364–66 n. 81. I find it most likely that Josephus was never truly a Pharisee but sought to align himself with them as they increased in power after the Jewish War.

²⁴⁵ On the minimal reference to John and focus upon Herod Antipas within *Ant.* 18.116–19, see Hartmann, *Der Tod Johannes des Täufers*, 269. In addition to the discussion of Josephus' description of Herod Antipas in Hoehner, *Herod Antipas*; and Nikos Kokkinos, *The Herodian Dynasty: Origins, Role in Society and Eclipse* (JSPSup 30; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1998), 229–235, see the insightful literary analysis of the description of Herod Antipas in Josephus in Jensen, *Herod Antipas*, 53–100. While Josephus calls Herod Antipas "Herod," I will refer to him as Antipas here to prevent confusion with Herod the Great.

²⁴⁶ Antipas shows insensitivity to Jewish concerns in his construction of Tiberias upon graves (18.36–38) and in his unlawful marriage to Herodias (18.136; cf. 18.109–15). His actions in the negotiations with Artabanus (18.101–5) point to self-serving motives, rather than justice and piety, as the guiding forces for his life and rule, something that his marriage to Herodias and his treatment of John would confirm. The earlier description of his construction of Tiberias foreshadows this trait, along with showing that he chooses his friendship with Tiberius and Rome over concern for Jewish customs (see Jensen, *Herod Antipas*, 68–100, esp. 91–94, 98–99).

Agrippa I, and Vitellius.²⁴⁷ The example of Antipas serves as an illustration of how “irretrievable disasters” await those who “depart from strict observance of [the] laws” (*Ant.* 1.14 [Thackeray, LCL]). John the Baptist is a positive figure to contrast with Antipas, providing a further example of Antipas’ insensitivity to Jewish concerns and unjust rule, illustrating that unlawful actions are answered with calamity.²⁴⁸

The account of 18.109–15 focuses on the events that brought about Antipas’ defeat at the hand of the Nabatean King, Aretas IV. The aside about John the Baptist offers a theological interpretation of the events made by “some of the Jews” (τισὶ τῶν Ἰουδαίων) (18.116), with Josephus concluding the account without the qualification that the interpretation was confined to a particular group of Jews, calling it the “the opinion of the Jews” (τοῖς δὲ Ἰουδαίοις δόξα) (18.119).²⁴⁹ While not explicitly stated, Josephus seems to agree that Aretas’ defeat was a “most certainly just” (μάλα δικαίως) punishment that was from God (ὑπο τοῦ θεοῦ).²⁵⁰

Josephus notes from the outset that Antipas had killed John the Baptist in 18.117, after which he speaks about the person of John. The description of John is not ascribed to

²⁴⁷ While pointing out the positive pictures of Philip and Agrippa I that stand in contrast to Antipas, Jensen’s analysis (see n. 246 above) overlooks the role of Vitellius in this narrative.

²⁴⁸ Cf. Mason, *Josephus and the New Testament*, 214; Hartmann, *Der Tod Johannes des Täufers*, 314–29.

²⁴⁹ On *Ant.* 18.116 and 18.119 forming an *inclusio*, see Meier, “John the Baptist in Josephus,” 228–29; Rothschild, “Echoes of a Whisper,” 1:258. For further discussion of the literary category of this passage and the label of it as a “*diegressio*,” see Hartmann, *Der Tod Johannes des Täufers*, 298–302.

²⁵⁰ See Thackeray, *Josephus*, 132–33. Webb regards καὶ μάλα δικαίως as an insertion of Josephus offering his opinion on the matter (*John the Baptizer*, 34). While Josephus is not afraid to give his opinion throughout his work, the lack of personal reflection on the Baptist could be a way to avoid too closely

the masses and coheres with Josephus' tastes, indicating that this is likely his view of the Baptist. Josephus says that John was a "good man" (ἀγαθὸν ἄνδρα).²⁵¹ He then explains John's practice of baptism, noting that John commanded Jews to be baptized (τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις κελεύοντα ... βαπτισμῶ συνιέναι)²⁵² if they were "cultivating virtue" (ἀρετὴν ἐπασκοῦσιν) and "practicing (χρωμένοις) righteousness towards one another (τὰ πρὸς ἀλλήλους δικαιοσύνη) and piety towards God (πρὸς τὸν θεὸν εὐσεβεία)."²⁵³ While

identifying with a figure who was executed by the Romans client ruler (cf. C. A. Evans, "Josephus on John the Baptist," 56).

²⁵¹ Eisler's emendation that the text originally read ἄγριον ἄνδρα ("wild man") due to the description of John in the Slavonic version of Josephus is almost universally rejected (as noted by Louis H. Feldman in his note on the text in the LCL translation of Josephus [9:81 n. c]; also see Rothschild, "Echoes of a Whisper," 1:262–63). While Lichtenberger thinks there is a polemic against the Baptist ("Täufergemeinden," 45–46), the text seems to portray the Baptist in a positive light (see Backhaus, *Die "Jüngerkreise" des Täufers*, 272–73). The title "good man" could be a way to avoid calling John a prophet, especially in light of the false prophets who sparked movements that Josephus disdained (Jo. Taylor, *The Immerser*, 259).

²⁵² Webb thinks that this phrase points to a group being formed (*John the Baptizer*, 199–200, 353–54, 370), but the phrase itself is ambiguous (see Nodet, "Jésus et Jean-Baptiste," 325). In light of Josephus' dislike for groups that become rebellious mobs, it seems that the phrase indicates that people came out to receive John's baptism in groups rather than that John formed a movement (as Feldman notes in the LCL translation [9:82 n. a], and supported in Kraeling, *John the Baptist*, 119; Scobie, *John the Baptist*, 132). For an extended discussion supporting this position, see Backhaus, *Die "Jüngerkreise" des Täufers*, 268–72; Hartmann, *Der Tod Johannes des Täufers*, 294–96.

²⁵³ While many translate the participles of *Ant.* 18.117 as reflecting the content of what John the Baptist was commanding along with baptism, as understood in Feldman's LCL translation: "had exhorted the Jews to lead righteous lives, to practise justice towards their fellows and piety towards God, and so doing to join in baptism" (9:81–83; also see Ernst, *Johannes der Täufer*, 253; Webb, *John the Baptizer*, 188; Mason, *Josephus and the New Testament*, 214; Jo. Taylor, *The Immerser*, 6; Tromp, "John the Baptist," 135), and others have argued that the participles are adjectival, describing "the Jews" who John was teaching (see Frederick John Foakes-Jackson and Kirsopp Lake, eds., *The Beginnings of Christianity* [5 vols.; London: MacMillan, 1920–33], 1:102; William R. Farmer, "John the Baptist," *IDB* 2:959; cf. Lupieri, "John the Baptist in New Testament Traditions," 451), it seems best to view these participles as circumstantial, indicating that a virtuous life was a prerequisite for baptism (see Meier, "John in the Baptist in Josephus," 229–31; cf. C. A. Evans, "Josephus on John the Baptist," 60; Rothschild, "Echoes of a Whisper," 1:264; Nir, "Josephus' Account of John the Baptist," 38).

Josephus' description could reflect the historical John's teaching on baptism,²⁵⁴ the description of baptism being dependent upon virtuous living (*δικαιοσύνη, εὐσέβεια*) and not having the power to cleanse from sin coheres with Hellenistic ideals and conforms to Josephus' presentation of Judaism as a moral philosophy.²⁵⁵ John essentially promotes Josephus' conception of Judaism that upholds the Jewish law while corresponding to Greco-Roman sensibilities.

John is an eclectic Jew, neither an Essene nor a Pharisee but having some of the best qualities of each group. In advocating baptism, John is like the admirable Essenes (*J.W.* 2.129, 138, 159; *Ant.* 18.19) and Josephus' mentor Bannus (*Life* 11), something that reinforces the fact that Josephus describes John positively.²⁵⁶ While Josephus may describe John's ministry in ways similar to the Essenes, Josephus does not label him as an Essene nor would the original audience immediately see him as an Essene or connect him to Bannus.²⁵⁷ John's popularity makes it likely that his rite of purification was

²⁵⁴ Josephus' description of John's baptism is often viewed as "a distortion meant to impress Josephus' enlightened and skeptical Gentiles readers" or that it is a "rationalizing understanding of John's teaching that the ritual required appropriate preparation and disposition" (Adela Yarbro Collins, "The Origin of Christian Baptism," *StudLit* 19 [1989]: 29), but Mauro Pesce raises the possibility that Josephus' words reflect the teaching of the Baptist, as baptism removes bodily impurity still remaining after repentance (see *Da Gesù al cristianesimo*, 102–5).

²⁵⁵ Feldman, *Josephus and Modern Scholarship*, 675; Mason, *Josephus and the New Testament*, 214–15. Cf. Hartmann, *Der Tod Johannes des Täufers*, 305. On John as one like Seneca, Epictetus, or Socrates, see Schlatter, *Johannes der Täufer*, 59. John's baptism also matches the common distinction between body and soul in Hellenistic thought (Tatum, *John the Baptist*, 99; Webb, *John the Baptizer*, 167; Chilton, "John the Baptist," 37) although this distinction might fit in a Palestinian context as well (Jo. Taylor, *The Immerser*, 88–93; Pesce, *Da Gesù al cristianesimo*, 102–5).

²⁵⁶ Lichtenberger, "Dead Sea Scrolls," 343–46.

²⁵⁷ Bannus is not named in the *Jewish Antiquities*, and, although referring to the description of the sects in the *J.W.* 2.119–66 (*Ant.* 18.11), the account of the Essenes in *Ant.* 18 does not emphasize the meaning of their purification practices, only noting that it was different from the practices done in the

similar to that of the Pharisees, who Josephus claims had control over the temple cult and the allegiance of the masses (*Ant.* 18.15, 17; cf. 13.298). Since John attracted the pious, his initial audience would include many Pharisees. Moreover, the popularity that John enjoys and the influence his words have over the crowd is reminiscent of the power of the Pharisees, who Josephus says are influential (*Ant.* 18.15, 17; cf. 13.288, 298, 401–2). John is not called a Pharisee, however, nor given any of their distinctive elements in comparison to the other groups, such as their allegiance to the oral law.²⁵⁸

Attention moves from describing John (18.117) to the actions of Antipas towards John (18.118–19). When “the others joined” (τῶν ἄλλων συστρεφόμενων) the righteous ones in flocking to John the Baptist,²⁵⁹ Antipas became alarmed, fearing that John’s sway over the people could lead to “sedition” (στάσις) (18.118).²⁶⁰ In order to prevent such a

temple (*Ant.* 18.19). It would seem that if Josephus wanted to show a connection between John and the Essenes, Josephus would more closely align their descriptions in *Ant.* 18.

²⁵⁸ Feldman, *Josephus and Modern Scholarship*, 676. The connections between the Pharisees and the Fourth Philosophy (*Ant.* 18.1–10, 23) and their opposition to kings (*Ant.* 17.41) may be a reason that John is not made to be a Pharisee, as Josephus seeks to show John as a “harmless dispenser of water ritual” (Meier, “John the Baptist in Josephus,” 233).

²⁵⁹ The identity of “the others” is difficult to determine, leading to the presence of textual variants and conjectures. While some suggest that the “others” are non-Jews (e.g., Tatum, *John the Baptist*, 99), there is no other indication of a Jew/Gentile contrast in the text. The most contextually sound view is that the “others” are “unrighteous” people, as John’s influence was spreading so that people were changing their ways to become virtuous and be baptized, as suggested in Lupieri, “John the Baptist in New Testament Traditions,” 451; Meier, “John the Baptist in Josephus,” 232 (also see translator’s note in LCL 9:82 n. c). Such a group certainly could include Jews and Gentiles (Nir, “Josephus’ Account of John the Baptist,” 40).

²⁶⁰ The word could be rendered “sedition” (e.g., LCL 9:83; cf. *Ant.* 18.62) or “strife” (Tatum, *John the Baptist*, 99; cf. *Ant.* 18.8); see discussion in LSJ, 1634; Delling, “στάσις,” *TDNT* 7:568–71, esp. 570–71; Webb, *John The Baptizer*, 37–38. Since the term is placed into the thoughts of Antipas, “sedition” is more appropriate, referring to a political revolt. On the question of whether the text should read ἀπόστασις (as adopted in Niese’s critical text) rather than στάσις (the LCL reading), see Rothschild, “Echoes of a Whisper,” 1:265. It does not seem that the lexical choice leads to a divergent understanding of the passage (Hartmann, *Der Tod Johannes des Täufers*, 258–59).

thing, Antipas imprisoned John and put him to death (18.118–19). The description of John as a teacher who promotes proper ethics makes Antipas’ fear of John provoking an incident unfounded and reveals Antipas’ opposition to truth, as John and his followers would only oppose Antipas insofar as his actions are unjust and impious.²⁶¹ The use of *νεώτερον* to describe the uprising that may happen is ironic, as John is not advocating any sort of “radical innovation”²⁶² but a return to proper values; Antipas is the true innovator. Antipas’ treatment of John shows an unjust ruler killing a virtuous man and thus deserving punishment.

It seems that Jews and Josephus could view God’s judgment coming shortly after an incident or having a long delay,²⁶³ and Josephus’ narrative techniques make it difficult to determine the length of time that elapsed between John’s execution and Antipas’ defeat.²⁶⁴ Therefore, it may not be proper to say that Josephus’ account highlights that

²⁶¹ In fact, Antipas should welcome the idea that unrighteous people are now turning to righteous lives in order to be baptized by John rather than fear John’s influence. Although Jonathan’s admonitions to Felix are explicit and offer an even clearer political motivation than in the case of Antipas and John, there is a certain resemblance between Antipas’ actions and those of Felix against Jonathan the high priest in that Felix disdains righteous rebukes since he is a person who habitually chooses to do what is wrong (see *Ant.* 20.160–66, esp. 162).

²⁶² The term is translated as an “uprising” in LCL 9:83; Meier, “John the Baptist in Josephus,” 233, but as “radical innovation” in Webb, *John the Baptizer*, 32, 37; Tatum, *John the Baptist*, 98. While the term is an euphemism for rebellion (see Lupieri, “John the Baptist in New Testament Traditions,” 451, with examples appearing in places such as *Ant.* 20.7, 106, 133), the term seems to offer an additional connotation that is useful and relevant here. On John as the point for continuity and tradition, see Hartmann, *Der Tod Johannes des Täufers*, 318.

²⁶³ Examples of punishments coming shortly after the actions were committed appear in Nikos Kokkinos, “Crucifixion in AD 36: The Keystone for Dating the Birth of Jesus,” in *Chronos, Kairos, Christos: Nativity and Chronological Studies Presented to Jack Finegan* (ed. Jerry Vardaman and Edwin M. Yamauchi; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1989), 135, while Hoehner, *Herod Antipas*, 126 n. 1 cites examples of delay. Also see discussion in Feldman, *Josephus and Modern Scholarship*, 678.

²⁶⁴ Josephus portrays Aretas’ defeat of Antipas occurring shortly before the death of Tiberius and thus before 37 C.E., but he does not give a date for the Baptist’s death, with the flashback nature of the story making it difficult to give an approximate date for John’s death in Josephus’ mind and to determine if the

John's death was seen as avenged by a defeat that occurred many years later, but his description portrays the people remembering John as a righteous man after his death. The recording of this opinion nearly sixty years later is indication of a memory of the unjust end to John's life in Jewish circles.

Evaluation

As with the Evangelists, Josephus' ideological interests and aims are on display in his description of John the Baptist. It is unclear to what extent Josephus has shaped the image of John by modifying his sources of information on the Baptist since we do not know what information he had on the Baptist.²⁶⁵ Therefore, before placing Josephus' portrayal of John in dialogue with the Gospels, the evaluation of Josephus' Baptist will first place John in comparison to other figures within his *Jewish Antiquities*.

Although John is a relatively minor figure in *Jewish Antiquities*, Josephus' description of him is remarkably different from similar figures. Josephus depicts Jewish prophetic teachers in less than favorable terms (see e.g., *Ant.* 18.85–87; 20.97–99, 169–172, 188; cf. *J.W.* 2.261–65; 6.285–86; 7.437–40), but he calls John “a good man” (*Ant.*

Josephus seeks to show the Baptist's death and Antipas' defeat in close succession (Hoehner, *Herod Antipas*, 169–70; cf. Chilton “John the Baptist,” 39). The events in *Ant.* 18.101–5 present some chronological questions in light of the placement of this negotiation in the reign of Gaius in Suetonius, *Cal.* 24.3 (see the divergent opinions in Schürer, *History of the Jewish People*, 1:350–51; Hoehner, *Herod Antipas*, 251–54). Another example of the difficulty of determining the chronology of events is that the discussion of Philip and his death (*Ant.* 18.106–8) is before the description of Antipas' marriage to Herodias. This order introduces a good ruler before highlighting some improper actions of Antipas; there is no need to see the marriage only happening after Philip's death, but it does seem that Philip died before Antipas' defeat because of the role Philip's soldiers have in the battle (*Ant.* 18.114).

²⁶⁵ As noted in Ernst, *Johannes der Täufer*, 256. For discussion of sources for Josephus' words on the Baptist, see Hartmann, *Der Tod Johannes des Täufers*, 345–55.

18.117).²⁶⁶ Furthermore, Josephus approves of actions in other rulers similar to those undertaken by Antipas.²⁶⁷ Thus, John is more like Onias the prophet (*Ant.* 14.22–24) or Jesus the son of Ananias (*J.W.* 6.300–9) than the Samaritan (*Ant.* 18.85–87), Theudas (*Ant.* 20.97–99), or the Egyptian prophet (*Ant.* 20.169–72//*J.W.* 2.261–65).²⁶⁸ Josephus also seems more interested in John the Baptist than in Jesus and his brother James.²⁶⁹ Since Josephus does not relate John the Baptist to Jesus, it does not appear that his association with Jesus was universal.²⁷⁰ In fact, if there is any credence to Josephus' claims about John's popularity amongst the Jews,²⁷¹ then Jews inside and outside of the Jesus movement had a high opinion of John, with Josephus' Pharisaic sympathies making it likely that the Baptist was esteemed in some Pharisaic circles.²⁷² Unless Josephus only

²⁶⁶ Josephus never calls John a prophet. On the avoidance of the term “prophet” among “Pharisaic or early rabbinic teachers” as well as its use for John in the Gospels, see Chilton, “John the Baptist,” 29–32.

²⁶⁷ Jensen, *Herod Antipas*, 100.

²⁶⁸ Webb tries to place John the Baptist in the same class as Theudas and the Egyptian (*John the Baptizer*, 349–78), but Josephus's description makes a distinction between these figures, as discussed in Richard A. Horsley, “‘Like One of the Prophets of Old’: Two Types of Popular Prophets at the Time of Jesus,” *CBQ* 47 (1985): 1–30; Chilton, “John the Baptist,” 29–32. This may reflect a difference in substance between John and these figures or Josephus' attempt to portray John differently; see discussion in John Dominic Crossan, *The Historical Jesus: The Life of a Mediterranean Peasant* (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1991), 158–67, 230–32.

²⁶⁹ Cf. Meier, *A Marginal Jew*, 1:68–69. Of course, one must keep in mind the theoretical nature of our knowledge about Josephus' description on Jesus. Schlatter (*Johannes der Täufer*, 64) highlights that Josephus discusses the Baptist but pays no attention to Jewish figures such as Hillel and Shammai.

²⁷⁰ It is unclear if a close connection between John and Jesus had been entrenched by the time of Celsus or Origen, as it seems that Celsus links John and Jesus as suffering in the same manner (*Cels.* 1.41 [ANF 4:414]) but Origen criticizes him on this point and notes that Jews did not seek to link John and Jesus (*Cels.* 1.48 [ANF 4:417]).

²⁷¹ Cf. Nodet, “Jésus et Jean-Baptiste,” 331. Josephus' attempts to appeal to the interests of his fellow countrymen lead me to the conclusion that this was actually true.

²⁷² On connections between the historical John and the Pharisees, see Jo. Taylor, *The Immerser*, 155–213. It seems that John retained a place in Judaism in a later period, as Origen states that Celsus claims the Jews accepted John to be “the Baptist” (*Cels.* 1.47 [ANF 4:416]) and that opponents of Christianity used

learned about John through Roman sources or contacts, which seems unlikely, the sheer fact that he knows and discusses John the Baptist would indicate a certain prominence in Jewish circles throughout the first century. The possible attempt by Josephus to refute misunderstandings of the meaning of John the Baptist's baptism in *Ant.* 18.117 also points to John remaining a popular figure, particularly if the views Josephus seeks to correct were not derived from individuals or groups of believers in Jesus.²⁷³ While Josephus' words suggest that the Baptist retain popularity towards the end of the first century, the historian's praise for him calls into question whether John had a distinct group of followers/disciple at this time, as the existence of such a group could substantiate Antipas' suspicions of him and would make John akin to the prophetic figures that Josephus dislikes.²⁷⁴

Overall, Josephus displays a high regard for the Baptist and portrays John as advocating a form of Judaism akin to the version espoused by the historian. In making John the Baptist an idealized figure, Josephus does something similar to what Mark, Luke, and John also do, as they show similarities between John and Jesus and use John as

John's identity as a Jew as argument against Christians, as Jesus was baptized by a Jew (*Cels.* 2.4 [ANF 4:431]).

²⁷³ It is difficult to know what group, if any, Josephus refutes in denying John's baptism has the power to forgive sins. While Scobie thinks Josephus knows this tradition from followers of Jesus (*John the Baptist*, 111), Grant Shafer argues that this is unlikely that Josephus knew this view from followers of Jesus ("John the Baptist, Jesus, and the Forgiveness of Sins," *Proceedings of the Eastern Great Lakes and Midwest Society of Biblical Literature* 26 [2006]: 59). Meier concludes that Josephus knew this position from "followers of John the Baptist" ("John the Baptist in Josephus," 231 n. 21), but Backhaus shows that Josephus has no awareness of a group continuing to follow John the Baptist (*Die "Jüngerkreise" des Täufers*, 272–74). It seems best to note that Josephus is "is aware of traditions (Jewish or Christian) stating the opposite of what he wants to be known about John" (Lupieri, "John the Baptist in New Testament Traditions," 454).

²⁷⁴ Cf. Backhaus, *Die "Jüngerkreise" des Täufers*, 272–74.

an example for believers in Jesus; the content and particular techniques might differ but the overall aim is remarkably similar.²⁷⁵ Above all, Josephus' use of John suggests that John was a popular Jewish teacher throughout the first century, even among those Jews who did not believe in Jesus.²⁷⁶

Conclusions: Synthesis and Summary

The distinctive portrayals of John in four extant texts roughly contemporaneous with the Gospel of Matthew (Mark, Luke-Acts, John, Josephus' *Jewish Antiquities*) reflect some interesting similarities that are important to bear in mind when approaching the Matthean Baptist. Each of the gospels draws attention to parallels that exist between John and Jesus; the image of Jesus has in some part shaped its portrayal of the Baptist and the Baptist could also influence the way each text describes Jesus. While Josephus does not connect John and Jesus, Josephus' description of John parallels his description of the Essenes and his teacher Bannus, reflecting a connection between John and idealized or respected figures.

Each of the texts also uses John as a way to speak to its perception of Judaism and advance their claims or key ideas. For Josephus, John espouses Judaism as a philosophical school in conformity to the ideals of the Greco-Roman world. Luke focuses on the ethical teachings of the Baptist and uses John to show continuity with the

²⁷⁵ Josephus could have interpreted John through the lens of his teacher Bannus, as discussed in Scobie, *John the Baptist*, 10–11; Lupieri, “John the Baptist in New Testament Traditions,” 454. Therefore, while the followers of Jesus made John more like Jesus, a follower of Bannus may have made him more like Bannus.

²⁷⁶ It is more likely that Jesus' followers used a Jewish teacher for their purposes than that Josephus separated John from any connection to Jesus or his followers (Mason, *Josephus and the New Testament*, 219).

Scriptures and faithful Jews. The Markan Baptist offers forgiveness of sins outside of the temple order, setting the stage for Jesus' ministry that brings to an end to the literal observance of certain elements of the Jewish law, while the Johannine Baptist advances the high Christological views of the community in the midst of its conflict with other Jews. The parallelism and the subordination of the Baptist reinforces the Christological focus of the gospels,²⁷⁷ and the Baptist serves Josephus' differing purposes in the *Jewish Antiquities*, as the description of the Baptist helps to show the wickedness of Herod Antipas and that God brings just punishment for sin. Therefore, the Baptist reflects key elements of the writers' work and stands as a somewhat idealized figure for the audience in all works that discuss him.

A focus on Matthew's setting is aided by noting the perceptions about the Baptist at the time of Matthew's composition reflected in these texts. The divergent images of the Baptist in these four texts indicate that there was still an ability to mold the image of the Baptist; he was a malleable figure as the various authors describe him differently. That writers on both sides of the divide concerning belief in Jesus as the Christ and three writers from various schools of thought within the Jesus movement discuss John and do so in a way in which he reflects their ideas and key themes reveals the Baptist possessing

²⁷⁷ The gospels do not make the Baptist a perfect figure, however, as his understanding of Jesus' ministry is incomplete and wavering and must be corrected (Luke 7:19) and his followers continue to fast even after Jesus arrives (Mark 2:18–22//Luke 5:33–39). The laudatory and limiting features of the text create some problems for those interested in developing a system of salvation-history, as John's role as a bridge figure leads to elements of his ministry still akin to an "old" form of Judaism while others resemble the way that Judaism is transformed by Jesus; John ushers in the "new" while staying connected to the "old."

capital for these writers and their audiences; the Baptist was a useful ally to have on one's side.

Moreover, the fact that John appears as a positive figure in Jewish literature outside of the Jesus movement points to John not being the exclusive property of these groups. The use of the Baptist in the debate with the "Jews" in the Gospel of John indicates that there was competition between groups for the Baptist, with Josephus trying to claim John as his own. In fact, the stronger connections between John and the Jesus movement in the later texts (Luke and John) could point to an attempt by believers in Jesus to locate the Baptist more firmly within their group and to distance him from other Jewish groups. Moreover, the greater interest shown in Luke to the opposition John faces from the Pharisees (e.g., Luke 7:29–30) could also indicate that Luke seeks to separate John from Jewish groups outside of the Jesus movement around the time that Matthew wrote.

The traditions about the Baptist in all four texts point to John's popularity among the masses, his faithfulness to the Jewish law and teachings, and his execution by the Roman-appointed ruler. They also all indicate that John had some sort of following in the wider populace, with the gospels showing him to have "disciples" and all texts revealing an influence beyond a close circle of students. There does not seem to be enough evidence to identify a specific "Baptist group" at the time these texts were composed, and Josephus' use of John may point against the possibility of such a group. The portrayal of John's popularity and the value each writer finds in John, however, gives strong plausibility to the view that there were at least "Baptist sympathizers" at the time of Matthew's composition.

Finally, although the title “Baptist” is not used in all the works, all the texts highlight John’s baptizing activity, though the meaning of this ministry varies in conformity with the desired way to portray the significance of John’s work. Therefore, people saw some sort of significance in John’s baptismal work, which complemented his preaching, but there was not a fixed sense of its meaning.

These observations about the Baptist in other works and perceptions of him around the time Matthew was written give three guiding thoughts for the following study of the Matthean Baptist. First, Matthew is not alone in showing parallels between John and Jesus, using John as an example for followers of Jesus, subordinating him to Jesus, and relating him to salvation history as one who is connected to the Scriptures but also beginning something new. Therefore, one must determine the special ways that Matthew uses and shapes these motifs for his purposes and setting. Second, the Matthean approach to the purpose and meaning of John’s baptism and preaching will likely tie into key themes and aims of the Evangelist in line with the way that each of the other texts frame John’s ministry in conformity with the author’s theological agenda. Finally, the indications about John’s popularity among groups in Judaism, including potentially the Pharisees, means that the Baptist could be a part of the way that Matthew deals with the Jewish opponents of the group as well as other Jews who might not be hostile to his group but did not believe in Jesus.

CHAPTER 3

MATTHEW 21:23–32 AND 17:10–13

Introduction

In addition to the rationale offered in the opening chapter of this dissertation for commencing the analysis of the Matthean Baptist by examining the last passages that discuss John the Baptist, a number of other factors point to Matt 21:23–32 and 17:10–13 having special relevance for understanding how Matthew describes and uses the Baptist in his narrative and thus being a wise starting point for this study. Both passages stand near important points in the narrative, coming after the Transfiguration (17:10–13) and between Jesus’ entry in Jerusalem and the Passion Narrative (21:23–32). Furthermore, the Matthean Jesus speaks about John in both passages, so the perspective given about John would be authoritative for Matthew’s audience and should guide the audience’s view of John.¹ Moreover, both passages relate to the conflict between Matthew’s group and its Jewish opponents because one occurs in a dispute between Jesus and the religious leaders (21:23–32) and the other in a conversation discussing the teaching of the scribes (17:10–13). Finally, both passages note that John “came,” a term that suggests an

¹ On Jesus as a “reliable protagonist” in Matthew, see Gary Yamasaki, *John the Baptist in Life and Death: Audience-Oriented Criticism of Matthew’s Narrative* (JSNTSup 167; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1998), 78–80.

explanation of John's overarching purposes.² These issues also reflect links between the two passages, justifying the analysis of them appearing in the same chapter.

Approaching the last texts discussing the Baptist is not without challenge and some limitations. Because of the way that these texts assume and develop earlier portions of Mathew's narrative, there will be a need to refer to earlier passages in the examination of these final references to John. In addition, while these two passages help disclose a trajectory for the portrayal of the Baptist in Matthew and how this portrayal fits into the Gospel's setting, one must be careful not to read these passages into the earlier ones in a way that distorts the meaning of the earlier passage. The discussion of these passages and use of them in analyzing other passages will seek to bear in mind this caution.

Before examining these passages in greater detail, we will offer a preview of the overarching claim and findings. Both passages highlight the failure of the Jewish religious leaders to recognize John's important role in salvation history as a unique messenger before Jesus. In contrast, Matthew's group correctly grasps that John is the Elijah who was to come, a position that gives John an essential role in salvation history that is above other prophets and makes Jesus' ministry the arrival of God, for which John prepared. In addition to bolstering the beliefs of Matthew's group about Jesus as the fulfillment of the promises of Jewish Scriptures, John's Elijanic identity indicts Matthew's opponents, with Matthew staking a claim to this popular Jewish preacher and even elevating his importance above the popular view of him in a way that shows his opponents to reject God's eschatological activity.

² Cf. John P. Meier, "John the Baptist in Matthew's Gospel," *JBL* 99 (1980): 398. The reference to John as having "come" in ch. 17 is a reference to Elijah having come (17:12), but the passage equates John with Elijah.

Matthew 21:23–32

Introduction

Matthew 21:23–32 recalls key words and themes in previous passages discussing the Baptist in Matthew, synthesizing the Gospel’s portrayal of John the Baptist and thus helping reveal his function in the work. Jesus’ reference to John’s baptism in 21:25 recalls his baptizing activity, including his baptism of Jesus (3:1–17). The chief priests and the elders acknowledge that the crowd believes John to be a prophet just as Herod does earlier in the narrative (14:5), and the crowd’s belief that John is a prophet recalls Jesus’ description of John as “more than a prophet” (11:9). Furthermore, the crowd’s favorable opinion of John reflects John’s popularity with the people displayed in 3:5–6 and implied in Jesus’ line of questioning with the “crowds” in 11:7–11. Jesus’ declaration that John “came” (ἦλθεν) echoes earlier statements Jesus makes about John (11:18–19; 17:12; cf. 11:14). The phrase “way of righteousness” (ἐν ὁδῷ δικαιοσύνης) summons the use of Isa 40:3 to introduce John’s ministry as “preparing the way of the Lord” (Matt 3:3; cf. 11:10) and John’s baptism of Jesus “to fulfill all righteousness” (3:15). The note that the chief priests and elders “did not believe” John (οὐκ ἐπιστεύσατε αὐτῷ) evokes the ideas that John faces rejection from “this generation” (11:16–19) and that those who cause the Son of man to suffer also do to John “whatever they pleased” (17:12).³ The theme of the “vineyard” in the two parables Jesus speaks in this chapter (21:28–32; 21:33–46) relates to John’s preaching on the necessity for fruit and judgment coming upon those who do not bear fruit (3:7–10), with the judgment that the following parables

³ The word πιστεύω does not appear in earlier discussions of John in Matthew, but it appears in the Markan source (Mark 11:31), which may account for its use in Matt 21:32.

highlight (21:33–46; 22:1–14) reminiscent of John’s teaching on judgment (3:7, 10) and the ability for God to raise up children to Abraham (3:9). Reference to the “the kingdom” (21:31–32, 21:43) reflects the subject of John’s preaching (3:2). While some of these links appear in Mark, a number of them are unique to Matthew and point to his work in linking the discussion of the Baptist here to earlier narratives.

As in Mark, this passage presents a parallelism between John the Baptist and Jesus, as Jesus uses John’s ministry as a way to defend his own. The changes Matthew makes and the addition of the parable unit mentioning John reveals how Matthew further develops the parallelism and uses it for his own purposes.

Redaction and Context

The last reference to John the Baptist in Matthew occurs in a discussion between Jesus and the Jewish officials regarding Jesus’ authority in which Jesus’ answer is contingent on his examiners declaring from where John received his authority (Matt 21:23–27//Mark 11:27–33). While this passage largely resembles Mark, it also contains a few notable differences.⁴ Jesus’ dialogue partners in Matthew’s account are the “chief priests and elders of the people” (Matt 21:23) rather than the Markan “chief priests,

⁴ Only the most important differences will receive attention in the text. For complete list of differences and discussion of them, see Donald A. Hagner, *Matthew* (2 vols.; WBC 33; Waco, TX: Thomas Nelson, 1991, 1995), 2:608; Robert H. Gundry, *Matthew: A Commentary on His Handbook for a Mixed Church under Persecution* (2d ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994), 419–21. For discussion of the various “minor agreements” between Matthew and Luke in this section, see William D. Davies and Dale C. Allison, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to Saint Matthew* (3 vols.; ICC; Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1988–97), 3:156; Ulrich Luz, *Matthew* (trans. James Crouch; 3 vols.; Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress, 2001–7), 3:27; John Nolland, *Matthew* (NIGTC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005), 857–58. The changes Matthew makes are mostly stylistic and cause his account to be more polished than the Markan version (see Gam Seng Shae, “The Question on the Authority of Jesus,” *NovT* 16 [1974]: 4). For further discussion of Matthew’s redaction and purposes in 21:23–27 for the Gospel’s Jewish setting, see Boris Repschinski, *The Controversy Stories in the Gospel of Matthew: Their Redaction, Form and Relevance for the Relationship between the Matthean Community and Formative Judaism* (FRLANT 189; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2000), 193–99.

scribes, and elders” (Mark 11:27), so Jesus is now speaking to the leaders of the Jewish people.⁵ Matthew explicitly describes Jesus as teaching (Matt 21:23), emphasizing that part of the dispute concerns Jesus’ teaching.⁶ Matthew turns the narrator’s explanation of why Jesus’ opponents will not say that John’s baptism was from men (Mark 11:32) into a statement made by the chief priests and elders themselves, with the result that these Jewish leaders now declare that they are afraid of the crowd and that all the people consider John to be a prophet (Matt 21:26).

No break appears in the dialogue, indicating that the uniquely Matthean parable of the Two Children (τέκνα) in 21:28–32 is Jesus’ response to the lack of an answer from the chief priests and elders.⁷ In the parable, one of the children says he will go to work in the vineyard and does not while the other child says he will not go but later does.⁸ While

⁵ The term “elders of the people” is commonly due to Matthew’s hand (see 26:3, 47; 27:1).

⁶ With Gundry, *Matthew*, 419. Matthew’s use of διδάσκω here could be a way to clarify Mark’s description of Jesus “walking (περιπατοῦντες) in the temple” (Mark 11:27) and may be due to the omission of Mark 12:35 and the need to depict Jesus teaching in the temple in light of Matt 26:55/Mark 14:49 (Nolland, *Matthew*, 856). Luke also describes Jesus teaching (Luke 20:1).

⁷ While the parable is often titled “the parable of the Two Sons,” the parable uses τεκνόν rather than υἱός and thus is better labeled “the parable of the Two Children.” See discussion in Edwin Keith Broadhead, “An Example of Gender Bias in UBS³,” *BT* 40 (1989): 336–38.

⁸ The parable features a well-known textual problem, as three different forms of the parable appear among the major manuscripts. Against the decision of the NA²⁷/UBS⁴ (for the rationale of this selection, see Bruce M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament* [2d ed.; Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1994], 44–46), this study adopts the version appearing in B and supported by Westcott and Hort and the NA²⁵, in which the first son says he will go but does not and the second initially refuses but later changes his mind. For defenses of this choice, see Josef Schmid, “Das textgeschichtliche Problem der Parable von den zwei Söhnen,” in *Vom Wort des Lebens: Festschrift für Max Meinertz* (ed. Nikolaus Adler; Münster: Aschendorff, 1951), 68–84; Paul Foster, “A Tale of Two Sons: But Which One Did the Far, Far Better Thing? A Study of Matt 21.28–32,” *NTS* 47 (2001): 26–37; Wesley G. Olmstead, *Matthew’s Trilogy of Parables: The Nation, the Nations, and the Reader in Matthew 21.28–22.14* (SNTSMS 127; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 167–76. For further discussions of the text of the parable and other proposals for its meaning and the rise of the various readings, see W. M. Macgregor, “The Parable of the Two Sons,” *ExpTim* 38 (1926–27): 498–501; J. Ramsey Michaels, “Parable of the Regretful Son,” *HTR* 61 (1968): 15–26; J. Duncan M. Derrett, “The Parable of the Two Sons,” *ST* 25 (1971): 109–16; W. L. Richard, “Another Look at the Parable of the Two Sons,” *BR* 23 (1978): 5–14; Bernard Brandon Scott, *Hear Then the Parable: A Commentary on the Parables of Jesus* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1989), 80–

the priests and elders avoid self-indictment by refusing to answer Jesus' question in 21:27, Jesus uses their judgment that the one who initially refuses but then works in the field is the one who does the will of the father to condemn his dialogue opponents. This logic reveals that "tax collectors and prostitutes" enter the kingdom of God "before them" since these groups do God's will (21:31).⁹ The Matthean Jesus then explains why (γὰρ)

85; Wendell E. Langley, "The Parable of the Two Sons (Matthew 21:28–32) against Its Semitic and Rabbinic Backdrop," *CBQ* 58 (1996): 228–43; Yamasaki, *John the Baptist*, 149–51; James Keith Elliott, "The Parable of the Two Sons: Text and Exegesis," in *New Testament Textual Criticism and Exegesis: Festschrift J. Delobel* (ed. Adelbert Denaux; BETL 161; Leuven: Peeters, 2002), 67–77.

⁹ Much discussion has focused upon the meaning of *προάγουσιν ὑμᾶς* in 21:31. Those who think this phrase speaks of order and therefore allows the possibility that the chief priests and elders can still enter in the kingdom include Willoughby Allen, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to St. Matthew* (3d ed.; ICC; Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1919), 227; A. H. McNeile, *The Gospel according to St. Matthew* (London: Macmillan, 1915), 306; Craig L. Blomberg, *Interpreting the Parables* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1990), 187; Arland J. Hultgren, *The Parables of Jesus: A Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 221–22; David Turner, *Matthew* (BECNT; Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008), 509 n. 5 (cf. BDAG, 864). A larger number of scholars maintains that the passage highlights the exclusion of the chief priests and elders, as the tax collectors and prostitutes enter *instead of* the chief priests and elders; see e.g., Pierre Bonnard, *L'Évangile selon Saint Matthieu* (2d ed.; CNT 1; Paris: Delachaux & Niestlé, 1970), 313; Jacques Dupont, "Les deux fils dissemblables (Mt. 21)," *AsSeign* 57 (1971): 25; Jan Lambrecht, *Out of the Treasure: The Parables in the Gospel of Matthew* (Louvain Theological & Pastoral Monographs 10; Louvain/Grand Rapids: Peeters/Eerdmans, 1991), 95; Douglas R. A. Hare, *Matthew* (IBC; Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1993), 247; Gerd Häfner, *Der verheißene Vorläufer. Redaktionskritische Untersuchung zur Darstellung Johannes des Täufers im Matthäus-Evangelium* (SBB 27; Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1994), 393; Gundry, *Matthew*, 422; John P. Meier, *A Marginal Jew: Rethinking the Historical Jesus* (4 vols.; ABRL; New York/New Haven, CT: Doubleday/Yale University Press, 1991–2009), 2:224 n. 229; W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 3:169; Rudolf Schnackenburg, *The Gospel of Matthew* (trans. Robert R. Barr; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), 209; Olmstead, *Matthew's Trilogy*, 101. On the use of a comparison to express exclusion, see BDF §245a (3). While the parables that follow 21:28–32 point to the exclusion of the religious leaders (esp. 21:43), 21:28–32 itself seems to leave open the possibility of repentance and exhorts the disobedient to "change their minds," as noted in e.g., Alexander Sand, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus* (RNT; Regensburg: Verlag Friedrich Pustet, 1986), 431; John R. Donahue, *The Gospel in Parable: Metaphor, Narrative, and Theology in the Synoptic Gospels* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1988), 88–89; Warren Carter and John Paul Heil, *Matthew's Parables: Audience-Centered Perspectives* (CBQMS 30; Washington: Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1998), 159 (cf. Häfner, *Der verheißene Vorläufer*, 390–91, 395). One must not overstate this hope (see R. T. France, *The Gospel of Matthew* [NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007], 805), however, and recognize that v. 32 could indicate that this will not happen (see Petri Luomanen, *Entering the Kingdom of Heaven: A Study of the Structure of Matthew's View of Salvation* [WUNT 2/101; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1998], 162–63). The debate between absolute exclusion or possible inclusion may be more of a concern of contemporary interpreters than Matthew himself and probably goes beyond the aim of the passage and the phrase itself, as the focus on the passage is on the indictment of the religious leaders in their failure to do the will of God in contrast to the tax collectors and prostitutes rather than whether the religious leaders do or do not also enter the kingdom (see Hagner, *Matthew*, 2:614; Klyne Snodgrass, *Stories with Intent: A Comprehensive Guide*

these groups enter before the chief priests and elders, as the chief priests and elders are like the disobedient son of the story in that they do not do the will of God since they did not believe (ἐπίστευσαν) John when he came “in the way of righteousness” (ἐν ὁδῷ δικαιοσύνης) while the tax collectors and prostitutes “believed” (ἐπίστευσαν) John. Unlike the second son, the chief priests and elders even refuse to change their minds (μετεμέλομαι) when given a further opportunity.¹⁰ The inclusion of tax collectors offers a further point of parallelism between John and Jesus, as tax collectors appear among those to whom Jesus ministers (9:9–13; 10:3; 11:19). Since no prostitutes appear in Jesus’ ministry in Matthew, however, the inclusion of prostitutes does not offer the same parallelism.

This parable unit reflects distinctive Matthean terms and themes.¹¹ While one may not be able to determine whether a tradition or source stands behind Matt 21:28–32 or if it is the Evangelist’s own composition,¹² the passage reveals much influence from the

to the Parables [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008], 273–74). I will use the translation “go before” to translate προάγω but do not intend by this translation to state that the religious leaders will also enter the kingdom.

¹⁰ There is no need to decide between Matthew comparing the religious leaders to the son who said “yes” but did not go and contrasting them to the son who said “no” but later went (a distinction highlighted in Richard, “Another Look,” who favors a comparison), as Matthew uses both of the sons in the story to indict the religious leaders (with Luz, *Matthew*, 3:27).

¹¹ On the presence of Matthean diction and style, see Lambrecht, *Out of the Treasure*, 94–95; Gundry, *Matthew*, 421–22. Snodgrass offers a helpful reminder to be careful not to overstate the so-called “Mattheanisms” (*Stories with Intent*, 269), with Ivor H. Jones noting that many of the “Mattheanisms” could also be seen as traditional expressions (*Matthean Parables: A Literary and Historical Commentary* [NovTSup 80; Leiden: Brill, 1995], 391–94). For a balanced discussion concerning the redactional and traditional items, see Olmstead, *Matthew’s Trilogy*, 133–35.

¹² As noted in e.g., Bonnard, *Matthieu*, 311; Luz, *Matthew*, 3:27. Those who argue for the parable as a Matthean composition include Helmut Merkel, “Das Gleichnis von den ‘ungleichen Söhnen’ (Matth. xxi.28–32),” *NTS* 20 (1974): 254–61; Gundry, *Matthew*, 421–24; Ron Cameron, “Matthew’s Parable of the Two Sons,” *Forum* 8 (1992): 191–209. Others, however, deem it to be Matthew’s adaptation of a parable that could come from the historical Jesus (e.g., Eduard Schweizer, *The Good News according to Matthew* [trans. David E. Green; Atlanta: John Knox, 1975], 410; Lambrecht, *Out of the Treasure*, 98–100; W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 3:165; Hultgren, *The Parables of Jesus*, 224). The explanation of the parable

Evangelist and its discussion of the Baptist thus reflects Matthew's perspective on the Baptist. Moreover, the inclusion of this parable in this context and the connection made to John in 21:32 points to the fact that "Matthew feels compelled to comment on the lack of belief in the Baptist manifested by the Jewish authorities in 21:25,"¹³ going further than his Markan source.

Matthew's rendition of the parable of the Wicked Tenants (Matt 21:33–46//Mark 12:1–12) has connections to the previous parable and offers additional links between John and Jesus. The vineyard imagery connects the parable of the Wicked Tenants and the parable of the Two Children.¹⁴ The concluding note that the "chief priests and the Pharisees" feared the crowds because they hold Jesus to be a prophet (21:46) echoes the words about John in 21:25.¹⁵ In addition, Matthew interjects the Pharisees into the conversation, as the Pharisees are not included in the Markan parallel. These connections point to John and Jesus enjoying popularity with the people, who consider each man to be a prophet, but being opposed by the leaders and the Pharisees.

in 21:32 has some similarities to a tradition found in Luke 7:29–30 in that both passages contrast the response to John of tax collectors and religious elite, but the numerous differences between the two passages call into question whether a common *written* tradition stands behind Matt 21:32 and Luke 7:29–30 (Luz, *Matthew*, 3:27; Meier, *A Marginal Jew*, 2:167–70, 224–25). While the lack of verbal correspondence between these texts is problematic for the idea of a shared written (Q) tradition, the common elements could point to an idea or oral tradition (q) known by both Matthew and Luke that is then distinctly developed by Matthew and Luke, as a strongly redactional feel is present in both Matt 21:31b–32 and Luke 7:29–30 (see Nolland, *Matthew*, 861; cf. Josef Ernst, *Johannes der Täufer: Interpretation, Geschichte, Wirkungsgeschichte* [BZNW 53; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1989], 180).

¹³ Lambrecht, *Out of the Treasure*, 100. Both W. Davies and Allison (*Matthew*, 3:162) and Turner (*Matthew*, 509) note that Matthew's account gives a more explicit affirmation of John than the Markan text.

¹⁴ On the parable of Two Children as a bridge from the discussion of authority to the parable of the Wicked Tenants, see Hare, *Matthew*, 246.

¹⁵ Mark 12:12 does not refer to Jesus as a prophet, noting that Jesus' audience feared the crowd because they knew that the parable had been spoken against them. In addition to offering a link between John and Jesus, the reference to Jesus as a prophet recalls the crowd's view of Jesus in 21:11. The inclusion

The parable of the Wedding Feast (Matt 22:1–14) follows the parable of the Wicked Tenants (21:33–46), embedding the discussion of John the Baptist within a collection of three parables from 21:28–22:14.¹⁶ In addition to an overarching paraenetic thrust in this sequence of parables, there are also polemical and salvation-historical themes since the parables discuss the rejection of John (21:28–32), Jesus (21:33–46), and the messengers that Jesus sends (22:1–14).¹⁷ The result of this persecution is the transfer of the “kingdom of God” to others (21:43; 22:9) and the destruction of the temple (22:7), with the new recipients of the kingdom unexpected guests (22:9–10) who must exhibit proper obedience (21:43; 22:11–14). These parables set up the deuteronomic indictment that comes in Matt 23, a speech that associates the scribes and the Pharisees with those who killed the prophets (23:29–33), describes opposition to the messengers sent by Jesus (23:34–36), labels Jerusalem as the city that kills the prophets (23:37–39), and connects the rejection of Jesus’ messengers to the destruction of the temple (23:29–24:2). John the Baptist would be one of the prophets who was rejected and mistreated by the religious leaders in the parable of the Wicked Tenants, standing in the line of the

of the Pharisees in the group against which Jesus speaks this parable (21:46) recalls John’s sharp rebuke of the Pharisees in 3:7–10, further connecting John and Jesus.

¹⁶ For discussions of this group of parables, see Sjef van Tilborg, *The Jewish Leaders in Matthew* (Leiden: Brill, 1972), 47–52; Akira Ogawa, “Paraboles de l’Israël véritable? Reconsidération critique de Mt 21.28–22.14,” *NovT* 21 (1979): 121–49; Donahue, *The Gospel in Parable*, 85–96; Carter and Heil, *Matthew’s Parables*, 148–55; Allan W. Martens, “‘Produce Fruit Worthy of Repentance’: Parables of Judgment against Jewish Religious Leaders and the Nation (Matt 21:28–22:14, par.; Luke 13:6–9),” in *The Challenge of Jesus’ Parables* (ed. Richard N. Longenecker; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 151–76; Olmstead, *Matthew’s Trilogy*.

¹⁷ On the messengers of 22:1–14 being messengers sent by Christ in light of the links between 22:1–14 and 23:29–24:2, see Gundry, *Matthew*, 432; Frederick Dale Bruner, *Matthew: A Commentary* (rev. ed.; 2 vols.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004), 2:369–94; Olmstead, *Matthew’s Trilogy*, 121–23. For discussion of the paraenetic and salvation-historical purposes of the parable in the history of interpretation of these parables, see Luz, *Matthew*, 3:32.

prophets put to death.¹⁸ Because the rejection of John receives its own discussion in 21:28–32, he appears to have a special place among these prophets sent by God but rejected by the leaders.

Elements of Matthew's account merit closer examination. Two notable ideas for further consideration that are Matthean adaptations from Mark are the crowd's perception of John the Baptist and the Jewish leaders' failure to believe John. The uniquely Matthean statements that John came "in the way of righteousness" and was believed by the tax collectors and prostitutes also have relevance for this study. Each of these four topics will now receive further examination, with a summary to follow these discussions that synthesizes the significance of this passage.

The Crowd's View of John as a Prophet

The use of the term ὄχλος in Matthew causes the statement about the leaders fearing the crowd and their perception of John to have additional significance in Matthew. In his monograph on the crowds in Matthew, J. R. C. Cousland argues that the crowds play a distinct and more important role in Matthew than in Mark, as the crowds are a "distinct and relatively consistent entity, figuring, along with the disciples and Jewish leaders, as one of the main groups in the gospel," and a group that is

¹⁸ See Ernst Bammel, "The Baptist in Early Christian Tradition," *NTS* 18 (1971–72): 103. Note the use of the plural δούλοι in Matthew's account of the parable of the Wicked Tenants rather than single servant as in the Markan and Lukan forms and the detail about killing the servants in the parable of the Wedding Feast, something not found in the similar story of Luke 14:15–24. Prophets are called δούλοι in LXX 2 Chron 24:19; Jer 7:25–26; 25:4 (cf. Prov 9:3) (Hagner, *Matthew*, 2:620). On the motif of the fate of the prophets, see Odil H. Steck, *Israel und das gewaltsame Geschick der Propheten: Untersuchungen zur Überlieferung des deuteronomistischen Geschichtsbildes im Alten Testament, Spätjudentum und Urchristentum* (WMANT 23; Neukirchen: Neukirchener Verlag, 1967). The link between John and the fate of the prophets in Matthew is most notably developed in Wolfgang Trilling, "Die Täufertradition bei Matthäus," *BZ* 3 (1959): 272–75, 284.

“representative of Israel” but “distinct from its leaders.”¹⁹ Cousland also finds that Matthew portrays the crowd with “transparency” in that they “do not represent members of Matthew’s community, but the Jewish people—as distinguished from their leaders—of Matthew’s own day.”²⁰ In depicting the crowds as initially well-disposed towards Jesus but turning on him at the prompting of the religious leaders, Cousland argues that Matthew’s portrayal serves as a way to call for Jews of Matthew’s time to overcome the opinions in circulation about Jesus and believe in him.

In light of the transparency in the Matthean portrayal of the ὄχλος noted by Cousland, the crowd’s opinion about John in 21:26 would thus reflect the understanding of “the Jewish people of Matthew’s own day.” While one must be cautious in moving from the text to the historical setting of the Gospel, the depiction of the Baptist in the other gospels and in Josephus lends credence to the idea that a positive perspective on the Baptist persisted among Jews outside of the Jesus movement. Moreover, there is nothing in Matthew that indicates the crowd’s opinion of John changes; while the crowd welcomes Jesus as a prophet (see 21:11) but then turns on him and calls for his execution (27:20–23) and believes the lie about his body being stolen (28:15), John’s prophetic status continues in the world of the narrative and therefore probably also in the world behind the narrative. Although Matthew’s use of the present tense (ἔχουσιν) to describe the crowds’ opinion of John could be due to Matthew’s use of direct discourse here,²¹ the present tense may further display the transparency of the text, showing that the Jewish

¹⁹ J. R. C. Cousland, *The Crowds in the Gospel of Matthew* (NovTSup 102; Leiden: Brill, 2002), 301. On discussion of this point, see *ibid.*, 31–98.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 302. Examination of the transparency of the crowds appears in *ibid.*, 263–300.

²¹ As maintained in Hagner, *Matthew*, 2:618.

people still believe John to be a prophet. In light of Matthew's overall tendencies to draw parallels between the opponents of Jesus in the narrative and the opponents of his group, it would seem that the view of the Jewish leaders and/or the Pharisees towards John would likely have some correspondence to the opponents of Matthew's time.

Matthew also differs from Mark in that the term "prophet" appears earlier in Matthew to describe John the Baptist. A reference to John's standing as a prophet occurs in Jesus' speech to the crowds (τοῖς ὄχλοις) (11:7),²² noting that they not only went to see a prophet but saw one who is more than a prophet (11:9). Jesus' application of the parable of the Two Children states that the chief priests and elders have rejected the will of God by rejecting John, a remark that portrays John as one who declares the will of God, affirming the central truth of the crowd's opinion about John. The two parables that follow highlight that God's messengers are continually rejected by the Jewish leaders, showing that John is rejected like the prophets before him and like Jesus and Jesus' followers. While affirming that John is a prophet, Jesus declares John to be "*more than a prophet*" (11:9, emphasis mine), indicating that the crowd is on the right track with John but that its opinion of John needs further refinement.

The Jewish Leaders' Failure to Believe John

This passage also goes beyond the Markan parallel in highlighting the failure of Jewish opponents to believe John.²³ As noted above, Matthew places the statement that Jesus' opponents were afraid of the crowd and that the crowd held John to be a prophet

²² On the lack of differentiation between the singular and plural of ὄχλος, see Cousland, *The Crowds in the Gospel of Matthew*, 37–39.

²³ Cf. Gundry, *Matthew*, 422, who notes that "behind Matthew's composition and editing" in 21:28–32 "lies the purpose of highlighting the Jewish leaders' guilt."

on the lips of Jesus' opponents (Matt 21:26) rather than as a comment of the narrator (Mark 11:32). While this shift could simply be a smoother way of stating the point of the Markan text, the use of direct discourse shows Jesus' opponents intentionally and explicitly evading the truth in an effort to maintain control over the crowd since they do not even *consider* what is true. They are more interested in appearances and power than in truth, a characteristic that marks the behavior of Jesus' Jewish opponents elsewhere (e.g., 6:1–18; 23:2–36; cf. 22:16)²⁴ and will ultimately led to the suppression of the report of Jesus' resurrection (28:11–15). In fact, the leaders are so concerned about others' opinion of them that they fail to speak on important matters, including the status of a popular prophetic figure. Since the remarks of Jesus' adversaries echo Herod's attitude earlier in Matthew (14:5), a certain similarity also exists between the Jewish leaders and Herod.²⁵ Matthew thus shows the religious leaders to be ineffective and unqualified leaders.

The Matthean account also draws greater attention to the opposition of the religious leaders towards John the Baptist. While the Markan passage points out that Jesus' opponents did not "believe" Jesus (Mark 11:31), the point is not further developed. In contrast, the Matthean Jesus revisits their opinion of John, noting again that they did not believe him (Matt 21:32) and having them declare publicly what is discussed in private conversation in Mark. Moreover, Matthew notes that not only did Jesus'

²⁴ See Richard A. Edwards, *Matthew's Story of Jesus* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1985), 74; Carter and Heil, *Matthew's Parables*, 154; Yamasaki, *John the Baptist*, 138; Craig S. Keener, *A Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 506.

²⁵ The Jewish leaders are thus more like the leadership displayed by the Gentiles and those whom they appointed than the ideal shown by Jesus and expected of the leaders of God's people (cf. 20:25–28). On their failure to act as leaders, see Bruner, *Matthew*, 2:369–70.

opponents refuse John when he came to them “in the way of righteousness” (21:32a) but even after “seeing” (ἰδόντες), they did not change their minds in order to believe him. Matthew therefore portrays the religious leaders as repeatedly rejecting John.

Most commentators see the implied object of “seeing” in 21:32 as the response of the tax collectors and prostitutes, often noting that their response should provoke repentance amongst the Jewish leaders,²⁶ but a number of considerations in the context indicate that the object of “seeing” may rather be the ministry of Jesus.²⁷ First, Matthew uses the word εἶδον in the following parable in the phrase ἰδόντες τὸν υἱὸν (21:38).²⁸ Furthermore, 21:32 notes the failure of the religious leaders to change their mind about John “afterward” (ὕστερον), with the parable of the Wicked Tenants using the same word to introduce the sending of the son in 21:37.²⁹ The only other appearance of μετεμέλομαι in Matthew and the Synoptics is Matt 27:3, in which Judas has “regret” after seeing that Jesus was condemned. The discussion of Jesus’ authority in 21:23–27 has already linked Jesus’ authority with John’s baptism, implying that accepting John’s baptism will lead to

²⁶See e.g., Dupont, “Les deux fils dissemblables,” 27; Meier, “John the Baptist,” 401; Sand, *Matthäus*, 431; Daniel Patte, *The Gospel according to Matthew: A Structural Commentary on Matthew’s Faith* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1987), 297; W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 3:171; Hagner, *Matthew*, 2:614; Lambrecht, *Out of the Treasure*, 103; Hare, *Matthew*, 247; Carter and Heil, *Matthew’s Parables*, 158–59; Keener, *Matthew*, 509; Hultgren, *The Parables of Jesus*, 221; Luz, *Matthew*, 3:32; Olmstead, *Matthew’s Trilogy*, 108; Turner, *Matthew*, 509. Bonnard also falls into this camp, but his comment that the religious leaders did not see John and then did not see Jesus is a comment that reflects a tension that could lead to the conclusion discussed in n. 27 (*Matthieu*, 313). The faith of tax collectors and prostitutes should thus function like the Paul’s explanation of the conversion of the Gentiles in Rom 11:14.

²⁷ With Gundry, *Matthew*, 424. Cf. Bammel, “The Baptist in Early Christian Tradition,” 103; Carter and Heil, *Matthew’s Parables*, 158–59. This issue receives minimal consideration; e.g., Hagner notes that the object is not stated but does not discuss it further (*Matthew*, 2:614); Olmstead briefly interacts with Gundry’s view in an endnote and rejects it (*Matthew’s Trilogy*, 217 n. 55).

²⁸ Only Matthew has this phrase, as Luke has a pronoun (Luke 20:14) and Mark moves directly to the speech of the tenants (Mark 12:7).

²⁹ The use of ὕστερον is unique to the Matthean form of the parable of the Wicked Tenants.

accepting Jesus' authority.³⁰ Jesus' ministry therefore provides the chief priests and elders another chance to accept John's message, but they display an unwillingness to change. Since one's opinion and response to Jesus and John are intertwined, the rejection of Jesus that Matthew chronicles is also a rejection of John the Baptist. Rejection of Jesus at the time of the Evangelist would also be tantamount to rejecting John.³¹

Matthew heightens the consequences for rejecting John the Baptist. The Jewish leaders' failure to believe John is simply noted in Mark 11:31 without further comment on the consequences of this choice. The Matthean Jesus further notes, however, that their failure to respond to John's message causes the tax collectors and prostitutes to "go before" (προάγω) them into the kingdom of God (21:31). This statement reveals that John's message leads one into the kingdom while failure to believe him prohibits one from entering the kingdom (cf. 7:21–23).³² Although the rejection of the Son and the servants Jesus sends have more severe consequences than the rejection of John in that rejection of Jesus causes the kingdom of God to be passed on to another people (21:43) and the rejection of his messengers leads to the destruction of the city and invitations being extended to others (22:7),³³ the rejection of John is no trivial matter. The application of the parable makes John's message akin to the words of the Father in the

³⁰ Cf. R. Edwards, *Matthew's Story*, 74.

³¹ Cf. Lambrecht, *Out of the Treasure*, 103. Ogawa ("Paraboles de l'Israël véritable," 125–27) and Luz (*Matthew*, 3:32) also highlight how their lack of repentance continues into Matthew's time.

³² Cf. France, *Matthew*, 805.

³³ While 21:23–32 defends John's authority, the broader section also defends Jesus' authority, ultimately showing him to be the Son (see Gene R. Smillie, "Jesus' Response to the Question of His Authority in Matthew 21," *BibSac* 162 [2005]: 460). On the way that the passage thus subordinates the rejection of John below the rejection of Jesus, see Häfner, *Der verheißene Vorläufer*, 396–98.

parable, meaning that rejecting his message is ultimately rejecting a messenger of God.³⁴

The passage therefore shows that John is a prophet whose message is rejected at one's own peril.

The parable of the Two Children offers a window into what “disbelief” of John looks like. Scholars have often noted a number of discrepancies between the parable (21:28–31a) and the application (21:31b–32).³⁵ First, the subject of the parable seems to be the importance of obedience over mere confession but the application in 21:31b discusses the differing responses of the religious leaders and the tax collectors and prostitutes. Second, 21:32 abruptly introduces the Baptist, seemingly interjecting him as a way to connect the parable to the dispute in 21:23–27. In doing so, however, the application seems to equate John with the father of the parable and the tax collectors and prostitutes and religious leaders with the two sons. Whether or not these tensions mean that the parable and application have different origins, it seems that Matthew has found a connection between them, perhaps even bringing them together.³⁶

Closer examination of the parable unit reveals a stronger coherence between the parable and the application than often noted. The connection between the parable and Jesus' statement in 21:31b is that that the religious leaders are like the first son in that

³⁴ See discussion in Adolf von Schlatter, *Der Evangelist Matthäus: Seine Sprache, sein Zeil, seine Selbständigkeit. Ein Kommentar zum ersten Evangelium* (6th ed.; Stuttgart: Calwer, 1963), 626; Gundry, *Matthew*, 423–24.

³⁵ See e.g., Lambrecht, *Out of the Treasure*, 95; Luz, *Matthew*, 3:26–28. A common view is that 21:32 was an independent saying added to the parable due to the catch words of “tax collectors and prostitutes” in 21:31 and 21:32 (e.g., Ogawa, “Parables de l’Israël véritable,” 121–22; Martens, ““Produce Fruit Worthy of Repentance,”” 156–58).

³⁶ Matthew seems to have inserted this parable into the context here, as the triad of parables most likely is a Matthean composition (as persuasively argued in Olmstead, *Matthew's Trilogy*). If the parable and application were not linked before Matthew, then he is the one who relates the parable to the ministry of John the Baptist (Luomanen, *Entering the Kingdom*, 161–62).

they are more concerned with appearances than in proper conduct while the tax collectors and prostitutes have acted properly even though they have previously behaved shamefully.³⁷ In addition, a focus upon proper action rather than correct words matches the teaching of John (3:7–10), making the reference to John the Baptist less surprising than usually maintained. Furthermore, the parable’s principle fits the context since the religious leaders are more concerned with honor than obedience to the truth in refusing to answer Jesus’ question in 21:23–27. Finally, 21:32 can be seen as an explanation of the principle stated in 21:31b, explaining how the religious leaders have rejected the will of the God and why the tax collectors and prostitutes enter the kingdom by focusing on their respective responses to John.³⁸

Although 21:32 need not assume that the tax collectors and prostitutes initially refused John but then changed their mind while the religious leaders accepted his message but did not practice it,³⁹ it also does not rule out the idea that the religious leaders claimed to accept John but did not support this statement with their actions. The Pharisees and Sadducees earlier come out to John’s baptism (3:7), which could show an

³⁷ Cf. Patte, *Matthew*, 294–97. This connection seem more likely than the proposal of Poul Nepper-Christensen that John stands as the obedient son who does the will of the Father (“Die Taufe im Matthäusevangelium im Lichte der Traditionen über Johannes den Täufer,” *NTS* 31 [1985]: 200), as the text does not seem to contrast John and the religious leaders.

³⁸ Those that highlight how 21:32 serves to apply the parable include Patte, *Matthew*, 296–97; Scott, *Hear Then the Parable*, 81–82; Blomberg, *Interpreting the Parables*, 187; Hultgren, *The Parables of Jesus*, 223; Snodgrass, *Stories with Intent*, 272. On v. 32 as the key to the whole pericope and thus vital in its interpretation, see Merkel, “Das Gleichnis von den ‘ungleichen Söhnen,’” 259–60.

³⁹ One must be careful not to attempt to translate every element of the parable into an action being illustrated, as aspects of the story may stem from the logic of the narrative rather than an external reference. The “yes” and “no” of the two children and their opposing behaviors could be such details, with the story discussing the importance of proper actions over mere words rather than attempting to describe people who have an initial positive response but later renege while others have a negative response but later change.

initial attempt to associate with him.⁴⁰ While the refusal of the religious leaders to affirm John's divine authority in 21:25 points against any sort of acceptance of John, their failure to deny John's authority in 21:26–27 reveals that they say things to retain honor in the eyes of the people, a stance that would seem more likely to lead them to speak positively than negatively of John in light of his popularity.⁴¹ The parable indicates that disbelief of John is failure to produce the proper actions for which he called.⁴² Regardless of what the religious leaders in the narrative or Jews in Matthew's time say (or, as in the narrative context, do not say) about John, failure to live in accordance with his teachings means that one has rejected him.

The parables that follow the parable of the Two Children seem to add certain connotations to the way that Jesus' opponents rejected John. The text does not say that the religious leaders put John to death, but the parables describe opposition to messengers sent both before (21:35–36) and after Jesus (22:6) as culminating in their deaths. In addition, they will also put to death Jesus (21:37–39), a figure labeled as a prophet in this context (21:11, 46). Jesus later links the scribes and the Pharisees with those who put to death the prophets (23:29–32), describing the scribes and the Pharisees as the descendants of these individuals. A connection also exists between the remark made by the religious leaders about the crowd believing John to be a prophet (21:26) and Herod's statement in 14:5, linking these two groups. Matthew notes an alliance against Jesus

⁴⁰ On this passage and interpretation, see chapter 4 of this dissertation.

⁴¹ See Richard, "Another Look," 10. The Matthean Jesus will later point out that the scribes and the Pharisees say the right things but do not have right practice, with an example being their claim that they would not have rejected the prophets that were put to death by their fathers (23:29–36).

⁴² Cf. Nolland, *Matthew*, 864.

existing between Herod the Great and the religious leaders in Matt 2:3–6, suggesting that the house of Herod works in conjunction with the Jewish religious leaders at times.

Overall, Matthew places a stronger emphasis than Mark on the rejection of John. The rejection of the Baptist is more explicit, and the explanation of the parable of the Two Children teaches that rejection of John prevents one from entering into the kingdom of God, indicating that John declares the will of God. One's response to John depends not on the words one says about John but on whether one follows his call to produce fruit keeping with repentance. Finally, Matthew links Jesus' ministry with John's so that rejecting Jesus is rejecting John.

John Came in the "Way of Righteousness"

The Matthean Jesus' statement that John came "in the way of righteousness" declares the overarching purpose of John's ministry.⁴³ This purpose is expressed with a word (*δικαιοσύνη*) that appears seven times in Matthew but only once in the other Synoptics (Luke 1:75), with the seven appearances of the word coming in contexts either unique to Matthew or as redactional insertions (3:15; 5:6, 10, 20; 6:1, 33; 21:32).⁴⁴ The use of a redactional term makes the meaning of the phrase "righteousness" especially relevant for understanding the significance of the Baptist for Matthew. While some scholars have sought to find a uniform "Pauline" sense of the word in Matthew that refers to righteousness as a gift,⁴⁵ more recent proponents of a consistent meaning of the term in

⁴³ For a similar observation, see Ernst Lohmeyer, *Das Evangelium des Matthäus* (ed. Werner Schmach; 4th ed.; KEK; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1956), 308.

⁴⁴ Five occurrences are in the Sermon on the Mount (5:6, 10, 20; 6:1, 33) and the other two appear in connection with John the Baptist (3:15; 21:32).

⁴⁵ See esp. Martin Johannes Fielder, "Gerechtigkeit im Matthäus-Evangelium," *Theologische Versuche* 8 (1977): 63–75, a work summarizing the findings of Fielder's unpublished, two volume

Matthew have rejected this view and instead argue that it refers to an ethical demand.⁴⁶

Others, however, find multiple meanings of the word in Matthew or find some passages to have intentional ambiguity.⁴⁷ The use of *δικαιοσύνη* elsewhere in Matthew indicates that there is not a uniform meaning for the word that can simply be adopted in the passages that discuss the Matthean Baptist.

At least three of the passages in the Sermon on the Mount feature an ethical meaning for *δικαιοσύνη*. There is a wide consensus that the term refers to ethical conduct in 5:20 and 6:1, as Jesus contrasts the behavior expected of his disciples with the conduct

dissertation on the topic (“Der Begriff *δικαιοσύνη* im Matthäus-Evangelium, auf seine Grundlagen untersucht” [Ph.D. diss., Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg, 1957]).

⁴⁶ While the view that Matthew always uses “righteousness” to refer to an ethical demand appears in works such as Georg Strecker, *Der Weg der Gerechtigkeit: Untersuchung zur Theologie des Mätthaus* (3d ed.; FRLANT 82; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1971), 153–58, 179–81, 187; David Hill, *Greek Words with Hebrew Meanings: Studies in the Semantics of Soteriological Terms* (SNTSMS 5; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967), 124–28, this position has been most forcefully argued in Benno Przybylski, *Righteousness in Matthew and His World of Thought* (SNTSMS 41; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980). Przybylski’s proposal has been widely adopted; see e.g., Roger Mohrland, *Matthew and Paul: A Comparison of Ethical Perspectives* (SNTSMS 48; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 114; J. Andrew Overman, *Matthew’s Gospel and Formative Judaism* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1990), 91–94; Scot McKnight, “Matthew, Gospel of,” *DJG*, 540; Ulrich Luz, *The Theology of the Gospel of Matthew* (trans. J. Bradford Robinson; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 35 n. 22.

⁴⁷ For other approaches, including a potential diversity in meaning for *δικαιοσύνη* in Matthew, see J. A. Ziesler, *The Meaning of Righteousness in Paul* (SNTSMS 20; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972), 130–36; John Reumann, *Righteousness in the New Testament: “Justification” in the United States Lutheran-Roman Catholic Dialogue* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1982), 125–35; Robert G. Bratcher, “Righteousness in Matthew,” *BT* 40 (1989): 228–35; W. Popkes, “Die Gerechtigkeits-tradition im Matthäus-Evangelium,” *ZNW* 80 (1989): 1–23; Donald A. Hagner, “Righteousness in Matthew’s Theology,” in *Worship, Theology, and Ministry in the Early Church* (ed. Michael J. Wilkins and Terence Paige; JSNTSup 87; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1992), 101–20; idem, “Holiness and Ecclesiology: The Church in Matthew,” in *Built Upon the Rock* (ed. Daniel M. Gurtner and John Nolland; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), 170–86; Häfner, *Der verheißene Vorläufer*, 89–152; Robert G. Olender, “Righteousness in Matthew with Implications for the Declaration of Joseph’s Righteousness and the Matthean Exception Clauses” (PhD diss., Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2008), esp. 47–96; Craig A. Evans, “Fulfilling the Law and Seeking Righteousness in Matthew and in the Dead Sea Scrolls,” in *Jesus, Matthew’s Gospel, and Early Christianity* (ed. Daniel M. Gurtner, Joel Willitts, and Richard A. Burridge; LNTS 435; London: T & T Clark, 2011), 102–14; Francis Moloney, “Matthew 5:17–18 and the Matthean use of ΔΙΚΑΙΟΣΥΝΗ,” in *Unity and Diversity in the Gospels and Paul: Essays in Honor of Frank J. Matera* (ed. Christopher W. Skinner and Kelly R. Iverson; Early Christianity and Literature 7; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2012), 41–53.

of the scribes and Pharisees.⁴⁸ The reference to being persecuted for “righteousness’ sake” in 5:10 is another example of ethical behavior. It should be noted that this form of righteousness has meaning in the sectarian conflict reflected in the Gospel of Matthew.⁴⁹ The connection that Jesus makes between being persecuted for righteousness’ sake (5:10) and being persecuted on his account (5:11) draws a connection between this form of righteousness and that which Jesus advocates in contradistinction to the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees. Those that practice the form of righteousness advocated by Jesus will face persecution like the prophets and righteous of old (23:29, 35, 37; cf. 5:12) and Jesus himself (27:19, 24),⁵⁰ but they are promised eschatological reward (13:43; 13:49–50; 25:31–46), in particular possession of “the kingdom of heaven” (5:10), while those that follow the form of righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees will be excluded

⁴⁸ Nearly all of those that find various meanings at work in Matthew’s use of δικαιοσύνη deem 5:20 and 6:1 to have an ethical meaning (see list in Hagner, “Righteousness in Matthew’s Theology,” 109 nn. 1–9). Although these two references reflect the hand of Matthew, one need not see the use of δικαιοσύνη in these two places as paradigmatic and indicative of its use elsewhere in the Gospel as maintained in Przybylski, *Righteousness in Matthew*, 78–79, 98. Reumann argues against Przyblyski’s focus on a singular conception of righteousness by noting that the term had varying uses in OT and Jewish thought (*Righteousness in the New Testament*, 125–126). Przybylski’s approach is also refuted in Hagner, “Righteousness in Matthew’s Theology,” 111 n. 3; Häfner, *Der verheißene Vorläufer*, 110. The problem with Przybylski’s choice of 5:20 and 6:1 as paradigmatic passages emerges from a comparison of Przyblyski’s work to Gerhard Barth, who uses 3:15, the first reference to righteousness, as the key to understand the concept and thus argues that righteousness is God’s demand as well as an eschatological gift (see Gerhard Barth, “Matthew’s Understanding of the Law,” in Günther Bornkamm, Gerhard Barth, and Heinz Joachim Held, *Tradition and Interpretation in Matthew* [trans. Percy Scott; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1963], 138–40). For a more extended critique of Przybylski’s approach, see Olender, “Righteousness in Matthew,” 30–36.

⁴⁹ On “righteousness” as part of the language of sectarian conflict, see Overman, *Matthew’s Gospel*, 16–19. On the role of righteousness within the sectarian conflict in the background of Matthew, see *ibid.*, 91–94; John Kampen, “‘Righteousness’ in Matthew and the Legal Texts from Qumran,” in *Legal Texts and Legal Issues: Proceedings of the Second Meeting of the International Organization for Qumran Studies*, Cambridge 1995. Published in Honour of Joseph M. Baumgarten (ed. Moshe Bernstein, Florentino Garcia Martinez, and John Kampen; STDJ 23; Leiden: Brill, 1997), 479–87; C. A. Evans, “Fulfilling the Law,” 111–12.

⁵⁰ The NA²⁷/UBS⁴ favors the reading τούτου (on rationale, see Metzger, *A Textual Commentary*, 56–57), but there is strong support for the reading τοῦ δικαίου τούτου, featuring κ, L, W, f¹,¹³, 33, and a number of versions along with the Majority text.

from the kingdom (23:13, 15; cf. 5:20) since their righteousness is only in outward appearance and they break the true meaning of the Law (23:23–28). Therefore, Matthew shows that his group practices the correct observation of the Mosaic Law in line with the teachings of Jesus (5:17) while other groups have abandoned devotion to God’s law and practice a form of righteousness that is really unrighteousness.

The meaning of *δικαιοσύνη* is less clear in 5:6 and 6:33 but suggests another meaning to *δικαιοσύνη* present in Matthew.⁵¹ While those who “hunger and thirst for righteousness” (5:6) could refer to those seeking righteous conduct,⁵² the fact that God fills this hunger, however, calls into question viewing *δικαιοσύνη* as a human activity.⁵³ Furthermore, *δικαιοσύνη* has eschatological connotations at times in the LXX, as the word appears in passages that speak of God’s deliverance of his people with particular reference to the fulfillment of God’s promises to Israel (Isa 46:12–13; 51:5–6, 8; 59:9; 61:10; 62:1; 63:11 cf. Isa 54:17; LXX Pss 51:14; 88:17–18; 144:6).⁵⁴ The imagery of

⁵¹ As noted in e.g., Popkes, “Die Gerechtigkeitsstradition im Matthäus-Evangelium,” 2. Cf. Häfner, *Der verheißene Vorläufer*, 114–15. See the conclusions of different scholars on these passage listed in Hagner, “Righteousness in Matthew’s Theology,” 109 nn. 1–9. For concurring discussions on these passages, see John P. Meier, *Law and History in Matthew’s Gospel* (AnBib 71; Rome: Biblical Institute, 1976), 77–79; Hagner, “Righteousness in Matthew’s Theology,” 111–15; Häfner, *Der verheißene Vorläufer*, 115–27.

⁵² As argued in e.g., Ziesler, *The Meaning of Righteousness*, 132–33; Hill, *Greek Words*, 127; Przybylski, *Righteousness in Matthew*, 96–98. Those that argue for an ethical meaning here often do so because of its use elsewhere in Matthew. For a sectarian background to 5:6 and connection to the discussion of the law in Sir 24:19–21, see Kampen, “‘Righteousness’ in Matthew,” 483.

⁵³ Häfner, *Der verheißene Vorläufer*, 119–20.

⁵⁴ See Meier, *Law and History*, 77; Reumann, *Righteousness in the New Testament*, 128; Bratcher, “Righteousness in Matthew,” 234; Hagner, “Righteousness in Matthew’s Theology,” 111; Häfner, *Der verheißene Vorläufer*, 119–27. Joseph A. Fitzmyer notes that this post-exilic focus on God’s righteousness as his saving acts seems to be what led the LXX translators to render *צדק* (Gen 19:19, 20:13, 21:23, 32:10, Exod 15:13, 34:7; Isa 63:7) and *צדקה* (Gen 24:49, Jos 24:13, Isa 38:19; 39:8; Dan 8:12; 9:13) as *δικαιοσύνη* (in Reumann, *Righteousness in the New Testament*, 200–1). In addition to the examination of the theme of righteousness in the OT and LXX found in Hill, *Greek Words*, 82–109; Ziesler, *The Meaning of*

“hungering and thirsting” recalls words in the Psalms and Prophets that point to God’s eschatological provision for those in present need and suffering (Ps 107:5–6; Isa 49:10; Jer 31:25).⁵⁵ Therefore, it seems better to view *δικαιοσύνη* in 5:6 as referring to an eschatological activity of God in which God comes to the rescue of His people and delivers them.⁵⁶ In 6:33, Jesus declares the need to “seek first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness,” with the coordination of “kingdom of God” and “his righteousness” indicating a parallelism between these two ideas,⁵⁷ making God’s righteousness, like the kingdom of God, something that God establishes.⁵⁸ These eschatological uses of *δικαιοσύνη* work with the ethical nuances of the word used elsewhere, showing that one should live an ethical life in order to partake in the eschatological blessings that come with the kingdom.⁵⁹

Righteousness, 17–69; Reumann, *Righteousness in the New Testament*, 12–18; Häfner, *Der verheißene Vorläufer*, 90–102, also see the discussions of the theme of righteousness in Isaiah appearing in Gerhard von Rad, *Old Testament Theology* (trans. D. M. G. Stalker; New York: Harper & Row, 1962), 370–83 and in the Psalms found in H.-J. Kraus, *Theology of the Psalms* (trans. K. Crim; Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1986), 42–43, 154.

⁵⁵ See C. A. Evans, “Fulfilling the Law,” 104–5, who cites Isa 25:6; 41:17–18; 43:20; 44:3; 49:9–10; 55:1–3.

⁵⁶ On the eschatological nature of the beatitudes, see Robert A. Guelich, “The Matthean Beatitudes: ‘Entrance Requirements’ or Eschatological Blessings?” *JBL* 95 (1976): 426–31. For a discussion of the future orientation of this beatitude, which differs from 5:10, see Moloney, “Matthew 5:17–18,” 44.

⁵⁷ Meier, *Law and History*, 77–78; Moloney, “Matthew 5:17–18,” 49–51. Cf. Reumann, *Righteousness in the New Testament*, 131.

⁵⁸ While referring to God’s activity, the statement has a behavioral thrust, as one should pursue God’s priorities and will in line with the message that Jesus teaches (see Ziesler, *The Meaning of Righteousness*, 143, 170, 189; Bratcher, “Righteousness in Matthew,” 234; Hagner, “Righteousness in Matthew’s Theology,” 114–15. Cf. Reumann, *Righteousness in the New Testament*, 15. Przybylski stresses an ethical meaning here but notes that the ethic involves an imitation of God (*Righteousness in Matthew*, 89–91).

⁵⁹ On the link between “righteousness” in 5:6 and 6:33, see Meier, *Law and History*, 77–79; Kampen, “‘Righteousness’ in Matthew,” 484–85; C. A. Evans, “Fulfilling the Law,” 107. For a link

An ethical meaning is often posited for the phrase ἐν ὁδοῦ δικαιοσύνης in 21:32. For example, William D. Davies and Dale C. Allison state that this phrase is “a traditional Jewish expression” that refers to “righteous conduct,” making John a teacher of righteousness.⁶⁰ A similar phrase appears in 2 Pet 2:21 and in the LXX (Prov 21:16, 21) to describe proper conduct. However, the LXX typically uses a plural form (Prov 8:20; 12:28; 16:17, 31; 17:23), with this variation in form calling into question whether the singular phrase in Matthew reflects a technical term for ethical conduct.⁶¹ In light of the way δικαιοσύνη appears to indicate that Jesus offers a different interpretation of the Law from that of the scribes and Pharisees in 5:20, the term would more likely refer to a form of practicing the law that leads to the kingdom (cf. 21:31) rather than ethical actions in general. Thus, John’s arrival “in the way of righteousness” could indicate that he practiced and preached the correct form of righteousness that Jesus taught in the Sermon on the Mount,⁶² a righteousness rejected by the religious leaders and Pharisees. This

between these two passages as both reflecting the “motivation” for righteousness based upon a chiasm of the seven appearance of δικαιοσύνη in Matthew, see Olender, “Righteousness in Matthew,” 49, 58–62.

⁶⁰ W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 3:169–70, citing LXX Job 24:13; Ps 23:3; LXX Prov 2:20; 8:20; 12:28; 16:7, 31; 21:16, 21; Tob 1:3; *1 En.* 82:4; 92:3; 94:1; 99:10; *Jub.* 1:20; 23:26; 25:15; 1QS 4.2; CD 1.16; 1QH 7.14; Josephus, *Ant.* 13.260; 2 Pet 2:21; *Barn.* 1.4; 5.4. For others with similar views, see Allen, *Matthew*, 227; James A. Kleist, “Greek or Semitic Idiom: A Note on Mt. 21,32,” *CBQ* 8 (1946): 192–96; Strecker, *Der Weg der Gerechtigkeit*, 187; Ziesler, *The Meaning of Righteousness*, 131–32; Luz, *Matthew*, 3:31; Gundry, *Matthew*, 423; Keener, *Matthew*, 509; Olmstead, *Matthew’s Trilogy*, 101–5; Schnackenburg, *Matthew*, 298; Turner, *Matthew*, 509; C. A. Evans, “Fulfilling the Law,” 109 n. 14. Cf. Patte, *Matthew*, 296.

⁶¹ W. Davies and Allison find little difference between the plural and the singular, but seem to undercut their position that the term was a “traditional Jewish expression” by noting that the term does not appear in rabbinic sources (*Matthew*, 3:169). On the uniqueness of the expression, also see Luz, *Matthew*, 3:31 n. 51.

⁶² Cf. Bratcher’s translation: “John came to you showing the path/way that leads to the Kingdom (of Heaven)” (“Righteousness in Matthew,” 234). Bratcher, however, does not give clarity as to the meaning of this phrase and thus has been classified as one who finds an ethical or a salvation-historical meaning.

modified “ethical” meaning would be of value in the Gospel’s context in light of the contrast made between Jesus and John and the religious leaders and Pharisees.

On the other hand, some scholars argue for a salvation-historical meaning of *δικαιοσύνη* in 21:32.⁶³ Advocates for a salvation-historical meaning of *δικαιοσύνη* in 21:32 also often find such a meaning in 3:15, noting that an ethical meaning of *δικαιοσύνη* does not work in 3:15 or 21:32 and that both passages deal with John the Baptist. The statement that John “came” is reminiscent of statements with salvation-historical significance, and the term *ὁδός* could have significance in recalling John’s salvation-historical work as one who prepares for the Lord.⁶⁴ The theme of salvation history appears in the collection of parables in 21:28–22:14. A salvation-historical understanding of *δικαιοσύνη* would highlight the guilt of the Jewish leaders, as they have rejected God at a decisive moment in salvation-history.⁶⁵ In addition, it attributes a special role for John, as his ministry is more closely related to the kingdom than other prophets since he “came in the way of righteousness,” with this special role stemming from his close proximity to the kingdom’s arrival in line with the prophecy of Isa 40:3. In light of the parables that follow, however, his role is a penultimate one, with “the Son” standing at the climax.

⁶³ Reumann, *Righteousness in the New Testament*, 133, 35; Hagner, “Righteousness in Matthew’s Theology,” 117–18; Häfner, *Der verheißene Vorläufer*, 147–51, 394–99; Hultgren, *The Parables of Jesus*, 222; Nolland, *Matthew*, 863–64; Moloney, “Matthew 5:17–18,” 51–53. Cf. Ernst, *Johannes der Täufer*, 181.

⁶⁴ See Walter Wink, *John the Baptist in the Gospel Tradition* (SNTSMS 7; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968), 35; Carter and Heil, *Matthew’s Parables*, 157.

⁶⁵ Häfner, *Der verheißene Vorläufer*, 395.

A third approach is to find both ethical and salvation-historical meanings in the passage.⁶⁶ One should exercise caution before advocating a double meaning in order to guard against an “illegitimate totality transfer,”⁶⁷ but one should not dismiss this possibility because of its misuse and abuse elsewhere in scholarship. In fact, a word like *δικαιοσύνη* would seem to be a prime candidate for being a term designed to bring up more than one nuance. This option appears to be the most appealing, recognizing both the way that the final use of the term can conjure up numerous meanings that appear in the work and nuances in the passage that point to each of the meanings.

The meaning of “the way of righteousness” and the description of John as one who came in this manner gives him a special role that stands above popular views about John, connects him to the teachings of Jesus, and disparages the leaders. This explanation of John’s work, along with the focus upon him in the parable unit, elevates him above the prophets, as his ministry has a distinctive immediacy to the kingdom of heaven and the accomplishment of God’s saving activity; John is not just a pious figure who behaves well or even a prophet but one who comes to bring about the accomplishment of God’s purposes and save the people. Moreover, in declaring that John “came in the way of righteousness,” Matthew places John on the same side as Jesus in the debate about righteousness occurring between his group and the “scribes and the Pharisees.” In opposing John, the religious leaders not only reject the correct interpretation of the law

⁶⁶ See Meier, *Law and History*, 77–79; Grant R. Osborne, *Matthew* (ZECNT; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010), 782 n. 11. Reumann notes that both aspects could be present (*Righteousness in the New Testament*, 135), and Bruner finds an ethical meaning but states that the term has nuances referring to a gift (*Matthew*, 2:375). Snodgrass is noncommittal on the meaning, noting how both meanings show that the leaders reject God’s will and purposes (*Stories with Intent*, 274).

⁶⁷ See discussion in D. A. Carson, *Exegetical Fallacies* (2d ed.; Grand Rapids: Baker, 1996), 52, 60–61.

but reject God's salvation-historical activity. Therefore, the religious leaders reject this Jewish figure that was popularly seen as a prophet, and they exclude themselves from the fulfillment of God's promises of salvation for Israel.

The Belief of Tax Collectors and Prostitutes

Perhaps the most surprising element in the discussion of John the Baptist concerns Jesus' remark that the "tax collectors and prostitutes believed him" (21:32). In addition to being notable because it declares tax collectors and prostitutes to be of greater character than chief priests and elders, it is striking because these groups have never been explicitly linked to John the Baptist elsewhere in the Gospel of Matthew. In fact, while other traditions associate John the Baptist with tax collectors (Luke 3:12–13; 7:29) and other individuals with questionable ethical practices (Luke 3:14; Josephus, *Ant.* 18.118),⁶⁸ no other document explicitly associates John with prostitutes.⁶⁹ Tax collectors are associates

⁶⁸ Josephus does not explicitly identify the "others" who come to John but an identification of these individuals as ones who were not already practicing virtue seems most reasonable in light of Josephus' earlier note about virtue as a prerequisite for receiving John's baptism. While discussing whether tax collectors and soldiers listened to John in light of Luke 3:10–14, the Jesus Seminar did not examine whether prostitutes believed John's message (see W. Barnes Tatum, *John the Baptist and Jesus: A Report of the Jesus Seminar* [Sonoma, CA: Polebridge, 1994], 138), but many scholars have stressed the value of Matthew's statement about prostitutes for the historical John (e.g., Schlatter, *Matthäus*, 626–27; W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 3:169; Joan E. Taylor, *The Immerser: John the Baptist within Second Temple Judaism* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997], 119).

⁶⁹ The woman described in Luke 7:36–50 seems to have received John's baptism in light of the wider context in which this story appears (see John J. Kilgallen, "John the Baptist, the Sinful Woman, and the Pharisee," *JBL* 104 [1985]: 675–79), but the passage does not explicitly identify her as a prostitute. While many commentators confidentially claim that she is a prostitute (e.g., Joel B. Green, *The Gospel of Luke* [NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997], 309), some do not (e.g., Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *The Gospel according to Luke: Introduction, Translation, and Notes* [2 vols.; AB 28, 28A; New York: Doubleday, 1981, 1985], 1:689), and Luke does not call her a πόρνη. Instead, Luke uses the term ἀμαρτωλός, a word that can refer to a prostitute but is also generic in that it refers to those who practice sexual immorality or other vices (see K. H. Rengstorf, "ἀμαρτωλός, κτλ.," *TDNT* 1:317–35). Simon Légasse argues that the term appears here to refer to a prostitute but uses an alternative word in light of the context's connections to "sinners" (see "Jésus et les prostituées," *RTL* 7 [1974]: 140), but there are numerous explanations of the description of this woman as a sinner other than she was a prostitute by vocation, as discussed Barbara E. Reid, "'Do You See This Woman?' Luke 7:36–50 as a Paradigm for Feminist Hermeneutics," *BR* 40 (1995): 43–45; Jo. Taylor, *The Immerser*, 119–23. In light of these issues, this passage cannot be confidently deemed a tradition connecting John or Jesus with prostitutes.

of Jesus (Matthew 9:13; 11:18 and parr.; Luke 15:2), with tax collectors and sinners often paired together,⁷⁰ but prostitutes also never overtly appear among Jesus' followers in any of the canonical gospels.⁷¹ Therefore, an explanation of this saying about John the Baptist as reflecting the tendency to develop parallelisms between John and Jesus does not seem to be sufficient,⁷² as it only can explain the reference to tax collectors. Furthermore, a possible reluctance to associate Jesus with prostitutes makes their connection with John the Baptist here particularly strange.⁷³ Matthew's choice to employ the term here rather than a potentially less problematic (and more common) term such as "sinner" raises the question of whether it has a special value within Matthew's account and could offer insight into Matthew's portrayal and use of the Baptist.⁷⁴

⁷⁰ Tax collectors also appear with other groups (Matt 5:46–47; 18:17; Luke 18:11). On the meaning of "tax collectors and sinners," see John R. Donahue, "Tax Collectors and Sinners: An Attempt at Identification," *CBQ* 33 (1971): 39–60; William R. Farmer, "Who Are the 'Tax-collectors and Sinners' in the Synoptic Tradition?" in *From Faith to Faith: Essays in Honor of Donald G. Miller on his 70th Birthday* (ed. D. Y. Hadidan; Pittsburgh: Pickwick, 1979), 167–74; Dennis E. Smith, "The Historical Jesus at Table," *SBL Seminar Papers, 1989* (SBLSP 28; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1989), 466–86; Kathleen E. Corley, *Private Women, Public Meals: Social Conflict in the Synoptic Tradition* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1993), 89–93; James D. G. Dunn, "Pharisees, Sinners, and Jesus," in idem, *Jesus, Paul, and the Law: Studies in Mark and Galatians* (London: SPCK, 1990), 61–88.

⁷¹ Besides here, the only other appearances of the word in the NT are Luke 15:30; 1 Cor 6:15, 16; Heb 11:31; Jas 2:25; Rev 17:1, 5, 15, 16; 19:2. Cf. Bammel, "The Baptist in Early Christian Tradition," 104.

⁷² See in e.g., Gundry, *Matthew*, 424; W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 3:169; Luz, *Matthew*, 3:31.

⁷³ If Luke altered a tradition linking Jesus or John (or both) to a prostitute in Luke 7:36–50, then his redaction could reveal a reticence to associate prostitutes with these figures. Mark may also reflect an attempt to avoid associations between Jesus and prostitutes in toning down the impropriety of the woman who anoints Jesus in Mark 14:3–9, an account that seems parallel to this story in Luke, as discussed in Corley, *Private Women*, 102–5. Josephus shows a concern to protect Judaism from associations with prostitutes (see Friedrich Hauck and Siegfried Schulz, "πόρνη, πόρνος, πορνεία, πορνεύω, ἐκπορνεύω," *TDNT*, 588–89; Légasse, "Jésus et les prostituées," 139).

⁷⁴ If there is a common written or oral tradition between Matt 21:32 and Luke 7:29–30 that discussed tax collectors and prostitutes, it would seem that Luke omitted the prostitutes but Matthew chose to retain the term (see Lambrecht, *Out of the Treasure*, 97; Jo. Taylor, *The Immerser*, 119). The perception of prostitutes among Jews would make it likely that Matthew would also seek to excise this phrase from his tradition, leaving its presence all the more remarkable.

One explanation is that the reference to “tax collectors and prostitutes” reveals John’s interaction with both genders as a way to show the inclusion of women in John’s ministry as well as the early church.⁷⁵ The connections between soldiers and prostitutes could point to Matt 21:32 as an alternative to the traditions in Luke 3:10–14,⁷⁶ with Matthew featuring a male and a female group rather than two male groups. Kathleen E. Corley finds an egalitarianism in Matthew due to women being included in the feeding miracles (Matt 14:13–21; 15:32–38) and further notes that the “prostitutes” of 21:32 are analogous to the “sinners” with whom Jesus dines in 9:9–13 (cf. 11:18–19), thus showing the presence of women in Jesus’ ministry.⁷⁷ The failure of Matthew to modify traditions featuring “tax collectors and sinners” speaks against this explanation, however, as one would expect a clearer link between the passages if Matthew intends to reveal that the ministries of John and Jesus both embrace women. In addition, highlighting an association between John and prostitutes seems to be an odd way to indicate the presence of women in his ministry; Matthew could have noted women as part of the crowds going to him (3:5–6) or associated him with women of better repute. Finally, Corley overstates the egalitarian ideal that emerges in Matthew, as Matthew avoids including women in groups which Jesus teaches.⁷⁸ This explanation thus seems unconvincing.

⁷⁵ I first discovered this approach in Schlatter, *Matthäus*, 627. Cf. France, *Matthew*, 804. On the possible importance of the mention of women here for reconstructing the historical John, see Jo. Taylor, *The Immerser*, 12–23.

⁷⁶ On the link between prostitutes and soldiers, see J. Gibson, “HOI TELEŌNAI KAI HAI PORNAI,” *JTS* 32 (1981): 429–33.

⁷⁷ Corley, *Private Women*, 147–179.

⁷⁸ For an explanation of the presence of women at the Matthean miracles of multiplication but the lack of reference to women in the groups that Jesus teaches, see Amy E. Richter, *Enoch and the Gospel of Matthew* (Princeton Theological Monograph Series 183; Eugene, OH: Pickwick, 2012), 198–200.

Another position finds the reference to the tax collectors and prostitutes to point to the inclusion of Gentiles.⁷⁹ These two particular groups were both seen as collaborators with the Romans, as tax collectors worked for them and the clients of prostitutes often were Roman soldiers.⁸⁰ While tax collectors and prostitutes may have worked with the Romans, however, they were still Jews, albeit Jews who were not obedient to the Law.⁸¹ The comparison between the tax collectors and prostitutes and chief priests and elders thus seems to be a division between different groups of Jews.⁸² While the inclusion of the Gentiles does not seem to be the primary meaning, the focus on actions does point to the possibility of obedient Gentiles entering the kingdom, reminiscent of John's teaching in Matt 3:7–10.⁸³

⁷⁹ The salvation-historical view seen in the history of interpretation of this passage (see Luz, *Matthew*, 3:32) has often seen the obedient son of the parable as the Gentiles, as reflected in the views of Chrysostom, *Hom. Matt.* 67.2 (NPNF¹ 10:411); Jerome, *Comm. Matt.* 3.21:28 (FC 117:242–44). This view appears among those who advocate for the Gentiles hypothesis, such as Kenneth W. Clark, “The Gentile Bias of Matthew,” *JBL* 66 (1947): 166–67; John P. Meier, *Matthew* (Wilmington, DE: M. Glazier, 1980), 241. Cf. *Op. imp. Matt.* 40 (Thomas Oden, ed., *Incomplete Commentary on Matthew [Opus imperfectum]* [trans. James Kellerman; 2 vols; ACT; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Academic, 2010], 2:310–14). This view seems to have fallen into disfavor (as noted in W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 3:172), with some acknowledging it as a secondary meaning but not the primary purpose (Olmstead, *Matthew's Trilogy*, 153; cf. Häfner, *Der verheißene Vorläufer*, 396–98).

⁸⁰ Gibson, “HOI TELEŌNAI,” 429–33. This article has proven influential in commentaries; see Daniel J. Harrington, *The Gospel of Matthew* (SP 1; Collegeville, MN: Liturgical, 1991), 299; W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 3:169; Hultgren, *The Parables of Jesus*, 221.

⁸¹ See Donahue, “Tax Collectors and Sinners,” 39–60, refuting the argument that tax collectors were viewed as Jews who had become Gentiles found in Norman Perrin, *Rediscovering the Teaching of Jesus* (New York: Harper and Row, 1967), 93–102. For a discussion of the presence of prostitution in Israel, see Keener, *Matthew*, 508–9.

⁸² See esp. Amy-Jill Levine, *The Social and Ethnic Dimensions of Matthean Salvation History* (Studies in the Bible and Early Christianity 14; Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen, 1988), 204–6. A similar view appears in W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 3:172; Luz, *Matthew*, 3:32; Snodgrass, *Stories with Intent*, 274.

⁸³ Patte, *Matthew*, 297. Also see Olmstead, *Matthew's Trilogy*, 153; Craig A. Evans, *Matthew* (NCBC; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 368.

Perhaps the most common suggestion for explaining the remark about tax collectors and prostitutes is that it enhances the indictment of the chief priests and elders by showing these notorious groups of sinners to be better than the religious leaders.⁸⁴ These two groups could serve as representative of the most grievous sins, with the reference to prostitutes more clearly describing sexual immorality than the term “sinners.”⁸⁵ The inclusion of prostitutes may offer a particularly strong rebuke in that there is an emphasis in other texts on the exclusion of prostitutes from the kingdom of God.⁸⁶ While there certainly is an indictment of the religious leaders in this passage, one should also note that the text explicitly highlights that tax collectors and prostitutes believed John; it is not just that the leaders are worse than the “worst” of sinners but that the “worst” of sinners have accepted John’s message and therefore are entering into the kingdom, effectively replacing the individuals normally seen as pious.

The above options have looked at the use of the terms outside of the Gospel, but another approach to understanding the reference to tax collectors and prostitutes in Matt 21:31–32 is to consider the use of the term elsewhere in Matthew. Tax collectors are outsiders (5:46; 18:17), but yet they flock to Jesus (9:10–11; 11:19), and Matthew alone explicitly notes that one of twelve disciples was a tax collector (10:3; cf. 9:9). The word *πόρνη* does not occur anywhere else in the Gospel, but in the LXX the word is associated

⁸⁴ E.g., Schnackenburg, *Matthew*, 209; Hagner, *Matthew*, 2:614; Turner, *Matthew*, 509; Snodgrass, *Stories with Intent*, 273–74; Luz, *Matthew*, 3:30.

⁸⁵ See Nolland, *Matthew*, 863; Bruner, *Matthew*, 2:373–75. One sees this view in Chrysostom’s comments about these groups showing lusts to be avoided (*Hom. Matt.* 67.3 [*NPNF*¹ 10:411–12]; Cf. *Op. imp. Matt.* 40 [Oden, *Incomplete Commentary*, 2:312]). For a similar position, see Dupont, “Les deux fils dissemblables,” 24.

⁸⁶ See Hauck and Schulz, “*πόρνη*,” 6:593; W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 3:169. Cf. France, *Matthew*, 804.

with Rahab (Josh 2:1, 6:17, 23, 25) and Tamar (Gen 38:15, 21, 22),⁸⁷ both of whom appear in Matthew's genealogy of Jesus.⁸⁸ The context of Matt 21:31–32 offers some connection to the story of Tamar in that the “prostitute” is more righteous than the patriarch Judah (Gen 38:26), just as these prostitutes are better than the religious leaders. Two contrasts also appear in the story of Rahab.⁸⁹ First, she fears the God of Israel and supports the people of Israel unlike the Gentile king of Jericho. Second, her actions are better than those of the Israelite Achan. The presence of “tax collectors” recalls Matt 9:9–13 and 11:18, passages in which tax collectors respond to Jesus' call while the Pharisees and “this generation” reject Jesus. Thus, tax collectors and prostitutes function as figures that stand in contrast with disobedient Jewish groups. The potentially traditional grouping of tax collectors and prostitutes therefore allows Matthew to rebuke the Jewish leaders but also to link John and Jesus.

In addition, this mention of tax collectors and prostitutes offers praise for John's work and shows his influence on the people. The emphasis on right action in this section indicates that the prostitutes and tax collectors heeded his teachings.⁹⁰ John's ability to bring these Jewish sinners to repentance may have led to his popularity, as his

⁸⁷ Tamar was not a prostitute, but she posed as one (Gen 38:26). While Josephus does not refer to her as a prostitute (*Ant.* 5.8–15), a number of early “Christian” writers highlight that Rahab was a prostitute (Heb 11:31; James 2:25; *1 Clem.* 12:1).

⁸⁸ Jerome Quinn questions whether the Rahab in Matt 1:5 refers to the figure in Joshua (“Is Παχάβ in Matt 1,5 Rahab of Jericho?” *Bib* 62 [1981]: 225–28), but his theory has not found widespread support (see e.g., Raymond E. Brown, “Παχάβ in Matt 1,5 Probably is Rahab of Jericho,” *Bib* 63 [1982]: 79–80). For discussion of the question of Rahab's marriage, see Richard Bauckham, “Tamar's Ancestry and Rahab's Marriage: Two Problems in the Matthean Genealogy,” *NovT* 37 (1995): 320–29. For Jewish traditions that place Rahab in the genealogy of other important figures, see A. T. Hanson, “Rahab the Harlot in Early Christian Tradition,” *JSNT* 1 (1978): 56–58.

⁸⁹ Levine, *The Social and Ethnic Dimensions*, 82–84.

reclamation of these sinners would show his sway and persuasion of the most unlikely people. Moreover, John's ability to get sinners to repent indicates that those who reject him are actually less concerned about the Law, further castigating the opponents of John who also oppose Jesus. In addition to amplifying John's magnetism, this statement reveals that there was a division in Israel before Jesus' ministry, as some accepted John's teachings but others did not.⁹¹

The question still remains as to why there is no reference to these groups of sinners in previous discussions of John's ministry. One possibility is that they should be seen in the crowds that come to John, as the remark that "the people of Jerusalem and all Judea" and "all the region of the Jordan" come to John (3:5) could designate the inclusion of notorious sinners among those baptized by John since repentance is the primary feature of the Baptist's message (3:2) and confession of sin accompanies baptism (3:6).⁹² The reason for the readiness of the tax collector Matthew to follow Jesus and Jesus' popularity among tax collectors in the narrative could be because of their earlier associations with John in light of 21:31–32. Another possibility is that following Jesus shows belief in John, so tax collectors believe John because they follow Jesus. In this approach, the way that one "believes" John would be in becoming a follower of Jesus, making Jesus' ministry continuation of John's work. Either way, the comment about tax collectors believing John shows him to prepare the way for Jesus' ministry.

⁹⁰ See *Op. imp. Matt 40* (Oden, *Incomplete Commentary*, 2:312–13). On what this would look like for tax collectors and prostitutes, see Jo. Taylor, *The Immerser*, 116–18, 122.

⁹¹ See W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 3:171.

⁹² On the way that the phrase "the regions of the Jordan" in Matt 3 may reflect memory of Sodom and Gomorrah, see Edmondo Lupieri, *Giovanni Battista nelle tradizioni sinottiche* (StBib 82; Brescia: Paideia, 1988), 104. This connection could mean that people from this sinful area come to John.

The reference to prostitutes and tax collectors believing John serves both to indict those who do not believe John or Jesus and also to link John with Jesus. Tax collectors and prostitutes show themselves to be more righteous than those who reject John and Jesus, with these opponents rejecting a figure (John) who brings those who break the law into the kingdom of heaven. Moreover, the belief of tax collectors in John creates a point of parallelism between John and Jesus, while the lack of explicit reference to tax collectors following John shows that John prepares the way for Jesus to call these figures to follow him.

Summary of Matthew 21:23–32

Matthew's redaction of the question of Jesus' authority advances the link between John and Jesus found in the Markan account while also portraying John as a special prophetic figure who is rejected in spite of his important ministry. The links between John and Jesus are strengthened, as the Jewish leaders reject both figures in spite of their popularity, including their ability to bring sinners to repentance and teach the proper form of the Jewish Law. The additional parable unit stresses that John declares God's will and opens up the kingdom to sinners, and the placement of this parable in the broader trilogy of parables gives John a special status among the prophets. The use of the term "the way of righteousness" also creates a stronger connection between John and the fulfillment of God's eschatological promises, with John standing on the cusp of their fulfillment and helping people enter into the kingdom. Jesus' ministry offers another opportunity to respond to John, with the rejection of Jesus by the religious leaders showing that they still reject John. The groups that respond to John reveal Jesus' ministry to continue John's ministry but also to be the culmination of it.

The transparency within Matthew's portrayal of the crowds as well as the traditions discussed in chapter 2 indicate that John's popularity continued among some Jews outside of the Jesus movement at the time of the Gospel's composition. The stronger link between John and Jesus seen in this passage and the greater attention given to John's role would be part of Matthew's strategy in his conflict with other Jewish groups, showing that those who like and respect John should join Matthew's group of believers in Jesus and that its opponents oppose the will of God in not acknowledging the importance of John's ministry. In fact, Matthew's portrayal of John here gives him a special place above the other prophets, elevating John above popular perceptions of him and thus perhaps functioning as a way to appeal to any individuals who believed John was more than a righteous or good man.

Matthew 17:10–13

Introduction

The position of Matt 17:10–13 within the narrative and Matthew's redactional activity on the passage cause it to be another pivotal passage concerning the role and function of John the Baptist in the Gospel of Matthew and shows a relationship between the Matthean Baptist and the conflict between Matthew's group and its Jewish opponents.⁹³ The words spoken in 17:11–12 come from the Matthean Jesus, meaning that they are authoritative for Matthew's group. The narrator's comment in 17:13 is a statement of the redactor, showing the view of the Evangelist, and the section has much

⁹³ In line with the approach outlined in chapter 1, I am viewing Mark 9:11–13 as the source for Matt 17:10–13. On the possibility of interdependence between the Matthean and Markan texts, see Justin Taylor, "The Coming of Elijah, Mt 17,10–13 and Mk 9,1–13: The Development of the Texts," *RevB* 98 (1991): 107–19. Against Ju. Taylor, I see Matt 17:12b as original to the Matthean account rather than

Matthan vocabulary.⁹⁴ Matthew's reworking of the Transfiguration creates a slightly different context for this discussion, as the emphasis on Moses in the Matthean Transfiguration could be in response to the debates occurring between Matthew's group and its Jewish opponents.⁹⁵ While a reference to the teaching of the "scribes" is already present in the Markan form, Matthew appears interested in relating this passage to the conflict in Matthew between Jesus and the scribes and Pharisees and the conflict in his time between his group and its Jewish opponents. The way that the passage recalls earlier ideas about John also suggests that this passage helps synthesis and utilize various components of Matthew's depiction of the Baptist, thus having a programmatic function.⁹⁶

Redaction and Context

Before examining the peculiarities of the Matthean version of the discussion about Elijah, a couple of differences between Matthew and Mark in the preceding context

reflecting the influence of the Markan form, as the text is only missing in D and some old Latin manuscripts. On 17:10–13 as a unit, see Häfner, *Der verheißene Vorläufer*, 306–7.

⁹⁴ W. Davies and Allison include τότε among Matthew's "characteristic" words and βαπτιστής and μαθητής as often-used editorial words even though they do not match Hawkins' criteria for "characteristic" terms of Matthew (*Matthew*, 1:74–80). Gundry includes these terms as well as συνήμι as Mattheanisms in this verse (*Matthew*, 348. Cf. W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:716). The idea of the disciples "understanding" Jesus' comments also appears in Matt 16:12, as well as in the discussion of the parables in ch. 13 (see Häfner, *Der verheißene Vorläufer*, 317). On the redactional nature of the vocabulary of this section as a whole, see Luz, *Matthew*, 2:395.

⁹⁵ See A. D. A. Moses, *Matthew's Transfiguration Story and Jewish-Christian Controversy* (JSNTSup 122; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1996). Also note that Peter calls Jesus "Lord" (κύριε) in Matt 17:4 rather than "Rabbi" (ῥαββί) as in Mark 9:4, in line with the avoidance of the term by followers of Jesus in Matthew and its use amongst the opponents of Matthew's group as reflected in Matt 23:8 (Harrington, *Matthew*, 256).

⁹⁶ The identification of John as Elijah occurs 11:14–15. The note about Elijah's suffering recalls John's death in 14:1–12 (cf. 11:12, as discussed in Yamasaki, *John the Baptist*, 134–35), and the note that "they" did not "know" John brings to mind the discussion of John's rejection by "this generation" in 11:2–19 (see Trilling, "Die Täufertadition," 281). The connection between this passage and the Transfiguration

should be highlighted. First, Matthew eliminates the Markan emphasis on the figure of Elijah by stating that “Moses and Elijah” appear (Matt 17:3) rather than that Elijah appeared with Moses (Mark 9:5) and shows greater attention to the figure of Moses in his account of the Transfiguration.⁹⁷ While centering upon the figure of Moses, the Matthean Transfiguration also indicates that Jesus is greater than Elijah. Second, Matthew omits Mark’s comment concerning the disciples’ confusion about Jesus’ statement about the resurrection of the dead (Mark 9:10). This omission could indicate that the disciples’ question in Matt 17:10 is tied to the vision rather than to the statement about the

offers another link to earlier passages discussing John, as the voice of God in 17:5 recalls the voice at the baptism scene (3:17).

⁹⁷ On the significance of Elijah appearing first in Mark, see Joel Marcus, *Mark* (2 vols.; AB 27, 27A; New York/New Haven, CT: Doubleday/Yale University Press, 2000, 2009), 2:632–3, 636–37; Robert A. Stein, *Mark* (BECNT; Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008), 417. On the greater attention to Moses in the Matthean Transfiguration, see Judith E. Wentling, “A Comparison of the Elijan Motifs in the Gospels of Matthew and Mark,” *Proceedings: Eastern Great Lakes Biblical Society* 2 (1982): 114; Moses, *Matthew’s Transfiguration*; Dale C. Allison, *The New Moses: A Matthean Typology* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993), 243–48; Craig L. Blomberg, “Matthew,” in *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament* (ed. G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson; Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007), 55–56. On Matthew’s broader purpose in the Transfiguration, see Sigfred Pedersen, “Die Proklamation Jesu als des Eschatological Offenbarungsträgers (Mt. xvii 1–13),” *NovT* 17 (1976): 241–64; Simon S. Lee, *Jesus’ Transfiguration and the Believers’ Transformation: A Study of the Transfiguration and Its Development in Early Christian Writings* (WUNT 2/265; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009), 93–108.

resurrection of dead (Matt 17:9b//Mark 9:9b).⁹⁸ At the least, it avoids presenting the disciples as not understanding Jesus' teaching.⁹⁹

The Matthean version of the discussion about Elijah has numerous divergences from the Markan account (Matt 17:10–13//Mark 9:11–13).¹⁰⁰ Whereas there is no explicit subject asking the question in Mark 9:11, Matt 17:10 notes that the question comes from the “disciples” (οἱ μαθηταί). Logically, it would seem that Peter, James, and John are the ones asking the question,¹⁰¹ but the use of “disciples” creates a larger separation between this discussion and the Transfiguration and indicates that the teaching is one related to discipleship and a concern for Matthew's group.¹⁰² In addition, 17:12 describes Elijah's appearance and work of restoration as independent verbs (ἔρχεται καὶ ἀποκαταστήσει)

⁹⁸ As argued in e.g., Hagner, *Matthew*, 2:498; Luz, *Matthew*, 2:395, 400; Yamasaki, *John the Baptist*, 134. Since it is unclear if there was a common expectation that Elijah would appear before the Messiah (see works cited in n. 131 below), Origen's belief that the confusion arose because Elijah's appearance at the Transfiguration was after the appearance of the Messiah rather than before is not the likely reason behind the conversation (see discussion of Origen, *Comm. Matt.* 13.1 in Bruner, *Matthew*, 2:182). Rather, the issue would be how the kingdom could be arriving without the appearance of Elijah (Nolland, *Matthew*, 708). Gundry, however, believes that the discussion still concerns the resurrection (*Matthew*, 346–47) and is not alone in this opinion (see e.g., Moses, *Matthew's Transfiguration*, 154–55). The reference to the resurrection of the dead in Matt 27:51–53 may indicate that the resurrection of the dead is important to Matthew and his audience (see discussion in Wentling, “A Comparison of the Elijah Motifs,” 117. Cf. W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:712).

⁹⁹ The Transfiguration story itself, however, still draws attention to the lack of understanding of Peter, who seems to think that Jesus is on par with Moses and Elijah, as this lack of understanding is essential for the story.

¹⁰⁰ For more complete examinations of the differences between the Matthean and Markan accounts, see W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:711, 714–17; Hagner, *Matthew*, 2:496–97; Gundry, *Matthew*, 346–48.

¹⁰¹ That Matthew omits a reference to the group coming to the disciples after this conversation as found in the Markan parallel (Matt 17:14//Mark 9:14) could indicate, however, that a large group of disciples is involved, as argued in Häfner, *Der verheißene Vorläufer*, 309–10.

¹⁰² On the partition created between 17:1–9 and 17:10–13, see Nolland, *Matthew*, 707. On the issue of discipleship and the concerns of the early church in this passage, see Wink, *John the Baptist*, 31; Edgar Krentz, “None Greater among Those Born from Women: John the Baptist in the Gospel of Matthew,” *CurThM* 10 (1983): 338; Gundry, *Matthew*, 338.

rather than using a participle to depict his coming (ἐλθῶν) and an indicative verb to describe his work of restoration (ἀποκαθιστάνει) as in Mark 9:12. Furthermore, a future form of ἀποκαθίστημι appears in Matt 17:11 while a present tense is found in Mark 9:12, and Jesus does not repeat the statement that Elijah comes “first” in Matt 17:11. Matthew also does not include the question that follows the affirmation of Elijah’s coming (Mark 9:12: “how is it written about the son of man that he should suffer many things and be despised?”). Other notable differences between Matt 9:12 and Mark 9:13 include different contrastive conjunctions (Matt 17:12: δὲ; Mark 9:13: ἀλλὰ), different ways of describing Elijah having come (Matt 17:12: ἤδη ἦλθεν; Mark 9:13: ἐλήλυθεν), and Matthew’s statement that “they did not know him [John]” (οὐκ ἐπέγνωσαν αὐτόν). Additionally, Matthew uses ἀλλὰ to join the facts that “they did not know him” and “they did to him as much as they willed,” emphasizing this contrast, and the first Evangelist notes that the treatment of Elijah and Son of Man are similar (οὕτως) rather than depicting both as the fulfillment of Scripture (Mark 9:12, 13). Finally, Matthew adds a comment about the disciples understanding that Jesus spoke about John (17:13).

The primary aim of this passage does not seem to be to make clear that John is Elijah or simply to eliminate major problems in the Markan account in developing a “double typology” of John as the eschatological Elijah and Jesus suffering like John.¹⁰³ Matthew explicitly states that John is Elijah earlier in the narrative (11:10, 14), so this does not stand as a new idea in this text. In addition, Matthew actually decreases the

¹⁰³ The phrase “double typology” is borrowed from Osborne, *Matthew*, 650. On Matthew seeking to make clear that John is Elijah, see e.g., David Hill, *The Gospel of Matthew* (NCB; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1972), 168; Harrington, *Matthew*, 254. On Matthew’s aims to eliminate difficulties in the Markan text, see e.g., Hagner, *Matthew*, 2:497; C. A. Evans, *Matthew*, 322.

connections between John's death and Jesus' death in that he removes Mark's remarks that both were "as it is written" and in the process also removes the links between Jesus' sufferings and Isa 53 that appear in the Markan account.¹⁰⁴ Matthew thus removes material that easily coheres with his interests elsewhere in the Gospel, as Matthew shows a propensity to relate Jesus' life to the Scriptures and highlight similarities between John and Jesus.¹⁰⁵

Further examination of the changes made by Matthew reveals that the greater issue here is the disciples' understanding of the figure of John versus the rejection of John by the religious leaders. After discussing the contrast between the disciples and the religious leaders in understanding who John is and the implications of the rejection of the promised Elijah, attention will turn to the place and value of the text within the conflict between Matthew's church and its Jewish opponents.

The Understanding of the Disciples and the Failure of the Religious Leaders to Understand

Rather than telling the audience that Jesus spoke about John the Baptist, the narrator's concluding comment states that the disciples understood (*συνῆκαν οἱ μαθηταί*)

¹⁰⁴ See Hagner, *Matthew*, 2:497; W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:715. That Matthew omits this reference to Jesus' death as fulfilling the Jewish Scriptures makes it unlikely that his omission of the fact that John's death has Scriptural foundation is due to Matthew's desire to show that Jesus' death but not John's is according to Scripture.

¹⁰⁵ While it is certainly possible that Matthew omitted the Markan statements that the suffering of the Son of Man and Elijah "had been written" (*γέγραπται*) because of a failure to find any texts supporting this point (as noted in e.g., Wentling, "A Comparison of the Elijan Motifs," 114), the Jewish Scriptures used by Matthew elsewhere as "fulfillment" texts may cause one to wonder if Matthew could not find any text to support this point (cf. Nolland, *Matthew*, 709). Moreover, Brant Pitre offers a potential explanation for the view that Elijah would have to suffer in *Jesus, the Tribulation, and the End of Exile: Restoration Eschatology and the Origin of the Atonement* (WUNT 2/204; Tübingen/Grand Rapids: Mohr Siebeck/Baker Academic, 2005), 188–97, and W. Davies and Allison note that there is a possibility that traditions saw Elijah being rejected (*Matthew*, 2:716, referring to Mal 4:6; 4 *Ezra* 7:29). On the elimination of the phrases "as it is written" as a way to focus more upon John and Elijah, see Bonnard, *Matthieu*, 257.

that Jesus was talking about John when he spoke about Elijah (17:13). Therefore, the issue is the disciples' awareness of this truth, not John's identity. This text implies that the disciples did not understand John to be Elijah until this point. The failure of the disciples to grasp this truth when Jesus initially teaches it demonstrates that Jesus' declaration that John is Elijah (11:14–15) is difficult to understand.¹⁰⁶ The disciples need Jesus' help to be able to recognize John as Elijah.¹⁰⁷

In contrast to the disciples' understanding is the uniquely Matthean note about the failure of others to “know” (ἐπιγινώσκω) John to be Elijah.¹⁰⁸ While adding that those who “did to [Elijah] whatever they pleased” did not “know” him, Matthew does not state explicitly who these individuals are. As in Mark, the most natural reading would be to identify “they” with the “scribes,” the last group mentioned in the text.¹⁰⁹ An objection to this proposal, however, is that the scribes play no role in Matthew's account of the death of John.¹¹⁰ The following comment that “thus also the Son of Man is about to suffer by them” (Matt 17:12b) offers some clarity, however, by connecting those who did not “know” John with those who will cause the suffering of Jesus, a group that Jesus has

¹⁰⁶ John's suffering and death, the only narrated events about John between chapters 11 and 17, may have made belief in him as Elijah even more difficult. On the suffering of John as part of the content of what the disciples now understand, see Ju. Taylor, “The Coming of Elijah,” 108–9.

¹⁰⁷ Patte, *Matthew*, 239.

¹⁰⁸ Bammel (“The Baptist in Early Christian Tradition,” 102 n. 6) highlights Trilling's notable failure to discuss the fact that John was “not known” (see “Die Taüfertradition,” 279–82). Gundry lists ἐπιγινώσκω as a Matthean term (*Matthew*, 348).

¹⁰⁹ Cf. Bonnard, *Matthieu*, 258, who notes that the term initially applies to scribes but expands to all the populace. Hagner notes that “they” are the scribes and Jewish leaders (*Matthew*, 2:499).

¹¹⁰ E.g., Yamasaki, *John the Baptist*, 135.

already stated includes the elders, chief priests, and scribes (Matt 16:21).¹¹¹ In effect, Matthew makes these people accomplices in John's death.¹¹² While Matthew still depicts John's death at the hand of Herod and includes no explicit note about the participation of the religious leaders, this comment could reflect that these groups did nothing to stop Herod from killing John and were pleased with it.¹¹³ Moreover, the chief priests, elders, and scribes do not actually kill Jesus, as he is executed by the Romans, but they are implicated for supporting and demanding this action by the Romans.¹¹⁴ Therefore, the text reveals a parallelism between John and Jesus in their rejections, pointing to the involvement of Jewish leaders in the death of each man.

The reference to the "scribes" teaching that Elijah comes first but participating with the group that did not "know" him conforms to the earlier portrayal of the scribes in Matthew. In 2:1–12, the scribes have the correct teaching about the birthplace of the Messiah but rather than seek out the Messiah to worship him, they are participants in Herod's plot to locate and destroy the Messiah. Later, the Matthean Jesus highlights that the scribes and the Pharisees say the right thing but do not do it (23:2–3).¹¹⁵ The scribes therefore teach what is right (Elijah must come) but do not practice it (refuse to acknowledge his arrival in the form of John). In the same way (*οὐτως*), the leaders

¹¹¹ Noted in e.g., Trilling, "Die Täufertradition," 280; R. Edwards, *Matthew's Story*, 63; W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:716; Nolland, *Matthew*, 709.

¹¹² Origen, *Comm. Matt.* 13.1 (*ANF* 9:474).

¹¹³ France, *Matthew*, 654–55.

¹¹⁴ The scribes and the Pharisees are also implicated in the death and punishment of the messengers sent by Jesus in Matt 23:34–36, though it is unclear if they are in fact the ones who inflict these punishments.

¹¹⁵ See Mark Allan Powell, "Do and Keep What Moses Says (Matthew 23:2–7)," *JBL* 114 (1995): 419–35.

stumble over Jesus even though he does the works of the promised Messiah, and they will do to him what they wish: destroy him. Thus, their lack of recognition of John and Jesus is not just an intellectual deficiency, but an active rejection and opposition.¹¹⁶

The Rejection of the Promised Elijah

The passage also draws further attention to John's identity as the Elijah promised in Malachi who calls the people of Israel to repentance in preparation for the arrival of the day of the Lord and to the rejection of this figure by the leaders. The Matthean form of the passage does this through increasing the connections to the prophecy of Malachi and stressing that the fulfillment of this passage has happened in the person of John. As a result, the failure of the religious leaders to heed John's message means that they stand under a curse.

The redactional analysis of the passage above noted the subtle difference between Matt 17:11 and Mark 9:12 with Matthew's use of a future form of ἀποκαθίστημι. A traditional interpretation for this difference, which continues to have contemporary advocates, is that Matthew's version reflects a future work of Elijah in which he will bring about restoration, with this ministry occurring before the future coming of the Son of Man; there is thus a ministry of John and a future ministry of Elijah.¹¹⁷ This view has

¹¹⁶ Osborne, *Matthew*, 650.

¹¹⁷ This interpretation appears in e.g., Chrysostom, *Hom. Matt. 57.1* (*NPNF*¹ 10:352). Also see the comments of Theodore of Mopsuestia (Manlio Simonetti, ed., *Matthew* [2 vols; ACCSNT 1; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Academic, 2001, 2002], 1b:58). Contemporary proponents include Gundry, *Matthew*, 347–48; Nolland, *Matthew*, 708; Mark Goodacre, "Mark, Elijah, the Baptist, and Matthew: The Success of the First Intertextual Reading," in *Biblical Interpretation in Early Christian Gospels, Volume 2: The Gospel of Matthew* (ed. Thomas R. Hatina; LNTS 310; London: T & T Clark, 2008), 80; Turner, *Matthew*, 421–22.

largely fallen into disfavor, with scholars instead explaining the future tense here as a more clear allusion to LXX Mal 3:24.¹¹⁸

The firmer connection to Malachi offers a helpful explanation of what is meant that Elijah is to “restore all things.”¹¹⁹ Clarification on this point would be important for two major reasons. First, it seems that there was a variety of opinion at the time concerning what exactly Elijah would do in his work of “restoration.”¹²⁰ A stronger link to LXX Malachi would ground an understanding of his work of restoration to a particular idea, that which appears in the text of Malachi. Second, the expression that Elijah will “restore all things” could be interpreted to mean “eschatological renewal of the present order itself (which would make Elijah the Messiah himself, rather than the forerunner of the Messiah), as, for example, apparently in Acts 1:6” (cf. Acts 3:12),¹²¹ so there would be a need to show how Elijah’s work of restoration differs from the work of Jesus as the Messiah. According to LXX Mal 3:23, Elijah will “restore (ἀποκαταστήσει) the hearts of a father to his son and the heart of a person to his neighbor.” The next verse refers back to

¹¹⁸ W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:714–15; Hagner, *Matthew*, 2:499; Luz, *Matthew*, 2:400; Bruner, *Matthew*, 2:182–83. The phrasing also would reflect the perspective of the scribes’ teaching (France, *Matthew*, 654). While a present tense verb, ἔρχεται could also possess a futuristic meaning, indicating that both verbs reflect the perspective of the scribes.

¹¹⁹ On Matthew’s understanding of John’s work of restoration along the lines of Malachi’s prophecy, see e.g., Wink, *John the Baptist*, 31. On this statement indicating that Matthew makes John’s ministry one of restoration, see Schlatter, *Matthäus*, 531.

¹²⁰ See discussion in W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:714–15. For surveys of these various expectations and views of Elijah, see Str-B 4:792–97; Häfner, *Der verheißene Vorläufer*, 321–85; Markus Öhler, *Elia im Neuen Testament: Untersuchungen zur Bedeutung des alttestamentlichen Propheten im Neuen Testament* (BZNW 88; Berlin/New York: de Gruyter, 1997), 1–30. Concise English summaries and analyses of various images of Elijah in Judaism appear in Wentling, “A Comparison of the Elijan Motifs,” 104–7; Öhler, “The Expectation of Elijah and the Presence of the Kingdom of God,” *JBL* 118 (1999): 461–64. For an extensive list of references to perspectives on the work of Elijah, see Keener, *Matthew*, 439–40 n. 122.

¹²¹ Hagner, *Matthew*, 2:499.

Moses' regulations (LXX Mal 3:24),¹²² which indicates that Elijah's work of restoration is in helping people return back to the laws that Moses gave at Sinai.¹²³ The fact that the second half of LXX Mal 3:23 focuses upon a person's relationship with his neighbor offers a further allusion to the Ten Commandments, as Elijah's work will help repair these relationships governed by the fifth and ten commandments, respectively.¹²⁴ The closer allusion of LXX Mal 3:23 in Matt 17:11 therefore indicates that Elijah works to bring repentance to the Jews, restoring their obedience to the Law in anticipation of the day of the Lord.

Other subtle redactional changes made by Matthew highlight John's ministry as the fulfillment of the prophecy about Elijah. The use of independent verbs in 17:11 to describe Elijah's coming and work of restoration (ἔρχεται καὶ ἀποκαταστήσει) draws greater attention to each of these actions, and 17:12 addresses these two aspects of Elijah's work.¹²⁵ The Matthean ἤδη ἦλθεν places a greater emphasis on the "pastness" of

¹²² The reference to Moses is immediately before the reference to Elijah in the MT (Mal 3:22–23).

¹²³ Cf. Robert Macina, "Jean le Baptist étail-il Élie? Examen de la tradition néotestamentaire," *Proche Orient chrétien* 34 (1984): 216–20, esp. 216. On the work of Elijah in Mal 4:5–6 as helping people obey statues in light of the discussions of Mal 3:1 and Exod 23:20–22, see David L. Peterson, *Zechariah 9–14 and Malachi* (OTL; Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1995), 210; against Ralph L. Smith, *Micah-Malachi* (WBC 32; Waco, TX: Word, 1984), 340–41, who finds 3:1 and 4:5–6 to describe disparate roles for the messenger. The idea of Elijah helping Israel to obey the Torah does not seem to be an idiosyncratic view of the work of Elijah, as W. Davies and Allison point out that the variety of expectations concerning Elijah's work of restoration often revolve around bringing about repentance (*Matthew*, 2:715). A slight variation seems to appear in Sir 48:10, which looks to Elijah as helping bring restoration of the twelve tribes of Israel. For various rabbinic texts discussing Elijah as "a master halakist," see Keener, *Matthew*, 440 n. 122.

¹²⁴ The MT has "the hearts of parents to their children and the hearts of children to their parents" in Mal 3:23 (Eng Mal 4:5), which points to restoration as an elimination of conflict between generations and has a connection to Joel 2:28. On the meaning of the MT, see Öhler, *Eliä*, 4–5; D. L. Peterson, *Zechariah*, 231.

¹²⁵ The μέν ... δέ construction of 17:11–12 points to the statements in these two verses as standing in close relationship to one another.

Elijah's appearance, stressing it is something that has definitely already happened.¹²⁶

Recognition of John's work of "restoration" as bringing people back to the law helps interpret the contrast between "will restore" (17:11) and "they did not know him but did to him as much as they willed" (17:12), showing that the Jewish leaders did not heed John's call to repentance because they did not acknowledge that John was the promised Elijah and refused to follow or obey the law.

The fact that John suffers and dies, however, does not mean that his ministry failed and thus that the prophecy was not fulfilled.¹²⁷ The failure of the Jewish leaders to obey John's teaching does not preclude others Jews from accepting his witness. Furthermore, the prophecy of LXX Mal 3:23b shows that Elijah's ministry is to help avoid a curse coming on the land, indicating a possibility for his ministry to be rejected.¹²⁸ Finally, the idea that John's suffering prevents him from accomplishing his divinely intended work overlooks the fact that Jesus' suffering does not render his ministry ineffective.¹²⁹ The link between the suffering of John and Jesus in this passage indicates that both figures are rejected by their people, not that they failed in their work.

¹²⁶ On Matthew's emphatic way of describing this event as already being accomplished, see Trilling, "Die Täufertadition," 281; Bonnard, *Matthieu*, 258; Ernst, *Johannes der Täufer*, 178; Hagner, *Matthew*, 2:497; Osborne, *Matthew*, 649.

¹²⁷ The view that resistance prevents John from bringing the promised restoration appears in many works; see e.g., Bonnard, *Matthieu*, 258; Schweizer, *Matthew*, 351; Hare, *Matthew*, 201. Cf. Bammel, "The Baptist in Early Christian Tradition," 102. Also see the discussion in Häfner, *Der verheißene Vorläufer*, 314–15.

¹²⁸ On the possibility of individuals not heeding Elijah's message, see W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:716; Bruner, *Matthew*, 2:183. The disobedience of the people does not stop the coming of God in the prophecy of Malachi, as it seems that the wicked will be punished and the righteous rewarded on the day of the Lord (see Beth Glazier-McDonald, *Malachi: The Divine Messenger* [SBLDS 98; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1987], 131, 256–57).

¹²⁹ Bruner, *Matthew*, 2:183. Cf. Patte, *Matthew*, 239.

In describing Elijah in accordance with the expectation of Malachi and stressing that Elijah “has come,” Matthew shows that John the Baptist’s ministry is a pivotal moment in salvation-history, as he ministers before the arrival of the day of the Lord.¹³⁰ While there is debate about whether there was an expectation of Elijah coming before the Messiah prior to the rise of the Jesus movement, these discussions can obscure the fact that there was an expectation of Elijah’s arrival at a key, eschatological moment since Elijah comes before the “great and terrible day of the Lord” (Mal 4:5).¹³¹ If John is this Elijah, then the day of the Lord has come, showing that Jesus’ ministry is its fulfillment even if the day of final judgment still awaits.

The description of John’s work as that of Elijah offers a twofold indictment against the Jewish leaders and indicates that they are cursed and face judgment. First, the fact that people need to be restored would reveal a failure by the Jewish leadership of the time to produce obedience to the Law of Moses in the people, as faithfulness to the Law would presumably have declined, necessitating Elijah’s appearance.¹³² In addition, the religious leaders failed to heed the words of one who came to call people to obedience to Moses, as their concern for power and their own laws causes them to miss the true teaching of the Moses. On top of these indictments is that fact that Elijah’s mission

¹³⁰ For similar analysis, see Harrington, *Matthew*, 256; W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:711, 715; Sand, *Matthäus*, 358. On the ministry of Elijah appearing within the “final days of the tribulation,” see Pitre, *Jesus, the Tribulation, and the End of Exile*, 185.

¹³¹ A point made by Craig L. Blomberg in his own analysis of the question of whether there was a Jewish expectation of Elijah preceding the Messiah before its place in the Jesus movement in “Elijah, Election, and the Use of Malachi in the New Testament,” *CTR* 2 (1987): 103–4. On the debate concerning Elijah’s appearance before the Messiah, see esp. Morris M. Faierstein, “Why Do the Scribes Say that Elijah Must Come First?” *JBL* 100 (1981): 75–86; Dale C. Allison, “Elijah Must Come First,” *JBL* 103 (1984): 256–58; Joseph A. Fitzmyer, “More about Elijah Coming First,” *JBL* 104 (1985): 295–96.

¹³² See Macina, “Jean le Baptist,” 216–20.

according to LXX Mal 3:23b prevents a curse from coming upon the land,¹³³ showing that the religious leaders' failure to recognize John as Elijah brings a curse to the land. Their failure to lead the people to repentance under the leadership of Elijah results in the punishment that comes on the people and land.

The Role of the Passage in the Dispute with Matthew's Jewish Opponents

The reference to teaching of the scribes in 17:10 raises the question of how this passage might relate to the dispute in Matthew between Jesus and the "scribes and the Pharisees." One must be cautious in immediately deeming this dialogue to function within this dispute, as scribes appear in the Markan form as well. Although Matthew does retain references to the scribes in Markan conflict stories (Matt 9:3//Mark 2:6; Matt 15:1//Mark 7:1), he also at times removes references to the scribes¹³⁴ and changes Markan references to scribes to focus on the "Pharisees" (Matt 12:24//Mark 3:22; cf. Matt 22:34–35//Mark 12:28). In fact, Matthew shifts the focus from the scribes to the Pharisees in a Markan passage which similarly discusses the teaching of the scribes (Matt 22:41//Mark 12:35). Moreover, the term "scribe" is not a uniformly bad term in Matthew, as Jesus sends out scribes (23:34) and scribes can be taught the kingdom of heaven (13:51–52).¹³⁵ These factors lead David E. Orton to propose that although Mark's use of

¹³³ There is a division of opinion on whether the "land" that is cursed in the prophecy of Malachi is the land of Judah (see Glazier-McDonald, *Malachi*, 258–59) or the whole earth (D. L. Peterson, *Zechariah*, 232). The context of Matthew would seem to support the former option.

¹³⁴ The omission of a reference to scribes often appears when they are included with other groups such as the Pharisees (Matt 9:11//Mark 2:16) or elders and priests (Matt 21:23//Mark 11:27; Matt 26:47//Mark 14:43; Matt 27:1//Mark 15:1; cf. Matt 26:3//Mark 14:2 where Matthew has the "elders of the people" instead of the Markan "scribes"). A Markan reference to scribes is omitted in Matt 17:14//Mark 9:14 in which a crowd is discussed.

¹³⁵ See Overman, *Matthew's Gospel*, 115–17; David E. Orton, *The Understanding Scribe: Matthew and the Apocalyptic Ideal* (JSNTSup 25; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1989), 20–35. The reference to "some of the scribes" in Matt 9:3//Mark 2:6 also reflects this partition within the scribes. The unique

“scribes” refers to opponents in light of the reference to scribes in the following pericope (Mark 9:14), the scribes in Matthew are the “Soferim of an earlier generation.”¹³⁶

The discussion of the scribes here does not explicitly link them to an opposing group, but it still seems best to view these scribes as connected to the Jewish opponents of Matthew’s group. The majority of Matthew’s references to scribes associate them with the Pharisees or the chief priests and elders,¹³⁷ and strong contextual reasons are involved in the “positive” references to scribes (13:51–52; 23:34), as the scribe of 13:51–52 has been “trained for the kingdom” and Jesus himself sends the scribes of 23:34. Therefore, the audience would most likely view these scribes in a negative sense unless it finds a clear reason to think otherwise. Moreover, the most recent reference to the scribes before 17:10–13 indicates that they will be participants in Jesus’ sufferings in Jerusalem (16:21), and the context of 17:10–13 links the scribes to those who did not “know” John and mistreated him. The failure to include a comment that more closely links this group to the Pharisees or to another group, however, could indicate that the teaching described here was not a peculiar or distinctive teaching of the Pharisees or Matthew’s opponents, but rather one that was pervasive in first-century Judaism.

reference to a scribe in Matt 8:19 points to a scribe as a “false disciple,” as he calls Jesus “teacher” and his question is followed up by one from “another of the disciples.” On the way that Matthew’s gospel may reflect scribal activity, see Krister Stendahl, *The School of St. Matthew and Its Use of the Old Testament* (2d ed.; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1968), 195; O. Lamar Cope, *Mathew: A Scribe Trained for the Kingdom of Heaven* (CBQMS 5; Washington: The Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1976).

¹³⁶ See Orton, *The Understanding Scribe*, 31–33. Orton bases his idea upon the way that the Mishnah introduces authoritative scribes.

¹³⁷ With the Pharisees: 5:20; 7:28; 12:38–42; 15:1–20; 23:2–36. With chief priests only: 2:4; 20:18; 21:15. With elders only: 26:57; 27:41. With the chief priests and the elders: 16:21.

While not an exact parallel, Jesus' remarks in this passage are somewhat reminiscent of his statements in the Sermon on the Mount.¹³⁸ In the so-called "Antitheses" in the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus affirms a traditional teaching that comes from Scripture and therefore declared by others. After affirming the teaching, Jesus introduces his own distinctive teaching on the matter (λέγω δὲ ὑμῖν).¹³⁹ Rather than speaking about the proper practice of the command of God, Jesus highlights that a promise has been fulfilled in that Elijah has come. Jesus thus agrees with the teaching but also finds a point of disagreement in regards to the application of the truth.¹⁴⁰

The question remains whether this teaching about the arrival of Elijah in John was a prominent issue in the dispute between believers in Jesus and other Jews. Discussions of this text often deem this issue to be important,¹⁴¹ and one can find support for this view in *Dial.* 49 since Trypho brings up this matter. The question in the text, however, does not come from the scribes themselves but rather from the disciples, with Matthew explicitly highlighting that disciples ask this question (17:10).¹⁴² Furthermore, the passage ends on a note that the disciples understand that Jesus was talking about John; the passage shows that the disciples were able to find a solution to this problem.¹⁴³ In

¹³⁸ For similar observations, see Schlatter, *Matthäus*, 531; France, *Matthew*, 654. Cf. Bruner, *Matthew*, 2:182

¹³⁹ Jesus uses the first person pronoun in the Sermon on the Mount but not here in 17:12.

¹⁴⁰ Cf. Bonnard, *Matthieu*, 257.

¹⁴¹ E.g., Schlatter, *Matthäus*, 531; Hare, *Matthew*, 200; Hagner, *Matthew*, 2:498; Luz, *Matthew*, 2:400; Bruner, *Matthew*, 2:181. A more cautious approach appears in Sand, *Matthäus*, 247, 358.

¹⁴² In fact, the disciples seem to have the same belief as the scribes at the beginning of this passage, thinking the Elijah has not yet come (Patte, *Matthew*, 238).

¹⁴³ Cf. Häfner, *Der verheißene Vorläufer*, 318.

addition, Justin's text may not reflect an actual debate between a believer in Jesus and a Jew but rather be apologetic literature read by believers in Jesus. Therefore, it would be more accurate to state that believers in Jesus saw this as a potential problem and objection to their belief in Jesus, with the issue becoming a point of discussion *within* groups of followers of Jesus.¹⁴⁴ Matthew's version reveals that the question asked here had special relevance for his group of believers in Jesus in that it felt a need to secure an Elijah figure arriving before the ministry of Jesus in order to defend its beliefs about Jesus. In affirming John to be the Elijah figure, Matthew's group affirms a teaching that would be scandalous to other Jewish groups, which did not hold John to be Elijah.¹⁴⁵

This need to show that Elijah has come may also be reflected in the way Matthew's description of Jesus reflects a variety of the different expectations concerning Elijah that may have been in circulation at the time. Since Jesus is "God with us" (1:23), Elijah's appearance prepares Israel for God's presence. Since Jesus comes for the lost sheep of Israel (15:24; cf. 10:6), Elijah's appearance is related to the restoration of the tribes of Israel (Sir 48:10). If the question about Elijah arises because of the discussion of the resurrection of the dead (cf. *m. Sotah* 9:15), Elijah has already appeared before the resurrection of the dead that occurs in Matt 27:52–53. Matthew's portrayal of John as Elijah could therefore be a way of merging various Jewish expectations concerning Elijah, showing what was expected to happen when Elijah comes has happened and that Elijah must therefore have come in the person of John.

¹⁴⁴ On the possibility of this text pointing to debates with groups of Jesus believers, see Pedersen, "Proklamation," 263. Cf. Schnackenburg, *Matthew*, 167.

¹⁴⁵ Cf. Turner, *Matthew*, 422.

The internal wrestling of Matthew's group concerning the relationship of John the Baptist to Elijah may have led to the stronger links to the prophecy of Malachi noted in the previous section. By recalling Malachi's words that describe Elijah's ministry as one which brings repentance and obedience to the law before the day of the Lord, it decreases the likelihood that one can reject John as the fulfillment of Elijah because the restoration of all things did not happen. John's ministry brought repentance, but it was not embraced by the leaders. Because he was Elijah, the rejection of John by the Jewish leaders means that they face the judgment about which Malachi speaks.

Summary of Matthew 17:10–13

The description of John as the eschatological Elijah and the correlation of the suffering of John and Jesus do not seem to be the distinctive stamp that Matthew made on this passage. Rather, these themes serve to help Matthew indicate that the disciples, and thus his group, have the correct understanding of the teaching of Elijah while the religious leaders have failed to grasp the monumental importance of John's ministry as Elijah who brings repentance in anticipation for the "great and terrible" day of the Lord. In failing to recognize Elijah and mistreating him, these leaders stand under judgment and bring a curse to the land. John's suffering therefore does not show his failure to do the work of Elijah but, like Jesus' suffering, the failure of the religious leaders to respond to God's will and activity in the world. While it is unclear if Matthew's opponents rejected the claims Matthew's group made about Jesus because of the lack of arrival of Elijah or if this was an internal question or a hypothetical challenge, recognition of John as Elijah would differentiate believers in Jesus from other Jews and support their claims about Jesus.

Conclusion

Attention to the last two passages discussing John the Baptist in the Gospel of Matthew reveal that aspects of his portrayal connect to the conflict reflected in the Gospel between Matthew's group and its Jewish opponents. In 21:23–32, Jesus' words indicate that John has a special role as one who comes to prepare for the fulfillment of God's promised salvation that comes in the person of Jesus and that one's response to John determines whether one enters into the kingdom. The passage also shows that the crowds thought highly of John the Baptist while the religious leaders rejected John and were more concerned about maintaining control than seeking truth. In doing so, not only do the leaders show themselves to be worse than tax collectors and prostitutes, but they show themselves to be uninterested in a movement aimed at bringing sinners to repentance and true obedience. The inclusion of these particular groups of sinners in John's ministry also shows his ministry to continue in Jesus' work.

In addition to highlighting the guilt of the religious leaders in rejecting John, the discussion in 17:10–13 shows that the followers of Jesus have the correct understanding of the promised Elijah. Because Elijah has come in John, Jesus' ministry serves as the pivotal event in salvific history, the day of the Lord that Elijah precedes. John sought to bring people back into right obedience of the law, but the religious leaders, who teach about the promised Elijah, fail to heed John's call to repent, mistreat him, and thus stand under the judgment.

These two passages show John as a key prophetic figure who must be accepted. The religious leaders rejected him and the disciples see him as Elijah, with the crowd having a positive view of him but not quite recognizing his work as Elijah in preparing

for an eschatological event. Matthew goes farther not just in affirming that John is a prophet but securing him as the promised Elijah while also showing the failure of the religious leaders to heed this truth about John. If John remained a popular figure in Judaism outside of the Jesus movement at the time of the Gospel's composition, such logic would push Jews yet to align with Matthew's group or their opposition to move to Matthew's group, particularly those who see the Baptist to be a messenger who declares the will of God.

CHAPTER 4

MATTHEW 3:1–17

Introduction

This investigation of Matt 3:1–17 consists of three sections. The first section examines the content of the passage and Matthew’s redaction. The second section attempts to synthesize the portrayal of the Baptist in 3:1–17 in dialogue with the depiction of John that emerged in the two passages examined in the previous chapter of this dissertation. The third section discusses two themes of 3:1–17 with special relevance to the Jewish setting of the Gospel: the similarities between John and Jesus and Jesus’ ministry as the culmination of John’s ministry. The overarching argument of this chapter is that Matthew attempts to show his group of believers of Jesus to be the outgrowth of the ministry of John the Baptist in order to legitimize his group in the eyes of Jews who held the Baptist in high regard and to show the inadequacy of the Jewish opponents of Matthew’s group.

Content and Redaction

Introduction

The third chapter of Matthew features three units. The first unit introduces the ministry of John the Baptist, offering a summary of his work and a brief description of his dress and diet (3:1–6). The second unit features a speech of the Baptist (3:7–12). The

final unit recounts events surrounding Jesus' baptism by John (3:13–17). Discussion of each unit highlights Matthew's redaction and use of the ideas appearing in his sources.

Matthew 3:1–6

Matthew's utilization of Mark as a source begins with the description of John the Baptist in Matt 3:1–6.¹ The introduction of John the Baptist comes without any explanation or preparation (3:1–2), as his appearance precedes the OT quotation describing his ministry (3:3).² The phrase “in those days” (Ἐν δὲ ταῖς ἡμέραις ἐκεῖναις) links John's activity to the circumstances surrounding Jesus' birth and infancy, situating John's ministry during the time of Jesus' residency in Nazareth (2:23).³ Due to the use of “those days” elsewhere in the OT and in Matthew, this phrase may also have an

¹ Matthew and Luke agree against Mark in lacking a reference to Exod 23:20 and Mal 3:1 in their initial description of John and in placing the citation of Isa 40:3 after introducing John (Matt 3:1–3//Luke 3:1–4). These agreements could reflect the influence of another written or oral tradition (or traditions) shared by Matthew and Luke or be similar revisions of Mark. Even if Matthew possessed another tradition introducing the Baptist, it appears that Mark 1:2–6 is the primary source for Matt 3:1–6. For further discussion of the source of this passage, see William D. Davies and Dale C. Allison, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to Saint Matthew* (3 vols.; ICC; Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1988–97), 1:286; Donald A. Hagner, *Matthew* (2 vols.; WBC 33; Waco, TX: Thomas Nelson, 1991, 1995), 1:45; Gerd Häfner, *Der verheißene Vorläufer. Redaktionskritische Untersuchung zur Darstellung Johannes des Täuflers im Matthäus-Evangelium* (SBB 27; Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1994), 5–9; John Nolland, *Matthew* (NIGTC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005), 134–35.

² Many commentators think that sudden reference to John indicates that Matthew assumes his audience would be familiar with John the Baptist (e.g., Daniel Patte, *The Gospel according to Matthew: A Structural Commentary on Matthew's Faith* [Philadelphia: Fortress, 1987], 48; Daniel J. Harrington, *The Gospel of Matthew* [SP 1; Collegeville, MN: Liturgical, 1991], 50; W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:289; Nolland, *Matthew*, 136).

³ As noted by e.g., Edgar Krentz, “None Greater among Those Born from Women: John the Baptist in the Gospel of Matthew,” *CurThM* 10 (1983): 334; Häfner, *Der verheißene Vorläufer*, 7; Ulrich Luz, *Matthew* (trans. James Crouch; 3 vols.; Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress, 2001–7), 1:134; Nolland, *Matthew*, 135. Others note that this phrase shows that John's ministry occurs in the “day of the Messiah” (Grant R. Osborne, *Matthew* [ZECNT; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010], 109) or the “days of Jesus Christ” (Edmondo Lupieri, “John the Baptist in New Testament Traditions and History,” *ANRW* 2.26.1 [1992]: 447). Cf. Patte, *Matthew*, 48.

eschatological nuance, indicating a new time of God’s activity.⁴ While an eschatological nuance is not required since this phrase does not always feature an eschatological meaning,⁵ taking into consideration the overarching picture of the Matthean Baptist discussed in the previous chapter points to an eschatological connotation in this phrase, as John is the promised Elijah and comes in the “way of righteousness.”⁶ The Baptist’s ministry thus marks a new stage in the outworking of God’s plan of salvation, which happens while Jesus lives in Nazareth. Matthew differs from Mark in using a historical present verb (*παράγινεται*) to depict John’s appearance.⁷ While offering a connection between John and Jesus in that this word later introduces Jesus (3:13), the audience would first find a connection between John and the Magi since the same verb appears in the description of the Magi’s arrival in Jerusalem (2:1).⁸ John is thus aligned with the Magi rather than with Herod and “all Jerusalem.”

⁴ See Isa 10:20; Jer 3:16, 18; 31:33; 50:4, 20; Dan 2:10; Amos 9:7; Joel 3:1; Zeph 1:15; Zech 8:23; 12:3–4; Matt 7:22; 9:15; 10:15; 11:22, 24; 12:36; 24:19, 22, 29, 36, 42, 50; 25:12; 26:29. Advocates of this phrase indicating a special time in salvation history include Georg Strecker, *Der Weg der Gerechtigkeit: Untersuchung zur Theologie des Mätthäus* (3d ed.; FRLANT 82; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1971), 90–91; John P. Meier, “John the Baptist in Matthew’s Gospel,” *JBL* 99 (1980): 387–88; Hagner, *Matthew*, 1:47; Alexander Sand, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus* (RNT; Regensburg: Verlag Friedrich Puste, 1986), 65; Harrington, *Matthew*, 50. The idea that this temporal phrase places John’s ministry during the time of Jesus’ residency need not exclude the position that it indicates a new time of God’s activity (see e.g., Warren Carter, *Matthew and the Margins: A Sociopolitical and Religious Reading* [Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2000], 92).

⁵ There is no eschatological or revelatory meaning in e.g., Gen 6:4; Exod 2:11; Deut 17:9; 19:17; 26:3; Dan 10:2, leading to a rejection of this view by Robert H. Gundry, *Matthew: A Commentary on His Handbook for a Mixed Church under Persecution* (2d ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994), 41; Luz, *Matthew*, 1:134 n. 4. After noting the possible eschatological meaning of this phrase, W. Davies and Allison caution against “reading too much into the first few words of Mt 3.1” in light of these parallels (*Matthew*, 1:287–88).

⁶ The content of John’s preaching in 3:2 also highlights a new moment in history.

⁷ Mark uses *ἐγένετο*. On Matthew’s use of *παράγινομαι* to introduce new characters, see R. T. France, *The Gospel of Matthew* (NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 96 n. 1.

⁸ The verb in 2:1, however, is in the aorist tense, while 3:1 is a present tense verb. Gundry suggests that Matthew’s use of the present tense here highlights that John begins the preaching of the

Matthew gives more specificity than Mark to the location of John's ministry by labeling it the "wilderness of Judea." John thus preaches in the region where Jesus was born (2:1) but could not reside due to opposition (2:23–24). The reference to Judea connects John and Jesus to a degree, as Jesus was born in Judea, but it also reflects a difference between them, as Jesus' ministry will be in the towns of Galilee (4:12–25) rather than in the wilderness of Judea (3:1).⁹ The location of John's ministry in Judea causes the audience to expect John to face opposition,¹⁰ but it also shows God at work in the region in spite of Jesus' absence, with John's activity perhaps preparing for Jesus to re-enter this region.¹¹ John's location in the wilderness offers hope in light of "the messianic and apocalyptic hopes [that] had come to be localized in the area,"¹² with this hope made clear through the quotation of Isa 40:3. John's location also reveals him to live on the margins of society and operate outside of the power structures of the time.¹³

kingdom that continues to the present day, a view that is possible but not provable (*Matthew*, 41). The view of Häfner that the present tense appears in 3:1 and 3:13 to introduce new scenes seems more restrained and a better explanation (*Der verheißene Vorläufer*, 9; cf. W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:288 who note the similar use of the present in 2:13, 19; 4:5, 8; 9:14; 15:1; 19:10; 20:8; 22:16; 25:19; 27:38). The use of the present could also make John's preaching more vivid, giving it a greater stress (see Nolland, *Matthew*, 136; David Turner, *Matthew* [BECNT; Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008], 105–6).

⁹ On links between John and Jesus, see Carter, *Matthew and the Margins*, 92; Nolland, *Matthew*, 137. On differences, see Patte, *Matthew*, 43; Häfner, *Der verheißene Vorläufer*, 13.

¹⁰ With W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 291. The content of John's preaching would also show his danger, as he is preaching a kingdom (Carter, *Matthew and the Margins*, 92–93).

¹¹ Cf. Gundry, *Matthew*, 42.

¹² Robert W. Funk, "The Wilderness," *JBL* 78 (1959): 205–14, quotation on 214. On the hope offered in light of imagery of the wilderness, also see Craig S. Keener, *A Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 116–18.

¹³ Carter, *Matthew and the Margins*, 92; Adriana Destro and Mauro Pesce, *Encounters with Jesus: The Man in His Place and Time* (trans. Brian McNeil; Minneapolis: Fortress, 2012), 43. Cf. Jerome's comment on Isa 40:3 that John did not preach in Jerusalem but rather in solitude (cited in Thomas Aquinas, *Catena Aurea* [trans. William Whiston; London: J. G. F. and J. Rivington, 1842], 92).

While identifying John with the title “the Baptist (ὁ βαπτιστής), Matthew is “more interested in John as the prophet than as the one who baptizes.”¹⁴ In contrast to Mark’s use of the participle βαπτίζων and description of John as preaching a “baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins” (Mark 1:4),¹⁵ Matthew uses the noun βαπτιστής to identify John and uses direct discourse to offer a summary of John’s preaching in 3:2, the content of which features no reference to baptism (“Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!”).¹⁶ This summary of John’s preaching does not portray him exclusively proclaiming judgment, as grounding the call to repent in the nearness of the kingdom of

¹⁴ Luz, *Matthew*, 1:135. The fact that John’s baptizing activity only receives a summary description in 3:6 but his speech features an extended section further reveals that Matthew places a stronger emphasis on John as a preacher than as a baptizer. The use of the title “Baptist” could be a way to distinguish the Baptist from other figures named John (as noted in e.g., Charles H. H. Scobie, *John the Baptist* [London: SCM, 1964], 90 n. 1; Janice Capel Anderson, *Matthew’s Narrative Web: Over, and Over, and Over Again* [JSNTSup 91; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1994], 84).

¹⁵ The participle βαπτίζων in Mark 1:4 could be either adjectival (ὁ βαπτίζων: “the Baptizer/one who is baptizing”) or adverbial (βαπτίζων: “John appeared, baptizing in the wilderness...”) due to a textual variant surrounding the article, with the best reading featuring the article and thus an adjectival participle (with John K. Elliott, “*Ho baptizōn* and Mark 1.4,” *TZ* 31 [1975]: 14–15). The use of an adjectival participle rather than the title “Baptist” (βαπτιστής) “puts more stress on the activity of baptism” (W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:288; cf. Clayton R. Bowen, “Prolegomena to a New Study of John the Baptist,” in *Studies in the New Testament: Collected Papers of Dr. Clayton R. Bowen* [ed. Robert J. Hutcheon; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1936], 33–34). If the article is a later addition influenced by the identification of John as “the Baptist” (as argued in Bruce M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament* [2d ed.; Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1994], 62), the emphasis in Mark on John’s baptizing work is even stronger, as his appearance is characterized by baptizing (βαπτίζων) and preaching a baptism (κηρύσσων βάπτισμα). The variant raises the question of what reading Matthew would have known; Matthew may have substituted a noun for an adverbial participle even if the original reading contained an adjectival participle.

¹⁶ There is a minor textual issue in Matt 3:2, as κ and B do not contain a καὶ between Ἰουδαίας and λέγων, but the conjunction appears in most manuscripts as well as D and Latin and Syriac witnesses. While NA²⁷ places καὶ in brackets, it seems best to view the original reading as containing this conjunction due its appearance in 4:17 and Matthew’s predilection for showing parallelisms between Jesus and John, a position favored by W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 292 n. 11; Häfner, *Der verheißene Vorläufer*, 9 n. 4 (the reading also is adopted without discussion in Gundry, *Matthew*, 42; Osborne, *Matthew*, 110). The lack of a καὶ in 10:5 may be explained by the fact that κηρύσσω appears as an imperative rather than a participle as in 3:2 and 4:17. Matthew’s placement of the note that John preaches (κηρύσσων) ahead of the reference to his location (ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ) also seems to stress his preaching (W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 290; Gundry, *Matthew*, 42).

heaven (γάρα) also looks to the fact that redemption will happen.¹⁷ While the Markan Baptist offers forgiveness of sins outside of the temple in a rite, the Matthean Baptist calls for an “inner attitude of conversion” as he announces the nearness of the kingdom.¹⁸ Such a call presupposes that “the notion that Israel has lost its way” and that the status quo is insufficient.¹⁹ John’s message shows him taking up the prophetic call for repentance,²⁰ a message that Jesus (4:17) and his disciples (10:7) will continue after John’s imprisonment (4:12). The focus on the nearness of the kingdom, however, seems to differentiate John’s message from the prophets before him.²¹

The quotation of Isa 40:3 interprets John’s ministry.²² Mark connects Isa 40:3 to the appearance of John the Baptist,²³ but Matthew makes it even more evident that John is the voice described by Isaiah through a number of features. First, Matthew introduces

¹⁷ See discussion in Carl H. Kraeling, *John the Baptist* (New York: Scribner, 1951), 67–71; George Beasley-Murray, *Baptism in the New Testament* (London: Macmillan, 1963), 32. On the kingdom as the “coming of God,” see discussion in France, *Matthew*, 102–3.

¹⁸ Meier, “John the Baptist,” 388. A similar perspective appears in Gundry, *Matthew*, 43.

¹⁹ Jack Dean Kingsbury, *Matthew as Story* (2d ed.; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1986), 47. On John’s message showing the overthrow of the status quo, see Hagner, *Matthew*, 1:46; Carter, *Matthew and the Margins*, 90.

²⁰ Hagner, *Matthew*, 1:47. The call to repent would seem to be the same as that proclaimed by the Jewish prophets, only now placed in an eschatological context. On the continuity of John’s message of repentance with the prophets, also see Kraeling, *John the Baptist*, 70–71; John P. Meier, *A Marginal Jew: Rethinking the Historical Jesus* (4 vols.; ABRL; New York/New Haven, CT: Doubleday/Yale University Press, 1991–2009), 2:28–29, 73.

²¹ Luz, *Matthew*, 1:135; Herbert Bassler, *The Mind behind the Gospels: A Commentary to Matthew 1–14* (Reference Library of Jewish Intellectual History; Boston: Academic Studies, 2009), 73–74.

²² While Augustine suggested that 3:3 continues the speech of the Baptist, with the Baptist speaking of himself in the third person akin to the witness of the author in John 21:24 (*Cons.* 2.12.25 [*NPNF* 6:116]), it seems best to view 3:3 as a “direct narratorial comment” similar to those that appear at 1:22; 2:15, 17–18, 23b (Anderson, *Matthew’s Narrative Web*, 82).

²³ Mark uses a conflation of Exod 23:20 and Mal 3:1 in his introduction of the Baptist, but only names the prophet Isaiah, so the stress in Mark seems to be on the correspondence between John’s ministry and the prophecy of Isaiah.

the quotation with the phrase οὗτος γάρ ἐστιν, indicating that John is the “voice” described by Isaiah. Second, because Matthew wants to show that John is the figure mentioned in Isa 40:3, the introduction of the quotation of Isa 40:3 diverges from the introductions to citations in Matthew’s infancy narratives (1:22; 2:15, 17, 23) by using a masculine (ὁ ῥηθείς) rather than a neuter (τὸ ῥηθὲν) participle.²⁴ Thus, it is not simply that John’s ministry fulfills the description of Isa 40:3 but that he himself is the figure mentioned in Isa 40:3. Third, Matthew’s introduction of John in 3:1–2 more closely matches the order of Isa 40:3, as Matthew places ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ after κηρύσσων, showing John to be “calling in the wilderness.”²⁵ The use of direct discourse in 3:2 then reveals the message of this “voice,” with John’s words reflecting the call for “straight paths.”²⁶

This identification of John as the “voice” of Isa 40:3 indicates that John is more than a baptizer or a preacher of the kingdom, as he is the one who prepares the way for the activity of God. Because John fulfills Isaiah’s prophecy, the Baptist is a “reliable

²⁴ The introductory comment also differs from the references to Scripture in Matt 1–2 by lacking the verb πληρόω, a term that Matthew seems to reserve for Jesus (Gundry, *Matthew*, 44; Nolland, *Matthew*, 138; on 2:17 as an exception, see W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:292 n. 13; Turner, *Matthew*, 107–8). While lacking a form of πληρόω here, it seems that Matthew still seeks to show that John is the fulfillment of this prophecy (France, *Matthew*, 104). Matthew appears to adapt this quotation so that it more closely resembles the other “fulfillment” quotations, as this is the only quotation Matthew inherits from Mark that “uses such an elaborate formulaic introduction” (Craig L. Blomberg, “Matthew,” in *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament* [ed. G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson; Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007], 12).

²⁵ While the MT and LXX may reflect different ways to understand the phrase “in the wilderness” in Isa 40:3, both the MT and LXX mention the voice calling and then the wilderness, the same order that appears in Matthew. Mark mentions the wilderness first and then the preaching of John. Matthew’s crafting 3:1–2 to fit the Isa 40:3 quotation is readily noted (e.g., Hagner, *Matthew*, 1:4; Josef Ernst, *Johannes der Täufer: Interpretation, Geschichte, Wirkungsgeschichte* [BZNW 53; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1989], 155–56).

²⁶ Sand, *Matthäus*, 65–66. Cf. Chrysostom, *Hom. Matt.* 10.3, who notes that John uses different words but preaches the same message as the figure of Isaiah (*NPNF*¹ 10:63).

source of the narrator's ideological point of view."²⁷ Moreover, the content of the prophecy indicates that John is the last messenger before the climatic activity of God, which the Matthean Baptist describes as the arrival of the "kingdom of heaven."²⁸ Since Jesus has already been described as "God with us" (1:23), John's ministry prepares people for Jesus' work and mission. The attempt to demonstrate an even more exact fulfillment of Isa 40:3 could also indicate that the figure for whom John prepares the people is God himself, as Isa 40:3 speaks of the arrival of God.²⁹

A comment about John's dress and diet in 3:4 follows this quotation from Isaiah. This information further characterizes the Baptist.³⁰ Matthew's placement of the note varies from Mark 1:6, as it occurs before the reference to the masses coming to be baptized in Matthew. This difference offers a smoother narrative, as it allows Matthew to juxtapose the response of the crowds (3:5–6) with the arrival of the Pharisees and Sadducees (3:7).³¹ There are a number of subtle differences in the wording between Mark 1:6 and Matthew 3:4. First, Matthew avoids the periphrastic construction of Mark 1:6 (ἦν ἐνδεδυμένος ... καὶ ἐσθίων) through the use of finite verbs (εἶχεν ἔνδυμα ... ἢ τροφή ἦν).³²

²⁷ Gary Yamasaki, *John the Baptist in Life and Death: Audience-Oriented Criticism of Matthew's Narrative* (JSNTSup 167; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1998), 83.

²⁸ Cf. Hubert Frankemölle, "Johannes der Täufer und Jesus im Matthäusevangelium: Jesus als Nachfolger des Täufers," *NTS* 42 (1996): 207–9. On the connection between Isa 40 and the kingdom of God, see the discussion of the allusion to Isa 40:4 in *T. Mos.* 10.1–4 in David W. Pao, *Acts and the Isaianic New Exodus* (WUNT 2/138; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000; repr. Biblical Studies Library; Grand Rapids: Baker, 2002), 43.

²⁹ France, *Matthew*, 105. Cf. Blomberg, "Matthew," 12–13.

³⁰ As noted in e.g., *Op. imp. Matt.* 3 (Thomas Oden, ed., *Incomplete Commentary on Matthew [Opus imperfectum]* [trans. James Kellerman; 2 vols; ACT; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Academic, 2010], 1:45); Yamasaki, *John the Baptist*, 83.

³¹ As noted in e.g., Hagner, *Matthew*, 1:45; Harrington, *Matthew*, 51; Gundry, *Matthew*, 45.

³² Ernst, *Johannes der Täufer*, 156; Häfner, *Der verheißene Vorläufer*, 22.

This shift makes for stronger parallelism between the description of John's dress (v. 4a: εἶχεν ἔνδυμα αὐτοῦ ἀπὸ τριχῶν καμήλου καὶ ζώνην δερματίνην περὶ τὴν ὀσφὺν αὐτοῦ) and the description of John's diet (v.4b: ἡ τροφή ἣν αὐτοῦ ἀκρίδες καὶ μέλι ἄγριον).³³ Second, Matthew depicts John as wearing a garment made of camel hair through the use of ἔνδυμα and ἀπὸ.³⁴ Third, Matthew's construction shifts the reference to John's eating habits to describe John's diet as consisting exclusively of locusts and wild honey.³⁵

Scholars often view the description of John's dress in 3:4 as making a connection between John and Elijah.³⁶ The strongest argument for this position is the similarity between Matt 3:4 (ζώνην δερματίνην περὶ τὴν ὀσφὺν αὐτοῦ) and 4 Kgdms 1:8 (ζώνην

³³ W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:296; Gundry, *Matthew*, 45.

³⁴ A point highlighted in Eve-Marie Becker, "Kamelhaare ... und wilder Honig: Der historische Wert und die theologische Bedeutung der biographischen Täufer-Notiz (Mk 1,6)," in *Die bleibende Gegenwart des Evangeliums: Festschrift für Otto Merk zum 70. Geburtstag* (ed. Roland Gebauer and Martin Meiser; Marburger Theologische Studien 76; Marburg: N. G. Elwert, 2003), 16. On the use of ἀπὸ to denote material source elsewhere in Matthew, see W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:295.

³⁵ While noted by others (e.g., Keener, *Matthew*, 119), James Kelhoffer has emphasized the importance of this difference the greatest (*The Diet of John the Baptist: "Locusts and Wild Honey" in Synoptic and Patristic Interpretation* [WUNT 176; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005], 4–6)

³⁶ E.g., Pierre Bonnard, *L'Évangile selon Saint Matthieu* (2d ed.; CNT 1; Paris: Delachaux & Niestlé, 1970), 33; Ernst Bammel, "The Baptist in Early Christian Tradition," *NTS* 18 (1971–72): 101; David Hill, *The Gospel of Matthew* (NCB; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1972), 91; Meier, "John the Baptist," 389; Poul Nepper-Christensen, "Die Taufe im Matthäusevangelium im Lichte der Traditionen über Johannes den Täufer," *NTS* 31 (1985): 194; Patte, *Matthew*, 48; W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:295; Ernst, *Johannes der Täufer*, 157; Hagner, *Matthew*, 1:48; Harrington, *Matthew*, 51; Anderson, *Matthew's Narrative Web*, 85; Gundry, *Matthew*, 45; Frankemölle, "Johannes der Täufer," 206–7; Markus Öhler, *Elia im Neuen Testament: Untersuchungen zur Bedeutung des alttestamentlichen Propheten im Neuen Testament* (BZNW 88; Berlin/New York: de Gruyter, 1997), 71; Donald Senior, *The Gospel of Matthew* (IBT; Nashville: Abingdon, 1997), 53; Yamasaki, *John the Baptist*, 83–84; Keener, *Matthew*, 118; Carter, *Matthew and the Margins*, 91; Luz, *Matthew*, 1:48; Rudolf Schnackenburg, *The Gospel of Matthew* (trans. Robert R. Barr; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), 139; Nolland, *Matthew*, 139; France, *Matthew*, 105–6; Basser, *Mind behind the Gospels*, 78; Osborne, *Matthew*, 112; Craig A. Evans, *Matthew* (NCBC; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 68. Joan E. Taylor notes that the remark about John's dress may have supplied a link to Elijah but was not intended to be so by the historical Baptist (*The Immerser: John the Baptist within Second Temple Judaism* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997], 35). For a more extended discussion on the connection between John's dress and the prophet Elijah, see Paul Joüon, "Le costume d'Elie et celui de Jean Baptiste," *Bib* 16 (1935): 74–81.

δερματίνην περιεζωσμένος τὴν ὄσφυν αὐτοῦ). Closer examination of Matt 3:4, however, reveals a number of difficulties with the description of John evoking the figure of Elijah.³⁷ One weakness is that Matt 3:4 is not an *exact* parallel to 4 Kgdms 1:8 and the description of Elijah wearing a leather belt is a minor feature in the description of Elijah, meaning that an allusion to 4 Kgdms 1:8 may not be readily discerned by the original audience. In addition, the use of a leather belt could be typical of a Bedouin; it was not something unique to Elijah or even unusual. Moreover, 4 Kgdms 1:8 states that Elijah is a hairy man (ἀνὴρ δασύς), not that he wears a garment of animal hair,³⁸ and traditions speak of Elijah wearing the skin of sheep and goats rather than the hair of camel (see Heb 11:37; *1 Clem.* 17:1).³⁹ The word *μηλωτή* appears exclusively in the LXX in reference to the prophet's mantle (3 Kgdms 19:13, 19; 4 Kgdms 2:8, 13, 14) while *ἔνδυμα*, the term

³⁷ Those who note problems with viewing the details of Matt 3:4/Mark 1:6 as connecting John with the prophet Elijah include Kraeling, *John the Baptist*, 14–16; John A. T. Robinson, “Elijah, John, and Jesus: An Essay in Detection,” in *Twelve New Testament Studies* (London: SCM, 1962), 29 n. 2; Meier, *A Marginal Jew*, 2:46–49. The skepticism these writers note in their discussions of the historical Baptist appears in regard to the Matthean Baptist in Häfner, *Der verheißene Vorläufer*, 27–28. Also see the following examinations of both the historical Baptist and the portrayal of the Baptist in the Synoptics: Philipp Vielhauer, “Tracht und Speise Johannes des Täufers,” in idem, *Aufsätze zum Neuen Testament* (Munich: Chr. Kaiser, 1965), 47–54; E. M. Becker, “Kamelhaare,” 13–28. An objection to a reference to Elijah in 3:4 does not challenge an emphasis on John as Elijah in Matthew as a whole, as demonstrated by Häfner's rejection of a reference to Elijah here while still stressing the importance on the Elijah them for Matthew in *Der verheißene Vorläufer*, 401–11.

³⁸ While some argue that the Hebrew of 2 Kings 1:8 could indicate that John had a garment of hair (e.g., W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:295; Yamasaki, *John the Baptist*, 84), the Hebrew phrase (*בְּעַל שֵׂעָר*) seems to be an idiomatic one that points a person being hairy rather than a possessor of a garment of hair (see *HALOT*, 1:143). English translations are divided in regards to whether 2 Kings 1:8 describes Elijah as hairy (KJV, CEV, NRSV, NASB, HCSB, NJPS, NET) or wearing a garment of hair (RSV, NAB, NJB, ESV, NIV). Josephus describes John as a “hairy man” in *Ant.* 9.22, though in a slightly different way (*ἄνθρωπος πονέλεγον δασύν*). The same Greek expression that appears in 4 Kgdms 1:8 occurs in LXX Gen 27:11 to describe Esau as a “hairy man.”

³⁹ Heb 11:37: *ἐν μηλωταῖς, ἐν αἰγείοις δέρμασιν; 1 Clem.* 17:1: *ἐν δέρμασιν αἰγείοις καὶ μηλωταῖς*. Both traditions do not speak of this attire as unique to Elijah. On the lack of parallel references to clothing with camel's hair, see Nolland, *Matthew*, 139. Kraeling highlights that the camel would be the animal upon which a nomad would depend, so the Baptist's use of camel hair would make sense of his wilderness setting, reflecting the dress of a nomad (*John the Baptist*, 14–15).

used here, never occurs in the Elijah narratives.⁴⁰ The parallelism in Matthew's description of John's dress and diet suggests a similar theme linking the two, but there is no link between John's eating habits and Elijah.⁴¹ Furthermore, no connection to the figure of Elijah is made in the Scripture Matthew cites in chapter 3 (Isa 40:3).⁴² Finally, while some writers in the early church found a reference to Elijah here, this reference was by no means universal, as many writers note other meanings for John's attire.⁴³

Prominent alternative interpretations for John's dress and diet also are unconvincing.⁴⁴ Some writers maintain that John's dress is the common wardrobe of the prophets (Zech 13:4), but there is a paucity of evidence for a distinctive dress of the prophets and LXX Zech 13:4 uses *δέρις*, not *ἔνδυμα*, to describe the wardrobe of a

⁴⁰ The LXX uses *ἔνδυμα* in 2 Kgdms 1:24; 20:8; 4 Kgdms 10:22; Pss 68:12; 132:2; Prov 31:22; Isa 63:2; Lam 4:14; Dan 3:21; 7:9; Zeph 1:8; Wis 18:24; Ep Jer 1:10; *Ps. Sol.* 2:20.

⁴¹ On the lack of connection between John's diet and Elijah, see Robert Macina, "Jean le Baptiste était-il Élie? Examen de la tradition néotestamentaire," *Proche Orient chrétien* 34 (1984): 214; Kelhoffer, *The Diet of John the Baptist*, 4–5, 12–35; cf. Yamasaki, *John the Baptist*, 84. Bammel offers a link between John's diet and Elijah, but his proposal is less than compelling and based on later rabbinic texts ("The Baptist in Early Christian Tradition," 101 n. 4).

⁴² Matthew could break a possible allusion to Mal 3:4 that appears in Mark 1:5 by altering the Markan order of Judea and Jerusalem to Jerusalem and Judea (W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:297 n. 23).

⁴³ Kelhoffer notes that a connection between John's dress and his identity of Elijah appears in some early church writers, such as Clement, *Str.* 3.53.3; Origen, *Mat. Cat.* 39 (*The Diet of John the Baptist*, 4, n. 8), but examination of selections of various early Christians writers (Manlio Simonetti, ed., *Matthew* [2 vols; ACCSNT 1; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Academic, 2001, 2002], 1a:40–41; Thomas Aquinas, *Catena Aurea* [trans. William Whiston; London: J. G. F. and J. Rivington, 1842], 95–96) reveals this stance was by no means a universal or even a dominant interpretation. In addition, those that note a connection between the description of John and Elijah also highlight other meanings. For example, Jerome notes that the dress of Elijah (and John) was a mark of mortification of sin (Jerome *Hom. Exod* 91 [FC 57:240], as cited in Keener, *Matthew*, 118 n. 131). For other discussions of the Church Fathers, see Ernst, *Johannes der Täufer*, 242–44.

⁴⁴ These views are sometimes substitutes for a connection with Elijah and sometimes used in conjunction with a reference to Elijah, with many scholars finding a reference to Elijah in John's clothing but a different reference in his diet.

prophet.⁴⁵ In addition, there seems to be little or no connection between John's diet and the prophets.⁴⁶ John's dress and diet do not present him as showing repentance or issuing a call for repentance, as Matthew uses the word *ἔνδυμα* rather than the term used in other contexts to call for repentance (*ῥῶ/σάκκος*).⁴⁷ Moreover, John's diet appears to be typical of the region and thus not distinctive of the poor or of ascetics.⁴⁸ Finally, while there is a

⁴⁵ For similar a conclusion to the issue of John's dress and the prophets, see esp. Häfner, *Der verheißene Vorläufer*, 23–26 (cf. Vielhauer, "Tracht und Speise," 51). Other texts used to show John's attire as the dress of a prophet include Isa 20:2; 1 Sam 28:14; Heb 11:37. This view is offered in e.g., Scobie, *John the Baptist*, 128–29 (regarding the historical Baptist); Richard A. Edwards, *Matthew's Story of Jesus* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1985), 15; E. M. Becker, "Kamelhaare," 16, 26 (on the Matthean Baptist); cf. Jo. Taylor, *The Immerser*, 35–38. Michael Tilly has offered the most substantial argument for both John's dress and diet identifying him as a prophet in *Johannes der Täufer und die Biographie der Propheten: Die synoptische Täuferüberlieferung und das jüdische Prophetenbild zur Zeit des Täufers* (BWANT 7/17; Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1994), 167–85. For others that viewed John's diet as that of a prophet, see Kelhoffer, *The Diet of John the Baptist*, 16–17. In commenting that "a garment woven with camel's hair designates the peculiar clothing of this prophetic figure," Hilary does not seem to interpret John's clothing as distinctive of prophets (*On Matthew 2.2* [Simonetti, *Matthew*, 1a:40]). A couple of witnesses have *δέρις* instead of *τρίχας* in Mark 1:6 (D, a), but there are no variants in Matt 3:4 featuring *δέρις*.

⁴⁶ Kelhoffer, *The Diet of John the Baptist*, 17; Yamasaki, *John the Baptist*, 84. Against Tilly, *Johannes*, 38, 175–87, who argues for a connection between John's diet and the prophets on the basis of a controversial claim found in Otto Böcher, "Aß Johannes der Täufer kein Brot (Luk. VII.33)?" *NTS* 18 (1971–72): 90–92. For an evaluation of Böcher's position, see Meier, *A Marginal Jew*, 2:48.

⁴⁷ On this view, see esp. Jo. Taylor, *The Immerser*, 35–38; cf. Scobie, *John the Baptist*, 136–40. Others that link John's description with a call for repentance include Turner, *Matthew*, 109; Chrysostom, *Hom. Matt.* 10.4 (NPNF¹ 10:64); Peter Chrysologus, *Sermons*, 167.8–9 (Simonetti, *Matthew*, 1a:41). Adolf von Schlatter highlights that John possesses the garments of the repentance and the poor (*Der Evangelist Matthäus: Seine Sprache, sein Zeil, seine Selbständigkeit. Ein Kommentar zum ersten Evangelium* [6th ed.; Stuttgart: Calwer, 1963], 60), combining this position with the view discussed in the following note.

⁴⁸ See e.g., Vielhauer, "Tracht und Speise," 53; E. M. Becker, "Kamelhaare," 20–21. The normalcy of John's dress among Bedouins is readily recognized (e.g., Scobie, *John the Baptist*, 128, 135–36; W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:296; Ernst, *Johannes der Täufer*, 286), but Luz rejects the position that John's diet is the normal diet of a Bedouin, which he notes is "bread, milk, and dates" (*Matthew*, 1:136 n. 19). It need not be argued, however, that the normal diet of a Bedouin consisted *only* of locusts and honey, but rather that the consumption of locusts and honey were normal for this group of people. On the consumption of locusts by Bedouins and discussion of Jerome's comments in *Adv. Iovin.* 2.7, 15 that mentions the normalcy of eating locusts, see Kelhoffer, *The Diet of John the Baptist*, 36–79. On honey as a "regular sweetener in the Palestinian diet" and a commodity "widely used in the ancient Mediterranean world," see Keener, *Matthew*, 119. For a thorough discussion of honey in the ancient world, see Kelhoffer, *The Diet of John the Baptist*, 81–99. Those that think John's diet reflects that of the poor include Keener, *Matthew*, 118–19; Carter, *Matthew and the Margins*, 95; Osborne, *Matthew*, 112. Those that find asceticism in both John's dress and diet include Sand, *Matthäus*, 66; Craig L. Blomberg, *Matthew* (NAC 22; Nashville: Broadman, 1992), 75; W. Barnes Tatum, *John the Baptist and Jesus: A Report of the Jesus*

sense in which John's behavior regarding dress and food reflects Jesus' teaching in the Sermon on the Mount in that John does not worry about what he will wear or eat (see Matt 6:25–33),⁴⁹ it seems doubtful that the primary emphasis of this description is to demonstrate John's proper behavior as a disciple.

The Markan description of John's diet and dress reflects that of a man living in the wilderness, and the same meaning is present in the similar description of the Baptist in Matthew,⁵⁰ with Matthew's depiction of the diet of John as consisting (solely) of locusts and wild honey offering an additional element by associating John the Baptist with other "wilderness survivors."⁵¹ Analogous diets of food found in the wilderness appear in traditions about Isaiah (*Mart. Isa.* 2:7–11) and the group of Jews led by Judas Maccabeus (2 Macc 5:21–26), as each party resided in the wilderness due to the threat of persecution. The fact that John preaches in an area (Judea) hostile to Jesus (2:22–23) suggests that John's presence in the wilderness was due to persecution akin to these figures who offered protests against the authorities of their time. John's dress also reflects that of a survivor living in the wilderness who offers some sort of critique or protest of

Seminar (Sonoma, CA: Polebridge, 1994), 116; Luz, *Matthew*, 1:135–36. A number of writers note that John's diet reflects asceticism and that his clothes point to him being Elijah (e.g., W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:296–97; Gundry, *Matthew*, 45; Yamasaki, *John the Baptist*, 84; Schnackenburg, *Matthew*, 30).

⁴⁹ On John as a model disciple due to his behavior, see Lisa M. Bowens, "The Role of John the Baptist in Matthew's Gospel," *WW* 30 (2010): 312. Cf. Chromatius, *Tractate on Matthew* 9.1 (Simonetti, *Matthew*, 1a:40); Jo. Taylor, *The Immerser*, 38–39. Many writers that deem John's diet as a sign of his asceticism regard John's asceticism as an example for followers of Jesus.

⁵⁰ On the the Markan Baptist, see esp. Vielhauer, "Tracht und Speise," 47–54; E. M. Becker, "Kamelhaare," 13–28; Kelhoffer, *The Diet of John the Baptist*, 121–23 (cf. the discussion of the historical Baptist in Meier, *A Marginal Jew*, 2:49). On a similar viewpoint adapted in Matthew, see Häfner, *Der verheißene Vorläufer*, 28–29.

⁵¹ Kelhoffer, *The Diet of John the Baptist*, 124–28. The elements of John's diet are food that grew without human labor, further indicating that John resides away from society. On the historical John's diet as consisting of "natural food," see Lupieri, "John the Baptist in New Testament Traditions," 439–41;

the status quo.⁵² Since Isa 40:3 reminds the audience that renewal happens in the wilderness, human hostility fulfills God's plan like in Matt 2:13–23.

While the note about John's diet and dress may primarily show him as a man in the wilderness protesting the world in which he lives, it also supplies the audience an insight into his place among the various groups within Judaism since John's choice of wardrobe and food reflects first-century *halakic* debates. John's practices would align him most closely with the views of the Pharisees,⁵³ as he wears the product of an (unclean) animal (Lev 11:4),⁵⁴ does not seem to have special practices like those reflected in CD 12.13–15 to keep the purity of locusts allowed under the Mosaic Law (Lev

idem, "The Law and the Prophets Were until John: John the Baptist between Jewish Halakhot and Christian History of Salvation," *Neot* 35 (2001): 49–56; Jo. Taylor, *The Immerser*, 34.

⁵² Even though there is not an exact parallel with a figure clothed in camel's hair, John's garment fits a figure who has been "cut off from all of society's amenities" (Keener, *Matthew*, 118), recalling others who wore garments that were animals products while living on the fringes of society (Heb 11:37; *1 Clem.* 17:1; cf. Josephus, *J.W.* 1.480 and the discussion of this text in Kraeling, *John the Baptist*, 15). Also see discussion of John's garment showing him to be on the fringe of society in Jerome H. Neyrey, *Honor and Shame in the Gospel of Matthew* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1998), 63. The use of camel hair rather than sheep or goat skin could stem from the practices of the historical Baptist, but may also indicate that John was more marginalized than figures before him.

⁵³ See Lupieri, "The Law and Prophets," 50–52; Jo. Taylor, *The Immerser*, 42; James Kelhoffer, "Did John the Baptist Eat Like a Former Essene? Locust-Eating in the Ancient Near East and at Qumran," *DSD* 11 (2004): 294–314. Against Stevan L. Davies, "John the Baptist and Essene Kashruth," *NTS* 29 (1983): 569–71; James H. Charlesworth, "John the Baptizer and Qumran Barriers in Light of the *Rule of the Community*," in *The Provo International Conference on the Dead Sea Scrolls* (ed. D. W. Parry and E. Ulrich; STDJ 30; Leiden: Brill, 1999), 353–75, both of whom contend that John's practices reflect the practices of the Essenes. The lack of attention to cooking techniques of locusts would seem more reflective of the practices of the Pharisees, and John's dress and consumption of wild honey disagrees with the practices described in the various works related to Qumran, which for the sake of simplicity will be classified as Essene. It is unclear where the Sadducees stood on these issues.

⁵⁴ For discussions of whether one could wear clothing made from animals, see 11QT 47.7–18; 51.1–5; 4QMMT^b 17–23; 4Q268 fr. 1 col. 2; *m. Hul.* 9.1; *Teh.* 1.4; *'Ed.* 6.3; *Yad.* 4.6. Some early commentators noted the significance of the fact that John wore an unclean animal, viewing this as a sign of the inclusion of Gentiles; see the excerpts from Maximus of Turin and Theodore of Mopsuestia (*Fragment* 12) in Simonetti, *Matthew*, 1a:40–41. Since, as Lupieri points out, it is unlikely that John had a loom to make it himself ("John the Baptist in New Testament Traditions," 441), it would seem that John did not think he could become impure due to the lack of purity of the one who made the garment.

11:22),⁵⁵ and eats wild honey that could contain the larvae of bees or other impurities (against CD 12.12b).⁵⁶ This observation about John's *halakic* practices would be equally true of the Markan text, but Matthew's special interest in the "scribes and Pharisees" and the appearance of the Pharisees at John's baptism in 3:7 increases the likelihood of its relevancy for Matthew. Therefore, the practices of the Matthean John suggest that he differs from the Essenes and has certain equivalences with the Pharisees.

The response of the crowds to John's call for repentance and announcement of the imminent arrival of the kingdom appears in 3:5–6. There are some slight variations between the groups responding to John listed by Mark and Matthew. The city of Jerusalem is present on both lists, but Matthew mentions Jerusalem first and refers to the city itself (ἐξεπορεύετο πρὸς αὐτὸν Ἱεροσόλυμα) rather than the inhabitants (Mark 1:5: ἐξεπορεύετο πρὸς αὐτὸν ... οἱ Ἱεροσολυμίται πάντες).⁵⁷ In addition to placing the reference to Judea after mentioning Jerusalem, Matthew also alters the note from "all the country (χώρα) of Judea" (Mark 1:5) to "all Judea" (Matt 3:5). Jerusalem and Judea are two places of hostility towards Jesus in Matthew, with their order in Matt 3:5 matching their

⁵⁵ On regulations concerning the consumption of locusts, also see *m. Ter.* 10.9, 11.1; *m. Ber.* 6.3; *m. 'Ed.* 8.4; *m. Hul.* 3.7, 8.1; *m. 'Abod. Zar.* 2.7.

⁵⁶ On various opinions as to how to safeguard the purity of honey, see *m. Mak.* 3.8, 6.4; *Teh.* 3.1; *b. Bek.* 7b. Cf. Philo's comment about the Essenes in Eusebius, *Praep. Ev.* 8.1.8. It should be noted, however, that some rabbis were less lenient in regards to the purity of honey (see *m. Mak.* 6.4; *b. Bek.* 7b, as noted in Lupieri, "The Law and Prophets," 51), so John's behavior in relation to honey could also have made him deviant in the eyes of some, even potentially most, Pharisees.

⁵⁷ On the rarity of the Markan Ἱεροσολυμίται, see W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:297. Matthew's use of the city rather than the Markan term thus could be stylistic, with the city serving as a metonymy to stand for its residents.

order of appearance in chapter 2.⁵⁸ Matthew lists an additional group responding to John: “all the region around the Jordan” (πᾶσα ἡ περίχωρος τοῦ Ἰορδάνου).

These changes both enhance John’s popularity and temper it. The addition of “all the region around the Jordan” expands John’s geographical and numerical influence, showing John having a considerable following from this region and possessing a good reputation.⁵⁹ The lack of use of “all” in connection to Jerusalem, however, indicates that John enjoyed limited popularity in the capital city.⁶⁰ Matthew’s description of a non-universal response of Jerusalem to John is not surprising in light of “all Jerusalem” being troubled at the news of Jesus’ birth (2:3). The reference to “the region around the Jordan” may recall the location of Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen 13:10, 11; 19:17, 28; cf. *Jub.* 16.5–6), with John’s discussion of individuals fleeing from punishment by fire (3:7–12) akin to that punishment experienced by these cities offering a point of correspondence to this

⁵⁸ Gundry notes that the placement of Jerusalem at the head of the list causes a “natural progression from Jerusalem eastward to through surrounding Judea to the region around the Jordan River” (*Matthew*, 45).

⁵⁹ Cf. the discussion of a “good reputation” for Jesus in Neyrey, *Honor and Shame*, 35–37, 129. W. Davies and Allison note that the use of “all” could point forward to the discussion of 17:11, in which Elijah is said to “restore all things” (*Matthew*, 1:297–98). While this is possible, one must note that Mark stresses that “all” Judea and “all” the people of Jerusalem come to John while Matthew does not note that “all” Jerusalem comes to him. For further critique of the opinion of W. Davies and Allison, see Häfner, *Der verheißene Vorläufer*, 33. If a link does exist between 3:5 and 17:11, it could be that there were some who did not “know” him (17:12).

⁶⁰ While one could argue that Matthew omits a reference to “all Jerusalem” because he states that the city itself, not its residents, come out to him and a city acts as a unity and cannot have only a part of it move, three factors support Matthew’s attempt to convey a partial response to John. First, Matthew’s source here (Mark) highlights the entirety of Jerusalem’s response, which Matthew reworks and omits; he seems intentionally to eliminate the reference to “all” regarding Jerusalem. Second, the absence of “all” before Jerusalem stands in contrast to the other two groups in Matthew’s account. Third, and perhaps most important, Matthew states that “all” Jerusalem was trouble at the news of Jesus birth (2:3) and that the whole (πᾶσα) city was in turmoil when Jesus entered Jerusalem (21:10), indicating that Matthew uses πᾶς to convey the people of Jerusalem acting together.

tradition.⁶¹ Therefore, the description of the crowds coming to John shows sinners repenting at John's ministry while many of the elite in Jerusalem fail to respond properly.⁶²

Reference to the activity by which John is identified in 3:1 finally appears in 3:6, as the text states that those who came to John “were baptized in the Jordan River by him, confessing their sins.” A difference with Mark 1:5b is that the phrase ἐν τῷ Ἰορδάνῃ ποταμῷ precedes rather than follows ὑπ' αὐτοῦ.⁶³ A common explanation of this change is that the Evangelist moves ἐν τῷ Ἰορδάνῃ ποταμῷ so that it stands in close proximity with ἡ περίχωρος τοῦ Ἰορδάνου in 3:5.⁶⁴ Another possibility is that the order places a stronger emphasis on the location of John's baptizing work.⁶⁵ John's use of a river to administer

⁶¹ Cf. Edmondo Lupieri, *Giovanni Battista nelle tradizioni sinottiche* (StBib 82; Brescia: Paideia, 1988), 104. On the possibility that the reference to the region around the Jordan points to the restoration of Israel happening through the presence of the Transjordan tribes, see Gundry, *Matthew*, 45.

⁶² On John's “baptism of repentance” as a call to back to the law, see Ernst Lohmeyer, *Das Evangelium des Matthäus* (ed. Werner Schmauch; 4th ed.; KEK; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1956), 44.

⁶³ While ποταμῷ is missing in D, L, and f¹³ as well as in the Majority Text, it is present in witnesses such as κ, B, f¹, and 33 and is most likely original, with the omission due to perceived redundancy.

⁶⁴ E.g., W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:298.

⁶⁵ The words ὑπ' αὐτοῦ are often viewed as showing that John administered these baptisms himself, which many scholars think is a distinction element of the historical John's washing in comparison with other Jewish groups (see e.g., Schlatter, *Matthäus*, 54, 63; Adela Yarbro Collins, “The Origin of Christian Baptism,” *StudLit* 19 [1989]: 41; Meier, *A Marginal Jew*, 2:51; Robert L. Webb, *John the Baptizer and Prophet* [JSNTSup 62; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1991], 180–81; James D. G. Dunn, *Jesus Remembered* [Christianity in the Making 1; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003], 357–58). Jo. Taylor, however, has raised the question if that truly was a major point of differentiation, as it is unclear if John physically performed the action and if all other washings were self-administered (*The Immerser*, 49–58). Therefore, the use of the Jordan may be more noteworthy than the agency of John. On John's use of the Jordan as being somewhat odd, see Colin Brown, “What Was John the Baptist Doing?” *BBR* 7 (1997): 38–39; cf. Clare K. Rothschild, “Echoes of a Whisper: The Uncertain Authenticity of Josephus' Witness to John the Baptist,” in *Ablution, Initiation, and Baptism: Late Antiquity, Early Judaism, and Early Christianity* (ed. David Hellholm, Tor Vegge, Øyvind Norderval, and Christer Hellholm; BZNW 176; 3 vols.; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2011), 1:267. While there is no need to accept the etymological meaning of the “Jordan” discussed

his washing fits the background of Jewish washings, as a river constitutes “living water” and would be the form of water needed to purify “cases in which the uncleanness caused by the contagion was particularly severe.”⁶⁶ Matthew, however, does not simply state that John used a generic body of “living water.” Rather, he highlights John’s use of the Jordan, suggesting some importance to this particular river.

A number of possibilities have been raised regarding the significance of the Jordan. Some writers view John’s use of the Jordan as recalling the crossing of this river in Josh 3:14–17, offering a new entry into the Promised Land.⁶⁷ Nothing in Matthew’s text, however, points to a connection between John’s baptism and this event.⁶⁸ A link to the Garden of Eden is possible in light of Gen 13:10 and *L.A.E.* 6–8 (*Apoc. Mos.* 29.13), but the latter text is notoriously difficult to date and the reference to Gen 13:10 relates more to the location of the people that come to John’s baptism than his use of the Jordan.⁶⁹ The use of the verb βαπτίζω to refer to washing in the Jordan in the story of

by Rabanus (see Aquinas, *Catena Aurea*, 97), his attention to the reference to the Jordan does indicate that this note about the Jordan may have special meaning in the text.

⁶⁶ Webb, *John the Baptizer*, 108. On the need for purification in living water, see Lev 14:5–6, 50–52, 15:3; Num 19:17; Deut 21:4. The rabbis eventually ruled that this type of water was the highest quality for purification (see *m. Miqw.* 1.1–8). On the meaning of John’s use of running water within the context of Second Temple Judaism and later rabbinic practice, see Webb, *John the Baptizer*, 195–96; Jo. Taylor, *The Immerser*, 59–60; Lupieri, “The Law and Prophets,” 51–52. For caution in regarding John’s baptism as in running water, however, see Bruce Chilton, “John the Baptist: His Immersion and Death,” in *Dimensions of Baptism: Biblical and Theological Studies* (ed. Stanley E. Porter and Anthony R. Cross; JSNTSup 234; London: Sheffield Academic, 2002), 38. Another opinion of the significance of running water appears in Kraeling, *John the Baptist*, 102, 113.

⁶⁷ On the possibility of such a meaning in the baptism of the historical John, see C. C. McCown, “The Scene of John’s Ministry,” *JBL* 59 (1940): 127–28; Webb, *John the Baptizer*, 360–66; C. Brown, “What Was John the Baptist Doing?” 44–49; Carter, *Matthew and the Margins*, 95–96.

⁶⁸ As also pointed out by Nolland, *Matthew*, 141. Kraeling rejects this view of the historical John’s baptism (*John the Baptist*, 103–5).

⁶⁹ W. Davies and Allison discuss a possible connection to Eden, noting that this link “cannot be altogether excluded” (*Matthew*, 296 n. 19) in light of the texts connecting the Jordan to Adam and possible

Namaan (2 Kings 5:14) would seem to be the closest link. Potentially of relevance in this story is Namaan's disregard for the Jordan (2 Kings 5:12).

The Jordan, therefore, did not always have positive connotations, and one should also note that it does not appear that the Jordan had a special status amongst Jews at the time of the Baptist or the composition of Matthew.⁷⁰ In fact, later rabbis would limit its use for ritual purifications by placing the river in the second category among cleansing bodies (*m. Par.* 8.8–10), although it is unclear how early this ruling first appeared.⁷¹ The use of the Jordan therefore may represent a *halakic* difference between John and the Pharisees, as the Pharisees think that the Jordan can offer purity but it would be a dubious choice for a special washing in preparation for the arrival of the kingdom of heaven, which seems to be the meaning of the Matthean John's baptism (see discussion below).⁷² The use of the Jordan would also differentiate John's baptism from the washings at Qumran, where the residents used cisterns to collect rain water. Therefore, John's use of the Jordan could further distinguish John from other forms of Judaism in the first century, implying that "there was no advantage in the pools of Qumran, the double vatted

overtones of paradise in John's diet. For discussion of the *Life of Adam and Eve* in connection to John's baptism, see Webb, *John the Baptizer*, 121–22.

⁷⁰ See examination and conclusion in W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:300.

⁷¹ A prohibition on using the Jordan might also appear in CD 10.11, as one was not to use impure water, with a similar discussion appearing in *m. Miqw.* 2.1–2 (see C. Brown, "What Was John the Baptist Doing?" 42). Webb rightly notes that the ruling of *m. Par.* 8.8–10 might not be current at the time of John and only prohibited use of the Jordan for the waters of the red heifer but goes too far in saying that "it is unlikely that John or those receiving the baptism would have been concerned with such Pharisaic/rabbinic distinctions" (*John the Baptizer*, 181–82 n. 56).

⁷² Lupieri, "John the Baptist in New Testament Traditions," 441; idem, "The Law and Prophets," 51–52. Since the Jordan was running water, however, Pharisees may have considered it acceptable for certain types of washings (Jo. Taylor, *The Immerser*, 56).

miqvaoth of the Pharisees, or the private baths of aristocratic groups such as the Sadducees.”⁷³

Recognition of the similarities and differences between John’s baptism and the practices of other Jews of the time raises the question of the meaning of John’s baptism in Matthew. Was it a ritual purification, an initiation rite, a sacramental activity that bestowed the forgiveness of sins, or something entirely different? Since the concern here is the Matthean Baptist rather than the historical Baptist, focus will remain on Matthew’s depiction of John’s practice and how Matthew’s audience would understand John’s baptizing activity.⁷⁴ One should bear in mind both the limited nature of Matthew’s description of John’s baptizing practice and how this information differs from the information presented by other writers.

The evidence in Matthew rules out the legitimacy of a number of claims about the historical John’s baptism for the meaning of John’s baptism within Matthew’s narrative. For example, while scholars often view the baptism of John as only administered on a person once,⁷⁵ nothing in Matthew indicates this idea.⁷⁶ In fact, the use of the imperfect

⁷³ Chilton, “John the Baptist,” 38. Cf. Schlatter, *Matthäus*, 65.

⁷⁴ Voluminous literature exists discussing the background for and meaning of the baptism of the historical John. For various proposals, see Joseph Thomas, *Le mouvement baptiste en Palestine et Syrie (150 AV. J.-C.–300 AP. J.-C.)* (Gembloux: Duculot, 1935), 63–88; H. H. Rowley, “Jewish Proselyte Baptism and the Baptism of John,” *HUCA* 15 (1940): 313–34; Kraeling, *John the Baptist*, 95–122; Nils Dahl, “The Origin of Baptism,” *NTT* 56 (1955): 36–52; John A. T. Robinson, “The Baptism of John and the Qumran Community,” in idem, *Twelve New Testament Studies* (London: SCM, 1962), 11–27; Beasley-Murray, *Baptism in the New Testament*, 31–44; Scobie, *John the Baptist*, 90–116; Hartwig Thyen, “ΒΑΠΤΙΣΜΑ ΜΕΤΑΝΟΙΑΣ ΕΙΣ ΑΦΕΣΙΝ ΑΜΑΡΤΙΩΝ,” in *The Future of Our Religious Past: Essays in Honour of Rudolf Bultmann* (ed. James M. Robinson; trans. Charles E. Carlston and Robert P. Scharlemann; New York: Harper & Row, 1971), 131–68; Derwood Smith, “Jewish Proselyte Baptism and the Baptism of John,” *ResQ* 25 (1982): 13–32; Collins, “The Origin of Christian Baptism,” 28–36; Ernst, *Johannes der Täufer*, 320–40; Webb, *John the Baptizer*, 95–216; Meier, *A Marginal Jew*, 2:49–55; Jo. Taylor, *The Immerser*, 49–100.

⁷⁵ See e.g., A. Collins, “The Origin of Christian Baptism,” 41; Meier, *A Marginal Jew*, 2:51; Dunn, *Jesus Remembered*, 357. While common, this opinion is by no means universal, with some positing

tense to describe the baptism of the crowds (3:6) and the use of the present tense to describe John's baptism in the Baptist's speech in 3:11 may count against viewing John's baptism as only being administered once.⁷⁷ Matthew thus does not seem to draw a contrast between John's baptism and the washings of other Jewish groups based upon the issue of repeatability. Similarly, nothing in Matthew portrays John's baptism as a rite of initiation into a new group of followers.⁷⁸ The removal of the phrase "for the forgiveness of sins" in the description of John's baptism and placement at the Last Supper (26:28) rules out understanding the Matthean Baptist's rite as mediating forgiveness or a protest against the rites of the temple.

The minimal information that Matthew gives about John's baptism indicates that the audience would see it having some similarity to other Jewish washings of the time. As Robert Webb notes, "the predominant conception" for ablutions found in the Hebrew

that the historical John's baptism was repeatable (Jo. Taylor, *The Immerser*, 70; Chilton, "John the Baptist," 37). Webb rightly points out that the data about John given in Josephus and the NT on the whole is inconclusive (*John the Baptizer*, 183). While the tradition may not offer historical value, it should be noted that John is described as a Hermerobaptist in the *Pseudo-Clementines* (*Hom.* 2.23, as noted in Scobie, *John the Baptist*, 92 n. 1). Therefore, the view that John's baptism as "once-for-all" was by no means universal among early groups.

⁷⁶ Perhaps the strongest argument is that people seem to return to their normal occupations after receiving John's baptism in Luke 3:10–14 (Scobie, *John the Baptist*, 91–92), but this idea exclusively appears in Luke. The only evidence that might be offered in Matthew for an unrepeated baptism is that Jesus was only baptized once, but it is difficult to view the baptism of Jesus as representative of all other baptisms (see 3:14–15).

⁷⁷ Dunn's argument that the aorist is also used of John's baptism (*Jesus Remembered*, 357 n. 89) does not apply to Matthew's depiction of the Baptist, which only uses the present or imperfect tense.

⁷⁸ Matthew's text does not reflect a concern for showing the Baptist forming a particular group in this rite (see France, *Matthew*, 108–9). One could potentially argue that Matt 28:19 shows making disciples as involving baptism and teaching, which could indicate that baptism was the first step in becoming a disciple of the Baptist. While all John's disciples would likely have been baptized, making baptism a qualification for discipleship, the text does not stress that all who were baptized then became disciples of John or were then taught by him, as the only other detail Matthew includes concerning those baptized by John is that they confess sins (3:6). For more on the relation between discipleship and baptism, see n. 141 below.

Bible and Second Temple literature is to purify people from uncleanness and “if John’s baptism—an immersion performed in the context of the Jewish culture—did not have a cleansing function, this would probably be the most surprising and distinctive feature.”⁷⁹

Webb discusses the historical Baptist, but his observation would also apply to the Matthean text: the Jewish setting of Matthew makes it likely that the audience would understand John’s baptism as being one of purification unless given reasons for thinking otherwise.⁸⁰ The lack of delineation between John’s baptism and other purifying washings of the time offers little reason to deem John’s baptism to have a fundamentally different meaning, and the use of the verb βαπτίζω in the LXX (Sir 34:30; Jdt 12:7) and elsewhere in the NT to refer to ceremonial purifications (Mark 7:4; Luke 11:38) shows that it can refer to ceremonial washings.⁸¹

The Matthean John’s preaching of the coming of the kingdom and the arrival of a figure after him offers a context for this washing of purification. It would seem that the

⁷⁹ Webb, *John the Baptizer*, 194. See his discussion of the practices in *ibid.*, 95–162. Jo. Taylor further points out that even proselyte baptism would be tied to purity (*The Immerser*, 68; cf. 58–64). The observation that other washings at John’s time did not deal with sin but with purity also appears in Nolland, *Matthew*, 140–41, who highlights that forgiveness of sins comes through metaphorical rather than literal washings (see e.g., Isa 1:15–17; Jer 4:14; also Ps 51:7–9; Isa 4:2–6; Ezek 36:25–26, 33; 37:33; Jer 33:8; Rev 7:14; *Jub.* 1:23). It would seem that repentance leads to forgiveness of sin while immersion was needed in order to achieve bodily purity from the effects of sin.

⁸⁰ Writers who think John’s baptism brought bodily purity include Webb, *John the Baptizer*, 194–96; Jo. Taylor, *The Immerser*, 56–100; also see B. E. Thiering, “Inner and Outer Cleansing at Qumran as a Background to New Testament Baptism,” *NTS* 26 (1979–80): 266–77; Chilton, “John the Baptist,” 37–39; Destro and Pesce, *Encounters with Jesus*, 44. While these works deal with the historical John, their attention to the meaning of John’s baptism in light of the realities of first-century Judaism make their insights applicable to discussion of the Matthean Baptist.

⁸¹ The noun βαπτισμός also appears in these contexts (Mark 7:4, 8 v.1.; Heb 9:10), and this is the same word used by Josephus to describe John’s practice (BDAG, 165). It should be noted, however, that Matthew uses βάπτισμα, the word describing the rite of the church elsewhere (e.g., Rom 6:4; Eph 4:5), rather than βαπτισμός in 3:7; 21:25. However, it is unclear if there is an absolute distinction between the two terms in light of the use of βαπτισμός in Heb 6:2 and the variation amongst manuscripts concerning whether βαπτισμός or βάπτισμα appears in Col 2:12.

Matthean John's baptism differs from other washings of the time in having an eschatological thrust, as people respond to his announcement of the coming of the kingdom by being baptized. The need for purity to enter the temple (Philo, *Spec. Laws* 1.269; *Unchangeable* 7–8; Josephus, *J.W.* 5.227, 6.426–27; *Ant.* 12.145; *Ag.Ap.* 2.104; cf. *J.W.* 4.202; *m. Yoma* 3.3; *y. Yoma* 40b) indicates purity is needed to be in the presence of God.⁸² One can thus view John's baptismal practice as offering bodily purity in light of the anticipation of the kingdom of heaven.⁸³ This call for bodily purity matches the call for ethical purity that arises from his words to repent. In fact, John's preaching of repentance indicates that this baptism must be joined with true repentance (see esp. 3:7–10), perhaps leading to the note that John's baptism is “for repentance” (3:11).

The confession that accompanies John's baptism is the people confessing their sin in anticipation of the arrival of God's kingdom. Confession of sin would happen in times of “revival” (Ezra 10:1; Neh 9:2),⁸⁴ so it would not be surprising that people would confess their sins in preparation for the kingdom of heaven. Moreover, turning to God in whole-hearted obedience would lead one to confess sin and seek to turn from it.⁸⁵ Highlighting that confession of sins accompanies baptism could be indicative of the preparatory nature of John's baptism; people confess sin but must look elsewhere for

⁸² See Webb, *John the Baptizer*, 110; Jo. Taylor, *The Immerser*, 61–63.

⁸³ For a similar view of John's baptism, see the discussion in Dahl, “The Origin of Baptism,” 36–52. Cf. Jerome, *Comm. Matt.* 1.3.3 (FC 117:68).

⁸⁴ Osborne, *Matthew*, 112. The idea of a public confession of sins is also discussed in Meier, *A Marginal Jew*, 2:94–95 n. 158, 112–16, who notes that it could be a general confession of sin by the people rather than of individual sins. A confession of the sins of the people could make Jesus' baptism by John an activity akin to that of Ezra, who confesses the sins of the people (Daniel S. Dapaah, *The Relationship between John the Baptist and Jesus of Nazareth: A Critical Study* [Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2005], 89).

⁸⁵ Patte, *Matthew*, 49.

forgiveness, which will come in the ministry of the one who will “save his people from their sins” (1:21). John thus readies the people for the kingdom of heaven and to receive this forgiveness.⁸⁶

A number of key ideas about John the Baptist emerge in 3:1–6. First, the Evangelist identifies John as the fulfillment of the prophecy of Isa 40:3, indicating that his message should be seen as preparing for Jesus’ ministry as “God with us” that will save the people from their sins. In calling the people to repent, he shows that the current order is not sufficient. In addition to being in the wilderness to fulfill the prophetic word of Isaiah, John also appears there because he is a protester who finds himself at odds with the establishment. John does not fit neatly into any of the major Jewish groups of the time, although he is close to the positions of the Pharisees in some areas. While living on the margins of society, John influences masses, baptizing them so that they would stand pure in preparation for the imminent arrival of the kingdom of heaven.

Matthew 3:7–12

In vv. 7–12, Matthew presents his audience with an extended speech of the Baptist. While the Lukan parallels to Matt 3:7–10 and 3:11–12 occur in different scenes (see Luke 3:7–9, 15–17), there is no clear break in the narrative between Matt 3:7–10 and 3:11–12, causing 3:7–12 to be a single speech of the Baptist. Because 3:7–10 and 3:11–12 discuss different subjects, however, one can view the speech as having two subunits (vv. 7–10 and 11–12), but this division should be viewed as sections within a singular speech.

⁸⁶ W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:301.

Although there are similarities between Mark 1:7–8 and Matt 3:11–12, it seems best to view Matt 3:7–12 as derived from Q traditions.⁸⁷ The minimal differences between the wording of Matt 3:7–10//Luke 3:7–9⁸⁸ and Matt 3:11–12//Luke 3:15–17⁸⁹ make it likely that this speech comes from a written tradition (or traditions) possessed by both Matthew and Luke (Q). It is unclear if this shared tradition consisted of a single speech, a source with the two sayings in different contexts as in Luke, or sayings from multiple sources.⁹⁰ Redactional analysis of Matt 3:7–12 thus can look to Matthew’s hand in the wording of the passage but not its context or placement.

The precipitating force for John’s speech in 3:7–12 is the Baptist’s observation (Ἰδὼν) of many Pharisees and Sadducees “coming out to his baptism” (ἔρχομενους ἐπὶ τὸ

⁸⁷ That is, Mark 1:7–8 seems to be a secondary source for Matt 3:11–12, with the primary source being the Q tradition(s) (see Harry Fleddermann, “John and the Coming One (Matt 3:1–12//Luke 3:16–17),” *SBL Seminar Papers, 1984* [SBLSP 23; Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1984], 380). For a thorough discussion of the sources in this section, see Häfner, *Der verheißene Vorläufer*, 35–51.

⁸⁸ Three differences exist between Matt 3:7–10 and Luke 3:7–9: (1) a singular form of καρπός and ἄξιος appears in Matt 3:8 while the plural of each is present in Luke 3:8; (2) Matthew uses δόξητε λέγειν and Luke ἄρξῃσε λέγειν in John’s statement against presuming that descent from Abraham will save one from judgment (Matt 3:9//Luke 3:8); (3) the best manuscripts of Matthew lack the word καὶ between ἤδη δὲ and ἡ ἀξίω in Matt 3:10 while this conjunction appears in Luke 3:9. It is difficult to know if any of these differences are due to Matthew’s hand (for arguments on the originality of either form of the differences, see e.g., W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:305, 307; Meier, *A Marginal Jew*, 2:73–74). Even if the variances are due to Matthew, the significance of the changes seems minimal, driven more by style than by ideology.

⁸⁹ The largest number of differences between Matthew and Luke appear in Matt 3:11//Luke 3:16, the nature and significance of which will be discussed below. There are three points of divergence between Matt 3:12//Luke 3:17: (1) καὶ appears between αὐτοῦ and a form of the verb διακαθαρίζω only in Matthew; (2) the verbs διακαθαρίζω and συνάγω are in the future tense in Matthew and are aorist infinitives in Luke; (3) αὐτοῦ precedes εἰς τὴν ἀποθήκην in Matthew but follows the prepositional phrase in Luke, causing it to refer in Matthew to “his grain” and in Luke to “his threshing floor.” Any differences due to Matthew’s hand seem more likely to be stylistic than ideological (see discussion in Fleddermann, “John,” 379–80).

⁹⁰ Matthew’s combination of disparate teachings into the Sermon on the Mount may point towards the speech originally being two separate sayings. The similar saying in Mark 1:7–8 suggests that these sayings (Matt 3:7–10, 11–12) circulated independently at some point. Also see discussion in Risto Uro, “John the Baptist and the Jesus Movement: What Does Q Tell Us?” in *The Gospel Behind the Gospel: Current Studies in Q* (ed. R. A. Piper; NovTSup 75; Leiden: Brill, 1994), 244.

βάπτισμα αὐτοῦ) (3:7a). The Baptist directs his speech towards these groups (αὐτοῖς). Because this introduction differs from the way Luke frames the Baptist's speech (see Luke 3:7) and the Pharisees and Sadducees appear together as a group exclusively in Matthew among the Synoptics (Matt 16:1–12), many scholars deem this introduction Matthean, but such a conclusion is not certain nor necessary.⁹¹ The Pharisees head the list because they will be the primary opponents of Jesus and the connection with their rivals the Sadducees shows a unified front of opposition to John's ministry.⁹² The Pharisees and Sadducees explicitly appear together in Matthew twice,⁹³ as they come out to John's baptism (3:7) and ask Jesus for a sign (16:1). Here, the Baptist rebukes them and warns them that they are in danger (3:7–10), and Jesus later rebukes them for asking for a sign and warns his disciples about the danger of the "leaven" of the Pharisees and the Sadducees (16:1–12). Therefore, certain similarities exist in the respective interactions of John and Jesus with these groups.

A critical issue in understanding this passage is what Matthew intends to convey with the preposition ἐπί. Some scholars view ἐπί here as meaning "against," with Matthew portraying these groups as hostile to John and coming out to oppose, not

⁹¹ On the redactional nature of the introduction, see e.g., Walter Wink, *John the Baptist in the Gospel Tradition* (SNTSMS 7; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968), 34 n. 1; Meier, "John the Baptist," 389. While many scholars argue that the original audience for this sermon would be the Lukan crowds (e.g., James M. Robinson, Paul Hoffmann, and John S. Kloppenborg, eds., *The Critical Edition of Q* [Minneapolis: Fortress, 2000], 8), Luke has an interest in crowds, which may indicate that the reference to the crowds is from Luke rather than from his source (see Uro, "John the Baptist," 234). The audience in the tradition used by Matthew and Luke, if there even was an explicit audience, is not relevant for our purposes and may be impossible to determine.

⁹² With Luz, *Matthew*, 1:137. On this grouping as a "cross-party delegation," see France, *Matthew*, 110.

⁹³ The two parties both appear in Matt 22:34, but they are not explicitly working together.

receive, John's baptism.⁹⁴ Such a perspective would match the Gospel's portrayal of the Pharisees and Sadducees as opponents of Jesus. Because John's words in 3:7b–10 presuppose an audience seeking to benefit from baptism, however, it seems better to view ἐπί as denoting purpose, showing the Pharisees and Sadducees coming out with the intention that they would receive John's baptism.⁹⁵ That 21:25 and 32 indicate that the Pharisees reject John does not mean that they could not have initially come to receive his baptism, as Matthew often describes the Pharisees as performing the right actions for faulty reasons (6:1–18; 23:5, 16–28); this would be the first example and introduces the idea that the Pharisees live in hypocritical fashion as they seek to be respected and honored by the people.⁹⁶ In addition, John's speech here could lie behind their later dislike of him in the narrative, giving Matthew's audience an explanation for the opposition between these two figures. Furthermore, the description of the Pharisees as ones who cleanse the outside but are unclean on the inside (23:25) coheres with an image of them seeking to be washed by John but not having "purified" their inner character.⁹⁷

⁹⁴ E.g., Gundry, *Matthew*, 46; W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:304. Cf. Yamasaki, *John the Baptist*, 86. On ἐπί as meaning "against," see BDAG, 366 (definition 12). Others do not note that ἐπί means "against" but do highlight that the Pharisees and Sadducees come out to examine this new phenomenon rather than come out to receive John's baptism (see e.g., France, *Matthew*, 110).

⁹⁵ See e.g., Nolland, *Matthew*, 142; Turner, *Matthew*, 112. Those arguing for a meaning of "against" often find that the tension between the setting and the discourse stem from "imperfect" editing of Matthew (W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:304), but this explanation is both unsatisfactory and unnecessary, as the use of ἐπί to denote purpose is common (see definition 4 in BDAG, 364). This view appears in many earlier interpreters: Chromatius, *Tractate on Matthew*, 10.2 (Simonetti, *Matthew*, 1a:44); *Op. imp. Matt.* 3 (Oden, *Incomplete Commentary*, 1:48); Tatian, *Diatessaron* §4 (ANF 9:49). Cf. Chrysostom, *Hom. Matt.* 11.1 (NPNF¹ 10:67–68). A note that Pharisees were baptized by John appears in the *Pseudo-Clementines* (*Recog.* 1.54), but this statement could be part of an intention to link together John and the Pharisees, both of whom are deemed opponents of the truth in the *Pseudo-Clementines*.

⁹⁶ Cf. the discussion in Häfner, *Der verheißene Vorläufer*, 53.

⁹⁷ Jo. Taylor, *The Immerser*, 82–83. The unknown author of the *Op. imp. Matt.* states that these groups put their trust in water rather than the ways of God in Homily 3 (Oden, *Incomplete Commentary*, 1:48).

The use of $\delta\acute{\epsilon}$ in 3:7 hints at a difference between these groups and the great number of people from various regions coming to be baptized by John; unlike the masses, the Pharisees and Sadducees attempt to be baptized by John but do not submit to his teaching.

Since this is the first time that the Pharisees and the Sadducees appear in the Gospel of Matthew, John's words to them offer the audience a window through which to view these groups, with John's opinion of them likely being deemed accurate due to his identification as the fulfillment of Isa 40:3. Moreover, John's popularity in the narrative and in other texts of the time causes him to be a reliable figure, with his perspective on the Pharisees something that would influence Matthew's audience and serve as a "social weapon" in the dispute between Matthew's group and its opponents.⁹⁸ John's words reveal the Pharisees and Sadducees to be bad even before they speak, as the label of "brood of vipers" ($\gamma\epsilon\nu\nu\eta\mu\alpha\tau\alpha\ \acute{\epsilon}\chi\iota\delta\nu\tilde{\omega}\nu$) (3:7) portrays the Pharisees and Sadducees as especially evil people who will inflict harm.⁹⁹ Regardless of whether the emphasis on

⁹⁸ See Bruce J. Malina and Richard H. Rohrbaugh, *Social Science Commentary on the Synoptic Gospels* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992), 38; Bruce J. Malina and Jerome H. Neyrey, *Calling Jesus Names: The Social Value of Labels in Matthew* (Foundations and Facets: Social Facets; Sonoma, CA: Polebridge, 1998), 37, 47–48.

⁹⁹ On the characterization of the Pharisees and Sadducees preceding their activity in the narrative, see Yamasaki, *John the Baptist*, 87; Häfner, *Der verheißene Vorläufer*, 53. The label "brood of vipers" might refer to the "parent-killing" nature of snakes, see Craig S. Keener, "'Brood of Vipers' (Matthew 3.7; 12.34; 23.33)," *JSNT* 28 (2005): 3–11, with a similar view appearing earlier in *Op. imp. Matt.* 3 (Oden, *Incomplete Commentary*, 1:48–49); Chrysostom, *Hom.* 11.2 (*NPNF*¹ 10:68). In addition, this label might highlight them as poisonous and dangerous for others (W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:304). The reference to the "teaching" of the Pharisees and Sadducees as "leaven" uses another metaphor to describe the "infectious" nature of the Pharisees and Sadducees. The claim by some scholars (e.g. Ernst, *Johannes der Täufer*, 301) that the image of snakes would offer a point of connection Satan does not seem evident in the text (see Meier, *A Marginal Jew*, 2:72 n. 41). For discussion of other possible backgrounds for this phrase, see Häfner, *Der verheißene Vorläufer*, 58; Bassler, *Mind behind the Gospels*, 80. On the importance of charges that show individuals or groups causing harm, see Malina and Neyrey, *Calling Jesus Names*, 50–51.

John's rhetorical question in 3:7 falls upon the "who" (showing that it was not John) or "you" (showing the inadequate response of this group of people), John's words to the Pharisees and Sadducees show that they do not stand as true students of his message.¹⁰⁰

John's words refer to imminent judgment coming upon those who do not bear good fruit (3:7, 10).¹⁰¹ This focus upon judgment presents a new thrust in John's message, as the summary of his proclamation in 3:2 centered upon the arrival of the kingdom of heaven, a concept that implies judgment but highlights good news. This message of judgment is not directed towards all of Israel but to the Pharisees and Sadducees, and the command for them to "make fruit worthy of repentance" (3:8) informs Matthew's audience that the practices of the Pharisees and Sadducees are not sufficient for inclusion in the kingdom of heaven.¹⁰² John also declares that receiving his baptism alone is not enough to save one from final judgment; one can be ritually pure but in danger of judgment.¹⁰³

¹⁰⁰ For various opinions in terms of where to place the stress in the question of 3:7, see W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:305; Turner, *Matthew*, 112–13; Osborne, *Matthew*, 113.

¹⁰¹ The immediacy of judgment of the kingdom is indicated both by the use of ἤδη and the "vivid present tense" in 3:10 (Hagner, *Matthew*, 1:50). Against Carl R. Kazmierski, "The Stones of Abraham: John the Baptist and the End of Torah (Matt 3,7–10 par. Luke 3,7–9)," *Bib* 68 (1987): 30, there is no need to see 3:10 as indicating that judgment has begun. For a rebuttal to Kazmierski's argument, see Yamaski, *John the Baptist*, 89–90.

¹⁰² In discussing what happens to "every tree," the Matthean John speaks to these groups but also speaks of what happens to individuals who do not "bear fruit," a message that goes beyond the groups John addressed in the narrative to the individual members of Matthew's audience (see Meier, *A Marginal Jew*, 2:30).

¹⁰³ While some argue that the "fruit" must be baptism itself due to Matthew's use of a singular form of καρπός (Helmut Merklein, "Die Umkehrpredigt bei Johannes dem Täufer," *BZ* 25 [1981]: 36–37; Nepper-Christensen, "Die Taufe im Matthäusevangelium," 202), this position contradicts the understanding of fruit in the rest of the Gospel, which highlights obedience to the Law, not observation of ceremonial statutes (cf. discussion in Häfner, *Der verheißene Vorläufer*, 66–67).

The Matthean John follows his command to do something (“bear fruit”) with a command to refrain from doing something else: “Do not think to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father.’”¹⁰⁴ John’s statement indicates that “physical descent is no guarantee of salvation any more, if it ever was,”¹⁰⁵ so both baptism by John and physical descent from Abraham are insufficient to save one from judgment.¹⁰⁶ In addition, the statement indicates that these groups can be replaced by others,¹⁰⁷ with John’s discussion of God making stones to bear children to Abraham showing God’s “freedom and power not to be constrained by the limits of natural possibility” and opening up the possibility for inclusion of Gentiles.¹⁰⁸ God’s ability to bring forth children of Abraham from stones should counteract false confidence deriving from their lineage and move them to “bear fruit worthy of repentance.” John’s words do not promise what will happen, but simply what could happen; God *could* bring forth children for Abraham from stones and *could*

¹⁰⁴ On the exhortation and prohibition of the Matthean John in 3:7–9, see Yamasaki, *John the Baptist*, 87–88, although there is no need to maintain, as Yamasaki does, that this remark shows John’s ability to read minds, as prophets often quote an idea to then refute it (W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:307, citing Isa 24:14–19; Jer 8:9–13; Ezek 11:14–21; Hag 1:2–11).

¹⁰⁵ Ben Witherington III, “Jesus and the Baptist—Two of a Kind?” *SBL Seminar Papers*, 1988 (SBLSP 27; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988), 231.

¹⁰⁶ Meier, *A Marginal Jew*, 2:29, 74 n. 49.

¹⁰⁷ On the imagery as one separating trees from their root and thus separating the Jewish leaders from Abraham, see Yamasaki, *John the Baptist*, 90, an element noted earlier by Cyril of Alexandria, *Fragment 24* (Simonetti, *Matthew*, 1a:45). Raising up new children for Abraham need not refer to doing so out of Gentiles, as Scobie highlights a background of the statement could be the cutting off of the people of Israel and starting over with Moses in Exod 34 (*John the Baptist*, 84). These words of exclusion are directed towards particular groups of Jews, not looking to the exclusion of all Jews (cf. Patte, *Matthew*, 47–48; J. Andrew Overman, *Church and Community in Crisis: The Gospel according to Matthew* [The New Testament in Context; Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press International, 1996], 55). On similar teaching appearing in Jewish sectarian debates, see James D. G. Dunn, “John the Baptist’s Use of Scripture,” in *The Gospels and Scriptures of Israel* (ed. Craig A. Evans and William R. Stegner; JSNTSup 104; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1994), 49.

¹⁰⁸ Nolland, *Matthew*, 145. For similar positions, see e.g., Hagner, *Matthew*, 1:50; W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:308–9.

bring punishment on these groups. Therefore, John's preaching offers an opportunity for the Pharisees and Sadducees to change their ways and avoid judgment.¹⁰⁹ One would expect some sort of response or reaction from this challenge to the honor of these Jewish groups,¹¹⁰ but the narrative does not record their response to John's rebuke at this point. With these words the audience sees a stark line separating John and these groups and the need for these Jewish groups to regain prominence in the eyes of the people.

In addition to characterizing the Pharisees and Sadducees, the content of John's message also serves as a model for Jesus' message.¹¹¹ Jesus later uses the phrase "brood of vipers" to rebuke the Pharisees (12:34) and scribes and Pharisees (23:33).¹¹² Jesus also utilizes the metaphor of a tree in discussing proper conduct (7:16–20; 12:33; 21:43) and employs the image of fire for judgment (5:22; 7:19; 13:30; 13:40, 42, 50; 18:8, 9; 25:41).¹¹³ Therefore, the polemical, paraenetic, and eschatological elements of Jesus' message are rooted in the preaching of John, with the narrative showing that Jesus adopts

¹⁰⁹ See Chrysostom, *Hom. Matt.* 11.2–3 (*NPNF¹* 10:69–70). For more recent advocates of a call to change in these words, see Schlatter, *Matthäus*, 69; Ernst, *Johannes*, 159.

¹¹⁰ Bruce J. Malina, *The New Testament World: Insights from Cultural Anthropology* (3d ed.; Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2001), 33–37.

¹¹¹ On this point, see esp. Wolfgang Trilling, "Die Täufertradition bei Matthäus," *BZ* 3 (1959): 282–83; Wink, *John the Baptist*, 33–34.

¹¹² Meier, "John the Baptist," 390; Anderson, *Matthew's Narrative Web*, 87. A particularly strong link occurs between 3:7 and 23:33, as Jesus calls the scribes and Pharisees a "brood of vipers" and then asks "how shall you flee from the judgment of Gehenna?"

¹¹³ France highlights that Jesus also discusses repentance (11:20–21, 12:41) and Abraham (8:11–12), two other elements of John's preaching here (*Matthew*, 98).

and expands John's message.¹¹⁴ Since this imagery appears in the Jewish prophets, both John and Jesus stand in continuity with these figures.¹¹⁵

The Baptist's speech continues in 3:11–12 but shifts subjects, as he compares himself with a figure that will come after him.¹¹⁶ The imagery of fire connects Matt 3:10–12, as the Baptist first declares that trees that do not bear good fruit will be thrown into the fire (3:10), then that another figure will baptize with the Holy Spirit and fire (3:11), and finally that this figure will burn the chaff in an unquenchable fire (3:12).¹¹⁷ The events of Pentecost stand as the fulfillment of the saying in Luke-Acts, but no such event is described in Matthew, so one must look elsewhere for Matthew's understanding of this baptism. John may use baptismal language metaphorically to speak of the work of this coming figure rather than an actual baptism done by this figure, so one does not have to find another reference to a baptism to find the fulfillment of this promise.¹¹⁸

In describing the baptizing work of the coming figure as a baptism of fire, the Matthean John indicates that this figure will judge. The imagery of fire occurs throughout

¹¹⁴ Cf. Frankemölle, "Johannes der Täufer," 213.

¹¹⁵ On the OT roots of John's message, see discussions in Kraeling, *John the Baptist*, 39–45; Dunn, "John the Baptist's Use of Scripture," 48; Jo. Taylor, *The Immerser*, 135–38; Blomberg, "Matthew," 11–12; Craig S. Keener, *The Historical Jesus of the Gospels* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009), 168, 483 n. 27. On specific connections between John's preaching and Malachi, see Jeffrey A. Trumbower, "The Role of Malachi in the Career of John the Baptist," in *The Gospels and Scriptures of Israel* (ed. Craig A. Evans and William R. Stegner; JSNTSup 104; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1994), 34–40; Jo. Taylor, *The Immerser*, 147.

¹¹⁶ On the continuous message of John, see Gundry, *Matthew*, 47; Krentz, "None Greater among Those Born from Women," 336. The movement from judgment to proclamation of the coming one could also reflect the message of Malachi, as discussed in Trumbower, "The Role of Malachi," 34–40.

¹¹⁷ On "fire" as a catchword in Matt 3:10–12, see Luz, *Matthew*, 1:133.

¹¹⁸ Matthew's conclusion features a command to baptize in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (28:19), but it is difficult to understand how this command to Jesus' disciples to baptize all nations in the threefold name fulfills John's description that the coming figure himself will baptize in the Holy Spirit and fire (cf. Dunn, *Jesus Remembered*, 361).

Matthew in discussions of judgment (3:10, 12; 5:22; 7:19; 13:40, 42, 50; 18:8, 9; 25:41).

The use of “baptismal” language to symbolize judgment aligns with descriptions of calamity using water imagery in Jewish texts, as one can look to the story of the Flood or the lake of fire in Revelation as instances of water being used to judge.¹¹⁹ John’s words about the “coming one” could also reflect an emphasis on judgment, as texts such as Isa 40:10 speak of God coming in judgment.¹²⁰

The discussion of the coming baptism in Matthew, however, does not seem to be exclusively focused on judgment, as John also refers to baptism in the Holy Spirit. While “spirit” does appear with relation to judgment in some texts,¹²¹ the use of the adjective “holy” to describe this Spirit and the positive value attribute to the Holy Spirit (1:18, 20; 12:32; 28:19) and Spirit of God (3:16; 12:18, 28, 31, cf. 22:43) in Matthew makes it more likely that the reference to the Spirit refers to salvation.¹²² Moreover, descriptions of the coming of the Holy Spirit at the end time (Joel 2:28–30; Isa 32:15; 44:3; cf. 1QS 4.20–21) and of a connection between Spirit and water (Isa 44:3; Ezek 36:25–27; 1QS 4.21) makes the use of “baptismal” language to describe the coming of the Spirit understandable. An announcement of salvation for some fits the context, as John’s warning exhorts the Pharisees and Sadducees to seek God in true repentance, in hopes that they would receive salvation rather than judgment.

¹¹⁹ See Jo. Taylor, *The Immerser*, 138–40. Examples of Jewish writers using water in imagery of judgment include Gen 6:10; 2 Sam 22:5; Job 22:11; Pss 18:4, 16; 32:6; 42:7; 69:1–2, 14–15; 88:7; 124:4–5; 144:7; Isa 8:7–8; 43:2; Hos 5:10; Jon 2:5. For discussion of the “stream of fire” used for judgment in Dan 7:9–10, see Scobie, *John the Baptist*, 68–69.

¹²⁰ See Jacques Dupont, “L’ambassade de Jean Baptiste,” *NRTh* 83 (1961): 818–19.

¹²¹ See Isa 4:4; 30:27–28; 40:24; 41:16; Jer 4:11–16; 23:19; 30:23; Ezek 13:11–13; 1QSb 5.24–25, as noted in W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:316–17.

¹²² Cf. Hagner, *Matthew*, 1:52; Yamasaki, *John the Baptist*, 93.

The view that John preaches a single baptism with two types of effects coheres with the thrust of the Matthean John's preaching and other descriptions in Matthew that separate the good and the bad.¹²³ The announcement of salvation for the truly repentant and judgment on the unrepentant matches expectations of what would happen with the arrival of the kingdom of heaven.¹²⁴ In addition, Matthew highlights the various fates of the obedient and disobedient in passages such as 13:36–43; 47–50; 25:31–46. John's statement in 3:12 changes the metaphor but makes the same point: the work of the coming figure has different effects on different groups of people. While noting two effects, however, the stress in the passage as a whole seems to be on judgment, as the image of "fire" dominates 3:10–12.¹²⁵

The statement about the coming figure's work in 3:12 clarifies the ministry of John. The metaphor used here is one of a farmer dealing with separate piles of wheat and chaff as he cleanses his threshing floor.¹²⁶ In addition to elucidating the nature of the ministry of the figure who comes after John by showing that he will "take these two groups to their end, whether to the 'granary' or to the 'fire', that is, whether to blessing or judgment," it also offers a further window into John's ministry, as the image presents John's ministry as creating the separation between these two groups before the arrival of

¹²³ On this view of John's preaching of baptism, see e.g., Gundry, *Matthew*, 49. This position has been most forcibly argued (for the historical John) in James D. G. Dunn, "Spirit-and-Fire Baptism," *NovT* 14 (1972): 81–92. Against e.g., Webb, *John the Baptizer*, 289–91; Nolland, *Matthew*, 147. In adopting this view for the Matthean John, no claim is made for or against its plausibility for the historical John.

¹²⁴ John's preaching would reflect this sort of separation, as declaring judgment and the kingdom would separate the bad and the good (*Op. imp. Matt.* 3 [Oden, *Incomplete Commentary*, 1:49–50]); cf. Chrysostom, *Hom. Matt.* 10.2 [*NPNF*¹ 10:62–63]).

¹²⁵ On the stress of judgment here, see Gundry, *Matthew*, 49.

¹²⁶ As argued in Robert L. Webb, "The Activity of John the Baptist's Expected Figure at the Threshing Floor (Matthew 3.12 = Luke 3.17)," *JSNT* 43 (1991): 103–11.

the figure who comes after him.¹²⁷ In effect, John offers a last chance for one to demonstrate that he or she is “wheat” rather than “chaff.”¹²⁸ Such an understanding meshes with the description of John the Baptist as preparing the way for the Lord, as the onset of the kingdom of heaven would bring salvation to those who have turned to God but destruction for those who reject him.¹²⁹ The fact that the figure that follows John will bring judgment and “baptize in the Holy Spirit” points to this figure being God himself, as these were two activities expected of God at the end of time.¹³⁰ John thus comes before the arrival of God and the day of the Lord, preparing people for this occasion.

In addition to describing the respective works of John and the figure after him, 3:12 once again foreshadows Jesus’ teaching. John’s words find an echo in Jesus’ explanation of the parable of the tares (13:24–30; 36–43).¹³¹ In addition, his discussion of

¹²⁷ Ibid., 109–11, quotation on 109.

¹²⁸ A possible objection to Webb’s proposal is that the Matthean John’s work cannot separate individuals into “wheat” and “chaff” since this separation happens at the end and not at the time of John’s ministry (see Häfner, *Der verheißene Vorläufer*, 80–84, esp. 82; Luz, *Matthew*, 1:138–39). The statement need not be indicative of the Matthean John’s conscience attempt to separate the wheat from the chaff, as not all who receive his baptism would seem to be considered “wheat.” Rather, it is that one’s response to John’s message demonstrates if one is “wheat” or “chaff.” In some ways, his words echo those of Jesus later in Matthew (e.g. 13:36–43; 47–50; 25:31–46) highlighting that separation will occur at a later date but that present conduct serves as the basis for the final separation. Moreover, Matthew may expand the image so that it refers to the whole winnowing process, emphasizing that it is the coming figure, not John, who will decide if one is “wheat” or “chaff” (see Nolland, *Matthew*, 148–49).

¹²⁹ See Yamasaki, *John the Baptist*, 91. While many scholars highlight that the figure about whom John speaks will bring the judgment that he proclaimed (e.g., T. W. Manson, “John the Baptist,” *BJRL* 36 [1953–54]: 398; Knox Chamblin, “Gospel and Judgment in the Preaching of John the Baptist,” *TynBul* 13 [1963]: 110; Scobie, *John the Baptist*, 65; Jo. Taylor, *The Immerser*, 134), one should note that this figure will also bring the kingdom about which John preaches (cf. the comments of Rabanus in Aquinas, *Catena Aurea*, 103).

¹³⁰ See John H. Hughes, “John the Baptist: The Forerunner of God Himself,” *NovT* 14 (1972): 190–219, esp. 190–201. Cf. Kraeling, *John the Baptist*, 41, 44; Ernst, *Johannes der Täufer*, 48–55, 305–9. For an examination of different eschatological figures and the roles of each, with the conclusion that the activities of John’s coming one best fits those of God himself, see Webb, *John the Baptizer*, 190–284.

¹³¹ On the links between John’s message and the parable of Tares, see esp. David Catchpole, “John the Baptist, Jesus, and the Parable of the Tares,” *SJT* 31 (1978): 557–70. A similar idea emerges, though

the chaff being burned with “unquenchable fire” introduces the idea of eternal judgment, a theme that will appear elsewhere in the Gospel but was not necessarily universal in Judaism at the time, as it seems that there were a range of views amongst Jews concerning whether judgment was eternal or temporal.¹³² Therefore, John’s statement in 3:12 offers another point of continuity between John and Jesus while also potentially differentiating John and Jesus from other Jewish groups.

The most significant differences between Matt 3:11 and Luke 3:16 concern the description of the greater figure that comes after John.¹³³ The first difference occurs in that the Lukan Baptist states, “The one stronger than me is coming” (ἔρχεται δὲ ὁ ἰσχυρότερός μου) (3:16) while the Matthean Baptist declares, “The one coming after me is stronger than me” (ὁ δὲ ὀπίσω μου ἐρχόμενος ἰσχυρότερός μου ἐστίν) (3:11).¹³⁴ The uniqueness of the form of the saying in Matthew points to some intentionality behind this version.¹³⁵ Matthew’s wording highlights the strength of the figure that comes after John

using different imagery, in 13:47–50 (cf. 25:31–46). For other points of connection between John’s words in 3:12 and Jesus’ teaching in Matthew, see Jo. Taylor, *The Immerser*, 150.

¹³² Keener, *Matthew*, 129 n. 165. On the limited use of the imagery of being “thrown” into the fire (3:10; cf. 3:12) in Second Temple Judaism, see Dale C. Allison, *Constructing Jesus: Memory, Imagination, History* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2010), 217.

¹³³ For a thorough examination of the texts, see Fleddermann, “John,” 377–81.

¹³⁴ The Lukan form of the saying is similar to the Markan form: ἔρχεται ὁ ἰσχυρότερός μου ὀπίσω μου.

¹³⁵ While some think that Matthew changed the wording of his source to offer a connection to Matt 11:3 (e.g., Ernst, *Johannes der Täufer*, 50; Meier, *A Marginal Jew*, 2:79 n. 76), many scholars deem Matthew to have preserved Q (Fleddermann, “John,” 378; Uro, “John the Baptist,” 235; J. M. Robinson, Hoffman, and Kloppenborg, *The Critical Edition of Q*, 14). The latter view, however, presumes that Luke alters his Q tradition under the influence of the Markan text, which would seem unusual. The link between “the strong man” and Satan in Matt 12:29//Mark 3:22 could cause Matthew to alter the title here so that a similar title would not be used for Jesus and Satan (cf. Meier, “John the Baptist,” 390–91). The appearance of ὁ δὲ ὀπίσω μου ἐρχόμενος in John 1:27 (cf. Acts 19:4) indicates that Matthew’s use of a participial phrase here may reflect use of a tradition different from Mark (or Q), though it is unclear if this tradition would use a verb to discuss the greater strength of the figure.

rather than his arrival, with John's comparison of their respective "baptisms" reflecting the greater strength of this figure.¹³⁶ Matthew thus elevates the status of the one who will come after John, which the audience knows is Jesus.

Another difference between the saying in Matthew and Luke is the inclusion of the prepositional phrase *ὀπίσω μου* in Matthew alone. Because this phrase also appears in forms of the saying in Mark 1:7 and John 1:27, it does not appear that it reflects a uniquely Matthean interest.¹³⁷ While Matthew does seem to use the phrase *ὀπίσω μου* at times to refer to a disciple who "comes after" his teacher (4:19; 10:38; 16:24),¹³⁸ the phrase could have a temporal meaning, referring to an individual who comes at a later point.¹³⁹ The title "the one who comes after me" (*ὁ ὀπίσω μου ἐρχόμενος*) would be an unusual way to describe a disciple.¹⁴⁰ Moreover, while Matt 3:14 highlights that Jesus traveled from Galilee to the Jordan with the purpose of being baptized (*τοῦ βαπτισθῆναι*) by John, it does not seem that receiving John's baptism necessarily made someone a disciple of John.¹⁴¹ Nothing else in the Matthean text presents Jesus as a disciple of

¹³⁶ With e.g., Wink, *John the Baptist*, 36; Meier, "John the Baptist," 390 n. 24; Eduoard Cothenet, "Le baptême selon S. Matthieu," *SNTU* 9 (1984): 82; Gundry, *Matthew*, 48. Cf. W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:314, who note this possibility.

¹³⁷ It seems most likely that Luke omits the phrase *ὀπίσω μου* (as argued in e.g., Fleddermann, "John," 380–81; Webb, *John the Baptizer*, 265; J. M. Robinson, Hoffman, and Kloppenborg, *The Critical Edition of Q*, 14).

¹³⁸ Kendrick Grobel, "He Who Cometh After Me," *JBL* 60 (1941): 397–401. Wink finds this meaning in the Matthean use of the phrase (*John the Baptist*, 38), and France seems to lean this way as well (*Matthew*, 112–13). Cf. Clare K. Rothschild, *Baptist Traditions and Q* (WUNT 190; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005), 54 n. 60.

¹³⁹ See 3 Kgdms 1:6, 24; Neh 3:16, 17; Eccl 10:14; cf. Dan 2:39 and the Theodotian reading of 7:6 (Fleddermann, "John," 378).

¹⁴⁰ Cf. Häfner, *Der verheißene Vorläufer*, 79.

¹⁴¹ One must remember that the master-disciple relationship was not based upon acceptance of a rite such as baptism but rather a teacher-student relationship (Kraeling, *John the Baptist*, 119; Jo. Taylor,

John.¹⁴² Therefore, a temporal meaning seems best for *ὀπίσω μου* in Matt 3:11. It is unclear if *ὁ ἐρχόμενος* was a common title for the Messiah at the time, and the presence of *ὀπίσω μου* between *ὁ* and *ἐρχόμενος* points against the Matthean Baptist using *ὁ ἐρχόμενος* to refer to Messiah.¹⁴³ In light of the description of John as the fulfillment of Isa 40:3, the one who follows John would be “the Lord,” with the activities performed by the figure about whom John speaks matching those of God Himself at the end of the age, as noted above.

Matthew’s version of the Baptist’s statement about the one who comes after him also differs from the parallel saying in Mark and Luke in the discussion of the footwear of the coming figure. Whereas the Baptist states in Mark and Luke that he is not able (*οὐκ ... ἰκανός*) to untie (*λύσαι*) the strap of the sandals of the figure to come (*τὸν ἱμάντα τῶν ὑποδημάτων αὐτοῦ*), the Matthean Baptist talks about being unable to “carry” (*βαστάσαι*)

The Immerser, 102). Moreover, one should note that the text only states that Jesus sought Jesus in order to receive his baptism, not to become his student (Nepper-Christensen, “Die Taufe im Matthäusevangelium,” 198–99; against Frankemölle, “Johannes der Täufer,” 213).

¹⁴² With e.g., Meier, “John the Baptist,” 390. While Robert L. Webb (“John the Baptist and His Relationship to Jesus,” in *Studying the Historical Jesus: Evaluations of the Current State of Current Research* [ed. Bruce D. Chilton and Craig A. Evans; Leiden: Brill, 1994], 218–19) finds Jesus’ baptism by John to indicate that he was John’s disciple on the historical level, there does not seem to be a clear reason in Matthew’s text to view Jesus as a disciple rather than as one loosely connected to the Baptist, particularly since Webb uses John 3 rather than texts in Matthew to argue for Jesus being a disciple of John (*Ibid.*, 219–23. Cf. Meier, *A Marginal Jew*, 2:117–18).

¹⁴³ See discussion in Webb, *John the Baptizer*, 271. Those that think the title *ὁ ἐρχόμενος* is messianic in light of its use in places like Matt 11:3; 21:9; 23:39; Heb 10:37 (cf. Ps 118:26) include e.g., Scobie, *John the Baptist*, 65–66; W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:313–14; Hagner, *Matthew*, 1:51; Joel Marcus, “John the Baptist and Jesus,” in *When Judaism and Christianity Began: Essays in Memory of Anthony J. Saldarini* (ed. Alan J. Avery-Peck, Daniel Harrington, and Jacob Neusner; 2 vols.; JSJSup 85; Leiden: Brill, 2004), 1:179–93. Rejection of a reference by the Matthean Baptist to the Messiah in these words does not preclude a reference by the historical Baptist to the Messiah, however, nor would a reference by the historical Baptist to the Messiah necessitate such an understanding of the words of the Matthean John.

sandals (τὰ ὑποδήματα).¹⁴⁴ The different image may be an alternative way of stating the same point made in the Markan and Lukan statements, depicting a disciple carrying rather than untying his master's shoes and thereby indicating that the one who comes after the Matthean John is in fact his master.¹⁴⁵

In light of the stress on the superior strength of this figure in the phrase ὁ δὲ ὀπίσω μου ἐρχόμενος ἰσχυρότερος μου ἐστίν, however, it is reasonable to consider whether Matthew's image may reflect a greater dignity for the figure about which John speaks.¹⁴⁶

While John describes the figure coming after him as performing activities reserved for

¹⁴⁴ It is unclear if this change is introduced by Matthew or was in the source he used for this particular saying. Fleddermann maintains that the wording here is Matthean ("John," 379), while Uro ("John the Baptist," 236) and the International Q Project (J. M. Robinson, Hoffman, and Kloppenborg, *The Critical Edition of Q*, 14) think it reflects in Matthew's source. Matthew's use of βασιτάζω elsewhere (8:17; 20:12) makes it more likely that this change is due to Matthew's hand (as maintained in e.g., Häfner, *Der verheißene Vorläufer*, 75).

¹⁴⁵ See Meier, "John the Baptist," 391; idem, *A Marginal Jew*, 2:79 n. 76; W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:315; Häfner, *Der verheißene Vorläufer*, 75–78. Gundry (*Matthew*, 48) thinks that the expression in Matthew has the exact same meaning as the saying in Luke, arguing that βασιτάζω here means "remove" (cf. BDAG, 171). However, βασιτάζω usually means "carry," not "loose" or "remove" (Webb, *John the Baptizer*, 271–72 n. 21). The question of whether there is a difference in meaning between the expressions in Matt 3:11 and Luke 3:16 has long been a point of interest, with both Augustine (*Cons.* 2.12.29 [NPNF¹ 6:118–19]) and Jerome (*Comm. Matt.* 1.3.3 [FC 117:69]) discussing the issue. On the possibility that the differences found in Matthew reflect a different translation of an Aramaic original, with the fact that Luke 3:16 speaks of "strap of the sandal" and Acts 13:25 discussing the sandal itself, see Ernst Lohmeyer, "Zur evangelischen Überlieferung von Johannes dem Täufer," *JBL* 51 (1932): 317.

¹⁴⁶ For example, Hagner notes that this change could reflect a stronger contrast between John and Jesus (*Matthew*, 1:51). Paul Bretscher argues that Matthew's form depicts John the Baptist as declaring that he is not worthy to wear sandals in the presence of this figure, akin to the need for Moses (Exod 3:5) and Joshua (Josh 5:15) to take off their sandals in the presence of God in "Whose Sandals (Matt 3.11)?" *JBL* 86 (1967): 81–87. Bretscher's argument falters on a number of grounds (see W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:315; Häfner, *Der verheißene Vorläufer*, 77–78). First, it is not clear that the verb βασιτάζω can refer to one wearing sandals. Second, this verb does not appear in the LXX forms of the stories of Moses and Joshua (both passages use the verb λύω, the word used in Mark 1:7 and Luke 3:15). Third, Bretscher makes much of the lack of an αὐτοῦ following ὑποδήματα in Matt 3:11 (cf. Luke 3:17), but this possessive pronoun would not be necessary and likely is omitted because of redundancy (see Fleddermann, "John," 379). Finally, Bretscher argues that οὗ is dependent upon ἰκανός, with the genitive a genitive of comparison rather than a genitive of possession, a possibility that seems unlikely (see Gundry, *Matthew*, 48). The appearance of βασιτάζω in Justin Martyr, *Dial.* 49 indicates that he likely was familiar with the Matthean form of the saying, with the use of this phrase in the dialogue with a Jew suggesting that this form of the saying may have particular relevance in a Jewish setting.

God, John's comparison of himself with this coming figure presents some problems for viewing this figure as God Himself, as it seems odd to speak of the strap of the sandal of God and for a man like John to compare himself to God Himself. These difficulties lead some to view the Baptist speaking of "an agent of Yahweh, who, acting with God's authority and power, would come to judge and restore."¹⁴⁷ Matthew's elimination of Mark's τὸν ἱμάντα may make it more clear that the Baptist speaks of the coming of God, however, as there are references to the sandal of God in the Hebrew Scriptures (Pss 60:10; 108:10) but not to the strap of the sandal of God.¹⁴⁸ The elimination of τὸν ἱμάντα may then lead to Matthew's substitution of βαστάσαι for Mark's λῦσαι.¹⁴⁹ Matthew's saying about the sandal would thus have the same basic thrust as the Markan form – this figure who comes after John is so much greater than he that John is not even worthy to be a servant of this figure – but also highlights Jesus' identity as the Son of God.¹⁵⁰ While

¹⁴⁷ See e.g., Webb, *John the Baptizer*, 282–88, quotation on 286. For similar views, also see Meier, *A Marginal Jew*, 2:33–35; Jo. Taylor, *Immerser*, 144–45; Dapaah, *The Relationship between John the Baptist and Jesus of Nazareth*, 73. Kraeling regards John as preaching about the Son of Man in Dan 7, who is not a human but "like a man" (*John the Baptist*, 57–58). While all these views specifically address the historical John, they could be seen as possibilities for the words of the Matthean Baptist. On ambiguity between the arrival of God himself and the ministry of his agent in the text of Isaiah, see Blomberg, "Matthew," 12–13.

¹⁴⁸ See Hughes, "John the Baptist," 195–96.

¹⁴⁹ The verb βαστάζω also makes a link between the Baptist's saying here and the narrator's statement, quoting Isa 53:4, in 8:17 that Jesus is able to "carry" diseases. Matthew may thus indicate that John is not able to "carry" sandals while Jesus is able to "carry" diseases and thus restore the people (Gundry, *Matthew*, 48).

¹⁵⁰ On the saying as showing that even the feet of this figure have honor, see Neyrey, *Honor and Shame*, 66. Another possible explanation for the change to the image of carrying the sandals rather than unloosening the strap of the sandal is that a disciple would carry his master's sandal but would not take off his shoe according to *b. Ketub.* 96a (see David Daube, *The New Testament and Rabbinic Judaism* [Jordan Lectures in Comparative Religion 2; New York: Arno, 1973], 266–67). The Matthean John would thus speak of himself as not being worthy to perform the work of a disciple rather than a slave, something that would protect John's dignity. While considered a possibility, many scholars reject Daube's view as "too ingenious" (W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:315; Webb, *John the Baptizer*, 284 n. 65), and its dependence upon a Talmudic text (cf. Str-B, 1:121) also raises questions. Lupieri explores the possibility

this argument would mesh with Matthew's overall Christology, the support for it is admittedly tenuous; it is viewed as a possibility rather than with strong probability.

John's speech in 3:7–12 therefore offers insights into the Pharisees and the Sadducees, John's work, and the figure that comes after him. The first section of the Baptist's speech (3:7–10) indicates that the Pharisees and Sadducees do not embrace his teaching and stand under the threat of judgment and replacement unless they change. It is not enough for them to receive a baptism, as they must also reform their ways, revealing that their current conduct and practices are insufficient. The Baptist's speech about a coming figure (3:11–12) affirms that his own work is that of preparation, as John's baptism prepares people for the day when a more powerful figure comes and enacts judgment upon the disobedient while offering salvation to the righteous. The language that John uses for this figure, which the audience knows is Jesus in light of the preceding narratives, shows him performing the work of God.

Matthew 3:13–17

Mark's account of Jesus' baptism and the events that follow serves as the main source for Matthew's description of the same events (Matt 3:13–17//Mark 1:9–11).¹⁵¹ In

that the historical Baptist used this saying with nuptial imagery in light of the reference to sandals in the levirate marriage laws of Deut 25:9; Ruth 4:7 ("John the Baptist in New Testament Traditions," 436–37; cf. Chromatius, *Tractate on Matthew* 11.4 [Simonetti, *Matthew*, 1a:47]; Jerome (*Comm. Matt.* 1.3.3 [FC 117:69]). It is possible that Matthew's change in imagery is intended to evoke nuptial imagery in light of his use of the bridegroom imagery elsewhere, with this image being another point of overlap in the teachings of John and Jesus. The reference to sandals in the levirate marriage laws, however, is not a positive image and does not seem to be an obvious point of contact. Hilary and Pseudo-Chrysostom offer a different perspective concerning the imagery of the sandal here, noting that the sandal belongs to Christian preachers, with John indicating that he stands below them (as noted in Aquinas, *Catena Aurea*, 103).

¹⁵¹ The appearance of a form of ἀνοίγω rather than the Markan σχίζω to describe the action in the sky as well as the use of ἐπί rather than Markan εἰς in recounting the Spirit's activity on Jesus in both Matt 3:16 and Luke 3:22 raises the question of whether they each possessed a (similar) source describing these events in addition to Mark (W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:329; cf. Meier, *A Marginal Jew*, 2:103).

addition to rewriting parts of the Markan tradition, Matthew's account features an unparalleled conversation between John and Jesus (3:14–15). This conversation contains much redactional vocabulary, meaning that its written form could come from the hand of the Evangelist, although the presence of non-Matthean vocabulary also makes it plausible to view Matthew adapting a tradition.¹⁵²

A shift in subject occurs in 3:13, as Jesus is the main actor and John becomes a supporting figure. Matthew signals this shift differently from Mark 1:9, as Matt 3:13 features the same word in the same form to introduce the adult Jesus that earlier marks the arrival of John the Baptist (*παραγίνεται*).¹⁵³ By noting that Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan, Matthew confirms that John's ministry occurs at the time of Jesus' residence in Galilee (2:23–25).¹⁵⁴ In addition, Jesus' journey to John means that Jesus returns to Judea, the area from which he had to withdraw because of hostility.¹⁵⁵

Matthew explicitly notes that the motivation for Jesus' travel from Galilee to the Jordan was to seek out John and receive his baptism (3:13). The Matthean Jesus wants to

¹⁵² Häfner, *Der verheißene Vorläufer*, 87–89. While W. Davies and Allison highlight the redactional vocabulary in the passage (*Matthew*, 1:323–27), Hagner points out the “occurrence of non-Matthean vocabulary” (*Matthew*, 1:54). Deciding whether this conversation originates from a pre-Matthean tradition or Matthew's composition (as argued in Gundry, *Matthew*, 50–51) is not necessary for the purpose of this work and difficult to determine based on linguistic data (Luz, *Matthew*, 1:140). Even if the text comes partially or completely from pre-Matthean tradition, it can still have a programmatic element to it (Cothenet, “Le baptême,” 83–84).

¹⁵³ Gundry suggests that the use of the present here shows Jesus' baptism to be an example for Matthew's audience (see *Matthew*, 49–53). Nolland, however, rightly points out that present tense indicates a new scene (*Matthew*, 152). Moreover, there seem to be many differences between the baptism of Jesus and that of his followers, indicating that Jesus' baptism was a special event rather than an example to be followed (Hagner, *Matthew*, 1:60).

¹⁵⁴ Matthew does not follow Mark in describing Jesus coming to John from Nazareth. This divergence could be an attempt by Matthew to avoid repetition since Nazareth was already mentioned in 2:23–25 (Hagner, *Matthew*, 1:55). For other suggestions, see Gundry, *Matthew*, 49; Nolland, *Matthew*, 152.

¹⁵⁵ Lupieri, “John the Baptist in New Testament Traditions,” 447.

be associated with John and thus seems to endorse his message.¹⁵⁶ This reference to Jesus' travels recalls the events in Matt 2, in which Jesus and his family's travels are in accordance with the Scriptures. While no citations of Scriptures emerge in the conversation between John and Jesus (3:14–15), the word *πληρώω* does appear in this passage and the passage ends with a Scripture quotation in 3:17. In addition, the note that Jesus' baptism is "to fulfill all righteousness" uses a word (*δικαιοσύνη*) that occurs in the Scriptures to speak of God's saving actions of His people.¹⁵⁷ The use of *πληρώω* makes a salvation-historical meaning the most likely meaning for *δικαιοσύνη* here.¹⁵⁸ Therefore, Jesus' baptism occurs because of his intention to bring the words of Scripture to their fulfillment.¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁶ Cf. Destro and Pesce, *Encounters with Jesus*, 44, who make a similar point in regards to the historical figures of John and Jesus. On Jesus identifying himself with John's mission by seeking his baptism, see Keener, *Matthew*, 132. Harrington goes too far, however, in noting that Jesus goes to John as a "mentor" (*Matthew*, 53). Neyrey highlights how Josephus experience with Bannus may indicate seeking out a figure like John was a respected thing practice (*Honor and Shame*, 104).

¹⁵⁷ See discussion on *δικαιοσύνη* in the section on Matt 21:23–32 in chapter 3 of this dissertation.

¹⁵⁸ John P. Meier, *Law and History in Matthew's Gospel* (AnBib 71; Rome: Biblical Institute, 1976), 79–80; Hagner, *Matthew*, 1:56; Häfner, *Der verheißene Vorläufer*, 137–39; Dapaah, *The Relationship between John the Baptist and Jesus of Nazareth*, 87. Cf. John Reumann, *Righteousness in the New Testament: "Justification" in the United States Lutheran-Roman Catholic Dialogue* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1982), 127, 134; Keener, *Matthew*, 118; Nolland, *Matthew*, 154. Those that view it as referring to obedience often do so on the basis of the (perceived) meaning of *δικαιοσύνη* elsewhere in Matthew rather than the context of this particular passage (see e.g., Benno Przybylski, *Righteousness in Matthew and His World of Thought* [SNTSMS 41; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980], 91–94; W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:326–27; France, *Matthew*, 119. Cf. Gundry, *Matthew*, 50). Although dated, the summary of various views on the meaning of "to fulfill all righteousness" by Otto Eissfeldt remains useful ("*Πληρῶσαι πάντων δικαιοσύνην* in Matthäus 3:15," *ZNW* 61 [1970]: 209–15). Also see the more recent survey in W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:325–27.

¹⁵⁹ Cf. Lohmeyer, *Matthäus*, 51; Frankemölle, "Johannes der Täufer," 212. In light of the use of "righteousness" elsewhere in the Gospel, there could be a secondary intention to show John and Jesus reflecting a form of righteousness that differs from that of the Pharisees; see discussion in Schlatter, *Matthäus*, 89.

The conversation between John and Jesus contributes to the image of the Matthean Baptist in two major ways. First, John is able to recognize Jesus as the one about whom he speaks, as he initially seeks to prevent Jesus from being baptized because Jesus is greater than he (3:14). This observation marks a significant difference between Matthew and Mark, as the Markan Baptist gives no indication that he knows Jesus to be the figure about whom he speaks. The Matthean John therefore testifies to the audience about both the dangers of the Pharisees and the Sadducees and the identity of Jesus, two key issues at the time of the Gospel's composition.¹⁶⁰ John's explicit opinion on both parties would be important in light of his popularity in the first century, showing whom John supports and whom he rejects.

Second, by refusing to baptize Jesus, John shows that his understanding of God's plan is incomplete and must be corrected by Jesus. John has a proper view of Jesus as a person, but Jesus' response indicates that John is wrong in how he envisions God's plan unfolding, failing to recognize that Jesus needs to be baptized.¹⁶¹ The use of "now" also indicates that the Baptist does not understand the timeline of God's activity.¹⁶² In addition, John's misunderstanding of God's plan concerns Jesus' humility, as he does not understand why Jesus would choose to be baptized by an inferior individual.¹⁶³ While

¹⁶⁰ Cf. discussions in R. Edwards, *Matthew's Story*, 16; Robert G. Olender, "Righteousness in Matthew with Implications for the Declaration of Joseph's Righteousness and the Matthean Exception Clauses" (PhD diss., Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2008), 54–56; Turner, *Matthew*, 117; Osborne, *Matthew*, 122.

¹⁶¹ See comments in Yamasaki, *John the Baptist*, 95–97; Nolland, *Matthew*, 153–54.

¹⁶² On the importance of "now," see Nepper-Christensen, "Die Taufe im Matthäusevangelium," 199; Patte, *Matthew*, 50.

¹⁶³ On Jesus' humility here, see Patte, *Matthew*, 50; Gundry, *Matthew*, 51. Cf. Jerome, *Comm. Matt* 1.3.3 (FC 117:70). On John's misunderstanding previewing that of Peter in 16:13–23, see Bowens,

John thus has a lack of understanding of his own work,¹⁶⁴ he obeys Jesus and consents to baptize Jesus (3:15), showing John to be teachable and responding properly when his confusion is addressed.¹⁶⁵ Therefore, Matthew's unique conversation between John and Jesus clarifies John's relationship with Jesus, as John sees Jesus as the one who fulfills John's words and submits himself to Jesus.

John and Luke both mute the Baptist's role in the baptism of Jesus,¹⁶⁶ but Matthew seems to take the exact opposite approach, enhancing the Baptist's role. The Matthean Jesus states that John *must* baptize him in order that the two of them may "fulfill all righteousness" (3:15). Since Jesus includes John in the statement through the use of the plural pronoun ἡμῶν, the Baptist participates in bringing the promises of God to their fulfillment.¹⁶⁷ Jesus thus aligns himself with the Baptist and highlights John's role rather than reiterating his own superiority.¹⁶⁸ This high note about John's needed participation in the plan of God comes immediately after John states his inferiority,

"The Role of John," 313–17, esp. 315. On a link between John and Joseph the "father" of Jesus, see R. Edwards, *Matthew's Story*, 16.

¹⁶⁴ See Lupieri, "John the Baptist in New Testament Traditions," 448; Nolland, *Matthew*, 152–53.

¹⁶⁵ As Yamasaki points out, the word used for John's action is the same word used by Jesus in responding to John (*John the Baptist*, 98). Also see R. Edwards, *Matthew's Story*, 16; W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:327.

¹⁶⁶ John and Luke use different approaches to downplay the Baptist's role in Jesus' baptism, as Luke omits any explicit reference to John at the baptism (Luke 3:21–22) while John mentions the Spirit's descent upon Jesus without noting a baptism (John 1:32–34).

¹⁶⁷ While some suggest that the use of ἡμῶν could be a way to include the audience (e.g., Hagner, *Matthew*, 1:56; Gundry, *Matthew*, 50–51), it is difficult to see the activity of John and Jesus here as having a transparent nature that speaks to Matthew's audience; it seems better to view ἡμῶν as having its natural meaning in the narrative, referring to John and Jesus. On John therefore also standing as a participant in the fulfillment of God's promises, see Meier, "John the Baptist," 391–92; Webb, *John the Baptizer*, 58; Häfner, *Der verheißene Vorläufer*, 145; Nolland, *Matthew*, 153.

¹⁶⁸ Dapaah, *The Relationship between John the Baptist and Jesus of Nazareth*, 87.

showing that one must not overly minimize John's importance.¹⁶⁹ Jesus' words show that John's baptism of him was not something that John took upon himself to do, but was something done at the directive of Jesus and to fulfill God's plan, thus revealing John's good character.¹⁷⁰ Moreover, Jesus' words about John's role in salvation history also appear after John has testified to the Gospel's audience that Jesus is the figure about whom he spoke, so Jesus' words give honor to a figure who offers Jesus support, something that can further enhance John's importance and thus the importance of the figure (Jesus) whom he supports.¹⁷¹ In fact, the interaction between Jesus and John is one that features indirect compliments, as each proclaims the other's importance without making explicit comments about the other's honor.¹⁷² Therefore, the baptism of Jesus is an event in which John and Jesus collaborate together to fulfill God's plan, something necessary to accomplish God's plan.

While elevating the significance of John's baptism of Jesus, Matthew also seems to downplay the actual baptism of Jesus. Matthew compresses the already brief mention of Jesus' baptism in Mark, describing the baptism itself with a participle (βαπτισθεῖς) rather than a finite verb (Mark 1:9: ἐβαπτίσθη) and then stating that Jesus immediately

¹⁶⁹ Meier, "John the Baptist," 391. Cf. Nepper-Christensen, "Die Taufe im Matthäusevangelium," 200–1.

¹⁷⁰ See Malina and Neyrey, *Calling Jesus Names*, 100–3, cf. 52–53, 63–65. The baptism thus shows the humility of both men.

¹⁷¹ While Malina and Neyrey do not identify this passage as an example of what they label "the acclamation of an acclaimer," it would also seem to fit into this category (*Calling Jesus Names*, 101, 121–22).

¹⁷² On the use of indirect compliments in a honor-based society, see Malina, *The New Testament World*, 97.

went up from the water (εὐθύς ἀνέβη ἀπὸ τοῦ ὕδατος) (3:16).¹⁷³ The following events thus happen not *while* Jesus is leaving the water but *after* Jesus has left the water.¹⁷⁴ The preceding conversation about the meaning of the baptism also decreases the proportion given to the baptism itself; Matthew focuses on what happens before and after the baptism rather than the baptism itself.¹⁷⁵ Jesus' baptism is an event required so that other things can happen.¹⁷⁶

Matthew's account presents the events that follow Jesus' baptism as public. In stating that "the heavens opened" rather than that Jesus saw the heavenly activity, Matthew describes this as an event that others can experience.¹⁷⁷ An additional "public" element of the Matthean account of the events after Jesus' baptism is the heavenly voice, as this voice speaks in the third person rather than with the second person as in Mark 1:17.¹⁷⁸ Since Jesus is no longer in the water, it is unclear if the Baptist is with Jesus

¹⁷³ Matthew shifts the Markan εὐθύς from describing Jesus' vision to Jesus' movement out of the water. Commentators throughout the centuries have noted that this expression is unusual, though with different conclusions and emphases on its meaning (see e.g., *Op. imp. Matt. 4* [Oden, *Incomplete Commentary*, 1:57–58]; W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:328). For another discussion of the importance of εὐθύς here, see France, *Matthew*, 116 n. 5.

¹⁷⁴ The present participle (ἀναβαίνων) of Mark 1:10 is most likely temporal, showing that the following actions occur while Jesus leaves the water. Since the Spirit of God comes upon Jesus after his baptism, the passage therefore does not teach that the reception of the Spirit happens at the baptism of a follower of Jesus, as argued in e.g., Jerome, *Comm. Matt.* 1.3.3 (FC 117:70).

¹⁷⁵ Häfner, *Der verheißene Vorläufer*, 153.

¹⁷⁶ While it is unclear if Justin's claim that Elijah had to anoint the Messiah before he could commence his work (*Dial.* 8.4; 49.1) was a Jewish belief before the rise of the Jesus movement, Matthew's text may convey a similar idea, viewing John's baptism of Jesus as a necessary event so that Jesus could then begin his ministry.

¹⁷⁷ The inclusion of αὐτῷ after ἠνεώχθησαν in many manuscripts, including \aleph^1 and D, may arise because of the influence of Mark, in which Jesus sees the heavens being "split." External support for the omission of αὐτῷ includes the manuscripts \aleph^* and B and various versions, and this reading is preferable since it would not parallel the Markan text (with W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:328 n. 67). See discussion in Metzger, *A Textual Commentary*, 9.

¹⁷⁸ These two events are linked with the use of ἰδοῦ.

when the heavens open and the voice speaks, so it cannot be a revelation only to the Baptist.¹⁷⁹ The public pronouncement of Jesus' identity increases the guilt of those who reject Jesus, as they do not heed this "salvific revelation" about Jesus.¹⁸⁰ John's baptism therefore serves to prepare Jesus for his public manifestation and to help indict those who reject him since they have rejected public testimony about Jesus' identity.

Matthew's description of the Spirit's descent reflects the anointing of Jesus to take up the work of the promised figure of Isa 42:1,¹⁸¹ as Matthew's changes to Mark 1:11 make the words of the voice from heaven more closely resemble this statement.¹⁸² Matthew differs from Mark in explicitly noting that the Spirit that descends is the Spirit "of God" (θεοῦ).¹⁸³ The first Evangelist also inverts the order of the phrases ὡσεὶ

¹⁷⁹ The public nature of the event would mean that the Baptist would presumably hear the voice along with the rest of the people (cf. Luz, *Matthew*, 1:143), but there is no need to see the voice as being especially directed towards the Baptist as suggested by many commentators (e.g., W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:330; Turner, *Matthew*, 121; Osborne *Matthew*, 125), especially since John has already identified Jesus as the figure about whom he preached (Gundry, *Matthew*, 53).

¹⁸⁰ On this event as a "salvific revelation," see Schnackenburg, *Matthew*, 35. On the passage increasing the guilt of those who reject Jesus, see Overman, *Church and Community in Crisis*, 131; cf. Chrysostom, *Hom. Matt.* 12.1 (*NPNF*¹ 10:76). The lack of public response in the text may stand as an indication that the public does not accept this testimony about Jesus (cf. France, *Matthew*, 118–19).

¹⁸¹ On connections to the Messiah in the Targumic traditions of this text, see Basser, *Mind behind the Gospels*, 88.

¹⁸² This statement does not deny that there are allusions to other texts (e.g., Ps 2:7; Gen 22:2) in this phrase, only that a stronger connection to Isa 42:1 exists in Matthew's text and that this connection is intentional. For an affirmation of an allusion to Isa 42:1 that denies a connection to Ps 2:7 while also affirming a connection to LXX Jer 31:20, see Jeffrey Gibbs, "Israel Standing with Israel: The Baptism of Jesus in Matthew's Gospel (Matt 3:13-17)," *CBQ* 64 (2002): 511–26. For a suggestion that the voice from heaven also refers to Exod 4:22–23, see Paul G. Bretscher, "Exodus 4:22–23 and the Voice from Heaven," *JBL* 87 (1968): 301–11. On other potential allusions, see Blomberg, "Matthew," 14. For discussion on the implications of the conflation of texts on the imagery of Son and Servant, see Bonnard, *Matthieu*, 40; W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:336–38; Nolland, *Matthew*, 157–58; Turner, *Matthew*, 123. The conflation of quotations perhaps leads to the absence of a statement that the baptism "fulfills" a particular citation (see France, *Matthew*, 123–24).

¹⁸³ While there is some question as whether there is an article (τοῦ) before θεοῦ due to its absence in some witnesses (including \aleph and B), the presence of θεοῦ in the text seems secure since it appears in witnesses that include and do not include the article. The use of the phrase "Spirit of God" also connects the anointing of Jesus with the Spirit to his use of the Spirit of God to cast out demons (see Cothenet, "Le

περιστερᾶν and καταβαΐνον so that the participle comes first, and this shift in word order allows for the inclusion of the participle ἐρχόμενον.¹⁸⁴ Matthew uses a different preposition to describe the Spirit's relation to Jesus (ἐπί), so that the Spirit "comes upon Jesus" (Matt 3:16) rather than "descends into him" (Mark 1:10).¹⁸⁵ Two different actions thus occur: the Spirit of God descends like a dove and the Spirit "comes upon" Jesus.¹⁸⁶ The latter action, unique to the Matthean account, recalls the coming of the Spirit upon figures in the OT (Judg 11:29; 14:6; 15:14; 1 Sam 10:6, 10; 11:6; cf. Judg 6:34), as well as phrases in Isaiah describing the coming king and the servant of God (Isa 11:2; 44:3; 61:1; cf. Isa 32:15).¹⁸⁷ Therefore, Matthew's description of the Spirit's descent shows Jesus to be the one to bring the eschatological promises of God to fruition.¹⁸⁸ After the

baptême," 86). The descent of the Spirit remains a private event in Matthew, as the text notes that Jesus saw (εἶδεν) the Spirit (against W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:330).

¹⁸⁴ Matthew's use of ὡσεὶ in a Markan text reading ὡς also occurs in Matt 9:36/Mark 6:34. This change seems to be stylistic, with little or no difference in meaning (W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:331; against Gundry, *Matthew*, 52). The meaning of the symbolism of the dove at Jesus' baptism is not pertinent to the interests of this project. For a thorough discussion of proposed options, see W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:331–34.

¹⁸⁵ The agreement between Matthew and Luke here seems coincidental, as both correct the "harsher" phrase found in Mark (εἰς αὐτόν) but for different reasons (Wink, *John the Baptist*, 37 n. 3; Gundry, *Matthew*, 52; cf. W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:334). C. A. Evans highlights that the change to Mark's note avoids the view that the Spirit only became active in Jesus' life at this moment (*Matthew*, 77). The preposition ἐπί also appears in Acts to describe the coming of the Holy Spirit upon the followers of Jesus (e.g., 1:8; 2:17, 18; cf. 2:3).

¹⁸⁶ A καὶ joins the two participial phrases (καταβαΐνον; ἐρχόμενον) in some manuscripts (Ⲙ², C, D, L, W, 0233, f¹,¹³, Maj), but no conjunction appears in Ⲙ^{*} and B. The evidence slightly favors the omission of καὶ, but one cannot be dogmatic about its exclusion. See discussion in W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:334 n. 75; Metzger, *A Textual Commentary*, 9–10.

¹⁸⁷ As noted in e.g., W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:334; C. A. Evans, *Matthew*, 78.

¹⁸⁸ With Hagner, *Matthew*, 1:58. Matthew's description thus is more of an "anointing" of the Messiah by the Spirit (Wink, *John the Baptist*, 37 n. 3).

baptism, Jesus is now ready to take up his messianic work, ready to “save his people from their sins” (1:21).

The words spoken by the voice from heaven in 3:17 also help connect the events to two other passages in Matthew. The first connection is to the identification of John the Baptist as the voice of Isa 40:3 in Matt 3:3; while John is the voice of Isa 40:3, Jesus is the servant of Isa 42:1. The use of quotations from Isaiah to discuss the roles of both John and Jesus shows their different roles, as John prepares while Jesus accomplishes the work as the Servant of God. The second connection is to Matt 17:5, as a heavenly voice makes the same statement as in 3:17.¹⁸⁹ This identification of Jesus does not lead to a diminishment of the figure of John, as the narrative places an importance on his role preparing for Jesus’ ministry; John is an essential figure like Moses and Elijah whose role must not be elevated over that of the Son of God.¹⁹⁰

The description of John’s ministry indicates that his work concludes once Jesus receives the Spirit of God. As the voice of Isa 40:3, John prepares for the arrival of the Lord. This preparation occurs by proclaiming a message of repentance and baptizing people in order to establish bodily purity in anticipation of the arrival of the kingdom of heaven. Jesus’ conversation with the Baptist in 3:14–15 reveals an added feature: John’s

¹⁸⁹ A reference to John as Elijah appears in the conversation following the Transfiguration (17:10–13), so both Matt 3 and Matt 17 highlight who Jesus is and who John is, though the order is reversed and different OT texts are used to define John’s ministry. For further discussion of the parallels and similarities between Matthew’s accounts of the baptism and the transfiguration, see W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:320.

¹⁹⁰ On the words of 3:17 as offering a contrast between John and Jesus, see Nepper-Christensen, “Die Taufe im Matthäusevangelium,” 202. While there may be an attempt to fight against an over-elevation of the person of Moses in Matthew’s account of the Transfiguration, the basis for this argument is on numerous Mosaic motifs in the passage (see discussion in chapter 3 of this dissertation). While it is possible that Matthew’s account of Jesus’ baptism counters a tendency to elevate the Baptist, the passage as a whole does not offer any other indications of this theme. Therefore, the passage may show the limited nature of John’s work, but it does not feature a polemic against him.

baptism of Jesus allows Jesus to be consecrated so that he can commence his ministry as the promised figure about whom John speaks. Although recognizing his role as one to prepare for another figure and knowing that this figure is Jesus, John does not fully understand his preparatory work, particularly the fact that he must baptize Jesus even though Jesus is greater than he.

**The Depiction of the Baptist in Matthew 3:1–17 in Relation with 17:10–13 and
21:23–32**

It is appropriate to place the portrayal of the Baptist in 3:1–17 in a dialogue with the depiction of John in 21:23–32 and 17:10–13, the texts discussed in chapter 3 of this dissertation. Those two passages indicate that John the Baptist is a prophet sent by God, with John having a special place as the final prophet (the promised “Elijah”) who comes before the accomplishment of God’s saving purposes in Jesus (the day of the Lord). His identity as Elijah, however, is only recognized by the followers of Jesus through Jesus’ teaching about John. The Jewish religious leaders fail to embrace his message and his role as Elijah, standing in opposition to his message and playing a role in his demise. The crowds have a more favorable opinion of John, viewing him to be a prophet, but even this position is inadequate since it fails to see him as Elijah. A belief in John as Elijah would lead to the identification of Jesus not just as the Messiah but God himself, equating Jesus’ ministry with the day of the Lord.

The extended discussion of the person and ministry of John the Baptist in 3:1–17 coheres with this interpretation of the person and work of John in a number of areas. While Matt 3:1–17 never explicitly relates John the Baptist to Elijah, the identification of John the Baptist as the “voice” of Isa 40:3 reflects the same idea (3:1–3) that John is the

forerunner of the climactic activity of God and the final prophet before Jesus' arrival.¹⁹¹

The crowds that come out to John confirm his popularity among the masses, while the lack of reference to "all" Jerusalem coming to his baptism and the description of John living in the wilderness suggest that the authorities dislike John. The conversation between John and Jesus reveals that Jesus has a true grasp of John's role. With John's baptism preparing Jesus for his work and being said to "fulfill all righteousness," Matt 3:1–17 indicates that John comes in the way of righteousness and that he is an essential figure in salvation history, in line with expectations of an "Elijah to come."

The description of John the Baptist in Matt 3:1–17 also offers some clarifications about John. First, it offers a better framework for understanding the meaning of "John's baptism." The account of John's ministry indicates that his baptism was one that offered bodily purity in anticipation for the arrival of the kingdom of heaven and that this activity was "from heaven." Acknowledging John's baptism would look to the need for a change in the structures of the world, further explaining why Jesus' dialogue opponents in ch. 21 would not want to embrace John's teaching as having a heavenly mandate. Second, the present passage reveals that the purpose of John's appearance "in the way of righteousness" was to prepare people for the climactic activity of God, the coming of the kingdom in the person of Jesus. Therefore, Matt 3:1–17 indicates some self-awareness in the Baptist of his eschatological role. Finally, John's message features a critique of the present order and of other Jewish groups, as he lives in the wilderness, announcing that

¹⁹¹ It seems that Matthew's stress is to present John as the figure of Isa 40:3 and then connect this figure with the promised Elijah of Mal 3:1.

the current order will end and that judgment will fall upon Pharisees and Sadducees unless they alter their ways.

Not only does the description of John the Baptist in Matt 3:1–17 cohere and clarify aspects of the Baptist's person and work found in 17:10–13 and 21:23–32, it also offers new insights into the Matthean Baptist. John's *halakic* practices appear to vary from those of the Essenes, and his baptismal practices may present a difference between himself and the Pharisees.¹⁹² John's response to the arrival of the Pharisees indicates that John was not a Pharisee. The inclusion of the Sadducees in 3:7 reveals that he also is in conflict with this group, and his location in the wilderness reflects a distance from the socially elite and powerful. Therefore, John was a Jew but not a member of any of the major Jewish parties of the time.

In addition to distancing the Baptist from other Jewish groups, Matthew also more closely connects John to the figure of Jesus. Since this topic receives further discussion in the next section, analysis here will center on how this connection emerges from the dual facts that Jesus expressly seeks out John and John recognizes Jesus as the figure who will come after him. The first point reveals that Jesus sought to connect with John's work, while the latter point shows that John endorses the claims that Matthew makes about Jesus. By subjecting his behavior to the teaching of Jesus, John indicates that Jesus is greater than he and that Jesus might fulfill John's message in a way that differs from John's original expectation.

¹⁹² Matthew's description of John does not make it clear whether individuals were baptized in the state of nudity or if they were clothed, like the Essenes. The reference to John wearing camel skin and a leather belt, could indicate that he, and those who participated in his rite, were neither naked nor wearing the attire of the Essenes.

The image of the Baptist that emerges so far stands in contrast with other views of the time. By omitting any connection between John's baptism the forgiveness of sins, Matthew avoids the possibility of interpreting John's work as standing outside of the temple sacrifices or in contrast to traditional structures of Judaism. In stating that John is the figure described in Isa 40:3, Matthew shows that any perception of John as a mere man or another prophet fails to grasp his significance, as he was a prophet who comes before a decisive moment in salvation history. While the meaning of John's baptism presented by Matthew has much in common with Josephus' description, the message that appears on the lips of the Matthean John offers a distinctive difference, as John's call emerges from his announcement of the imminent arrival of the kingdom of heaven. Moreover, Matthew's interpretation counters any attempt to understand the Baptist apart from the work of Jesus.

Matthew rules out belief in John as the Messiah, but his portrayal of John still places an importance on him. In fact, Matthew offers the Baptist a special role in God's plan and purposes. While such a view of John might not be congenial to a person who viewed the Baptist as the Messiah, it is unclear if such a belief was present at the time of the composition of Matthew. Portraying John as having such an important role might appeal to someone who thought highly of the Baptist as a powerful and faithful Jewish prophet. In fact, the view of the Baptist that the Gospel of Matthew presents actually offers an apology for the Baptist against potential criticisms. For example, one could deem John to be a false prophet because the imminent events about which he spoke did not take place. By indicating that John prepares the way for Jesus, Matthew shows that

John's words were indeed fulfilled.¹⁹³ Therefore, Matthew's description of John could be an attempt to get individuals or groups that esteemed the Baptist to align with Matthew's group of Jewish believers in Jesus.

The actions and conduct of the Baptist in this passage would serve as an example to those who had an appreciation of the Baptist. First, John's own belief in Jesus should prompt those who respect John to believe the same about Jesus, as one would adopt the view of the Baptist. In addition, the way that Matthew makes the Baptist speak of the figure who comes after him in language that describes God himself would indicate that Jesus is worthy of worship. Second, the Baptist's obedience to Jesus' teachings indicates that heeding the words of the Baptist means following the words of Jesus. Third, John's lack of understanding about the way Jesus accomplishes the actions about which John spoke reveals that faithful Jews might need to reconfigure their thinking about the Messiah and the accomplishment of God's plan.

The Relationship of Themes in Matthew 3:1–17 to the Jewish Setting of Matthew

Introduction

The third section of this chapter focuses upon the relevancy of two themes concerning the Matthean Baptist that emerge in 3:1–17 for the setting of Matthew. The first theme concerns the similarities present between the Matthean John and the Matthean Jesus. The second theme is the portrayal of Jesus' ministry as the culmination of John's work. The discussion of each theme will briefly note how the theme emerges in 3:1–17

¹⁹³ The lack of reference to John's baptism forgiving sins could also be a way to defend the Baptist, showing that his baptism in no way circumvents the temple rite. In light of the similar point made in Josephus, one might wonder if Josephus also seeks to rehabilitate John or reflects an interpretation that rehabilitates him. The lack of any sort of apocalyptic preaching by John would also deflect accusations that his message did not come true.

and then focus on its significance in the Jewish setting of Matthew. In effect, both themes legitimize Matthew's group and its beliefs about Jesus in the eyes of Jews who held the Baptist in high regard and also show the inadequacy of the Jewish opponents of Matthew's group.

The Similarities between John and Jesus

The survey of previous scholarship on the Matthean Baptist in the opening chapter of this dissertation noted how studies have drawn attention to similarities between the figures of John and Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew, many of which occur in 3:1–17. The examination of the Baptist in Mark, Luke-Acts, the Gospel of John, and Josephus' *Jewish Antiquities* in chapter 2 revealed a positive disposition towards the Baptist among believers in Jesus and Jews who did not believe in Jesus. This observation indicates that it would be advantageous for believers in Jesus to stress connections between John and Jesus. Although employing a tactic similarly used by other writers in connecting John and Jesus, Matthew creates distinctive parallels between John and Jesus that seem to be of particular significance for the setting of the Gospel.

The greatest amount of parallelism distinctive to Matthew appears in the teaching of the two figures. While Matthew does add a link in the description of the activities of John and Jesus in his use of *παράγινεται* to introduce both figures (3:1, 13), many of the links in the lives of the two figures already appear in Mark, such as the fact that both are “handed over” (*παραδίδωμι*).¹⁹⁴ Matthew furthers these links between John and Jesus by

¹⁹⁴ For a discussion of the “Johannine subplot” of Matthew that highlights the links between John and Jesus without redactional considerations, see Anderson, *Matthew's Narrative Web*, 172–74. It should also be noted that Matthew undoes some of the narrative parallelism between the two figures. For example, Matthew's choice of *ἔθαψαν* to describe John's burial in Matt 14:12 breaks the link that connects John's burial to Jesus' burial in Mark's use of *ἔθηκαν αὐτὸ ἐν μνημείῳ* to describe both events (Mark 6:29; 15:46).

adding numerous points of overlap in the words of two figures. As noted in the examination of Matt 3:1–17 in the first section of this chapter, both figures declare the Pharisees to be a “brood of vipers” (3:7; 12:34; 23:33), use the metaphor of tree in discussing proper conduct (7:16–20; 12:33; 21:43), and employ the image of fire for judgment (7:19; 13:42, 50; 18:8–9). Moreover, John’s focus on the contrasting fate of the good and bad (3:12) also is found in Jesus’ message (13:47–50; 25:31–46). Perhaps the strongest link between the teaching of John and Jesus in Matthew appears in each figure saying, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand” (3:2; 4:17).

Matthew highlights the apocalyptic elements of the message of both figures, with many of the aspects of apocalyptic discourse seen throughout Matthew noted by David C. Sim first appearing in the message of John the Baptist.¹⁹⁵ The Baptist’s preaching can be viewed as dualistic, and he speaks about the fate of righteous and wicked at the hands of a figure who serves as judge. Moreover, in appearing as a forerunner of the arrival of the kingdom of heaven, John reveals an eschatological timetable, with judgment imminent and occurring after a time of great apostasy.¹⁹⁶ John’s location in the wilderness and opposition to the Pharisees and Sadducees protests this apostasy and connects these groups to it. Although apocalyptic elements appear in the preaching of the Lukan Baptist, they are toned down through the inclusion of 3:10–14 and the statement that the Baptist “evangelized” the crowd (3:18), and apocalyptic eschatology does not play the same

¹⁹⁵ See David C. Sim, *Apocalyptic Eschatology in the Gospel of Matthew* (SNTSMS 88; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996). Sim discusses the elements of apocalyptic discourse in pp. 23–53 and then notes their respective appearances in Matthew in pp. 73–178. W. Davies and Allison also note that John’s preaching introduces apocalyptic imagery (*Matthew*, 1:343–44).

¹⁹⁶ The tension between determinism and a call for change also appears in John’s preaching, as his proclamation of judgment seems to come as a call for change. On the issue of responsibility and an opportunity for change within a deterministic view of the world, see Sim, *Apocalyptic Eschatology*, 87–92.

distinctive role in Luke that it does in Matthew. Therefore, it seems that Matthew emphasizes John as an apocalyptic preacher, and Matthew's group can trace its apocalyptic beliefs to John. Sim's discussion of the apocalyptic eschatology in Matthew is also pertinent because of its connection to the social setting of Matthew, as Sim notes how such language functions within sectarian conflict.¹⁹⁷ The Matthean Baptist seems to participate in this sectarian battle, helping Matthew's group form an identity and legitimate itself.

An examination of the parallels also reveals that Matthew integrates statements of the Baptist appearing in his source(s) into the ministry of Jesus.¹⁹⁸ The phrase "brood of vipers" that John uses in 3:7 appears twice on the lips of Jesus (12:34; 23:33) where the phrase has no parallel in the similar passage in Luke.¹⁹⁹ Moreover, Jesus' description of the burning of the tares in 13:36–43 in a parable unique to Matthew recalls John's words (3:12).²⁰⁰ John's image of cutting down trees that do not bear good fruit and throwing them into the fire also appears in a statement of Jesus unique to Matthew (7:19). The narrative's portrayal of Jesus adopting the language of the Baptist mirrors Matthew's compositional activity, as Matthew uses the teaching of the Baptist in his account of

¹⁹⁷ Sim, *Apocalyptic Eschatology*, 54–69, 179–243.

¹⁹⁸ For a similar observation but with a different emphasis, see Rothschild, *Baptist Traditions*, 83–88, 101–15. Also see discussion in Meier, "John the Baptist," 390; idem, *A Marginal Jew*, 2:71 n. 40.

¹⁹⁹ Neither passage has an exact Lukan parallel, but no reference to "brood of vipers" or a similar saying appears in the similar contexts in Luke 6:46 (Matt 12:34) and Luke 11:47–51 (Matt 23:33).

²⁰⁰ Gundry argues that Matthew has edited Mark's parable of the seed growing by itself (Mark 4:26–29) "to the point of composition" and notes that there is "ample evidence of [Matthew's] composing the parable as well as the interpretation" (*Matthew*, 261–65, 271–75, quotations on 262 and 274, respectively). Others, however, claim that the parable comes from Matthew's special source(s) (e.g., Hagner, *Matthew*, 1:382). W. Davies and Allison find the parable (13:24–30) to come from a tradition used by Matthew and the interpretation (13:36–43) to be the composition of Matthew (*Matthew*, 2:407 n. 1).

Jesus' teaching. In essence, Matthew makes Jesus more like the Baptist and more like the figure the Baptist expects, particularly in comparison with Luke.

Matthew's modeling of Jesus' message and ministry on that of John's has two significant implications for Matt 3:1–17. First, it raises the question of whether the Baptist's speech in Matt 3:2 is best viewed as a rewriting of Mark 1:15 that Matthew places on the lips of the Baptist.²⁰¹ In light of the tendency elsewhere to place the words and images spoken by the Baptist into Jesus' ministry, the direction of the movement may be from Baptist to Jesus rather than from Jesus to the Baptist, with Matthew's source(s) perhaps featuring a note about the Baptist preaching the kingdom of heaven.²⁰² Second, the way that Matthew injects elements of the Baptist's message into Jesus' teaching raises the question of whether Matthew's source for 3:7–10 contained a reference to the "Pharisees and Sadducees" and that the appearance of this allied group in 16:1–12 is due to Matthew's attempt to show that Jesus found himself in opposition with the same groups John rebukes in Matthew's source(s).²⁰³

Regardless of whether Matthew's depiction of John's opposition to the Pharisees and Sadducees comes from his source or is the Evangelist's contribution, the adversarial relationship that exists between both John and Jesus and the Pharisees and Sadducees is an additional element of parallelism in the narrative between the figures of John and

²⁰¹ As maintained in e.g., W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:292.

²⁰² The command for the disciple to preach the same message in 10:7 could thus also be a way for the message of the disciples to conform to John's, with Matthew potentially editing Luke 9:2 to place the words of the Baptist on the lips of the disciples. On the Baptist and the kingdom, see Scobie, *John the Baptist*, 62. Cf. Rothschild, *Baptist Traditions*, 203–30.

²⁰³ For more discussion on the parties in 3:7 and the reading in Matthew's source, see n. 91 above. Could Matthew's interest in highlighting the participation of the "chief priests and elders of the people" in Jesus' execution be a way to recall the appearance of the Pharisees and Sadducees at John's baptism, with the "elders" being Pharisees in power and the Sadducees "priests" in power?

Jesus. This parallelism depicts the conflict that exists at the time of the composition of Matthew going back to the time of the Baptist. Matthew's group follows in the footsteps of John the Baptist in intra-Jewish debates.

In addition, John's conflict with the Pharisees and Sadducees helps to explain the hostility that emerges later in the narrative between Jesus and these groups. In 3:7–10, John rebukes Pharisees and Sadducees who may very well be seeking to associate themselves with the Baptist. What happens next is unclear, but it seems most likely that John's harsh speech towards these groups creates a rift between them and the Baptist. In contrast, when the Pharisees and Sadducees approach Jesus, they have already made up their mind towards him, as they come to "tempt" him (16:1). While the hostility between Jesus and the scribes and the Pharisees may relate back to Jesus' statement in 5:20, Jesus' declaration here reflects the same idea as John's speech of 3:7–10: the Pharisees will be excluded from the kingdom of heaven unless they change their ways. Moreover, the Sermon on the Mount occurs after Matthew's note that Jesus continues John's message after the Baptist's imprisonment, so Jesus' rejection of the Pharisees and the Sadducees may already be detected in 4:17, if not already in 3:13 when Jesus seeks out the Baptist. Jesus' connection with John may be the reason for the Matthean Pharisees opposition to Jesus, as Matthew's construction of the story shows John provoking the Pharisees who then oppose Jesus when he preaches the same message as John.

The parallelism between John and Jesus in Matthew would help legitimize Matthew's group in the eyes of other Jews and reveal the inadequacy of the Jewish opponents of his group. First, the similarities between the message of John and that of Jesus in Matthew's narrative would legitimize Matthew's group of Jewish believers in

Jesus in the eyes of other Jews because the group's message is the same as that of this popular Jewish figure.²⁰⁴ In addition, the similarities highlighted between John and Jesus would harness any public goodwill still felt towards John the Baptist and transfer it towards Matthew's own group of Jewish believers in Jesus; if one respects or admires the Baptist, then one should feel the same about Jesus, who preaches the same message (3:2; 4:17).²⁰⁵ In effect, Matthew shows Jesus as the successor of John, carrying forth his message akin to the way a student would pass along the message of his teacher. Second, by indicating that John came into conflict with the Pharisees and the Sadducees, Matthew shows that John the Baptist found himself in opposition to the predecessors of Matthew's Jewish opponents, a claim that would place a negative mark on the opponents of his group as they were rejected by the popular figure of the Baptist. In fact, John speaks negatively about the Pharisees, indicting them and showing them to be false, and John's opinion still seems to carry weight for Jews of the time Matthew composed his Gospel. Therefore, highlighting the similarities between John and Jesus is both an offensive and defensive tactic, offering a basis to accept Matthew's group of followers of Jesus as the correct group and a reason to reject its opponents.

²⁰⁴ On the use of a revered figure from the past as a common way to legitimate a group, especially in pre-industrial societies, see Philip F. Esler, *Community and Gospel in Luke-Acts: The Social and Political Motivations of Lucan Theology* (SNTSMS 57; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 19–20.

²⁰⁵ Cf. Neyrey, *Honor and Shame*, 37, 80, 102–4.

Jesus' Ministry as the Culmination of John's Ministry

Matthew 3:1–17 also presents Jesus' ministry as the culmination of the ministry of John the Baptist. After noting how aspects of 3:1–17 that develop this theme, this subsection will highlight the possible function of this theme within the Gospel's setting.

One way in which 3:1–17 portrays Jesus' work as the natural and intended culmination of the ministry of John the Baptist is through placing John's ministry within the broader ministry of Jesus. Unlike Mark and Luke, Matthew only introduces his audience to John the Baptist after it has first learned about Jesus and notes that John's ministry occurs while Jesus lives in Nazareth. This difference among the Synoptic Gospels may arise from the various traditions known by each of the Evangelists, but it also makes the Baptist's ministry a subset of Jesus' ministry.²⁰⁶ The ministry of John the Baptist is a stage in the storyline of Jesus coming to save his people from their sins, so John's ministry has its purpose in relationship to Jesus' work.²⁰⁷

A number of elements in 3:1–17 reveal the provisional and temporary nature of the Baptist's work. The Gospel of Mark already features the idea that the Baptist came to prepare the way for God's climactic activity in restoring his people. Matthew retains this idea and furthers this theme by specifically identifying the Baptist as the "voice" of Isa

²⁰⁶ On the one hand, Matthew's tendency to highlight parallels between John and Jesus would seem to indicate that Matthew was unfamiliar with Luke 1. The numerous points of contrast between the Matthean and Lukan infancy accounts, however, raise the question of whether the Matthean account is in some ways a response to the Lukan account. The absence of a description of the Baptist's birth could stand as yet another example of the contrasts between the two canonical infancy narratives. Such an argument stands as a speculative possibility, not a firm argument for Matthew's knowledge of the traditions of the Baptist's birth.

²⁰⁷ This observation counters the claim of Yamasaki, who argues that Matt 3:1–10 serves no purpose on the level of the narrative and works more on the level of discourse (*John the Baptist*, 90–91) because it seems that one can view the events of 3:1–10 as part of what is needed for Jesus to accomplish his mission of saving his people from their sins.

40:3. Matthew's summary of John's preaching also points out the provisional nature of his ministry, as he calls for repentance in light of the nearness of the kingdom of heaven (3:2). Therefore, the Matthean John not only looks to a figure to come after him as in Mark 1:7–8 and Luke 3:16 but also shows that the arrival of this figure will happen soon after him, giving his ministry a temporary purpose.²⁰⁸ In addition, the Matthean Baptist differs from both the Markan and the Lukan depictions of the Baptist by stressing that this figure is stronger than he, further elevating the work of this figure above his own work. Finally, the lack of reference to the "forgiveness of sins" in John's ministry (cf. Mark 1:4//Luke 3:3) indicates that John's ministry prepares for Jesus' work, who offers forgiveness of sins (9:2; 26:28) and saves his people from their sins (1:21).

The account of Jesus' baptism by John in Matt 3:13–17 points to the work of Jesus as the culmination of the Baptist's ministry. First, the Matthean Baptist recognizes that Jesus is the figure about whom he speaks. John thus shows that the figure for which he prepared has come in Jesus, with this identification an indication of Jesus' divine status since John describes the coming of God and a figure who performs activities expected of God at the end of time. Second, the Baptist demonstrates misunderstanding in his encounter with Jesus and must be corrected by Jesus. Therefore, Jesus has the final say about the purpose of John's ministry; John's teachings are provisional and subject to refinement by the words and works of Jesus. Finally, the conclusion of the discussion of John's ministry is his baptism of Jesus, with his active role in the narrative ceasing after

²⁰⁸ While the Markan Baptist speaks about a coming figure, there is no timetable given concerning whether this figure will come soon after John. Therefore, John's work could be seen as having a longer relevancy in Mark; people could think that the figure about whom the Baptist spoke was still to come in the future.

he baptizes Jesus. This idea also occurs in Mark, but a difference between Matthew and Mark is the public pronouncement of Jesus' identity after his baptism; a function of the Matthean John is to help reveal Jesus' identity to Israel.²⁰⁹

Summary

Portraying Jesus' ministry as continuing John's and John's ministry as finding its culmination in the ministry of Jesus indicate that believers in Jesus are not just a group with a similar agenda to John's or one that was influenced by the ministry of the Baptist but rather stand as the rightful heirs of the Baptist's legacy. Matthew's group would be the continuation of John's work in that it also preaches the kingdom (10:7) and has the same apocalyptic worldview found in the Baptist's preaching. In addition, Matthew's group is the logical culmination of John's ministry in that John's ministry was by design temporary, preparing for Jesus' ministry. Therefore, even though Matthew's group worships Jesus and speaks about him, they are the true heirs of the Baptist's message. Matthew's attempt to claim this lineage for believers in Jesus would legitimate his group in the eyes of Jews who had a positive view towards the Baptist, regardless of whether or not a person or group viewed themselves as the "disciples" of John or connected to his movement.²¹⁰ A stress on the continuation of the ministry of the Baptist also appears in the Gospel of John, as the disciples of the Baptist become the disciples of Jesus, with this

²⁰⁹ There is a certain sense, therefore, in which the Matthean Baptist fulfills the description given by the Johannine Baptist, revealing the coming figure to Israel (John 1:31). A difference between Matthew and John, however, is that in the Fourth Gospel the Baptist publicly identifies Jesus (John 1:29) while Jesus' identification as this figure occurs in a private conversation between John and Jesus (Matt 3:14) and then publicly by the actions of God after the baptism (3:16–17).

²¹⁰ Matthew could also offer an appeal to individuals who viewed themselves as the continuation of his ministry, if any such individuals existed. Matthew does not seem to disparage the Baptist, as he offers a complimentary description of the Baptist in noting him to be the climactic prophet who prepares

stress on continuity potentially a similar way to legitimate John's group in the midst of its conflict with "the synagogue."²¹¹

Conclusion

This three part analysis of the portrayal of the Baptist in Matt 3:1–17 has sought to situate the role of the Matthean Baptist within the Jewish setting of the Gospel of Matthew. The discussion of the content of the passage and Matthew's redaction underlined various details in the passage itself. These insights were then examined in more detail in the second and third sections of the chapter. The second section brought the description of the Baptist in Matt 3:1–17 into dialogue with the discussion of the Baptist in 17:10–13 and 21:23–32, considering how the ideas appearing in 3:1–17 cohere with, clarify, and add to the insights present in the texts analyzed in chapter 3 of this dissertation. Of particular importance is that the description of the Matthean Baptist shows him standing outside of the leadership of his time as well as the various Jewish groups while being linked more closely to Jesus. In addition, the Baptist serves an important role in salvation history, but he does not grasp fully the plan of God in accomplishing his promises to Israel and must be corrected by Jesus. The third section focused upon two special themes in Matt 3:1–17 for the setting of Matthew, noting that the similarities that appear between John and Jesus in this passage and the interpretation of Jesus' ministry as the culmination of John's ministry would serve to legitimize

for the arrival of God. This role would be more than tolerable for those who viewed the Baptist with much reverence.

²¹¹ Of note is that a similar stress on the continuation of the ministry of the Baptist in the ministry of Jesus and his followers may also appear in Luke-Acts, as Luke describes individuals who had only received the baptism of John as "disciples" (Acts 19:1–6; cf. 18:24–28). This link, however, could have slightly different purposes, as noted in the discussion of Acts 18:24–19:6 in chapter 2 of this dissertation.

Matthew's group in the eyes of Jews who admired or respected the Baptist and to criticize the opponents of the group. In effect, the stronger link between John and Jesus reveals Jesus' work to continue the ministry of the Baptist and those who believe in Jesus to be the true heirs of the Baptist's movement and their opponents to be the successors of those who opposed John.

CHAPTER 5

MATTHEW 9:14–17 and 11:2–19

Introduction

The grouping of 9:14–17 and 11:2–19 in this chapter stems from numerous links between the passages. First, 9:14–17 features a question to Jesus from John’s disciples, and 11:2–19 describes a question to Jesus from John. Second, both passages mention “the disciples of John.” Third, a reference to the contrasting eating practices of John and Jesus (11:18–19) and the disciples of each man (9:14) occurs in each passage. The appearance of 9:14–17 within a larger section that focuses upon the miraculous deeds of Jesus (8:1–9:34) and the reference to Jesus’ “deeds” in 11:2, 19 (cf. 11:5) offers a fourth point of connection, as both passages allude to miracles. Finally, the answers Jesus offers in both passages discuss the unfolding of salvation history and the changes that occur with Jesus’ ministry, revealing Jesus’ presence to be the climactic activity of God.

Analysis of each passage will be followed by a discussion of the implications of the passage for the role of the Baptist in the Gospel’s Jewish setting. This discussion argues that Matthew confirms in these passages that Jesus’ ministry is indeed the continuation and culmination of John’s ministry in spite of discontinuities that exist between the ministries of John and Jesus. The texts show John and his followers intentionally trying to reconcile the differences between their expectations and Jesus’ ministry, with the actions of John and his disciples standing in contrast to others who

reject both John and Jesus. Moreover, since John is the eschatological Elijah, the opponents who reject him are the fulfillment of the promise of eschatological enemies.

Matthew 9:14–17

Introduction

The significance of Matt 9:14–17 for understanding the function of the Matthean Baptist has not been highlighted in many previous studies. An examination of this passage is absent in a number of works on the Matthean Baptist.¹ Works that discuss this text frequently focus on whether the passage reflects competition between the followers of Jesus and John in the background of Matthew rather than on the way the passage contributes to the overall depiction of John in the narrative.² Redactional analyses of the passage often find the differences between Mark and Matthew to be mostly stylistic,³ with some scholars highlighting an ideological difference concerning the perspective

¹ E.g., John P. Meier, “John the Baptist in Matthew’s Gospel,” *JBL* 99 (1980): 383–405; Janice Capel Anderson, *Matthew’s Narrative Web: Over, and Over, and Over Again* (JSNTSup 91; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1994), 83–90, 172–74; Gerd Häfner, *Der verheißenen Vorläufer. Redaktionskritische Untersuchung zur Darstellung Johannes des Täufers im Matthäus-Evangelium* (SBB 27; Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1994); Lisa M. Bowens, “The Role of John the Baptist in Matthew’s Gospel,” *WW* 30 (2010): 311–18.

² This is true of works that employ a redactional approach (Wolfgang Trilling, “Die Täufertradition bei Matthäus,” *BZ* 3 [1959]: 286; Walter Wink, *John the Baptist in the Gospel Tradition* [SNTSMS 7; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968], 39) as well as the literary analysis that appears in Hubert Frankemölle, “Johannes der Täufer und Jesus im Matthäusevangelium: Jesus als Nachfolger des Täufers,” *NTS* 42 (1996): 215–16. While these scholars reject any sort of hostility between the followers of John and Matthew’s group, James L. Jones has sought to use this passage to support his claim that Matthew seeks “to refute or to convert those who had, in the eyes of the evangelist, mistakenly put their faith in the forerunner and had failed to recognize the true Messiah” (“References to John the Baptist in the Gospel according to St. Matthew,” *ATHR* 41 [1959]: 302, with discussion of 9:14–17 on 300). For a more recent examination devoted to this issue, see Knut Backhaus, *Die “Jüngerkreise” des Täufers Johannes: Eine Studie zu den religionsgeschichtlichen Ursprüngen des Christentums* (PTS 19; Paderborn: F. Schöningh, 1991), 155–58.

³ Robert L. Webb’s remarks represent a good example of this common conclusion: “In spite of these changes, Matthew’s thrust in the passage is essentially the same as Mark’s” (*John the Baptizer and Prophet* [JSNTSup 62; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1991], 56).

towards the Law expressed in Matthew's conclusion (9:17: "and so both are preserved").⁴

Other studies consider the significance of the passage in the conflict between Matthew's group and the "Pharisees," with minimal focus on the role of the Baptist in the passage.⁵

Although John himself does not appear as a character in this pericope nor as a direct topic of conversation, the conversation between John's disciples and Jesus offers insight into the significance of the Matthean Baptist for the Gospel's historical context.⁶ John's "disciples 'are representative of their master and so function as a narrative extension of his character,'" so the interaction between Jesus and John's disciples speaks to relationship between John and Jesus as well as to the relationship of their followers.

⁴ For example, Daniel J. Harrington states, "[T]he evangelist followed Mark 2:18–22, omitting only extraneous or repetitious material and thus providing a tighter account. The major departure comes only at the very end of the double parable on the cloth and the wine skins: 'and both are preserved' (9:17)" (*The Gospel of Matthew* [SP 1; Collegeville, MN: Liturgical, 1991], 127). Harrington interprets this Matthean addition as trying to show "that the tradition of pre-70 Judaism is best preserved by the movement centered around Jesus" (*Ibid.*, 129).

⁵ E.g., Boris Repschinski, *The Controversy Stories in the Gospel of Matthew: Their Redaction, Form and Relevance for the Relationship between the Matthean Community and Formative Judaism* (FRLANT 189; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2000), 83–90. Also see Josef Ernst, who concludes his discussion of this passage by remarking, "Matthäus hat lediglich den Gegensatz zwischen den Pharisäern und den Jüngern Jesu stärker herausgestellt" (*Johannes der Täufer: Interpretation, Geschichte, Wirkungsgeschichte* [BZNW 53; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1989], 165–67, quotation on 167).

⁶ Works that highlight how the passage contributes to the image of John the Baptist in Matthew include Edgar Krentz, "None Greater among Those Born from Women: John the Baptist in the Gospel of Matthew," *CurThM* 10 (1983): 337; Poul Nepper-Christensen, "Die Taufe im Matthäusevangelium im Lichte der Traditionen über Johannes den Täufer," *NTS* 31 (1985): 189–207; Gary Yamasaki, *John the Baptist in Life and Death: Audience-Oriented Criticism of Matthew's Narrative* (JSNTSup 167; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1998). Cf. Ernst, *Johannes der Täufer*, 166.

⁷ Yamasaki, *John the Baptist*, 103, quoting John A. Darr, *On Character Building: The Reader and Rhetoric of Characterization in Luke-Acts* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1992), 75. Yamasaki goes too far, however, in treating John's disciples "as if they are John himself." John and his disciples are closely related yet they are still distinct characters. Against e.g., Jerome, *Comm. Matt.* 1.9.13 (FC 117:108); Backhaus, *Die "Jüngerkreise" des Täufers Johannes*, 157, as nothing in the text shows John's disciples as acting differently than their master would desire.

Content and Redaction

Many of the alterations Matthew makes to Mark 2:18–22 are ways to improve the account and describe the events in vocabulary and syntax typical of the first Evangelist.⁸ The Matthean version is shorter, as Matthew omits redundancies such as Mark's introduction to the story (Mark 2:18a) and Jesus' answer to the question about the ability of the "sons of the bridegroom" to fast while the bridegroom is with them (Mark 2:19b). The conjunction δέ in v. 16 more closely links the saying about the bridegroom to the statement about the cloth than in Mark 2:19–21,⁹ and Matthew's substitution of the noun ἰμάτιον for the pronoun αὐτός (Matt 9:16//Mark 2:21) eliminates an ambiguity in Mark's version.¹⁰ Favorite terms of Matthew like τότε and προσέρχομαι appear in his account

⁸ For this perspective on many of the differences between Matthew and Mark, see Repschinski, *The Controversy Stories*, 83–90, 247–48; Michael G. Steinhauser, "Neuer Wein braucht neue Schläuchen," in *Biblische Randbemerkungen* (ed. H. Merklein and J. Lange; Würzburg: Echter, 1974), 114–17; William D. Davies and Dale C. Allison, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to Saint Matthew* (3 vols.; ICC; Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1988–97), 2:107–16; Donald A. Hagner, *Matthew* (2 vols.; WBC 33; Waco, TX: Thomas Nelson, 1991, 1995), 1:242; Robert H. Gundry, *Matthew: A Commentary on His Handbook for a Mixed Church under Persecution* (2d ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994), 68–71. Some also note that some of the differences could reflect Palestinian memory (Backhaus, *Die "Jüngerkreise" des Täufers Johannes*, 155–57; cf. J. C. O'Neill, "The Source of the Parables of the Bridegroom and Wicked Husbandmen," *JTS* 39 [1988]: 488). There are a number of minor agreements between Matthew 9:14–17 and Luke 5:33–39 against Mark 2:18–22, but these agreements do not seem significant enough to warrant the supposition of another source for this pericope (with John Nolland, *Matthew* [NIGTC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005], 389; cf. Ulrich Luz, *Matthew* [trans. James Crouch; 3 vols.; Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress, 2001–7], 2:36 n. 4).

⁹ The tradition history of the account is beyond the scope of this examination, but the relationship between the question of fasting and the metaphors has sparked much discussion, with various proposals existing to explain the connection (see e.g., J. B. Muddiman, "Jesus and Fasting," in *Jésus aux origines de la christologie* [ed. J. Dupont; BETL 40; Gembloux: Duculot, 1975], 271–81; George Brooke, "The Feast of New Wine and the Question of Fasting," *ExpTim* 95 [1984]: 175–76) while others have sought to explain the meaning of the statements as independent sayings (see esp. Alistair Kee, "The Question about Fasting," *NovT* 11 [1969]: 161–79; idem, "Old Coat and New Wine: A Parable of Repentance," *NovT* 12 [1970]: 13–21).

¹⁰ The insertion of αὐτοῦ after πλήρωμα in Matt 9:16 also may clarify some ambiguity. Another ambiguity Matthew clarifies is the identity of the questioners (Matt 9:14//Mark 2:18).

(9:14).¹¹ The insertion of βάλλουσιν in 9:17c creates a resemblance between v. 17a (βάλλουσιν οἶνον νέον εἰς ἀσκοὺς παλαιούς) and v. 17c (βάλλουσιν οἶνον νέον εἰς ἀσκοὺς καινούς), reflecting the first Evangelist's fondness for parallelism.¹² Finally, the use of a cognate verb (ἐπιβάλλει) before a cognate noun (ἐπίβλημα) in 9:16 corresponds to other constructions in Matthew,¹³ as does the shift from a third person singular in Mark 2:22 (οὐδεις βάλλει) to a third person plural in Matt 9:17 (βάλλουσιν).¹⁴

A number of the changes occurring in the introduction to the story and question posed to Jesus in 9:14 insert different elements in Matthew's story. Matthew's characteristic τότε does not always note a direct connection between two stories, but here it seems to link this discussion with the preceding story, in which the Pharisees object to Jesus' table fellowship with tax collectors and sinners.¹⁵ The conversation of 9:14–17

¹¹ Both words are listed among Matthean favorites in W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:75–79; Gundry, *Matthew*, 674–82; Luz, *Matthew*, 1:25–39. The use of a verb and a participle in Matt 9:14 (προσέρχονται ... λέγοντες) rather than two finite verbs as in Mark 2:18 (ἔρχονται καὶ λέγουσιν) reflects a change to syntax common in Matthew (2:7, 17; 9:29; 12:38; 15:1; 20:20; 21:1–2; 23:1–2; 26:65; 27:9), as noted in W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:108; Gundry, *Matthew*, 168.

¹² Matthew's attempt to bring parallelism is clearer when one compares his version with Luke's, as Luke inserts βλητέον in 5:39. Gundry also finds that the use of a present tense form for ῥήγνυμι in Matt 9:17 rather than Mark's future tense form of the word (2:22) increases the parallelism in the statement, conforming to the present tense form of ἀπόλλυμι in Matt 9:17 (*Matthew*, 168). The subject of the latter verb, however, differs between the first two Evangelists, as discussed below. The use of two finite verbs noted above (n. 11) also allows for the presence of parallelism between the question and Jesus' response (Repschinski, *The Controversy Stories*, 248).

¹³ See e.g., Matt 2:12; 4:18; 13:24; 37; cf. 13:3 (Edmondo Lupieri, *Giovanni Battista nelle tradizioni sinottiche* [StBib 82; Brescia: Paideia, 1988], 111, who also notes the use of cognates in 13:30, a statement unique to Matthew).

¹⁴ On this "impersonal plural" as a Semitic expression, see W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:113.

¹⁵ A stronger link between the meal with the tax collectors and sinners and the discussion about fasting is observed by many: A. Feuillet, "La controverse sur le jeune (Mc 2,18-20; Mat 9,14-15; Lc 5,33-35)," *NRTh* 90 (1968): 116; Pierre Bonnard, *L'Évangile selon Saint Matthieu* (2d ed.; CNT 1; Paris: Delachaux & Niestlé, 1970), 132; Eduard Schweizer, *The Good News according to Matthew* (trans. David E. Green; Atlanta: John Knox, 1975), 227; Richard A. Edwards, *Matthew's Story of Jesus* (Philadelphia:

thus is a continuation of that occurring in 9:9–13. The absence of Mark’s introductory statement that John’s disciples and the Pharisees were fasting (ἤσαν ... νηστεύοντες) along with the likely inclusion of a remark that John’s disciples and the Pharisees fast “often” (πολλά)¹⁶ causes the issue to be the frequency of fasting rather than the refusal of Jesus’ disciples to fast in general or on a particular occasion in which both John’s disciples and the Pharisees fast.¹⁷ Jesus’ example of fasting (4:2) and the earlier teaching of the Matthean Jesus on fasting (6:16–18) also suggest that the issue centers upon how, not whether, Jesus’ disciples fast.¹⁸ The connection between John’s disciples and the Pharisees recalls Matt 3:1–17 and the conflict between John and the Pharisees there, so

Fortress, 1985), 30; Alexander Sand, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus* (RNT; Regensburg: Verlag Friedrich Pustet, 1986), 198; W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:107–8 n. 112; Ernst, *Johannes der Täufer*, 167; Hagner, *Matthew*, 1:242; Repschinski, *The Controversy Stories*, 83, 248; Luz, *Matthew*, 2:36; Nolland, *Matthew*, 389; cf. R. T. France, *The Gospel of Matthew* (NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 350.

¹⁶ The NA²⁶ and subsequent revisions print πολλά in brackets, but the recent SBLGNT prints πολλά without brackets. Witnesses that lack this word consist of κ* and B as well as 0281 and some Sahidic manuscripts. Two significant internal arguments for the exclusion of πολλά are (1) that the word rarely appears in Matthew (the only other use besides the disputed use 9:14 is 5:20; on Matthew’s rare use of the word, see Luz, *Matthew*, 1:40; W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:74) and (2) that a remark about frequency offers a harmonization with the Lukan version (Luke 5:33). However, there is widespread geographic support for the reading πολλά (Alexandrian: κ², 33, 579, 892, bo, sa^{mss}; Western: D, k; Byzantine: K, W, Maj; Caesarean: Θ, f^{1,13}, 700), and this reading is unique among the Synoptic parallels (Luke 5:33 uses a different word for frequency: πυκνά), factors that lead to πολλά more likely being the original reading (with Schweizer, *Matthew*, 226; Sand, *Matthäus*, 197; W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:107–8; Hagner, *Matthew*, 1:243; Repschinski, *The Controversy Stories*, 85 n. 83; Nolland, *Matthew*, 388; France, *Matthew*, 349; David Turner, *Matthew* [BECNT; Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008], 251, 254, 256; Craig A. Evans, *Matthew* [NCBC; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012], 203–4).

¹⁷ Cf. Nolland, *Matthew*, 390. Jesus and his disciples would presumably follow the requirement to fast on the Day of Atonement (Lev 16:29–31; Num 29:7–11). The use of the present tense here (νηστεύομεν, νηστεύουσιν) could indicate discussion of characteristic fasting (see Bonnard, *Matthieu*, 133).

¹⁸ While some think that there is simply a contradiction between Matt 6:16–18 and 9:14–17, as these traditions come from two different sources (e.g., Repschinski, *The Controversy Stories*, 85–86), it seems appropriate to look for a way for these passages to fit together. Part of the issue in the present passage may be that the fasts of Jesus’ disciples do not look like the fasts of the Pharisees, as noted in 6:16–18; the frequency of their fasting may thus also be different (cf. the discussion of fasting days in *Did.* 8.1). For other discussions on the relationship between Jesus’ teaching in 6:16–18 and the issue of fasting in 9:14–15, see Kee, “The Question about Fasting,” 167–72; O’Neill, “The Source of the Parables of the

one should see these opposing groups as having a common practice.¹⁹ While the shift from Mark's "the disciples of the Pharisees" (2:18) to the "Pharisees" in Matt 9:14 may stem from Matthew's attempt to relate the story more concisely or remove an unusual term,²⁰ it also reduces a parallelism between John and the Pharisees.²¹ In contrast, Matthew retains what is a similarity between Jesus and the Baptist: both figures have disciples.²²

Perhaps the most significant difference in Matthew's account is the question's origin from the disciples of John. This identification of the questioners clarifies an ambiguity present in the Markan text, which does not name the inquirers, but it also has a number of implications in reading the story.²³ First, Matthew's version is an interaction

Bridegroom and Wicked Husbandmen," 487; Craig S. Keener, *A Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 300.

¹⁹ On the way that the appearance of John's disciples offers link to the events of 3:1–17 and thus the hostility between John and the Pharisees, see Daniel Patte, *The Gospel according to Matthew: A Structural Commentary on Matthew's Faith* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1987), 130. The fact that John is condemned for his fasting practices (11:18) indicates that John's fasts differed in some way (perhaps concerning the occasion for fasting or particular regulations of the practice) from those of the Pharisees.

²⁰ These common explanations for this difference appear in e.g., W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:108; Backhaus, *Die "Jüngerkreise" des Täufers Johannes*, 156; Luz, *Matthew*, 2:36.

²¹ With Meier, "John the Baptist," 402 n. 63. On a desire to disassociate John's disciples and the Pharisees in this passage, see Joan E. Taylor, *The Immerser: John the Baptist within Second Temple Judaism* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 209–10.

²² This similarity would also appear in the Markan form of the story, but the elimination of the "disciples of the Pharisees" causes it to be a stronger point of connection between John and Jesus.

²³ A number of commentators (e.g. W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:108; Gundry, *Matthew*, 169; France, *Matthew*, 355) hold that the identification of John's disciples indicates an attempt to show three stories with three different groups finding fault with Jesus and his disciples. Three factors speak against this view. First, Matthew shows an interest elsewhere on the conflict Jesus has with the scribes and the Pharisees (esp. ch. 23), but nowhere else in Matthew does Jesus come into conflict with John's disciples. Second, Matthew alters the link between the stories in 9:9–13 and 9:14–17 so that they seem to arise at the same occasion. Third, the behavior of John's disciples here differs from the scribes and the Pharisees in that they directly ask Jesus a question and the question does not necessarily reflect hostility toward Jesus (cf. Jack Dean Kingsbury, *Matthew as Story* [2d ed.; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1986], 58; Patte, *Matthew*, 130).

between Jesus and John's disciples. This interaction could indicate that the passage is more interested in the relationship between Jesus and John's disciples than the conflict between Jesus and the Pharisees.²⁴

Second, the earlier description of John in Matthew alters the form of the story so that Matthew's version more closely resembles what Bultmann labeled a "scholastic dialogue" rather than a controversy dialogue.²⁵ Boris Repschinski notes that the version of the story "in Mark is certainly skirting the boundaries of form" between Bultmann's scholastic dialogue and controversy dialogue, as it is unclear if the questioners are hostile, an important element in distinguishing between these two forms.²⁶ The identification of John's disciples as the questioners expunges any hostile overtones to the question in light of Matthew's portrayal of John, as John is hostile towards the Pharisees but friendly to Jesus.²⁷ Further indication that John's disciples are not hostile towards Jesus is that they ask Jesus a question, hoping for him to offer clarity; they are more like John in 3:14–15 than the scribes or Pharisees in the previous stories (9:3, 11).²⁸

²⁴ Bonnard, *Matthieu*, 132. Cf. Backhaus, *Die "Jüngerkreise" des Täufers Johannes*, 155. It seems that the mention of the Pharisees is a more incidental part of Matthew's account (cf. Kee, "The Question about Fasting," 163).

²⁵ For Rudolf Bultmann's discussion of these two literary types, see *History of the Synoptic Tradition* (trans. John Marsh; rev. ed.; Oxford: Blackwell, 1972), 11–69. Bultmann views 9:14–17 as a controversy story and labels the question from the Baptist through his followers in 11:2 a scholastic apophthegm.

²⁶ Repschinski, *The Controversy Stories*, 89. Repschinski argues that Matthew's version moves to the story closer to a controversy story (Ibid., 83–90).

²⁷ With Wink, *John the Baptist*, 39, although he offers no explanation for this position. Many early commentators have a negative view towards John's disciples but seem to go beyond the text with their statements; see Chrysostom, *Hom. Matt.* 30.4 (NPNF¹ 10:201–2); Peter Chrysologus, *Sermons* 31.2 (Manlio Simonetti, ed., *Matthew* [2 vols; ACCSNT 1; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Academic, 2001, 2002], 1a:180).

²⁸ On John's disciples as teachable in this passage, see Schweizer, *Matthew*, 227. The Matthean form also more closely resembles a scholastic dialogue in that the question does not stem from a particular

Moreover, while the text does follow two controversy stories, it does not stand at the center of a complex of controversy stories as in Mark (see 2:1–3:6), indicating that Matthew might not be using it in the same way as Mark. John's disciples thus ask why one who preaches the same message as John the Baptist differs on an issue on which their teacher and the Pharisees seem to have an agreement; John's disciples are confused as to why their practices are closer to those of a group that their teacher rebuked (3:7) rather than those of a teacher who spreads the same message as their master (3:2; 4:17).²⁹

Third, the passage portrays a certain relationship existing between Jesus and John's disciples, as John's disciples seek out Jesus.³⁰ The closer link between this story and the preceding meal with tax collectors and sinners depicts the disciples of John as present at this meal.³¹ In light of the way that Jesus continues John's message, the presence of John's disciples among those eating with Jesus' ministry is not surprising.³² The preceding description of the call of the tax collector and Jesus' table fellowship with

action of Jesus but simply comes from an attempt by a party to understand and issue (see discussion on this issue in Bultmann, *History of the Synoptic Tradition*, 54).

²⁹ Jesus' position as a preacher of repentance (4:17) further adds to the confusion of John's disciples (W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:107; C. A. Evans, *Matthew*, 204), as fasting usually comes with repentance. In addition, fasting seems to be a normal practice of piety (Adolf von Schlatter, *Der Evangelist Matthäus: Seine Sprache, sein Zeil, seine Selbständigkeit. Ein Kommentar zum ersten Evangelium* [6th ed.; Stuttgart: Calwer, 1963], 311; A. Kee, "The Question about Fasting," 163–64; France, *Matthew*, 356; Turner, *Matthew*, 254). The actions of the disciples of John could indicate that they have doubts about Jesus' identity (cf. J. Andrew Overman, *Church and Community in Crisis: The Gospel according to Matthew* [The New Testament in Context; Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press International, 1996], 131) or reflect the fact that Jesus' ministry does not cohere with their expectations, with these expectations leading them to fast (cf. Schlatter, *Matthäus*, 312). Matthew's narrative is vague on whether John shared his knowledge of who Jesus is with his disciples.

³⁰ Nepper-Christensen, "Die Taufe im Matthäusevangelium," 192; Warren Carter, *Matthew and the Margins: A Sociopolitical and Religious Reading* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2000), 222. By labeling them the disciples of the Baptist, it does not seem that one should view them as also being disciples of Jesus (With Wink, *John the Baptist*, 39; against Trilling, "Die Täufertradition," 286).

³¹ As noted in Augustine, *Cons. 2.27.62 (NPNF¹ 6:133)*; R. Edwards, *Matthew's Story*, 30.

³² Cf. Frankemölle, "Johannes der Täufer," 215–16.

tax collectors and sinners (9:9–13) could reflect another point of continuity between the ministries of John and Jesus, as John’s call to repentance seems to attract sinners (3:6; cf. 21:32).³³ Fasting offers a point of discontinuity in the messages of John and Jesus with these sinners, however, as the question from John’s disciples implies that John calls these individuals to fast frequently while Jesus does not.

Noteworthy changes also occur in Jesus’ words about the bridegroom (9:15). First, this statement notes the inappropriateness of the “sons of the wedding” mourning (Matt 9:15: *μὴ δύνανται οἱ υἱοὶ τοῦ νυμφῶνος πένθειν*) in the presence of the bridegroom rather than fasting (Mark 2:19: *μὴ δύνανται οἱ υἱοὶ τοῦ νυμφῶνος ... νηστεύουσιν*).³⁴ Because Jesus then notes the appropriateness of fasting when the bridegroom is taken away (9:15b), he equates fasting with mourning and thus discusses a certain type of fasting that resembles mourning.³⁵ The effects of this equation are twofold. First, it more forcefully shows why frequent fasting is inappropriate during the time of Jesus’ ministry. In the Sermon on the Mount, mourning seems to be a sign of waiting for the kingdom to arrive, with fasting having a similar purpose (5:4, 6). Since Jesus’ ministry brings joy and fulfillment, there is no need to show sorrow and longing by fasting; what fasting seeks is accomplished in Jesus’ ministry.³⁶ Moreover, the removal of the reference to John’s

³³ Nothing in Matthew’s text indicates that John himself would not dine with tax collectors and sinners, as associating with these individuals was not against the law and Matthew notes that John did eat in 3:4 (cf. 11:18–19).

³⁴ On the stylistic nature of the other syntactical changes, see W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:108.

³⁵ Augustine, *Cons.* 2.27.63 (*NPNF*¹ 6:133); cf. Bonnard, *Matthieu*, 133. Since the Baptist is imprisoned, there is no reason to see mourning for John’s death as the reason that his disciples are mourning.

³⁶ On fasting as a sign of repentance and confession that seeks forgiveness, see e.g., 1 Kings 21:27–29; Neh 1:4; Dan 9:3, 30; Zech 7:1–3; 8:18–19; *Pss. Sol* 3:6–8; *Apoc. El.* 1:21 (Sand, *Matthäus*, 198;

baptism forgiving sins and the description of Jesus' ministry as one to "save his people from their sins" in 1:21 shows that John prepares people for the forgiveness that would only come through Jesus' ministry, with 9:1–8 showing this forgiveness is now available through Jesus. Therefore, Jesus' answer proclaims to John's disciples that he is the one who John expected, with the image of bridegroom a fitting way to depict the arrival of the "coming one" who performs the work of God.³⁷

Second, the use of "mourn" makes it clearer that Jesus' words about the "bridegroom" being "taken away" from the "sons of the bridegroom" refers to his own death and how it shifts the practice of fasting.³⁸ Frequent fasting will resume at this point, and this fasting will not be limited to the brief time in which Jesus is separated from his disciples (cf. 28:20) but will occur throughout the period after Jesus' death.³⁹ The

C. A. Evans, *Matthew*, 204). On Jesus' ministry accomplishing what fasting seeks, see Carter, *Matthew and the Margins*, 223. Jesus' achievement of the hopes of fasting may stand behind some of his teaching concerning fasting in Matt 6:16–18.

³⁷ On the declaration of Jesus as the figure about whom the Matthean John spoke here, see Hilary, *On Matthew* 9.3 (Simonetti, *Matthew*, 1a:179–80); Schlatter, *Matthäus*, 311–12; cf. W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:110. While it is unclear if the concept of the Messiah as the bridegroom was one that predates Jesus' teachings (for the messiah as bridegroom, see Feuillet, "La controverse sur le jeune," 133–34; O'Neill, "The Source of the Parables of the Bridegroom and Wicked Husbandmen," 485–86; against this image, see J. Gnlika, "Bräutigam—spätjüdisches Messiasprädikat?" *TTZ* 69 [1960]: 298–300; Muddimann, "Jesus and Fasting," 277), the image of God as a bridegroom occurs in the Jewish Scriptures (Hos 2:16–20; Isa 54:5–6) and the image could thus be that God has arrived with his people (cf. Hagner, *Matthew*, 1:243; Keener, *Matthew*, 300; Grant R. Osborne, *Matthew* [ZECNT; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010], 342). Therefore, Jesus' words here could be interpreted as an implied claim to deity (see Philip B. Payne, "Jesus' Implicit Claim to Deity in His Parables," *TJ* 2 [1981]: 10–11). On the connection between the bridegroom and the Messiah stemming from Jesus himself, see Gundry, *Matthew*, 170.

³⁸ See W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:109 n. 121; Repschinski, *The Controversy Stories*, 86; Nolland, *Matthew*, 390–91. In addition, the use of wedding imagery elsewhere in Matthew (22:1–14; 25:1–13) supports an allegorical reading of the expression to refer to Jesus' death. While many scholars note a link between the reference here to the bridegroom being "taken away" and the Suffering Servant of Isa 53:8 (e.g., Feuillet, "La controverse sur le jeune," 252–56; Hagner, *Matthew*, 1:243; Gundry, *Matthew*, 169; France, *Matthew*, 356; Turner, *Matthew*, 255; Osborne, *Matthew*, 342), this link is questionable since Matt 9:15 uses the verb ἀπαίρω while αἶρω appears in LXX Isa 53:8.

³⁹ On the removal of the remark about the time for fasting indicating a continuing need for fasting, see Schweizer, *Matthew*, 227; Sand, *Matthäus*, 198; Hagner, *Matthew*, 1:242–43; Luz, *Matthew*, 2:37.

removal of Jesus ruptures the experience of joy and creates anticipation for another climactic day, causing frequent fasting to be appropriate once again. This note about Jesus' death also indicates that there is a period of suffering before the judgment which John proclaimed commences; there is joy and then suffering and only after that judgment.

In maintaining that the reason for the non-fasting of Jesus' disciples is the joy that marks Jesus' ministry, Jesus offers a slight redefinition of his ministry to the disciples of John.⁴⁰ Jesus stresses that fact that salvation and joy emerge in his ministry, with judgment waiting for another day. Therefore, the continued frequent fasting of John's disciples stems from a lack of recognition of the arrival of the figure about whom John spoke due to an overemphasis on coming judgment.⁴¹ While Jesus critiques the continued frequent fasting of John's disciples during his ministry, Jesus also points to future fasting, and this fasting will resemble the fasting of John's disciples in looking to the judgment to come.⁴² Much like the way that Jesus commands baptism to happen in the future (28:19), there is a difference between the practice as taught by John and the way that Jesus exhorts his followers to perform the rite, as they now fast both because they wait for judgment and because Jesus has been rejected. Jesus therefore teaches a continuation of John's

Against J. A. Ziesler, "The Removal of the Bridegroom: A Note on Mark 2,18–22 and Parallels," *NTS* 19 (1972–73): 190–94; Nolland, *Matthew*, 390–91. Nolland's comments offer a helpful reminder that Matthew cannot view the justification for fasting as due to Jesus' absence. Rather, fasting occurs because Jesus was executed (cf. Bonnard, *Matthieu*, 133; Hagner, *Matthew*, 1:245). The death of Jesus also could be an indication that the present time is the time of eschatological woes, a time that calls for fasting (see W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:111).

⁴⁰ Cf. Carl H. Kraeling, *John the Baptist* (New York: Scribner, 1951), 147, 152–53.

⁴¹ For similar positions, see Schlatter, *Matthäus*, 312; Bonnard, *Matthieu*, 133; Patte, *Matthew*, 130–31; Yamasaki, *John the Baptist*, 105–6.

⁴² See Schlatter, *Matthäus*, 313; Ernst, *Johannes der Täufer*, 166–67 (cf. A. Kee, "The Question about Fasting," 167–72). Against Backhaus, *Die "Jüngerkreise" des Täufers Johannes*, 157. On the future fasting looking forward to judgment, see Yamasaki, *John the Baptist*, 106. Since Jesus elsewhere rejects the

practice but transforms it in light of his ministry being the fulfillment of John’s message and his fulfillment of John’s message occurring in a different way than John imagined.

The statements about the cloth (9:16) and the wine and wineskins (9:17) feature modifications that affect the focus of these saying. The absence of the remark about the “new” being torn away from the “old” (τὸ καινὸν τοῦ παλαιοῦ) in 9:16 indicates that the relationship between the “old” and the “new” is not Matthew’s central theme. The unifying feature of the sayings in vv. 16 and 17 is the “*danger of loss*” that comes “through laziness or thoughtlessness” since both parables discuss how a foolish action causes irreparable damage.⁴³ The first Evangelist also alters the description of the destruction of the wine and wineskins, shifting the voice of the verb *ρήγνυμι* from active to passive and the grammatical subject from the new wine (Mark 2:20) to the old wineskins (Matt 9:14). Matthew thus focuses on the skins breaking rather than the wine causing the split. The description of the damage gives equal emphasis to the respective effects, noting both the spilling of the wine (ὁ οἶνος ἐκχεῖται) and the destruction of the wineskins (οἱ ἀσκοὶ ἀπόλλυνται).⁴⁴ The concluding statement (“and both are preserved”) confirms that the damage to both items is the focus of the image.

fasting practices of the Pharisees (6:16–18), his exhortation to fast draws upon the fasting practices taught by John and not those of the Pharisees.

⁴³ A. Kee, “The Old Coat and New Wine,” 19, 20, italics original. Cf. Bonnard, *Mattheiu*, 134.

⁴⁴ Mark only uses one verb (*ἀπόλλυται*) to describe what happens to both the wine and the wineskins. Luke similarly uses two verbs in 5:38, but they are in the future tense rather than the present tense as in Mat 9:17. Luke also uses a pronoun for wine (*αὐτός*) in 5:38. The agreement between Matthew and Luke in using a form of the verb *ἐκχέω* could be due to this verb being more fitting to describe what would happen to new wine in such a situation than Mark’s choice of *ἀπόλλυμι*, with this latter word more appropriate to portray the impact on the wineskins (see discussion in Steinhauser, “Neuer Wein braucht neue Schläuchen,” 114–15). The appearance of the particle *γέ* in both Matt 9:17 and Luke 5:37 but not in Mark 2:19 is a minor agreement.

Because “both” appears in the context of a figurative saying, one must first investigate the referent within the metaphor and then consider to what this metaphor applies. While the “new (νέον) wine” and the “fresh (καινούς) wineskins”⁴⁵ are the last two nouns mentioned in the saying, the focus of the concluding remark on preserving two items make it more likely that “both” refers to the old wineskins and new wine, the two items ruined if one puts new wine into old wineskins.⁴⁶ The issue of the validity of the Mosaic Law is not one raised in the passage since the question posed to Jesus concerns the frequency of fasting, not a command from the Torah to fast. Therefore, it would be traditions of certain Jewish groups, not the Torah, that are preserved.⁴⁷

Since the question comes from John’s disciples and Jesus addresses them, it seems that the concern is for retaining the teaching of John. The stress on preservation is more appropriate of Matthew’s perspective of the Baptist than Matthew’s perspective on the Pharisees since Jesus elsewhere has no problem criticizing the traditions and practices of the Pharisees (15:1–20) but is complimentary of the Baptist (3:13; 11:7–15; 17:10–13; 21:23–32).⁴⁸ The concern of the discussion in 9:16–17 thus is on the way to preserve the

⁴⁵ For discussion on the rationale for the use of different terms to describe the “new” wine and wineskins, see W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:114; Keener, *Matthew*, 301 n. 96. For a possible eschatological meaning in καινός, see Ferdinand Hahn, “Die Bildworte vom neuen Flicker und vom jungen Wein,” *EvT* 31 (1971): 363.

⁴⁶ With W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:115; Turner, *Matthew*, 255–56. Against Hagner, *Matthew*, 1:244; Repschinski, *The Controversy Stories*, 87. For discussion of this issue, also see Luz, *Matthew*, 2:37. The focus on both elements shows that the phrase does not speak primarily about the “newness” that comes through Jesus’ ministry (with A. Kee, “The Old Coat and New Wine,” 14–21. Cf. Hahn, “Bildworte,” 369–70; Nolland, *Matthew*, 391–92. Against Steinhauser, “Neuer Wein braucht neue Schläuchen,” 116–17; Gundry, *Matthew*, 171).

⁴⁷ Cf. Schweizer, *Matthew*, 227. Against W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:112; Harrington, *Matthew*, 129; Keener, *Matthew*, 301; Turner, *Matthew*, 256.

⁴⁸ Ziesler is on the right track in noting the connection of Jesus’ statement to the occasion of the question but focuses upon the Pharisees rather than John’s disciples (“The Removal of the Bridegroom,” 192–94). Also see the discussion in Repschinski, *The Controversy Stories*, 87–88.

teachings of John the Baptist while embracing the teachings of Jesus.⁴⁹ In addition to affirming that one can preserve the teachings of the Baptist while also adopting Jesus' stance, the two sayings in 9:16–17 exhort the need for a correct understanding of the shift that take places in Jesus; one cannot combine Jesus' teachings with those of John the Baptist without careful consideration of Jesus' words just as one cannot throw new wine into old wineskins.⁵⁰

One can now sketch the flow of Matthew's account of the question of fasting. John's disciples come to Jesus in order to understand the reason why they more closely resemble the Pharisees than Jesus' disciples in the frequency of their fasting (9:14). Jesus responds to their question by highlighting that fasting is inappropriate for a time of joy, characterizing his ministry as one that brings present joy rather than one that brings immediate judgment but also one that will feature suffering (9:15). Jesus thus shows himself to be the figure about whom John proclaimed but reconfigures the view of his ministry by focusing upon joy and then suffering rather than the immediate judgment that John imagined. After answering the question about fasting, Jesus offers two word pictures for the disciples as they seek to come to grips with how to relate John's ministry to Jesus' activity (9:16–17). These images seek to show how to preserve John's work in light of Jesus' arrival; they can embrace Jesus while also preserving John. In fact, only by embracing Jesus' work does one render John's ministry useful in the present age.

⁴⁹ Cf. C. A. Evans, *Matthew*, 205, who notes that the images in 9:16–17 “underscore the incompatibility of the (old) age of John and the (new) age of Jesus.” Turner also discusses the importance of John's disciples as the audience of the saying of the Matthean Jesus (*Matthew*, 255).

⁵⁰ For a similar position, see Schlatter, *Matthäus*, 314–15.

Implications for the Role of the Matthean Baptist in the Gospel's Setting

The passage seems to dissolve the connection between John's disciples and the Pharisees that was found in the tradition while offering a basis for a stronger link between John's disciples and believers in Jesus.⁵¹ The overarching narrative of Matthew causes the audience to view this point of congruence (frequent fasting) between John's disciples and the Pharisees to be coincidental; they have similar practices but different motives and underlying beliefs.⁵² In addition, Matthew shows that the lack of regular fasting in Jesus' disciples was for a period of time limited to Jesus' ministry and that they will once again practice fasting, indicating that fasting can connect them with John's disciples. While there is newness to fasting tied to Jesus' removal, the statement about the wine and wineskins shows that this new fast does not defame the old practices advocated by John but rather preserves them. Therefore, the passage offers a rationale for individuals who desire to safeguard the memory of John the Baptist or who think that any differences between John and Jesus require choosing one at the exclusion of the other.⁵³ In addition, the passage illustrates that there might have been points of agreement between the Pharisees and John the Baptist, indicating that those who liked the Baptist could be drawn to the Pharisees rather than to groups of Jewish believers in Jesus. The link between Jesus and John's disciples and Jesus' words, as well as the earlier distance between John and

⁵¹ Against Overman, *Church and Community in Crisis*, 132, who argues that the passage seeks to distance Jesus' disciples from John's disciples and the Pharisees.

⁵² Cf. the discussion about similar practices but different motivations in 6:1–18. The similarities between John and Jesus in Matthew points to viewing the practices of John's disciples as closer to those prescribed by Jesus than those denounced by him, with this passage explaining the rationale for the areas in which they differ.

⁵³ I differ from the approach found in J. Jones, "References to John the Baptist," 300 by finding a goal of the passage to unite rather than separate Jesus and the Baptist.

the Pharisees, would be a way to point out that one must choose between John and the Pharisees just as one must choose between Jesus and the Pharisees.⁵⁴

This conversation between Jesus and John's disciples continues and furthers two themes and ideas about the Matthean Baptist seen in the passages already examined in this study. First, there are a number of ways in which the passage highlights continuity between Jesus and John. Perhaps the most obvious issue is that both Jesus and John have disciples. Closer examination of the passage indicates that Jesus' words teach a need for fasting after Jesus' death, showing that both John and Jesus teach their disciples to fast as they wait for the final climactic activity of God to come in the form of judgment. Another element of the passage that demonstrates continuity between John and Jesus is that John's disciples interact with Jesus, asking him to clarify a puzzling point of difference in the behavior of two figures teaching the same message. The connection between 9:9–13 and 9:14–17 may indicate their presence at Jesus ministry; they are not Jesus' disciples but seem interested in what Jesus is doing. The images that Jesus uses in 9:16–17 also portray Jesus' work as the continuation of John's ministry, as only through Jesus' ministry can John's ministry continue to have usefulness.

Second, Jesus' words to John's disciples in 9:15 depict him as the culmination of John's ministry. In describing himself as the bridegroom, Jesus identifies himself as figure about whom John spoke, using language appropriate for God himself. This passage also appears in the midst of a series of miracles in which Jesus demonstrates his power to perform the activities of God such as forgiving sins (9:1–8), controlling the forces of

⁵⁴ On Matthew's call to choose between Jesus and the Pharisees, see Brian C. Dennert, "Constructing Righteousness: The «Better Righteousness» of *Matthew* as Part of the Development of a Christian Identity," *ASE* 28/2 (2011): 57–80.

nature (8:23–27), and raising the dead (8:18–26), activities that reveal Jesus to be the figure about whom John spoke.

While showing Jesus to be the figure John expected, the passage highlights that Jesus' ministry does not necessarily fit the hopes created by John's preaching. The Matthean Baptist focuses on the imminent arrival of the kingdom and stresses judgment over salvation, so John's disciples would expect the figure that will come after John to bring judgment. Rather than judging sinners, however, Jesus eats with sinners, offering sinners the opportunity to repent. Jesus' ministry therefore does not match the expectation of John's disciples in much the same way that Jesus' desire to be baptized does not match John's expectation in 3:14–15. Like his earlier response to John, Jesus' answer to the question posed by the Baptist's disciples does not offer a harsh rebuke or expose malformed intentions. Rather, it centers on correcting a misunderstanding of the way that God will fulfill his promises. While the Baptist positively receives Jesus' correction earlier in the narrative, the present story makes it unclear if John's disciples alter their behavior in light of Jesus' statement. However, in light of John's conduct in 3:14–15, it would seem that his disciples would follow their master's lead and adjust their practices in light of Jesus' teaching. In this way, Matthew's insertion of 3:14–15 helps explain the relationship between John's disciples and Jesus and how one should expect John's disciples to respond to Jesus' teaching.

Matthew 11:2–19

Introduction

Matthew 11:2–19 consists of three subunits, as (1) the Baptist asks Jesus a question about his identity in 11:2–6, (2) Jesus asks the crowd questions about John the

Baptist in 11:7–15, and (3) Jesus speaks a parable to describe the behavior of “this generation” toward John the Baptist and himself in 11:16–19.⁵⁵ The appearance of the word ἔργον in 11:2 and 11:19 forms an *inclusio* from 11:2–19, with the reference to the Baptist in all three subunits providing another unifying element. The use of τότε in 11:20 indicates a logical connection between 11:2–19 and 11:20–24, but the shift in subject and audience in 11:20 presents a break. This break and the presence of this *inclusio* cause 11:2–19 to function as a distinct unit in Matthew.

The large amount of overlap between Matt 11:2–6//Luke 7:18–23, Matt 11:7–11//Luke 7:24–28, and Matt 11:16–19//Luke 7:31–35 points to Matthew possessing a source that already linked these units.⁵⁶ The presence of material unique to each Evangelist at a similar point (Matt 11:14–15 and Luke 7:29–30) and the differences in wording and placement of what looks like a shared tradition in Matt 11:12–13//Luke 16:16, however, make it difficult to know the extent of the source(s) used by Matthew and Luke. One also has no way of knowing if there are places in the unit where both Evangelists alter their source(s). In line with the methodological decisions set forth in chapter 1, examination of Matt 11:2–19 will draw attention to places where Matthean redaction seems present in light of comparisons to the parallels in Luke and knowledge of

⁵⁵ All three parts are introduced with questions (J. Ian H. McDonald, “Questioning and Discernment in Gospel Discourse: Communicative Strategy in Matthew 11:2–19,” in *Authenticating the Words of Jesus* [ed. Bruce D. Chilton and Craig A. Evans; New Testament Tools and Studies 28; Leiden: Brill, 1999], 339–40).

⁵⁶ While there are a number of differences in Matt 11:7a//Luke 7:24a, which links John’s question to Jesus (Matt 11:2–6//Luke 7:18–23) with Jesus’ discussion of John (Matt 11:7b–11//Luke 7:24b–28), these differences can stem from the work of one or both of the Evangelists and do not call into question the linking of these two passages before Matthew and Luke (Richard A. Edwards, “Matthew’s Use of Q in Chapter Eleven,” in *Logia: les paroles de Jesus—the sayings of Jesus* [ed. Joël Delobel; Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1982], 63).

the tendencies of each author but will not attempt to reconstruct the wording or aims of Matthew's source(s).

The discussion of Matt 11:2–19 will consider both its context and the text itself. The first subsection deals with the context, noting where Matthew places this unit within his narrative. The next three subsections discuss 11:2–6, 7–15, and 16–19, respectively, with a summary following the examination of these subunits. The last subsection seeks to explore ramifications for the function of the Matthean Baptist within Matthew's setting.

Context

In addition to a “horizontal reading” of this text that notes how it differs from the Lukan parallel in wording and content, one should also conduct a “vertical reading,” considering where Matthew has placed this tradition.⁵⁷ A comparison with Luke is useful in this “vertical reading,” as what precedes and follows the section is significantly different from its parallel in Luke.

Luke places the question after two miracle stories, the first a Q tradition (7:1–10) and the second a passage unique to Luke (7:11–17). The concluding line of the second of these miracles notes the news of Jesus' miracles spreading, and 7:18 then introduces the discussion of the Baptist by stating that John's disciples tell John about Jesus' miraculous activities.

In contrast, Matthew places the story of the Baptist's question after Jesus sends out his disciples on a mission and then goes out and teaches and preaches himself (9:36–11:1). Matthew's account of the sending of the twelve seems to conflate the account of

⁵⁷ On the idea of “horizontal” and “vertical” readings of the text, see William G. Thompson, *Matthew's Advice to a Divided Community: Mt. 17,22–18,35* (AnBib 44; Rome: Biblical Institute, 1970), 4–13.

Mark 6:6b–13//Luke 9:1–6 and a tradition in which Jesus sends out a group on a mission (Luke 10:1–12) into a single sending of the disciples that speaks beyond the historical disciples to the current situation of Matthew’s group, with a particular focus on offering words of encouragement in the midst of suffering and opposition through the inclusion of material from Mark 13:9–13 (Matt 10:17–22; cf. 24:9–14) and sayings that Luke uses in other contexts (Matt 10:24//Luke 6:40; Matt 10:26–33/Luke 12:2–9; Matt 10:34–36//Luke 12:51–53; Matt 10:37–39//Luke 14:25–27, 17:33) in Matt 10:17–42.⁵⁸

This discourse offers links between the ministries of John, Jesus, and Jesus’ disciples while also differentiating between John’s work and that of Jesus and his disciples. Jesus commands his disciples to proclaim the same message that John (3:3) and Jesus (4:17) preached (“the kingdom of heaven is at hand”) and perform the same miracles Matthew describes Jesus working in Matt 8–9 (10:7–8).⁵⁹ Therefore, the disciples continue John’s message, but they do so in the same manner as Jesus by performing miraculous works. Because of the fusion of the mission of the twelve with the present circumstances of Matthew’s group, this passage would attribute both concepts to

⁵⁸ In addition to the discussions on the sources of Matt 10 in the commentaries, see F. W. Beare, “The Mission of the Disciples and the Mission Charge: Matthew 10 and Parallels,” *JBL* 89 (1970): 1–13; Eung Chun Park, *The Mission Discourse in Matthew’s Interpretation* (WUNT 2/81; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1995). On the mission discourse as serving as a model and message for the mission of Matthew’s group, see Schuyler Brown, “The Mission to Israel in Matthew’s Central Section,” *ZNW* 69 (1978): 73–90, esp. 84–85; W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:190; Luz, *Matthew*, 2:124; David C. Sim, *Apocalyptic Eschatology in the Gospel of Matthew* (SNTSMS 88; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 170. The words of Matt 28:19–20 alter this mission from being exclusively Jewish to include the Gentiles (on the inclusion of the Jews in Matt 28:19, see John P. Meier, “Nations or Gentiles in Matthew 28:19?” *CBQ* 39 [1977]: 94–102) and gives the disciples the authority to teach.

⁵⁹ Mark describes the twelve calling for repentance, casting out demons, and healing the sick (6:12–13), but this appears in the Evangelist’s report of the mission of the twelve, not in the words of Jesus. Luke also notes that the disciples are to preach the kingdom and heal in Luke 9:2 and 10:6 (cf. 9:6). Therefore, the preaching of the disciples and their miraculous activities are not elements unique to Matthew, but the terminology used referring to their message and ministry in Matthew is unique and more reminiscent of Jesus’ work.

Matthew's group as well; it continues the message of John but is more in line with Jesus' manner of ministering.⁶⁰

The discussion of suffering in this discourse offers a point of similarity between John, Jesus, and Jesus' disciples, and Jesus' words place their suffering within an eschatological context. The disciples will be "handed over" (10:17, 19, 21) just as John was (4:12), and accused of working under the power of the master of demons like Jesus (10:24–25), an accusation that Matthew also notes is directed towards John (11:18). Jesus' discussion of the division that occurs within households (10:21, 35) recalls passages in the Prophets that speak of apostasy at the end time (Mic 7:6; Isa 19:2),⁶¹ and Jesus' words in 10:17–22 have parallels in the apocalyptic discourse of Matt 24:9–13/Mark 13:9–13.⁶² Therefore, this opposition is part of the eschatological woes.⁶³ The placement of these words in this setting shows that these woes commence even before Jesus' death.⁶⁴ The opponents of Jesus and of Matthew's group are therefore the promised opposition of the last day.⁶⁵

⁶⁰ The lack of reference to miracles in the Great Commission could also indicate a slight change in the experience of the community (Hagner, *Matthew*, 1:273). For another view of the significance of Jesus' miraculous healings in contrast to that of his followers, see J. R. C. Cousland, *The Crowds in the Gospel of Matthew* (NovTSup 102; Leiden: Brill, 2002), 101–23.

⁶¹ These texts would develop in the eschatological thinking of Second Temple Judaism (see *Jub.* 23:16, 19–20; *1 En.* 56:7; 99:5; 100:2; *4 Ezra* 6:24; *2 Bar.* 70:3) (Gundry, *Matthew*, 193; Hagner, *Matthew*, 1:292). This trajectory would continue into the Mishnah (e.g., *m. Sot.* 9.15).

⁶² See Sim, *Apocalyptic Eschatology*, 169–73.

⁶³ On the eschatological elements of this section, see Donald A. Hagner, "Apocalyptic Motifs in Matthew," *HBT* 7 (1985): 64–65; W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:181–82; Harrington, *Matthew*, 141–48.

⁶⁴ There are differences in the time before Jesus' death and after his death, as reflected in the variations between Matt 10:5–15 and Matt 28:19–20 (mission to the Gentiles; teaching ministry of the disciples), but the similarities between Matt 10 and 24 indicate that both periods are in the time of the eschatological woes.

⁶⁵ See esp. W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:196–97.

Immediately after discussing the Baptist in 11:2–19, the Matthean Jesus pronounces woes on Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum for failing to repent when seeing the miracles (*δυνάμεις*) that Jesus performed (11:20–24). This placement of words of judgment following the discussion between Jesus and John’s disciples and Jesus’ ensuing words to the crowd is a unique element in Matthew’s narrative, as Luke has the story of Jesus being anointed by a sinful woman at the house of Simon the Pharisee (Luke 7:36–50). In light of the focus on judgment in the message of the Matthean John and the lack of focus of Jesus’ message on judgment so far,⁶⁶ these words offer confirmation that Jesus will indeed judge. The timetable for this judgment is different from the one that John offered, but the overall framework is the same. Jesus will speak of judgment more in the next few chapters (e.g., 12:33–37; 13:24–30, 36–43, 47–50). At the same time that Jesus affirms that judgment will come, however, there is still a stress laid on the offer of salvation due to the invitation that appears in 11:25–30.

These words of condemnation reveal a connection between Jesus and his disciples that further differentiates them from the Baptist. Jesus notes that the cities that reject him are worse than the people of Sodom and Gomorrah in 11:23–24, which recalls a similar statement about those who reject the disciples (10:15). There is no indication that rejecting John causes one to be worse than Sodom and Gomorrah. Therefore, the rejection of John is a serious offense, but the rejection of Jesus and of his messengers leads to even worse consequences, a theme that also appears in the trilogy of parables in 21:28–22:14. The difference between the ministry of the disciples and that of John

⁶⁶ While Jesus picks up elements of the Baptist’s proclamation in the Sermon on the Mount (7:15–20; cf. 8:12), this has not been the primary thrust of Jesus’ message, as he has offered forgiveness and invited sinners to repentance (9:1–13). See discussion in Yamasaki, *John the Baptist*, 126–27.

(miracles) seems to be the reason for this difference, as these works show the presence of the kingdom about which John spoke would come soon.

The passages before and after 11:2–19 highlight that the eschatological scenario painted by John is modified by Jesus while also emphasizing both continuity between John, Jesus, and the disciples and a differentiation between John and Jesus and his disciples. Judgment will come, but there is a longer period of opposition in light of Jesus' remarks to the disciples, with this suffering eschatological in nature. John does not preach a message that is different from Jesus and Jesus' disciples, but the fulfillment of the kingdom will occur differently than the way that John had envisioned.

Matthew 11:2–6

The overarching narrative of Matt 11:2–6 largely resembles Luke 7:18–23, but the Matthean form of the story has several distinctive elements. The greatest number of differences between Matt 11:2–6 and Luke 7:18–23 occur in the description of John learning about Jesus' activities and sending a delegation to him (Matt 11:2–3//Luke 7:18–21).⁶⁷ Matthew's shorter form reflects his aims, regardless of whether the shorter form is due to his hand.⁶⁸

⁶⁷ Luke alone chronicles John's disciples telling John about "these things," John summoning and sending two disciples to ask Jesus a question, the disciples asking these questions to Jesus, and Jesus then performing miracles in the presence of John's disciples.

⁶⁸ Matthew's tendency to streamline Mark makes it possible that he has abbreviated a longer form (as maintained in e.g., Hagner, *Matthew*, 1:299; Harrington, *Matthew*, 156), but one must remember that this tendency of Matthew has often been overstated, as noted in E. P. Sanders, *Tendencies of the Synoptic Tradition* (SNTSMS 9; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969), 83–87. The presence of Lukan vocabulary and tendencies in the passage (see W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:242; Backhaus, *Die "Jüngerkreise" des Täufers Johannes*, 116; Hanna Stettler, "Die Bedeutung der Täuferanfrage in Matthäus 11,26 par Lk 7,18–23 für die Christologie," *Bib* 89 [2008]: 175–76) offers a reasonable case for Luke expanding the report, preventing a conclusive argument for the originality of either form (Ernst, *Johannes der Täufer*, 57). It seems that both Evangelists rework the tradition in order to connect this story to their narrative (W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:239–40).

One of the most significant differences is that only Matthew states that the Baptist is in prison (ἐν τῷ δεσμωτηρίῳ).⁶⁹ In addition to clarifying that the “handing over” of John described in 4:12 means that he was imprisoned and thus integrating this incident within Matthew’s larger narrative, the reference to John’s imprisonment portrays him as living out Jesus’ teaching (5:10–12; 10:17–25) that those who follow him will suffer.⁷⁰ John’s imprisonment and the placement of this question after the mission discourse also connect John’s imprisonment to the eschatological woes in which the righteous are persecuted.⁷¹ There was not a place in John’s preaching in 3:7–12 for an extended period in which the righteous would suffer and lawlessness would prevail, so his imprisonment does not fit into his eschatological scheme and would prompt his doubts in prison.⁷² Suffering experienced by Matthew’s audience could similarly raise questions concerning whether Jesus was indeed the figure about whom John spoke, making John’s question of special relevance for them.

⁶⁹ Since the parallel in Luke does not mention that John is in prison and nothing in the story itself requires John’s imprisonment, this note most likely comes from Matthew’s hand (with e.g., Ernst, *Johannes der Täufer*, 167; Harrington, *Matthew*, 158; Häfner, *Der vorheißene Vorläufer*, 167; against e.g., Backhaus, *Die “Jüngerkreise” des Täufers Johannes*, 130).

⁷⁰ On the link between the suffering of Jesus’ disciples and the imprisonment of John, see R. Edwards, *Matthew’s Story*, 37; Patte, *Matthew*, 158; Gundry, *Matthew*, 204; Keener, *Matthew*, 333. Cf. Schweizer, *Matthew*, 256.

⁷¹ On the paradigm of eschatological woes as a “progressive breakdown of human society whereby the wicked prosper and intensify the suffering of the righteous” based upon texts such as *1 En.* 93:9–10; 91:11–12; 99:4–5; 100:1–4; Dan 8:13–14; 9:26–27; 12:1; *T. Jud.* 23:3–4, see Sim, *Apocalyptic Eschatology*, 42.

⁷² While many early church writers take issue with John having doubts about Jesus’ identity and deem John to be asking on behalf of his disciples (e.g. Jerome, *Com. Matt.* 2.11.3 [FC 117:128]; Chrysostom, *Hom. Matt.* 36.2 [NPNF¹ 10:238–39]; *Op. imp. Matt.* 26 [Thomas Oden, ed., *Incomplete Commentary on Matthew [Opus imperfectum]* [trans. James Kellerman; 2 vols; ACT; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Academic, 2010], 1:195–96]; for others, see Luz, *Matthew*, 2:133), Matthew would not seem to have a problem, as he seems to highlight confusion in the Baptist and his followers (Schweizer, *Matthew*, 256; Patte, *Matthew*, 159). Moreover, many prominent Jewish figures, including Elijah, experience doubt (Keener, *Matthew*, 334).

John's disciples are less prominent in Matthew's description, which allows for a stronger focus to follow upon an interchange between Jesus and John.⁷³ While Luke recounts the Baptist's disciples telling him about Jesus' activity (7:18) and has a longer interaction between Jesus and the disciples (7:19–20), Matthew notes that John hears about "the deeds of the Christ" with no reference to the mediating work of his disciples (11:2). In addition, the wording of 11:3 shows John directly asking Jesus the question: "he [John] said to him [Jesus]."⁷⁴ This construction recalls the previous interchange between John and Jesus in the narrative (3:13–17), which features John declaring his belief in Jesus as the coming figure but also misunderstanding the way Jesus accomplishes his work. Confusion on John's part thus is not something new or something that would threaten his importance.⁷⁵ In fact, John's misunderstanding in the earlier passage sets up a statement about his importance (3:15) akin to what happens here (see 11:7–15).

The term "the deeds of the Christ," unique to Matthew, recalls the miracles of Jesus described in chapters 8 and 9.⁷⁶ While this phrase is the wording of the narrator and

⁷³ As also noted in Jacques Dupont, "L'ambassade de Jean Baptiste," *NRTh* 83 (1961): 807–8; Backhaus, *Die "Jüngerkreise" des Täufers Johannes*, 130–31; Bowens, "The Role of John the Baptist," 313. Cf. Gundry, *Matthew*, 205; Häfner, *Der verheißene Vorläufer*, 174.

⁷⁴ The different constructions of Matthew and Luke also reveal Matthew showing an interest in John speaking to Jesus, as Matthew has λέγω as the main verb (εἶπεν) and πέμπω as a participle (πέμψας) (on Matthew's editorial use of πέμψας, see W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:79; Gundry, *Matthew*, 680; cf. Sand, *Matthäus*, 237) while in Luke the main verb is πέμπω (ἔπεμψεν) while λέγω is a participle (λέγων).

⁷⁵ On this question not being completely unexpected and showing Jesus explaining himself again to John, see R. Edwards, *Matthew's Story*, 38; Edmondo Lupieri, "John the Baptist in New Testament Traditions and History," *ANRW* 2.26.1 (1992): 448. On the development of the misunderstanding of John and his disciples, see Yamasaki, *John the Baptist*, 106–7. Cf. Patte, *Matthew*, 159.

⁷⁶ The "deeds of the Christ" would seem to be inclusive of all that Jesus has done so far in the gospel, including teaching, miracles, and sending out the disciples (see e.g., Bonnard, *Matthieu*, 160;

thus not necessarily the perspective of the Matthean John, its use to describe what John heard hints at the Matthean John's question stemming, at least in part, from the fact that Jesus' ministry includes activities that would occur at the time of the expected Christ.⁷⁷

These activities prompt John to ask if Jesus is "the coming one" (ὁ ἐρχόμενος) about whom John spoke (3:11) or if this figure will be someone besides Jesus (11:3).⁷⁸ John's

Donald Verseput, *The Rejection of the Humble Messianic King* [European University Studies 33/291; Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1986], 65; Luz, *Matthew*, 2:132; Stettler, "Die Bedeutung," 176), with the ministry of the disciples that corresponds to the ministry of Jesus thus a continuation of the "deeds of the Christ" (see Heinz Joachim Held, "Matthew and Interpreter of Miracle Stories," in Günther Bornkamm, Gerhard Barth, and Heinz Joachim Held, *Tradition and Interpretation in Matthew* (trans. Percy Scott; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1963), 250–52). The choice of the term "deeds," however, would emphasize the miracles Jesus has performed more than the words that he has spoken, and the placement of the note about Jesus teaching and preaching in 11:1 hints at John paying attention to Jesus' activities rather than his teaching (cf. Patte, *Matthew*, 157–59; Gundry, *Matthew*, 204; Sand, *Matthäus*, 237). The argument that Jesus' answer in 11:4–5 indicates that the "deeds of the Christ" of 11:2 is what Jesus says and does in the Gospel so far (e.g. W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:240) makes Jesus' answer offer nothing new to John in his request, merely pointing him back to what prompted the question in the first place, and thus seems a lackluster explanation.

⁷⁷ Some scholars note that there was no expectation that the Messiah would perform miracles (e.g., Luz, *Matthew*, 2:132 n. 20). It certainly was not a universal belief in light of the diversity of messianic expectations of the time. The actions that Jesus performs, however, reflect ideas of what would happen in messianic times (cf. Lida Novakovic, *Messiah, Healer of the Sick: A Study of Jesus as the Son of David in the Gospel of Matthew* [WUNT 2/170; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003], 163–69), making the phrase "the deeds of the Christ" fitting (cf. Gundry, *Matthew*, 206). In addition, other prophets or messianic figures tried to use miracles to justify their own beliefs (Schweizer, *Matthew*, 256), perhaps indicating a belief among some Jews that messianic figures would perform miracles. Finally, a number of passages indicate that there potentially was an expectation among some Jews that the Messiah would perform miracles; see 4Q521; 2 Bar. 29:6–7; 73:1–2; 4 Ezra 7:123 (as noted in e.g., Carter, *Matthew and the Margins*, 250; also see Str-B 1:593–96). There is some question in these passages if the Messiah or God Himself who performs these works (for discussion, see John J. Collins, *The Scepter and the Star: The Messiahs of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Other Ancient Literature* [New York: Doubleday, 1995], 119; Hans Kvalbein, "The Wonders of the End-Time: Metaphoric Language in 4Q521 and the Interpretation of Matthew 11.5 Par.," *JSP* 18 [1998]: 87–110; Benjamin G. Wold, "Agency and Raising the Dead in 4QPseudo-Ezekiel and 4Q521 2 ii," *ZNW* 103 [2012]: 1–19), but regardless of whether the activities described are performed by God rather than by the Messiah, there is a link between the miracles and the appearance of the Messiah and the kingdom, making it possible to label these "the works of the Messiah" (C. A. Evans, *Matthew*, 234–35).

⁷⁸ Matthew 11:3 reads ἕτερον while Luke 7:19 uses ἄλλον for "another." While it is likely that ἕτερον reflects Matthew's hand (Luz, *Matthew*, 2:130; against James M. Robinson, Paul Hoffmann, and John S. Kloppenborg, eds., *The Critical Edition of Q* [Minneapolis: Fortress, 2000], 119), there is no need to see Matthew's choice as intending to highlight the fact that John asked if "another of a different kind" would come (as noted in e.g., Keener, *Matthew*, 335; Gundry, *Matthew*, 205; Turner, *Matthew*, 291) since it does not seem that Matthew evokes the distinction between the two words found in Classical Greek (Hagner, *Matthew*, 1:299–300. Also see John K. Elliott, "The Use of ἕτερος in the New Testament," *ZNW* 60 [1969]: 140–41).

question is reasonable, as he hears of the miracles that Jesus performs but not the judgment that he proclaimed.⁷⁹ With his question, John recognizes an error somewhere in his thinking, either in his view of how God's plan will unfold or in his identification of Jesus as this figure.⁸⁰ The Baptist turns to Jesus to help him in the midst of his misunderstanding, likely in hopes that Jesus will help clarify the issue.

Jesus' answer in 11:4–5 indirectly affirms that John does not need to look for another because Jesus is *ὁ ἐρχόμενος*. In addition to reflecting the various activities of Jesus that Matthew places before this passage,⁸¹ these activities literally fulfill those Isaiah stated would be performed at the end of time (26:19; 29:18; 35:5–6; 61:1).⁸² Therefore, these activities indicate that the kingdom of God has come in Jesus' work (cf. 12:28) and that Jesus is indeed the figure about whom John spoke.⁸³ While Jesus' activity

⁷⁹ Since the Scriptures often speak about judgment in relation to the coming of God (Pss 96:13; 98:9; Isa 30:27; 40:10; Zech 2:10), "the coming one" is an appropriate title to reflect John's expectation that the figure would bring judgment (see Pierre Grelot, "«Celui Qui Vient» (Mt 11,3 et Lc 7,19)," in *Ce Dieu Qui Vient: Études sur l'Ancien et le Nouveau Testament offertes au Professeur Bernard Renaud à l'occasion de son soixante-cinquième anniversaire* (ed. Raymond Kuntzmann; Lectio Divina 159; Paris: Cerf, 1995), 276–77. Cf. Dupont, "L'ambassade de Jean Baptiste," 814–21.

⁸⁰ Cf. John P. Meier, *A Marginal Jew: Rethinking the Historical Jesus* (4 vols.; ABRL; New York/New Haven, CT: Doubleday/Yale University Press, 1991–2009), 2:133. This response of John to Jesus' works differs from those described later in the chapter (esp. 11:20–24); there is no condemnation of John in this passage.

⁸¹ In addition to the more obvious parallels to Isaiah in the miracles of 8:1–4, 9:1–8, 18–26, 27–31, the ability of the deaf-mute to speak in 9:32–34 points to him being able to hear too (see discussion in Nolland, *Matthew*, 451). The "poor" are "evangelized" in 5:3–12 (cf. 9:35).

⁸² Stettler, "Die Bedeutung," 179. Cf. Schweizer, *Matthew*, 256; Gundry, *Matthew*, 206. The one exception might be the healing of the lepers, although some have seen this as referring to Isa 35:8 (Verseput, *The Rejection*, 69; C. A. Evans, *Matthew*, 235), with others seeing the reference to lepers shaped by the story of Namaan (Stettler, "Die Bedeutung," 179; Grelot, "«Celui Qui Vient»," 281–82). On the distinctive of a literal fulfillment in the discussion in Matt 11:5 par., see Kvalbein, "The Wonders of the End-Time," 87–110.

⁸³ The fact that this list comes from the book of Isaiah would also show that Jesus is the figure for whom John was preparing and that the kingdom described by Isaiah has come (cf. Verseput, *The Rejection*, 71. On the Isaianic structure of 11:5, see W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:242). Grelot similarly notes

causes confusion in John, in looking at what Jesus has been doing one is reassured that Jesus is the figure John expected.

Jesus' answer to John's disciples does not just look to the activities which Jesus has performed since he also commands the disciples to announce to John what they "hear."⁸⁴ In addition to reflecting the phases of Jesus' ministry discussed so far in the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus' answer specifically highlights his words, indicating that Jesus' preaching explains his ministry.⁸⁵ Jesus' words so far in Matthew's narrative have highlighted that salvation comes now, judgment will come later, and suffering happens in the present, indicating that the fulfillment of promises occurs in a different way than originally expected.

By quoting passages from the Jewish Scriptures that deal with both salvation and judgment but only alluding to the works that would indicate restoration and salvation in 11:5,⁸⁶ Jesus essentially tells John that he is the figure but that the work of judgment is not his present focus.⁸⁷ Placing the words of judgment directed towards the cities that do

that these works would show the manifestation of God, indicating that he has come to his people ("«Celui Qui Vient»,” 284–87).

⁸⁴ Matthew's "hear and see" differs from Luke's rendition. Luke's order reflects the sequence of Jesus' answer, as they first report the miracles Jesus performs ("see") and then the preaching to the poor ("hear"). While there are plausible arguments for the originality of either order due to the redactional tendencies of each Evangelist (see discussion in Häfner, *Der vorheißene Vorläufer*, 162–63), the presence of βλέπω, a term Matthew prefers, rather than ὁράω/εἶδον points towards Matthean redaction on the passage (Gundry, *Matthew*, 205–6, 675). By placing "hear" first, Mathew would seem to prioritize the words of Jesus, just as he places an emphasis on Jesus' words by presenting an extended discourse in chs. 5–7 and through inserting much teaching into Mark's account. Another difference is the tense of the verbs in the two versions.

⁸⁵ For similar arguments on Matthew's emphasis on Jesus' words here, see Patte, *Matthew*, 159; Gundry, *Matthew*, 206; Häfner, *Der vorheißene Vorläufer*, 179.

⁸⁶ See Isa 26:16–21; 29:18–21; 35:3–10; 61:1–2.

⁸⁷ D. A. Carson notes that Jesus "studiously avoiding mention of judgment even when citing texts that intermingle blessing and judgment, suggests that the judgment is delayed, even while the promised

not repent at Jesus' words after this larger complex (11:20–24) also shows Jesus to be the figure that John expected and will judge, but this judgment happens after his miracles have been rejected.⁸⁸ Therefore, John cannot assume that his captivity will end because of Jesus' ministry; a period of suffering must continue even while the kingdom is present and the expected figure has arrived.

Although the content of the command to report back to John is essentially the same in Matthew and Luke,⁸⁹ the placement of the question from John after Jesus sends his disciples causes Jesus' command to John's disciples to be a way in which Jesus commissions John's disciples with a mission akin to his own disciples.⁹⁰ The uniquely Matthean use of *πορεύομαι* in describing the departure of John's disciples shows the obedience of John's disciples in following Jesus' directives.⁹¹ Their obedience to Jesus' words suggests a positive response from John, which is reinforced by John's earlier receptivity to Jesus' words (3:13–17).⁹²

blessings are being fulfilled in his ministry" ("Do the Prophets and the Law Quit Prophesying before John? A Note on Matthew 11:13," in *The Gospels and the Scriptures of Israel* [ed. Craig A. Evans and William R. Stegner; JSNTSup 104; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1993], 180–81). For a similar view, see Meier, *A Marginal Jew*, 2:134. Matthew's note about John's location in prison makes the absence of any reference in Jesus' response to release for the captives more striking in light of texts like Isa 42:6–7; Ps 146; 4Q521 (see Jo. Taylor, *The Immerser*, 290–91).

⁸⁸ Yamasaki, *John the Baptist*, 107, 109; cf. W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:245.

⁸⁹ The only differences between Matt 11:4–6/Luke 7:22–23 are Matthew's insertion of Jesus as the subject of *εἶπεν*, the order and tense of "hear" and "see," and Matthew's use of the conjunction *καί* at three points in the list of miracles. On the order of and tenses of the verbs, see n. 84 above. The insertion of Jesus in 11:4 and the threefold use of *καί* in 11:5 reflect Matthean style and help clarity or improve the story (W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:242).

⁹⁰ On this command as a preview of 28:19–20, see Osborne, *Matthew*, 414–15. On John's disciples as witnesses, see Keener, *Matthew*, 336.

⁹¹ Cf. Carter, *Matthew and the Margins*, 251.

⁹² On the likely positive response of the Baptist, see R. Edwards, "Matthew's Use of Q," 65. The fact that the Pharisees are later "scandalized" also points to John's acceptance, as John and the Pharisees are different.

While Jesus' words are addressed towards the Baptist, the narrative seems directed towards the audience of the Gospel and thus addressing the discontinuity between Jesus' ministry and John's teaching that the audience would notice, with the answer affirming that Jesus is the one who fulfills the content of John's message.⁹³ The lack of a recorded response by both John and his disciples indicates that their response is not the concern of the Evangelist; it is not about John's view of Jesus.⁹⁴ In effect, Jesus' response speaks beyond the Baptist to Matthew's audience to show that Jesus is indeed the fulfillment of John's prophecy.

The concluding beatitude serves as a warning to those who do not believe in Jesus due to his ministry not fitting the expectations set by the Baptist, but it stresses the blessing that one can receive in Jesus.⁹⁵ This prominence of blessing is in line with the emphasis of Jesus' preaching and his answer to John in which judgment is not the main thrust.⁹⁶ This statement assumes that recognizing Jesus to be the fulfillment of John's

⁹³ Cf. Hafner, *Der vorheißene Vorläufer*, 174–76, 190–91; Yamasaki, *John the Baptist*, 109–10; Nolland, *Matthew*, 452; Osborne, *Matthew*, 416. The use of the singular in 11:6 does not mean that it is only directed towards John (with Jo. Taylor, *The Immerser*, 293; against Webb, *John the Baptizer*, 279).

⁹⁴ In some ways, Matthew addresses this issue by including 3:14–15, showing that John and therefore also his faithful followers heed the correction of Jesus. Moreover, the lack of a response by John shows that John is not a witness to Jesus in this passage (as helpfully noted in Backhaus, *Die "Jüngerkreise" des Täufers Johannes*, 127; Dupont, "L'ambassade de Jean Baptiste," 810; against Bultmann, *History of the Synoptic Tradition*, 23). In fact, John's doubt would seem to make him a lackluster witness (Ernst, *Johannes der Täufer*, 60).

⁹⁵ W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:244. Cf. Chrysostom, *Hom. Matt.* 37.1 (*NPNF¹* 10:243). On the unit both warning and encouraging, see Turner, *Matthew*, 292. Those who stress the beatitude as a warning include Carter, *Matthew and the Margins*, 251; Luz, *Matthew*, 2:135; Nolland, *Matthew*, 452.

⁹⁶ Schweizer, *Matthew*, 257. The beatitude both recalls the beatitudes in 5:3–12 (esp. 5:11) and the need to confess Jesus before men in 10:32–33 (Osborne, *Matthew*, 415).

preaching may not be easy, with the lack of correspondence between John's expectations and Jesus' ministry a potential "scandal."⁹⁷

The issue here is not whether John is the Christ or if Jesus is the Christ, but rather if Jesus fits the expectations set out in the preaching of John. The text therefore does not serve as a polemic against John or individuals believing John to be the Messiah.⁹⁸ It serves as defense of the Baptist, explaining how Jesus can indeed be the figure about whom John spoke, a concern that would be especially pertinent to those who supported John's message.⁹⁹ The fact that Jesus' answer in 11:5 corresponds to Matthew's organization of the narrative may indicate that Matthew's narrative is an attempt to echo a tradition reflecting Jesus' response to the question of the Baptist, showing the Evangelist's interest in Jesus' answer to John.

Matthew 11:7–15

There is a change in both audience and in the subject of the discourse in 11:7. As John's disciples depart, Jesus speaks to the crowds (τοῖς ὄχλοις) that seem to be gathered around him and have heard the discussion between Jesus and John's disciples.¹⁰⁰ Jesus

⁹⁷ Hagner, *Matthew*, 1:301; cf. Bonnard, *Matthieu*, 161–62; W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:244. While the lack of correspondence between Jesus' ministry and John's expectations would be a critical issue, there are also other reasons for people to stumble at Jesus (Gundry, *Matthew*, 207).

⁹⁸ Sand, *Matthäus*, 237; Backhaus, *Die "Jüngerkreise" des Täufers Johannes*, 117–37. Against Bultmann, *History of the Synoptic Tradition*, 24.

⁹⁹ See Kraeling, *John the Baptist*, 129–31, who notes that the issue addressed would be one "among those who had the Baptist's proclamation still ringing in their ears, who lived in close contact with faithful disciples of John and whose thinking about Jesus was conditioned in large measure by their recollection of his life in their midst" (130). John S. Kloppenborg argues that the tradition is an appeal to the followers of the Baptist (*The Formation of Q: Trajectories in Ancient Wisdom Collections* [Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 2000], 109). Cf. Wink, *John the Baptist*, 23–24.

¹⁰⁰ The close connection between 11:2–6 and 11:7 may indicate that the crowds were already present and hearing Jesus' words in response to John's question (Verseput, *The Rejection*, 78). This was assumed by many Church Fathers, who see Jesus' words here as countering the perception by the crowds that John was doubting (Jerome, *Comm. Matt.* 2.11.6 [FC 117:130]; Chrysostom, *Hom. Matt.* 37.1 [NPNF¹

continues to speak to this crowd beyond v. 15, but the subject changes in 11:16 when Jesus begins to speak to the same crowds about “this generation.” While Matt 11:2–6 deals with the question of whether Jesus is indeed “the coming one,” 11:7–15 focuses on the identity of John the Baptist, declaring that he is the Elijah who was expected to come (11:10, 14).

Matthew 11:7–15 seems to derive from a variety of sources. Minor differences exist between Matt 11:7–11 and Luke 7:24–28, reflecting an origin in a shared source.¹⁰¹ Great overlap exists between Matt 11:12–13 and Luke 16:16, suggesting that Matthew and Luke have adapted a shared tradition.¹⁰² Matthew 11:14–15 most likely comes from Matthew’s hand, reflecting both a teaching (John is Elijah) and a tendency (making this idea explicit) that occurs later in the Gospel (see Matt 17:10–13).¹⁰³

Numerous divergences appear between Matt 11:7a and Luke 7:24a. Some of these differences are stylistic variations with little or no influence on the meaning of the passage.¹⁰⁴ The importance of Matthew’s use of *πορεύομαι* was noted above, as it points to John’s disciples obeying Jesus’ directions in 11:4. Matthew alone makes explicit that Jesus speaks, a change that could be for the sake of clarity or place an emphasis on these

10:243]; *Op. imp. Matt.* 26 [Oden, *Incomplete Commentary*, 1:197–98]; Gregory the Great, *Forty Gospel Homilies* 6.2 [Simonetti, *Matthew*, 1a:220]).

¹⁰¹ The tradition history of Matt 11:7–11//Luke 7:24–28 is beyond the scope of this project, as Matthew would have not been interested in or likely aware of how these sayings came together.

¹⁰² Meier notes that 11:12–13 is “heavily laden with Matthean theology” (“John the Baptist,” 395). On the overlap in these traditions despite their different placements and wording, see Brant Pitre, *Jesus, the Tribulation, and the End of Exile: Restoration Eschatology and the Origin of the Atonement* (WUNT 2/204; Tübingen/Grand Rapids: Mohr Siebeck/Baker Academic, 2005), 161–64.

¹⁰³ 11:15 may be a traditional saying associated with Jesus that Matthew adds to this section.

¹⁰⁴ For example, the difference in the description of the crowd (Matt 11:7: *τοῖς ὄχλοις*; Luke 7:24: *τοὺς ὄχλους*) seems of no interpretive significance and is rarely even mentioned by scholars.

words.¹⁰⁵ The omission of any reference to John’s disciples here keeps the focus on Jesus’ words about John.¹⁰⁶

The only other differences between Matt 11:7–11//Luke 7:24–28¹⁰⁷ appear in Jesus’ second question and answer to the crowds (Matt 11:8bc//Luke 7:25bc),¹⁰⁸ the quotation of Scripture in Matt 11:10//Luke 7:27,¹⁰⁹ and some of the wording of Jesus’ statement about John’s greatness (Matt 11:11a//Luke 7:28).¹¹⁰ It is not completely clear if the differences between Matt 11:8bc and Luke 7:25bc stem from Matthew’s shortening of a longer expression or a Lukan expansion to clarify the image for his audience, but this decision does not greatly alter the passage’s teaching on John.¹¹¹ The influence of the LXX likely explains the differences in Matt 11:10//Luke 7:27 since Matthew’s form more

¹⁰⁵ On the latter interpretation, see Gundry, *Matthew*, 207.

¹⁰⁶ Gundry’s argument that Matthew omits the phrase τῶν ἀγγέλων Ἰωάννου as a way to safeguard John’s role as a messenger seems unlikely (*Matthew*, 207), as this phrase appears to be Lukan (see Häfner, *Der vorheißene Vorläufer*, 192; Luz, *Matthew*, 2:136; J. M. Robinson, Hoffman, and Kloppenborg, *The Critical Edition of Q*, 128).

¹⁰⁷ While W. Davies and Allison find another difference in that some manuscripts of Luke feature ἐξεληλύθατε in 7:24, 25, 26 rather than the aorist ἐξήλθατε that appears in Matt 11:7, 8, 9 (see *Matthew*, 2:247 n. 51), this reading does not have sufficient support to deem it original, with both the NA²⁷/UBS⁴ and SBLGNT reading ἐξήλθατε in Luke.

¹⁰⁸ A minor difference is that Luke 7:25 features ἱματίοις between the words μαλακοῖς and ἡμφιεσμένον, but this word does not appear in the best witnesses for Matt 11:8 (⳨, B, and D). A more substantial difference is the answer given to the second question by Jesus, as Matthew’s version is shorter and speaks of those who live “in the houses of kings” (ἐν τοῖς οἴκοις τῶν βασιλέων) and wearing “soft clothing” (οἱ τὰ μαλακὰ φοροῦντες) (ἰδοὺ οἱ τὰ μαλακὰ φοροῦντες ἐν τοῖς οἴκοις τῶν βασιλέων εἰσὶν) while Luke’s refers those who wear “expensive garments” (οἱ ἐν ἱματισμῷ ἐνδόξῳ) and “live in luxury (τρυφῇ ὑπάρχοντες) in kingly residences” (ἐν τοῖς βασιλείοις).

¹⁰⁹ Matthew’s reading corresponds to most manuscripts of LXX Exod 23:20 and LXX Mal 3:1 and has ἐγὼ between Ἴδοὺ and ἀποστέλλω, while ἐγὼ does not appear in Luke. This pronoun is also absent in Mark 1:2.

¹¹⁰ See discussion in the body of the text for these differences.

¹¹¹ Hagner, *Matthew*, 1:303. It seems more likely that Luke or a writer added to the statement to make it clearer (see W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:248; Häfner, *Der vorheißene Vorläufer*, 193–94; Luz, *Matthew*, 2:136).

closely resembles the LXX. The use of the title τοῦ βαπτιστοῦ in Matt 11:11a and the substitution of “heaven” for “God” in 11:11b are also unlikely to have any ideological significance.

The variation between Luke’s expression that “no one is” (οὐδεὶς ἐστίν) greater than John and Matthew’s statement that “one has not arisen” (οὐκ ἐγήγερται) who is greater than John the Baptist could be stylistic, but it may also reflect a slightly different meaning in Matthew’s form of the passage. Matthew’s expression is more Semitic, so it is plausible that Matthew has substituted a Semitic phrase for a Greek expression or that Luke has substituted a Greek expression for a Semitic construction due to their different audiences.¹¹² Matthew’s editorial use of ἐγείρω favors this phrase being from his hand.¹¹³ While the references to prophets rising in Matt 24:11, 24 derive from Mark 13, the use of this term elsewhere to describe the appearance of prophets (e.g., John 7:52) or other key figures in history (e.g. LXX Judg 2:16, 18; 3:9, 15; Heb 7:11, 15) show a Jewish association with prophets or key figures.¹¹⁴ Therefore, the use of ἐγείρω may highlight John’s important place in salvation history.¹¹⁵

¹¹² W. Davies and Allison favor Matthew changing the expression to the more Semitic form (*Matthew*, 2:250). Luz’s comments imply a belief that Matthew’s reading is original (*Matthew*, 2:136).

¹¹³ On ἐγείρω as editorial, see e.g., W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:77; Gundry, *Matthew*, 676.

¹¹⁴ Scholars who note the connections between ἐγείρω and prophets include W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:251; Gundry, *Matthew*, 208. Also see the discussion in Versepunt, *The Rejection*, 86; Lothar Coenen, “Resurrection,” *NIDNTT*, 3:279–81. On a link to MT Deut 34:10, see R. Steven Notley, “The Kingdom of Heaven Forcefully Advances,” in *The Interpretation of Scripture in Early Judaism and Christianity: Studies in Language and Tradition* (ed. Craig A. Evans; JSPSup 33; SSEJC 7; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 2000), 291.

¹¹⁵ See Backhaus, *Die “Jüngerkreise” des Täufers Johannes*, 61. Cf. Carson, “Do the Prophets,” 181–82.

Attention now turns from Matthew's modification of the tradition in 11:7–11 to his use of it. The identity of the crowds to which Jesus speaks in this unit is unclear, but the question Jesus asks three times (“What did you go out to see?”)¹¹⁶ assumes that this group went out to the wilderness to see John. This passage directs the audience back to Matt 3:1–17,¹¹⁷ making it likely that the audience should think the crowds here include the people from Jerusalem, all Judea, and all the regions of the Jordan. While they seem to have had a positive perception of John, Jesus' words to them about John indicate that they do not understand the true significance of John's work.¹¹⁸

Each of Jesus' three questions supplies an answer that is incorrect or insufficient, as Jesus asks if they saw a “reed shaken by the wind,” “a man dressing in soft clothes,” or a “prophet.” The first two images could be interpreted literally as referring to a reed that blows in the wind and a figure wearing soft clothing or could have symbolic meaning. For example, Jesus may compare John to a person who vacillates with the image of the reed,¹¹⁹ and the reference to those in “soft clothes” could show that John did not use

¹¹⁶ The sentence could be punctuated so that τί means “why?” instead of “what?” The variant reading in 11:9 that switches the order of the infinitive and the noun (προφήτην ἰδεῖν) clarifies this ambiguity, as it could only be rendered as “Why?” A similar variant also appears, with weaker support, in 11:8. The structure of the passage seems to focus on what the people went to see, not why they went out, as it addresses John's identity (Verseput, *The Rejection*, 81, 341–42 n. 83). Most scholars lean towards this position, but there is little interpretative difference (Osborne, *Matthew*, 419). No significance seems to appear in the switch from θεάσασθαι in 11:7 to ἰδεῖν in 11:8, 9.

¹¹⁷ Walter Vogels, “Performers and Receivers of the Kingdom: A Semiotic Analysis of Matthew 11:2–15,” *ScESt* 42 (1990): 329.

¹¹⁸ Verseput, *The Rejection*, 78. On the crowds understanding of Jesus, see Cousland, *The Crowds in the Gospel of Matthew*, 101–208.

¹¹⁹ Those that think it refers to John's wavering include e.g., Hagner, *Matthew*, 1:305; Gundry, *Matthew*, 207. This view is rejected by W. Davies and Allison, who offer another proposal that the reeds refer to the Exodus (*Matthew*, 2:247), but their proposal has not found wide acceptance.

forms of worldly power.¹²⁰ The images may be multivalent, with a symbolic meaning secondary to the literal images.¹²¹ A decision between these options is not necessary for the purposes of this study, though it seems best to deem it multivalent.

While it is unclear if Jesus' words in the first two images are intended to speak against particular opinions of the Baptist and what would lead people to these opinions, the third image (a prophet) seems more appropriate of John and appears to be the view that the crowd had of John (cf. 14:5; 21:26).¹²² Jesus initially affirms this opinion, but he then goes beyond it, noting that John is "more than a prophet" (11:9). With these words, Jesus shows that John actually stands in a different category; he is not a prophet but the "messenger" who is to come before the arrival of God.¹²³ Therefore, Jesus shows the insufficiency of the crowds' opinion and seeks to correct the crowds' beliefs about John.¹²⁴

Jesus gives the basis for the placement of John in a category higher than prophet in 11:10. Just as the narrator identified John as the fulfillment of passages from the

¹²⁰ Many early interpreters viewed the reference to John's dress as indicating that he does not seek the world's comforts or power (Jerome, *Comm. Matt.* 2.11.6 [FC 117:130]; Chrysostom, *Hom. Matt.* 37.1 [NPNF¹ 10:243–44]; *Op. imp. Matt.* 26 [Oden, *Incomplete Commentary*, 1:198]).

¹²¹ In addition, there may be a reference to Herod lying behind both statements, see Gerd Theissen, "Das 'schwankende Rohr' in Mt. 11,7 und die Gründungsmünzen von Tiberias. Ein Beitrag zur Lokalkoloritforschung in den synoptischen Evangelien," *ZDPV* 101 (1985): 43–55. For a discussion of both literal and symbolic meaning in the passage, see Häfner, *Der vorheißene Vorläufer*, 218–22; Luz, *Matthew*, 2:138–39.

¹²² McDonald, "Questioning and Discernment," 353. On the rhetorical strategy here and the origins of a popular belief in John as a prophet, see Nolland, *Matthew*, 455.

¹²³ See M. Jack Suggs, *Wisdom, Christology, and Law in Matthew's Gospel* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1970), 45. Cf. Ernst, *Johannes der Täufer*, 62. The use of the word ἄγγελος does indicate a special status for John, but it need not be interpreted as showing his "angelic-like" nature as discussed in some early interpreters (Jerome, *Com. Matt.* 2.11.9 [FC 117:130–31]; *Op. imp. Matt.* 26 [Oden, *Incomplete Commentary*, 1:199]) and reflected in later iconography.

¹²⁴ With Dapaah, *The Relationship between John the Baptist and Jesus of Nazareth*, 120.

Scriptures (3:3), Jesus declares here that John is the figure who fulfills Exod 23:20 and Mal 3:1 (11:10).¹²⁵ John's status as one greater than a prophet is due to his special function as the messenger who prepares for the activity of God.¹²⁶ The information that Jesus presents in 11:7–9 should direct the audience to this conclusion,¹²⁷ with the discussion in 11:2–6 affirming that Jesus' ministry is indeed this promised event. The fact that the quotation of Scripture refers to "you" instead of "me" indicates a slightly different scheme of the end-time, as it would seem that God sends Elijah before another figure ("you").¹²⁸ Jesus' words therefore clarify who John is but also rework his expectations about the end-time.

¹²⁵ The inclusion of ἐγώ in 11:10 causes the first part of the quotation (Ἴδού ἐγὼ ἀποστέλλω τὸν ἄγγελόν μου πρὸ προσώπου σου) to be an exact replica of LXX Exod 23:20, a passage that has similarities with Mal 3:1 and was linked with Mal 3:1 (see Krister Stendahl, *The School of St. Matthew and its Use of the Old Testament* [2d ed.; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1968], 50). Some dispute whether there is any connection to Exod 23:20, arguing that the text is a paraphrase of only Mal 3:1 (Verseput, *The Rejection*, 84–85; Osborne, *Matthew*, 420). Since Malachi alludes to Exodus, however, it seems best to view Exod 23:20 in the background of the statement (James DeYoung, "The Function of Malachi 3.1 in Matthew 11.10: Kingdom Reality as the Hermeneutic of Jesus," in *The Gospels and the Scriptures of Israel* [ed. Craig A. Evans and William R. Stegner; JSNTSup 104; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1993], 71). The second part of the quotation (ὁς κατασκευάσει τὴν ὁδὸν σου ἔμπροσθέν σου) differs from the LXX form of Mal 3:1 and more likely reflects knowledge of the MT form. A difference between Mal 3:1 and Matt 11:10 is the use of the second person pronoun at two points (τὴν ὁδὸν σου, ἔμπροσθέν σου), with a first person singular suffix used and only in one place (ἐγὼ).

¹²⁶ On John's task as one that differs from that of a prophet, see Jerome, *Com. Matt.* 2.11.9 (FC 117:130); Chrysostom, *Hom. Matt.* 37.2 (NPNF¹ 10:244); *Op. imp. Matt.* 26 (Oden, *Incomplete Commentary*, 1:199–200). The use of Exod 23:20 may indicate that John is a messenger who comes to lead people into the area of promise, as John helps lead the people into the kingdom of heaven rather than Canaan (W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:249; cf. Häfner, *Der vorheißene Vorläufer*, 224–25). On potential connection to Moses and the Messiah in the use of Exod 23:20, see Volker Schönle, *Johannes, Jesus und die Juden: Die theologische Position des atthäus und des Verfassers der Redenquelle im Lichte von Mt. 11* (Beiträge zur biblischen Exegese und Theologie 17; Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1982), 68.

¹²⁷ Verseput, *The Rejection*, 83. On the need to reintroduce this teaching in light of Matthew's portrayal of the Baptist since 3:12, see the discussion in Yamasaki, *John the Baptist*, 111–12.

¹²⁸ This shift may be due to the influence of Exod 23:20 on the text of Mal 3:1 (so Gundry, *Matthew*, 207–8), but it seems more likely that it notes the presence of different figures, as God speaks about a messenger coming before another individual (Harrington, *Matthew*, 156; Luz, *Matthew*, 2:138 n. 22). Ambiguity exists in Malachi's text, as there is discussion of a messenger (Elijah), a messenger of the covenant, and God. Scholars have argued that the messenger of the covenant is Elijah, God, or another figure. See discussion in David M. Miller, "The Messenger, the Lord, and the Coming Judgment in the

The remarks about John the Baptist in 11:11 continue to emphasize his importance, with some marks of Matthew seeming to give John an even greater role.¹²⁹ The presence of ἀμὴν places a weight onto this statement that is not featured in the Lukan parallel, and the phrase ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν recalls Jesus' divine teaching elsewhere in Matthew.¹³⁰ As noted above, the presence of ἐγγήγερται in Jesus' description of John as the greatest of humans (ἐν γεννητοῖς γυναικῶν) highlights his place as an important figure in the unfolding of God's plans, with Jesus' words showing John to have a function that surpasses all others.¹³¹ While Jesus' statement about John may appear to give John an even greater role than Jesus himself, the placement of this statement after the confirmation of Jesus' identity in 11:2–6 and the description of John's work in 11:10 indicates that John is not greater than Jesus.¹³² Nevertheless, John's special relationship to the kingdom does give him great importance.

Reception History of Malachi 3," *NTS* 53 (2007): 1–16. Matthew seems to work with this ambiguity. For an argument that the shift in pronouns as a way to show Jesus' deity, see DeYoung, "Function of Malachi," 89 (cf. Schlatter, *Matthäus*, 363).

¹²⁹ While the praise for John appears in Matthew's source, this seems to be another example of John giving "acclaim" to someone who offered him "acclaim" (see Bruce J. Malina and Jerome H. Neyrey, *Calling Jesus Names: The Social Value of Labels in Matthew* [Foundations and Facets: Social Facets; Sonoma, CA: Polebridge, 1998], 101), as the Matthean John has praised John in 3:13–17.

¹³⁰ Yamasaki, *John the Baptist*, 112. A number of manuscripts read ἀμὴν in Luke 7:28 (including ⳨, L, Ξ), but this reading is likely due to an assimilation to its presence in the Matthean parallel.

¹³¹ It is possible that Jesus does not intend to elevate John over prophets and the patriarchs, with the statement putting John on par with them (Jerome, *Comm. Matt.* 2.11.11 [FC 117:131]). The context, however, seems to point to John being elevated due to his special role and connection to the kingdom. Verseput further deems the phrase οὐκ ἐγγήγερται and John's title as adding to the "impression of an authoritative declaration" (*The Rejection*, 86).

¹³² See Carson, "Do the Prophets," 182. There is no need to deem the use of the perfect tense in ἐγγήγερται as excluding Jesus from this category, as argued in Martin Dibelius, *Die urchristliche Überlieferung von Johannes dem Täufer* (FRLANT 15; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1911), 9; Meier, "John the Baptist," 394 n. 37; Verseput, *The Rejection*, 86, 344 n. 102. The attempt to exclude Jesus from this comparison appears in early interpreters as well; see Jerome, *Comm. Matt.* 2.11.11 (FC 117:131); Chrysostom, *Hom. Matt.* 37.2 (NPNF¹ 10:245); *Op. imp. Matt.* 26 (Oden, *Incomplete Commentary*, 1:200).

Rather than seeking to minimize the significance of the Baptist, 11:11b stresses the importance of the kingdom of heaven for which John prepares and which Jesus enacts. In light of the placement of this statement that speaks of the greatness of the “least in the kingdom of heaven” (ὁ δὲ μικρότερος ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ τῶν οὐρανῶν)¹³³ in comparison with John the Baptist shortly after Jesus’ reference to the μικρός in 10:42, the term seems to refer to a follower of Jesus engaged in missionary service.¹³⁴ The kingdom of heaven reverses the natural order of things, making the least great and the first last, thus a figure that appears insignificant is even greater than John.¹³⁵ This seemingly irrelevant individual is greater than John the Baptist because of his connection to the kingdom of heaven, as “the least” experiences the kingdom of heaven in a fuller way than John does through the connection between Jesus’ miracles and the miracles performed by the disciples in mission. This elevation of the kingdom of heaven over John the Baptist reflects John’s preaching of the kingdom of heaven (3:2) and emphasis on a figure coming after him who is greater than he (3:11–12). While the saying does not seem to intend to exclude John from the kingdom,¹³⁶ it shows that Jesus’ followers experience the

¹³³ On the superlative use of μικρότερος here, see BDF §60–61.

¹³⁴ Yamasaki, *John the Baptist*, 113–16. Also see Carson, “Do the Prophets,” 184–85; Luz, *Matthew*, 2:139; Nolland, *Matthew*, 457; Eloff, “Ἀπο ... ἔως,” 97; cf. Jerome, *Comm. Matt.* 2.11.11 (FC 117:131). Against those who think that Jesus refers to himself with the phrase ὁ μικρότερος (e.g., Chrysostom, *Hom. Matt.* 37.2 [NPNF¹ 10:244–45]; Oscar Cullman, “Ὁ ὀπίσω μου ἐρχόμενος,” in *The Early Church: Studies in Early Christian History and Theology* [ed. A. J. Higgins; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1956], 180; Carter, *Matthew and the Margins*, 252–53).

¹³⁵ On the saying highlighting the reversal of order that appears in the kingdom, see Meier, *A Marginal Jew*, 2:142–43; Jo. Taylor, *The Immerser*, 303–4. Cf. Benedict Viviano, “The Least in the Kingdom: Matthew 11:11, Its Parallel in Luke 7:28 (Q), and Daniel 4:14,” *CBQ* 62 (2000): 51–52.

¹³⁶ Jesus’ words do not exclude John from the kingdom of heaven, as Jesus does not make a dualistic distinction between those “born of woman” and those “in the kingdom of heaven” since the “least” would also be born of woman (Yamasaki, *John the Baptist*, 115–16. Cf. Verseput, *The Rejection*,

kingdom in a qualitatively different way than John because of their respective historical positions in relation to Jesus' ministry.¹³⁷

It is unclear which elements in 11:12–13 reflect Matthew's hand,¹³⁸ but there are five distinctive aspects of Matthew's form of the saying.¹³⁹ First, the saying in Matthew seems more interested in John the Baptist, as it occurs in a section discussing John (11:2–19) and features two references to the Baptist. Second, Matthew does not simply refer to John the Baptist but describes a period of time with the phrase “the days of John.”¹⁴⁰ Third, Matthew's version places a stronger emphasis on the concept of “violence,” featuring two words from the βία- root (βιάζεται, βιασται) as well as another word that suggests aggressive activity (ἀρπάζουσιν). Fourth, Matthew shows an interest in tracing this violence to the present with the word ἄρτι. Finally, Matthew's version explicitly

90; against Charles H. H. Scobie, *John the Baptist* [London: SCM, 1964], 157; R. Edwards, *Matthew's Story*, 39; Harrington, *Matthew*, 157; Luz, *Matthew*, 2:139). The primary purpose of the statement does not seem to be the Baptist's place inside or outside of the kingdom (Häfner, *Der vorheißene Vorläufer*, 228).

¹³⁷ Cf. Keener, *Matthew*, 338–39.

¹³⁸ On the originality of Luke's order, see W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:253; Meier, *A Marginal Jew*, 2:157–60; J. M. Robinson, Hoffman, and Kloppenborg, *The Critical Edition of Q*, 464–67. Cf. Luz, *Matthew*, 2:136–37. For a critique of the originality of Luke's order, see Stephen Llewelyn, “The Traditionsgeschichte of Matt 11:12–13 Par. Luke 16:16,” *NovT* 36 (1994): 330–49 (cf. Dibelius, *Die urchristliche Überlieferung*, 23–24). Elements of each version often seen as redactional have also been challenged; on Luke's εὐαγγελίζεται, see Pitre, *Jesus, the Tribulation, and the End of Exile*, 163, and on Matthew's ἐπροφητευσαν and order of “the Prophets and Law,” see Llewelyn, “Traditionsgeschichte,” 342–46.

¹³⁹ Two items that reflect Matthew's tendencies but do not seem overly significant are the use of the title ὁ βαπτιστής (τοῦ βαπτιστοῦ) and the phrase “the kingdom of heaven.”

¹⁴⁰ On John's work as a period, see Wink, *John the Baptist*, 29; W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:254.

notes the relationship between “all the Prophets and the Law” and “John,” as Matthew notes that “they prophesied until John” (ἕως Ἰωάννου ἐπροφητευσαν).¹⁴¹

Matthew 11:12 has proven to be one of the most difficult verses in Matthew and perhaps all of the New Testament.¹⁴² Since others have addressed the issues in this text in more detail, this discussion will briefly set forth the positions adopted and then turn to understand the meaning of the passage as a whole. The phrase ἀπὸ δὲ τῶν ἡμερῶν Ἰωάννου τοῦ βαπτιστοῦ includes John, as ἀπό typically has an inclusive meaning in Matthew, especially when used with ἕως.¹⁴³ A passive meaning is more likely for βιάζεται, referring to the violence that the kingdom suffers, for two reasons: (1) the Matthean context shows opposition in mentioning John's imprisonment and the rejection by “this generation” portrayed in the parable that follows (11:16–19); and (2) the words βιάζομαι, βιαστής, and ἀρπάζω typically have negative connotations.¹⁴⁴ The βιασται are

¹⁴¹ Luke has no verb in the statement (μέχρι Ἰωάννου). There could be a slightly different meaning between Matthew's ἕως and Luke's μέχρι (with Luke's word more likely original; see David R. Catchpole, “On Doing Violence to The Kingdom,” *JTSA* 25 [1978]: 56–57; cf. R. Edwards, “Matthew's Use,” 64), but the difference could be due to the order in the two elements of the statement rather than a difference in ideology concerning John's place inside or outside of the Law and Prophets. The dispute between John being included or excluded from the period the Law and the Prophets in both versions would seem to reveal that the lexical choice does not demand a particular interpretation.

¹⁴² A whole monograph is devoted to the interpretation history of this verse: P. S. Cameron, *Violence and the Kingdom: The Interpretation of Matthew 11.12* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1988).

¹⁴³ This position appears in e.g., Schlatter, *Matthäus*, 367; Wink, *John the Baptist*, 29; Versepunt, *The Rejection*, 93; W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:254; Yamasaki, *John the Baptist*, 117.

¹⁴⁴ Other who take an *in malem partem* meaning include e.g., G. Braumann, “Βία,” *NIDNTT* 3:712; W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:256; Hagner, *Matthew*, 1:306–7; Gundry, *Matthew*, 209–10; Luz, *Matthew*, 2:140; Osborne, *Matthew*, 421–22. Against this view are those who see it as *in bonam partem*, such as Rod Doyle, “Matthew 11:12 – A Challenge to the Evangelist's Community,” *Colloq* 18 (1985): 20–30; Versepunt, *The Rejection*, 94–99; Gerd Häfner, “Gewalt gegen die Basileia? Zum Problem der Auslegung des »Stürmerspruches« Mt 11,12,” *ZNW* 83 (1992): 21–51. For lexical considerations, see G. Schenk, “βιάζομαι,” *TDNT* 1:609–14; W. Ernest Moore, “ΒΙΑΖΩ, ΑΡΠΑΖΩ and Cognates in Josephus,” *NTS* 21 (1975): 519–43; C. Spicq, “βιάζομαι,” *TLNT* 1:287–91.

those who oppose the advancement of the kingdom, especially the scribes and the Pharisees that oppose Jesus in Matt 9.¹⁴⁵ In light of the eschatological language used to describe the opponents that the disciples face in their mission in Matt 10 and the characterization of the eschatological tribulation as a period of violence, this opposition is connected to the apostasy that occurs as part of the eschatological woes.¹⁴⁶ Finally, an inclusive use of ἔως in v. 13 makes sense of the portrayal of John, as he stands as a transition figure who concludes the time before the arrival of the kingdom but also stands at the beginning of the new time; the Prophets and the Law prophesied up to and including his ministry and it is in his days that the kingdom of heaven began to face the opposition that is part of the eschatological woes.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁵ Cf. Schlatter, *Matthäus*, 368. A connection to the Pharisees in this expression also appears in W. Moore, “BIAZΩ,” 540–42; idem, “Violence to the Kingdom: Josephus and the Syrian Churches,” *ExpTim* 1989 (100): 174–77, although he also links the saying to the Zealots. For a connection between “violent ones” and false teaching, see B. E. Thiering, “Are the ‘Violent Men’ False Teachers?” *NovT* 21 (1979): 293–97. For other discussions of the identity of the “violent,” see Georg Braumann, “Dem Himmelreich wird Gewalt angetan (Mt 11:12),” *ZNW* 52 (1961): 104–9; Paul Barnett, “Who Were the Biastai?” *RTR* 36 (1977): 65–70; Doyle, “Matthew 11:12,” 22, 26–28. Since Matthew has not related Herod’s opposition to John at this juncture in the narrative, he does not seem to be the immediate referent here, though one would include Herod in this group upon re-encountering the text.

¹⁴⁶ W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:255–56; Luz, *Matthew*, 2:141–42; Pitre, *Jesus, the Tribulation, and the End of Exile*, 165–69. A similar view appears in Dibelius, *Die urchristliche Überlieferung*, 25–29. While one need not go so far as to view the opposition as coming from demoniac powers (Kraeling, *John the Baptist*, 157; cf. Kingsbury, *Matthew as Story*, 61 n. 6), this conflict would seem to be part of the cosmic conflict that is to occur at the end of time. The fact that this passage uses the word βιάζομαι rather than the more usual words that describe persecution (ἀποκτείνω, δίωκω) also points to the opposition as eschatological (cf. Jozef Verheyden, “The Violators of the Kingdom of God: Struggling with Q Polemics in Q 16,16–18,” in *Jesus, Paul, and Early Christianity: Studies in Honour of Henk Jan de Jonge* [ed. Rieuwerd Buitenwerf, Harm W. Hollander, Johannes Tromp; NovTSup 130; Leiden: Brill, 2008], 406).

¹⁴⁷ With Bonnard, *Matthieu*, 153; Luz, *Matthew*, 2:142; Nolland, *Matthew*, 458. Against Versepunt, *The Rejection*, 100–1; W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:257; Gundry, *Matthew*, 210; Yamasaki, *John the Baptist*, 117 n. 54. The saying itself might be constructed in such a way to reflect the tension in the fact that John stands as a figure of transition at the climax of the Law and Prophets (cf. Turner, *Matthew*, 295; Osborne, *Matthew*, 422), as it seems both to make John an end point and a beginning point (Llewelyn, “Traditiongeschichte,” 343; cf. *Op. imp. Matt.* 26 [Oden, *Incomplete Commentary*, 1:200–1]).

The appearance of Matthew's form of this tradition of 11:12–13 after 11:11 attests to the greatness of John the Baptist and the greatness of the kingdom while highlighting that there is present suffering.¹⁴⁸ The opposition that John and Jesus' followers face confirms that the eschatological age has commenced. The fact that this violence begins in the days of John the Baptist rather than in the days of the prophets indicates that John's work is a turning point in history.¹⁴⁹ Since Jesus commences his ministry during John's lifetime and John's ministry occurs "in the days of Jesus" (cf. 3:1), the kingdom comes in "the days of John."¹⁵⁰ In noting a period of violence against the kingdom that commences with John, Jesus' words looks to an intermediary period between the present age and the fullness of the kingdom,¹⁵¹ a period that lasts from John to the time of the Gospel's audience. This reality offers a harsh characterization of the opponents of John as well as the Jewish adversaries of Matthew's time as the promised eschatological enemies. Jesus' words also make John the first one to suffer in this period, with John's suffering marking the shift from the protection of Jesus seen in the infancy narrative to his Passion.

¹⁴⁸ Cf. McDonald, "Questioning and Discernment," 355. The $\delta\acute{\epsilon}$ here thus seems to have a contrastive meaning; John is great and the kingdom is even greater, but the kingdom has been opposed since the time of John.

¹⁴⁹ See esp. Pitre, *Jesus, the Tribulation, and the End of Exile*, 168–69. Cf. Theodore of Mopsuestia, *Fragment* 61 (Simonetti, *Matthew*, 1a:224); Schönle, *Johannes*, 125, 151. On the difference between John's suffering and that of the prophets, see Overman, *Church and Community in Crisis*, 166–67; Luz, *Matthew*, 1:142.

¹⁵⁰ Therefore, the view that 11:11 has antithetical parallelism, with 11:11a reflecting the positive advancement of the kingdom (Carson, "Do the Prophets," 187; Nolland, *Matthew*, 458; Cf. Mervyn Eloff, "Ἄπο ... ἔως and Salvation History in Matthew's Gospel," in *Built Upon the Rock* [ed. Daniel M. Gurtner and John Nolland; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008], 98–99), would not greatly alter the overall meaning of the statement. John's preaching about the nearness of the kingdom also makes it appropriate to say that the kingdom suffered violence during his ministry (cf. Catchpole, "On Doing Violence," 60. Also see Jerome, *Comm. Matt.* 2.11.12 [FC 117:131–32]).

¹⁵¹ On the periodization of time in Jesus' statement, see Kraeling, *John the Baptist*, 156. Cf. Notley, "Kingdom of Heaven," 306–7. This eschatological scheme differs from the salvation-historical epochs in Meier, "John the Baptist," 401–5.

Matthew's statement about the Jewish Scriptures (11:13) justifies both the greatness of John and the kingdom (11:11) and the opposition that John, Jesus, and Jesus' followers experience (11:12). The greatness of John and the kingdom is declared by noting that John's ministry stands at the end of the prophesying of the Prophets and the Law; a new day dawns with John's ministry, which is the cause of his greatness but also the reason for his "least-ness." John's place at the end of the prophesying of all the Prophets and Law locates him at the beginning of the eschatological woes.¹⁵² Rather than the opposition of the kingdom jeopardizing John's role as Elijah, it shows that he is Elijah who is rejected as part of the eschatological sufferings.

Discussion of John's position as the one who stands at the turning point of the ages leads to Jesus' declaration of the need to recognize John's identity as the eschatological Elijah (11:14–15).¹⁵³ The words of 11:15 reveal that this truth is not one that is easily accepted or readily apparent to the crowds or Matthew's audience.¹⁵⁴ This statement may be difficult to believe because John's suffering does not fit the eschatological scheme present in his preaching.¹⁵⁵ It is an important point to make, however, as John's Elijanic identity leads to the conclusion that the arrival of God has

¹⁵² The words of 11:13 could also be interpreted to describe the fact that the Law and the Prophets spoke of the opposition that John and the kingdom experience (Robert Branden, *Satanic Conflict and the Plot of Matthew* [Studies in Biblical Literature 89; New York: Peter Lang, 2006], 132).

¹⁵³ On μέλλω showing John's eschatological significance, see Catchpole, "On Doing Violence," 51.

¹⁵⁴ On the difficulty of this saying, see Schlatter, *Johannes der Täufer*, 47–48; Kraeling, *John the Baptist*, 143; Wink, *John the Baptist*, 31–32; Hagner, *Matthew*, 1:308; Harrington, *Matthew*, 15.

¹⁵⁵ Cf. Sand, *Matthäus*, 241; Ernst, *Johannes der Täufer*, 170.

indeed come, supporting Matthew's controversial claims about Jesus.¹⁵⁶ The call to hear in v. 15 serves as warning, prompting the people to embrace his message and to turn back to God in repentance lest they face judgment as described in the discussion of Elijah in Malachi.¹⁵⁷ The parable that follows indicates a group has rejected John's Elijanic identity, but the words of 11:14–15 implore the crowds and potentially Jews in Matthew's time to accept John as Elijah.¹⁵⁸

The comments on the Baptist in 11:7–15 seem especially appropriate after the preceding incident (11:2–6), as Matthew's audience may have concerns about who John the Baptist is due to the question he asks Jesus. Jesus' viewpoint on the Baptist affirms his importance, noting that he is the promised Elijah and the figure that stands at the turning of the ages; Jesus is the coming one and John is the Elijah who comes before the day of the Lord. Matthew adds that John's ministry stands at the onset of the eschatological tribulations, something that the Matthean John did not anticipate and leads to his question to Jesus. Jesus' words therefore indicate a change in the eschatological system which John preached; a turning point has happened in that Jesus does bring a change but there is a longer period before the end, with this period marked by suffering.¹⁵⁹ The stress on opposition to the kingdom explains John's imprisonment, and the eschatological element of these sufferings characterizes the line of opposition that

¹⁵⁶ On the Christology here, see Wink, *John the Baptist*, 32; Meier, "John the Baptist," 396; Vogels, "Semiotic Analysis," 330; Frankemölle, "Johannes der Täufer," 207–9. Cf. Versepunt, *The Rejection*, 102–3; Schönle, *Johannes*, 129.

¹⁵⁷ Meier, "John the Baptist," 397; DeYoung, "Function of Malachi," 88–89. Also see Luz, *Matthew*, 2:143. Ernst Bammel ("The Baptist in Early Christian Tradition," *NTS* 18 [1971–72]: 101) rightly notes that Trilling ("Die Täufertradition," 281) goes too far in labeling this as a threat.

¹⁵⁸ Against Bonnard, *Matthieu*, 164; Patte, *Matthew*, 160–61.

¹⁵⁹ On Jesus altering John's system, see Hagner, "Apocalyptic Motifs," 63, 68–73.

goes from John to “now” as the fulfillment of eschatological opponents, a category into which the Jewish opponents of Matthew’s time fall.

Matthew 11:16–19

Matthew returns to his shared source with Luke in 11:16.¹⁶⁰ While a continuation of Jesus’ discourse to the crowds that begins in 11:7–15 and making yet another reference to John the Baptist, the central topic of 11:16–19 is the way that “this generation” has treated John and Jesus. The use of the adversative conjunction δέ to connect this parable unit to the previous discussion prepares the audience for the discussion of a group that does not recognize the true identity of John or Jesus.¹⁶¹ One may therefore see “this generation” as connected to the forces that have opposed the kingdom since the days of John.

A number of variations appear between Matthew’s and Luke’s respective forms of the parable unit. Some differences have minimal importance in understanding Matthew’s version of the parable, such as Matthew’s briefer introduction,¹⁶² the use of

¹⁶⁰ Elements of this examination of Matt 11:16–19 are taken from Brian C. Dennert, “The Rejection of Wisdom’s Call: Matthew’s Use of Proverbs 1:20–33 in the Parable of Children in the Marketplace,” in *Searching the Scriptures: Studies in Context and Intertextuality* (ed. Craig A. Evans and Jeremiah J. Johnston; SSEJC 19; London and New York: Bloomsbury T & T Clark), forthcoming.

¹⁶¹ With Sand, *Matthäus*, 242; Stephan Witetschek, “The Stigma of a Glutton and Drunkard: Q 7,34 in Historical and Sociological Perspective,” *ETL* 83 (2007): 152. Luke uses οὖν to join the parable to his context.

¹⁶² The briefer introduction to the parable in Matt 11:16 (Τίμι δὲ ὁμοιώσω τὴν γενεὰν ταύτην; cf. Luke 7:31: Τίμι οὖν ὁμοιώσω τοὺς ἀνθρώπους τῆς γενεᾶς ταύτης, καὶ τίμι εἰσὶν ὅμοιοι) likely reflects Matthew’s tendency to reduce a double comparison (as argued in e.g., W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:260; Luz, *Matthew*, 2:145). For a more thorough consideration of the issue, see Häfner, *Der verheißene Vorläufer*, 246. A similar issue may explain the difference between Luke’s τοὺς ἀνθρώπους τῆς γενεᾶς ταύτης (7:31) and Matthew’s τὴν γενεὰν ταύτην (11:16) (see Harry Fleddermann, *Q: A Reconstruction and Commentary* [Biblical Tools and Studies 1; Leuven: Peeters, 2005], 365), although this variation could also stem from a Lukan alteration (as maintained in Wendy J. Cotter, “The Parable of the Children in the Marketplace, Q (Lk) 7:31–35: An Examination of Its Significance,” *NovT* 29 [1987]: 290; J. M. Robinson, Hoffman, and Kloppenborg, *The Critical Edition of Q*, 140).

ἐκόψαθε (“you mourned”) rather than Luke’s ἐκλαύσατε (“you wept”) in Matt 11:17/Luke 7:32,¹⁶³ the repetition of μῆτε in Matt 11:18 (μῆτε ἐσθίων μῆτε πίνων),¹⁶⁴ and Luke’s inclusion of a remark that the Baptist specifically abstained from bread and wine (μὴ ἐσθίων ἄρτον μῆτε πίνων οἶνον) and of the title ὁ βαπτιστῆς (Matt 11:18//Luke 7:33).¹⁶⁵

A number of other differences, however, seem to be due to Matthew’s hand and of special relevance in interpreting the passage. The use of the plural ἀγοραῖς in Matt 11:16 reflects a Matthen tendency to use the plural and brings correspondence to the reference to “cities” in 11:1 and 20.¹⁶⁶ Matthew’s use of a third person plural form of λέγω in Matt 11:18–19a//Luke 7:33–34 causes the ones making the accusations about John and Jesus (“this generation”) to be different from Jesus’ audience (the crowds).¹⁶⁷ The most significant change is in the concluding proverb (Matt 11:19b//Luke 7:35), as

¹⁶³ This difference likely reflects the respective customs of the audiences of Matthew and Luke. While scholars commonly note that κόπτω seems “more Palestinian,” which may have led Luke to altering it for his audience (e.g., Arland Hultgren, *The Parables of Jesus* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000], 207), the use of it elsewhere in Luke (8:52; 23:27) indicates that it is not “too Palestinian” for Luke, which may mean that Matthew altered the word κλαίω from his source (see W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew* 2:263; Wendy J. Cotter, “Children Sitting in the Agora,” *Forum* 5 (1989): 64–65; Gundry, *Matthew*, 212; Luz, *Matthew* 2:145 n. 8). The redactional use of κόπτω in Matt 24:30 would seem to increase this possibility.

¹⁶⁴ Luke only has one μῆτε (μὴ ἐσθίων ἄρτον μῆτε πίνων οἶνον), although some manuscripts have μῆτε in both places (A, D, L, Θ, Ψ, f¹, 13, 33, Maj). Matthew’s version looks like an improvement that creates parallelism.

¹⁶⁵ On these as Lukan additions, see W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:263; Häfner, *Der verheißene Vorläufer*, 256; Fleddermann, *Q*, 367.

¹⁶⁶ While the reconstruction of Q by the International Q Project deems the plural to be the reading found in the tradition that Luke has altered (J. M. Robinson, Hoffman, and Kloppenborg, *Critical Edition of Q*, 146), a number of commentators on Matthew and writers on the parable in Q view the plural to have come from Matthew, including Olof Linton, “The Parable of the Children’s Game,” *NTS* 22 (1976): 161; Cotter, “The Parable of the Children in the Marketplace,” 290–91; W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:261; Gundry, *Matthew*, 211.

¹⁶⁷ The Lukan form is seen as original in J. M. Robinson, Hoffman, and Kloppenborg, *The Critical Edition of Q*, 142.

Wisdom is justified by “her deeds” rather than by “her children,”¹⁶⁸ showing an emphasis on the works of Jesus in Matthew’s version.

A final set of differences are difficult to attribute to Matthew or Luke but present a slightly different understanding of the parable and its explanation.¹⁶⁹ First, the two Evangelists label the target group of the call of the children in the marketplaces differently, as Matthew uses τοῖς ἑτέροις and Luke ἀλλήλων.¹⁷⁰ This variance leads to a slightly different image in the parable, as the Lukan account reflects a fight within a group while the Matthean account describes one group accusing another. A second difference concerns the tense of ἔρχομαι in the explanation of the parable, as Matt 11:18–19a states that John and the son of man “came” (aorist: ἦλθεν) while Luke 7:33–34 states that they “have come” (perfect: ἐλήλυθεν).¹⁷¹ Regardless of the origin of the aorist, it

¹⁶⁸ While some important majuscules (B², C, D, L, Θ), minuscules (f¹, 33, Maj), and versions (Old Latin, Middle Egyptian) read τέκνων in Matt 11:19, the original hands of κ and B, along with W and some of the versions (Syriac, Bohairic), bring strong and widespread external support to the reading ἔργων, with τέκνων likely an assimilation to the Lukan parallel.

¹⁶⁹ The difference in syntax and construction in the description of the children (Matt 11:16b: ὁμοία ἐστὶν παιδίους καθημένους ἐν ταῖς ἀγοραῖς ἃ προσφωνοῦντα τοῖς ἑτέροις λέγουσιν; Luke 7:32: ὅμοιοί εἰσιν παιδίους τοῖς ἐν ἀγορᾷ καθημένους καὶ προσφωνοῦσιν ἀλλήλοις, ἃ λέγει) is another variation that is difficult to attribute to the activity of a particular Evangelist. It is unlikely that this difference greatly affects the meaning of the parable unit and might be tied to other differences between the two versions discussed above. For further examination, see Häfner, *Der vorheißene Vorläufer*, 248–50. It is also unclear what causes the difference between the Matthean τελωνῶν φίλος καὶ ἁμαρτωλῶν (11:19) and the Lukan φίλος τελωνῶν καὶ ἁμαρτωλῶν (7:34), but this variation does not seem overly significant.

¹⁷⁰ Deciding on the original wording in this situation has proven to be one of the most difficult elements in the reconstruction of Q in this unit. *The Critical Edition of Q* prints τοῖς ἑτέροις in double brackets to show uncertainty in the committee, and others favor τοῖς ἑτέροις as the original reading since the Lukan ἀλλήλων could be a stylistic improvement that helps clarify ambiguity (see Cotter, “The Parable of the Children in the Marketplace,” 291; Fleddermann, *Q*, 366). The possibility remains that both Evangelists have altered a different word, with W. Davies and Allison suggesting ἄλλοις (*Matthew*, 2:261). For further consideration of the issue, see Linton, “The Parable of the Children’s Game,” 167–71; Häfner, *Der vorheißene Vorläufer*, 250–53.

¹⁷¹ Since the use of the aorist here reflects Matthew’s description of John (17:12; 21:32) as well as Jesus’ teaching on his own mission earlier in Matthew (9:1, 13; 10:34, 35), this tense could be due to

more strongly relates the eating habits of John and Jesus to their place in salvation history, with the use of the aorist affirming the past appearance of two eschatological figures.¹⁷²

Other traditions in Matthew also affect the interpretation of this unit. The contrast between the eating habits of John and Jesus recalls 9:14–17, while Jesus’ friendship with tax collectors and sinners alludes to his meal with them in 9:9–13. In addition, the accusation of John having a demon is similar to the charge that Jesus works through the “ruler of demons” (9:34), a charge that Jesus tells the disciples to expect to face (10:25). This charge against Jesus comes from the Pharisees, a group that John rebuked (3:7–10). These accusations thus recall the opposition of the Pharisees in the preceding narratives in Matthew and develop a similarity between John, Jesus, and Jesus’ followers.

The introduction of the parable (v. 16a) locates the comparison between the children and “this generation.”¹⁷³ The negative connotations associated with the term “this generation” (e.g., Deut 1:35; 32:5; Judg 2:10, Pss 78:9; 95:10; Jer 7:29) reveals a polemical aim for the parable.¹⁷⁴ The commentary in 11:18–19a appears as an application

Matthew’s hand (W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:263 n. 122). Most reconstructions of Q deem Luke to have altered an aorist into the perfect (e.g., J. M. Robinson, Hoffman, and Kloppenborg, *The Critical Edition of Q*, 144; Fleddermann, *Q*, 367), but others have sought to argue for the perfect being original (see Witetschek, “Stigma,” 136–37).

¹⁷² Cf. R. Edwards, “Matthew’s Use,” 67. On the use of the aorist as “more theological,” see Verseput, *The Rejection*, 109.

¹⁷³ Luz, *Matthew*, 2:147. Against Joachim Jeremias, *The Parables of Jesus* (trans. S. H. Hooke; rev. ed.; New York: Scribner, 1963), 101, who argues that the introduction makes a general comparison to what follows. Jeremias’ view is adopted by many others (e.g., Verseput, *The Rejection*, 105).

¹⁷⁴ The use of the term in the rabbis (*m. San* 10.3; Mek. on Exod 15.1; *b. Nid* 61) and Josephus (*J.W.* 5.442) also points to the pejorative import for “this generation” (W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:260–61; against Christl Maier and Jens Herzer, “Die spielenden Kinder der Weisheit [Lk 7,31–35 par. Mat 11,16–19]: Beobachtungen zu einem Gleichnis Jesu and seiner Reception,” in *Exegese vor Ort: Festschrift für Peter Welten zum 65. Geburtstag* [ed. Christl Maier, Klaus-Peter Jörns, and Rüdiger Liwak;

of the image rather than an explicit allegorization of the figures in the parable due to the loose correspondence of actions and the reversal of order of the potentially corresponding items (dancing/feasting; mourning/fasting). The image of the parable will first be explored (11:16b–17) and then how Jesus applies it to “this generation” (11:18–19).

The widely accepted proposal of Joachim Jeremias that the parable rebukes “this generation” as children who like to give orders to others through an everyday picture of children playing games of imaginary wedding and funerals has slim evidence.¹⁷⁵ While adopting Jeremias’ proposal, François Bovon points out that the game is unattested in contemporary sources.¹⁷⁶ The appearance of *αὐλεω* (“I play the flute”) and *ὀρχέομαι* (“I dance”) in the context of a victory celebration in Polybius (*Hist.* 30.22.3) also shows that these actions do not exclusively occur at a wedding,¹⁷⁷ calling into question whether the term portrays children playing a “wedding game.” Moreover, although BDAG states that an *ἀγορά* was a place for children to play when translated “marketplace,” this passage is

Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2001], 289–92). On the moral ramifications of the term, “this generation,” see M. Meinertz, “‘Dieses Geschlecht’ im Neuen Testament,” *BZ* 1 (1957): 283–89.

¹⁷⁵ Jeremias, *The Parables of Jesus*, 161. Commentators who use elements of Jeremias’ analysis include I. Howard Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (NIGTC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978), 300; Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *The Gospel according to Luke: Introduction, Translation, and Notes* (2 vols.; AB 28, 28A; New York: Doubleday, 1981, 1985), 1:680; W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:262; Harrington, *Matthew*, 157; Gundry, *Matthew*, 212; Hultgren, *The Parables of Jesus*, 205; France, *Matthew*, 433.

¹⁷⁶ Bovon, *Luke*, 286. The passing remark about children burying a grasshopper in *b. Yebam.* 121b (“Is it not possible that a mere ant had died and that the children gave it the man’s name?” translation from *The Babylonian Talmud* [trans. I. Epstein; 7 vols.; quincentury ed.; London: Socino, 1978], 3.1:860) does not establish this as a familiar game of the era.

¹⁷⁷ The references to *ὀρχέομαι* in Eccl 3:4 and *αὐλεω* in 1 Cor 14:7 also do not have wedding imagery. Other texts use *ὀρχέομαι* with birthday celebrations (Xenophon, *Cyr.* 1.3.10; Matt 14:6) and triumphs in battle (2 Sam 6:16, 20, 21; 1 Chron 15:29; Isa 13:21).

its only example.¹⁷⁸ Therefore, Jeremias' view is not grounded in firm evidence of the period.

A more plausible image for this parable is offered by Wendy Cotter, who draws attention to the shock value contained in the description of children sitting (*κάθημαι*) in the *agora* and formally calling out (*προσφωνέω*) by noting parallels depicting sitting in the *agora* as taking a position as judge.¹⁷⁹ Although *παιδίον* lost its force as the diminutive of *παῖς* to signify a child under the age of 7 in the Koine period,¹⁸⁰ it still commonly denoted younger children (e.g., Matt 2:8–9, 11, 13, 20; Luke 1:59, 66, 76, 80; 2:17; Heb 11:23) and childish behavior (1 Cor 14:20), as the *παιδίον* needs to learn wisdom (Isa 7:16, 8:4, 10:19; Ps-Diogenes, *Epistles* 8.2, 35.2). Pseudo-Diogenes discusses a school of children learning in the *agora*,¹⁸¹ so it appears that they should be learning in the *agora*. The concluding statement on Wisdom being justified (*ἐδικαιώθη*)

¹⁷⁸ BDAG, 14. Neither LSJ, 13 nor MM, 5–6 note children playing in their discussions of *ἀγορά*.

¹⁷⁹ Cotter, “The Parable of the Children in the Marketplace,” 289–304; idem, “Children Sitting in the Agora,” 63–82. Nolland uses this image but with a different application in *Matthew*, 462–63. The alternative suggestion that the parable illustrates the capricious nature of children described in Epictetus, *Discourses* 3.15.5–7 (supported in C. H. Dodd, *The Parables of the Kingdom* [rev. ed.; New York: Scribner, 1961], 15–16; Ivor Jones, *The Matthean Parables: A Literary and Historical Commentary* [NovTSup 80; Leiden: Brill, 1995], 267–68; Luz, *Matthew*, 2:147–48; Melanie Johnson-Debaufre, *Jesus Among Her Children: Q, Eschatology, and the Construction of Christian Origins* [HTS 55; Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005], 45–62) is also inadequate since the change in the request occurs after the rejection of the initial offer and thus is not arbitrary or impulsive (Linton, “The Parable of the Children’s Game,” 174).

¹⁸⁰ BDAG, 749; BDF §111 (3). Philo, quoting Hippocrates, states that one is a *παιδίον* until the age of 7 and is a *παῖς* from the ages of 7 to 14 (*Creation* 105). Herodotus’ use of *παιδίον* to refer to a girl age of 8 or 9 shows that this distinction was not absolute even in earlier eras (*Hist.* 5.51.1–3).

¹⁸¹ See Pseudo-Diogenes, *Epistles* 8.2, where he encounters children in a school in the *agora* (in Abraham J. Malherbe, ed., *The Cynic Epistles* [SBLSPS 12; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1977], 100) and 35.2, when he encounters students who are not reciting correctly in the *agora* (Malherbe, *Cynic*, 144).

affirms the legal imagery present in the parable.¹⁸² The parable thus pictures “this generation” as children who “adopt dignified behaviors” as judges but are really “shallow children” in their superficial judgments,¹⁸³ assuming the position of judges in the *agora* instead of their proper role as students.

The call of the children is proverbial, echoing Aesop’s fable of the fluting fisherman.¹⁸⁴ The allusion to this fable by Herodotus to describe the refusal of the Ionians and Aiolians to cooperate with Cyrus (*Hist.* 1.141) shows that the phrase *ηὐλήσαμεν ὑμῶν καὶ οὐκ ᾠρχήσασθε* (“We played the flute for you and you did not dance”) was a way of condemning those who do not comply with one’s request. The pairing of this expression with *ἐθρηγήσαμεν καὶ οὐκ ἐκλάυσατε* (“we wailed and you did not weep”) shows refusal to a range of choices.¹⁸⁵ Therefore, the image of the parable portrays “this generation” as accusing and judging “the others” for complete lack of conformity to their desires and depicts them as refusing to be pleased at various options.

Jesus applies this image to the rejection of John and “the son of man.” The children in the parable speak (*λέγουσιν*) in an accusatory matter against the “others” (v. 17) like “this generation” speaks against John and Jesus (vv. 18–19).¹⁸⁶ Since the

¹⁸² Cf. Maier and Herzer, “Die spielenden Kinder,” 284–85, who propose an early connection between the parable (Matt 11:16–17) and the concluding aphorism (11:19b).

¹⁸³ Cotter, “The Parable of the Children in the Marketplace,” 302.

¹⁸⁴ “O most wicked creatures! When I was playing the flute, you would not dance but now, when I have ceased, you do this action” (author’s translation).

¹⁸⁵ Nolland, *Matthew*, 463.

¹⁸⁶ Those who view the calling children as “this generation” include Jeremias, *The Parables of Jesus*, 161–62; Linton, “The Parable of the Children’s Game,” 173–77; Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke*, 300–1; Cotter, “The Parable of the Children in the Marketplace,” 302–4; W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:262; Gundry, *Matthew*, 212. Against Dieter Zeller, “Die Bildlogik des Gleichnisses Mt 11 16f./Lk 7 31f.,” *ZNW* 68 (1977): 255–57; Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 1:679–80; Harrington, *Matthew*, 157; Christopher M.

preceding narratives have the complaint about Jesus' table fellowship with tax collectors (11:19) arise from the Pharisees (9:9–13), the Pharisees would be part of "this generation." Strengthening the connection between the Pharisees and "this generation" is the similarity between the accusation that John has a demon with the response of the Pharisees towards Jesus' work of exorcism (9:32–34) as well as later passages that connect the Pharisees and "this generation."¹⁸⁷ The scribes and the Pharisees thus act like the *παῖδια* of the parable in their rejection of Jesus. This parable unit also shows that the Pharisees have rejected John, as they have judged him as being possessed by a demon and seem to have sought to spread this claim.¹⁸⁸ These words thus bridge the gap between Matt 3:7–10 and 21:23–32 concerning the view of John held by the Pharisees.

The accusers of Jesus and John are also "childish" in that they are unreasonable, acting more like "bratty kids" who desire their way no matter what rather than rational judges. The evidence marshaled against John and Jesus does not prove these accusations.¹⁸⁹ Since fasting is a respectable practice (cf. 9:14–17), the rejection of John

Tuckett, *Q and the History of Early Christianity: Studies in Q* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1996), 176–79; France, *Matthew*, 433–34; Nolland, *Matthew*, 461–63, who maintain that John and Jesus are the calling children.

¹⁸⁷ Elsewhere, Matthew links the sayings against "this evil generation" found in Q traditions to the scribes and the Pharisees (Matt 12:39–45//Luke 11:16, 29–30, 31–32; Matt 24:34–36//Luke 11:49–51). The only time that the term "this generation" or a similar phrase appears in Matthew not in a context directly related to the Pharisees is 17:17, with the idea appearing in the Markan source of that section. For a similar conclusion, see Hafner, *Der verheißene Vorläufer*, 260–61.

¹⁸⁸ The charge that John has a demon could be a mark of insanity (John 7:42; 8:48, 52; 10:20; cf. Diogenes Laertius, *Lives* 6.54), but the similar discussion of Jesus' control of the demons in Matt 9:32–34 (cf. 10:25) points to it describing an opposing spiritual force (Cotter, "Children Sitting the Agora," 71–74; Keener, *Matthew*, 342).

¹⁸⁹ For a discussion of the logic of these accusations, see Cotter, "Children Sitting in the Agora," 70–79.

is both surprising and irrational.¹⁹⁰ Moreover, divergent practices lead to the rejection of both figures, seeming to point to prejudice in the eyes of “this generation.” Although unlikely to occur in the first century C.E., both charges were capital offenses according to the Jewish Scriptures, reflecting the severity of the unsubstantiated and unreasonable charges against John and Jesus.¹⁹¹

Rather than leading to the conclusions reached by “this generation,” the actions of John and Jesus should reveal their respective roles and relation to the kingdom of heaven.¹⁹² The note about John’s fasting and Jesus’ eating and drinking connects back to the discussion Jesus has with John’s disciples in 9:14–17, as this passage appears immediately after a scornful remark about Jesus’ eating companions (9:9–13) and notes that John’s disciples fast while Jesus’ disciples do not fast.¹⁹³ Jesus’ answer to John’s disciples reveals that John’s fasting was proper in preparation for the coming judgment but the presence of salvation in Jesus means that they do not need to fast often.¹⁹⁴ The rejection of John tied to his fasting here affirms a distinction between his fasts and those of the Pharisees; there must be something different between John’s fasts and the fasting

¹⁹⁰ On the social value of fasting and how it should lead to prominence for John, see Malina and Neyrey, *Calling Jesus Names*, 96, 121. John is thus slandered for something that is praised elsewhere.

¹⁹¹ Cf. Keener, *Matthew*, 342. The Torah commands to stone sorcerers (Exod 23:18; Lev 20:27) and prophets who advocate others gods (Deut 12:19–13:18) as well as the obstinate son (Deut 21:20), showing the severity of the charges. CD 12.2b–3 indicates that some groups wished to enforce the death penalty for similar charges.

¹⁹² Cf. Franz Mussner, “Der nicht erkannte Kairos (Mt 11,16–19 = Lk 7,31–35),” *Bib* 40 (1959): 599–612.

¹⁹³ While reference to John’s eating and drinking habits could allude back to the note about his diet in 3:4, the earlier text states what John does eat rather than what he does not eat.

¹⁹⁴ At times, “eating and drinking” was a term for carefree living (e.g., Isa 22:13; 1 Cor 15:32) and seems to indicate people who do not consider final judgment (Luke 12:45; 17:27), so John’s fasting could reflect what one should do in light of pending judgment (cf. W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:262).

of the Pharisees that allows them to use his fasting as a sign of his lack of conformity to God's expectations.

The reference to Jesus as the "son of man" here indicates that the real group that is in danger is "this generation." So far, the term "son of man" has appeared in Matthew to note that Jesus has nowhere to lay his head (8:20) and Jesus' authority to forgive sins (9:6). It also appears in the mission discourse, as Jesus refers to the fact that the son of man will come (10:23). The eschatological activity of the son of man develops as Matthew progresses (e.g., 13:41), and Jesus' role as the son of man elsewhere reflects John's view of the coming judgment.¹⁹⁵ Jesus thus notes that "this generation" has rejected the one who will bring judgment. A greater emphasis falls upon the rejection of Jesus through ἰδοὺ and the double accusation leveled at him here, as rejection of the judge himself will lead to judgment upon "this generation." This emphasis on the rejection of Jesus bringing greater consequences reflects the same theme that appears in the trilogy of parables in 21:28–22:14, as rejecting John is serious but rejecting Jesus is even more dangerous.

An emphasis on Jesus continues in the concluding aphorism of the parable unit.

The adversative καί ("yet") introduces this statement,¹⁹⁶ revealing that in spite of the

¹⁹⁵ See Sim, *Apocalyptic Eschatology*, 94–99, 114–28. The harvest language in Matt 13:41 reflects the teaching of John the Baptist (cf. 25:31–46).

¹⁹⁶ See BDF §442 (1). While Simon Gathercole ("The Justification of Wisdom [Matt 11.19b/Luke 7.35]," *NTS* 49 [2003]: 482) and Thomas E. Phillips ("Will the Wise Person Get Drunk? The Background of the Human Wisdom in Luke 7:35 and Matthew 11:19," *JBL* 127 [2008]: 395) argue that the καί is a simple connective, the context suggests an adversative connective formation as in Q 7:32, 33 12:6–7, signifying a dramatic conclusion to the saying (D. A. Carson, "Matthew 11:19b/Luke 7:35: A Test Case for the Bearing of Q Christology on the Synoptic Problem," in *Jesus of Nazareth: Lord and Christ, Essays on the Historical Jesus and New Testament Christology* [ed. Joel B. Green and Max Turner; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994], 142).

rejection by “this generation,” divine Wisdom is vindicated (ἐδικαιώθη)¹⁹⁷ by her deeds (ἀπὸ τῶν ἔργων αὐτῆς).¹⁹⁸ In light of the reference to the “deeds of the Messiah” in 11:2, Matthew seems to draw a connection between Jesus and Wisdom.¹⁹⁹ The focus falls upon justifying Jesus rather than John, something not surprising in light of John’s remarks about the superior ministry of Jesus and the Gospel’s overall purpose to describe Jesus.²⁰⁰

¹⁹⁷ This appears to be a gnomic aorist, against Gathercole, “The Justification of Wisdom,” 484–85. For a defense of a category like gnomic aorist using verbal aspect theory, see Stanley Porter, *Verbal Aspect in the Greek of the New Testament, with Reference to Tense and Mood* (SBG 1; New York: Peter Lang, 1993), esp. 79, 236.

¹⁹⁸ BDAG, 107 (5, e); BDF §210 (2). Gathercole (“The Justification of Wisdom,” 483–84) argues that δικαιωθῆναι ἀπὸ denotes “a release from” something based upon parallels in Acts 13:38–39; Rom 6:7; Sir 26:29 (cf. Maier and Herzer, “Die spielenden Kinder,” 293–94). These three references, however, all discuss being set free from sin. A better parallel is Isa 45:25.

¹⁹⁹ The concept of Jesus as Wisdom here appears in some earlier writers (Hilary, *On Matthew* 9.9 [Simonetti, *Matthew*, 1a:225–26]; cf. Theodore of Heraclea, *Fragment 77* [Simonetti, *Matthew*, 1a:226]), but a stress on Wisdom Christology is often seen as coming from redactional analysis, as M. Jack Suggs argues that the shift from the justification of Wisdom occurring through “her children” in Q to “through her works” in Matthew makes it a “clear instance of the personification of Wisdom” (*Wisdom, Christology, and Law*, 33). Many have found this verse as one element of a Wisdom Christology theme in Matthew; see Felix Christ, *Jesus-Sophia: die Sophia-Christologie bei den Synoptikern* (ATANT 57; Zürich: Zwingli, 1970); James D. G. Dunn, *Christology in the Making* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1980), 198–204; Fred W. Burnett, *The Testament of Jesus-Sophia: A Redaction-Critical Study of the Eschatological Discourse in Matthew* (Washington: University Press of America, 1981); Celia Deutsch, *Hidden Wisdom and the Easy Yoke: Wisdom, Torah, and Discipleship in Matt 11,25–30* (JSNTSup 18; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1987); idem, “Wisdom in Matthew: Transformation of a Symbol,” *NovT* 32 (1990): 13–47; Russell Pregeant, “The Wisdom Passages in Matthew’s Story,” in *Treasures Old and New* (ed. David Bauer and Mark Allan Powell; SBLSym1; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1996), 197–232. Others have argued against the concept of Wisdom Christology in Matthew, see esp. Marshall D. Johnson, “Reflections on a Wisdom Approach to Matthew’s Christology,” *CBQ* 36 (1974): 44–64; Frances Taylor Gench, *Wisdom in the Christology of Matthew* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1997). The position of W. Davies and Allison seems proper, as they acknowledge the presence of Wisdom Christology but state that it “is at the periphery of Matthew’s major concerns” (*Matthew*, 2:295). The presence of Wisdom Christology in Matt 11:19 has also been contentious, with Harrington finding Wisdom Christology present in Matthew but not in this passage (*Matthew*, 158). For other arguments against Wisdom Christology here, see Carson, “Matthew 11:19b/Luke 7:35,” 128–46; Gathercole, “The Justification of Wisdom,” 488; Nolland, *Matthew*, 464; France, *Matthew*, 434–35; Phillips, ““Will the Wise Person,” 385–87, 395. Writing before Suggs, Ragnar Leivestrand argues against a reference to divine Wisdom in Matt 11:19 in “An Interpretation of Matt 11,19,” *JBL* 71 (1952): 179–81. In my ““The Rejection of Wisdom’s Call,”” I argue for the presence of Wisdom Christology in 11:16–19 due to an allusion to Prov 1:20–33 in Matt 11:16–30 that allegorizes the opposition to Jesus as the rejection of Wisdom.

²⁰⁰ John may already have been justified due to Matthew’s editorial work in 11:12–15 (Witetschek, “Stigma,” 152), and the fact that the accusation towards John is tied to a respectable practice (fasting) may also eliminate the need to justify John here. The similar charge brought against Jesus receives

The portrayal of Jesus as Wisdom, rather than of John and Jesus as messengers of Wisdom, reflects Jesus as the culmination of John's ministry, as John was a messenger of Wisdom but Jesus is Wisdom personified.

The changes made to the parable and its surrounding context expand already existing connections between the parable and Prov 1:20–33, causing Jesus' words in Matt 11:16–30 to recall the words of Wisdom describing her rejection in Prov 1:20–33.²⁰¹ In Prov 1:20–33, Wisdom calls out to those who should learn from her (“the simple”) in the place where they should learn (the city gate) (1:20–23), but they reject her call and Wisdom then announces judgment upon them (1:24–33). In a similar way, Jesus' parable describes those who should learn (children) in their place of learning (the *agora*), but they refuse the call. By placing the parable unit after the description of Jesus ministering in the cities (11:1) and performing miracles among great crowds (8:1–2, 6, 18, 28; 9:1–2, 8, 17, 27, 32), eliminating references to miracles happening in homes (see Mark 1:32–34//Matt 8:16–17; Mark 2:1–4//Matt 9:1–3), Matthew portrays Jesus' ministry as occurring at the gathering places of people akin to the call of Wisdom in Prov 1:20–33. The scribes and Pharisees resemble the simple in Prov 1:20–33 and the children of the parable in that they should learn but take the posture of judges instead of the posture of learners. Moreover, the placement of words of judgment on the cities after the discussion of the rejection of John and Jesus issues a structural correspondence with Prov 1:20–33, in which Wisdom responds to the rejection of her call by announcing judgment. Jesus'

its own defense, potentially because the grounds for the charge were not as frivolous (on Jesus' defense to the charge, see Malina and Neyrey, *Calling Jesus Names*, 33–68). The charge offered against Jesus in 11:18 is also answered through the use of Hos 6:6 in Matt 9:9–13.

²⁰¹ For a fuller discussion of the link between this passage and Prov 1:20–33, see Dennert, “The Rejection of Wisdom's Call.”

activities thus serve as the defense of his person, indicating that Jesus is indeed the Messiah and Wisdom incarnate, with his miracles serving as a call by Wisdom.

This parable unit highlights continuity between John and Jesus as well as a point of discontinuity.²⁰² The continuity emerges in that both are rejected by “this generation.” This parallel between John and Jesus was already in the tradition, but Matthew’s placement of the passage in his narrative more firmly links John and Jesus in the accusations leveled against them and in the ones who oppose them. John’s location in jail therefore may stem from opposition from religious leaders, not just a Roman authority, as they bring unsubstantiated charges that would lead to capital punishment in Jewish law. The discontinuity that appears in the practices of John and Jesus is explained by the earlier tradition concerning why Jesus’ disciples do not fast and why Jesus eats with sinners; one sees the actions of John and Jesus tied to their same basic message but different roles in God’s plan, activities that lead to people rejecting them. Matthew also affirms Jesus as the culmination of John’s ministry, as Jesus’ words in 9:14–17 explain his eating practices, the title “son of man” offers a preview of his role in judgment, and the reference to Wisdom being justified by her works recalls Jesus’ words of affirmation to begin 11:2–19, with John a messenger of Wisdom and Jesus Wisdom incarnate.

Summary and Synthesis of Matthew 11:2–19

Affirmation of Jesus as the figure about whom John spoke seems to be one purpose of this passage. The Baptist’s question to Jesus raises this issue, and Jesus’

²⁰² Against Meier, “John the Baptist,” 399, who thinks that 11:16–19 focuses more on the parallels between John and Jesus. Matthew retains most of the focus on continuity between John and Jesus in the tradition but adds the element of discontinuity to show Jesus as the culmination of John’s ministry. For an early observation that 11:16–19 shows continuity between John and Jesus in spite of their differences, see Chrysostom, *Hom. Matt.* 37.5 (*NPNF*¹ 10:246).

immediate answer seeks to affirm that the kingdom does indeed arrive in Jesus, as his works are those expected when God comes. Jesus' omission of notes of judgment, however, reveals that the imminent judgment to which John looked did not immediately accompany the other activities. In effect, Jesus' answer separates elements that are intertwined in John's preaching. Matthew's placement of the text indicates that Jesus will still bring judgment, as he declares that judgment will come in 11:20–24. Therefore, Jesus reconfigures John's message rather than rejects it completely, describing a period of eschatological woes that begins with John's suffering and extends until Jesus' return to judge. In affirming that Jesus is the figure about whom John spoke, the passage also upholds John's veracity and importance. The passage therefore highlights the need for Jesus to correct and refine John's message, following the example that appears in 3:14–15.

The passage also affirms John's role as Elijah and the eschatological significance of his work. As the eschatological Elijah who prepares people for the kingdom that comes in Jesus, John is more than a prophet and he is not possessed by a demon. John's rejection stands at the beginning of the eschatological woes. The opposition that Matthew's group faces is not just the same opposition that Jesus encountered but a continuation of the opposition that John himself faced, as they also connected him to the forces of evil. Matthew's redaction links these charges to the scribes and the Pharisees, showing that they actively rejected John.

Implications for the Role of the Matthean Baptist in the Gospel's Setting

This passage is interested in portraying Jesus and Matthew's group both in continuity with and as the culmination of John's ministry, something that draws upon the

Baptist's enduring popularity in Jewish circles and legitimizes Matthew's group. This section, however, also addresses potential challenges to these ideas and seeks to correct potential misperceptions of John.

The themes of continuity and culmination were already present in the tradition before Matthew, but Matthew strengthens these themes. The parable of the Children in the Marketplace highlights that John and Jesus were both rejected by "this generation," and Matthew's association of "this generation" with the Pharisees and use of two accusations in 11:18–19 in the stories about Jesus that precede this parable reflects a point of continuity between John and Jesus. In addition, the mission discourse that precedes this unit shows that the disciples continue the message of John and face the same charges as Jesus and as John, revealing them to be a continuation of John's ministry. The lack of account of the disciples' mission and Jesus' statement of the opposition to the kingdom that continues "until now" show Matthew's group to face the same eschatological opponents as John.

In the midst of this continuity also stands the theme of culmination. John's question to Jesus through his disciples demonstrates that Jesus is indeed the figure whom John proclaimed. Matthew's placement of Jesus' words of condemnation towards the Galilean cities confirms that Jesus is this figure, as does the correspondence between Matthew's structure and Jesus' answer to John's disciples, both of which feature an emphasis on Jesus' words. The fact that the disciples have a greater ministry than John because they perform miracles similar to those of Jesus, which leads to greater judgment for those rejecting the disciples, is not a rebuke of John but rather comes from the fact that John indicated that something greater than he would arrive in the kingdom, with the

presence of the kingdom surpassing his ministry (11:11). There is no reprimand of John present here, as the Baptist earlier shifts his plans due to Jesus' words, indicating that John defers to Jesus; Jesus is the culmination of John's ministry by offering the definitive interpretation of John the Baptist's ministry, something that John himself recognizes. Moreover, since Jesus is the fulfillment of John's predictions, John is indeed Elijah, who prepares the way for the coming activity of God.

Matthew also goes farther than his tradition in addressing points of discontinuity between John and Jesus. There is a disjunction between John's preaching in Matthew and Jesus' ministry so far, which seems to prompt John's question and threaten his earlier confidence in Jesus' identity. By having an earlier portrayal of John in which his misunderstanding is corrected by Jesus, Matthew shows that John's understanding is incomplete but that he is teachable, heeding the words of Jesus and adjusting his understanding when necessary. Moreover, the passage reveals that differences between John's predictions and Jesus' ministry is one of time, order, and emphasis rather than content since Jesus does indeed bring the kingdom and will judge. The revised timeline that Jesus gives does not marginalize John but shows him as a key turning point, as it is during his ministry that the promised eschatological opposition to the kingdom begins. While the scheme differs from the one John envisioned, there is still an important place for John in this scheme. In trying to explain the differences between John and Jesus, Matthew seems to defend his overall conception of Jesus as the continuation and culmination of John's ministry and keeps the two figures united.

Above all, Matthew shows great concern in declaring John to be the eschatological Elijah. Within the tradition, this identification shows the insufficiency of

the crowds' perception of John as a prophet; John is indeed a prophet but he is more than that. The words of the Matthean Jesus indicate that this was a controversial belief to accept but no less necessary to believe. The attempt to explain the disjunctions between John's preaching and Jesus' ministry may in fact be a way to defend John's Elijanic identity, as believing Jesus to be the figure about whom John preached would justify viewing him as Elijah. In addition, Jesus' words about the violence that the kingdom suffers at the present time indicate that John's predictions had come true and that he could indeed be Elijah. Matthew therefore defends and elevates John in this passage. Since the identification of John as Elijah leads to the identification of Jesus as the Son of God and the Messiah, the defense of John also defends Matthew's claims about Jesus.

Conclusion

The two passages examined in this chapter present Jesus' ministry as the continuation and culmination of John's ministry in spite of the discontinuities that exist between the ministries of John and Jesus. Jesus' answers to John's disciples in 9:14–17 and to John in 11:2–6 highlight that the climactic event, the arrival of the kingdom of God and the presence of God with his people, has occurred in Jesus' ministry since Jesus is the bridegroom and performs the activities expected of God at the last day. The frequent fasting of John's disciples in contradistinction to lack of fasting among Jesus' disciples and John's experience in prison, however, point to discontinuity that exist between Jesus' work and John's predictions. Jesus' responses to both questions rework John's message, noting that suffering will occur, as the bridegroom will be removed and the kingdom of heaven suffers violence. In addition, Jesus notes that his current ministry is an offer of salvation, with the rejection of this message leading to the judgment that

John trumpeted. The discontinuities between Jesus' message and Jesus' ministry stem from the different locations of John and Jesus within salvation history and not an opposition between their missions, and the earlier portrayal of John the Baptist acquiescing to Jesus' wishes and way of acting at the baptism of Jesus indicates that John saw the need for adjusting his own message at certain points. The behavior of John's disciples and John himself separates John and his followers from groups like the scribes and Pharisees, who unreasonably reject Jesus because he does not match their ideas and expectations. Therefore, the differences between John and Jesus do not mean that the Baptist has no place within the beliefs of Matthew's group; he serves as a pivotal figure and even stands as an example for Matthew's group as he experiences suffering and takes his questions to Jesus.

Matthew's work shows not just compatibility between John's message and his group's beliefs about Jesus but fundamental cohesion. Jesus is the fulfillment of John's message and John stands as a figure that justifies Jesus' claims about himself. Solidarity exists between John and Jesus while lethal discord stands between these figures and the Jewish opponents of Matthew's group. In light of the enduring popularity of John the Baptist among Jews and the conflict that seems to exist between Matthew's Jewish group and its Jewish opponents, Matthew strengthens his group's claims and offers an attack on the opponents of his group by aligning the Baptist to the side of his group and showing him to be the eschatological Elijah.

CHAPTER 6

MATTHEW 4:12, 14:1–13a, AND 16:14

Introduction

The three remaining passages in Matthew that refer to the Baptist (4:12, 14:1–13a, 16:14) have thematic links. All three passages have connections to suffering, as John is imprisoned in 4:12, he is executed in 14:1–13a, and the list of figures with whom John and Jesus are associated in 16:14 endure some form of rejection or suffering. While there is less resemblance between 14:1–2 and 16:14 in Matthew than in their respective parallels in Mark, both passages note that a person or group identifies Jesus as John the Baptist. Furthermore, Jesus’ response to John’s imprisonment in 4:12 is the same as his reaction to John’s death in 14:13a, as he “withdraws” (*ἀναχωρέω*) and begins a new phase of ministry.¹ Similarly, 4:12 and 16:14 both stand immediately before key junctures of the Gospel.² In addition, all three passages have parallels with the Gospel of Mark and reflect some noteworthy redactional activity.

¹ On 4:12 and 14:13 marking the beginning and the beginning of the end of Jesus’ ministry, see William D. Davies and Dale C. Allison, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to Saint Matthew* (3 vols.; ICC; Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1988–97), 1:376.

² Even if one does not follow the outline of Jack Dean Kingsbury that divides the Gospel into three sections of 1:1–4:16, 4:17–16:20, and 16:21–28:20 (see *Matthew: Structure, Christology, Kingdom* [Philadelphia: Fortress, 1975], 1–25; for a defense of this structure from a literary-critical perspective, see David R. Bauer, *The Structure of Matthew’s Gospel: A Study in Literary Design* [JSNTSup 31; Decatur, GA: Almond, 1988]), the phrase Ἀπὸ τότε ἤρξατο ὁ Ἰησοῦς still reflects a significant shift in the narrative.

The analysis of these three texts will proceed in two parts. The first part discusses Matt 4:12. The second part examines Matt 14:1–13a and features an excursus on Matt 16:14. Both parts highlight how the passage(s) portray Jesus as the continuation and culmination of the ministry of John the Baptist while also noting an interest in expanding the opposition to the Baptist beyond the house of the Roman-appointed ruler. This latter interest indicts the Jewish opponents of Matthew’s group by showing that they have rejected and participated in the opposition to this popular Jewish figure who is the eschatological Elijah.

Matthew 4:12

Matthew echoes Mark by depicting Jesus’ chronological succession of the Baptist since Jesus only begins his ministry after John’s arrest. Matthew’s description of this event, however, also injects additional elements that are of significance for understanding the author’s use of John within the narrative, especially when consideration of 4:12 includes its wider context (4:13–17). In particular, Matthew’s account shows John’s imprisonment causing the fulfillment of God’s plan and Jesus’ ministry as both continuing and bringing John’s ministry to a culmination.

Like Mark, Matthew uses a passive form of the verb *παράδιδωμι* (“hand over/betray”) to describe what happens to John.³ The significance of this lexical choice and its grammatical tense is twofold. First, it establishes a link between John, Jesus, and

³ Matthew 4:12 has an aorist passive indicative form (*παρεδόθη*) since it is the content of what Jesus heard. Mark 1:14 is an aorist passive infinitive form (*παραδοθήναι*), serving as a temporal infinitive introduction to the statement.

the disciples, as the word appears with reference to all three parties.⁴ Second, the use of the passive can be construed as a “divine passive,” indicating that John’s arrest is not just in accordance with the will of God but prompted by God.⁵ John’s imprisonment therefore serves as a way of showing that the suffering of Jesus and his disciples does not run counter to God’s plan or call into question the divine approval and sanction of their ministries. In fact, suffering seems to be part of their mission and the accomplishment of God’s will, just as it is for John.

A further notable aspect of this construction is that the human agency through which the divine action occurs is unnamed. In light of the information given in the rest of the narrative, Jewish figures seems to be at work in the arrest of John.⁶ Since John alienated himself from the Matthean Pharisees and Sadducees with his words in 3:7–10 and they have not yet responded to his challenge, this action against John may be viewed

⁴ The verb is used with reference to Jesus in 10:4; 17:22; 20:18–19; 26:2, 15–16, 21, 23–25, 45–46, 48; 27:2–4, 18, 26 and with reference to the disciples in 10:17, 19, 21; 24:9, 10. While many of these references have Markan parallels, some of them are insertions (24:9; 26:2, 25) and others are in unique material (27:3, 4) (Robert H. Gundry, *Matthew: A Commentary on His Handbook for a Mixed Church under Persecution* [2d ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994], 59). Not every appearance of the word is directly connected to John, Jesus, and the disciples, but most of the appearances of the word not directly tied to these figures refer to objects (11:27; 25:14, 20, 22, as noted in Janice Capel Anderson, *Matthew’s Narrative Web: Over, and Over, and Over Again* [JSNTSup 91; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1994], 88) or occur as part of a hypothetical scenario (e.g., 5:25; 18:34).

⁵ As noted in e.g., W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:375; Josef Ernst, *Johannes der Täufer: Interpretation, Geschichte, Wirkungsgeschichte* (BZNW 53; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1989), 165; Douglas R. A. Hare, *Matthew* (IBC; Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1993), 247; Warren Carter, *Matthew and the Margins: A Sociopolitical and Religious Reading* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2000), 113. Also see Norman Perrin, “The Use of (*para*)*didonai* in Connection with the Passion of Jesus in the New Testament,” in *Der Ruf Jesu und die Antwort der Gemeinde* (ed. Eduard Lohse; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1970), 204–12.

⁶ Cf. Carter, *Matthew and the Margins*, 113, who notes that the cryptic reference to John’s arrest reflects the response to John’s ministry by the elite.

as part of their response to John's challenge.⁷ The use of the verb *παραδίδωμι* also points to Jews handing John over to Roman officials, as this is what happens to Jesus and is what will happen to the disciples (cf. 10:17–21).⁸ The rest of Matthew's narrative reveals opposition to John from Jewish forces, as "this generation" lay serious charges against John in 11:18 and the authorities and Pharisees reject John's ministry in 21:23–32. Matthew's note about John's ministry in the Judean territory (3:1) places him in area hostile to Jesus, with this hostility coming from an alliance between Roman-appointed political leaders and Jewish groups (2:4).⁹ Since this alliance targets Jesus and John supports Jesus and is linked to him, one would suspect John and Jesus to follow a similar path, something that Matthew makes explicit in 17:10–13, as the same groups that killed John are said to be at work in orchestrating Jesus' death. Therefore, Matthew's narrative points to Jewish groups playing a role in John's arrest.

Matthew also depicts Jesus as reacting to John's arrest. Mark's note about John's arrest is strictly chronological, as he states that Jesus ministered in Galilee after John had been arrested through a temporal infinitive construction (Mark 1:14: *μετὰ τὸ παραδοθῆναι τὸν Ἰωάννην ἦλθεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἰς τὴν Γαλιλαίαν*). In contrast, Matthew's participle *ἀκούσας* seems to have a causal element in its meaning ("because he heard"), with Jesus'

⁷ On challenges to honor and the need to respond, see Bruce J. Malina, *The New Testament World: Insights from Cultural Anthropology* (3d ed.; Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2001), 33–37.

⁸ On the use of *παραδίδωμι* elsewhere in Matthew to describe Jewish persecution of Jesus and the disciples, see Douglas R. A. Hare, *The Theme of Jewish Persecution of Christians in the Gospel of Matthew* (SNTSMS 6; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967), 101–9.

⁹ On John's appearance in a place of danger, see Gerd Häfner, *Der verheißene Vorläufer. Redaktionskritische Untersuchung zur Darstellung Johannes des Täufers im Matthäus-Evangelium* (SBB 27; Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1994), 301.

knowledge of John's arrest causing Jesus to go to Galilee to minister.¹⁰ The use of the verb ἀναχωρέω rather than the Markan ἦλθεν further supports a causal nuance to this construction, as the verb appears elsewhere in Matthew to describe a change in travel plans or location due to hostility (2:12, 13, 14, 22; 12:15, 14:13, 15:21). This verb also connects John's imprisonment with Jesus' opponents in the infancy narratives. Since John's arrest similarly causes Jesus to move to a different geographical location (cf. 2:14, 22), "[t]he persecution of John ... becomes the persecution of Jesus."¹¹

A contrast with the infancy narrative exists, however, because the forces opposing John successfully apprehend him. John's arrest serves as an indication that Jesus will not always be able to escape from the schemes of his opponents because the divine plan includes suffering.¹² The success of Jesus' opponents is not ultimate, however, as Matthew notes that this arrest leads to a new phase in the plan of God and serves as a signal for Jesus to begin his ministry.¹³

Matthew adds to the Markan frame by highlighting that Jesus left Nazareth to reside in Capernaum (4:13) and offering an interpretation of the significance of Jesus' ministry in Galilee (4:14–16). Jesus' residence in Capernaum is in some ways akin to

¹⁰ Alexander Sand, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus* (RNT; Regensburg: Verlag Friedrich Pustet, 1986), 75. The causal connection is noted in e.g., W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:375; Gundry, *Matthew*, 59. Hagner is unsure of a causal connection (*Matthew* [2 vols.; WBC 33; Waco, TX: Thomas Nelson, 1991, 1995], 1:72).

¹¹ Edmondo Lupieri, "John the Baptist in New Testament Traditions and History," *ANRW* 2.26.1 (1992): 447.

¹² Adolf von Schlatter, *Der Evangelist Matthäus: Seine Sprache, sein Zeil, seine Selbständigkeit. Ein Kommentar zum ersten Evangelium* (6th ed.; Stuttgart: Calwer, 1963), 113. Jesus' movement shows that this moment is the not the time for his suffering (Anderson, *Matthew's Narrative Web*, 89).

¹³ Craig S. Keener, *A Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 145. Cf. Pierre Bonnard, *L'Évangile selon Saint Matthieu* (2d ed.; CNT 1; Paris: Delachaux & Niestlé, 1970), 47.

John's residence in the wilderness, as he ministers away from the places of power potentially due to opposition.¹⁴ Matthew once again uses a quotation from Isaiah to interpret the events of his narrative (Isa 8:23–9:1 [Eng. 9:1–2]). This particular quotation connects Galilee with the Gentiles, showing that the saving work of God spoken about in Isaiah and to which Matthew has already alluded will affect the Gentiles.¹⁵ The arrest of John therefore does not indicate that his ministry or the plan of God has failed, and Jesus' relocation does not stand simply as an act of self-preservation.¹⁶ Rather, John's arrest causes the Jewish Scriptures to be fulfilled in that salvation will go beyond the borders of Israel, with Jesus' ministry in Galilee that happens as a result foreshadowing this extension.¹⁷ Matthew's use of this quotation from Isaiah reveals that the rejection of John in part leads to the Gentile mission, something that also seems true of the rejection of Jesus and his disciples later in the Gospel (21:23–22:14, 28:19–20). Matthew thus connects the Gentile mission to the rejection of John the Baptist.

The difference in the content of Jesus' preaching from the Markan parallel portrays Jesus as continuing the Baptist's ministry. As already highlighted in the discussion of Matt 3:3, the content of Jesus' preaching in 4:17 is exactly the same as

¹⁴ On Jesus' ministry in Galilee being away from the powerful places, see Keener, *Matthew*, 145.

¹⁵ While scholars often note that it is odd that Jesus withdraws into Galilee, which is also ruled by Herod (e.g., see Daniel J. Harrington, *The Gospel of Matthew* [SP 1; Collegeville, MN: Liturgical, 1991], 71), Matthew does not share the fact that John was opposed by Herod at this point. Therefore, it does not seem that Jesus is taking a stand or seeking to challenge Herod with his actions, against John P. Meier, "John the Baptist in Matthew's Gospel," *JBL* 99 (1980): 399 n. 57. For further discussion on this issue, see W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:376.

¹⁶ Though Jesus' movement could also serve as an example of what it would look like to flee persecution as in 10:23 (Gundry, *Matthew*, 59).

¹⁷ On the contrast between light towards the Gentiles and the darkness of Israel, see R. T. France, *The Gospel of Matthew* (NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 139.

John's preaching. Since Galilee is not mentioned among the regions that flock to John in 3:5, Jesus' travel into Galilee means that he continues John's message and ministry in a region that has not seemed to have heard John.¹⁸ When Jesus then calls disciples in 4:18–22, he forms a group devoted to John's message in this region.¹⁹ Jesus thus extends John's ministry upon the arrest of the Baptist, functioning as John's successor.²⁰ The similarities between the messages of John and Jesus also link their fates, suggesting that Jesus too will face opposition.²¹

While the Matthean Jesus' words do not show the same emphasis as the Markan Jesus on the idea of "fulfillment" (Mark 1:15: Πεπλήρωται ὁ καιρὸς καὶ ἤγγικεν ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ), the overall description in Matthew shows that the kingdom about which John spoke as coming soon is now present in Jesus.²² The repetition of John's

¹⁸ Cf. Martin Dibelius, *Die urchristliche Überlieferung von Johannes dem Täufer* (FRLANT 15; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1911), 65. Jesus is the only Galilean said to come to see John (3:13).

¹⁹ Bruce J. Malina and Richard H. Rohrbaugh, *Social Science Commentary on the Synoptic Gospels* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992), 44.

²⁰ While some writers state that Matthew stresses John's role as a forerunner through this description (e.g., Daniel Patte, *The Gospel according to Matthew: A Structural Commentary on Matthew's Faith* [Philadelphia: Fortress, 1987], 55; Gary Yamasaki, *John the Baptist in Life and Death: Audience-Oriented Criticism of Matthew's Narrative* [JSNTSup 167; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1998], 101), one could also view Jesus as the one who succeeds John; it is a matter of perspective whether John's work looks forward to Jesus' ministry or Jesus' ministry looks back onto John's work. On the level of the narrative, one sees Jesus taking over John's ministry. Jesus' continuation of John's message also shows him as a student of the Baptist's message and thus as one whose message is not his own, two things that would enhance Jesus' ministry (see Jerome H. Neyrey, *Honor and Shame in the Gospel of Matthew* [Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1998], 37, 80, 104; Bruce J. Malina and Jerome H. Neyrey, *Calling Jesus Names: The Social Value of Labels in Matthew* [Foundations and Facets: Social Facets; Sonoma, CA: Polebridge, 1998], 120). The commencement of Jesus' ministry after John's imprisonment shows that no competition exists between the two figures (J. Andrew Overman, *Church and Community in Crisis: The Gospel according to Matthew* [The New Testament in Context; Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press International, 1996], 58).

²¹ David Turner, *Matthew* (BECNT; Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008), 133.

²² For discussions that also stress Jesus' ministry as both continuing John's but also being its fulfillment, see Richard A. Edwards, *Matthew's Story of Jesus* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1985), 18; Patte, *Matthew*, 56; France, *Matthew*, 140.

words recalls the entirety of Matt 3, including John's message about one who would come after him, the identification of this figure as Jesus, and the declaration of Jesus as the Son of God.²³ In addition, Matthew introduces Jesus' preaching in 4:13–16 by stating that Jesus' time in Galilee fulfills Isa 8:23–9:1, a passage that speaks of the great light arriving.²⁴ Jesus' message does not continue the rest of John's preaching, as Jesus does not look to a figure to come after him,²⁵ with Jesus instead calling listeners to follow him. Jesus will also declare the "gospel of the kingdom" (4:23), something that John does not do.²⁶ Therefore, Jesus proclaims John's message but stands as the one who fulfills its content.

Jesus' words, however, also imply that a central aspect of what John foresaw in the arrival of the kingdom of heaven remains for a future day: judgment will not come immediately but after a period of waiting marked by suffering. The focus on Jesus' ministry as a "light" differs from John's description of the ministry of the coming one, conforming to the fact that Jesus serves as the culmination of John's preaching in a way that differs from John's expectations.²⁷ By recalling the previous chapter in repeating John's words, Matthew evokes Jesus' words to John that indicate the plan of God will be fulfilled differently than how John thought (3:13–17). The ministry of Jesus that ensues

²³ Yamasaki, *John the Baptist*, 102.

²⁴ Walter Wink, *John the Baptist in the Gospel Tradition* (SNTSMS 7; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968), 37–38.

²⁵ Craig A. Evans, *Matthew* (NCBC; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 90.

²⁶ Lupieri, "John the Baptist in New Testament Traditions," 448. The disciples will also preach this message after the resurrection (24:14); see Jack Dean Kingsbury, *Matthew as Story* (2d ed.; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1986), 59.

²⁷ Patte, *Matthew*, 56.

confirms this difference, as Jesus calls disciples and has a ministry of proclamation and miracles in 4:18–25 rather than a ministry of judgment. Jesus thus continues John’s message but reconfigures it so that judgment awaits and suffering is present.

The brief reference to John’s arrest in Matt 4:12 coheres with the description of the Baptist elsewhere in the Gospel and reinforces the overall portrayal of the Matthean Baptist. It highlights that Jesus stands in continuity with the Baptist but also that Jesus’ ministry serves to culminate John’s preaching in spite of Jesus’ work differing from the judgment that John proclaimed would come. In addition, it shows that the opposition to John is not outside of God’s plan, as both the divine passive and the quotation of Scripture reveal that the opposition John faces is a necessary part of God’s plan. The connection between John’s suffering and the suffering of Jesus and the disciples introduced through the word *παραδίδωμι* further adds to the idea of continuity that exists between John, Jesus, and the disciples. The lexical link between the movement of Jesus’ family in the infancy narratives and his relocation upon hearing news of John’s arrest also links John’s suffering to the opposition to Jesus. Issues such as the hostility that exists between John and the Pharisees and the Sadducees (3:7–10), the charges against John (11:18), and the connections between John and Jesus suggest Jewish involvement in John’s death (esp. 17:10–13) akin to the way that the religious leaders later hand over Jesus to the Roman authorities to be killed.

Matthew 14:1–13a

Introduction

Although some scholars have posited a tradition other than Mark 6:14–29 as the origin or primary source for Matthew’s account of John’s death in Matt 14:1–12,²⁸ the majority opinion remains that Matthew’s description is a revised version of Mark.²⁹ The passage itself does not divulge any direct knowledge of the tradition of John’s death that Josephus records in *Ant.* 18.116–19, but the historian’s claim about the opinion he recounts being held by many Jews makes it reasonable to believe that other interpretations were in circulation and perhaps known to Matthew and his audience, including this one.³⁰ Therefore, in addition to noting how Matthew’s version of John’s death differs from his Markan source, one should also keep in mind how it compares to the themes and ideas found in Josephus’ account of the Baptist’s demise.

²⁸ See Ernst Lohmeyer, *Das Evangelium des Matthäus* (ed. Werner Schmauch; 4th ed.; KEK; Göttingen; Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1956), 233–34; Harold Hoehner, *Herod Antipas* (SNTSMS 17; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972), 114–17. For rebuttals to their arguments, see Wolfgang Trilling, “Die Täufertradition bei Matthäus,” *BZ* 3 (1959): 272; Häfner, *Der verheißene Vorläufer*, 288. Schlatter argues that Matthew’s version is the source for Mark (*Matthaus*, 462), but this view seems unlikely, as discussed in W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:463–64.

²⁹ Support of Matthew’s redaction of Mark’s account, with varying degrees of evidence given, appears in Dibelius, *Die urchristliche Überlieferung*, 80–81; Meier, “John the Baptist,” 399–400; W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:463–64; Ernst, *Johannes der Täufer*, 173–75; Häfner, *Der verheißene Vorläufer*, 289–90; Ulrich Luz, *Matthew* (trans. James Crouch; 3 vols.; Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress, 2001–7), 2:305. Also see Mark Goodacre, “Fatigue in the Synoptics,” *NTS* 44 (1998): 46–47, 52.

³⁰ Cf. Gerd Theissen, *The Gospels in Context* (trans. Linda M. Maloney; London: T & T Clark, 1992), 85–86. Harrington notes that Matthew could be aware of a tradition similar to that appearing in Josephus (*Matthew*, 217). On Matthew’s lack of knowledge of Josephus, see John P. Meier, *A Marginal Jew: Rethinking the Historical Jesus* (4 vols.; ABRL; New York/New Haven, CT: Doubleday/Yale University Press, 1991–2009), 2:230–31 n. 264; against Roland Schütz, *Johannes der Täufer* (ATANT 50; Zurich/Stuttgart: Zwingli, 1967), 17–18. The dating of Matthew may rule out any direct knowledge of Josephus’ work.

Because 14:1–2 and 14:3–12 are related but seemingly separable units (cf. Luke 9:7–9), the analysis will divide the account into these two units.³¹ The inclusion of v. 13a in this discussion stems from the link Matthew creates between 14:1–12 and the events that follow in Matthew’s narrative.³² Before examining each section, consideration will be given to the story’s context, particularly in comparison to its Markan parallel. An excursus on Matt 16:14 appears between the analysis of Matt 14:1–2 and 14:3–13a due to the similarity between Matt 14:1–2//Mark 6:14–16 and Mark 8:28//Matt 16:14. Discussion of the implications of this passage for the role of the Baptist in the Gospel’s Jewish setting follows these exegetical examinations.

Context

Matthew matches Mark in presenting the Baptist’s death as a flashback set up by Herod’s reaction to news about Jesus’ ministry (Matt 14:1–2//Mark 6:14–16),³³ but the first Evangelist creates a different frame for this story due to what precedes this report. In Mark, it seems that Herod hears about Jesus’ ministry through the mission of the disciples, as Jesus sends out the disciples in the immediately preceding passage (Mark 6:1–13). In contrast, the Matthean Herod hears a general report about Jesus’ activities

³¹ On these units being examined separately, see esp. Michael Hartmann, *Der Tod Johannes des Täufers: Eine exegetische und rezeptionsgeschichtliche Studie auf dem Hintergrund narrative, intertextueller, und kulturanthropologischer Zugänge* (SBB 45; Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 2001), 46–206. Many others note this division regardless of the structure used in examining the text (e.g., Sand, *Matthäus*, 302; W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:464; Hagner, *Matthew*, 2:411; Häfner, *Der verheißene Vorläufer*, 288–89; Nolland, *Matthew*, 578–85. Against Rudolf Schnackenburg, *The Gospel of Matthew* [trans. Robert R. Barr; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002], 139). Some discussions of the passage seek further subdivisions in vv. 3–12 (e.g., Hagner, *Matthew*, 2:411; Luz, *Matthew*, 2:305), but these divisions may reflect more careful organization than intended by Matthew (W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:463).

³² For further rationale for this approach, see Häfner, *Der verheißene Vorläufer*, 288–89.

³³ On the effect that this flashback has on Matthew’s audience, see Terrence Donaldson, “For Herod Had John Arrested,” *SR* 28 (1999): 35–48. For further discussion on the relationship of this flashback to Matthew’s narrative, see discussion in n. 36 below.

(14:1: τὴν ἀκοήν; cf. 4:24) and the pericope before John's death is the rejection of Jesus in his hometown (13:53–58). While this juxtaposition appears due to Matthew's following the order of Mark but having placed the commissioning of the twelve earlier in his narrative (10:7–11:1), a thematic link is present between 13:53–58 and 14:1–2 because both passages chronicle inadequate responses to the miraculous works (δυνάμεις) of Jesus.³⁴ The use of the phrase ἐν ἐκείνῳ τῷ καιρῷ indicates a loose connection existing between the preceding events and the following narrative.³⁵ Therefore, the events of 14:1–2 are not in response to what happens in 13:53–58 or the next chronological occurrences in the narrative. In fact, the way that the flashback of 14:3–12 leads to Jesus' withdrawal in 14:13 could cause 14:1–2 to serve as a thematic “flash-forward” that continues the theme of 13:53–58 while also setting up the events that begin in 14:13.³⁶

³⁴ This connection is noted in e.g., France, *Matthew*, 547. On δυνάμεις as a catchword due to its use in 13:54, 58; 14:2, see Luz, *Matthew*, 2:305. This link appears to a certain extent in Mark as well (Hartmann, *Der Tod Johannes des Täufers*, 49, 55–56) and stands even though Matthew concludes the previous passage by noting the failure to Jesus to perform miracles (on the tension present in the juxtaposition here, see Regina Janes, “Why the Daughter of Herodias Must Dance,” *JSNT* 28 [2006]: 454). For an attempt to show a link between the two stories due to the topic of family, see Patte, *Matthew*, 208–9, an explanation that likely goes beyond the intention of the text.

³⁵ As noted in e.g., Gundry, *Matthew*, 284; Carter, *Matthew and the Margins*, 302. This phrase also appears to connect passages in 11:25, 12:1. Hagner notes that there is no “chronological significance” to this term (*Matthew*, 2:411). On Matthew's construction as showing a reordering of the story, see Augustine, *Cons.* 2.43.91 (*NPNF*¹ 6:145–46).

³⁶ The way that the flashback of John's death leads into the next event in the narrative (14:13) has long been a point of discussion, with many commentators viewing this as a slip due to Matthew's redaction of Mark (e.g., W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:463; Hagner, *Matthew*, 2:417; Overman, *Church and Community in Crisis*, 210; cf. Eduard Schweizer, *The Good News according to Matthew* [trans. David E. Green; Atlanta: John Knox, 1975], 317). While some have sought to argue that the news that Herod believes Jesus to be the resurrected John rather than the report of John's death is what causes Jesus' withdrawal (see esp. O. Lamar Cope, “The Death of John the Baptist in the Gospel of Matthew; or The Case of the Confusing Conjunction,” *CBQ* 39 [1976]: 515–19; Yamasaki, *John the Baptist*, 131 n. 9; cf. Pierson Parker, “Jesus, John the Baptist, and the Herods,” *PRSt* [1981]: 7; R. Edwards, *Matthew's Story*, 52), the construction favors the report of John's death being what Jesus hears and the proposed parenthesis of 14:3–12 seems too long and not clearly marked for the audience (see Lupieri, “John the Baptist in New Testament Traditions,” 447; Häfner, *Der verheißene Vorläufer*, 300–1 n. 6; Donaldson, “For Herod Had John Arrested,” 36; Luz, *Matthew*, 2:306 n. 9). The length of time between John's death and Herod hearing

The story of the rejection of Jesus by his hometown features other connections to the Baptist in Matthew's narrative.³⁷ Jesus' presence in Nazareth and his rejection evoke 4:12–13, when Jesus leaves Nazareth after John's imprisonment.³⁸ Moreover, 11:2–6 discusses John's response to Jesus' miraculous works, with John's inquiry offering a counterpoint to the responses to Jesus' miracles by the synagogue in Nazareth and Herod.³⁹ In addition, the rejection of Jesus in Nazareth recalls 11:2–6 through the use of *σκανδαλίζω*, as the works of Jesus lead to the synagogue participants of his hometown "being scandalized" (13:57) and missing a blessing (11:6). Placing the rejection of John after the rejection of Jesus also resembles the linking of the opposition to each figure highlighted in 11:18–19.⁴⁰

Matthew's juxtaposition of 13:53–58 and 14:1–12 has two significant effects. First, it links the fates of John and Jesus more closely together, as it chronicles the rejection of Jesus (13:53–58) and then the rejection of John (14:3–12). Second, it moves from the rejection of Jesus by his Jewish brethren to the execution of John by the Roman-appointed ruler.

news about Jesus' miracles could be similar to the amount of time it took for the Baptist's disciples to tell Jesus about John's death (see Ernst, *Johannes der Täufer*, 177; cf. Nolland, *Matthew*, 582).

³⁷ James L. Jones tries to argue that the rejection of Jesus' hometown is a polemic against John's disciples as part of his argument that Matthew seeks "to refute or to convert those who had, in the eyes of the evangelist, mistakenly put their faith in the forerunner and had failed to recognize the true Messiah" ("References to John the Baptist in the Gospel according to St. Matthew," *ATHR* 41 [1959]: 301), but offers no evidence or rationale to support this claim.

³⁸ See France, *Matthew*, 140.

³⁹ Yamasaki, *John the Baptist*, 129–30. On John's response as different from that of Jesus' hometown, see J. R. C. Cousland, *The Crowds in the Gospel of Matthew* (NovTSup 102; Leiden: Brill, 2002), 126–28.

⁴⁰ Cf. Turner, *Matthew*, 362.

Matthew 14:1–2

Matthew 14:1–2 focuses upon Herod’s response to news of Jesus’ miracles. The first Evangelist omits the opinion of “some” that Jesus was John the Baptist, Elijah, or one of the prophets of old (Mark 6:14–15).⁴¹ The inclusion of the similar list in Mark 8:27–28, retained with revisions in Matt 16:13–14 and Luke 9:18–19, could explain its absence here in Matthew; perhaps Matthew found the two catalogues to be redundant and deemed the list more pivotal for the discussion at Caesarea Philippi.⁴² Matthew’s version also eliminates the circuitous discussion that appears in Mark. While these concerns could stand behind the omission of the list of the various opinions offered by people about Jesus,⁴³ this difference causes Herod’s opinion about Jesus being John to be the only viewpoint given on this occasion.

In a certain sense, Herod appears in a better light than the residents of Jesus’ hometown, since they take offense at his miracles whereas Herod thinks Jesus is a resurrected Baptist.⁴⁴ Herod’s conclusion is incorrect, but he comes nearer to the truth by recognizing a connection that exists between John and Jesus and seeing special power

⁴¹ Following the NA²⁷ reading of Mark 6:14 (ἔλεγον) rather than the variant ἔλεγε. See discussion in Bruce M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament* (2d ed.; Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1994), 76.

⁴² However, both lists appear in the same chapter in Luke (9:7–9, 9:18–19) and stand in closer proximity, so Luke did not seem to find the similar lists to be redundant or too close to each other.

⁴³ The elimination of the views of others concerning Jesus may explain Matthew’s use of the aorist tense (ἠγέρθη) in 14:2, following the Markan aorist in 6:15 rather than the perfect (ἔγήγερται) in 6:16. On the possibility that a textual issue led to Matthew only discussing Herod’s opinion, see W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:467. For more discussion on this verb, see n. 111 below.

⁴⁴ Matthew uses ὁ βαπτιστής rather than ὁ βαπτίζων in line with his alteration of the participle to the substantive in Matt 3:3/Mark 1:4 as well as its appearance in Mark 6:25, showing a consistency not present in Mark’s labeling of the Baptist.

standing behind Jesus' activities.⁴⁵ It is unclear exactly what Herod believes in terms of John being raised from the dead and able to perform miraculous works, as there is no definite evidence from the time period for a similar belief in a resurrected person performing miracles.⁴⁶ Matthew's construction of the passage, however, focuses more on Herod's equation of Jesus and John than the nature of Herod's belief in a resurrection of John.⁴⁷

While Herod's view may be marginally better than the response to Jesus in the synagogue in Nazareth, his name links him with a figure that opposes Jesus in the infancy narratives and recalls the actions of this Roman-appointed ruler in the infancy narrative.⁴⁸ Since the Herod that opposed Jesus in the infancy narrative had been ruthless and wicked

⁴⁵ Nolland, *Matthew*, 580; Turner, *Matthew*, 362; C. A. Evans, *Matthew*, 291. Cf. Patte, *Matthew*, 208. For a stress on the fact that Herod is still incorrect, see Häfner, *Der verheißene Vorläufer*, 291–92; Gundry, *Matthew*, 285.

⁴⁶ For the viewpoint that Herod's belief reflects popular imagination rather than a particular element of Jewish thought, see W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:468; Hartmann, *Der Tod Johannes des Täufers*, 83–89; Schnackenburg, *Matthew*, 139–40; Frederick Dale Bruner, *Matthew: A Commentary* (rev. ed.; 2 vols.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004), 2:65; Nolland, *Matthew*, 580. Keener relates the belief in John's resurrection with biblical resuscitation (*Matthew*, 398), but it would seem that Hellenistic thought would be as influential, if not more so, on Herod's thinking (Bonnard, *Matthieu*, 216; Grant R. Osborne, *Matthew* [ZECNT; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010], 557). For recent reexaminations with differing conclusions regarding the proposal of Carl H. Kraeling that the accusations concerned necromancy in that Jesus was using John's spirit ("Was Jesus Accused of Necromancy?" *JBL* 59 [1940]: 147–57), see Markus Öhler, *Elia im Neuen Testament: Untersuchungen zur Bedeutung des alttestamentlichen Propheten im Neuen Testament* (BZNW 88; Berlin/New York: de Gruyter, 1997), 114–16; Hartmann, *Der Tod Johannes des Täufers*, 83–89.

⁴⁷ Gundry, *Matthew*, 285.

⁴⁸ The use of *ὁ τετραάρχης* in 14:1 rather than the Markan *ὁ βασιλεὺς* distinguishes this Herod from his father (2:2, 3, 19), but the use of "Herod" to name both figures links them together. The substitution of *ὁ τετραάρχης* for *ὁ βασιλεὺς* could also reflect a desire for technical accuracy, although this seems more likely to be the case in the similar shift in Luke (see Gundry, *Matthew*, 284–85). While the appearance of the term "king" in 14:9 could reflect Matthew's "fatigue" in editing his source (Goodacre, "Fatigue," 52), it may keep some elements of the kingly contrast or seek to show a connection between Herod Antipas and Herod the Great (Carter, *Matthew and the Margins*, 302, 304). However, the shift from *ὁ βασιλεὺς* to *ὁ τετραάρχης* at the start of the narrative causes Matthew's passage to have less interest in developing the theme of kingship than in Mark.

in seeking to eliminate Jesus, the audience would not be surprised if this Herod also opposes Jesus and acts in indecent ways and may actually expect it.⁴⁹ In describing Herod's desire to kill John (14:5), Matthew confirms that this Herod follows in the footsteps of his father in wanting to eliminate figures who might threaten him.⁵⁰ Since the infancy narratives describe an alliance forming between Herod's father and the chief priests and scribes of the people (2:4), the idea of an alliance between Jews and the Roman-appointed ruler named Herod stands in the background of the Matthean text. Matthew's infancy narratives therefore help characterize this Herod and create a link between John and Jesus, as both are opposed by figures named Herod.

The sole inclusion of Herod's opinion that Jesus is John the Baptist raised from the dead offers a stronger focus on the link between John and Jesus. The double reference to the belief that Jesus was John raised from the dead in Mark 6:14–16 similarly creates a stronger link between John and Jesus than between Jesus and the other popular opinions (Elijah, one of the prophets), but the omission of these possibilities eliminates a detail that diverts the audience from the link between John and Jesus by broadening the links beyond John and Jesus. In a certain respect, this equation seems reasonable to the audience, as Matthew emphasizes similarities between John and Jesus. The equation of John and Jesus could be a way of honoring one individual by associating him with a more popular figure. In light of the stress on John's popularity earlier in Matthew as well as in

⁴⁹ Hare, *Matthew*, 164; Dorothy Jean Weaver, "Power and Powerlessness: Matthew's Use of Irony in the Portrayal of Political Leaders," in *Treasures New and Old: Recent Contributions to Matthean Studies* (ed. David R. Bauer and Mark Allan Powell; SBLSymS 1; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1996), 188; Donaldson, "For Herod Had John Arrested," 42. On the link between the infancy narratives and Matt 14:1–12 in that the infancy narrative speaks of a birth and 14:3 speaks of Herod's birthday, see Carter, *Matthew and the Margins*, 303.

⁵⁰ Cf. Wink, *John the Baptist*, 26–27, following Trilling, "Die Täufertradition," 274.

the description of his death (14:5) and the rejection of Jesus in the immediately preceding passage, this equation seems more likely to be a compliment to Jesus by connecting him with John than vice versa.⁵¹ This correlation strengthens the foreshadowing effect of the story of John's death, as what happens to John provides a preview of what will happen to Jesus.⁵²

A final difference in Matthew's introduction to John's execution is the omission of a reference to Herod beheading John.⁵³ This absence may simply be stylistic or due to Matthew's shortening of the discussion, as the information of the manner of John's death appears in the description that follows. The lack of explicit note about John being beheaded at this point avoids stating that John experienced an ignoble death, so it is also possible that the omission of John's beheading eliminates a detail that can cast dishonor on John.⁵⁴ In light of Matthew's overall shortening of Mark's account of John's death, however, it is difficult to determine if Matthew's editing seeks to minimize this detail as a way to avoid disparaging John; it is simply a possibility in light of the Matthean form of the text.

⁵¹ C. A. Evans, *Matthew*, 312. The one previous passage that highlights the rejection of John shows his rejection as unreasonable and is also linked with the rejection of Jesus (11:18–19). On honor of John here, also see Hagner, *Matthew*, 2:411.

⁵² Anderson, *Matthew's Narrative Web*, 89; Yamasaki, *John the Baptist*, 130–32.

⁵³ The addition of this note in D and some Vulgate manuscripts seems due to the influence of Mark 6:16.

⁵⁴ On the disgrace of beheading, see Neyrey, *Honor and Shame*, 67; Hartmann, *Der Tod Johannes des Täuflers*, 190–98. The lesser role played by Herodias in Matthew's account of John's death may lower the possible dishonor to John due to the role of a woman in his death (cf. Neyrey, *Honor and Shame*, 67). The weakened discussion of John's beheading indicates that the story does not seem intended to show why Jesus could not be John resurrected because of the separation of his body and head (a position argued in Ross S. Kraemer, "Implicating Herodias and Herod in the Death of John the Baptist: A [Christian] Theological Strategy?" *JBL* 125 [2006]: 321–49) or an "etiological haggada" explaining why and how John was beheaded (a view maintained in Roger Aus, *Water into Wine and the Beheading of John the Baptist* [BJS 150; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988], 68).

Therefore, a number of emphases and issues emerge in the way that Matthew introduces the story of the Baptist's death. First, the passage focuses exclusively on Herod's view of Jesus. Second, Matthew creates a link between Herod's view and the rejection of Jesus at the synagogue. Third, Jesus is only identified with the Baptist. Finally, Matthew may reduce the attention given to the fact that John was beheaded.

Excursus: John the Baptist in Matthew 16:14

While Matthew omits possible identities for Jesus besides John the Baptist from Mark 6:15 in Matt 14:1–2, the first Evangelist retains the other possibilities given in the Markan text and adds another figure to it (Jeremiah) in 16:14. Matthew's unique reference to Jeremiah has prompted discussion of Matthew's use of Jeremiah and the connections between Jeremiah and Jesus,⁵⁵ but the inclusion of Jeremiah in this list may also reveal insights into Matthew's description of the Baptist, particularly since Matthew seems to link John and Jesus elsewhere.⁵⁶ Moreover, the fact that Matthew identifies John

⁵⁵ See esp. Jean Carmignac, "Pourquoi Jérémie est-il mentionné en Matthieu 16,14?" in *Tradition und Glaube: Das frühe Christentum in seiner Umwelt; Festgabe für Karl Georg Kuhn zum 65. Geburtstag* (ed. Hartmut Stegemann, Gert Jeremías, and Heinz-Wolfgang Kuhn; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1971), 283–98; M. J. J. Menken, "The References to Jeremiah in the Gospel according to Matthew (Mt 2,17; 16,14; 27,9)," *ETL* 60 (1984): 5–24; Ross E. Winkle, "The Jeremiah Model for Jesus in the Temple," *AUSS* 24 (1986): 155–72; David J. Zucker, "Jesus and Jeremiah in the Matthean Tradition," *JES* 27 (1990): 288–305; Michael P. Knowles, *Jeremiah in Matthew's Gospel: The Rejected Prophet Motif in Matthean Redaction* (JSNTSup 68; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993); Mark F. Whitters, "Jesus in the Footsteps of Jeremiah," *CBQ* 68 (2006): 229–47. The arguments of these works have proved more influential than those offered in H. F. D. Sparks, "St. Matthew's References to Jeremiah," *JTS* 1 (1950): 155–56; Bruce Dahlberg, "Typological Use of Jeremiah 1.4–19 in Matthew 16.13–23," *JBL* 94 (1975): 73–80 (see discussion in Knowles, *Jeremiah in Matthew's Gospel*, 82–84).

⁵⁶ Against Robert L. Webb, *John the Baptizer and Prophet* (JSNTSup 62; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1991), 59, who does not think that the addition of Jeremiah in 16:14 influences the portrayal of the Baptist in Matthew.

with Elijah shows that similarities exist between John and Elijah, indicating that resemblances may also exist between John and Jeremiah.⁵⁷

More connections certainly exist between Jeremiah and Jesus than between Jeremiah and John,⁵⁸ but a greater correlation of Jesus and Jeremiah makes sense of Matthew's focus on Jesus. The stronger connections between Jesus and Jeremiah thus do not undermine a possible link between John and Jeremiah. Jeremiah was a prophet who suffered rejection from the people and spoke of the destruction of the city and captivity for Judah, calling them to repent. John also calls for repentance (3:3) and threatens judgment (3:10).⁵⁹ John's challenge of the religious practices and pride of the nation (3:7–9) leads to the rejection of him by the religious (11:16–19) and political leaders (14:1–12), thus recalling Jeremiah's story. Differences certainly exist between John and Jeremiah, just as they do between Jesus and Jeremiah, but the links indicate the fact that John can be seen as also walking "in the footsteps of Jeremiah."⁶⁰

⁵⁷ The argument could be made that the association between Elijah and John would cause these two figures to be linked and a similar special connection to exist between Jesus and Jeremiah (cf. Overman, *Church and Community in Crisis*, 238; Zucker, "Jesus and Jeremiah," 297). Support for this view could be found in Winkle's argument that there are two groups noted in light of the grammatical construction of the passage, with one group noting that Jesus is John or Elijah and the other that he is Jeremiah or one of the prophets (Winkle, "The Jeremiah Model," 155–56). However, Matthew's account features three groups or opinions about Jesus here (W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:618–19). Resemblances also seem to exist between Jesus and the other figures. While Matthew does not seem interested in developing connections between Elijah and Jesus (see Öhler, *Elia*, 163–75, 292–93), this does not mean that he completely severs any possible links.

⁵⁸ See esp. Zucker, "Jesus and Jeremiah;" Winkle, "Jeremiah Model;" Whitters, "Jesus in the Footsteps of Jeremiah." Commentators often note these connections (e.g., W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:619; Turner, *Matthew*, 403).

⁵⁹ On preaching of repentance as a link between Jesus and Jeremiah, see Zucker, "Jesus and Jeremiah," 298–99.

⁶⁰ This phrase is taken from the title and thesis of Whitters, "Jesus in the Footsteps of Jeremiah." On differences between Jesus and Jeremiah, see Zucker, "Jesus and Jeremiah," 298 n. 32.

In their studies on the references to Jeremiah in the Gospel of Matthew, M. J. J.

Menken and Michael Knowles both highlight that the importance of the figure of Jeremiah here derives from his status as a prophet who spoke against his Jewish brethren and who experienced rejection and suffering.⁶¹ Jeremiah's example thus serves as a defense for the suffering of Jesus, indicating that he stands as yet another prophet who is rejected.⁶² Moreover, the content of Jeremiah's preaching seems to justify the rejection of Jesus, as seen in Matthew's use of passages from Jeremiah in 2:17–18 and 27:9–10 to show how the rejection of Jesus by Jewish authorities fulfills the words of Jeremiah.⁶³ Since traditions about Jeremiah included the description of his martyrdom, the presence of his name in this list could show that Jesus does not just face opposition but that he would also die.⁶⁴ The placement of this reference to Jeremiah before Peter's confession of

⁶¹ Menken, "The References to Jeremiah," 17–24; Knowles, *Jeremiah in Matthew's Gospel*, 90–95. Both scholars draw in part upon Cargimac's description of Jeremiah as a "prophet of mischief" ("le prophète de malheur") in "Pourquoi Jérémie," 292. A similar perspective about the connection between Jeremiah's message and rejected ministry appeared earlier in Bonnard, *Matthieu*, 243. This position seems more compelling than the view that Jeremiah was a figure expected to return in eschatological times, as there is no undisputed evidence for this belief (see discussion in Zucker, "Jesus and Jeremiah," 301–4; Menken, "The References to Jeremiah," 13–17; W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:618–19; Knowles, *Jeremiah in Matthew's Gospel*, 85–90). Not all have found the line of argumentation appearing in the works of Menken and Knowles convincing, however, as some note that the meaning of the reference to Jeremiah here is unexplained (Schnackenburg, *Matthew*, 158; Luz, *Matthew*, 2:361).

⁶² The link between Jeremiah and the fate of the prophets is seen in many discussion of the passage; see e.g., Yamasaki, *John the Baptist*, 133; Öhler, *Elia*, 164; Donald Senior, *The Gospel of Matthew* (IBT; Nashville: Abingdon, 1997), 190; Cousland, *The Crowds in the Gospel of Matthew*, 221. Jesus' comments in 13:53–58 also show that it is not surprising that a messenger of God would be rejected (Yamasaki, *John the Baptist*, 130).

⁶³ Jerusalem seems to take part in the rejection of Jesus in 2:17–18 and the chief priests reject Jesus in 27:9–10, indicating that Jeremiah foresaw rejection from Jewish leaders. For further discussion of Matthew's use of Jeremiah in these passages to show the rejection of Jesus by the Jewish leaders, see Menken, "The References to Jeremiah," 6–12; Knowles, *Jeremiah in Matthew's Gospel*, 33–81, 305–6. Jeremiah also points to the suffering of the prophets in 2:30; 26:20–23 (Tilly, *Johannes der Täufer*, 240–41).

⁶⁴ On traditions of Jeremiah's martyrdom and the lack of death of Elijah, see Zucker, "Jesus and Jeremiah," 301 n. 44; Menken, "The References to Jeremiah," 18–22.

Jesus' identity and rejection of the possibility of Jesus' suffering (16:13–20) indicates that Peter should have seen the need for Jesus to die and also sets up the focus on Jesus' journey to suffer in Jerusalem (16:21).⁶⁵ While Jeremiah's fate may primarily serve as a way to defend Jesus' suffering, Matthew also defends John's death, as the Matthean Jesus will later link his own fate to the suffering of John (17:10–13). If an honored figure like Jeremiah suffered and other prophets were rejected, then it is neither surprising nor problematic that Jesus and John the Baptist also suffer due to the rejection of the people.⁶⁶

Although the inclusion of Jeremiah serves as a way to highlight Jesus' suffering, one must remember that the possible identities for Jesus are unsatisfactory. As Peter confesses, Jesus is not a prophet but rather the Messiah.⁶⁷ In a similar way, the inclusion of Elijah on the list reminds the audience that John the Baptist is greater than a prophet since he is the Elijah who is to come. The identification of Jesus as the "Messiah, the Son of the living God" (16:14) also clarifies who John is, as he is Elijah who comes to prepare for the arrival of God. The inclusion of Jeremiah among the possible identities for Jesus and its location at the point in which Jesus begins to speak explicitly of his suffering demonstrates that rejection does not disqualify them from being eschatological figures but rather stands in congruence with the examples and messages seen in the Jewish prophets.

⁶⁵ See esp. Knowles, *Jeremiah in Matthew's Gospel*, 91.

⁶⁶ On the honor given to John and Jesus in associating them with Jeremiah and Elijah, see Hartmann, *Der Tod Johannes des Täuflers*, 56–57.

⁶⁷ See Patte, *Matthew*, 231; Carter, *Matthew and the Margins*, 333. Cf. W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:617.

Matthew's reference to John the Baptist alongside of the insertion of Jeremiah in 16:14 has value for the conflict between Matthew's group and its Jewish opponents. The death of the eschatological Elijah and the "Messiah, the son of the Living God" should not be surprising in light of the ministry and the message of Jeremiah. While Elijah and other prophets were rejected by their contemporaries, the hostility towards Jeremiah seems to have been even greater and his message one that looked to the rejection of the prophets whom God sent. The reference to Elijah and the declaration of Peter that follows, however, shows that the rejection of John and Jesus does not simply continue the motif of the rejection of the prophets but takes it to another level, as the figures that usher in the eschatological promises of God have been rejected.

Matthew 14:3–13a

Matthew's aims in offering a significantly condensed description of John's death extend beyond trying to tell the story more concisely or eliminating awkward elements of Mark's account.⁶⁸ The additions and subtractions to the text portray Herod as wicked and similar to the Jewish leaders and Pharisees, highlight John's popularity with the masses at the time of his death, reveal points of similarity and difference with Jesus' death, and show a relationship existing between Jesus and John's disciples.

The elimination of unnecessary details or material that may seem historically problematic likely stands behind some of the changes that Matthew makes, although it is not always clear into which category a particular detail falls.⁶⁹ A difference that may

⁶⁸ For concise discussion of the eliminated details, see Gundry, *Matthew*, 286.

⁶⁹ See discussion in Trilling, "Die Täufertradition," 272; Theissen, *Gospels in Context*, 88 n. 70; Luz, *Matthew*, 2:305. Matthew's alterations make the account more like that of Josephus, perhaps indicating a desire to harmonize Mark's account with the tradition Josephus records, which Matthew's audience may have also known.

reduce unnecessary details but also be related to historical concerns is the omission of the reference of the guest-list, as its absence could avoid a perception that the banquet takes place in Tiberias.⁷⁰ The omission of a reference to the executioner shortens the story but may also heighten Herod's guilt by more closely connecting him to John's death.⁷¹ Regardless of whether particular omissions simply streamline the story or have another purpose, the shorter narrative of Matthew offers fewer distractions for the audience.

A somewhat surprising series of changes that Matthew makes is the removal of elements that allude to the narratives of Esther and Elijah.⁷² For example, Matthew's omission of Mark's note that Herod offered up to half his kingdom in a vow to the daughter of Herodias (Matt 14:7//Mark 6:22) jettisons one of the stronger links between the story of Esther and the death of John (cf. Esther 5:3, 6; 7:2).⁷³ Although Matthew still has Herodias play a role in the death of John, the Evangelist reduces the John/Elijah and Herodias/Jezebel typology of Mark by making Herod, not Herodias, the one who wants to kill John (Matt 14:5; cf. Mark 6:19–20). The elimination or minimizing of other allusions from the Jewish Scriptures in the passage after Matthew's identification of John

⁷⁰ Harrington, *Matthew*, 215.

⁷¹ Luz, *Matthew*, 2:307 n. 19.

⁷² Scholars continue to explore the possibility of intertextual links to these narratives or others, as indicated by two papers in the Consultation on Intertextuality at the 2010 SBL Annual Meeting: Joonho Yoon, "Among Deborah, Esther, and Jezebel, Who is the Literary Predecessor of Herodias?: Multi-Intertextual Reading of John's Beheading in Matthew 14"; Jesse Rainbow, "John, Elijah, and Naboth: What Does 1 Kings 21 Have to Do with Matthew 14?" (papers presented at the annual meeting of the SBL, Atlanta, 21 November 2010). Matthew's redaction also eliminates the link to the healing of the dead daughter that appear in Mark's account (see Janes, "Why the Daughter") and the theme of *Speisungsgeschichte* (Hartmann, *Der Tod Johannes des Täufers*, 150–62, 247–51).

⁷³ Matthew also eliminates some of the other links between Mark's story and the story of Esther discussed in Aus, *Water into Wine*, 39–74.

as the Elijah who was to come (11:14) keeps the image of John as the promised Elijah of Malachi at the forefront.

Matthew's account paints Herod in a more negative light. The removal of the Elijah/Jezebel typology causes Herod to be the villain. In retaining the fact that John's death was the result of the prompting of Herodias through her daughter (14:8), Matthew portrays Herod as a weak individual over whom women have a sway. As highlighted above, the lack of reference to the executioner makes Herod more directly responsible for John's death, with the text literally stating that Herod had John beheaded (14:10). The omission of the note that Herodias held a grudge against John because of John's criticism of Herod's marriage to Herodias (Mark 6:20) and the lack of reference to Herod's fear of John and estimate of him (Mark 6:20–21) prevents locating any openness in Herod to John's teaching.⁷⁴ Rather, he rejects God's law and seeks to hinder John's attempt to uphold the law by placing the Baptist in prison.⁷⁵ Matthew's earlier teaching on divorce (5:31–32) also makes the sin committed by Herod clearer, as he marries a divorced woman in Herodias, the wife of his brother Philip.⁷⁶ The disdain for oaths noted in the Sermon on the Mount (5:33–37) further indicts Herod's character, as his oath is out of

⁷⁴ The use of the imperfect in 14:4 (ἔλεγεν) could indicate that this was a repeated criticism (Hagner, *Matthew*, 2:41), but it seems better to view it as background information to the narrative (Häfner, *Der verheißene Vorläufer*, 294).

⁷⁵ On the imprisonment of John as a rejection of the law and an attempt to place the law "in prison," see Hilary of Poitiers, *On Matthew* 14.3.7 (Manlio Simonetti, ed., *Matthew* [2 vols; ACCSNT 1; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Academic, 2001, 2002], 1b:3).

⁷⁶ There is no need to see the elimination of Mark's note that Herod had married Herodias (Mark 6:17) as an indication that Herod and Herodias were not yet married (against Gundry, *Matthew*, 287). Matthew's note that the dancing girl was the daughter of Herodias could show that Herodias had been married and had a child, making her marriage to Herod a violation of the Levitical law, especially if Mark 6:22 (or the version of Mark 6:22 that Matthew knew) indicates that she was the daughter of Herod (see Metzger, *A Textual Commentary*, 77).

accord with Jesus' teachings.⁷⁷ Herod's vow seems even more impulsive and foolish because the dance of Herodias' daughter only pleases Herod (14:6) rather than all the guests of the banquet (Mark 6:22).⁷⁸ The passage therefore depicts Herod as a lawbreaker who acts rashly.

Above all, Herod appears in the story as one who is primarily concerned with how others view him.⁷⁹ Herod's initial inability to act on his desire to kill John stems from his fear of the crowds.⁸⁰ Since Herodias' daughter is able to manipulate Herod to do what he wanted to do in the first place (14:5), he appears as a weak individual, guided by his impulses and the will of others rather than his own views.⁸¹ Moreover, the fact that a *woman* is able to manipulate Herod and influence his actions is especially remarkable and casts Herod as a weak individual. There may even be irony in the use of the term "king" in 14:9, as Herod does not act as a true sovereign because he is captive to the desires of a

⁷⁷ Senior, *Matthew*, 165; Luz, *Matthew*, 2:307; Nolland, *Matthew*, 584. Peter also takes an oath in 26:72. The retention of Mark's plural description of the Herod's oath (διὰ τοὺς ὄρκους) in Matt 14:9 even though Matthew speaks of a single oath in 14:7 (μετὰ ὄρκου ὠμολόγησεν αὐτῆ; cf. Mark 6:22) could reveal Herod making multiple oaths or repeating an oath (see discussion in Hoehner, *Herod Antipas*, 165–66; W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:474; Hagner, *Matthew*, 2:413).

⁷⁸ See Hoehner, *Herod Antipas*, 167; Hartmann, *Der Tod Johannes des Täufers* 249. If the dance is intended to be erotic (as maintained in e.g., Schlatter, *Matthäus*, 460), then the fact that only Herod was pleased by it would attribute lust to Herod alone. While there is no clear indication that this dance is erotic (cf. Hoehner, *Herod Antipas*, 156–57), the note about the dancing of this girl at a banquet may prompt certain connotations of moral laxness (Theissen, *Gospels in Context*, 89–95). Even if the dance was not overtly sexual, the sheer fact that a young girl danced in front of people outside of her family could also show shameful behavior occurring (Malina and Rohrbaugh, *Social Science Commentary*, 107). Moreover, there seems to be a Jewish disdain for a solo dance such as this situation (Aus, *Water into Wine*, 50–53).

⁷⁹ A similar point is made in Weaver, "Power and Powerlessness," 189–90.

⁸⁰ Herod's fear of the crowds could be a fear that they would riot upon John's death (see Jerome, *Comm. Matt.* 2.14.5 [FC 115:168]).

⁸¹ R. Edwards, *Matthew's Story*, 52; cf. Kraemer, "Implicating Herodias," 324. On Herod's weakness foreshadowing Pilate and evoking Herod the Great, see Weaver, "Power and Powerlessness," 179–96.

woman and the opinion of the masses.⁸² Herod's concern for maintaining honor in the eyes of others and staying in control seems to explain the problematic statement that Herod "was sorry" (λυπηθείς)⁸³ on hearing the request of Herodias' daughter but commanded for John to be killed on account of Herodias' request and the guests.⁸⁴ Herod did want to kill John but was sorry that he had to do so under these circumstances, as his hand was forced.⁸⁵ There would be possible ways for Herod to nullify his oath, as it would technically require the murder of an innocent man,⁸⁶ but if Herod found a way to divest himself from this oath, it would have negative effects on how his subjects view his word and his power.⁸⁷ The inclusion of the fact that Herod commanded John's death "on account of the guests" indicates his desire to maintain control over his subjects, as Herod

⁸² Sand, *Matthäus*, 303. On the similarity between the concern of Herod about the crowds and Saul's actions in 1 Sam 15:24, see Schlatter, *Matthäus*, 459.

⁸³ Mark 6:26 reads περιλυπος γενόμενος. Matthew's use of λυπέω may reflect a stylistic choice, but it could be a way to lessen the sorrow that Herod has in light of the fact that the Matthean Herod does not have the respect for John that the Markan Herod possesses (Gundry, *Matthew*, 287, 289). While Jerome posits that Herod fakes this sadness in light of the earlier reference to Herod's desiring to kill John (*Comm. on Matt.* 2.14.9 [Simonetti, *Matthew*, 1b:5]), there does not seem to be any indication in the text that this sadness is feigned.

⁸⁴ For discussion on the variant in 14:9 that seems to clarify a potential ambiguity of whether δία modifies Herod's sorrow or the command, see Metzger, *A Textual Commentary*, 29. There appears to be little difference between the potential readings (Hagner, *Matthew*, 2:413), but it seems best to view the δία as modifying the command rather than Herod's sorrow, in agreement with many English translations (e.g., KJV, NRSV, NAB, NKJV, NASB, NIV, NET).

⁸⁵ Cf. Hoehner, *Herod Antipas*, 158. On Herod having plans to kill John at a different time, see Gundry, *Matthew*, 287; Häfner, *Der verheißene Vorläufer*, 298. Cf. Patte, *Matthew*, 214 n. 7.

⁸⁶ See J. Duncan M. Derrett, "Herod's Oath and the Head of John the Baptist," *BZ* 9 (1965): 52–59; Keener, *Matthew*, 401. This view also appears in Origen, *Comm. Matt.* 10.22 (ANF 9:429).

⁸⁷ On the potential impact that a release from his oath might have on Herod's power over his subjects, see Derrett, "Herod's Oath," 233–39. While rejecting Derrett's proposal, Hoehner also highlights the need for Herod to keep his word in the presence of his guests (*Herod Antipas*, 167). For a discussion of this passage that focuses on Herod's concern for social relationships, see Patte, *Matthew*, 208.

wants to avoid losing face in their presence and retain their respect and loyalty.⁸⁸

Therefore, Herod was more concerned with keeping power and maintaining honor than doing what was just or what he thought was right.⁸⁹

In addition to presenting Herod in a bad light, the influence that others have on his actions and his concern for retaining power establishes a point of connection to the Jewish leaders and opponents of Jesus. It is the crowd's opinion that John is a prophet that initially prevents Herod from killing John (14:5), and the opinion of the crowds influences the answer that the chief priests and elders give Jesus in 21:23–27 and their attempt to arrest Jesus in 21:46.⁹⁰ Political considerations are also on the forefront of the minds of the religious leaders when they seek to arrest Jesus in 26:5. All three of these notes appear in the Markan parallels, so Matthew has inserted the actions and behavior of the Jewish leaders into the portrayal of Herod, linking these groups together. Herod's behavior is akin to that of the Pharisees in Matthew, as Jesus speaks about their desire to have reward in the eyes of men and to look good before others (6:1–18; 23:2–36). Furthermore, Matthew's description of Herod as breaking various regulations that appear in the Sermon on the Mount present him as similar to the Pharisees, who actually break

⁸⁸ Matthew's *συνανακειμένους* could be a way to stress the role of the guests, as he seems to have added the prefix *συν-* to Mark's *ἀνακειμένους*. The presence of a variant reading for Mark 6:26 featuring *συνανακειμένους* and the use of the term in 6:22, however, could also explain Matthew's reading (cf. W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:473).

⁸⁹ Ernst, *Johannes der Täufer*, 173; Hartmann, *Der Tod Johannes des Täufers*, 248. Cf. Chrysostom, *Hom on Matt.* 48.4 (*NPNF*¹ 10:298); Peter Chrysologus, *Sermons* 127.7 (Simonetti, *Matthew*, 1b:4).

⁹⁰ As noted in Trilling, "Die Täufertradition," 274; Wink, *John the Baptist*, 28.

the law (cf. 23:2–36).⁹¹ Like the Jewish leaders and Pharisees, Herod fails to recognize the true identity of John just as he fails to recognize who Jesus is and follow God’s law.

A connection between the Jewish religious leaders and Herod in Matthew’s description of the fate of Jesus and John is not surprising in light of their alliance in 2:4.⁹² This previous alliance between Herod’s father and the religious leaders of Jerusalem indicates that a relationship may exist between Herod and Jewish religious leaders.⁹³ Moreover, since Matthew does not include Mark’s note that the guest list featured Herod’s courtiers, officers, and the leading men of Galilee (6:21), the identity of the “guests” of Matt 14:9 is ambiguous, allowing for the possibility that Jewish religious leaders were present at Herod’s birthday celebration. While losing face would be reason enough for Herod’s actions, Matthew’s narrative indicates that some Jewish figures would support the execution of John, as hostility exists between John and the Pharisees and the Sadducees due to John’s speech against them (3:7–10) and “this generation” made accusations against John that should lead to his execution (11:18). Moreover, Matthew has recently pointed out that the Pharisees wanted to destroy Jesus (12:14), and Matthew later indicts Jewish groups in the rejection and execution of John (17:10–13; cf. 21:23–32). Therefore, the individuals who kill Jesus also seem to play a role in John’s death.⁹⁴ Herod may feel pressure to fulfill the request of Herodias’ daughter not only to

⁹¹ Cf. Bruner, *Mathew*, 2:66, who notes that all the sins of the Sermon on the Mount appear in this passage.

⁹² Luz, *Matthew*, 2:308. The link between Herod and the actions of his father is also highlighted in the discussion of the “anti-God front” (“Die gottfeindliche Front”) in Trilling, “Die Täufertradition,” 274; Wink, *John the Baptist*, 28. On links between the portrayals of Herod the Great and Herod Antipas, see Weaver, “Power and Powerlessness,” 187–88.

⁹³ Cf. Derrett, “Herod’s Oath,” 50.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 53–54; Donaldson, “For Herod Had John Arrested,” 44–46.

retain honor in the eyes of his guests but also because they would like to see John dead as soon as possible.⁹⁵ Since this is an argument in the midst of silence, however, one can only leave it open as a possibility.

One of the few things that Matthew adds to the narrative is that Herod had not yet killed John because he feared the crowd (14:5).⁹⁶ As already noted, this statement reveals how captive Herod is to public opinion. This statement additionally portrays a difference between the views of John held by figures such as Herod and the masses.⁹⁷ While the use of the language of a “prophet” recalls the immediately preceding passage in which Jesus does not have honor in his hometown (13:57),⁹⁸ this statement also points to a contrast that exists between John and Jesus, as Jesus is rejected by the people of his town but John’s popularity in the masses is noted. In adding this statement, Matthew therefore highlights the importance of John to the crowds, showing that the attempt to slander John (11:18) does not win over the masses. At the same time, however, the passage also shows the insufficiency of the crowds’ opinion of John, as Jesus has declared him to be more than a prophet and the eschatological Elijah in 11:7–15.⁹⁹ Matthew’s account of John’s death does not simply chronicle the death of a martyr or a prophet; it is the death of one

⁹⁵ See Gundry, *Matthew*, 287.

⁹⁶ This is one of the two additions to the text noted in Wink, *John the Baptist*, 29 and serves as a key part of the analysis in Trilling, “Die Täufertradition,” 272–75.

⁹⁷ Häfner, *Der verheißene Vorläufer*, 295. While Gundry thinks the crowd is correct in their belief, with the crowd representing the church (*Matthew*, 287), the portrayal of the crowd elsewhere in Matthew points to it being the Jewish people distinct from their leaders (see Cousland, *The Crowds in the Gospel of Matthew*).

⁹⁸ On this connection, see esp. Ernst, *Johannes der Täufer*, 175.

⁹⁹ Cf. Carter, *Matthew and the Margins*, 303. Against W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:471; Häfner, *Der verheißene Vorläufer*, 295.

who is more than a prophet.¹⁰⁰ Therefore, while there is a sense in which the theme of the “fate of the prophets” is present here,¹⁰¹ the death of John goes beyond the death of a prophet as John is the eschatological Elijah who has been rejected.

Matthew increases the connections between John’s death and Jesus’ death that stand in Mark’s story so that the death of John continues to serve as a preview for Jesus’ passion.¹⁰² Lexical links remain between John’s imprisonment and Jesus’ later imprisonment.¹⁰³ As in Mark, both figures experience a shameful death at the hands of the Roman-appointed rulers.¹⁰⁴ Even though Matthew indicates that Herod wants to kill John, Matthew also notes the grief that Herod has, setting up the hesitation of Pilate in

¹⁰⁰ While the text has features that reflect the suffering of a prophet (Hartmann, *Der Tod Johannes des Täuflers*, 170–71, citing 1 Kings 22:26; 2 Chron 16:10; Jer 20:2; *Mart. Isa.* 2:13), the text itself does not have the characteristics of a martyrdom story of a prophet (Theissen, *Gospels in Context*, 84–85; Hare, *Matthew*, 164–65). The expanded story of John’s death in Mark also does not reflect a martyr’s death (Wink, *John the Baptist*, 13).

¹⁰¹ As argued in Trilling, “Die Täufertradition,” 272–75, and then affirmed in e.g., Wink, *John the Baptist*, 27–28; Schweizer, *Matthew*, 318; Meier, “John the Baptist,” 400; W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:471; Luz, *Matthew*, 2:307; Cousland, *The Crowds in the Gospel of Matthew*, 218; Nolland, *Matthew*, 583.

¹⁰² Wink labels 14:3–12 as “John’s Passion” (*John the Baptist*, 28) and W. Davies and Allison calls John’s death a “Christological parable” (*Matthew*, 2:476, with a list of similarities appearing on the same page). Others that highlight the link between John’s death and Jesus’ death include Schlatter, *Matthäus*, 462; Bonnard, *Matthieu*, 216–17; Schweizer, *Matthew*, 316–17; Sand, *Matthäus*, 303; Hare, *Matthew*, 165; Senior, *Matthew*, 164; Keener, *Matthew*, 397; Bruner, *Matthew*, 2:63; France, *Matthew*, 552; Turner, *Matthew*, 365; Osborne, *Matthew*, 554, 560. Hubert Frankemölle highlights that both Jesus and his disciples will find the same fate as John (“Johannes der Täufer und Jesus im Matthäusevangelium: Jesus als Nachfolger des Täuflers,” *NTS* 42 [1996]: 214–15). On Mark’s links between John’s death and Jesus’ death, see Ernst, *Johannes der Täufer*, 28–29.

¹⁰³ Κρατέω appears in Matt 14:3//Mark 6:17; Matt 21:46//Mark 12:12; Matt 26:4//Mark 14:1; Matt 26:48//Mark 14:44; Matt 26:50//Mark 14:46; Matt 27:55//Mark 14:49, with Matthew adding one more appearance of the word in the Passion narrative (26:57). Δέω occurs in Matt 14:3//Mark 6:17; Matt 27:2//Mark 15:1.

¹⁰⁴ Turner, *Matthew*, 364–65. Like crucifixion, beheading was also the death of a criminal, as indicated in *m. Sanh.* 7.3 (W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:474). On the Roman use of beheading by a sword, see Herbert Bassler, *The Mind behind the Gospels: A Commentary to Matthew 1–14* (Reference Library of Jewish Intellectual History; Boston: Academic Studies, 2009), 341.

executing Jesus.¹⁰⁵ As already noted, an additional element in Matthew is how the opinion of the crowds influences the ability of the authorities to eliminate John and Jesus, as Herod and the Jewish leaders initially refrain from striking against John and Jesus, respectively, due to the opinion of the crowds. A challenge to the honor of Herod and the Jewish leaders leads them to shift course, however, and seek to kill their targets, as Herod kills John in order to save face after the request of Herodias' daughter, and the religious leaders decide to strike at Jesus after the temple cleansing and the parable of the Tenants (21:46). Matthew's account also links the two stories with the inclusion of the women in the narratives concerning the execution of each, as he alone includes the discussion with Pilate's wife in the Passion Narrative (27:19), although these two women have antithetical roles in the proceedings since Pilate's wife seeks to stop the execution of Jesus while Herodias schemes to kill John.¹⁰⁶ The connections between John's death and Jesus' death are not surprising in light of the parallelism between the figures throughout the narrative; one would expect Jesus to suffer in the same way as John.¹⁰⁷ In fact, the death of John at the hands of Herod indicates that the lethal opposition towards Jesus seen in the infancy narratives will eventually culminate in his death, with John's death showing the violence that is exerted against the kingdom (cf. 11:12).¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁵ As noted in e.g., W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:474; Osborne, *Matthew*, 559. See discussion above for the way that Matthew's description shows Herod as concerned with popular opinion.

¹⁰⁶ The fact that Herod heeds the request of a woman and Pilate declines seems to indicate that Pilate is a stronger figure than Herod.

¹⁰⁷ See esp. Anderson, *Matthew's Narrative Web*, 171–73. Yamasaki states that the overall narrative conditions the audience to expect the same things to happen to John and Jesus (*John the Baptist*, 131).

¹⁰⁸ Cf. R. Edwards, *Matthew's Story*, 52.

Although serving as a way to foreshadow the Passion, Matthew's account reflects some divergences between the death of John and the death of Jesus.¹⁰⁹ Matthew states that the crowd held John in high regard at the time of his execution, a point later reiterated (21:26). The crowds, however, will turn against Jesus at the prompting of the chief priests and the elders (27:20). Therefore, John's popularity remains while Jesus' does not; John remains a figure with prominence while the religious leaders are able to convince the people that Jesus is a deviant who must be destroyed.¹¹⁰ The differing views of John and Jesus at their respective deaths appears elsewhere in the Gospel of Matthew, as a large group of Jews still revere John after his death in the narrative (21:23–27) while a false report goes forth concerning Jesus (28:11–15). Since the crowds in Matthew correspond to the Jews of Matthew's time, one may view this variance as reflecting a different perspective towards each figure at Matthew's time.

Matthew's use of the aorist tense (ἠγγέρθη ἀπὸ τῶν νεκρῶν) in 14:2 in describing Herod's belief that John was resurrected from the dead differs from Mark's formation of the description of a belief in John's resurrection (6:15: ἐγγέρεται ἐκ νεκρῶν) and more closely resembles Matthew's description of Jesus' resurrection (27:64; 28:7).¹¹¹ While this might seem to link the deaths of John and Jesus, Jesus alone is raised, showing a

¹⁰⁹ Many writers note the connections between John's death and Jesus' death, but Häfner is one of the few that develop the discontinuities between the deaths of each figure (*Der verheißene Vorläufer*, 293, 298).

¹¹⁰ On prominence and deviance, see Malina and Neyrey, *Calling Jesus Names*, 40.

¹¹¹ Gundry, *Matthew*, 285. On this phrase as reflecting Matthean style, also see W. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:467. The verb ἐγείρω never appears with the preposition ἀπό to speak of resurrection in Mark.

difference in their respective fates.¹¹² Since the feeding of the five thousand follows John's death and has affinities to the Last Supper, wherein Matthew inserts the idea of the forgiveness of sins (26:28) that is absent in Matthew's description of John's baptism, Matthew may also highlight that forgiveness comes through Jesus' death; John prepares the way for Jesus in death but it is Jesus' death that results in forgiveness. The links between the deaths of both figures heighten Jesus' power, with Jesus' death following a similar narrative of John's death but surpassing it through his resurrection and the offer of forgiveness through his death.

Alterations to the remark about the burial of John by his disciples also reveal similarities and important differences to Jesus' fate. As in Mark, John's disciples are able to take and bury John's body, honoring their teacher in the wake of his ignoble death since it seems that John has no family to bury him.¹¹³ Matthew's description of Joseph of Arimathea as one who had been discipled by Jesus (27:57: ἐμαθητεύθη τῷ Ἰησοῦ; cf. Mark 15:43) presents a further point of connection in that a disciple of Jesus buries him just like John's disciples bury the Baptist. However, Matthew's wording of the description of John's disciples burying Jesus' body (14:12: ἔθαψαν αὐτόν¹¹⁴) varies from

¹¹² Mark also shows Jesus alone being raised from the dead, but this difference seems more prominent in Matthew, especially if (as seems most likely) Mark includes no description of the resurrected Christ.

¹¹³ On the respect that this note might show for John the Baptist, see Joan E. Taylor, *The Immerser: John the Baptist within Second Temple Judaism* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 249; Hartmann, *Der Tod Johannes des Täufers*, 190–98. Cf. Schnackenburg, *Matthew*, 140. If αὐτόν stands as the original reading in 14:12 rather than αὐτό (see n. 114 below), then one may also see Matthew seeking to show reverence for John in describing his burial by describing the burial of him as a person rather than of a corpse (cf. Gundry, *Matthew*, 286). On John's death as a dishonor to him, see Neyrey, *Honor and Shame*, 67.

¹¹⁴ The reading αὐτό (found in witnesses such as \aleph^1 , D, f¹, 13, and Maj) is more likely to be a correction stemming from the use of πτώμα, which would require a neuter pronoun. While there is minimal

Mark 6:29 (ἔθηκαν αὐτὸ ἐν μνημείῳ) and reduces the connection between the burials of John and Jesus found in Mark's account (Mark 15:46: ἔθηκεν αὐτὸν ἐν μνημείῳ; cf. Matt 27:60: ἔθηκεν αὐτὸ ἐν τῷ καινῷ αὐτοῦ μνημείῳ).¹¹⁵ John's death might foreshadow Jesus' fate, but there is point of discontinuity in the events that occur after the death of each figure. In fact, John's disciples announce (ἀπαγγέλλω) John's death just as Jesus' disciples announce (ἀπαγγέλλω) Jesus' resurrection (28:8, 10), stressing different elements of what happens to each figure: John is dead, Jesus is risen.

Matthew's description of the disciples of John telling Jesus about John's death (14:12) continues a theme of interaction between Jesus and John's disciples, as it is now the third occasion in which they converse (9:14–17; 11:2–6).¹¹⁶ This time, however, the disciples of John do not ask Jesus a question but rather report to him.¹¹⁷ Their message to Jesus replaces the report of Jesus' disciples that comes before Jesus' withdrawal into the wilderness (Mark 6:30).¹¹⁸ Therefore, Matthew essentially substitutes the report of John's

support for the reading αὐτόν, these few witnesses include \aleph^* and B, so this reading has internal probability and a few strong witnesses. See discussion in Metzger, *A Textual Commentary*, 29.

¹¹⁵ This difference seems to be ignored by some key works on the Matthean Baptist (e.g., Meier, "John the Baptist," 399 n. 57) while some commentators note it but do not explain if there is any rationale for the variation (e.g., Hagner, *Matthew*, 2:411; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:475). For a similar discussion of the possible significance of this difference, see Häfner, *Der verheißene Vorläufer*, 299 n. 3. Edmondo Lupieri also notes the possibility that the lack of reference to a μνημείον in Matthew could be due to the similarity its presence creates between the burials of John and Jesus (*Giovanni Battista nelle tradizioni sinottiche* [StBib 82; Brescia: Paideia, 1988], 88 n. 6).

¹¹⁶ The content of what John's disciples tell Jesus is not noted. John's disciples could tell Jesus about Herod's belief that John is resurrected Jesus, which causes Jesus to see that Herod would be seeking to kill Jesus (see Cope, "The Death of John the Baptist," 515–19). However, the flashback nature of 14:3–12 makes it more likely that this refers to the news of John's fate.

¹¹⁷ Häfner, *Der verheißene Vorläufer*, 300. There is a reversal in that John's disciples report to John in 11:4 but here they report to Jesus, with the verb ἀπαγγέλλω appearing in both passages (also see Luz, *Matthew*, 2:305).

¹¹⁸ Schweizer, *Matthew*, 317; Ernst, *Johannes der Täufer*, 176; Luz, *Matthew*, 2:305.

disciples for the report of Jesus' disciples. That John's disciples go to Jesus after the death of their master indicates that their relationship is not one of hostility but rather one of friendship, so Matthew draws the disciples of John closer to Jesus than in Mark.¹¹⁹ In fact, it seems that being a disciple of John naturally leads to interaction with Jesus, something not surprising in light of John's message in Matthew about the greatness of the one who will come after him.¹²⁰ It is unclear what happens to John's disciples after they report John's death to Jesus, as they could disband, regroup around Jesus, or be part of the crowds that follows Jesus in the next passage.¹²¹ While Matthew is not interested in describing what happens to John's disciples, he seems concerned to show them thinking that Jesus in some way is associated with the ministry of John by having them report to Jesus.

This report of John's disciples has an effect on Jesus, as 14:13 states that Jesus withdraws (*ἀναχωρέω*) upon hearing the news of John's death. While there is a sense in which Jesus might be mourning the death of John, elsewhere Jesus withdraws when there is opposition to his ministry (2:13, 14, 22; 12:15; 15:21).¹²² Therefore, as in 4:12, Jesus

¹¹⁹ For similar views of Matthew showing a positive relationship existing between John's disciples and Jesus, see Bonnard, *Matthieu*, 217; Knut Backhaus, *Die "Jüngerkreise" des Täufers Johannes: Eine Studie zu den religionsgeschichtlichen Ursprüngen des Christentums* (PTS 19; Paderborn: F. Schöningh, 1991), 17; Hagner, *Matthew*, 2:413; Häfner, *Der verheißene Vorläufer*, 299; Luz, *Matthew*, 2:307. Cf. J. Jones, "References to John the Baptist," 302, who notes that the passage shows that Jesus does not establish a competing community.

¹²⁰ Cf. Keener, *Matthew*, 402.

¹²¹ While some since the time of Jerome (*Comm. Matt.* 2.4.12 [Simonetti, *Matthew*, 1b:5]) have contended that Matthew shows John's disciples now following Jesus (e.g., Trilling, "Die Täufertradition," 286; Gundry, *Matthew*, 289), the text does not clearly state this (Wink, *John the Baptist*, 39; Häfner, *Der verheißene Vorläufer*, 300). On John's disciples being part of the crowd in the next passage, see Chrysostom, *Hom. Matt* 49.1 (*NPNF¹* 10:303–4).

¹²² Anderson, *Matthew's Narrative Web*, 89. Cf. Häfner, *Der verheißene Vorläufer*, 301–3.

sees opposition to John as a threat to his own safety.¹²³ Jewish opposition is at work in all other times in Matthew that Jesus “withdraws,” as the religious leaders and “all Jerusalem” seem to work in conjunction with Herod in 2:13, 14, 22 and hostility from the Pharisees leads Jesus to “withdraw” (12:15; 15:21). Once again, a subtlety may point to Jewish opposition at work in John’s death.¹²⁴ Since Jesus has already placed the opposition to John in an eschatological context in 11:12, these opponents would be the fulfillment of the promise of eschatological enemies.¹²⁵

The link between John’s death and Jesus’ actions may also be a way to indicate that Jesus is the one who answers and vindicates John’s unjust end. Josephus’ report about John the Baptist portrays God as John’s patron who avenges his unjust death, and Herod’s belief in John’s resurrection causing Jesus’ miraculous activity shows a similar perspective, as God would respond to Herod’s unjust treatment of John by raising John from the dead and performing miracles through him.¹²⁶ While Jesus withdraws and thus does not seem to be doing anything to answer John’s death, his resurrection and role as coming judge would serve as the vindication of John’s death, showing that God will act

¹²³ It is more than just that the news of John’s fate means that Jesus should expect something similar to happen to him, as noted in e.g., Trilling, “Die Täufertradition,” 272–74; Wink, *John the Baptist*, 27; Meier, “John the Baptist,” 400.

¹²⁴ On Matthew’s lack of reference to the Herodians in Matt 12:14//Mark 3:6 and its relationship to this passage, see Häfner, *Der verheißene Vorläufer*, 304.

¹²⁵ Cf. Carl H. Kraeling, *John the Baptist* (New York: Scribner, 1951), 160–61. On the passage making Herod as one of the “violent ones,” see Carter, *Matthew and the Margins*, 304.

¹²⁶ Hartmann, *Der Tod Johannes des Täufers*, 146.

to punish those who killed this man.¹²⁷ Therefore, Matthew may depict Jesus' ministry and actions as a response to John's death.

A number of themes appear in Matthew's account of John's death. Like Josephus and unlike Mark, Matthew highlights the role of Herod in John's death. In adapting Mark, however, Matthew shows that Herod rejects the Jewish law and is controlled by the opinions of others. Matthew also links John's death to the infancy narratives where another Herod appears, with the elder Herod helping to characterize this Herod. Other places in Matthew (3:7–10, 11:18; 21:23–32) indicate that certain Jewish groups would support the execution of John, including the Pharisees, but Matthew also highlights that the masses of Jews supported John (14:5). John's fate foreshadows Jesus' death, but there are also a number of ways in which Jesus' death differs from John's execution, especially the differing views of the crowds towards John and Jesus at the time of their respective deaths and the fact that Jesus is resurrected while John is not. The link between John's disciples and Jesus indicates that a relationship exists between these two figures, with Jesus continuing John's work and serving as the one who will respond to John's death.

¹²⁷ Cf. Hartmann, *Der Tod Johannes des Täuflers*, 198. On God's actions at the cross vindicating Jesus' unjust end, see Neyrey, *Honor and Shame*, 140–48.

Implications for the Role of the Matthean Baptist in the Gospel's Setting

Many of the features of Matthew's account of John's death and the reference to John alongside of Elijah and Jeremiah as possible identifications for Jesus function in the Gospel's Jewish setting. The insertion of the remark about John's enduring popularity with the crowds reveals the potential usefulness of the Baptist within a Jewish setting, as the crowds have a positive, though (in Matthew's eyes) insufficient, view of John. In addition, Matthew indicts the Jewish leaders and Pharisees by creating links between them and Herod in that both are captive to popular opinion, defends the suffering of John and Jesus through the association with Jeremiah, further establishes a link of continuity between John and Jesus through the report of John's disciples to Jesus, and shows Jesus surpassing John just as John predicts through some of the differences surrounding their deaths.

Matthew seems interested in forging links between Herod and the Jewish leaders and Pharisees so that these Jewish figures would be viewed as playing a role in John's death in light of the link between the opposition to Jesus and the opposition to John in 17:10–13. In addition to the similarities between Herod Antipas and the religious leaders in rejecting God's law and being more concerned about worldly power, the alliance between Herod the Great and the chief priests and scribes (2:4) and the hostility that exists between John and the Pharisees and Sadducees (3:7–10) points to these groups having a role in or at least supporting the death of John (cf. 11:18) just as these groups help promote the execution of Jesus. Since Matthew shows John to be the eschatological Elijah, Matthew reveals the religious leaders to be unable to recognize the important eschatological moment that comes with John and Jesus. They thus stand as the fulfillment

of eschatological enemies who seek to lead the Jewish people astray and oppose God's kingdom. The opponents of Matthew's group are the continuation of these opponents.

The reference to Jeremiah among the list of popular opinions about Jesus defends Jesus' suffering as well as John's death. Since Jeremiah was rejected by the people, the rejection of Jesus is not surprising. Because of the links throughout Matthew between Jesus and John, as well as some similarities between John himself and Jeremiah, the suffering of Jeremiah also provides a precedent for the death of John, especially since the historical Elijah was not martyred. Moreover, the retention of some connections that Mark makes between John's fate and Jesus' death as well as some additional elements found in Matthew could be a way of using the death of a popular figure (John) to help justify and defend the death of Jesus. Matthew shows a different way of explaining the death of John than the Jewish opinion reflected in Josephus' account of John's death, offering an interpretation that supports his group's claims about Jesus rather than one that supports the idea that disaster comes upon those who depart from God's law.

The report of John's disciples to Jesus about John's death more tightly connects John's disciples to Jesus and his followers. Matthew does not seem interested in tracing what happens to the Baptist's disciples after his death, but Matthew's portrayal of positive interaction between them and Jesus indicates that these individuals did not impede or oppose Jesus' ministry. In fact, Matthew's description indirectly presents them as either joining the crowds that are undecided about Jesus or following the intentions of their master and becoming part of Jesus' circle. Moreover, the report of John's death to Jesus by John's disciples indicates a link occurring between Jesus and the Baptist, with Jesus in a certain sense the recognized successor of John from the point of view of John's

disciples. The Jesus movement, and therefore also Matthew's group, is an extension of John's ministry.

The differences between John's death and Jesus' death also show John as preparing the way for Jesus but being surpassed by the one who John declared to be greater than he. John's death foreshadows Jesus' in Matthew as it does in Mark, linking Jesus' fate with the fate of a popular Jewish figure, but Matthew seems interested in also revealing a stronger difference between the two figures in that Jesus rises from the dead. This does not degrade John's status but is in line with John's predictions about Jesus' ministry surpassing his own. Jesus' response to the news of John's death also points to his ministry and resurrection serving as the way to defend John after the Baptist's unjust death. Therefore, Jesus' resurrection serves as a way of affirming John's status as the eschatological Elijah but also is an indication that Jesus is the ultimate figure to whom John looked.

Conclusion

The references to John the Baptist in Matt 4:12, 14:1–13a, and 16:14 draw upon and develop themes about the Baptist found elsewhere in Matthew. These passages show Jesus as the continuation of the Baptist's ministry, as Jesus preaches the same message as John, experiences the same sort of opposition as John, and is even viewed as being a resurrected John. Moreover, Jesus is the one who continues John's ministry when John is unable to minister and is the figure to whom John's disciples turn when the Baptist is killed; Jesus is the true successor of John. Both figures also stand in the continuing line of prophetic figures that are rejected by their people like Elijah and Jeremiah, although surpassing these prophets due to their eschatological roles.

At the same time, however, Jesus goes beyond John's ministry as the one who brings to a culmination the hopes present in John's ministry. While preaching the same message as John, Jesus does so as the figure about whom John preached and as the fulfillment of the light to the Gentiles of which the prophets spoke. Jesus is also rejected and killed by the Roman-appointed ruler, but Jesus' story does not end with his burial by his disciples, as he is raised from the dead. In fact, the very miraculous deeds that lead Herod to think that Jesus is John resurrected indicate that Jesus is the one of whom John spoke. Jesus goes beyond the ministry of Elijah, Jeremiah, and even John in that he is the Messiah to whom all looked forward.

In addition to presenting Jesus as the continuation and culmination of John's ministry, these passages also portray the Jewish opponents of Matthew's group standing in the line of the figures that have rejected the eschatological Elijah and the Messiah. While John's execution happens at the hand of Herod, Matthew's overall portrayal of the Baptist's interaction with Jewish groups (Pharisees and Sadducees) and Jewish leaders (chief priests and elders) and the interaction between Herod the Great and the Jewish leaders points to these Jewish groups possibly influencing Herod's decision or at least supporting it. In fact, Herod has similarities to the Jewish groups that oppose Jesus, and Matthew shows that the Herodian house forms alliances with these like-minded Jews to oppose Jesus. The description of John's imprisonment and death links his sufferings with opposition to Jesus, as Jesus responds to the treatment of John in the same way that Jesus' family and Jesus himself family react to opposition from the house of Herod and from the Pharisees: he withdraws. Jesus' earlier statement about opposition to the kingdom portrays this opposition as eschatological, showing that these opponents are

“violent ones” seeking to oppose God’s purposes. While the death of John may look like a defeat of the kingdom, the resurrection of Jesus ultimately affirms its victory and vindicates John.

CHAPTER 7

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Synthesis of Study

The aim of this project has been to connect recent work respectively focused upon studying John the Baptist and the Gospel of Matthew against a backdrop of first-century Judaism and to fill in a gap in research about the Matthean Baptist through examining the significance of Matthew's description of John the Baptist within the Gospel's historical and social setting of first-century Judaism. The largely inductive approach to this investigation and the cumulative nature of the overarching argument warrants a concluding synthesis that traces the contributions of the various elements of this study to its thesis that Matthew presents Jesus as the continuation and the culmination of John's ministry as a way to bolster the attractiveness of his group and damage the standing of its Jewish opponents.¹

Four extant texts roughly contemporaneous with the Gospel of Matthew (Mark, Luke-Acts, John, Josephus' *Jewish Antiquities*) offer insight into views towards the Baptist at the time of the composition with Matthew. All four texts reflect a high regard for the Baptist both in the traditions they record about him and in the way they use the Baptist to support the differing ideologies of their respective authors. Josephus' use of the

¹ While this discussion will summarize key points developed in the course of the preceding chapters, it will not give a chapter-by-chapter summary since the opening chapter of this dissertation gives an overview of each chapter and summaries appear in each chapter.

Baptist seems particularly significant since it reflects a perception of John outside of the Jesus movement, with John spoken about in glowing terms and seeming to have enduring popularity among Jews. The Baptist also plays a special role as a witness in the Gospel of John, a work which reflects a dispute between Jewish believers in Jesus and other Jews. Moreover, the Gospel of Matthew itself points to many Jews viewing John favorably since the crowds, whom the Evangelist portrays as the Jewish people differentiated from its leaders, view him to be a prophet.

Although there does not seem to be evidence to identify a “Baptist group” at the time these texts were composed, the portrayal of John’s popularity and the value each writer finds in John suggests that there were some individuals or groups who had a high regard for John the Baptist at the time of the composition of Matthew. A link to John the Baptist would therefore be advantageous for a Jewish group such as Matthew’s group, and other “Christian” writers link John and Jesus. While Matthew seems to have inherited the linking of John and Jesus from his sources, he appears to develop it in special ways for his setting. The investigation of the Matthean Baptist in this work thus considers the unique way that Matthew shaped these elements and what it might reveal about the significance of the Matthean Baptist for Matthew’s setting and intended audience.

The last two references to John the Baptist in Matthew (17:10–13; 21:23–32) present John as an essential and unique prophetic figure who must be accepted but whom the religious leaders and Pharisees have rejected. The Matthean Jesus declares that John “came in the way of righteousness” and that the rejection of John leads to exclusion from the kingdom of heaven, with Matthew further emphasizing that the religious leaders and Pharisees did not accept John’s message (21:32). Moreover, the inclusion of the parable

of the Two Children (21:28–32) within a trilogy of parables that looks to the rejection of the prophets, Jesus, and the messengers sent by Jesus (21:28–22:14) elevates John above the role of a prophet since he receives special attention. This parable unit also shows John standing in the same stream as Jesus and his followers; Jesus continues John's story but also serves to culminate it as the fulfillment of God's promises of salvation. Matthew 17:10–13 affirms this special status for John and notes that this status is recognized by Jesus' followers. By highlighting John's role as the eschatological Elijah promised by Malachi, Matthew presents the Jewish leaders and Pharisees as having rejected God's eschatological messenger, thus rejecting the Law and God's promises to Israel.

Matthew's description of the Baptist throughout the narrative sets up the use of the Baptist in these final passages mentioning the Baptist. The presentation of John's ministry in Matt 3:1–17 features connections between his ministry and the ministry of Jesus, including their message about the kingdom and their adversarial relationship with the Pharisees and the Sadducees. Moreover, John's message and baptism is one of eschatological preparation, showing that his ministry had a temporary nature and sets up the climactic eschatological activity of God. John himself confesses that this moment comes in Jesus' ministry at the baptism scene, as John believes he should be baptized by Jesus (3:14). The linking together of John and Jesus serves as a way to justify the beliefs of Matthew's group about Jesus, as John's work looks to the coming of God which is then fulfilled in the person of Jesus.

While Matthew highlights the links between John and Jesus as a way to show Jesus as the continuation and culmination of John's ministry, there is also discontinuity between the Matthean John's expectations and the ministry of Jesus described in the

Gospel. In particular, Jesus does not seem to fulfill the primary role described in John's preaching: judge. The interaction between John and Jesus at Jesus' baptism sets up the defense for this potentially problematic issue, as Jesus affirms himself as the fulfillment of John's message but that the accomplishment of this message will be different from that which John imagined. Therefore, the baptismal scene reveals that Jesus serves as the true interpreter of John's work and can reconfigure John's vision, with John accepting Jesus' views. Jesus' answer to the question of John's disciples (9:14–17) and his answer to John the Baptist and the remarks that follow (11:2–19) present himself as the fulfillment of John's hope while also adjusting John's eschatological scheme to include suffering in the present. If some Jews thought that John preached about the arrival of the end and the coming of God, something that is not entirely clear due to the nature of the evidence concerning John's preaching, then Matthew's portrayal of Jesus and description of the interaction between John and Jesus would also defend the Baptist against an accusation that his predictions did not come true.

Matthew's remarks about the Baptist's suffering (4:12; 14:1–13a) show that his imprisonment and death do not undercut his status as the Elijah who was to come but rather places him in continuity with rejected figures from the Jewish Scriptures and confirms his eschatological location by suffering as part of the eschatological woes. The Matthean Jesus' words about violence directed towards the kingdom since the time of John places the suffering of John the Baptist in an eschatological context (11:12), thus also affirming the eschatological significance of Jesus' work. Matthew's subtle links between Herod and the Jewish leaders and the Pharisees connect the opponents of John and Jesus but also paint them in eschatological colors, showing that the opponents of

Matthew's group have rejected the pivotal moment in salvation-history that comes in Jesus by first rejecting John. The suffering and rejection of John and Jesus lead to the fulfillment of the promise of the Scriptures that salvation would extend to the Gentiles, while also leading to a curse on those who reject Elijah.

Since it appears that John remained a popular figure in Judaism outside of the Jesus movement at the time of the Gospel's composition, the connections made between John and Jesus would encourage Jews to align themselves with Matthew's group, particularly those who saw the Baptist to be a figure who spoke the will of God. In addition, it would push Jews away from the opponents of Matthew's group, whom Matthew portrays as being in continuity with those who rejected the Baptist. In fact, Jesus' teaching that John is the eschatological Elijah, a teaching that is passed along through his disciples and Matthew's group, would elevate John above the popular opinion of him, as the crowd viewed John to be a prophet but not necessarily as this eschatological figure. Therefore, while it is unclear if there were individuals at the time of Matthew's composition who would deem themselves to be disciples of the Baptist, an individual or group that thought highly of the Baptist would be attracted to Matthew's description of John due to the importance it attributes to John. Matthew's group utilizes John to substantiate the group's claims about Jesus, as John's role as Elijah would confirm Jesus' ministry as the fulfillment of God's eschatological promises, but Matthew's teaching on John would also be a way to maintain John's importance and even defend and increase it. In a certain sense, Matthew's description of John preserves his significance.

Significance in Dialogue with Previous Studies

The analysis of the Matthean Baptist offered in this dissertation both builds upon and advances the various approaches and explanations to the Matthean Baptist found in the previous works on the subject discussed in the opening chapter. It addresses the parallelism and the subordination of the Baptist in Matthew noted by Trilling, propounded in English by Wink, and investigated by scholars ever since. It differs from other studies, however, by placing this theme within the historical and social setting of the Gospel of Matthew and the context of first-century Jewish sectarian discussions. The explanation of John's role within the situation of conflict between Matthew's group and its Jewish opponents pays attention to the pastoral nature of the Gospel's composition and thus seems preferable to Meier's examination of the Matthean Baptist that describes the role of the Baptist within a developed scheme of salvation history or Trilling's backdrop of the Gospel as written by a Gentile. The approach also seeks a middle ground regarding the question of the role of the Matthean Baptist in relationship to followers of the Baptist, neither embracing the existence of a "Baptist sect" and the concept of a polemic towards this group like J. Jones nor quickly dismissing consideration of the potential influence of positive conceptions of the Baptist in the argument.

Like Häfner, the overarching argument of this work finds an importance on the "Christological" implications to the portrayal of the Baptist, but the analysis goes further than Häfner in noting how the description of the Baptist also serves to substantiate the claims of Matthew's group in contrast to the beliefs or opinions circulating amongst other Jewish groups. When placed against the backdrop of competition and conflict with other Jewish groups, one can see that John's identity as Elijah would help to argue for the

veracity of Matthew's beliefs about Jesus while also indicting the group's opponents for rejecting John and contributing to his demise. Therefore, John's Elijanic identity has a legitimizing function as well as a polemical function.

Suggestions for Further Research

While this project has focused narrowly on the role and significance of the Matthean Baptist for the Jewish setting of the first Gospel, the analysis has implications for related topics and raises questions for future explorations. Therefore, this study will conclude by noting three suggestions for further research regarding the figure of John the Baptist and his legacy among Jewish believers in Jesus.

The first suggestion for further research concerns the use of the Gospel of Matthew in discussions of the historical Baptist. Scholars have noted that the Gospel of Matthew may offer a portrayal of Jesus that is more reminiscent of the historical Jesus due to the Jewish setting and approach to the story of Jesus.² One may wonder if the same could be said of John the Baptist. That is, the presentation of John the Baptist within Matthew's Jewish historical and social setting may mean that the ministry of the Matthean Baptist better reflects the intentions and perceptions of the Baptist amongst fellow Jews. For example, Matthew's portrayal of John's baptism as not being for the forgiveness of sins could be in accordance with the historical John's teaching, with Matthew and Josephus rightly noting this aspect of John's work. Similarly, the preaching of the kingdom by the Matthean John could be a window into the message of the historical John, showing that both the historical John and the historical Jesus preached

² See e.g., David C. Sim, "Matthew and Jesus of Nazareth," in *Matthew and His Christian Contemporaries* (ed. David C. Sim and Boris Repschinski; LNTS 333; London: T & T Clark, 2011), 155–72.

about the kingdom of God. Moreover, Jesus' words about tax collectors and prostitutes believing John may point to the historical John ministering amongst these notorious groups. In addition, the use of John the Baptist in Matthew raises the question of whether Matthew's group had a special connection to John, perhaps with the Evangelist or members of his group having been influenced by John and his teaching and thus seeking to preserve it.³ The apocalyptic nature of Matthew could reflect a connection to the historical John's apocalyptic teaching, with this element within the beliefs of Matthew's group derived from John's teaching. This observation about the historical value of Matthew's description of John reverses the typical approach to the relevancy of Matthew's data on the Baptist for the historical Baptist, as Matthew often plays a minimal role in these discussions due to the secondary nature of most of its traditions about the Baptist and the redactional nature of the unique passages on the Baptist. Future work on the historical John can further explore this possibility of Matthew's value for the historical John and if Matthew might preserve memories of the historical Baptist.

A related suggestion for further study is the reception of Matthew's Gospel and particularly how its audience responded to Matthew's use and depiction of the Baptist. One may wonder about how successful the Evangelist was in using the Baptist for his purposes. Evidence may be available to address this question in the form of two versions of Matthew that Craig A. Evans has noted could derive from early Jewish communities:

³ A post-70 CE date would most likely rule out a direct relationship between John and the Evangelist and those in the Evangelist's group, but the popularity of John amongst Jews makes it possible and plausible that John also influenced a "second generation." Similarly, the "first generation" of Matthew's group could have had links to John, leading the "second generation" also to hold him in reverence.

the Hebrew version of Matthew quoted in Shem Tob ben Isaac's *Evan Bohan*⁴ and a Coptic text of Matthew found in the fourth-century papyrus Codex Schøyen.⁵ Evans highlights, following others before him, that both of these texts feature differences from Greek Matthew in passages dealing with John the Baptist, with both works giving the Baptist more prominence or being more sympathetic towards him.⁶ These texts may indicate that some early readers or listeners were uncomfortable with Matthew's depiction of John and wanted to elevate the Baptist's importance further, perhaps due to some allegiance or special regard for him. Further examination of these texts, and potentially others, could help offer insight into the ideology of groups that used

⁴ For text and analysis of Hebrew Matthew, see George Howard, *Hebrew Gospel of Matthew* (rev. ed.; Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1995 [1987 orig. entitled, *The Gospel of Matthew according to a Primitive Hebrew Text*]). While Howard's analysis of this text has been criticized by William L. Petersen (review of George Howard, *The Gospel of Matthew according to a Primitive Hebrew Text*, *JBL* 108 [1989]: 722–26; "Some Observations on a Recent Edition of and Introduction to Shem-Tob's 'Hebrew Matthew,'" *TC* 3 [1997]: <<http://rosetta.reltech.org/TC/v03/Petersen1998a.html>> [22 June 2013]) and William Horbury (review of George Howard, *The Gospel of Matthew according to a Primitive Hebrew Text*, *JTS* 43 [1992]: 166–69; review of George Howard, *Hebrew Gospel of Matthew*, *JJS* 47 [1996]: 382–84), it has also garnered support (e.g., Daniel Harrington, review of George Howard, *The Gospel according to a Primitive Text*, *CBQ* 50 [1988]: 717–18; Robert F. Shedinger, "A Further Consideration of the Textual Nature of Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew," *CBQ* 61 [1999]: 686–94), and Howard heeded some of the chief criticisms leveled at his first edition. For Howard's response to criticisms of the second edition, see "A Response to William L. Petersen's Review of *Hebrew Gospel of Matthew*," *TC* 4 [1998]: <<http://rosetta.reltech.org/TC/vol04/Howard1999.html>> [22 June 2013]).

⁵ This manuscript of Matt 5:38–28:20 features Semitic influence and exhibits some significant differences from the Greek version of Matthew as well as other known Coptic versions, indicating that it could have originated in a Jewish context. For transcription, German translation, and analysis of this manuscript, see Hans-Martin Schenke, *Das Matthäus-Evangelium im mittelägyptischen Dialekt des Koptischen (Codex Schøyen)* (Manuscripts in the Schøyen Collection 2: Coptic Papyri 1; Oslo: Hermes, 2001).

⁶ Craig A. Evans, "The Jewish Christian Gospel Tradition," in *Jewish Believers in Jesus: The Early Centuries* (ed. Oskar Skarsaune and Reidar Hvalvik; Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1997), 267–76. Evans follows George Howard's discussion of the divergences between the Hebrew Matthew and the Greek form in giving John an "exalted" role beyond the bounds of "developing Christianity" (267). Uwe-Karsten Plisch argues that differences from Greek Matthew reflect greater sympathy for the Baptist movement in "Die Perikopen über Johannes den Täufer in der neuentdeckten mittelägyptischen Version des Matthäus-Evangeliums (Codex Schøyen)," *NovT* 43 (2001): 368–92, with Evans noting that Plisch's thesis "may exaggerate the significance of some of the different readings" about the Baptist but still has some "merit" ("The Jewish Gospel Tradition," 276).

Matthew's text and how they responded to the claims and strategies of the Evangelist. In light of the way that the Evangelists each describe and use the Baptist in distinct ways, perhaps recipients of Matthew adjusted the portrayal of John to suit better their own ideas and emphases.

A final area that warrants further consideration is the relationship between the fluidity depicted by Matthew between those who viewed John positively and the Jesus movement and the antagonism that seems to exist between supporters of John and Jesus in the *Pseudo-Clementines*. Was the fluidity that Matthew portrays something that truly existed at the time of Matthew's composition, or was it only a construction of Matthew when in fact there was a clear line of demarcation between the Jesus movement and John the Baptist? If this fluidity was a historical reality, how then does this fluidity relate to the perspective on the Baptist offered in the *Pseudo-Clementines*?⁷ Are the perspectives of Matthew and the *Pseudo-Clementines* evidence of different perspectives on the relationship between John and the Jesus movement in different geographic areas? Or did something happen between the writing of Matthew and the traditions reflected in the *Pseudo-Clementines* that led to a "parting of the ways" between the Jesus movement and people who revered the Baptist?⁸ One can envision a number of different scenarios of how such a break would occur. For example, the lessening of tensions between believers

⁷ The recent work on the *Pseudo-Clementines* by F. Stanley Jones may be important in these considerations, as one may also need to (re-)consider the relationship between the conception of John in these works and historical realities. Jones' work is now helpfully brought in F. Stanley Jones, *Pseudoclementina Elchasaiticaque inter Judaeochristiana: Collected Studies* (OLA 203; Leuven: Peeters, 2012). For a discussion of Jones' contributions, see Annette Yoshiko Reed, "Reflections on F. S. Jones, *Pseudoclementina Elchasaiticaque inter Judaeochristiana: Collected Studies*," *ASE* 30/1 (2013): 101–9.

⁸ Seeing a division between a group that revered John and the Jesus movement emerge only in the second century would cohere with the approach found in Knut Backhuus, *Die "Jüngerkreise" des Täufers*

in Jesus and Formative Judaism could lead to internal disputes concerning the importance of John and Jesus, with some leaving the Jesus movement because they wanted to stress John more.⁹ A similar possibility would be that Matthew's attempt to show the importance of the Baptist was not found to be acceptable by some who liked the Baptist, leading them to offer counterproposals ranging from the minor enhancements of John's importance found in the versions noted above to the viewpoint rejected in the *Pseudo-Clementines*. Further study may substantiate, refute, or refine these hypotheses and would likely lead to a better understanding of this complex issue.

Unfortunately, the demand for further understanding of the legacy of John the Baptist and his followers on the rise of Christianity may exceed the evidence that has survived. Perhaps the constant interest concerning John the Baptist and what became of those whom he baptized and taught stems from the fact that we can learn so little about this man who seems to have played such a formative role on a faith tradition that has exerted great influence over the past two thousand years. While the Baptist himself and those he directly influenced may remain hidden in the recesses of history, Matthew's use of the Baptist testifies to the way that this figure helped shape Jesus' early followers. The Johannine Jesus' words to Nicodemus describing the Holy Spirit may thus reflect the

Johannes: Eine Studie zu den religionsgeschichtlichen Ursprüngen des Christentums (PTS 19; Paderborn: F. Schöningh, 1991).

⁹ Lewis Coser notes that conflict can make groups more cohesive and lead to associations and coalitions forming between groups (see *The Functions of Social Conflict* [New York: Free, 1956], 87–95, 139–50), and it is worth considering whether the converse is true, if the lack of conflict can lead to division or conflict. David B. Barrett's study of renewal and independent movements in Africa could be a helpful place to begin, as Barrett talks about groups that do not break away from each other as well as the dynamics that leads to an "iceberg" that causes a break at a particular "flashpoint" (see *Schism and Renewal in Africa: An Analysis of Six Thousand Contemporary Religious Movements* [Nairobi: Oxford University Press, 1968], 181–83, 207–307). Studies of similar dynamics in other places may corroborate aspects of Barrett's analysis, point out trends and aspects that seem more general rather than tied to the particular context of Barrett's examination, and may update Barrett's somewhat dated study.

reality about knowledge of John the Baptist, as we may not be able to learn from where he came or where he went but his “voice” is heard through his effects on documents such as the Gospel of Matthew.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Dictionaries and Grammars

- Bauer, Walter, Frederick W. Danker, William F. Arndt, and F. Wilbur Gingrich. *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*. 3d ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000.
- Blass, Frederich, Alber Debrunner, and Robert W. Funk. *A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961.
- Brown, Colin, ed. *New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*. 4 vols. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1975–85.
- Kittel, Gerhard and Gerhard Friedrich, eds. *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*. Translated by Geoffrey W. Bromiley. 10 vols. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964–76.
- Koehler, Ludwig, Walter Baumgartner, and Johann Jacob Stamm. *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*. Translated and edited under the supervision of M. E. J. Richardson. 4 vols. Leiden: Brill, 1994–99.
- Liddell, Henry George, Robert Scott, and Henry Stuart Jones. *A Greek-English Lexicon*. 9th ed. with revised supplement. Oxford: Clarendon, 1996.
- Moulton, James Hope and George Milligan. *The Vocabulary of the Greek Testament: Illustrated from Papyri and Other Non-Literary Sources*. 1930. Reprint, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1972.
- Spicq, Ceslas. *Theological Lexicon of the New Testament*. Translated and edited by James D. Ernest. 3 vols. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1994.

Ancient Texts and Translations

- Aland, Kurt and Barbara, Johannes Karavidopoulos, Carlo M. Martini, and Bruce M. Metzger, eds. *Novum Testamentum Graece*. Nestle-Aland 27th ed. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1993.
- _____, eds. *The Greek New Testament*. United Bible Societies 4th ed. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1993.

- Aquinas, Thomas. *Catena Aurea*. Translated by William Whiston. London: J. G. F. and J. Rivington, 1842.
- Augustine. *Harmony of the Gospels*. In vol. 6 of *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Series 1. Edited by Philip Schaff. 14 vols. 1886–89. Reprint, Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1994.
- The Babylonian Talmud*. Translated by I. Epstein. 7 vols. Quincentury ed. London: Socino, 1978.
- Charlesworth, James H., ed. *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*. 2 vols. Anchor Bible Reference Library. New York: Doubleday, 1983, 1985.
- Chrysostom, John. *Homilies on Matthew*. In vol. 10 of *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Series 1. Edited by Philip Schaff. 14 vols. 1886–89. Reprint, Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1994.
- Danby, Herbert, ed. *The Mishnah: Translated from the Hebrew with Introduction and Brief Explanatory Notes*. London: Oxford University Press, 1933.
- Diogenes Laertius. *Lives of Eminent Philosophers*. Translated by R. D. Hicks. 2 vols. Loeb Classical Library. London: Heinemann, 1925.
- Ehrman, Bart D., ed. *The Apostolic Fathers*. 2 vols. Loeb Classical Library. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003, 2004.
- Elliger, Karl and Wilhelm Rudolph., eds. *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*. 5th ed. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1997.
- Epictetus. Translated by W. A. Oldfather. 2 vols. Loeb Classical Library. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1925, 1928.
- Eusebius of Caesarea. *The Ecclesiastical History*. Translated by Kirsopp Lake and J. E. L. Oulton. 2 vols. Loeb Classical Library. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1926, 1932.
- _____. *Praeparatio Evangelica*. Translated by E. H. Gifford. Oxford: Clarendon, 1903.
- Guggenheimer, Heinrich W., ed. *The Jerusalem Talmud [Talmud Yerushalmi]: Edition, Translation, and Commentary*. 14 vols. Berlin: de Gruyter, 2000–12.
- Herodotus. Translated by A. D. Godley. 4 vols. Loeb Classical Library. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1920–25.
- Holmes, Michael, ed. *The Greek New Testament: SBL Edition*. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2010.

- Irenaeus. *Against Heresies*. In vol. 1 of *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*. Edited by Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson. 10 vols. 1885–87. Reprint, Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1994.
- _____. *Fragments from the Lost Writings of Irenaeus*. In vol. 1 of *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*. Edited by Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson. 10 vols. 1885–87. Reprint, Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1994.
- Jerome. *Commentary on Matthew*. Translated by Thomas P. Scheck. The Fathers of the Church 117. Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 2008.
- _____. *Homilies 60–96*. Translated by Maries Liquori Ewald. The Fathers of the Church Series 57. Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 1966.
- _____. *Preface to the Commentaries*. In vol. 6 of *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Series 2. Edited by Philip Schaff. 14 vols. 1886–1900. Reprint, Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1994.
- Josephus. Translated by Henry St. John Thackeray, Ralph Marcus, Allen Wirkgren, and Louis H. Feldman. 9 vols. Loeb Classical Library. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1926–65.
- Justin Martyr. *Dialogue with Trypho*. In vol. 1 of *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*. Edited by Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson. 10 vols. 1885–87. Reprint, Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1994.
- Livy. *History of Rome*. Translated by B. O. Foster, Frank Gardner Moore, Alfred C. Schlesinger, and Russell M. Geer. 14 vols. Loeb Classical Library. London: Heinemann, 1919–59.
- Malherbe, Abraham J., ed. *The Cynic Epistles*. Society of Biblical Literature Sources for Biblical Study 12. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1977.
- Martínez, Florentino García and Eibert J. C. Tigchelaar, eds. *The Dead Sea Scrolls: Study Edition*. 2 vols. Leiden: Brill, 1997, 1998.
- Mekhilta according to Rabbi Ishmael: An Analytical Translation*. Translated by Jacob Neusner. 2 vols. Brown Judaic Studies 148, 156. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988.
- Oden, Thomas, ed. *Incomplete Commentary on Matthew (Opus imperfectum)*. Translated by James Kellerman. 2 vols. Ancient Christian Texts. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Academic, 2010.
- Origen. *Against Celsus*. In vol. 4 of *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*. Edited by Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson. 10 vols. 1885–87. Reprint, Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1994.

- _____. *Commentary on John*. In vol. 9 of *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*. Edited by Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson. 10 vols. 1885–87. Reprint, Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1994.
- _____. *Commentary on Matthew*. In vol. 9 of *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*. Edited by Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson. 10 vols. 1885–87. Reprint, Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1994.
- Perry, B. E. *Aesopica*. 2 vols. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois, 1952.
- Philo. Translated by F. H. Colson, G. H. Whitaker, and Ralph Marcus. 12 vols. Loeb Classical Library. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1929–62.
- Polybius. *The Histories*. Translated by W. R. Paton. 6 vols. Loeb Classical Library. London: Heinemann, 1922–27.
- The Pseudo-Clementine Literature*. In vol. 8 of *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*. Edited by Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson. 10 vols. 1885–87. Reprint, Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1994.
- Rahlf's, Alfred, and Robert Hanhart, eds. *Septuaginta*. Rev. ed. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2006.
- Simonetti, Manlio, ed. *Matthew*. 2 vols. Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture: New Testament 1. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Academic, 2001, 2002.
- Suetonius. *Lives of the Twelve Caesars*. Translated by J. C. Rolfe. 2 vols. Rev. ed. Loeb Classical Library. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997, 1998.
- Tatian. *Diatessaron*. In vol. 9 of *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*. Edited by Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson. 10 vols. 1885–1887. Reprint. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1994.
- Vermes, Geza. *The Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English*. Rev. ed. London: Penguin, 2004.
- Xenophon. *Cyropaedia*. Translated by Walter Miller. 2 vols. Loeb Classical Library. London: Heinemann, 1914.

Books and Articles

- Abel, F. M. "Who Wrote Matthew?" *New Testament Studies* 17 (1971): 138–52.
- Alexander, Philip S. "What Happened to the Jewish Priesthood after 70?" Pages 5–33 in *A Wandering Galilean: Essays in Honor of Sean Freyne*. Edited by Zuleika Rodgers, Margaret Daly-Denton, and Anne Fitzpatrick-McKinley. Journal for the

Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic, and Roman Periods: Supplement Series 132. Leiden: Brill, 2009.

Allen, Willoughby. *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to St. Matthew*. 3d ed. International Critical Commentary. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1919.

Allison, Dale C. *Constructing Jesus: Memory, Imagination, History*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2010.

_____. "Elijah Must Come First." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 103 (1984): 256–58.

_____. *The New Moses: A Matthean Typology*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993.

Anderson, Janice Capel. *Matthew's Narrative Web: Over, and Over, and Over Again*. Journal for the Study of the New Testament: Supplement Series 91. Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1994.

Ash, Anthony. "John's Disciples: A Serious Problem." *Restoration Quarterly* 45 (2003): 85–93.

Attridge, Harold W. "Josephus and His Works." Pages 185–232 in *Jewish Writings of the Second-Temple Period: Apocrypha, Pseudepigrapha, Qumran Sectarian Writings, Philo, Josephus*. Edited by Michael E. Stone. Compendia rerum iudaicarum ad Novum Testamentum 2.2. Assen/Philadelphia: Van Gorcum/Fortress, 1984.

Aune, David E. *Revelation 1–5*. Word Biblical Commentary 52a. Dallas: Word Books, 1994.

Aus, Roger. *Water into Wine and the Beheading of John the Baptist*. Brown Judaic Studies 150. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988.

Bachmann, Michael. "Johannes der Täufer bei Lukas: Nachzügler oder Vorläufer." Pages 123–55 in *Word der Zeit: Festgabet für Karl Heinrich Rengstorf zum 75. Geburtstag*. Edited by Wilfrid Haubeck and Michael Bachmann. Leiden: Brill, 1980.

Backhaus, Knut. *Die "Jüngerkreise" des Täufers Johannes: Eine Studie zu den religionsgeschichtlichen Ursprüngen des Christenums*. Paderborner Theologische Studien 19. Paderborn: F. Schöningh, 1991.

Bacon, Benjamin W. "The Five Books of Moses against the Jews." *The Expositor* 15 (1918): 56–66.

_____. *Studies in Matthew*. New York: Holt, 1930.

- Badke, William B. "Was Jesus a Disciple of John?" *Evangelical Quarterly* 62 (1990): 195–204.
- Baldensberger, Wilhelm. *Der Prolog des vierten Evangeliums. Sein polemisch-apologetischer Zweck*. Freiburg: Mohr Siebeck, 1898.
- Bammel, Ernst. "The Baptist in Early Christian Tradition." *New Testament Studies* 18 (1971–72): 95–128.
- _____. "John Did No Miracle." Pages 197–202 in *Miracles: Cambridge Studies in Their Philosophy and History*. Edited by C. F. D. Moule. London: Mowbray, 1965.
- _____. "Is Luke 16,16-18 of Baptist Provenance?" *Harvard Theological Review* 51 (1958): 101–6.
- Bardet, Serget. *Le Testimonium Flavianum. Examen historique, considérations historiographiques*. Paris: Cerf, 2002.
- Barnett, Paul. "Who Were the Biastai?" *Reformed Theological Review* 36 (1977): 65–70.
- Barrett, David B. *Schism and Renewal in Africa: An Analysis of Six Thousand Contemporary Religious Movements*. Nairobi: Oxford University Press, 1968.
- Barrett, C. K. "Apollos and the Twelve Disciples of Ephesus." Pages 29–39 in vol. 1 of *The New Testament Age*. Edited by W. C. Weinrich. 2 vols. Mercer, GA: Mercer University Press, 1984.
- _____. *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*. 2 vols. International Critical Commentary. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1998.
- _____. *The Gospel according to St. John*. London: SPCK, 1955.
- _____. "The Lamb of God." *New Testament Studies* 1 (1954–55): 210–18.
- Barth, Gerhard. "Matthew's Understanding of the Law." Pages in 58–164 in *Tradition and Interpretation in Matthew*. Translated by Percy Scott. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1963.
- Barton, Stephen C. "Can We Identify the Gospel Audiences?" Pages 173–94 in *The Gospel for All Christians: Rethinking the Gospel Audiences*. Edited by Richard Bauckham. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998.
- _____. "Early Christianity and the Sociology of Sect." Pages 140–62 in *The Open Text*. Edited by Francis Watson. London: SCM, 1993.

- Basser, Herbert. *The Mind behind the Gospels: A Commentary to Matthew 1–14*. Reference Library of Jewish Intellectual History. Boston: Academic Studies, 2009.
- Bauckham, Richard, ed. *The Gospel for All Christians: Rethinking the Gospel Audiences*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998.
- _____. "Is there Patristic Counter-Evidence? A Response to Margaret Mitchell." Pages 68–110 in *The Audience of the Gospels: The Origin and Function of the Gospels in Early Christianity*. Edited by Edward W. Klink III. Library of New Testament Studies 353. London: T & T Clark, 2010.
- _____. "Martyrdom of Enoch and Elijah: Jewish or Christian?" *Journal of Biblical Literature* 95 (1976): 447–58.
- _____. "Response to Philip Esler." *Scottish Journal of Theology* 51 (1998): 249–53.
- _____. "Tamar's Ancestry and Rahab's Marriage: Two Problems in the Matthean Genealogy." *Novum Testament* 37 (1995): 313–29.
- Bauer, David R. *The Structure of Matthew's Gospel: A Study in Literary Design*. Journal for the Study of the New Testament: Supplement Series 31. Decatur, GA: Almond, 1988.
- Beare, F. W. "The Mission of the Disciples and the Mission Charge: Matthew 10 and Parallels." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 89 (1970): 1–13.
- Beasley-Murray, George. *Baptism in the New Testament*. London: Macmillan, 1963.
- Becker, Adam H. and Annette Yoshiko Reed, eds. *The Ways That Never Parted: Jews and Christians in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages*. Texts and Studies in Ancient Judaism 95. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003.
- Becker, Eve-Marie. "Kamelhaare ... und wilder Honig: Der historische Wert und die theologische Bedeutung der biographischen Täufer-Notiz (Mk 1,6)." Pages 13–28 in *Die bleibende Gegenwart des Evangeliums: Festschrift für Otto Merk zum 70. Geburtstag*. Edited by Roland Gebauer and Martin Meiser. Marburger Theologische Studien 76. Marburg: N. G. Elwert, 2003.
- Becker, Jürgen. *Johannes der Täufer und Jesus von Nazareth*. Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 1972.
- Bell, Albert. "Josephus the Satirist: A Clue to the Original Form of the *Testimonium Flavianum*." *Jewish Quarterly Review* 67 (1976): 16–22.

- Bennema, Cornelius. "The Character of John in the Fourth Gospel." *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 52 (2009): 271–84.
- Berger, Peter and Thomas Luckmann. *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1967.
- Best, Ernst. "Spirit-Baptism." *Novum Testamentum* 4 (1960): 236–43.
- Bilde, Per. *Flavius Josephus between Jerusalem and Rome: His Life, His Works, and Their Importance*. Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha: Supplement Series 2. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1988.
- Bird, Michael F. "Bauckham's *The Gospel for All Christians* Revisited." *European Journal of Theology* 15 (2006): 5–13.
- _____. "The Markan Community, Myth or Maze? Bauckham's *The Gospel for All Christians* Revisited." *Journal of Theological Studies* 37 (2006): 474–86.
- _____. "The Unity of Luke-Acts in Recent Discussion." *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 29 (2007): 425–48.
- Blenkinsopp, Joseph. "Interpretation and the Tendency to Sectarianism: An Aspect of Second Temple History." Pages 1–15 in *Jewish and Christian Self-Definition Volume 2: Aspects of Judaism in the Greco-Roman World*. Edited by E. P. Sanders. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1981.
- Blomberg, Craig L. "Elijah, Election, and the Use of Malachi in the New Testament." *Criswell Theological Review* 2 (1987): 99–117.
- _____. "The Gospel for Specific Communities and All Christians." Pages 111–33 in *The Audience of the Gospels: The Origin and Function of the Gospels in Early Christianity*. Edited by Edward W. Klink III. Library of New Testament Studies. London: T & T Clark, 2010.
- _____. *Interpreting the Parables*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1990.
- _____. *Matthew*. New American Commentary 22. Nashville: Broadman, 1992.
- _____. "Matthew." Pages 1–109 in *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*. Edited by G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007.
- Böcher, Otto. "Aß Johannes der Täufer kein Brot (Luk. Vii.33)?" *New Testament Studies* 18 (1971–72): 90–92.
- _____. "Lukas und Johannes der Täufer." *Studien zum Neuen Testament und seiner Umwelt* 4 (1979): 27–44.

- Böhlemann, Peter. *Jesus und der Täufer: Schlüssel zur Theologie und Ethik des Lukas*. Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series 99. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.
- Bonnard, Pierre. *L'Évangile selon Saint Matthieu*. 2d ed. Commentaire du Nouveau Testament 1. Paris: Delachaux & Niestlé, 1970.
- Boring, M. Eugene. *Mark*. New Testament Library. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2006.
- Bornkamm, Günther, Gerhard Barth, and Heinz Joachim Held. *Tradition and Interpretation in Matthew*. Translated by Percy Scott. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1963.
- _____. "The Authority to 'Bind' and 'Loose' in the Church in Matthew's Gospel." Pages 83–97 in *The Interpretation of Matthew*. Edited by Graham Stanton. Issues in Religion and Theology 3. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983.
- Bowen, Clayton R. "John the Baptist in the New Testament." *American Journal of Theology* 16 (1912): 90–106.
- _____. "Prolegomena to a New Study of John the Baptist." Pages 30–48 in *Studies in the New Testament: Collected Papers of Dr. Clayton R. Bowen*. Edited by Robert J. Hutcheon. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1936.
- Bowens, Lisa M. "The Role of John the Baptist in Matthew's Gospel." *Word and World* 30 (2010): 311–18.
- Bovon, François. *Luke 1: A Commentary on the Gospel of Luke 1:1–9:50*. Translated by Christine M. Thomas. Hermeneia. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992.
- Boyarin, Daniel. *Border Lines: The Partition of Judaeo-Christianity*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005.
- Branden, Robert. *Satanic Conflict and the Plot of Matthew*. Studies in Biblical Literature 89. New York: Peter Lang, 2006.
- Bratcher, Robert G. "Righteousness in Matthew." *The Bible Translator* 40 (1989): 228–35.
- Braumann, Georg. "Dem Himmelreich wird Gewalt angetan (Mt 11:12)." *Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche* 52 (1961): 104–9.
- Bretscher, Paul G. "Exodus 4:22–23 and the Voice from Heaven." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 87 (1968): 301–11.

- _____. "Whose Sandals (Matt 3.11)?" *Journal of Biblical Literature* 86 (1967): 81–87.
- Broadhead, Edwin Keith. "An Example of Gender Bias in UBS³." *The Bible Translator* 40 (1989): 336–38.
- Brooke, George. "The Feast of New Wine and the Question of Fasting." *Expository Times* 95 (1984): 175–76.
- Brower, Kent. "Elijah in the Markan Passion Narrative." *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 18 (1983): 85–101.
- Brown, Colin. "What Was John the Baptist Doing?" *Bulletin of Biblical Research* 7 (1997): 37–49.
- Brown, Jeanine K. *The Disciples in Narrative Perspective: The Portrayal and Function of the Matthean Disciples*. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2002.
- Brown, Raymond E. *The Birth of the Messiah*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1977.
- _____. *The Gospel according to John I–XII: Introduction, Translation, and Notes*. Anchor Bible 29. New York: Doubleday, 1966.
- _____. "Ραχάβ in Matt 1,5 Probably is Rahab of Jericho." *Biblica* 63 (1982): 79–80.
- _____. "Three Quotations from John the Baptist in the Gospel of John." *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 22 (1960): 292–98.
- Brown, Schuyler. "The Matthean Community and the Gentile Mission." *Novum Testamentum* 22 (1980): 193–221.
- _____. "The Mission to Israel in Matthew's Central Section." *Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche* 69 (1978): 73–90.
- _____. "Water Baptism and Spirit-Baptism in Luke-Acts." *Anglican Theological Review* 59 (1977): 135–51.
- Brownlee, William. "John the Baptist in the New Light of the Ancient Scrolls." *Interpretation* 9 (1955): 71–90.
- Bruce, F. F. *The Book of Acts*. Rev. ed. New International Commentary on the New Testament. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998.
- Bruner, Frederick Dale. *Matthew: A Commentary*. Rev. ed. 2 vols. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004.

- Bulgakov, Sergius. *The Friend of the Bridegroom*. Translated by Boris Jakim. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003.
- Bultmann, Rudolf. *The Gospel of John: A Commentary*. Translated by George Beasley-Murray. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1971.
- _____. *History of the Synoptic Tradition*. Translated by John Marsh. Rev. ed. Oxford: Blackwell, 1972.
- Burnett, Fred W. *The Testament of Jesus-Sophia: A Redaction-Critical Study of the Eschatological Discourse in Matthew*. Washington: University Press of America, 1981.
- Burrows, E. W. "Did John the Baptist Call Jesus 'The Lamb of God'?" *Expository Times* 85 (1974): 245–49.
- Cameron, P. S. *Violence and the Kingdom: The Interpretation of Matthew 11.12*. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1988.
- Cameron, Ron. "Matthew's Parable of the Two Sons." *Forum* 8 (1992): 191–209.
- _____. "What Have You Gone Out to See? Characterization of John and Jesus in the Gospels." *Semeia* 49 (1990): 35–69.
- Carmignac, Jean. "Pourquoi Jérémie est-il mentionné en Matthieu 16,14?" Pages 283–98 in *Tradition und Glaube: Das frühe Christentum in seiner Umwelt; Festgabe für Karl Georg Kuhn zum 65. Geburtstag*. Edited by Hartmut Stegemann, Gert Jeremías, and Heinz-Wolfgang Kuhn. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1971.
- Carson, D. A. "Do the Prophets and the Law Quit Prophesying before John? A Note on Matthew 11:13." Pages 179–94 in *The Gospels and the Scriptures of Israel*. Edited by Craig A. Evans and William R. Stegner. Journal for the Study of the New Testament: Supplement Series 104. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1993.
- _____. *Exegetical Fallacies*. 2d ed. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1996.
- _____. *The Gospel according to John*. The Pillar New Testament Commentary. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991.
- _____. "Matthew 11:19b/Luke 7:35: A Test Case for the Bearing of Q Christology on the Synoptic Problem." Pages 128–46 in *Jesus of Nazareth: Lord and Christ, Essays on the Historical Jesus and New Testament Christology*. Edited by Joel B. Green and Max Turner. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994.
- Carter, Warren. *Matthew and the Margins: A Sociopolitical and Religious Reading*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2000.

- _____. "Matthew's Gospel: Jewish Christianity, Christian Judaism, or Neither?" Pages 155–79 in *Jewish Christianity Reconsidered: Rethinking Ancient Groups and Texts*. Edited by Matt A. Jackson-McCabe. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2007.
- _____. "Narrative/Literary Approaches to Matthean Theology: The 'Reign of Heavens' As An Example." *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 67 (1997): 3–27.
- _____ and John Paul Heil. *Matthew's Parables: Audience-Centered Perspectives*. Catholic Biblical Quarterly Monograph Series 30. Washington: Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1998.
- Catchpole, David. "On Doing Violence to The Kingdom." *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa* 25 (1978): 50–61.
- _____. "John the Baptist, Jesus, and the Parable of the Tares." *Scottish Journal of Theology* 31 (1978): 557–70.
- Chalcraft, David J. "The Development of Weber's Sociology of Sects. Encouraging a New Fascination." Pages 26–51 in *Sectarianism in Early Judaism: Sociological Advances*. Edited by David J. Chalcraft. London: Equinox, 2007.
- Chamblin, Knox. "Gospel and Judgment in the Preaching of John the Baptist." *Tyndale Bulletin* 13 (1963): 7–15.
- Charlesworth, James H. "John the Baptizer and Qumran Barriers in Light of the *Rule of the Community*." Pages 353–75 in *The Provo International Conference on the Dead Sea Scrolls*. Edited by D. W. Parry and E. Ulrich. Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judea 30. Leiden: Brill, 1999.
- Chilton, Bruce. "John the Baptist: His Immersion and Death." Pages 25–44 in *Dimensions of Baptism: Biblical and Theological Studies*. Journal for the Study of the New Testament: Supplement Series 234. Edited by Stanley E. Porter and Anthony R. Cross. London: Sheffield Academic, 2002.
- _____. "John the Purifier." Pages 1–37 in *Judaic Approaches to the Gospels*. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1994.
- Christ, Felix. *Jesus-Sophia: die Sophia-Christologie bei den Synoptiken*. Abhandlungen zur Theologie des Alten und Neuen Testaments 57. Zürich: Zwingli, 1970.
- Clark, Kenneth W. "The Gentile Bias in Matthew." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 66 (1947): 165–72.
- _____. "Worship in the Jerusalem Temple after A.D. 70." *New Testament Studies* 6 (1960): 269–80.

- Cohen, Anthony P. *The Symbolic Construction of Community*. Chichester: Ellis Horwood, 1985.
- Cohen, Shaye J. D. *From the Maccabees to the Mishnah*. 2d ed. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2006.
- _____. "The Significance of Yavneh." *Hebrew Union College Annual* 55 (1984): 27–53.
- Cohen, Stuart. *The Three Crowns: Structures of Communal Politics in Early Rabbinic Jewry*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990.
- Collins, Adela Yarbro. *Mark*. Hermeneia. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2007.
- _____. "The Origin of Christian Baptism." *Studia Liturgica* 19 (1989): 28–46.
- _____. Review of J. Massynberde Ford, *Revelation: Introduction, Translation, Commentary*. *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 38 (1976): 555–57.
- Collins, John J. *The Scepter and the Star: The Messiahs of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Other Ancient Literature*. New York: Doubleday, 1995.
- Conzelmann, Hans. *Acts of the Apostles*. Edited by Eldon Jay Epp. Translated by James Limburg, A. Thomas Kraabel, and Donald H. Juel. Hermeneia. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1987.
- _____. *The Theology of St. Luke*. Translated by Geoffrey Buswell. New York: Harper & Row, 1961.
- Cook, Michael J. "Interpreting 'Pro-Jewish' Passages in Matthew." *Hebrew Union College Annual* 54 (1983): 135–46.
- Cope, O. Lamar. "The Death of John the Baptist in the Gospel of Matthew; or The Case of the Confusing Conjunction." *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 39 (1976): 515–19.
- _____. *Matthew: A Scribe Trained for the Kingdom of Heaven*. Catholic Biblical Quarterly Monograph Series 5. Washington: The Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1976.
- Corley, Kathleen E., *Private Women, Public Meals: Social Conflict in the Synoptic Tradition*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1993.
- Coser, Lewis A. *The Functions of Social Conflict*. New York: Free, 1964.
- Cothenet, Eduoard. "Le baptême selon S. Matthieu." *Studien zum Neuen Testament und seiner Umwelt* 9 (1984): 79–94.
- Cotter, Wendy J. "Children Sitting in the Agora." *Forum* 5 (1989): 63–82.

- _____. "Cornelius, the Roman Army, and Religion." Pages 279–301 in *Religious Rivalries and the Struggle for Success in Caesarea Maritima*. Edited by Terence L. Donaldson. Studies in Christianity and Judaism 8. Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier, 2000.
- _____. "The Parable of the Children in the Marketplace, Q (Lk) 7:31–35: An Examination of Its Significance." *Novum Testamentum* 29 (1987): 289–304.
- Cousland, J. R. C. *The Crowds in the Gospel of Matthew*. Novum Testamentum Supplements 102. Leiden: Brill, 2002.
- Croatto, J. Severino. "Jesus, Prophet Like Elijah and Prophet-Teacher Like Moses in Luke-Acts." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 124 (2005): 451–65.
- Crossan, John Dominic. *The Historical Jesus: The Life of a Mediterranean Peasant*. San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1991.
- Crossley, James G. "History from the Margins: The Death of John the Baptist." Pages 147–61 in *Writing History, Constructing Religion*. Edited by James G. Crossley and Chrisian Karner. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005.
- Cullman, Oscar. "Ὁ ὀπίσω μου ἐρχόμενος." Pages 177–82 in *The Early Church: Studies in Early Christian History and Theology*. Edited by A. J. Higgins. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1956.
- Culpepper, R. Alan. "Mark 6:17–29 in Its Narrative Context: Kingdoms in Conflict." Pages 145–63 in *Mark as Story: Retrospect and Prospect*. Edited by Kelly R. Iverson and Christopher W. Skinner. Resources for Biblical Studies 65. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2011.
- _____. "The Pivot of John's Prologue," *New Testament Studies* 27 (1981): 1–31.
- Cummins, Anthony. "Integrated Scripture, Embedded Empire: The Ironic Interplay of 'King' Herod, John and Jesus in Mark 6.1–44." Pages 31–48 in *Biblical Interpretation in Early Christian Gospels Volume 1: The Gospel of Mark*. Edited by Thomas Hatina. Library of New Testament Studies 304. London: T & T Clark, 2006.
- Cuvillier, Elian. "Torah Observance and Radicalization in the First Gospel. Matthew and the First Century Judaism: A Contribution to the Debate." *New Testament Studies* 55 (2009): 144–59.
- Dahl, Nils. "The Origin of Baptism." *Norsk Teologisk Tidsskrift* 56 (1955): 36–52.
- Dahlberg, Bruce. "Typological Use of Jeremiah 1.4–19 in Matthew 16.13–23." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 94 (1975): 73–80.

- Danker, Frederick W. "Luke 16:16 – An Opposition Logion." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 77 (1958): 231–43.
- Dapaah, Daniel S. *The Relationship between John the Baptist and Jesus of Nazareth: A Critical Study*. Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2005.
- Darr, John A. *On Character Building: The Reader and Rhetoric of Characterization in Luke-Acts*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1992.
- Daube, David. *The New Testament and Rabbinic Judaism*. Jordan Lectures in Comparative Religion 2. New York: Arno, 1973.
- Davies, Stevan L. "John the Baptist and Essene Kashruth." *New Testament Studies* 29 (1983): 569–71.
- Davies, William D. *The Setting of the Sermon on the Mount*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1964.
- _____ and Dale C. Allison. *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to Saint Matthew*. 3 vols. International Critical Commentary. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1988–1997.
- Deines, Roland. "Not the Law but the Messiah: Law and Righteousness in the Gospel of Matthew: An Ongoing Debate." Pages 53–84 in *Built Upon the Rock*. Edited by Daniel M. Gurtner and John Nolland. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008.
- Delorme, Jean. "John the Baptist's Head—The Word Perverted: A Reading of a Narrative Mark 6.14–29." *Semeia* 81 (1998): 115–29.
- Dennert, Brian C. "Constructing Righteousness: The «Better Righteousness» of *Matthew* as Part of the Development of a Christian Identity." *Annali di Storia dell'Esegesi* 28/2 (2011): 57–80.
- _____. "The Rejection of Wisdom's Call: Matthew's Use of Proverbs 1:20–33 in the Parable of Children in the Marketplace." In *Searching the Scriptures: Studies in Context and Intertextuality*. Edited by Craig A. Evans and Jeremiah J. Johnston. Studies in Scripture in Early Judaism and Christianity 19. London and New York: Bloomsbury T & T Clark, forthcoming.
- Derrett, J. Duncan M. "Herod's Oath and the Head of John the Baptist." *Biblische Zeitschrift* 9 (1965): 49–59, 233–46.
- _____. "The Parable of the Two Sons." *Studia Theologica* 25 (1971): 109–16.
- Destro, Adriana and Mauro Pesce. *Encounters with Jesus: The Man in His Place and Time*. Translated by Brian McNeil. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2012.

Deutsch, Celia. *Hidden Wisdom and the Easy Yoke: Wisdom, Torah, and Discipleship in Matt 11,25–30*. Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement 18. Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1987.

_____. “Wisdom in Matthew: Transformation of a Symbol.” *Novum Testamentum* 32 (1990): 13–47.

DeYoung, James. “The Function of Malachi 3.1 in Matthew 11.10 Kingdom Reality as the Hermeneutic of Jesus.” Pages 66–91 in *The Gospels and the Scriptures of Israel*. Edited by Craig A. Evans and William R. Stegner. Journal for the Study of the New Testament: Supplement Series 104. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1993.

Dibelius, Martin. *Die urchristliche Überlieferung von Johannes dem Täufer*. Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments 15. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1911.

Dillon, Richard. “The Benedictus in Micro and Macro Context.” *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 68 (2006): 457–80.

Dobschütz, Ernst von. “Matthew as Rabbi and Catechist.” Pages 19–29 in *The Interpretation of Matthew*. Edited by Graham Stanton. Issues in Religion and Theology 3. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983.

Dodd, C. H. *Historical Tradition in the Fourth Gospel*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1963.

_____. *The Parables of the Kingdom*. Rev. ed. New York: Scribner, 1961.

Donahue, John R. *The Gospel in Parable: Metaphor, Narrative, and Theology in the Synoptic Gospels*. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1988.

_____. “Redaction Criticism: Has the *Hauptstrasse* Become a *Sackgasse*?” Pages 27–57 in *The New Literary Criticism and the New Testament*. Edited by Elizabeth Struthers Malbon and Edgar V. McKnight. Journal for the Study of the New Testament: Supplement Series 109. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1994.

_____. “Tax Collectors and Sinners: An Attempt at Identification.” *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 33 (1971): 39–60.

_____ and Daniel Harrington. *The Gospel of Mark*. Sacred Pagina 2. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical, 2002.

Donaldson, Terrence. “For Herod Had John Arrested.” *Studies in Religion* 28 (1999) 35–48.

Doyle, Rod. “Matthew 11:12 – A Challenge to the Evangelist’s Community.” *Colloquium* 18 (1985): 20–30.

Draper, Jonathan A. "Do the *Didache* and Matthew Reflect an 'Irrevocable Parting of the Ways' with Judaism?" Pages 217–41 in *Matthew and the Didache: Two Documents from the Same Jewish-Christian Milieu?* Edited by Huub van de Sandt. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2005.

Dunn, James D. G. *Christology in the Making*. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1980.

_____. "How Did Mathew Go about Composing His Gospel." Pages 39–58 in *Jesus, Matthew, and Early Christianity: Essays in Memory of Graham N. Stanton*. Edited by Daniel M. Gurtner, Joel Willits, and Richard Burridge. Library of New Testament Studies 435. London: T & T Clark, 2011.

_____. *Jesus Remembered*. Christianity in the Making 1. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003.

_____. "John the Baptist's Use of Scripture." Pages 42–54 in *The Gospels and Scriptures of Israel*. Journal for the Study of the New Testament: Supplement Series 104. Edited by Craig A. Evans and William R. Stegner. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1994.

_____. "Pharisees, Sinners, and Jesus." Pages 61–88 in *Jesus, Paul, and the Law: Studies in Mark and Galatians*. London: SPCK, 1990.

_____. "Spirit-and-Fire Baptism." *Novum Testamentum* 14 (1972): 81–92.

Dupont, Jacques. "L'ambassade de Jean Baptiste." *La nouvelle revue théologique* 83 (1961): 805–21, 943–59.

_____. "Les deux fils dissemblables (Mt. 21)." *Assemblées du Seigneur* 57 (1971): 20–32.

Duran, Nicole Wilkinson. "Return of the Disembodied or How John the Baptist Lost His Head." Pages 277–91 in *Reading Communities, Reading Scripture: Essays in Honor of Daniel Patte*. Edited by Gary A. Phillips and Nicole Wilkinson Duran. Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 2002.

Eck, Ernest van. "A Sitz for the Gospel of Mark? A Critical Reaction to Bauckham's Theory on the Universality of the Gospels." *Hervormde theologiese studies* 54 (2000): 973–1008.

Edwards, James R. "Markan Sandwiches: The Significance of Interpolations in Markan Narratives." *Novum Testamentum* 31 (1989): 193–216.

Edwards, Richard A. *Matthew's Narrative Portrait of Disciples: How the Text-Connoted Reader Is Informed*. Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 1997.

_____. *Matthew's Story of Jesus*. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1985.

- _____. "Matthew's Use of Q in Chapter Eleven." Pages 257–75 in *Logia: les paroles de Jesus-the sayings of Jesus*. Edited by Joël Delobel. Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1982.
- Eisler, Robert. *The Messiah Jesus and John the Baptist according to Flavius Josephus' Recently Rediscovered 'Capture of Jerusalem' and Other Jewish and Christian Sources*. Translated by A. H. Krappe. New York: L. MacVeagh, 1931.
- Eissfeldt, Otto. "Πληρῶσαι πᾶσον δικαιοσύνην in Matthäus 3:15." *Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft* 61 (1970): 209–15.
- Elliott, James Keith. "The Parable of the Two Sons: Text and Exegesis." Pages 67–77 in *New Testament Textual Criticism and Exegesis: Festschrift J. Delobel*. Edited by Adelbert Denaux. Bibliotheca ephemeridum theologiarum lovaniensium 161. Leuven: Peeters, 2002.
- Elliott, John H. "The Jewish Messianic Movement: From Faction to Sect." Pages 75–95 in *Modelling Early Christianity: Social Scientific Studies of the New Testament in Its Context*. Edited by Philip F. Esler. London: Routledge, 1995.
- _____. *What is Social-Scientific Criticism? Guides to Biblical Scholarship*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993.
- Elliott, John K. "Did the Lord's Prayer Originate with John the Baptist?" *Theologische Zeitschrift* 29 (1973): 215.
- _____. "Ho baptizōn and Mark 1.4." *Theologische Zeitschrift* 31 (1975): 14–15.
- _____. "The Use of ἕτερος in the New Testament." *Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft* 60 (1969): 140–41.
- Eloff, Mervyn. "Ἀπο ... ἕως and Salvation History in Matthew's Gospel." Pages 85–107 in *Built Upon the Rock*. Edited by Daniel M. Gurtner and John Nolland. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008.
- Enslin, Morton S. "John and Jesus." *Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche* 66 (1975): 1–18.
- Erickson, Richard J. "The Jailing of John and the Baptism of Jesus: Luke 3:19–21." *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 36 (1993): 455–66.
- Ernst, Josef. *Johannes der Täufer: Interpretation, Geschichte, Wirkungsgeschichte*. Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft 53. Berlin: de Gruyter, 1989.

- _____. "War Jesus ein Schüler Johannes des Täufers?" Pages 13–33 in *Vom Urchristentum zu Jesus für Joachim Gnilka*. Edited by Hubert Frankenmölle and Karl Kertelge. Freiburg/Basel/Vienna: Herder, 1989.
- Esler, Philip F. "Community and Gospel in Early Christianity: A Response to Richard Bauckham's *Gospels for All Christians*." *Scottish Journal of Theology* 51 (1998): 235–48.
- _____. *Community and Gospel in Luke-Acts: The Social and Political Motivations of Lucan Theology*. Society for New Testament Study Monograph Series 57. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989.
- _____. *Galatians*. London: Routledge, 1998.
- Etzioni, Amitai, "Community." Page 83 in *The Cambridge Dictionary of Sociology*. Edited by Bryan S. Turner. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006.
- Evans, Christopher F. *Saint Luke*. Trinity Press International New Testament Commentary. Philadelphia: Trinity Press International, 1990.
- Evans, Craig A. "The Baptism of John in Typological Context." Pages 45–71 in *Dimensions in Baptism: Biblical and Theological Studies*. Journal for the Study of the New Testament: Supplement Series 234. Edited by Stanley E. Porter and Anthony R. Cross. London: Sheffield Academic, 2002.
- _____. "Fulfilling the Law and Seeking Righteousness in Matthew and in the Dead Sea Scrolls." Pages 102–14 in *Jesus, Matthew's Gospel, and Early Christianity*. Edited by Daniel M. Gurtner, Joel Willitts, and Richard A. Burridge. Library of New Testament Studies 435. London: T & T Clark, 2011.
- _____. "The Jewish Gospel Tradition." Pages 241–77 in *Jewish Believers in Jesus: The Early Centuries*. Edited by Oskar Skarsaune and Reidar Hvalvik. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1997.
- _____. "Josephus on John the Baptist and Other Jewish Prophets of Deliverance." Pages 55–63 in *The Historical Jesus in Context*. Edited by Dale C. Allison, John Dominic Crossan, and Amy-Jill Levine. Princeton Readings in Religion. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006.
- _____. *Mark 8:22–16:20*. Word Biblical Commentary 34b. Dallas: Word, 2001.
- _____. *Matthew*. New Cambridge Bible Commentary. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012.
- Eve, Eric. "Reconstructing Mark: A Thought Experiment." Pages 89–114 in *Questioning Q: A Multidimensional Critique*. Edited by Mark Goodacre and Nicholas Perrin. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2004.

Faierstein, Morris M. "Why Do the Scribes Say that Elijah Must Come First?" *Journal of Biblical Literature* 100 (1981): 75–86.

Farmer, William R. "John the Baptist." Pages 955–62 in vol. 2 of *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*. Edited by G. A. Buttrick. 4 vols. Nashville: Abingdon, 1962.

_____. "Who Are the 'Tax-collectors and Sinners' in the Synoptic Tradition?" Pages 167–74 in *From Faith to Faith: Essays in Honor of Donald G. Miller on his 70th Birthday*. Edited by D. Y. Hadidan. Pittsburgh: Pickwick, 1979.

Feldman, Louis H. "Flavius Josephus Revisited: The Man, His Writings, and His Significance." Pages 763–862 in *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt: Geschichte und Kultur Roms im Spiegel der neueren Forschung*. Part 2, *Principat* 21.2. Edited by H. Temporini and W. Haase. Berlin: de Gruyter, 1984.

_____. *Josephus and Modern Scholarship (1937–80)*. Berlin: de Gruyter, 1984.

_____. "Introduction." Pages 23–67 in *Josephus, Judaism, and Christianity*. Edited by Louis H. Feldman and Gohei Hata. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1987.

Feuillet, A. "La controverse sur le jeune (Mc 2,18–20; Mat 9,14–15; Lc 5,33–35)." *La nouvelle revue théologique* 90 (1968): 113–36, 252–77.

Fielder, Martin Johannes. "Der Begriff δικαιοσύνη im Matthäus-Evangelium, auf seine Grundlagen untersucht." Ph.D. diss., Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg, 1957.

_____. "Gerechtigkeit im Matthäus-Evangelium." *Theologische Versuche* 8 (1977): 63–75.

Fitzmyer, Joseph A. *The Acts of the Apostles: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*. Anchor Bible 31. New York: Doubleday, 1998.

_____. *The Gospel according to Luke: Introduction, Translation, and Notes*. 2 vols. Anchor Bible 28, 28A. New York: Doubleday, 1981, 1985.

_____. *Luke the Theologian*. London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1989.

_____. "More about Elijah Coming First." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 104 (1985): 295–96.

Fleddermann, Harry. "John and the Coming One (Matt 3:1–12//Luke 3:16–17)." Pages 377–84 in *SBL Seminar Papers, 1984*. Society of Biblical Literature Seminar Papers 23. Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1984.

- _____. *Q: A Reconstruction and Commentary*. Biblical Tools and Studies 1. Leuven: Peeters, 2005.
- Flusser, David. "Two Anti-Jewish Montages in Matthew." *Immanuel* 5 (1975): 37–45.
- Foakes-Jackson, Frederick John and Kirsopp Lake, eds. *The Beginnings of Christianity*. 5 vols. London: MacMillan, 1920–33.
- Ford, J. Massyngberde. *Revelation: Introduction, Translation, Commentary*. Anchor Bible 38. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1975.
- _____. "Zealotism and the Lukan Infancy Narrative." *Novum Testamentum* 18 (1976): 280–92.
- Foster, Paul. *Community, Law, and Mission in Matthew's Gospel*. Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 177. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004.
- _____. "A Tale of Two Sons: But Which One Did the Far, Far Better Thing? A Study of Matt 21.28–32." *New Testament Studies* 47 (2001): 26–37.
- _____. "Why Did Matthew Get the Shema Wrong? A Study of Matthew 22:37." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 122 (2003): 309–33.
- Fowler, Robert M. "Who is 'the Reader' in Reader Response Criticism." *Semeia* 31 (1985): 5–23.
- France, R. T. *The Gospel of Mark*. New International Greek Testament Commentary. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002.
- _____. *The Gospel of Matthew*. New International Commentary on the New Testament. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007.
- Frankemölle, Hubert. *Jahwebund und Kirche Christi*. Neutestamentliche Abhandlungen 10. Münster: Aschendorff, 1974.
- _____. "Johannes der Täufer und Jesus im Matthäusevangelium: Jesus als Nachfolger des Täufers." *New Testament Studies* 42 (1996): 196–218.
- Freed, Edwin D. "The Women in Matthew's Genealogy." *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 29 (1987): 3–19.
- Fuller, Michael E. "Isaiah 40.3–5 and Luke's Understanding of the Wilderness of John the Baptist." Pages 43–58 in *Biblical Interpretation in Early Christian Gospels Volume 3: The Gospel of Luke*. Edited by Thomas Hatina. Library of New Testament Studies 376. Studies in Scripture in Early Judaism and Christianity 16. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 2010.

- Funk, Robert W. "The Wilderness." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 78 (1959): 205–14.
- Gager, John G. *Kingdom and Community: The Social World of Early Christianity*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1973.
- Garland, David E. *The Intention of Matthew 23*. Novum Testamentum Supplements 23. Leiden: Brill, 1979.
- Gaston, Lloyd. "The Messiah of Israel as Teacher of the Gentiles: The Setting of Matthew's Christology." *Interpretation* 21 (1975): 24–40.
- Gathercole, Simon. "The Justification of Wisdom (Matt 11.19b/Luke 7.35)." *New Testament Studies* 49 (2003): 476–88.
- Gelardini, Gabriella. "The Contest for a Royal Title: Herod versus Jesus in the Gospel According to Mark (6,14–29; 15,6–15)." *Annali di Storia dell'Esegesi* 28/2 (2011): 93–106.
- Gench, Frances Taylor. *Wisdom in the Christology of Matthew*. Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1997.
- Geysler, A. S. "The Youth of John the Baptist: A Deduction from the Break in the Parallel Account of the Lucan Infancy Story." *Novum Testamentum* 1 (1956): 70–75.
- Gibbs, Jeffrey. "Israel Standing with Israel: The Baptism of Jesus in Matthew's Gospel (Matt 3:13–17)." *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 64 (2002): 511–26.
- Gibson, J. "HOI TELEŌNAI KAI HAI PORNAI." *Journal of Theological Studies* 32 (1981): 429–33.
- Glasson, T. F. "John the Baptist in the Fourth Gospel." *Expository Times* 67 (1955–56): 245–46.
- Glazier-McDonald, Beth. *Malachi: The Divine Messenger*. Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series 98. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1987.
- Gnilka, Joachim. "'Bräutigam'–spätjüdisches Messiasprädikat?" *Trierer theologische Zeitschrift* 69 (1960): 298–300.
- _____. "Das Martyrium Johannes' des Taufers (Mk 6,17–29)." Pages 78–93 in *Orientierung an Jesus. Zur Theologie des Synoptiker. Für Josef Schmid*. Edited by Paul Hoffmann, Norbert Brox, and Wilhelm Pesch. Freiburg: Herder, 1973.
- Goguel, Maurice. *Au seuil de l'évangile: Jean-Baptiste*. Paris: Payot, 1928.
- Goodacre, Mark. "Fatigue in the Synoptics." *New Testament Studies* 44 (1998): 45–58.

- _____. "Mark, Elijah, the Baptist, and Matthew: The Success of the First Intertextual Reading." Pages 73–84 in *Biblical Interpretation in Early Christian Gospels, Volume 2: The Gospel of Matthew*. Edited by Thomas R. Hatina. Library of New Testament Studies 310. London: T & T Clark, 2008.
- Goodman, Martin. "Sadducees and Essenes after 70 CE." Pages 347–56 in *Crossing the Boundaries: Essays in Biblical Interpretation in Honour of Michael D. Goulder*. Edited by Stanley E. Porter, Paul Joyce, and David E. Orton. Biblical Interpretation Series 8. Leiden: Brill, 1994.
- Goulder, Michael D. *Midrash and Lection in Matthew*. London: SPCK, 1974.
- Green, Joel B. *The Gospel of Luke*. New International Commentary on the New Testament. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997.
- _____. *The Theology of the Gospel of Luke*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995.
- Gregory, Andrew F. and C. Kavin Rowe, eds. *Rethinking the Unity and Reception of Luke and Acts*. Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2010.
- Grelot, Pierre. "«Celui Qui Vient» (Mt 11,3 et Lc 7,19)." Pages 275–90 in *Ce Dieu Qui Vient: Études sur l'Ancien et le Nouveau Testament offertes au Professeur Bernard Renaud à l'occasion de son soixante-cinquième anniversaire*. Lectio Divina 159. Edited Raymond Kuntzmann. Paris: Cerf, 1995.
- Grobel, Kendrick. "He Who Cometh After Me." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 60 (1941): 397–401.
- Guelich, Robert A. "'The Beginning of the Gospel': Mark 1:1–15." *Biblical Research* 27 (1982): 5–15.
- _____. *Mark 1:1–8:26*. Word Biblical Commentary 34a. Dallas: Word, 1989.
- _____. "The Matthean Beatitudes: 'Entrance-Requirements' or Eschatological Blessings?" *Journal of Biblical Literature* 95 (1976): 415–34.
- Gundry, Robert H. *Mark: A Commentary on His Apology for the Cross*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993.
- _____. *Matthew: A Commentary on His Handbook for a Mixed Church under Persecution*. 2d ed. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994.
- Gurtner, Daniel M. "The Gospel of Matthew from Stanton to Present: A Survey of Some Recent Developments." Pages 23–38 in *Jesus, Matthew's Gospel, and Early Christianity*. Edited by Daniel M. Gurtner, Joel Willitts, and Richard A. Burrige. Library of New Testament Studies 435. London: T & T Clark, 2011.

- Guttman, Alexander. "The End of the Jewish Sacrificial Cult." *Hebrew Union College Annual* 38 (1967): 137–48.
- Häfner, Gerd. "Gewalt gegen die Basileia? Zum Problem der Auslegung des »Stürmerspruches« Mt 11,12." *Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche* 83 (1992): 21–51.
- _____. *Der verheißen Vorläufer. Redaktionskritische Untersuchung zur Darstellung Johannes des Täufers im Matthäus-Evangelium*. Stuttgarter biblische Beiträge 27. Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1994.
- Hagner, Donald A. "Apocalyptic Motifs in Matthew." *Horizons in Biblical Theology* 7 (1985): 53–82.
- _____. "Determining the Date of Matthew." Pages 76–93 in *Jesus, Matthew's Gospel, and Early Christianity*. Edited by Daniel M. Gurtner, Joel Willitts, and Richard A. Burridge. Library of New Testament Studies 435. London: T & T Clark, 2011.
- _____. "Holiness and Ecclesiology: The Church in Matthew." Pages 170–86 in *Built Upon the Rock*. Edited by Daniel M. Gurtner and John Nolland. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008.
- _____. *Matthew*. 2 vols. Word Biblical Commentary 33. Waco, TX: Thomas Nelson, 1991, 1995.
- _____. "Matthew: Apostate, Reformer, Revolutionary?" *New Testament Studies* 49 (2003): 193–209.
- _____. "Righteousness in Matthew's Theology." Pages 101–20 in *Worship, Theology, and Ministry in the Early Church*. Edited by Michael J. Wilkins and Terence Paige. Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1992.
- _____. "The *Sitz im Leben* of the Gospel of Matthew." Pages 27–68 in *Treasures Old and New*. Edited by David Bauer and Mark Allan Powell. Society of Biblical Literature Symposium Series 1. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1996.
- _____ and Stephen E. Young. "The Historical Critical Method." Pages 11–43 in *Methods for Matthew*. Edited by Matthew Allan Powell. Methods in Biblical Interpretation. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009.
- Hahn, Ferdinand. "Die Bildworte vom neuen Flicker und vom jungen Wein." *Evangelische Theologie* 31 (1971): 357–75.
- Hanson, A. T. "Rahab the Harlot in Early Christian Tradition." *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 1 (1978): 53–60.

- Hare, Douglas. "How Jewish is Matthew?" *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 62 (2000): 264–77.
- _____. *Matthew*. Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1993.
- _____. *The Theme of Jewish Persecution*. Society of New Testament Studies Monograph Series 6. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967.
- _____ and Daniel Harrington. "Makes Disciples of All the Gentiles (Mt 28:19)." *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 37 (1975): 359–69.
- Harland, Philip A. *Associations, Synagogues, and Congregations: Claiming a Place in Ancient Mediterranean Society*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2003.
- Harrington, Daniel J. *The Gospel of Matthew*. Sacred Pagina 1. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical, 1991.
- _____. "How Jewish Was Mark's Gospel?" Pages 343–59 in vol. 2 of *When Judaism and Christianity Began: Essays in Memory of Anthony J. Saldarini*. Edited by Alan J. Avery-Peck, Daniel Harrington, and Jacob Neusner. 2 vols. Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic, and Roman Periods: Supplement Series 85. Leiden: Brill, 2004.
- _____. Review of George Howard, *The Gospel according to a Primitive Text*. *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 50 (1988): 717–18.
- _____. *What Are They Saying About Mark?* Mahwah, NJ: Paulist, 2005.
- Hartmann, Michael. *Der Tod Johannes des Täufers: Eine exegetische und rezeptionsgeschichtliche Studie auf dem Hintergrund narrative, intertextueller, und kulturanthropologischer Zugänge*. Stuttgarter biblische Beiträge 45. Stuttgart: Kotholisches Bibelwerk, 2001.
- Hatina, Thomas R. "The Voice of Northrop Frye Crying in the Wilderness: The Mythmaking Function of Isaiah 40:3 in Luke's Annunciation of the Baptist." Pages 59–84 in *Biblical Interpretation in Early Christian Gospels Volume 3: The Gospel of Luke*. Edited by Thomas Hatina. Library of New Testament Studies 376. Studies in Scripture in Early Judaism and Christianity 16. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 2010.
- Hedlun, Randall J. "A New Reading of Acts 18:24–19:7: Understanding the Ephesian Disciples Encounter as Social Conflict." *Religion and Theology* 17 (2010): 40–60.
- Held, Heinz Joachim. "Matthew and Interpreter of Miracle Stories." Pages 165–299 in *Tradition and Interpretation in Matthew*. Translated by Percy Scott. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1963.

- Hengel, Martin. *The Four Gospels and the One Gospel of Jesus Christ*. Translated by John Bowden. Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 2000.
- _____. *Studies in the Gospel of Mark*. Translated by John Bowden. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1985.
- Hill, David. *The Gospel of Matthew*. New Century Bible. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1972.
- _____. *Greek Words and Hebrew Meanings: Studies in the Semantics of Soteriological Terms*. Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series 5. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967.
- Himmelfarb, Martha. *A Kingdom of Priests: Ancestry and Merit in Ancient Judaism*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006.
- Hoehner, Harold. *Herod Antipas*. Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series 17. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972.
- Hoffeditz, David M. and Gary E. Yates. "Femme Fatale Redux: Intertextual Connection to the Elijah/Jezebel Narratives in Mark 6:14–29." *Bulletin for Biblical Research* 15 (2005): 199–221.
- Hollenbach, Paul. "The Conversion of Jesus: From Jesus the Baptizer to Jesus the Healer." Pages 196–219 in *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt: Geschichte und Kultur Roms im Spiegel der neueren Forschung Part 2, Principat*, 25.1. Edited by H. Temporini and W. Haase. New York: de Gruyter, 1982.
- _____. "Social Aspects of John the Baptist's Preaching Mission in the Context of Palestinian Judaism." Pages 850–75 in *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt: Geschichte und Kultur Roms im Spiegel der neueren Forschung Part 2, Principat*, 19.1. Edited by H. Temporini and W. Haase. New York: de Gruyter, 1979.
- Holmberg, Bengt. *Sociology and the New Testament: An Appraisal*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1990.
- Hooker, Morna. "John the Baptist and the Johannine Prologue." *New Testament Studies* 16 (1969–70): 354–58.
- Horbury, William. Review of George Howard, *The Gospel of Matthew according to a Primitive Hebrew Text*. *Journal of Theological Studies* 43 (1992): 166–69.
- _____. Review of George Howard, *Hebrew Gospel of Matthew*. *Journal of Jewish Studies* 47 (1996): 382–84.
- Horsley, Richard A. "'Like One of the Prophets of Old': Two Types of Popular Prophets at the Time of Jesus." *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 47 (1985): 1–30.

- Howard, George. *Hebrew Gospel of Matthew*. Rev. ed. Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1995.
- _____. "A Response to William L. Petersen's Review of *Hebrew Gospel of Matthew*." *TC: A Journal of Biblical Textual Criticism* 4 (1998): <<http://rosetta.reltech.org/TC/vol04/Howard1999.html>> (22 June 2013).
- Howell, David B. *Matthew's Inclusive Story: A Story in the Narrative Rhetoric of the First Gospel*. Journal for the Study of the New Testament: Supplement Series 42. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1990.
- Hughes, John H. "John the Baptist: The Forerunner of God Himself." *Novum Testamentum* 14 (1972): 191–218.
- Hui, Archie W. D. "John the Baptist and Spirit-Baptism." *Evangelical Quarterly* 72 (1999): 99–115.
- Hummel, Reinhart. *Die Auseinandersetzung zwischen Kirche und Judentum im Matthäusevangelium*. Munich: Kaiser, 1966.
- Hultgren, Arland J. *The Parables of Jesus: A Commentary*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000.
- Incigneri, Brian. *The Gospel to the Romans: The Setting and Rhetoric of Mark's Gospel*. Biblical Interpretation Series 65. Leiden: Brill, 2003.
- Jackson-McCabe, Matt. "What's in a Name? The Problem of 'Jewish Christianity.'" Pages 7–38 in *Jewish Christianity Reconsidered: Rethinking Ancient Groups and Texts*. Edited by Matt Jackson-McCabe. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2007.
- Janes, Regina. "Why the Daughter of Herodias Must Dance." *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 28 (2006): 443–67.
- Jensen, Morten Hørning. *Herod Antipas in Galilee: The Literary and Archaeological Sources on the Reign of Herod Antipas and Its Socio-Economic Impact on Galilee*. Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 2/215. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006.
- Jeremias, Joachim. *The Parables of Jesus*. Translated by S. H. Hooke. Rev. ed. New York: Scribner, 1963.
- Johnson, Allan G. *The Blackwell Dictionary of Sociology: A User's Guide to Sociological Language*. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2000.
- Johnson, Luke Timothy. *The Acts of the Apostles*. Sacred Pagina 5. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical, 1992.

_____. *The Gospel of Luke*. Sacred Pagina 3. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical, 1991.

- Johnson, Marshall. "Reflections on a Wisdom Approach to Matthew's Christology." *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 36 (1974): 44–64.
- Johnson-Debaufre, Melanie. *Jesus Among Her Children: Q, Eschatology, and the Construction of Christian Origins*. Harvard Theological Studies 55. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005.
- Jones, F. Stanley. *Pseudoclementina Elchasaiticaque inter Judaeochristiana: Collected Studies*. Orientalia lovaniensia analecta 203. Leuven: Peeters, 2012.
- Jones, Ivor H. *Matthean Parables: A Literary and Historical Commentary*. Novum Testament Supplements 80. Leiden: Brill, 1995.
- Jones, James L. "References to John the Baptist in the Gospel according to St. Matthew." *Anglican Theological Review* 41 (1959): 298–302.
- Jossa, Giorgio. "Jews, Romans and Christians: From the *Bellum Judaicum* to the *Antiquitates*." Pages 341–52 in *Josephus and Jewish History in Flavian Rome and Beyond*. Edited by Joseph Sievers and Gaia Lembi. Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic, and Roman Periods: Supplement Series 104. Leiden: Brill, 2005.
- Joüon, Paul. "Le costume d'Elie et celui de Jean Baptiste." *Biblica* 16 (1935): 74–81.
- Joynes, Christine E. "A Questions of Identity: 'Who Do People Say That I Am?' Elijah, John the Baptist, and Jesus in Mark's Gospel." Pages 15–29 in *Understanding, Studying, and Reading: New Testament Essays in Honour of John Ashton*. Edited by Christopher Rowland and Crispin H. T. Fletcher-Louis. Journal for the Study of the New Testament: Supplement Series 153. Sheffield: Sheffield, 1998.
- Kampen, John. "'Righteousness' in Matthew and the Legal Texts from Qumran." Pages 461–87 in *Legal Texts and Legal Issues: Proceedings of the Second Meeting of the International Organization for Qumran Studies, Cambridge 1995. Published in Honour of Joseph M. Baumgarten*. Edited by Moshe Bernstein, Florentino Garcia Martinez, and John Kampen. Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah 23. Leiden: Brill, 1997.
- Karakolis, Christos. "Narrative Funktion und christologische Bedeutung der markinischen Erzählung vom Tod Johannes des Täufers (Mk 6:14–29)." *Novum Testamentum* 52 (2010): 134–55.
- Käsemann, Ernst. "The Disciples of John the Baptist in Ephesus." Pages 136–48 in *Essays on New Testament Themes*. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1982.

- Kazen, Thomas. "Sectarian Gospels for Some Christians? Intention and Mirror Reading in the Light of Extra-Canonical Texts." *New Testament Studies* 51 (2005): 561–78.
- Kazmierski, Carl R. "The Stones of Abraham: John the Baptist and the End of Torah (Matt 3,7–10 par. Luke 3,7–9)." *Biblica* 68 (1987): 22–40.
- Kee, Alistair. "Old Coat and New Wine: A Parable of Repentance." *Novum Testamentum* 12 (1970): 13–21.
- _____. "The Question about Fasting." *Novum Testamentum* 11 (1969): 161–79.
- Keener, Craig S. "'Brood of Vipers' (Matthew 3.7; 12.34; 23.33)." *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 28 (2005): 3–11.
- _____. *A Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999.
- _____. *The Gospel of John*. 2 vols. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2003.
- _____. *The Historical Jesus of the Gospels*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009.
- Kelhoffer, James. "Did John the Baptist Eat Like a Former Essene? Locust-Eating in the Ancient Near East and at Qumran." *Dead Sea Discoveries* 11 (2004): 294–314.
- _____. *The Diet of John the Baptist: "Locusts and Wild Honey" in Synoptic and Patristic Interpretation*. Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 176. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005.
- Kilgallen, John J. "John the Baptist, the Sinful Woman, and the Pharisee." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 104 (1985): 675–79.
- Kilpatrick, George D. *The Origins of the Gospel according to St. Matthew*. Rev. ed. Oxford: Clarendon, 1950.
- Kingsbury Jack Dean. *Matthew: Structure, Christology, and Kingdom*. 2d ed. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1989.
- _____. *Matthew as Story*. 2d ed. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1986.
- _____. "Reflections on 'The Reader' of Matthew's Gospel." *New Testament Studies* 34 (1988): 442–60.
- Kinman, Brent. "Luke's Exoneration of John the Baptist." *Journal of Theological Studies* 44 (1993): 595–98.
- Kleist, James A. "Greek or Semitic Idiom: A Note on Mt. 21,32." *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 8 (1946): 192–96.

- Klink III, Edward W., ed. *The Audience of the Gospels: The Origin and Function of the Gospels in Early Christianity*. Library of New Testament Studies 353. London: T & T Clark, 2010.
- _____. *The Sheep of the Fold: The Audience and Origin of the Gospel of John*. Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series 141. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.
- Kloppenborg, John S. *The Formation of Q: Trajectories in Ancient Wisdom Collections*. Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 2000.
- Kloppenborg Verbin, John. *Excavating Q*. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 2000.
- Knowles, Michael P. *Jeremiah in Matthew's Gospel: The Rejected Prophet Motif in Matthaean Redaction*. Journal for the Study of the New Testament: Supplement Series 68. Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993.
- Kokkinos, Nikos. "Crucifixion in AD 36: The Keystone for Dating the Birth of Jesus." Pages 133–64 in *Chronos, Kairos, Christos: Nativity and Chronological Studies Presented to Jack Finegan*. Edited by Jerry Vardaman and Edwin M. Yamauchi. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1989.
- _____. *The Herodian Dynasty: Origins, Role in Society and Eclipse*. Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha: Supplement Series 30. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1998.
- Kraeling, Carl H. *John the Baptist*. New York: Scribner, 1951.
- Kraemer, Ross S. "Implicating Herodias and Herod in the Death of John the Baptist: A (Christian) Theological Strategy?" *Journal of Biblical Literature* 125 (2006): 321–49.
- Kraus, H.-J. *Theology of the Psalms*. Translated by K. Crim. Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1986.
- Krentz, Edgar. "None Greater among Those Born from Women: John the Baptist in the Gospel of Matthew." *Currents in Theology and Mission* 10 (1983): 333–38.
- Kuhn, Karl A. "The Point of the Step-Parallelism in Luke 1–2." *New Testament Studies* 47 (2001): 38–49.
- Kvalbein, Hans. "The Wonders of the End-Time: Metaphoric Language in 4Q521 and the Interpretation of Matthew 11.5 Par." *Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha* 18 (1998): 87–110.
- Kysar, Robert. *John: The Maverick Gospel*. Rev. ed. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1993.

- Lambrecht, Jan. *Out of the Treasure: The Parables in the Gospel of Matthew*. Louvain Theological & Pastoral Monographs 10. Louvain/Grand Rapids: Peeters/Eerdmans, 1991.
- Langley, Wendell E. "The Parable of the Two Sons (Matthew 21:28–32) against Its Semitic and Rabbinic Backdrop." *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 58 (1996): 228–43.
- Légasse, Simon. "Jésus et les prostituées." *Revue théologique de Louvain* 7 (1974): 137–54.
- Lee, Simon S. *Jesus' Transfiguration and the Believers' Transformation: A Study of the Transfiguration and Its Development in Early Christian Writings*. Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 2/265. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009.
- Leivestad, Ragnar. "An Interpretation of Matt 11,19." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 71 (1952): 179–81.
- Levine, Amy-Jill. "Matthew's Advice to a Divided Readership." Pages 22–41 in *The Gospel of Matthew in Current Study: Studies in Memory of William G. Thompson, S. J.* Edited by David E. Aune. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001.
- _____. "Matthew's Portrayal of the Synagogue and Its Leaders." Pages 177–93 in *Matthew's Gospel: At the Crossroads of Early Christianity*. Edited by Donald Senior. Bibliotheca ephemeridum theologiarum lovaniensium 243. Leuven: Peeters, 2011.
- _____. *The Social and Ethnic Dimensions of Matthean Salvation History*. Studies in the Bible and Early Christianity 14. Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen, 1988.
- Lewis, Jack P. "Jamnia after Forty Years." *Hebrew Union College Annual* 70–71 (2000–1): 233–59.
- _____. "What Was 'Jamnia'?" *Journal of Bible and Religion* 32 (1964): 12–32.
- Lichtenberger, Hermann. "The Dead Sea Scrolls and John the Baptist: Reflections on Josephus' Account of John the Baptist." Pages 340–46 in *The Dead Sea Scrolls: Forty Years of Research*. Edited by Devorah Dimant and Uriel Rappaport. Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah 10. Leiden: Brill, 1992.
- _____. "Reflections on the History of John the Baptist's Communities." *Folia orientalia* 25 (1988): 45–49.
- _____. "Täufergemeinden und frühchristliche Täuferpolemik im letzten Drittel des 1. Jahrhunderts." *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche* 84 (1987): 36–57.

- Lieu, Judith. "The Parting of the Ways, Theological Construction or Historical Reality?" *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 56 (1994): 101–19.
- Lincoln, Andrew T. *Truth on Trial: The Lawsuit Motif in the Fourth Gospel*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2000.
- Lindeskog, Goesta. "Johannes der Täufer." *Annual of the Swedish Theological Institute* 12 (1983): 55–83.
- Linton, Olof. "The Parable of the Children's Game." *New Testament Studies* 22 (1976): 159–79.
- Llewelyn, Stephen. "The *Traditiongeschichte* of Matt 11:12–13 Par. Luke 16:16." *Novum Testamentum* 36 (1994): 330–49.
- Lohmeyer, Ernst. *Das Evangelium des Matthäus*. Edited by Werner Schmauch. 4th ed. Kritisch-exegetischer Kommentar über das Neue Testament. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1956.
- _____. *Das Urchristentum I: Johannes der Täufer*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1932.
- _____. "Zur evangelischen Überlieferung von Johannes dem Täufer." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 51 (1932): 300–19.
- Lührmann, Dieter. *Markusevangelium*. Handbuch zum Neuen Testament 3. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1987.
- Luomanen, Petri. *Entering the Kingdom of Heaven: A Study of the Structure of Matthew's View of Salvation*. Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 2/101 Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1998.
- _____. "The 'Sociology of Sectarianism' in Matthew: Modeling the Genesis of Early Jewish and Christian Communities." Pages 107–30 in *Fair Play: Diversity and Conflicts in Early Christianity: Essays in Honor of Heikki Räsänen*. Edited by Ismo Dunderberg, Christopher Tuckett, and Kari Syreeni. *Novum Testamentum Supplements* 103. Leiden: Brill, 2002.
- Lupieri, Edmondo. *Giovanni Battista fra Storia e Leggenda*. Brescia: Paideia, 1988.
- _____. *Giovanni Battista nelle tradizioni sinottiche*. *Studi Biblici* 82. Brescia: Paideia, 1988.
- _____. "John the Baptist: the First Monk. A Contribution to the History of the Figure of John the Baptist in the Early Monastic World." Pages 11–23 in *Monasticism: A Historical Overview*. *Word and Spirit* 6. Still River, MA: St. Bede, 1984.

- _____. "John the Baptist in New Testament Traditions and History." Pages 430–61 in *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt: Geschichte und Kultur Roms im Spiegel der neueren Forschung* Part 2, *Principat*, 26.1. Edited by H. Temporini and W. Haase. New York: de Gruyter, 1992.
- _____. "John the Gnostic: The Figure of the Baptist in Origen and Heterodox Gnosticism." *Studia Patristica* 19 (1989): 322–27.
- _____. "The Law and the Prophets Were until John: John the Baptist between Jewish Halakhot and Christian History of Salvation." *Neotestamentica* 35 (2001): 49–56.
- _____. *The Mandaean: The Last Gnostics*. Translated by Charles Hindley. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002.
- Luz, Ulrich. *Matthew*. Translated by James Crouch. 3 vols. Hermeneia. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2001–7.
- _____. *The Theology of the Gospel of Matthew*. Translated by J. Bradford Robinson. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995.
- Macgregor, W. M. "The Parable of the Two Sons." *Expository Times* 38 (1926–27): 498–501.
- Macina, Robert. "Jean le Baptist était-il Élie? Examen de la tradition néotestamentaire." *Proche Orient chrétien* 34 (1984): 209–32.
- Maier, Christl and Jens Herzer. "Die spielenden Kinder der Weisheit (Lk 7,31–35 par. Mat 11,16–19): Beobachtungen zu einem Gleichnis Jesu and seiner Reception." Pages 277–300 in *Exegese vor Ort: Festschrift für Peter Welten zum 65. Geburtstag*. Edited by Christl Maier, Klaus-Peter Jörns, and Rüdiger Liwak. Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2001.
- Malina, Bruce J. *The New Testament World: Insights from Cultural Anthropology*. 3d ed. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2001.
- _____ and Jerome H. Neyrey. *Calling Jesus Names: The Social Value of Labels in Matthew*. Foundations and Facets: Social Facets. Sonoma, CA: Polebridge, 1998.
- _____ and Richard H. Rohrbaugh. *Social Science Commentary on the Synoptic Gospels*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992.
- Manson, T. W. "John the Baptist." *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* 36 (1953–54): 395–412.

Marcus, Joel. "John the Baptist and Jesus." Pages 179–97 in vol. 1 of *When Judaism and Christianity Began: Essays in Memory of Anthony J. Saldarini*. 2 vols. Edited by Alan Jeffery Avery-Peck, Daniel Harrington, and Jacob Neusner. *Journal for the Study of Judaism Supplement* 85. Leiden: Brill, 2004.

_____. *Mark*. 2 vols. AB 27, 27A. New York/New Haven, CT: Doubleday/Yale University Press, 2000, 2009.

_____. "Mark 9,11–13 'As It Has Been Written.'" *Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche* 80 (1989): 42–63.

_____. "The Jewish War and the *Sitz im Leben* of Mark." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 111 (1992): 441–62.

Marshall, I. Howard. *Acts*. Tyndale New Testament Commentary. Leicester/Grand Rapids: InterVarsity/Eerdmans, 1980.

_____. *The Gospel of Luke: A Commentary on the Greek Text*. New International Greek Testament Commentary. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978.

_____. *Luke: Historian and Theologian*. 3d ed. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1988.

Martens, Allan W. "'Produce Fruit Worthy of Repentance': Parables of Judgment against Jewish Religious Leaders and the Nation (Matt 21:28–22:14, par.; Luke 13:6–9)." Pages 151–76 in *The Challenge of Jesus' Parables*. Edited by Richard N. Longenecker. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000.

Martin, Ralph A. *Mark: Evangelist and Theologian*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1972.

Martyn, J. Louis. *History and Theology in the Fourth Gospel*. 3d ed. New Testament Library. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2003.

Marxsen, Willi. *Mark the Evangelist: Studies on the Redaction History of the Gospel*. Translated by James Boyce, Donald Juel, and William Poehlmann with Roy A. Harrisville. Nashville: Abingdon, 1969.

Mason, Steve. *Flavius Josephus on the Pharisees: A Composition-Critical Study*. *Studia post-biblica* 39. Leiden: Brill, 1991.

_____. *Josephus and the New Testament*. 2d ed. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2003.

McCown, C. C. "The Scene of John's Ministry." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 59 (1940): 113–31.

- McDonald, J. Ian H. "Questioning and Discernment in Gospel Discourse: Communicative Strategy in Matthew 11:2–19." Pages 333–61 in *Authenticating the Words of Jesus*. Edited by Bruce D. Chilton and Craig A. Evans. New Testament Tools and Studies 28. Leiden: Brill, 1999.
- McIver, Robert K. "Twentieth Century Approaches to the Matthean Community." *Andrews University Seminary Studies* 37 (1999): 23–38.
- McKnight, Scot. "Matthew, Gospel of." Pages 526–41 in *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels*. Edited by Joel B. Green and Scott McKnight. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1992.
- McNeile, A. H. *The Gospel according to St. Matthew*. London: Macmillan, 1915.
- Meier, John P. "John the Baptist in Josephus: Philology and Exegesis." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 111 (1992): 225–37.
- _____. "John the Baptist in Matthew's Gospel." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 99 (1980): 383–405.
- _____. *Law and History in Matthew's Gospel*. Analecta biblica 71. Rome: Biblical Institute, 1976.
- _____. *A Marginal Jew: Rethinking the Historical Jesus*. 4 vols. Anchor Bible Reference Library. New York/New Haven, CT: Doubleday/Yale University Press, 1991–2009.
- _____. *Matthew*. Wilmington, DE: M. Glazier, 1980.
- _____. "Matthew, Gospel of." Pages 622–641 of vol. 4 of *Anchor Bible Dictionary*. Edited by D. N. Freedman. 6 vols. New York: Doubleday, 1992.
- _____. "Nations or Gentiles in Matthew 28:19?" *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 39 (1977): 94–102.
- _____. "Salvation-History in Matthew: In Search of a Starting Point." *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 37 (1975): 103–15.
- _____. *The Vision of Matthew*. New York: Crossroads, 1991.
- Meinertz, M. "'Dieses Geschlecht' im Neuen Testament." *Biblische Zeitschrift* 1 (1957): 283–89.
- Menken, M. J. J. "The Quotation from Isa 40,3 in John 1,23." *Biblica* 66 (1985): 190–205.

- _____. "The References to Jeremiah in the Gospel according to Matthew (Mt 2,17; 16,14; 27,9)." *Ephemerides theologicae lovanienses* 60 (1984): 5–24.
- Merkel, Helmut. "Das Gleichnis von den 'ungleichen Söhnen (Matth. xxi.28–32)." *New Testament Studies* 20 (1974): 254–61.
- Merklein, Helmut. "Die Umkehrpredigt bei Johannes dem Täufer." *Biblische Zeitschrift* 25 (1981): 29–46.
- Merwe, D. G. van der. "The Historical and Theological Significance of John the Baptist as He is Portrayed in John 1." *Neotestamentica* 33 (1999): 267–292.
- Metzger, Bruce M. *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*. 2d ed. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1994.
- Michaels, J. Ramsey. "Parable of the Regretful Son." *Harvard Theological Review* 61 (1968): 15–26.
- _____. "Paul and John the Baptist: An Odd Couple?" *Tyndale Bulletin* 42 (1991): 245–60.
- Michel, Otto. "The Conclusion of Matthew's Gospel: A Contribution to the History of the Easter Message." Pages 30–41 in *The Interpretation of Matthew*. Edited by Graham N. Stanton. Issues in Religion and Theology 3. Fortress: Philadelphia, 1983.
- Miller, David M. "The Messenger, the Lord, and the Coming Judgment in the Reception History of Malachi 3." *New Testament Studies* 53 (2007): 1–16.
- Miller, Robert J. "Elijah, John, and Jesus in the Gospel of Luke." *New Testament Studies* 34 (1988): 611–22.
- Minear, Paul. "Luke's Use of the Birth Stories." Pages 111–30 in *Studies in Luke-Acts*. Edited by L. E. Keck and J. Louis Martyn. Nashville: Abingdon, 1966.
- Mitchell, Margaret M. "Patristic Counter-Evidence to the Claim that 'The Gospels Were Written for All Christians.'" *New Testament Studies* 51 (2005): 36–79.
- Mohrlang, Roger. *Matthew and Paul: A Comparison of Ethical Perspectives*. Society of New Testament Studies Monograph Series 48. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984.
- Moloney, Francis J. *John*. Sacred Pagina 4. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical, 1998.
- _____. "Mark 6.6b–30: Mission, the Baptist, and Failure." *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 63 (2001): 647–63.

- _____. "Matthew 5:17–18 and the Matthean use of ΔΙΚΑΙΟΣΥΝΗ." Pages 33–59 in *Unity and Diversity in the Gospels and Paul: Essays in Honor of Frank J. Matera*. Edited by Christopher W. Skinner and Kelly R. Iverson. *Early Christianity and Literature* 7. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2012.
- _____. "Recent Johannine Studies: Part Two: Monographs." *Expository Times* 123 (2012): 417–28.
- Moore, Stephen D. *Literary Criticism and the Gospels: The Theoretical Challenge*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1989.
- Moore, W. Ernst. "ΒΙΑΖΩ, ΑΠΙΑΖΩ and Cognates in Josephus." *New Testament Studies* 21 (1975): 519–43.
- _____. "Violence to the Kingdom: Josephus and the Syrian Churches." *Expository Times* 1989 (100): 174–77.
- Moses, A. D. A. *Matthew's Transfiguration Story and Jewish-Christian Controversy*. *Journal for the Study of the New Testament: Supplement Series* 122. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1996.
- Muddiman, J. B. "Jesus and Fasting." Pages 271–81 in *Jésus aux origines de la christologie*. Edited by J. Dupont. *Bibliotheca ephemeridum theologicarum lovaniensium* 40. Gembloux: Duculot, 1975.
- Müller, Christoph Gregor. *Mehr als ein Prophet: Die Charakterzeichnung Johannes des Täufers im lukanischen Erzählwerk*. *Herders biblische Studien* 31. Freiburg: Herder, 2001.
- Müller, Ulrich B. *Johannes der Täufer: Jüdischer Prophet und Wegbereiter Jesu*. *Biblische Gestalten* 6. Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2002.
- Murphy, Catherine M. *John the Baptist: Prophet of Purity for a New Age*. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical, 2003.
- Murphy, Frederick J. "The Jewishness of Matthew: Another Look." Pages 377–403 in vol. 2 of *When Judaism and Christianity Began: Essays in Memory of Anthony J. Saldarini*. 2 vols. Edited by Alan Jeffery Avery-Peck, Daniel Harrington, and Jacob Neusner. *Journal for the Study of Judaism Supplement* 85. Leiden: Brill, 2004.
- Murphy-O'Connor, Jerome. "John the Baptist and Jesus: History and Hypothesis." *New Testament Studies* 36 (1990): 359–74.
- Mussner, Franz. "Der nicht erkannte Kairos (Mt 11,16–19 = Lk 7,31–35)." *Biblica* 40 (1959): 599–612.

- Nanos, Mark. *The Irony of Galatians: Paul's Letter in First-Century Context*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2002.
- Nepper-Christensen, Poul. *Das Matthäusevangelium, Ein judenchristliches Evangelium?* Acta theologica danica 1. Aarhus: Universitetsforlaget, 1958.
- _____. "Die Taufe im Matthäusevangelium im Lichte der Traditionen über Johannes den Täufer." *New Testament Studies* 31 (1985): 189–207.
- Neusner, Jacob. "The Formation of Rabbinic Judaism: Yavneh from A.D. 70–100." Pages 3–42 in *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt: Geschichte und Kultur Roms im Spiegel der neueren Forschung Part 2, Principat*, 19.2. Edited by H. Temporini and W. Haase. New York: de Gruyter, 1979.
- Neyrey, Jerome H. *Honor and Shame in the Gospel of Matthew*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1998.
- Nir, Rivka. "Josephus' Account of John the Baptist: A Christian Interpolation?" *Journal for the Study of the Historical Jesus* 10 (2012): 32–62.
- Nodet, Étienne. "Jésus et Jean-Baptiste selon Josèphe." *Revue biblique* 92 (1985): 321–48.
- Nolland, John. *Matthew*. New International Greek Testament Commentary. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005.
- Notley, R. Steven. "The Kingdom of Heaven Forcefully Advances." Pages 279–311 in *The Interpretation of Scripture in Early Judaism and Christianity: Studies in Language and Tradition*. Edited by Craig A. Evans. Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha Supplement Series 33. Studies in Scripture in Early Judaism and Christianity 7. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 2000.
- Novakovic, Lida. *Messiah, Healer of the Sick: A Study of Jesus as the Son of David in the Gospel of Matthew*. Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 2/170. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003.
- Ogawa, Akira. "Paraboles de l'Israël véritable? Reconsidération critique de Mt 21.28–22.14." *Novum Testamentum* 21 (1979): 121–49.
- Öhler, Markus. *Elia im Neuen Testament: Untersuchungen zur Bedeutung des alttestamentlichen Propheten im Neuen Testament*. Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft 88. Berlin/New York: de Gruyter, 1997.
- _____. "The Expectation of Elijah and the Presence of the Kingdom of God." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 118 (1999): 461–76.

- Olender, Robert G. "Righteousness in Matthew with Implications for the Declaration of Joseph's Righteousness and the Matthean Exception Clauses." PhD diss., Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2008.
- Oliver, H. H. "The Lucan Birth Stories and the Purpose of Luke-Acts." *New Testament Studies* 10 (1963–64): 202–26.
- Olmstead, Wesley G. *Matthew's Trilogy of Parables: The Nation, the Nations, and the Reader in Matthew 21.28–22.14*. Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series 127. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003.
- O'Neill, J. C. "The Source of the Parables of the Bridegroom and Wicked Husbandmen." *Journal of Theological Studies* 39 (1988): 485–89.
- Orton, David E. *The Understanding Scribe: Matthew and the Apocalyptic Ideal*. Journal for the Study of the New Testament: Supplement Series 25. Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1989.
- Osborne, Grant R. *Matthew*. Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010.
- Osten-Sacken, Peter von der. "Der erste Christ: Johannes der Täufer als Schlüssel zum Prolog des vierten Evangelium." *Theologia viatorum* 13 (1975/76): 155–73.
- Overman, J. Andrew. *Church and Community in Crisis: The Gospel according to Matthew*. The New Testament in Context. Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press International, 1996.
- _____. *Matthew's Gospel and Formative Judaism*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1990.
- Paget, James Carleton. "The Definition of the Term 'Jewish Christian'/'Jewish Christianity' in the History of Research." Pages 289–324 in *Jews, Christians, and Jewish Christians in Antiquity*. Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 251. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010.
- _____. "The Four among Jews." Pages 205–21 in *The Written Gospel*. Edited by Markus Bockmuehl and Donald A. Hagner. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.
- _____. "Some Observations on Josephus and Christianity." Pages 199–248 in *Jews, Christians, and Jewish Christians in Antiquity*. Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 251. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010.
- Painter, John. *Mark's Gospel*. London: Routledge, 1997.

- _____. "Matthew and John." Pages 66–86 in *Matthew and His Christian Contemporaries*. Edited by David C. Sim and Boris Repschinski. Library of New Testament Studies 333. London: T & T Clark, 2008.
- Pao, David W. *Acts and the Isaianic New Exodus*. Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 2/138. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000. Reprint, Biblical Studies Library. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2002.
- Park, Eung Chun. *The Mission Discourse in Matthew's Interpretation*. Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 2/81. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1995.
- Parker, Pierson. "Jesus, John the Baptist, and the Herods." *Perspectives in Religious Studies* (1981): 4–11.
- Parratt, J. K. "The Rebaptism of the Ephesian Disciples." *Expository Times* 79 (1967–68): 182–83.
- Parsons, Ernest W. "The Significance of John the Baptist for the Beginning of Christianity." Pages 1–17 in *Environmental Factors in Christian History*. Edited by John Thomas McNeill, Matthew Spinka, and Harold R. Willoughby. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1939.
- Parsons, Mikael C. and Richard I. Pervo, eds. *Rethinking the Unity of Luke and Acts*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993.
- Patte, Daniel. *The Gospel according to Matthew: A Structural Commentary on Matthew's Faith*. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1987.
- Paul, A. "Flavius Josephus' 'Antiquities of the Jews': An Anti-Christian Manifesto." *New Testament Studies* 31 (1985): 473–80.
- Payne, Philip B. "Jesus' Implicit Claim to Deity in His Parables." *Trinity Journal* 2 (1981): 3–23.
- Pedersen, Sigfred. "Die Proklamation Jesu als des Eschatological Offenbarungsträgers (Mt. xvii 1–13)." *Novum Testamentum* 17 (1976): 241–64.
- Perkins, Pheme. "Mark." Pages 507–733 in vol. 8 of *The New Interpreter's Bible*. Edited by Leander Keck. 12 vols. Nashville: Abingdon, 2003.
- Perrin, Nicholas. "The Limits of a Reconstructed Q." Pages 71–88 in *Questioning Q: A Multidimensional Critique*. Edited by Mark Goodacre and Nicholas Perrin. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2004.
- Perrin, Norman. "The Evangelist as Author: Reflections on Method in the Study and Interpretation of the Synoptic Gospels and Acts." *Biblical Research* 17 (1972): 5–18.

- _____. *Rediscovering the Teaching of Jesus*. New York: Harper and Row, 1967.
- _____. “The Use of (*para*)*didonai* in Connection with the Passion of Jesus in the New Testament.” Pages 204–12 in *Der Ruf Jesu und die Antwort der Gemeinde*. Edited by Eduard Lohse. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1970.
- _____. *What is Redaction Criticism?* Guides to Biblical Scholarship. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1969.
- Pervo, Richard I. *Acts: A Commentary*. Hermeneia. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2009.
- Pesce, Mauro. *Da Gesù al cristianesimo*. Antico e Nuovo Testamento 11. Brescia: Morcelliana, 2011.
- Pesch, Wilhelm. “Theologische Aussagen der Redaktion von Matthäus 23.” Pages 286–99. *Orientierung an Jesus: Zur Theologie der Synoptiker. Für Josef Schmid*. Edited by Paul Hoffman, Norbert Brox, and Wilhelm Pesch. Freiburg: Herder, 1973.
- Petersen, William L. Review of George Howard, *The Gospel of Matthew according to a Primitive Hebrew Text*. *Journal of Biblical Literature* 108 (1989): 722–26.
- _____. “Some Observations on a Recent Edition of and Introduction to Shem-Tob’s ‘Hebrew Matthew.’” *TC: A Journal of Biblical Textual Criticism* 3 (1998): <<http://rosetta.reltech.org/TC/v03/Petersen1998a.html>> (22 June 2013).
- Peterson, David L. *Zechariah 9–14 and Malachi*. Old Testament Library. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1995.
- Peterson, Dwight N. *The Origins of Mark: The Markan Community in Current Debate*. Biblical Interpretation Series 48. Leiden: Brill, 2000.
- Phillips, Thomas E. “‘Will the Wise Person Get Drunk?’ The Background of the Human Wisdom in Luke 7:35 and Matthew 11:19.” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 127 (2008): 385–96.
- Pitre, Brant. *Jesus, the Tribulation, and the End of Exile: Restoration Eschatology and the Origin of the Atonement*. Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 2/204. Tübingen/Grand Rapids: Mohr Siebeck/Baker Academic, 2005.
- Pleiss, Isak J. du. “The Lukan Audience—Rediscovered? Some Reactions to Bauckham’s Theory.” *Neotestamentica* 34 (2000): 234–61.
- Plisch, Uwe-Karsten. “Die Perikopen über Johannes den Täufer in der neuentdeckten mittelägyptischen Version des Matthäus-Evangeliums (Codex Schøyen).” *Novum Testamentum* 43 (2001): 368–92.

- Popkes, W. "Die Gerechtigkeits-tradition im Matthäus-Evangelium." *Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche* 80 (1989): 1–23.
- Porter, Stanley E. "Literary Approaches to the New Testament." Pages 77–128 in *Approaches to New Testament Study*. Edited by Stanley E. Porter and David Tombs. *Journal for the Study of the New Testament: Supplement Series* 120. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1995.
- _____. *Verbal Aspect in the Greek of the New Testament, with Reference to Tense and Mood*. *Studies in Biblical Greek* 1. New York: Peter Lang, 1993.
- Powell, Mark Allan. "Do and Keep What Moses Says (Matthew 23:2–7)." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 114 (1995): 419–35.
- _____, ed. *Methods for Matthew*. *Methods in Biblical Interpretation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009.
- _____. *What is Narrative Criticism?* *Guides to Biblical Scholarship*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1990.
- Pregeant, Russell. "The Wisdom Passages in Matthew's Story." Pages 197–232 in *Treasures Old and New*. Edited by David Bauer and Mark Allan Powell. *Society of Biblical Literature Symposium Series* 1. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1996.
- Pryke, John. "John the Baptist and the Qumran Community." *Restoration Quarterly* 4 (1964): 483–96.
- Pryor, John W. "John the Baptist and Jesus: Tradition and Texts in John 3.24." *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 66 (1997): 15–26.
- Przybylski, Benno. *Righteousness in Matthew and His World of Thought*. *Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series* 41. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980.
- Quinn, Jerome. "Is 'Παράβ' in Matt 1,5 Rahab of Jericho?" *Biblica* 62 (1981): 225–28.
- Rad, Gerhard von. *Old Testament Theology*. Translated by D. M. G. Stalker. New York: Harper & Row, 1962.
- Rajak, Tessa. *Josephus: The Historian and His Society*. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983.
- Rainbow, Jesse. "John, Elijah, and Naboth: What Does 1 Kings 21 Have to Do with Matthew 14?" Paper presented at the annual meeting of the SBL. Atlanta, November 21, 2010.

- Reed, Annette Yoshiko. "Reflections on F. S. Jones, *Pseudoclementina Elchasaiticaque inter Judaeochristiana: Collected Studies*." *Annali di Storia dell'Esegesi* 30/1 (2013): 101–9.
- Reid, Barbara E. "'Do You See This Woman? Luke 7:36–50 as a Paradigm for Feminist Hermeneutics.'" *Biblical Research* 40 (1995): 37–49.
- Reinhartz, Adele. "Gospel Audiences: Variations on a Theme." Pages 134–52 in *The Audience of the Gospels: The Origin and Function of the Gospels in Early Christianity*. Edited by Edward W. Klink III. Library of New Testament Studies 353. London: T & T Clark, 2010.
- Repschinski, Boris. *The Controversy Stories in the Gospel of Matthew: Their Redaction, Form and Relevance for the Relationship between the Matthean Community and Formative Judaism*. Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments 189. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2000.
- Reumann, John. "The Quest for the Historical Baptist." Pages 181–99 in *Understanding the Sacred Text: Essays in Honor of Morton S. Enslin on the Hebrew Bible and Christian Beginnings*. Edited by John Reumann. Valley Forge, PA: Judson, 1972.
- _____. *Righteousness in the New Testament: "Justification" in the United States Lutheran-Roman Catholic Dialogue*. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1982.
- Richard, W. L. "Another Look at the Parable of the Two Sons." *Biblical Research* 23 (1978): 5–14.
- Richter, Amy E. *Enoch and the Gospel of Matthew*. Princeton Theological Monograph Series 183. Eugene, OH: Pickwick, 2012.
- Richter, Georg. "'Bist du Elias?' (Joh. 1,21)." *Biblische Zeitschrift* 6 (1962): 79–92, 238–56; 7 (1963): 63–80.
- Riesner, Rainer. "Bethany Beyond the Jordan (John 1:28): Topography, Theology, and History in the Fourth Gospel." *Tyndale Bulletin* 38 (1987): 29–63.
- Rife, J. M. "The Standing of John the Baptist." Pages 205–8 in *Festschrift to Honor F. Wilbur Gingrich*. Edited by E. H. Barth and R. E. Cocroft. Leiden: Brill, 1972.
- Rindoš, Jaroslav. *He of Whom It is Written: John the Baptist and Elijah in Luke*. Österreichische biblische Studien 38. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2010.
- Rishell, C. W. "Baldensperger's Theory of the Origin of the Fourth Gospel." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 20 (1901): 38–49.

- Rivkin, Ellis. "Locating John the Baptizer in Palestinian Judaism." Pages 79–85 in *SBL Seminar Papers, 1983*. Society of Biblical Literature Seminar Papers 22. Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1983.
- Robbins, Vernon. "Social-Scientific Criticism and Literary Studies: Prospects for Cooperation in Biblical Interpretation." Pages 274–89 in *Modelling Early Christianity: Social Scientific Studies of the New Testament in Its Context*. Edited by Philip F. Esler. London: Routledge, 1995.
- Robinson, James M., Paul Hoffmann, and John S. Kloppenborg, eds. *The Critical Edition of Q*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2000.
- Robinson, John A. T. "The Baptism of John and the Qumran Community." Pages 11–27 in *Twelve New Testament Studies*. London: SCM, 1962.
- _____. "Elijah, John, and Jesus: An Essay in Detection." Pages 28–52 in *Twelve New Testament Studies*. London: SCM, 1962.
- Rodd, C. S. "The End of the Theology of Q?" *Expository Times* 113 (2001): 5–11.
- Roskam, Hendrik N. *The Purpose of the Gospel of Mark in Its Historical and Social Context*. Novum Testamentum Supplements 114. Leiden: Brill, 2004.
- Rothschild, Clare K. *Baptist Traditions and Q*. Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 190. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005.
- _____. "Echoes of a Whisper: The Uncertain Authenticity of Josephus' Witness to John the Baptist." Pages 255–90 in vol. 1 of *Ablution, Initiation, and Baptism: Late Antiquity, Early Judaism, and Early Christianity*. Edited by David Hellholm, Tor Vegge, Øyvind Norderval, and Christer Hellholm. 3 vols. Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft 176. Berlin: de Gruyter, 2011.
- Rowley, H. H. "Jewish Proselyte Baptism and the Baptism of John." *Hebrew Union College Annual* 15 (1940): 313–34.
- Runesson, Anders. "Judging Gentiles in the Gospel of Matthew: Between 'Othering' and Inclusion." Pages 133–51 in *Jesus, Matthew, and Early Christianity: Essays in Memory of Graham N. Stanton*. Edited by Daniel M. Gurtner, Joel Willits, and Richard Burridge. Library of New Testament Studies 435. London: T & T Clark, 2011.
- _____. "Rethinking Early Jewish-Christian Relations: Matthean Community History as Pharisaic Intragroup Conflict." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 127 (2008): 95–132.
- Saldarini, Anthony J. *Matthew's Christian-Jewish Community*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994.

- Sand, Alexander. *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus*. Regensburger Neues Testament. Regensburg: Verlag Friedrich Puste, 1986.
- Sanders, E. P. *Tendencies of the Synoptic Tradition*. Society of New Testament Studies Monograph Series 9. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969.
- _____ and Margaret Davies. *Studying the Synoptic Gospels*. London: SCM, 1989.
- Sandy, D. Brent. "John the Baptist's 'Lamb of God' Affirmation in Its Canonical and Apocalyptic Milieu." *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 34 (1991): 447–60.
- Schäfer, Peter. "Die sogenannte Synode von Jabne. Zur Trennung von Juden u. Christen im ersten/zweiten Jh. N. Chr." *Judaica* 31 (1975): 54–64, 116–24.
- _____. "Rabbis and Priests, or: How to Do Away with the Glorious Past of the Sons of Aaron." Pages 155–72 in *Antiquity in Antiquity*. Edited by Gregg Gardner and Kevin L. Osterloh. Texte und Studien zum antiken Judentum 123. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008.
- Schenke, Hans-Martin. *Das Matthäus-Evangelium im mittelägyptischen Dialekt des Koptischen (Codex Schøyen)*. Manuscripts in the Schøyen Collection 2: Coptic Papyri 1. Oslo: Hermes, 2001.
- Schlatter, Adolf von. *Der Evangelist Matthäus: Seine Sprache, sein Zeil, seine Selbständigkeit. Ein Kommentar zum ersten Evangelium*. 6th ed. Stuttgart: Calwer, 1963.
- _____. *Johannes der Täufer*. Edited by W. Michaelis. Basel: Verlag Friedrich Reinhardt, 1956.
- Schmid, Josef. "Das textgeschichtliche Problem der Parable von den zwei Söhnen." Pages 68–84 in *Vom Wort des Lebens: Festschrift für Max Meinertz*. Edited by Nikolaus Adler. Münster: Aschendorff, 1951.
- Schnackenburg, Rudolf. *The Gospel according to St. John*. Translated by Kevin Smyth. 3 vols. Vol. 1: New York: Herder and Herder, 1966. Vols. 2, 3: New York: Crossroad, 1980–82.
- _____. *The Gospel of Matthew*. Translated by Robert R. Barr. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002.
- Schönle, Volker. *Johannes, Jesus und die Juden: Die theologische Position des Matthäus und des Verfassers der Redenquelle im Lichte von Mt. 11*. Beiträge zur biblischen Exegese und Theologie 17. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1982.

- Schürer, Emil. *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ*. Revised and edited by Geza Vermes, Fergus Millar, and Martin Goodman. 4 vols. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1986.
- Schütz, Roland. *Johannes der Täufer*. Abhandlungen zur Theologie des Alten und Neuen Testaments 50. Zurich/Stuttgart: Zwingli, 1967.
- Schweizer, Eduard. "Die Bekehrung des Apollos (Apg 18,24–26)." *Evangelische Theologie* 15 (1955): 247–54.
- _____. *The Good News according to Matthew*. Translated by David E. Green. Atlanta: John Knox, 1975.
- Scobie, Charles H. H. *John the Baptist*. London: SCM, 1964.
- Scott, Bernard Brandon. *Hear Then the Parable: A Commentary on the Parables of Jesus*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1989.
- Scroggs, Robin. "The Earliest Christian Communities as Sectarian Movement." Pages 1–23 in *Christianity, Judaism, and Other Greco-Roman Cults: Studies for Morton Smith at Sixty, Part II: Early Christianity*. Edited by Jacob Neusner. Leiden: Brill, 1975.
- Senior, Donald. "Between Two Worlds: Gentiles and Jews in Matthew's Gospel." *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 61 (1999): 1–23.
- _____. "Directions in Matthean Studies." Pages 5–21 in *The Gospel of Matthew in Current Study: Studies in Memory of William G. Thompson, S. J.* Edited by David E. Aune. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001.
- _____. *The Gospel of Matthew*. Interpreting Biblical Texts. Nashville: Abingdon, 1997.
- _____. "Matthew at the Crossroads of Early Christianity: An Introductory Assessment." Pages 3–23 in *Matthew's Gospel: At the Crossroads of Early Christianity*. Edited by Donald Senior. Bibliotheca ephemeridum theologiarum lovaniensium 243. Leuven: Peeters, 2011.
- _____. *What Are They Saying about Matthew?* Rev. ed. New York: Paulist, 1996.
- Shae, Gam Seng. "The Question on the Authority of Jesus." *Novum Testamentum* 16 (1974): 1–29.
- Shafer, Grant. "John the Baptist, Jesus, and the Forgiveness of Sins." *Proceedings of the Eastern Great Lakes and Midwest Society of Biblical Literature* 26 (2006): 51–67.

- Shedinger, Robert F. "A Further Consideration of the Textual Nature of Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew." *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 61 (1999): 686–94.
- Sim, David C. *Apocalyptic Eschatology in the Gospel of Matthew*. Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series 88. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.
- _____. "The Gospel for All Christians: A Response to Richard Bauckham." *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 84 (2001): 3–27.
- _____. *The Gospel of Matthew and Christian Judaism: The History and Social Setting of the Matthean Community*. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1998.
- _____. "Matthew and Jesus of Nazareth." Pages 155–72 in *Matthew and His Christian Contemporaries*. Edited by David C. Sim and Boris Repschinski. Library of New Testament Studies 333. London: T & T Clark, 2011.
- Skarsaune, Oskar. "Jewish Believers in Jesus in Antiquity—Problems of Definition, Method, and Sources." Pages 3–16 in *Jewish Believers in Jesus: The Early Centuries*. Edited by Oskar Skarsaune and Reidar Hvalvik. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1997.
- Smalley, Stephen S. "Redaction Criticism." Pages 181–95 in *New Testament Interpretation: Essays on Principals and Methods*. Edited by I. Howard Marshall. Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 1977.
- Smillie, Gene R. "Jesus' Response to the Question of His Authority in Matthew 21." *Bibliotheca Sacra* 162 (2005): 459–69.
- Smith, Dennis E. "The Historical Jesus at Table." Pages 466–86 in *SBL Seminar Papers, 1989*. Seminar of Biblical Literature Seminar Papers 28. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1989.
- Smith, Derwood. "Jewish Proselyte Baptism and the Baptism of John." *Restoration Quarterly* 25 (1982): 13–32.
- Smith, Dwight Moody. *John among the Gospels*. 2d ed. Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2001.
- Smith, Ralph L. *Micah-Malachi*. Word Biblical Commentary 32. Waco, TX: Word, 1984.
- Snodgrass, Klyne. *Stories with Intent: A Comprehensive Guide to the Parables*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008.
- Sparks, H. F. D. "St. Matthew's References to Jeremiah." *Journal of Theological Studies* 1 (1950): 155–56.

- Stacey, Margaret. "The Myth of Community Studies." Pages 13–26 in *The Sociology of Community: A Selection of Readings*. Edited by Colin Bell and Howard Newby. New Sociology Library 5. New York: Frank Cass and Company Limited, 1974.
- Stanton, Graham. "The Communities of Matthew." *Interpretation* 46 (1992): 379–91.
- _____. *A Gospel for a New People: Studies in Matthew*. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1992.
- _____. "Introduction: Matthew's Gospel in Recent Scholarship." Pages 1–26 in *The Interpretation of Matthew*. Edited by Graham N. Stanton. 2d ed. Studies in New Testament Interpretation. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1995.
- _____. "The Origin and Purpose of Matthew's Gospel: Matthean Scholarship from 1945–1980." Pages 1889–1951 in *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt: Geschichte und Kultur Roms im Spiegel der neueren Forschung Part 2, Principat, 25.3*. Edited by H. Temporini and W. Haase. New York: de Gruyter, 1985.
- _____. "Revisiting Matthew's Communities." *Hervormde theologiese studies* 52 (1996): 376–94.
- Stark, Rodney and William S. Bainbridge. *A Theory of Religion*. Toronto Studies in Religion 2. New York: Peter Lang, 1987.
- _____. "Of Churches, Sects, and Cults: Preliminary Concepts for a Theory of Religious Movements." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 18 (1979): 117–31.
- Starr, Joshua. "The Unjewish Character of the Markan Account of John the Baptist." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 51 (1932): 227–37.
- Steck, Odil H. *Israel und das gewaltsame Geschick der Propheten: Untersuchungen zur Überlieferung des deuternomistischen Geschichtsbildes im Alten Testament, Spätjudentum und Urchristentum*. Wissenschaftliche Monographien zum Alten und Neuen Testament 23. Neukirchen: Neukirchener Verlag, 1967.
- Stein, Robert A. *Mark*. Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008.
- Steinhauser, Michael G. "Neuer Wein braucht neue Schläuchen." Pages 113–23 in *Biblische Randbemerkungen*. Edited by H. Merklein and J. Lange. Würzburg: Echter, 1974.
- Steinmann, Jean. *Saint John the Baptist and the Desert Tradition*. New York: Harper, 1958.

- Stemberger, Günther. "Die sogenannte 'Synode von Jabne' und das frühe Christentum." *Kairos* 19 (1977): 14–21.
- Stendahl, Krister. *The School of St. Matthew and its Use of the Old Testament*. 2d ed. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1968.
- Stettler, Hanna. "Die Bedeutung der Täuferanfrage in Matthäus 11,26 par Lk 7,18–23 für die Christologie." *Biblica* 89 (2008): 173–200.
- Stowasser, Martin. *Johannes der Täufer im vierten Evangelium*. Österreichische biblische Studien 12. Klosterneuburg: Österreichisches Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1992.
- Strack, H. L. and P. Billerbeck. *Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrasch*. 6 vols. Munich: Beck, 1922–61.
- Strecker, Georg. *Der Weg der Gerechtigkeit: Untersuchung zur Theologie des Mätthaus*. 3d ed. Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments 82. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1971.
- Suggs, M. Jack. *Wisdom, Christology, and Law in Matthew's Gospel*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1970.
- Tannehill, Robert. *The Narrative Unity of Luke-Acts: A Literary Interpretation*. 2 vols. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1986, 1990.
- Tatum, W. Barnes. *John the Baptist and Jesus: A Report of the Jesus Seminar*. Sonoma, CA: Polebridge, 1994.
- Taylor, Joan E. *The Immerser: John the Baptist within Second Temple Judaism*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997.
- _____ and Federico Adinolfi. "John the Baptist and Jesus the Baptist: A Narrative Critical Approach." *Journal for Study of the Historical Jesus* 10 (2012): 247–84.
- Taylor, Justin. "The Coming of Elijah, Mt 17,10–13 and Mk 9,1–13: The Development of the Texts." *Revue biblique* 98 (1991): 107–19.
- Taylor, Vincent. *The Gospel according to St. Mark*. London: Macmillan, 1952.
- Thackeray, Henry St. John. *Josephus: The Man and the Historian*. 1929. Reprint, New York: Ktav, 1967.
- Theissen, Gerd. *The Gospels in Context*. Translated by Linda M. Maloney. London: T & T Clark, 1992.

- _____. "Das 'schwankende Rohr' in Mt. 11,7 und die Gründungsmünzen von Tiberias. Ein Beitrag zur Lokalkoloritforschung in den synoptischen Evangelien." *Zeitschrift des deutschen Palästina-Vereins* 101 (1985): 43–55.
- Thiering, B. E. "Are the 'Violent Men' False Teachers?" *Novum Testamentum* 21 (1979): 293–97.
- _____. "Inner and Outer Cleansing at Qumran as a Background to New Testament Baptism." *New Testament Studies* 26 (1979–80): 266–77.
- Thomas, Joseph. *Le mouvement baptiste en Palestine et Syrie (150 AV. J.-C. – 300 AP. J.-C.)*. Gembloux: Duculot, 1935.
- Thompson, William G. *Matthew's Advice to a Divided Community: Mt. 17,22–18,35*. Analecta biblica 44. Rome: Biblical Institute, 1970.
- _____. "Reflections on the Composition of Mt 8:1–9:34." *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 33 (1971): 365–88.
- Thrall, Margaret E. "Elijah and Moses in Mark's Account of the Transfiguration." *New Testament Studies* 15 (1970): 305–17.
- Thyen, Hartwig. "ΒΑΠΤΙΣΜΑ ΜΕΤΑΝΟΙΑΣ ΕΙΣ ΑΦΕΣΙΝ ΑΜΑΡΤΙΩΝ." Pages 131–68 in *The Future of Our Religious Past: Essays in Honour of Rudolf Bultman*. Edited by James M. Robinson. Translated by Charles E. Carlston and Robert P. Scharlemann. New York: Harper & Row, 1971.
- Tilborg, Sjef van. *Imaginative Love in John*. Biblical Interpretation Series 2. Leiden: Brill, 1993.
- _____. *The Jewish Leaders in Matthew*. Leiden: Brill, 1972.
- Tilly, Michael. *Johannes der Täufer und die Biographie der Propheten: Die synoptische Täuferüberlieferung und das jüdische Prophetenbild zur Zeit des Täufers*. Beiträge zur Wissenschaft vom Alten und Neuen Testament 7/17. Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1994.
- Todd, J. C. "Logia of John." *Expository Times* 21 (1910): 173–75.
- Trilling, Wolfgang. "Die Täufertradition bei Matthäus." *Biblische Zeitschrift* 3 (1959): 271–89.
- _____. *Das wahre Israel: Studien zur Theologie des Matthäus-Evangeliums*. 3d ed. Studien zum Alten und Neuen Testaments 10. Munich: Kösel, 1964.
- Tromp, Johannes. "John the Baptist according to Flavius Josephus, and His Incorporation in the Christian Tradition." Pages 135–49 in *Empsychoi logoi—Religious*

Innovations in Antiquity: Studies in Honour of Pieter Willem van der Horst. Edited by Alberdina Houtman, Albert de Jong, and Magdalena Wilhelmina Misser-van de Weg. *Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity* 73. Leiden: Brill, 2008.

Trumbower, Jeffrey A. "The Role of Malachi in the Career of John the Baptist." Pages 28–41 in *The Gospels and Scriptures of Israel*. *Journal for the Study of the New Testament: Supplement Series* 104. Edited by Craig A. Evans and William R. Stegner. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1994.

Tuckett, Christopher M. "Gospels and Communities: Was Mark Written for a Suffering Community?" Pages 37–96 in *Jesus, Paul, and Early Christianity: Studies in Honour of Henk Jan de Jonge*. Edited by Rieuwerd Buitenwerf, Harm W. Hollander, and Johannes Tomp. *Novum Testamentum Supplements* 130. Leiden: Brill, 2008.

_____. "Matthew: The Social and Historical Context – Jewish Christian and/or Gentile?" Pages 99–129 in *Matthew's Gospel: At the Crossroads of Early Christianity*. Edited by Donald Senior. *Bibliotheca ephemeridum theologiarum lovaniensium* 243. Leuven: Peeters, 2011.

_____. *Q and the History of Early Christianity: Studies in Q*. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1996.

Turner, David. *Matthew*. Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008.

Twelftree, Graham N. "Jesus the Baptist." *Journal for the Study of the Historical Jesus* 7 (2009): 103–25.

Tyson, Joseph P. "The Birth Narratives and the Beginning of Luke's Gospel." *Semeia* 52 (1991): 103–20.

Ulrich, Daniel W. "The Missional Audience of the Gospel of Matthew." *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 69 (2007): 64–83.

Uro, Risto. "John the Baptist and the Jesus Movement: What Does Q Tell Us?" Pages 231–57 in *The Gospel Behind the Gospel: Current Studies in Q*. *Novum Testamentum Supplements* 75. Edited by R. A. Piper. Leiden: Brill, 1994.

Vassiliadis, Petros. "The Function of John the Baptist in Q and Mark: A Hypothesis." *Theologica* (1975): 405–13.

Verheyden, Jozef. "The Violators of the Kingdom of God: Struggling with Q Polemics in Q 16,16–18." Pages 397–415 in *Jesus, Paul, and Early Christianity: Studies in Honour of Henk Jan de Jonge*. Edited by Rieuwerd Buitenwerf, Harm W.

- Hollander, Johannes Tromp. *Novum Testamentum Supplements* 130. Leiden: Brill, 2008.
- Verseput, Donald. *The Rejection of the Humble Messianic King*. European University Studies 33/291. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1986.
- Vielhauer, Philipp. "Tracht und Speise Johannes des Täufers." Pages 47–54 in *Aufsätze zum Neuen Testament*. Munich: Chr. Kaiser, 1965.
- Viviano, Benedict. "The Least in the Kingdom: Matthew 11:11, Its Parallel in Luke 7:28 (Q), and Daniel 4:14." *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 62 (2000): 41–54.
- Vledder, Evert Jan and A. G. van Aarde. "The Social Location of the Matthean Community." *Hervormde theologiese studies* 51 (1995): 388–408.
- Vogels, Walter. "Performers and Receivers of the Kingdom: A Semiotic Analysis of Matthew 11:2–15." *Science et Esprit* 42 (1990): 325–36.
- Völter, D. "Die Apokalypse des Zacharias im Evangeliums des Lucas." *Theologisch Tijdschrift* 30 (1896): 244–69.
- Wahlde, Urban C. von. *The Gospel and Letters of John*. 3 vols. Eerdmans Critical Commentary. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010.
- _____. "The Johannine 'Jews': A Critical Survey." *New Testament Studies* 28 (1982): 33–60.
- _____. "The Witnesses to Jesus in John 5:31–40 and Belief in the Fourth Gospel." *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 43 (1981): 385–404.
- Walker, Rolf. *Die Heilgeschichte im ersten Evangelium*. Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments 91. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1967.
- Walters, Patricia. *The Assumed Authorial Unity of Luke and Acts: A Reassessment*. Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series 145. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009.
- Watts, Rikki E. *Isaiah's New Exodus and Mark*. Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 88. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1997.
- Watson, Francis. "Toward a Literal Reading of the Gospels." Pages 195–217 in *The Gospel for All Christians: Rethinking the Gospel Audiences*. Edited by Richard Bauckham. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998.
- Weaver, Dorothy Jean. "Power and Powerlessness: Matthew's Use of Irony in the Portrayal of Political Leaders." Pages 179–96 in *Treasures Old and New*. Edited

by David Bauer and Mark Allan Powell. Society of Biblical Literature Symposium Series 1. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1996.

- Webb, Robert L. "The Activity of John the Baptist's Expected Figure at the Threshing Floor (Matthew 3.12 = Luke 3.17)." *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 43 (1991): 103–11.
- _____. "John the Baptist and His Relationship to Jesus." Pages 179–229 in *Studying the Historical Jesus: Evaluations of the Current State of Current Research*. Edited by Bruce D. Chilton and Craig A. Evans. Leiden: Brill, 1994.
- _____. *John the Baptizer and Prophet*. Journal for the Study of the New Testament: Supplement Series 62. Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1991.
- Wentling, Judith. "A Comparison of the Elijan Motifs in the Gospels of Matthew and Mark." *Proceedings: Eastern Great Lakes Biblical Society* 2 (1982): 104–25.
- Weren, Wim. "The History and Social Setting of the Matthean Community." Pages 51–62 in *Matthew and the Didache: Two Documents from the Same Jewish-Christian Milieu?* Edited by Huub van de Sandt. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2005.
- Whealy, Alice. *Josephus on Jesus: The Testimonium Flavianum Controversy from Late Antiquity to Modern Times*. Studies in Biblical Literature 36. New York: Peter Lang, 2003.
- White, L. Michael. "Shifting Sectarian Boundaries in Early Christianity." *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* 70 (1988): 7–24.
- Whitters, Mark F. "Jesus in the Footsteps of Jeremiah." *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 68 (2006): 229–47.
- Wilkens, W. "Die Täuferüberlieferung des Matthäus und ihre Verarbeitung durch Lukas." *New Testament Studies* 40 (1994): 542–57.
- Willitts, Joel. *Matthew's Messianic Shepherd-King: In Search of the 'Lost Sheep of the House of Israel.'* Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft 147. Berlin: de Gruyter, 2007.
- Wilson, Bryan. *Magic and the Millennium: A Sociological Study of Religious Movements of Protest among Tribal and Third World Peoples*. London: Heinemann, 1973.
- Wilson, S. G. "Lukan Eschatology." *New Testament Studies* 15 (1970): 330–47.
- Windisch, Hans. "Kleine Beiträge zur evangelischen Überlieferung. 1. Zum Gastmahl des Antipas." *Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche* 18 (1917–18): 73–81.

- Wink, Walter. *John the Baptist in the Gospel Tradition*. Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series 7. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968.
- _____. Review of Josef Ernst, *Johannes der Täufer: Interpretation, Geschichte, Wirkungsgeschichte*. *Journal of Biblical Literature* 111 (1992): 144–46.
- Winkle, Ross E. “The Jeremiah Model for Jesus in the Temple.” *Andrews University Seminary Studies* 24 (1986): 155–72.
- Witetschek, Stephan. “The Stigma of a Glutton and Drunkard: Q 7,34 in Historical and Sociological Perspective.” *Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses* 83 (2007): 135–54.
- Witherington III, Ben. *The Acts of the Apostles: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998.
- _____. “Jesus and the Baptist—Two of a Kind?” Pages 225–48 in *SBL Seminar Papers, 1988*. Society of Biblical Literature Seminar Papers 27. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988.
- Wold, Benjamin G. “Agency and Raising the Dead in 4QPseudo-Ezekiel and 4Q521 2 ii.” *Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche* 103 (2012): 1–19.
- Wolff, Christian. “Zur Bedeutung Johannes der Täufers im Markusevangelium.” *Theologischer Literaturzeitung* 102 (1977): 857–65.
- Wolter, Michael. “Apollos und die ephesinischen Johannesjünger (Acts 18,24–19,7).” *Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche* 78 (1987): 49–73.
- _____. “Reconstructing Q?” *Expository Times* 115 (2003–4): 115–19.
- Yamasaki, Gary. *John the Baptist in Life and Death: Audience-Oriented Criticism of Matthew’s Narrative*. Journal for the Study of the New Testament: Supplement Series 167. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1998.
- Yoon, Joonho. “Among Deborah, Esther, and Jezebel, Who is the Literary Predecessor of Herodias?: Multi-Intertextual Reading of John’s Beheading in Matthew 14.” Paper presented at the annual meeting of the SBL. Atlanta, November 21, 2010.
- Zeller, Dieter. “Die Bildlogik des Gleichnisses Mt 11 16f./Lk 7 31f.” *Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche* 68 (1977): 252–57.

- Zetterholm, Magnus. *The Formation of Christianity in Antioch: A Social Scientific Approach to the Separation between Judaism and Christianity*. London: Routledge, 2003.
- Ziesler, J. A. *The Meaning of Righteousness in Paul*. Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series 20. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972.
- _____. "The Removal of the Bridegroom: A Note on Mark 2,18–22 and Parallels." *New Testament Studies* 19 (1972–73): 190–94.
- Zucker, David J. "Jesus and Jeremiah in the Matthean Tradition." *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* 27 (1990): 288–305.

VITA

Brian Dennert was born in Des Moines, Iowa. Before studying at Loyola University Chicago, he attended Cedarville University, where he earned a Bachelor of Arts in Bible Pre-Seminary with highest honor in 2003. He also attended Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in Deerfield, Illinois, and he received a Master of Divinity in 2006 and a Master of Theology in New Testament in 2009. He has taught courses at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School and Loyola University Chicago.

Dr. Dennert has presented papers at regional and national meetings of the Society of Biblical Literature and the Evangelical Theological Society and is a member of the Society of Biblical Literature, the Evangelical Theological Society, Institute for Biblical Research, and the Chicago Society of Biblical Research. He has published articles in *Trinity Journal*, the *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*, *Annali di Storia dell'Esegesi*, and the *Journal of Biblical Literature*. He has also written book reviews for *Trinity Journal*, the *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*, and *Bulletin for Biblical Research*. Since 2011, Dr. Dennert has served on the North American Editorial Board of *Annali di Storia dell'Esegesi*.

Dr. Dennert is an ordained minister in the Presbyterian Church in America. Prior to his doctoral studies, Dr. Dennert served a parish in Naperville, Illinois. He now serves as the Associate Pastor at Trinity Presbyterian Church and currently resides in Crestwood, Illinois with his wife (Beth) and two children (Emma and Micah).

