Overcoming Satan, Overcoming the World: Exploring the Cosmologies of Mark and John

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Various cosmologies are reflected in the NT, and with these cosmologies come different understandings of the origins of evil. Within the Gospels in particular, there are individual and corporate sources of evil, along with a notorious harbinger of ill-will, known variously as Satan (Σατανᾶς),[1] the devil (ὁ διάβολος),[2] the evil one (ὁ πονηρός),[3] Beelzebul (Βεελζεβοὺλ),[4] the enemy (ὁ ἐχθρός),[5] the tempter (ὁ πειράζων),[6] and the ruler of this world (ὁ ἄρχων τοῦ κόσμοῦ τούτου).[7] My goal in this essay is to explore the role that evil plays in Markan and Johannine cosmologies and to delineate major differences as they relate to the mission of Jesus in each Gospel. In particular, I aim to explore three questions: (1) What is the primary source of evil in each narrative?; (2) How does God, specifically through the agency of Jesus, intervene to overcome the evil that emerges in each narrative?; and (3) How do the answers to the previous two questions shed light on the different Christological presentations of these two Gospels?

The mythological worlds of Mark and John introduce numerous realities, both human and otherworldly, that conspire to oppose Jesus's mission. In this essay, I will argue that, while in Mark's Gospel, Jesus's chief opponent is Satan, who represents an opposing kingdom with its own satanic agenda, in John's Gospel, Jesus is continually met with opposition from the world (ὁ κόσμος) and its various representatives, including Satan (the ruler of the

[1] Mark 1:13; 3:23, 36; 4:15; 8:33; Matt 4:10; 12:16; 16:23; Luke 10:18; 11:18; 13:16; 22:3; 22:31; John 13:27.

[2] Matt 4:1, 5, 8, 11; 13:39; 25:41; Luke 4:2, 3, 5, 9, 13; 8:12; John 6:20; 8:44; 13:2.

[3] Matt 13:19, 38.

[4] Matt 10:25; 12:24, 27; Mark 3:22; Luke 11:15, 18, 19. On the development of this title, see E. C. B. MacLaurin, "Beelzeboul," *NovT* 20 (1978): 156–60.

[5] Matt 13:39; Luke 10:19.

[6] Matt 4:3.

[7] John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11.

κόσμος, cf. John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11), the religious leaders (οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι),[8] and the crowds. Thus, through his ministry and on the cross, the mission of the Markan Jesus is to defeat Satan and thereby usher in the reign of God. For John, however, Satan is one part of a larger cosmic reality over which Jesus must ultimately triumph. I recognize that these claims are somewhat monotonous, though my argument is intended to function heuristically, suggesting prospects for future analyses of these texts. I am guided here by the recognition that neither Gospel offers a singular unified cosmology.[9] Rather, each consists of elements drawn from potentially conflicting cosmologies that have coalesced within the documents as we now have them. My greater concern in approaching these two Gospels is to examine the world reflected in the final forms of these texts. In what follows, I will pay close attention to the contours of the world(s) within the texts while remaining mindful of historical concerns in the world(s) behind them.

A. Overcoming Satan in the Gospel of Mark

Mark's view of the world in which Jesus lives undeniably belongs to the realm of apocalyptic eschatology.[10] While there is significant debate over whether contemporary reconstructions of the historical Jesus should be articulated in eschatological or non-eschatological terms, scholars have long recognized the apocalyptic elements in the Synoptics in general, and Mark in particular. The story world of Mark's Gospel assumes that a cosmic battle between God and Satan is underway in an earthly realm over which evil currently prevails and in which humans are, on their own, powerless with respect to evil. As this battle moves progressively toward a climactic showdown, Jesus will prevail and usher in the kingdom of God. All of this is to say nothing of Mark's overtly apocalyptic material, including the so-called "little

[8] There is not space here for a full discussion of the problems raised by trying to translate the phrase οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι as it appears in the Fourth Gospel. For the purposes of my argument here, I understand the term – with a few exceptions (e.g., John 4:9, 22; 18:39; 19:3) – to serve as shorthand for the Jewish leaders from Jerusalem.

[9] The work of John K. Riches on these questions is particularly useful; see "Conflicting Mythologies: Mythical Narrative in the Gospel of Mark," *JSNT* 84 (2001): 33; idem, *Conflicting Mythologies: Identity Formation in the Gospels of Mark and Matthew* (SNTW; Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 2000). Cf. also David J. Neville, "Moral Vision and Eschatology in Mark's Gospel: Coherence or Conflict?" *JBL* 127 (2008): 359–84, who points to the inherent tension created by Mark's ethical presentation and the violence perpetrated by God against Jesus *en route* to ushering in the kingdom on earth.

[10] See Marcus's helpful treatment of this subject: Joel Marcus, *Mark 1–8* (AB 27; New York: Doubleday, 2000), 71–75; cf. also idem, *The Way of the Lord: Christological Exegesis of the Old Testament in the Gospel of Mark* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1992).

apocalypse" in Mark 13, and pronouncements from Jesus such as "you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven" (14:62).[11] Against the backdrop of this apocalyptic worldview, we will examine how evil functions in the Gospel and how a paradoxical crucified messiah ultimately overcomes Satan.

The Gospel of Mark begins abruptly, employing a fast-paced, paratactic style of discourse. At the outset of the story, John the Baptizer appears on the fringes of civilized society, behaving in an overtly eschatological manner and calling for repentance (1:3–8). Jesus then appears, and is immediately baptized and driven into the wilderness to be tempted by Satan (1:9–13).[12] Like Adam, Jesus is tempted by Satan at the beginning of his story. Unlike Adam, there is no report of his failure or victory.[13] This scene represents the beginning of Jesus's struggle against evil – one that will continue throughout the narrative. However, 1:13c provides an initial sign that things will be different with Jesus than with Adam. Whereas the temptation and subsequent fall of Adam led to fear and anxiety within creation (see Gen 3:14–20), Jesus is here depicted as being with the wild beasts (ἦν μετὰ τῶν θηρίων). This phrase likely reflects an allusion to Adam's peaceful relationship with all creation in Eden prior to the fall. Thus, Jesus's reversal of Adam's misfortunes will begin slowly and incipiently and increase exponentially, just like the growth of a mustard seed (cf. Mark 4:30–32).[14] This idea is illustrated in the first scene after Jesus emerges from the wilderness (1:21–28), where he rebukes and casts out an unclean spirit – one of Satan's lesser emissaries.[15] This exor-

[11] A helpful starting point for understanding the role apocalyptic eschatology played in the thought world leading up to the NT, is John J. Collins, *The Apocalyptic Imagination: An Introduction to Jewish Apocalyptic Literature* (2d ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998).

[12] On the significance of the temptation stories, cf. Petr Pokorny, "The Temptation Stories and Their Intention," *NTS* 20 (1974): 115–27; Richard Dormandy, "Jesus' Temptations in Mark's Gospel: Mark 1:12–13," *ExpTim* 114 (2003): 183–7.

[13] Technically, Adam is tempted by a serpent in Gen 3, which later Jewish interpretation connected with Satan. See e.g., *Apoc. Mos.* 17:1–5. There can be little doubt that in the popular religious imagination of Mark's audience, the serpent and Satan were one and the same. For more on this, see Gary A. Anderson, "The Exaltation of Adam and the Fall of Satan," *Journal of Jewish Thought and Philosophy* 6 (1997): 105–34. By this time, Isa 14:12, which recounts the fall of the morning star from heaven, was also influential, being commonly understood as a reference to Satan's fall from heaven. See Jürgen Kalms, *Der Sturz des Gottesfeindes: Traditionsgeschichtliche Studien zu Apokalypse 12* (WMANT 93; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 2001), 144–9.

[14] Irenaeus will later systematize this idea, albeit loosely, in the notion of "recapitulation."

[15] Throughout the narrative, Mark uses the terms δαιμόνιον (1:34, 39; 3:15, 22; 6:13; 7:26, 29, 30; 9:38) and ἀκάθαρτος πνεῦμα (1:23, 26, 27; 3:11, 30; 5:2, 8, 13; 6:7; 7:25; 9:25) interchangeably.

cism is an early indication that Satan's power has been significantly weakened in the wake of the wilderness struggle with Jesus.

It is important that Satan is among the first figures to which the Markan audience is introduced. Apart from the disciples – who will figure prominently in the story – the most important players in the narrative appear in Mark's prologue (1:1–13).[16] In order, the audience meets Jesus (1:1), John the Baptizer (1:4), God (viz., the "voice from the heavens"; 1:11), the Spirit (1:12), and Satan (1:13). These characters will direct the action within Mark's story, even if only from the shadows.[17] That Satan appears in Mark's earliest list of *dramatis personae* suggests his role as Jesus's primary adversary in the Gospel.[18]

I. Mark's "Gospel" and the In-Breaking of the Kingdom

After his experience in the wilderness, Jesus emerges proclaiming the advent of God's kingdom (or "reign," βασιλεία; 1:15). For the Markan Jesus, the in-breaking of this kingdom will be mediated primarily through three activities: preaching,[19] healing,[20] and exorcism.[21] These are the activities in which Jesus

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[16] There is ongoing debate as to the exact parameters of Mark's prologue. I have chosen to limit the unit to 1:1–13, while others argue that the unit should be expanded to include 1:14–15. On the latter suggestion, cf. e.g., Rudolf Pesch, *Das Markusevangelium* (2d ed.; HTKNT; Freiburg: Herder, 1976–1977), 1:71–74; Josef Ernst, *Das Evangelium nach Markus* (RNT; Regensburg: Pustet-Verlag, 1981), 31; Dieter Luhrmann, *Das Markusevangelium* (HNT 3; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1987); 32–33; Marcus, *Mark 1–8*, 137–40; M. Eugene Boring, *Mark* (NTL; Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2006), 29–53.

[17] God makes only two appearances in Mark (1:11; 9:7), though there is little doubt that much of what occurs in the narrative happens as a result of divine constraint. On the role of God in the story, see Ira Brent Driggers, *Following God Through Mark: Theological Tension in the Second Gospel* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2004); idem, "God as Healer of Creation in the Gospel of Mark," in *Character Studies and the Gospel of Mark* (eds. Christopher W. Skinner and Matthew Ryan Hauge; LNTS 483; London: Bloomsbury/T&T Clark, forthcoming 2014). Likewise, Satan makes only one explicit appearance in the narrative but hovers over the events of the story in and through his "representatives" – demons, illness, and the religious leaders.

[18] "One place that enables us to see that Mark's broad view of Satan or the demonic is other than socio-political is in the Temptation narrative (Mark 1:12–13). By its early position in the Gospel it is narrationally important for informing hearers' opinions about Jesus as well as introducing and characterizing an anti-hero" (Graham H. Twelftree, *In the Name of Jesus: Exorcism among Early Christians* [Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007], 106–7).

[19] The terms κηρύσσω (1:14, 38–39), διδάσκω (1:21–28; 2:13; 4:2; 6:2, 6, 34; 8:31; 9:31; 10:1; 11:17; 12:35; 14:49), and λαλεῖν τόν λόγον (2:2; 4:33) are used of Jesus's public proclamation in Mark.

[20] Passages in which Jesus heals contracted illness, congenital illness, or raises the dead include: 1:29–45; 2:1–12; 3:1–6; 5:21–43; 6:53–56; 7:32–37; 10:46–52.

[21] See 1:23–26, 34, 39; 5:1–20; 7:24–31; 9:14–29.

most regularly engages during his ministry in the first half of the Gospel, and they represent the substance of the disciples' ministry as depicted in the bookend passages, 3:13–19 and 6:7–13. In chapter 3, Jesus chooses the Twelve that "they might be with him and that he might send them out to preach and to have authority to drive out demons" (3:14–15). In chapter 6, the disciples venture out: "They went out and preached that people should repent. They drove out many demons and anointed many sick people with oil and healed them" (6:12–13). These three activities reveal something about Mark's vision of how God will intervene to overcome evil.[22] As a buildup to the climactic moment on the cross, these are the primary means by which the arrival of God's reign and the end of Satan's dominion will be displayed throughout the ministry of Jesus.

1. Public Proclamation and the Reign of God

In Mark's incipit we have what is likely an objective genitive (τοῦ εὐαγγελίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ; the gospel *about* Jesus Christ), but the focus of this "gospel," as least as Jesus preaches it, is rarely Jesus himself – a striking difference from the understanding of "gospel" held by Mark's earliest audiences. Instead Jesus's proclamation is about God and the nearness of God's kingdom. Especially in the first half of the Gospel (1:1–8:30), whenever Jesus is found preaching and teaching, the focus is on God rather than himself.[23] The specific content of Jesus's inaugural message is found in Mark 1:15: "The time has been fulfilled and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent and believe in the gospel." Here we have two parallel statements, the first of which consists of two indicative clauses connected by καὶ, and the second of which consists of two imperatives connected by καὶ:

1:15a	1:15b
πεπλήρωται ὁ καιρὸς	μετανοεῖτε
καὶ	καὶ
ἤγγικεν ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ	πιστεύετε ἐν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ

[22] Lawrence Iwuamadi, *"He Called Unto Him the Twelve and Began to Send them Forth": The Continuation of Jesus' Mission According to the Gospel of Mark* (Tesi Gregoriana: Seri Telogia 169; Rome: Editrice Pontificia Università Gregoriana, 2008), 249-69, argues that continuing the mission is a critical theme in Mark, despite the paucity of explicit references within the narrative.

[23] This begins to change in the second half of the Gospel, especially in 8:31, 9:31, and 10:32–34, where Jesus predicts his coming betrayal, persecution, and death. Steadily in the latter chapters of Mark, Jesus's preaching becomes more and more about his mission, crucifixion, and resurrection.

As Marcus notes, "This parallelism is to be understood in the context of apocalyptic eschatology. The *kairos*, the old evil age of Satan's dominion, is now fulfilled, i.e., at an end; the new age of God's rule is about to begin."[24] Jesus's very first message is therefore an announcement that Satan's rule has been vanquished, God's rule has been inaugurated, and action is required by those who hear.[25] The idea that Satan's dominion has reached its end appears in another instance of Jesus's public proclamation, the so-called Beelzebul controversy in Mark 3.

There is not space here to provide a full exegesis of this passage, though it does bear mentioning that the point we are making is ancillary to the broader emphasis of the unit. Mark 3:20–35 is the first of the so-called Markan intercalations and seeks to create dramatized irony that will connect Jesus's family to his Jewish opponents. In the middle section of the sandwich construction (3:22–27), Jesus utters a brief parable about plundering the house of the "strong man" (ὁ ἰσχυρός):

[22] And the teachers of the law who came down from Jerusalem said, "He is possessed by Beelzebul! By the prince of demons he is driving out demons." [23] So Jesus called them over to him and began to speak to them in parables: "How can Satan drive out Satan? [24] If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. [25] If a house is divided against itself, that house cannot stand. [26] And if Satan opposes himself and is divided, he cannot stand; his end has come. [27] In fact, no one can enter a strong man's house without first tying him up. Then he can plunder the strong man's house (NIV).

On this parable, Marcus comments,

In the implicit allegory that has been created by the narrative, Satan is the strong householder (cf. 3:25), Jesus is the Stronger One who has invaded his realm, trussed him up securely, and plundered his goods…. In the context the parable implies that Jesus' exorcisms demonstrate the end of the dominion of Satan (3:24) and the arrival of the dominion of God.[26]

In 1:7, John the Baptizer had announced the coming of "a stronger one" (ἔρχεται ὁ ἰσχυρότερος). Beginning with his wilderness struggle against Satan and on through the rest of the story, Jesus, the "stronger one" is in the process of binding and overcoming Satan, the "strong man."[27]

Another instance of Jesus's public proclamation in which Satan appears explicitly is the so-called Parable of the Sower (4:1–20; cf. ἔρχεται ὁ Σατανᾶς, 4:15). This parable is important for the present discussion for sever-

[24] Marcus, *Mark 1–8*, 175.

[25] An "already-not yet" tension begins to emerge at this point in the story. Although the reign of God is breaking into the world with immediacy and power, the ultimate force of evil will not be defeated completely until Jesus's triumph on the cross.

[26] Ibid., 282–3.

[27] See Roland Meynet, "Qui donc est 'le plus fort'?" *RB* 90 (1983): 334–50 for a discussion of this pericope and its evolution in the Synoptic Gospels.

al reasons. First, it is the only parable in Mark that Jesus openly explains. It thereby serves as a paradigm for how the audience is to understand the remaining Markan parables. Second, that Satan is portrayed in this paradigmatic parable as the chief enemy interfering with the sowing process is further evidence of his roles as Jesus's primary opponent and the source of evil in Mark's cosmology.

Thus, a key component of Jesus's public proclamation in the Gospel of Mark is that overcoming Satan is at the very heart of his mission. As the βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ makes its full emergence into the world, the audience is progressively aware of the weakening of Satan's dominion until, at the cross, it is forever vanquished.

2. Exorcism, Healing, and the Reign of God

The remaining two elements of Jesus's Markan ministry – healings and exorcisms – are miraculous in nature and thereby represent direct challenges to the source of evil in Mark's cosmology. After Jesus preaches his inaugural sermon, his first two public actions are driving an unclean spirit from a man in the synagogue (1:21–28) and healing Simon's mother-in-law (1:29–31). As the story moves forward, exorcisms and healings are ubiquitous and both prove to be key components of ushering in the reign of God.

There is little dispute that Jesus's confrontations with the demonic are to be understood as direct conflict with satanic powers. In the Second Temple literature from the second century B.C.E. to the first century C.E., there is also a strong tradition linking illness to the demonic.[28] Mark's cosmology appears to be drawing from the well of this tradition such that when the Markan Jesus comes into contact with both sickness and unclean spirits, he is directly at war with Satan. In each instance, Jesus is able to succeed with relative ease in vanquishing Satan's schemes (see the chart below).

Text	Situation	Result(s)
1:21–28	Jesus drives out an unclean spirit.	The spirit departs the man with a shriek.
1:29–31	Jesus heals Simon's mother-in-law.	The fever leaves and she begins to wait on Jesus and his disciples.
1:40–45	Jesus heals a man with leprosy.	The man is clean and openly reports what Jesus has done.

[28] Cf. e.g., Tob 6, 8, 11; *Jub.* 48; *1 En.* 6–11; apGen 20:12–29; 4QPrNab ar. On this, Howard Clark Kee comments, "Human ailments and disasters are performed by the demonic powers, but are permitted by God to happen. Ultimately, the powers of evil will be overcome, and the final and eternal restoration of the creation will occur" (*Medicine, Miracle & Magic in New Testament Times* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986], 22–23).

Text	Situation	Result(s)
2:1–11	Jesus heals & forgives a paralytic.	The healed man walks away and the witnesses openly praise God.
3:1–5	Jesus heals a man with a withered hand.	The hand is restored and the religious leaders scheme against Jesus.
5:1–20	Jesus drives out a "legion" of spirits.	The healed man is dressed, in his right mind, and eager to go with Jesus.
5:21–43	Jesus heals a hemorrhaging woman and raises a little girl from the dead.	The woman departs free of hemorrhage and the girl is alive and able to walk.
7:31–37	Jesus heals a deaf and mute man.	The man's ears are opened and his tongue is loosened so that he speaks plainly.
8:22–26	Jesus heals a blind man.	In this two-stage healing,[29] the man initially sees people "walking around like trees," then later sees everything clearly.
9:14–29	Jesus drives out an unclean spirit.	The convulsing boy is once again able to hear, speak, and stand up.
10:46–52	Jesus restores Bartimaeus' vision.	The man can see again and begins to follow Jesus.

The above chart illustrates Jesus's conflict with illness and the demonic in Mark. Given the connection between illness and the demonic discussed above, it is plausible that Mark's audience would have understood these confrontations as demonstrations of Jesus's power over situations previously controlled by Satan and his emissaries. It is also true that in each instance, Jesus returns individuals to a state greater than their previous way of life, allowing each the freedom to live without prior negative constraints under the newly inaugurated reign of God. Of particular importance to the argument we have been advancing here is the scene depicted in Mark 5:1–20, where Jesus is met by a demoniac living among the tombs. The audience learns that the man is possessed by a "legion" of demons that has imbued him with superhuman strength.[30] In 5:3–5 we read:

[29] Within the recent commentary tradition there is much historical speculation over Jesus's seeming inability to heal the man on the first try. Within Mark's literary universe, the two-stage healing is probably intended to be symbolic and related to the disciples and their "two stages" of vision in the forthcoming episodes. On this, see Francis J. Moloney, *The Gospel of Mark: A Commentary* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2002), 163.

[30] The term λεγιών is a Latin loanword used in the Roman military to denote a group of between 5,000 and 6,000 soldiers. In recent years, scholars have discussed a possible anti-Roman sentiment behind Mark's use of this term, suggesting that this is one place where Rome's presence is made explicit in the narrative. On Mark as a reaction to Roman imperialism, see the recent monograph by Adam Winn, *The Purpose of Mark's Gospel: An Early*

> This man lived in the tombs, and no one could bind him anymore, not even with a chain. For he had often been chained hand and foot, but he tore the chains apart and broke the irons on his feet. *No one was strong enough to subdue him.* Night and day among the tombs and in the hills he would cry out and cut himself with stones (NIV; emphasis added).

In this description we have another connection to our previous contrast between Jesus as the stronger one (ὁ ἰσχυρότερος) and Satan as the strong man (ὁ ἰσχυρός). To this point, the demoniac has demonstrated such power that "no one was strong enough to subdue him" (καὶ οὐδεὶς ἴσχυεν αὐτὸν δαμάσαι, 5:4c). However, Jesus proves to be more than capable of subduing the demoniac. He accomplishes this through a conversation in which he permits the demons to make a request, after which they re-embody within a herd of pigs and rush headlong into the sea. Here Jesus again demonstrates that, though Satan's dominion has been characterized by inhuman strength, he is the stronger one who can subdue even the greatest of powers with mere words.

II. Evil and Mark's Christology

To this point, our discussion has sought to establish that in Mark's Gospel, Satan is the primary source of evil who uses multiple agents to enforce his dominion and challenge the reign of God inaugurated by Jesus. It should also be stressed that, even in light of the foregoing argument, evil is not, generally speaking, writ large across the narrative, but rather remains implicit. We turn now to a consideration of how this understanding of evil relates to Mark's Christology. The principal Christological titles employed by Mark are "Messiah" (χριστός), "Son of God" (ὁ υἱός τοῦ θεοῦ), and "Son of Man" (ὁ υἱός τοῦ ἀνθρώπου). Although Son of Man is Jesus's preferred self-designation, it is never employed as a confessional title. Rather, it seems to relate to Jesus's fate and authority as the (crucified) Son of God and (suffering) Messiah – the two titles that dominate the Gospel story. The importance of these two titles can be observed further by looking more closely at Mark's incipit: Ἀρχὴ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ υἱοῦ θεοῦ ("The beginning of the gospel of Jesus *Christ* the *son of God*"; emphases added).[31] This opening statement provides

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Christian Response to Roman Imperial Propaganda (WUNT 2.245; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008).

[31] There is a notoriously difficult textual issue here. The phrase υἱοῦ θεοῦ is missing from some manuscripts, notably the first hand of ℵ (along with θ 28 *l*2211 sa^{ms}). Most other manuscripts include υἱοῦ θεοῦ (with some including the variant υἱοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ: A f ^{1,13} 33 𝔐). On external grounds, υἱοῦ θεοῦ boasts much better attestation. Two internal considerations can also be used as evidence for this reading. With regard to transcriptional probabilities, one can explain the omission of the phrase in ℵ by pointing out that there are multiple places in Sinaiticus in which chains of genitives ending in ου are omitted (e.g. Acts 28:31; Col 2:2; Heb 12:2; Rev 12:14; 15:7; 22:1). In uncial script, the title for Jesus would likely have been written as one long *nomen sacrum* (ΙΥ̅ΧΡ̅ΥΥ̅Θ̅Υ̅). Within this

an insider's perspective that elevates the audience above the figures in the story and provides information crucial for understanding the identity of Jesus. As the story unfolds, the audience already knows what most characters in the story will fail to realize: Jesus is both Messiah and Son of God. These two titles also serve as "bookends" for the narrative. At the halfway point of the Gospel, Peter confesses that Jesus is the Messiah (8:29), and as Jesus takes his last breath, the centurion standing watch declares, "Surely this man was the son of God" (15:39). These categories represent the substance of Mark's Christological emphasis. As discussed above, Jesus's roles in the Markan drama are those of preacher, healer, exorcist, and ultimately, crucified one. Therefore, the question before us is: How do these roles align with the recognition that Jesus is Messiah and Son of God?

It is not too difficult to imagine what it would have meant for Mark's earliest audiences that a figure identified as Messiah or Son of God preached, healed, and drove out demons. These are part and parcel of the religious tradition to which they were heirs. The death of Jesus at the hands of his enemies would have been much more problematic. Unlike the Johannine Jesus, the Jesus of Mark's Gospel consistently diverts attention from himself. When Jesus proclaims the kingdom, he points toward God. It is noteworthy that, though healings and exorcisms are usually performed in public, they function differently than Jesus's public proclamation of the kingdom. When the crowds witness the miraculous, their focus is shifted to Jesus rather than God, and since the Markan Jesus wishes to direct attention toward God and away from himself, healings and exorcisms are typically followed by a command to secrecy.[32] One reason for this secrecy is because these activities do not indi-

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string of upsilons, one can easily imagine an accidental scribal omission. As to intrinsic probabilities, it seems highly likely that the author intended the title υἱοῦ θεοῦ as an original part of the incipit. The titles Christ and Son of God punctuate the halfway point (8:29) and ending (15:39) of the story, respectively. The overwhelming preponderance of external and internal evidence suggests that υἱοῦ θεοῦ is original. For opposing perspectives on the inclusion of υἱοῦ θεοῦ, see Peter M. Head, "A Text-Critical Study of Mark 1.1 'The Beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ'," *NTS* 37.4 (1991): 621-9, who argues against its inclusion, and Tommy Wasserman, "The 'Son of God' Was In the Beginning (Mark I:I)," *JTS* 62.1 (2001): 20-50, who argues for its inclusion.

[32] The so-called "messianic secret" (also known as Mark's secrecy motif) has been one of the most discussed topics in Markan research. The first scholar to identify this motif was William Wrede, whose work is required reading for studying the Second Gospel; cf. *The Messianic Secret* (trans. J. C. G. Greig; Library of Theological Translations; Cambridge: James Clarke & Co., 1971). While Wrede's conclusions are no longer accepted, his work continues to be cited as a reference point for fresh examinations of Mark's secrecy motif. See, most recently, David F. Watson, *Honor Among Christians: The Cultural Key to the Messianic Secret* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2010) and Kelly R. Iverson, '"Wherever the Gospel is Preached': The Paradox of Secrecy in the Gospel of Mark," in *Mark as Story:*

cate fully what it means for Jesus to be Messiah and Son of God. One can understand what it means for Jesus to fill these roles only through the lens of his death and resurrection (e.g., 10:45). His exalted status is validated ironically through his death at the hands of his enemies, and the audience is thus forced to come to terms with the paradox of a crucified Messiah and Son of God.

In the first half of Mark, Jesus is an agent of God's will, ushering in God's reign. As preacher/exorcist/healer, he stands in a long line of those proclaiming what God *would* do in the future by demonstrating what God *could* do in the present. It is not until the cross, however, that Mark's announcement of Jesus as Messiah and Son of God makes sense within the context of the story world, where Satan is the principal source of evil. Through the ministry of Jesus the kingdom is inaugurated, but only through his death and resurrection is Satan overcome and God's dominion established on the earth.

B. Overcoming the World in the Gospel of John

Before we explore John's understanding of evil, it is possible to point out several major differences between the Markan and Johannine presentations of Jesus's ministry. First, whereas the Markan Jesus regularly preaches about God's kingdom, Jesus's message in John is most often about himself and his relationship to the Father. This emphasis can perhaps best be seen in Jesus's use of predicated[33] and un-predicated[34] ἐγώ εἰμι pronouncements, though it is perspicuous in the discourses as well.[35] Also, the term "kingdom" appears only three times in John (3:3, 5; 18:36), and in each instance appears to be synonymous with the concept of heaven. Second, in stark contrast to Mark's Gospel, the Johannine Jesus never performs a single exorcism.[36] Third, in John as in Mark, Jesus engages in miraculous activity, though here his miracles are known as σημεῖα ("signs") and there are only seven. Of the seven

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Retrospect and Prospect (eds. Kelly R. Iverson and Christopher W. Skinner; SBLRBS 65; Atlanta & Leiden: Society of Biblical Literature & Brill, 2011), 181–200.

[33] Cf. 6:35, 41, 48, 51; 8:12, 23; 10:7, 9, 11, 14; 11:25; 14:6; 15:1, 5.

[34] Cf. 4:26; 6:20; 8:24, 28, 58; 13:19; 18:5, 6, 8.

[35] On the literary and theological significance of ἐγώ εἰμι, see David Mark Ball, *'I Am' in John's Gospel: Literary Functions, Background, and Theological Implications* (JSNTSup 124; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996).

[36] Cf. Eric Plumer, "The Absence of Exorcisms in the Fourth Gospel," *Bib* 78 (1997), 350–68; Ronald A. Piper, "Satan, Demons, and the Absence of Exorcisms in the Fourth Gospel," in *Christology, Controversy and Community: New Testament Essays in Honour of David R. Catchpole* (eds. David G. Horrell and Christopher M. Tuckett; NovTSup 99; Leiden: Brill, 2000), 253–78.

signs, only three are healings;[37] the remaining four consist of three nature miracles[38] and the raising of Lazarus from the dead.[39] Fourth, and perhaps most importantly for our purposes here, it is not clear that John assumes an apocalyptic cosmology like that found in Mark. A strong case can be made for Mark's thoroughgoing apocalyptic perspective, but John is better understood against the backdrop of sectarian Judaism in the first century C.E., though some have argued that John retains remnants of apocalyptic.[40] It should be clear at the outset that Jesus's ministry and cosmic context are strikingly different in John than in Mark, and therefore the way in which God intervenes to overcome evil will also differ.

I. Cosmology, John's Prologue, and the Κόσμος

What can we say of John's cosmology and in what way does it impact our understanding of the origins and role of evil in the Gospel? First, it must be admitted that modern discussions of John's cosmology have been complex; consequently a specific background is impossible to identify with any certainty. Second, it is a confounding irony that as important as cosmology is to an interpretation of the Gospel, cosmology *per se* is not a major concern within the narrative.[41] In other words, decisions about John's cosmology made prior to interpreting the Prologue prove foundational to the interpretive lens through which scholars have read the entire Gospel.[42] Scholars have variously

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[37] A royal official's son is healed in 4:46–54, a paralytic is healed at Bethzatha in 5:1–18, and the young man born blind is healed in 9:1–7.

[38] Jesus changes water to wine (2:1–11), feeds 5,000 men (6:5–14), and walks on water (6:16–21).

[39] See 11:1–45. In an interesting departure from the traditional listing of signs, Andreas Köstenberger ("Seventh Johannine Sign: A Study in John's Christology," *BBR* 5 [1995]: 87–103) replaces the walking on water (6:16–21) with the cleansing of the temple (2:13–22).

[40] See the recent volume, Catrin H. Williams and Christopher Rowland, eds., *John's Gospel and Intimations of Apocalyptic* (London: Bloomsbury/T&T Clark, 2013). Many of the contributors suggest that the Fourth Gospel reveals shades or hints of apocalyptic. See also, Benjamin E. Reynolds, *The Apocalyptic Son of Man in the Gospel of John* (WUNT 2.249; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008).

[41] T. Evan Pollard, "Cosmology and the Prologue of the Fourth Gospel," *VC* 12 (1958): 148–9, expresses this well: "In the Gospel as a whole John is not interested in cosmology. His interest is in the saving activity of God in Jesus Christ…. If the theme of the Gospel itself (apart from the Prologue) is the self-revelation of God through His Son for the salvation of the world – the theme which is most explicitly stated in John 3^{16} and 20^{31} – then it is not unreasonable to expect that this would also be the main theme of the Prologue. If the theme of the Prologue is primarily cosmological, it is not a real introduction to the Gospel, for it is introducing a theme which has no place in the Gospel itself."

[42] For a recent and historically important example, one need look no further than Rudolf Bultmann's "Gnostic Redeemer Myth" to confirm that this is true; cf. "Die Bedeutung der

read John's λόγος in light of Greek philosophy, Philonic exegesis, incipient forms of Gnosticism, rabbinic mysticism, and other expressions of sectarian Judaism. Here we will argue that John reflects a backdrop within first century diaspora Judaism and that the Prologue should be read in light of the Torah.[43]

The first words of the Gospel, ἐν ἀρχῇ, are a transparent allusion to the opening words of Gen 1. As the Prologue advances, it is difficult to escape the conclusion that John's story of Jesus is meant to be situated within the broader story of Israel's God as recounted in Genesis and Exodus. Throughout the early chapters of Genesis, the God of Israel is shown creating, sustaining, and entering into covenant with humanity. Just as the first creation account takes place "in the beginning" when God creates by *speaking* light, land, and all living creatures into existence (see Gen 1:3–31), so the Gospel of John pictures the λόγος (= דבר יהוה) as the one through whom everything was created (1:3). The λόγος is the purveyor of *life* and the *light* of humanity shining forth into the darkness (1:4–5) – concepts of obvious importance to Gen 1.

Within the story of the incarnate λόγος, John introduces his audience to the multi-layered term, κόσμος.[44] In Hellenistic Greek, κόσμος carries a range of meanings, several of which are employed in the Gospel;[45] these include nuances related to the material reality of the created world,[46] the physical realm into which Jesus has entered,[47] and the object of God's affection and salvific intentions.[48] What is perhaps most important for analyzing the role of the world in John's cosmology is its metonymical use to denote humanity. Pamment perceptively notes:

> The difference between the Johannine presentation and that of the synoptics can be seen from John's narrowing of the concept 'world'. For the synoptic writers, the world includes not only human society but its physical environment… The Fourth Evangelist does not, of course, deny that the physical world is God's creation: 'All things were made through him and without him was not anything made that was made' (1:3); but his interest immediately

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neu erschlossenen mandäischen und manichäischen Quell für das Verständnis des Johannesevangeliums," *ZNW* 24 (1925): 100–146.

[43] On this background, see the excellent discussion in Craig S. Keener, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary* (2 vols.; Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003) 1:172–232.

[44] The term is used 78 times in the Fourth Gospel and appears in all but four chapters (John 2; 5; 19; 20).

[45] See *TDNT* 3:868–98; BDAG, s.v. κόσμος (pp. 561–3).

[46] Most notably 1:10b: ὁ κόσμος δι' αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο.

[47] The Fourth Gospel presents Jesus as the one who has come "from above." Thus, his departure from the Father represents his entrance into "the world," the realm of "below." On this, see 1:9, 10a, 3:17ab, 19; 6:14.

[48] See, among others, 1:29; 3:16, 17c; 4:42; 6:51.

centres on human society to the exclusion of all else (1:4ff). For John, 'the world' is 'the human world'.[49]

Thus, characteristically in John, κόσμος is employed as a technical term for humanity, and in those contexts has a "distinctly pejorative meaning."[50] Lars Kierspel has devoted much attention to analyzing the role of the world in John, though he focuses too narrowly on the connection between οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι and ὁ κόσμος that emerges in the latter stages of the Gospel.[51] In my opinion this identification is too restrictive. More attention should be devoted to understanding characteristics exhibited by other human figures, and this will allow us to see how humanity is fundamentally opposed to the mission of the Johannine Jesus. Before we can appreciate this specific nuance of the term, we need to understand the role of the κόσμος in the Gospel's prologue. Since it is widely acknowledged that the prologue sets the agenda for the entire Gospel, it stands to reason that reading the narrative through the lens of the prologue will prove useful for understanding the Gospel's message.

In the prologue, it is revealed that the λόγος has eternal origins (1:1–2), is the agent of creation (1:3), the light of humanity (1:4–5, 9), has taken on human flesh (1:14), and is the revealer of the Father to humanity (1:18). Though the audience is privy to this inside information, the characters in the narrative are not. Throughout the Gospel, Jesus will meet characters whose most consistent trait is their inability to understand him in a way that would be deemed legitimate from the evaluative point of view of the narrator. Some will fail to understand his obscure teachings, while others will struggle to comprehend even the most transparent elements of his message, mission, or identity.[52]

Two proleptic statements from the prologue describe this progressively unfolding reality. The first is 1:10: "He was in the world (ἐν τῷ κοσμῷ), and though the world (ὁ κόσμος) was created through him, the world (ὁ κόσμος) did not know him." Two different nuances seem to be present in this one verse. The first and second uses of κόσμος refer to the realm of creation into which Jesus has entered, while the third refers to humanity. This statement prepares the audience for humanity's rejection of Jesus across the narrative and builds upon the narrator's previous statement that the darkness has not

[49] Margaret Pamment, "Eschatology and the Fourth Gospel," *JSNT* 15 (1982): 82.

[50] Stanley B. Marrow, "Κόσμος in John," *CBQ* 64 (2002): 90.

[51] Lars Kierspel, *The Jews and the World in the Fourth Gospel: Parallelism, Function, and Context* (WUNT 2.220; Tubingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006), especially 76-110; 111-53.

[52] I deal at length with these different types of understanding in my monograph, *John and Thomas: Gospels in Conflict? Johannine Characterization and the Thomas Question* (PTMS 115; Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2009); see also my chapter, "Misunderstanding, Christology, and Johannine Characterization: Reading John's Characters through the Lens of the Prologue," in *Characters and Characterization in the Gospel of John* (ed. Christopher W. Skinner; LNTS 461; London: Bloomsbury/T&T Clark, 2013), 111–27.

comprehended the light (see 1:5). Verse 11 then reiterates the substance of verse 10: "He came to his own place (τὰ ἴδια) and his own people (οἱ ἴδιοι) did not receive him." The neuter plural use of ἴδιος in the first half of the verse is a reference to the physical realm into which Jesus has entered, and the masculine plural use of ἴδιος in the second half of the verse refers to humanity. Together, these two verses function similarly to a type of synthetic parallelism found in many poetic passages of the Hebrew Bible; viz., the second verse reiterates and clarifies the meaning of the first. The world thus represents the internal orientation and outward behavior of all who oppose the light. Throughout the story, the κόσμος has a number of representatives who oppose Jesus – οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι, the crowds, and individuals such as Nicodemus and the disciples. For John, κόσμος is symbolic of humanity, which is characterized by its opposition to Jesus.

Before moving on, it is important to note that approaching the subject this way runs the risk of flattening out a robust and complex concept. This analysis of the κόσμος as human opposition to Jesus is not the same as undertaking a comprehensive analysis of the κόσμος concept throughout the Fourth Gospel. For John the world is a beautiful place created by God (through Jesus), as well as a place capable of great evils. These complementary ideas stand side-by-side in the Fourth Gospel and should be kept in mind.

II. The World versus the Word

A handful of passages describe the relationship between Jesus and the κόσμος. The collective attitude of humanity toward Jesus manifests itself primarily in two ways: hatred and misunderstanding. We will briefly examine these passages in order to get a more informed understanding of the source of evil in John's narrative.[53]

1. The World Hates/Rejects Jesus

Four texts in particular depict the hostility of the κόσμος toward Jesus: 7:1–7; 14:15–17; 15:18–21; 17:14–15.

7:1–7: Here Jesus's brothers encourage him to travel into Judea and make his works known publicly (7:3–4). That their encouragement is derisive rather than genuine is confirmed by 7:5: "For not even his own brothers believed in him." In response to their request Jesus speaks of his "hour" – an important theme throughout the narrative – and contrasts their reality with his own. While his appointed time has not yet come, they are always free to do as they

[53] For a fuller treatment of these passages, see my chapter, "The World: Promise and Unfulfilled Hope," in *Character Studies in the Fourth Gospel: Literary Approaches to Seventy Figures in John* (eds. Steven D. Hunt, D. François Tolmie, and Ruben Zimmerman; WUNT 2.314; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013), 61–70.

wish. In 7:7, Jesus explains that the world is not able (οὐ δύναται) to hate them though it hates him because he testifies publicly about the world's evil deeds. Here δύναται indicates an existential reality that goes beyond mere ability, and anticipates its use in the next saying from John 14. The world is constrained by its hatred for Jesus but is not able to hate those who share its perspectives.

14:15–17: In this section Jesus has begun instructing the disciples about the coming of the *Paraclete*. Just as there is an organic connection between Jesus and the Father, there is a connection between the Father and the soon-coming spirit. This advocate, whom Jesus identifies as the spirit of truth (14:17a), will reside in the disciples and guide them in the future. The world, however, is not able (οὐ δύναται) to receive this spirit, nor can the world see or come to know the spirit (14:17b). This statement is another instance in which Jesus uses δύναται to describe an existential reality that extends beyond simple human capacity. The world *cannot* understand or come to know the Father because it is fundamentally opposed at an existential level to the things of God.

15:18–21: Again Jesus clearly states that the world hates him, adding that the world also hates anyone who belongs to him (15:18–19). This teaching further reinforces the interconnectedness of Jesus to his followers, not unlike the connection shared by Jesus and the Father. The world's hatred will also lead it to persecute Jesus and his followers, all of which results from their not knowing the Father (15:21; cf. 1:10). Ironically, the world's persecution and eventual killing of Jesus will result in the world's ultimate defeat (cf. 16:32–33).

17:14–15: In John 17, Jesus closes the Farewell Discourse (chapters 13–17) with what has come to be known as his "high priestly prayer." Anticipating his departure, Jesus prays for himself (17:1–5), his disciples (17:6–19), and future believers everywhere (17:20–26). In this middle portion of the prayer he petitions the Father to protect the disciples because the world has hated them just as it has hated him.

2. The World Misunderstands Jesus

In addition to the passages that depict the world's hatred of Jesus, there are also three instances in which the world is characterized as being unable to understand Jesus: 12:19; 16:20; 17:25. I have argued above that misunderstanding is the trait most consistently displayed by human figures in the Fourth Gospel, though often this element of characterization is displayed through speech and character interaction. In these three texts the world is explicitly described as lacking the capacity to comprehend Jesus's message, mission, and identity.

12:19: The setting in which this verse appears is Jesus's triumphal entry into Jerusalem. As he rides into town, Jesus is acclaimed king of Israel and recognized as the long-awaited fulfillment of the Jewish scriptures. It is noteworthy that in 12:16, the disciples do not understand the meaning of this event. Throughout John there is a present/future schema in which the disciples do not understand what is happening in the present of the story time but are able to understand in the later, post-resurrection setting from which the story is being told (e.g., 2:13–17; 19–22; 20:3–9). This sense of misunderstanding applies to the crowds who are also acclaiming Jesus as the king. In 12:19, the Pharisees lament that the "whole world" has gone after Jesus. While it is tempting to see this as a positive characterization, I disagree with that conclusion. The crowds are hailing Jesus as king because of what they have seen him do. This is a "signs-faith" and it proves to be an illegitimate basis upon which to believe. Without exception, those who embrace Jesus on the basis of his *works* ultimately fall away. It is rather those who believe Jesus on the basis of his *word* who are exalted within the narrative.[54] Therefore, the statement that the world has gone after Jesus – even on the lips of the Pharisees – aligns with the evaluative point of view of the narrator, and reinforces the idea that the world has fundamentally misunderstood Jesus's mission. This misunderstanding will be more clearly revealed when all of those now acclaiming him as king abandon him in his darkest hour.

16:20: In the center of chapter 16, Jesus is preparing the disciples for his departure to the Father. The audience knows that he must return to the Father in order to complete his mission on earth, but this will be a cause of grief for the disciples. Jesus claims that the world will rejoice at his departure, which the implied audience understands is his impending death. Ironically, however, the world will rejoice in ignorance, believing that Jesus's departure is a victory. This victory, however, will be temporary, as the resurrection will signify that Jesus's mission has been completed successfully. This rejoicing in ignorance is further evidence that the world is unable to see and understand Jesus's mission.

17:25: At the end of Jesus's high priestly prayer, he speaks directly to the Father and makes the comment, "Though the world does not know you, I know you and they [viz., all disciples] know that you have sent me." Jesus has revealed the Father to those he has chosen, but the world is unable to partake in this revelation. This is the final time Jesus speaks of the world with the nuance we have been describing here. The term κόσμος will appear five more times in the Gospel (18:20, 36 [twice], 37; 21:25), but never again as a

[54] E.g., the mother of Jesus (2:1–12); the Samaritan woman (4:21–26, 39–42); the royal official (4:43–54). Of immediate relevance to this point is Jesus's statement to Thomas in 20:29: "Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

symbol for humanity. The end of the Farewell Discourse signals the beginning of a new epoch in the relationship between Jesus and the κόσμος.

Unlike Mark, Jesus's enemy is not an otherworldly entity who must be defeated in a climactic battle. Instead, Jesus's primary enemy is humanity, whose collective impulse – opposing the things of God – is driven more by its limitations than its power. If humanity, metonymically represented as the κόσμος, is Jesus's main opponent in the Gospel of John, does this mean that John has altogether abandoned the role of Satan so prominent in Mark?

III. Satan, the Ruler of the Κόσμος

Satan makes several appearances in John. The term Σατανᾶς appears once (13:27) and διάβολος is used three times (6:20; 8:44; 13:2), but the designation that is most important for our study is ὁ ἄρχων τοῦ κόσμου. The Gospel's emphasis on humanity as the κόσμος is no doubt related to its insistence that Satan is the ruler of the κόσμος. Three times Satan is called the ruler of the/this world (12:31; 14:30; 16:11), and though the title seems to suggest dominion, Satan does not function as the overarching enemy of Jesus.[55] It is actually rather difficult to delineate the exact function of Satan vis-à-vis the κόσμος. John's Satan figure is neither completely in control of events on the earth nor completely separate from the impulses of humanity, which makes for a somewhat confusing taxonomy of evil. Stuckenbruck has observed:

> The devil (ὁ διάβολος) is presented not so much as one who acts on its own but through *people who oppose Jesus*. Activity that opposes Jesus comes from the devil and is described through the metaphor of parentage…. However, the close alignment between demonic and human activity is not ultimately a matter of collapsing the two…. [S]uch language cannot be reduced to metaphor, [and] 'the ruler of this world' appropriately functions as an overarching designation for a power that controls impulses, which, on a profound level, contravenes what Jesus declares about himself.[56]

The title ὁ ἄρχων τοῦ κόσμου appears for the first time in 12:31, within the ironic context of Jesus predicting Satan's defeat: "Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be driven out (ἐκβληθήσεται ἔξω)." Even at the first utterance of his title, Satan's fate and seeming lack of power come to the fore. The second occurrence of the title in 14:30 announces that he is coming, with the strong implication that he is coming to kill Jesus. This time Jesus announces Satan's impotence: "He has no power over me" (14:31b). The third and final time the title appears is in 16:11: "The ruler

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[55] For more on this, see Jutta Leonhardt-Balzer, "Gestalten des Bösen im frühen Christentum," in *Apokalyptik und Qumran* (eds. Jörg Frey and Michael Becker; Einblicke 10; Paderborn: Bonifatius, 2007), 221–5.

[56] Loren Stuckenbruck, "Evil in Johannine and Apocalyptic Perspective: Petition for Protection in John 17," in *John's Gospel and Intimations of Apocalyptic*, 205–6 (emphasis added).

of this world has been condemned (κέκριται)." This use of κρίνω in the perfect tense has pronounced exegetical significance. Sometimes called the "intensive perfect," this usage implies that an event was completed in the past and has ongoing results or implications at the time of speaking or writing.[57] Jesus not only predicts the permanent defeat of Satan, but speaks about it in a manner that emphasizes its ongoing effects. All three instances in which Jesus speaks of ὁ ἄρχων τοῦ κόσμου definitively indicate that he will not pose a significant threat to Jesus's mission, though his opposition to Jesus is bound up with humanity's resistance. In the face of this dual opposition from the κόσμος and its ruler, Jesus's victory appears certain (cf. 12:27; 16:33).

It is still not entirely clear how Satan's function should be understood with respect to the primary source of evil in this Gospel, though perhaps we are asking the wrong question. Does Satan have power or does he not? Is he above the κόσμος or in league with the κόσμος? Jutta Leonhardt-Balzer helpfully sums up the role of Satan in John by noting that "the Archon is the force behind the world in its state of refusal to acknowledge Christ; he is personified unbelief."[58] Satan therefore works hand-in-glove with the κόσμος, for which he is the not-completely-powerless figurehead.

IV. Evil and John's Christology

The Christology of John's Gospel is among the most distinctive in the NT. The idea of Jesus as the incarnation of God's pre-existent λόγος is completely foreign to the Christologies of the Synoptic Gospels.[59] Whereas in Mark's apocalyptic universe, the primary objective of this very human Jesus is to defeat Satan and usher in the kingdom of God, the mission of the Johannine Jesus is, above all, to reveal the Father. This divine figure is not primarily concerned with overthrowing evil, either in the form of humanity or a Satan figure. To be sure, Jesus does speak about both of these things, but only as a virtual certainty. We have already witnessed the inevitability of Satan's defeat in the three passages where Jesus discusses the ἄρχων τοῦ κόσμου. In 16:33, Jesus announces to his disciples: "Take heart, I have overcome the world (ἀλλὰ θαρσεῖτε, ἐγὼ νενίκηκα τὸν κόσμον, 16:33)." As with 16:11, this is another proleptic announcement in which the intensive perfect is employed. This event will not take place in the story time until Jesus is glorified, though

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[57] See BDF, §340, 342; Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar: Beyond the Basics. An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 573–6.

[58] Jutta Leonhardt-Balzer, "The Ruler of the World, Antichrists and Pseudo-Prophets: Johannine Variations on an Apocalyptic Motif," in *John's Gospel and Intimations of Apocalyptic*, 189 (emphasis added).

[59] For an opposing perspective, see Simon J. Gathercole, *The Pre-existent Son: Recovering the Christologies of Matthew, Mark and Luke* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006).

he speaks of it in the Farewell Discourse as a certainty, the effects of which will be ongoing.

Accompanying his certainty about future events, Jesus also displays a confidence that contrasts sharply with his portrayal in Mark. Three examples should suffice to illustrate this critical difference. First, in John 12:27, he comments: "Now my soul is troubled. And what should I say – 'Father, save me from this hour'? No, it is for this reason that I have come to this hour." By contrast, in Mark 14:32–42, Jesus is troubled to the point of death and prays three times that his "cup" might pass from him. Second, in John 18, Jesus exercises a near sovereign control over the events that take place in the garden, even securing release for his disciples (cf. 18:4–10) before his arrest. The garden scene in Mark 14 differs significantly, as Jesus is immediately seized after the kiss from Judas (14:45–46). Third, while on the cross, Jesus has a conversation in which he instructs the Beloved Disciple to care for his mother (19:26–27) and then triumphantly announces that his mission is complete (τετέλεσται, 19:30). On the cross in Mark, Jesus's agonized cry is "*Eloi eloi lama sabachthani?*" (15:34).

John's "stranger from heaven" has entered a dualistic, non-apocalyptic world, intent on accomplishing the Father's will.[60] Through the incarnation, evil – in the forms of Satan and humanity – has already been defeated. Rather than securing Jesus's victory, the cross is the means by which God's full revelation to humanity is realized and salvation is secured.

C. Postscript: Christological Trajectories

In demonstrating the critical differences in Markan and Johannine cosmologies, I have tried to make the case that in these Gospels, cosmology, evil, and Christology are intimately connected to one another. The Second Gospel assumes an apocalyptic worldview in which Jesus's battle against evil culminates in a decisive victory on the cross. Within the thought world of the Fourth Gospel, the cross consummates the revelation of God rather than the defeat of evil. With these profound differences in mind, it remains only to raise a few historical questions about Christological trajectories:

(1) There is strong evidence that belief in and devotion to Jesus as an exalted figure can be traced back to some of our earliest sources. In other words, a so-called "high Christology" emerged quite early within the various

[60] See the foundational essay by Wayne Meeks, "The Man from Heaven in Johannine Sectarianism," *JBL* 91 (1972): 44–72; cf. also Marinus de Jonge, *Jesus: Stranger from Heaven and Son of God: Jesus Christ and the Christians in Johannine Perspective* (SBLSBS 11; Missoula: Scholars, 1977).

Christian churches.[61] While Mark's Christology is much higher than is sometimes allowed by scholars, the Christology of the Fourth Gospel is among the highest in the NT, and is framed within a largely non-apocalyptic narrative universe. Against that backdrop, does John's exalted Christology necessitate the abandonment of an apocalyptic worldview (or vice versa: Does John's rejection of apocalyptic necessitate a more exalted Christology)?

(2) There is also strong evidence, in my opinion, for the position that the Fourth Gospel was familiar with the Gospel of Mark.[62] However, irrespective of one's position regarding the relationship between the two Gospels, it must be judged implausible that John would have been completely unfamiliar with traditions portraying Jesus as an exorcist. Thus, John's avoidance of material depicting Jesus as an exorcist suggests an intentional distancing from this prominent early tradition.[63] Was it, then, part of John's agenda to break from this early Christological paradigm in order to fashion a more cosmic, and consequently more docetic Christology?

(3) I have suggested above that the view of two opposing powers, so common to the cosmology of the literature of the Second Temple period, is controverted, or at the very least, modified in the Fourth Gospel.[64] What, if anything, could this cosmology, coupled with John's Christology, help us understand about the provenance of the Fourth Gospel?

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[61] The starting point for an analysis of this evidence is the authoritative work of Larry Hurtado; see *Lord Jesus Christ: Devotion to Jesus in Earliest Christianity* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003); idem, *How on Earth Did Jesus Become a God? Historical Questions about Earliest Devotion to Jesus* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005).

[62] See the case set forth in C.K. Barrett, *The Gospel according to St. John: An Introduction with Commentary and Notes on the Greek Text* (2d. ed.; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1978), 42–54.

[63] On this, see Edwin K. Broadhead, "Echoes of an Exorcism in the Fourth Gospel?," *ZNW* 86 (1995): 111–9.

[64] Eric Sorensen, *Possession and Exorcism in the New Testament and Early Christianity* (WUNT 2.157; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2002), 118-67, treats the cosmology of the Fourth Gospel as if it is identical to other cosmologies in the NT. He also suggests that exorcism and possession are concepts present within John. In my estimation, his discussion both flattens out and conflates the various cosmologies present in the NT.