SCRIPTURE IN THE NEW TESTAMENT: LITERARY AND THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES[1]

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Abstract

Following the work of C.H. Dodd (1952) and R.B. Hays (1989), it is often assumed that the task of explaining scriptural quotations in the NT is to look beyond superficial discrepancies and discover sophisticated patterns or frameworks of meaning. Those who argue that the rhetorical purposes of the NT authors should take priority over what the text once meant in its ancient context are said to be blind to this level of sophistication, which often involves evoking texts at some distance from the quoted text. In this article, I examine two quotations (Isa 40:3; 52:5) where scholars have argued that the meaning and function of the texts (in Mark 1:2-3 and Rom 2:24 respectively) depends on their ability to evoke a wider Isaian framework. I first establish that the arguments for Isa 40:3 in Mark 1:2-3 are very much stronger than the arguments for Isa 52:5 in Rom 2:24. I then show that there are significant counter-arguments to the case for Isa 40:3 in Mark 1:2-3, which are not necessarily fatal but do raise serious questions. I conclude that the much weaker case of Isa 52:5 in Rom 2:24 can safely be dismissed.

1. Introduction

1.1 Use of Scripture and theology

As with many NT topics, traditional approaches to 'Scripture in the NT' have usually focused on theology. For example, if we want to know why Mark opens his Gospel with a quotation from Isa 40: ('Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight'), the answer lies in Mark's theology; in particular, his understanding of Jesus as the χριστός who fulfils the hopes of Israel. If we want to know why Paul's first explicit quotation in Romans is

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from Hab 2:4 ('The righteous by faith will live'), it has usually been related to his doctrine of 'justification by faith', though more recently, Hays and others have related it to the role of Christ's faithfulness in Paul's doctrine of salvation (Hays 1988, 209). And for some commentators, this is also true for allusions. Thus the book of Revelation opens with the statement that the 'revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show his servants what must soon take place' contains a three word allusion (ἃ δεῖ γενέσθαι) to Dan 2:28, which according to Beale, signals that John sees his visions as the fulfilment of Daniel (Beale 1998, 165-8). For much of Church history, the study of Scripture in the NT has been in the service of theology.

1.2 Use of Scripture and historical studies

Historical studies were not entirely absent from this but only really came to the fore after the Enlightenment. Three areas can be singled out. First, there was intense interest in reconstructing the circumstances of the OT books. This opened up a gap between what the 'original' meant (or might have meant) and the meaning assigned to it in the NT. Of course, it proved extremely difficult to isolate the 'author' of books like Genesis or Isaiah, which were deemed to be composite, but whether the focus was on the sources or the final editors, the net effect was the same. Isa 40:3 is not referring to John the Baptist's preaching in the wilderness but a literal highway, along which the exiles can return to their homeland.

The second area springs from this. Scripture was not an ancient artefact for the people of Israel but a living word, accompanied by an oral tradition and scribal exegesis. The key question was not what such and such a text might have meant in its original setting, even if that could be reconstructed, but how the text was being interpreted in the first century. This was of course greatly facilitated by the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, though the works of Philo and Josephus remain important. The most popular books at Qumran, namely, Psalms, Isaiah and Deuteronomy, are also the most cited in the NT. Perhaps the most celebrated example of this came with the discovery of the Nahum commentary, which like Paul, understands the Deuteronomic legislation about not leaving criminals hanging overnight on a tree as a reference to crucifixion (2:12). For those concerned about the validity of NT interpretation, this provides a sort of halfway house. The NT meaning frequently differs from the original meaning but is understandable in the light of first-century interpretation.

Third, and one on which Gert Steyn has done a great deal of work, the text used by the NT authors is not necessarily identical to that which has come down to us in Sinaiticus, Vaticanus and Alexandrinus. The aggregate of these three great uncial manuscripts formed the basis of Rahlfs' edition of the Septuagint and numerous studies in the twentieth century offered a rationale for why the NT authors differed from Rahlfs. In preparation for the volume on *Isaiah in the New Testament* (Moyise & Menken 2006), I compared the wording of Rahlfs with that of the Göttingen edition in all of the explicit quotations from Isaiah and found that the extent of difference was 8%. Many scholars today, such as Menken (2004) on Matthew and Wilk (1998) on Paul, argue that these authors were dependent on a revised form of the LXX and so the situation is even more complex. Ironically, at a time when these results are becoming more and more available, copyright law allows Rahlfs' edition of the LXX to be bundled with many software programmes, compounding the problem even more.

1.3 Use of Scripture and literary studies

A more recent development and one that I will consider in the first part of this paper, is literary approaches. The NT is not the only ancient work to draw on other texts. Consciously or unconsciously, authors have been drawing on other authors since time immemorial. Is it possible to deduce a theory of quotation or a theory of allusion that will guide us in our interpretation of particular NT texts? The obvious place to start such an investigation is the ancient rhetorical handbooks, and to that we now turn.

2. Ancient theories of quotation

2.1 Aristotle

Aristotle briefly discusses the citing of ancient witnesses such as Homer and certain well-known proverbs and maxims but the brevity of his treatment suggests that he was not convinced of its value. He does offer some examples but they are not very profound: 'If you are urging somebody not to make a friend of an old man, you will appeal to the proverb, "Never show an old man kindness".' (*Rhet.* 1:15). He does, however, make some interesting observations. First, he stipulates that the use of maxims should be confined to the older man who is experienced in such subjects. On the lips of the inexperienced, such maxims sound foolish. Secondly, he suggests the orator

should try and guess the opinions of his listeners and then offer a general truth in support. Thus 'if a man happens to have bad neighbours or bad children, he will agree with any one who tells him, "Nothing is more annoying than having neighbours."' (*Rhet*. 2:21). Thirdly, in order to make a proverb or maxim more persuasive, he suggests adding a judicious comment. Thus the maxim, 'We ought not to follow the saying that bids us treat our friends as future enemies: much better to treat our enemies as future friends' is made more convincing by the addition, 'for the other behaviour is that of a traitor' (*Rhet*. 2:21).

2.2 Quintillian

Quintilian notes the practice of the 'greatest orators of drawing upon the early poets to support their arguments or adorn their eloquence... for the charms of poetry provide a pleasant relief from the severity of forensic eloquence' (*Inst.* 1:8.12). There are two ideas here. First, is the idea of proof, which 'makes use of the sentiments expressed by the poet as evidence in support of his own statements.' In *Inst.* 2:7, Quintilian argues that it will be more useful for boys to memorise the great works than their own compositions for this will give them 'a plentiful and choice vocabulary and a command of artistic structure and a supply of figures which will not have to be hunted for, but will offer themselves spontaneously from the treasure-house'. Such a treasure-house will be useful in court debate for 'phrases which have not been coined merely to suit the circumstances of the lawsuit of the moment carry greater weight and often win greater praise than if they were our own'. In other words, utterances that do not spring from the immediate situation are less open to the accusation of bias, for they were taken as 'authoritative' before the exigencies of the current situation were known.

2.3 Longinus

The idea of the 'charms of poetry' is particularly taken up by Longinus in his pursuit of the sublime: 'it is well that we ourselves, when elaborating anything which requires lofty expression and elevated conception, should shape some idea in our minds as to how perchance Homer would have said this very thing' (*Subl.* 14:1). Indeed, 'there would not have been so fine a bloom of perfection on Plato's philosophical doctrines, and that he would not in many cases have found his way to poetical subject-matter and modes of expression, unless he had with all his heart and mind struggled with

Homer' (*Subl.* 13:4). Longinus is aware of the accusation of plagiarism but denies it. One is not seeking to pass someone else's work off as one's own; it is more like 'taking an impression from beautiful forms or figures or other works of art' (*Subl.* 13:4). Those not necessarily persuaded by rational argument are moved in their inner being by the sublime.

2.4 Assessment

Given the importance of Homer in the ancient world, these statements are rather meagre but they do offer a starting point for our discussion. Some scholars think that NT quotations can be largely explained by such rhetorical devices, while others see them as peripheral to their main concern of offering an *exposition* or *interpretation* of Scripture. For example, what is the function or purpose of the Habakkuk quotation in Rom 1:17? Aristotle would probably say that Paul has deftly mingled his words with the words of Habakkuk in order to give the impression (in reality, false) that Habakkuk means what Paul means. By omitting the Septuagint's pronoun ('the righteous will live by *my* faithfulness'), Paul ensures that it is human faith that is being spoken about. Furthermore, since Paul is introducing himself to the Roman church, he cites a text that he knows (or thinks he knows) will be common ground. In this way, he hopes to gain their confidence for some of the more controversial claims (e.g., 'all Israel will be saved') that he will make later in the letter.

Quintilian and Longinus would probably note that Paul did not need to add the quotation. His programmatic statement about the gospel could quite happily end with the words, 'For in it the righteousness of God is revealed through faith for faith'. For Quintilian, the advantage of the quotation is that it shows that Paul's statement has not been formulated just to meet the needs of the Roman church but was written long ago. Longinus would be less interested in the words as 'proof' but see them more for their aesthetic value. As a skilled writer, Paul knows when to break off from his own style and introduce words from another source. In this case, the words from Habakkuk have an almost unparalleled succinctness, each word (righteous, faith, live) pregnant with meaning and connotation. Paul knows the value of appealing to the emotions as well as the mind in his quest to persuade his readers and hearers.

3. Modern theories of quotation

3.1 Meir Sternberg

If we turn from ancient to modern theorists, Meir Sternberg highlights the inevitable process of *recontextualization* when a text is severed from its original moorings and forced to serve a different purpose: 'However accurate the wording of the quotation and however pure the quoter's motives, tearing a piece of discourse from its original habitat and reconstructing it within a new network of relations cannot but interfere with its effect' (Sternberg 1982, 108). On this view, quotations inevitably disturb rather than console for they introduce a tension between previous contextual meanings and the function or role in the new work. As H. Davidson says of T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land*, 'The work's meaning is in the tension between its previous contextual definition and its present context' (Davidson 1985, 117). And it is easy to see how this could be applied to the NT. Isa 40:3 is a call to prepare a place in the wilderness for God's coming but this is not Mark's understanding of Jesus' mission, and so a tension is created. Isaiah 52 speaks with great *pathos* concerning Israel's plight, including the statement in v.5 that it has resulted in God's name being despised. When Paul quotes this text in Rom 2:24, he quotes it in the form of an accusation: 'The name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles *because of you*'. Anyone who knows the original context of these quotations will experience dissonance, at least at some level.

In part, this dissonance is caused by the quotation formula itself, which draws attention to the fact that these are not the author's words. Had Paul simply made the point that God is dishonoured when his people act hypocritically, few would disagree. But by drawing attention to the quotation, the possibility arises that the knowledgeable reader will know that the passage is about 'pity' rather than 'blame' and thus experience dissonance. As Christopher Stanley notes, an '"informed audience" would have turned immediately to the original context of the quotation… [and] would have found themselves more confused than helped', leading them to 'question the entire premise of Paul's argument concerning the Jews' (Stanley 2004, 147-8). Stanley deduces from this that Paul did *not* expect his hearers/readers to know the context of his quotations but simply wishes them to accept his interpretation of it.

3.2 Richard Hays and Ross Wagner

Scholars such as Richard Hays and Ross Wagner draw a different conclusion. If locating the quotation would produce dissonance, perhaps we should look for a more sophisticated understanding of Paul's hermeneutics. After all, there are around sixty explicit quotations in Romans. He surely would not have wanted to risk dissonance on sixty separate occasions! For Hays and Wagner, the answer lies in treating the quotations as pointers to an overarching scriptural framework. Thus Wagner claims that Paul wrote Romans 'in concert' with Isaiah (the title of his book). The term is suggestive for it implies harmony rather than discord. According to Wagner, Paul reads Isaiah as a three-act play of rebellion, punishment and restoration and 'locates himself and his fellow believers (Jew and Gentile) in the final act of the story, where heralds go forth with the good news that God has redeemed his people' (Wagner 2002, 354). This involves a two-fold strategy: (1) Paul reads prophecies of Israel's deliverance as prophecies of his own gospel and mission; and (2) Paul reads texts that denounce Israel's idolatry and unfaithfulness as referring to Israel's current resistance to the gospel. This does not create a battlefield, as Sternberg's theory suggests, for in

> claiming that God will be faithful to redeem all Israel, Paul does not lean on the isolated testimony of a few verses from Isaiah. Rather, he taps into a broad and deep stream of thought that is characteristic of Isaiah's vision—a stream of thought, moreover, that is shared by numerous other prophetic texts and that is kept vigorously alive in later Jewish literature (Wagner 2002, 297).

Wagner does not base this on any particular literary theory but he acknowledges his debt to Hays's idea of 'intertextual echo'. Hays draws on theorists like John Hollander and Thomas Greene to argue that texts are not like isolated islands but are interconnected. Thus a reference to one text can *activate* a series of other texts. Wagner quotes the following words from Hays:

> Paul finds the continuity between Torah and gospel through a hermeneutic that reads Scripture primarily as a *narrative* of divine election and promise… Within this narrative framework for interpretation, Paul's fragmentary references to and echoes of Scripture derive coherence from their common relation to the scriptural story of God's righteousness. Though the quotations appear eclectic and scattered, they usually must be understood as allusive

recollections of the wider narrative setting from which they are taken (Wagner 2002, 157-8).

3.3 Aim of this paper

In the rest of this paper, I wish to examine whether this is correct. It is a difficult task because Hays readily admits that a direct comparison with the source texts often 'appears' to point to eclecticism. However, according to Hays, this is a superficial view based on appearance only. A deeper, more sophisticated analysis shows that individual quotations frequently point to a scriptural framework or substructure, as C.H. Dodd (1952) put it, from which they derive their meaning. The aim of this paper is to show that while quotations *can* act in this way, especially in exegetical passages like Romans 4 and Galatians 3, we should not assume that this is the case for all quotations. Such an analysis is of course open to the accusation that it is focusing on 'appearance' only and has not seen the level of sophistication that others have seen. For that reason, the argument will appear rather convoluted, with the following five steps:

1. I will examine the arguments used by Snodgrass, Marcus and Schneck that the quotation of Isa 40:3 in Mark 1:3 is designed to evoke an Isaiah framework for understanding the rest of the book.
2. I will examine the arguments of Hays and Wagner that the quotation of Isa 52:5 in Rom 2:24 evokes the wider salvation context of Isaiah 52.
3. I will show that the case for Mark 1:3 is much stronger than the case for Rom 2:24.
4. I will offer counter-arguments for Mark 1:3 which are not necessarily fatal, but do put several question marks against it.
5. I will argue that if Mark 1:3 presents a much stronger case than Rom 2:24 but has now been shown to have considerable weaknesses, the case for Rom 2:24 can be safely dismissed.

My conclusion is that while well-known passages like Isaiah 40 or Psalm 2 might provide a scriptural framework for understanding individual quotations, we should not assume that this is the case for all of the quotations in the NT.

4. Isa 40:3 in Mark 1:3

4.1 General observations on Mark 1:1-3

The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. As it is written in the prophet Isaiah, 'See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way; the voice of one crying out in the wilderness: "Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight."'

Most commentators on this passage point out all or most the following points:

1. The first words, 'The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God', act as a title. There is debate at to whether it is the title of the whole book or just the introduction. The more detailed commentaries also supply the textual data for accepting 'son of God' as part of the original text.

2. The composite nature of the quotation, despite the fact that Isaiah (at least in the best manuscripts) is specifically mentioned. Opinions vary as to whether this is because Mark has taken over the composite quotation and thinks it is all from Isaiah or that he names Isaiah as either the most important or the most well known of the sources.

3. The changed syntax of Mark's Isaiah quotation, so that it is the 'voice' that is located in the wilderness, not the requested 'preparation'. This is usually thought to have been facilitated by the LXX's omission of the second reference to wilderness (בערבה), thus destroying the parallelism 'in the wilderness'/ 'in the desert' of the Hebrew text.

4. The wilderness theme in the citation provides a context for understanding John's prophetic activity and in particular, the testing of Jesus for forty days, which corresponds to the testing of Israel for forty years.

4.2 Klyne Snodgrass

However, in an article entitled, 'Streams of Tradition Emerging from Isaiah 40:1-5 and their Adaptation in the NT', Klyne Snodgrass demonstrates the influence of this text in other OT books (Mal 3:1), Qumran (1QS 8:12-16;

9:17-20), the Pseudepigrapha (*1 Bar.*5:5-7), Apocrypha (*Ass.Mos.*10:1-5) and the rabbis (*Pes. R*. 29-33). He then turns to the Gospels, where he thinks that Luke has been influenced by this text in 1:17, 76-79; 2:30-31 and 9:52, as well as the extended quotation in Luke 3:4-6. As for Mark, its pivotal position at the beginning of the Gospel suggests that the author has 'adopted a stream of tradition which will summarize immediately what his gospel is about' (Snodgrass 1980, 36). He notes particularly the way that ὁδός is later used for the 'way of God' (Mark 12:14) and the 'way of discipleship' (Mark 10:52), and so 'the composite quotation not only provides a link with the OT, but also establishes a theme that is integral in Mark's explanation of discipleship' (Snodgrass 1980, 36). He concludes the article with the statement that 'the formative role that these verses have particularly in Mark and Luke can be appreciated only in light of previous usage'.[2]

4.3 Joel Marcus

Joel Marcus begins his study of Mark 1:2-3 by offering five arguments in favour of the view that Mark is responsible for inserting the Exod 23:20/Mal 3:1 material into his Isaiah quotation and placing it *before* John the Baptist is introduced.[3] He then draws on Robert Guelich's (1982, 5-15) study that καθὼς γέγραπται ('as it is written') always plays a transitional role in the NT, acting as a bridge between a previously mentioned fact or event and the OT quotation that supports it.[4] That being the case, the primary role of the quotation is not the location of John in the wilderness or even John as the forerunner of Jesus, both of which come after the quotation, but its link with the opening verse. According to Marcus, Mark begins his Gospel with the assertion that the 'good news of Jesus Christ' is 'written in the prophet Isaiah'.

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[2] Snodgrass (1980, 40). This and the following paragraphs on Marcus and Schneck draw on Moyise (2008, 8-11).

[3] (1) The technique of beginning a work with references to Scripture is common in the New Testament (Matthew, John, Romans, Hebrews) (2) Conflation is part of Mark's style (1:11; 11:9-10; 11:17; 13:24-6; 14:62) (3) It explains the reference to 'Isaiah' (4) By eliminating the words 'before you', Mark has improved the parallelism between v. 2 and v. 3 (5) By so doing, he has accented the parallelism between 'your way' and 'the way of the Lord' which coheres with the importance of this theme later in the Gospel. See Marcus (1992, 15-16).

[4] He argues that the four possible counter examples (Luke 11:30; 17:26; John 3:14; 1 Cor 2:9) are not true parallels to Mark 1:2 and so Guelich's conclusion is correct.

Marcus is aware of the dangers of *assuming* that OT quotations always evoke their wider context[5] but in this case, he thinks it is justified. He cites a number of studies that have already suggested that Isaiah 40 is the most likely background for understanding Mark's use of εὐαγγελίον (Stuhlmacher 1968). He also notes common themes, such as the revelation of God's kingly power in Isa 40:9-10 and Mark 1:9-11, and the requirement to herald the good news in Isa 40:9 and Mark 1:15. Citing Snodgrass's article, Marcus asserts that:

> John the Baptist and Jesus are set firmly within the context of Jewish apocalyptic eschatology by the citation of Isa. 40:3 in Mark 1:3. Their appearance on the scene fulfills the prophecies of old because it heralds eschatological events, because it is the preparation for and the beginning of the fulfillment of that end so eagerly yearned for since OT times: the triumphant march of the holy warrior, Yahweh, leading his people through the wilderness to their true homeland in a mighty demonstration of saving power (Marcus 1992, 29).

This 'way' through the wilderness links with Mark 8-10, which has often been characterised as 'following Jesus on the way' because of the occurrence of ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ in Mark 8:27 and 10:52.[6] The reader, says Marcus, would connect this 'way to Jerusalem' with the promised 'way' quoted in Mark 1:2-3 and so deduce that 'the fearful trek of the befuddled, bedraggled little band of disciples *is* the return of Israel to Zion, and Jesus' suffering and death there are the prophesied apocalyptic victory of the divine warrior' (Marcus 1992, 36). Of course, it would be difficult to argue that this is what the prophet had in mind when he spoke of a triumphant march through the wilderness. In a graphic description of Mark's hermeneutics, Marcus says that 'Mark takes the raw ore of Jewish apocalyptic conceptions and subjects them to a Christological neutron bombardment, thereby producing a powerful, disturbing, unpredictable new form of apocalyptic eschatology' (Marcus 1992, 41). Mark is not simply reproducing the thought of Isaiah 40, he is offering a 'radical, cross-centred adaptation of it' (Marcus 1992, 36).

4.4 Richard Schneck

Richard Schneck builds on this by asserting that the prologue of Mark's Gospel, which he considers to be Mark 1:1-15, has a similar function to Isa

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[5] A view often associated with Dodd (1952).

[6] And five occurrences of ὁδός between 8:17 and 10:52 See Best (1981, 5).

40:1-11, which acts as a prologue to Isaiah 40-55. He then seeks to show that there is a significant quotation or allusion to Isaiah in each of the first 8 chapters of Mark. In chs 4 and 7, this is an explicit quotation (Isa 6:9-10 about blindness; 29:13 about hypocrisy). In Mark 2:16-20, he suggests that behind the debate about why the disciples are not fasting lies Isa 58:2-7 (eg. 'you fast only to quarrel and to fight… Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of injustice...?'). On the surface, he notes that Mark 3 seems devoid of allusions to Isaiah but he believes that behind the saying about first binding the strong man before plundering his goods, lies Isa 49:24-25 ('Can the prey be taken from the mighty, or the captives of a tyrant be rescued?'). For reasons of space, I will not reproduce all his examples. Suffice to say that Schneck concludes that Isaiah was Mark's most important scriptural source and that by quotation and allusion, Mark intends to evoke this important salvation-history background for understanding the story of Jesus (Schneck 1994, 42).

5. Isaiah 52:5 in Romans 2:24[7]

5.1 Context in Romans

Like Mark's Gospel, Paul's letter to the Romans begins with the claim that his message ('the gospel of God') was 'promised beforehand through the prophets in the holy scriptures' (Rom 1:2). However, unlike Mark, he does not cite a particular passage of scripture at this point. His first explicit quotation is from Hab 2:4 in Rom 1:17. The next quotation is some 40 verses later in Rom 2:24, where Paul quotes Isa 52:5: 'The name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you'. The quotation is problematic since the emphasis of the original is on God's compassion for the piteous state of Israel, not judgement.

5.2 Textual traditions

The Masoretic text, Göttingen reconstruction of the LXX, NA27 and the NRSV translation of Isa 52:3-6 are set out in the following table.

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[7] This section draws on Moyise (2008, 33-48).

Isa 52:3-6 NRSV	Isa 52:5 MT	Isa 52:5 LXX	Rom 2:24 NA27
You were sold for nothing, and you shall be redeemed without money. For thus says the Lord GOD. Long ago, my people went down into Egypt to reside there as aliens; the Assyrian, too, has oppressed them without cause. Now therefore what am I doing here, says the LORD, seeing that my people are taken away without cause? Their rulers howl, says the LORD, *and continually, all day long, my name is despised.* Therefore my people shall know my name; therefore in that day they shall know that it is I who speak; here am I.	ותמיד כל היום שמי מנאץ	δι᾽ ὑμᾶς διὰ παντὸς τὸ ὄνομά μου βλασφημεῖται ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν	τὸ γὰρ ὄνομα τοῦ θεοῦ δι᾽ ὑμᾶς βλασφημεῖται ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν, καθὼς γέγραπται

5.3 Dissonance with the original context

The key points to note are (1) The LXX has nothing to correspond to the כל
היום ('all day long') of the MT; (2) It has two additional phrases, δι᾽ ὑμᾶς
('because of you') and ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν ('among the gentiles'); (3) Paul's
quotation differs from the LXX (and MT) by omitting διὰ παντὸς
('continually'); (4) Paul's quotation differs from the LXX by using the third
person ('the name of God') rather than first person ('my name'); (5) Paul's
quotation differs from the LXX in the order of the 'name of God' and
'because of you' clauses. All this could suggest that Paul is using a different
LXX text to that printed by Rahlfs and Göttingen but since none of these
changes bring the text closer to the Hebrew, or at least to the MT, this does
not seem likely. The main point to notice, however, is clearly visible in the
English translation. As Byrne says: 'According to both the Hebrew original
and the LXX it was Israel's misfortune that led to the reviling of God's
name by the nations. Paul, however, interprets the LXX phrase "on account
of you" as "because of your fault", thereby converting what was originally
an oracle of compassion towards Israel into one of judgment' (Byrne 1996,
101).

5.4 The solution according to Hays

Hays agrees that on the surface, Paul's quotation appears to be a 'stunning misreading' of Isa 52:5. The original context is clearly 'part of Yahweh's reassurance of Israel in exile' and it is 'precisely because Israel's oppressed condition allows the nations to despise the power of Israel's God, the people can trust more surely that God will reveal himself and act to vindicate his own name'. Paul has indeed 'transformed Isaiah's oracle of promise into a word of reproach' (Hays 1989, 45). However, that is not the end of the matter, for Paul quotes Isa. 52:7 ('How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!') in Rom 10:15, demonstrating that he knows this is an oracle of salvation. It is thus nonsense to assume that Paul was either unaware or had no interest in the context of Isa 52:5. How then should we understand Paul's quotation of Isa 52:5 in Rom 2:24?

Though Hays calls it a 'provocative misreading', he insists that this is only provisional: 'If Paul reads Isa 52:5 as a reproach, it is a reproach only in the same way that the historical event to which it refers was a reproach' (Hays 1989, 45). As the argument of Romans unfolds, it becomes clear that Paul does not think that this reproach is final. Thus by the time we get to Romans 11, we discover that the hardening of Israel is temporary and that in the end, 'all Israel will be saved' (Rom 11:26). At this point, the reader will understand that Paul's 'misreading' of Isa 52:5 was temporary and that its message of hope is ultimately Paul's message also. In short, the meaning of Isa 52:5 in Rom 2:24 can only be understood from multiple readings of the text:

> The letter's rhetorical structure lures the reader into expecting Israel's final condemnation, but the later chapters undercut such an expectation, requiring the reader in subsequent encounters with the text to understand the Isaiah quotation more deeply in relation to its original prophetic context (Hays 1989, 46).

5.5 The solution according to Wagner

Wagner also sees the key evidence in Paul's quotation of Isa 52:7 in Rom 10:15 but makes an additional point. The blame motif comes from the LXX's addition, δι᾽ ὑμᾶς ('because of you'), which Paul takes as 'because of your fault'. It is impossible to say whether this was the intention of the LXX translator but Wagner thinks it is important to note that Paul is not

responsible for this addition. Following on from the accusations in Rom 2:17-23, Paul has accentuated but not manufactured Israel's responsibility for the plight described in Isaiah 52. The dissonance, he claims, is primarily with the Hebrew text rather than the LXX.

6. A comparison of the arguments for Mark 1:3 and Rom 2:24

6.1 The case for Mark 1:3

The arguments for seeing Mark 1:3 as evoking an Isaian framework for interpreting what follows can be summarised as follows:

1. It's location at the beginning of the book.
2. The specific mention of Isaiah as the source.
3. The use of καθὼς γέγραπται, which points backwards to the title rather than forwards to John's activities in the wilderness.
4. The occurrence of significant Isaiah material in the chapters that follow.
5. The concentrated use of ὁδός in chs 8-10, which readers would connect with the 'way of the Lord' from the quotation.
6. The popularity of Isaiah 40 in first-century Judaism.

6.2 The case for Rom 2:24

Before summarising the arguments for Rom 2:24, it is worth noting how few of the above are applicable to it:

1. The first quotation of Isaiah in Romans does not occur until 2:24.
2. Isaiah is not specifically named in the introductory formula.
3. Although καθὼς γέγραπται does appear in the introductory formula, it does not point back to a significant statement like, 'The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ', but to a series of (unsubstantiated) accusations that Jewish teachers are invariably hypocrites.
4. There is little Isaiah material in the chapters that follow (Romans 3-8).
5. The themes of 'God's name' and 'blasphemy among the Gentiles' are not picked up later in the book.

6. Isaiah 52 does not appear to have enjoyed the same popularity in first-century Judaism as Isaiah 40.

Instead, the key to the argument for Rom 2:24 is that when the reader finally gets to Romans 9-11, they will discover: (1) That Isaiah is in fact an important source for Paul; and (2) Paul quotes from Isa 52:7, thus showing that he is fully aware of the salvation context of Isaiah 52. This would then cause a retrospective understanding of the quotation of Isa 52:5 in Rom 2:24. However, this assumes that readers would recognize that 'how beautiful are the feet' is a quotation from the same passage as, 'The name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles'. Paul offers little help for them to do so, for his quotation omits two of the phrases ('upon the mountains' and 'a message of peace') which might have aided such recognition. It is true that he does refer to Isaiah in Rom 10:16, where he cites from Isa 53:1 ('Lord, who has believed our message') and one could perhaps argue that this would direct the readers to the previous chapter. But the way that Paul darts around the scriptures in Romans 10, citing from Leviticus 18, Deuteronomy 30, Isaiah 28, Joel 2, Psalm 18, Deuteronomy 32 and Isaiah 65 mitigates against this. His readers might have been dazzled by his expertise in Scripture but like the proverbial wood and trees, it is unlikely that in the midst of this scriptural complexity, the words 'how beautiful are the feet' would have triggered the profound re-reading of Isa 52:5 that Hays and Wagner propose.

Secondly, the argument that it was the LXX's addition of δι᾽ ὑμᾶς that triggered the change from 'pity' to 'blame' is somewhat ironic given the hypothesis that is being put forward. As Hays and most commentators correctly note, the surrounding context of Isa 52:5 makes it clear that 'pity' is the key theme. It is only by isolating Isa 52:5 from its context and interpreting δι᾽ ὑμᾶς in a particular way (i.e. 'because of your fault' rather than the more general 'concerning you') that one could see 'blame' as the key theme. But this type of approach is precisely what Wagner is arguing against. I thus conclude with Stanley that any reader who knows the context of Isaiah 52 will be more struck by dissonance than continuity.

In summary, the case for Mark 1:3 evoking an Isaiah framework is very much stronger than the case for Rom 2:24 evoking the broader themes of Isaiah 52.

7. Counter-arguments for seeing Mark 1:3 as evoking an Isaiah framework

7.1 The use of Isa 40:3 in Judaism does not support the framework hypothesis

In a comprehensive critique of the 'framework' hypothesis, Thomas Hatina points out that the mere presence of Isa 40:3 in the Apocrypha, Pseudepigrapha, Qumran and the rabbis does not, in itself, support such a hypothesis. Indeed, it could be used to prove the opposite. Texts like the *Community Rule*, *Baruch* and the *Assumption of Moses* are hardly characterized by the contextually-sensitive exegesis that is being suggested for Mark. In order to further the case for Mark's opening quotation evoking a scriptural framework for understanding the whole book, it would be necessary to show that the same was present in some of these other works. This, however, is not the case, and neither Snodgrass, Marcus or Schneck attempt such a defence.[8]

7.2 Significant Isaiah material in Mark 2-8?

The case for seeing significant Isaiah material in some of Mark's chapters is extremely weak. For example, Schneck attempts to make up for the lack of *any* verbal agreement[9] between Mark 3:27 ('But no one can enter a strong man's house') and Isa 49:24-25 ('Can the prey be taken from the mighty?'), by suggesting a number of parallels from surrounding texts. Thus he suggests that the promise of restoration for Israel's survivors in Isa 49:6 is alluded to in Mark's story of the restoration of the man's withered hand in Mark 3:4-5, while Isa 50:1 (mother Zion estranged from her husband) is alluded to in the story of Jesus' mother waiting outside in Mark 3:31-32. He has enough awareness to realize: 'Some of these contacts between Mark 3 and Isaiah 49 do not seem too significant in themselves.' But he then adds: 'However, the number of both major and minor coincidences between these two sections supports the hypothesis that when Isa 49:24-25 is *indirectly*

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[8] Hatina probably puts it too strongly when he claims that atomistic exegesis was the 'norm' for early Jewish interpretation but it would be difficult to maintain the opposite. Citing the Apocrypha, Pseudepigrapha, Qumran and the rabbis does not increase the probability of the particular proposal that the citation of Isa 40:3 in Mark 1:3 is supposed to evoke a scriptural framework for understanding the whole book. There is no precedent for one particular quotation having such a formative role on the interpretation of a whole book.

[9] In fact, he says the LXX of Isa 49:4-25 is corrupt and so Mark 3:27 reflects the MT.

cited in Mark, the surrounding context in Isaiah 49 was intended as a help for the catechist in order to explain the mission of Jesus as the servant of God portrayed in Deutero-Isaiah' (Schneck 1994, 100. Emphasis added). To my mind, it is more an indication of the desperate lengths to which Schneck will go in order to support his hypothesis. Not only are the additional parallels a considerable distance from Isa 49:24-25, they are even more dubious than the original suggestion. In short, the thesis that each of Mark's chapters contains significant Isaiah material cannot be sustained.

7.3 A significant link with chs 8-10?

It is by no means obvious that readers would link the way of discipleship and Jesus' way to Jerusalem in chs 8-10 with the 'way' mentioned in Mark 1:3. Apart from being separated by 8 chapters, the sheer diversity of meanings of ὁδός in Mark's Gospel mitigates against taking it as a technical term. As Hatina notes:

> When all 16 uses of ὁδός in Mark are examined, a variety of nuances emerge. Some refer to a road (4.4, 15; 10.46; 11.8), some to journeys whose destination are other than Jerusalem (Caesarea Philippi in 8.27; Capernaum in 9.33, 34), some to journeys which exclude Jesus (disciples in 6.8; the 4000 in 8.3), one refers to God's teaching (12.14), and one simply refers to movement (2.23)… The use of ὁδός in 1.2-3 hardly coheres semantically or theologically with each use in the central section, let alone with every other use in the Gospel (Hatina 2002, 168).

In short, it is hard to see how readers could be expected to take the vast majority of occurrences of ὁδός in a mundane way, but infuse a few particular examples in chs 8-10 with a whole framework of meaning derived from Deutero-Isaiah.

7.4 Contextual and christological interpretation

The more one argues for a christological or messianic interpretation of Isa 40:3 in Mark's Gospel, the weaker the contextual parallels become. For example, Marcus wishes to show that 'the fearful trek of the befuddled, bedraggled little band of disciples *is* the return of Israel to Zion, and Jesus' suffering and death there are the prophesied apocalyptic victory of the divine warrior' (Marcus 1992, 36). Since it would be impossible to show that this is what Isaiah had in mind, Marcus speaks about it being subject to

a 'christological neutron bombardment, thereby producing a powerful, disturbing, unpredictable new form of apocalyptic eschatology' (Marcus 1992, 41). Now this could be correct but for our purposes, what it highlights is the dissonance that exists between the story Mark is telling and what we read in Isaiah. We are being asked to look at the irradiated remains of a 'christological neutron bombardment' and recognize the shape and texture of the original material. One could of course argue that early Christian catechesis would have nurtured such optical skills from the beginning, but it does weaken the observable parallels between the two texts, and hence the direct evidence to support the particular hypothesis.

7.5 The composite quotation

Although naming Isaiah as author of the composite quotation *could* be seen as an attempt to highlight this prophet, the fact of the composite quotation could point in the opposite direction. If Mark was wishing to show that the gospel of Jesus Christ is written in Isaiah, why complicate matters by introducing the Malachi/Exodus material between the introductory formula and the Isaiah quotation? It certainly perplexed later copyists, who changed 'Isaiah' to 'the prophets', and Matthew and Luke are aware that the Malachi/Exodus belongs in another context (Jesus' reply to John the Baptist's question from prison).

7.6 The role of other texts

As Marcus himself goes on to show, Mark frames various aspects of Jesus' life in the light of other texts, for example, the righteous sufferer of the Psalms, the stricken shepherd of Zechariah and the exalted son of man from Daniel 7. This indeed shows that Scripture was important to Mark but surely relativises the claims for any one particular text. This was my principle objection to Beale's thesis on Revelation (Moyise, 1995). Without denying the importance of Daniel, it can also be shown that Ezekiel is a significant influence on the structure of the book, Isaiah is the dominant influence in certain sections of the book, while the language of the Psalms is found throughout. If there is an overall pattern to these uses of scripture, it derives from John's (or in this case Mark's) literary/theological construction, not the dominant force of one particular source.

7.7 Relevance to John's activity in the wilderness

Without denying that the influence of a quotation can go beyond the immediate application, 'as sparks escape and kindle new blazes', as Hays (1989, 33) puts it, there are good reasons for suggesting that the primary application of Isa 40:3 *is* to what immediately follows. Verse 4 begins, 'John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming'. His role is clearly to point to one who is more important and the contrast in baptisms ('I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit') suggests that John's work was in some sense preparatory. The reader will no doubt wonder how the story will develop from this particular introduction, but it does not seem to me that they would be struck by the dissonance between Isaiah's grand words and the mundane details of John' activity in the wilderness. There is enough agreement in vocabulary and ideas to suggest that John's ministry is being seen as a fulfilment of the composite quotation.

8. Conclusion

Many scholars have argued that scriptural quotations evoke whole frameworks of meaning and those who doubt it are accused of being blind to the author's sophistication. It is for this reason that I have employed a somewhat convoluted argument in this paper where:

1. I have shown that the arguments for regarding Mark 1:3 in this way are much stronger than for Rom 2:24.
2. There are many counter-arguments that can be levelled at Mark 1:3, which at the very least, make it far from certain.
3. If the case for Mark 1:3 is far from certain, the much weaker case for Rom 2:24 can be safely dismissed.

I conclude that scriptural quotations in the NT do not always evoke whole frameworks of meaning and it should not therefore be assumed as a presupposition.

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