

IN CC-BY-NC-ND on mark16.sib.swiss, with the kind permission of de Gruyter editor

Hultgren, S., ““A Vision for the End of Days’: Deferral of Revelation in Daniel and at the End of Mark”, *ZNW* 109 (2018/2), p. 153-184, <https://doi.org/10.1515/znw-2018-0010>.

Stephen Hultgren*

“A Vision for the End of Days”: Deferral of Revelation in Daniel and at the End of Mark

<https://doi.org/10.1515/znw-2018-0010>

Abstract: An important clue to the meaning of Mark 16,8 has not received adequate attention. The verse is an intertextual allusion to Dan 10,7. Daniel 10–12 establishes a pattern of revelation, concealment, and future revelation, in which the resurrection of the dead is apocalyptically deferred – its truth not confirmable until it happens at the end of days. A similar pattern of concealment and revelation characterizes Mark’s gospel. At the end of the gospel, the resurrection of Jesus is announced (and so revealed) in story time, but further concealed in discourse time. In the act of narrating, the message is once again revealed. With the omission of a resurrection appearance, however, the vision of the risen Lord remains concealed until the revelation of the Son of Man at the *parousia*.

Zusammenfassung: Ein wichtiger Anhaltspunkt für die Bedeutung von Mk 16,8 ist bisher nicht gebührend gewürdigt worden. Der Vers spielt intertextuell auf Dan 10,7 an. Die Kapitel 10–12 im Danielbuch stellen ein Schema von Offenbarung, Verborgenheit und zukünftiger Offenbarung her, nach dem die Auferstehung der Toten apokalyptisch aufgeschoben ist – deren Wahrheit ist erst am Ende der Tage zu verifizieren. Ein entsprechendes Schema von Offenbarung und Verborgenheit kennzeichnet das Markusevangelium. Am Schluss des Evangeliums wird die Auferstehung Jesu in erzählter Zeit angekündigt (also geoffenbart), doch bleibt sie in der Erzählzeit weiter verborgen. Im Akt des Erzählens wird die Botschaft noch einmal kundgetan. Durch das Auslassen einer Auferstehungserrscheinung bleibt aber die Vision des Auferstandenen bis zur *parousia* des Menschensohnes weiterhin verborgen.

Keywords: End of the Gospel of Mark, Mark’s use of Daniel, narrative criticism of the Gospel of Mark, eschatology in the gospels

The end of Mark’s gospel has long puzzled and fascinated scholars. Despite the massive amount of scholarly literature that has been dedicated to it, I have become convinced that an important clue – even a decisive key – to the interpre-

*Corresponding author: Stephen Hultgren, Australian Lutheran College – University of Divinity, 104 Jeffcott St., North Adelaide SA 5006, Australia; stephen.hultgren@alc.edu.au

tation of Mark's ending has not received adequate attention. The thesis of this article is that the original end of Mark (16,8) is inspired by Daniel. Following that book, Mark inscribes into his gospel a dialectic of concealment and revelation of the angelic message, while the vision of the resurrected Jesus is apocalyptically deferred. We shall review the history of the discussion later, but first we establish the foundations of the thesis.

1 Daniel 10–12 as Intertext for Mark 16,1–8

In Mark 16,5–7 the women who come to Jesus's tomb see a young man, who announces that Jesus has been raised and gives them a commission. In response,

they went out and fled (ἔφυγον) from the tomb, for trembling (τρόμος) and astonishment (ἔκστασις) had seized them; and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid (ἔφοβοῦντο γάρ) (adapted from NRSV).

Commentators usually compare the women's reaction of flight, fear, trembling, and astonishment to other places in Mark where characters react in similar ways.¹ Less often noted is a possible allusion to Dan 10,7, where Daniel reports the reaction of certain people to an appearance of an angelic figure. Mark's wording is closer to the Theodotonic translation than to the Old Greek, but that does not make an allusion less likely.² Theodotion reads (as adapted from NETS):

And I, Daniel, alone saw the vision, and the men who were with me did not see the vision, rather great astonishment (ἔκστασις) fell upon them, and they fled (ἔφυγον) in fear (ἐν φόβῳ).³

¹ For example, Mark 4,41; 5,33-42; 6,50–51; 14,50–52. See, e.g., Paul L. Danove, *The End of Mark's Story: A Methodological Study* (Leiden: Brill, 1993), 207–208.

² Although the translation called Theodotion is traditionally dated to the second century AD, Theodotonic readings are well attested in the New Testament, including Mark, and it is likely that Theodotion actually antedates the New Testament. See John J. Collins, *Daniel*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1993), 9–11.

³ The Old Greek of Dan 10,7 (Septuaginta: Vetus Testamentum Graecum, vol. XVI/2: Susanna, Daniel, Bel et Draco, ed. Joseph Ziegler, 2nd ed. [Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1999]) reads: "And I, Daniel, saw this great vision, and the persons who were with me saw [sic] this vision, and a mighty fear (φόβος) fell on them, and they ran away (ἀπέδρασαν) in haste (ἐν σπουδῇ)" (NETS). Rahlfs and Hanhart (Septuaginta. Id est Vetus Testamentum graecae iuxta LXX interpretes, ed. Alfred Rahlfs, ed. altera quam recognovit et emendavit Robert Hanhart [Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2006]) and the 1954 Göttingen edition (Septuaginta: Vetus

Once we note a possible allusion to Dan 10,7,⁴ we observe that Mark 16,1–8 contains other parallels to Daniel 10–12, which raise the question whether Mark has drawn on these chapters in constructing his story:

- (1) Both texts feature an “angelic” messenger described as a “man”⁵ dressed in bright apparel.⁶
- (2) In both cases the angelic message involves resurrection of the dead (Dan 12,1–3; Mark 16,6).
- (3) In both cases the response to the vision includes speechlessness and secret keeping (Dan 10,15.17; 12,4.9; Mark 16,8).⁷

If we cast our eyes further afield, we find other elements of Daniel 7–12 that informed or may have informed Mark’s writing: most obviously the conflicts culminating in the abomination of desolation (Dan 11,31; 12,11; cf. 8,13; 9,27), and the coming of the Son of Man (7,13), which Mark includes in 13,14.19.26; 14,62, but also the violent death of an anointed one (Dan 9,26), the death and resurrection of the “wise” (11,33; 12,3; with allusion to the servant of the LORD in Isa 52,13; 53,11), and the motif of misunderstanding (Dan 8,27; 12,8).

It would not be surprising if Mark drew on Daniel 10–12 in constructing his story. After all, a major theme of these chapters is the suffering and death of the righteous (11,33–35), as well as their vindication in resurrection (12,2–3). What could offer a more appropriate framework for a story about the (death and) resurrection of Jesus than these chapters, all the more as Mark may have interpreted the death and resurrection of Jesus in part in terms of the Jewish tradition of the persecution and vindication (and/or exaltation) of the righteous man?⁸ At this point we need to look more closely at the structure and themes of Daniel 10–12, which will indicate what kind of a theological framework these chapters may have offered Mark.

Testamentum Graecum, vol. XVI/2: Susanna, Daniel, Bel et Draco, ed. Joseph Ziegler [Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 1954]) have the negative (the persons “did not see this vision”).

⁴ The trembling (τρέμος) of Mark 16,8 has a counterpart in Dan 10,11 (OG: τρέμων; TH: ἐντρομος).

⁵ Dan 10,5 OG: ἄνθρωπος; TH: ἀνὴρ; Mark 16,5: νεανίσκος.

⁶ Commentators usually connect the νεανίσκος in Mark 16,5 with the one in 14,51–52. They also refer to 2Macc 3,26.33 (see also Tob 5,5–9; Josephus, Ant V,277). Dan 10 is usually not mentioned.

⁷ It is perhaps worth noting that, although it does not come through in the Greek translations, the people who run away in Dan 10,7 hide themselves (אָהַבְתֶּם). That Mark drew on this part of Daniel may find further support in that in his parallel Luke (24,5) echoes Dan 10,9.15.

⁸ On Mark’s passion narrative in connection with that tradition, see George W.E. Nickelsburg, “The Genre and Function of the Markan Passion Narrative,” *HTR* 73 (1980): 153–184. On the relationship of Daniel 11–12 to that tradition, see by the same author, *Resurrection, Immortality, and Eternal Life in Intertestamental Judaism*, HTS 26 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1972), 11–27.68–70.82–84.170–176.

Chapters 10–12 of Daniel constitute the final vision of the book (10,1.14), with 11,2–12,4 at its heart. Although called a “vision,” one might more properly speak of this part of Daniel in terms of an *audition* of revelatory “word(s)” (10,1.11; 12,4.9),⁹ as it does not contain symbolic visions to be interpreted, like chapters 7–8, but has more affinity to the interpretations of those visions.¹⁰ The “vision,” strictly speaking, is of the man/angel who appears in 10,5 and who speaks the revelatory words. The “word” involves in the first instance “a great conflict” (10,1), that is, the wars between the nations in chapter 11, which were already covered in chapters 7–8, as well as the heavenly struggle mentioned in 10,13.20. But this “word” involves more than that, perhaps even a “further vision” (NRSV), contained especially in 11,40–12,3, about what is to happen at the “end of days” (10,14).¹¹ Attention to the structure of chapters 10–12 will help us to see the significance of this point.

Chapter 11 is largely parallel to chapters 7 and 8. The two visions in the latter two chapters allude, each in its own way, to the successive rise of the Persians and the Greeks, ending with the megalomania of Antiochus IV Epiphanes and anticipation of his destruction at the hands of God. That is also the content of 11,2–45. But the final vision of Daniel goes beyond chapters 7 and 8,¹² namely, from 11,40 onwards. To be sure, in terms of the general course of events, the parallels to chapters 7 and 8 run as far as 11,45 (or 12,1).¹³ But historical recounting ends at 11,39.¹⁴ From that point onwards the author writes of future expectation, namely,

9 The phenomena of “vision” and revelatory “word” are not always clearly distinguished in Daniel; cf. 9,23.

10 Dan 7,15–18.23–27; 8,15–26.

11 A “further vision for those days” may be the most likely meaning of *כי עוד חזון לימים*, although other interpretations have been proposed, e.g., “the vision is yet for (many) days,” that is, its fulfilment is still to come (cf. 8,17; 11,27.35). See James A. Montgomery, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Daniel*, ICC (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1927), 412. Dan 10,14 is based on Hab 2,3, but the latter has its own difficulties, leading to no straightforward explanation of Dan 10,14. However one interprets it, the verse clearly points to the end of days (11,40–12,3) as the main content of the vision.

12 Note that the vision of chapter 8 ends (in verse 27) with Daniel not comprehending the vision. That comment opens the way for another, more complete “vision” or revelatory word, which Daniel will understand (10,1), pointing forward to 11,2–12,4.

13 The megalomania of Antiochus is described in 11,36–39 and his demise in 11,40–45. The vision of chapter 8 runs up to the demise of Antiochus at the hands of God (8,25). The vision of chapter 7 also leads up to the demise of Antiochus, but it includes further the deliverance of the saints and the restoration of the kingdom to them (7,13–14.18.27), which could be seen as a parallel to 12,1. The “vision” of chapter 9 (cf. 9,23) also ends with the demise of Antiochus (9,27).

14 Collins, *Daniel* (see n. 2), 388–389.

of “the time of the end” (עת קץ), as anticipated in 10,14 (אחרית הימים). What is new in chapters 11 and 12, over against chapters 7 and 8, are the details of the demise of Antiochus in 11,40–45 and, most importantly for our purposes, the deliverance of the people of Israel, including resurrection of the dead (12,1–3). Particularly singled out is the resurrection of the “wise” who die as martyrs (11,33–35; 12,3). That means that it is the message of divine deliverance and especially resurrection of the dead in 12,1–3 that is of primary importance in the (further?) “vision for [...] the end of days” in 10,14.¹⁵ The reference to the “appointed” “time of the end” for which the slain martyrs must wait (11,35) supports this view.

Following upon this analysis we make two observations pertinent to Mark. First, Daniel is told to keep the revelatory words secret, to “seal” the book (12,4,9; cf. 8,26). That is, of course, the apocalypticist’s fictional literary device. Daniel allegedly sees the visions and receives the words in the sixth century BC, but in fact they come from the Maccabean era. The effect of this device is that, when the implied reader opens Daniel’s book in the time of the end (12,4), the Maccabean era, he/she will see that Daniel’s predictions for the course of history have thus far been fulfilled, and that gives confidence to believe that the remaining predictions – including the demise of Antiochus, the deliverance of the people of Israel, the restoration of the kingdom, and the resurrection of the dead – will also be fulfilled. Fulfillment of expectations is placed within a framework of concealment and revelation. This framework in turn points to the end of history as the time of revelation. That leads to the second observation.

The predictions of the “vision” in 11,2–12,3 vary in kind. As we have noted, the implied reader of Daniel who opens and reads the book at the time of the Hellenistic crisis is encouraged to believe that Daniel’s predictions will be confirmed, particularly the demise of Antiochus. As events unfolded in the second century, actual readers would have witnessed the fulfillment of those predictions, at least in broad terms.¹⁶ Yet there is one part of the vision that would remain unfulfilled, and that is the resurrection of the dead. That raises for the reader the question of

¹⁵ In contrast to the vision of chapter 8, which according to 8,17 is also for “the time of the end” (עת קץ), but which only runs up to the demise of Antiochus (8,25).

¹⁶ The end of chapter 11 was written before the death of Antiochus, for historical reporting ends at 11,39, and the details of the death of Antiochus in 11,40–45 are not historical. They appear to be expectations based on the author’s interpretation of older prophecy, such as Ezek 38–39, among others. See Carol A. Newsom, *Daniel: A Commentary*, OTL (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2014), 356–358; John E. Goldingay, *Daniel*, WBC 30 (Waco, TX: Word, 1989), 285. Thus the earliest readers of Daniel would have looked for the demise of Antiochus, and would have witnessed the fulfillment of that expectation, although not exactly as Daniel predicted. See Newsom, *Daniel*, 359, for the surviving historical accounts of the death of Antiochus.

when *that* part of the vision would be fulfilled. It would happen only at the end of history – or, if one wishes, *beyond* history.¹⁷ That there would be a resurrection was not in question, because the expectation was based on older prophetic material that provided a framework for interpreting events in what was regarded as the last days.¹⁸ But *when* the resurrection would happen was a mystery.

Indeed, already the epilogue of Daniel (12,5–13) addresses this mystery.¹⁹ Daniel hears an angel ask the man clothed in linen (10,5), “How long shall it be until the end of these wonders?” (12,6). The man in linen answers that “all these things would be accomplished” when the shattering of the power of the holy people is finished.²⁰ But Daniel does not understand, and so he asks, “My Lord, what will be the outcome of these things?” Daniel receives no clear answer. The book closes with what appear to be attempts to (re)calculate the time of the end, probably including the resurrection of the dead.²¹ In other words, the (further) “vision” of resurrection remains *apocalyptically deferred*, its fulfillment (indefinitely) delayed. The message becomes an eschatological hope that can be confirmed (seen) only at the end of history – and it remains so for every reader of Daniel until the “vision” is accomplished.

2 Deferral of Revelation in Mark

If Mark 16,8 is an allusion to Dan 10,7, and if Mark valued the final chapters of Daniel – chapter 13 especially suggests that he did – then how might Daniel 10–12 have shaped the end of his gospel? I propose that Mark inscribes into his gospel

17 As in 2Macc 7.

18 History was expected to end with a time of distress for the people of Israel, divine judgment upon the wicked oppressor, divine deliverance for Israel, and resurrection of the dead, as, e.g., in Jer 30,7; Isa 10; 26,17–21; 66,24. The influence of older prophecy on Daniel was immense. See briefly Goldingay, *Daniel* (see n. 16), 284–285. More fully: Nickelsburg, *Resurrection* (see n. 8), 15–26; Matthias Henze, “The Use of Scripture in the Book of Daniel,” in *A Companion to Biblical Interpretation in Early Judaism*, ed. Matthias Henze (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2012), 279–307. That the words of the prophets remained to be fulfilled in the time of the “end” came forth from Hab 2,3, upon which Daniel depends in 8,17,19; 11,27,35; 12,12.

19 The epilogue may have been written after the main body of the work ending at 12,4 was complete. It reflects attempts to deal with the fact that the end of Antiochus and the rededication of the temple did not usher in the end of history. See Newsom, *Daniel* (see n. 16), 27–28.

20 Or when the power of the shatterer (Antiochus) ends. See Collins, *Daniel* (see n. 2), 369,399.

21 Collins, *Daniel* (see n. 2), 401; Newsom, *Daniel* (see n. 16), 367–368.

by means of allusion to those chapters a Daniel-like concealment of the message of resurrection and an apocalyptic deferral of the vision of the resurrected Jesus.

Deferral of revelation runs like a red thread through Mark. The most obvious instance is the transfiguration story. After Peter, James, and John witness Jesus transfigured on the mountain, Jesus admonishes them not to tell anyone what they have seen until the Son of Man should rise from the dead (9,9). The resurrection becomes the *terminus ad quem* for the keeping of the secret. This moratorium places the vision of the glorified Jesus under the sign of the cross: in Mark’s Christology disclosure of the vision must be deferred until after Jesus’s death and resurrection, because only his death in conformity to the divine will, which the resurrection validates (8,31), enables the correct apprehension of Jesus’s divine Sonship (15,39; cf. 12,1–12).²² As an anticipated vision of Jesus’s glory in the resurrection or the *parousia*, the vision cannot be told before the cross.

The transfiguration pericope is important not only because of the motif of deferral, but also because of the formal parallelism between 9,6 and 16,8. Not unlike the women at the tomb, Peter is at a loss for words after seeing the vision: “he did not know what he should respond, for they were afraid (ἔκφοβοι γὰρ ἐγένοντο).” With this clearly redactional addition,²³ Mark presents Peter as, in effect, speechless (despite verse 5) and in fear before the manifestation of divine power, a common motif in epiphany stories. That suggests that we are on the right track in interpreting 16,8 fundamentally in terms of speechlessness before an (apocalyptic) vision. A difference, of course, is that while in the transfiguration and its aftermath a vision is given along with a command to silence, at the end of Mark we have the opposite: a command to speak and a promised vision, but the message is concealed, and the vision is lacking. We shall return to that difference.

The command to silence in the transfiguration reminds us that deferral of revelation is part of a larger narrative pattern in Mark. Students of Mark hardly need to be reminded that secrecy is a major motif in this gospel. Here it only needs to be pointed out that, over against Wrede’s tendency to emphasize secrecy in a one-sided way,²⁴ the motif is actually part of a larger dialectic of secrecy and

²² Ulrich Luz, “The Secrecy Motif and the Marcan Christology” (trans. R. Morgan), in *The Messianic Secret*, ed. Christopher Tuckett, IRT 1 (London: SPCK, 1983), 75–96, here 85–86. It is true that declarations of Jesus’s Sonship occur before the resurrection (14,62; 15,39), but for Mark the apostolic preaching of Jesus as the messiah and Son of God must await the resurrection and take place in light of the cross.

²³ Omitted in Matthew and only fragmentarily retained in Luke. And see Mark 14,40.

²⁴ William Wrede, *Das Messiasgeheimnis in den Evangelien: Zugleich ein Beitrag zum Verständnis des Markusevangeliums* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1901), 69.124–129.137–138.236–

openness.²⁵ The dialectic relates in the first instance to Jesus's *identity* and *power*: declarations of Jesus's identity, either in public or in private,²⁶ along with publication of his miracles (openness),²⁷ commands to silence (secrecy),²⁸ and occasional violations of those commands (openness).²⁹ But just as importantly, the dialectic has a key role in the *narrative structure* of Mark, not only in explicit references to Jesus's public and private teaching and ministry,³⁰ but also in sequences of openness and withdrawal that drive the narrative forward.³¹ In the transfiguration Jesus's true identity is revealed, a command to secrecy is given, and a time of further revelation is indicated. The same dialectic of openness and secrecy seems to have shaped the end of Mark's narrative: the angelic announcement of the resurrection of Jesus, a kind of epiphany, partakes of openness; the women's

237, recognized that secrecy and openness stood side-by-side in Mark. He attributed this to the fact that both elements existed unreconciled in Mark's tradition. But for Wrede the controlling concept was secrecy (although this concept was already being challenged, before Mark, by the divergent material in the tradition), since it was the device that integrated the old view that Jesus had become messiah at the resurrection with the later, messianic interpretation of an (in fact) non-messianic life of Jesus.

25 After Wrede, scholars have recognized that both secrecy and openness existed in the tradition but that Mark has employed both motifs redactionally and with equal (or at least more closely balanced) weight to contrast the hiding of Jesus's identity and the open revelation of his power and authority. The latter spreads his name and also leads to conflict, driving the narrative. See especially the essays of Ulrich Luz, "The Secrecy Motif" (see n. 22), and James D.G. Dunn, "The Messianic Secret in Mark," in *The Messianic Secret*, ed. Christopher Tuckett, IRT 1 (London: SPCK, 1983), 116–131; Erik Sjöberg, *Der verborgene Menschensohn in den Evangelien* (Lund: Gleerup, 1955), 100–132.156.159.225–230. And compare Hans Jürgen Ebeling, *Das Messiasgeheimnis und die Botschaft des Marcus-Evangelisten*, BZNW 19 (Berlin: Töpelmann, 1939). An adequate explanation of the secrecy motif requires attention to both secrecy and openness. See Christopher Tuckett, "Introduction: The Problem of the Messianic Secret," in *The Messianic Secret*, ed. Christopher Tuckett, IRT 1 (London: SPCK, 1983), 1–28, here 13–18.

26 Mark 1,11.24.34; 2,10.28; 3,11; 5,7; 8,29; 9,7; 10,47; 14,62; 15,39; see also 11,1–11; 12,1–12.

27 Mark 1,28; 3,8; 5,19–20; 6,14.

28 Mark 1,34.44; 3,12; 5,43; 7,36; 8,30; 9,9.

29 Mark 1,45; 7,36.

30 E.g., Mark 4,10–13.33–34; 5,37.40; 7,17.24–25.33; 8,23; 9,2; 9,28.33; 10,10; 13,3.

31 E.g., Mark 1,32–34 (openness, but with command to silence) → 1,35–38 (withdrawal) → 1,39–45b (openness, but with command to silence) → 1,45c (withdrawal) → 1,45d (openness) → 2,1 (withdrawal) → 2,2 (openness); 3,7a (withdrawal) → 3,7b–12 (openness, but with command to silence) → 3,13 (cf. 4,1) (withdrawal) → 3,20 (openness). See also 6,31–33. Cf. Wilhelm Egger, *Frohbotschaft und Lehre: Die Sammelberichte des Wirkens Jesu im Markusevangelium* (Frankfurt: Knecht, 1976), 64–119.

running away and keeping the angelic message silent involves secrecy. Yet the message of the angel points, beyond the story, to a further revelation.³²

The motifs of revelation, concealment, and deferral appear prominently elsewhere in Mark. As 4,22 puts it: “There is nothing hidden (κρυπτόν) except that it may be revealed (ἵνα φανερωθῆ), nor is anything secret (ἀπόκρυφον) except that it may come into the open (ἵνα ἔλθῃ εἰς φανερόν).” Apparently some things may be *intentionally* hidden in order that (ἵνα) they may be revealed at the right time. In the immediate context this saying explicates the parabolic saying of 4,21. In the larger context of chapter 4, however, the saying alludes to the mystery of the kingdom of God (4,11), its hiddenness and ultimate manifestation. Already the parable of the sower (4,3–9), Jesus’s statement about his mystifying use of parables (4,10–12), and the explanation of the parable (4,13–20) participate in a pattern of revelation, concealment, and further revelation. The two parables in 4,26–32 depict the kingdom as a mystery that begins in hiddenness or insignificance but

32 The juxtaposition of revelation and secrecy in 16,7–8 is best seen as a product of Markan redaction, with 16,7 coming largely from the tradition, and 16,8 largely Mark’s redaction (apart from the departure of the women). To be sure, many scholars have seen 16,7 (with 14,28) as a Markan interpolation, which has created an unintended tension with verse 8. On this view, if one removes verse 7, the women’s behavior in verse 8 is no longer disobedience to the command of the angel but a response to an epiphany. See the literature in Robert H. Stein, “A Short Note on Mark XIV. 28 and XVI. 7,” *NTS* 20 (1973/74): 445–452, here 445; and esp. Frans Neiryck, “Marc 16,1–8: Tradition et rédaction,” *ETL* 56 (1980): 56–88, here 62–83. More likely, verse 7 belongs to the pre-Markan tradition. The commissioning of the women and the promise of a confirmatory sign belong form-critically to the epiphany. The reference to an appearance to “the disciples and Peter” betrays the tradition preserved in 1Cor 15,5. See Rudolf Pesch, *Das Markusevangelium*, 4th ed., 2 vols., HThKNT 2 (Freiburg: Herder, 1984/1991), 2:521.522.534–535; Hans Freiherr von Campenhausen, *Der Ablauf der Osterereignisse und das leere Grab*, 4th impression (Heidelberg: Carl Winter, 1977), 37 n. 147; Reginald H. Fuller, *The Formation of the Resurrection Narratives* (New York, NY: Macmillan, 1971), 68–69. See also n. 73 below. On 16:7–8 in relation to commissioning stories, see Anne Moore, “Enigmatic Endings and Delayed Signs: The Ending of Mark’s Gospel,” in *Text and Community: Essays in Memory of Bruce M. Metzger*, 2 vols., ed. J. Harold Ellens (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix, 2007), 1:103–120, here 116–117. In 16,8 Mark has intentionally changed the tradition, according to which the women told the disciples what they had seen, in order to juxtapose revelation and secrecy (in contrast to the reason given in Campenhausen, *Ablauf*, 36–37). Others have also found here an intentional juxtaposition of openness and secrecy (with varying views on Mark’s redactional activity). See Neiryck, “Marc 16,1–8,” 69–72. To be sure, a reaction of flight in fear and silence belongs to the form of an epiphany story, and Pesch considers verse 8 to be pre-Markan (*Markusevangelium*, 2:152.535–536). But verse 5 already provides the motif of fear. Verse 8 is better seen as an additional instance of the motif, inserted by Mark himself, with allusion to Daniel 10. On the “doubling” of the motif of fear in Markan stories, see J. Lee Magness, *Sense and Absence: Structure and Suspense in the Ending of Mark’s Gospel*, SemeiaSt (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1986), 93–98.

that in the end becomes great and is visible to all. In the still larger context of the gospel, 4,22 nicely summarizes the messianic secret: the true meaning of the identity of Jesus as messiah, which is (and must be) first hidden, will be revealed at the right time (9,9). Analysis of chapter 13 suggests that Mark has inserted some verses or arranged the material in such a way as, if not to dampen eschatological expectation (see 13,28–31), then at least to warn against tying the *parousia* too closely to visible events of the end time.³³ The *parousia*, the vision (ὄψοντα) of the Son of Man (13,26), remains a certain hope, but its timing remains indefinite (13,32). This too is part of the deferral of revelation in Mark.

Given the possible allusion to Dan 10,7, the obvious importance of Daniel 10–12 for biblical understandings of death and resurrection, and the fact that the motifs of revelation, concealment, and deferral are already prominent in Daniel, it is astonishing that these chapters have not played a greater role in interpretation of Mark 16,1–8 than they have done.³⁴ The more thorough commentators call attention to Dan 10,7,³⁵ but they do not make much of the possible allusion. The

33 The separation of layers in chapter 13 is notoriously difficult, but it is likely that Markan redaction can be seen especially in the temporal notices of 13,7 (ἀλλ' οὐπω τὸ τέλος) and 13,8 (ἀρχή) in response to the questions of verse 4; in verse 10; and in the way that Mark uses verses 5–6 and 21–23 to bracket the end time events of verses 7–20 and especially the coming of false messiahs (perhaps also the destruction of the temple) from the authentic *parousia* in verses 24–27. See Jan Lambrecht, *Die Redaktion der Markus-Apokalyse: Literarische Analyse und Strukturuntersuchung*, AnBib 28 (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1967), 113–114, 127–130, 136, 142. (esp.) 172–180, 191, 257–258, 273–274; Erich Gräßer, *Das Problem der Parusieverzögerung in den synoptischen Evangelien und in der Apostelgeschichte*, 2nd impression, BZNW 22 (Berlin: Töpelmann, 1960), 152–170; and cf. Willi Marxsen, *Mark the Evangelist: Studies on the Redaction History of the Gospel*, trans. James Boyce et al. (Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1969), 166–189.

34 Ebeling, *Messiasgeheimnis* (see n. 25), 201–202, brings the Danielic motif of secret keeping into connection with Mark's transfiguration story, but does not extend it to the resurrection. David Catchpole, "The Fearful Silence of the Women at the Tomb: A Study in Markan Theology," *JTS* 18 (1977): 3–10, here 6, brings Dan 12,4 into connection with Mark 16,7. David S. du Toit, "Die Danielrezeption in Markus 13," in *Die Geschichte der Daniel-Auslegung in Judentum, Christentum und Islam: Studien zur Kommentierung des Danielbuches in Literatur und Kunst*, ed. Katharina Bracht and David S. du Toit, BZAW 371 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2007), 55–76, notes the neglect of the reception of Daniel in Mark in New Testament research, and demonstrates extensive intertextual allusions to Daniel 7–12 (esp. ch. 12) in Mark 13.

35 E.g., Pesch, *Markusevangelium* (see n. 32), 2:528; Joel Marcus, *Mark*, 2 vols., AB 27–27A (New York, NY: Doubleday, 2000, 2009), 2:1081; Adela Yarbro Collins, *Mark: A Commentary*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2007), 800; Richard T. France, *The Gospel of Mark*, NIGTC (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2002), 682.

Nestle-Aland edition of the Greek New Testament does not even give Dan 10,7 in the margin at Mark 16,8.³⁶

To be sure, there are two important differences between Daniel and Mark. First, in Daniel it is the people who do *not* see the vision that flee in fear,³⁷ while in Mark the women both see the angel and flee in fear. Second, in Daniel explicit commands are given to keep the vision secret, whereas in Mark there is an explicit command to reveal the content of the epiphany, and the secrecy is, or at least appears to be, disobedience to the command. Nonetheless, the affinities between Daniel and Mark are too strong to ignore. But if we are on the right track, what is the meaning of the silence at the end of Mark’s gospel? If the *terminus* given at 9,9 is reached at 16,6, why does deferral of revelation continue? Before we continue with our thesis, we need to review proposed answers to the question: Why do the women keep silent?

3 The Silence of the Women: A History of the Discussion

Early work on the end of Mark focused on textual criticism. As is well known, the manuscripts preserve several different endings or combinations of endings. The so-called shorter ending has the women deliver the message of the angel, while the so-called longer ending (16,9–20) has Mary Magdalene (16,10) and two disciples (16,13) report resurrection appearances. The *Textus Receptus* of the Greek New Testament included 16,9–20 after 16,8, and that text became standard in modern versions. However, with the rise of modern textual criticism and gospel studies, it became clear that neither the longer ending nor the so-called shorter ending could be original to Mark. The evidence has been discussed thoroughly elsewhere, and it is unnecessary to rehearse it here. It is sufficient to note that the manuscript evidence makes it extremely likely that 16,8 constitutes the oldest recoverable ending for Mark.³⁸ In addition, studies of Markan vocabulary have

³⁶ The 28th edition gives 1En 106,4.12 as parallels to Mark 16,8, which are not as close as Dan 10,7. It gives Dan 10,6 in the margin at Matt 28,3.

³⁷ But see n. 3.

³⁸ Brooke Foss Westcott and Fenton John Anthony Hort, *The New Testament in the Original Greek. Volume 2: Introduction, Appendix* (Cambridge: Macmillan, 1882), 28–51 (appendix); Bruce M. Metzger and Bart D. Ehrman, *The Text of the New Testament: Its Transmission, Corruption, and Restoration*, 4th ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 322–327; Kurt Aland, “Der wiederge-

shown that neither the longer nor the shorter ending is likely Markan in origin.³⁹ The awkwardness of the transition from 16,8 to 16,9 suggests that 16,9–20 is a secondary addition. Finally, the appearances of Jesus in 16,9–20 do not correspond to the prediction of 16,7 (one or more appearances in Galilee) in the way that, for example, Matt 28,16–20 or John 21 would do. While the shorter ending corresponds somewhat better, its attestation is so slight that already on text-critical grounds it must be excluded from consideration. Although a small number of scholars from the middle of the 20th century onwards were still open to the possible authenticity of the longer ending,⁴⁰ or parts of it,⁴¹ the vast majority of scholars have accepted that 16,8 gives the oldest recoverable ending for Mark, as do I.

But granted that 16,8 marks the oldest recoverable ending, the next major question was whether 16,8 was in fact Mark's original ending, or at least his intended ending. Many scholars have found it "incredible" or at least improbable that the gospel could end at 16,8.⁴² Is it possible, for example, that the original ending was lost⁴³ or suppressed,⁴⁴ or that Mark was unable to finish his gospel,

fundene Markusschluß? Eine methodologische Bemerkung zur textkritischen Arbeit," *ZTK* 67 (1970): 3–13; Robert H. Stein, "The Ending of Mark," *BBR* 18/1 (2008): 79–98, here 80–85.

39 On the non-Markan vocabulary of the longer and shorter endings, see Robert Morgenthaler, *Statistik des neutestamentlichen Wortschatzes*, 4th impression (Zurich: Gotthelf-Verlag, 1992), 58–60; Vincent Taylor, *The Gospel according to St. Mark*, 2nd ed. (London: Macmillan, 1966), 610–615; Danove, *End* (see n. 1), 122–125; John Christopher Thomas, "A Reconsideration of the Ending of Mark," *JETS* 26/4 (1983): 407–419, here 410–412. In defense of the possibly Markan character of the longer ending, see William R. Farmer, *The Last Twelve Verses of Mark*, SNTSMS 25 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974), 79–103; David W. Hester, *Does Mark 16:9–20 Belong in the New Testament?* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2015), 125–145.

40 See esp. Farmer, *The Last Twelve Verses* (see n. 39). For other attempts to defend its authenticity, see Metzger and Ehrman, *Text* (see n. 38), 326 n. 45; Stein, "Ending" (see n. 38), 84 n. 24. More recently: Hester, *Mark 16:9–20* (see n. 39) (associates of Mark wrote the verses on the basis of notes from the evangelist); Nicholas P. Lunn, *The Original Ending of Mark: A New Case for the Authenticity of Mark 16:9–20* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2014).

41 E.g., Eta Linnemann, "Der (wiedergefundene) Markusschluß," *ZTK* 66/3 (1969): 255–287, who argues that Mark originally ended with Matt 28,16–17; Mark 16,15–20 after 16,8. Critique in Aland, "Markusschluß" (see n. 38).

42 Westcott and Hort, *New Testament* (see n. 38), 46–47; Edgar J. Goodspeed, "The Original Conclusion of the Gospel of Mark," *AmJT* 9/3 (1905): 484–490, here 484; and many others.

43 Burnett Hillman Streeter, *The Four Gospels* (New York, NY: Macmillan, 1925), 333–360.

44 E.g., Benjamin Wisner Bacon, *The Beginnings of Gospel Story* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1909), xviii.229–232: the Galilean appearance at the end of Mark was suppressed in order to harmonize the gospel with the tradition of Jerusalem appearances. Bacon later modified his view. See Robert Oliver Kevin, "The Lost Ending of the Gospel according to Mark: A Criticism and a Reconstruction," *JBL* 45 (1926): 81–103, here 89–90. Kirsopp Lake, *The Historical Evidence for the Resurrection of Jesus Christ* (London: Williams & Norgate, 1907), 224–226, argued that

because of death or some other hindrance? And there was the question whether a sentence, let alone an entire book, could end with ἐφοβοῦντο γάρ.⁴⁵ Perhaps the verb was originally followed (grammatically) by a subordinate clause or an objective complement,⁴⁶ telling of what the women “were afraid.”⁴⁷ All of these concerns and questions led to hypotheses of a lost ending. Most often hypothesized was an ending with the women telling the disciples what they had witnessed after all,⁴⁸ and/or with appearances of the resurrected Jesus identical with or similar to the end of Matthew or John 21.⁴⁹

But such hypotheses are difficult to sustain. If Mark’s original account had the women speak to the disciples after all, we would have to suppose that Mark wrote 16:8 only to contradict himself.⁵⁰ Moreover, the text-critical evidence, as well as the fact that Matthew and Luke show no knowledge of anything in Mark’s text beyond 16:8,⁵¹ necessitate that, if an original ending was lost, the loss must have happened extremely early, probably with the original manuscript of Mark

Mark’s ending was suppressed because it was viewed as docetic: in his resurrection appearance story Jesus was not “flesh and blood.”

45 Westcott and Hort, *New Testament* (see n. 38), 46–47.

46 Cf. Mark 11,18, where ἐφοβοῦντο γάρ is followed by αὐτόν.

47 Streeter, *The Four Gospels* (see n. 43), 337; Francis Crawford Burkitt, “The Historical Character of the Gospel of Mark,” *AmJT* 15/2 (1911): 169–193, here 171–172; and his *Two Lectures on the Gospels* (London: Macmillan, 1901), 28.

48 Charles F.D. Moule, “St Mark XVI. 8 Once More,” *NTS* 2 (1955/1956): 58–59.

49 Goodspeed, “The Original Conclusion” (see n. 42), 484–490 (the lost ending is contained in Matt 28,9–10.16–20, but without verse 19b); Streeter, *The Four Gospels* (see n. 43), 343.351–360: an appearance to Mary, and then one to Peter and others at the Sea of Galilee, on which John based his chapter 21; Burkitt, *Two Lectures* (see n. 47), 28–33: an ending like that in Matthew and in the *Gospel of Peter*; later, in his *Christian Beginnings: Three Lectures* (London: University of London Press, 1924), 83, Burkitt went so far as to propose that the original end of Mark covered the period of Acts 1–12. See similarly Bacon, *Beginnings* (see n. 44), xviii–xix; Kevin, “Lost Ending” (see n. 44), 100–102.

50 Mark 1,44–45 would offer no precedent for such a contradiction. Jesus’s command to silence is broken, but there is no narrative contradiction. Likewise 9,6 does not contradict 9,5 but simply qualifies Peter’s words as an inadequate response to the vision.

51 The minor agreement ἀπαγγεῖλαι/ἀπήγγειλαν in Matt 28,8/Luke 24,9 is not evidence to the contrary. It most likely indicates correction of Mark by Matthew and Luke (independently of each other). The verb is redactional in both gospels. See the evidence in Neiryneck, “Marc 16,1–8” (see n. 32), 78–80. But it is also likely that the women’s (or Mary’s) “telling” the disciples about what they witnessed was part of the commonly received tradition, as suggested by John 20,18 (ἀγγέλουσα) (cf. 20,2). Nor is it convincing that Matt 28,18–20 is dependent on Mark 16,15–20, an original part of the second gospel, as in Linnemann, “Markusschluß” (see n. 41), 270–273; Walter Schmithals, “Der Markusschluß, die Verklärungsgeschichte und die Aussendung der Zwölf,” *ZTK* 69/4 (1972): 379–411, here 405–406.

and before copies began to circulate, as even proponents of the hypothesis concede.⁵² But that is highly unlikely. Such a hypothesis requires that the original of Mark's gospel or an early copy was mutilated in such a "clean" way that it left no indication to the earliest scribes that Mark 16,8 was not the original ending, that no attempt was therefore made to supply the missing ending, and that this manuscript then became not only the source for Matthew and Luke but also the ancestor of a whole group of manuscripts.⁵³ The hypothesis of intentional suppression also faces serious problems.⁵⁴ That Mark was unable to write a last paragraph in his gospel before he was detained, died, or was otherwise hindered must be regarded as a desperate solution to an imagined problem. The lack of a specific appearance to Peter in Matt 28,16–20 makes it unlikely that that passage preserves the lost ending.⁵⁵ While it is likely that Matt 28,16–20 and John 21 contain the *kinds* of traditions of which Mark betrays knowledge in 16,7, it remains totally speculative that Mark actually recorded one or more of those traditions in his gospel.

As important as the foregoing *objections* to the hypothesis of a lost ending are, just as important are the *positive* arguments for seeing Mark 16,8 as the original ending of the gospel, especially on the grounds of Markan style and theology. The striking juxtaposition of the command to speak in 16,7 (εἴπατε) and the silence of the women in 16,8 (οὐδενὶ οὐδὲν εἶπαν) at the end of the pericope (and the gospel) can be seen as a reversal of the typical motif of secrecy in Mark, usually found at the end of pericopes, where a command to silence is often given and sometimes broken. Particularly illustrative is 1,44–45: the command not to say anything to anyone (μηδενὶ μηδὲν εἰπῆς) followed by the healed leper's proclamation (see also 7,36). Of course, one has to ask why Mark would *reverse* the typical motif,⁵⁶ and why he would apparently allow secrecy to continue after the resurrection (cf. 9,9). But that such an ending reflects prominent features of

52 Streeter, *The Four Gospels* (see n. 43), 338–344 (but slightly different, p. 352). That the ending of Mark was lost somewhat later, because Mark had fallen into neglect (Burkitt, *Two Lectures* [see n. 47], 33–34), is unlikely (Streeter, *The Four Gospels* [see n. 43], 339–341).

53 Aland, "Markusschluß" (see n. 38), 8–9.

54 See the critique of the "suppression" hypothesis in Streeter, *The Four Gospels* (see n. 43), 341–342. If the end of Mark was suppressed in order to harmonize the gospel with the tradition of Jerusalem appearances, then why was the end of Matthew not also suppressed, and why were Mark 16,7–8 not also removed? Against the reasoning of Lake (see n. 44), see J.M. Creed, "The Conclusion of the Gospel according to Saint Mark," *JTS* 31 (1930): 175–180, here 176.

55 Contra Goodspeed, "The Original Conclusion" (see n. 42). Although it is possible that the singling out of Peter in Mark 16,7 is primarily an allusion to 14,29–31 rather than to a special resurrection appearance to Peter.

56 There is undoubtedly a heavy dose of Markan irony here. See Andrew T. Lincoln, "The Promise and the Failure: Mark 16:7, 8," *JBL* 108 (1989): 283–300, here 289–291.

Mark’s style can hardly be denied. Furthermore, it was shown that 16,8, containing brief commentary at the end of a pericope that gives an inside view on characters but also raises further questions, is typical of Mark’s narrative technique,⁵⁷ as is abruptness.⁵⁸ The question whether a sentence, a paragraph, or even a book could end with ἐφοβοῦντο γάρ was answered affirmatively.⁵⁹ It was shown that, contrary to earlier opinion,⁶⁰ the technique of ending a book with an apparently open or suspended ending would not have been unfamiliar to ancient readers.⁶¹ If, as is likely, the transfiguration story serves within Mark’s narrative structure as an ersatz, anticipatory vision of the risen Jesus (cf. 9,9), then that might explain why Mark omits an appearance story at the end of the gospel.⁶² We shall return to that point. Finally, I would add – and this is the particular contribution of this article – that if the silence of the women is viewed as a kind of “sealing” of the vision along the lines of Daniel 10–12, then it may be considered a valid way to end a book in the apocalyptic tradition.

Thus, although some scholars have even recently continued to argue for a lost ending, or that for whatever reason Mark never finished his gospel,⁶³ such speculation seems unwarranted. It can only be explained by the feeling of a lack

57 Thomas E. Boomersshine and Gilbert L. Bartholomew, “The Narrative Technique of Mark 16:8,” *JBL* 100/2 (1981): 213–223. On Mark’s fondness for ending concluding statements with short γάρ clauses, see Morton S. Enslin, “ἐφοβοῦντο γάρ, Mark 16 8,” *JBL* 46 (1927): 62–68, here 65 n. 4. Indeed, for a similar pericope ending, compare Mark 10,21–22 (ὑπάγετε ... ἀπῆλθεν ... γάρ ...) with 16,7–8 (ὑπάγετε ... ἐξεληθοῦσαι ἔφυγον ... γάρ).

58 On abruptness in Markan style, see Enslin, “ἐφοβοῦντο γάρ” (see n. 57), 66–67; Robert P. Meyer, “Mark 16:8 – The Ending of Mark’s Gospel,” *BR* 14 (1969): 33–43, here 37–39; Magness, *Sense* (see n. 32), 89–90.

59 A sentence: Carl H. Kraeling, “A Philological Note on Mark 16 8,” *JBL* 44 (1925): 357–358; Richard Rusden Ottley, “εφοβουντο γαρ Mark xvi 8,” *JTS* 27 (1926): 407–409; Henry J. Cadbury, “Mark 16 8,” *JBL* 46 (1927): 344–345; a paragraph or section: Enslin, “ἐφοβοῦντο γάρ” (see n. 57); Robert Henry Lightfoot, *Locality and Doctrine in the Gospels* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1938), 10–15; a treatise and therefore probably also a book: Pieter Willem van der Horst, “Can a Book End with γάρ? A Note on Mark xvi. 8,” *JTS* 23 (1972): 121–124. See more recently Kelly R. Iverson, “A Further Word on Final Γάρ (Mark 16:8),” *CBQ* 68 (2006): 79–94.

60 Wilfred Lawrence Knox, “The Ending of St. Mark’s Gospel,” *HTR* 35 (1942): 13–23.

61 Magness, *Sense* (see n. 32).

62 With this, however, I do not endorse the view that the transfiguration is a misplaced resurrection story, as in, e.g., Schmithals, “Markusschluss” (see n. 51), who argues that Mark moved resurrection appearance stories found in his source; they now stand at 9,2–8; 3,13–19; and 16,15–20.

63 Among recent writers, see, e.g., Stein, “Ending” (see n. 38), 98 (with further literature); N. Clayton Croy, *The Mutilation of Mark’s Gospel* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 2003) (and the list of scholars on pp. 174–177 there).

of closure. A need for closure is as understandable as it is ancient,⁶⁴ already manifest in the shorter and longer endings of the gospel, not to mention Matthew and Luke. Yet if we are correct that Mark writes in the Danielic tradition, then an open ending at 16,8 should not be dismissed as the conceit of modern literary critics especially enamored of such,⁶⁵ but should rather be regarded as a deeply biblical response to the message of the resurrection.⁶⁶ Later we will need to consider what that response means.

The question does arise, however: Must the women not have said something to someone at some point? Otherwise how would the story of the empty tomb have ever become known? Surely Mark realized this. Some scholars have argued that even the reunion between Jesus and Peter and the other disciples in Galilee (16,7) depends on the women speaking.⁶⁷ So perhaps we are to understand Mark to mean only that the women did not speak to anyone on the way to the disciples, but they reported to the disciples what they had seen and heard.⁶⁸

Speaking strictly, however, from a historical perspective the reunion in Galilee does not depend on the women's report.⁶⁹ According to 14,28, Jesus predicted that the disciples would be scattered like sheep, but after his resurrection he would go before them to Galilee. After the arrest (cf. 14,50), trial, and crucifixion of Jesus, Peter and the disciples may have returned to Galilee at their own initiative, without the women's urging, and there become recipients of one or more visions of Jesus. The promise in 14,28 and its confirmation in 16,7 would then constitute *ex post facto* justification for the disciples' (otherwise scandalous)

64 On the (ancient) felt need for closure in story, as a way of making sense of things, see Frank Kermode, *The Sense of an Ending: Studies in the Theory of Fiction. With a New Epilogue*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000); Marianna Torgovnick, *Closure in the Novel* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1981), 3–4; with respect to the end of Mark: Frank Kermode, *The Genesis of Secrecy: On the Interpretation of Narrative* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1979), 65–73; Goodspeed, “The Original Conclusion” (see n. 42), 484; Croy, *Mutilation* (see n. 63), 12,46; among many others.

65 So Stein, “Ending” (see n. 38), 88.92–93; and already Knox, “Ending” (see n. 60), 22–23.

66 In the right context even the “open” ending can bring closure (cf. Torgovnick, *Closure* [see n. 64], 6). After all, even Daniel has something of an open ending, if not in plot then at least in its delineation of the future.

67 E.g., Theodore J. Weeden, *Mark – Traditions in Conflict* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress, 1971), 50.117.164.

68 Magness, *Sense* (see n. 32), 100.121. An analogy to 1,44–45 is invoked here: Just as the healed leper is not to speak to anyone except the priest, so the women did not speak to anyone except the disciples. See, e.g., Magness, *Sense* (see n. 32), 98; Catchpole, “Fearful Silence” (see n. 34), 6. But the parallel is not exact. See Lincoln, “Promise” (see n. 56), 289 n. 17.

69 Correctly Lincoln, “Promise” (see n. 56), 292.

flight to Galilee.⁷⁰ The two verses (already in the pre-Markan tradition) show that the flight happened under divine providence;⁷¹ for the first appearance(s) probably occurred in Galilee.⁷² Nor is a successful report of the women to the disciples necessary for the coherence of Mark’s narrative.⁷³

From a historical perspective it is true, of course, that if the women never said anything to anyone about what they had seen, then the story of the empty tomb would never have become known. It seems that either the women must have told (in a lost ending) or (more likely) that Mark intends the reader to imagine that they told. But it is also possible that for literary purposes Mark wants the reader or hearer of his gospel to imagine that he or she is hearing the words of the young man in 16,6–7, previously kept secret, for the first time. In other words, in the very reading (or hearing) of the gospel, what was previously hidden is now revealed. That would be a function of the omniscient narrator in Mark’s gospel, who lets

70 A flight to Galilee seems likely to me, despite Marxsen, *Mark the Evangelist* (see n. 33), 81 n. 101; Campenhausen, *Ablauf* (see n. 32), 44. Mark 16,7 does not prove (historically) that the disciples were still in Jerusalem on Easter morning (contra Campenhausen, *Ablauf* [see n. 32], 3751), if the command is *ex post facto*. The fact that both Luke and John – the two Jerusalem-centric gospels – omit the flight of the disciples at the arrest suggests that it was remembered as a flight to Galilee. And it is difficult to account otherwise for the tradition in John 21. See also John 16,32.

71 On the likelihood that 16,7 preserves pre-Markan tradition, see n. 32. For 14,28 as pre-Markan, see Pesch, *Markusevangelium* (see n. 32), 2:377.381–382. In Matt 28,10.16 the apologetic becomes even stronger, as the disciples go to Galilee at the explicit command of Jesus (mediated through the women).

72 Campenhausen, *Ablauf* (see n. 32), 12–19.

73 Strictly speaking, the command to the women in Mark 16,7 is not to tell the disciples to go to Galilee (contrast Matt 28,10.16), but only to tell them that Jesus is going there before them (προάγει). That the disciples *will* go to Galilee is presupposed. The effect is to remind the reader of 14,28, which becomes a promise that the reader assumes is to be fulfilled, regardless of what the women do. Cf. David S. du Toit, *Der abwesende Herr: Strategien im Markusevangelium zur Bewältigung der Abwesenheit des Auferstandenen*, WMANT 111 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 2006), 251–252, 390 n. 275, 393–394. But what is the point of Mark 16,7, if it is not a command to tell the disciples to go to Galilee? It seems that there was a tradition according to which the women left the tomb to tell the disciples (still in Jerusalem) about the resurrection of Jesus (as in Matt 28,8; Luke 24,9.22–23; John 20,18; cf. 20,1–2). The report of the women in this tradition served to prepare for the appearance(s) of Jesus in Jerusalem. The pre-Markan tradition, as expressed in Mark 16,7, preserved the report of the women, but changed its purpose. Now the report serves to introduce an alternative tradition of one or more resurrection appearances in Galilee. This tradition included or at least implied the disciples’ reconciliation with Jesus (cf. John 21), and so fulfilled the promise in Mark 14,28. Perhaps Matt 28,8–10.16–20 reflects an integration of these traditions: report of the women to the disciples (still in Jerusalem); resurrection appearance (to the women) in Jerusalem; command to the disciples to go to Galilee; resurrection appearance (to the disciples) in Galilee.

the reader in on the secret as he tells the story. The Danielic flavor of the ending supports this view, to which we shall return.⁷⁴

If we take the silence of the women at face value, what does it mean? Some early approaches explained the women's silence on apologetic grounds. For example, the women's silence functions to explain why the story of the empty tomb arose late in the gospel tradition.⁷⁵ But if by that one assigns 16,8cd to the tradition,⁷⁶ the evidence of Markan redaction speaks against it.⁷⁷ Some scholars would have Mark be the inventor of the empty tomb tradition, so that the women's silence is the cover under which the evangelist introduces the story into the tradition.⁷⁸ That, however, is unlikely. The fact that Matthew, Luke, and John all know a tradition according to which one or more women discovered the empty tomb and told the disciples (Matt 28,1–8; Luke 24,1–9; John 20,1–2.11–18) makes it more likely that Mark worked with such a tradition but altered its ending. Mark shapes his story *against* the grain of the tradition; he is not the inventor of it.

Other interpretations have focused on the disciples, or on the disciples as a cipher for the early church. The women's silence allows the disciples to be the first witnesses or proclaimers of the resurrection,⁷⁹ or it protects them from the suspicion of having tampered with the tomb.⁸⁰ Alternatively, the silence of the women has been interpreted as polemic *against* the disciples or the Jerusalem

74 In a similar way, the (third-person) narrator of the book of Daniel has privileged knowledge of the visions in chapters 7–12, received and recorded (in the first person) by the character Daniel in his (sealed) book. The visions remain secret until the book is published, opened, and read. On the omniscient narrator in Mark's gospel, see David Rhoads, Joanna Dewey, and Donald Michie, *Mark as Story: An Introduction to the Narrative of a Gospel*, 3rd ed. (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2012), 39–43.

75 Neiryneck, "Marc 16,1–8" (see n. 32), 64–66, gives a long catalog of scholars who have held this view.

76 See Neiryneck, "Marc 16,1–8" (see n. 32), 66.69.81, for the many scholars who hold verse 8 to be traditional.

77 On the Markan character of 16,8cd, see Boomershine and Bartholomew, "Narrative Technique" (see n. 57); Catchpole, "Fearful Silence" (see n. 34), 6. And see n. 32 above. Compare 16,8cd especially with 1,44; 9,6.

78 See the scholars listed by Neiryneck, "Marc 16,1–8" (see n. 32), 65 (nn. 345 and 348).66 (n. 360).74.88 (n. 487).

79 See the scholars mentioned in Neiryneck, "Marc 16,1–8" (see n. 32), 66–68; further Ulrich Wilckens, *Auferstehung: Das biblische Auferstehungszeugnis historisch untersucht und erklärt* (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlag Gerd Mohn, 1974), 35; Fuller, *Formation* (see n. 32), 64; Pesch, *Markusevangelium* (see n. 32), 2:535–536. Some feminist scholarship sees here a deliberate downgrading of women. See the references in Susan Miller, "'They Said Nothing to Anyone': The Fear and Silence of the Women at the Empty Tomb (Mk 16.1–8)," *FemTh* 13/1 (2004): 77–90, here 78.88.

80 Campenhausen, *Ablauf* (see n. 32), 36–39.

church. The silence of the women is Mark’s final indictment against the disciples, who represent proponents of a false θεῖος ἀνὴρ Christology in Mark’s time. The omission of a resurrection appearance prevents proponents of this Christology from appealing to it as warrant for their own spiritual experiences with the risen Lord. The silence of the women entails that the disciples never met the risen Lord, were never rehabilitated, and never received an apostolic commission.⁸¹ Or perhaps the silence implies that the call to leave Jerusalem for Galilee was never communicated to the disciples, so that the church was not where it was supposed to be according to the will of its Lord. This is Mark’s polemic against the hegemony of the Jerusalem church.⁸²

Against these interpretations, it is a stretch to say that the silence of the women is really about the disciples. If Mark’s aim was to safeguard the disciples’ claim to be legitimate witnesses to the resurrection, why does he omit a resurrection appearance to them?⁸³ As for polemic against the disciples or the Jerusalem church, the women’s disobedience certainly reminds one of the disciples’ many failures in the gospel. But as we have seen, 16,8 does not necessarily mean that the meeting between Jesus and the disciples predicted in 16,7 never occurred. On the contrary, one can argue that 14,28, not to mention Jesus’s predictions for the disciples’ missionary work in chapter 13, implies that the meeting, along with a rehabilitation of the disciples, did happen.

By far the most popular interpretation of the silence of the women in recent decades has been that Mark intends to provoke reflection or even action on the part of the reader (or hearer). Perhaps Mark intends the reader to imagine the ending of the story. As in other stories with open or suspended endings, Mark has used foreshadowing, structural patterning in the preceding narrative, and the like to lead the reader not to regard 16,8 as the end, but to imagine that the

81 Weeden, *Mark* (see n. 67), 44–100.109.117.164. Similarly Joseph B. Tyson, “The Blindness of the Disciples in Mark,” *JBL* 80/3 (1961): 261–268, here 268.

82 E.g., Ludger Schenke, *Auferstehungsverkündigung und leeres Grab* (Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1969), 51–52; John Dominic Crossan, “Mark and the Relatives of Jesus,” *NovT* 15/2 (1973): 81–113, here 109–113.

83 That Mark could not report resurrection appearances to the disciples because the stories did not yet exist or because he did not know them (Wilckens, *Auferstehung* [see n. 79], 38; Fuller, *Formation* [see n. 32], 66–67) is unlikely. Common to the stories in Matt 28,16–20; Luke 24,44–49; and John 20,19–23 is not only an appearance of the risen Jesus, but also an apostolic mission and commission, in each case given in a “Trinitarian” context. These shared elements suggest that the stories, different as they are, are rooted in a tradition of some antiquity. That such commissioning stories did not exist in the first generation of the church is difficult to accept.

women finally spoke, and that the disciples did see Jesus.⁸⁴ For Andrew Lincoln, verse 7, with its promise, and verse 8, with the failure of the women, must be read together and in light of the whole gospel. The failure of the women recalls the failure of the disciples throughout the gospel, especially their flight from Jesus at his arrest (14,50). But the promise of verse 7 “points to a time beyond the women’s disobedient response when the disciples will regroup with Jesus in Galilee,” and the reader can confidently assume that this promise will be fulfilled, since chapter 13 indicates a post-resurrection role for the disciples. The juxtaposition of verses 7 and 8 provides “a paradigm for Christian existence,” encouraging hope and discipleship despite failure.⁸⁵ Others have argued that Mark’s ending does not simply provoke reflection but is a call to action. The reader is called upon to overcome his or her fear and to take up the cross,⁸⁶ to follow in the way of discipleship,⁸⁷ and to preach the gospel where the women failed to do so.⁸⁸

Of the interpretations of the women’s silence proffered thus far, I find most compelling the more recent ones that see in it an implicit call upon the reader for reflection.⁸⁹ Recent studies of Mark’s ending from the perspectives of cognitive science and performance criticism may lend further credence to the view that Mark intends to provoke certain responses at the end of his gospel.⁹⁰ That said, one wonders whether scholars, in focusing their interpretation on apologetics, polemics, the disciples, or reader/audience response, have missed the main point. Might the ending have above all a Christological meaning? After all, Jesus Christ is the primary subject of Mark’s gospel (1,1). The echoes of the messianic secret motif in 16,7–8 point in this direction. Our observation of the influence of

84 Norman R. Petersen, “When is the End Not the End? Literary Reflections on the Ending of Mark’s Narrative,” *Int* 34 (1980): 151–166, here 163; Magness, *Sense* (see n. 32), 87–125.

85 Lincoln, “Promise” (see n. 56), 291–293.

86 Brian K. Blount, “Is the Joke on Us? Mark’s Irony, Mark’s God, and Mark’s Ending,” in *The Ending of Mark and the Ends of God: Essays in Memory of Donald Harrisville Juel*, ed. Beverly R. Gaventa and Patrick D. Miller (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2005), 15–32.

87 Morna D. Hooker, *A Commentary on the Gospel according to St. Mark*, BNTC (London: Black, 1991), 392–394.

88 Thomas E. Boomershine, “Mark 16:8 and the Apostolic Commission,” *JBL* 100/2 (1981): 225–239; Rhoads, Dewey, and Michie, *Mark as Story* (see n. 74), 143–144; Magness, *Sense* (see n. 32), 102, 125; Danove, *End* (see n. 1), 220–222, 229.

89 Against the view that the ending encourages the reader to become a disciple or to proclaim the gospel where the women failed (note that the women are *not* commissioned to proclaim the resurrection; contrast Matt 28,7!), see du Toit, *Der abwesende Herr* (see n. 73), 252.

90 See, e.g., Michael R. Whinton, “Feeling the Silence: A Moment-by-Moment Account of Emotions at the End of Mark (16:1–8),” *CBQ* 78 (2016): 272–289, who explores the various ways in which ancient audiences might have responded to Mark’s ending.

Daniel enables us to propose a specific Christological interpretation: with the intertext Daniel 10–12, the silence of the women indicates a concealment of revelation, while the lack of a resurrection appearance signals an apocalyptic deferral of the vision of the risen Jesus. To be more precise: the *narrating* of that vision *must* be deferred.

4 An Apocalyptic and Christological Interpretation

To explain this, let us return for a moment to the transfiguration story. We noted previously that this story, with the subsequent command to silence, is the prime example of deferral of revelation in Mark. We also noted an important difference in Mark 16,1–8. Whereas in the case of the transfiguration a vision is narrated but a command is given to the disciples *not* to “narrate” (δηγῆσονται) what they have “seen” (ἃ εἶδον) to anyone until the Son of Man should rise from the dead (9,9), with the empty tomb we have the opposite: the resurrection of Jesus is announced, a vision is promised, and a command to speak is given, but the command to speak remains unfulfilled, and the vision itself is *not* narrated. The ending is all the more striking given the *terminus* designated in 9,9: since the resurrection has happened, it seems that now is the time, if there ever was one, not only for the women to tell what they had seen and heard, but for Mark to “narrate” the disciples’ “vision” of the glorified Jesus. Yet neither happens. Why not?⁹¹

Before we proceed, it is helpful to recall an interesting article by Norman Petersen on “closure” at the end of Mark.⁹² Petersen observes that throughout his gospel Mark establishes a reliable “system of closures” – the generation of readerly expectations consistently followed by their fulfillment (for example, Jesus’s predictions of his death and resurrection, and their fulfillment). This system of closures includes fulfillments beyond the characters’ own actions. For example, Jesus’s resurrection vindicates him against his opponents’ intentions and actions

⁹¹ Wilckens, *Auferstehung* (see n. 79), 39, argues that the moratorium of 9,9 continues beyond 16,8 on the grounds that only when the disciples have come to a true understanding of Jesus through a resurrection appearance can the silence be lifted, and they must be the ones to divulge the secret. An alternative explanation is that for Mark the dialectic of openness and secrecy continues after Easter, until the *parousia*, as will now be explained. Cf. Maria Horstmann, *Studien zur markinischen Christologie: Mk 8,27–9,13 als Zugang zum Christusbild des zweiten Evangeliums*, NTAbh NS 6 (Münster: Aschendorff, 1969), 132–134.

⁹² Petersen, “When” (see n. 84).

to destroy him. But this reliable system of closures renders the ending of 16,8 (on a literal reading) suspect. Can the women's silence really be the last word?

Petersen further points out that Mark's system of closures extends beyond 16,8; for Mark points forward to eschatological events in chapter 13 that reach their closure in the *parousia*. The *fulfillment* of those events, however, he does not emplot; they only reach closure beyond his plotted narrative, in a narrative world that the reader must imagine. As a result, the gospel offers "open disclosure" of eschatological events in the imaginative world (chapter 13), but it also brings apparently premature, or even "false" closure at 16,8, since not only the events of chapter 13, but arguably even the promised coming of the kingdom in 1,15 remain outstanding. This phenomenon forces the reader to read 16,8 on two levels – on the level of Mark's story (the plotted narrative), and on the level of the unplotted time of Mark's narrative world that continues after 16,8 until the *parousia*. To put it in terms of literary theory, one must read 16,8 both on the level of "story time," that is, the past of Jesus and the disciples as represented in Mark's story, and on the level of "discourse time," the time in which Mark tells his story to his implied readers and which includes the later events in Mark's narrative world. Mark 16,8 as the end of story time disturbs the (implied) reader's expectations regarding the fulfillment of predicted, later events in discourse time.

Petersen argues that 16,8 can provide closure in either a literal way or an ironic way. If we find closure in a literal reading of 16,8, Petersen argues, then all of the previous "closures" in Mark's story (expectations and their fulfillment) are revealed as a hoax. Jesus becomes an unreliable character, and especially the prospective closure of Jesus's story in the *parousia* is undermined. The disciples never come to a correct understanding of Jesus. Petersen finds such a reading of Mark incredible. Therefore he prefers finding closure in an ironic reading of 16,8. Mark does not mean what he says. The ending is an ironic substitution for the "obvious" continuation of events. The ironic ending becomes a bridge between the plotted time of the story and unplotted time in the narrative world. Mark is directing the reader to supply imaginatively an appropriate ending for the gospel. This imaginatively supplied ending includes the meeting between Jesus and the disciples predicted in 16,7, where the disciples (finally) come to an adequate understanding of Jesus. Such an ending brings closure to Mark's story (in story time).

Finally, for Petersen the ironic ending also suggests a closure in discourse time. Chapter 13 predicts a conflict of eschatological interpretations. Some people (false prophets) in the implied reader's time (the future from the perspective of Mark's story) are preaching false messiahs and the arrival of the end time (13,6.21–23). In opposition to them the disciples, with their newfound, correct understanding of Jesus (after the meeting in Galilee predicted in 16,7), now stand for those

who say that the end is “not yet.” The disciples now propound the correct Christology (ironically, in view of their past). The *parousia* will resolve this conflict of interpretations and bring final closure in discourse time, just as the imagined meeting in Galilee brings closure to Mark’s (past) story told in story time.

There is much with which one may agree in Petersen’s reading, including the need to read 16,8 on more than one level; his recognition that 16,8 stimulates the reader’s imagination with respect to Mark’s narrative world (including the parts not plotted by Mark); his identification of the tension between the “open disclosure” of the eschatological events in chapter 13 and the apparently premature closure in 16,8; and his sense that the end of Mark is concerned with Christology, and in particular a correct understanding of Jesus between his resurrection and the *parousia*.

In critique of Petersen, however, I do not find it convincing that Mark intends 16,8 ironically in the sense that Mark does not mean what he says.⁹³ If Mark’s real point is that the meeting between Jesus and the disciples in Galilee did in fact happen, he could have described that meeting and its consequences, as Petersen himself acknowledges.⁹⁴ Moreover, it is not convincing that finding closure in a literal reading of 16,8 must lead to the conclusion that all of the satisfied expectations previously found in Mark are a hoax. The Danielic flavor of Mark’s ending suggests a different interpretation on a literal reading of 16,8: It is *precisely to Mark’s point* that the command to disclose the angelic message about *this* expected vision (of the resurrected Jesus), as well as the vision itself, are and indeed must be concealed by an apparently premature closure. Let us, then, return to Mark.

The transfiguration story establishes a pattern, consisting of revelation and concealment, as well as a duality of story time and discourse time, that becomes fundamental also for interpreting 16,8. In Markan story time the vision of transfiguration is revealed to the disciples, but its “narration” is (at Jesus’s command) forbidden, and so concealed, until Jesus is raised from the dead. In Markan story time the vision must remain concealed until that point, because the vision only receives its true meaning from the resurrection (cf. 9,9). In other words, in Markan story time the revelation of the vision to others is deferred, subordinated

⁹³ In another respect, of course, the ending is very ironic. As Lincoln, “Promise” (see n. 56), 290.291, puts it: “The double irony is that [the women] are to tell of a promise that failure is not the end, but then *they* fail to tell and that is the end – of the narrative!” Furthermore, it is as though “at precisely the wrong time” the women “carry out the pre-resurrection injunction to silence.”

⁹⁴ Petersen, “When” (n. 84), 163. See also n. 83 above.

to the death and resurrection of Jesus.⁹⁵ In the post-resurrection era that belongs to Mark's discourse time, however, the meaning of the transfiguration (Jesus is glorified) is now fulfilled; therefore the vision is appropriately narrated – in the gospel itself, and whenever the gospel is read and heard.

The effect is that the reader in the post-resurrection time (and there is no other reader) reads the story as if what was once concealed – the glory of the Son of God – is now revealed. Or perhaps more precisely, his glory is at once revealed and concealed: in the time of the story, it is both revealed to and immediately concealed by the disciples; and again, in the very act of reading (or hearing), it is revealed to the reader, yet still concealed by its very transitoriness. The reader (hearer) experiences the disciples' merely *anticipatory* (and therefore previously concealed) vision of the glory of the risen Jesus (in story time) as now appropriately narrated and in that sense "revealed," even as the vision remains in another sense concealed, because of its transitoriness.⁹⁶

But just this dynamic of revelation and concealment points to a need to modify Petersen's temporal distinctions. As we have seen, Petersen, following standard literary theory, distinguishes between the story time of Mark's (past) story and the discourse time in which Mark tells the story, which includes the future events of chapter 13 in Mark's narrative world. Mark's (past) story finds closure in the implied meeting in Galilee, whereas the future events of the narrative world find closure at the *parousia*. But thereby Petersen overlooks a third temporal situation, namely, the narrating instance, the act and indeed the time of narrating itself. Gérard Genette has underlined the importance of distinguishing not only between story and (narrative) discourse, but also between the latter two and (the act of) *narrating*.⁹⁷ The latter distinction is not always as clearly distin-

⁹⁵ That the vision of transfiguration is subordinated to the death and resurrection of Jesus is clear not only from 9,9, but also from 9,7. In the Markan context the divine command, "listen to him [Jesus]," means that the disciples must listen to Jesus's teaching on the necessity of his death and resurrection (8,31–33, etc.).

⁹⁶ Whatever the transfiguration may have meant in the tradition before Mark, for the evangelist it is the disciples' *fleeting* vision of Jesus's future glory, or, if one wishes (cf. Tom Alec Burkill, *Mysterious Revelation: An Examination of the Philosophy of St. Mark's Gospel* [Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1963], 158–164), of the hidden glory that he already now possesses and that is destined to be revealed again. That is clear not only from 9,9, but also from the redactional 9,6: whatever 9,5 may have meant (positively) in the tradition, Mark turns it into the disciples' *mistaken* attempt to capture and hold onto this fleeting moment of glory. It is debated whether for Mark the vision is an anticipation of the resurrection or the *parousia*. Perhaps it is both: 9,1 suggests the *parousia* (cf. 2Pet 1,16–18), while 9,9 suggests the resurrection.

⁹⁷ Gérard Genette, *Narrative Discourse: An Essay in Method*, trans. Jane E. Lewin (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1980), 25–32.212–227.

guished from the former as it should be.⁹⁸ Genette shows how through “narrative metalepsis” an author can “play on the double temporality of the story and the narrating.” In such temporal play the act itself of narrating (or performing) becomes a shifting boundary between the “world of which one tells” and the “world in which one tells.” An effect of this is that the reader is drawn into the narrative as though he or she belonged to it.⁹⁹ So the transfiguration scene partakes not only of story time (when the vision was revealed to *and* concealed by the disciples) and discourse time (including the period “after the Son of Man has risen from the dead,” when the story is appropriately told), but it also partakes of the time of narrating, when we read or hear the gospel, and so experience the *original* concealment along with revelation.¹⁰⁰

How then do things stand with the announcement that Jesus has been raised in 16,6 and the expected vision in 16,7? We take these in turn, beginning with the announcement of 16,6. In *story* time the truth of the resurrection is declared by the young man at the tomb. But with the gospel ending at 16,8 the message is concealed (and its revelation only imagined in *discourse* time). The effect of this concealment is that in the *time of narrating* the reader (real or implied) experiences the discovery of the empty tomb as if the truth of the resurrection is being revealed for the first time.¹⁰¹ Or again, more precisely, as with the transfiguration, the reader experiences revelation and concealment at once. It is the dimension of the “time of narrating,” in which the boundary between the “world of which one tells” and the “world in which one tells” is blurred (Genette), that makes

98 E.g., in Seymour Chatman, *Story and Discourse: Narrative Structure in Fiction and Film* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1978), 62–63, who notes the distinction between story time and discourse time, having to do with questions of order, duration, and frequency, and then collapses the time of the narrator into discourse time; similarly Gerald Prince, *A Dictionary of Narratology* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1987), 21. See also Genette’s critique of Todorov (*Narrative Discourse* [see n. 97], 29.213).

99 Genette, *Narrative Discourse* (see n. 97), 235–236.

100 The importance of the act of narrating as part of a Markan strategy for making the once hidden revealed to the reader has also been noted, although in a different context, by du Toit, *Der abwesende Herr* (see n. 73), 388.

101 Cf. Andreas Lindemann, “Die Osterbotschaft des Markus: Zur theologischen Interpretation von Mark 16. 1–8,” *NTS* 26/3 (1980): 298–317, here 315. Contra Petersen, “When” (see n. 84), 159, who puts the implied reader, whom he regards as living within the first generation of Christians (9,1; 13,30) and in Markan discourse time, and the modern reader, excluded from discourse time, in different situations. Thereby Petersen misses the significance of the narrating act, which at *any* time both conceals and reveals the truth of the resurrection for the implied reader. This is, of course, very different from saying that the evangelist in this way becomes the *inventor* of the story. See at n. 78 above.

this simultaneity of revelation and concealment possible.¹⁰² That is, the message of the angel is simultaneously announced and kept secret (by the women) in the “world of which one tells,” and it is again revealed, precisely as the story is read, in the “world in which one tells.” This blurring of worlds approaches what Genette aptly calls a “defiance of verisimilitude”;¹⁰³ for how could the story have ever been written if the women never told?¹⁰⁴ They must have told – and yet according to Mark they did not. As noted above, this blurring of worlds means either that Mark’s ending *does* require the reader to imagine that the women told and that the disciples saw the risen Jesus (in discourse time), or we must take it as a function of the omniscient narrator. In either case, the reader *also* experiences the revelation of the resurrection at the time of narrating. I suggest that it is the specifically Danielic motif of revelation, concealment, and further revelation that causes Mark to write this way. The very reading of the gospel functions like the “opening” of Mark’s heretofore “sealed” story, its secrets now revealed.

What then about the omission of a vision of the risen Jesus? How do we understand that? Just as the narration of the vision of the transfiguration must be deferred until the resurrection of Jesus – for only then can the meaning of that vision be understood, its truth confirmed – so, in Mark’s design, the narration of the vision of the resurrected Jesus must be *further* deferred; indeed, it cannot be told *at all* until the *parousia*,¹⁰⁵ for only then can its meaning be fully understood, its truth finally confirmed.¹⁰⁶ Just here the resurrection differs from the transfiguration. The Markan narrative assigns an endpoint for the moratorium on speaking of the transfiguration within its own story time (16,6), which endpoint authorizes its narration (cf. 9,9), that is, its revelation, in discourse time – and that means: narrated in Mark’s gospel itself. But the deferral of the vision of the resurrection continues until the *parousia* and so cannot be narrated. There is, to be sure, a kind of revelation of the resurrection – in the very reading or hearing of

102 For more on this phenomenon, see Stephen H. Smith, *A Lion with Wings: A Narrative-Critical Approach to Mark’s Gospel* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1996), 149; and Adam Abraham Mendilow, “The Position of the Present in Fiction,” in *The Theory of the Novel*, ed. Philip Stevick (New York, NY: Free Press, 1967), 255–280, here 264–267. See also Whitenton, “Feeling” (see n. 90), 279–280, on “diegetic effect,” the blurring of the real world and the narrative world.

103 Genette, *Narrative Discourse* (see n. 97), 236.

104 Is this a kind of narrative paralipsis? The reader recognizes that the women must eventually have told, but that information is withheld. See Genette, *Narrative Discourse* (see n. 97), 195–197; Prince, *Dictionary* (see n. 98), 69.

105 Cf. Lightfoot, *Locality* (see n. 59), 67; Burkill, *Mysterious Revelation* (see n. 96), 178–179.

106 Thus the narration of the vision of the risen Jesus is in a somewhat different category from the women’s proclamation (contrast Magness, *Sense* [see n. 32], 101–102.115).

Mark's gospel, the angel's proclamation, "he has been raised," and the women's discovery of the empty tomb, both previously concealed, are both revealed. But the revelation of the resurrection remains further concealed in the absence of a narrated appearance.

Again, revisiting Daniel will help us understand this. In Daniel the opening of the sealed vision "for the end of days," which happens in the very reading of the book, reveals what has heretofore been concealed: the announcement of the events of the last days, and the meaning of those events. Just so with Mark, the very "opening" (reading) of the gospel reveals what was previously concealed by the women – the meaning of the empty tomb, the announcement, "he has been raised" (16,6). Yet as we saw, in Daniel one event of the last days remains outstanding: the resurrection of the dead. Its confirmation is (perpetually) apocalyptically deferred – its truth is concealed until it happens. Even so in Mark, the vision of the resurrected Jesus remains concealed, as it awaits final confirmation at the *parousia*. Only then will Jesus, the Son of Man, be visibly present to all (13,26: ὄψοντα). Until then, the empty tomb bespeaks only Jesus's "visible absence": "He is not here (οὐκ ἔστιν ὧδε). See (ἴδε) the place where they laid him" (16,6).

This deferral does not place the truth of the resurrection in doubt; for we have the young man's announcement, in fulfillment of Jesus's earlier predictions: ἠγγέροθη! Furthermore, the vision of the transfiguration serves as a kind of Markan "pledge" of the future glorification of Jesus. But for Mark there can be no definitive vision of Jesus short of the *parousia* itself. Unlike the appearance of the Son of Man at the *parousia*, the appearance of Jesus "to his disciples and to Peter" (16,7) would still only be a private (cf. Acts 10,41; 13,31), fleeting affair,¹⁰⁷ like the vision of the transfiguration. Indeed, this may explain why in Mark's narrative structure the transfiguration serves as an ersatz vision of the resurrected Jesus. In its very transitoriness it anticipates the appearance(s) of the risen Jesus of which Mark knew, but which he chose to omit, precisely because it was (they were) transitory.¹⁰⁸ To narrate the appearance of the risen Jesus as the *last* event in the gospel would be to give it a meaning that it does not and cannot have – it would be to endow it with the visible, abiding presence of the Son of Man that is appropriate only for the *parousia*.

¹⁰⁷ Cf. Lightfoot, *Locality* (see n. 59), 77: Mark was not interested in narrating "passing" appearances of the risen Jesus.

¹⁰⁸ Thus, just as the anointing at Bethany is an ersatz, anticipatory anointing for burial (14,8), which will never take place at the tomb because Jesus's body disappears, so the transfiguration is an ersatz vision of the resurrected Jesus which will never take place because Mark omits it.

Ernst Lohmeyer argued, in fact, that the vision foretold in 16,7 is a reference to the *parousia* rather than a resurrection appearance, and he explained the end of Mark on that basis: the women sense nothing less than the arrival of the eschatological Son of Man, and so they flee in fearful silence.¹⁰⁹ Only a handful of scholars have followed Lohmeyer.¹¹⁰ There are many problems with this view, and it is better to interpret 16,7 as referring to a resurrection appearance.¹¹¹ That said, there is a moment of truth in Lohmeyer's proposal with which we must reckon, namely, that Mark may have been aware of an interpretation of the resurrection according to which the decisive appearance of Jesus was to happen at the *parousia*. It has been argued that Mark held to an early Palestinian Christology according to which Christ, though taken into heaven at his resurrection, would enter into decisive and visible rule only at the (imminent) *parousia* (cf. Acts 3,21), while other early Christians held that Christ was already reigning, potentially even visibly, since his resurrection.¹¹² The competition between these two views may have led Mark to omit a resurrection appearance out of concern that it would imply a premature fulfillment of the *parousia* expectation.

The other gospels offer support for this possibility. For example, in the farewell discourses of the Gospel of John, Jesus speaks much about his departure from and return to the disciples and of how they will see him again (16,16–24; cf. 14,19), where it is not always clear whether he is referring to the resurrection appearances at the end of the gospel (cf. 20,20.25), or to his appearance at the *parousia*, after

109 Ernst Lohmeyer, *Galiläa und Jerusalem* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1936), 10–14; also his *Das Evangelium des Markus*, KEK 1/2, 15th impression (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1959), 356–357.359.

110 Especially Lightfoot, *Locality* (see n. 59), 24–48.61–65.73–77, follows and develops Lohmeyer's view. Others who have followed Lohmeyer are Marxsen, *Mark the Evangelist* (see n. 33), 83–92.111–116; Weeden, *Mark* (see n. 67), 46.110–117; Neill Q. Hamilton, "Resurrection Tradition and the Composition of Mark," *JBL* 84/4 (1965): 415–421; Norman Perrin, *The Resurrection according to Matthew, Mark, and Luke* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress, 1977), 27.33–36; further references in Stein, "Short Note" (see n. 32), 445 n. 2.

111 See the critique of the *parousia* interpretation in, e.g., Lincoln, "Promise" (see n. 56), 285; Stein, "Ending" (see n. 38), 94 n. 78; and Stein, "Short Note" (see n. 32).

112 Weeden, *Mark* (see n. 67), 128–137, building on Ferdinand Hahn, *The Titles of Jesus in Christology: Their History in Early Christianity*, trans. Harold Knight and George Ogg (London: Lutterworth, 1969), 92–103.129–135; and Reginald H. Fuller, *The Foundations of New Testament Christology* (New York, NY: Scribner's Sons, 1965), 145–147.185–186. Thus Jesus's entry into power as Son of Man expected from Dan 7,13 could have been interpreted by some as obtaining already from the resurrection, even visibly (cf. Acts 7,55–56), whereas Mark may have foreseen its fulfillment only at the *parousia*. On the different uses to which early Christian tradition put Dan 7,13 in this regard, see Norman Perrin, *Rediscovering the Teaching of Jesus* (London: SCM, 1967), 173–185.

his departure to the Father (16,10.17; cf. 7,33), to take believers “home” (14,1–3), or to both (or perhaps even to his “return” through the coming of the Paraclete; cf. 14,19).¹¹³ This ambiguity is due to the fact that to a certain degree John telescopes Jesus’s death and his ascension to the Father in his overall “departure” from the world (7,33–34; 8,21; 13,1.33.36–37; 20,17; cf. 14,12.28; 16,5.7.28), so that just as the resurrection solves the “problem” of Jesus’s departure and absence in death, so his *parousia* (as well as the sending of the Paraclete) solves the “problem” of his departure and absence in his ascension. Here resurrection appearance and *parousia* converge to some degree in the theological imagination.

The evidence from Matthew is perhaps even more important, since this gospel builds its story of Jesus’s resurrection appearance to the disciples in Galilee (28,16–20) on Mark’s foundation. In Matthew’s account the disciples see (ιδόντες) Jesus as the One to whom God has granted (divine passive: ἐδόθη) all authority (πᾶσα ἐξουσία) in heaven and on earth (ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς). The grant of authority, along with the commission to make disciples of all nations (πάντα τὰ ἔθνη), signals that the risen Jesus is none other than the messianic Son of Man who has received the eschatological power that was promised in Dan 7,13–14; for in his vision Daniel sees that “authority (ἐξουσία) was given (ἐδόθη) to him [the Son of Man], and all the nations of the earth (πάντα τὰ ἔθνη τῆς γῆς) according to posterity ...” (Dan 7,14 OG). Matthew emphasizes Jesus’s abiding presence (“I am with you always, to the end of the age”), particularly through the invocation of his name in the gathered community (18,20). The interpretation of the resurrection by way of Dan 7,13–14, together with the emphasis on the abiding presence of Jesus, effectively implies that the resurrection is a replacement for the *parousia*, or at least an anticipation of it.¹¹⁴ In this way Matthew confronts head-on the “problem” of Jesus’s absence through resurrection and ascension, or through the delay of the *parousia*.

Matthew’s story is heavily overwritten by Matthean themes and other secondary features, but that he works with a tradition of some antiquity can hardly be doubted.¹¹⁵ One wonders whether Matthew’s account is indicative of the kind of resurrection appearance story that Mark knew and deliberately omitted. Its

¹¹³ See Siegfried Schulz, *Untersuchungen zur Menschensohn-Christologie im Johannesevangelium* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1957), 158–173.

¹¹⁴ Gräßer, *Problem* (see n. 33), 201–202. Joachim Jeremias, *New Testament Theology*, trans. John Bowden (London: SCM, 1971), 310, puts it this way in connection with Matt 28,18: in the disciples’ vision of the risen Jesus, “they experienced the *parousia*.” Of course, for Matthew history continues beyond this appearance.

¹¹⁵ William D. Davies and Dale C. Allison, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to Saint Matthew*, 3 vols., ICC (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1988–1997), 3:677–678.

portrayal of a visible and enduring presence of Jesus as the Son of Man exercising authority over heaven and earth was precisely what Mark did not want to narrate at this point.¹¹⁶ Like the Lord's Supper (1Cor 11,26), Mark's gospel "proclaims the Lord's death until he comes."¹¹⁷ Of course Mark affirms the resurrection, but the powerful presence of Jesus will be visible only at the end of time, when the Son of Man returns definitively in power and glory (13,26; cf. 14,62; Rev 1,7).¹¹⁸ Until then, the Christian community lives not by the visible presence of its Lord, but with his absence, or at least his hiddenness,¹¹⁹ even as his true identity was

116 Cf. similarly Bradly S. Billings, "The End of Mark's Gospel and the Markan Community: A Fresh Look in an Old Place," *Colloq* 46/1 (2014): 42–54, here 52. Contra Hans-Werner Bartsch, "Der Schluß des Markus-Evangeliums: Ein überlieferungsgeschichtliches Problem," *TZ* 27/4 (1971): 241–254, who argues that Mark's original (but lost) ending *precisely showed* the risen Jesus as the Son of Man at the *parousia* in fulfillment of apocalyptic expectation. It was removed because of the delay of the *parousia* and replaced by the story of the empty tomb. Of course Mark knows of the Son of Man's authority, but within his narrative he confines the exercise of that authority to Jesus's earthly ministry (2,10). Cf. du Toit, *Der abwesende Herr* (see n. 73), 332–398 (cf. 409–434), who shows how Mark transfers Jesus's teaching authority in the post-Easter period to his pre-Easter words. The specification ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς in 2,10, however, betrays knowledge (also by Mark) of the Son of Man's post-Easter exercise of authority also ἐν οὐρανῷ (Matt 28,18). On the Son of Man's *implicit* exercise of authority to forgive sins in the post-Easter period (Mark 16,7), see du Toit, *Der abwesende Herr* (see n. 73), 309.

117 And compare the cry "maranatha" in 1Cor 16,22. See Hahn, *Titles* (see n. 112), 93–98. It has been observed that Mark's omission of a resurrection appearance has the effect of focusing attention on the death of Jesus. See Magness, *Sense* (see n. 32), 91. That for Mark even the vision of the risen Jesus remains under the shadow of the cross is emphasized by Lindemann, "Osterbotschaft" (see n. 101), 310–317.

118 Contra Lukas Kundert, "Die Apokalypse ist bereits geschehen: Neutestamentliche Eschatologie am Beispiel der Evangelienschlüsse," in *Kontexte der Schrift. Band I: Text, Ethik, Judentum und Christentum, Gesellschaft. Ekkehard W. Stegemann zum 60. Geburtstag*, ed. Gabriella Gelardini (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 2005), 100–115, here 105.110–113, who argues that with Mark's original ending (16,8) the *parousia* has already happened, because the text has no ascension of Jesus. Even for Matthew this view is valid only in part: the Son of Man is already presently reigning on earth (28,20), but that does not exclude a future coming (chapters 24–25). But it does not seem right for Mark 16,1–8 at all.

119 Weeden, *Mark* (see n. 67), 83.85–89.100.106–111.114.125–126, argues that for Mark Jesus is absent from the church until the end of time. He follows Elias Bickermann, "Das leere Grab," *ZNW* 23 (1924): 281–292, and Hamilton, "Resurrection Tradition" (see n. 110), in regarding the empty-tomb story as a "translation" or "removal" story, which thus highlights the absence of the body and draws attention to the *parousia* rather than the resurrection. On the presence and absence of Jesus in the Gospel of Mark, see above all du Toit, *Der abwesende Herr* (see n. 73). On absence, see further John Dominic Crossan, "A Form for Absence: The Markan Creation of Gospel," *Semeia* 12 (1978): 41–55; and Werner H. Kelber, *The Oral and the Written Gospel: The Hermeneutics of Speaking and Writing in the Synoptic Tradition, Mark, Paul, and Q* (Philadel-

hidden during his earthly ministry.¹²⁰ Likewise the community does not live from power, but is oppressed and persecuted (Mark 13,9–13.18–20); it lives from weakness, in which the powerful Christ is secretly present (cf. 2Cor 4,7–12; 12,9; 13,4).¹²¹ For Mark the risen Jesus must remain concealed until the end of history.

5 Conclusion

Compared to the other canonical gospels, two things stand out at the end of Mark: the silence of the women, and the absence of a resurrection appearance. This article proposes that the background of Daniel explains both of these features. Like Daniel, the women receive a vision that relates to the “end of days.” Their silence serves as an intertextual signal indicating the concealment of the angel’s message. In the very “opening” of the Gospel of Mark the reader experiences the revelation of the concealed message as though for the first time. At the same time, because the content of that message – Jesus has been raised from the dead – remains a truth that can only be eschatologically confirmed, the vision of the risen Jesus remains further deferred, which is to say, its narration is omitted from the gospel. For Mark the resurrected Jesus remains hidden until the *parousia*, just as he was a hidden messiah during his ministry. The silence of the women is therefore primarily about Jesus, rather than apologetic, polemic, the disciples, or the women themselves. Reader-response interpretations of the surprising end of Mark are not wrong, but such interpretations henceforth should include the

phia, PA: Fortress, 1983), 207–211. To be sure, the promised *resurrection* appearance in 16,7, with the implied forgiveness and reconciliation of the disciples through Jesus as the Son of Man (cf. 2,10), suggests Jesus’s presence (cf. du Toit, *Der abwesende Herr* [see n. 73], 309; though see also p. 392), so that one might better speak of his hiddenness than his absence. Yet as for Mark Jesus’s hiddenness persists until the *parousia*, it is perhaps hardly distinguishable from his absence. On Jesus’s hiddenness until the *parousia*, see also Paul J. Achtemeier, *Mark*, 2nd ed. (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress, 1986), 51.123.

120 See n. 91. Some scholars have seen in “Galilee” in 14,28 and 16,7 an allusion to the concept that this location is for Mark the place of Jesus’s hiddenness, after Easter as before Easter. See, e.g., Marxsen, *Mark the Evangelist* (see n. 33), 92.94. There may be something to that, although it is perhaps more likely that Mark simply preserves a memory that the earliest resurrection appearances happened there.

121 Even after Easter discipleship remains under the cross. See Henning Paulsen, “Mk XVI 1–8,” *NovT* 22/2 (1980): 138–175, here 172–173. Cf. Lincoln, “Promise” (see n. 56), 297–298. None of this implies, however, that the disciples were never restored (so Perrin, *Resurrection* [see n. 110], 31).

reader's reflection on the concealment of the angelic message and the deferred vision of the risen Jesus as an apocalyptic (Danielic) motif.¹²²

122 Kermode, *Sense* (see n. 64), 17–18.24 (cf. p. 166), points out the particular analogy between traditional apocalyptic, which both tends towards and defies closure, and the literary peripeteia. Both phenomena confront our expectations with something beyond our expectations, and so force us to adjust expectations or reinterpret them.