



Allen, G. V. (2021) Exodus traditions in the synoptic gospels. In: Kowalski, B. and Docherty, S. (eds.) *The Reception of Exodus Motifs in Jewish and Christian Literature*. Series: Themes in Biblical Narrative, 30. Brill: Leiden; Boston, pp. 201-221. ISBN 9789004471122 (doi: [10.1163/9789004471122_012](https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004471122_012)).

This is the Author Accepted Manuscript.

There may be differences between this version and the published version. You are advised to consult the publisher's version if you wish to cite from it.

<http://eprints.gla.ac.uk/266168/>

Deposited on: 04 March 2022

Enlighten – Research publications by members of the University of Glasgow
<http://eprints.gla.ac.uk>

Exodus Traditions in the Synoptic Gospels

Garrick V. Allen

It is a testament to the compositional practices and literary erudition of early Jewish and Christian writers that scholars, like those who contributed to this book and many others beside, continue to interrogate their incessant usage of wording, themes, and ideas from antecedent works.¹ The Synoptic Gospels are a part of this larger trajectory of Jewish literary production. Their authors crafted these stylized narratives in a way that connects the story of Jesus to major figures and events in Jewish scripture, reflecting and further developing perspectives on the significance of Jesus' life and activity as his earliest followers perceived it. The significance of Adam, Abraham, David, and Elijah and their stories crop up throughout the narrative; the exile, the politics of empire, and expectations of restoration underline the texture of these works. Even women like Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, and Bathsheba are foundational for understanding the larger story Jesus' activity, at least according to Matthew's genealogy (1:2–16).

Within this larger constellation of thematic and lexical borrowing from Jewish scripture, the story of the exodus from Egypt, Moses' role as the prophet of liberation, and the symbolism of wilderness and salvific deliverance from Egypt play a central role. Setting aside for the moment the parallels between Moses' activity as lawgiver at Sinai and Jesus as herald of a new law in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5–7) and other legal exegesis in the Gospels,² this article examines the relationships that exist between the exodus event and the narratives of the Synoptic Gospels, particularly at the place where the Synoptics differ most markedly: their beginnings.

¹ As I have argued for the book of Revelation in Garrick V. Allen, *The Book of Revelation and Early Jewish Textual Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017).

² See Dale C. Allison, *The New Moses: A Matthean Typology* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993), 172–194.

In one sense, this relationship is well-trodden ground in scholarship on the Gospels. So instead of cataloguing literary relationships and listing allusions, I want to instead emphasize the flexible ways that the Gospels alluded to and reused exodus traditions, endeavoring also to show how each of the evangelists continued to develop their work's relationship to the exodus narrative in distinctive ways. Exodus traditions are central to the beginning of each of these narratives, but the relationship between Jesus' activity and the exodus event are articulated in varying ways. Although explicit quotations of the legal material from Exodus occur in numerous locations,³ the evangelists tend to filter their engagement with the narrative of Israel's escape from Egypt through existing exegetical traditions and through the vector of other scriptural works, like Isaiah and other prophetic traditions.⁴ The Synoptic Gospels and Exodus have an intertwined literary relationship, but the ways that exodus traditions are incorporated into these works defy straightforward categorization. To demonstrate this, I will examine the literary relationships between the narrative of the exodus event and the beginning of each of the Synoptic Gospels, noting the growing explicitness of references to the exodus in as the tradition develops from Mark to Matthew to Luke. I conclude with some methodological considerations.

Mark and Exodus Traditions

The first chapter of Mark is replete with nuanced references and allusions to Jewish scripture, including Elijah traditions and an emphasis on the location of the desert or wilderness. Mark makes his narrative's indebtedness to Jewish scripture explicit almost immediately: 1:2–3 is a quotation attributed to "Isaiah the prophet" (καθὼς γέγραπται ἐν τῷ Ἡσαΐα τῷ προφήτῃ), an

³ E.g. Mark 7:10 (Exod 20:12; 21:17, cf. Deut 5:16; Lev 20:9); 10:19 (Exod 20:12–16, cf. Deut 5:16–20); Matt 15:4 (Exod 20:12; 21:17); Matt 19:18–19 // Mark 19:19 // Luke 18:20 (Exod 20:12–16 // Deut 5:16–20).

⁴ A point emphasized for Mark by Rikki E. Watts, *Isaiah's New Exodus in Mark*, WUNT 2/88 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1997).

ascription that veils its complexity.⁵ If we read Mark 1:1–3 as programmatic of the message of the book,⁶ exodus traditions of divinely prepared movement and salvation, filtered through later prophetic traditions, are central to Mark’s conceptualization of Jesus’ activity.

<i>Mark 1:2b–3</i>	<i>Exod 23:20</i>		<i>Mal 3:1</i>	
	<i>OG/LXX</i>	<i>proto-MT</i>	<i>OG/LXX</i>	<i>proto-MT</i>
ἰδοὺ [ἐγὼ] ἀποστέλλω τὸν ἄγγελόν μου πρὸ προσώπου σου ὅς κατασκευάσει τὴν ὁδὸν σου	ἰδοὺ ἐγὼ ἀποστέλλω τὸν ἄγγελόν μου πρὸ προσώπου σου ἵνα φυλάξῃ σε ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ	הנה אנכי שלח מלאך לפניך לשמרך בדרך	ἰδοὺ ἐγὼ ἐξαποστέλλω τὸν ἄγγελόν μου καὶ ἐπιβλέψεται ὁδὸν πρὸ προσώπου μου	הנני שלח מלאכי ופנה דרך לפני
<i>Isa 40:3</i>				
	<i>OG/LXX</i>	<i>proto-MT</i>		
φωνὴ βοῶντος ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ Ἔτοιμάσατε τὴν ὁδὸν κυρίου εὐθείας ποιεῖτε τὰς τρίβους αὐτοῦ	φωνὴ βοῶντος ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ Ἔτοιμάσατε τὴν ὁδὸν κυρίου εὐθείας ποιεῖτε τὰς τρίβους τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν	קול קורא במדבר פנו דרך יהוה ישרו בערבה מסלה לאלהינן		

As is well known, the textual form of the quotation in Mark 1:2–3, and the nature of its composition, are difficult to determine. The first clause of the quotation– “behold I am sending my messenger before your face” (ἰδοὺ [ἐγὼ] ἀποστέλλω τὸν ἄγγελόν μου πρὸ προσώπου σου) is a verbatim representation of the OG text of the corresponding clause in OG Exod 23:30, especially if we choose to read the pronoun ἐγὼ as part of Mark’s

⁵ Some witnesses, even early ones like Codex Alexandrinus, omit the explicit reference, attributing the quotation instead simply to “the prophets” (τοὺς προφηταῖς), a tacit acknowledgement of the complexity of the quotation. Marginal comments in some manuscripts also draw attention to the quotation’s possible source texts. See Martin Karrer, “Scriptural Quotations in the Jesus Tradition and Early Christianity: Textual History and Theology,” in *Ancient Readers and their Scriptures: Engaging the Hebrew bible in Early Judaism and Christianity*, ed. G. V. Allen and J. A. Dunne (Leiden: Brill, 2019), 98–127 (esp. 118–120).

⁶ As does Watts, *New Exodus*, 53–55 and John Drury, “Mark 1.1–15: An Interpretation,” in *Alternative Approaches to New Testament Study*, ed. A. E. Harvey (London: SPCK, 1985), 25–36.

*Ausgangstext.*⁷ This utterance from Exodus occurs at the end of the Covenant Code, promising the logical completion of the exodus event – the eventual (and conditional) conquest of Canaan. Despite their near verbatim relationship in the first clause, the Greek texts of Mark 1:2 and Exod 23:20 diverge in the second, and their divergence cannot be attributed to alternative rendering of the proto-MT: the angel in Exodus is sent “in order that he will protect you on the road,” while in Mark the messenger is the one “who will prepare your way.” Similarities exist, but the details of the wording of the second clause in Mark’s quotation differ from Exodus’ Greek and Hebrew forms. Additionally, some aspects of Mark and Exodus’ Greek text agree with one another against the proto-MT, like the inclusion of the first person genitive pronoun modifying “angel/messenger” (μου).

The second clause of the quotation appears at first glance to be a rendering of the Hebrew text of Mal 3:1, a passage that speaks of a messenger who prepares God’s way, preceding his manifestation at the temple. The figure in Malachi is a messenger of the covenant whose appearance will refine humanity (Mal 3:2–3), watching the road in preparation for a kind of new exodus.⁸ The use of the third person singular future form of κατασκευάζω in Mark (as opposed to ἐπιβλέπεται in Malachi) corresponds to פנה if it is read as a *piel* construction, as it is pointed in the Masoretic tradition (“to clear away”; “clean up”). An imperative *piel* construction of פנה appears also in Isa 40:3 and is translated as ἐτοιμάσατε (“prepare”) in the OG,⁹ a reading also preserved in Mark 1:3. The use of ἐπιβλέπεται (“he will look upon”) as an equivalent for פנה in OG Mal 3:1, suggests that the OG translator read פנה as a *qal* form (“to turn toward [attentively]”; cf. Job 21:5). Both forms of the Malachi text

⁷ ἐγώ is preserved in a number of witnesses, including the early pandect codices Sinaiticus and Alexandrinus. I suspect it was omitted from the main text of NA²⁸ in large part because of its coherence to Exod 23:20 and Mal 3:1.

⁸ I use the collocation “new exodus” to refer to the use of exodus motifs from Jewish scripture as a vector to conceptualize a new salvific event – like the end of exile or interpretations of Jesus’ crucifixion and resurrection – effected by God or his messiah in early Jewish and Christian literature. On the diversity of uses of “new exodus” terminology in New Testament studies see Daniel Lynwood Smith, “The Uses of ‘New Exodus’ in New Testament Scholarship: Preparing a Way through the Wilderness,” *CBR* 14/2 (2016): 207–243.

⁹ On the similarities of Mal 3:1 and Isa 40:3, see Watts, *New Exodus*, 73–74.

also lack the prepositional phrase witnessed in Exod 23:20 related to the road at the very end of the second clause (ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ). Even if it does not agree precisely with the formulation of the Markan quotation (τὴν ὁδόν σου vs. ὁδὸν/דרך), the construction in Malachi is closer than its parallel in Exod 23:20. If we take Exod 23:20 and Mal 3:1 as entities that Mark encountered as discrete literary units, it appears that the author drew the first clause word for word from Exodus and the second clause from a form similar to the sense of the proto-MT of Malachi.

But the identification of the text form that stands behind the Markan quotation is complicated by the pre-existing relationship between Exod 23:20 and Mal 3:1, texts whose forms suggest a multi-directional interpretive détente. The wording of proto-MT of Mal 3:1 is an obvious example of inner-biblical exegesis, reusing the Exodus utterance by adopting similar wording and themes and by using the promise of entrance into the promised land in Exodus as a model for God’s return to the temple, preceded by a messenger of the covenant.¹⁰ Some elements are rearranged, like לפני, and other referents are altered to correspond to a new literary context, like the personal pronouns, but these alterations are standard aspects of textual reuse in early Judaism.¹¹

Many have noted that Malachi reuses or otherwise reworks Exod 23:30,¹² but there may also be influence by Malachi on the Exodus text in quantitatively small-scale ways, especially in the OG. For example, both OG Malachi and Exodus agree that it is “my angel” (τὸν ἄγγελόν μου) that has been sent, even though the Hebrew of Exodus lacks any pronoun, suggesting perhaps that the translator of OG Exodus (or his Hebrew *Vorlage*) was influenced

¹⁰ On scriptural reuse in Malachi, see Sheree Lear, *Scribal Composition: Malachi as a Test Case* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 2017).

¹¹ Also in the New Testament, e.g. Mark 1:11; 12:36; 14:24; 14:27, 62; Rom 3:11–18; 1 Pet 2:6–8. See further discussion in Joel Marcus, *Mark 1–8*, AB 27 (London: Doubleday, 2000), 147–148.

¹² E.g. Andrew E. Hill, *Malachi*, AB 25D (London: Doubleday, 1998), 287–288; B. Glazier-McDonald, *Malachi the Divine Messenger* (Atlanta: Scholars, 1987), 130.

by the wording of Mal 3:1.¹³ The similarities and complex relationship between the Exodus and Malachi texts create issues for identifying not only the text form, but also literary work that Mark cites. The relationship between these utterances is so close that ancient Jewish readers would have easily collocated them as related unites – Mal 3:1 and Exod 23:20 become linked and mutually illuminating texts for understanding God’s past and future salvific activities, first in Mark but then also in Rabbinic literature (e.g. *Exod. Rab.* 23.20).

The situation is such that it is equally plausible that Mark quotes a text form similar to the sense of the entire Malachi segment in the proto-MT.¹⁴ If Mark utilized this form, it would explain his use of the first person pronoun in “my messenger,” and it is not inconceivable that the author rearranged the equivalent of לפני (πρὸ προσώπου σου) back into the first clause. There is no definitive conclusion to reach here, but what is clear is that Mark’s use of the language of the exodus is entwined with and filtered through a post-exilic prophetic re-imagining of the exodus and God’s return. Malachi becomes an important intermediary tradition for Mark’s conceptualization of the exodus, especially because Mal 4:5 (MT 3:23) explicitly articulates Elijah as a precursor who is sent in a preparatory way before “the great and terrible day of the Lord.” This conclusion coheres with Mark’s use of Elijah imagery to symbolize John the Baptist’s activity (e.g. Mark 1:6; cf. 2 Kgs 1:8; Zech 13:4).

The second half of the quotation (Mark 1:3) does indeed come directly from the start of deutero-Isaiah, a section that emphasises the impending end of exile (e.g. Isa 40:1–2; cf. Bar 5:7–9; *Pss. Sol.* 11:4; 4Q176; 1QS 8 12–16; 9 17–20).¹⁵ This part of the Markan quotation

¹³ The SP of Exod 23:20 does preserve מלאכי against the proto-MT מלאך, perhaps suggesting an editorial relationship at the level of both the Hebrew and Greek texts of these utterances. See John William Wevers, *Notes on the Greek Text of Exodus* (Atlanta: Scholars, 1990), 369.

¹⁴ So Adele Yarbro Collins, *Mark*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2007), 136.

¹⁵ Other parts of Isaiah, notably chapter 11 and 51, rework exodus traditions in a way that correlates the coming end of exile with a new exodus. See Michael Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1985), 354–356. On deutero-Isaiah in the Gospels and early Judaism see Garrick V. Allen, “Israel’s Scriptures in the New Testament: Eschatology,” in *The Old Testament in the New: Israel’s Scriptures in the New Testament and other Early Christian Writings*, ed. M. Henze and D. Lincicum (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, forthcoming).

follows the OG verbatim with the exception of the final word, using the third person pronoun (αὐτοῦ) instead of “our God” (τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν) because the referent is already in view in light of the clause’s collocation with the preceding material.¹⁶ Even in locations where Greek translations might diverge from one another based on different understandings of the Hebrew, both Mark and OG Isa 40:3 agree verbatim. Both simplify בערבה מסלה (“a highway in the desert”) to τὰς τρίβους (“the paths”), substituting a plural for the singular, and both represent ישר (“straighten”; “smooth”) with εὐθείας ποιεῖτε (“make straight”), even though other translational options for the *piel* form exist in the tradition.¹⁷ The second part of the quotation is likely quoted directly from an OG form of Isa 40:3, which has been collocated with a complex of other scriptural traditions because each of these texts speak of the preparation of a divine pathway.

The composition of the quotation reflects the complexity of Markan practices of reuse when it comes to exodus traditions more broadly. Jewish scriptural sources, potentially preserved in multiple languages, are combined in complicated ways due to their perceived similarity in wording and content. By opening his Gospel in this way, Mark alerts readers to the fact that his narrative is deeply connected to the story of Israel as it is preserved in Jewish scripture and that his engagement with the exodus event is mediated through intervening interpretive traditions. The quotation articulates that the story of Jesus is a recapitulation of the entrance into the promised land (Exodus), that the activity of John the Baptist is preparatory for God’s return (Malachi), and that Mark views the narrative of his work as pertaining to the end of exile (Isaiah).

¹⁶ Some have intuited a christological alteration here, arguing that the antecedent of αὐτοῦ is Jesus. See Robert A. Guelich, *Mark 1–8:26*, WBC 34A (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1989), 11; Rikk E. Watts, “Mark,” in *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, ed. G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007), 113. Codex Bezae (D05) preserves the reading τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν, creating an exact correspondence with Isa 40:3.

¹⁷ OG Isa 40:3 is the only location where εὐθείας ποιεῖτε translates a form of ישר (E. Hatch and H. A. Redpath, *A Concordance to the Septuagint* [Oxford: Clarendon, 1987], 2.1154–1168) and it is rendered with six other possible Greek equivalents (T. Muraoka, *A Greek-Hebrew/Aramaic Two-way Index to the Septuagint* [Leuven: Peeters, 2010], 227).

Within this larger complex of traditions, we see other allusions to Exodus in Mark's opening chapter. John's location "in the desert" and the gathering of people Judea and Jerusalem (1:5) recalls the wilderness wandering that intervened between the exodus event across the Sea of Reeds and the wilderness wandering.¹⁸ John the Baptist is re-preparing Israel in the desert through baptism for the forgiveness of sins, a symbolic activity that also has resonances with exodus traditions.¹⁹ Similarly, immediately after Jesus' baptism, he is cast into the desert (εἰς τὴν ἔρημον) for forty days (1:12–13), repeating in condensed form the forty years the Israelites wandered in the desert (Exod 16:35) and the forty days that Moses spent in the cloud of God's presence on Sinai (Exod 24:18; see also Mark 9:1–13; Acts 1:3–4).²⁰

Markan engagement with the exodus in 1:1–15 is paradigmatic of his use of this tradition in other parts of the book. For example, a number of allusions to Exodus occur in the Olivet Discourse, combined with and subsumed by other scriptural resonances.²¹ Rarely has Exodus been considered a major intertext for Mark 13, a first person speech of Jesus that emphasizes prophetic fulfilment, a cataclysmic eschatology, and apocalyptic language. The discourse is prompted by an anonymous disciple, who, upon leaving the temple, marvels at the size of the stone and the building (13:1). Jesus responds that these objects of awe will be cast down, one not left standing on another (13:2). The location of the discourse then moves to the Mount of Olives across from the temple, where Peter, James, John, and Andrew ask Jesus privately when "the sign that all these things are about will be accomplished" (13:4).

¹⁸ Guelich, *Mark*, 18.

¹⁹ R. E. Nixon, *The Exodus in the New Testament* (London: Tyndale, 1963), 13, for example, argues that the use of the verb ἀναβαίνειν to describe Jesus' "coming up" out of the water of baptism is an allusion to the activity of the Israelites as they "go up" out of Egypt (ἀνέβησαν οἱ υἱοὶ Ἰσραὴλ ἐκ γῆς Αἰγύπτου; Exod 13:18) and "go up" into the promised land (ἀναβάντες; Deut 1:21).

²⁰ See Drury, "Mark," 25–36; Watts, *New Exodus*, 102–121.

²¹ On the textual issues of quotations in the Synoptic apocalypse see Krister Stendahl, *The School of St. Matthew and its Use of the Old Testament*, 2nd ed. (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1968), 79–83 [repr. Ramsey: Siegler, 1990].

Jesus' response begins with a series of warnings (13:5–13). They should not be led astray, “for many will come in my name saying that ‘I am’” (ἐγὼ εἰμι; 13:6). Although debated, the use of “I am” language to speak of messianic pretenders is similar to Moses' experiences at the burning bush (Exod 3:6, 14; 4:5), a conclusion supported by the quotation of Exod 3:6 in Mark 12:26.²² The national strife that follows the appearance of false messiahs will also occur on a smaller scale in the activity of the community (13:10). They will be handed over to authorities, punished and beaten, but the holy spirit will speak for God's people, giving them the words to say when they stand before authorities (13:11). This trope is also located in the Lord's assurance to Moses that he will put words in Aaron's mouth and that God will be Moses' mouth and with Aaron's mouth when they stand before Pharaoh (Exod 4:15). The community who will be harassed at the end of the age will be prophets like Moses, speaking to authorities and powers with words ordained by God's spirit in that moment in an effort to affect a salvific event.

The speech then shifts in 13:14 to a description of signs that more imminently precede the end. When these appear, people should be alarmed (contra 13:7) and flee immediately when they see the desolating sacrilege set up (τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως ἐστηκότα; cf. Dan 9:27; 12:11). This period is defined by universal suffering, “such as has not been from the beginning of creation that God has made until now” (13:19). This assertion about the intensity of suffering at the end of the age is an allusion to the impact of Exodus' plagues: the rain (Exod 9:18), locusts (10:14), and wailing brought about by the death of firstborn (11:6) are events that have never and will never be experienced again (cf. also Dan 12:1).²³ Appeals

²² See Craig A. Evans, “Exodus in the New Testament: Patterns of Revelation and Redemption,” in *The Book of Exodus: Composition, Reception, and Interpretation*, VTSup 164, ed. T. B. Dozeman, C. A. Evans, and J. N. Lohr (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 440–464 (here 445–448). The ἐγὼ εἰμι formula of course has a wider valence, particularly in the Gospel of John. Numerous studies have explored Mark 13:6 within this matrix. E.g. David Mark Ball, *‘I Am’ in John’s Gospel: Literary Function, Background and Theological Implications*, JSNTSup 124 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996).

²³ See Paul Sloan, *Mark 13 and the Return of the Shepherd: The Narrative Logic of Zechariah in Mark*, LNTS 604 (London: T&T Clark, 2019), 183–184.

to the intensity of the plague traditions places the eschatological events that Jesus describes within the framework of judgement and eventual deliverance of God's people.

The discourse concludes with reprieve. God will cut short the days for the sake of the elect (Mark 13:20) and false prophets and messiahs giving signs and wonders will be manifest, immediately preceding the appearance of the son of man (13:26). He will emerge after the darkening of the sun, the refusal of the moon to give its light, and the shaking of the powers in heaven (cf. Isa 13:10; 34:4; Joel 2:10; 3:4; 4:15; *1 En.* 102:2), sending his messengers to gather the elect from the four corners of the world. The message of the speech is reiterated through the metaphor of the fig tree and a call for watchfulness. Just as you know that summer is near when the fig tree blossoms, so too you will know that the end is nigh when these things occur; and they will occur before the passing of this generation (13:28–31), even if no one knows the exact hour (13:32–37).

This outline of the end, culminating in the desecration (13:14) and destruction of the temple (13:2) is constructed in conversation with early Jewish literature, particularly prophetic and apocalyptic traditions. The desolating sacrilege (13:14) alludes to Danielic traditions of the temple's desecration by foreign kings (cf. 1 Macc 1:41–64). Moreover, the language of the end of exile and associated cosmic disturbances is drawn from material in Isaiah and Joel (Mark 13:24–25). But exodus traditions are also present in this broader tapestry of scriptural resonances, even if they remain an undercurrent in this larger picture.

A number of other examples of Mark's engagement with exodus traditions could be mustered here,²⁴ but these examples from Mark 1 and 13 are sufficient to demonstrate the way in which Mark engages the exodus event. Material from Exodus is rarely the explicit

²⁴ E.g. the Transfiguration (Mark 9:1–13), the Last Supper (14:12–25), a quotation of Jesus about the resurrection in 12:26 (// Matt 22:32 // Luke 20:37; Exod 3:6), and some miracles. See Nixon, *Exodus*, 11–19; Kim Sun Wook, "The Wilderness as a Place of the New Exodus in Mark's Feeding Miracles (Mark 6:31–44 and 8:1–10)," *Biblical Theology Bulletin* 48 (2018): 62–75; Kelli S. O'Brien, *The Use of Scripture in the Markan Passion Narrative*, LNTS 384 (London: T&T Clark, 2010); Evans, "Exodus in the New Testament," 448–451.

focus of Mark's scriptural engagement and rewriting, and these allusions are collocated and enmeshed with other scriptural works and utterances. In part, Mark construes Jesus' activity as a new exodus, using material directly from Exodus itself (e.g. Mark 1:2; 12:26) and also exodus traditions pertaining to the end of exile mediated through intervening interpretive and scriptural traditions. Exodus typologies are a persistent undercurrent in Mark,²⁵ but beyond a few explicit quotations, Mark's use of Exodus is largely implicit.

Exodus in Matthew

This situation changes in Matthew, who more explicitly presents his narrative, especially chapters 1–4, as a stylized enactment of the exodus event.²⁶ The ratcheting up of Markan sensibilities is most obvious in Matthew's infancy narrative. Numerous features of Matthew's expansion to Mark's narrative allude to the exodus, creating again a typological relationship between Matthew and the exodus story more broadly.

The first instance of Matthew's engagement with the exodus narrative is the family's escape to Egypt. Following the visit of the magi, an angel of the Lord appears to Joseph in a dream, warning him to flee to Egypt to escape the coming violence of Herod (2:13). Joseph obeys this command (2:14), and the narrator explains this action as a fulfillment of "what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet, 'from Egypt I called my son'" (2:15), a quotation of Hos 11:1. Not only does the conflict between Herod and the child indicate that Herod viewed this child as a legitimate threat to his kingship, culminating in the slaughter of the innocents (Matt 2:16–18), but that the story of how Jesus will become king is connected

²⁵ So also Harald Sahlin, "The New Exodus of Salvation according to St Paul," in *The Root of the Vine: Essays in Biblical Theology*, ed. A. Fridrichsen (Westminster: Dacre Press, 1953), 81–95, who argues that the New Testament sees a direct typological correlation between "the historical Exodus and the Messianic deliverance" (p. 83). On *Urzeit-Endzeit* typological development within Jewish scripture, see Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation*, 356–379.

²⁶ See Franz Tóth, *Der Exodus in Matthäusevangelium: Die Rezeption der Exoduserzählung in Mt 1–4 vor dem Hintergrund biblischer und frühjüdischer Schriftdiskurse*, WUNT (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2020).

inextricably with the exodus event. The quotation of Hos 11:1 makes explicit the combination of exodus and kingship themes, transferring the sonship of Israel in Hosea to Jesus.²⁷

Matt 2:15	OG Hos 11:1	Proto-MT Hos 11:1
ἐξ Αἰγύπτου ἐκάλεσα τὸν υἱόν μου	ἐξ Αἰγύπτου μετεκάλεσα τὰ τέκνα αὐτοῦ	וממצרים קראתי לבני
From Egypt I called my son	From Egypt I called again his children	And from Egypt I called my son

On the surface this quotation is problematic for a number of reasons, including the fact that Matthew views Hosea’s words a prophecy in need of fulfilment when they simply reflect upon Israel’s disobedience in Hosea and that the quotation appears when Jesus and his family enter Egypt, not when they leave it.²⁸ And, like Mark 1:2–3, this quotation has some deeper underlying textual problems. At first glance, Matthew appears to be an isomorphic translation of the proto-MT, and it differs from the OG in significant ways, using a different verb and referring to “my son” (τὸν υἱόν μου) instead of “his children” (τὰ τέκνα αὐτοῦ).²⁹ The revisers to the Greek tradition too noted the differences between Hos 11:1 OG and proto-MT.³⁰ They corrected the Greek text to more closely reflect the Hebrew, creating Greek versions within the stream to the proto-MT that are closer to Matthew’s rendering. Although

²⁷ See Clay Alan Ham, “The Minor Prophets in Matthew’s Gospel,” in *The Minor Prophets in the New Testament*, LNTS 377, ed. M. J. J. Menken and S. Moyise (London: T&T Clark, 2009), 39–56 (here 44–45).

²⁸ Some of these issues are discussed in G. K. Beale, “The Use of Hosea 11:1 in Matthew 2:15: One More Time,” *JETS* 55 (2012): 697–715 and Ulrich Luz, *Matthew 1–7*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2007), 118.

²⁹ See Beale, “Use of Hosea,” 697 n.1. who notes that “it is clear that Matthew has quoted the Hebrew...and not the Greek OT,” a perspective shared also with Jerome in *ad Aglasiam*, who argues that the evangelists often appeal to the Hebrew when the wording of their quotations differ from the OG/LXX. See also C. H. Dodd, *According to the Scriptures* (London: Nisbet, 1953), 75–78 and a more nuanced take on the textual issues in Stendahl, *School*, 39–41.

³⁰ For a brief overview of the relationship between OG and proto-MT Hosea in the context of recent debate on composition of the OG Twelve, see Myrto Theodorou, *Lexical Dependence and Intertextual Allusion in the Septuagint of the Twelve Prophets: Studies in Hosea, Amos and Micah*, LHBOTS 570 (London: T&T Clark, 2012), 8–22 and Heinz-Dieter Neef, “Das Hoseabuch im Spiegel der Septuaginta – Aspekte der Deutung,” in *Die Septuaginta und das frühe Christentum*, WUNT 277, ed. T. S. Cautley and H. Lichtenberger (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), 106–118.

these revising Greek texts have traditionally been thought to reflect periods later than the composition of the Gospels, it is now widely acknowledged that these recensions preserve earlier traditions, some of which (like this quotation) are also witnessed in early Christian writings.³¹ None of the later revisions correspond exactly to Matthew's wording, but together they provide another option alongside the view that Matthew directly translated the Hebrew. Aquila and Theodotion both preserve the verb ἐκάλεσα and Aquila preserves τὸν υἱόν μου.³² In terms of understanding the sources for Matthew's engagement with exodus traditions, all that we can say for certain is that Matthew's version of this text is aligned with the proto-MT stream of Hos 11:1, a textual stream reflected also in the revising Greek traditions.

In any case, the quotation makes clear that the location of the family's temporary exile is not coincidental, a point emphasized in the narrative at Herod's death, interrupted only by the murder of the innocents.³³ An angel again appears to Joseph in Egypt (2:19), telling him to "go to the land of Israel, for those who were seeking the life of the boy are now dead" (2:20). Joseph obeys and, guided by another dream, avoids Judea and returns to Galilee, apparently fulfilling another prophecy (2:21–23). The narrative movement to and from Egypt recalls Israel's own history, which culminated in the exodus event. In addition to the geographic symbolism, the angel's message to Joseph upon the death of Herod that "the ones who were seeking the life of your child are now dead" (τεθνήκασιν γὰρ οἱ ζητοῦντες τὴν ψυχὴν τοῦ παιδίου; 2:20) is a clear allusion to Exod 4:19. Following Moses' encounter with God at the burning bush and the commissioning of his prophetic task (Exod 3:1–4:17), Moses desires to return to Egypt from Midian (4:18–19). The Lord tells him to "go to Egypt, for all

³¹ The discovery of the 8HevXIIgr, the earliest manuscript to witness to the revision of the OG text, pushed the revision process significantly earlier. See Dominique Barthélemy, *Les devanciers d'Aquila: Première publication intégrale du texte des fragments du dodécaprophète* (Leiden: Brill, 1963).

³² Joseph Ziegler, *Duodecim Prophetæ*, 3rd ed. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1982), 172; Stendahl, *School*, 101.

³³ This passage may also allude to the threat of the murder of Israelite children in Exod 1:15–22. See Ian Boxall, *Discovering Matthew: Content, Interpretation, Reception* (London: SPCK, 2014), 88. Allison, *New Moses*, 141 argues that the quotation of Hos 11:1 "tells us that there is a parallelism between what unfolds in Matthew 2 and what unfolded long ago in Egypt."

those who were seeking your life are dead (τεθνήκασιν γὰρ πάντες οἱ ζητοῦντές σου τὴν ψυχὴν; OG 4:19). Moses, his wife, and children arise and go to Egypt where he begins his prophetic activity before Pharaoh. The wording of Matt 2:20 and Exod 4:19 are strikingly similar, both using the plural τεθνήκασιν even though it was only Herod seeking Jesus' life, as is their syntactic arrangement and word order.³⁴ Although Moses returns to Egypt in the quotation while Joseph and his family return to Israel, the explicit allusion draws a direct connection between Moses and Jesus – both are now at the point in their stories where their prophetic activities begin, both of which will culminate in a new exodus, a significant salvific event.

This impression is confirmed in Matthew 3, where Matthew begins to take up the narrative of Mark. Even though Matthew's quotation that contextualizes John's activity is only of OG Isa 40:3 (cf. Mal 3:1/Exod 23:20 in Matt 11:10), other features of the passage allude to the exodus in a way that is similar to Mark's portrayal. Most obviously, Jesus' baptism at the Jordan and his proclamation by God as "my beloved son" (3:17) is similar to Moses' declaration before Pharaoh in Exod 4:22 that Israel is Yhwh's firstborn son (τάδε λέγει κύριος υἱὸς πρωτότοκός μου Ἰσραηλ). Both declarations of sonship legitimate the instigation of events – the exodus and Jesus' ministry – that purport to lead to Israel's liberation. Moreover, Jesus' temptation in Matthew is expanded vis-à-vis Mark's terse report. In Matthew Jesus is also in the desert for forty days (4:2), but he is tempted by satan and relives Israel's wilderness wandering. Again, the themes of kingship and exodus are connected as satan tempts Jesus to eat bread he can make from stones (4:3), recalling the manna in the wilderness, and to take up universal kingship (4:8–9).³⁵ Following John's arrest, Jesus then begins to proclaim that the kingdom of God is near (4:17).

³⁴ So also Allison, *New Moses*, 140–144.

³⁵ See Allison, *New Moses*, 165–172.

Matthew's narrative appropriation of exodus tradition does not stop after this chapter, as many have noted.³⁶ In some cases, Matthew does explicitly quote utterances located also in the literary work now known as Exodus,³⁷ but this overview of Matthew 1–4 is sufficient to establish the ways that the evangelist engaged this tradition. Matthew's repertoire of reuse is flexible. It includes the use of narrative devices like the geographic movement from Judea to Egypt to Galilee, explicit quotation to intervening traditions like Hos 11:1,³⁸ and explicit allusions to precise utterances related to Moses' activity like in Matt 2:20. Matthew's variety of connections to exodus traditions acknowledge the pattern of reference in Mark, making the typological connection between Jesus and Moses and the exodus and Jesus' activity more explicit, notably through the addition of the family's escape to Egypt and return to Galilee. Matthew simplifies the textual issues associate with the quotation that precedes John the Baptist's activity vis-à-vis Mark,³⁹ but the way that the added narrative material in Matthew 1–2 continues to allude to exodus traditions suggests that Matthew intuited Mark's own allusions and composed in such a way that his infancy narrative emphasized this connection. This pattern continues in Luke.

Exodus in Luke

Like Matthew, Luke is attentive to the patterns of allusion, quotation, and symbolism in Mark that connect the Gospel narrative to aspects of the exodus event. And the Lukan childhood

³⁶ See W. D. Davies, *The Setting of the Sermon on the Mount* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1964), 25–93; Nixon, *Exodus*, 15; Smith, "New Exodus," 220–222; Allison, *New Moses*, 172–190.

³⁷ Matt 5:21 (Exod 20:13); 5:38 (Exod 21:24); 11:10 (Exod 23:20/Mal 3:1); 15:4 (Exod 21:17); 19:18 (Exod 20:12–16); 22:32 (Exod 3:6); 27:10 (Exod 9:12).

³⁸ Historically, Hos 11:1 may be one the first literary compositions to discuss the exodus event, preceding the composition of the book of Exodus. See Lester L. Grabbe, "Exodus and History," in *The Book of Exodus: Composition, Reception, and Interpretation*, VTSup 164, ed. T. B. Dozeman, C. A. Evans, and J. N. Lohr (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 61–87.

³⁹ The quotation in Mark 1:2–3 is also distributed in Luke, with the Exod 23:30/Mal 3:1 material appearing in 7:27. See Huub van de Sandt, "The Minor Prophets in Luke-Acts," in *The Minor Prophets in the New Testament*, LNTS 377, ed. M. J. J. Menken and S. Moyise (London: T&T Clark, 2009), 57–77 (here 58–59).

narrative makes connections to the exodus narrative in markedly different ways than Matthew, while other parts of the Gospel, like the Lukan transfiguration account, make the relationship between the exodus more explicit than either Mark or Matthew. The first allusion to the exodus narrative is located in the introduction of Zechariah, Elizabeth, and their miraculous son, John, whose conception is markedly similar to the divinely ordained conception of aged, barren patriarchal wives in the Torah (Luke 1:7). A small detail about Elizabeth creates a direct link to Exodus. The only background information that we are told about Elizabeth is that she is a descendent of Aaron, Moses' brother (Luke 1:6). She shares a name with Aaron's wife, who is also called Elizabeth in OG Exod 6:23. We are also alerted to the fact that Elizabeth is a relative of Mary (Luke 1:36), and although Jesus and John are not brothers like Aaron and Moses, the familial connection and explicit articulation of Elizabeth's heritage connects the Lukan infancy narrative to the exodus event by creating a parallel between the activity of Jesus and John that follows that of Moses and Aaron.

Another feature that alludes to the exodus is the interruption of the narrative by the Magnificat (Luke 1:46–56). This song is closely related to Hannah's prayer in 1 Samuel (2:1–10; cf. *L.A.B.* 51.3–6), but also preserves parallels with Moses' song after the crossing of the Sea of Reeds (Exod 15:1–18).⁴⁰ In both texts God is a savior (Luke 1:47 ἠγαλλίασεν τὸ πνεῦμά μου ἐπὶ τῷ θεῷ τῷ σωτήρῳ μου, Exod 15:2 ἐγένετό μοι εἰς σωτηρίαν), he stretches out his arm in strength (Luke 1:51 ἐποίησεν κράτος ἐν βραχίονι αὐτοῦ, Exod 15:6 ἡ δεξιὰ σου, κύριε, δεδόξασται ἐν ἰσχύι, ἡ δεξιὰ σου χεῖρ, κύριε, ἔθραυσεν ἐχθρούς, 15:12 ἐξέτεινας τὴν δεξιάν σου), and God uplifts Israel in the face of her enemies (Luke 1:52–55; Exod 15:15–17). Beyond these thematic and lexical similarities, both Moses' and Mary's songs follow a decisive recognition of God's power and completion of promises. In Exodus, the song

⁴⁰ Kenneth E. Bailey, "The Song of Mary: Vision of a New Exodus (Luke 1:46–55)," *Theological Review* 2/1 (1979): 29–35 notes a number of poetic structural parallels between the Magnificat and Moses' song in Exodus 15.

immediately follows the culmination of the exodus narrative and the destruction of the Egyptians, fulfilling the promised liberation from slavery. Likewise, Mary's prayer follows a statement by Elizabeth, who notes that "blessed is she who believes that there would be a fulfilment of what was spoken to her by the Lord" (Luke 1:45). The fulfilment of divine promises prompts both of these poetic texts, drawing an implicit parallel between the miraculous pregnancies (and John's leaping in utero) and the escape from Egypt. The song foreshadows the significance of the activity of both the unborn Jesus and John that follows in the narrative.

Zechariah's prophecy (Luke 1:67–80) also alludes to the exodus event. Zechariah notes that the God of Israel redeemed (1:68 ἐποίησεν λύτρωσιν τῷ λαῷ αὐτοῦ), an action that Moses also attributes to God in his song (Exod 15:13 ὠδήγησας τῇ δικαιοσύνῃ σου τὸν λαόν σου τοῦτον, ὃν ἐλύτρωσω). And he points out that just as God has remembered his holy covenant with their ancestors (μνησθῆναι διαθήκης ἁγίας αὐτοῦ), and Abraham in particular, so he too now has rescued his people from their enemies (1:73–75). This phraseology is similar to the language of Exod 2:24 (καὶ ἐμνήσθη ὁ θεὸς τῆς διαθήκης αὐτοῦ τῆς πρὸς Ἀβραὰμ καὶ Ἰσαὰκ καὶ Ἰακώβ), where God hears the cries of Israel under the yoke of slavery and remembers his covenant with their ancestors (cf. Lev 26:42; 2 Macc 1:2). This complex of allusions is further supported by an allusion to Isa 40:3 in Luke 1:76, a text that refers to Israel's return from exile in the form of a new Exodus and which is quoted explicitly and extensively in Luke 3:4–6. For Zechariah, John will be "the prophet of the Most High," going before the Lord to prepare his way (1:76), connecting John to Elijah traditions. The special Lukan material in chapter 1 includes a constellation of allusions to the exodus, collocated with and filtered through intervening scriptural development in Israel's story.

Exodus allusions persist in the description of Jesus' birth and adolescence. When Jesus is presented to the temple authorities as the firstborn male of his family (Luke 2:22–

38), a passage unique to Luke, the narrator makes it clear that this action was undertaken to follow the law that “every male who opens the womb will be designated as holy to the Lord” (πᾶν ἄρσεν διανοῖγον μήτραν ἅγιον τῷ κυρίῳ κληθήσεται). This narrative aside quotes parts of Exod 13:12–15, where Moses commands the Israelites to consecrate their firstborn upon their entrance into the land in remembrance of plague of the firstborn (Exod 12:29–32). Moses gives provision to redeem firstborn male children and the first male offspring of some animals, an action that Jesus’ parents make by sacrificing a pair of turtledoves and young pigeons (Luke 2:24, cf. Lev 12:8). The wording of Luke 2:23 combines the commands related to animals about opening the womb (Exod 13:12 πᾶν διανοῖγον μήτραν) and the specific command about make children (13:13 πᾶν πρωτότοκον ἀνθρώπου τῶν υἱῶν σου λυτρώση), even though the verbs differ (καλέω in Luke and λυτρώω/ἵτη in Exodus).

This quotation is particularly important for the development of Lukan exodus motifs because the ritual activity of Jesus’ family is symbolically freighted. The activity of redeeming human male children in Exod 13:13 is a direct response to God’s saving activity. Parents will tell their children that their redemption is a sign that the Lord brought their ancestors out of slavery, killing the firstborn of all Egypt – both animals and humans: “It shall serve as a sign on your hand and as an emblem on your forehead that by strength of hand the Lord brought us out of Egypt” (Exod 13:16). Luke’s inclusion of this story indicates that, for him, Mary and Joseph are not simply carrying out legal responsibilities. Jesus’ consecration draws direct attention to a specific point in the exodus narrative – the time between Israel’s release and Pharaoh’s change of heart to pursue them – suggesting that Israel again stands on the precipice of a salvific event. This view is reinforced by Simeon’s prophecy that his eyes have seen God’s salvation (Luke 2:30), by his parent’s amazement at

these words (2:33), and by Anna's prophecy (2:36–38), even though Luke fails to report its content.⁴¹ Luke further develops exodus traditions related to Jesus' birth and early life.

This pattern continues with Jesus' journey to the temple as a twelve-year-old (Luke 2:41–51), a story that is unique to Luke and coincides with a major exodus event: the Passover. It is not so much the action of the passage that is important, but a small note by the narrator that ties Jesus' early life to the exodus events. In the introduction to this section we are told that every year Jesus and his parents went up to Jerusalem for the Passover festival and that when he was twelve, they went up again as usual (2:41–42). Although not direct allusions to a particular text in Exodus, these statements, once again, present Jesus and his family as sensitive to the commands that Moses gives the Israelites before the cross the sea out of Egypt. In Exod 12:14–20, Moses tells the people that they are to keep the Passover as an annual festival, giving particular instructions for the ritual. And in 12:24–27 the perpetual ordinance is set up so that parents can pass onto their children the memory of deliverance from Egypt: “It is the Passover sacrifice to Yhwh, for he passed over the houses of the Israelites in Egypt, when he struck down the Egyptians but spared our houses” (12:27). Both times when Jesus appears at the temple in the Lukan infancy narrative, at his consecration and at one of his family's journeys for Passover, these events are tied directly to the memory of the exodus that parents were to pass on to their children. The contextual notes that the evangelist gives to explain their appearance at the temple are not simply narrative notices. Considering the selectivity of Luke's infancy narrative, the events that he does record place Jesus' movements as a child and family activities within in the context of the exodus event, foreshadowing the significance of his activity as an adult.

⁴¹ Other scriptural passages are also evoked in these texts. See, e.g., Michael Lyons, “Psalm 22 and the ‘Servants’ of Isaiah 54; 56–66,” *CBQ* 77 (2015): 640–656.

The exodus theme is, like the parallel passages in Mark and Matthew, once again apparent also in John's ministry (3:4), Jesus' baptism at the Jordan (3:21), and his forty days in the desert (Luke 4:2; Acts 1:2–3).⁴² For example, Luke too quotes Isa 40:3–5 (3:4), expanding upon Matthew's form of the quotation by adding more material beyond Isa 40:3. But Luke also highlights the relationship between the exodus and other events narrated also in Mark and Matthew. For example, the transfiguration has obvious parallels with the exodus narrative and new exodus expectations (Mark 9:2–8 // Matt 17:1–8 // Luke 9:28–36), especially the appearance of Moses and Elijah, a collocation of figures found also in the compound quotation in Mark 1:2–3.⁴³ But Luke 9:31 notes that the content of the conversation between Jesus, Moses, Elijah pertains Jesus' "going out" or "exodus" (ἐξοδὸν αὐτοῦ) that he was about to accomplish in Jerusalem.⁴⁴ The lexeme ἐξοδος refers explicitly to the exodus event in Heb 11:22 (cf. also OG Exod 19:1; Num 33:38; 1 Kgs 6:1; Ps 104:38), raising the possibility that the discussion on the mountain of the transfiguration concerned Jesus' impending fate in Jerusalem, conceptualized by the narrator as a new exodus.⁴⁵ Picking up on the allusions to the exodus embedded in his sources, Luke makes these references more explicit by emphasizing the link between Jesus' appearances in Jerusalem and the exodus, further conceptualizing his activity in these terms.

Conclusion

⁴² On these texts and larger patterns of exodus traditions in Luke, see J. Mánek, "The New Exodus in the Book of Luke," *NovT* 2/1 (1957): 8–23 and Susan R. Garrett, "Exodus from Bondage: Luke 9:31 and Acts 12:1–24," *CBQ* 52 (1990): 656–680.

⁴³ For another specific Lukan allusion see Luke 11:20 ("finger of God") and Exod 8:19. See I. Howard Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke*, NIGTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978), 475–476; Evans, "Exodus in the New Testament," 440–445.

⁴⁴ On this passage, and many of the other exodus references in Luke vis-à-vis the Synoptics, see Ulrike Mittmann, "'Sie sprachen von seinem Exodus, den er in Jerusalem erfüllen sollte' (Lk 9,31)," in *Exodus. Rezeptionen in deuterokanonischer und frühjüdischer Literatur*, DCLS 32, ed. J. Gärtner and B. Schmitz (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2016), 321–370.

⁴⁵ Mánek, "New Exodus," 8–23 links the Transfiguration to the Lukan resurrection account.

The narratives of the Synoptic Gospels and Jesus' activities are deeply connected with the exodus narrative and their authors endeavored to make this correspondence clear from the outset. Each Gospel emphasizes this relationship in different ways, modifying their inherited traditions and, for the most part, making more explicit the typological connection between the exodus and Jesus' actions. For example, both the Matthean and Lukan infancy narratives expand upon Mark in ways that emphasize this relationship: Matthew narrates the story of the escape to and return from Egypt anchored in a quotation of Hos 11:1, and Luke describes Jesus' early appearances at the temple in terms of legal obligations tied to the exodus and the imperative for parents to teach their children about the significance of God's deliverance of Israel. The exodus event was an important conceptual resource for the Synoptic evangelists that influenced their presentation of the significance of Jesus' activity.

This selective analysis of exodus traditions in the Synoptic Gospels highlights three critical points related to scriptural reuse that impinge on the methodology of "Old Testament in the New Testament" studies. The development of exodus traditions in the beginning of the Synoptic Gospels demonstrates the *flexibility*, *complexity*, and *mediation* of scriptural traditions. Each of these features has consequences for how scholars identify, analyze, and interpret the reuse of scriptural traditions in the New Testament.⁴⁶ And although these observations are not novel, they bear repeating in light of the recent emphasis on the search for criteria and a unified methodology relevant for all New Testament works.⁴⁷

When I describe the evangelists' uses of scriptural traditions as *flexible*, I mean that they are not bound to refer to scripture in any pre-determined way and that the intentionality

⁴⁶ For other recent methodological reflections along these lines see Beate Kowalski, "Selective versus Contextual Allusions: Reconsidering Technical Terms of Intertextuality," in *Methodology in the Use of the Old Testament in the New: Context and Criteria*, LNTS 579, ed. D. Allen and S. Smith (London: T&T Clark, 2019), 86–102 and in the same volume Susan Docherty, "Crossing Testamentary Borders: Methodological Insights for OT/NT Study from Contemporary Hebrew Bible Scholarship," 11–22;

⁴⁷ E.g. David M. Allen, "Introduction: The Study of the Use of the Old Testament in the New," *JSNT* 38 (2015): 3–16.

of their references is not determined by the explicitness of their presentation. Authors working within a broader Jewish textual culture of the late second temple period, like the evangelists, were free to intuit connections between scriptural works, to interpret them in conversation with existing traditions, to present these interpretations in their own literary works with varying levels of explicitness, and to develop existing traditions and interpretations in new ways. The flexibility of reference is one main reason why scholars continue to disagree about the very presence of intertextual references and their significance of the interpreting the target narrative. Yet, the density of references to the exodus, especially at the outset of each of the Synoptic Gospels, cues readers to be sensitive to nuanced forms of presentation, even if allusions are remote, as the narratives progress. This flexibility of reference is an ambient feature that is common to early Jewish and Christian textual cultures more broadly and it is on clear display in how each evangelist develops connections between Jesus' early life, the beginning of his ministry, and the exodus.⁴⁸

The second point is that the way that these references are presented to readers, and the interpretive processes that stand behind these references, is *complex*. But very rarely do scholars acknowledge this complexity in all its variety. We tend to compare two static literary entities – the Gospel of Mark and Exodus, for example – as we find them in modern print critical editions. And even if we acknowledge that Exodus existed in multiple languages and textual forms during the period that Mark was written, and that the material form of Exodus available to Mark differed significantly from our access to the work in printed books, many still fail to take into account a range of other factors that influenced the ways that Mark may have engaged with a given Exodus text. The factors include issues associated both with the underlying operation of reuse and its presentation,⁴⁹ including the interpretive possibilities of

⁴⁸ So also Docherty, “Crossing Testamentary Borders,” 21–22; Allen, *Book of Revelation*.

⁴⁹ See William A. Tooman, “Scriptural Reuse in Ancient Jewish Literature: Comments and Reflections on the State of the Art,” in *Methodology in the Use of the Old Testament in the New: Context and Criteria*, LNTS 579, ed. D. Allen and S. Smith (London: T&T Clark, 2019), 23–39 (esp. 35–36).

reading Greek and Hebrew in manuscript cultures,⁵⁰ the role of memory, intuited relationships between remote scriptural utterances (e.g. Exod 23:20 and Mal 3:1), literary choices associated with the presentation of reused material, the transmission and reconstruction of the text of the New Testament, and the mediating influence of other Jewish interpretive traditions, among others. It is difficult to consider these intricacies when we access these traditions only through the medium of the critical edition; we elide and obscure the multifaceted realities of literary composition in early Judaism when we work within exclusively print culture suppositions.

My final point relates to the *mediated* nature of these traditions. When analyzing the reception of scriptural traditions in early Christian literature, we must recognize that interpretive practices are mediated by intervening traditions.⁵¹ I have attempted to demonstrate that Exodus' reception within the Hebrew Bible and its early versions, in Mal 3:1 for instance, influences its deployment in the New Testament and that the evangelists are not simply reading a copy of Exodus isolated from other traditions. But the mediation of traditions like the Exodus extends also to early Jewish traditions that were not eventually collocated in any biblical collection.⁵² Scholars recognize this reality when they consider relevant parallels in the Dead Sea Scrolls, early Jewish Hellenistic literature, or other works. But it is important for New Testament scholars in particular to situate the ways that their corpus engages scriptural traditions within a much broader discourse that defines early Jewish and Christian literary production. The Gospels are one point in a broader history of scriptural interpretation that uses exodus traditions to conceptualize the location of a community within history, standing at the blurred boundary of the end of exile and the end of

⁵⁰ Allen, *Book of Revelation*, 25–27.

⁵¹ See a recent articulation of this point in Susan Docherty, "New Testament Scriptural Interpretation in its Early Jewish Context: Reflections of the Status Quaestionis and Future Directions," *NovT* 57 (2015): 1–19.

⁵² See the articles by Susan Docherty, Jacques van Ruiten, Erkki Koskeniemi, and Sean Adams in Section 2 of this volume.

the age. If we want to know “how the New Testament uses the Old Testament,” we must continue to locate our close analyses within the larger context of engagement with Jewish scripture in antiquity. And we must continue to find room within our methodologies to recognize that the New Testament is not an isolated corpus, but that it is part of a larger trajectory of engagement with Jewish scriptural traditions in antiquity.