

theology and create a deeper love and gratefulness for our God and Savior.

In summary, *40 Questions about Biblical Theology* is a helpful resource for theological studies and will be of great benefit to persons in the classroom as well as the church. In addition to providing a helpful distinction between biblical and systematic theology, it is an excellent starting point for understanding the essentials of biblical theology. The writers are both practical and accessible, and they leave the reader with a helpful framework for studying the unifying themes of Scripture.

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Mark 13 and the Return of the Shepherd: The Narrative Logic of Zechariah in Mark, by Paul T. Sloan. Library of New Testament Studies 604. New York: T & T Clark, 2019. x + 253 pp. \$114.00.

Scholars disagree on whether Jesus's Olivet Discourse (OD) describes the temple's destruction in AD 70, a still future Second Coming of Christ, or both. The relationship between Mark 13:1–23 and Mark 13:24–27 is especially debated. Some view the latter as a description of Jesus's Second Coming connected to the former because both describe eschatological events (e.g., Stein and Evans). Others view both as descriptions of the same events culminating in AD 70 (e.g., France and Wright). Still others argue the latter passage is a fragment with no organic connection to the preceding material (e.g., Beasley-Murray). All sides agree that much depends how Mark uses the OT, and Paul Sloan has made a significant contribution by investigating that particular intertextual question.

Sloan is Assistant Professor of Theology and Chair of the Department of Theology at the Houston Baptist University. *Mark 13 and the Return of the Shepherd* is a revised version of his PhD thesis completed at the University of St. Andrews. The purpose is "to examine the extent of Zechariah's influence upon Mark 13, and to offer an interpretation of that discourse in light of Mark's allusions to that prophetic text" (1). It includes a "comprehensive semiotic exegesis of Mark 13 within the context of Mark as a whole" (ibid.). That is, Sloan seeks to demonstrate how Mark's use of Zechariah outside of chapter 13 prepares his readers to understand his use within it.

Why Zechariah 13–14? Mark uses Zechariah 14:5 to describe Jesus's *παρουσία* in 8:38, and he uses Zechariah 13:7 to describe Jesus's death in 14:27. In the intervening material, Zechariah describes the following events which also appear in Mark's OD: "(1) tribulation in all the land; (2) refinement by fire of God's covenantal people; and (3) an international war waged in Jerusalem with concomitant suffering for Jerusalem's inhabitants" (5). By citing Zechariah 13:7, Mark "indicates

that the striking of the shepherd signals the onset of the eschatological tribulations of Zech. 13:8–9 and 14:1–4 [i.e., the content of Mark 13], which culminate in the theophany of Zech. 14:5” (6). That is, Zechariah explains why Mark’s OD combines events that might at first glance seem disparate. “The strangeness of the disciples asking about the temple’s destruction but being told about their own persecution and the coming of the Son of Man dissolves when read in light of the allusions to Zechariah” (212).

Chapter 1 presents the methodology. Sloan admirably seeks to interpret Mark’s story from the perspective of a mid-first-century author and audience. Sloan argues that the OT would have formed a significant part of what Eco has called the “cultural encyclopedia” or “body of knowledge that might be known by members of a given culture in a given time and place” and “conditions what a sender might intend, and therefore what a receiver might understand, with respect to a given utterance” (10). Sloan employs a modified form of Hays’s methodology for identifying evoked texts. Like Hays, Sloan begins with the presupposition that Mark generates a new meaning of Zechariah by using the OT prophet’s words.

In chapter 2, Sloan examines specific Second Temple literature to demonstrate prior use of Zechariah 13–14 consistent with Mark 13’s usage. Sloan persuasively shows that these early texts understood Zechariah 13–14 to describe a time of affliction and war ended by an angel-accompanied theophany. In chapter 3, Sloan examines Mark’s use of Zechariah 9–14 throughout his Gospel. Sloan concludes that “Mark’s narrative does not simply pilfer Zech. 9–14 for various lexemes, but demonstrates a reflection upon Zechariah’s content in service of the whole story Mark tells” (70).

Chapter 4 examines the two bookends that Mark uses on either side of his OD—Zechariah 13:7 and 14:5. Sloan suggests that Mark uses the former to indicate that the “disciples’ flight is the inauguration [or what Sloan later calls the “first step”] of the eschatological tribulation depicted in Zech 13:8–9 and 14:1–4” (90). *Contra* the majority position, Sloan argues Jesus’s post-resurrection meeting with his disciples in Galilee does not fulfill the promised regathering. The regathering will come after the disciples have endured a long period of tribulation. Furthermore, understanding Mark’s use of Zechariah sheds light on several obscure passages in the Gospel. For example, “Mark 13 represents the content of the cryptic references to ‘fire’ and ‘stumbling’ from [Mk] 9:49 [“salted with fire”] and 14:27–31, and should be understood as the fulfillment of the tribulations of Zech. 13:8–9” (118).

After examining Mark’s Gospel as a whole, Sloan moves to discussing Mark 13 in particular. The literature review (chap. 5) includes significant interaction with preterist interpretations of the OD. Sloan admits that his survey is not exhaustive, and does not include any interaction with those who argue that Mark 13:14–22 refers to an eschatological “abomination of desolation” and still-future tribulation. In chapter 6, Sloan provides his exegesis of Mark 13. He argues that 13:5–23

provides the answer to the disciples' question regarding the timing of the temple's destruction. Verses 5–13 describe general trials that Jesus's disciples will endure, and vv. 14–23 describe the specific trial that comes upon the believers in Judea in conjunction with the Jewish War. Mark 13:24–27 is a new unit describing the coming of the Son of Man following (much later) the tribulation period in 13:14–23; 13:24–31 provides a warning regarding the timing of the near judgment on Jerusalem. And 13:32–37 provides a similar notice regarding the *παρουσία*. Sloan does not identify the “abomination of desolation,” but he suggests that it is some sign that precedes the temple's destruction and is not the destruction itself.

Sloan's conclusion (chap. 7) not only summarizes his findings but also demonstrates that two ancient documents (the *Didache* and Cyril of Alexander's commentary on Zechariah) recognized the influence of Zechariah on Mark 13. Cyril also understands Zechariah 14:1–3 as a reference to AD 70 followed by Jesus's eventual *παρουσία* in 14:5. However, as Sloan acknowledges, *Didache* 16.3–5 places the coming “fiery test” after the ascension of the “world-deceiver” who commits abominations (218) which would seem to weaken Sloan's argument.

Sloan makes a valuable contribution to the debate over Mark 13:24–27 by demonstrating its reliance on Zechariah's vision of an angel-accompanied theophany. For example, the phrase *μετὰ δυνάμεως πολλῆς* in Mark 13:26 based on its usage in the LXX should be understood as a reference to an army, specifically an angelic army which accompanies Christ at his return. Sloan's argument that Mark describes the events of AD 70 in 13:14–23 by evoking Zechariah is not as convincing. Sloan argues that the “day” in both Zechariah 14:4 and Mark 13:32 should be distinguished from the “day” of Zechariah 14:1, which is the judgment of AD 70. Sloan's argument relies on the lack of the demonstrative *ἐκεῖνος* in the LXX's version of Zechariah 14:1. Still, the demonstrative is present repeatedly throughout Zechariah 12:1–9, which describes “that day” in which the nations besiege Jerusalem *and* the Lord comes to deliver her from that attack. Based on the repetition of the phrase “that day” in chapter 14 and the presence of an attack on Jerusalem in both passages, wouldn't the reader of Zechariah have assumed that both chapter 12 and chapter 14 were describing the same attack? It seems more likely that the Hebrew text of Zechariah 14:1 used a participle (“coming”) attached to the word “day,” rather than the usual construct “day of the Lord” for reasons other than making a distinction between the “day” of Zechariah 14:2 and all of the other references to “day” in Zechariah 12–14. In other words, while Sloan has made a compelling case from Zechariah for a future angel-accompanied theophany of the Son of Man in Mark 13:24–27, he has not made as convincing a case that Mark 13:14–23 drawing on Zechariah 14 also described AD 70.

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