

JOHN MARK, AUTHOR OF THE GOSPEL OF JOHN WITH JESUS' MOTHER

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SUMMARY

This article shows that the anonymous author of the Fourth Gospel, called the Gospel of John, probably was John Mark, a young inhabitant of Jerusalem and, after Jesus' resurrection, member of the first church of Jerusalem and author of the Gospel of Mark. Characteristics of the author of the Fourth Gospel, who is described and acts in it as "the disciple whom Jesus loved" and who is described by the Early Church Fathers as "a priest wearing the priestly breast piece", are compared to the characteristics of John Mark, known from the Acts of the Apostles and Paul's letters, and also to the characteristics of the anonymous rich young ruler and of the anonymous fleeing young man, both known from Mark's gospel as approaching, but then leaving, the still mortal Jesus. This article also shows that the usual identification of the anonymous author with the apostle John, son of Zebedee, is impossible.

The usual argument against John Mark as the beloved disciple and author of the Fourth Gospel is that he was not an apostle following Jesus, so he could not have written about Jesus' activities outside of Jerusalem. This article says that John Mark could have written about these activities, if he had the co-operation of Mary, the virgin mother of Jesus, who was also his own 'mother' from the moment when Jesus, dying on the cross, recommended them to each other as 'mother' and 'son', saying to them "Behold your son" and "Behold your mother". From that moment he even "took her to his own home". Jesus' mother, who is anonymous in the Fourth Gospel, just like the author and beloved disciple himself is anonymous in it, is a co-author of this gospel, and this also explains the literary and theological difference between the Gospel of Mark and the Gospel of John.

John Mark, author of the Gospel of John with Jesus' mother

1. Introduction – the beloved disciple and evangelist, a priest called John

In the so-called Fourth Gospel, named the Gospel of John (which is the Gospel of Jesus Christ according to John), there is a disciple of Jesus, who is five times described as “the disciple, whom Jesus (He) loved” (John 13,23 19,26 20,2 21,7.20), for instance in these verses, describing what Jesus said from upon the cross:

“When Jesus saw his mother, and the disciple whom he loved standing near, he said to his mother, "Woman, behold, your son!" Then he said to the disciple, "Behold, your mother!" And from that hour the disciple took her to his own home.” (John 19,26-27; Bible citations are from the Revised Standard Version (RSV), unless otherwise indicated)

In the so-called “second ending” of this gospel (John, chapter 21), which was added to the twenty chapters of the original, it is stated that the gospel was written by this “disciple whom Jesus loved”:

“20 Peter turned and saw following them the disciple whom Jesus loved, who had lain close to his breast at the supper and had said, "Lord, who is it that is going to betray you?"

21 When Peter saw him, he said to Jesus, "Lord, what about this man?"

22 Jesus said to him, "If it is my will that he remain until I come, what is that to you? Follow me!"

23 The saying spread abroad among the brethren that this disciple was not to die; yet Jesus did not say to him that he was not to die, but, "If it is my will that he remain until I come, what is that to you?"

24 This is the disciple who is bearing witness to these things, and who has written these things; and we know that his testimony is true.

25 But there are also many other things which Jesus did; were every one of them to be written, I suppose that the world itself could not contain the books that would be written.” (John 21,20-25)

This second ending, which speaks of “we” (verse 24) and of “I” (verse 25), was not written by the beloved disciple, but the original gospel is indeed “his testimony”, and it ends with the so-called “first ending”:

“Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in his name.” (John 20,30-31)

The name of the beloved disciple is not mentioned in this gospel, but the oldest and only testimony about the name of the person that produced the gospel, is the testimony of Irenaeus, a bishop from Smyrna in Asia Minor, who wrote in about 185 CE:

“Then John, disciple of the Lord, who also lay on his breast, himself published the gospel, while he was staying at Ephesus in Asia” (Ireneaus: 3,1,1, cited in Eusebius: 5,8,4).

And another independent testimony is that of the Polycrates, bishop of Ephesus in the time of Emperor Septimius Severus, i.e. 145 to 211 CE, who stated that the beloved disciple was a priest, wearing the high priestly breast piece (Eusebius: 5,24,2). So, the beloved disciple was a John, but which one is not clear from the other, later, conflicting testimonies¹, and also in our times there is much discussion, with many publications, about the unknown author. The most usual opinion is that the beloved disciple was the apostle John, son of Zebedee, who with his brother James was called out of their fisherman's boat by Jesus at the Lake of Galilee to become his followers and later his apostles (Matt 4,21 10,2 John 21,2). But also John Mark, a young inhabitant of Jerusalem and member of the first church and author of the Gospel of Mark (Acts 12,12.25 13,5.13 15,37.39 2Tim 4,11 Col 4,10 Phm 24 1Pet 5,13) has been mentioned as a possible candidate, by Wellhausen in 1908 CE, and by Sanders and Parker in 1960 (Sanders and Parker: 97-110).

The intention of this article is to make plausible the thesis that John Mark was indeed the beloved disciple, who put the Fourth Gospel in writing at Ephesus in Asia Minor (today's Turkey), and that he did this with Mary, the virgin mother of Jesus.

At the end of this article is a table with a survey of most of the arguments of this article, in which in the left column are characteristics of the author and beloved disciple, in the right column characteristics of John Mark, and in the middle the arguments that link the characteristics on its left and right. The Cenacle is a linking element with its own arguments on the left and right (see table 1).

2. The Cenacle – in house of Mark and John

Important events, described in the New Testament, happened in a place where Jesus' disciples were gathered: the Last Supper with Jesus in a "large upper room" in Jerusalem (Mark 14,13-17), the appearances of the risen Jesus to his disciples in "the house" where "the doors were shut" (John 20,19.26), the continuing with one accord in prayer and supplication in "the upper room, where they were staying, Peter and John and James and Andrew, ..." and the other apostles (Acts 1,13-14).

- Traditions of Cyril of Jerusalem in 348 CE and the nun Aetheria in 385 CE ascertain that these events all took place in the same upper room (now called the Cenacle, because Jesus' Last Supper took place here: cena is Latin for meal, diner).
- A tradition exists of the pilgrim Theodosius in 530 CE, who tells that the upper room was in the house of Mark, the evangelist. This was the headquarters of the church in Jerusalem (Brownrigg: 175), "the house of Mary, the mother of John whose other name was Mark" (Acts 12,12). See fig. 1 for a map of Jerusalem in Jesus' time.
- That the Cenacle was in the house of John Mark, also complies with the fact that both in the Cenacle and in the house of John Mark was restricted access: in the Cenacle in the first period after Jesus' crucifixion the doors were shut for fear of the Jews (John 20,19.26), and, fourteen years later, in the house of John Mark the young woman who kept the door at night didn't admit Simon Peter by herself, even though she had already recognized his voice (Acts 12,12-16). Apparently one didn't open the door, unless one was sure it would not cause danger.
- The householder of the house of the Cenacle is anonymous in all gospels, because Jesus arranges the preparation of the Last Supper in the Cenacle in such a way that none of the bystanders then, nor of the readers later, would know to whose house He would go². The householder of John Mark's house is anonymous too, for in Acts

¹ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gospel_of_John#Date_and_authorship

² Mark 14,12-16

12,12 the house is merely described as “the house of Mary, the mother of John whose other name was Mark”; the name of the master of the house is not mentioned, and in Jesus’ times “Mary” was the most popular name for a woman: 25% of all Hebrew women were called Mary.³ And Mark may have been the Christian undercover name of this John, a name only known to and used by Christians among themselves, which non-Christians thus would not recognize as this John’s, and which thus would not give them a clue for the location of the Cenacle or for the identity of the master of the house.

- It is remarkable that Mark in his gospel states about Jesus in the night of the Last Supper: “when it was evening he came with the twelve” (Mark 14,17) – instead of ‘he went with the twelve.’ Mark thus betrays that his view-point lay inside the Cenacle and not with the twelve apostles.

Not only do indications exist that the Cenacle was in the house of John Mark, but also that it was in the house of the beloved disciple:

- In 658 CE Bishop Arculf made a drawing of the church that has been built on the place of the upper room, “showing in this one building, facing east, the cenacle or supper-room on the south-east side (once within the house of St Mark) and the rock of the dormition [of Mary] on the north-west side (once within the house of St John). This accords exactly with the location of the cenacle and the dormition shrines today” (Brownrigg: 169).
- The beloved disciple was present at the Last Supper, enjoying the privilege of leaning on Jesus’ bosom (John 13,23), probably because he was at home and one of the hosts of Jesus and his apostles.
- Of Mary, Jesus’ mother, and the beloved disciple is said that at Jesus’ death on Good Friday “from that hour the disciple took her to his own home” (John 19,25-27), but also that until Pentecost, i.e. fifty days later, she was in the Cenacle, for there the apostles “with one accord devoted themselves to prayer, together with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus” (Acts 1,13-14).
- A direct indication for the identification of the house of the beloved disciple with the house of John Mark is the place where Simon Peter stayed. On Easter morning, when it was still dark, he was in the house of the beloved disciple, for from there he “came out” and ran towards the grave accompanied by the beloved disciple, and they returned home together: “Then the disciples went away again unto their own home” (John 20,1-4.10 AV). Later that same day, when Jesus appeared to his disciples, and also during the nine days after Jesus’ ascension, when they continued with one accord in prayer before Pentecost, Simon Peter was in the Cenacle (John 20,24 Acts 1,13). And much later, in the night when an angel had helped Simon Peter escape from prison, but his guards hadn’t noticed anything yet, Simon Peter, when this had become clear to him, went to the house of John Mark, where many were in prayer for him:

“10 When they had passed the first and the second guard, they came to the iron gate leading into the city. It opened to them of its own accord, and they went out and passed on through one street; and immediately the angel left him.

³ R. Reich, Caiaphas name inscribed on bone boxes, *Biblical Archeology Review* 18/5 (1992) 38-44

11 And Peter came to himself, and said, "Now I am sure that the Lord has sent his angel and rescued me from the hand of Herod and from all that the Jewish people were expecting."

12 When he realized this, he went to the house of Mary, the mother of John whose other name was Mark, where many were gathered together and were praying." Acts 12,10-12

Simon Peter understood that at this moment he was still able to go to his own place of abode, because he wasn't searched for by Herod's soldiers yet. If he wanted to show himself to the people in this house as a free man, and if he wanted to take some personal things with him on his flight, he would have to do it now, for as soon as his escape would be discovered, he would be searched for here immediately. That the young woman who kept the door recognizes his voice also indicates that he was a well known person here. Peter lets his escape also be reported to "James and to the brethren" (Acts 12,17), who apparently were not in the house, probably because they were, as usual, in the temple and in their own homes (cf. Acts 21,18)⁴. After this, Peter leaves for another place. Only in the early morning Herod's soldiers discover his escape (Acts 12,1-12.18).

Soon after Simon Peter had fled from Jerusalem to some unrecorded places, one of which is assumed to be Antioch in Syria because of the traditional liturgical feast of St. Peter's Chair in Antioch on February 22, John Mark went to Antioch and from there to Perga. But from Perga he suddenly returned to Jerusalem (Acts 12,25 13,5.13). The explanation could be that he followed Simon Peter, his guest inhabitant of the Cenacle, to where he had fled, Antioch and Perga, and that there it became clear that Simon Peter would not return to Jerusalem for the time being, but would travel on to Rome. Therefore John Mark may have been sent back to Jerusalem to his home, the Cenacle, by the undercover Simon Peter (possibly "Simeon who was called Niger" in Antioch (Acts 13,1)) and perhaps urged by Simon Peter and/or other apostles and (Roman) disciples, orally or by letter, to put in writing, in the Gospel according to Mark, the still vivid memories of himself and the rest of the Cenacle's inhabitants of Simon Peter's narratives and teachings about Jesus. Tradition, in the voices of Irenaeus, Papias and Clement, says that Mark was "a follower of Peter", and that "he accompanied Peter" and that he wrote down Peter's teachings in the Gospel of Mark "after their departure [of Peter and Paul]", and that Peter was still alive then.⁵

⁴ This James was James the Just, "the Lord's brother" (Gal 1,19). The thesis of their being in the temple is elaborated in my article "James and the brothers", which has not been published yet but has been submitted to the editorial board of an exegetical periodical.

⁵ "After their departure [of Peter and Paul], Mark, the disciple and interpreter of Peter, did also hand down to us in writing what had been preached by Peter" (Irenaeus: 3.1.1. cited by Eusebius: 5,8,2-3). "And the presbyter said this. Mark having become the interpreter of Peter, wrote down accurately whatsoever he remembered. It was not, however, in exact order that he related the sayings or deeds of Christ. For he neither heard the Lord nor accompanied Him. But afterwards, as I said, he accompanied Peter, who accommodated his instructions to the necessities, but with no intention of giving a regular narrative of the Lord's sayings. Wherefore Mark made no mistake in thus writing some things as he remembered them. For of one thing he took especial care, not to omit anything he had heard, and not to put anything fictitious into the statements" (Papias, bishop of Hierapolis in Asia Minor in 1st half of 2nd century, cited by Eusebius: 3,39,15). "1. And so greatly did the splendor of piety illumine the minds of Peter's hearers [in Rome] that they were not satisfied with hearing once only, and were not content with the unwritten teaching of the divine Gospel, but with all sorts of entreaties they besought Mark,

a follower of Peter, and the one whose Gospel is extant, that he would leave them a written monument of the doctrine which had been orally communicated to them. Nor did they cease until they had prevailed with the man, and had thus become the occasion of the written Gospel which bears the name of Mark. 2. And they say that Peter when he had learned, through a revelation of the Spirit, of that which had been done [so Mark did not write

All these indications for the identity of the house of the beloved disciple and the house of John Mark, are also indications for the identity of the beloved disciple and John Mark himself.

3. The rich young ruler and the fleeing young man

It's generally accepted that John Mark, twice taken on a journey by and having a close relationship with Barnabas, mentioned in the Acts, was the same as the evangelist Mark, the nephew of Barnabas (Col 4,10 Acts 12,12.25 15,37)⁶.

“And Barnabas and Saul returned from Jerusalem when they had fulfilled their mission, bringing with them John whose other name was Mark.” Acts 12,25

“And Barnabas wanted to take with them John called Mark.” Acts 15,37

“Aristarchus my fellow prisoner greets you, and Mark the cousin of Barnabas (concerning whom you have received instructions—if he comes to you, receive him)” Col 4,10

Of the evangelist Mark is also generally accepted, that he himself was the person, who, as the rich young ruler, asked Jesus about eternal life and who was looked at and loved by Jesus (Mark 10,17-22)⁷. For this detail, of being looked at and loved, is only mentioned in the Gospel of Mark and not in the corresponding pericopes (= gospel paragraphs) in Luke and Matthew, and therefore it is supposed that John Mark was himself this young man:

“And as he was setting out on his journey, a man ran up and knelt before him, and asked him, "Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" ...” (Mark 10,17) (“And a certain ruler asked him, saying, “Good Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? ...” (Luke 18,18))

“And Jesus said to him, "Why do you call me good? No one is good but God alone. You know the commandments: ‘Do not kill, Do not commit adultery, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Do not defraud, Honor your father and mother.’” And he said to him, "Teacher, all these I have observed from my youth." Then Jesus, looking at him, loved him, and said to him, "One thing you lack: Go your way, sell whatever you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, take up the cross, and follow Me." But he was sad at this word, and went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.” (Mark 10,18-22 NKJV)

the Gospel of Mark in Rome], was pleased with the zeal of the men, and that the work obtained the sanction of his authority for the purpose of being used in the churches. Clement in the eighth book of his Hypotyposes gives this account, and with him agrees the bishop of Hierapolis named Papias” (Eusebius: 2,15,1-2). Justin Martyr (100-169 CE) quotes from the Gospel of Mark as being “the memoirs of Peter” (Justin Martyr: Dialogue 106.3) and Peter's speech in Acts 10,34-40 serves as a good summary of the Gospel of Mark. Also Tertullian (ca. 160-235 CE) (Adversus Marcionem IV,5) and Origen (ca. 185-254 CE) (cited by Eusebius: 6,26) confirm the tradition. That Papias says that Mark neither heard nor followed Jesus complies with his sadly leaving Jesus, as the rich young ruler, and with his secret discipleship, which apparently was not betrayed by the apostles, who saw him at Jesus' breast at home, in the Cenacle. This secret discipleship is discussed in the next chapters.

⁶ www.theologywebsite.com/nt/mark.shtml

⁷ www.khouse.org/articles/biblestudy/20010601-347.html

“When the young man heard this, he went away sorrowful; for he had great possessions.” (Matt 19,22)

The similarities between the rich young ruler and the beloved disciple are the following:

- The rich young ruler was loved by Jesus (the verb used for ‘love’ in Mark 10,21 is ‘agapō’; NA²⁷) and also the beloved disciple was loved by Jesus (four times ‘agapō’ (John 13,23 19,26 21,7.20) and once ‘phileō’ (John 20,2 NA²⁷))⁸.
- The rich young ruler came running to Jesus (detail only in Mark); the beloved disciple ran to Jesus’ open grave (detail only in John) (Mark 10,17 John 20,3-5).
- The rich young ruler was advised to follow Jesus and to take up the cross (detail only in Mark 10,21 NKJV); the beloved disciple stood by the cross of Jesus (detail only in John 19,25-27).
- The rich young ruler asked Jesus how “to inherit eternal life” (Mark 10,17); the beloved disciple wrote the gospel of the “eternal life”: in it John literally used the expression “eternal life” seventeen times (John 3,15.16.36 4,14.36 5,24.39 6,27.40.47.54.68 10,28 12,25.50 17,2.3); in the other gospels, beside in the rich young ruler’s own question to Jesus (Matt 19,16 Mark 10,17.30 Luke 18,18), it is used only once, when a certain expert in God’s Law, given to Moses, asks Jesus the same thing: how to inherit eternal life (Luke 10,25). Furthermore, in John 14,6 Jesus Himself says: “I am the way, the truth and the life”. In fact John wrote all the gospel of Jesus for his readers to “have life in his name” (John 20,30-31), and this is his final gospel statement. In his letter 1John he mentions “eternal life” six times (1John 1,2 2,25 3,15 5,11.13.20), and in 1John 1,2 and 5,20 he calls Jesus “the eternal life” in person.
- The rich young ruler remains anonymous in the Gospel of Mark; the beloved disciple remains anonymous in the Gospel of John, and also Jesus’ virgin mother remains anonymous in this gospel.

From the pericopes of Luke and Matthew we know, that the “man” that ran up to Jesus (Mark 10,17), was not only rich, but also a “ruler” (‘archōn’ Luke 18,18) and a “young man” (‘neaniskos’ Matt 19,20.22).

3.1. Ruler (‘archōn’)

The rich young man is a “ruler” (Luke 18,18). The Greek word used is ‘archōn’, which means ‘a ruler, commander, chief, leader’, and which was an official title in the Jewish communities (Schürer: II, 518). Nicodemus, a Pharisee only known from John’s gospel, was a “ruler” too (‘archōn’ John 3,1), and the Talmud⁹ says that Nicodemus was very rich (Lightfoot: John 3,1), and this is confirmed by his ability to instantaneously bring “a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pounds” for Jesus’ burial¹⁰. The rich young ruler addresses Jesus with ‘Rabbi’ (in Greek ‘didaskalos’) = “Teacher”, like Nicodemus does.¹¹ The rich young ruler already believed in the existence of eternal life even before he spoke to Jesus and therefore he

⁸ All Greek citations are from the 27th Nestle-Aland edition of the Greek basic text (oldest manuscripts) of the New Testament.

⁹ The first written compendium of Judaism's oral law and its discussion by the rabbi's of 200-500 CE.

¹⁰ John 19,39; a Roman pound was the equivalent of about 0,33 kilogram (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ancient_Roman_units_of_measurement#Mass_and_Coins), so Nicodemus brought about 30 kilos of the extremely precious mixture.

¹¹ Mark 10,20 John 3,2

could have belonged to the Pharisees, who believed in the resurrection of the dead.¹² In this he again resembles Nicodemus, who was a Pharisee. Furthermore, Jesus had already spoken to Nicodemus about the gift of eternal life and the rich young ruler asks Jesus how to “inherit” this life (John 3,15-16 cf. John 17,2; Mark 10,17). Because of all of this, it is possible that the rich young ruler was an heir of Nicodemus. When Jesus told the rich young man that he had to observe the commandments (God’s Law given to Moses), he answered “Teacher, all these have I observed from my youth”, which was probably due to his being brought up in the house of Nicodemus, who was “the teacher of Israel”.¹³ Nicodemus was a disciple of Jesus secretly – he “came to Jesus by night” (John 3,1-2) –, and many other rulers believed in Him:

“Nevertheless many even of the authorities (‘archontōn’ = rulers) believed in him, but for fear of the Pharisees they did not confess it, lest they should be put out of the synagogue.” John 12,42 (RSV).

Cenacle in the house of Nicodemus and John Mark

As already said, even Jesus arranges the preparation for his last Passover meal in such a way that no one of the bystanders then, or of the readers of the gospel later, would know to whose house Jesus would go for this Passover meal: the house of his secret disciples Nicodemus and John Mark¹⁴. Also in Acts 12,12 the householder of the Cenacle is anonymous, for the house is described as “the house of Mary, the mother of John whose other name was Mark”, and in Jesus’ times “Mary” was the most popular name for a woman: 25% of all Hebrew women were called Mary.¹⁵ And the fact that the two disciples, sent out for the preparation of the meal and ordered to say to the householder: “The Teacher says, Where is my guest room, where I am to eat the passover with my disciples?” (Mark 14,14), had to follow an anonymous man carrying a jar of water – in Biblical times only women carried water for their homes –, makes one think of what the Talmud says about Nicodemus (who called Jesus “Teacher” and thus would understand what was meant by “the Teacher says”¹⁶): that he was, or felt, responsible for the provision of water for the people who came to Jerusalem for the feast in the temple, and that he even wanted to pay for the water he lent for that purpose.¹⁷ Jesus told Nicodemus in their first secret, nightly, conversation (John 3,1-21) that “unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God” and that “The wind blows where it wills, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know whence it comes or whither it goes; so it is with every one who is born of the Spirit”¹⁸: in the Cenacle, at the Last Supper, Jesus washed the feet of his disciples with water, symbolizing the forgiveness of their sins through Jesus’ sacrificial ministry, and later He blew the Holy Spirit on them, thus giving them the power to forgive other men’s sins in His name.¹⁹ And Nicodemus, when he visited Jesus secretly at night “first”²⁰, may have told Jesus, that Jesus could visit him secretly at

¹² Luke 18,18 Acts 23,8

¹³ Mark 10,20-21 John 3,10

¹⁴ Mark 14,12-16

¹⁵ R. Reich, Caiaphas name inscribed on bone boxes, *Biblical Archeology Review* 18/5 (1992) 38-44

¹⁶ John 3,2

¹⁷ Lightfoot on John 3,1 (Taanith, fol. 20.I Avoth R. Nathan, c.7). The title of this priestly functionary was “digger of wells” (Lightfoot on John 3,1).

¹⁸ John 3,5.8

¹⁹ John 13,5; “Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained” (John 20,22-23).

²⁰ “Nicodemus also, who had at first come to him by night, came bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes” John 19,39, ‘prōton’ = first (of all); at first. So here it could mean that Nicodemus came to Jesus (secretely at night) first, and that Jesus came to Nicodemus (secretely at night)

night too, and that he had a large guest room Jesus could use with his disciples in case He would need it, e.g. when Jesus' time had come²¹ to be "lifted up" (i.e. condemned and hung on the cross) by the successors of Moses (John 3,14-15). After all, Jesus had told Nicodemus that "as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life" (John 3,14-15), and He – who when Passover was at hand "knew that his hour had come to depart out of this world to the Father" (John 13,1) – lets his disciples tell the householder of the Cenacle: "The Teacher says, My time is at hand; I will keep the passover at your house with my disciples".²² And perhaps it is not a coincidence that some ancient documents based on the work of the second century author Tatian claim that Nicodemus had his private conversation with Jesus during his last Passover in Jerusalem.²³

(It is probable that Jesus in his discourse with Nicodemus, when referring to Moses lifting up the serpent, meant that Nicodemus himself was to lift up the Son of Man, as Nicodemus was not only "a ruler of the Jews" and "the teacher of Israel" (NKJV, 'ho didaskalos tou israel')²⁴ and thus one of the "Pharisees [sitting] on Moses seat" of whom Jesus said "practice and observe whatever they tell you"²⁵, but, according to Acts 13,27-29, also one of the "rulers" of Jerusalem who "fulfilled [the prophets] by condemning him", and who "asked Pilate to have him killed", and "took him down from the tree, and laid him in a tomb", for only Nicodemus assisted Joseph of Arimatea at Jesus' burial.²⁶ Nicodemus may have consented in the condemnation of Jesus by the Great Sanhedrin – of which he was a member as "a ruler" and "the teacher of Israel" – because Jesus Himself had let him know "My time [to be lifted up] is at hand".²⁷ The teacher Nicodemus had said to Jesus "we know that you are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do, unless God is with him"²⁸, thus indirectly asking Jesus whether He had come to take Nicodemus' place as "the teacher of Israel" in the Great Sanhedrin, because Nicodemus himself could not do the signs that Jesus did. Jesus answers him by telling him that Nicodemus "must be born anew", "born of water and the Spirit", but that the Son of man (=Jesus) Himself "must ... be lifted up" (to die on the cross) and was sent "not to condemn the world" (as a president/member of the Great Sanhedrin could do), "but that the world might be saved through him" – He came "to give up his life as a ransom for many".²⁹)

Secret disciples

A remarkable fact is that only John's gospel mentions the existence of Nicodemus, and reveals that he was a secret disciple, like Joseph of Arimatea was a secret disciple "for fear of the Jews", as John says (John 3,2 7,50 19,38-39). The fact that the doors of the Cenacle, where the apostles stayed after Jesus' crucifixion, were shut "for fear of the Jews", again as John says (John 20,19.26), may represent not (only) the apostles' fear but (most of all) Nicodemus' fear that the apostles would be found in his upper room.

Also the beloved disciple, author of the Fourth Gospel, must have been a disciple of Jesus secretly, for, when standing at Jesus' cross, he is not interrogated or recognized as a disciple by the high priests, scribes (experts in Holy Scripture) and elders, who were mocking Jesus on the cross, nor by the soldiers there, of whom some probably were the same as the officers who

later: at the night of the Last Supper. It also may mean that Nicodemus in the beginning had come to Jesus secretly, but now, at the burial, came to (the dead) Jesus openly.

²¹ John states twice that "no one arrested him [Jesus], because his hour had not yet come" (John 7,30 and John 8,20).

²² Matt 26,18

²³ Ricciotti: 319

²⁴ John 3,1.10

²⁵ Matt 23,2-3

²⁶ John 19,38-42; Also Joseph of Arimatea was a member of the Great Sanhedrin, and thus a ruler.

²⁷ Matt 26,18

²⁸ John 3,2

²⁹ John 3,3.5.7.14.17 – Mr 10,45

that night had arrested Jesus and had seen Simon Peter with Him in the garden Gethsemane, and had interrogated Simon Peter – “Did I not see you in the garden with him?” John 18,26 – and had recognized him as a disciple when he sat down with them by the fire in the high priest’s courtyard.³⁰

Of Nicodemus may also be deduced from the Talmud that at some point he lost his riches and that his family was very impoverished³¹. The cause may have been that Nicodemus became a public disciple of Jesus, and therefore was “put out of the synagogue” (John 12,42) and thus out of his public function by the Jews. Also John Mark became a public disciple of Jesus some time after Jesus’ resurrection, e.g. when he went to Antioch with Paul in about 44 CE (Acts 12,25) (see table 2). From at least 54 CE he was the bishop of Alexandria in Egypt (Eusebius: 2,16,1-2). And in the year 62 CE many rulers caused commotion by their apparent public belief in Jesus as the Christ:

“But as many as believed did so on account of James.³² Therefore when many even of the rulers believed, there was a commotion among the Jews and Scribes and Pharisees, who said that there was danger that the whole people would be looking for Jesus as the Christ” (Eusebius: 2,23,10).

John Mark	Nicodemus	Master of the Cenacle
is a very rich ruler	is a very rich ruler of the Jews	
addresses Jesus with Teacher	addresses Jesus with Teacher	is told on behalf of Jesus: “The Teacher (Jesus) says ...”
believed in eternal life	believed in eternal life, as he was a Pharisee	
asks Jesus how to inherit eternal life	had heard that belief in Jesus gave eternal life	
(was taught and) had observed all the commandments from his youth	was the teacher of Israel: taught the commandments to Israel	
wore a ‘sindōn’ (see below)	wore a ‘sindōn’ (see below)	
didn’t become a public disciple immediately	was a secret disciple: he came to Jesus by night	Jesus came to the Cenacle by night; it had closed doors for fear of the Jews.
is loved by Jesus		is protected by Jesus, who preserved his anonymity as host of the Cenacle
	was responsible for the water for the festive pilgrims	an anonymous young man (and not a woman!) carried water to the Cenacle
	was told he had to be born anew from water and Spirit	in the Cenacle Jesus washed his disciples’ feet with water, and later blew the Holy Spirit on them
	was told that Jesus had to be lifted up (when his time had come)	was told: “My time is at hand”
	had his private conversation with Jesus during his last Passover	was the host of Jesus during his last Passover
	brought more than 30 kilos of a precious mixture of spices for Jesus’ burial	is an anonymous beneficiary of Jesus in offering Him and his disciples his Last Passover meal in his house
became a public disciple	lost his riches	

Table 2. Similarities between the beloved disciple, Nicodemus and the householder of the Cenacle

³⁰ Matt 27,41-43 John 3,1-2 19,26.38-39; 18,15-27

³¹ Lightfoot on John 3,1 (Chetubb. fol. 66.2.)

³² Again, this James is James the Just, “the Lord’s brother” (Gal 1,19), and not the apostle James of Zebedee.

3.2. Young man ('neaniskos')

The rich young ruler was a “young man” ('neaniskos' Matt 19,20,22) and in the Gospel of Mark is a detail, which is not in the other gospels, which is that a young man, who followed Jesus when He was arrested and carried along to the high priests, is seized by the officers, the servants of the high priests, but escapes by leaving his linen cloth in their hands and fleeing naked:

“And there followed him a certain young man ('neaniskos'), having a linen cloth ('sindōn'- pronounced 'sindone') cast about his naked body; and the young men ('neaniskoi') laid hold on him: And he left the linen cloth, and fled from them naked.” (Mark 14,51-52 AV)

Mark is the only evangelist who mentions this incident, and tradition says that Mark himself was this fleeing young man.³³ But, as the rich young man ('neaniskos'), Mark may also have been one of the young men ('neaniskoi') who carried Jesus along. And when Jesus was brought to the high priest, according to the Gospel of John, also Simon Peter and another, anonymous, disciple followed Him, and this disciple is described as “known to the high priest”.

“Simon Peter followed Jesus, and so did another disciple. As this disciple was known to the high priest, he entered the court of the high priest along with Jesus, while Peter stood outside at the door. So the other disciple, who was known to the high priest, went out and spoke to the maid who kept the door, and brought Peter in.” John 18,15-16 (RSV)

So, beside the possibility that Mark knew the flight incident because he was himself the fleeing young man or one of the young men who took Jesus to the high priest, Mark also could have heard the story about the naked fleeing young man from Simon Peter or from the anonymous disciple known to the high priest and standing at the gate. Or he was himself this anonymous disciple.

This disciple, described by John as “the other disciple, who was known to the high priest” next to Simon Peter, is generally regarded as the same as the anonymous beloved disciple, because the next time John describes an anonymous disciple he writes: “the disciple whom he loved, standing near” (John 19,6) and “Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved” (John 20,2). But the fact that the anonymous disciple known to the high priest could just walk into the courtyard of the high priest along with the officers of the high priests without being questioned, proves that the woman at the gate and the officers knew him as someone known to the high priest, but were completely ignorant of his discipleship of Jesus.³⁴ So, he probably was a secret disciple, which is confirmed by the fact that also the evangelist doesn't reveal this disciple's identity to the readers of his gospel. The two properties of this specific anonymous disciple – his being known to the high priest and his secret discipleship – are the exact characteristics of “Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus, but secretly, for fear of the Jews” (John 19,38) and who was “a respected member of the council” (Mark 15,43). This “council” is the Great Sanhedrin, which was presided over by the high

³³ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arrest_of_Jesus

³⁴ The still unrecognized Simon Peter, on the other hand, had to stay outside at the gate: unlike the disciple, known to the high priest, he was a stranger to the door maid and the temple servants. Only after he had entered the high priest's courtyard, and had joined the servants who were sitting in the warmth and the light of the fire, Simon was interrogated and recognized as a disciple of Jesus (Luke 22,54-56).

priest,³⁵ and which consisted of priests, scribes and elders. Joseph of Arimatea was a craftsman, an artisan in stone, for he laid the dead body of Jesus “in his own new tomb, which he had hewn in the rock” (Matt 27,60). So, he was not not a scribe or temple priest but, as a member of the Great Sanhedrin, an elder. And thus he may have been one of the “elders” who were present when Jesus was seized in Gethsemane on the Mount of Olives, for there Jesus spoke “to the chief priests and officers of the temple and elders, who had come out against him” (Lu 22,52). Joseph’s position of member of the Great Sanhedrin complies with the authority whereby he overruled the door maid and let Simon Peter enter the high priest’s courtyard (John 18,15-16). The fact that this anonymous secret disciple had the courage to let Simon Peter enter, also complies with Joseph of Arimatea’s other courageous deeds: a) he “was a member of the council, a good and righteous man, who had not consented to their purpose and deed” concerning the elimination of Jesus (Luke 23,50-51) b) he “took courage and went to Pilate, and asked for the body of Jesus” (Mark 15,43) c) he personally buried Jesus’ body “in his own new tomb, which he had hewn in the rock; and he rolled a great stone to the door of the tomb, and departed” (Matt 27,60) (see table 3).

anonymous disciple at high priest’s gate	Joseph of Arimatea
is known to the high priest	is known to the high priest, as he was a member of the Great Sanhedrin, presided over by the high priest
was a secret disciple	was a secret disciple
is present at Jesus’ arrest	is an elder, and elders were present at Jesus’ arrest
overrules doormaid of high priest	is a ruler beside the high priest
is courageous: - lets Simon Peter enter the high priest’s courtyard	is courageous: - had not consented in the councils decision that Jesus had to die - asked Pilate for Jesus’ dead body - personally buried Jesus in his own grave, just outside Jerusalem

Table 3. The anonymous disciple at the gate and Joseph of Arimatea

If the courageous deed, of allowing Simon Peter’s entry into the high priest’s courtyard by using his own authority, had been performed by the evangelist, the beloved disciple, he certainly would have written that it was the beloved disciple who did it. But he didn’t write this, but he did, perhaps deliberately, allude to himself being “the other disciple, who was known to the high priest” next to Simon Peter (John 18,16), by calling himself “the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved”, also next to Simon Peter, only a few paragraphs further (John 20,2). This allusion was the nearest he could get to the courageous deeds of Joseph of Arimatea. The positive deeds of his own, he could mention, were the lying at Jesus’ breast (at home in secret) and the asking who would be Jesus’ traitor (only after Simon Peter had told him to ask this), the standing at the foot of the cross (where also high priests, scribes and elders like Joseph of Arimatea were present³⁶), his telling Simon Peter that the man at the shore of the Lake of Tiberias was the risen Jesus (without rushing to Jesus himself, but only

³⁵ Either the high priest Annas or Caiphas. Caiphas certainly was the president of the Council of the Temple (see paragraph 4.1.2. for its description), which formed a distinct block within the Great Sanhedrin.

³⁶ Matt 27,41-43

later following Simon Peter in the boat), and the attempt to follow the risen Jesus (only after Simon Peter had started to follow Jesus).

So, the real identities of those present at Jesus' arrest and at the cross probably were as shown in the table below (see table 4). The fleeing young man was, as tradition says, John Mark, the anonymous disciple at the gate, known to the high priest, was Joseph of Arimatea, and the anonymous beloved disciple at the cross was John Mark. The apostle John of Zebedee had fled Jesus at his arrest when "all forsook Him, and fled" (Mark 14,50), and was hiding in the Cenacle with "doors being shut" (John 20,19.26).

Gospel identity (at the arrest)	Person
Jesus	Jesus
chief priests and elders	e.g. Joseph of Arimatea a craftsman and member of the Great Sanhedrin
young officers	young officers
anonymous disciple, known to the high priest "Simon Peter ... and ... the other disciple"	Joseph of Arimatea member of the Great Sanhedrin
Simon Peter	Simon Peter
fleeing young man	John Mark
anonymous beloved disciple (at the grave) "Simon Peter and the other disciple"	John Mark

Handwritten annotations: A curved arrow points from the 'anonymous disciple, known to the high priest' row to the 'anonymous beloved disciple (at the grave)' row, labeled '= ?'. Another curved arrow points from the 'anonymous disciple, known to the high priest' row to the 'fleeing young man' row, labeled '= !'. A third curved arrow points from the 'anonymous beloved disciple (at the grave)' row to the 'fleeing young man' row, labeled '= !'.

Table 4. Identities at arrest and grave

Another good reason – beside the argument from tradition and John's (deliberately) unclear and suggestive gospel recount – why it is probable that John Mark was the young man who initially followed the band that had seized Jesus, and who was seized himself but fled naked, is that this young man apparently had followed the captured Jesus with Simon Peter. This is exactly what the beloved disciple did at least five other times, according to the Gospel of John:

- 1) when "Peter ... came out" and went to Jesus' empty grave, he followed Peter, for he only outran him later (John 20,3-4);
- 2) he entered the empty grave only after Simon had entered it (John 20,6-8);
- 3) when Simon Peter said he went fishing at the Sea of Tiberias (to be able to meet Jesus there alone?), he and some others decided to go and accompany Simon Peter (John 21,3);
- 4) he went to Jesus at the shore of the lake only after Peter had gone to Him (John 21,1-7);
- 5) after Simon Peter had started to follow the risen Jesus, he too tried to follow Jesus (John 21,19-20).

And also in his identity of John Mark, he is known as "a follower of Peter" (Clement in Eusebius 2,15,1-2), e.g. right after Simon Peter had fled from Jerusalem to Antioch, John Mark went to Antioch too (Acts 12,17-25). (Beside the following of (Peter and) Jesus, also the running (to Jesus) is a characteristic of all of John Mark's three anonymous identities: as the rich young ruler he ran to Jesus, knelt and called Him "Teacher", as the young man in

the linen cloth he ran from the officers, but possibly in the direction of the city, where Jesus was going, and as the beloved disciple he ran to Jesus' grave, wondering whether it was totally empty or not. There are no other running male disciples in the gospels.)

The beloved disciple had followed Jesus and Simon Peter and the other apostles from the Cenacle (his home, and in his home dress, only an expensive linen cloth = 'sindōn') to the Mount of Olives, and from there he followed Jesus and Simon Peter to the olive-yard Gethsemane on this Mount, and then he even must have secretly followed Jesus from where He left Simon Peter, James and John of Zebedee, to the place a little further where He fell down and prayed in solitude: Mark's gospel (Mark 14,35-36.39) cites this private prayer of Jesus! It is important to note that, when Jesus, after his prayer in agony, returned to his apostles Simon Peter, and James and John of Zebedee, He found them sleeping (Mark 14,37-40), and this happened twice. So these apostles certainly weren't the source of information for the citation of Jesus' prayer in the Gethsemane, but it probably was John Mark, who was used to following Jesus secretly. This is another reason why it is probable that John Mark again secretly followed Jesus and Simon Peter to see what would happen to Jesus after He had been arrested. Here is a figure showing the sixteen times John Mark, in this or one of his three anonymous identities, followed Jesus and Simon Peter:

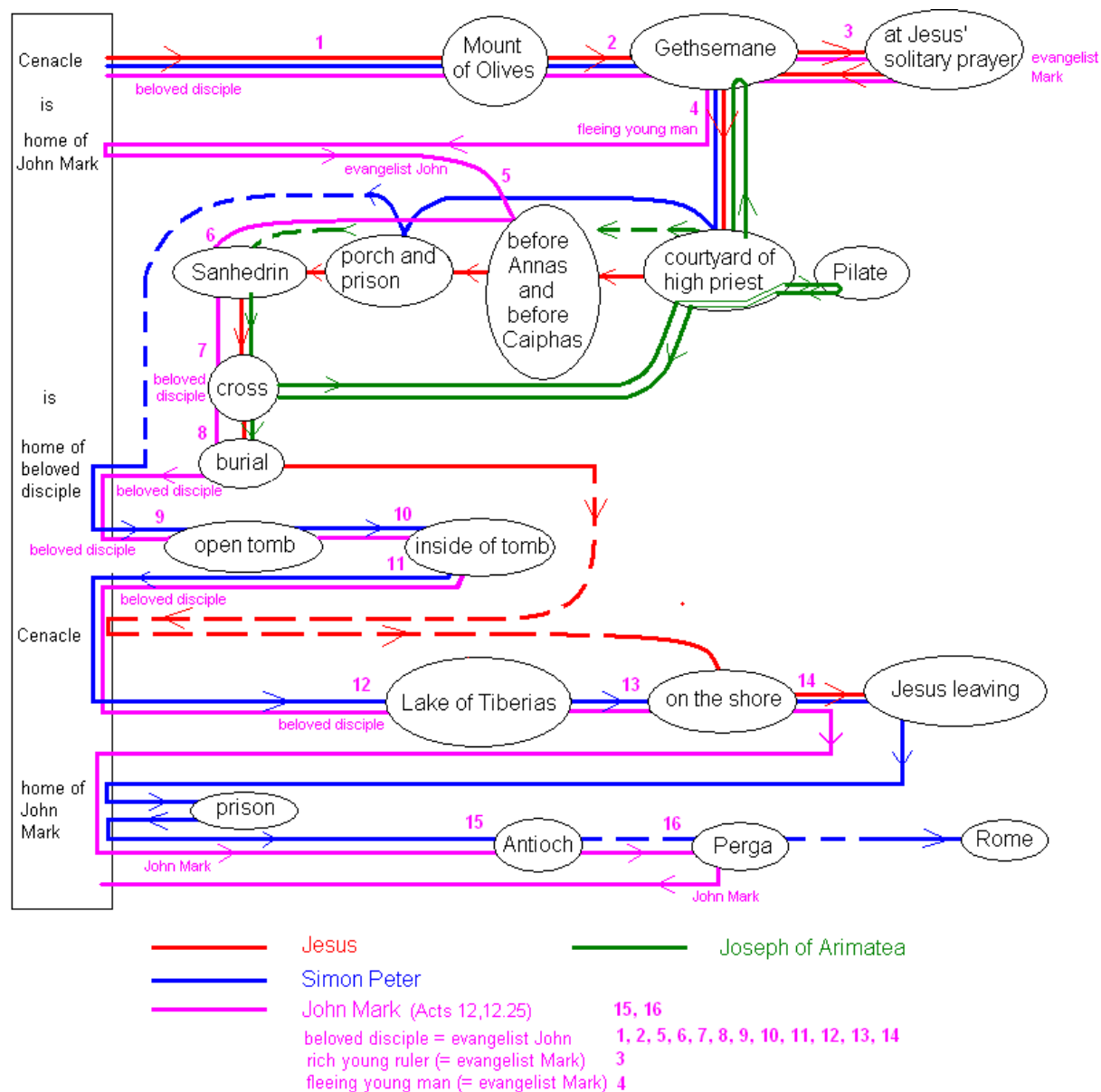


Fig. 2. John Mark “a follower of Peter” (Church Father Clement cited by Eusebius: 2,15,1-2)

Caught in fear

When John Mark was caught by the ‘hypēretai’ (= temple officers, temple attendants) who arrested Jesus (John 18,3.12 NA²⁷), obviously because they thought that the young man following them was a disciple of Jesus, he fled naked, obviously because he did not want to be treated as a disciple of Jesus, now captured and bound. And it is also obvious that, as the ruler John Mark, just like Joseph of Arimatea and Nicodemus, was a well known and respected person, he did not even want to be recognized by the ‘hypēretai’, for then they would know or suspect he was a secret disciple of Jesus, since he hadn’t come to the Mount of Olives with them, but most probably with Jesus. Nevertheless, after his flight he possibly ran home naked, put on some cloths, ran to the high priest’s palace in Antonia - thus again following Jesus and Simon Peter, who wanted “to see the end” (Matt 26,58) -, and stood there beside Jesus, when the high priest Annas asked Him about “his disciples and his teaching” (John 18,19). There Jesus pointed his finger to the ‘hypēretai’ standing by, who knew his teaching from his discourses in the temple – He had said to them “Day after day I sat in the temple teaching, and you did not seize me” (Matt 21,23 26,55) and “the officers (‘hypēretai’) then went back to the chief priests and Pharisees, who said to them, "Why did you not bring him?" The officers (‘hypēretai’) answered, "No man ever spoke like this man!"” (John 7,45-46) –, and He said to Annas “behold, they know what I said” (John 18,19-22). Perhaps the rich young ruler, the beloved disciple, the fleeing young man, felt he himself, as a (secret) disciple, was, or would soon be, pointed at by Jesus, as someone who knew what He said, and, as he had just narrowly escaped from being caught as a disciple, still felt he had to shake off every suspicion, and therefore was the “one of the officers (‘hypēretai’) standing by” who “struck Jesus with the palm of his hand” saying “Is that how you answer the high priest?” (John 18,22). For John Mark was himself a ‘hypēretēs’, as Acts 13,5 tells us, and therefore probably still caught in his fear to be recognized by the other (lower) ‘hypēretai’ standing by, as the disciple that escaped them in the darkness of the Garden, and now also fearing to be betrayed by Jesus to the high priest as one of his secret disciples.

But although only Annas, Jesus and the ‘hypēretai’ were present, John could not help reporting this incident in the Fourth Gospel.

4. John Mark an attendant (‘hypēretēs’)

4.1. Lower officer of the temple prison

The servants of the high priests, who took Jesus in, are described by Mark as just “young men” (‘neaniskoi’ Mark 14,43.52). But the Gospel of John clarifies that these young men were “‘hypēretai’ (plural of ‘hypēretēs’) of the high priests (plural) and Pharisees”, and “‘hypēretai’ of the Jews” (John 18,3.12): they were the ‘hypēretai’ who once were charged to arrest Jesus, when He was teaching in the temple, but who initially didn’t do this because they heard and respected his teachings, and said “No man ever spoke like this man!” (John 7,14-37.45-469). Later, nevertheless, they were the ‘hypēretai’ at the arrest of Jesus in Gethsemane (John 18,3.12), and the ‘hypēretai’ sitting in the high priest’s courtyard at night (Matt 26,58 Mark 14,54 John 18,18). After Jesus’ face had been slapped when Annas asked Him about his disciples and doctrine (John 18,22), the ‘hypēretai’ struck and mocked Jesus in prison at night (Mark 14,65 Matt 26,67-68), and the next day, at midday, the ‘hypēretai’ called out to Pilate for Jesus’ crucifixion (John 19,6). These ‘hypēretai’ were under command of one or more captains of the temple who kept order in the temple. In the New Testament there are captains of the temple, also sitting in the high priest’s courtyard (Luke 22,52.55), the Captain of the Temple with ‘hypēretai’ taking action in the temple, arresting disturbers (Acts 5,24.26 (4,1)), and Judas conferring with the high priests and captains of the temple about how to betray

Jesus to them (Luke 22,4). So, the ‘hypēretai’ were servants of the temple, officers in public service, who had to restore order when it had been violated.

Their barracks – the barracks of the temple prison – were part of the temple’s tower-fortress Antonia, where also the barracks of the ordinary temple guard (which had to prevent disorder and theft), the city guard, and the Roman guard were located (Josephus: War 5,5,8). Antonia was the most secured place of the city and thus the best place to keep prisoners, and its gate was called the “Watch Gate” (Madaule: 46, “Tor der Wache”), which is an equivalent of “Prison Gate”, as in Ne 12,39 both names translate ‘shah-ar’ = gate, ‘mattara’ = a jail, as a guard house (D.V. translation resp. AV translation). In Acts 5,18 the temple prison is called “the public prison” (NIV), ‘in full view of all’ (‘dēmosia’ Acts 5,18 NA²⁷ = public, in public places, in full view of all), for the Watch Gate of the temple, opening onto the Tyropoeon valley, in which the market place was located, was used by the citizens of Jerusalem to come and go to the temple; thus the offenders of the temple order, who were kept in the public prison in this gate, were subjected to the scorn and ridicule of all (see fig. 3). This is illustrated by the fact that, when the apostles were imprisoned and beaten for preaching Jesus’ name in the temple, they were “rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the name” (Acts 5,17-42): their imprisonment and corporal punishment were visible to all Jerusalem’s inhabitants.

[The temple prison in the first temple was in the “the upper Benjamin Gate of the house of the LORD”: this was the northern temple gate in which Jeremiah was beaten and put in the stocks for a day and a night, after he had prophesied in the temple (Jer 19,14 20,2-3). The Catholic Encyclopedia states that ‘Benjamin’ was “The name of the northern gate of the Temple, where Jeremias was imprisoned (Jer.,xx,2; xxxviii,7,14), probably the same as “watch-gate” (II Esdras, xii,38 [Ne 12,39]) and as the one spoken of in Jeremiah (viii, 3,5,16; ix,2)”. In the second temple (of Nehemiah) the prison will have been in “the Prison Gate” (Neh 12,39 AV), which was also in the northern temple/city wall and also called the “Watch Gate” (D.V. translation) and “Gate of the Guard”, the third translation of ‘shah-ar’ ‘mattara’ (NASB, RSV, ASV, HNV). In Herod’s temple, which was the same as the second temple, but extended into the northern direction, there was a “Watch Gate” as well (Madaule: 46, “Tor der Wache”). This gate, which probably housed the prison just as in the times of Jeremiah and Nehemiah, was in the northern part of the western wall of the Temple Mount at the foot of the fortress Antonia, in which the ordinary temple guards were stationed as well. Here Simon Peter and John of Zebedee were being detained from the evening to the next day and later all the apostles were detained here for part of the evening and night and beaten the next day (Acts 4,3 5,18-19.25.40).]

That the high priest’s palace and courtyard, to which Jesus was brought, were part of the temple fortress Antonia as well, and not in Caiphas’ private house in the upper city (see fig. 1), can be made plausible from Josephus’ description of Antonia – Josephus being a first century historian – and from the number of high priests who have lived in the temple fortress, and it can be proved from Simon Peter’s movements in the night when Jesus was arrested.

[Josephus describes Antonia as a building that looked like a fortress from the outside, but was like a palace inside: “a palace, it being parted into all kinds of rooms and other conveniences, such as courts, and places for bathing, and broad spaces for camps” (Safrai: 984; Josephus: War 5,238-45). Historically several high priests before Caiphas, and probably also after him, have lived in the temple and in the temple fortress (Hilkiah and Jehoiada (2Kings 22,3-5 2Chron 22,11-12), Simon the Maccabean, and Hyrcanus, and “his sons and ... their sons after them”, e.g. Aristobulus I, and his widow queen Salome Alexandra, and Hyrcanus II (1Macc 13,52; Josephus: Antiquities 18,4,3), and probably also Jesus ben Gamala in ± 64 CE (Josephus: Antiquities 20,9,4; this Jesus’ wife Martha demanded that a carpet was laid before her feet when she went to (the sanctuary of) the temple (Rops: 191)). Also Edersheim (ch. 4, p. 65) states that the high priest possessed a house in the temple. And it is important to note that not only the prison’s ‘hypēretai’, but also the ordinary captains of the temple were sitting in the high priest’s courtyard after Jesus had been brought in there (Luke 22,52-55). They even lit a fire there, as if they were at home (Luke 22,52.55 John 18,18). So, the high priest’s courtyard apparently was shared by and accessible to both the prison guards and the ordinary temple guards. And as the ‘hypēretai’ were sitting “below” by the fire in the high priest’s courtyard in the night when they had taken in Jesus (Mark 14,66 John 18,18), the high priest’s palace may very well have been in one of the upper floors of Antonia. Moreover, the chambers where the high priest and the standing Council of the Temple³⁷ used to gather, were inside the

³⁷ See paragraph 4.1.2. for its description.

sanctuary, in the south western corner of the Court of the Priests, and were only accessible during day-time, and then only by priests and Levites (Edersheim: ch. 4 and 2). So, these chambers could not be used when Jesus was brought in. It is probable that in the night when the ‘hypēretai’ were sent to arrest Jesus on the Mount of Olives, Annas and Caiphas were both waiting for Jesus’ arrival in Caiphas’ palace in Antonia, for then Matthew 26,57, which says that the ‘hypēretai’ brought Jesus “to Caiphas” (i.e. to Caiphas’ palace in Antonia), does not contradict John 18,13, which says Jesus was brought “to Annas first”, and then sent to Caiphas (John 18,24).

That the high priest’s palace and courtyard were not far from the prison and the barracks of the ‘hypēretai’ in the western temple gate, the Watch Gate, and that they even were in the same building, is proved by Simon Peter’s movements in this night (see fig. 3 and table 5). Peter had entered the high priest’s courtyard through the porch just like Jesus, and even after Jesus had been brought from Annas to Caiphas, Peter just needed to have walked “out into the porch” to be able to see Jesus turn and look at him; only after that Peter “went out”.³⁸ This proves that Annas and Caiphas saw Jesus in the same building. But when and where did Peter see Jesus turn and look at him? Scripture says that Jesus turned and looked at Peter at the moment when Peter, while standing in the porch, denied Jesus for the third time and the cock crew. For Peter to be able to see Jesus, one usually imagines Jesus as, very coincidentally, being led across the high priest’s courtyard at that particular moment (to be brought to the prison, in order to be ready for the examination by the Great Sanhedrin, which took place in the temple’s court room the next morning). But at Peter’s third denial Jesus was not being led in the direction of the porch, where Peter was, for Jesus had to turn to be able to look at Peter in the porch. This proves that Jesus still wasn’t leaving the building and that also the prison thus was in the same building.³⁹ So, the eye-contact in the usual reconstruction described above, would have to have been even briefer and more coincidental, for right after Peter denied Jesus, Jesus must not only have crossed Peter’s sight from the porch, but Peter must also have looked in that direction (as if he knew Jesus was there), like also Jesus must have known that Peter was in the porch, to be able to turn and look at him. All of this just seems too coincidental. The following reconstruction is a more plausible explanation of Peter’s looking at Jesus: While Jesus is interrogated by Annas inside Caiphas’ palace in Antonia, Peter is interrogated in the courtyard by one of the maids. After his first denial of Jesus Peter goes “out into the porch”, the porch of the Watch Gate at the foot of Antonia. While Jesus is interrogated by Caiphas and the Council of the Temple⁴⁰, by this time assembled in Caiphas’ palace, Peter gets interrogated for the second time as well, by another maid, and he denies Jesus again. But he keeps waiting in the porch, as he wanted “to see the end”.⁴¹ “After an interval of about ... an hour” another man interrogates Peter and after his third denial of Jesus the cock crows for the second time, and then “the Lord turned and looked at Peter” (Luke 22,59-61): after the Council of the Temple had condemned Jesus to death, He had been taken to and locked up in Antonia’s “public prison”, which was in the same building and also ‘in full view of all’ in the Watch Gate, where Peter was still waiting to see the end. So, here in the Watch Gate, after Peter and Jesus had already seen and recognized each other, and after the cock crew, Peter saw how Jesus turned and looked at him from the prison, and he “went out and wept bitterly” (Luke 22,62).⁴² Then the “men who held Jesus” – Mark 14,65 specifies they were ‘hypēretai’ – “mocked Him and beat Him” (Luke 2,63). This is something the ‘hypēretai’, as officers of the public temple prison, would and could do in the temple prison.

In the upper city on the western hill of Jerusalem archaeologists found the so-called “house of Caiphas”, with a store-house, treasury, palace, court of justice, guardroom and cells, complete sets of weights and measures, used only by priests, and a huge stone door-lintel inscribed: ‘This is Korban or offering’; “In the very centre of the courtroom is the mouth of the bottle-necked prison, into which the condemned prisoner could be lowered after trial” and also the other prisoners were in the gloom of the lower floor beneath the courtroom: “Descending to a third level there is a complete guardroom, all round the walls of which are still the staples for the prisoners’ chains. On one side is a small window opening on to the bottle-necked condemned cell. Below this window, ..., is a block on which the guard stood to peer down into the gloom of the cell below him” (Brownrigg: 26). This again proves that Jesus was in the public prison of Antonia, for if Jesus had been trialled by Caiphas in his private house in the upper city, He would have been in a dark cell under the courtroom, and thus would not have been visible to Simon Peter. And the temple’s ‘hypēretai’ certainly wouldn’t have lowered themselves into Caiphas’ dark pit cell to mock and beat Jesus there.]

³⁸ Mark 14,68//Matt 26,71 (AV); Luke 22,61; Matt 26,75//Luke 22,62

³⁹ It is improbable that Jesus had already passed Peter in the porch (of Caiphas’ private house in the upper city) and was leaving the building when He turned and looked at Peter when Peter denied Jesus, for then Peter would have seen Jesus approaching the porch and would have understood that Jesus was being led out of the building, and thus would have gone outside, out of the porch, immediately, to be able to follow Jesus and the ‘hypēretai’ secretly when they were outside the building, leading Him to some other place. He would not have waited until Jesus had passed him in the porch and have let a servant interrogate him about Jesus then.

⁴⁰ This priestly council will be described in paragraph 4.1.2.

⁴¹ Matt 26,58

⁴² Matt 26,75 Luke 22,62

Table 5. The Council of the Temple and the porch and prison of the Watch Gate

John 18	Luke 22	Mark 14		Matt 26		conclusions
13 to Annas	54 into the high priest's house	53 to the high priest		57 to Caiaphas the high priest (indicating the place, not the man)		Annas and Caiaphas both waited for Jesus in Caiaphas' house in Antonia and Jesus went to Annas first
15 entered the 'aule' (courtyard) of the high priest	55 in the middle of the 'aule'	54 into the 'aule' of the high priest	66 And as Peter was below in the 'aule'	58 Peter into the high priest's 'aule' "to see the end"	69 Now Peter was sitting outside in the 'aule'	Peter into the 'aule' on the ground level of the Antonia tower and adjoining the Watch Gate
17 maid	56-57 maid		66-68 one of the maids		69-70 maid	first question and denial
			68 Peter went out into the porch ('pro-aulion') (cock crowed)		71 Peter gone out into the porch ('puloon')	Peter out of the 'aule' into the porch ('pro-aule') of the Watch Gate (cock crowed)
24 Jesus to Caiaphas		55 the whole council		59 the whole council		Annas sends Jesus to Caiaphas and the Council of the Temple
25 they	58 someone else		69-70 maid		71-72 maid	second question and denial
	59 after an interval of about an hour		70 after a little while			When the meeting of the Council of the Temple had ended
26-27 servant	59-60 still another		70-71 the bystanders		73-74 they	third question and denial
27 cock crowed	60 cock crowed		72 second .. cock crowed		74 cock crowed	cock crowed (second time)
	61 the Lord turned and looked at Peter					Jesus in public temple prison ('in view of all') in the Watch Gate, where Peter was
	63-65 the men who were holding Jesus ..., beat him		65 the guards ('hypēretai') received him with blows		67-68 some slapped him	the 'hypēretai' in the temple prison in the Watch Gate
	66 day, the elders of the people		15,1 morning, whole council		27,1 morning, elders of the people	In the morning Jesus was led before the Great Sanhedrin
28 from Caiaphas to the praetorium, early, 29 Pilate	23,1 before Pilate		15,1 to Pilate		27,2 to Pilate	To Pilate

And also Pilate probably had a (military) office in Antonia, as was the traditional opinion for many centuries, for in this fortress also the Roman guard was stationed⁴³, and the place where Pilate condemned Jesus and washed his hands in front of the crowd resembles the place of the temple (the 'pterugion') where some other authorities stood and/or spoke to the crowd.

[**Razis**: When Nicanor's 500 Syrian soldiers set fire to the doors of the courtyard of the temple fortress, Razis, "the father of the Jews" (2Macc 14,37), tried to kill himself by the sword in (his office in) the temple fortress, and then ran up on the wall and threw himself down from this (temple) wall and fell on the ground, but survived this fall.

"When the troops were about to capture the tower and were forcing the door of the courtyard, they ordered that fire be brought and the doors burned. Being surrounded, Razis fell upon his own sword, ... But in the heat of the struggle he did not hit exactly, and the crowd was now rushing in through the doors. He bravely ran up on the wall, and manfully threw himself down into the crowd. But as they quickly drew back, a space opened and he fell in the middle of the empty space. Still alive and aflame with anger, he rose ..." (2Macc 14,37-46)

[**James the Just**: He was thrown down from the 'pterugion' (= literally: a little wing, figuratively: any pointed extremity, a battlement (New American Standard Greek lexicon)) of the temple by the priests who ran up to him, when he spoke with authority to the crowd in and around the temple on the Feast of Passover, as the high priests had asked him to do (addressing him: Oh, just one, to whom we all owe obedience). Also James survived this fall (Eus: 2,23,10-12.14-16).

"Therefore stand on the battlement ('pterugion') of the temple that you may be clearly visible on high, and that your words may be audible to all the people, for because of the Passover all the tribes, with the Gentiles also, have come together.' So the Scribes and Pharisees mentioned before made James stand on

⁴³ Josephus: War 5,5,8 (234-245)

the battlement ('pterugion') of the temple, and they cried out to him and said, 'Oh, just one, to whom we all owe obedience, since the people are straying after Jesus who was crucified, tell us what is the gate of Jesus?' (Eusebius 2,23,11-12, translation of Lake: 173)

Jesus: The devil tempted Jesus to throw Himself down from the 'pterugion' of the temple and to survive this fall (Matt 4,5 Lu 4,9) (to show his authority by the place where He stood, and to show his invincibility by surviving the fall, like the most respected Raxis and James both did).

Paul:

"Paul, standing on the steps, motioned with his hand to the people; and when there was a great hush, he spoke to them in the Hebrew language ... (And when they heard that he addressed them in the Hebrew language, they were the more quiet)".

Paul spoke from the top of the stairs that led from the Court of the Gentiles to Antonia, after "the tribune of the cohort" ('chiliarchos' = the Roman military tribunal⁴⁴) had rescued him from the crowd that had thrown him out of the sanctuary and had tried to kill him in the Court of the Gentiles (Acts 21,40 22,2).

Before this happened, Paul "went in" to James (Acts 21,17-18). The manuscripts of this verse use the Greek verb 'eiseimi' (NA²⁷) for "went in", which indeed means: 'to go in, enter', but is used only four times in the New Testament: three times in Acts of the Apostles and once in the epistle to the Hebrews.⁴⁵ In these four cases it is used solely for the entering of the inner courts of the temple. After the verses cited above (Paul "went in with us to James") the verb appears again six verses further: "Paul ... the next day purifying himself with them entered (a form of 'eiseimi') into the temple" (AV).⁴⁶ The third case is about the lame man who, when he saw "Peter and John about to go into the temple" asked for alms, and the fourth time it is about the priests who "went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God" (AV).⁴⁷ As the lame man sat at the Beautiful Gate, which opened on the inner Court of the Women, and as the priests entered the "first tabernacle", which in Herod's temple were the inner courts, the conclusion is that James and Paul will also have been in one of the inner courts of the temple.⁴⁸ This is confirmed by the following:

"Then Paul took the men (the men 'under a vow' = Nazarites), and the next day purifying himself with them entered (a form of 'eiseimi') into the temple, to signify the accomplishment of the days of purification, until that an offering should be offered for every one of them"⁴⁹

The office where this signifying of Nazarites had to be done was in the sanctuary, viz. in the inner Court of the Women, in the chamber of the Nazarites (see fig. 4). So, here "the temple" means the sanctuary, as in the following vicissitudes of Paul:

"When the seven days were almost completed, the Jews from Asia, who had seen him in the temple, stirred up all the crowd, and laid hands on him, crying out, "... This is the man who ... also brought Greeks into the temple, and he has defiled this holy place." For they had previously seen Trophimus the Ephesian with him in the city, and they supposed that Paul had brought him into the temple. Then ... they seized Paul and dragged him out of the temple, and at once the gates were shut. And as they were trying to kill him, word came to the tribune of the cohort ... He at once took soldiers and centurions, and ran down to them; ... and arrested him [Paul] ... he ordered him to be brought into the barracks. And when he [Paul] came to the steps, he was actually carried by the soldiers because of the violence of the crowd; ... As Paul was about to be brought into the barracks, he said to the tribune, "May I say something to you?" And he said, "Do you know Greek? ... Paul replied, "I am a Jew, from Tarsus in Cilicia, a citizen of no mean city; I beg you, let me speak to the people." And when he had given him leave, Paul, standing on the steps, motioned with his hand to the people; and when there was a great hush, he spoke to them in the Hebrew language ..."⁵⁰

Also here "the temple" must mean the sanctuary (i.e. the inner courts), for every Greek, and thus also Trophimus, was allowed to enter the Court of the Gentiles (a Gentile = a not-Jew) but was forbidden on pain of death to enter the sanctuary. So, Paul was dragged out of the sanctuary into the Court of the Gentiles, and the Roman military tribunal took him from this public court to the steps leading to Antonia, where Paul spoke to the crowd.

Pilate: He sat on his judgement seat on the sixth hour (= at midday) on the day of preparation of Passover on 'Lithostrōtos' (= Pavement, mosaic), in Hebrew 'Gabbata' (= 'elevated' or 'platform'; the Syrian and Persian versions read Gaphiphtha, which signifies a fence or enclosure, from the Aramaic 'gab' = bulwarks/breastworks/battlement). Here he executed judgement on Jesus and washed his hands in front of the

⁴⁴ Online Bible Greek Lexicon 5506

⁴⁵ Acts 3,3 21,18 21,26 Heb 9,6 (Strongs 1524); The other verb for 'to enter' ('eiserxomai') is used 198 times in the N.T.

⁴⁶ Acts 21,26 NA²⁷

⁴⁷ Acts 3,3 Heb 9,6 NA²⁷

⁴⁸ Acts 3,2; see fig. 3.

⁴⁹ Acts 21,26

⁵⁰ Acts 21,27-40

crowd (which stood in the Court of the Gentiles of the temple and possibly in the Tyropoeon valley, see fig. 3) and here the words “Behold the Man!” (“Ecce Homo”) were spoken (Mt 27,19.24 John 19,13 John 19,5).

The place Gabbata, as can be deduced from the meanings of the names, probably was an elevated paved platform, enclosed with a fence or battlement (cf. “When thou buildest a new house, then thou shalt make a battlement for thy roof, that thou bring not blood upon thine house, if any man fall from thence.” De 22,8 AV), and probably fit with a pointed extremity (the ‘pterugion’, also translated as ‘battlement’): a kind of pointed fenced balcony, from where one could speak to and be seen by the crowds in the temple courts. It was probably near the top of the stairs that led the priests who threw down James the Just, and the Roman tribunal who rescued Paul, from the Court of the Gentiles to the top of the temple wall and to Gabbata. So the platform was, most probably, on one of the upper floors of Antonia, at its south-eastern corner (see fig. 3). Concerning Gabbata it is said that “For centuries it was thought that the imprisonment and trial of Jesus took place in the Antonia fortress”⁵¹. Today some theories say that Gabbata was in the palace of Herod in the upper city (see fig. 1).⁵² These theories refer to Josephus, War 2,14,8:

“Now at this time Florus took up his quarters at the palace; and on the next day he had his tribunal set before it, and sat upon it, when the high priests, and the men of power, and those of the greatest eminence in the city, came all before that tribunal; upon which Florus commanded them to deliver up to him those that had reproached him, ...”.

But as the procurator Florus took up his quarters in Herod’s palace in 64/65 CE, and as this was well after the years 30-33 CE of Jesus and Pilate, the procurator Pilate may still have had his quarters and tribunal in Antonia. That Pilate and Jesus were in Antonia, facing the crowds in the temple courts, is confirmed by the fact that the ‘hypēretai’, whose working terrain was the temple⁵³, were able to call out to Pilate for Jesus’ crucifixion at midday (John 19,6).]

Now, suddenly, it is very significant that John Mark himself is not only a ‘neaniskos’, just as the prison officers, but is also called a ‘hypēretēs’ in Acts 13,5:

“And Barnabas and Saul returned from Jerusalem when they had fulfilled their mission, bringing with them John whose other name was Mark. ... And when they were at Salamis, they preached the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews: and they had also John to their minister (‘hypēretēs’).” Acts 12,25 13,5 (AV NA²⁷)

The papyrologist and professor of early Christian history Carsten Peter Thiede said the following about it:

"Mark was the helper or assistant of Barnabas and Paul. But this is not what the Greek text says. It uses the word 'hypēretēs', which may indeed mean assistant or helper. But Luke uses it to read thus: ‘They had with them John, the ‘hypēretēs’’. Hypēretēs is an attribute given to Mark himself, in his own right, not in relation to Paul and Barnabas. What then does it mean?”⁵⁴

The Jews used the word ‘hypēretēs’ (literally ‘under-rower’) to denote an assistant, a helper, in a public hierarchical ministry. As shown above, a lower officer of the temple prison was a ‘hypēretēs’⁵⁵, but not every ‘hypēretēs’ was necessarily an officer of the temple prison. There were other public offices in the temple, with the title ‘hypēretēs’ attached to them.

⁵¹ Harris: 147-148

⁵² e.g. Harris: 147-148, and a theory in the article of the Jewish Encyclopedia on Gabbatha (www.jewishencyclopedia.com/view.jsp?artid=3&letter=G)

⁵³ When they arrested Jesus on behalf of the Council of the Temple and the scribes and elders, they were accompanied by a band of soldiers (‘speira’ John 18,3.12), probably because the Mount of Olives did not belong to the ‘hypēretai’s proper working terrain.

⁵⁴ Thiede: 50

⁵⁵ Luke 22,52 Acts 5,26; Verreth: 125

4.2. Sacristan of the temple synagogue

Thiede explains the term ‘hypēretēs’ for John Mark in Acts 13,5 with the verse Luke 1,2, in which is spoken of “ministers of the Word” (‘hypēretai tou logou’), and assumes that Mark was considered a minister of the Word of God because he would already have put in writing the Gospel of Mark. But maybe Mark, even before writing this gospel, had already been a servant of the Word in his daily office: as a servant of the Word of God of the Old Testament. Mark may have been a paid employee of one of the synagogues of the temple: a sacristan, as there also was a sacristan (the Greek text says ‘hypēretēs’ NA²⁷) in the synagogue of Nazareth, who handed the book of Isaiah to Jesus and received it back (Luke 4,20), and as in the Jewish settlements under king Antiochus III the Greek word ‘hypēretēs’ was the equivalent of the Hebrew word ‘hazzan’, indicating the sacristan of a synagogue: ‘hazzanim’ were the paid employees of the community and synagogue, as religious functionaries out of the Hebrew tribe of Levi⁵⁶.

John Mark is mentioned as just one of Paul’s fellow travellers, when the departure of Paul and Barnabas from Jerusalem is described⁵⁷, but he is titled ‘hypēretēs’ at the very moment when is described that Paul and Barnabas preached the Word of God in the synagogues of the Jews. At this moment a ‘hypēretēs’ of the type with good knowledge of the books of the Bible and the procedure in a synagogue – a sacristan – was very useful indeed⁵⁸. If the ‘hypēretēs’ Mark had the office of sacristan of the main temple synagogue – many Jews used the Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible, called the Septuagint, in worship and religious study until the second century CE –, this would comply with his literary knowledge which allowed him to write the Gospel of Mark (and John) in Greek: he would not have been an ordinary soldier of the temple prison, who probably weren’t literate. Also the fact that the rich young man was a ruler (‘archōn’), excludes that he was an ordinary soldier.

But his being a ruler also seems to exclude that he (still) was an ordinary sacristan. It is possible that, after having been a paid sacristan, he became the ruler (‘archōn’) of one of the temple synagogues, like Jairus was the ruler (‘archōn’) of a synagogue in Galilee⁵⁹. But the ruler of a synagogue, who ministered in this office gratis, would not have remained a paid ‘hypēretēs’ as well. And John Mark, as the young ruler, was both a ‘hypēretēs’ and a ruler, and he was rich. So, John Mark probably had, or had been promoted to, still another function with the title ‘hypēretēs’.

4.3. Secretary of the Council of the Temple

An indicative fact is that the anonymous evangelist knew the officers of the temple prison very well, for he knows it was the officer Malchus, whose ear had been cut off by Simon Peter and healed by Jesus in Gethsemane, and he even knows it was his right ear, and also knows that it was Malchus’ relative who had seen Simon Peter in the garden of Gethsemane and who interrogated him in the high priest’s courtyard⁶⁰. And he is the only evangelist who

⁵⁶ Josephus, Ant. 4,214 13,67; Epiphanius, Haer. 30,11; Safrai: 469-470. Levi was the name of one of the twelve sons of Jacob (= Israel), son of Isaac, son of Abraham.

⁵⁷ Acts 12,25

⁵⁸ Acts 13,5; cf. 2Tim 4,11; Jesus made Paul his ‘hypēretēs’, and Paul called himself one of the “ministers (‘hypēretai’) of Christ (‘christos’ = the anointed) and stewards of the mysteries of God” (Acts 26,16 1Cor 4,1) (Likewise John Mark was a ‘hypēretēs’ of the anointed high priest Caiphas).

⁵⁹ “a ruler (‘archōn’) of the synagogue” Luke 8,41 NA²⁷; John 18,10 Luke 20,50-51

⁶⁰ John 18,10.26

writes that ‘hypēretai’ of the high priests were in the band of soldiers that arrested Jesus, and also among the persons calling out for his crucifixion⁶¹.

A possibility is that John Mark, for instance after having been the sacristan and/or ruler of a temple synagogue – where on feast days the high priest and the representatives of the Israelites gathered for the reading of the Torah⁶² – became a servant of the spoken and written word of the high priest as the secretary (‘grammateus’ cf. LXX 2Sa 8,17 Neh 13,13) of the Council of the Temple, which was presided over by the high priest. This standing council consisted of ruling temple priests, such as treasurers, administrators and the like, and it regulated in detail everything connected with the affairs and services of the sanctuary and it was a court that rendered legal decisions affecting the priesthood⁶³. Maybe John Mark was also the secretary of the Great Sanhedrin, which functioned as the court for criminal affairs and in other instances as the court for religious and civil affairs. The Great Sanhedrin consisted of priests, scribes (‘grammateus’ in the sense of biblical scholar⁶⁴) and elders, of whom many were Pharisees; and the priestly Council of the Temple formed a distinctive block within the Great Sanhedrin⁶⁵. John Mark certainly was a man of letters, for he was able to write the Gospel of Mark in Greek. And perhaps it is not mere coincidence that very near to his home, the Cenacle, was the so-called “house of Caiphas” (see fig. 1).⁶⁶

In Josephus’ description of how Moses gave the constitution of government to the assembled people, is the following:

“Let there be seven men to judge in every city, and these such as have been before most zealous in the exercise of virtue and righteousness. Let every judge have two officers (‘hypēretai’) allotted him out of the tribe of Levi.” (Josephus: Antiquities 4,8,14)⁶⁷

Also the judge who is mentioned in the Sermon on the Mount in the Gospel of Matthew, had a ‘hypēretēs’ as his officer.⁶⁸ In local communities it was common for the tribunals to sit in the synagogue and also public meetings could be held there⁶⁹. In these cases the sacristan of the synagogue was the secretary of the judges and of the community as well⁷⁰. In the temple, however, the Council of the Temple gathered in a courtroom in the Court of the Priests, which was only accessible for priests and Levites, and the Great Sanhedrin gathered in the Hall of Hewn Stones in the Court of the Israelites (see fig. 3), and thus not in the temple’s synagogue. So, a temple sacristan could not easily have both functions. John Mark was most probably of

⁶¹ John 18,3 19,6

⁶² Safrai: 904-05

⁶³ Mishnah Shekalim 5 and Tamid, Lightfoot: ch. 4, p. 70, Edersheim: ch. 4, p. 70, Safrai: 602, 874

⁶⁴ The Online Bible Greek Lexicon 1122 gives these three meanings for ‘grammateus’ in the Bible: 1) secretary 2) Scriptural scholar 3) religious teacher. Strong’s concordance 1122 gives only the general meaning: ‘a writer, i.e. (professionally) scribe or secretary:— scribe, town-clerk’.

⁶⁵ Safrai: 602

⁶⁶ The site of his house is reported by the famous “Pilgrim of Bordeaux”, who wrote the book “Itinary” (“Itinerarium Burdigalense”) about his pilgrimage to Jerusalem in 333 CE (text: www.christusrex.org/www1/ofm/pilgr/bord/10Bord07bJerus.html; map of sites of Cenacle and House of Caiphas: L. Grollenberg: map 4).

⁶⁷ Safrai: 470, note 5: “two ὑπηρέται of the tribe of Levi”

⁶⁸ Matt 5,25 NA²⁷

⁶⁹ Safrai: 942-43

⁷⁰ Safrai: 935-36.

a Levitical family and probably even a priest (see next paragraph), so he could enter the courtroom of the Council of the Temple, and be its secretary.

Futhermore, as the evangelist of the Gospel of John, he was able to cite in his gospel the very words that Caiphas spoke about Jesus in the meeting of the high priests and Pharisees: that He would have to die for the people.

“So the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered the council [...] But one of them, Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, said to them, "You know nothing at all; you do not understand that it is expedient for you that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation should not perish.”” John 11,47.49-50 (RSV)

This could mean that the evangelist was personally present when these words were spoken⁷¹. Now it is important to note, that this plan of Caiphas must have leaked towards Jesus in some way, because right after Caiphas had taken this decision, but still before the command was given that anyone who knew Jesus’ place of abode had to betray this to the chief priests and Pharisees, Jesus “therefore” – because of only this decision – already “walked no more openly among the Jews” but went into a city called Ephraim⁷². The secretary of the council, as the secret beloved disciple of Jesus, could have been the start of this information leak towards Jesus.

This plot resembles and is pre-imaged by the spy work of Hushai (king David’s secret friend at the court of king Absalom, where he was a counsellor), whose message to David made David flee unto the desert.⁷³

“And when Hushai the Archite, David’s friend, came to Absalom, Hushai said to Absalom, "Long live the king! Long live the king!" ... Then Hushai said to Zadok and Abiathar the priests, "Thus and thus did Ahithophel counsel Absalom and the elders of Israel; and thus and thus have I counselled. Now therefore send quickly and tell David, ‘Do not lodge tonight at the fords of the wilderness, but by all means pass over; lest the king and all the people who are with him be swallowed up.’”” 2Sa 16,16 17,15-16

Absalom’s counsellor Ahithophel gave Absalom the advice to kill only the weary and discouraged David, and none of the people with him, in order to let “all the people ... be at peace”, and this also resembles and pre-images how only Jesus, in his sorrow and agony, was arrested on the Mount of Olives, to “die for the people” – as Caiphas said –, and how all his disciples fled:

“Moreover Ahithophel said to Absalom, "Let me choose twelve thousand men, and I will set out and pursue David tonight. I will come upon him while he is weary and discouraged, and throw him into a panic; and all the people who are with him will flee. I will strike down the king only, and I will bring all the people back to you as a bride comes home to her husband. You seek the life of only one man, and all the people will be at peace.”” 2Sam 17,1-3

“And they went to a place which was called Gethsemane; and he said to his disciples, "Sit here, while I pray." And he took with him Peter and James and John, and began to be greatly distressed and troubled. And he said to them, "My soul is very sorrowful,

⁷¹ This first “council” (John 11,47 ‘sunedrion’ NA²⁷) that was gathered by the chief priests and Pharisees to discuss the case ‘Jesus’, was not the Council of the Temple, whose members were all priests. But the Council of the Temple did form a distinct block in the Great Sanhedrin (Safrai: 602).

⁷² John 11,53-57 AV

⁷³ 2Sam 16,16-19 17,1-21

even to death; remain here, and watch." And ... Judas came, one of the twelve, and with him a crowd with swords and clubs, from the chief priests and the scribes and the elders. ... And they laid hands on him and seized him. ... And they all forsook him, and fled." Mark 14,32-50

The text of the Gospel of Mark also describes the exact words and events of Jesus' trial before Caiphas and the Council of the Temple at night ("council" Matt 26,59 Mark 14,55), which for this occasion had assembled in the palace of Caiphas and in which also "scribes" ('grammateis': here having to mean 'secretaries'⁷⁴) but no elders were present, and thus was not the Great Sanhedrin. So, the source of information for Mark's text almost must have been John Mark himself, as the secretary who had personally written down the records of this nightly high priestly council. His being the secretary of Caiphas and the Council of the Temple would explain very well how John Mark knew by name the 'hypēretai' of the temple prison, stationed in the courtyard of Caiphas' palace and charged to take in offenders of the temple order and bring them before the jury-court. Edersheim says about the Council of the Temple that "this judicatory, which ordinarily did not busy itself with criminal questions, apparently took a leading part in the condemnation of Jesus".⁷⁵ But it was legal to bring Jesus before the Council of the Temple – which in certain cases acted as a court of justice with the power to inflict corporal punishments (Acts 5,40 and Tosefta Menahot 13,21)⁷⁶ and even the death penalty⁷⁷ –, because Jesus had violently removed the sellers of sacrificial oxen and sheep and doves, and also the moneychangers, from the temple,⁷⁸ and therefore, in the view of the high priests, was an offender of the temple order and obstructor of the sacrificial service of the sanctuary, which was regulated by the priests of the Council of the Temple.

⁷⁴ Mark 14,53-65 Matt 26,57-68 (NA²⁷); A scribe, in the sense of an expert in Holy Scripture, could not be a member of the strictly priestly Council of the Temple, unless he was a (high) priest too.

⁷⁵ Edersheim: ch. 4, p. 70

⁷⁶ "Woe is me because of the House of Boethus. Woe is me because of their staves. Woe is me because of the house of Qadros. Woe is me because of their pen. Woe is me because of the house of Elhanan. Woe is me because of their whispering. Woe is me because of the house of Ismael ben Phiabi. For they are high priests, and their sons, treasurers, and their sons-in-law, supervisors, and their servants come and beat us with staves" (Tosefta Menahot 13,21 Neusner: Tosefta 1467-1468). Boethus, Qadros, Elhanan, and Ismael ben Phiabi are the names of high priests and their high priestly dynasties.

⁷⁷ E.g. on Gentiles (= not-Jews) who entered the temple's inner courts: "Quite lately, they who have dug under the ruins of the Temple have discovered one of those tablets in the Court of the Temple which warned Gentiles, on pain of death, not to advance farther into the sanctuary. The tablet answers exactly to the description of Josephus, and its inscription is almost literally as he gives it" (Edersheim: ch. 7, p. 106). "Thus was the first enclosure. In the midst of which, and not far from it, was the second, to be gone up to by a few steps: this was encompassed by a stone wall for a partition, with an inscription, which forbade any foreigner to go in under pain of death" (Josephus: Antiquities 15,11,5). At day time Levites who served as the assistants of the priests in the sacrificial service were forbidden, on pain of death, to enter the Holy Place or to touch the altar (Rops: 458-59). "The laws of Levitical cleanness ... were most rigidly enforced upon worshippers and priests. If a leper, or any other who was 'defiled', had ventured into the sanctuary itself, or any priest officiated in a state of 'uncleanness,' he would, when discovered, be dragged out and killed, without form of process, by 'the rebels' beating.' Minor punishments were awarded to those guilty of smaller offences of the same kind" (Edersheim: ch. 4, p. 61; Tosefta Menahot 13,21). And according to the Talmud, if an ordinary temple guard was found asleep at his post at night, his clothes would be set on fire (Lightfoot: 107) (M. Middoth I:2).

⁷⁸ Matt 21,12 Mark 11,15 John 2,13-21

If John Mark, who was both a ruler ('archōn') and a 'hypēretēs', was the secretary of the high priest and the ruling Council of the Temple, his titles would be the same as those of the secretary of the court of justice of the six supreme judges of Athens: both 'archōn' and 'hypēretēs'.⁷⁹ In the political organisation of Athens of the fifth century BCE a 'hypēretēs' was either 1) a secretary ('grammateus'), 2) an under-secretary, 3) a herald of the magistrates (such as judges) and political institutions, or 4) an actual 'hypēretēs': a lower officer, e.g. a doorkeeper, hall guard, or executioner.⁸⁰ As the officers of the Jerusalem temple prison had the corresponding Athenian title ('hypēretēs'), John Mark, as the secretary of the Council of the Temple, may have had the two corresponding Athenian titles as well: both 'hypēretēs' and 'archōn'. And, as already said, also for the Jews in general it was normal to call John Mark 'hypēretēs', just as every secretary of a judge, and to call him ruler ('archōn'), just as every member of the ruling Council of the Temple and every member of the Great Sanhedrin.

According to the Talmud, if an ordinary temple guard was found asleep at his post at night, his clothes would be set on fire; this is literally alluded to by John in his Book of Revelation:

“Lo, I am coming like a thief! Blessed is he who is awake, keeping his garments that he may not go naked and be seen exposed!” (Rev 16,15)⁸¹

and according to John Lightfoot, the renowned Jewish New Testament scholar, both the Book of Revelation and the Fourth Gospel “must have been written by one who had been at one time an actor in [the Temple services] ... it seems highly improbable that a book so full of liturgical allusions as the Book of Revelation – and these, many of them, not to great or important points, but to *minutiae* [= very small details] – could have been written by any other than a priest, and one who had at one time been in actual service in the Temple itself, and thus become so intimately conversant with its details, that they came to him naturally, as part of the imagery he employed” (Lightfoot: 106-107).

Other references of John Mark to the temple service are his citing Jesus who said

“Watch therefore—for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or in the morning— lest he come suddenly and find you asleep” (Mark 13,35-36).

These were almost the same words as the ones used in the Talmud for the unexpected coming of the superintendent of the priests, who would knock on the door of the priests' dormitory to call them to their daily duty: “And at what time does the superintendent come by? Not all the times are the same. Sometimes he comes at cockcrow, or near then, earlier or later” (Neusner: 863). Another reference to the temple service is his citing Jesus who during the Last Supper washed the feet of his disciples – who had already washed their hands at the start of the meal – and said to them

“He who has bathed does not need to wash, except for his feet, but he is clean ('katharos') all over” (John 13,10 NA²⁷).

This was the ritual rule for the temple priests, who were obliged to immerse their whole body only once in the morning, and then only to wash their hands and feet every time they (re-)

⁷⁹ Verreth: 125 and 107

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ The “keeping his garments that he may not go naked and be seen exposed” (Rev 16,15) may be something of which the author (John Mark) wished that it had happened to himself, when he ran from the officers in Gethsemane, but which unfortunately did not happen to him: he had to leave his garment and go naked.

entered the sanctuary, to be ritually clean ('katharos' means ritually clean in John 13,10 Rev 15,6 Ezr 6,20 Lev 24,6 2CH 13,11 LXX) and thus fit to enter and perform their priestly duties (Lightfoot: 112-113).

“Ministers of the Word” ('hypēretai tou Logou')

The Book of Revelations was written at the end of the first century by a John who knew and was known to the seven churches in Asia Minor and who directed his admonitions to them (Rev 1,1.4.11 2,1-3.22), and who has traditionally been regarded as the same as the author of the Fourth Gospel and John's letters 1John, 2John and 3John. A unique characteristic of the books John, 1John and Revelation is that in them Jesus is called “the Word” ('ho logos') in person (both in John 1,1.14 1Jo 1,1 5,7 and in Rev 19,13).

So, the evangelist John Mark, who called Jesus “the Word”, and who was a 'hypēretēs' (= “minister” Acts 13,5), may have been the first of “the ministers of the word/Word” ('hypēretai tou logou' as opposed to the 'hypēretai' of the prison), who “delivered” ('para-didōmi': also used as 'to put in prison', 'to run in'⁸²) “the things which have been accomplished among us”:

“Inasmuch as many have undertaken to compile a narrative [gospel] of the things which have been accomplished among us, just as they were delivered to us by those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word ...” (Luke 1,1-2)

John Mark put in words and delivered to the church both the Gospel of Jesus according to Mark and the Gospel of Jesus, who is “the Word”, according to John. The 'hypēretēs' of the synagogue of Nazareth “delivered” ('epi-didōmi') the book of Isaiah to Jesus (Luke 4,17-20). And a Pharisaic scribe, as a minister of the Word of God, delivered ('para-didōmi') decrees to the Jewish people, to supplement the Word of God of the Bible (Mark 7,13). “And as they [Paul and Barnabas] went through the cities, they delivered ('para-didōmi') unto them the decrees to keep, that had been ordained by the apostles and elders who were at Jerusalem” (Acts 16,4 KJ21). Thus John Mark, the 'hypēretēs' – not of the prison but of the word of the council –, may have written and delivered the decrees of the Council of the Temple and the Great Sanhedrin to the priests and the people (see table 6).

'hypēretēs' of the prison	'hypēretēs' of the synagogue	“Pharisees and scribes” (ministers of the Word of God)	'hypēretēs' John Mark	Paul and Barnabas	“Hypēretēs (=Mark) of the Word” (= 'John')
delivered ('para-didōmi')	delivered ('epi-didōmi')	“making the Word of God of no effect through your tradition ('paradosis' from 'para-didōmi'), which ye have delivered ('para-didōmi')” (Mark 7,13 KJ21)	<i>delivered</i>	delivered ('para-didōmi') unto them the decrees to keep, that had been ordained by the apostles and elders ... at Jerusalem” (Acts 16,4 KJ21)	delivered ('para-didōmi')
prisoners	Book of Isaiah	'paradosis' = tradition, decree , public ordinance	<i>decrees</i> of the Council of the Temple	decrees	Gospels of Jesus, who is “the Word”

Table 6. Ministers who delivered words (e.g. decrees and verdicts) in stead of prisoners

⁸² John Mark used it thus when he wrote that John the Baptist was “put in prison” in only one word: a form of 'para-didōmi' (Mark 1,14 RSV) and when he wrote “... the chief priests ... bound Jesus, and carried him away, and delivered (a form of 'para-didōmi') him to Pilate. ... he [Pilate] knew that the chief priests had delivered (a form of 'para-didōmi') him for envy” (Mark 15,1-10) (cf. Paul, “dragging off both men and women delivered ('para-didōmi') them up to prison”; “binding and delivering to prison both men and women” (Acts 8,3 and 22,4)).

5. John Mark Levitical

John Mark could have owed his riches and rulership in the temple hierarchy to a relationship with an aristocratic family of priests. Mark's uncle Barnabas was of the tribe of Levi⁸³, the tribe out of which the priests and Levites were taken. And also Nicodemus probably was a relative. According to Lightfoot a certain story in the Talmud depicts Nicodemus as the priest who was responsible for the provision of water for the pilgrims who came to the feast in the temple of Jerusalem (Lightfoot: John 3,1)⁸⁴.

5.1. "A priest wearing the 'petalon'" (Eusebius)

And according to Polycrates, cited by Eusebius, the beloved disciple John was/became ('egenēthē') a priest ('hiereus') wearing/carrying ('pephorekōs' from 'pherō' = to carry) the 'petalon', which word is used in the Septuagint (the 3rd to 1st century BCE Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible) for the high priestly breast plate⁸⁵. Perhaps John Mark was not only the secretary of the high priest, but also the assistant who was responsible for the most important piece of the high priest's juridical clothes: the linen 'ephod' (garment) which held the breast plate with the Urim and Thummim. These were the stone instruments used by the high priest to find out God's will and judgement in (legal) decisions.⁸⁶

[But Eusebius may also only have wanted to indicate that John was a Jewish priest, wearing an 'ephod'. Every priest serving in the temple wore a white linen garment, of which at least the breast piece was called 'ephod' (Ex 28,31 1Sa 14,3 22,18; e.g. the young Samuel wore a linen 'ephod' in the sanctuary (1Sa 2,18 14,3)). The high priest wore a more costly woven 'ephod', ornamented with a golden breast plate, engraved with the words 'HOLINESS TO THE LORD' and containing the Urim and Thummim, and in the Hebrew Bible the high priest's breast piece is often denoted by just the term general 'ephod'⁸⁷. Perhaps for this reason Eusebius mistakenly translated the Hebrew word for any priest's linen garment ('ephod') into the Greek word 'petalon' for the high priest's golden breast plate, not noticing that, although the 'petalon' was a breast piece ('ephod'), not every breast piece ('ephod') was a 'petalon'.]

5.2. The grave cloth given to "the servant of the priest" (Gospel of the Hebrews)

The burial cloths, in which Joseph of Arimatea buried Jesus' dead body, are called 'othonia' by John (19,40) and by the editor of the inserted verse Luke 24,12 (describing what Simon Peter saw), and 'sindōn' by the three synoptics⁸⁸. A 'sindōn' (a Greek word of uncertain, perhaps foreign, origin) was an expensive fine linen cloth,⁸⁹ and it is used in the New Testament only for Jesus' burial cloth (Mark 15,46) and for the garment that the fleeing

⁸³ Acts 4,36 Col 4,10

⁸⁴ Here Lightfoot cites the Talmud: Taanith, fol. 20.I Avoth R. Nathan, c. 7.

⁸⁵ 'hos egenēthē hiereus to petalon pephorekōs' (Eusebius: 5,24,2-3).

⁸⁶ Ex 28,30 Nu 27,21; Opinions are divergent concerning the actual existence of the 'petalon' in Jesus' time.

⁸⁷ 1 Samuel 21,9 23,9 30,7 Hosea 3,4

⁸⁸ 'othonia' plural of 'othonion', (small) linen cloth, winding, bandage (Strong's), NA²⁷ John 19,40 20,5-7 Luke 24,12; 'sindōn', an expensive, fine linen cloth (Strong's), NA²⁷ Matt 27,59 Mark 15,46 Luke 23,53. Matthew, Mark and Luke are called synoptics (Greek for 'together-view') because their three gospels have approximately the same view and describe the same events of Jesus' public life in the same way. John describes some similar but also some altogether different events.

⁸⁹ G.J.M. Bartelink, Grieks-Nederlands woordenboek (Greek-Dutch dictionary) (Utrecht/Antwerpen 1958) 221

young man “wearing nothing but a linen garment (‘sindōn’)” left behind (Mark 14,51-52 NIV).

Joseph of Arimatea had buried Jesus’ body in “pure”, or “clean”, linen cloths (Mt 27,59). The Greek word used here (‘katharos’) is not only ‘generally clean’, but also ‘ritually clean’, ‘Leviticallly clean’, as required for garments used in the temple: see the use of ‘katharos’ in this sense by John in his referral to a temple priest’s ritual washing (John 13,10), and also in John’s verse Rev 15,6 on the clothing of the angels who came out of the temple. Also in the Greek Old Testament ‘katharos’ is used when referring to the purity of the temple (e.g. Ezr 6,20 Lev 24,6 2Ch 13,11 (LXX)). And all priests and Levites who worked in the sanctuary of the temple had to wear linen, and wool was forbidden in the temple (Eze 44,17-18).

It is remarkable, that for the beloved disciple it was decisive to see that in Jesus’ open grave not only the ‘othonia’ (windings) lay at the entrance, but also the cloth that had covered his face (‘soudarion’ from the Latin sudarium = sweat cloth) lay inside the grave, neatly “wrapped up in one place” (‘entetuligmenon eis hena topon’ John 20,7-8 NA²⁷), which may mean ‘rolled up (without rolling it to the left or right but by keeping the roll) in one place’, like one would roll up a long fine linen garment that is easily creased by folding or careless rolling. The beloved disciple entered the tomb, and then “saw (the roll) and believed” (that Jesus had risen) (John 20,8). According to the 1st or 2nd century Gospel of the Hebrews, cited by Jerome in *De Viris Illustribus* 2, Jesus’ “linen cloth” / “grave clothes” were given to “the servant of the priest” by the risen Jesus⁹⁰. Furthermore, according to Pfeiffer, professor of iconography and history of Christian art, a, or the, grave cloth was brought to Ephesus by Mary, the virgin mother of Jesus, and John, the evangelist⁹¹, and, according to Van Haelst, a, or the, grave cloth was brought to Ephesus by Mary⁹². According to the ancient authors Irenaeus, Polycrates and Eusebius, John and Mary arrived together in Ephesus, where John wrote the Fourth Gospel.⁹³ All this indicates that the beloved disciple and evangelist was this “servant of the priest”: the Levitical temple minister (‘hypēretēs’) and ruler (‘archōn’) John Mark, secretary of the high priest Caiphas.

John Mark’s temple ‘sindōn’ lost ...

The reason why the beloved disciple “saw – the ‘sindōn’ – and believed” (John 20,8) may have been that the ‘sindōn’ in which Jesus’ dead body was buried, was his own ‘sindōn’, his own expensive linen garment, left in the hands of the ‘hypēretai’ when they nearly caught him on or near the Mount of Olives, but now rolled up like a precious garment again.

The Hebrew word ‘ephod’, for a priest’s garment, is transliterated to Greek in the Septuagint as ‘ephoud’ (1Sa 2,18), and translated as ‘stolē’ (2Sa 6,14 1Ch 15,27 a.o.), as ‘hierateius’ (= priesthood, Hos 3,4), and as ‘epōmida’ (= garment attached to the shoulder⁹⁴, Ex 28,4), but never as ‘sindōn’. Lightfoot in his commentary on Mark 14,51-52⁹⁵, says that the word ‘sindōn’ was used in the Talmud (Menacoth fol. 40.I) for a Jewish linen upper-garment (‘talith’ = cloak), (also) worn by boys and priests, especially in the summer in Jerusalem, and that “with this garment they commonly covered their head when they prayed”. Lightfoot also cites the Talmud: “the ‘talith’ whereby the boy covers his head, and a great part of himself”

⁹⁰ Jerome (in Latin: Hieronymus), *De Viris Illustribus* 2. “When the Lord had given the linen cloth to the servant of the priest, He went to James and appeared to him ...” (other translation: “but the Lord, after he had given his grave clothes to the servant of the priest, appeared to James” (www.studylight.org/his/ad/ecf/pos/jeromeandgennadius/view.cgi?file=npnf2-03-27.htm)).

⁹¹ Sora: 46

⁹² Van Haelst: 28.

⁹³ Irenaeus designates this John as “John, the disciple of the Lord” (Eusebius 3,23), and Polycrates designates him as “John, who leaned on the Lord’s breast” (Eusebius 3,31).

⁹⁴ Ibid. 107

⁹⁵ Lightfoot: vol. 2 p. 458-460

and “the priests who veil themselves when they go up into the pulpit with a ‘talith’ which is not their own”, and also “Nicodemus went to a little oratory, and covered himself, and prayed” and “Nicodemus goes to his oratory again, covers himself and prays”⁹⁶. Now it is probable that the ‘sindōn’ worn by John Mark was such a ‘talith’. And it may have resembled a white linen toga. (A toga was a white woollen rectangular Roman upper-garment, a couple of meters long, which was wrapped around a man’s body, over a tunic. The white toga of a Roman senator had a purple edging along one of the long edges to distinguish him as a ruler.) The fact that the young man who followed the captured Jesus, had his ‘sindōn’ “cast about his naked body” and could leave it behind and flee naked (Mark 14,51-52), indicates that this ‘sindōn’ certainly wasn’t an ‘ephod’, which had “joined” “shoulder pieces”⁹⁷ and could not as easily be put off, while running, as a ‘talith’ or toga. Lightfoot says that, as the ‘sindōn’ was usually worn as an outer garment, some think that the person who wore it in the night when Jesus was captured had been roused from his bed.⁹⁸ So it may certainly have been worn by the beloved disciple, who, while lying in bed, or elsewhere at home, heard that Jesus had come to the upper room of his house, and who then, with his ‘sindōn’ cast about his naked body, rushed to Jesus and was allowed to lie down at Jesus’ breast, on the bench where Jesus already lay amidst the benches of his apostles. The fact that the young man wearing the ‘sindōn’ on the Mount of Olives was caught by the temple officers, and Simon Peter was not, indicates that the ‘sindōn’ probably was white and thus more visible at night than the ordinary cloths of the fisherman Simon Peter. When the young man fled naked, he wasn’t caught again, probably because he had become less visible when leaving the white ‘sindōn’.

John Mark may usually have worn a white linen ‘talith’ or toga in the temple when he was outside the sanctuary, e.g. with a long (white linen) seam along one of the edges and a few centimetres from this edge (as in the Shroud of Turin⁹⁹) to distinguish him as a Jewish ruler (the clothes of the priests in the temple had to be completely white and linen (Ex 28,5-6 2Ch 5,12) and thus could not contain the purple wool of a senator’s toga).¹⁰⁰ John Mark called his garment a ‘sindōn’ and not a toga, probably because a (Roman) toga was invariably made of wool¹⁰¹, and his ‘toga’ was made of linen, because wool was not allowed in the temple (Eze 44,17). And he could call it a ‘sindōn’, because it resembled a linen ‘talith’, but was perhaps longer and decorated with a seam. John Lightfoot (on Mark 14,51-52) also says that there was discussion among the rabbis about the question whether a ‘talith’ (a ‘sindōn’) should have the purple fringes, as prescribed by Num 15,38 for all upper garments, or shouldn’t have these usually woollen fringes to avoid wearing garments made of two different materials: linen and woollen (as forbidden by Lev 19,19), or whether the fringes should be removed/omitted from a ‘talith’ only in certain special occasions. John Mark’s ‘sindōn’ probably didn’t have visible purple woollen fringes because he was only allowed to wear white linen in the temple.

John Mark could wear his almost Roman upper garment, because he didn’t have a liturgical function but only an administrative one, in which he must have had frequent contact with his Roman, toga wearing, colleagues, the secretaries of the Roman procurator Pilate stationed in

⁹⁶ Lightfoot on John 3,1 (vol. 3 p. 262), citing the Talmud: Taanith, fol. 20.I. Avoth R. Nathan, c. 7.

⁹⁷ Ex 28,6-7

⁹⁸ Or that he was a sect member, e.g. of the sect of Banus – the sect joined by the first century Jewish historian Josephus (Josephus, Life 2) – who macerated their bodies with hunger and cold (Lightfoot: vol. 2, p. 458-460).

⁹⁹ The Shroud of Turin was and is an expensive, costly woven (twill herringbone weave), rectangular 4,4 x 1,1 m, linen cloth, with a long seam near one of the long edges (www.shroud.com/menu.htm).

¹⁰⁰ Only the high priest’s normal liturgical cloths had to be blue, purple and scarlet (Exod 28), but when performing the prescribed rites of the Day of Atonement he too wore only white garments (Safrai: 897).

¹⁰¹ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Toga>

Antonia, where Caiphas' and John Mark's office was located as well. As John Mark had both a Hebrew name (יְחֻנָּן = 'Jochanan') and a Roman, Latin, name (Marcus), he may also have worn both a Hebrew linen priestly 'ephod', as an under garment, and a unique Roman-Jewish linen toga-talith, as an upper garment.

... and bought by Joseph of Arimatea, and returned by Jesus

Mark had left his 'sindōn' in the hands of the 'hypēretai'. Mark's fellow secret disciple, the elder Joseph of Arimatea, who was present when the soldiers set out for Jesus, and who probably had seen that the escaping young man left his 'sindōn', and who entered the high priest's courtyard with the 'hypēretai', may have bought the 'sindōn' from these 'hypēretai' (see table 7).

Beloved disciple		John Mark
Priest		Levitical
Wearing the 'petalon' or 'ephod' (linen undergarment) (worn by priests in the temple)		Wearing a 'sindōn' (linen upper garment) In temple only linen was allowed (Nicodemus covered himself with a 'sindōn' and prayed)
Saw the 'sindōn' and believed (and took it to Ephesus)	Realized that his lost 'sindōn', bought from the 'hypēretai' by Joseph of Arimatea, was rolled up by the risen Jesus for him.	Left his 'sindōn' in the hands of the 'hypēretai'
(Jesus gave 'sindōn' to) the servant of the priest		Is 'hypēretēs': temple attendant and assistant of a judge, and 'archōn': ruler (as Nicodemus)
Was literate (wrote Gospel of John in Greek)		Was literate (wrote Gospel of Mark in Greek)
Cites Caiphas		(Athenian 'hypēretēs'+ 'archōn' = the secretary of the judges) So, he probably was the secretary of Caiphas and the Council of the Temple.

Table 7. Priest and Levitical

Garments were objects of value and thus merchandise, for the soldiers at Jesus' cross deliberately "divided his garments among them, casting lots for them, to decide what each should take" (Mark 15,24), and they said about Jesus' tunic, which was "without seam¹⁰², woven from top to bottom": "'Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it to see whose it shall be'" (John 19,23-24). The rich Joseph of Arimatea may have bought John Mark's unique 'sindōn' from the 'hypēretai', because he needed it for Jesus' burial as there was no time left to go and by a new cloth in the city because the Sabbath (Saturday) was very near, on which no one was allowed to work or even bury someone. And all the sellers of cloths would already have left the market place for the same reason: they weren't allowed to work, or even close their shops and secure their merchandise, on the Sabbath. Still, Joseph bought a 'sindōn', after Jesus had died and Joseph had received the burial permission from Pilate in Antonia, which he could enter at the end of that afternoon just as freely as he had done the night before at the arrest of Jesus, and where the 'hypēretai' still kept John Mark's 'sindōn'.

Besides the secret of having lost his 'sindōn' another secret of John Mark may have been that he gave Jesus a slap in the face before Annas. This act and the argument used by the 'hypēretēs' to justify his slapping Jesus – "Is that how you answer the high priest?" (John

¹⁰² "without seam" = 'arragos' = not sewn together: of a single piece = "without a join" (BBE)

18,22) – would not be expected or accepted from an ordinary lower prison officer, who should only act to order¹⁰³, but they comply very well with John Mark's office of ruler and secretary of the high priest(s), in which he was the daily witness of how all people, small and great alike, addressed the high priest with great awe and reverence, and in which he himself had to address these priests with all due respect every day. And although only Annas, Jesus, and the 'hypēretai' were present when Jesus received his first slap in the face – the Council of the Temple was only present when Jesus was led before Caiphas later that night,¹⁰⁴ and the other high priests, scribes and elders were only present in the morning, when Jesus was led before the Great Sanhedrin¹⁰⁵ –, the incident is reported in John's gospel. This suggests the presence of the evangelist himself at this incident.

A fact is that after this first slap in the face Jesus was beaten further by the other 'hypēretai'.¹⁰⁶ If one of their rulers had slapped Jesus before He even had been trialled, then the lower officers felt they could freely beat Jesus too. When Jesus was in prison, ready for the trial the next morning, the "men who were holding Jesus mocked him and beat him; they also blindfolded him and asked him, "Prophecy! Who is it that struck you?" (Luke 22,63-65 AV). The officers of the temple prison asked Jesus to point out the one that struck Him, and in this way took revenge on Him for pointing his finger to them in Annas' room, as the ones who had heard Him in the temple.¹⁰⁷

After Jesus' trials and crucifixion Joseph of Arimatea used John Mark's 'sindōn' for the burying of Jesus' dead body, and left it in his own, new and secured grave, where it was expected to be destroyed by the decaying corps. (Somewhere between the burial and the finding of the 'sindōn' in the empty grave, an image of Jesus' beaten face and body may have been formed on it, as can be seen on the Shroud of Turin.¹⁰⁸) And somewhere between the burial and the finding of the 'sindōn', it was neatly rolled up (which would hide the image), like an expensive linen garment was neatly rolled up to prevent creases. If Joseph of Arimatea had taken away Jesus' dead body on the first day after the Sabbath for reburying (this is discussed below), he would have taken the 'sindōn' too, not only because it was his property, bought from the 'hypēretai' for a high price, but also because it facilitated the carrying of Jesus' body. This last argument is the reason why, when the empty grave and linen cloths were found, they kept the departing Peter "wondering in himself at that which was come to pass" (Luke 24,12). But the moment John Mark sees his 'sindōn' lying there in the grave, rolled up like a garment, he realizes it must have been laid there by Jesus for him: it had to have been done by someone who knew it was a garment and nevertheless left it in the grave, and thus by someone who had seen that John Mark fled from the 'hypēretai' leaving his 'sindōn', and who knew that Joseph of Arimatea bought it, and who would understand that John Mark, as a secret disciple, would want the garment back as it was the proof of his

¹⁰³ When the 'hypēretai' were sent to arrest Jesus when He was preaching in the temple, they didn't even do this because they heard and respected Jesus' teachings: "The officers ('hypēretai') then went back to the chief priests and Pharisees, who said to them, "Why did you not bring him?" The officers ('hypēretai') answered, "No man ever spoke like this man!" (John 7,14-37.45-46).

¹⁰⁴ Matt 26,59 Mark 14 55 John 18,24

¹⁰⁵ Matt 27,1 Mark 15,1 Luke 22, 66

¹⁰⁶ Mark 14,65 Luke 22,63-64

¹⁰⁷ This again confirms that the 'hypēretai' (Mark 14,65) were officers of the temple prison.

¹⁰⁸ The image of the face on the Shroud of Turin, according to pathologists, shows a black eye, a broken nose and various other broken bones of the face. The fact that the Turin Shroud was washed after it had been woven, and has starch impurities, indicates that it may have been a worn and washed garment (facts A15 and A20 in "Evidences for Testing Hypotheses About the Body Image Formation of the Turin Shroud", Giulio Fanti et al., 3rd International Dallas Conference, September 2005, www.shroud.com/pdfs/doclist.pdf).

discipleship (and who knew that John Mark would be one of the first visitors of the grave).¹⁰⁹ This person was not one of the ‘hypēretai’, for they would simply have taken possession of the precious linen cloth again and would not have left it in the grave, nor Joseph of Arimatea – he would have taken the body with the ‘sindōn’ –, nor Simon Peter – he had been with John Mark all night and didn’t know the grave was empty and wondered about what had happened –, nor John Mark himself, so only a risen Jesus could have done it. John Mark interprets the rolled up ‘sindōn’ as a personal gift of Jesus to himself, and takes it from the grave, and thus takes away the proof of his discipleship. In this sense the risen Jesus “had given the grave cloth(s) to the servant of the priest”, as Jerome cites the Gospel of the Hebrews. Perhaps John Mark already then, or some time after He had seen the risen Jesus in person, found the image of Jesus’ face and its bruises, and understood that Jesus returned his garment with this image to him, as a sign that Jesus forgave him his secret discipleship, his fleeing from the ‘hypēretai’, and his slapping Jesus’ face in Annas’ room in Antonia, just like the three identical questions which the risen Jesus directed to Simon Peter at the See of Tiberias – “do you love me?” (John 21,15.16.17) – referred to Simon Peter’s three denials of Jesus in the high priest’s courtyard and porch. John Mark doesn’t destroy the ‘sindōn’, perhaps because it can be regarded as the proof of Jesus’ resurrection, and perhaps because of the image and its significance: Jesus’ personal forgiveness for John Mark. John takes the ‘sindōn’ with him to Ephesus in Asia Minor.¹¹⁰

After Jesus had been wrapped in the ‘sindōn’, it wasn’t a garment anymore, for it had been used as the sweat cloth (‘soudarion’) of a dead man, and was thus, to John Mark’s standards, ritually unclean. Perhaps this is the reason why John Mark called the initial cloth in which Jesus was to be buried a ‘sindōn’ (Mark 15,46), but called the empty grave cloths ‘soudarion’ and ‘othonia’ (John 20,6-7). But of course John Mark also knew that the words ‘othonia’ and ‘soudarion’ would not as easily be associated with his own garment as the word ‘sindōn’ would.

6. John Mark, author of the Gospel of John with Mary, the virgin mother of Jesus

Since Jesus’ crucifixion, when Jesus told his mother Mary “Woman, behold, your son”, and told the beloved disciple, standing by, “Behold, your mother”, these two lived together in Jerusalem in John’s house¹¹¹. Together they brought Jesus’ grave cloth(s) to Ephesus, where they arrived together. At Ephesus John wrote the Fourth Gospel. It is then not unreasonable to assume that John wrote this gospel together with Mary. If this John was the same as John Mark, the co-authorship of Mary would explain the difference in style and contents between the Gospel of Mark and the Fourth Gospel, named the Gospel of John. The author of the Fourth Gospel is a man according to grammar (“the disciple, whom (‘ov) he loved”, “what shall happen to this man” – ‘ουτος’)¹¹², and so it was John who put the pen to papyrus for the Gospel of John, but also for the Gospel of Mark.

¹⁰⁹ It is not sure whether the women who entered the empty grave first, saw the ‘sindōn’ (Luke 23,55-24,12 Mark 16,1-8 Matt 28,1-8), so it is possible that it was taken out of the grave before the women arrived and then put back there deliberately (by Jesus) only after the women had left and before Simon Peter and John Mark reached the grave.

¹¹⁰ Sora: 46, Van Haelst: 28. According to Ian Wilson the Shroud of Turin may have been the same as the “Mandylion”, a cloth with the “Image of Edessa” (of at least Jesus’ face) that showed up in 525-600 CE in Edessa, another town, now called Sanliurfa, in Asia Minor, today’s Turkey. (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Image_of_Edessa#Links_with_the_Shroud_of_Turin and http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shroud_of_Turin#Possible_history_before_the_14th_century:_The_Image_of_Edessa)

¹¹¹ John 19,25-27

¹¹² NA²⁷ John 16,26 21,21

Internal evidence concerning the authorship of the Fourth Gospel is indirect. B.F. Westcott's well-known "concentric circles of proof" for the authorship¹¹³ (see table 8), which he used in 1881 CE to identify the apostle John of Zebedee, can all be applied to the 'mother-and-son' couple John Mark and Mary. Here must be stressed that the claims of Westcott's fourth and fifth circles of proof, claiming that the evangelist was an apostle and 'the apostle whom Jesus loved', are invalid:

	B.F. Westcott: John of Zebedee, fisherman-apostle	My study: John Mark and Mary, Jesus' virgin mother
1	The author of the Fourth Gospel was a Jew.	Jesus' virgin mother Mary and John Mark both were Jews.
2	It was a Jew of Palestine.	The details known about Jerusalem (e.g. the Pool of Siloam and the Pool Bethesda, John 5,2 9,7.11) fit with the knowledge of John Mark, who lived in Jerusalem (better than with the knowledge of the Galilean fisherman John of Zebedee).
3	The author was an eyewitness of the events he describes.	Jesus' mother Mary was in the company of Jesus and his disciples at least at Cana and in Capernaum and (until) at the foot of the cross ¹¹⁴ . John Mark was an eyewitness of the events in Jerusalem: the entrance into Jerusalem and the temple, the Last Supper, the arrest, the trials, the crucifixion, the empty grave and the appearances.
4	a) The author was an Apostle, because of the scope of his description, the acquaintance with the thoughts and feelings of the disciples at critical moments, the recollection of words spoken among themselves, the familiarity with the places to which they withdrew from time to time and the acquaintance with imperfect or erroneous impressions the apostles received initially. b) The author was an Apostle because he stood very near to the Lord: he knew the Lord's emotions, the grounds of his actions and even the mind of the Lord in many cases ¹¹⁵ .	a) All of these reasons (on all the occasions, mentioned by Westcott) can be explained either by the presence of Jesus' virgin mother Mary as one of the "women" who followed and served Jesus and his apostles (Mark 15,40-41 Luke 8,1-3), or by the presence of John Mark. b) This standing very near to the Lord and this knowledge serve as very good arguments to defend that the author was Jesus' virgin mother Mary.

¹¹³ See bibliography. See also http://www.bible.org/page.php?page_id=1150

¹¹⁴ John 2,1.12 19,25-27; Pope Benedict XVI, during the general audience of February 14, 2007, stated about Jesus' mother: "Becoming a disciple of Christ, Mary manifested at Cana her complete trust in him (cf. John 2:5) and followed him to the foot of the cross, where she received a maternal mission from him for all his disciples of all times, represented by John (cf. John 19:25-27)" (www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/audiences/2007/documents/hf_ben-xvi_aud_20070214_en.html).

¹¹⁵ John 2,24 ff, 4,1 5,6 6,15 7,1 16,9 (motives), 11,33 13,21 (emotions), 6,6.61.64 13.1.3.11 (thoughts)

5	<p>The author was the Apostle John.</p> <p>a) John 21,24 assigns authorship to “the apostle whom Jesus loved”.</p> <p>b) He was known to the high priest.</p> <p>c) He stood in close relationship to Peter.</p> <p>d) The author should be one of the three favorite apostles of the synoptics: Peter, James and John.</p>	<p>a) This is not accurate, because John 21,24 and John 21,20 and 21,23 all say it was the “disciple” – not the ‘apostle’ – “whom Jesus loved”.</p> <p>b) The being known to the high priest was a characteristic of the anonymous disciple at the gate, and needn’t be applied to the beloved disciple (and it certainly was a characteristic of another secret disciple, Joseph of Arimatea, as he was a member of the Great Sanhedrin).</p> <p>c) Simon Peter lived in John Mark’s house from 30 to 44 CE.</p> <p>c) There is no basis for this assumption.</p>
6	<p>Corroboration: John (the apostle) is not mentioned by name anywhere in the Fourth Gospel.</p>	<p>(Refutation of Westcott’s argument: The apostle James of Zebedee, brother of the apostle John, isn’t mentioned by name anywhere in the Fourth Gospel either.)</p> <p>Corroborations for John Mark:</p> <p>1) John Mark is not in the Fourth Gospel at all: not by name, nor by deeds.</p> <p>2) Jesus’ mother is not mentioned by name anywhere in the Fourth Gospel either.</p> <p>3) John Mark is not mentioned by name anywhere in the Gospel of Mark.</p>

Table 8. Westcott’s concentric circles of proof

Another argument that supports the authorship of Mary is that the Fourth Gospel proclaims Jesus as being God, born in the flesh: “The Word was God”, “the Word was made flesh” (through Mary), “the only begotten God” (John 1,1.14.18). Mary, Jesus’ virgin mother, could be posited as the author of the Fourth Gospel in the sense in which antiquity defined authorship: “The author is the person whose ideas the book expresses, not necessarily the person who set pen to papyrus”¹¹⁶. The renowned New Testament scholar Brown identifies several phases in the development of the Fourth Gospel, and these phases could correspond to its several authors (see table 9):

	Phases in the development (R.E. Brown, <i>The Community of the Beloved Disciple</i> , New York 1979; www.beloveddisciple.org)	Possible authors (my study)
1	the initial pre-Gospel version	Jesus’ virgin mother Mary
2	the pre-Gospel work produced by “the evangelist” or main writer	John Mark
3	the final version written by a redactor	the “I”-person of the addition (John 21,25)

Table 9. Phases in the development of the Gospel of John

That the mother of Jesus is not mentioned or known as the co-author of the Gospel of John, is explained by the fact that the gospel itself says it was a male disciple who wrote it (‘hon’ and

¹¹⁶ Brown and Collins: 1034-1054; Brown: lxxxvii.

‘houtos’ John 16,25 21,21). The male authorship is only mentioned in the addition (chapter 21) to the original work (chapters 1 to 20), but John 20 and John 21 have always been found as a unity in all known manuscripts, and that is why Craig, another New Testament scholar, states that chapter 21 was probably added before the gospel was published¹¹⁷. So the fact that the author was a man, was known from the start, and thus, at least at certain stages, no one thought about Mary.

7. Not John of Zebedee

The most usual identification of the gospel’s author “John” is with the apostle John, one of the sons of Zebedee. This is not the same person as John Mark, for in the Acts is first spoken of the killing of “James, the brother of John”¹¹⁸, so, of the sons of Zebedee (Mark 1,17-20), and ten verses further is spoken of the house in Jerusalem of “Mary, the mother of John whose other name was Mark”¹¹⁹. The name Mark is probably mentioned here to distinguish this John from the before mentioned John, the brother of James. And the mother of (James and) John of Zebedee was preferably called “the mother of the sons of Zebedee”¹²⁰ and probably still lived in Galilee.

Before the Council

After Jesus had risen and ascended to heaven the following event took place in the temple, when Simon Peter and John of Zebedee had healed a lame man there:

“11 And as the lame man which was healed held Peter and John, all the people ran together unto them in the porch that is called Solomon’s, greatly wondering. 1 And as they spake unto the people, the priests, and the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees, came upon them ... 3 And they laid hands on them and put *them* in hold unto the next day ... 5 And it came to pass on the morrow, that their rulers, and elders, and scribes, 6 And Annas the high priest, and Caiaphas, and John, and Alexander, and as many as were of the kindred of the high priest, were gathered together at Jerusalem. 7 And when they had set them in the midst, they asked, By what power, or by what name, have ye done this? 8 Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, said unto them,

Ye rulers of the people, and elders of Israel, ... by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, *even* by him doth this man stand here before you whole. ...

13 Now when they saw the boldness (‘parrhesia’ = ‘all out-spokenness’) of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned (‘agrammatoi’ = ‘un-lettered’), and ignorant men (‘idiōtai’), they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them (‘epignōskon’ RSV: recognized), that they had been with Jesus. 14 And beholding the man which was healed standing with them, they could say nothing against it. 15 But when they had commanded them to go aside out of the council, they conferred among themselves, 16 Saying,

What shall we do to these men? for that indeed a notable miracle hath been done by them *is* manifest to all them that dwell in Jerusalem; and we cannot deny *it*. 17 But that it spread no further among the people, let us straitly threaten them, that they speak henceforth to no man in this name.

18 And they called them ...” (Acts 3,11 - 4,18 AV, NA²⁷)

¹¹⁷ Craig: 204.

¹¹⁸ Acts 12,2

¹¹⁹ Acts 12,12

¹²⁰ Matt 20,20 27,56

Some characteristics of John of Zebedee, and of the beloved disciple, and of John Mark, that can be drawn from this and other New Testament texts, are the following (see table 10):

John, son of Zebedee	Beloved disciple	John Mark
fisherman in Galilee (Matt 4,18-22)	has a home in Jerusalem (John 19,27) alludes to the temple service (John 13,10)	a 'hypēretēs' (of the temple) and lives in Jerusalem (Acts 13,5 and 12,12) alludes to the temple service (Mark 13,35)
unknown to the high priests: they marveled at his boldness, illiteracy and ignorance		as an 'hypēretēs' probably known to the temple priests
boldness (‘parrhesia’: all out-spokenness)	doesn't reveal the identity of “the disciple known to the high priest” at the gate and is anonymous himself in his own gospel (of John)	is anonymous in his own gospel (of Mark)
unlettered, illiterate (‘agrammatos’)	is literate (author of Gospel of John)	is literate (author of Gospel of Mark)
ignorant = without public office (‘idiōtes’ = a private person, without public office, i.e. by implication: ignorant, rude, unlearned – compare: “idiot”)	seems to have been present when Jesus was interrogated by Annas (for he cites their conversation)	a ruler (‘archōn’ = a ruler in a public office) and a ‘hypēretēs’ = an attendant in a public hierarchical function
is recognized as having been with Jesus	is not recognized at the cross as having been with Jesus (John 19,26)	escapes the ‘hypēretai’ unrecognized
was called by Jesus and immediately left his boat and father and followed Jesus (Matt 4,22)	wants to follow the risen Jesus, but has to “remain” and is not allowed to follow Him (John 21,20-23)	ran to Jesus, was invited by Jesus to follow Him, but sadly left Jesus as he was rich
is impetuous, a plain, downright fellow, and nicknamed as one of the “Boanerges” = ‘sons of thunder’ (Mark 3,17); wanted to command fire to come from heaven to consume a village that was hostile to Jesus (Luke 9,54)	runs and reaches Jesus’ grave first, but doesn't enter it; (for fear of the Jews denied Jesus by slapping Him in the face before Annas, but reports this incident in his gospel;) recognizes the risen Jesus first, but doesn't go to Him first.	secretly follows Jesus, but flees the ‘hypēretai’ that held Jesus

Table 10. John of Zebedee versus John Mark

The fact that the high priests recognized (or got to know) that Peter and John of Zebedee had been with Jesus, also excludes that this John was the beloved disciple, for the beloved disciple was not recognized as one of Jesus' disciples when he stood at the cross. Simon Peter and John of Zebedee both were apostles of Jesus in public and they also both were near Him when Jesus was arrested in Gethsemane on the Mount of Olives, but still only Simon Peter got recognized by the 'hypēretai' as a disciple of Jesus, and one of them said: "Did not I see thee in the garden with Him?"¹²¹ If the beloved disciple was John of Zebedee, the 'hypēretai' would have seen him too in the garden and should have recognized him too as a disciple of Jesus when he stood at the cross the next day. So, the beloved disciple was not John of Zebedee and not an apostle, but a disciple of Jesus in secret, like Nicodemus (John 3,1) and Joseph of Arimatea (John 19,38) and like "many" "among the rulers"¹²². The beloved disciple also later could never be recognized by anyone as someone who had been with Jesus, for he never had been with Jesus the way Simon Peter and John of Zebedee had been:

"And Jesus said to them [Simon and Andrew], "Follow me and I will make you become fishers of men." And immediately they left their nets and followed him. And going on a little farther, he saw James the son of Zebedee and John his brother, who were in their boat mending the nets. And immediately he called them; and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired servants, and followed him." Mark 1,17-20 (RSV)

"And a ruler ('archōn') asked him, ..." Luke 18,18 (RSV)

"...And Jesus looking upon him loved him, and said to him, "You lack one thing; go, sell what you have, and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me." At that saying his countenance fell, and he went away sorrowful; for he had great possessions." Mark 10,21-22 (RSV)

"Nevertheless many even of the authorities ('archontōn' plural of 'archōn') believed in him, but for fear of the Pharisees they did not confess it, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God." John 12,42-43 (RSV and NA²⁷)

Why would the beloved disciple have preferred to stay anonymous in his gospels? One of the reasons probably was that he was not proud of the fact that he had not followed Jesus immediately and that he had been a secret disciple. Obviously, the evangelist was willing to be identified with the beloved disciple – who lay on Jesus' breast, who stood at the foot of the cross, who saw and believed, who said "It is the Lord!", and who wanted to follow the risen Jesus¹²³ – for the evangelist published the second ending (chapter 21), which revealed that the evangelist was the beloved disciple. But to be identified with the secret disciple, who knew and probably was known to the 'hypēretai' and who had probably slapped Jesus' face and who probably was silently present when Jesus was condemned to death, was the last thing he wanted.

Of course he did write that eventually he had wanted to follow Jesus, after He had risen:

"He [Jesus] said to him [Simon Peter] the third time, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?" Peter was grieved because he said to him the third time, "Do you love me?" And he said to him, "Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Feed my sheep. Truly, truly, I say to you, when you were young, you girded yourself and walked where you would; but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will gird you and carry you where you do not wish to go." (This he

¹²¹ John 18,26 Matt 26,37

¹²² "rulers" (NKJV) = 'archontōn' NA²⁷ John 12,42-43

¹²³ John 13,22.25.28 19,26 20,8 21,7.20

said to show by what death he was to glorify God.) And after this he said to him, "Follow me."

Peter turned and saw following them the disciple whom Jesus loved ... When Peter saw him, he said to Jesus, "Lord, what about this man?" Jesus said to him, "If it is my will that he remain until I come, what is that to you? Follow me!" The saying spread abroad among the brethren that this disciple was not to die; yet Jesus did not say to him that he was not to die, but, "If it is my will that he remain until I come, what is that to you?" (John 21,17-23)

Perhaps Jesus didn't allow John Mark to follow Him with Simon Peter after He had risen, because John Mark hadn't voluntarily followed Jesus when He was still a mortal human being. But there may have been another reason. Simon Peter's position as leader of the apostles – "you are Peter ('petros' = rock) and on this rock I will build my church. ... I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven" (Matt 16,18-19) –, a position given to Peter before he denied Jesus, was continued by Jesus after He had forgiven Peter his three denials and had let him declare his love for Jesus three times. Thus probably also John Mark's position as secret disciple and secretary of Caiphas was continued by Jesus – after Jesus had forgiven him his slapping his face, and John Mark had shown his willingness to openly follow Him – as Jesus said to Simon Peter "'If it is my will that he remain until I come, what is that to you?'" This (temporary) continuation of John Mark's secret discipleship ("remain until I come") may have been the main reason for his anonymity in both of his gospels. Jesus didn't mean that John Mark would remain alive, for this it explicitly refuted in the gospel's next verses. John Mark had to remain a secret disciple. And the reason why John Mark had to stay a secret disciple wasn't Simon Peter's business, only Jesus'.

So, you may have been right if you spotted our John Mark as the first priest mentioned next to the high priests Annas and Caiaphas in the council gathered around the apostles Peter and John of Zebedee and the lame man who was healed in the temple (Acts 4,6). And you may have been right in thinking that the private conference held by this council (Acts 4,16-17) was transmitted to us by John Mark. Perhaps the transmission of details like these was one of the reasons why Jesus wanted John "to remain" in his position right beside Caiphas.

The returning of the grave cloth before it could be identified as John Mark's 'sindōn' had not only served the demonstration of Jesus' resurrection and forgiveness, but also the continuation of John Mark's secret discipleship. And also the preserving of the anonymity of the Cenacle's householder had served the continuation of John Mark's secret discipleship: if Nicodemus would be exposed as a disciple, the same would probably happen to his heir and inmate John Mark.

At Jesus' tomb

“43 Joseph of Arimathea, a respected member of the council, who was also himself looking for the kingdom of God, took courage and went to Pilate, and asked for the body of Jesus.

44 And Pilate wondered if he were already dead; and summoning the centurion, he asked him whether he was already dead.

45 And when he learned from the centurion that he was dead, he granted the body to Joseph.

46 And he bought a linen shroud ('sindōn'), and taking him down, wrapped him in the linen shroud ('sindōn'), and laid him in a tomb which had been hewn out of the rock; and he rolled a stone against the door of the tomb.

47 Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joses saw where he was laid.” Mark 15,43-

- “1 Now on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene came to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb.
 2 So she ran, and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him."
 3 Peter then came out with the other disciple, and they went toward the tomb.
 4 They both ran, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first;
 5 and stooping to look in, he saw the linen cloths (‘othonia’) lying there, but he did not go in.
 6 Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb; he saw the linen cloths (‘othonia’) lying,
 7 and the napkin (‘soudarion’), which had been on his head, not lying with the linen cloths (‘othonia’) but rolled up in a place by itself.
 8 Then the other disciple, who reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed;
 9 for as yet they did not know the scripture, that he must rise from the dead.
 10 Then the disciples went back to their homes (unto their own home (AV)).
 11 But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb, and as she wept she stooped to look into the tomb;” John 20,1-11 RSV

[“Then arose Peter, and ran unto the sepulchre; and stooping down, he beheld the linen clothes laid by themselves, and departed, wondering in himself at that which was come to pass.” Luke 24,12 (AV)]

In the early morning of the resurrection Mary Magdalena had not entered the open grave, but had only seen that the stone had been taken away, so she had only guessed that Jesus’ body had been taken away. She said “They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him” (John 20,1-2). She probably thought that Joseph of Arimatea, who had asked Pilate for Jesus’ dead body, had taken the body out of this grave – “his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock” (Matt 27,60) – and had reburied it somewhere else, for the first burying had been done in a hurry as Jews weren’t allowed to do any work on the Sabbath which started at the end of that afternoon: “And when evening had come, since it was the day of Preparation, that is, the day before the sabbath, Joseph of Arimathea, ... took courage and went to Pilate, and asked for the body of Jesus” (Mark 15,42-43), and “because of the Jewish day of Preparation, as the tomb was close at hand, they laid Jesus there” (John 19,42). And the women saw “how his body was laid; then they returned, and prepared spices and ointments. On the sabbath they rested according to the commandment” (Luke 23,55-56). This indicates that the women prepared for the next, definitive, burial on the first day after the Sabbath.

Having heard what Mary Magdalene had said, and probably knowing that Mary had not looked inside the grave, the beloved disciple rushed to Jesus’ grave with Simon Peter, but eventually Peter “came, following” the beloved disciple (John 20,1-6), and also Mary Magdalene followed later, for the beloved disciple “reached the tomb first” (John 20,4). Apparently the beloved disciple knew which grave had been used for Jesus, for he found the grave on his own. The beloved disciple then most probably had been present at the burial of Jesus, also because “the tomb was close at hand”, close to the cross (John 19,42), at the foot of which John had stood (John 19,26). This again indicates that the beloved disciple was a secret disciple, for he could take the risk of being near Jesus in his last hour, both at the cross, where also other (high) priests, scribes and elders were present, and at the burial by Joseph of Arimatea and Nicodemus – members of the Great Sanhedrin and rulers of the Jews¹²⁴ –, only if he was, just like Joseph and Nicodemus, and unlike John of Zebedee, a ruler of the Jews

¹²⁴ Matt 27,41; Mark 15,43 Luke 23,50-51 resp. John 3,1

and a secret disciple. And although John Mark will not have ritually defiled himself by touching Jesus' dead body, Joseph of Arimatea and Nicodemus and possibly also John Mark are described as the inhabitants and rulers ('archontes') of Jerusalem by Paul, when he speaks about Jesus' condemnation and burial:

“those who live in Jerusalem and their rulers ... fulfilled these [utterances of the prophets] by condemning him. ... they asked Pilate to have him killed. And when they had fulfilled all that was written of him, they took him down from the tree, and laid him in a tomb.” Acts 13, 27-29

When John reached the tomb on Easter morning he didn't enter it, but waited for Simon Peter to arrive and take a look inside. Only after Simon Peter had seen it was empty, except for the grave cloths, John entered the grave himself. The reason may have been that he didn't want to be ritually defiled by the tomb or the dead body unnecessarily, for it was only the beginning of “the first day of the week” (John 20,1), the first day after the Sabbath. He had to be Levitically clean to be able to enter the temple and go to work.¹²⁵ A defilement by entering an occupied grave or touching a dead body lasted seven days (Lev 21,1-4 Nu 19,16-22). And his running to, but not entering, the grave first doesn't comply at all with the impetuosity of John of Zebedee, who had left his father at once, and who wanted to command fire from heaven. Also later, the beloved disciple's recognizing the risen Jesus first, but not going to Him first, strongly contrasts John of Zebedee's impetuosity.

John's description of what he saw in the grave, and what and why he believed, is very unclear. A seemingly more simple explanation than the one based on John's secret discipleship, of what and why John “believed” when he saw the empty ‘soudarion’, has been given by some, e.g. by M. Poole (1624-1679) and J. Wesley (1703-1791)¹²⁶: John didn't believe Jesus' dead body had been taken away, as Mary Magdalena had told them, until he entered the tomb and saw that the tomb (and ‘soudarion’) was empty. But this explanation is not logical, for it was the emptiness of the grave, reported to him by Simon Peter, which made him enter the grave. So, already *before* he entered and saw, he could have believed that someone had taken Jesus' body away. But the text says that only *after* he entered and saw, John Mark believed. Now the seeing of the rolled up ‘sindōn’ was actually an argument against the belief that someone had taken the body away (whether Joseph of Arimatea or a thief), but – only for John Mark! – it was a positive argument for the belief that Jesus had risen. Simon Peter, at seeing the grave cloths, must have considered that the body probably was not stolen, for a wrapped body is much easier to handle than a naked body, without anything bound around hands and feet, and a theft would have to have been done in a hurry. Simon Peter may therefore have wondered why Joseph of Arimatea had taken off the grave cloths first (and perhaps anointed and rewrapped the body in another cloth), and then took the body to its definitive tomb without even taking the ‘sindōn’, and all this even during the night and not by day. Peter may therefore even have started to wonder whether Jesus had risen or not. Perhaps John deliberately edited this particular gospel recount in such a way that it could be interpreted in both ways, the first given interpretation – the seeing how his ‘sindōn’ was neatly rolled up like a garment and the believing that Jesus had risen – relating to John, and the second interpretation – the seeing that the body was gone and perhaps taken and the grave cloths weren't – relating to Peter. Also this ambiguous description by the evangelist doesn't comply at all with the outspokenness of John of Zebedee.

If the beloved disciple already believed that Jesus had risen, when he returned home with Peter, he apparently didn't tell Peter about it, nor Mary Magdalene, for Peter was “wondering

¹²⁵ Likewise the high priests, when they brought Jesus to the Roman procurator Pilate, “did not enter the praetorium, so that they might not be defiled, but might eat the passover” (John 18,28).

¹²⁶ <http://wes.biblecommenter.com/john/20.htm>

in himself” and Mary Magdalene kept “weeping outside the tomb”.¹²⁷ Also this doesn’t comply with the outspokenness of John of Zebedee at all, but it complies exactly with the anonymity and secret discipleship of John Mark, who apparently hadn’t told Simon Peter or Mary Magdalene that Joseph of Arimatea had bought his ‘sindōn’ from the ‘hypēretai’ either. The less people who knew this, the smaller the chance it would ever reach the ears of possible traitors of his discipleship.

So, when Peter first entered the tomb and told John Mark that the tomb was empty except for a linen roll, John Mark must have thought “a roll? But it was only folded once at Jesus’ head, enveloping his body, at the burial! Is this roll really my ‘sindōn’ then?” But as Peter didn’t know – and wasn’t supposed to know – that Jesus had been buried in John Mark’s ‘sindōn’, bought from the ‘hypēretai’, John Mark could not ask him “Is the linen roll you’re seeing my ‘sindōn’?” So, John had to enter the grave himself, for if it was his unique ‘sindōn’ he would have to take it away as it was the proof of his discipleship. He entered the tomb, not to verify it was empty, for Peter had already told him this. He entered it to check out the roll. Then, at seeing the roll and identifying it as his ‘sindōn’ (e.g. by the seam near the edge), he realized it was rolled up by Jesus for him, and believed, and took it.¹²⁸

¹²⁷ Luke 24,12 John 20,11

¹²⁸ In this context the following interview given by Barry Schwartz on the Turin Shroud in NBC's Today Show with Matt Lauer, Friday 21 March 2008, is interesting. Question: “If it were really dating back to one AD, it would look much older. How do you answer that?” Answer: “Well, I would answer it by saying that simply this cloth that bears this image would have been carefully protected. And assuming for a moment that it really was first century, it is a bloodstained cloth, it was against Jewish tradition to even handle. So, they would have kept it a secret. It would have been well preserved, probably kept hidden most of the time. And perhaps that’s the reason why the condition is as good as it was, when I first saw it in 1978. I felt the same thing, it seemed to be quite well preserved for something that potentially was that old.” (www.msnbc.msn.com/id/21134540/vp/23742321#23742321)

***** Intermezzo: THE SHROUD OF TURIN *****

There was enough room in the grave to be able to neatly roll up the 'sindōn', for if it was folded in half on the platform where Jesus' body had lain – as it seems to have been folded according to the images on the Shroud of Turin –, it could be rolled up from the fold (at the images of the head) in the direction of the two ends of the 'sindōn' (at the images of the feet).

Perhaps the images on the Shroud of Turin were like photographs (e.g. formed by corona discharge through a plasma of air¹²⁹), taken when the 'sindōn' was still enveloping Jesus' body and the upper half of the cloth was kept straight and horizontal by the voluminous "mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pounds' weight" brought by Nicodemus (John 19,39) and laid beside Jesus at either side, and/or by the "two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had lain, one at the head and one at the feet" (John 20,12), seen by Mary Magdalene. Jesus' face probably was at a certain angle to his body when He died on the cross, as his chin probably rested on his breast then, but at the burial Joseph and Nicodemus may have pulled up Jesus' chin from his breast, without bending the neck at the top of his back, and have stuck a certain object between his chin and breast, to keep his face as horizontal as the body and thus also at a higher level than the body.

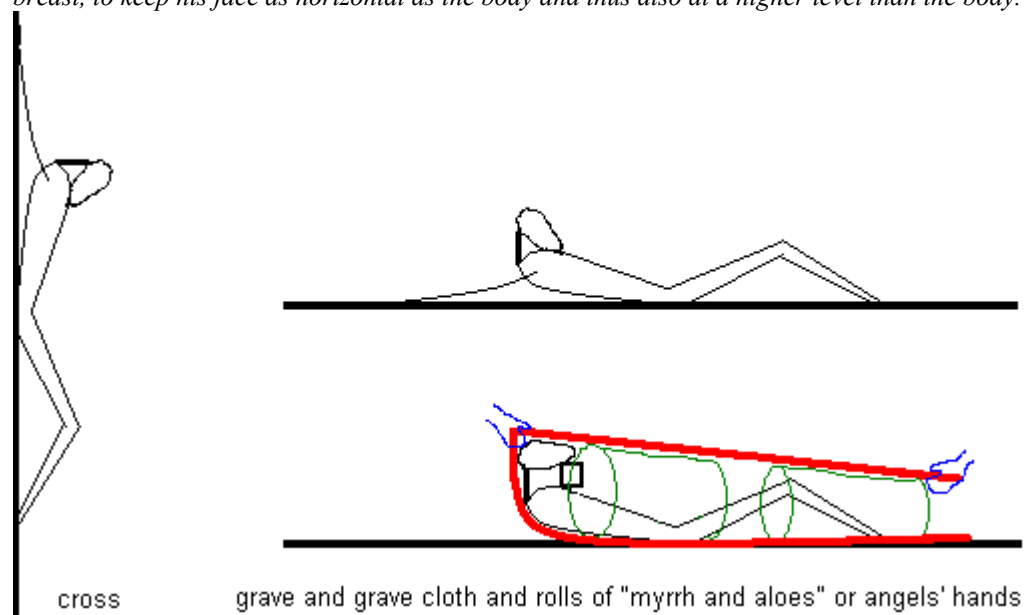


Fig. I. From cross to grave cloth

This would explain the absence (or shortness) of Jesus' throat in the front image on the Shroud, and the seeming presence of a certain object beneath his chin, and perhaps also the absence of an image of the top of his head. And if the largeness of the image was a function of the distance of the cloth to the body, this would explain why the image of the face (and knees) is relatively smaller than the image of the rest of the body, for the face and knees were nearer to the cloth.

Perhaps John Mark, after having taken his 'sindōn' home, at the edge of the roll cut off a strip along the seam in the upper layers of the roll, to render the roll less recognizable as his 'sindōn'. If a strip of cloth, as long as the circumference of the roll, was cut off from the last layer, exactly along the seam, this seam would from that moment lie exactly at the edge of the cloth and thus would seem to be an ordinary functional seam, applied to prevent the edge of the cloth from loosening. It would no longer seem a useless, only decorative, seam somewhere inside the cloth near the edge. Thus the roll would no longer be recognizable as John Mark's 'sindōn', of which the seam distinguished it from every other 'talith' or toga. And if a cloth, folded in half (= doubled), is rolled up from the fold to the ends, the upper half forms circles with a smaller circumference than the circles formed by the lower half of the cloth. So, in the last layer of the roll the lower half would not completely cover the upper half, which thus would stick out from underneath the lower half. So, the decorative seam would not only be visible in the last layer of the roll, formed by the lower half, but also, for a shorter length, in the next to last layer of the roll, where the upper half sticks out (see the figure below).

This might explain the two removed strips of cloth -already removed before the fire of 1532 CE-, one 37 cm and one 19 cm in length, at the two edges of the Shroud of Turin in the corners along the seam. When the Shroud of Turin, 4,4 m in length and about 0,4 mm in thickness, is rolled up loosely (thickness of one layer of 1 mm) with an initial circular circumference of 26 cm, the complete roll would attain a circumference of 36 cm at the most.

¹²⁹ G. Fanti, F. Lattarulo and O. Scheuermann, *Body Image Formation Hypotheses Based On Corona Discharge*, Third Dallas International Conference on the Shroud of Turin: Dallas, Texas, September 8-11, 2005, www.dim.unipd.it/fanti/PDFpresCORONA.pdf (presentation slides), www.dim.unipd.it/fanti/corona.pdf (article)

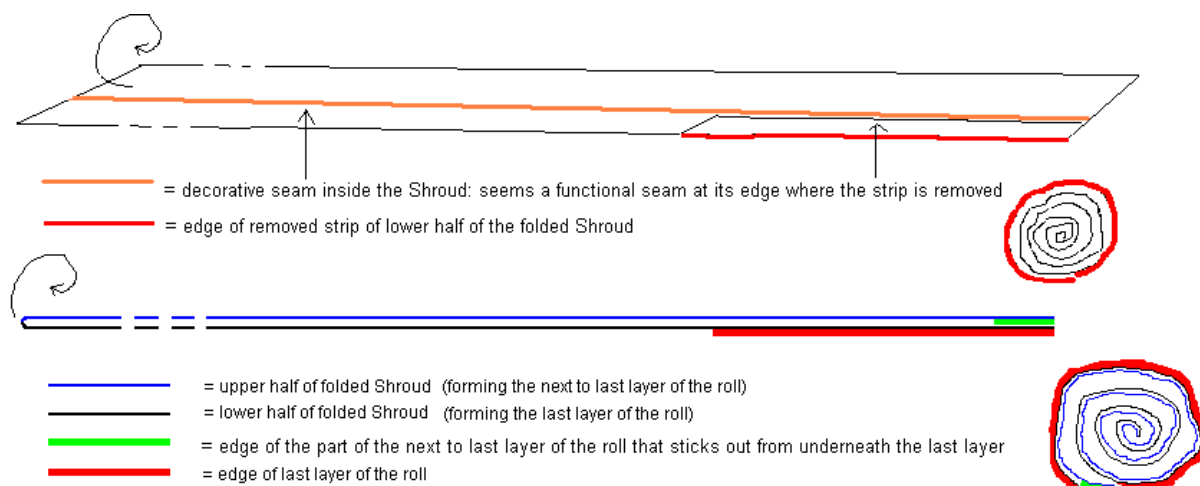


Fig. II. Grave cloth, doubled and then rolled up

According to some scholars the seam in the Shroud of Turin encloses a twisted cord because the seam shows a sinusoidal (= wave form) pattern¹³⁰. Maybe the seam encloses or enclosed a purple/blue linen cord, in order to observe in a Pharisaic meticulous way, even for an all white linen temple garment, the prescription of Nu 15,38 which in the Bible in Basic English is translated as:

“Say to the children of Israel that through all their generations they are to put on the edges of their robes an ornament of twisted threads (*‘tsiytsith’*), and in every ornament (*‘tsiytsith’*) a blue cord (*‘pathiyl’* = cord, twisted thread).” Nu 15,38 (BBE)

Here the expression ‘an ornament of twisted threads’ translates just the one word *‘tsiytsith’*, which means: (literally) blossom, (figuratively) ornament. But in the Septuagint, at Nu 15,38, the word *‘tsiytsith’* is translated as *‘kraspedon’* = seam, cf. the Greek verb *‘kraspedōō’* = to make a seam (Bartelink: 147). So, the commandment of Nu 15,38 can be read as a prescription to **make in every robe a seam with a blue cord in it**. And Nu 15,38 is one of the commandments, of which the young ruler Mark said

“Teacher, all these I have observed from my youth” (Mark 10,20).

Thus the presence of the seam with cord, and the fact that the Shroud was doubled and rolled up, and the soap and starch impurities¹³¹, prove that the Shroud was a used and washed Jewish temple garment, that was not supposed to be creased. Now hear what the Talmud says about the priests:

“They did not sleep in the consecrated garments. But they spread them out, doubled them over, and lay them down under their heads, and cover themselves with their own clothes.” (Tamid 1,1; Neusner: 863)

And the garments of the priests who had been dismissed from their sacrificial service in the temple (of a week’s shift, about twice a year) were laid in “wall niches there, on which were written [the names] of the various pieces of clothing” (Tamid 5,3; Neusner: 869-870). And the fact that the priests put on a *‘talith’* “which was not their own” (Piske Tosaphoth in Menacoth numer. 150; Lightfoot on Mark 14,51), indicates that also a sacrificing priest’s *‘talith’* was probably a garment that was doubled over and kept in a wall niche in the priest’s dormitory for the next shift of priests. In this way Jesus’ leaving his doubled *‘talith’* in the wall niche of the empty grave for John Mark perhaps could be seen as a sign that Jesus extended his New Testamental high priestly sacrificial ministry to the priest John Mark.

B. Schwartz, a sindonologist, said about the Shroud: “It is a bloodstained cloth. It was against Jewish tradition to even handle. So, they would have kept it a secret. It would have been well preserved, probably kept hidden most of the time, and perhaps that’s the reason why the condition is as good as it was when I first saw it in 1978.”¹³² And perhaps that’s also why its history is so hard to trace until 525 CE (if it’s the Image of Edessa).

¹³⁰ A.D. Adler and A. and M. Whanger, *Concerning the Side Strip on the Shroud of Turin* (www.shroud.com/adler2.htm) and M. Guscin, *Some notes on the Nice Symposium 12-13- May 1997*, (www.shroud.com/bsts4603.htm) and M. Antonacci, *Private Internet Debate Challenges Ray Roger’s Thermochemica Acta Paper* (www.shroud.com/pdfs/debate.pdf)

¹³¹ Facts A15 and A20 in “Evidences for Testing Hypotheses About the Body Image Formation of the Turin Shroud” by Giulio Fanti et al., September 2005, www.shroud.com/pdfs/doclist.pdf

¹³² www.msnbc.msn.com/id/21134540/vp/23742321#23742321

8. Other candidates for the authorship

Besides that can be said that the apostle John, son of Zebedee, could not have been the author and beloved disciple, the following can be said about the other candidates¹³³ (see table 11):

	Already existing theories about the author of the Fourth Gospel	My study
1	An existence of a 'John of Jerusalem' who had access into the High Priest's house was first proposed by H. Delff (1889), "but no external evidence of any kind supports this theory" (www.bible.org).	This theoretical person complies exactly with the historical John Mark, who was a 'hypēretēs' (attendant of synagogue, temple, and/or judge) and 'archōn' (ruler) and lived in Jerusalem.
2	It is pseudepigraphical: meant is that the author wanted to create the impression of apostolic authorship of his/her work, although he or she was not an apostle.	John Mark, who was known to be no apostle, wrote the Gospel of Mark, and it gained general acceptance in the Church. So, the other gospel he wrote, the so-called 'Gospel of John', could gain acceptance as well, without having been written by an apostle. And also the Gospel of Luke, who wasn't an apostle, gained acceptance. So, there was no need to create the impression of apostolicity, but it would help obscuring the real identity of the author of the Fourth Gospel: the not-apostolic John Mark.
3	John Mark being the author of the Fourth Gospel is impossible because of the different style of the Gospel of Mark	The different style of the Fourth Gospel, when compared to the Gospel of Mark, can be explained by the co-authorship of Jesus' virgin mother Mary.
4	John the Elder ('presbyter'): he is mentioned by Papias, who is cited by Eusebius.	Papias does not designate this John the Elder as the author of the Fourth Gospel: "I would inquire for the sayings of the Prebyters, what Andrew said, or what Peter said, or what Philip or what Thomas or James or what John or Matthew or any other of the Lord's disciples said, and for the things which Aristion and the Presbyter John, the disciples of the Lord, were saying." (Eusebius 3,39). But Papias does clearly distinguish the apostle "John", mentioned between the apostles James and Matthew, from "the Presbyter John". So, perhaps "the Presbyter John" was the same as the priest John Mark ('presbyter', the Greek word for 'elder', is the origin of our modern word 'priest').

¹³³ 1 to 6: www.bible.org/page.php?page_id=1150, 7: www.beloveddisciple.org

5	Lazarus: he is the only man in the Gospel of John of whom is said explicitly that he was loved by Jesus, viz. together with his sisters Martha and Mary ¹³⁴ .	If Lazarus was the evangelist of the Fourth Gospel – who wanted to remain the anonymous beloved disciple in this gospel –, he wouldn't have written in it that Jesus loved Lazarus. Of the anonymous rich young ruler (Mark) is also said explicitly that he was loved by Jesus, and he was loved on his own, but this is in the Gospel of Mark and not in John's. John Mark, who published the Fourth Gospel probably after he had published his Gospel of Mark, could not take back his verse Mark 10,21, which revealed that Jesus loved Mark. So, by calling himself the beloved disciple he gave a small clue for his identity. (Likewise, by describing how Jesus was slapped in the face before Annas, he left a small clue for his identity.)
6	Lazarus and John Mark: the Fourth Gospel is an Aramaic work by Lazarus, edited by John Mark, who was the evangelist.	It might as well - or even better - have been an Aramaic work by Jesus' virgin mother Mary, edited by John Mark (in Greek). Mary lived in Nazareth (Luke 1,26.39) and "Generally, scholars believe that the towns of Nazareth and Capernaum where Jesus lived were Aramaic-speaking communities" ¹³⁵ .
7	Mary Magdalena	The author of the Fourth Gospel was a man, but the co-author may have been a woman who stood very near to Jesus. As the Fourth Gospel primarily testifies to Jesus' being God, become flesh (John 1,1.14), this co-author could also have been Mary, the virgin mother of Jesus, to whose care the beloved disciple had been entrusted (and visa-versa) by Jesus on the cross, and who lived in John's house in Jerusalem and Ephesus, where the Fourth Gospel was written.

Table 11. Other candidates for the authorship

9. Conclusion

The general view used to be that the apostle John of Zebedee was the author of the Gospel of John, also called the Fourth Gospel. Nevertheless, some people have thought that John Mark was the beloved disciple and evangelist of the Gospel of John and this article is meant as

¹³⁴ John 11,3.5.11.36

¹³⁵ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Boanerges#Boanerges>

corroboration, with some new arguments, especially that Jesus' virgin mother Mary was a co-author of the Gospel of John. This explains the difference with the Gospel of Mark. The beloved disciple and Mary had been entrusted to each other's care by the dying Jesus. The Gospel of John was written in Ephesus by a John, and John and Mary arrived and lived together in Ephesus. Both the beloved disciple and Jesus' mother are anonymous in this gospel. Mark was anonymous in the Gospel of Mark. The Gospel of John starts by clearly testifying that Jesus was and is God, become flesh, and this took place through the virginal motherhood of Mary.

The beloved disciple knew (the names and family relations and other details of) the officers of the temple prison and was not recognized as a disciple of Jesus by the officers, high priests and elders at Jesus' cross, and John Mark, a nephew of the Levite Barnabas, was 1) a 'hypēretēs' = a temple attendant and/or a judge's secretary, and 2) an 'archōn' = ruler – the two Greek titles of the secretary of the court of justice of Athens –, and therefore he probably was the secretary of the priestly ruling Council of the Temple and possibly also of the general court of justice of Jerusalem, the Great Sanhedrin in which the Council of the Temple formed a distinct block. This is confirmed by Eusebius, who says that the beloved disciple was a priest wearing/carrying the (high) priestly breast piece. And his being Caiphas' secretary also explains how the details of the high priests' plans, words and councils found their way into the New Testament. And both the Gospel of John and the Gospel of Mark refer to minutiae of the temple service, which were regulated by the Council of the Temple. In Luke's term "ministers of the Word" for evangelists the two characteristics of John Mark (the 'hypēretēs' = minister Mark, and "the Word" as the unique expression used by John) are a unity. John Mark, as the beloved disciple John and as Mark, was one of the "ministers ('hypēretai') of the Word", who "delivered" Jesus' gospel to the people. Likewise, as Caiphas' secretary ('hypēretēs'), he had delivered Caiphas' decrees to the priests and people, as later Paul and Barnabas "delivered" "the decrees" of the apostles to the churches.

The beloved disciple wanted to stay anonymous in his gospel, probably because he had been a secret disciple of Jesus, just like Nicodemus, ruler of the Pharisees, and Joseph of Arimatea, member of the Great Sanhedrin, had been, and because Jesus had wanted him to remain the, secretly Christian, secretary of Caiphas and the Council of the Temple: the risen Jesus had said to Simon Peter "If it is my will that he [the beloved disciple] remain until I come, what is that to you?" The beloved disciple didn't enter Jesus' opened, but perhaps still occupied, grave first, probably because he wanted to stay Levitically, i.e. ritually, clean, to be able to go to work in the temple. The (ritually) clean linen cloth in which Jesus was buried (probably the unique garment worn by John Mark in the temple and at home, and left in the hands of the temple officers on the Mount of Olives, and bought from them by Joseph of Arimatea), a) compelled the beloved disciple to enter the grave and see if the cloth lying there was his own garment, b) triggered the beloved disciple's belief that Jesus had risen, when he saw it there, neatly (doubled and) rolled up like a (priest's) garment, c) was given to "the servant of the priest" by Jesus after his resurrection (Jerome citing the Gospel of the Hebrews) (i.e. the beloved disciple took it from Jesus' grave), and d) was taken to Ephesus by the evangelist John and Mary. The beloved disciple was known to the high priests, elders and scribes at Jesus' cross (though not as a disciple), was anonymous in his partly ambiguous and allusive gospel(s) and was literate, but the apostle John of Zebedee was unknown to the high priests (although recognized as a disciple), bold (out-spoken), illiterate, zealous, impetuous and plain. Westcott's fifth circle of proof, claiming that John 21,24 assigns authorship to 'the apostle whom Jesus loved', is invalid, for John 21,24 says it was a disciple. All his other circles of proof can easily be applied to John Mark and Mary. John Mark and Mary are a better alternative for John of Zebedee than all other proposed candidates for the authorship.

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 AV Authorized Version (1769)
 BBE Bible in Basic English (1965)
 HNV Hebrew Names Version (World English Bible, Messianic Edition)
 KJ21 21st Century King James Version (1994)
 LXX The Septuagint: the 3rd to 1st century BCE Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible
 NASB New American Standard Bible (1971)
 NIV New International Version (1984)
 NKJV New King James Version (1982)
 RSV Revised Standard Version (1947)
 Wey Weymouth New Testament Translation (1912)

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Abbreviations

BCE = Before Common Era or Before Christian Era, an equivalent of Before Christ (BC)

CE = Common Era or Christian Era, an equivalent of Anno Domini (AD) (= “in the year of the Lord”)

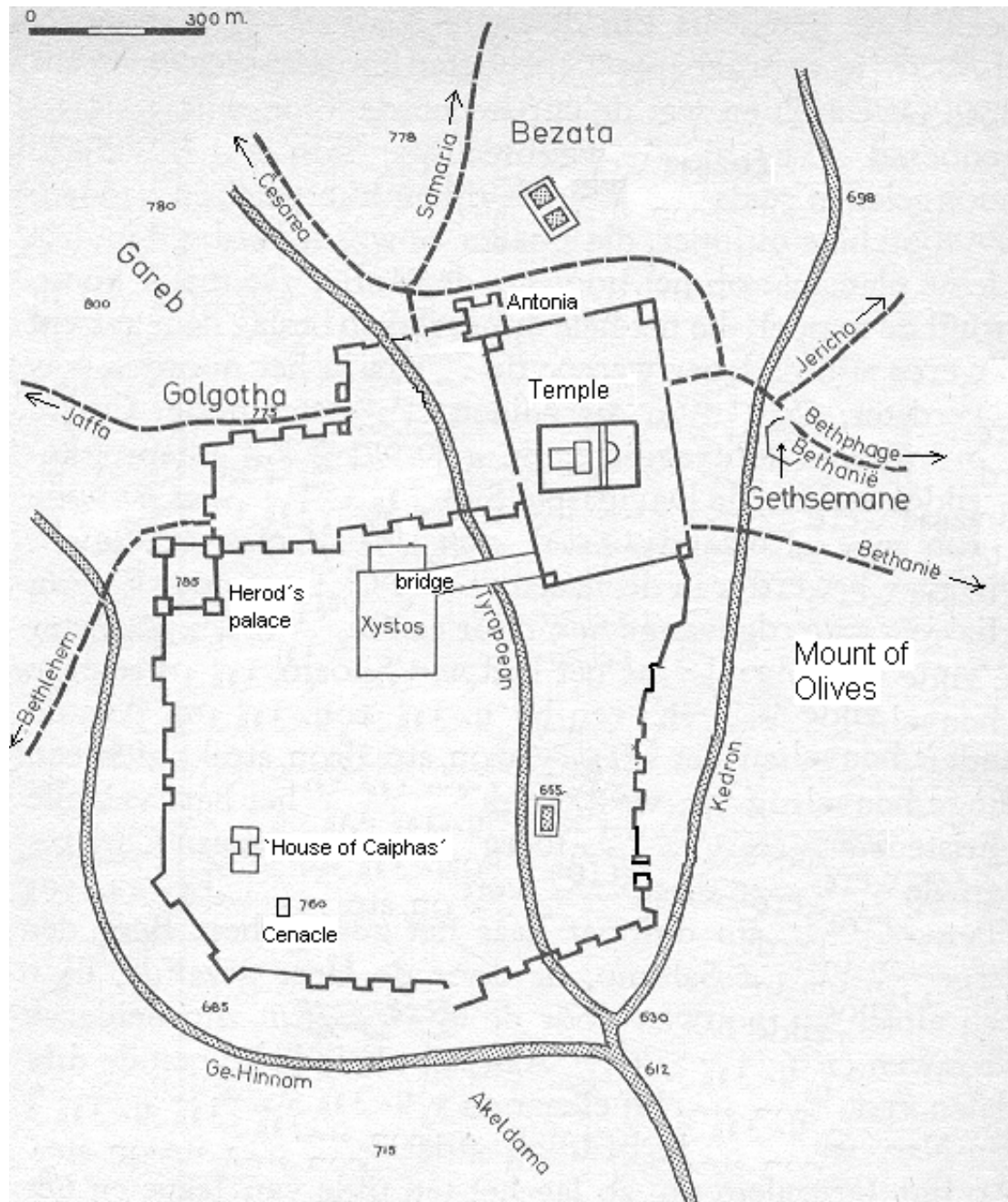


Fig. 1. Jerusalem in the days of Jesus

(adapted from Rops: 107)

Cenacle: the house of the Last Supper

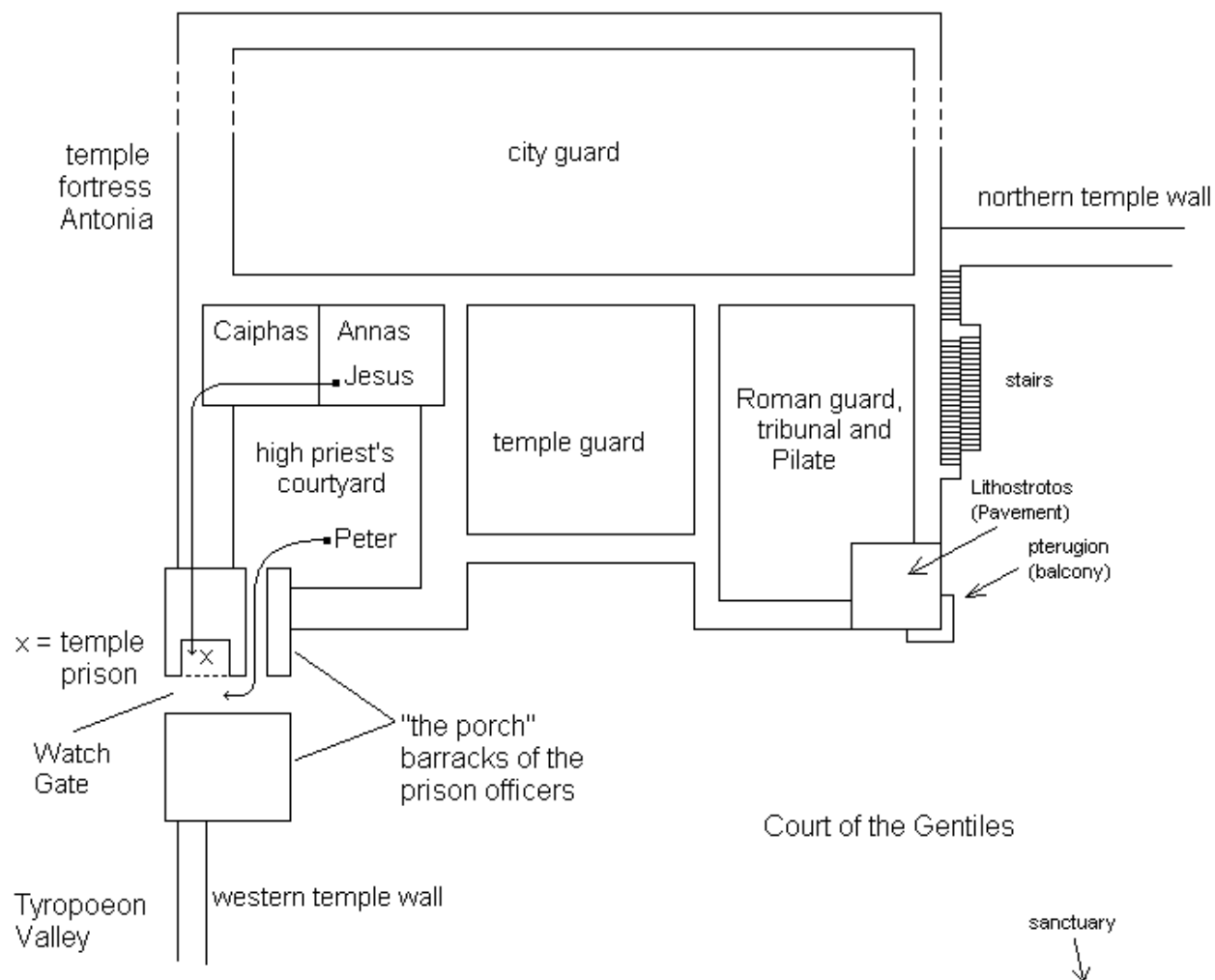
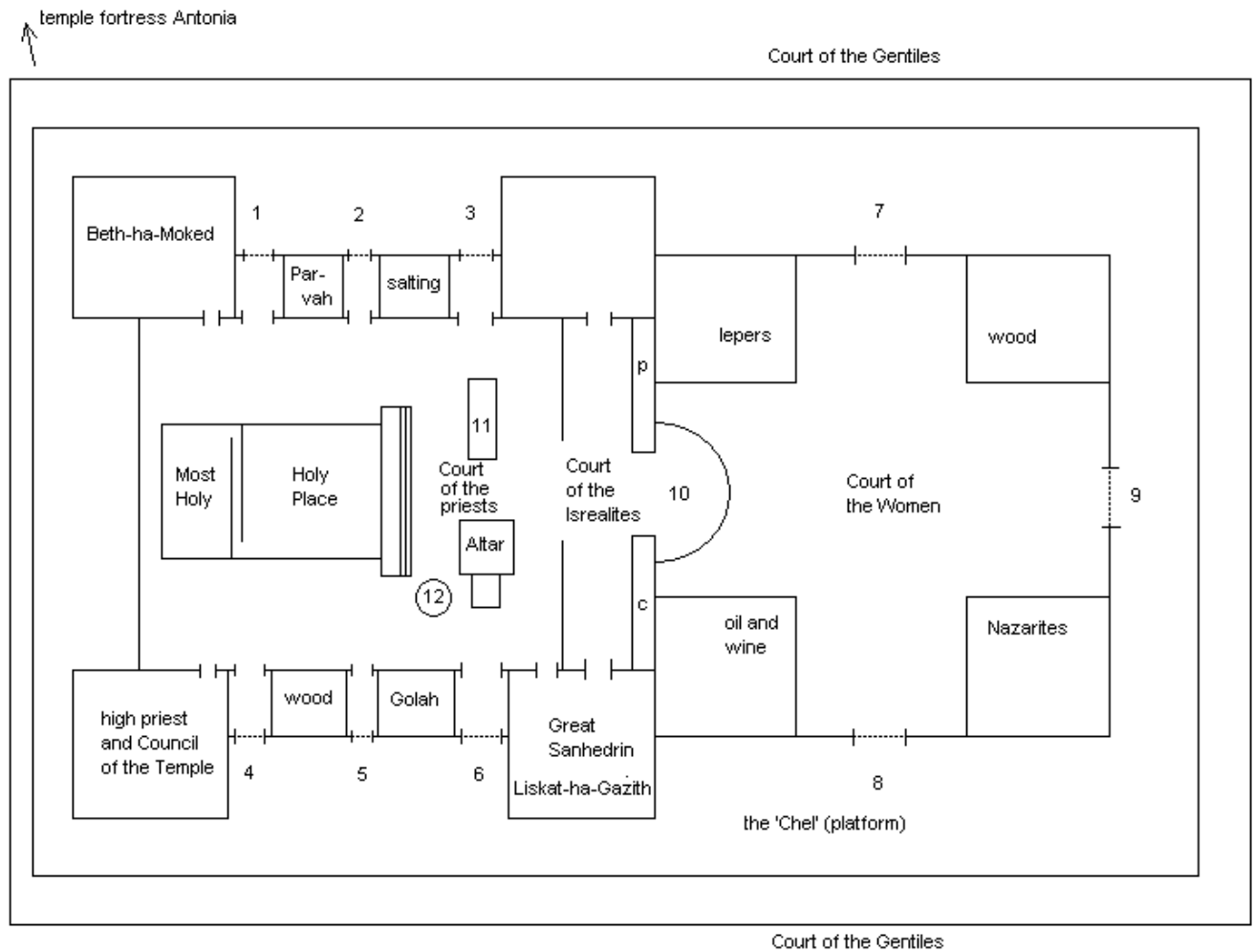


Fig. 3. A possible configuration of Antonia, the Watch Gate and the temple prison



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| 1 = Gate of the Beth-ha-Moked | Beth-ha-Moked = 'house of the stoves', main guard room and dormitory of the priests |
| 2 = Gate of Sacrifices | Parvah = chamber for salting the skins of the sacrifices |
| 3 = Spark Gate (Nitzutz) | salting = chamber for salting the sacrifices |
| 4 = Wood Gate | p = Chamber of Pinehas (= chamber of high priest's vestements) |
| 5 = Gate of the Firstlings | c = chamber of baked cakes |
| 6 = Water Gate | Golah = chamber for the water apparatus which emptied and filled the laver |
| 9 = Beautiful Gate | Liskat-ha-Gazith = Hall of Hewn Stones (or of Square Stones), |
| 10 = Nicanor Gate | the courtroom of the Great Sanhedrin |
| 11 = Slaughter house | |
| 12 = Water laver | |

Fig. 4. A sketch of the sanctuary of the temple, accessible through nine gates (according to Edersheim's description in "The Temple: Its Ministries and Services" chapter 2)

Table 1. Some characteristics of the beloved disciple, John Mark, and John of Zebedee

Characteristics of beloved disciple	Linking arguments			Characteristics of John Mark
House of beloved disciple I	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> The beloved disciple lay at Jesus' breast at the Last Supper, as if he was the host and at home. From Good Friday Mary was at the beloved disciple's and at least until Pentecost she was in the Cenacle. Tradition says the north side of the house of the Cenacle was in the house of John. 	<p style="text-align: center;">Cenacle</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The householder of the Cenacle is anonymous in all gospels. <p>(Probably the house of Nicodemus: he was a rich ruler and secret disciple "for fear of the Jews": the Cenacle had closed doors "for fear of the Jews"; Jesus came to the upper room of the anonymous master of the house by night and unnoticed, just as Nicodemus secretly had come to Jesus by night and unnoticed; Nicodemus was responsible for the provision of water for the pilgrims coming to the feast in the temple, and the Cenacle was found by Jesus' disciples by following a man carrying a jar of water, when only women carried water for their homes; Jesus spoke to Nicodemus about being born anew from water and the Spirit; in the Cenacle Jesus washed his disciple's feet with water (symbol of the forgiveness of their sins), and breathed the Holy Spirit on them.)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> The householder of John Mark's house is anonymous (Acts 12,12). Tradition calls the Cenacle the house of John Mark. Restricted access to the Cenacle (closed doors) and to John Mark's (doorkeeper doesn't let Simon Peter enter) Simon Peter's departure from the Cenacle (Jerusalem) is followed by John Mark's departure from and return to Jerusalem. Mark's gospel states that Jesus "came" to the Cenacle with the Twelve, so Mark's view-point lay inside the Cenacle. 	House of John Mark
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Simon Peter is at the beloved disciple's on Easter morning, in the Cenacle on Easter evening as a witness of Jesus' apparition, in the Cenacle during the nine days of prayer before Pentecost, and at John Mark's before his flight out of Jerusalem. 			
Beloved disciple II	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Jesus, beholding the rich young ruler, "loved him". The rich young ruler was invited to follow Jesus and to take up the cross; the beloved disciple stood by the cross of Jesus, and wanted to follow the risen Jesus. The rich young ruler came running to Jesus; the beloved disciple ran to Jesus' grave. The rich young ruler asked Jesus about eternal life; the beloved disciple wrote the gospel about eternal life. The rich young ruler is anonymous in the Gospel of Mark; the beloved disciple is anonymous in the Gospel of John. 	Rich young ruler is a "young man" (' neaniskos ') and a "ruler" (' archōn ') and rich (just as Nicodemus was a rich ruler)		
Beloved disciple III	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> The young man, who fled the temple officers, had been following Simon Peter, who was following the captured Jesus; the beloved disciple followed Simon Peter at least five times when Simon was following Jesus: 1) he ran with Simon Peter to Jesus' grave and 2) entered it only after Simon had entered, 3) he followed Simon Peter when Simon went fishing on the Lake of Tiberias (to be able to meet the risen Jesus), and 4) he followed Simon Peter by boat, after Simon had jumped into the water to meet Jesus at the shore, and 5) he started to follow Simon Peter when Simon was following the risen Jesus. (And as the evangelist John he seems to have followed Jesus to Gethsemane and later into Annas' court room.) The fleeing young man is anonymous in the Gospel of Mark; the beloved disciple is anonymous in the Gospel of John. 	Fleeing young man He was a ' neaniskos ' just as the temple officers (' hypēretai ') were young men (' neaniskoi ').		

<p>Beloved disciple</p> <p>known unto and not suspected by the high priests, scribes, elders and officers at the cross of Jesus</p> <p>IV</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. John's gospel cites the high priest Caiphas' words, both in the meeting with the Pharisees and in the trial of Jesus at night in the high priest's palace. 2. When Jesus was interrogated by the high priest Annas, a certain 'hypēretēs' slapped Jesus' face, telling Him "Is that how you answer the high priest"? This incident, although it took place in the presence of only Annas, Jesus and the 'hypēretai', is reported in John's gospel. 3. Eusebius states that the beloved disciple was a priest, carrying/wearing the 'petalon' (high priestly breast plate or priestly linen garment). 4. A secretary of a judge was a 'hypēretēs', and the judge Caiphas' deadly plan was secretly brought from the high priests' meeting place with the Pharisees to Jesus (cf. Mt 5,25 Lu 4,20 Jo 18,22). This is pre-imaged by the spy work of the counsellor Hushai for king David at the court of king Absalom. 5. John Mark, just like the secretary of the judges of Athens, was called both 'hypēretēs' and 'archōn'. Similarly the temple's prison officers were called 'hypēretai', just like Athens' prison officers were called 'hypēretai'. 6. John Mark, as the beloved disciple and as Mark, was one of the "ministers ('hypēretai') of the Word", who "delivered" Jesus' gospel to the people. Likewise 1) a Pharisaic scribe, as a minister of the Word of God, "delivered" decrees to the people, 2) Paul and Barnabas "delivered" the apostles' "decrees" to the people, and 3) also Caiphas' secretary will have delivered the decrees of Caiphas and the Council of the Temple to the priests and people. (A 'hypēretēs' of the synagogue "delivered" Bible books, and an ordinary 'hypēretēs' of the prison "delivered" prisoners.) 7. The author of the Fourth Gospel and the author of the Book of Revelations, traditionally regarded as the same person John, refer and allude to minutiae (=very small details) of the service in the temple, which were regulated by the Council of the Temple. 8. Of John Mark's two names John is a Hebrew name, befitting the Jewish secretary of the Jewish high priest Caiphas, and Mark is a Roman name, befitting the secretary who had frequent contact with his Roman colleagues, the secretaries of the Roman procurator Pilate. 9. John Mark's house (the Cenacle) is very near to the "House of Caiphas". 10. The Council of the Temple, presided over by Caiphas, judged Jesus at night, as Jesus had offended the temple order and obstructed the sacrificial service when He violently removed the merchants and moneychangers from the temple court. 11. Only the Gospel of John reveals that the 'hypēretai' of the high priests were present at Jesus' capture and also that they called out to Pilate for his crucifixion (18,3 19,6). 12. Only the Gospel of John mentions the family relationship between two 'hypēretai' in the courtyard of the high priest, and knows the name, Malchus, of one of them, and knows that the ear that had been cut off and healed in Gethsemane on the Mount of Olives was his right ear. 13. John Mark can be a Levite or priest because his uncle Barnabas is of the tribe of Levi. 14. The rich John Mark, who had obeyed all the commandments of the law from his youth, and who asked Jesus how to inherit eternal life, may have been an heir of, and have lived in the house of the rich priest and law teacher Nicodemus "the teacher of Israel", to whom Jesus had spoken about eternal life. Nicodemus used to cover himself with a 'sindōn' and Mark lost his 'sindōn'. 15. The beloved disciple didn't enter Jesus' grave until Simon had seen and had said it was empty except for the grave cloths, probably because he wanted to stay ritually clean, to be able to enter the temple and go to work. 16. Jesus was buried in a 'sindōn': a fine linen cloth or garment. All the temple clothes of the priests and Levites (e.g. Samuel) had to be made of white linen and be ritually clean. The linen cloak, worn by Jewish men and boys at prayer, and which could cover a boy almost completely, was called a 'sindōn'. John Mark fled naked after he left his 'sindōn' in the hands of the 'hypēretai' who took Jesus to the temple fortress Antonia. (That Jesus turned and looked at Peter in the porch, proves that Jesus' cell, the 'hypēretai' and Peter were in Antonia). Joseph of Arimatea bought a (ritually) "clean" 'sindōn' after he had received Pilate's permission in Antonia to bury Jesus. (Paul's movements from the temple's sanctuary to the top of the stairs prove that the Roman tribunal was in Antonia). The beloved disciple was present at the burial. At Easter morning he entered the empty grave, not to verify it was empty but to see the grave cloth. Seeing it neatly rolled up like a garment made only the beloved disciple (and not Simon Peter) believe that Jesus had risen, because Jesus had to have done this for him. The grave cloth was given to the servant of the (high) priest by the risen Jesus, according to the Gospel of the Hebrews, and the beloved disciple John and Mary went to Ephesus in Asia Minor according to tradition, and took the grave cloth there, according to some scholars. And according to tradition John wrote the Fourth Gospel in Ephesus. John Mark lost his temple 'sindōn' (and slapped Jesus' face) – Jesus (imprinted his face on the 'sindōn' and) returned it to John Mark. <i>(According to Ian Wilson the Shroud of Turin may have been the same as the Mandylion, which showed up in Asia Minor in 525-600 CE. The Shroud's corded seam, its starch impurities, and its having been (doubled and) rolled up, prove it was a Jewish (priest's) temple garment.)</i> 17. The risen Jesus wanted the beloved disciple to "remain until I come" and not to follow Him, and probably meant that John Mark had to remain Caiphas' secretary and Jesus' secret disciple; John Mark remained anonymous in his gospel by calling himself the beloved disciple, which complies with his remaining a secret disciple and Caiphas' secretary, and remained anonymous in his Gospel of Mark, as the rich young ruler and fleeing young man. 18. In the Acts there is a priest called John at Caiphas' side in the council gathered in the temple, and its secret discourse, on the undeniable miracle worked in the temple by Peter and John of Zebedee in Jesus' name, found its way into the New Testament. 19. The beloved disciple followed Simon Peter and Jesus many times, and John Mark followed Simon Peter and Jesus from Gethsemane (to his place of solitary prayer and) to Antonia, and later followed Simon Peter to Antioch, and was called "a follower of Peter" and wrote down Simon Peter's narratives in the Gospel of Mark. 	<p>John Mark is a 'hypēretēs' Acts 13,5</p> <p>'hypēretēs' was the word used by the Jews for</p> <p>1) a lower officer of the high priests in the temple, e.g. a lower officer of the temple prison</p> <p>2) a 'hazzan' = a Levitical sacristan of a synagogue and</p> <p>3) a Levitical secretary of a judge</p>
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<p>Author of the Gospel of John, together with Mary, Jesus' mother</p> <p>V</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. John Mark was a man of letters, for he was the author of the Gospel of Mark. 2. The Gospel of John was written by the beloved disciple, called John, at Ephesus (Irenaeus), and John and Mary (took Jesus' grave cloth to Ephesus and) arrived and lived there together (according to Irenaeus, Polycrates and Eusebius). 3. The Gospel of John proclaims Jesus' being God, born in the flesh ("The Word was God", "the Word was made flesh", "the only begotten God"). 4. The Gospel of John knows the thoughts, emotions and motives of Jesus. 5. There were three phases in the development of the Gospel of John, and therefore there may have been three authors: Mary, John Mark, and the author of John 21. 6. The beloved disciple is a man according to the grammar of John 19,25 and John 21,24 ("he", "his"). 7. The male authorship was known from the start of the gospel's publication and transmission, and therefore no one thought of Mary. 8. Mark is able to cite Jesus' solitary prayer in Gethsemane, but John of Zebedee was asleep there, so John Mark, as the secret beloved disciple, followed Simon Peter and Jesus from the Cenacle to the Mount of Olives, and from there to Gethsemane, and from there he even left Simon Peter and John of Zebedee and secretly followed Jesus to the place where Jesus went to pray alone. 9. Westcott's concentric circles of proof can all be applied to John Mark and Mary. Westcott's fifth circle of proof, claiming that John's Gospel says its author was an apostle, is invalid, for it says it was a disciple. 10. Both the author of the Gospel of John and the author of the Gospel of Mark allude to very small details of the service in the temple (John 13,10 Mark 13,35) 11. The Fourth Gospel speaks of Jesus as "the Word" ('tou Logou'), Mark is a 'hypēretēs', and the author of the Gospels of John and Mark was one of the "ministers of the Word" ('hypēretai tou Logou') (Luke's denotation of an evangelist in Luke 1,2). 	<p>Author of the Gospel of Mark</p>
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<p>The author of the Gospel of John is anonymous, literate and a secret disciple of Jesus, and is ambiguous</p> <p>and cites Jesus' solitary prayer</p> <p>VI</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The author of the Fourth Gospel had a home in Jerusalem and alludes to very small details of the temple service, but John of Zebedee was fisherman in Galilee. 2. Simon Peter (Mt 16,16 26,33-35 John 13,6-9) and the apostle John of Zebedee (Luke 9,52-54) have an impetuosity which complies with the nickname "Boanerges" (= Sons of Thunder) of the brothers John and James of Zebedee, denoting their fiery and destructive zeal. 3. Simon Peter and the apostle John of Zebedee are "unlearned and ignorant men", but the beloved disciple wrote the Fourth Gospel. 4. Simon Peter and James and John of Zebedee were asleep when Jesus prayed in agony, but the Gospel of John and the Gospel of Mark (and those of Matthew and Luke) cite this prayer of Jesus, of which John of Zebedee cannot have been the source (nor probably the publican Matthew or the physician Luke). 5. Simon Peter and John of Zebedee both were apostles of Jesus publicly and also both present at the capture of Jesus in Gethsemane, but still, only Simon Peter got interrogated and recognized as a disciple by the 'hypēretai' in the high priest's courtyard, and the beloved disciple didn't get interrogated or recognized at the cross (just like the secret disciples Joseph of Arimatea and Nicodemus, who buried Jesus, weren't recognized). John of Zebedee, on the other hand, got recognized as a disciple of Jesus in the temple. 6. The beloved disciple is anonymous in his own gospel, and thus was not out-spoken. 7. The beloved disciple didn't reveal the identity of "the disciple known to the high priest" at the gate, and thus was not out-spoken. 8. The beloved disciple ran and reached Jesus' grave first, but didn't enter it first, and thus was not impetuous. 9. The beloved disciple didn't tell Peter or Mary Magdalene that his 'sindōn' had been bought and buried, and thus was not out-spoken. 10. The beloved disciple didn't tell Simon Peter or Mary Magdalena about his belief that Jesus had risen, and thus was not out-spoken. 11. The beloved disciple gave an ambiguous description of what he saw in the grave and what and why he believed, and thus was not out-spoken. 12. The beloved disciple recognized the risen Jesus first, but didn't go to Him first, and thus was not impetuous. 13. The beloved disciple was a secret disciple, fled the 'hypēretai', slapped Jesus' face, kept silent at Jesus' conviction, and thus was not zealous. 14. (The beloved disciple, for fear of the Jews, denied Jesus by slapping Him in the face before Annas, but reported this incident in his gospel, and thus was ambiguous in stead of impetuous. Also John Mark was ambiguous for he ran to Jesus, was invited to follow Him, but sadly left Jesus as he was rich, and later he secretly followed the arrested Jesus, but fled the 'hypēretai' who held Him.) 	<p>IS NOT John of Zebedee, who is bold (out-spoken), illiterate and zealous/impetuous and a plain and downright man</p> <p>who was asleep when Jesus prayed in agony and solitude</p> <p>John of Zebedee is distinguished from John Mark in Acts 12,2.12</p>
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