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# Studien zum Neuen Testament und seiner Umwelt

## Probleme der Forschung

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## VORWORT

*Auch der dritte Band der „SNTU“ bringt wie die beiden vorausgegangenen eine breite Auswahl exegetischer Arbeiten zum Neuen Testament. Teilweise war dafür wieder die Absicht maßgeblich, Autoren zu Wort kommen zu lassen, deren Veröffentlichungen in ihrer Muttersprache (dänisch, finnisch, holländisch, polnisch) den wenigsten benützlich wären. Diese bereits in Band 1 und 2 verwirklichte Zielsetzung wurde von verschiedenen Seiten sehr begrüßt und soll im Rahmen des Möglichen auch weiter beibehalten werden. Zugleich werden die „Studien“ aber in der Hinsicht eine Änderung erfahren, daß in Zukunft auch Aufsätze in Englisch und Französisch erscheinen, wofür in diesem Band ein erster Anfang gesetzt ist. Es ist zu hoffen, daß dies einem nicht geringen Kreis von Lesern die biblische Arbeit erleichtert.*

*Längstens mit dem dritten Band wird für die Abonnenten und Bezieher auch deutlich geworden sein, daß es sich bei den „Studien“ um eine periodische Veröffentlichung handelt, die ab 1979 zweimal jährlich — bei vermindertem Heftumfang — herauskommt, wobei ein eventueller Titel im Durchschnitt nur auf einen Teil des Inhalts Bezug nimmt. Es ist offenkundig, daß dies auch für den vorliegenden Band gilt.*

*Der Text der Beiträge wurde durchgehend etwas bearbeitet, doch geschah das auf Ersuchen bzw. mit ausdrücklicher Zustimmung der Verfasser, die deshalb für den Inhalt auch allein verantwortlich sind.*

*Es bleibt noch zu erwähnen, daß die notwendige Vereinheitlichung in der Zitation der Literatur, bei den Abkürzungen und ähnlichem von meiner Assistentin Fr. C. Eckmair durchgeführt wurde, die auch die Register erstellt hat. Für alle damit verbundene Mühe und den aufgewendeten Fleiß gebührt ihr aufrichtiger Dank.*

*A. Fuchs*

## The Angels of the Son of Man \*

The venerable Bede writes in his *Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum* that when St. Gregory the Great saw some boys in the slave market in Rome who had come from the race of the Angles in Britain, he exclaimed that they had the face of angels, and that they ought to be converted to Christianity and so made fellow-heirs of the angels in heaven.<sup>1</sup> Another form of the tradition says that the future pope told the youths that they should not call themselves Angles (“Anguli”), but “Angeli Dei, Angels of God”.<sup>2</sup> This *bon mot*, which through the years has given pleasure to seminarians in their study of church history, has in fact a good basis in the theology of the NT. It is interesting to see how many persons in the gospels are either called angels, or are given angel-like qualities, or in any case are made fellow-heirs of the angels of heaven.<sup>3</sup>

The term ἄγγελος appears about 55 times in the gospels,<sup>4</sup> many times translated as *angel*, but other times rendered as *messenger*. Thus it loses in translation some of the richer connotations found in the Greek.

An important example is the role played by John the Baptist in the Gospel according to St. Mark. Many interpreters of the gospel think that the Baptist is a paradigm of Christian discipleship for the evangelist.<sup>5</sup> The Baptist prepares the way of the Lord, and

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\* Der erste Entwurf dieses auf den neuesten Stand gebrachten und verbesserten Aufsatzes erschien unter dem Titel „Los Angeles del Hijo del Hombre“ in: *EstB* 32 (1973) 283–289 [Die Redaktion].

<sup>1</sup> *B. Colgrave—R. A. B. Mynors* (ed), Bede, *Ecclesiastical history of the English people* (Oxford mediaeval texts), London 1970, 135.

<sup>2</sup> *B. Colgrave* (ed), *The Earliest Life of Gregory the Great* by an Anonymous Monk of Whitby, Lawrence 1968, 90f.

<sup>3</sup> For discussion of the presence of angels in the theology and worship of Qumran, cf. *J. A. Fitzmyer*, A Feature of Qumrân Angelology and the Angels of 1 Cor 11,10, in: *NTS* 4 (1957–58) 48–58; and *H. J. Cadbury*, A Qumran Parallel to Paul, in: *HTR* 51 (1958) 1–2. For the Old Testament background, cf. *G. M. Landes*, Shall We Neglect the Angels?, in: *USQR* 14 (1959) 19–25; and *M. Takahashi*, An Oriental’s Approach to the Problems of Angelology, in: *ZAW* 78 (1966) 343–350.

<sup>4</sup> It is found 51 times in the synoptics, not including ἰσάγγελοι in Lk 20,36.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. *W. Marrens*, *Der Evangelist Markus* (FRLANT, 67), Göttingen

directs the multitude at Mk 1,7 to the mightier one, that is, Jesus. The Baptist has to suffer a passion and unjust death at the hands of the leaders of Galilee, which prepares the reader of Mk for the passion of our Lord in Jerusalem. Indeed the first verse of the gospel, after its title (1,1), gives to the Baptist the name of Mal 3,1 τὸν ἄγγελόν μου, literally my angel/messenger, who prepares the way of the Lord on earth. Also at Mt 11,9f (Lk 7,26f) Jesus is presented as saying that John the Baptist was "more than a prophet", indeed he was „my messenger". If John the Baptist was the angel and messenger of the Lord, and a very important model for the followers of Jesus, it would appear that they too may have been called to be angel/messengers of the Lord.

John the Baptist is described in Mk 1,4 as one who preached a baptism of repentance in preparation for the mightier one who was to come. The same role of preaching is used to describe the purpose of calling the twelve in Mk 3,14 (ἵνα ἀποστέλλῃ . . . κηρύσσειν), and in 6,7 the twelve are sent out (ἀποστέλλειν) by Jesus in order to preach repentance (vs. 12: ἐκήρυξαν ἵνα μετανοῶσιν . . .).<sup>6</sup> In Mk 13,10 and 14,9 the content of the preaching is simply called *the gospel*. The disciples thus expect not only to participate in the future authority of the Son of man, when he comes in glory as judge,<sup>7</sup> but already in the present time they can serve as his ἄγγελοι, preaching repentance and the good news that in Jesus the victory of God over the demonic world is already being realized. Just as the Son of man will come in clouds with great power and glory, and will send out (ἀποστελεῖ) the angels, and will gather his elect (Mk 13,27f; cf. Mt 13,39—42.49f), already in the historical life of Jesus he began to send out the twelve (6,7: ἤρξατο . . . ἀποστέλλειν).<sup>8</sup> It is the evangelist Lk who especially identifies the disciples as ἄγγελους. In 9,51f, when Jesus set his face to go to Jerusalem, he sent messengers (ἀπέστειλεν

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<sup>2</sup>1959, 17—26; S. E. Johnson, A Commentary on the Gospel According to St. Mark (BNTC), London 1972, 23; and W. Wink, John the Baptist in the Gospel Tradition (SNTS MS, 7), Cambridge 1968, 11.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Lk 15,10, where the angels of God rejoice over one sinner who repents.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Mk 10,35ff; Mt 19,28 (Lk 22,30); Mt 25,31—46.

<sup>8</sup> This correlation between the earthly activity of Jesus and the action of the Son of man is made especially clear in Mt 26, where the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners (vs. 45), but he says to his disciples that he could appeal to his Father, and he would at once send more than twelve legions of angels (vs. 53). Also in Jn 1,51 Jesus' present mission is explained by a vision of the Son of man, upon whom the angels of God descend; Jesus is that Son of man, who descends from heaven (3,13) as judge (5,27).

ἀγγέλους) ahead of him. Also at Lk 7,24 two of the disciples of John the Baptist are called his ἄγγελοι messengers.<sup>9</sup>

Mark the evangelist mentions the ministry of angels at the beginning of the mission of Jesus (1,13), when angels ministered to him in the wilderness,<sup>10</sup> and at the end of his life (16,5f), when the young man in a white robe<sup>11</sup> said that Jesus had risen and was going before the disciples to Galilee, where they would see him.<sup>12</sup> In these examples it is clear that the angel of God participates in the divine authority and power of him who sent him. The messenger is authenticated and authorized by his sender. The decisive question is not especially the ontological status of the angel/messenger *per se* (is it supernatural or human?), but rather deals with the problem "Whose angel/messenger is he?"<sup>13</sup> Mk believes that Jesus was proleptically in his historical life the coming exalted Son of man; and even before his resurrection, Jesus was truly to be called the Son of God. Therefore it is a coherent and natural consequence of his faith that Mk describes John the Baptist, who prepares the way of Jesus, as his angel/messenger, and that the evangelist presents the disciples as preaching the gospel of the victory of God in Jesus, just as the angel of the End in Rev 14,6f was to do, but already during the life and ministry of Jesus.

This application of future roles and actions to the earthly life of Jesus represents pre-Marcian tradition, which comes at least from the primitive church which spoke Aramaic and referred to Jesus as *bar nasha*. Indeed much of the confusion which is found in the concept and „chronology“ of the Son of man comes from the fact that Aramaic and Hebrew do not have a future tense clearly distinguished from the present tense of the verb. It is inherently possible, perhaps probable, that also among Jesus' first disciples

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Mt 25,41, where the devil also has his angels.

<sup>10</sup> Mt 4,11. Cf. Mt 18,10, where the disciples have guardian angels in heaven, and Lk 22,43, where an angel strengthens Jesus on the Mount of Olives. At Jn 12,29, while some people hear thunder, others interpret the sound as an angel speaking to Jesus. At Mt 4,6 (Lk 4,10) the devil tempted Jesus to force his guardian angels to save him from harm. Finally Mt 1,20.24; 2,13.19, and Lk 1,11.13.18f.26.28.30.34f.38; 2,9f.13.15.21 also stress the role of angels at the beginning of Jesus' life.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. *E. Haenchen*, *Der Weg Jesu*, Berlin <sup>2</sup>1968, 308: „Die Männer in weißen Kleidern sind immer himmlische Wesen“.

<sup>12</sup> Mt 28,2.5; Lk 24,23, and Jn 20,12 present additional tradition about angels which announce the resurrection of Jesus.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. *R. van der Hart*, *The Theology of Angels and Devils*, Cork—Dublin 1972, 24: „The word ‚angel‘ stands above all for a function, a divine function in which all sorts of persons and things can participate so long as they are suitable“.

there must have been a similar application of the future role of the angels of the Son of man to the disciples themselves, since Jesus was the future, coming Son of man already proleptically present on earth, and the concept of the Son of man presupposed a company of angel/messengers who would accompany him in his *parousia*. If Jesus thought of himself in any sense as realizing in the present the vocation of the Son of man, then in the same sense it was necessary to have a company of disciples who would accompany him and share in his life and work.

There are indications that the disciples were proleptic angels of the proleptic Son of man, collaborating in his mission. For example, when Mk 2,10 says that the Son of man has authority on earth to forgive sins, one remembers the proclamation of John the Baptist about repentance for the forgiveness of sins (1,4f), and the later commission the disciples receive in Lk 24,47 "that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be preached in his name ...". John the Baptist, the first angel/messenger of the mightier one, was able to effect forgiveness of sins in his baptism because he was sent by God, in whose authority he participated. Although Mk does not say *expressis verbis* that the followers of Jesus forgive sins, in any case they are able to heal many that were sick (6,13); and in 2,9 the evangelist indicates the close relation between sin and sickness: "Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven', or to say, 'Rise, take up your pallet and walk'?"

In Mk 2,23—28 the intimacy and close collaboration between the Son of man and his disciples is stressed. The Pharisees criticize the disciples of Jesus who pluck ears of grain on the sabbath in order to attack Jesus himself, as they did previously at 2,16 and 2,18. Jesus' reply indicates that the disciples participate in the authority of the Son of man: "The sabbath was made for man, not man for the sabbath; so the Son of man is lord even of the sabbath" (vs. 27f).

The references to the Son of man who has to suffer in Mk 8,31; 9,9.12.31; and at 10,33 reach their climax in 10,45: "The Son of man also came ... to serve, and to give his life ... for many". This saying follows verses 42—44, in which it is emphasized that the disciples have a similar ministry of serving. Also in 13,9—13 the disciples are warned that they too have to suffer many things.

All of these sayings of Jesus as the Son of man indicate a close intimacy between him and his disciples, which has its most profound expression in the last supper, where Jesus speaks of the Son of man going as it is written of him (14,21), and says later in vs. 24: "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many ...", repeating the theme of 10,45. Even in the betrayal of the Son of

man (14,41f), the disciples are called by Jesus to be with him to the very end, until the scriptures were fulfilled, when they all forsook him, and fled (vs. 49f).

Table-fellowship as a concrete expression of the unity between Jesus and his followers is a theme which is repeated many times in Mk. Almost at the beginning of his mission Jesus was criticized because he ate with sinners and tax collectors (2,15ff), but he responded: "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick; I came not to call the righteous, but sinners". The last public act of Jesus as a free man was to eat in Bethany with Simon the leper (14,3). An integral part of the ministry of Jesus was to give food to those who needed it, not only in the important events of the feedings of the five thousand and of the four thousand (6,36—44; 8,1—9), as well as the last supper, but also incidentally in the accounts of the healing of Jairus' daughter (5,43) and of the request of the Syrophenician woman (7,24—30), to whom Jesus says that his mission is to feed the children first. It is interesting that the only time in Mk (11,12f) in which it is said that Jesus himself was hungry, the story goes on to say that the fig tree outside Jerusalem could not supply him with food.<sup>14</sup> Perhaps this is a legend used by Mk to symbolize the absence of fruit in Judaism and its sterility,<sup>15</sup> in contrast to Jesus who welcomed and fed everyone who would come to his table.

Now even if much in these stories about the intimacy and collaboration between Jesus, the Son of man already present on earth, and his disciples, expressed especially in Jesus' meals with his companions, should be attributed to the hand of the evangelist, nonetheless it cannot be disputed that the historical Jesus in fact did welcome the lowly and outcasts to his table and to his fellowship. And this *ipsissima actio* of Jesus necessarily presupposes mission. The lowly and outcasts have to hear the good news of Jesus before they can come to his table and fellowship, just as the

<sup>14</sup> The unity between Jesus and his disciples and their collaboration is further presupposed in the interpretation of the cursing of the fig tree in Mk 11,20—25: greater miracles than this can be done by the disciples — even casting a mountain into the sea. Cf. *J. Caba*, La oración de petición (AnBib, 62), Rom 1974, 143: „The realization of this divine power to move and level mountains is a scriptural theme of eschatological time (Jes 40,4; 49,11; 54,10) mentioned by the synoptics (Mt 3,3; Mk 1,3; Lk 3,5—6); the participation now in this power by the disciples may be supported by this climate of eschatological realization by Jesus with his disciples“. Cf. *X. Léon-Dufour*, Etudes d'Évangile, Paris 1965, 200.

<sup>15</sup> But cf. the discussion of *J. Schmid*, Das Evangelium nach Markus (RNT, 2), Regensburg 1963, ad loc., and *J. Alonso Diaz*, Evangelio de San Marcos, in: La Sagrada Escritura, I, ad loc., who question this symbolical interpretation.



sick have to hear of the presence of the kind healer before they can receive healing. Such a mission is illustrated in the parable of the marriage feast (Mt 22,1—14), in which servants are sent to call and gather all whom they found, both good and bad, so that the wedding hall was filled with guests (vs. 10). The same understanding of mission is found in Mt 8,11 (Lk 13,29): "Many will come from east and west and sit at table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, while the sons of the kingdom will be thrown into the outer darkness . . .".

If the communal meals during Jesus' lifetime were in a sense anticipatory of the eschatological banquet which would come in its fulness in the kingdom of God, and to which Jesus referred at the last supper when he spoke of not drinking again of the fruit of the vine until that day when he would drink it new in the kingdom of God (Mk 14,25; Mt 26,29; cf. Lk 22,16.18), then it would seem possible that the disciples of Jesus, when they were not ashamed but were witnesses of Jesus to others so that they too might participate in the fellowship meals, also performed in the present during the life of Jesus a function which anticipated what the angels of the Son of man were to do at the end of the age. The role of the angels and the role of Jesus' followers were similar: to prepare the way of the Lord, preach the gospel of the victory of God in Jesus, and to gather God's elect.

This theology of mission seems to be present in Mk 8,34—38. The multitude with the disciples of Jesus are exhorted to take up their cross and accept the risk of losing their life for Jesus and the gospel, the opposite of being ashamed of Jesus and his words. If the followers of Jesus in the present indeed do not follow him and disseminate his words, but are ashamed, a parallel situation will take place in the future: The Son of man with his holy angels will also be ashamed of these false disciples (vs. 38). In Mt 16,27 the correlation between present and future is especially stressed: "Then he will repay every man for what he has done"<sup>16</sup>. Also the saying of Jesus in Mk 12,25 (Mt 22,30) makes a direct comparison

<sup>16</sup> Cf. Lk 12,8f (Mt 10,32f): "Every one who acknowledges me before men, the Son of man also will acknowledge before the angels of God; but he who denies me before men will be denied before the angels of God". It is possible that the phrase angels of God may not only be a periphrasis for *God*, or my Father (as it is found in Mt), but also indicates a stage in the eschatological mission of the angels. The Son of man tells his angels what men have already heard the Gospel on earth, who of them have denied Jesus (and thus ought to be rejected), and who of them have confessed Jesus (and thus ought to be gathered with the elect). For example, in Lk 16,22 the angels know Lazarus and carry him after his death to Abraham in heaven, but the rich man they leave in the torment of Hades.

between resurrection life and the angels in heaven: "When they rise from the dead, they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven"; Lk 20,36 uses the phrase ἰσάγγελοι, "they are equal to angels and are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection". And if the healings by Jesus, and especially the raising of the dead (Mk 5,42; Mt 9,25; Lk 8,55; 7,15; cf. Mk 9,27) manifest the presence of the kingdom of God, and are anticipations of the future resurrection, also in this world Jesus' disciples can speak proleptically with the tongues of angels (1 Cor 13,1), be received as an angel of God (Gal 4,14), and have a face "like the face of an angel" (Acts 6,15); indeed by showing hospitality to strangers, "some have entertained angels unawares" (Heb 13,2).<sup>17</sup>

It also seems probable that a future preaching of the gospel not only comes from the most ancient Aramaic tradition, but also is a necessary concomitant of Jesus' own teaching about the glorious Son of man who was to come, and about the kingdom of God which was at hand. Seeing that Jesus himself preached the gospel of the nearness of God's kingdom already in his life and mission, how much more would it be preached in the future, when it would always be closer in its glorious arrival. And since the disciples of Jesus also participated in that mission of proclamation, established by Jesus himself, they inevitably had to continue in that preaching until the end. Mk 13,32 (Mt 24,36) is an important example of this intimate relation between Jesus and his disciples, and the Son of man and his angels. Of that day or that hour when the Son of man comes, "no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son" (of man).<sup>18</sup> Thus the disciples (vs. 33), and indeed all the followers of Jesus (vs. 37), receive the warning: "Take heed, watch; for you do not know when the time will come" (vs. 33). This ignorance of

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<sup>17</sup> Cf. Rev 1,16.20, in which the angels of the seven churches represent, according to some commentators, their bishops (*Billerbeck*, III, 791f), but according to the majority of the commentaries represent their guardian angels (*M. Rist—L. H. Hough*, *The Revelation of St. John the Divine*, in: IB, XII, 345—613, 378; *G. B. Caird*, *A Commentary on the Revelation of St. John the Divine* [BNTC], London 1971, 24); other literature in *M. Rissi*, *Was ist und was geschehen soll danach. Die Zeit- und Geschichtsauffassung der Offenbarung des Johannes* (ATHANT, 46), Zürich—Stuttgart 1965, 109f. But if the author thinks of guardian angels, it is difficult to understand how one can write letters to such angels (2,1.8.12.18; 3,1.7.14). Celestial angels would not need written letters in order to know the will of the glorious Christ. It should also be noted that in 21,17 a man's measure is interchangeable with an angel's, and in 19,10 and 22,8f an angel rejects John's worship because he is a fellow servant like John and his brethren.

<sup>18</sup> So *R. H. Fuller*, *The Foundations of New Testament Christology*, New York 1965, 114.

the disciples is typical for Mark's presentation of them,<sup>19</sup> and is yet another characteristic which they share here with the angels as well.

Such testimony about Jesus, his life and message, is fully consistent with the proleptic ministry accomplished by him, who already in his life before the resurrection gave such eschatological benefits as liberation from Satan and a new reconciliation with God, offered to everyone. Insofar as this proleptic mission was true and authentic for Jesus, being in a certain sense (possibly known only to him and to God) the present Son of man who suffers and brings the kingdom of God, *in the same sense also* his disciples were missionaries of the End, preaching the gospel of the victory of God in Jesus and gathering from the four winds, from the ends of the earth, his elect, beginning, as did Jesus, in Galilee.

In summary, if Jesus spoke in any way about the Son of man, a fact that seems certain, then he had to speak also about his universal reign and his angels. Insofar as Jesus realized in his own life, death, and resurrection the vocation and mission of the Son of man, his followers also had a vocation to realize proleptically and cooperate in the role and mission of the angel/messengers of the Son of man, preparing his way, proclaiming the gospel of the victory of God in Jesus, and gathering the elect. Thus the disciples of Jesus had to think of their mission in this world as a vocation to become not "Anguli" but "Angeli Dei." They were called to become neither Jew nor Greek, but independent of every secular loyalty. The vocation of the disciples of Jesus was to liberate themselves from the past and open themselves to the future, so as to realize here on earth their citizenship in the kingdom of God, ἰσάγγελοι, like the angels of the Lord.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>19</sup> Cf. *T. J. Weeden*, *Mark — Traditions in Conflict*, Philadelphia 1971, 163.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. *A. Farrer*, *The Revelation of St. John the Divine*, Oxford 1964, 70: "Though the saints have their sphere of action on earth, they are 'in Jesus' (1,9; 14,13), they are in heaven (12,1) or tabernacle there (12,12; 13,6) . . ."