

KS. MIECZYSLAW MIKOŁAJCZAK

SINCE „THE DAYS OF THE TEMPLE”  
TILL „THE DAYS OF THE PASSION” (MK 14,48-49)

St. Mark speaks of the Temple for the last time in Mk 14,49 in his account of Jesus' arrest in the Garden of Gethsemane (καὶ ἔρχονται εἰς χωρίον οὗ τὸ ὄνομα Γεθσημανί) – „And they came to a place which was named Gethsemane” (Mk 14,32). The pericope about Jesus' arrest is found in the section in which the evangelist presents Jesus' coming to the Garden of Gethsemane (Mk 14,26-52). It belongs to a larger part of the second Gospel which describes the Passion and Resurrection of Jesus Christ (Mk 14,1-16.20)<sup>1</sup>. The excerpt of Mk 14,48-49 is a logion of Jesus in which he indicates the transition from the first stage of realization of his messianic mission and then coming to Jerusalem and teaching in the Temple (Mk 11-13) to the days of his Passion καὶ ἀποκριθεὶς ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν αὐτοῖς, Ὡς ἐπὶ ληστὴν ἐξήλθατε μετὰ μαχαίρων καὶ ξύλων συλλαβεῖν με;

---

<sup>1</sup> Cf. G. SCHILLE. *Das Leiden des Herrn*. In: „Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche” 52:1955 pp. 161-205; T.A. BURKILL. *St. Mark's Philosophy of the Passion*. In: „New Testament Studies” 2:1958 pp. 245-271; R. PESCH. *Die Überlieferung der Passion Jesu*. [In]: K. KERTEGLE. *Rückfrage nach Jesus*. In: *Quaestiones Disputatae* 63:1974 pp. 148-173.

καθ' ἡμέραν ἤμην πρὸς ὑμᾶς ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ διδάσκων καὶ οὐκ ἐκρατήσατέ με· ἀλλ' ἵνα πληρωθῶσιν αἱ γραφαί (Mk 14,1-15.47).

The word „temple” is used by Jesus for the last time in Mk 14,49. Jesus reminds of his activity as a teacher in the days when he attended the Temple and preached the Gospel of the Kingdom of His Father, God – JHWH (Mk 11-13). The excerpt of Mk 14,48-49 is retrospective in nature. „The Temple” is the place of the former ministry of Jesus. It is worth noticing that no other word is used in the context of Jesus' teaching in Jerusalem but „the Temple”.

### 1. THE ARREST OF JESUS IN THE GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE (MK 14,43-49)

Jesus does not resist his arrest but in a very resolute and unequivocal way reviles the method of his apprehension as devious, treacherous, duplicitous and ruthless. The religious leaders could have had arrested him earlier when he spent time in the Jerusalem Temple. It was then that he laid himself open to the disfavour of the leaders of the nation (ἤμην ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ διδάσκων). Jesus was there and could have been arrested then. The phrase ἤμην πρὸς ὑμᾶς depicts the arrest better than the past perfect tense which is more descriptive (ἤμην (...) διδάσκων). So we can conclude that the leaders were helpless in the face of Jesus greatness while he was teaching. They lacked courage to arrest him because they were afraid of the people.

Other synoptics describe these events slightly differently. This difference is especially noticeable in words of accusation spoken by Jesus to the soldiers arresting him – in other accounts these words have been omitted. In the Gospel of St. Matthew Jesus' logion from Mk 14,48-49 is replaced with καθεζόμεν ἤμην which presents him in a position typical of a teacher who sits down to teach (Ἐν ἐκείνῃ τῇ ὥρᾳ εἶπεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς τοῖς ὄχλοις, Ὡς ἐπὶ ληστὴν ἐξήλθατε μετὰ μαχαίρων καὶ ξύλων συλλαβεῖν με; καθ' ἡμέραν ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ ἐκαθεζόμεν διδάσκων καὶ οὐκ ἐκρατήσατέ με – Mt 26,55)<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> It is a very characteristic phrase in synoptic Gospels and also in St. John's where Jesus, the Teacher teaches sitting. Cf. Mt 5,1; 13,2; 15,29; 23,2; 24,3; 26,55; Mk 4,1; 9,35; 13,3; Lk 2,46; 4,20; 5,3; Jn 6,3.

Neither do we find in St. Matthew an object πρὸς ὑμᾶς or any other lexeme because the evangelist focuses his attention on Jesus himself. Other stylistic structure would lose its argumentative force and would not highlight the ease with which the enemies apprehended Jesus. The text is focused on Jesus, his teaching and preaching<sup>3</sup>.

In his Gospel account of the arrest of Jesus St. Luke (Lk 22,47-53) does not mention that Jesus has taught in the Temple. Thus we can conclude that it was not essential for the religious leaders who plotted against Jesus and wanted to catch him not to do it in the Temple. St. Luke highlights this thought in a different way: instead of using Mark's πρὸς ὑμᾶς (Mk 14,49a) he utilizes a clearer and comprehensible μεθ' ὑμῶν (Lk 22,53a) and then changes the verb of St. Mark's paraphrase ἡμῖν (...) καὶ οὐκ ἐκρατήσατε (...) – into a genitive absolute ὄντος μου (...) οὐκ ἐξετείνετε (...) (Lk 22,53). St. Luke links together the arrest of Jesus with the fact that could have been found in the Temple easily and does it with great force of expression.

St. Mark is the only synoptic who puts together three circumstances:

- he refers to the context and therefore he uses the πρὸς ὑμᾶς lexeme<sup>4</sup>;
- like St. Matthew he talks about Jesus' teaching using the participle διδάσκων;
- like St. Matthew and St. Luke he employs an expression ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ describing location.

Presenting the arrest, St. Mark emphasises the dishonesty of the religious leaders and contrasts it with the noble conduct of Jesus. The leaders did not want to seize a convenient opportunity to arrest Jesus in the Temple because in their perversity they did not have enough courage to openly and publically oppose the Highest Love – the Son

---

<sup>3</sup> Cf. H. KOSMALA. *Mt 26,52 – Quotation from the Targum*. In: „New Testament Studies” 4 :1960 pp. 3-5; F. REHKOPF. *Mt 26,50*. In: „Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche” 52:1961 pp. 109-115; G. SCHNEIDER. *Die Verhaftung Jesu*. In: „Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche” 63:1972 pp. 188-209; J.D.M. DERRETT. *History and the Two Swords*. In: *Studies in the NT*. T. III. Leiden 1982 p. 193-199.

<sup>4</sup> He uses a different preposition than St. Luke does.

of God. Plotting against him, they came at night planning to arrest Jesus without witnesses, in an out-of-the-way place (ἐξήλqate) not to fall into disfavour with people of whom they were religious leaders and teachers. They wished to arrest Jesus on the quiet and bring him in as a criminal (Mk 14,43-46). Their intentions are exposed when they come in „a great multitude”: (...) καὶ μετ' αὐτοῦ ὄχλος μετὰ μαχαίρων καὶ ξύλων παρὰ τῶν ἀρχιερέων καὶ τῶν γραμματέων καὶ τῶν πρεσβυτέρων (Mk 14,43b).

Having arrested Jesus in such a way, the religious leaders exposed their hatred, anger and hostility towards the Person of Jesus (Mk 14,48). His apprehension was the result of illegal ambush (ὡς ἐπί ληστῆν – Mk 14,48b). They seemed to have forgotten that Jesus was not an outlaw. They had not any charges against him because he was not a leader of a gang but that was how they arrested him. Never in his public activity did Jesus use physical force. He always stood up for truth and for his doctrine. He constantly encouraged people to believe in God – JHWH, his Father who sent him as his Son to save humanity from the flaw of the original sin. Jesus was always righteous and opposed hypocrisy and duplicity of the Jewish religious leaders. And he did it openly in the Jerusalem Temple without bad intentions and perversity in his heart. He never instigated people to violence nor encouraged them to use force or weapon. He never attempted to incite a revolt. His power lay in the words of truth and love. Whenever he faced opposition of the religious leaders he always silenced them – so powerful were his words spoken in the name of God – JHWH.

## 2. THE MESSAGE OF JESUS – FROM „THE JERUSALEM TEMPLE” TO „BECOMING THE TEMPLE OF GOD”

In the words καθ' ἡμέραν ἤμην πρὸς ὑμᾶς ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ διδάσκων καὶ οὐκ ἐκρατήσατέ με· ἀλλ' ἵνα πληρωθῶσιν αἱ γραφαί (Mk 14,49), Jesus refers back to his earlier mission and teaching presented in Mk 11-13. In Mk 14,49 the evangelist uses the thematic vocabulary ἱερόν – διδάσκειν and presents narrative details. The οὐκ ἐκρατήσατέ με phrase [„(...) and ye took me not” – Mk

14,49a] suggest St. Mark's reference to a situation described earlier in Mk 11,18: ἰ ἤκουσαν οἱ ἀρχιερεῖς καὶ οἱ γραμματεῖς, καὶ ἐζήτουν πῶς αὐτὸν ἀπολέσωσιν· ἐφοβοῦντο γὰρ αὐτόν, πῶς γὰρ ὁ ὄχλος ἐξεπλήσσετο ἐπὶ τῇ διδαχῇ αὐτοῦ. And even more to Mk 12,12 where the leaders did not arrest Jesus because they were afraid of the people: καὶ ἐζήτουν αὐτὸν κρατῆσαι, καὶ ἐφοβήσαντο τὸν ὄχλον, ἔγνωσαν γὰρ ὅτι πρὸς αὐτοῦς τὴν παραβολὴν εἶπεν. καὶ ἀφέντες αὐτὸν ἀπῆλθον.

In Mk 14,49 the evangelists draw our attention to the former ministry and teaching of Jesus. In the previous verse in Mk 14,48 he describes the circumstances of his arrest. St. Mark not only writes about what was happening at the moment but also points out to how Jesus was treated at the moment of his arrest. And he was treated like a common criminal (ὡς ἐπὶ ληστὴν Mk 14,48b) not only at the moment of his apprehension but he also would be treated as such in the nearest future: during the trial and execution.

Then the religious leaders who made the decision and gave the order to arrest Jesus do everything in their power to convince the multitudes of his guilt. They try to persuade people that he deserves the death penalty reserved for criminals. They try to find justification for the proposed penalty as the only one appropriate for his unforgivable (or so they think) offence. They urge people to ask for Barabbas to be released even though he was a rebel and a murderer (Mk 15,7)<sup>5</sup>, and to demand the condemnation of Jesus (Mk 15,11). In his description of the Crucifixion of Jesus St. Mark stresses twice that two criminals called λησταί were crucified together with him (Mk 15,7.32).

It can be said that Mk 14,48-49 is a transitory text between „the teaching of Jesus in the Jerusalem Temple”<sup>6</sup> and „the Passion of Jesus” announced and heralded by him in Mk 14,48. In the narrative on „the Passion of Jesus” we find a reference to the Temple, not with the term ἱερόν but with the ναός. In the logion of Jesus in Mk 14,48-49 we see transition from the ἱερόν theme to the ναός one; the transition from „the Jerusalem Temple” to „the temple of the heart”. Dur-

---

<sup>5</sup> According to a custom one prisoner's death sentence could be commuted because of the coming holiday. The crowd chose Barabbas to be released of his guilt and freed.

<sup>6</sup> The passage of Mk 14,49 is a remembrance of this.

ing the public mission and teaching of Jesus the days of ἱερόν were the days of difficult debates with the religious leaders of the nation. Then the days of suffering come – days of agony when Jesus will show the way to the νοός. The lot of the Jerusalem Temple has been decided.

### 3. FINAL CONCLUSIONS – „THE JERUSALEM TEMPLE” (ἱερόν) AND THE PASSION OF JESUS

The evangelical account of St. Mark about the „the Jerusalem Temple” can be regarded as a theological and narrative introduction to the Passion of Jesus. We can conclude that the author of the second Gospel deeply moved by the Passion of Jesus – by his agony on the cross – decided to present first „the days of the teaching of Jesus in the Jerusalem Temple”. St. Mark does not want the reader of the Gospel to disregard Jesus’ agony and ordeal because of the superficiality of his approach. He wants to help the reader of his work to immerse in the ambience of Jesus redemptive act and to understand it properly, to understand the depth of the thought.

The religious leaders were seemingly satisfied with the humiliation and derision of Jesus by the people whom he cherished and to whom he showed so much of heroic and redemptive love till the very end of his earthly mission – till his death on the cross (Mk 14,65; 15,31f). From the start we can see the wickedness of their conduct against Jesus. They are full of lies, cunningness, hypocrisy and deception (Mk 14,1). Jesus was condemned to death after the trial full of falsehood, lies and contradictions (Mk 14,56-59). Jesus was turned into the hands of Pilate because of their jealousy and hatred towards him (Mk 15,10).

The reader of the Gospel according to St. Mark does not have to experience scandal remembering the agony and death of Jesus because the roles are actually reversed. The words of Jesus testify to that: „The stone which the builders rejected is become the head of the corner. This was the Lord’s doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes” (Mk 12,10-11). In the Jerusalem Temple Jesus began the true trial when he brought charges against the religious leaders and announced

his sentence for them (Mk 12,40). In the eyes of God the accusers become the accused and the condemned is in fact their Judge.

St. Mark has been inspired by the resurrection and by the fact that the cross is not a failure and humiliation of Jesus but his victory. Despite the fact that Jesus was condemned to death his resurrection proves that he conquered death. In the chapters on the Jerusalem Temple (Mk 11-13) we find a hint how to interpret the Gospel and how to understand the Passion of Jesus.

### OD „DNI ŚWIĄTYNI” DO „DNI MĘKI” (MK 14,48-49)

#### S t r e s z c z e n i e

Św. Marek wspomina ostatni raz o świątyni jerozolimskiej w Mk 14,49, gdy relacjonuje publiczną działalność Jezusa Chrystusa – Nauczyciela, który przybył do niej, aby z mocą swojego posłannictwa głosić i wzywać do przyjęcia nauki o Królestwie Bożym, oraz uznanie w Nim Jezusa Syna Bożego – Mesjasza (Mk 11-13). Autor w analizach zawierających się w artykule zwrócił uwagę, że tekst Mk 14,48-49 ma charakter retrospektywny, a wspomniana w nim świątynia, stanowi miejsce minionego działania Jezusa w Jerozolimie. Mk 14,48-49 w układzie strukturalnym Ewangelii znajduje się w perykopie opisującej pobyt Jezusa wraz z uczniami w Ogrodzie Getsemani (Mk 14,26-52). Ow fragment przynależy do obszerniejszej, drugiej części Ewangelii Synoptycznej, opisującej mękę i zmartwychwstanie Jezusa Chrystusa (Mk 14,1-16,20). Konkretyzując, w relacji Mk 14,48-49 zawiera się logion Jezusa, stanowiący syntetyczny opis realizacji Jego mesjańskiego posłannictwa: „od dni pobytu i nauczania w świątyni Jerozolimskiej” (Mk 11-13) – „do dni Jego męki” (Mk 14,1-15,47). W artykule wykazano, że relacja Mk 14,48-49, która dotyczy świątyni jerozolimskiej może być uważana za wstęp teologiczno-narracyjny do opisu męki i śmierci Jezusa. Św. Marek został zainspirowany głębokimi przeżyciami, które dotyczyły bezpośrednio męki Jezusa – Jego cierpienia na krzyżu – doszedł do przekonania o konieczności opisanego dnia nauczania Jezusa w świątyni jerozolimskiej. Św. Marek pragnie, aby czytelnik jego Ewangelii nie zlekceważył powierzchownym podejściem powagi i ogromu cierpień – męki Jezusa. Intencją ewangelisty jest, aby pomóc czytelnikowi jego dzieła wejść w atmosferę i wymiar wydarzeń zbawczych i właściwie je odczytać – ze zrozumieniem głębi myśli w nich zawartych. Przywódcy duchowi narodu wybranego tylko pozornie byli usa-

tysfakcjonowani, pozornie byli zadowoleni z poniżenia i wyszydzenia Jezusa przez lud, dla którego przecież wcześniej tak wiele serca okazał w prawdzie i miłości heroicznej, zbawczej, do samego końca Jego ziemskiego posłannictwa – aż po śmierć na krzyżu (Mk 14,65;15,31n). Podłość działania przeciw Jezusowi jest widoczna już od samego początku – nacechowana kłamstwem, przebiegłością, obłudą i oszustwem (Mk 14,1). Skazanie Jezusa na śmierć dokonało się podczas procesu pełnego fałszu, kłamstwa i sprzeczności (Mk 14,56-59). Zazdrość i nienawiść wobec Osoby Jezusa są motywem i powodem przekazania Go Piłatowi (Mk 15,10). Czytelnik Ewangelii według św. Marka nie musi więc przeżywać zgorznienia i skandalu, wspominając mękę i śmierć Jezusa, ponieważ jej kolejność jest do odwrócenia. W wymiarze Boskim oskarżyciele są prawdziwymi oskarżonymi, a Skazany jest w istocie ich Sędzią. Św. Marek zainspirowany jest faktem zmartwychwstania Jezusa, faktem, że krzyż nie jest klęską i Jego poniżeniem, lecz faktycznym zwycięstwem. Mimo wcześniejszego skazania Jezusa, w Jego zmartwychwstaniu jest ukazane zwycięstwo nad śmiercią. W rozdziałach o świątyni jerozolimskiej (Mk 11-13), znajduje się metoda lektury i rozumienia męki Jezusa Chrystusa, a nawet całej Ewangelii o Nim.

**Słowa kluczowe:** Ewangelia św. Marka, świątynia jerozolimska, teologia męki Pańskiej, egzegeza, teologia biblijna.

**Key words:** The Gospel of Saint Mark. Temple in Jerusalem, theology of the Passion.