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The Gospel According to Isaiah. A Textual Analysis of Mk 1:1

Ewangelia według Izajasza. Analiza tekstualna Mk 1,1

Abstract. Detailed linguistic study shows that it is not improbable that Mk 1:1-2a should not be divided by a full stop, but rather by a comma. This is of crucial significance for the whole Gospel of Mark, because this opening phrase could be translated as: “The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, as it is written in Isaiah the prophet...”. Moreover, there are good reasons to suggest that the idea of εὐαγγέλιον as a good news concerning Jesus Christ “as it is written in Isaiah the prophet” present in Mk 1:2a can be understood in the light of Rm 1:1-4 and *vice versa*.

Streszczenie. Szczegółowe stadium lingwistyczne pokazuje, że nie jest wykluczone, iż wersety Mk 1,1–2a powinny być rozdzielone nie kropką, lecz raczej przecinkiem. To ma kluczowe znaczenie dla całej ewangelii Marka, ponieważ pierwsze zdanie może być przetłumaczone: “Początek Ewangelii Jezusa Chrystusa, Syna Bożego, jak jest napisane u proroka Izajasza...”. Ponadto są ważne powody, aby sugerować, że idea εὐαγγέλιον jako dobrej nowiny o Jezusie Chrystusie “jak jest napisane u proroka Izajasza...”, obecna w Mk 1,2a może być rozumiana w świetle Rz 1,1-4 i *vice versa*.

Keywords: Gospel; Isaiah; Mark; Letter to the Romans; biblical codices.

Słowa kluczowe: Ewangelia; Izajasz; Marek; List do Rzymian; kodeksy biblijne.

It is perhaps surprising that Isaiah is the only OT author mentioned by name in Mark's Gospel (1:2; 7:6). True enough, citations from other books are made, however, this directly attributed citation is made at the very beginning of his Gospel, and holds a specific significance, which will later be explored. Indeed, it can be argued that a good knowledge of Second Isaiah is indispensable to understanding "First Mark," if not the whole Gospel, starting even with the term εὐαγγέλιον.

From textual point of view the beginning of Mark's Gospel is quite problematic.¹ The reading υἱοῦ θεοῦ is omitted by some important witnesses (κ* Θ 28. 530 582* 820*)²; it is found, however, in other ancient witnesses (κ¹ B D L W 732)³; still others have the reading υἱοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ (A Δ f^{1,13} 33 565 579 700)⁴ or υἱοῦ τοῦ κυρίου (1241). Yarbo Collins argues that υἱοῦ θεοῦ is a secondary addition "because an accidental omission in the opening words of a work is unlikely."⁵ Indeed, it was not unknown to expand titles or quasi-titles of books in such a manner (cf. Rev 1:1),⁶ however, this omission could rather occur due to possible oversight in copying, occasioned by the similarity of the endings of the unusual cumulation of the *nomina sacra*: APXHTOYEYATTEΛIOYIYXYYY[TOY]ΘY.⁷ In fact, some codices have been corrected at this point with the full *nomina sacra* abbreviation, among them κ¹. It has been claimed that here are several instances in which κ breaks up chains of genitives ending in οῦ, as in this case (cf. e.g., Acts 28:31; Col 2:2; Heb 12:2; Rev 12:14; 15:7; 22:1), showing that there is the possibility of accidental scribal omission in Mk 1:1.⁸ Moreover, this homoioteleuton at the beginning of a work was unusual.⁹ In addition, the identification of Jesus as "Son of God," sometimes thought to be a later addition at this juncture, is not al-

¹ This are the references for textual critical analysis of this passage: C. Tischendorf, *Novum Testamentum Graece, in loco*; NA²⁸, *in loco*; R. J. Swanson, *New Testament Greek Manuscripts, in loco*; A. Ammassari, *Bezae Codex Cantabrigiensis, in loco*.

² Cf. the same in 2211, 1021 1436 1555* 1692 2430 2533 syr^(pal) co^{sams} arm^{mss} Ir^{pt}. Witness 28* omits Χριστοῦ.

³ Cf. the same in 1602 2427 latt sy co.

⁴ Cf. the same in 892 1071 1342 1424 Byz sy^{p,h}.

⁵ A. Yarbo Collins, *Mark*, 130; Cf. Idem, "Establishing the text: *Mark* 1:1," 111–127; P. M. Head, "A Text-Critical Study of *Mark* 1:1," *NTS* 37 (1991) 621–629.

⁶ B.M. Metzger, *The Text of the New Testament* [3rd ed.], *in loco*.

⁷ C.H. Turner, "Markan Usage," 150; R.A. Guelich, *Mark 1–8:26*, 6; M. Buscemi, "Critica textus di Mc 1," 73–74; W. Willker, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek Gospels*, 5–6.

⁸ W. Willker, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek Gospels*, 6.

⁹ J. Slomp, "Are the words 'Son of God' in *Mk* 1:1 original?" 148; Cf. A. Globe, "The Caesarean Omission of the Phrase 'Son of God' in *Mark* 1.1," *HTR* 75 (1982) 209–218.

ien to Mark's Gospel (cf. Mk 3:11; 5:7; 15:39; (8:29?¹⁰)) and so the likelihood of a later insertion is diminished.¹¹ In Mk 1:2a some sources have reading ὧς instead of καθώς, which could be understood to be a replacement for καθώς.¹² In the same verse the expression ἐν τῷ Ἡσαΐα τῷ προφήτῃ, was changed to ἐν τοῖς προφήταις (A, P, W, f¹³, 28, 579)¹³ as an attempt to provide a more comprehensive introductory formula to the citation, which does not start with the quote from Isaiah, but rather from Mal 3:1/Ex 20:23.

As far as the meaning of the text is concerned, some scholars have argued for a connection between ἀρχή in Mk 1:1 with Gen 1:1 (LXX) and Jn 1:1-2.¹⁴ Nonetheless, the meaning of ἀρχή depends on the meaning of the qualifying phrase, which in Mk 1:1 is not the same as in these two other passages.¹⁵ At this point, it is interesting to note that at the commencement of all four Gospels the book of the prophet Isaiah is mentioned and always with the same citation from Is 40:3, which is constantly used in reference to John the Baptist. Therefore, there is rather a question whether Mk 1:1 refers to the beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, as marked by John the Baptist, as it is written in Isaiah the prophet (Is 40:3), or simply to the beginning of a new literary composition?¹⁶

¹⁰ κ L 157 pc r¹ as well as W f¹³ pc b, sy^p sa^{mss}. Although a harmonization with Mt 16:16 and Lk 9:20 is suggested.

¹¹ Cf. description of Jesus as Beloved [or Only] Son (Mk 1:11; 9:7; 12:6), the Son (Mk 13:32), Son of the Blessed One.

¹² Cf. A, D, M, U, W, f¹³ (13, 69, 124, 174, 230, 346, 543, 788, 826, 983, 1689, 1709 etc), 28, 118, 579, 1424.

¹³ The same in 1342, vg^{ms}, Sy^h, Ir^{lat}. A harmonization with Mk 7:6 is suggested, where ὧς γέγραπται introduces a citation also from Isaiah (Is 29:13). Cf. D. Neuhaus, *Mark 1:2-3*, 13.

¹⁴ Cf. H. Anderson, *The Gospel of Mark*, 66; D. Neuhaus, *Mark 1:2-3*, 55-63. See Jewish background of this title in F. Manns, "Il Figlio di Dio (Mc 1,1)," 81-90.

¹⁵ For the comparison with the other Gospels see J.M. Gibbs, "Mk. 1,1-15, Mt. 1,1-4,16, Lk. 1,1-4,30, Jn. 1,1-51," 154-188.

¹⁶ The former solution could be strengthened by the combination of Is 40:3 and Mal 3:1 (cf. Mal 3:22-23) where is an allusion to Elijah, who should come before the arrival of the Messiah and Mk 1:1-3 is an introduction of the figure of John the Baptist. Nevertheless, the latter solution would be also worth considering; Markus suggested analysing ἀρχή as a temporal nuance. Idem, *Mark 1-8*, 141; On the basis of Mk 1:1-15 Shenke claimed the preexistence of Jesus Christ. Idem, "Gibt es im Markusevangelium eine Präexistenzchristologie?" 45-71. For other (also non biblical) beginning with ἀρχή cf. BAGD, 111b; For further discussion see J. Kudasiewicz, "Początek ewangelii Jezusa Chrystusa, Syna Boga (Mk 1, 1)," 89-109; M. Adinolfi, "Ἀρχή εὐαγγέλιον Χριστός," *RivBib* 43 (1995) 211-224; R.S. Poon, "The Beginning of the Gospel," 103-118.

Crucial, however, for our understanding of Mk 1:1-3 is the choice of punctuation. In fact, Wikgren identified six categories of interpretation of this passage and Cranfield suggested a list of ten different explanations.¹⁷ The most important question is whether Mk 1:1 finishes with full stop or a comma.¹⁸ It seems that the full stop after Mk 1:1, as in NA²⁸ and in many others publications, has to be challenged for various reasons. First of all, καθώς alone never begins a sentence in Mk or elsewhere in NT, except in the unrelated καθώς/οὐ τοῦ combination.¹⁹ Secondly, when καθώς occurs with the formula γέγραπται it always refers to the preceding rather than to the succeeding material.²⁰ In fact, the expression καθώς γέγραπται is present another two times in the Gospel of Mark and it refers to a particular person, who was mentioned in the preceding phrase, Mk 9:13 – Elijah; 14:21 – The Son of Man. Interestingly, in both cases there is no verbatim citation. Already Spitta noted that καθώς γέγραπται is “never the introductory clause, but always follows a report of something seen as the fulfillment of a prophetic word.”²¹ It seems that, similarly, Mk 1:2a refers to the previous verse.

In such a reading, the subordinate clause seems to lack a main clause, since Mk 1:1 is without a finite verb. There is no exact analogy to Mk 1:1-2b in other biblical books, but it is worth noticing that the anarthrous headings open the Gospel of Matthew and Book of Revelation, and are common in the OT (cf. Prov, Eccl, Cant) in particular for the prophetic books (cf. Is, Jer, Ho, Joel, Am, Ob, Nah, Hab, Zaph, Zc, Ml). In the LXX all of these headings, except those for Jeremiah and Habakkuk characterize the following work by an anar-

¹⁷ A. Wikgren, “APXH TOY EYANGELIOY,” *JBL* 61 (1942) 11–20; C.E.B. Cranfield, *The Gospel According to Saint Mark*, 34–35.

¹⁸ For the variation in translation see L. de Santis, “Mc 1,1. Studio di traduzione,” *Angelicum* 69 (1992) 175–192.

¹⁹ V. Taylor, *The Gospel According to St Mark*, 153; H. Anderson, *The Gospel of Mark*, 67–68; E. Haenchen, *Der Weg Jesu*, 39; R.A. Guelich, *Mark 1–8:26*, 6; R. E. Watts, *Isaiah's new Exodus and Mark*, 55–56.

²⁰ C.H. Turner, “Markan Usage,” 150; Arnold G., “Mk 1:1 und Eröffnungswendungen in griechischen und lateinischen Schriften,” 123–124; C.E.B. Cranfield, *The Gospel According to Saint Mark*, 35; W. Feneberg, *Der Markusprolog*, 186–187; R.A. Guelich, *Mark 1–8:26*, 7; J.K. Elliot, “ΚΑΘΩΣ and ΩΣΠΙΕΡ in the New Testament,” 55–56; J. Marcus, *The way of the Lord*, 17–18; R.E. Watts, *Isaiah's new Exodus and Mark*, 55–56; N.C. Croy, “Where the Gospel text begins,” 7; In in Lk 11:30 (NA²⁸) καθώς is after a full stop. Cf. the constant avoidance of use of καθώς at the beginning of the sentence by the expression καί καθώς in Lk 17:26; Jn 3:14; 1 Cor 2:9, even though there is no occurrence of καθώς γέγραπται.

²¹ F. Spitta, “Der Anfang des Markus-Evangeliums,” 306.

throus noun.²² Thus the heading could be an example of ellipse. It seems that Mk 1:1 could be simply influenced by Hebrew or Aramaic syntax, which omits the verb “to be” in present tense. In addition, an ellipse of the verb “to be” is not alien to Marcan Greek.²³

In recent scholarship on Mk 1:1-2a, a reference to ancient textual witnesses is often missing.²⁴ In fact, the way in which this text was written in ancient codices could provide us with important insights. Some ancient witnesses do not have an *incipit* (B, W), but those which have it, place it in a similar position:²⁵

Sinaiticus (S*)	Alexandrinus (A)
ARCHTOUEUAGGELI OUIUCUKAQWSGE GRAPTAIENTWWSA IATWPROFHHTH IDOU EGWAPOSTE LWTONAGGELONMOU	ARCHTOUEUAGGELIOUIUCUUUTOUQU WSGEGRAPTAIENTOISPROFHHTAIS IDOU EGWAPOSTELIWTONAGGELON MOU PROS WPOUSOUWSKATA
Bezae (D)	
APXHTOY EYAΓΓELIOY IHYXPYYIOY ΘY ΩΣ ΓEΓPAPTAI ENHΣAIA IATΩΠPOFHHTH IAOY AΠOCTEΛΛOY TON AΓΓEΛON MOY ΠPOΠPOC OΠOY CTOY ΩC KATA C KEY A C E I	

In codices *Sinaiticus* and *Alexandrinus* the *incipit* occurs in the same place, which marks the first segment as vv. 1-2a. The following segment begins with the first citation.²⁶ In codex Bezae the *incipit* is only in the first line and the text of the citations is without *incipit* on the other line (following the empty space). This demonstrates that ΚΑΘΩΣ/ΩΣ never forms an *incipit* in order to start

²² R.T. France, *The Gospel of Mark*, 51.

²³ Cf. superb article A. Niccacci, “La narrativa di Mc 1,” 59–71; J. Ch. Doudna, *The Greek of the Gospel of Mark*, 4–5.

²⁴ M.E. Boring, “Mark 1:1–15 and the Beginning of the Gospel,” 185–192; J. Zmijewski, “Markinischer ‘Prolog’ und Täufertradition,” 41–62; P.J. Sankey, “Promise and Fulfillment,” 3–18; N. C. Croy, “Where the Gospel text begins,” 106–127; J.K. Elliott, “Mark 1.1–3. A Later Addition to the Gospel?” 584–588; Guijarro Oporto S., “Why Does the Gospel of Mark Begin as It Does?” 28–38 Guijarro Oporto S., “¿Por qué comienza así el evangelio de Marcos?” 133–151.

²⁵ In the three most important papyruses for the Gospel of Mark (P45, P84, P88) there is physical absence of Mk 1:1ff. Cf. NA²⁸, *in loco*.

²⁶ Codex Alexandrinus, however sometimes puts randomly an *incipit*, which seems rather matter of artistic presentation of the texts than the indication of the division of it.

something new, but always is related to that which came before, i.e. Mk 1:1. Moreover, it is very important to notice that in codex *Sinaiticus* after Mk 1:2a is a dot, which seems to be a sign for a pause used in other places (cf. after Mk 1:2,3 etc).²⁷ Also after Mk 1:2a comes a small empty space, a typical sign in *Sinaiticus* used to indicate a pause (cf. after Mk 1:2,3,4, 6, 7, 10 etc.). It is remarkable that codex *Alexandrinus* follows the same pattern. There is a dot after v. 2a, which the usual sign to indicate a full stop in this textual witness (cf. after Mk 1:2,3,5,6 (after αὐτοῦ), 6 (at the end of the verse) etc. Similarly, like in *Sinaiticus* there is an empty space after v. 2 and 3.

It is difficult to judge whether these textual witnesses show the original version of the text, but the repetition of the same *incipit* in such important sources like \aleph , A, D (not in contrast to B, W) has to be taken into consideration, even more so because it agrees with a syntactical analysis of καθὼς γέγραπται. Thus, it is not improbable that Mk 1:1-2a should not be divided by a full stop, but rather by a comma. This is of vital significance for the whole Gospel of Mark, because this opening phrase can now be translated as: “The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, as it is written in Isaiah the prophet...” This leads to the questions about the meaning of the term “Gospel” in Mark, and its use in relation to Old Testament prophecies.

Firstly, what can be made of the Greek term commonly translated as “Gospel”? The Septuagint translates the root רַבָּא as εὐαγγελία, but originally it meant the reward given to a bearer of good news and then later came to refer to a good news itself (often about a victory) and the verb εὐαγγελίζω in the OT meant “to announce glad tidings.”²⁸ Dormeyer suggests that εὐαγγέλιον in Mk 1 describes the literary genre of the work.²⁹ Frankemölle and Stuhlmacher argue that the Christian use of Gospel is semantically unique, but it was inspired by the use of the related verb in Deutero-Isaiah.³⁰ J.P. Dickson claims that the noun and the verb express something that is “news” to the audience.³¹ G. Stanton suggests that imperial use of this term was not the source for Christian use but

²⁷ Two horizontal dots usually were used to indicate a textual variants. Cf. Ch.-B. Amphoux, “Codex Vaticanus B. Les points diacritiques des marges de Marc,” *JTS* 58 (2007) 440–466.

²⁸ The singular form εὐαγγέλιον does not appear in the LXX; For recent scholarship on the term “Gospel” cf. H. Frankemölle, *Evangelium*; J.P. Dickson, “Gospel and News,” 212–230; M. Hengel, *Die vier Evangelien und das eine Evangelium von Jesus Christus*.

²⁹ D. Dormeyer, “Die Kompositionsmetapher ‘Evangelium Jesu Christi, des Sohnes Gottes’ Mk 1.1,” 452–468.

³⁰ H. Frankemölle, *Evangelium*, 253–254; P. Stuhlmacher, *Das paulinische Evangelium*, 286–289.

³¹ J.P. Dickson, “Gospel and News,” 212–230.

“the background against which distinctively Christian usage was forged and first heard.”³²

Indeed, Marxsen even suggested that Mark has introduced the noun εὐαγγέλιον into the synoptic tradition.³³ What, then, is the source of εὐαγγέλιον in Mk 1:1? The mention of the name Isaiah at the beginning of the gospel is not enough to claim that it is of Isaianic provenance. In fact, in Isaiah the noun εὐαγγέλιον is never present as it is in Mark, and in Mark the verb εὐαγγελίζω is not present, as it is in Isaiah.³⁴ The use of the noun εὐαγγέλιον in the OT to refer to good news about a victory, does not correspond with Markan usage, nor with NT usage in general.³⁵ It should be noted, however, that the verb εὐαγγελίζω in Isaiah is used only once in a finite form (Is 60:6). The other times it is used as a participle (Is 40:9 twice; Is 52:7 twice) and as an infinitive (Is 61:1). The link between the noun εὐαγγέλιον and the participle εὐαγγελίζω is quite natural, since the noun and the verb come from the same Hebrew root כָּשַׁב (cf. 2 Sam 4:10). When we compare the influence of Second Isaiah on Mk 1:1-13, it becomes clear that Mark could easily know this verb; for instance Mk 1:3 quotes Is 40:3 but a few verses later in Is 40:9, which he would arguably have known, the participle εὐαγγελίζοντες occurs twice.³⁶ Therefore, a certain dependence of Mark on Isaiah in the use of this term can, in fact, be traced.

However, the main concern is not only the provenance of the term but its particular meaning in a new context. Does Ἀρχὴ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ [υἱοῦ θεοῦ]... mean “the gospel concerning Jesus Christ” with Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ as an objective genitive³⁷ or “the gospel proclaimed by Jesus Christ” with an subjective genitive³⁸ or is there a *double entendre*?³⁹ The latter option poses syntactical difficulty, since one or the other emphasis has to dominate. As Guelich argues the subjective genitive results often from “the misplaced emphasis on 1:14 from which 1:1 has been interpreted rather than interpreting 1:14 in terms of 1:1 with the latter providing the redactional setting for the tra-

³² G.N. Stanton, *Jesus and Gospel*, 2.

³³ W. Marxsen, *Der Evangelist Markus*, 125ff.

³⁴ E. Hatch – H.A. Redpath (et al.), *A Concordance to the Septuagint*, 568.

³⁵ Cf. use of εὐαγγελία/εὐαγγέλιον in 2 Sam 4:10; 2 Sam 18:20,22,25,27; 1 Kgs 7:9.

³⁶ Used as participle in Is 40:9 (twice) and 52:7 (twice); as infinitive in Is 61:1.

³⁷ Cf. E. Schweizer, “Die theologische Leistung des Markus,” 30–31; R. Pesch, “Anfang des Evangeliums Jesu Christi,” 108–113; R.A. Guelich, *Mark 1–8:26*, 9.

³⁸ Cf. C.E.B. Cranfield, *The Gospel According to Saint Mark*, 35–36; G. Dautzenberg, “Die Zeit des Evangeliums,” 223–224.

³⁹ R.T. France, *The Gospel of Mark*, 53; J. Marcus, *Mark 1–8*, 146–147; S. Haręzga, *Jezus i Jego uczniowie*, 40.

ditional reference of the former.”⁴⁰ The noun, used in the absolute state (typical for Mark against other Synoptics),⁴¹ refers to a message to be believed (Mk 1:15) or proclaimed (Mk 13:10; 14:9), rather than to the act of proclamation, though in the remaining two uses (Mk 8:35; 10:29) either sense is possible. It is more appropriate to read Mk 1:1 as an objective genitive, which is a more natural usage in the rest of the NT,⁴² however, Mk 1:14-15 makes clear that εὐαγγέλιον is preached by Jesus as well. It also has to be added that the term “gospel” in Mk 1:1 denotes the content rather than the literary type of the book.⁴³

If the connection between Mk 1:1 and Mk 1:2a is accepted as well as an objective genitive, a unique quality of the term εὐαγγέλιον could be introduced. The phrase καθὼς γέγραπται ἐν τῷ Ἡσαΐα τῷ προφήτῃ gives a distinctive meaning to the very first line of Mark’s gospel. The evangelist refers to what is written in Isaiah the prophet as a good news concerning Jesus Christ.⁴⁴

In this case, the resemblance of Mk 1:1–2a and Rm 1:1–4 is striking. It seems that there is analogous understanding of the Gospel. Similar syntax of the phrase strengthens this idea:

Mk 1:1–2a: Ἀρχὴ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ [υἱοῦ θεοῦ] [,] καθὼς γέγραπται ἐν τῷ Ἡσαΐα τῷ προφήτῃ.

Rm 1:1–2: Παῦλος [...] ἀφωρισμένος εἰς εὐαγγέλιον θεοῦ, ὃ προεπηγγείλατο διὰ τῶν προφητῶν αὐτοῦ ἐν γραφαῖς ἀγίαις.

In both cases the subordinated phrase explains the term “gospel,” as delivered by Isaiah/prophets and there are various similar expressions, such as:

⁴⁰ R.A. Guelich, *Mark 1–8*:26, 9; Cf. Idem, “The Beginning of the Gospel’ Mark 1:1–15,” BR 27 (1982) 5–15.

⁴¹ Mark uses εὐαγγέλιον in absolute state, except Mk 1:1,14.

⁴² Cf. R.T. France, *The Gospel of Mark*, 53; Though note the contrary i.e. Rm 2:16; 16:25, and denoting the recipients of the gospel Gal 2:7.

⁴³ Cf. R.T. France, *The Gospel of Mark*, 52–53; J. Schröter, “The Gospel of Mark,” 280–281; Markus links the meaning of εὐαγγέλιον with military victory and refers it to “Jesus ministry and triumph over demonic forces and their human agents.” J. Marcus, *Mark 1–8*, 146.

⁴⁴ The link between εὐαγγέλιον in Mk and the verb εὐαγγελίζω strenghtens this idea.

Mk 1		Rm 1	
	Introduction to the Gospel		Introduction to the letter
v. 1 (v. 14)	Gospel of Jesus Christ (Gospel of God)	v. 1	Gospel of God
v. 1	Jesus Christ	v. 1 v. 4	Christ Jesus Jesus Christ
v. 1	Son of God	v. 3 v. 4	concerning His son (Son of God) Son of God
v.2	prophet Isaiah	v. 2	prophets
v.2	as it is written (καθὼς γέγραπται)	v. 2	in the holy scriptures (ἐν γραφαῖς ἁγίαις)

Paul uses the verb προεπαγγέλλω, which occurs only twice in the Greek Bible (cf. 2 Cor 9:5), but only here in a finite form. Its use in the middle form is very significant, but even more its context. The verb προεπαγγέλλω refers to εὐαγγέλιον θεοῦ, which raises the question of whether this is a use of alliteration, typical in Jewish Scripture, as well as an attempt to link the noun with the verb. Moreover, the socio-historical context of the letter to the Romans and the Gospel of Mark can not be overlooked, since their writers belong to similar early Christian circles - both works were written quite early and Mark and Paul quite often refer to Isaiah (cf. Rm 9-10).

There are good reasons to suggest that the idea of εὐαγγέλιον as a good news concerning Jesus Christ “as it is written in Isaiah the prophet” present in Mk 1:2a can be understood in the light of Rm 1:1-4 and vice versa. The ancient textual witnesses (i.e. \aleph , A, D) confirm such syntactical and contextual analysis.

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