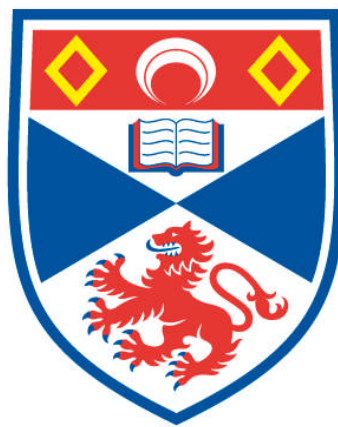


**WISDOM AND APOCALYPTIC IN THE GOSPEL OF  
MATTHEW : A COMPARATIVE STUDY WITH 1 ENOCH AND  
4QINSTRUCTION**

**Grant Macaskill**

**A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of PhD  
at the  
University of St Andrews**



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**Grant Macaskill**

**Submitted for the degree of Ph.D**

**22 April 2005**



## Abstract

### Wisdom and Apocalyptic in the Gospel of Matthew: a Comparative Study with 1 Enoch and 4QInstruction

Recent scholarship has demonstrated that Matthew's gospel has significantly developed both sapiential and apocalyptic elements within its narrative. Little attention has been paid, however, to the question of how these two features of Matthew's gospel might relate to one another. It is this gap in scholarly literature that the present study is intended to fill, by means of a comparative study with two other texts of mixed genre: *1 Enoch* and *4QInstruction*.

An examination of these texts demonstrates that each is marked by an inaugurated eschatology, within which the revealing of wisdom to an elect group, defined in distinction to the Jewish parent group, serves as the pivotal moment of inauguration. In addition, within *4QInstruction* the idea is developed that possession of this revealed wisdom allows the remnant to live in fidelity to the will of the Creator and to the patterns built-in to the original creation. Thus, possession of revealed wisdom facilitates a recovery of creation.

These findings provide lines of enquiry that may be brought to Matthew. Three sections of the gospel are examined (chapters 5-7; 11-12; 24-25). It is argued that Jesus is presented as an eschatological figure who reveals wisdom to an elect group. This wisdom cannot be reduced to great moral insight or interpretation of Torah, but is presented as prophetic revelation, happening in eschatological time. It remains the case, however, that Matthew presents it as *wisdom* and presents Jesus as a sage.

More tentatively, it is suggested that creation provides the patterns for the ethical requirements of Jesus' wisdom, thus indicating that the idea of restored creation is also at work in Matthew. The fall of the temple may also be connected in Matthew's narrative to such a restoration, but again, the evidence for this is not clear.

## Declarations

I, Grant Macaskill, hereby certify that this thesis, which is approximately 100000 words in length, has been written by me, that it is the record of work carried out by me and that it has not been submitted in any previous application for a higher degree.

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## **Chapter 1**

### **Wisdom and Apocalyptic in Matthew – an Introduction**

In recent years, a number of studies (to be discussed below) have devoted themselves to the study of so-called “apocalyptic” elements in the Gospel of Matthew. Likewise, a number of studies (also to be discussed below) have devoted themselves to the study of so-called “sapiential” elements in the First Gospel. While the scholarly evaluation of these works has not always been entirely favourable, their existence and - more importantly - the persistence in some form or another of their claims regarding the importance of the aforementioned elements to the Matthean presentation have had a huge impact upon academic approaches to the Gospel. Little has been done, however, by way of dedicated research on the relationship between these two elements. Commentators have, to be sure, commented on the relevant works in the context of a given verse, but a study of how the two elements might relate within the overall narrative of the Gospel remains absent from the scholarly literature. It is this gap that the present work is intended at least to begin to fill.

The approach taken will involve, initially, an examination of two Jewish texts—*1 Enoch* and *4QInstruction*—seeking to ascertain the relationship of sapiential and apocalyptic elements therein. The study is intended to discover whether, in each case, these elements are merely juxtaposed or whether underlying concepts bind them together and explain their mutual presence. The texts have been chosen because they are generally accepted as exemplars of the genres “apocalypse” and “instruction” (the latter genre belonging to the category of “wisdom” writings), yet each also contains elements from the other genre and thus forces us to move beyond the simple association of forms or ideas with genre and to examine underlying concepts. The

rationale for the selection of such a small number of texts will become clear once an appropriate survey of modern literature has been made. This study of these texts is intended to assess whether there are constant features in the relationship between sapiential and apocalyptic elements in both; the findings of this research will then be brought to Matthew's Gospel, establishing some lines of enquiry as to whether these features are present there also. Three key areas of that Gospel will provide loci for the research: chapters 5-7 (the Sermon on the Mount), 11-12 and 24-25 (the Olivet discourse). These chapters have been chosen because they have been of greatest significance to the scholars who have examined the sapiential and apocalyptic aspects of Matthew.<sup>1</sup>

As will become clear, part of the problem in the history of research on these areas has been the lack of clarity and consistency involved in the terms used by scholars: some use the terminology of "apocalyptic" to refer to a worldview, while others use it only as an adjective referring to elements of a genre. Similar inconsistencies befoul the use of "wisdom/sapiential" terminology. Underlying these inconsistencies are some key questions that often remain unaddressed: what precisely constitutes an apocalyptic or sapiential element? Are there distinct worldviews connected to such elements? How do these first two questions relate to questions of genre? While it would be helpful to set out some definitions at this point in the study, it also seems important to allow the need for such clarity, and an awareness of the points at which it is most lacking, to become manifest through a survey of previous literature. To this the study now turns.

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<sup>1</sup> In defence of this claim, and for a more through discussion of why each of these sections has been chosen, see below.

## Previous Research on Apocalyptic Elements in Matthew

The most significant work yet to have appeared on the presence of apocalyptic elements in the Gospel of Matthew is David Sim's *Apocalyptic Eschatology in the Gospel of Matthew*.<sup>2</sup> A number of other works, however, preceded this monograph and Sim explicitly set out to move beyond the deficiencies of these;<sup>3</sup> it will be important, therefore, to briefly summarise their contributions to this subject area, despite some reservations as to whether or not all of these studies are actually concerned with the presence of apocalyptic elements within the gospel rather than simply with end-time expectation (I shall suggest below that the equation of apocalyptic with end-time expectation is over-simplistic).

Sim begins his own literature survey by mentioning B.H. Streeter's seminal work, *The Four Gospels: A Study of Origins*.<sup>4</sup> This work identifies the prominence of end-expectation in Matthew<sup>5</sup> together with the presence of a cluster of "apocalyptic" concepts<sup>6</sup> before concluding that the gospel "must have been written during a period of intense Apocalyptic expectation."<sup>7</sup> It is noteworthy that the focus of Streeter's comments is on end-time expectation, with which the term "apocalyptic" is more or less conflated. This conflation is further reflected by his discussion of

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<sup>2</sup> David C. Sim, *Apocalyptic Eschatology in the Gospel of Matthew*, SNTSMS 88 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

<sup>3</sup> Sim, *Apocalyptic Eschatology*, 14.

<sup>4</sup> B.H. Streeter, *The Four Gospels: A Study of Origins*, (London: Macmillan, 1924).

<sup>5</sup> Streeter, *Four Gospels*, 520-1.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 521-2.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 523.

Matthew's date and provenance, in which he links the predominance of this aspect of Matthew with the resurgence of apocalyptic speculation after the Jewish War.<sup>8</sup>

The next work of importance is that of G. Bornkamm, "End-Expectation and Church in Matthew."<sup>9</sup> Bornkamm examined the eschatological material within Matthew, noting the dominance of end-expectation and ecclesiology in all of the major sections of the book,<sup>10</sup> before going on to examine more closely the theme of "better righteousness," the distinctive fusion of the Law with the teaching of Jesus. He concludes this section with these words: "Matthew reaches his radical understanding of the law by regarding it in the light of the will of God made known in creation, but more still in the sense of the universal judgement, which all men, and particularly his disciples, have to face."<sup>11</sup> The recognition of the importance of creation by Bornkamm is tantalising: **Part 2** of the present work will identify the importance of this theme within the texts studied, but Bornkamm left the point undeveloped and his failure to see the relationship between these two motivating factors is obvious. The study continues by examining the relationship of Christology and Law, arguing that the Messiah's key role in Matthew is "interpretation of the law."<sup>12</sup> The final section of the chapter addresses itself to the relationship of ecclesiology and Christology, arguing that the idea of the church as *corpus mixtum* is a major

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 523. Sim's summary of this aspect of Streeter's thought brings out how deep this conflation runs: he comments that the *Nero Redivivus* myth, "served to fuel even further the fire of apocalyptic speculation." See *Apocalyptic Eschatology*, 3-4.

<sup>9</sup> The references given here are to the English translation "End-Expectation and Church in Matthew," pages 15-51 in G. Bornkamm, G. Barth and H.J. Held, *Tradition and Interpretation in Matthew*, (London: SCM, 1963). The original German article appeared in *The Background of the New Testament and its Eschatology: Studies in Honour of C.H. Dodd*, (ed. W.D Davies and D. Daube, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1956) 222-269.

<sup>10</sup> "End-Expectation," 15-24.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 32.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 35.

development of the Matthean work,<sup>13</sup> and emphasising the function of end-time expectation as paraenetic, urging the church to be prepared for the judgement it will face. Indeed, as Sim notes,<sup>14</sup> this understanding of the purpose of end-time expectation runs through Bornkamm's whole article. It should be stressed in his defence that Bornkamm does not set out to examine what he calls apocalyptic elements in the gospel: his specific concern is with "end-time expectation" and its relationship to ecclesiology. Sim's discussion of Bornkamm under the umbrella of "apocalyptic eschatology," however, reflects how deep the identification of "apocalyptic" with end-time expectation runs.

The next work to be mentioned is that of Daniel Marguerat, *Le Jugement dans l'Evangile de Matthieu*.<sup>15</sup> This work, like that of Bornkamm, is specifically concerned with one area of what is often discussed under the heading of apocalyptic eschatology: here, the judgement. Marguerat set out to address the absence in scholarly literature of a study dedicated to the theme of judgement in Matthew. Early in the first part of the work, he acknowledges the pre-eminent role of apocalyptic literature in providing images of judgement that would be drawn on by works such as Matthew.<sup>16</sup> At the conclusion of this section, in which Marguerat gives an overview of the judgement material in Matthew, he asks two questions thrown up by this survey:

1. "Quelle fonction l'auteur du premier évangile attribue-t-il au thème du jugement dans son argumentation théologique?"

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 44.

<sup>14</sup> Sim, *Apocalyptic Eschatology*, 4-6.

<sup>15</sup> Daniel Marguerat, *Le Jugement dans l'Evangile de Matthieu* (Geneva: Labor et Fides, 1981).

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 18.

2. “La distinction que l’on opère entre le matériel traditionnel et l’apport du rédacteur font-ils percevoir, dans le recours au motif du jugement, un écart entre l’évangéliste et ses sources?”

“Curieusement,” he continues, “si l’importance de cette problématique en théologie mt est rarement niée, l’exégète débouche actuellement sur une lacune de la recherche.”<sup>17</sup>

The core of Marguerat’s research, which takes up and develops these questions, is that the importance of the judgement material lies not in a consistent description of the future event, the details of which Matthew makes no effort to bring into a coherent whole,<sup>18</sup> but rather in emphasising the criteria for judgement.<sup>19</sup> Like Bornkamm, then, his research sees the judgement material having a principally paraenetic function, though with obvious Christological implications.

If the works surveyed above saw the significance of apocalyptic elements primarily in terms of their theological and ethical role in paraenesis, a number of more recent articles sought to attach a sociological significance to them. G. Stanton’s “The Gospel of Matthew and Judaism,”<sup>20</sup> saw a connection between the gospel’s anti-Jewish polemic and the predominance of apocalyptic elements within it. The first two parts of Stanton’s article argue for the perception of the Matthean community that it was at odds with both the Jewish and the Gentile worlds. In the third part, he demonstrates the prominence of apocalyptic ideas in Matthew and asks, “Why is there increased prominence given to apocalyptic themes in this gospel? What is the *function* of

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 55.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., 23-24

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 25.

<sup>20</sup> G. Stanton, “The Gospel of Matthew and Judaism,” *BJRL* 66 (1984), 264-84.



these traditions?”<sup>21</sup> His answer is sociological: apocalyptic language responds to historical crises, providing comfort and consolation and reinforcing group identity.<sup>22</sup> In the case of Matthew, the language reflects the community’s separation from Judaism, a fact Stanton further supports in the final part of his article, in which he examines other Christian texts in which apocalyptic themes come to greater prominence in the context of Jewish opposition.<sup>23</sup>

A similar case was made by Donald Hagner in an article published the following year.<sup>24</sup> Unlike Stanton, Hagner begins with a general overview of the apocalyptic viewpoint and its social contexts<sup>25</sup> before commenting that the “simple realization,” that the Matthean community comprised Jewish Christians experiencing opposition from their parent group “will prepare us to expect apocalyptic in the Gospel of Mt.”<sup>26</sup> At the heart of both this work and that of Stanton is the understanding that apocalyptic writing is closely connected to a social context of oppression: “Alienation and the experience of hostility and persecution have been shown to be the key sociological factors that stimulate apocalyptic thought.”<sup>27</sup> Hagner continues by examining the details of the apocalyptic material in Matthew, noting that “apocalyptic-like”<sup>28</sup> motifs are used in connection with Jesus’ advent, and thus refer to the past, alongside more traditionally futurist apocalyptic language and ideas. Hagner sees this combination as a deliberate alteration of the apocalyptic worldview, which was always future-oriented. He closes by noting four functions to

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 278.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., 279.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 281-3.

<sup>24</sup> D.A. Hagner, “Apocalyptic Motifs in the Gospel of Matthew: Continuity and Discontinuity,” *HBT* 7 (1985), 53-82.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., 54-7.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., 57.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., 58.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 60.

this material in Matthew: *instruction* in the two apocalyptic realities of advent and parousia, *encouragement* in the face of persecution, *paraenesis* to moral obedience and *readiness* for the return of Christ.

O. L. Cope also argued, in 1989, for a sociological explanation of the prevalence of apocalyptic thinking in Matthew, though he also took up elements of Bornkamm's basic paraenetic explanation.<sup>29</sup> Interestingly, his article suggests an altogether different set of social anxieties to those proposed by Stanton and Hagner: Cope argues that the community is still part of the Jewish parent group and that it is the Jewish war and inter-church division that conspire to create such anxiety.

Also released in 1989 was David E. Orton's study of the positive use of the term γραμματεὺς in Matthew.<sup>30</sup> The sub-title of this work, *Matthew and the Apocalyptic Ideal*, prepares the reader for his findings. Orton examines the use of the term "scribe" in the Old Testament and Second Temple period<sup>31</sup> and then in various contexts that he sees as building up a picture of the "apocalyptic scribe."<sup>32</sup> This latter group of contexts includes the obvious apocalyptic and testamentary works, as well as the information found in Qumran literature, but it also, perhaps surprisingly, includes the writings of Ben Sira. Orton's point is that the key feature of the apocalyptic scribe is that he is a recipient and transmitter of divine revelation, often in a quasi-prophetical sense; such a description is, according to Orton, validly applied to Ben Sira. As

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<sup>29</sup> O. L. Cope, "To the Close of the Age: The Role of Apocalyptic Thought in the Gospel of Matthew," pages 113-24 in *Apocalyptic and the New Testament: Essays in Honour of J. Louis Martyn*, (ed. J. Marcus and M.L. Soards; JSNTSS 24; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1989).

<sup>30</sup> David E. Orton, *The Understanding Scribe: Matthew and the Apocalyptic Ideal*, (JSNTSS 25; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1989)

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 39-61.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 62-133.

the findings of this part of his study are brought to Matthew, and particularly to Matthew 13:52, a text often cited as evidence for a Matthean scribal school,<sup>33</sup> Orton is able to argue that the context of the positive references to the scribe (γραμματεὺς) in Matthew, especially that of Matthew 13:52, occur in contexts that suggest that the apocalyptic background is the most appropriate and that the designation foregrounds the idea of revelation within the gospel.

By providing a strong literary and theological reason for the reference to the scribe in Matthew 13:52, Orton's work raises an important challenge to the view that Matthew is the product of a scribal school. It also begins to address the question of the relationship of sapiential and apocalyptic elements in the gospel, since a major part of the background to the term "scribe" is seen as being in the wisdom literature. Finally, in emphasising the revelatory significance of the term "scribe," and indeed of the apocalyptic dimension of the gospel as a whole, Orton's work does greater justice to the character of the apocalypse genre than those works that focus on the eschatological dimension of that genre (of which more shall be said below).

As mentioned earlier, the most significant work on apocalyptic elements in Matthew's Gospel is that of David Sim.<sup>34</sup> He sought to provide a monograph treatment of the subject, drawing particularly on the suggestion of Stanton that division between the Matthean Christian community and the Jewish parent group provided the social context that explains the increased importance of apocalyptic elements within the gospel. Sim's work proper begins with a statement of his working assumptions, that Matthew's Gospel was probably composed in Syrian Antioch around 80 C.E. and that the evangelist (whoever he might have been) used Mark and Q as his

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<sup>33</sup> Orton discusses the works that make this connection: *ibid.*, 165-6.

<sup>34</sup> Sim, *Apocalyptic Eschatology*.

main source documents.<sup>35</sup> He then proceeds to outline his methodology, which is essentially one of redaction criticism.<sup>36</sup> The first major part of the study<sup>37</sup> examines apocalyptic eschatology and apocalypticism; after a discussion of the terminological problems associated with research in this area, Sim adopts a modified version of Koch's eight characteristics of apocalyptic thought:<sup>38</sup>

- 1) Dualism. 2) Determinism. 3) Eschatological woes. 4) The arrival of a saviour figure. 5) The judgement. 6) The fate of the wicked. 7) The fate of the righteous. 8) The imminence of the end.<sup>39</sup>

He then continues by surveying apocalyptic literature in order to demonstrate the presence of each of these characteristics and arguing that they reflect a consistent "apocalyptic eschatology."<sup>40</sup> Sim then addresses the question of the social setting and function of apocalyptic eschatology, arguing against Grabbe<sup>41</sup> that the consensus that apocalypticism arose in situations of oppression is valid. His criticism of Grabbe is essentially that the evidence used by the latter is late<sup>42</sup> and that his argument proceeds "on the premise that each phenomenon<sup>43</sup> remained

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid., 14-5.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., 15-9.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., 21-71

<sup>38</sup> Klaus Koch, *The Rediscovery of Apocalyptic*, (SBT 2/22 London: SCM, 1972), 28-33. Koch also suggested six literary characteristics of the genre apocalypse. These are summarised by Christopher Rowland, in *The Open Heaven: A Study of Apocalyptic in Judaism and Early Christianity* (New York: Crossroad, 1982), 454, as follows: "(i) discourse cycles in which the seer is shown something important about the destiny of man, (ii) spiritual turmoil which leads to some kind of revelation, (iii) paraenetic discourses which offer a kind of 'eschatological ethic,' (iv), pseudonymity (v) symbolism drawing on a vast reservoir of ancient mythology, and (vi) a long literary development and composite character."

<sup>39</sup> Sim, *Apocalyptic Eschatology*, 31-53.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., 53.

<sup>41</sup> L.L. Grabbe, "The Social Setting of Early Jewish Apocalypticism," *JSP* 4 (1989), 24-27.

<sup>42</sup> Sim, *Apocalyptic Eschatology*, 56-7.

<sup>43</sup> That is, apocalypticism and millenarianism.

substantially the same throughout different historical periods.”<sup>44</sup> Sim then proceeds to provide evidence for apocalyptic works arising in situations of historical crisis, summarising a great expanse of both primary and secondary literature in just a few pages.<sup>45</sup> This done, he proceeds to discuss the function of apocalyptic eschatology, drawing to a large extent on P.D. Hanson’s work, *The Dawn of Apocalyptic*,<sup>46</sup> and suggesting five categories of function:

1. Identification and legitimation, 2. explanation of current circumstances, 3. encouragement and hope for the future, 4. vengeance and consolation, 5. group solidarity and social control.<sup>47</sup>

Part 2 of Sim’s study<sup>48</sup> brings these findings to Matthew: he examines the gospel for evidence of each of the characteristics of apocalyptic eschatology, before reconstructing Matthew’s eschatology and concluding, “It is clear from this reconstruction that the Christian gospel of Matthew ultimately stands firmly within the general Jewish (and Christian) apocalyptic-eschatological tradition which was analysed in Part 1.” With this conclusion in place, he then examines the social setting of Matthew’s Gospel,<sup>49</sup> drawing conclusions based on the statements made in Part 1, that apocalyptic eschatology arose in situations of conflict and oppression and that it served certain functions within the group.

Sim’s work is of major importance in highlighting the importance of apocalyptic ideas within Matthew’s gospel and in isolating examples of these throughout its text. The work certainly demonstrates that ideas characteristic of the apocalypses are markedly more present in

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<sup>44</sup> Sim, *Apocalyptic Eschatology*, 57.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., 58-62.

<sup>46</sup> P.D. Hanson, *The Dawn of Apocalyptic: Historical and Sociological Roots of Jewish Apocalyptic Eschatology* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1975).

<sup>47</sup> Sim, *Apocalyptic Eschatology*, 64.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., 73-177.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., 181-249.

Matthew than in the other synoptics. Ultimately, however, the book reflects some of the serious deficiencies that more generally characterise scholarly approaches to the subject. First, there is no sensitivity to the diversity of ways in which given elements may be used within the broad range of apocalyptic literature. Sim simply takes Koch's list of characteristics and then trawls the apocalyptic writings for examples that justify the use of the categories. No attention is paid to the question of *how* a given element functions within a given text and whether the same element may be used in another text in service of an entirely different ideology. This leads to a more basic problem: the work flattens out of the diversity of worldviews and opinions reflected by the apocalyptic literature. This problem with Sim's approach is reflected in his use of the phrase "apocalyptic eschatology," which suggests that there is a consistent eschatology throughout the apocalyptic writings.<sup>50</sup> Second, Sim's treatment of Matthew, like his treatment of the apocalyptic texts, simply trawls for examples of his list of characteristics. Reading this section, one is more conscious of his desire to prove the presence of an apocalyptic eschatology than of any desire to identify the distinctive characteristics of Matthew's eschatology or to suggest how this might function within Matthew's overall theology (except insofar as that theology can support Sim's reconstruction of the Matthean social setting). Finally, the discussion of social contexts for apocalypticism is over-simplistic, a point arising from the sheer amount of material that is summarised on pages 58-62. Sim barely explores the range of discussion of social contexts of each apocalyptic work and seems not to notice the fact that his criticism of Grabbe – that he assumes a consistency to apocalypticism in different periods and places – also has implications for Sim's own argument, principally that there is a danger in moving away from the detailed

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<sup>50</sup> Both of these criticisms will be justified by the discussion of apocalyptic terminology later.

study of specific texts towards making generalisations about their contexts. These criticisms will be important in shaping the approach of the present work.

## Previous Research on Sapiential Elements in Matthew

There has been an awareness of Matthew's connections with the wisdom tradition since the early part of the twentieth century, when works by Norden<sup>51</sup> and Weiss<sup>52</sup> suggested that the first gospel presented Jesus in terms of personified Wisdom.<sup>53</sup> M. Jack Suggs was the first to develop the idea to any significant extent, however. His work<sup>54</sup> set out "to lift the Wisdom motif out of the footnotes of scholarly discussion, where it can be too quickly written off as an unexplained outburst of Johannine ideology."<sup>55</sup> The approach taken is one of redaction criticism. Suggs begins by examining traces of Wisdom<sup>56</sup> speculation in Q, broadly noting some of the connections between this hypothetical document and the Gospel of Thomas and noting also the absence in both of a passion narrative and thus the emphasis placed upon the teaching of Jesus. He concludes, "Q belongs at some point on the line of development which extends from the Wisdom of Solomon (for example) to second century Gnosticism. It is capable of being read as

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<sup>51</sup> E. Norden, *Agnostos Theos: Untersuchungen zur Formgeschichte Religiöser Reden* (Leipzig: Tuebner, 1913), 282-4.

<sup>52</sup> J. Weiss, "Das Logion Mt.11, 25-30," in *Neutestamentliche Studien: Georg Heinrici zu seinem 70. Geburtstag* (Leipzig: Heinrich, 1914), 120-9.

<sup>53</sup> More shall be said on this below, under the heading, **Wisdom/Sapiential**.

<sup>54</sup> M. Jack Suggs, *Wisdom, Christology and Law in Matthew's Gospel*, (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1970).

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

<sup>56</sup> Here, and in numerous places in the following discussion, I will use "Wisdom" (capitalised) to denote the idea of the personified/hypostasised divine attribute, in contrast to "wisdom" (uncapitalised) to denote the genre.

the report of Sophia's action in her envoys."<sup>57</sup> He moves beyond this statement that Q is *susceptible* to such a reading to propose that, in fact, it *invites* such a reading, a proposition based on the statement found in Luke 11:49-51 (paralleled by Matthew 23:34-6). This statement has the "Wisdom of God," sending envoys who are rejected by Israel. Suggs argues that the saying presents Jesus as "Wisdom's final prophet,"<sup>58</sup> and thus presents Jesus using sapiential categories. Suggs remains cautious, however, about using the phrase "Wisdom Christology" to refer to this phenomenon: "What we have in this saying is not, properly speaking, Christology at all: it is Sophiaology."

Suggs proceeds to examine the ways in which this idea is developed by Matthew. He examines Mt 11:19, noting the alteration of the (probably original) Lukan statement from "wisdom is justified by her children" to "by her deeds" and concluding that since this alteration relates back to 11:2, where Jesus' deeds are in view, Matthew must regard Jesus as being "Sophia incarnate."<sup>59</sup> He then returns to the pericope discussed above (Luke 11:49-51) and notes the Matthean redaction, which substitutes "I send you ..." for "The Wisdom of God will send ...,"<sup>60</sup> arguing that the alteration reflects Matthew's desire to present Jesus as Wisdom incarnate.

The following chapter takes up the issue by examining, first, the lament found in Matthew 23:37-9 (par. Lk 13:34-5) which Suggs assumes (in its original Q form) to be the speech of Sophia "in view of the fact that the remainder of the pericope accords so well with what is known of the portrait of Wisdom in Judaism."<sup>61</sup> Suggs fails, however, to provide any parallels for the

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<sup>57</sup> Ibid., 13.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid., 28.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid., 58.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid., 58-61.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid., 67.



central image of the hen and chicks in the wisdom tradition, an omission that weakens his subsequent argument that Matthew again transfers Wisdom's role to Jesus. Suggs then turns his attention to Matthew 11:25-30, noting the customary parallel with Sirach 51:26-7 and again suggesting that by having Jesus invite hearers to take up *his* yoke, and not that of personified Wisdom, Matthew has again transferred Wisdom's role to Jesus. The key development of this chapter is Suggs's recognition of the link between this transfer and Matthew's presentation of Jesus as *the Son*: "Now the Son is identified with Wisdom."<sup>62</sup>

The final stage of Suggs's work involves an examination of the relationship of Wisdom (embodied in Jesus) and Law in Matthew. The study begins by taking up the "easy yoke" imagery of Matthew 11:28-30, arguing that this imagery presents Jesus as the fulfilment of, "not an alternative to the yoke of the Torah."<sup>63</sup> Suggs then examines the Sermon on the Mount, arguing that the relationship between Wisdom and Torah means that Jesus (as the embodiment of Wisdom-Torah) always pronounces "the proper interpretation of the law and its literal establishment."<sup>64</sup> Thus, the "I say unto you ..." clause of the so-called antitheses in Matthew 5 "is the authoritative declaration of what in fact the law is."<sup>65</sup> He concludes by briefly examining the presentation of the disciples as "scribes" in 23:1-12.

The influence of Suggs's work on subsequent scholarship has been huge. As will be highlighted by chapter 6 of the present work, many continue to affirm his basic understanding of the identification of Jesus with Wisdom in certain passages. Several telling criticisms may be

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<sup>62</sup> Ibid., 96.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., 106.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid., 114.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid., 114.

levelled at it, however. The greatest of these is one acknowledged by Suggs himself:<sup>66</sup> the study makes little effort to relate the findings to the Matthean work, and its theology, as a whole. This deficiency alone would call for further research. Second, the work is based on an extremely small number of Matthean texts, and thus on a rather slender textual basis.<sup>67</sup> Third, for the most part the redaction of Matthew can only be effective in identifying Jesus with Wisdom if the reader has access to the original Q source. Without this, there is little in the text itself to suggest that he is to be understood in this way; the only text that really has a claim to this is Matthew 11:28-10, since the links with Sirach seem to place it into a more widely known sapiential stream, and even here scholars do not universally accept the link.<sup>68</sup>

Fred W. Burnett took up Suggs's conclusions in his 1981 work, *The Testament of Jesus-Sophia*.<sup>69</sup> This work argues that the redactional alterations made by Matthew in 23:37-9, changing a reference to the Wisdom of God to a first-person statement by Jesus, has the effect of transforming Jesus' eschatological discourse (found in Matthew 24) into the "testament"<sup>70</sup> of incarnate Sophia. The thesis proper begins with an examination of the Wisdom-Christology proposed by Suggs, which Burnett endorses and sets in the context of "the pre-Matthean picture of the rejection of Wisdom."<sup>71</sup> Burnett sees the rejection of Jesus, which is so prevalent in the

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<sup>66</sup> Ibid., 1.

<sup>67</sup> For this criticism, see Stanton, *The Gospel for a New People: Studies in Matthew* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1992), 181.

<sup>68</sup> See the discussion below in **Chapter 5**.

<sup>69</sup> Fred W. Burnett, *The Testament of Jesus-Sophia: A Redaction-Critical Study of the Eschatological Discourse in Matthew* (Washington: University Press of America, 1981).

<sup>70</sup> For a basic discussion of this genre and its connection with the apocalyptic genre, see Collins, *The Apocalyptic Imagination*, 127-44.

<sup>71</sup> Burnett, *The Testament of Jesus Sophia*, 94-8.

Matthean narrative,<sup>72</sup> as reflecting this idea of Wisdom's rejection and regards this theme as reaching its climax in Matthew 23:37-39. He then turns to examine the discourse found in 24:3-42, noting that the absence of visionary elements (among other things) makes problematic the simple categorisation of this discourse as apocalyptic. He notes the alternative idea, that the speech is a farewell discourse, and highlights several problems with this view before concluding that the best approach is to understand the discourse as a "testament," comparable with the testamentary material in the Epistle of Enoch, which he sees as reflecting the confluence of the wisdom and apocalyptic traditions. With this view in place, he proceeds to argue that the Matthean redaction of the disciples' question in 24:3 has the effect of creating a caesura between Jesus' prediction of the fall of the temple (24:1-2) and the discourse that follows, which Burnett regards as exclusively eschatological advice to the disciples and no longer concerned with the temple. This last point requires Burnett, in the subsequent discussion of the discourse, to reinterpret the material concerning the "abomination of desolation" (τὸ βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως) as referring to the desecration of Christian sanctuaries. Following the detailed examination of the discourse, Burnett concludes by exploring the implications of his study for Matthean theology as a whole.

Burnett's study has two major flaws, which may explain why it has largely fallen into the background of Matthean studies, unlike Suggs's work. First, the same fundamental criticism of Suggs may be levelled at Burnett: both argue that the Matthean redaction is intended to identify Jesus with Wisdom, but this identification could only be made by those capable of comparing Matthew's gospel with the sources behind it. Second, his attempt to loose the discourse in chapter 24 from the fall of the temple is problematic, both in the argumentation (explored in **Chapter 6**)

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<sup>72</sup> See the discussion of this theme in the context of Matthew 11-12 below, **Chapter 5**.

and in the conclusions (such as seeing the “abomination” language as referring to the desecration of Christian sanctuaries). More positively, his attempt to link the rejection of Jesus by the Jewish leaders to the rejection of Wisdom is certainly a commendable effort to provide a broader textual basis for Wisdom Christology in Matthew, but one must ask whether the idea of Wisdom’s *rejection* was as well attested as he believes, given that he sees the *locus classicus* for the idea as being *1 Enoch* 42:1-3. Even if the idea was common, it is more likely, given the absence of more explicit references to Jesus as Wisdom, that the rejection of Jesus is the dominant theme in the gospel and that the allusion to the rejection of Wisdom is just that: an allusion. Finally, his argument that the discourse in chapter 24 reflects the confluence of wisdom and apocalyptic is interesting but undeveloped: he simply places the eschatological discourse into the mouth of Wisdom incarnate and neglects more interesting issues, such as the relationship between the material in chapter 24 and the parables of chapter 25.

Celia Deutsch’s 1987 monograph, *Hidden Wisdom and the Easy Yoke*,<sup>73</sup> examines the redactional development of 11:25-30 (concluding that 11:25-7 belong to Q and 11:28-30 to M) before breaking it into its two subsections and examining the themes in each by means of a comparative study with other roughly contemporary Jewish literature. She concludes that Matthew “used notions of apocalyptic revelation, Sonship, Wisdom, the yoke and *anawim* vocabulary (1) to interpret Jesus’ identity and meaning, and (2) to spell out his call to discipleship.”<sup>74</sup> Aware that Matthew’s contemporaries, against whom he and his community defined themselves, also had access to these categories, Deutsch stresses that the author of the first gospel “uses them to say to his disciples that Jesus is the authoritative revealer and teacher of

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<sup>73</sup> C. Deutsch, *Hidden Wisdom and the Easy Yoke: Wisdom, Torah and Discipleship in Matthew 11.25-30*, (JSNTSS 18; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1987).

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, 143.

wisdom because he is Wisdom personified.”<sup>75</sup> It is worth noting that, again, Deutsch sees the proper interpretation of Torah as a crucial dimension to this.<sup>76</sup>

The first two criticisms of Suggs, above, hold true for Deutsch’s work also:<sup>77</sup> it is a slender textual basis that is examined and there is no attempt to relate the findings to Matthew’s wider theology. Nevertheless, the recognition that the pericope draws upon apocalyptic ideas of revelation takes the work beyond that of Suggs. The relationship of Jesus to the Torah, however, requires further examination: as we shall see in **Part 1** of the present work, the role played by the Torah within certain apocalyptic texts (specifically *1 Enoch*, which Deutsch draws on<sup>78</sup>) is at best marginal and possibly negative.

Ben Witherington’s 1995 work, *Jesus the Sage*,<sup>79</sup> sought to address some of these weaknesses. This work traces the development of the wisdom genre, with particular attention given to the way in which Wisdom is personified or hypostasised. It helpfully examines the currents of traditional and counter-order wisdom, allowing each text studied to provide its own unique contribution and exploring the relationship between Wisdom and Torah. Particularly noteworthy here is the fact that in the later Wisdom texts such as Sirach 24, Wisdom is portrayed as the greater category, with Torah being portrayed as its supreme earthly embodiment: “The special embodiment of Wisdom in Torah does not exclude her presence elsewhere. While Torah is indeed all the good things that can be said about Wisdom, since she resides therein, Wisdom is

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<sup>75</sup> Ibid., 143.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid., 143.

<sup>77</sup> This point is true also of Deutsch’s subsequent work, *Lady Wisdom, Jesus and the Sages: Metaphor and Social Context in Matthew’s Gospel*, (Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press, 1996).

<sup>78</sup> Ibid., 64-74.

<sup>79</sup> Ben Witherington III, *Jesus the Sage: The Pilgrimage of Wisdom*, (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1994).

not confined to the Torah.”<sup>80</sup> Witherington further notes that in Sirach 24, the understanding of Wisdom is not merely Torah-centric but that within that focus on Torah there is “a stress on the temple cultus and priesthood.”<sup>81</sup> He continues, “those who try to insist upon too exclusive an identification of Wisdom with Torah have not fully taken the measure of a sage who could say in the very first chapter of his work that God poured out Wisdom ‘upon all his works.’”<sup>82</sup>

Witherington then turns his attention to the various ways in which he sees the New Testament drawing upon this tradition, with its forms and concepts. Of greatest relevance to the present work is chapter 8 of this work, which Witherington entitles, “The Gospels of Wisdom: Matthew and John.”<sup>83</sup> Obviously, it is the section of this chapter that deals with the first gospel that is of interest. Witherington understands this gospel as being the product of an author belonging to a school<sup>84</sup> who handles his sources with the conservatism of one who regards himself as an editor rather than as an author.<sup>85</sup> He notes the fact that the term “rabbi” only occurs as an address on the lips of those who fail to acknowledge Jesus’ true status as “Lord,”<sup>86</sup> but stresses that the use of the term by Jesus in 23:8-10 points to its validity as a title when properly understood: he is “*the* teacher.”<sup>87</sup> This point is developed by the conclusion to the Sermon on the

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<sup>80</sup> Ibid., 96. He also describes Torah as Wisdom’s “objective repository” on page 98.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid., 97.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid., 98.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid., 335-380. To a lesser extent, chapter 5 bears relevance by providing an interesting discussion of the sapiential dimensions of Q.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid., 341-3.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid., 343.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid., 344.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid., 344. The emphasis is Witherington’s. The term used in Matthew 23:10 is καθηγητής, rather than “rabbi.” For a more nuanced discussion of this phrase, see Samuel Byrskog, *Jesus the Only Teacher: Didactic Authority and Transmission in Ancient Israel, Ancient Judaism and the Matthean Community*, (Coniectanea Biblica, NT 24; Stockholm: Almqvist and Wiksell, 1995), 287-90.

Mount, where Jesus' authority is contrasted with the lack of such authority among "their scribes," those associated with the Pharisees.<sup>88</sup> Witherington then examines several passages that seem to present Jesus and/or his disciples as scribes. Matthew 13:52, the reference to every scribe trained for the kingdom of heaven, is the first to be examined, with a specific kind of scribe being spoken of: "Matthew sees himself and his charges as sapiential scribes of the sort described in Sir 39:1-3 ... It is the chief job of the sapiential scribe to be an interpreter of the earlier Wisdom, not just in the Torah or in the Wisdom books, but also in this case the Wisdom in the teachings of Jesus."<sup>89</sup> Witherington next argues that the reference to "binding" and "loosing" in Matt. 16:17ff. is to "the practice of making decisions and giving commands on what one is *bound* to do and what one is *free* to do. That is, Peter ... is given the task, based on the tradition that he has received from Jesus, of interpreting that tradition so as to explain what is and is not permitted in terms of behaviour."<sup>90</sup> Finally, Witherington notes that Matt. 28:18-20 presents the commission of the first disciples in terms of making further disciples and teaching them to obey Jesus' commandments, thus emphasising the sapiential character of the gospel as a whole.

Witherington then proceeds to argue that the gospel as a whole presents Jesus as "David's Son and Lord, Solomon's superior."<sup>91</sup> It is worth tracing at least the first major part of this argument through in some detail, since it represents the most sustained case for a thoroughgoing Wisdom Christology in Matthew that has yet been made. Witherington notes, first, the emphasis of Matthew 1:1 that Jesus is the Son of David, a title repeated at crucial junctures of Matthew's

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<sup>88</sup> Ibid., 345.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid., 346.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid., 348.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid., 349. This is the title given to the subsection of the chapter that seeks to work through the gospel as a whole.

account and “not attested before the *Psalms of Solomon*.”<sup>92</sup> This latter point means, according to Witherington, that what we are dealing with here in the title is “a late sapiential and not an Old Testamental way of putting things.”<sup>93</sup> The connection he makes is with the person of Solomon, the great patron of wisdom. This claim he sees as reinforced by the events of Matthew 2 (heavenly signs, the visit of seers, power struggles with other kings),<sup>94</sup> though it might be suggested here, in anticipation of more thorough criticism below, that these signs merely reinforce Jesus’ kingly or Davidic status and not his Solomonic one. The account of Jesus’ baptism is understood explicitly as the reception of the Spirit of Wisdom, a point that Witherington sees as distinctively made by Matthew, who has the voice from heaven address the crowd, rather than Jesus, thus turning the event more explicitly into a kingly investiture.<sup>95</sup> He notes the repetition of the phrase in 17:5 at the transfiguration, seeing there Wisdom symbolism in the description of Jesus’ appearance, which he parallels with the Wisdom of Solomon 7:26, 29 (“she is a reflection of eternal light, a spotless mirror of the working of God, and an image of his goodness ... She is more beautiful than the sun and excels every constellation of the stars.”)<sup>96</sup> Again, it may be suggested that the argument here hardly develops a distinctive Matthean sapiential theology, since the transfiguration account is well attested in the other gospel sources and may draw on other traditions than the sapiential one in its symbolism (most obviously the theophany of Sinai). Nevertheless, the connection with the Wisdom of Solomon is then further developed by Witherington, who notes that immediately after the passage cited above is a description of the testing of the king: this is paralleled by the testing in Matthew 4 and then later

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<sup>92</sup> Ibid., 353.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid., 353.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid., 353.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid., 354.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid., 354.



in Matthew 26-7. The case is hardly convincing since the testing accounts are so distantly separated that the reader is hardly likely to connect them naturally with this citation. As Witherington discusses the quotation from Isaiah 9:1-2 at the beginning of Jesus' public ministry he is on firmer ground, stressing that this is a reference to a Davidic king, though his parallel of Jesus' opening words with those of Wisdom in Proverbs 1:20-3 again feels tenuous.<sup>97</sup> The treatment of the Sermon on the Mount is stronger: Witherington suggests that given the wealth of forms and ideas paralleled in the Wisdom tradition, it would be better to call this section of Matthew "the Teaching on the Mount."<sup>98</sup> Probably of most importance is his assessment that what we have here is "with some exceptions ... basically *conventional wisdom*, prefaced by eschatologically oriented beatitudes."<sup>99</sup> By "conventional wisdom," of course, Witherington means the kind found in Proverbs and Sirach, which centres on fidelity to Torah. But when the "exceptions" that he mentions are examined ("words against wealth or any oath taking, love of enemies, no divorce"),<sup>100</sup> the statement begins to ring a little hollow: as shall be seen in **Chapter 4** of the present work, the teaching on these areas for the most part falls into a structurally crucial block of material (the so-called antitheses) that highlights the inadequacy of Torah and affects the reading of the rest of the Sermon. Witherington then examines the miracle-accounts of Matthew 8-9, noting again the importance given to the title "Son of David", and arguing that the background to this is found in traditions that present Solomon as healer.<sup>101</sup> This issue will be dealt with more thoroughly in **Chapter 5**; at this stage it is sufficient to say that at the time when

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<sup>97</sup> Ibid., 355.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid., 356.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid., 356.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid., 356.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid., 357.

Witherington wrote this book, Novakovic's thorough examination of these chapters<sup>102</sup> had not yet been published and therefore Witherington was ignorant of some of the criticisms that she would level at the position taken by the works upon which he drew. The treatment of the commissioning speech in Matthew 10 is also weak: Witherington begins by simply claiming that it is possible to read this as the speech of Wisdom, but ends by seeing it as part of "a consistent, sustained attempt to see Jesus as a Solomonic and even Wisdom figure,"<sup>103</sup> a statement that is made with no further evidence than his previous (problematic) claims that the earlier chapters present Jesus as Solomonic. All of these alleged elements in the Matthean presentation of Jesus underlie Witherington's reprisal of the arguments of Suggs and Deutsch regarding 11:25-30: the criticism of Stanton, that 11:25-30 is too slender a textual base, is rejected on the basis of these strands of evidence from throughout the gospel, which Witherington sees as supporting his interpretation.

Little would be gained from examining the remainder of Witherington's case for a Matthean Wisdom Christology, since we have already stressed its weaknesses over the first half of the gospel and its inability to support his understanding of Matthew 11:25-30. It would seem that his sustained argument for a thoroughgoing Wisdom-Christology is open to some major criticisms.<sup>104</sup>

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<sup>102</sup> Lidija Novakovic, *Messiah, the Healer of the Sick: a Study of Jesus as the Son of David in the Gospel of Matthew* (WUNT 2.170; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003)

<sup>103</sup> Witherington, *Jesus the Sage*, 358.

<sup>104</sup> Other works may have been noted as proposing a Wisdom Christology in Matthew, notably that of James D.G. Dunn, *Christology in the Making: A New Testament Inquiry into the Origins of the Doctrine of the Incarnation* (London: SCM Press, 1989), 197-206 and Robert R.G. Hammerton-Kelly, *Pre-Existence, Wisdom and the Son of Man: A Study of the Idea of Pre-Existence in the New Testament* (SNTSMS 21; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973). Such works, however, are less specifically concerned with the Matthean text and have, as a result, been given little space within the present discussion.

Yet the problems with this one aspect of Witherington's work do not render all of his conclusions invalid: Witherington has picked up on some important points, particularly the way in which Jesus' ministry and the role of his disciples are depicted in sapiential terms of *teacher* and *disciples*, and the way in which this arguably traditional element has, in Matthew's hands, been foregrounded in Matthew 13:57, 23:8-10 and 28:18-20. Moreover, he has rightly recognized the way in which the arrangement of Jesus' teaching into blocks, such as the Sermon on the Mount, and the extent to which Matthew has included teaching omitted by the other gospels or possibly composed additional didactic material reinforce the sense that Jesus' *teaching* has salvific significance.<sup>105</sup> In other words, while a Wisdom Christology may not be defensible in Matthew (a question that will be more adequately explored in later chapters) there remains an emphasis on Jesus as being a Sage, an emphasis on the importance of his Wisdom. The question of how this relates to the apocalyptic elements in Matthew, therefore, remains significant.

## The Purpose, Shape and Methodology of the Present Study

The survey above demonstrates the scholarly acceptance that Matthew's gospel draws on imagery and forms found in both the sapiential and apocalyptic traditions and that these elements occupy an important position within its developing narrative. Yet it also demonstrates that attention has generally been focussed on one or the other of these areas and that the question of how they might relate to one another remains largely unaddressed. It is this deficiency that the present study will begin to address. **Part 1** will examine two texts which also present a mixture of sapiential and apocalyptic elements. The first of these, the collection of Jewish traditions known as 1 (Ethiopic) Enoch, is generally accepted to contain a number of apocalypses, yet it also

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<sup>105</sup> This will be explored more fully in all three chapters of **Part 2**.

employs sapiential elements and imagery. The second, *4QInstruction*, is generally accepted to be a Jewish work of wisdom (specifically, an “instruction”), yet it contains elements usually designated “apocalyptic.” Since each of these texts, accepted as exemplars of the genres to which they belong, contain elements of the other genre, the study of them will push us beyond the oversimplistic identification of form and ideology with genre and will require us to search for underlying concepts that explain why such elements are brought together. This goal justifies the examination of such a small number of texts: Sim’s work, in particular, highlights the fact that the approach that simply trawls a genre or category of writings for superficial traits is incapable of detecting such concepts and thus ignores the contextual dimension of these features. Only by devoting adequate space to individual works can we properly assess the function of forms and ideas within its compositional whole.

**Part 2** will bring the results of this study to Matthew. These results will provide lines of enquiry that may be brought to the Matthean text. Since both wisdom and apocalyptic elements have been highlighted as crucial and distinctive to Matthew’s work, it is reasonable to suggest that if a relationship between the two can be demonstrated, it will be of major importance to Matthew’s theology. Three sections of Matthew will be examined:

1. The first of these is Matthew 5-7, the Sermon on the Mount, chosen because it is important both to those who argue for the centrality of wisdom in the first gospel (such as Witherington) and also to those who argue for the importance of apocalyptic in that gospel (such as Sim). Indeed, the association of this section of Matthew with each of the traditions is well established: Schweitzer famously saw the Sermon as reflecting the “interim ethic” of an apocalyptic prophet who

expected the imminent end;<sup>106</sup> M. Gilbert, on the other hand, categorised the Sermon as a Christian “Wisdom” work, reporting Jesus teaching “in sapiential form.”<sup>107</sup>

2. The second section to be examined is Matthew 11-12. This section has been chosen for two reasons: first, given the significance of Matt 11:25-30 (and to a lesser extent 11: 19) to those who argue for a Matthean Wisdom Christology this section is unavoidable, and, second, narrative critical approaches have isolated these chapters as being central to the development of Matthew’s key themes and therefore where we might expect underlying concepts of Matthean theology to emerge.
3. The third section examined is Matt 24-25. This section has been chosen because it is generally understood by New Testament scholars as being the most explicitly apocalyptic section of the gospel,<sup>108</sup> yet a large part of its theology is expressed in the form of parables and fuses its eschatology with the sapiential categories of wisdom and folly. Again, therefore, it will make an important contribution to the study.

Parts 1 and 2 will not employ any single methodology to the exclusion of others. A wide range of methodologies are employed by contemporary scholarship and it is surely self-evident

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<sup>106</sup> Albert Schweitzer, *The Quest of the Historical Jesus: A Critical Study of its Progress from Reimarus to Wrede* (3<sup>rd</sup>. Edition. Trans. W.C. Montgomery; London: A&C Black, 1954), 352.

<sup>107</sup> M. Gilbert, “Wisdom Literature,” in *Jewish Writings of the Second Temple Period: Apocrypha, Pseudepigrapha, Qumran Sectarian Writings, Philo, Josephus*, edited by Michael E. Stone (CRINT 2; Assen: Van Gorcum Press/ Minneapolis: Fortress, 1984), 319.

<sup>108</sup> Whether such an assessment is legitimate will be examined in **Chapter 6**, below.

that to employ only one of these will truncate the nature of any piece of research. Sim's work demonstrates this fact well: by almost exclusively employing a redaction-critical method in which sociological factors are given primacy in the assumed process of redaction, he made the positive contribution of identifying Matthean redaction in an apocalyptic direction, but failed to make any contribution to our knowledge of how this redaction connects with the Matthean composition as a whole, or with its theology.<sup>109</sup> Given this failure, his sociological conclusions are at least open to question, since he has failed to take into account literary or compositional pressures that may have led to the apocalyptic redactional moves. Instead, the present work will seek to draw on the findings of different methodological approaches. This will certainly include redaction criticism,<sup>110</sup> but it will also include narrative criticism. It may be that such an open method should be understood as "composition criticism," a term used by some scholars<sup>111</sup> that reflects the desire to give the finished form or composition some priority, without neglecting the light that may be cast on the uniqueness of that finished form by redaction-critical and form-critical approaches. Since narrative critical approaches will be drawn on in this study, and since this approach has less of an established history in biblical studies, it may helpful at this point to

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<sup>109</sup> This neglect of theological dimensions is, of course, a departure from the concerns of traditional redaction criticism and its concern with theological *Tendenz*. This is a criticism of the way in which Sim employs redaction criticism, rather than a criticism of the method itself.

<sup>110</sup> I will, however, seek to avoid making assumptions on sources, i.e. I will not simply follow the two-source hypothesis. This does not represent a wholesale rejection of this theory on my part; however, since uncertainties remain over this issue, and since any significant redaction-critical conclusions based on this theory require the convoluted procedure of sifting the witnesses and making value-judgements on which is original (value-judgements which themselves may be open to question), it seems wiser simply to acknowledge points at which the Matthean composition has either moved in a more apocalyptic direction or retained a more apocalyptic emphasis.

<sup>111</sup> The best summary of this approach is to be found in Blaine Charette, *The Theme of Recompense in Matthew's Gospel* (JSNTSS 79; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1992), 16-19. Charette helpfully distinguishes the approach from more exclusively narrative-centred criticism.

note some of the terms and concepts that are employed within this method.<sup>112</sup> The “plotted time” of a given narrative is the period of time during which it ostensibly takes place. The “narrative world” is the reality that is depicted within the story, as distinct from the actual history that may stand “behind” the text. On the distinction between these two realities, however, David Bauer makes two points. First, “when an implied author makes explicit reference to other writings, thus drawing attention to these writings, they become part of the narrative world the author creates.”<sup>113</sup> Thus, a work cannot be interpreted in isolation from the literary traditions to which it refers or, though this must be treated with great caution, to which it alludes. Bauer’s point specifically concerns the Old Testament citations, but since writings not found in the canon, such as Sirach, may be alluded to, these must also be considered. It must be stressed, though, that in the absence of clear citation formulae, some caution must be exercised in the identification of allusions and their purpose, a point that will be made clear in the discussion of Matthew 11:25-30 (**Chapter 5**) which makes a number of such allusions. Second, Bauer notes that “although the narrative world of the Gospel is self-consistent and distinct from the external world of historical events and persons, it is not hermetically sealed from the external world. There are points in the Gospel at which it is clear that the implied author assumes knowledge that is not found in the text but rather belongs to the external world. When this occurs, we can say that the narrative points

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<sup>112</sup> Helpful summaries of the approach, applied specifically to Matthew, are found in Jack Dean Kingsbury, *Matthew as Story*, (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986), 1-40; David R. Bauer, “The Literary and Theological Function of the Genealogy in Matthew’s Gospel,” in David R. Bauer and Mark Allen Powell, eds., *Treasures Old and New: Contributions to Matthean Studies* (SBL Symposium Series 1; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1996), 131-33. Bauer, in particular, highlights the importance of taking historical issues into account within a balanced narrative-critical approach.

<sup>113</sup> Bauer, “The ... Function of the Genealogy,” 132.

beyond itself and requires that we explore the kind of historical knowledge that is assumed by the text.”<sup>114</sup>

The concluding chapter will suggest some ways in which the concepts identified in the body of the study inform Matthean Christology. Some cautious suggestions will also be made as to some of the implications of this study for Historical Jesus research. This latter point is occasioned by the fact that the question of how sapiential and apocalyptic elements relate to one another in the pre-gospel traditions is also a living one. This question is not central to the concerns of the present study, but it certainly warrants some treatment as a closely related issue: on one hand, the study of Matthew’s Gospel is an important stage in the reconstruction of a hypothetical Q document and of the teaching of the Historical Jesus; on the other hand, perceived sapiential/apocalyptic trajectories in Q (distinguished from the teaching of the Historical Jesus) have been important to the work of those who have seen a Wisdom-Christology operative in Matthew.<sup>115</sup> Before clarifying the terminology to be followed in the present work, therefore, it seems helpful to examine the question of the pre-gospel tradition as it is approached in contemporary scholarship.

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<sup>114</sup> Ibid., 132.

<sup>115</sup> This is true of the above mentioned works of M.J. Suggs and Ben Witherington. Witherington is generally critical of the work of J.S. Kloppenborg, which will be discussed below, but his argumentation highlights the fact that Wisdom-Christology approaches tend to be heavily reliant on Q-scholarship. Some awareness, therefore, of such scholarship, and of the views that dominate it, is important.



## **Excursus: Wisdom and Apocalypse in the Pre-Gospel**

### **Tradition**

There is a certain trend in contemporary gospel scholarship towards the view that wisdom and apocalyptic are mutually exclusive and exist together in the gospels solely as a result of redaction. This view, held by a significant number of New Testament scholars, is particularly associated with the work of John S. Kloppenborg and John Dominic Crossan.

### **John S. Kloppenborg and *The Formation of Q***

The work of John S. Kloppenborg has been of huge significance to scholars researching the nature and extent of the hypothetical gospel source, Q. A substantial number of the scholars involved in the Society of Biblical Literature's *Q Seminar* follow Kloppenborg in his understanding of the development of gospel sources,<sup>116</sup> and his work undergirds the work of other scholars such as Burton L. Mack and John Dominic Crossan.

Kloppenborg's most significant work in this area is *The Formation of Q*,<sup>117</sup> in which he argues that Q was a written document, composed in Greek and displaying three clear redactional strata, the earliest of which may be classified according to form as *gnomologium*. Following an introduction in which he surveys the more significant material written about Q, Kloppenborg argues first that Q was a written document, rather than a collection of orally transmitted

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<sup>116</sup> This fact is attested by the fact that of the contributors to the symposium edited by Kloppenborg, *Conflict and Invention: Literary, Rhetorical and Social Studies on the Sayings Gospel Q*, (Valley Forge: Trinity Press, 1995), comprising largely members of that seminar, only Richard Horsley voices disagreement with Kloppenborg in his article (ch. 3, "Social Conflict in the Synoptic Sayings Source Q," esp. 39-40).

<sup>117</sup> John S. Kloppenborg, *The Formation of Q: Trajectories in Ancient Wisdom Collections* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987).

sayings.<sup>118</sup> His argument here is based on the high fidelity of double tradition material, and draws upon the statistical analysis of the gospels carried out by Carlston and Norlin,<sup>119</sup> whose work indicated a higher level of fidelity between passages belonging to the double tradition than between those belonging to the triple tradition. Kloppenborg furthers his case by rejecting the work of Gerhardsson and Riesenfeld,<sup>120</sup> both of whom argue for a high level of faithfulness in oral transmission, on the basis that there is no evidence that the rabbinic models that underlie their approach were ever used in early Christianity<sup>121</sup> and that an explanation for the high levels of similarity between texts must therefore be a result of a shared written source. Having argued for Q being a written document, Kloppenborg proceeds to argue that the language in which it was written was Greek,<sup>122</sup> a point that will be important to his final conclusions regarding the classification of the strata of Q. He concludes his study of the nature and shape of Q by seeking to establish the order and extent of this written, Greek document.<sup>123</sup>

The second major part of Kloppenborg's study is an examination of the structure and thematic unity of Q.<sup>124</sup> Here he argues for a high level of topical organisation and for clear thematic unity within subsets of the material. Regarding the work as a whole, he agrees with Jacobson<sup>125</sup> that there is a unity based on Deuteronomistic motifs, but argues that this is redactional:

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<sup>118</sup> Ibid., 41-51.

<sup>119</sup> Charles E. Carlston and Dennis Norlin, "Once More — Statistics and Q." *HTR* 64 (1971): 59-78

<sup>120</sup> Birger Gerhardsson, *Memory and Manuscript* (Uppsala: Gleerup, 1961); H. Riesenfeld, *The Gospel Tradition* (London: A.R. Mowbray & Co., 1957).

<sup>121</sup> Kloppenborg, *Formation*, 44-46.

<sup>122</sup> Ibid., 51-64.

<sup>123</sup> Ibid., 64-87.

<sup>124</sup> Ibid., 89-95.

<sup>125</sup> Arland D. Jacobson, "The Literary Unity of Q," *JBL* 101 (1982) 265-389.

Hence, although he has not attempted to prove that deuteronomistic theology pervades the whole of Q, Jacobson successfully demonstrates that at one point in its literary evolution, Q was organized and redacted from a coherent theological perspective. This redaction lends to the collection an important unity.<sup>126</sup>

This discussion of redaction leads Kloppenborg to close this important section with an outlining of the redaction-analytical method that he will employ in the following chapters' examination of Q.<sup>127</sup>

The third main part of Kloppenborg's argument examines the clusters of sayings that announce judgement.<sup>128</sup> He argues that these belong to the same redactional stratum on the basis of several common features. First, he argues that they share a *projected audience*:

Although of course the *actual* audience of these Q speeches is the community itself, i.e., those already sympathetic to the preaching of the kingdom, the *projected audience* consists of the impenitent and the opponents of the community preaching . . . In their redactional arrangement

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<sup>126</sup> Kloppenborg, *Formation*, 93.

<sup>127</sup> Ibid., 95 – 101. Kloppenborg develops the methodologies of Dieter Lührmann, *Die Redaktion der Logienquelle*, (WMANT 33; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1969); Arland D. Jacobson, “Wisdom Christology in Q,” Ph.D diss., Claremont Graduate School, 1978. Drawing these works together, he provides 3 main analytical tools:

1. “The determination of the compositional principles which guide the juxtaposition of originally independent sayings and groups of sayings. Naturally this presupposes and builds upon the results from form-critical analysis.” (98)
2. “Second, redactional or compositional activity may be seen in insertions and glosses” (99)
3. “Finally . . . comparison of Q with other streams of tradition – principally Mark – is a means by which to corroborate the conclusions obtained from [the above].” (100)

<sup>128</sup> Kloppenborg, *Formation*, 102-170. The passages examined are, following the convention that numbers them according to their position in Luke, 3:7-9, 16-17; 7:1-10, 18-35; 11:14-52; 12:39-59; 17:23-37.

these sayings articulate the conflict between the Q group and their Jewish contemporaries over the preaching of the kingdom.<sup>129</sup>

Second, Kloppenborg argues that the sayings share a *form*, that of the *chria* (or apophthegm), “short pithy sayings which are given a brief introduction or setting.”<sup>130</sup>

He continues, however, that “in contrast to Mark, the Q chriae are not concerned with legal matters but criticize instead the response of ‘this generation’ to the preaching of the kingdom.”<sup>131</sup>

Third, Kloppenborg argues that the sayings share the common motif of judgement.<sup>132</sup>

Taken together, these three common features unite the five sayings clusters and, at least to Kloppenborg, suggest a single redactional stratum.

In the next stage of his argument, Kloppenborg examines the remaining sayings clusters in Q.<sup>133</sup> In contrast to the previous group of passages, which were prophetic in nature, he argues that “these sayings clusters or ‘speeches’ are controlled instead by sapiential themes and devices and, notwithstanding several important interpolations, are directed at the Q community in support of its radical mode of existence.”<sup>134</sup>

Again, he sees this material as belonging to a single sapiential stratum, based on several common features. First, there is a common *implied audience*: “The speeches in the main are

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<sup>129</sup> Ibid., 167.

<sup>130</sup> Ibid., 168.

<sup>131</sup> Ibid., 169.

<sup>132</sup> Ibid., 169.

<sup>133</sup> 6:20b-49; 9:57-62; 10:2-16, 21-24; 11: 2-4, 9-13; 12: 2-12; 12: 22-34; 13: 24-30.

<sup>134</sup> Kloppenborg, *Formation*, 171

addressed not to outsiders and opponents, but to members of the community. The tone is hortatory and instructional, not polemical or threatening.”<sup>135</sup>

Second, as with the prophetic material, these speeches present common *forms*:

A large number of the sayings can be classed as sapiential admonitions of the form second-person plural (or, less commonly, singular) imperative, with or without a motive clause. Some of these imperatives are introduced by the formula λέγω ὑμῖν, also a sapiential locution.<sup>136</sup>

Kloppenborg does note that these forms also occur in prophetic speech, but uses the fact that they are put to different use in those contexts - to undergird pronouncements of judgement, not ethical behaviour – as an escape route from the implication that this might have for his thesis.<sup>137</sup>

Third, several common motifs unify these passages. Kloppenborg highlights *poverty*, *renunciation of violence* and *confidence in God's providential protection* as key motifs, stressing that “throughout these portions of Q *discipleship* is conceived in the most radical social and personal terms.”<sup>138</sup> He also stresses that this discipleship is positively understood in Q as *the imitation of God*.<sup>139</sup> Finally he notes that these passages employ the term *Gentile* pejoratively, in sharp contrast to the term's use in the prophetic passages, in which Gentile faith is called as witness against the faithlessness of Israel. In drawing this discussion of motifs to a conclusion, Kloppenborg makes the following statement:

With some justification, this stratum of Q could be termed ‘the radical wisdom of the kingdom of God.’ The dawning kingdom motivates the radical ethic of Q, and in turn the community

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<sup>135</sup> Ibid., 238.

<sup>136</sup> Ibid., 239. Here Kloppenborg also very helpfully lists the range of wisdom forms occurring in the motive clauses.

<sup>137</sup> Ibid., 239.

<sup>138</sup> Ibid., 241.

<sup>139</sup> Ibid., 241.

members, by their mode of symbolic action (voluntary poverty, non-violence, love of enemies, etc.), point to the presence of the reign of God among them.<sup>140</sup>

The eschatological nature of the language used by Kloppenborg should not be ignored. He uses such language again in his final conclusion where he more explicitly describes Q as containing a realised eschatology.<sup>141</sup>

Before leaving this discussion of the sapiential material in Q, Kloppenborg argues for this stratum being the formative one. His conclusions draw together some of the results of form-critical analysis made throughout the course of this chapter: “As the analysis has shown, sayings which contain the deuteronomistic and judgement motifs appear to have been interpolated into and around the wisdom speeches.”<sup>142</sup>

Following the next section, in which Kloppenborg analyses the temptation narrative,<sup>143</sup> a comparison is made with other ancient sayings collections. This paves the way for Kloppenborg's formal conclusions regarding the composition of Q, namely that the earliest stratum was an *Instruction*, specifically belonging to the category of *gnomologium*.<sup>144</sup> To this was added the prophetic layer, transforming the work into a *chriae* collection.<sup>145</sup> Finally, a biographical element was added, moving the collection towards the category of *bios*.<sup>146</sup>

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<sup>140</sup> Ibid., 242.

<sup>141</sup> Ibid., 320-32.1

<sup>142</sup> Ibid., 243.

<sup>143</sup> Ibid., 246-25. Kloppenborg sees this narrative as a final redactional layer in Q.

<sup>144</sup> Ibid., 317-322. For his discussion of the categories “instruction,” and “gnomologium,” see *ibid.*, 263–306.

<sup>145</sup> Ibid., 322-325.

<sup>146</sup> Ibid., 325-328.

## John Dominic Crossan: *The Historical Jesus* and *The Birth of Christianity*

The significance of John Dominic Crossan as a New Testament scholar extends far outside the realm of the Academy. His works have found a wide audience in the popular marketplace and his profile as one of the leading members of the *Jesus Seminar* has ensured that his voice has been heard throughout the media. For our study, the two most important works are *The Historical Jesus*<sup>147</sup> and *The Birth of Christianity*.<sup>148</sup> In both of these works, Crossan explicitly draws on the work of Kloppenborg outlined above,<sup>149</sup> integrating that work into his own methodology and bringing it to bear on the question of the historical Jesus.<sup>150</sup> Following

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<sup>147</sup> John Dominic Crossan, *The Historical Jesus: The Life of a Mediterranean Jewish Peasant* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1991)

<sup>148</sup> Idem, *The Birth of Christianity: Discovering What Happened in the Years Immediately After the Death of Jesus* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1999).

<sup>149</sup> See especially Crossan, *Historical Jesus*, 220-230 and *Birth of Christianity*, 249-252. In the latter volume Crossan acknowledges that if Kloppenborg's work is wrong (along with that of a number of other scholars such as J.A.M. Robinson), then his own work is also wrong (116).

<sup>150</sup> That methodology is outlined in the prologue to Crossan, *Historical Jesus*. He speaks of three triads that he will employ:

1. "The first triad involves the reciprocal interplay of a macroscosmic level using cross-cultural and cross-temporal social *anthropology*, a mesocosmic level using Hellenistic or Greco-Roman *history*, and a microcosmic level using the *literature* of specific sayings and doings, stories and anecdotes, confessions and interpretations concerning Jesus." (xxviii)
2. "The second triad focuses specifically on that textual problem derived from the very nature of the Jesus tradition itself. The first step is *inventory* . . . of all the major sources and texts, both intracanonical and extracanonical, to be used. . . The second step is *stratification*, the positioning of each source or text in a chronological sequence . . . The third step is *attestation*. This loops back to the inventory but presents that now stratified data base in terms of multiplicity of independent attestation for each complex of the Jesus tradition within those sources or texts." (xxx)
3. The third triad "focuses on the methodological manipulation of that inventory." The first of its three elements "involves a focus on the sequence of strata . . . this step emphasizes the tremendous importance of that first

Kloppenborg's divorce of sapiential and prophetic/apocalyptic elements, and integrating that perspective into his socio-cultural analysis he argues, "When we cross apocalyptic and sapiential with scribes and peasants, it becomes necessary to locate Jesus in the quadrant formed by sapiential and peasant."<sup>151</sup>

Again, here, the sapiential element is understood primarily as involving hortatory ethical teaching. Indeed in the latter of his two works, Crossan ceases to speak of *sapiential* eschatology and speaks instead of *ethical eschatology*.<sup>152</sup> The ethics are, as in Kloppenborg, the ethics of *poverty*, although Crossan sees Jesus not as *demanding* dispossession but *presuming* it.<sup>153</sup> And, once again as with Kloppenborg, the emphasis within that poverty is on *non-violent* resistance, which for Crossan becomes located around the healing ministry and fellowship meals of Jesus and the early church.<sup>154</sup>

Where Crossan moves significantly beyond Kloppenborg is in his view that *apocalyptic* eschatology and *sapiential/ethical* eschatology are not simply redactionally distinct, but actually mutually corrosive. In his earlier volume, this idea is expressed in his argument that Jesus changed in his view of John the Baptist: "John's vision of awaiting the apocalyptic God, the Coming One, as a repentant sinner, which Jesus had originally accepted and even defended in the crisis of John's death, was no longer deemed adequate. It was now a question of being in the

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stratum. It is, in terms of methodological discipline, dated chronologically closest to the time of Jesus. . . The second element . . . is *hierarchy of attestation*. My methodology begins with the first stratum and, within it, with those complexes having the highest count of independent attestation. . . The final element is *bracketing of singularity*. This entails the complete avoidance of any unit found only in single attestation, even in the first stratum." (xxxii)

<sup>151</sup> Crossan, *Historical Jesus*, 292.

<sup>152</sup> I shall discuss the use of the term *eschatology* below, including Crossan's distinctive usage.

<sup>153</sup> Crossan, *Birth of Christianity*, 281.

<sup>154</sup> Crossan, *Historical Jesus*, 303-353, and *Birth of Christianity*, 423-445.



Kingdom.”<sup>155</sup> In Crossan's latter volume, this distinction becomes even more stark: “There is . . . counterevidence to any claim that a nonapocalyptic eschatology came first and an apocalyptic one developed only later. The earliest *nonapocalyptic* eschatology I can find is already an *anti-apocalyptic* one.”<sup>156</sup>

Interestingly, in the pages leading up to this statement, Crossan has argued that the inherent tension between the two eschatologies stems from their different views of the character of God: “The marriage of apocalypticism and ethicism is a much more difficult and delicate issue. Can they be combined? As long as apocalypticism involves a God who uses force and violence to end force and violence, they cannot be combined; one has to choose between them. . . . Ethicism . . . is absolute faith in a nonviolent God and the attempt to live and act in union with such a God.”<sup>157</sup> From this, and in open contrast to both the *inaugurated eschatology* of J.P. Meier<sup>158</sup> and the *restoration eschatology* of E.P. Sanders,<sup>159</sup> Crossan presents Jesus as endorsing an *ethical* eschatology in absolute distinction to an *apocalyptic* one. Given the elements that he stresses as programmatic to the ethics of Jesus, this leads him to see Jesus as remarkably like a Cynic: “I find the general comparison of Cynicism's and Jesus' anti-materialist and anti-imperialist criticism to be helpful. I would use the term *ethical eschatology* to describe *both* those programs and that comparison helps me to distinguish them from *ascetical* or *apocalyptic*

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<sup>155</sup> Ibid., 237-238

<sup>156</sup> Crossan, *Birth of Christianity*, 305.

<sup>157</sup> Ibid., 287.

<sup>158</sup> Cited and criticised in *ibid.*, 145-146.

<sup>159</sup> Cited and criticised in *ibid.*, 339-342.

*eschatology* ... If ... pagans heard Jesus speaking about the kingdom of God, how would they have understood his program? Some sort of Cynicism, surely.”<sup>160</sup>

## Summary

From the discussion above, we can isolate three points common to the arguments of Kloppenborg and Crossan. Neither scholar would be offended at the identification of these points and both would agree that they are of fundamental importance to their arguments.

1. Both argue for an evident stratification in the Gospel sources in which the earliest stratum may be designated *sapiential*.
2. Both see in that earliest stratum a realised eschatology that precludes any future elements.
3. Both see that sapiential material as being heavily influenced by Greco-Roman culture, both in terms of form (Kloppenborg's gnomologia) and content (Crossan's Cynicism).

At this point in the present study, these common elements to the thought of Kloppenborg and Crossan shall be left uncriticised. The findings of **Part 1** will, however, provide some telling problems for their arguments, which will be highlighted in due course.

## (End of excursus)

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<sup>160</sup> Ibid., 334-335.

## Terms, Concepts and Definitions

Before the present study can continue, some discussion of the categories of wisdom and apocalypse is required in order to allow some terminological definitions to be set out. Such definitions are necessitated by the lack of consistency with which scholars use the words “wisdom,” “apocalypse” and “eschatology” and their various cognates, a problem easily seen within the excursus above. In the light of such inconsistency and disagreement over the precise meaning of terms, it seems that the primary responsibility of the scholar is to be transparent in the adoption of definitions and, as far as possible, consistent to the definitions that have been adopted. It is hoped that the following discussion will make clear the definitions that will be operative in the present work.

### Apocalypse/Apocalyptic

As John Collins notes, the “notion that there is a class of writings that may be labelled ‘apocalyptic’ has been generally accepted since Frederick Lücke published the first comprehensive study of the subject in 1832.”<sup>161</sup> In addition to the biblical books of Daniel and Revelation, the body of writings that is generally seen as belonging to this category is as follows: *1 Enoch, 2 Enoch, Jubilees, 2 Baruch, 3 Baruch, 4 Ezra (2 Esdras), Apocalypse of Abraham, Testament of Abraham, Testament of Levi, Testament of Naphtali, Ascension of Isaiah, Shepherd*

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<sup>161</sup> Collins, *The Apocalyptic Imagination*, 2-3. Lücke’s work is *Versuch einer vollständigen Einleitung in die Offenbarung Johannis und in die gesamte apokalyptische Literatur*, (Bonn: Weber, 1832).

of *Hermas*, 3 *Enoch*.<sup>162</sup> In addition, certain parts of Ezekiel (the chariot vision of chapter 1 and the temple vision of chapters 40-48) are usually seen as reflecting the emergence of the genre.

Since the genre first drew the attention of scholarship, various proposals have been made concerning its origins. Some have seen the genre rising from the collision of Jewish ideas with Babylonian ones, particularly the idea of mantic wisdom;<sup>163</sup> others have seen a Persian background as providing the key.<sup>164</sup> Collins, noting the presence also of Hellenistic ideas in the apocalypses, is probably correct in seeing the genre as rising from the melting pot of the Hellenistic milieu.<sup>165</sup>

The most widely accepted definition of the term “apocalypse” is that offered in *Semeia 14* by John J. Collins:

“Apocalypse” is a genre of revelatory literature with a narrative framework, in which a revelation is mediated by an otherworldly being to a human recipient, disclosing a transcendent reality which is both

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<sup>162</sup> I have taken this list of works from Christopher Rowland, *The Open Heaven: A Study of Apocalyptic in Judaism and Early Christianity* (New York: Crossroad, 1982), 15. I am deliberately avoiding the descriptor “Jewish” at this point: some apocalypses often regarded as Jewish may well be Christian and this should affect the way in which they are used by biblical scholars.

<sup>163</sup> For example James VanderKam, *Enoch and the Growth of an Apocalyptic Tradition*, CBQMS 16 (Washington D.C., Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1984); H.P. Müller, “Mantische Weisheit und Apokalyptik,” in Congress Volume, Uppsala 1971, VTSup 22 (Leiden: Brill, 1972), 268-293. Gerhard von Rad, of course, famously saw the genre as being derived from Jewish wisdom speculation, but this view was essentially based on the presence of “wisdom” language in Daniel, the mantic associations of which he neglected. For von Rad’s proposal, see *Theologie des Alten Testaments* (2 vols, 4<sup>th</sup> ed., Munich: Kaiser, 1965), 2:315-330. For criticism, see Collins, *The Apocalyptic Imagination*, 5, 20-1, 39, 92.

<sup>164</sup> See Anders Hultgård, “Persian Apocalypticism,” in *the Encyclopedia of Apocalypticism, Volume 1: The Origins of Apocalypticism in Judaism and Christianity*, edited by John J. Collins, (New York, London: Continuum, 2000), 39-83.

<sup>165</sup> See, *The Apocalyptic Imagination*, 33-7.

temporal, insofar as it envisages eschatological salvation, and spatial insofar as it involves another, supernatural world.<sup>166</sup>

The emphasis on eschatology in this definition has been questioned by some, with the works of Rowland<sup>167</sup> and Himmelfarb,<sup>168</sup> in particular, arguing that the key element of the genre is revelation, which may or may not include eschatology.<sup>169</sup> Without making any final judgement on whether these last two scholars are correct, it is certainly the case that acknowledging the pre-eminence of the revelatory aspect as constitutive of the genre allows the scholar to transcend the possibly artificial distinction between “historical” and “visionary” apocalypses.<sup>170</sup> With this caveat regarding the role of eschatology in place, the definition provided by Collins is the one that will be accepted and followed in the present work. Collins himself regards this definition as

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<sup>166</sup> John J. Collins, “Introduction: Towards the Morphology of a Genre,” *Semeia* 14, 9. For a more complete discussion of the generic issues, see Collins, *Apocalyptic Imagination*, 1-42.

<sup>167</sup> Rowland, *The Open Heaven*. See, especially, pages 9-48. A good summary of Rowland’s position is found on page 26, where, regarding eschatology, he writes: “its presence in them is not their most distinctive feature, nor does it deserve to become the focus of attention in the study of apocalyptic to the exclusion of the other secrets which the apocalypses claim to reveal.”

<sup>168</sup> Martha T. Himmelfarb, *Ascent to Heaven in Jewish and Christian Apocalypses*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993).

<sup>169</sup> Related to the visionary character of the apocalypses is, of course, the question of the function and phenomenon of pseudepigraphy. Specifically, is the association of the visionary experiences with an ancient figure a mere fiction intended to lend credibility to the work, or does a more complex identification exist between the author and that figure. The answer to this question may vary from work to work; it is, in any case, beyond the purposes of this study to answer it. For a discussion of the various views on this issue, see Orton, *The Understanding Scribe*, 112-114.

<sup>170</sup> This distinction continues to be accepted by scholars. See, for instance, F. García Martínez, “Apocalypticism in the Dead Sea Scrolls,” pages 162-192 in *The Encyclopaedia of Apocalypticism, Volume 1: The Origins of Apocalypticism in Judaism and Christianity* (ed. John J. Collins; New York: Continuum, 2000). As a way of establishing sub-categories of apocalypse, there is nothing wrong with the distinction, but a definition of the genre as a whole must be capable of including *both* types. It seems best, therefore, to give the idea of revelation primacy, and to de-emphasise eschatology, recognizing the text-specific nature of the latter feature.

indicating the “common core of the genre,”<sup>171</sup> and thus more constitutive of all apocalypses than Koch’s list of apocalyptic literary features.<sup>172</sup> Nevertheless, Koch’s list and Sim’s development of it<sup>173</sup> remain useful as a diagnostic tool, a kind of “list of symptoms” indicating the presence of elements in a text most commonly associated with the apocalyptic genre.

This latter point brings the discussion to its point of greatest relevance for Matthean scholarship. Based on Collins’s definition, very little of the New Testament can be categorised as an apocalypse; certainly, Matthew as a whole cannot be classified as such. Nevertheless, the gospel may contain elements that are characteristic of the apocalyptic genre and most commonly associated with that genre. Where this is the case, we may use the adjective “apocalyptic” with justification, though also with some caution, acknowledging that there may be other backgrounds to a concept other than that of the genre apocalypse.<sup>174</sup>

What shall be avoided, as far possible, is the use of the adjective “apocalyptic” to denote a worldview. Such a use of the term has been noted above in the work of Kloppenborg and Crossan (see **Excursus 1**, above) and is also strongly associated with the research of Paolo Sacchi.<sup>175</sup> The work of Sacchi in unravelling the ideological roots of the genre is important, but it is questionable whether the term “apocalyptic” should have been used by him to denote this ideology, since it

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<sup>171</sup> *The Apocalyptic Imagination*, 5.

<sup>172</sup> Koch, *Rediscovery*, 28-33.

<sup>173</sup> See above.

<sup>174</sup> Another problem also arises here, which is the question of whether apocalyptic language in the gospels is intended to be read literally or metaphorically. The answer to this question must, I think, be sought in the context of the detailed study of the gospel texts themselves and so shall be addressed when appropriate to such study.

<sup>175</sup> P. Sacchi, *L’apocalittica giudaica e la sua Storia*, (Brescia: Paideia, 1990).

creates a greater level of confusion over whether a given apocalypse is “apocalyptic” at all.<sup>176</sup>

The more general problem with such a usage of the adjective is that it assumes a consistency in the worldview that lies behind the genre, a dangerous assumption to make.<sup>177</sup>

## Wisdom/Sapiential

According to Collins, “the category of wisdom literature is identified in modern scholarship primarily with the books of Proverbs, Qoheleth and Job in the Hebrew Bible and the apocryphal or deuterocanonical books of Ben Sira (Ecclesiasticus) and the Wisdom of Solomon.”<sup>178</sup> The basis for the association of these diverse books is, he continues, the high density of references to “wisdom” (חכמה or σοφία) in these books:

Like most traditional scholarly categories, however, ‘wisdom’ is not identified by a systematic literary analysis, but is an impressionistic, intuitive grouping of books that seem to have something in common. Those who have attempted to define just what they have in common have found the task surprisingly difficult.<sup>179</sup>

This is an important comment, one that should give any scholar reason to pause before passing judgement on whether a given form is “sapiential” or whether there is such a thing as a “sapiential worldview.” The humility embodied in Collins’s statement is one that the present

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<sup>176</sup> Boccaccini’s distinction between Zadokite and Enochic Judaism seems more constructive and bypasses this confusion. See *Beyond the Essene Hypothesis: The Parting of the Ways Between Qumran and Enochic Judaism*, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans 1998), *in toto*.

<sup>177</sup> See the discussion in Gabriele Boccaccini, *Middle Judaism: Jewish Thought 300 B.C.E – 200 C.E.*, (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991), 126-131.

<sup>178</sup> John J. Collins, *Jewish Wisdom in the Hellenistic Age*, (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1997), 1.

<sup>179</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

study will seek to reflect: the term “wisdom literature” will be used to refer to the works listed above, with the adjective “sapiential” being related to this. No single “sapiential” worldview will be assumed, but it will be acknowledged that the various ideologies that lie behind the wisdom texts all give some kind of pre-eminence to what they refer to as “wisdom,” even though they may construe that wisdom in different ways: thus, a concern in a text such as Matthew to present Jesus, or his teaching, as “wisdom” may be described as sapiential.

In terms of form, **Part 1** will, among other things, suggest that the formal generic distinctions dissolve under the influence of certain underlying concepts which lead to the fusion of forms and ideas from different traditions.<sup>180</sup> Nevertheless, two points may be noted as being of particular importance to the study that will follow.

First, what is striking about the formal associations of the wisdom literature is not so much the occurrence or preponderance of certain forms, but rather the extent to which forms in general predominate stylistically. The words of J.L. Crenshaw help to clarify this point:

Formally wisdom consists of proverbial sentence or instruction, debate, intellectual reflection; thematically wisdom comprises self-evident intuitions about mastering life for human betterment, groping after life’s secrets with regard to innocent suffering, grappling with finitude, and quest for truth concealed in the created order and manifested in Dame Wisdom. *When a marriage between form and content exists, there is wisdom literature. Lacking such oneness, a given text participates in biblical wisdom to a greater or lesser extent.*<sup>181</sup>

The italicised words highlight the importance of what we might describe as “form for form’s sake” to the category. Were we to scan the works generally regarded as belonging to the

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<sup>180</sup> Note the discussion below: “Preliminary Considerations on the Relationship of Wisdom and Apocalyptic.”

<sup>181</sup> J.L. Crenshaw, *Old Testament Wisdom: An Introduction*, (Atlanta; John Knox Press, 1981), 19. Emphasis mine.



category, one of the most obvious features would be a tendency to arrange material in a highly stylised fashion.<sup>182</sup> A brief glance at Matthew's gospel highlights a similar tendency to arrange material in stylised patterns, a point that will be developed in later chapters.

Second, while a diversity of forms may be employed by the wisdom teachers, and a great deal of space could be devoted to examining these, many of those most relevant to Jesus' teaching may be subsumed under a single term: *mashal*. This term lies behind the Greek term *παράβολή* and possesses a "broad semantic field"<sup>183</sup> that may include figurative sayings, metaphors, similes, parables, parabolic stories, illustrative stories and allegory.<sup>184</sup> Birger Gerhardsson, commenting on the range of forms of speech denoted by the term *parable* or *mashal*, provides a list similar to that above and states that all such forms are "distinguished by their skilful formulation from flat everyday speech."<sup>185</sup> An element of comparison is common in the form, although some have questioned whether it should be seen as constitutive of it.<sup>186</sup> It is important not to regard *meshalim* as exclusively or essentially sapiential forms: the importance of

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<sup>182</sup> See Gilbert, "Wisdom Literature," who notes Ben Sira's use of couplets (292) and Pseudo-Phocylides' use of dactylic hexameters (315).

<sup>183</sup> C.H. Peisker, "Παράβολή" *NIDNTT*, 2: 747

<sup>184</sup> This list of forms covered by the term has been taken from Alistair Wilson, *When Will These Things Happen: Jesus as Judge in Matthew 21-25*, (Carlisle: Paternoster, 2004), 196. I will follow Wilson and others in preferring the term *mashal* to *parable* simply because the latter term has, by virtue of its use in English, certain formal connotations that the former, by being used less commonly, manages to escape. There may be many sayings in the Gospel that we would not instinctively categorise as parables that should, nevertheless, be understood as such. The use of *mashal* escapes this formal prejudice. It would be impossible and artificial, however, to avoid the term *parable* altogether and so at points in this thesis the term will occur.

<sup>185</sup> B. Gerhardsson, "Illuminating the Kingdom: Narrative Meshalim in the Synoptic Gospels," in *Jesus and the Oral Gospel Tradition* (ed. H. Wansborough; JSNTSup 64; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1991), 266-309.

<sup>186</sup> So Wilson, *When Will These Things Happen*, 196.

*parallelismus membrorum* to the form certainly creates a strong link with wisdom literature,<sup>187</sup> but there are no parallels to the narrative *meshalim* in that tradition.<sup>188</sup> Despite this caveat, however, it remains the case that in Matthew the form clearly has sapiential significance. The *mashal* of the two builders (7:24-27) presents itself as being concerned with wisdom, since the two builders are wise and foolish respectively, a fact that could be echoed for the *mashal* of the ten virgins (25: 1-13). The discussion of Jesus' use of parables (13:11-17, 23) foregrounds the connection of the genre as used by Jesus with "understanding," though as I shall argue below, this actually represents a fusion with revelatory ideas. It is unsurprising, then, that in the course of his narrative Matthew links Jesus' use of *meshalim* to his authority as a teacher.<sup>189</sup> In particular, the way in which Jesus' teaching clearly draws on everyday speech but, as Gerhardsson suggests, skilfully turns this into something more is evidence of his sagacity. The fact that Matthew foregrounds this aspect of Jesus teaching by gathering these *meshalim* into thematic clusters is part of the way in which he presents Jesus as a Sage.

The comparative element within the *meshalim* may be worth considering a little further. Matthew Goff comments that the "worldly focus of biblical wisdom ... encourages the pursuit of natural analogies,"<sup>190</sup> a statement that draws upon his preceding discussion of the sense of order within creation attested, in particular, by Proverbs 8. This sense of order undergirds the "Tat-Ergehen-Zusammenhang," the act-consequence relationship: the world has been created to work in a certain fashion and reflection upon the created order shows that certain actions will be

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<sup>187</sup> As noted by Martin Hengel, *Studies in Early Christology* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1995), 90.

<sup>188</sup> See Witherington, *Jesus the Sage*, 158.

<sup>189</sup> See especially 7:28 and, less strongly, 13:54.

<sup>190</sup> Goff, *The Worldly and Heavenly Wisdom*, 43.

followed by certain consequences.<sup>191</sup> Works like Qoheleth and Job seem to wrestle with some kind of “crisis of wisdom,”<sup>192</sup> struggling with the implications of this view and with the inconsistency of reality with it. But these books, while on one level attesting a “counter-order wisdom,”<sup>193</sup> address a problem that stems from the basic conviction that the world has been made in a particular way. As Witherington notes, the absurdity of life “is a problem for Qoheleth precisely because he is a theist.”<sup>194</sup> This is an important issue to flag, since the idea that creation is ordered according to the foundations of Wisdom underlies both the tendency to make use of natural analogies and the preoccupation of sapiential literature with the act-consequence relationship. As we examine the various texts that will be studied in this work, it will be helpful to bear in mind that natural analogies are characteristic of wisdom literature’s creation theology and that both the act-consequence relationship and the various approaches to dealing with its problems have their roots in that same creation theology.

One last issue that requires to be discussed under this heading is the question of whether wisdom is increasingly “hypostasised” in the sapiential tradition, thus becoming Wisdom.<sup>195</sup> Such an idea has already been noted in the works surveyed above that propose a Matthean “Wisdom-Christology.” The idea that wisdom is hypostatized is well-established and is

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<sup>191</sup> As far as I know the phrase “Tat-Ergehen-Zusammenhang” goes back to Klaus Koch, “Gibt es ein Vergeltungsdogma im Alten Testament?” *ZTK* 52 (1955), 1-42.

<sup>192</sup> For the idea of such a “crisis,” see K. Galling, *Die Krise der Aufklärung in Israel* (Mainzer Universitätsreden 19; Mainz: Verlag der Johannes Gutenbergbuchhandlung, 1952). J. Crenshaw, *Old Testament Wisdom*, 196, notes that scepticism towards the act-consequence wisdom is well-attested in, for example, Isaiah 5:18-19 and Zephaniah 1:12, and therefore suggests that the terminology of a “crisis of wisdom” is misleading.

<sup>193</sup> See Witherington, *Jesus the Sage*, 59.

<sup>194</sup> *Ibid.*, 60.

<sup>195</sup> For an overview, see Gilbert, “Wisdom Literature,” 287-88. From here on I shall denote only personified/hypostasised wisdom as Wisdom.

discussed at length by Witherington,<sup>196</sup> who is appropriately cautious in distinguishing earlier stages of this process from latter ones. He notes that in Proverbs wisdom simply seems to be personified,<sup>197</sup> that Sirach 24 develops this personification and that only in Wisdom of Solomon does it appear to have become an independent *hypostasis*.<sup>198</sup> Robert Hammerton-Kelly has argued that such Wisdom was regarded as pre-existent within Judaism and therefore provided a useful category for Christian writers to depict the pre-existence of Jesus;<sup>199</sup> Burnett, after him,<sup>200</sup> sees the myth of Wisdom's rejection as background to the Matthean depiction of the rejection of Jesus by Israel. Some caution should be applied here: the rejection of Wisdom is primarily attested by *1 Enoch* 42:1-2, which may well reflect an older, more widespread myth, but it may also reflect a distinctive innovation of the author of the Similitudes. Care, then, should be taken in seeing the idea as providing background to Matthew's narrative of rejection. Nevertheless, the idea that wisdom is personified or hypostasised is well-attested and will be important to bear in mind.

## Eschatology/Eschatological

The noun *eschatology* properly refers to the ἔσχατον or *period of the last things*. The term, then, essentially refers to end-time expectation.<sup>201</sup> What that expectation might be may vary from

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<sup>196</sup> Witherington, *Jesus the Sage*, 36-114.

<sup>197</sup> Ibid., 36-49.

<sup>198</sup> Ibid., 108-11.

<sup>199</sup> Hammerton-Kelly, *Pre-Existence, Wisdom and the Son of Man*, 19-21.

<sup>200</sup> Burnett, *The Testament of Jesus-Sophia*, 94-8.

<sup>201</sup> I would wish to contrast this use of the terminology with that of Crossan, who at least makes his usage clear but surely pushes semantics by defining eschatology as *world-negation*, a definition that allows him to maintain his

group to group, as well as the question of where the group stands in relation to that fulfilment. Thus, the term requires some modification according to context: eschatology may be *realised* or *futurist* or *inaugurated* or perhaps modified by another phrase. Most writers have used these adjectives with an awareness that they are not necessarily in tension with one another: a given text may exhibit a realised eschatology, even though it also exhibits future expectations. Thus, for instance, Torleif Elgvin, whose work on *4QInstruction* will be considered in **Part 1**, speaks of a *realised eschatology* in that text, while also pointing out that, “an eschatological discourse on the coming judgement occupies a full two columns of the work.”<sup>202</sup> For Elgvin, a realised eschatology need not be entirely realised, it may anticipate a time of consummation.

But a problem has arisen within gospel studies precisely because of the way in which the language of eschatology has been used by scholars such as Kloppenborg and Crossan. As noticed above, these scholars have polarised realised and future eschatologies (the latter designated as apocalyptic) and assigned them to separate strata. For them, to speak of a realised eschatology is to speak of a view in which the kingdom has already come and which therefore rejects the expectation of a coming judgement. Clearly, this is a different use of the phrase to that of Elgvin. Such contradictory uses of the same terminology can only lead to confusion and it is for this reason that within the present work I shall employ the phrase “inaugurated eschatology” to denote an eschatology that contains both realised and future elements. This phrase shall be useful for two reasons. First, it escapes the confusion discussed above by avoiding the connotations that

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tension between an apocalyptic eschatology with real end-time expectation and a “sapiential” eschatology that is entirely realised. For his discussion see Crossan, *Birth of Christianity*, 258-260.

<sup>202</sup> Torleif Elgvin, “Early Essene Eschatology : Judgement and Salvation According to Sapiential Work A.” in *Current Research and Technological Developments on the Dead Sea Scrolls: Conference on the Texts from the Judean Desert, Jerusalem, 30 April 1995* (ed. Donald W. Parry and Stephen D. Ricks. Leiden: Brill, 1996), 128.

Kloppenborg and Crossan have given to the term “realised” and the contradiction that they have created between realised and apocalyptic eschatologies. Second, the term “inaugurated” may suggest the idea of a specific inaugural event, which is an idea that will be explored with regard to Matthew's depiction of Jesus as wisdom's revealer.

While the study of each individual text should be the primary basis for our understanding of its eschatology, some notes of caution from Rowland deserve to be heeded at the outset. These concern the assumption that there is, in apocalyptic texts, an underlying dichotomy between the present time and the time to come. This assumption is probably best demonstrated by the influential words of Rowley:

The prophets foretold the future that should arise out of the present, while the apocalyptists foretold the future that should break into the present ... the apocalyptists had little faith in the present to beget the future.<sup>203</sup>

These words reflect a common assumption that requires, at this point, to be made explicit and to be explicitly rejected as a presupposition. Rowland's caution is as follows:

The emphasis on the future breaking into the present as a hallmark of apocalyptic, while not entirely absent in the apocalyptic literature, hardly summarises the varying features of the eschatological secrets. It must, therefore, be questioned whether a particular type of eschatology can so easily be used as the characteristic feature of the hope for the future in the apocalypses.<sup>204</sup>

Such a statement will be important, with regard to each of the texts, for the research that will be carried out within the present study. If a proper attempt is to be made to analyse the eschatologies

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<sup>203</sup> H.H. Rowley, *The Relevance of Apocalyptic; A Study of Jewish and Christian Apocalypses from Daniel to the Revelation*, (London: Lutterworth, 1944), 38.

<sup>204</sup> Rowland, *The Open Heaven*, 29.

of our four texts, then any prior assumptions regarding those eschatologies would prejudice the work. Perhaps any or all of the texts exhibit the kind of sharp dichotomy described by Rowley, but then again, perhaps none of them does.

## **Preliminary Considerations on the Relationship of Wisdom and Apocalypse**

Before embarking on the present study, it is important to take into account an important contribution made by John J. Collins on the subject of the generic compatibility of Wisdom and Apocalypse. This contribution is found in an essay he contributed to *In Search of Wisdom: Essays in Memory of John G. Gammie*.<sup>205</sup> He approaches the question of the relationship of Wisdom and Apocalypse in the gospels in the light of other Jewish texts from the period and stresses that the question cannot be settled on the basis of form, but by examination also of the worldviews underlying those forms.

Collins begins by distinguishing five broad types of sapiential material: wisdom sayings, theological wisdom (such as reflections on theodicy), nature wisdom, mantic wisdom and higher wisdom through revelation.<sup>206</sup> He stresses that the presence of one or more of these types in any piece of literature does not establish continuity with another piece of literature containing a

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<sup>205</sup> John J. Collins, "Wisdom, Apocalypticism and Generic Compatibility," in *In Search of Wisdom: Essays in Memory of John G. Gammie* (ed. L. Perdue, B.B. Scott and W.J. Wiseman; Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1993), 165-185. Collins here critiques the views of Kloppenborg and Burton L. Mack, whose viewpoint is very similar to that of Crossan. See Burton L. Mack, *The Myth of Innocence: Mark and Christian Origins*, (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1988), 59-60.

<sup>206</sup> *Ibid.*, 168.

different type. Thus, the mantic wisdom found in Daniel is not continuous with the wisdom sayings or theological wisdom of Proverbs. Furthermore, he argues, the worldview that underlies the first three types of wisdom, as they are found in the wisdom books of the Hebrew Bible, is distinctive: "This worldview involves more than a point of orientation. It also involves a set of assumptions about the universe. It affirms a world where there is an organic connection between cause and effect; where human fulfilment, such as it is, is to be found in this life; and where wisdom can be found from accumulated experience without course to special revelation ... The question arises, however, whether the characteristic forms of wisdom literature were necessarily wedded to that worldview, and this question is crucial for the relation between biblical wisdom and apocalypticism."<sup>207</sup>

Collins continues by contrasting the worldview of the early apocalypses with that of the biblical wisdom books in three crucial respects:

1. The increased importance of the supernatural world.
2. The expectation of eschatological judgement and reward or punishment beyond death.
3. The perception that something is fundamentally wrong with this world.<sup>208</sup>

With regard to the last point, Collins stresses that in the apocalypses this sense of *anomie* is never total; there is still some kind of order in the cosmos.

With these preliminary points borne in mind, Collins then turns his attention to some of the places where sapiential material appears in an apocalyptic context.<sup>209</sup> He stresses the absence

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<sup>207</sup>Ibid., 169- 70.

<sup>208</sup>Ibid., 171.

<sup>209</sup>Ibid., 174-179. The texts examined are the second Sibylline Oracle, 1 and 2 Enoch and the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs.



of collections of *declarative sayings* in the apocalypses, but notes that “there is however a place for instructions and admonitions in the apocalypses and these sometimes have a sapiential character.”<sup>210</sup> In particular, Collins examines some of the passages classified as *testaments*<sup>211</sup> as they occur in *1 and 2 Enoch* and in the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*. He concludes his discussion of them as follows: “The ethical teaching of the testament is sapiential, undergirded by the experience of the patriarch. That experience, however, is understood in the light of the apocalyptic worldview ... The wisdom tradition provides the ethical focus of the testament; the apocalyptic tradition provides the explanatory frame, the larger context of meaning.”<sup>212</sup>

Having discussed the influence of wisdom texts on apocalyptic material, Collins then proceeds with a much briefer discussion of apocalyptic influence on wisdom texts, here discussing the Damascus Document and a text unearthed in the Cairo Geniza.<sup>213</sup> In the latter text, which is in the form of an *instruction* or *exhortation*, he discusses particularly the dualism it exhibits and also the emphasis on judgement, concluding, “The importance of this text for our purpose is that it shows that the traditional form of the wisdom instruction could be adapted to an apocalyptic worldview, similar to what we find at Qumran, although examples of such adaptation are rare. The form of sapiential sayings is not necessarily tied to a this-worldly ideology, such as we find in Proverbs. The forms of wisdom speech are adaptable and may be used in the service of more than one worldview.”<sup>214</sup>

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<sup>210</sup> Ibid., 174.

<sup>211</sup> For his discussion of this form, see *ibid.*, 178.

<sup>212</sup> Ibid., 179.

<sup>213</sup> Collins interacts with a study on this text by Klaus Berger, *Die Weisheitsschriften der Kairoer Geniza: Erstedition, Kommentar und Übersetzung* (Tübingen: Franke, 1989).

<sup>214</sup> Ibid., 181.

Collins closes his essay by bringing some of this discussion to bear on the conclusions of Kloppenborg. He notes that there is no necessary generic antithesis between sapiential and apocalyptic material<sup>215</sup> and highlights that the particular wisdom forms identified as prevalent in Q by Kloppenborg (the *admonition* form) are, in any case, those found most commonly in apocalypses.<sup>216</sup> He criticises Kloppenborg's attempts to reconstruct the worldview lying behind the texts<sup>217</sup> before concluding, "Kloppenborg is surely right that a major component of Q can be appropriately categorized as 'wisdom speeches.' There is no generic incompatibility, however, between these speeches and an apocalyptic worldview. Accordingly the sharp redaction-critical separation of the sapiential speeches from the announcement of judgement should be viewed with some suspicion and will need to be evaluated critically."<sup>218</sup>

This discussion of Collins's work establishes a single key point that must be borne in mind throughout the present work: there is no "generic incompatibility" between wisdom and apocalypse and, as a result, the question of how they relate to one another must move beyond the association of form and genre and examine—as Collins suggests—the concepts that underlie a text. It is on this level of textual examination that answers are to be found as to how sapiential and apocalyptic elements might relate to one another in Matthew. In approaching this question, however, we must be cautious to ensure a proper identification of the concepts underlying a text:

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<sup>215</sup> Ibid., 182.

<sup>216</sup> Ibid., 182.

<sup>217</sup> Here, Collins is interacting more with Kloppenborg's article, "Symbolic Eschatology and the Apocalypticism of Q." *HTR* 80 (1987) 287-306.

<sup>218</sup> Collins, "Generic Compatibility," 185.

these concepts must be clearly betrayed, either by the use of language in the text under consideration, or by the shape of the narrative in that text.

## Conclusions

This introductory chapter has demonstrated that while scholarship has acknowledged the significance of both apocalyptic and sapiential elements within Matthew's Gospel, it has not begun to significantly address the question of how the two might relate within the Matthean narrative and theological schema. Moreover, it has noted the difficulty with employing Jewish material as "background" in a way that has little sensitivity towards the literary features and theological concerns of any given text.

The proposal indicated in this chapter is of a study of two texts of variegated type—*1 Enoch* and *4QInstruction*—in order to establish whether any constant features emerge in these texts, or the worldviews that they seem to attest. The results of such a study will then be brought to Matthew, which will be examined in a way sensitive both to its final form and to its features comparable with Mark and Luke in order to ascertain whether the features identified in the three other texts are present in the gospel also.

## **Part One: 1 Enoch and 4QInstruction**

## **Chapter 2**

### **The Eschatology of *1 Enoch* and *4QInstruction***

At the conclusion of the previous chapter, the suggestion of John Collins—that research on the relationship of wisdom and apocalypse must move beyond formal considerations to examine the underlying worldviews of texts—was noted. The present chapter is intended to take up Collins’s suggestion and to examine the underlying concepts operative in two texts, chosen because while each is widely acknowledged as an exemplar of the genre to which it belongs, both are also widely acknowledged as containing elements from the other genre. This point forces the scholar to move beyond formal genre distinctions to consider whether there are common underlying concepts that may explain the recombination of generic elements. The texts in question are the collection of works known as *1 Enoch* and the Qumran text *4QInstruction* (also known as *4Q Sapiential Work A*). The relationship between these two texts is a matter of debate: there is some overlap of vocabulary, especially between The Epistle of Enoch and *4QInstruction*,<sup>1</sup> but the question of whether one text has drawn upon another or if the overlap stems from a closely related origin is, as yet,

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<sup>1</sup> See Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch 1: A Commentary on the Book of 1 Enoch, Chapters 1-36; 81-108* by George Nickelsburg, Hermeneia – A Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible, (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2001), 50, 58, 60-61; also John Strugnell and Daniel J. Harrington, with Torleif Elgvin, *Discoveries in the Judean Desert XXXIV. Qumran Cave 4 XXIV. Sapiential Texts, Part 2. 4QInstruction (Mūsār l’ Mēvīn): 4Q415ff. With a re-edition of 1Q26 by John Strugnell and Daniel J. Harrington, S.J. And an Edition of 4Q423 by Torleif Elgvin, in Consultation with Joseph A. Fitzmyer, S.J.* Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1999, 35; also Torleif Elgvin “Early Essene Eschatology : Judgement and Salvation According to *Sapiential Work A*.” in *Current Research and Technological Developments on the Dead Sea Scrolls: Conference on the Texts from the Judean Desert, Jerusalem, 30 April 1995*, (ed. Donald W. Parry and Stephen D. Ricks; STDJ 20; Leiden: Brill, 1996), 126-165 esp. 158; also Eibert J.C. Tigchelaar *To Increase Learning for the Understanding Ones; Reading and Reconstructing the Fragmentary Early Jewish Sapiential Text 4QInstruction* (STDJ 44; Leiden: Brill 2001), 212-217.

unanswerable.<sup>2</sup> As far as questions of genre are concerned, *1 Enoch*, despite its use of sapiential forms (discussed below in chapter 3), is classified as belonging to the genre of apocalypse<sup>3</sup> and *4QInstruction*, despite its use of apocalyptic language, is classified as belonging to the genre of instruction or wisdom.<sup>4</sup>

The specific area of thought that this chapter will examine is that of eschatology. Several reasons may be advanced for focusing on this aspect of the thought-world of the two texts. First, while it has already been suggested that the eschatological element is not necessarily as crucial to the genre apocalypse as has often been assumed, it is nevertheless the case that it is strongly characteristic of these two texts, a point that needs no defence at this point as it will be the substance of the chapter as a whole. Second, as demonstrated by the literature survey in **Chapter 1**, it remains the case that Matthew's eschatology is at the heart of the various discussions of the apocalyptic elements in that gospel; if these texts are to provide some lines of enquiry to bring to the gospel, then eschatology must form a major part of the research. Third, as was noted in Excursus 1, the idea that strata may be distinguished in the Jesus tradition on the basis of their eschatology is crucial to the work of some scholars; any research on wisdom and apocalypse in the gospels must, therefore, be prepared to interact with such an assumption and this is where a study of mixed genre texts such as these contains great potential value.

The central argument that will be advanced within this chapter is that both *1 Enoch* (in its various parts) and *4QInstruction* are marked by an eschatology that is best described as "inaugurated," within which the revealing of wisdom to a chosen group—who are thus set

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<sup>2</sup> Elgvin "Early Essene Eschatology," 158, thinks that *4QInstruction* drew upon *1 Enoch*; Tigchelaar, *To Increase Learning*, 212-217, takes the opposite view.

<sup>3</sup> For this classification of *1 Enoch*, see, for example, Collins, *Apocalyptic Imagination*, 5.

<sup>4</sup> For this classification of *4QInstruction*, see *DJD XXXIV*, 17.

apart from the rest of Israel—plays a key role in that inauguration. Related to this thesis is the question of how the wisdom revealed to the chosen relates to Torah.

## 1 *Enoch*

*1 Enoch*, also known as Ethiopic Enoch, is the name given to a sprawling corpus of works composed over several centuries.<sup>5</sup> The work is preserved now in complete form only in the Ethiopic language Ge'ez, in a text dating from the fifth or sixth century C.E. That text, in turn, is probably based on a Greek translation of the Aramaic original, this last work now attested by the Aramaic fragments found in Cave 4 at Qumran.<sup>6</sup> In the following study we shall consider the form of the corpus that appears to be best attested by the fragments found at Qumran.

Two important points arise from analysis of these fragments. First, there is no evidence for the presence of the Book of the Similitudes or Parables (chapters 37-71) among the texts found at Qumran, a fact that would suggest that this part of what now constitutes Ethiopic Enoch was not always a part of the Enochic corpus. Second, the Book of the Luminaries (chaps. 72-82), while attested among the fragments at Qumran, does not appear to have been copied together with the other parts of the corpus; it is always found on separate manuscripts.

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<sup>5</sup> For a discussion of the stages of composition, see Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch 1*, 25-26

<sup>6</sup> For the Aramaic fragments, see J.T. Milik, *The Books of Enoch: Aramaic Fragments of Qumran Cave 4*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976). While the Aramaic fragments provide important material for the textual criticism of *1 Enoch*, reconstructing the text requires the use of the later translations of the work. For a discussion of the textual bases for reconstructing *1 Enoch*, including the relative merits of the various mss., see Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch 1*, 9-20. For the Ethiopic text, see volume 1 of Michael A. Knibb, *The Ethiopic Book of Enoch: A New Edition in the Light of the Aramaic Dead Sea Fragments* (2 vols., Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978).

This would suggest that while it is probably the oldest of the Enochic material, it existed independently of the other parts of the Enochic corpus until a stage later than that attested by the Qumran fragments.<sup>7</sup>

Examining further the evidence of those fragments, particularly that of 4QEn<sup>c</sup> (4Q204),<sup>8</sup> Nickelsburg has suggested that there appears to have existed, at some stage, what he describes as a *testament*.

If we include 81:1-82:4ab, the three parts represented in 4QEn<sup>c</sup> form a literary unity that has the character of a testament. A narrative section about Enoch's past activity leads to a farewell scene in which the father instructs his sons on ethical and eschatological matters that are related, in part, to the content of the narrative.<sup>9</sup>

Argall agrees with Nickelsburg and, drawing upon the language of A.B. Kolenkow,<sup>10</sup> further qualifies this as being a “blessing-revelation testament,”<sup>11</sup> a description which draws attention to the portrayal of Enoch as a revealer of wisdom, about which we shall say more below.

While any reconstruction of something that might be termed an Enochic corpus attested by the Qumran fragments is ultimately hypothetical, Nickelsburg's proposal seems plausible on

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<sup>7</sup> For a fuller discussion of this, see *ibid.* p 9-10 and 22-26.

<sup>8</sup> This fragment preserves parts of chapters 1-6, 10, 13-15, 18, 31-32, 35-36, 89, 104-107 as well as part of the Book of Giants.

<sup>9</sup> Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch*, 23. See also pages 225-336. The “three parts” that Nickelsburg speaks of are the Book of the Watchers, the Dream Visions and the Epistle of Enoch. As can be seen from the list above, the fragment only preserves the second of the two dream visions found in chapters 83-89. No Aramaic fragment preserves the first vision, although the two visions are now bound together into a unity by 83:1-2. The well-attested second vision actually throws up greater textual problems. See *ibid.* p.24. For a briefer discussion of the “Enochic testament” than that found in his *1 Enoch* commentary, see Nickelsburg's *Jewish Literature Between the Bible and the Mishnah* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1981), p 150-151.

<sup>10</sup> A.B. Kolenkow, “The Genre Testament and Forecasts of the Future in the Hellenistic Jewish Milieu,” *JSJ* 6 (1975), 57-71.

<sup>11</sup> R.A. Argall, *1 Enoch and Sirach: A Comparative Literary and Conceptual Analysis of the Themes of Revelation Creation and Judgement*, SBLEJL 8, (Atlanta: Scholars Press), 17.



the grounds both of manuscript evidence and of the internal evidence that he adduces in the works cited above. By contrast, Milik's suggestion of an Enochic Pentateuch<sup>12</sup> has not received much support and has been roundly challenged by Greenfield and Stone.<sup>13</sup> One point that should be noted with regard to the testament proposal, however, is the absence of 94:6-104:9 within the Aramaic fragments and the strong suggestion that 104:10 continues the line of thought of 94:5.<sup>14</sup> This suggests that there may have existed a "Proto-Epistle of Enoch,"<sup>15</sup> from which a great deal of what now constitutes the Epistle was missing. If this was indeed the case, it is striking that some of the most obviously "sapiential" material in the corpus was later inserted at this particular point in the corpus.<sup>16</sup>

This suggestion of an Enochic Testament will provide some useful parameters for the present study. At the very least, the manuscript evidence that Nickelsburg examines suggests that in some sense, The Book of the Watchers, the Dream Visions and the Epistle of Enoch were seen as belonging together or linked in some way while the Book of the Luminaries was seen as distinct. Our study will, therefore, focus on those three books, leaving aside the material found in the Book of the Luminaries and that found in the Similitudes. The bulk of the study in this chapter will focus on the Book of the Watchers. Once the nature of the eschatological teachings in that book have been established, I shall briefly note similarities in the teaching of the Dream Visions and the Epistle of Enoch before noting the interesting contribution of the Apocalypse of Weeks.

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<sup>12</sup> Milik, *Enoch*, 58, 77-78, 183-84. See also G.H. Dix, "The Enochic Pentateuch," *JTS* 27 (1925-26), 29-42.

<sup>13</sup> J.C. Greenfield and M.E. Stone, "The Enochic Pentateuch and the Date of the Similitudes," *HTR* 70, (1977), 51-65.

<sup>14</sup> See Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch* 1, 24. Also, see Gabrielle Boccaccini, *Beyond the Essene Hypothesis: The Parting of the Ways Between Qumran and Enochic Judaism*, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 104-13.

<sup>15</sup> The phrase is Boccaccini's.

<sup>16</sup> See **chapter 3**.

## The Book of the Watchers

The Book of the Watchers, like the other parts of the corpus, is itself a composite of earlier traditions that have been brought together into what VanderKam describes as “a passable literary unity.”<sup>17</sup> Even the different sections of the book as we shall outline them below show some evidence of drawing together previously independent units or stories, a fact that seems especially clear in the ‘Aśa’el/Šemîḥazah traditions.<sup>18</sup>

The book is generally seen as comprising 5 main sections: an introduction (1-5); the stories of the angels' sin (6-11); the interaction of Enoch with the Watchers and Enoch's commissioning by God (12-16); Enoch's first journey (17-19); Enoch's second journey (20-36). It is possible that we should also take chapter 82 as part of the book, although it is perhaps best regarded as a bridging narrative with either the Dream Visions or the Epistle.<sup>19</sup> Even in this composite form, the Book of Watchers may be conservatively dated to around 170 B.C.E, and probably earlier.<sup>20</sup>

## Future Elements in the Eschatology of the Book of Watchers

It is clear almost immediately that the Book of the Watchers is oriented towards a future

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<sup>17</sup>J.C. VanderKam, *Enoch and the Growth of an Apocalyptic Tradition*, CBQMS 16, (Washington: Catholic Biblical Association, 1984), 110. VanderKam cites Dimant (“The 'Fallen Angels' in the Dead Sea Scrolls and Pseudepigraphic Books Related to Them,” Unpublished Ph.D dissertation, Hebrew University, Jerusalem, 1974) who describes the work as a *catalog* (page 22).

<sup>18</sup>See Carol A. Newsom “The Development of 1 Enoch 6-19: Cosmology and Judgement.” *CBQ* 42 (1980), 313-14.

<sup>19</sup>See Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch* 1, 334-335, 337-338 and Argall, *1 Enoch and Sirach*, 21-22

<sup>20</sup>See the discussion in VanderKam, *Enoch and the ... Apocalyptic Tradition*, 111-114.

event: the judgement of God upon the Watchers and upon humanity. In the introduction (chapters 1-5), the first part of Enoch's discourse (1: 3c – 9) consists of a theophany depicting God as “The Great Holy One”<sup>21</sup> coming forth from his dwelling to tread upon Mount Sinai in judgement,<sup>22</sup> a judgement that will clearly have global significance:

The earth will be wholly rent asunder,

and everything on earth will perish,

and there will be judgement on all. (1:7)<sup>23</sup>

This theophany is then followed by a denouncement speech (2:1-5:4)<sup>24</sup> in which the faithfulness of the created order is contrasted with the faithlessness of those who “have turned aside.”<sup>25</sup> This speech leads up to a resumption of the promise of judgement in 5:5-7.<sup>26</sup>

This emphasis on a future judgement is not an alien intrusion upon the substance of the Book of the Watchers as a whole, merely tagged on in the introduction; rather it reflects the very structure of the rest of the narrative as it now stands. Following the story of the Watchers' descent in chapters 6-11, which itself builds towards its climax with the binding of

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<sup>21</sup>This is one of the distinctive divine epithets in the corpus. For a discussion, see Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch* 1, 144. Argall's discussion of this whole section as reflecting the form of a Divine Warrior hymn should also be noted (*1 Enoch and Sirach*, 167-174).

<sup>22</sup>I shall discuss the location of this theophany – Mount Sinai – below.

<sup>23</sup>Translation: Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch* 1, 142.

<sup>24</sup>For this classification, see Hartman, *Asking for a Meaning: A Study of 1 Enoch 1-5* (Coniectanea Biblica: New Testament Series 12. Lund: Gleerup, 1979), 49

<sup>25</sup>The phrase as preserved in 4QEn<sup>a</sup> is וְאַתָּה שִׁנִּיתָ עֲבֹדָתְךָ “but you, you have changed your works.” See Milik, *Enoch*, 146 and 149.

<sup>26</sup>Rau (“Kosmologie, Eschatologie und die Lehrautorität Henochs: Traditions- und Formgeschichtliche Untersuchungen zum äthiopischen Henochbuch und zu verwandten Schriften,” Diss, University of Hamburg, 1974, 106-24. Cited by Argall, *1 Enoch and Sirach*, 101) argues that this combination reflects the late prophetic form of the “salvation-judgement oracle.” See also Nickelsburg, *Jewish Literature*, 49.

the Watchers and the pronouncement of judgement upon them,<sup>27</sup> Enoch is requested to bring a petition before God on behalf of the Watchers (12:1-13:7).<sup>28</sup> His throne vision in chapter 14 culminates in a divine message of denunciation upon the Watchers in chapters 15 and 16 that itself culminates with the promise “You will have no peace” (16:4). Enoch is then led on the first of two journeys.<sup>29</sup> His cosmological visions culminate in his vision of the great chasm at the edge of the world that serves as a prison for the rebel Watchers (18:10-11, 19:1) and of the desolate place in which the rebel stars are bound (18:12-16).<sup>30</sup> While the cosmological visions cannot be reduced to an eschatological function,<sup>31</sup> this *direction* of the narrative does seem to stress that the other functions of the visions have been subsumed under the eschatological one. On the second of his two journeys, Enoch moves in reverse; now his vision is expanded to include not only the prisons for the Watchers and the stars (21) but also those of human sinners (22:10,13). This dimension is brought to its climax in chapter 26:1-27:5 with Enoch's vision of the site of Jerusalem where he sees the “cursed valley” (of Hinnom),<sup>32</sup> where the godless will be cast at the time of the “righteous judgement” (27:2-3).<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>27</sup>Note the motif of the accusation or cry of the earth going up to heaven in 7:6 and 8:4 followed by the Archangels' bringing accusation against the Watchers to God in chapter 9. (There is possibly an accusation against God himself in 9:11). Chapter 10 then commissions the binding of the Watchers, an event which gives way in verse 16 to the command for Michael to destroy iniquity from the face of the earth, looking forward to the final judgement.

<sup>28</sup>This part of the narrative begins with Enoch being sent to the Watchers with a message of doom.

<sup>29</sup>Glasson has suggested that this journey is modelled upon Greek *Nekyia* journeys. See, *Greek Influence in Jewish Eschatology: With Special Reference to Apocalypses and Pseudepigraphs* (London: SPCK, 1961), 8-11. Newson has suggested a different model in “The Development of 1 Enoch 6-19: Cosmology and Judgement.” *CBQ* 42 (1980), 310-329. Her suggestion is that the journey should be likened to the ancient Near Eastern practice of displaying the wealth of one's kingdom to visiting diplomats. Nickelsburg prefers the former suggestion (*1 Enoch*, 280)

<sup>30</sup>For the significance of the stars, see Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch*, 288-289.

<sup>31</sup>For these non-eschatological functions, see Argall, *1 Enoch and Sirach*, 116-118.

<sup>32</sup>See Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch*, 319.

<sup>33</sup>Note M.T. Wacker, *Weltordnung und Gericht: Studien zu 1 Henoch 22* (FB 45, Würzburg: Echter, 1982), 243-

It is clear that the judgement in view is a final one.<sup>34</sup> That this is the case emerges from some of the terminology employed. It is for “the day of the great judgement” that the Watchers have been imprisoned (10:6), when the “eternal judgement is consummated” (10:12).<sup>35</sup> The destruction language used in 1:9 and 10:14,15,16 is also significant. Such language, however, merely makes explicit the finality implied by the storyline. Aside from one brief reference to Adam and Eve in 32:6, the Book of Watchers depicts the problem of sin (including human sin) as a consequence of the descent of the Watchers. The imprisonment and eventual destruction of those Watchers, together with the humans who allied themselves with them, therefore indicates a final end to all that is wrong in the world. Against such a background, the reference to the destruction of all iniquity in 10:16 makes perfect sense.

As a natural corollary of the destruction of all iniquity, there is also a stress on the restoration or renovation of the pristine state of creation. Hints of this begin to emerge in the contrast between the chosen and the sinners in 5:5-9: the former will “inherit the earth” (5:6-7) from which iniquity has been cast; they enjoy peace in an earth no longer covered by violence (5:9). This last point connects with the emphasis, seen particularly in chapter 9, that iniquity has come “upon the earth” (9:1,6,8,9,10) and is particularly seen in acts of violence: “All the earth was full of the godlessness and the violence that had befallen it” (9:1).

The idea of the restoration of creation is found particularly in 10:16-11:2, a passage reminiscent of Isaiah 65:17-25 in its portrayal of a world free of trouble and full of life and

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244, who sees “two-ways” imagery in the contrast of the cursed valley and the blessed place of the holy mountain (26:1-2), paralleling it with Psalm 1:3 and Jer 17:5-8.

<sup>34</sup>The reference to Noah and the flood in 10:1-3 seems to function as a type for the later descriptions of judgement in chapter 10, which cannot simply refer to the flood and the post-flood world. See Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch*, 219-228 and Hartman “An Early Example of Jewish Exegesis: *1 Enoch* 10:16-11:2,” *Neot* 17 (1983), 20-22.

<sup>35</sup>These phrases are not preserved in the Aramaic fragments. 4QEn<sup>b</sup> however precedes the latter phrase with a reference to “the great day,” **יִמּוֹת רַבָּא**.

bounty. The passage is part of the address to Michael that began in 10:11. As such, it is technically set in the *Urzeit*. However, it is clear that the primeval imagery is intended as typological for eschatology. As Nickelsburg notes, “In its eschatological dimension, this aspect of the story promises a new start beyond the destruction wreaked by the great judgement.”<sup>36</sup> That such an eschatological interpretation is required is indicated by two things. First, the imagery is so utopian that it cannot simply refer to the post-Flood humanity except by way of type: *all* the earth (10:22) is cleansed of *all* perversity and iniquity (10:16, 20, 22), *all* the sons of men become righteous (10:21), truth and peace will be united for *all* the generations of men (11:2). The fact that such language occurs in the context of primeval events that clearly have not led to such a utopian state, requires that the function of such language here is eschatological.<sup>37</sup> Secondly, the reference to “the plant of righteousness,” as a conduit of blessing in 10:16 indicates eschatological associations. This term will be discussed below, where it will be noted that it is commonly used to denote an eschatological remnant<sup>38</sup> in Jewish texts. At this point, it is sufficient to note that the use of such a term creates immediate eschatological associations in this story, associations that are confirmed in the mind of the reader by the character of the new world order described.

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<sup>36</sup> *1 Enoch* 1, 219.

<sup>37</sup> For this point, see Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch* 1, 167, where he speaks of the “radical incompatibility” of the descriptions found in 10:16-11:2 with the post-flood world. The key to this running together of *primordial* and *eschatological* appears to lie in this concept of a remnant that is delivered from the primordial/final judgements. In other words, there appears to be a typology in operation.

<sup>38</sup> I will use the term “remnant” frequently in what follows to denote a group that is distinguished from the mainstream of Judaism (if we can speak of such a thing). I am aware that this may not correspond with the way that the term is used in some biblical literature and that my usage is, on this level, somewhat vague. It is useful, however, to have a shorthand term denoting a group distinguished from its parent group on the basis of a self-perception that it represents the true group. For the biblical development of the term remnant, see Gerhard F. Hasel, *The Remnant: The History and Theology of the Remnant Idea from Genesis to Isaiah* (Andrews University Monographs, Studies in Religion 5; Berrien Springs, Mich: Andrews University Press, 1974); also Paul Edward Dinter, “The Remnant of Israel and the Stone of Stumbling in Zion According to Paul (Romans 9-11),” (Ph.D Dissertation, Union Theological Seminary, 1980), 160-239.

Also interesting, as we consider the idea of restored creation, are the references to the tree of life and the tree of wisdom, in 24:4-25:6 and 32:3-6 respectively. Both have their background in the Fall story of Genesis 2-3.<sup>39</sup> Only the tree of life, however, is depicted as having eschatological significance: after the Great Judgement it will “be given to the righteous and pious” (25:4) and “will be transplanted to the holy place, by the house of God” (25:5). What was lost to Adam and Eve when they were driven from the garden, then, is restored to the righteous after the judgement.

By contrast, the tree of wisdom is not restored to the righteous. Enoch himself, it is stressed, only sees it “from afar” (32:3), yet the “holy ones” (angels)<sup>40</sup> eat from it and learn “great wisdom.” This point is of major importance for, as shall be seen below, those same angels mediate wisdom to Enoch, who then mediates it to humanity. Insofar as this element is eschatological, it is realised, not future.

## **Realised Elements in the Eschatology of the Book of the Watchers**

Clearly, the Book of the Watchers is oriented towards this great, future event of the day of judgement. But a case can be made that the book regards that judgement to be imminent and regards the events leading up to that judgement to have been set in motion or inaugurated. In order to see that this is the case, we need to understand what the book does with the concept of revealed wisdom.

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<sup>39</sup>See especially 28:6 “This is the tree of wisdom from which your father of old and your mother of old, who were before you, ate . . . and they were driven from the garden.” (trans. Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch* 1, 320).

<sup>40</sup>On the terminology of “Holy Ones,” see Nickelsburg’s excursus in *1 Enoch* 1, 140-1. Also, L. Dequecker, “The ‘Saints of the Most High’ in Qumran and Daniel,” *OTS* 18 (1973), 108-87.

The theme of wisdom being revealed to Enoch and then transmitted to others is as central a theme to the book as is that of judgement. Within the body of the narrative, we are first introduced to Enoch as a “righteous scribe,” (12:3-4)<sup>41</sup> a title which suggests Enoch's function as the one who will write something down for the purpose of transmission. Chapters 14-16 describe his ascent to heaven, throne vision and commissioning as a prophet.<sup>42</sup> Here he is addressed as a “righteous man, a scribe of truth”(15:1). Following this commission, Enoch is led on his two journeys. At the climax of the first journey, Enoch's uniqueness as a recipient of revelation is stressed.<sup>43</sup> As the second journey nears its climax, another important element arises from Enoch's viewing of the garden of paradise containing the tree of wisdom (32:3), a tree that he himself sees only from afar,<sup>44</sup> unlike the angels, who eat from the tree and “learn great wisdom.” The narrative establishes a contrast between Adam and Eve, who ate from the tree and learned wisdom, an act that results in their being driven from the garden (33:6), and Enoch, who receives his wisdom via the angels who have learned wisdom from the tree. If 81:1-82:4 belong to the Book of the Watchers (they certainly presuppose it), then this wisdom received by Enoch through his visions from God and the seven guiding angels (20:1-8) is the same wisdom that is then written down (82:1) and transmitted to, and through, Methuselah (82:1-3).

That this revealed wisdom has a salvific function emerges when it is viewed against the background of the story of the Watchers, and particularly that of ‘Aśa’el. The divinely

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<sup>41</sup>For a discussion of the translation of “righteous” see Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch 1*, 270 (also for the connection with 15:1 discussed below). For the priestly and prophetic connotations of the title “scribe,” see Argall, *1 Enoch and Sirach*, 26-28.

<sup>42</sup>For a discussion of this prophetic commissioning, see Argall, *ibid.*, 29-30, and Martha Himmelfarb, *Ascent to Heaven in Jewish and Christian Apocalypses*, 9-20.

<sup>43</sup>19:3: “I, Enoch, alone saw the visions, the extremities of all things. And no one among humans has seen as I saw.” Translation, Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch 1*, 276.

<sup>44</sup>Greek: μακρόθεν; Ethiopic: *kaḥaktihomu*.



authorised wisdom given to Enoch stands in sharp contrast to the “worthless mystery” revealed by ‘Aśa’el.<sup>45</sup> In the introduction to the book (see especially 5:8), the chosen “sin no more” after they are given this wisdom and, as a result of this, they also escape God’s wrath (5:9). Thus, the narrative of the Book of the Watchers deals with the problem of sin in two ways: with the promise of the destruction of that sin, and with the promise of salvific wisdom to lead the chosen out of it. As Nickelsburg comments,

This dualistic counterposing of truth and its perversion is essential to the Enochic myth and to the description of the end time explicit or implicit in several layers of the tradition.<sup>46</sup>

It is the connection of Enoch’s wisdom with a group designated “the chosen” in the introduction that brings to the fore the idea that the eschatology of the book is inaugurated. In the superscription to the book (1:1), Enoch blesses the “righteous chosen”<sup>47</sup> who will be present on the “day of tribulation.”<sup>48</sup> Moving into the body of the introduction, Enoch takes up his “discourse,”<sup>49</sup> pronouncing that it is not for this generation but for “a far-off generation”<sup>50</sup> that he speaks. In the parallel phrase at the beginning of verse 3 this far-off generation is designated “the chosen.” The parallels between this section and the Balaam

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<sup>45</sup>16:3 “Worthless” translates Ethiopic *mennuna*. Newsom’s article, “Development of *1 Enoch* 6-19,” suggests that the ‘Aśa’el material was added to function as a literary foil to the tradition that saw Enoch as the revealer of the true mystery.

<sup>46</sup>Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch* 1, 27.

<sup>47</sup>Translating ἐκλεκτοὺς δικαίους. Ethiopic is *heruyāna waṣādeqāna* “chosen and righteous ones.”

<sup>48</sup>Greek: εἰς ἡμέραν ἀνάγκης. The Hebrew phrase יוֹם צָרָה occurs in the Hebrew Bible (2 Kings 19:3, Ps 50:15, 77:3, Obadiah 12, 14). A similar phrase, “time of distress/ tribulation” עֵת צָרָה occurs in Daniel 12:1. This passage depicts a group being delivered from this distress as they are led to righteousness by “the wise” הַמְּשֻׁכְּלִים. It also speaks of Daniel’s scroll being sealed up “until the time of the end” עַד־עֵת קֵץ.

<sup>49</sup>The Greek here is τὴν παραβολὴν αὐτοῦ. Milik notes that the singular seems to have been used to translate the plural form מַחֲלֹתָיו (“his parables”) in imitation of Numbers 23:7 (*Enoch*, 89). For the parallels between this section and the Balaam oracles, see Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch* 1, 138.

<sup>50</sup>4QEn<sup>a</sup> 1i preserves לְדֹרֹת רַחֲקִים

oracles of Numbers 23-24 throw one specific contrast into sharp relief: Balaam's blessings were upon Israel,<sup>51</sup> Enoch's blessings are upon the chosen. This same movement of substituting the language of "the chosen" for the language of "Israel" is seen in 1:8, which Hartman has demonstrated to be an elaboration of the elements of the Aaronic blessing of Numbers 6:24-26.<sup>52</sup> The inference, then, is that there will be a specific group, which may not be simply identified as Israel, which will only come into existence in the distant future (with respect to Enoch). An interesting development of this is found in 10:3 where the remnant of humanity delivered from the flood is referred to as a "plant,"<sup>53</sup> language that is reprised in 10:16 in the phrase "let the plant of righteousness appear,"<sup>54</sup> where the reference cannot be to the remnant that escaped the flood, and instead appears to be a remnant escaping the final judgement.<sup>55</sup>

Two features would suggest that the distant future in which this group comes into existence is that of the end-time itself. First, the references to the blessings of the chosen above bracket the description of God's appearing in judgement (1:3b-7c). This juxtaposing is of particular significance in the case of verse 8, where the description of God making peace with the righteous and protecting the chosen seems to stand in deliberate contrast to verse 7, with its pronouncement of judgement upon all and the perishing of everything upon the earth. The chosen are thus presented as a group delivered from, or exempted from, the judgement. *I*

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<sup>51</sup>Num 23: 7,21,23; 24:5,17,18.

<sup>52</sup>Hartman, *Asking for a Meaning*, 5, 32-38, 44-48, 132-136.

<sup>53</sup>The reading here "from him will be planted a plant" is not supported by the Ethiopic or by all of the Greek manuscripts. It occurs in the Chronography of George Syncellus which Milik takes to be the most reliable text at this point. See Milik, *Enoch*, 162.

<sup>54</sup>"Plant of righteousness" is attested by 4QEn<sup>c</sup> 1v: [נ]צבת קדשטא

<sup>55</sup> For further discussions of the "plant" imagery and its connection with a remnant theology, see Patrick A. Tiller, "The Eternal Planting in the Dead Sea Scrolls," *DSD* 4 (1997), 312-35; Shozo Fujita, "The Metaphor of the Plant in Jewish Literature of the Intertestamental Period," *JSJ* 7 (1976), 30-45. Note also how the imagery is used in Isaiah 61:3.

*Enoch* 5:5 functions as a foil to 1:8; it takes up the same vocabulary but, in speaking of the fate of sinners, negates it. They will not receive blessing but, rather, “an eternal curse”; for them there will be “no mercy or peace.” This antithesis is continued into verses 6 and 7, in which, in comparison to each of the blessings pronounced upon the righteous, a curse is pronounced upon the sinners. This juxtaposing of the references to the chosen to the descriptions of judgement establishes a close connection between the two that, when combined with the superscription's reference to the righteous chosen who will be present on the day of tribulation and with the reference in 1:3 to a distant generation, strongly implies that the chosen belong to a group that comes into existence at the end time.

Second, the giving of wisdom to the chosen in *1 Enoch* 5:8 appears to be the act that brings about their eschatological blessing: through receiving wisdom, they receive life and are delivered from sinfulness. While it is difficult to establish the chronological relationship of this giving of wisdom in relation to the time of the judgement,<sup>56</sup> the logic of verses 8-9 is that the chosen, who have been led out of their transgressions, will not die in the heat of God's wrath but “the number of their days they will complete” (5:9b). This may well suggest that the receiving of wisdom takes place within a lifetime of the judgement. Nickelsburg's comments, while referring to the whole Enochic corpus, may be appropriately cited here in reference to the Book of the Watchers:

Thus the books of Enoch are a corpus of texts that guarantee future salvation on the basis of a present reality to which the seer had been privy and which he then revealed. That seer – in the

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<sup>56</sup>The positioning of verse 8 after verse 7 may be taken as suggesting that the giving of wisdom occurs after the judgement, but this would seem to contradict the flow of verses 8 and 9, discussed below. It is probably better to see this as a parallel unit to verse 6 and 7, with verse 8 demonstrating why the chosen receive “forgiveness . . . mercy, peace and clemency” (because they have been delivered from their godlessness and pride, verse 8) and expanding on the nature of the “good light” that constitutes the salvation of the chosen (verse 8: “in the enlightened man there will be light, and in the wise man, understanding.” Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch* 1, 159).

book's fiction, Enoch of old; in reality the complement of authors who stand behind these texts – provides a bridge between opposing worlds, present and future, earthly and cosmic, human and divine. His revelations, written down, transmitted and interpreted, constitute and regulate the community of the chosen and righteous. Although allegedly received in primordial antiquity, these revelations are promulgated in a present that stands on the threshold of the end time. Functionally, they are eschatological revelation. . . Definitive deliverance will take place soon.<sup>57</sup>

It is reasonable to suggest that the community that transmitted the Book of the Watchers perceived itself to be that chosen remnant, a suggestion that would be supported if Nickelsburg and Suter are correct in seeing the story of the Watchers as partly symbolic of the perceived corruption of the Temple.<sup>58</sup> The community would then be those who perceived themselves as having received a wisdom that has set them apart from the corrupt body. This suggestion may receive further support from Hartman's suggestion that the use of tenses in *1 Enoch* 1-5 is intended to “make the reader interpret his own time in a very specific way.”<sup>59</sup>

## The Dream Visions

Having established the nature of the eschatology that underlies the Book of the Watchers, it seems wise to limit the discussion of the Dream Visions and the Epistle of Enoch

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<sup>57</sup>Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch* I, 42

<sup>58</sup> Nickelsburg, “Enoch, Levi and Peter: Recipients of Revelation in Upper Galilee,” *JBL* 100 (1981), 575-600; D.W. Suter, “Fallen Angel, Fallen Priest: The Problem of Family Purity in *1 Enoch*,” *HUCA* 50 (1979), 115-135.

<sup>59</sup> Hartman, *Asking for a Meaning*, 16. His argument is based in the distinct use of tenses for accusations, curses, reflections and promises.

to noting some similarities that suggest that these parts of the corpus share the eschatological outlook of that book.

There are two dream visions recounted in chapters 83-90. The first of those visions draws upon and expands the remnant typology that we noted earlier in our discussion of chapters 10-11: Enoch prays, in obedience to his grandfather, that God would preserve a remnant of humanity from the coming destruction (83:8). This remnant is again referred to as a plant (84:6), and again, despite the ante-diluvian setting, there seems to be a running together of primordial and eschatological elements, as reflected by the references to the “great day of judgement” (84:4) and “eternal destruction” (84:5).

The second of the two visions is the Animal Vision of chapters 85-90. The main point of note with regard to this Vision is that in its final form, as represented in the Enochic corpus, a major turning point comes with the birth of the lambs in 90:6-7, whose eyes are opened. This event is followed by a time of oppression for those lambs, but nevertheless leads very quickly to the judgement described in verses 19-27. Again, a typology appears to be at work, this time between the lambs whose eyes are opened - who are eventually delivered by the intervention of the great judgement - and those living in the time of Moses (89:28) and Samuel (89:41), whose eyes are opened temporarily. There seems again, therefore, to be present here the idea that the revealing of wisdom, here denoted by the opening of eyes, is an eschatological event, prefigured in the times of Moses and Samuel and connected to an imminent judgement. Only the inclusion of this vision in the Enochic corpus would lead the reader to connect this wisdom with that of Enoch.

Once again, it is a striking corollary of the judgement and destruction of sin that the original pristine state of Creation is restored. In 85:3, at the beginning of the Animal Apocalypse, the original man is depicted as a white bull, in contrast to the black bull of Cain

and his line. In the degeneration of history that ensues, the symbol of the white bull continues to be used of those who are righteous (85:9; 89:1,9,11) until it is used of Noah in 89:9. From this point on, the imagery of sheep is used of Israel: the glory of the white bull has disappeared from the earth. But in the *eschaton*, after sin is judged and destroyed (90:24-27), a white bull is once again born; not only so, but as the seer watches, the leaders of all the wild animals, described earlier as attacking the sheep and lambs of God's flock (90:2-4, 8-9), are transformed into white cattle (90:37). As Nickelsburg notes, the birth of the white bull probably representing a Messianic figure after the judgement "catalyzes the transformation of all the species into white bulls, the one species from which all of them came."<sup>60</sup> The point is clear: with the corruption of sin no longer tainting the earth, the pristine state of creation may be recapitulated.

## The Epistle of Enoch

That the Epistle of Enoch<sup>61</sup> presumes the content of the Book of the Watchers at many points has been demonstrated by Nickelsburg.<sup>62</sup> From this, we would expect that the eschatology of the earlier book would be reflected by the Epistle and numerous passages reflect that this is so. The reference to "the righteous one" who will "arise from sleep" in the introduction to the Epistle (92:3) may well reflect an eschatological giving of wisdom, a possibility supported by the parallel phrase that he will "walk in paths of righteousness."

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<sup>60</sup>Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch* 1, 407.

<sup>61</sup>We will examine the Epistle in greater depth in the next chapter, and in particular its use of wisdom forms.

<sup>62</sup>Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch* 1, 422-23.

Again, this event is closely linked to the judgement (92:5)<sup>63</sup> in which Enoch himself, as the great scribe, may play a significant role.<sup>64</sup> The two-ways instruction in 94:1-5 probably reflects the same idea:

To certain men of a generation the paths of violence and death will be revealed;

and they will keep away from them,

and they will not follow them.<sup>65</sup>

The beatitude in 98:10 also reflects the conviction that it is the possession of wisdom that leads to salvation.

The theme of future judgement is again central to the Epistle, emerging particularly in the woe forms that make up so much of the book.<sup>66</sup> While eternal judgement (as opposed to simply misfortune in this life) is implied in many of the individual woes, certain collections of woe-oracles are juxtaposed with descriptions of the judgement (97:3-10; 98:9-99:5; 99:11-100:4), making this emphasis even more explicit. Yet this future judgement is not seen as a distant thing; the use of the adverb “quickly”<sup>67</sup> in 94:1,6,7; 95:6; 96:1,6; 97:10; 98:16 in connection with verbs of destruction suggests that it is imminent. Again, therefore, the material suggests that its readers are to see themselves as a community living in the last days, saved from the coming wrath by the wisdom that has been revealed to them.

Again, the idea of restored creation parallels that of judgement. As iniquity is cast from

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<sup>63</sup> Again, note the reference to the “last generations” in 92:1. VanderKam (*Enoch and the Growth*, 173) describes Enoch as he is depicted in the Epistle as “a sage who teaches the last generations the way of righteousness in critical times and exhorts his community to patient hope in the final hours of the world.”

<sup>64</sup> See the discussion of 92:1 in VanderKam, *Enoch and the Growth*, 173-174.

<sup>65</sup> Translation: Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch I*, 454.

<sup>66</sup> See for instance 94:6-95:2, 95:4-7, 96:4-8, 97:7-10, 98:9-99:2, 99:11-16.

<sup>67</sup> Greek: ταχέως/ταχὺ, Ethiopic *fetuna*

the earth, the righteous are given healing and hear a voice of rest from heaven (96:3). From the time of judgement, the righteous will sleep peacefully, unthreatened by evil (100:5). While not as developed as the theme within the Book of the Watchers, some notion of the restoration of creation is implied in such language.

## The Apocalypse of Weeks

The Apocalypse of Weeks is generally taken to be an older composition that has been inserted into the body of the Epistle of Enoch,<sup>68</sup> although García Martínez has argued against this view.<sup>69</sup> As we shall notice below, it also sees the giving of wisdom to the chosen as an eschatological event, and this may be the main reason for its inclusion in the Enochic corpus. It warrants greater discussion at this stage in our study than does the rest of the Epistle because of its schematization of history and what that might reveal to us of how soon the judgement was expected to come.

## Future Elements in the Eschatology of the Apocalypse of Weeks

The Apocalypse of Weeks schematises history into ten weeks. The schema builds towards the description of the time of judgement in the final three weeks (91:11-17). Again, a

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<sup>68</sup>See the discussion of the origin and date of the Apocalypse of Weeks in VanderKam, *Enoch and the... Apocalyptic Tradition*, 142-149.

<sup>69</sup>F. García Martínez, *Qumran and Apocalyptic*, (STDJ 9; Leiden: Brill, 1992), 79-94.



flood-typology appears with the use of the Flood as a paradigm for the final judgement.<sup>70</sup> This typology appears to be used in order to undergird the notion of a “remnant” who will be faithful and be delivered from the final judgement even as such a group was delivered from the Flood.<sup>71</sup> The finality of the judgement to come is reflected in the language used in 91:15 of “the Great Judgment.”<sup>72</sup> That judgment will involve both destruction of sinners and the cosmic upheaval that will result in the removal or destruction of sin:

And all the deeds of wickedness will vanish from the whole earth and descend to the eternal pit (91:14)<sup>73</sup>

In contrast to this is striking use of the motif of “eternity” for the blessings awaiting the righteous: “generations of eternity”, דְּרֵי עֲלָמִין, in 91:13; “the path of eternal righteousness”, קֶשֶׁט עֲלָמָא, in 91:14; “eternal judgment” and “eternal heaven” in 91:15 and “all the powers of the heavens will shine forever” in 91:16.<sup>74</sup> If we compare this language to that used of the Flood (93:4-5), which as we have noticed functions as an antitype, the finality of the last judgment, and of the state of affairs that will follow it, emerge in sharp contrast.

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<sup>70</sup>See 93:4, where the Flood is described as “the first end.”

<sup>71</sup>See especially *1 Enoch* 83:8; 84: 5-6, speaking of the remnant escaping the flood, and compare to 90: 28-32 speaking of the remnant escaping the final judgement.

<sup>72</sup>This verse, as a whole, is rather difficult to reconstruct from the different manuscripts, which vary widely in their witness. The Aramaic of 4QEn<sup>s</sup> 1 iv, however, seems to support the rendering “the fixed time (קִיָּץ) of the Great Judgement (דִּינָא רַבָּא).” It should be pointed out, however, that רַבָּא is broken after the *bet* and is not so clear as either Milik (*Enoch*, 266-269) or Nickelsburg (*1 Enoch* I, 437) would suggest. Nevertheless, it remains the most obvious reading.

<sup>73</sup>Nickelsburg, *op cit.* 434. Milik, *Books of Enoch*, 266-267, here prefers the translation “doers of wickedness.” The Ethiopic is *kwellu tagbār rasi‘ān*, which would favour the translation “deeds” and there is a lacuna in the Aramaic fragment (4QEn<sup>s</sup> 1 4:20) at this point which only allows us to read [עב] with any certainty. The Ethiopic may well, therefore, attest the original form.

<sup>74</sup>The text of this line is rather uncertain: the Ethiopic and Aramaic differ as to whether the verb is “rise” or “shine”. The emphasis on eternity is found in both, however (Aramaic: [לְכוּל עֲמִין], 4QEn<sup>s</sup> 1 4:25).

## Realised Elements in the Eschatology of the Apocalypse of Weeks

While the ten week schema of the Apocalypse of Weeks moves towards the final judgement, it may also be argued that it presents the end time as inaugurated. Again, the key to this is the theme of the revealing of wisdom, which here takes place in the seventh week:

And at its conclusion (the seventh week), the chosen will be chosen,

as witnesses of righteousness from the eternal plant of righteousness,

to whom will be given sevenfold wisdom and knowledge (93:10)<sup>75</sup>

As the appendix to the Apocalypse of Weeks (93: 11-14) implies, the core of this salvific wisdom is the revelation given through Enoch himself.<sup>76</sup> VanderKam has convincingly demonstrated that the “seventh week” - in which the awakening takes place - depicts the time of composition of the Apocalypse of Weeks.<sup>77</sup> This would mean that the authors' intended audience are the people of their own day, a group whom they describe as having been given

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<sup>75</sup>Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch 1*, 434. The imagery establishes a clear parallel with 93:10, which speaks of Abraham.

<sup>76</sup>The placing of these verses, which contain a series of rhetorical questions that all would be answerable by “Enoch,” is a problem. For this, and for information generally about the order of chapters 91-93, see the classic discussions in François Martin, *Le Livre d'Hénoch: Documents pour l'Étude de la Bible, Traduit sur le Texte Éthiopien*, Paris: Letouzey et Ané 1906, 245 and R.H. Charles, *The Book of Enoch, or 1 Enoch: Translated from the Editor's Ethiopic Text, and edited with the introduction notes and indexes of the first edition wholly recast, enlarged and rewritten; together with a reprint from the editor's text of the Greek fragments*, Oxford: Clarendon Press 1912, 231. For the significance of the questions as pointing to the special status of Enoch's visions, see Boccaccini, *Beyond the Essene Hypothesis*, 112.

<sup>77</sup>James C. VanderKam, “Studies in the Apocalypse of Weeks (1 Enoch 93:1-10, 91:11-17),” *CBQ* 46 (1984) 521-523.

wisdom. A similar case can be made in the Animal Vision; there, the historical allusions are quite clear until just after the eyes of the lambs are opened, when events move towards the eschatological judgement (90:6-19). This would suggest that the religious awakening is understood to have taken place recently (or to be in the process of taking place now: note, the lambs “began” to see).

Having located this awakening in the time of the books' composition, or in their recent past, we may now ask where the event occurs in relation to the *eschaton*. We have noted already that in the Animal Vision, the opening of the lambs' eyes signals a shift, with historical allegory now giving way to eschatological events. Thus, the awakening of the lambs would appear to be the inaugural eschatological event. A similar point emerges in the Apocalypse of Weeks. The seventh week, structurally, is the turning-point of the work, a fact that emerges in a number of ways. First, the events prior to the seventh week (93: 4-9) have clear historical referents, while those following it (91: 11-17) express general eschatological hopes. Second, weeks eight to ten may be demonstrated to be dependent upon the earlier weeks. Specifically, there is no description of the wickedness that is being judged in those latter weeks; this information must be derived from the earlier weeks. Also, week eight forms a natural pair with week seven, as the judgement announced in the former week is finally executed (93:10, 91:11-12). Third, week seven heralds the shift from the time when wickedness prevails into the three weeks when it is destroyed. Thus, again, it would appear to be the first event in the eschatological calendar.<sup>78</sup> A further important link between the group of the seventh week and those who will enjoy the eschatological reversal is established by the

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<sup>78</sup> Although less obvious, Hartman has seen a similar element arising in chapters 1-5. His argument is based in the distinct use of tenses for accusations, curses, reflections and promises. He concludes from this that “the Introduction may make the reader interpret his own time in a very specific way.” Hartman, *Asking for a Meaning*, 16. We may also note here the two groups addressees of Enoch in 92:1: his sons and “the last generation.”

terminology of “righteous/righteousness.” This terminology occurs throughout the apocalypse to refer to the faithful and chosen, but only sporadically, since the history of the people alternates between fidelity and straying. In 93:10 it takes on fresh significance as a *permanent* characteristic of the chosen (93:10). The terminology then recurs seven times in 91:12-17, establishing a link between the utopian future state and the present group of the chosen.

One final question suggests itself here. What, if anything, is said about the length of time between the inauguration and the consummation of the eschatological calendar? Here there is little agreement among scholars. In discussing the *Apocalypse of Weeks*, Hartman sees the events of the final judgement as imminent, since otherwise they would provide little comfort to the righteous.<sup>79</sup> Against this, both Doeve and Koch argue that the period of the final three weeks is equal in length to the preceding three weeks, and therefore equal to the length of time from the Exodus to the giving of wisdom.<sup>80</sup> Koch's argument, in particular, is impressive in the material it handles and in its attempt to locate the time of the composition of the *Apocalypse*. Nickelsburg follows Koch in seeing the final consummation as located in the distant future.<sup>81</sup> It is important to stress, however, that the remoteness of the final consummation does not lessen the significance of the fact that the corpus does present this eschatological time as having been inaugurated.

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<sup>79</sup>Lars Hartman, “The Function of Some So-Called Apocalyptic Timetables,” *NTS* 22 (1975-1976) 11-13.

<sup>80</sup>J.W. Doeve, “Parousieverzögerung” *Ned TT* 17 (1962-1963) 33-36. Klaus Koch, “Sabbatstruktur der Geschichte: Die sogenannte Zehn-Wochen-Apocalypse (1 Hen 93:1-10; 91:11-17) und das Ringen um die alttestamentlichen Chronologien im späten Israelitentum,” *ZNW* 95 (1983) 403-430. A further argument for a long period of time between inauguration and consummation of the eschatological period is found in Richard Bauckham, *Jude and the Relatives of Jesus in the Early Church*, (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1990), 320-326. Bauckham argues that each of the weeks is a period of seven generations, and suggests that within this schema, the eschatological period is fulfilled in 3 stages, each also made up of seven generations.

<sup>81</sup>Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch* 1, 440.

## Conclusions: Eschatology in *1 Enoch*

The chapter thus far has demonstrated that the eschatology of *1 Enoch* is neither entirely futurist nor entirely realised; rather it is an *inaugurated* eschatology. Such an eschatology appears to be present in each of the three core units that make up the “testament” that Nickelsburg argued was attested by the Aramaic fragments. What is striking about this eschatology is that the point of inauguration is located in the revealing of wisdom to a remnant group, or in the opening of their eyes. The wisdom revealed appears to be that contained within the books of Enoch, so that possession of those books takes on an eschatological significance. In addition, the idea that the creation will be restored to a pristine state after the destruction of sin has also been isolated as a major feature of this eschatology, though unlike the possession of revealed wisdom, this element seems to belong to the future.

## **4QInstruction**

*4QInstruction* is one of the longer texts found in the caves at Qumran, although its highly fragmentary nature has made reconstruction difficult<sup>82</sup> and work on the actual content of the text, as Tigchelaar notes, is still at an early stage.<sup>83</sup> It is essentially a loosely structured

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<sup>82</sup>For discussions of the reconstruction of the text see the work of Harrington and Strugnell in *DJD XXXIV*, Torleif Elgvin, “The Reconstruction of Sapiential Work A,” in *RQ* 16 (1995) 559-580 and especially Tigchelaar, *To Increase Learning*, 1-169, whose work includes critical evaluation of both of the preceding works.

<sup>83</sup>Tigchelaar, *To Increase Learning*, 4. In the years since Tigchelaar made this comment, and indeed since I first drafted this chapter, a number of works and articles have appeared that discuss the content of *4QInstruction*. Most of these may be found in the bibliography. I would, however, draw attention to the work of Matthew J. Goff, *The Worldly and Heavenly Wisdom of 4QInstruction* (STDJ 50; Leiden: Brill, 2003), whose conclusions dovetail rather closely with my own.

collection<sup>84</sup> of ethical and paraenetic material, introduced and punctuated by reflections on the importance of wisdom and by eschatological descriptions. The relationship between the eschatological teaching and the paraenetic material shall be examined in the next chapters; the concern here is with the nature of the eschatology of *4QInstruction*. Three elements shall be isolated in this eschatology: the future judgement, the possession of revealed wisdom by the remnant and the restoration of creation.

## 1: The Future Judgement

Elgvin has drawn attention to the fact that the future elements of the eschatology of *4QInstruction* are not as detailed as those of other writings of the time, such as *1 Enoch*.<sup>85</sup> Nevertheless, Elgvin himself points out that:

An eschatological discourse on the coming judgement occupies a full two columns of the work.<sup>86</sup>

The most striking description of judgement is found in 4Q416 1 (supplemented with 4Q418\* 1,2 , 2b, 4Q418 229 and a number of smaller fragments of 4Q418),<sup>87</sup> a passage that comes near the beginning of the work:

10. in Heaven he shall pronounce judgement upon the works of wickedness and all his faithful children will be favourably accepted by [  
11. its end. And they shall be in terror. And all who defiled themselves in it shall cry out. For

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<sup>84</sup>*DJD XXXIV*, 17: “the parts are more important than the whole and the overall outline needs not follow a tight logic.”

<sup>85</sup>Torleif Elgvin, “Early Essene Eschatology,” 142.

<sup>86</sup>*Ibid.*, 128.

<sup>87</sup>See Tigchelaar, *To Increase Learning*, 175.

12. The [s]eas and the depths shall be in terror. And all who defiled themselves in it shall be in terror, and every spirit of flesh will be *laid bare*. But the sons of heaven [            in the day of ]

13. its [judge]ment. And all iniquity shall come to an end, while the period of truth will be completed [            ]

14. in all periods of eternity, for he is a God of truth.<sup>88</sup>

A dualism between the righteous and the wicked may be seen to be emerging in this text, notably in the reference to the “spirit of flesh” and the “sons of heaven” in line 12. Frey has seen in this a fundamental dualism that ultimately influenced the thought of Paul.<sup>90</sup>

<sup>88</sup>This translation is Tigchelaar's, *ibid.*, 176. I have departed from him (italicised words) in verses 11 and 12, where I have seen a possible chiasmic structure based on translating רָאָה as the 3<sup>rd</sup>. person plural Qal imperfect of רָאָה, "to see" rather than following Tigchelaar in rendering "they will fear", based on the root יָרָא. Such a rendering prompts me to follow the *DJD XXXIV* editors in reading וְיִתְעַרְעְרוּ, following 4Q416 1, "every spirit of flesh **will be laid bare**" rather than following Tigchelaar by substituting וְיִתְרָא (from 4Q418\* 2 4 ; Tigchelaar, *op cit.*, 180) and postulating a meaning "they will cry out." The chiasm is therefore as follows:

The heavens will see  
     shaken from its place will be the earth  
     and the seas and the depths will be in terror  
 And every spirit of flesh will be laid bare.

The point, however, is not important to my argument.

<sup>89</sup>See Tigchelaar, *To Increase Learning*, 209-210.

<sup>90</sup>Jörg Frey, "The Notion of Flesh in *4QInstruction* and the Background of Pauline Usage" in *Sapiential, Liturgical and Poetical Texts from Qumran: Proceedings of the Third Meeting of the International Organization*

Against this, however, Tigchelaar has preferred to see “spirit of flesh” as a reference to all living things rather than a pejorative term, and therefore rejects a dualistic interpretation.<sup>91</sup> A conclusion as to which is right is made more difficult by the fact that a lacuna obscures the verb that would allow us to know what exactly it is that the “sons of heaven” do. The structure of the text, however, would seem to imply that the key point is that the “sons of heaven” do not react to the judgement with the same fear as “every spirit of flesh”, implying that they have confidence as to their righteous status before God. Thus, at the judgement, the two groups appear to fall on different sides of the great divide. A dualistic interpretation of the text seems, therefore, to be required.<sup>92</sup>

Regardless of whether such a dualism is present in the lines just examined, it is certainly the case that it emerges elsewhere in the work, most notably in 4Q418 69 ii. Here, the judgement is described upon those who are termed the “foolish of heart”<sup>93</sup> The events are described in a second person address in lines 4-9; in line 10, the attention then shifts to the righteous who are addressed as “the chosen ones of the truth.”<sup>94</sup> The antithesis established, therefore, is between the “chosen ones of the truth” and the “foolish of heart,” a dualism reminiscent of that seen in the Apocalypse of Weeks, where the elect are given wisdom at the end of the present age.<sup>95</sup> This antithesis is developed by the phrases that occur in parallel with “chosen ones”: they are “searchers of understanding” and “those who keep watch over all

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for *Qumran Studies*, Oslo 1998, *Published in Memory of Maurice Baillet*. (ed. Daniel K. Falk, Florentino García Martínez, and Eileen M. Schuller; STDJ 35; Leiden: Brill, 2000), 197-226.

<sup>91</sup>Tigchelaar, *To Increase Learning*, 186-188.

<sup>92</sup>See also Goff, *Worldly and Heavenly Wisdom*, 80-123. The question of the relationship of the thought here to Pauline dualism remains open to discussion, however. Goff also notes the possibility that the language of “sons of heaven” presents the salvation of the righteous as involving an angelic afterlife. See page 208.

<sup>93</sup> אוילי לב, line 4.

<sup>94</sup> בתירי אמת

<sup>95</sup>1 Enoch 93:10, See the comments by Nickelsburg in the introduction to his commentary, *1 Enoch 1*, 41-42.



knowledge.” Thus, we are left with a dualism between the “wise” and the “foolish”, similar to that seen in the traditional Jewish wisdom of Proverbs and Psalm 1, but with an additional element: the “wise” are those who have been elected to partake in the eschatological salvation.<sup>96</sup> This connects naturally with the next element of the eschatology of *4QInstruction*.

## 2: The Possession of Revealed Wisdom by the Remnant

Arguably, the dualism seen above in terms of the judgement has a present dimension: 4Q418 81 i 1&2 address the reader as one who has been separated from “every spirit of flesh.” The text then continues to speak of the addressee using the terminology of priesthood borrowed from Numbers 18:20: “I am your portion and inheritance among the children of Israel.” As this language is taken up in *4QInstruction*, a subtle change is made: God is now the addressee’s inheritance among the “children of mankind” (בְּנֵי אָדָם). Elgvin sees in this a reinterpretation of priestly language referring to the reader as a member of the eschatological community.<sup>97</sup> He buttresses his case by noting the presence in line 13 of the phrase, “his sprout for an eternal planting” (פִּאֲרָתוֹ לְמַטְעַת עוֹלָם). The phrase, “eternal planting,”<sup>98</sup> depicts the faithful remnant in *1 Enoch* 93:10, where it redefines its earlier use as describing

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<sup>96</sup>See Goff’s comments regarding the development of traditional wisdom. *Worldly and Heavenly Wisdom*, 216-219.

<sup>97</sup>Pages 120-126 of Elgvin, “The Mystery to Come: Early Essene Theology of Revelation,” in *Qumran Between the Old and New Testaments*. (ed. F.H. Cryer and T.L. Thompson. JSOTSS 290. Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1998), 113-150.

<sup>98</sup>See footnote 56. Also, see Loren T. Stuckenbruck, “*4QInstruction* and the Possible Influence of Early Enochic Traditions: An Evaluation,” in *The Wisdom texts from Qumran and the Development of Sapiential Thought* (ed. C. Hempel *et al*; BETL 159. Leuven: Peters Press, 2002), 249-57.

Israel in 93:5. The term may be drawn from Isaiah 61:3 where it occurs with the same meaning of a remnant, but without the adjective “eternal.” Among the Qumran texts it occurs also in 1QH<sup>a</sup> 16:6; here too, it carries this same sense of a remnant. Tigchelaar has challenged Elgvin's view, preferring to see the text as addressing those of Aaronic lineage.<sup>99</sup> His response, however, does not actually provide any counter to Elgvin's evidence for the eschatological significance of מַטֵּעַת עוֹלָם. Nor does it deal with the fact that the change from God being the priests' inheritance “among the sons of Israel” to being the reader's inheritance “among the sons of men” would appear to be a shift in an eschatological direction, looking towards the remnant's priestly function towards humanity as a whole.<sup>100</sup>

Crucially, Elgvin sees the notion of revealed wisdom as a key element of such a realised eschatology. On this level, he notes in particular 4Q417 2 i 11-13

and in a proper understanding he will k[now the hid]den things of His thought when he walks in [p]erfecti[on in all] his d[ee]ds. Seek them always, and look [at al]l their outcome. Then you will have knowledge of [eterna]l glory [wi]th the mysteries of His wonder and His mighty deeds.<sup>101</sup>

Regarding this he comments:

The elect has access to the hidden mysteries of God: when he meditates on the deeds of God and their

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<sup>99</sup>Tigchelaar, *To Increase Learning*, 234-236

<sup>100</sup>Cf. Exodus 19:6. For this element in eschatological thinking, a shift towards the remnant community being the source of salvation for humanity more broadly, see Nickelsburg's comments on *The Animal Apocalypse*: “Israel's story stands in the broader context of humanity's story, and the nations deliverance from its enemies is a first step toward the re-creation and reuniting of the whole human race. That ultimate reconciliation emanates from within Israel, with the appearance of the great white bull that is described in language at home in Davidic messianic speculation. But the symbol of the bull and the transformation that ensues takes the human story back to its pre-Israelite beginnings. Through the re-creation of the whole human race God will accomplish what failed with the first family and with their counterparts who came out of the Ark.” (*1 Enoch* 1, 356-357).

<sup>101</sup>Translation, Elgvin, “Early Essene Eschatology,” 144.

consequences and when he understands the times, he will have knowledge of eternal glory and God's wonderful mysteries. Salvation is present, already the elect has knowledge of eternal glory.<sup>102</sup>

In order to develop our understanding of the role of revealed wisdom within the eschatology of *4QInstruction*, we must consider the importance of one of the key phrases in the text:  $\text{רַזְּןִּי הַיִּי}$ . This phrase occurs very frequently in *4QInstruction*: including reconstructions, Harrington suggests it occurs about thirty times:

It is so frequent and so regular in the work that when we find either word alone and need to fill in a lacuna, we can add the missing word with some confidence.<sup>103</sup>

Both words within the phrase are anarthrous, although the usage of the phrase, as shall be seen, seems to be definite.  $\text{רַזְּןִּי}$  is a Persian loanword, meaning “mystery”; it occurs commonly in the Qumran texts but usually in the construct plural form ( $\text{רַזְּנִי}$ ). The only other work that appears to attest the form  $\text{רַזְּןִּי הַיִּי}$ , as we have it here in *4QInstruction*, is The Book of Mysteries (1Q27 and 4Q299-301).  $\text{הַיִּי}$  is generally taken to be the *nip'al* participle of the verb  $\text{הָיָה}$ , “to be” ( $\text{הָיָה}$ ); from this, Milik gave the phrase a future sense, “the mystery that is to be/come,”<sup>104</sup> a translation followed by Harrington and Strugnell,<sup>105</sup> while García Martínez/Tigchelaar, Wacholder, and Lange have preferred “the mystery of being/existence.”<sup>106</sup>

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<sup>102</sup>Ibid., 144.

<sup>103</sup>D.J. Harrington, “The *Rāz Nihyeh* in a Qumran Wisdom Text (1Q26, 4Q415-418, 423)”, *RevQ* 17/65-68 (1996) 550.

<sup>104</sup>D. Barthélemy and J.T. Milik, *Qumran Cave I, DJD I* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1955), 101-102

<sup>105</sup>In *DJD XXXIV*.

<sup>106</sup>See Florentino García Martínez and Eibert Tigchelaar, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition*, (Leiden: Brill 2000), 845-879; Ben Zion Wacholder and Martin G. Abegg, *A Preliminary Edition of the Unpublished Dead Sea Scrolls: the Hebrew and Aramaic Scrolls from Cave Four. Facsimile 2I*, (Washington D.C.: Biblical Archaeological Society, 1992), 44-53; Armin Lange, *Weisheit und Prädestination: Wesheitliche Urordnung und*

The meaning of the phrase may, however, only be properly understood when we consider the contexts in which it occurs and the phrases that occur in parallel with it. Elgvin notes first of all that:

The most frequent context of this phrase in *4QInstruction* is הגה /דרוש /קח /הבט ברז “Meditate/search/gaze into the mystery to come” (7 times) and אשר גלה (אל) אונצה “as he opened your ear (the ear of those who understand) to the mystery to come” (8 times).<sup>107</sup>

The strong emphasis here on the role of God opening the ears of the elect should not be overlooked; it is sharply reminiscent of the language of the giving of wisdom/opening of eyes in the Apocalypse of Weeks and in the Animal Apocalypse.

Reflection on the parallel expressions reveals a breadth to the concept of רז נהיה that cannot be reduced to the future sense suggested by Milik *et al.* 4Q417 2 i 5-11 links רז נהיה to the creation,<sup>108</sup> and 4Q418 123 ii 2-8 seems to link the term to the periods (קציט) of the past, present and future (“everything that is in it with what came into being and what will be”).<sup>109</sup> The future sense is not excluded, however: 4Q417 1 i 10-11 exhorts the reader to gaze into the רז נהיה and “understand the birth-time of salvation and know who is to inherit glory and iniquity,” a notion echoed by 4Q418 2 i 18. In the light of this range of temporal associations, a rendering such as Elgvin's, “the mystery that is coming into being/ the

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*Prädestination in den Textfunden von Qumran*, (STDJ 18; Leiden: Brill 1995), 52-53.

<sup>107</sup> Elgvin, “Mystery,” 131-139.

<sup>108</sup> See Elgvin, “Mystery,” p. 135. Also *idem*, “Wisdom With and Without Apocalyptic,” in Falk, Martinez and Schuller, *Sapiential Texts*, 24-25.

<sup>109</sup> Elgvin, “Mystery,” 134

unfolding mystery”<sup>110</sup> becomes attractive.<sup>111</sup>

The breadth of *רַז נִיְיֶה* lies not only in its relation to time, however. In 4Q416 2 iii 9 it is linked to proper *obedience*: “you shall know what is allotted to it and you shall walk in righteousness.” Similarly 4Q417 2 i 7: “you shall know to distinguish between good and evil.” In 4Q416 2 iii 17-18, the term becomes the basis for an exhortation to honour one's parents.<sup>112</sup>

In the light of all of this, what exactly is *רַז נִיְיֶה*? Various suggestions have been put forward. Lange sees it as the pre-existent sapiential order of creation, which he equates with the heavenly form of the Mosaic Torah, contained in the Vision of Hagi mentioned in 4Q417 2 i 18.<sup>113</sup> This notion could possibly find some support in a fragment mentioned by Harrington<sup>114</sup> (4Q418 184 ii) in which *רַז נִיְיֶה* occurs near a phrase that could be read *בִּיד מֹשֶׁה*, “by the hand of Moses.” The text is not particularly clear, however, and against Lange's reading of 4Q417 2 i 18, Elgvin points out that the antithesis between “iniquity of the sons of perdition” and “those who observe his word” suggests a similar antithesis between the “engraven law” of verse 16 and the “Book of Hagi” of verse 18 (Lange equates the two). Elgvin himself sees the Book of Hagi as key. His view is that “*raz nihyeh* is a comprehensive word for God's mysterious plan for creation and history, his plan for man and for redemption

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<sup>110</sup> Elgvin, “Judgement and Salvation,” 134

<sup>111</sup> For this temporally broad understanding of the phrase, see Goff, *Worldly and Heavenly Wisdom*, 54-55.

<sup>112</sup> Lange, *Weisheit*, 58-59, makes much of this fragment and the close links with the Mosaic Torah, a point to which we shall return below.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid., 89, “Inhalt dieses Buches ist die präexistente Ordnung von Seit und Welt, welche die Schöpfungsordnung, die Aufteilung der Wirklichkeit in Gut und Böse, Weisheit und Torheit, Wahrheit und Frevel, Geist des Fleisches und Volk des Geistes und die sich in der Thora artikulierende ethische Ordnung der Welt enthält.”

<sup>114</sup> Harrington, “Raz Nihyeh,” 552

of the elect. It is salvation history in a wider meaning. These mysteries are revealed to the elect.”<sup>115</sup> He sees these mysteries as contained in both biblical and more sectarian books<sup>116</sup> but also suggests that the heavenly Book of Hagi may be equated with the writings associated with Enoch.<sup>117</sup>

At this stage of research, it seems impossible to know exactly what **רִן נְהִיָּה** actually is. I would suggest that in discussion of the phrase we bear in mind that it may originally (prior, even, to the composition of *4QInstruction*) have had a very definite sense, perhaps relating to some part of the writings associated with Enoch, but that over time, as the phrase was transmitted, it may have acquired a much broader field of associations. Thus, it may be that as *4QInstruction* was read within the *yahad*, the phrase had come to be associated with all of the writings and teachings regarded by that community as authoritative, or with authoritative interpretations of Scripture. This is speculative, but it does seem to me to be important that we recognize that the sense of **רִן נְהִיָּה** need not have been fixed. As we study *4QInstruction*, it seems wise to restrict ourselves to observing a field of significance for the phrase, rather than a specific definition. On this level, three points may be isolated from the discussion above:

1. **רִן נְהִיָּה** is *revealed* wisdom. The most common context in which it appears is “as he (God) has opened your ears to **רִן נְהִיָּה**.”
2. This revealed wisdom is the basis for the addressee's ethical discernment: in 4Q417 2 i 7, reflection on **רִן נְהִיָּה** enables the addressee to “know to distinguish

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<sup>115</sup> Elgvin, “Mystery,” 135. I should highlight that the actual reference in *4QInstruction* is to the “vision” of Hagu/Hagi, a factor that should be taken into account when comparing the reference here to that in CD 10:6, 1QSa 1:7 et cetera.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid., 131

<sup>117</sup> Ibid., 146-147. Goff, *Worldly and Heavenly Wisdom*, 83-120, discusses this passage at length and interacts with Elgvin's conclusions.

between good and evil,” an idea emerging also in 4Q416 2 iii 9 (“you shall know what is allotted to it and you shall walk in righteousness.”)

3. Possession of this wisdom will bring eschatological blessing and may itself be an eschatological blessing: 4Q417 1 i 10-11 exhorts the reader to gaze into the רַז נְהִיָּה and “understand the birth-time of salvation and know who is to inherit glory and iniquity,” a reference that suggests that the eschaton is in its birth-time. Understood in connection with the “planting” imagery discussed already, this reference points to an inaugurated or realised element in the eschatology of *4QInstruction*.

Given what has just been discussed, it is perhaps surprising that no-one has seen eschatological connotations in the word מְבִין (Mēvîn). This word is the standard address to the reader<sup>118</sup> and is probably best rendered as “Understanding One.”<sup>119</sup> As a term in its own right it obviously carries no special eschatological connotations. But set against the scheme of thought that has been discussed, in which to be an understanding one is to be part of the chosen people of God, to be one to whom has been revealed the רַז נְהִיָּה and who will therefore experience eschatological salvation, the natural association of the term is an eschatological one. I would, therefore, cautiously suggest that the use of the term indicates that the addressee is one of the eschatological elect.

### 3: The Community as Restored Creation

The third element of the eschatology of *4QInstruction* is more debatable. It emerges from a consideration of 4Q423 1 and 2 i. The text of these fragments, according to Elgvin,

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<sup>118</sup> The readings may conveniently be compared in Tigchelaar's table in “The Addressees of *4QInstruction*,” in Falk et al., *Sapiential Liturgical and Poetical Texts*, 66.

<sup>119</sup> See the discussion against Lange's inconsistent renderings in *DJD XXXIV*, 161.

“paraphrases and interprets the Garden of Eden story of Genesis 2-3.”<sup>120</sup> The tree of knowledge appears to occupy a central place (lines 1 and 2), though without the negative associations that this element has in the Genesis narrative. The text essentially establishes a contrast between those who are faithful and those who are not (line 4 reads: “in your being unfaithful.”), a contrast that is expressed further in the *two-ways* language in line 8 (“[be]tween his way and the way of [”]). The Eden imagery is related to the addressee of *4QInstruction* by the use of the 2<sup>nd</sup> person form in line 2 (“He has set you in charge of it, to till it and guard it”). Likewise, the use of 2<sup>nd</sup> person forms in 3-6, which employ the imagery of the curse of Genesis 3, establishes a link with the addressee's own time. This second link, however, is intended to lead in to the description of the “remnant” community to which the addressee now belongs. That such a community is in mind here is indicated by the use of the term “planting” (מטע). Elgvin notes the association of this term with some kind of remnant community throughout Jewish writings,<sup>121</sup> from Isaiah 60:21 through a number of references in Qumran texts—notably 1QH<sup>a</sup> 16—Jubilees, Psalms of Solomon and *I Enoch*.

Of the passages mentioned by Elgvin concerning the “eternal planting,” the most strikingly similar to 4Q423 1,2 is that of 1QH<sup>a</sup> 16: 4-26 (Suknik col. 8), which also uses the phrase מטעת עולם (line 6) in the context of Edenic imagery. An insightful study of this text has been provided by James Davila,<sup>122</sup> who defends a qualified allegorical reading<sup>123</sup> of the hymn and isolates six features within it that may be compared to the fragments under consideration here. The features he notes are as follows:

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<sup>120</sup> *DJDXXXIV*, 508.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid*, 511. See also the studies cited above in footnote 55.

<sup>122</sup> James R. Davila, “The *Hodayot* Hymnist and the Four who Entered Paradise,” *RevQ* 65-68 (1996), 457-78. As the title suggests, the article examines common elements in this account and the story of the four who entered Paradise, a story well represented in both Rabbinic and Hekhalot literature.

<sup>123</sup> His understanding is that the hymn is allegorical but that the angels depicted are both literal and allegorical.



1. The scene is the Garden of Eden.
2. The narrator is the irrigator of the Garden and thus presumably an Adam figure.
3. The “sprout” or “eternal planting” is the human community of faith residing spiritually in the heavenly temple.<sup>124</sup>
4. Animals and birds represent the human enemies of this sectarian group.
5. The “vigorous mighty ones and blazing fire that turns from side to side” (16:11-12) are angelic beings both in the literal and allegorical sense.
6. The prince (šr) of 16:12 is also an angelic being, this time an interloper potentially hostile to the eternal planting.<sup>125</sup>

The last point is based on Davila’s reconstruction of line 12, which is obscured by a lacuna: by comparison with 1Q35, he proposes the reading, “No prince [come]s to the fountain of life.” Puech rejects this reconstruction<sup>126</sup> preferring to read 𐤍𐤏 (“stranger”) instead of 𐤍𐤏 (“prince”).<sup>127</sup> Either reconstruction will support the points made below.

Davila’s analysis of the Hodayot text, when brought alongside 4Q423 1,2 as part of a comparative study, flags some interesting issues in the latter text, some of which would be easily missed without such a comparison. First, it is quite clear that Edenic imagery is primary within both scenes. The point needs little defence: in addition to the general setting of 4Q423 1,2 in a garden,<sup>128</sup> vocabulary has been lifted directly from Genesis, notably in line 1 (cf. Gen. 2:9), line 2 (cf. Gen. 2:15) and line 3, where curse language from Genesis 3:18 is cited

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<sup>124</sup> The justification for such a point lies particularly in the use of the term in 1QS 8:4b-10 and 11:5b-9a as well as 4Q418 81 4,11 and 13. In addition, Davila notes the strong connections between the use of the term in both the *Apocalypse of Weeks* (1 Enoch 93:3-10; 91:11-17) and CD-A 1:1-8 and a critique of the Second Temple.

<sup>125</sup> Each of these points are expanded by Davila, *ibid.*, 464-71.

<sup>126</sup> Davila (“The *Hodayot* Hymnist,” 463) mentions a correspondence with Puech over this matter, in which the latter scholar rejected the reconstruction as “palaeographically impossible.”

<sup>127</sup> See “Quelques Aspects de la Restoration du Rouleau des Hymnes (1QH),” *JJS* 39 (1988), 39.

<sup>128</sup> See Elgvin’s reconstruction of line 2. *DJD XXXIV*, 508-9.

verbatim: קוץ ודרדר תצמיח. It is interesting that 1QH<sup>a</sup> 16:11-12 also employs language associated with the curse (this time from Genesis 3:24): both texts, therefore, play upon the idea of exclusion from the Garden's blessings, although in 4Q423 1,2 such exclusion is depicted as a consequence of the unfaithfulness of the addressee, whereas in 1QH<sup>a</sup> 16:11-12 it is part of the blanket protection of the Garden from any outsider.

Second, in 4Q423 1,2 the addressee plays a comparable role to the Hodayot hymnist as an Adam figure. The two are not identical: the latter is, as Davila notes, an irrigator, while the former is a farmer (line 2: "to till it and guard it"). Nevertheless, both are presented as Adam figures with responsibility for maintaining the Garden. It is interesting to examine further the irrigation imagery, however. Such imagery is absent from 4Q423 1,2 but does occur in 4Q418 81 (+81a), a fragment that overlaps with 4Q423 8. In line 1 of this fragment, the image of opening a fountain is employed in the context of the addressee's blessing the angels. The verb פתח may be either an imperative or a 3<sup>rd</sup> person indicative, the editors favouring the latter. If the verb is an imperative, then there may be some sense in which the addressee is responsible for some kind of metaphorical irrigation; if it is an indicative, then the point of note is that the addressee is the recipient of divine irrigation and that this facilitates his fulfilment of the later imperatives to bless the angels and praise God's name.

Third, heavenly-temple imagery may be crucial to both texts. It is this point that the comparison begins to flag up some easily overlooked aspects of 4Q423 1,2, for there is no obvious reference to such imagery within it, nor are there any references to angels. Nevertheless, the language of the "planting" here must be set alongside its occurrence in 4Q418 81, where it occurs in line 13, in the context of magnifying God's glory. The previous line includes a reference to "all the Holy Ones," probably designating angels.<sup>129</sup> Earlier in this

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<sup>129</sup> See *DJD XXXIV*, 308.

fragment, there has been a reference to the addressee (possibly as a representative of the believing community) as being appointed “as a Holy of Holies<sup>130</sup> [over all the] earth,” followed by the statement that his lot has been cast “among all the [Go]dly [Ones]” (וּבְכוֹל [אֱלֹהִים]).<sup>131</sup> The contextual implication would seem to be that the phrase “eternal planting” depicts the community as participating in the angelic reality of the heavenly temple.<sup>132</sup> It may be that Elgvin’s statement concerning 4Q423 as a whole—that “these fragments probably derive from a lengthy section of *4QInstruction* which dealt with the life of the farmer,”<sup>133</sup>—should be revisited: perhaps much of the agricultural imagery employed in these fragments represents a play on the Eden/heavenly temple/community complex seen here.

Fourth, as suggested above, the texts diverge over where the threat to the Garden lies: in 1QH<sup>a</sup> 16, the threat comes from outsiders, the animals and birds that represent the human enemies of the community and the possibly angelic/demonic enemy mentioned in line 16. In 4Q423 1,2 the risk is from the addressee himself, whose unfaithfulness causes the earth to bring forth thorns and thistles (line 3).

Two further points arise from this last one. First, the divergence between the two texts suggests that the term “eternal planting” does not have quite the same sectarian edge in 4Q423 as it does in 1QH<sup>a</sup>. The background of the term requires that it denotes a righteous group distinct from the rest of Israel, but the usage here would suggest that a full-blown sectarianism, in which outsiders are villainised simply for being outsiders, is not indicated.

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<sup>130</sup> לקדוש קודשים

<sup>131</sup> The editors (*DJD XXXIV*, 305) discuss the problems in understanding the phrase, but are fairly confident of their reconstruction.

<sup>132</sup> Loren T. Stuckenbruck makes some interesting observations on possible links between Eden imagery and ideas of angelic fellowship. See “*4QInstruction* and the Possible Influence of Early Enochic Traditions: An Evaluation,” in Hempel et al, *The Wisdom Texts from Qumran*, 245-61.

<sup>133</sup> *DJDXXXIV*, 505.

sectarian document. Second, the divergence between the two texts draws attention to the fact that, in 4Q423, fidelity to God is key to belonging within the eternal planting. This point will be taken up in **Chapter 3**, as the creation discourse of 4Q416 1 is studied. At this point it is sufficient to note that the primary stress of the image in 4Q423 1,2 falls on the fidelity of the addressee.

The question that must be raised at this point regards whether this imagery is intended to be understood as a metaphor for the obedience of the remnant community, or as denoting that community's self-perception of its own actual status or nature. To phrase this differently: does the community believe itself to be *like* the original unspoiled Eden in its obedience, or does it perceive itself to be a *new* Eden? Ultimately, a decision on this question requires the additional background provided by the creation discourse at the beginning of the work and the by the admonitory material. I shall, therefore, return to this question in the next chapter.

## **Conclusion: Eschatology in 4QInstruction**

Like the texts that make up *1 Enoch*, *4QInstruction* presents an eschatology that is neither entirely futurist nor entirely realised but rather inaugurated. Moreover, like *1 Enoch*, that inauguration seems to be located around the notion of revealed wisdom, possession of which is characteristic of those belonging to the eschatological community. There are, of course, obvious differences in the nature of that revealed wisdom: in *1 Enoch*, it is based on a specific seer's heavenly journey, while in *4QInstruction* it is independent of such a visionary experience; in *1 Enoch* the narrative demands that the revealing of this wisdom be a future event, while in *4QInstruction* such revelation is clearly assumed to have already taken

place.<sup>134</sup> Nevertheless, the texts share an emphasis that wisdom will be revealed to the elect in the last days and that by possession of it, they will be differentiated from those outside their ideological communities.

Also shared is an emphasis on the restoration of creation, but while in *1 Enoch* this idea seems a simple corollary or consequence to the purging of evil that will take place at the judgement, in *4QInstruction* it has (if it is more than just a metaphor) begun to function as a realised aspect of eschatology. Further proof is required to demonstrate this; such proof will be provided in the next chapter and will further nuance our understanding of how this element of the eschatology of *4QInstruction* relates to its emphasis on revealed wisdom.

## **Inaugurated Eschatology, Revealed Wisdom and Mosaic Torah**

The stress on revealed wisdom raises the important question of how these texts relate to the Mosaic Torah and to the body of “mainstream” Judaism, if we can speak of such a thing. Do they regard Torah as corrupt and misleading, or simply as inadequate and in need of supplementation? Or do they, in fact, reinforce the importance of Torah? The answers to these questions are important in assessing how the groups that wrote or transmitted these documents may have perceived themselves with regard to other Jews.

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<sup>134</sup> See Goff, *Worldly and Heavenly Wisdom*, 52-3.

## 1 *Enoch* and the Mosaic Torah

The question of the relationship between *1 Enoch* and the Mosaic Torah is a matter of some debate. On one side of this debate, Hartman<sup>135</sup> and Sanders<sup>136</sup> have seen a positive connection between the two; on the other side, Sacchi<sup>137</sup> and, rather more cautiously, Nickelsburg<sup>138</sup> have seen the relationship as being more negative.<sup>139</sup> Boccaccini's recent work<sup>140</sup> has attempted a more thorough study of this, noting the developments of the relationship that are seen in the developing Enochic corpus.

It is certainly the case that there is little direct mention made of the Mosaic Torah; only 93:6 and possibly 99:2 make any explicit reference to that covenant.<sup>141</sup> The Animal Apocalypse devotes a significant portion of its narrative to the Sinai theophany (89:29-35), but makes no explicit mention of the giving of the Torah, a significant silence in the eyes of Nickelsburg.<sup>142</sup> However, while these are the only direct references, the work as a whole, and notably the Introduction (1-5) can be seen to display frequent allusions to the Torah. Hartman<sup>143</sup> traces many of these, although his case is weakened somewhat by his overuse of

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<sup>135</sup> Hartman, *Asking for a Meaning*.

<sup>136</sup> E.P. Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, (Philadelphia : Fortress Press, 1977).

<sup>137</sup> Paolo Sacchi, *Jewish Apocalyptic and its History*, (trans. W.J. Short, JSPSup20, Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press 1997).

<sup>138</sup> See especially Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch 1*, 50. See also idem, "Enochic Wisdom: An Alternative to Mosaic Torah?" in *Hesed Ve-Emet: Studies in Honor of Ernest S. Frerichs*, Edited by Jodi Magness and Seymour Gittin (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1998), 123-132.

<sup>139</sup> The notion of the Enochic corpus forming an alternative Pentateuch, developed by G.H. Dix, "The Enochic Pentateuch," *JTS* 27 (1925-1926) 29-42, and then by Milik, *Books of Enoch*, 58, 77-78, 183-184, has been refuted by Jonas C. Greenfield and Michael E. Stone, "The Enochic Pentateuch and the Date of the Similitudes," *HTR* 70 (1977) 51-65.

<sup>140</sup> Gabriele Boccaccini, *Beyond the Essene Hypothesis*.

<sup>141</sup> Boccaccini sees 93:6 as evidence of a shift in attitude towards the Torah in later Enochic circles. See *ibid.*, 107.

<sup>142</sup> See, *1 Enoch 1*, 379-80.

<sup>143</sup> Lars Hartman, *Asking for a Meaning: A Study of 1 Enoch 1-5* (Coniectanea Biblica: New Testament Series

rabbinic sources to demonstrate parallels. In particular, the location of the theophany, described in the opening chapter as taking place on Sinai, may be seen to be of significance; Bauckham suggests that these chapters “evoke God’s covenant with Israel as their ‘referential background.’”<sup>144</sup> In addition, there is the crucial fact that the Enochic corpus nowhere contains a body of laws comparable to that of the Torah, despite assuming high ethical standards, echoed in the terminology of “righteousness.” Connected to this, there is an emphasis throughout the corpus that one of the characteristics of the wicked is “straying”,<sup>145</sup> which would seem to assume something to be strayed from. Indeed, this is the very point of the cosmological observations in 2:1-5:3: they contrast the faithfulness of the heavenly bodies with the straying of the wicked.

Still, the fact remains that it is Enoch, not Moses, who receives the revelation that is crucial to salvation and, at the very least, there is an indication in the texts of an insufficiency or inadequacy in Torah. Torah is no longer sufficient for salvation; one must also be in possession of the revealed wisdom contained in Enoch's books.

What precisely constitutes such inadequacy? The Animal Apocalypse suggests that the inability to sustain faithfulness may be a starting point, since the post-Sinai history of Israel is one of constant fluctuation between faithfulness and apostasy (cf. 89:41; “Sometimes their eyes were opened, and sometimes they were blinded”). The eschatological insights throughout the Enochic writings may serve a role in this regard, motivating right behaviour on the basis of future consequences. But also important are a proper understanding of the origin of sin (arising as a consequence of the descent of the Watchers), and revealed cosmological

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12. Lund: Gleerup, 1979).

<sup>144</sup>R.J. Bauckham, “Apocalypses,” in D.A Carson *et al*, *Justification and Variegated Nomism: Volume 1. The Complexities of Second Temple Judaism*, (WUNT 2: 140; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001), 142.

<sup>145</sup> See 93:9, 98:15-99:2; 100:9. See also Nickelsburg's excursus on “Those Who Lead Many Astray” in *1 Enoch* 1, 486-488.

details which are of halakhic importance (in determining feasts, et cetera). Thus, even if *I Enoch* does not regard Torah negatively, it still implies that the latter must be interpreted in the light of Enoch's visions. Small wonder then that it is the reception of Enochic wisdom, and not Torah, that lies at the root of ethics in the Epistle of Enoch (cf. 103:2).

It is important to notice, in this connection, the changes that 1:8 makes to the Aaronic blessing: it is no longer the children of Israel that are blessed but, "the chosen and righteous." This redefinition we have already noted as taking place also in 93:10, which redefines the "eternal planting of righteousness" mentioned in 93:5 to indicate not Israel *per se*, but the chosen remnant. Thus, the inaugurated eschatology of *I Enoch*, which includes the formation of a group designated "the chosen," functions to delineate that group from the rest of Judaism. The crucial marker of that group is their possession of, and allegiance to, the revealed wisdom that has come through Enoch.

#### ***4QInstruction* and Mosaic Torah**

A similar picture appears in *4QInstruction*. There is a lack of reference to the Torah in this document, too,<sup>146</sup> though such an omission hardly sets it apart from more traditional or canonical Jewish wisdom works such as Proverbs and Qoheleth.<sup>147</sup> It is certainly true that *4QInstruction* draws upon Pentateuchal traditions,<sup>148</sup> but there are differing opinions as to whether or not this reflects a positive or negative attitude towards the latter.<sup>149</sup> It is a clear

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<sup>146</sup> See *DJD XXXIV*, 27.

<sup>147</sup> Sirach, of course, does mention Torah and equates this with wisdom at a number of points, the most celebrated of which is Sirach 24, especially verse 23.

<sup>148</sup> See Goff, *Worldly and Heavenly Wisdom*, 71.

<sup>149</sup> There is an allusion to Leviticus 26:20 in 4Q423 3 1-2, which occurs in the context of a reference to נְהִיָּה. Leviticus 26:3 includes an exhortation to walk according to God's laws; Elgvin, "Wisdom and Apocalypticism,"



feature of the work, however, that it is possession of, and allegiance to, **לן נהייה** that secures eschatological blessing. Furthermore, only by reflection on **לן נהייה** can one know properly how to conduct one's daily life. Even if Torah is not rejected, therefore, and seen as corrupt, it still requires to be interpreted in the light of **לן נהייה**, which is now clearly the real authority.

Thus, both *present* faithfulness to God and *future* destiny depend on belonging to the group that has been set apart from the “spirit of flesh” and to whom God has revealed the **לן נהייה**. Once again, then, inaugurated eschatology seems to be taking on an important function in demarcating the group from the rest of Judaism, even though the text is not a sectarian text as such.<sup>150</sup>

## Chapter Conclusions

The examination of *1 Enoch* and *4QInstruction* has demonstrated that each text is characterised by an inaugurated eschatology, within which the revealing of wisdom plays a crucial role. It should be clear from the discussion above that this idea has two dimensions. There is, first of all, a body of truth that is revealed to the remnant. In the case of *1 Enoch*, this is the content of Enoch's heavenly visions and his paraenesis; in the case of

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237, sees *4QInstruction* as replacing this with consideration of **לן נהייה**. See, however, Goff's comments, *Worldly and Heavenly Wisdom*, 72. Armin Lange's argument equating **לן נהייה** with Torah has been discussed above and is not to be followed, but it does draw attention to the close ethical association of the document with the standards found in the Torah.

<sup>150</sup> For the question of how this might relate to the major sectarian texts from Qumran, see my article, “Creation, Eschatology and Ethics in *4QInstruction*,” in *Defining Identities: Proceedings of the Vth Meeting of the International Organisation for Qumran Studies* (Edited by F. Garcia Martinez. Leiden: Brill, 2005, forthcoming). Also Charlotte Hempel, “The Qumran Sapiential Texts and the Rule Books,” in *The Wisdom Texts from Qumran and the Development of Sapiential Thought*, (ed. C. Hempel, et al BETL 159; Leuven: Peters Press, 2002), 277-95.

*4QInstruction*, it is the truth denoted by the term נִדְרֵי נִדְרֵי, a fact that testifies to the possibility of such an “apocalyptic” idea of wisdom existing apart from a specific body of heavenly visions. Second, there is an emphasis that the remnant must be divinely enabled to understand this body of truth.

The fact that such revelation is part of an eschatological scenario, rather than simply relating eschatological truths is a crucial feature: the idea of revelation that characterises *I Enoch* and *4QInstruction* is to be distinguished from more general prophetic ideas by the fact that it is specifically an eschatological revelation, that is, it takes place in eschatological time, and is made to a remnant group, who are deliberately delineated from their parent group.

The idea of restored creation is important to both texts, but in different ways. In *I Enoch*, the restoration of creation following the destruction of evil runs through the various stages of the tradition. In *4QInstruction* there exists, alongside this idea, the possibility (which will be explored further in **chapter 3**) that the remnant community already represents a restored creation, as they are enabled by their possession of revealed wisdom to regain a state of fidelity to their Creator’s will.

## **Excursus 2: The relevance of these findings to the work of Kloppenborg and Crossan**

As discussed in **Excursus 1**, Kloppenborg and Crossan both see a clear redactional stratification within the gospel sources. Of the two, Kloppenborg is the more cautious, taking care to distinguish his arguments for redaction from the notion that later layers are entirely the

innovation of later redactors.<sup>151</sup> Crossan has fewer reservations about reconstructing layers of tradition.<sup>152</sup> Regardless of their differences, however, both distinguish the different strata not simply on the basis of form, but on the basis of eschatology. The earliest, sapiential stratum is marked in their view by a realised eschatology from which ethical exhortations arise, while the later, apocalyptic stratum is marked by a futurist eschatology and is more concerned with divine retribution than with ethical behaviour.<sup>153</sup>

While the subtleties of this argument require to be dealt with by scholars devoted to the area of Historical Jesus and source critical research, we may note generally that the examination of *1 Enoch* and *4QInstruction* above would suggest that one should be cautious about introducing such a sharp distinction between realised and futurist eschatologies when dealing with Jewish texts of the Second Temple period. These texts have suggested that it was at least *possible* for Jewish writings from the Second Temple period to express an eschatology that is inaugurated and which therefore includes both future and realised elements. Indeed, we should note the fact that both categories—wisdom and apocalypse—are represented by these two texts. Thus, an inaugurated eschatology could form a substantial part of the worldview of an apocalypse; it could also form a substantial part of the worldview of a sapiential text. This would not preclude the possibility that in a paraenetic context, the realised aspect could be emphasised over the futurist one.

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<sup>151</sup> Kloppenborg, *Formation of Q*, 244-245.

<sup>152</sup> Crossan, *Birth of Christianity*, 250.

<sup>153</sup> See the discussion in **Excursus 1**.

## **Chapter 3**

### **Form, Ethics and Eschatology in *1 Enoch* and *4QInstruction***

The previous chapter demonstrated that *1 Enoch* and *4QInstruction* are characterised by an eschatology that is best described as *inaugurated*, and within which the revealing of wisdom plays a crucial eschatological role. This chapter now turns to examine the paraenetic material in *1 Enoch* and *4QInstruction*, with a view to establishing the effect such an eschatology has had on the ethical teaching of these texts and on the forms used to teach such ethics. Different from the previous chapter, in which the evidence of the two texts dovetailed, here we shall find that the two texts contribute in rather different ways to our understanding. The core thesis of this chapter is that the centrality of the concept of “wisdom” within the eschatological scenario, albeit a redefined concept of wisdom that cannot be gleaned by reflection and instead must be revealed, facilitates the uptake of traditional forms from the sapiential tradition. In their new eschatological context, these forms may be altered to a greater or lesser extent and may be juxtaposed or even fused with forms drawn from the prophetic tradition. This apparent fusing of traditions is, in fact, the predictable outcome of the replacement of the traditional notion of wisdom, inherent in creation and accessible to all who will reflect upon it,<sup>1</sup> by the idea of wisdom that must be revealed, which is more characteristic of apocalyptic writings.

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<sup>1</sup>As Witherington comments, *Jesus the Sage*, 10: “The sages dealt with and drew deductions from the repeatable patterns and moral patterns of ordinary life, both of human life and the life of the larger natural world.”

# 1 Enoch

Nickelsburg's suggestion that the Aramaic fragments of *1 Enoch* attest a testamentary form that was the forerunner of the later Ethiopic Pentateuch has already been noted.<sup>2</sup> Such a form draws attention to the presence of paraenetic material: within a narrative that presents itself as a testament, one would expect to find such material, an expectation that is surely even greater in a text that has placed such great emphasis on its central figure as a recipient of revealed wisdom. This feature draws attention, in particular, to the unit of material now referred to as The Epistle of Enoch. Nickelsburg is correct to draw attention to the *two-ways* instruction in 91:1-9 (itself closely linked with the material in chapters 81-82 which probably originally formed a bridge between chapters 1-36 and 91-105)<sup>3</sup> in which Methuselah summons his brothers and Enoch exhorts them:

Hear, O sons of Enoch, every word of your father,

and listen aright to the voice of my mouth;

for I testify to you and speak to you, my beloved:

Love the truth and walk in it<sup>4</sup>

The language here, and later in verses 18-19 where the sons are to walk “in the paths of righteousness” and avoid “the paths of violence,” is strongly reminiscent of Proverbs 1-8; the reader feels himself to be encountering sapiential material, specifically *instruction*.<sup>5</sup> What is

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<sup>2</sup>See **chapter 2**. For general discussion of the genre *testament* see Collins, *The Apocalyptic Imagination*, 127-8

<sup>3</sup>See Nickelsburg's discussion, *1 Enoch 1*, 335-337.

<sup>4</sup>*1 Enoch* 91:3, translation Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch 1*, 26. See his discussion of this verse on the same page.

<sup>5</sup>This same imagery is used in 92:1 which formally begins the *Epistle of Enoch*. Here Enoch “writes” his “complete sign of wisdom” for his sons and all “who will observe truth and peace.” The address to the sons gives the piece an *instructional* tone.

distinct, however, is that in *1 Enoch*, the wisdom that is to be sought is that of Enoch himself. This emerges from the stress in verse 18 that it is Enoch himself who reveals to his sons the paths of righteousness and violence, a verse that in turn recalls 82:1-4, in which Enoch's revelations are written down and transmitted to Methuselah. This, of course, arises from the eschatology discussed in chapter 2, in which the revealing of wisdom inaugurates the *eschaton*.

Thus, we are dealing here with a different concept of wisdom to that found in Proverbs 1-8. There, wisdom is immanent in creation and may be discerned by reflection; here, wisdom must be revealed. Nevertheless, despite the conceptual difference, both are called "wisdom," and it is noteworthy that *1 Enoch* draws upon traditional wisdom forms, such as the two-ways instruction just mentioned,<sup>6</sup> to present its ethical teaching. What is striking, though, about the forms appropriated is that they are recombined with prophetic elements, as we shall see in the study below.

Most of what follows is based upon the Epistle of Enoch, in which the paraenetic aspect is seen most clearly.<sup>7</sup> I shall begin, however, with a section from the Book of the Watchers.

## Creation Discourses in *1 Enoch*

Creation discourses are a common feature of wisdom material, particularly if we agree

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<sup>6</sup>Another such instruction is found in 94:1-5.

<sup>7</sup>It is possible to examine the narrative of the Book of the Watchers as a critique of the Jerusalem priesthood, intended to have an ethical impact on its readers: see Nickelsburg, "Enoch, Levi and Peter: Recipients of Revelation in Upper Galilee," *JBL* 100 (1981), 575-600; D.W. Suter, "Fallen Angel, Fallen Priest: The Problem of Family Purity in *1 Enoch*," *HUCA* 50 (1979), 115-135. I shall, however, confine myself to those sections that appear to be drawing on traditional wisdom forms.

that certain Psalms are to be classified as “wisdom” psalms.<sup>8</sup> In the material we are considering from *1 Enoch* (bearing in mind that we are not considering the Book of the Luminaries, chs. 72-82), there are two such discourses: *1 Enoch* 2:1-5:4 and 101:1-9. Both occur in the context of judgement.

## **1 Enoch 2:1-5:4**

When seen in its wider context of chapters 1 and 5, this section has been classified by Rau<sup>9</sup> and Argall<sup>10</sup> as a *salvation-judgement oracle*, a late prophetic form. Nevertheless, it contains elements that Nickelsburg identifies as “most closely paralleled in the wisdom literature,”<sup>11</sup> and that Argall specifies as being derived from the *creation hymn*.<sup>12</sup> The admonitory nature of the piece, as it constantly calls its audience to consider creation, reinforces the sapiential impression, but it becomes clear in 5:4 that the intended audience is not that of the faithful remnant but of the faithless who “have changed” their “works.”<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>8</sup>See Pss 8; 19:1-6; 33; 104; 136; 139. For this classification as Wisdom Psalms, see R.H. Whybray, “The Wisdom Psalms,” in *Wisdom in Ancient Israel*, (ed. J. Day, R.P. Gordon and H.G.M. Williamson; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 152-160. See also E. Gerstenberger, “Psalms” in *Old Testament Form Criticism* (ed. J.H. Hayes; San Antonio: Trinity University, 1974), 212-214. Also note Job 38-41; Proverbs 8:22-31; Sirach 16:24-17:14; 39:12-35; 42:15-43:33; Wisdom 7:15-8:1.

<sup>9</sup>Rau, *Kosmologie*, 106-24, especially 115 and 121. Cited by Argall, who builds upon his conclusions. See below.

<sup>10</sup>Argall, *1 Enoch and Sirach*, 101.

<sup>11</sup>Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch* 1, 152.

<sup>12</sup>See Argall, *1 Enoch and Sirach*, 101. For descriptions of the form of creation hymns, see Gerstenberger, “Psalms,” 209. Argall's point is based on the appropriation of literary devices such as participial style, rhetorical questions, and lists rather than on the occurrence of tripartite creation hymns.

<sup>13</sup>Aramaic is וְאַתָּה שִׁנִּיתָ עֲבֹדָתְךָ, “But you, you have changed your works.”

Each line from 2:1-5:3 begins with a verb exhorting the audience to “observe”<sup>14</sup> or “contemplate” aspects of creation. The list of these aspects is comprehensive: from heavenly bodies (2:1) through earthly works (2:2)<sup>15</sup> to signs of summer and winter (3:1-5:1). The reference to the faithfulness of the heavenly bodies with respect to the time of feasts (2:1) hints that a certain calendrical practice may be in the background as an ethical issue. However, it is the play on the Aramaic verb ܠܫܢܐ, *to change*, that is most important. The verb occurs in line 2, where nothing on earth changes, a thought set in direct parallelism to line 1, where the luminaries do not “alter” (or “transgress”: the root verb is ܥܒܪ) their paths. The verb is then taken up again in 5:2<sup>16</sup> where it leads into the direct contrast of 5:4.<sup>17</sup>

But you, you have changed (ܠܫܢܐܝܬ) your works [and do not do his word; but you trans]gress  
(ܥܒܪܝܬ) against him with great and hard (words).

The elements of creation are therefore being cited as condemnatory of the sinners, as a background to the prophetic judgement oracle that will be taken up in 5:5-9. The wisdom elements have, therefore, been enlisted by the prophetic, to which they remain subordinate.

The discussion of the signs of summer and winter in chapters 3 and 4, however, hints at a more nuanced use of eschatology, not simply anticipation of a coming judgement. The verses seem almost paradoxical: they describe the abundant provision of water in the winter

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<sup>14</sup>For Aramaic and Greek verbs, see the table of verbs in Argall, *1 Enoch and Sirach*, 103. For a discussion of the Ethiopic verbs, including the problem of variants, see Knibb, *The Ethiopic Book of Enoch*, 1:60-61. The forms are plural throughout.

<sup>15</sup>The call to observe heavenly works and earthly works in lines 1 and 2 may be intended as a merism depicting the totality of creation.

<sup>16</sup>Assuming Milik is correct in his reconstruction of the lacuna in 4QEn<sup>a</sup> 1 ii from the Greek text C (Milik, *The Book of Enoch*, 149).

<sup>17</sup>In the Ethiopic text, another verse separates these two lines. However, its thought is substantially similar as it speaks of the sea and rivers not changing their courses.



months and the corresponding withering of the trees followed by the drought conditions of summer with the corresponding blossoming of the trees. Argall<sup>18</sup> has noted that there is a strong link between the vocabulary of 4:1-5:1 and 5:9: both use the vocabulary of *burning* (the latter “in the heat of wrath” ἐν ὀργῇ θυμοῦ)<sup>19</sup> and both follow this with botanical growth imagery; in the case of 5:9, the righteous will grow (αὔξω) and increase (πληθυνῶ). Argall's suggestion is that the text implies that one must escape the wrath poured out (like the heat of summer) in the judgement by seeking refuge in the Enochic community (as one would seek the shade of trees) who at that time will flourish and bear fruit. He more cautiously suggests that the signs of winter indicate spiritual barrenness (the withered trees) in a time of seeming prosperity (the dew and rain). Argall's suggestion is perhaps reinforced by the stump imagery of Isaiah 6:13 and 11:1: the remnant community is depicted as the life that will sprout from the dead-looking stump in the midst of desolation. If the analysis is correct, then the paradoxical language of 3:1-5:1 reflects the inaugurated eschatology of a remnant community that has been discussed already. We may also note, with Argall, that the function of such imagery is to enjoin the audience to join with and take refuge in the Enochic community. To this we may add a second function: that this section serves a paraenetic function to the righteous to hold fast in their obedience and not to change their ways.

## **1 Enoch 101:1-9**

This section is reminiscent of that found in 2:1-5:4. The same verbs are used here in

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<sup>18</sup>Argall, *1 Enoch and Sirach*, 106-107.

<sup>19</sup>For the translation “heat of wrath,” see Nickelsburg's discussion of the phrase (*1 Enoch* 1, 163) where he notes the LXX rendering of עֵשֶׂת הַחֵם in Isaiah 42:25 by this phrase.

enjoining the audience to “contemplate”<sup>20</sup> and “look.” Again, the focus is on “the works of the Most High” (101:1), although here greater space is taken up by a discussion of the sea and rivers (mentioned only in passing in the Ethiopic and Greek of 5:3). Again, too, the context is one of judgement, with this section set in juxtaposition to 100:10-13 where the elements of creation are cited as part of a covenant lawsuit or *rib* (רִיב).<sup>21</sup>

Given the overlap with 2:1-5:4, we shall confine ourselves to noting two aspects of this passage. First, the sapiential associations of the piece are brought to the fore by the language of “fear” that forms an *inclusio* to the work. Line 1 contains the command “Fear to do evil” and line 9 the statement that “sinners do not fear the Most High.” This notion of fearing God and fearing to do evil is a characteristic feature of traditional wisdom.<sup>22</sup> Here, it serves to reinforce the idea that this is a piece of sapiential exhortation.

Second, the addressees of the opening admonition are not the sons of Enoch, but the “sons of men.” A universal appeal is being made to human beings to change their ways before they face judgement. There is an important connection to be made between these verses and 105:1-2 where the wisdom that has been transmitted by Enoch to his sons and then to the remnant community is then transmitted to the “sons of the earth,” who join Enoch in the paths of truth.<sup>23</sup> In the introduction to his commentary, Nickelsburg<sup>24</sup> highlights the essentially

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<sup>20</sup>Note Rau's observation (*Kosmologie*, 87) that this is the only other place in the Enochic corpus where the Greek verb *κατανοήσατε* is used.

<sup>21</sup>See the discussion in Argall, *1 Enoch and Sirach*, 109, 182-183.

<sup>22</sup>See Roland E. Murphy, “Religious Dimensions of Israelite Wisdom,” in *Ancient Israelite Wisdom: Essays in Honour of Frank Moore Cross* (ed. Patrick Miller, Paul D. Hanson and S. Dean McBride; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1987), pages 452-453; and Henri Blocher “The Fear of the Lord as the Principle of Wisdom,” *TynBul* 28 (1977), 3-28.

<sup>23</sup>These lines are omitted in some Greek manuscripts, but 4QEn<sup>c</sup> 5i contains fragmentary evidence that they were part of the Aramaic. See Milik, *The Book of Enoch*, 207 and Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch* 1, 531.

<sup>24</sup>*1 Enoch* 1, 26-28.

“evangelistic” thrust of these verses: wisdom is given to Enoch and then transmitted to his sons, then to the remnant community of the end time and by them to the sons of the earth. Thus the community sees itself as the mediator of blessing to the world.

## Woe Oracles and Exhortations in 1 Enoch

There are seven series of *woe-oracles* of varying length in the Epistle of Enoch.<sup>25</sup> Despite Coughenour's assertion that the *woe-oracle* is an essentially sapiential form,<sup>26</sup> the form has the strongest associations with the classical prophets,<sup>27</sup> of whom Habakkuk is the most similar in employing a string of woes.<sup>28</sup> Nevertheless, the occurrence of such strings of woes in the Epistle, which, as we have seen, presents itself as an instruction, and the clear antithetical parallelism between the woes and the exhortations that are juxtaposed with them,<sup>29</sup> mean that these series take on the character of sapiential material. Again, therefore, we see the merging of prophetic and sapiential elements in the Epistle of Enoch.

The structure of the woe-oracle is fairly clear. Drawing on the work of March,<sup>30</sup> Argall describes the structure as follows:

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<sup>25</sup> 94:6-10; 95:4-7; 96:4-8; 97:7-10; 98:9-99:2; 99:11-16; 100:7-9 .

<sup>26</sup> Robert A. Coughenour, “The Woe-oracles in Ethiopic Enoch,” *JSJ* 9 (1978), 192-197. Coughenour's case is built on the work of E. Gerstenberger, “The Woe-oracles of the Prophets,” *JBL* 81 (1962) 249-263.

<sup>27</sup> See, for example, Isaiah 5:8,11,18, 20-22; 10:1; 17:12; 18:1; 28:1; 29:1,15; 30:1; 33:1; 45:9-10; Jer 22:13; 23:1; 48:1; 50:27; Ez. 13:3,18; 34:2; Amos 5:18; 6:1; Mic. 2:1; Nah. 3:1 Hab. 2:6,9,12,15,19, Zeph 2:5; 3:1; Zech 11:17.

<sup>28</sup> This point is of interest given that the sins condemned in Habakkuk's woes are similar to those condemned in Enoch; the abuse of the poor by the rich.

<sup>29</sup> See for example 95:4 (addressed to sinners), “healing will be far from you,” and 96:3 (to the righteous) “Fear not, you who have suffered; for you will receive healing.”

<sup>30</sup> W.E. March, “Prophecy,” pages 164-165 in Hayes, ed., *Old Testament Form Criticism*, 1974.

In its basic form, the interjection **וַיִּי** is followed by a participle adjective or noun that describes those being addressed. The offence of the addressees is then specified, often by means of another participial clause and a sentence with a finite verb. A threat usually concludes the oracle.<sup>31</sup>

Argall also draws on the work of Janzen<sup>32</sup> who has noted, regarding the judgement spoken of in the threat clause, that it often approximates the *Talionsstil*, in which the penalty of justice is described as corresponding to the crime. Thus, for instance, in 94:6, those “who build iniquity and violence and lay deceit as a foundation” will “be overthrown,”<sup>33</sup> and in 94:7-8, those who have “acquired gold and silver” and who have “trusted” in their “riches” will “depart.”<sup>34</sup> The use of the Ethiopic adverb *fetuna* (“quickly”) in these two lines heightens the expectation of the judgement.

This talionic principle is reflected in the exhortations that are juxtaposed with the woes. The sinners will be delivered into the hand of the righteous, who will be responsible for their judgement (95:3) and have authority over them (96:1). These are the same righteous ones who have been persecuted by the sinners (95:7) and have presumably, therefore, been under the authority conferred on them by their wealth. There is, then, a reversal of situations being promised by the juxtaposing of woes and oracles.

Such an expectation of reversal emerges dramatically in the exhortation to the righteous in 99:3 to petition the angels regarding their oppression by the unrighteous:

that they may bring in the sins of the unrighteous before the Most High as a reminder.

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<sup>31</sup>Argall, *1 Enoch and Sirach*, 196.

<sup>32</sup>Waldemar Janzen, *Mourning Cry and Woe Oracle*, (Berlin, New York: de Gruyter, 1972), 81-82. It is important to stress that the clauses only *approximate* the *Talionsstil*; it is perhaps best to understand the punishment as being “appropriate” to the crime committed.

<sup>33</sup>Ethiopic is *yetnaššatu*. It also occurs in the following verse as part of a similar antithesis.

<sup>34</sup>Ethiopic is *tewadde'u*.

This language of a “reminder” is also found in 94:4, 96:7 and 97:7, in each place conveying the idea that the sins of the wicked will not be overlooked. It is important, however, to note the connection of the idea in 99:3 to the story in the Book of the Watchers of the cries of humanity rising up to Heaven after the descent of the Watchers.<sup>35</sup> This connection does more than simply establish a connection with the underlying narrative of the Enochic material; it provides a narrative basis for the hope the righteous should have.

While Argall has seen a greater emphasis on religious sins in the last three series of woes,<sup>36</sup> and on social sins in the first four, the fact is that each of the seven strings of woes condemns both social evil, as the rich prosper at the expense of the poor and the wicked at the expense of the righteous,<sup>37</sup> and religious evil,<sup>38</sup> which is particularly concerned with the changing or annulling of some body of teaching.<sup>39</sup> Indeed, it would be wrong of us to introduce a distinction between these two aspects of evil: those who have acquired riches (94:6-8), presumably at the expense of the poor, have committed blasphemy and iniquity (94:9).<sup>40</sup>

The fact that such a scathing attack on the rich brings the work into apparent conflict with the traditional wisdom of act-consequence, in which the rich are rich because of God's blessing<sup>41</sup> is acknowledged and dismissed in 96:4:

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<sup>35</sup>It is interesting that the Ethiopic text in 99:3 uses the verb *tenše'u*, “raise,” further capturing the connotation. The Greek is προέξεσθε.

<sup>36</sup>Argall, *1 Enoch and Sirach*, 209. He connects this shift in emphasis to the presence of Divine Warrior passages in the wider context.

<sup>37</sup>See 94:6-8; 96:4-6,8; 97:8; 98:11; 99:13; 100:7

<sup>38</sup>References to “iniquity,” “blasphemy,” “sin,” et cetera, occur in 94:6,9; 95:7; 98:12; 99:1-2; 99:14-15; 100:8

<sup>39</sup>See especially 99:2, “Woe to you who change the true words and pervert the eternal covenant,” and 98:14, “woe to you who annul the words of the righteous.”

<sup>40</sup>Compare the parallelism of 94:1-2, where the “paths of iniquity” parallel the “paths of violence.”

<sup>41</sup>Cf. Psalm 112:3.

Woe to you sinners, for your riches make you appear to be righteous, but your heart convicts you of being sinners.

This point is of some importance: the Enochic eschatological context, particularly the existence of a remnant community who perceive themselves to be persecuted and look forward to the reversal of that situation, calls for a reappraisal of traditional wisdom. The material in which this reappraisal is found is overwhelmingly eschatological in nature, constantly looking forward to the coming reversal. But the ethical issues raised are *this-worldly*; they are concerned with the abuse of the poor, the injustice of corruption, dishonesty in the legal system,<sup>42</sup> slavery.<sup>43</sup> It should not be overlooked that the exhortations to the righteous to “be hopeful”(96:1) and to “take courage” (97:1) and “fear them not”(95:3), as well as the exhortation to “be prepared” (99:3) are essentially exhortations not to be dragged into compromise with such sinners, a fact reinforced by the beatitude of 99:10, which deliberately contrasts the fate of the righteous with the woes pronounced on the unrighteous:

And then blessed will be all who listen to the words of the wise,

and learn to do the commandments of the Most High;

And walk in the paths of his righteousness,

**and do not err with the erring,**

For they will be saved.<sup>44</sup>

Thus, when considered paraenetically, this material is concerned with a fidelity to God that is expressed in *this-worldly* behaviour; it does not simply provide consolation to those who are

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<sup>42</sup>95:6

<sup>43</sup>98:4

<sup>44</sup>Translation, Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch 1*, 482.

presently suffering by means of the hope of future reversal.

## Disputation Speeches

The term *Disputation Speech* has been used of both prophetic<sup>45</sup> and sapiential<sup>46</sup> material. Essentially, it involves the citation of an opponent's view followed by the writer's answer. These elements are usually introduced formally and a conclusion is also given. In the Epistle, there are four disputations in 102:4-104:8, each of which discusses the question of what the righteous have gained by being faithful to God; two disputations are with the righteous (102:4-103:4 and 103:9-104:6) and two are with the wicked (103:5-8; 104:7-8).

Given that there are substantial discussions of these sections in Argall<sup>47</sup> and Nickelsburg,<sup>48</sup> I shall confine myself to noting two aspects of these speeches. First, given that the subject matter of each of those speeches is the question of what the righteous gain by remaining faithful to God, there is an obvious paraenetic function to these speeches; they are not merely forecasts of doom for the wicked. Second, as Argall in particular notes, the refutation in each of the speeches is based on the special knowledge gained by Enoch on the journeys narrated in the Book of the Watchers. Thus, in 103:1, the response of Enoch to the words spoken by the sinners regarding the death of the righteous is as follows:

And now I swear to you, the righteous, by the glory of the Great One,

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<sup>45</sup>See Claus Westermann, *Basic Forms of Prophetic Speech* (London: Lutterworth Press, 1967), 201

<sup>46</sup>See R.E. Murphy, *Wisdom Literature: Job, Proverbs, Ruth, Canticles, Ecclesiastes and Esther*, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1981), 18. Murphy is discussing Job at this point.

<sup>47</sup>*I Enoch and Sirach*, 185-196

<sup>48</sup>Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch 1*, 511-530.

and by his splendid kingship and his majesty I swear to you,

That I know this mystery.

For I have read the tablets of heaven

and I have seen the writing of what must be.<sup>49</sup>

The reference to the tablets of heaven goes back to 81:1-2, a section which Nickelsburg<sup>50</sup> sees as originally being part of a narrative bridge between the Book of Watchers and the material in chapters 91-105. The point of note for our study is that the basis for Enoch's paraenesis here is the secret wisdom that has been revealed to the elect and not some wisdom that may be discerned by reflection. Similar points may be made with regard to each of the disputations;<sup>51</sup> each false saying is refuted on the basis of Enoch's secret wisdom.

## **1 Enoch: Conclusions**

The following conclusions arise from our study of the material in The Epistle of Enoch and in The Book of Watchers.

First, by adopting the form of an *instruction*, the material we have looked at presents itself as sapiential. The use of a two-ways discourse in 94:1-6 is very natural in such a

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<sup>49</sup>Translation Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch 1*, 511. See also Nickelsburg's discussion of the "majesty" nouns used here (page 522).

<sup>50</sup>*1 Enoch 1*, 335-337.

<sup>51</sup>103:7-8 (second disputation) alludes back to the vision of Sheol in 22:10-11 where there is a compartment in Sheol for sinners who have not been punished in this life.; 104:3 (third disputation) alludes back to 22:12, which speaks of a compartment in Sheol for the martyrs who have cried out to God about the injustice of their deaths; 104:7-8 allude back to 8:2-4 and the reference to the writing down of the deeds of men.



context. Nevertheless, the work freely draws upon forms that are more prophetic in nature. Given the fact that the core concept of “wisdom” in the Enochic corpus is of a “revealed wisdom,” such a blend of sapiential and prophetic elements seems quite appropriate. In this context, the presence of “heavenly messenger” formulae throughout the Epistle should be noted.<sup>52</sup>

Second, the eschatological expectation of judgement hangs over all of the material. This judgement is presented as the ultimate resolution of the ethical problems of the world. Nevertheless, it serves a twofold paraenetic function that is concerned with the present time: to exhort sinners to change their ways and join with the righteous, and to exhort the righteous to remain steadfast in their commitment. In other words, it would be a mistake to regard the judgement material as either primarily having a theodicial function or a consolatory function. These functions may well be present, but they are neither exclusive nor primary.

Third, while the woe-oracles reveal a concern with ethical issues that are *this-worldly*, the frequent exhortations to fidelity and the creation discourses seem to assume an ethical system that is not specified in the text beyond the designation “the eternal covenant” (99:2). We may cautiously suggest, in the light of this, that the texts therefore assume the ethical standards of the Mosaic law, while still holding that the Torah alone is insufficient to effect salvation.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>52</sup>See 94:10; 98:8,10,12; 100:10; 103:7 and note the discussion in Argall, *1 Enoch and Sirach*, 45–46

<sup>53</sup>See the discussion in **chapter 2**.

## Form and Ethics in *4QInstruction*

If the significance of *1 Enoch* lies in the way in which it testifies to the free blending of sapiential and prophetic forms, the significance of *4QInstruction* lies in the way in which it testifies to the alteration, and (just as important) non-alteration of traditional forms. A brief examination of the material found in the fragments of *4QInstruction* reveals that its paraenetic material comprises primarily admonitions in the second person singular<sup>54</sup> imperative, frequently followed by motive clauses. As such, among Jewish instruction material, it is formally most similar to Proverbs 22:17-24:34<sup>55</sup> and Proverbs 25-27. This biblical material is obviously not eschatological in its content, either in admonitions or in motives,<sup>56</sup> although some sayings would lend themselves to a re-appropriation into an eschatological context.<sup>57</sup> It will be illuminating, therefore, to observe the extent to which the inaugurated eschatology of *4QInstruction* has affected this material as our text draws upon these traditional forms and re-appropriates them to its different eschatological context. The admonitions are not the only form used paraenetically in *4QInstruction*, however, and in the following study, considerable space shall also be devoted to a discussion of the creation discourse in 4Q416 1.

While it would be desirable to look in detail at each individual admonition or paraenetic form, this would require a full volume in itself and has, in any case, largely been

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<sup>54</sup>Second person singular addresses characterise *4QInstruction*, with the exception of the section preserved in 4Q418 69, where the addresses are second person plural (though generally not imperatives). Interestingly, this section is largely eschatological in its content.

<sup>55</sup>For a critical discussion of the relationship of Proverbs 22:17-24:22 to the Egyptian *Teaching of Amenemope*, see John Ruffle, "The Teaching of Amenemope and its Connection with the Book of Proverbs," *TynBul* 28 (1977), 29-68.

<sup>56</sup>Von Rad's discussion of these sections, in *Wisdom in Israel* (London: SCM, 1972), 88-91, contains an important discussion of the motive clauses.

<sup>57</sup>For example, Proverbs 23: 10-11, 17-18; 24: 13-14, 19-20

done by *DJD XXXIV* and by Jefferies' form-critical analysis of the admonitory material.<sup>58</sup>

Instead, I shall limit myself to an analysis of the best preserved sections of the work – 4Q416, fragments 1 and 2 i-ii and 4Q417, fragments 1 and 2<sup>59</sup> - with only brief comments being made about other parts of the work. For the purposes of the present study, analysis of these core sections will be sufficient to answer the question of whether the distinctive eschatology of *4QInstruction* has affected the admonitory form; a study of the other sections, while fascinating, would advance our argument little further.

## The Creation Discourse as an Ethical Framework

There is now general agreement that 4Q416 1 opens *4QInstruction*. Although Elgvin originally reconstructed the fragments of *4QInstruction* differently,<sup>60</sup> his conclusions were criticised thoroughly by Tigchelaar<sup>61</sup> and he has now, apparently, come to agree with the editors of *DJD XXXIV*.<sup>62</sup> The fragment contains a cosmological discourse discussing the role of the heavenly bodies (lines 1-9) followed by the description of judgement discussed already (10-14) and a reflection upon the nature of God (14b-17). The editors point out that this

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<sup>58</sup> Daryl F. Jefferies, *Wisdom at Qumran: A Form-Critical Analysis of the Admonitions in 4QInstruction* (Gorgias Dissertations, Near Eastern Studies 3; New Jersey: Gorgias Press, 2002).

<sup>59</sup> These fragments require supplementation in their reconstruction by other fragments, of course.

<sup>60</sup> Torleif Elgvin, "An Analysis of *4QInstruction*," diss: Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1998, p. 97-98.

<sup>61</sup> Eibert J.C. Tigchelaar *To Increase Learning*, 181-182.

<sup>62</sup> Goff, *Worldly and Heavenly Wisdom*, 5-6, indicates that, in a private correspondence, Elgvin made known to him that he had changed his opinion and was now in agreement with the editors.

introduction introduces some of the recurrent terminology of *4QInstruction*<sup>63</sup> as well as noting that

Its emphasis on God's sovereignty over the world leads into the hope and expectation of an orderly and just judgement against wickedness and for "all his children" (line 10). This hope is based on the nature of God, for "he is a God of all truth" (line 14).

While there is an obvious distinction in the eschatological dimension, we may nevertheless note some similarity between this and the great wisdom poem in Proverbs 8, where the wisdom employed by God at creation undergirds a sense of moral order in the world.

Tigchelaar, however, has justifiably highlighted the deficiencies of the editors' comments on two levels. First, their comments do not explain how the theology of this section is related to the work as a whole;<sup>64</sup> second, they have wrongly seen the emphasis to fall on God's sovereignty rather than on the obedience of the heavenly bodies.<sup>65</sup> A closer look at the text and at Tigchelaar's discussion of it will demonstrate the value of his criticisms. In order to aid such an examination, it may be helpful to have his translation before us:

1. every spirit [ stars of light,]
2. and to mete out the tasks of [ they run from eternal time,]
3. season upon season, and [ without standing still. Properly they go,]
4. according to their host, to ke[ep station (?), and to for kingdom]
5. and kingdom, for pr[ovince and province, for each and every man,
6. according to the poverty (?) of their host. [And the regulation of them all belongs to Him
7. And the host of heavens He has established ov[er and luminaries]
8. for their portents, and the signs of [their] se[asons]

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<sup>63</sup>They single out חפץ (line 2), מחסור (line 6) and יצר בשר (line 16).

<sup>64</sup>Tigchelaar, *To Increase Learning*, 182

<sup>65</sup>*Ibid.*, 192-193.

9. one after another. And all their assignments [they] shall [complete, and they shall] count (?)  
[
10. in heaven He shall pronounce judgement upon the works of wickedness, and all His faithful children will be favourably accepted by [
11. its end. And they shall be in terror. And all who defiled themselves in it, shall cry out. For the heavens shall fear, and the earth too shall be shaken (from its place)]
12. The [s]eas and the depths shall be in terror, and every spirit of flesh will cry out. But the sons of heaven [                      in the day of]
13. its judgement. And all iniquity shall come to an end, while the period of truth will be completed [
14. in all periods of eternity, for He is a God of truth. And from before the years of [
15. to let the righteous understand (the distinction) between good and evil, to [ ] every regula[tion
16. [incl]ination of the flesh is he/it. And from understanding (?) [
17. His creatures, for [
18. [ ] [   <sup>66</sup>

Line 1 introduces us to the “stars of light”<sup>67</sup> that will be the object of the next few lines' discussion. Tigchelaar suggests that there were probably one or two lines of text preceding this one<sup>68</sup> and suggests that such lines may have contained a call to “observe” or “consider,” similar to the admonition that introduces the similar section in *1 Enoch* 2-5.<sup>69</sup> The reference to the stars is then followed by a clause that has proved difficult to translate. This

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<sup>66</sup> Tigchelaar, *To Increase Learning*, 176.

<sup>67</sup> The phrase כִּי־בְּיָמָיו אֵלֶּיךָ is reconstructed from the parallel text 4Q418 229. In lines 1-3, the references to the reconstruction of 4Q416 1 in the following discussion are based on this latter fragment. Thereafter, supplements are mainly from 4Q418 1 and 2.

<sup>68</sup> Tigchelaar, *To Increase Learning*, 44.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid, 183.

clause appears to read **וּלְתַכֵּן חִפְצֹו** which is translated as “will” or “pleasure” by most translators,<sup>70</sup> based on reading the singular form **חִפֵּץ** with the 3 m.s. suffix. Tigchelaar, however, prefers to read **חִפְצֵי**, a construct plural with the meaning “tasks,” based on its use in 1QS 3:17 and 1QH 9:15 (Sukenik 1:13). In the photograph, the character does appear to be a *waw*, however the editors discuss the difficulties of distinguishing the two letters in 4Q416,<sup>71</sup> and these difficulties are compounded by a slight crease on the letter's downstroke and by the fact that it occurs on the very edge of the sheet, making a clear observation of the shape of the head of the letter impossible. Tigchelaar's reading is possible, therefore, and it has the advantage of providing a clear hypothetical parallel with the previous clause:

To establish the paths of the stars of light; and to mete out the tasks of the luminaries.<sup>72</sup>

By contrast, the editors confess that their own translation does not make clear the relation of the individual words in the phrase **וּלְתַכֵּן חִפְצֹו** far less the relation of the phrase to its context.<sup>73</sup>

The rest of line 2, reconstructed on the basis of 4Q418 229, seems to speak of the stars eternally running their course in the heavens, an idea similar to that found in *1 Enoch* 75:8. Line 3 seems to connect this function to the marking of the seasons; the opening clause is **מוֹעֵד בְּמוֹעֵד**. The rest of this line is difficult to reconstruct, but Tigchelaar suggests that the fragment of 4Q418 229 3 could be supplemented to read **וְאִין לְהַדְמוֹת בְּכוֹן־שֶׁר יִלְצוּ**. His suggestion is that **הַדְמוֹת** is a *nip'al*, *hip'il* or *hitpa'el* of **דָּמָה**, which occurs in *qal* form in

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<sup>70</sup>*DJD XXXIV*, 84 translates as “good pleasure”; Elgvin, “Analysis” page 239, translates “will”; García Martínez/Tigchelaar, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition* (Leiden: Brill 2000), 847, translate “what he wants.”

<sup>71</sup>*DJD XXXIV*, 74.

<sup>72</sup>Tigchelaar, *To Increase Learning*, 178.

<sup>73</sup>*DJD XXXIV*, 84

Joshua 10:12-13 where the sun comes to a standstill. Here then, if a negative particle may be read in the first lacuna, it denotes that the heavenly luminaries ceaselessly move as intended. This thought would be supported by his reconstruction of the second lacuna to read לכו בכושׁר, “properly they go,” a suggestion that Tigchelaar parallels with *1 Enoch* 2:1.<sup>74</sup>

Lines 4-6 contain a number of difficulties, notably how to translate למשור במשורה (line 4) and מחסור צבאם (line 6). Regarding the first, the editors translate, to “rule by dominion,”<sup>75</sup> while Elgvin translates “hin by hin.”<sup>76</sup> Given that the subjects of the clause are the heavenly bodies still in view at the end of the previous line, Tigchelaar suggests that משור is a variant spelling of מסורה, a form attested in 1QS X 4 and in Aramaic in 4Q204 1 i 19 (4QEn<sup>c</sup>). There, the meaning seems to be the “relative position of a star in relation to others,”<sup>77</sup> hence Tigchelaar's rendering, “to keep station.”<sup>78</sup> Regarding the second phrase, מחסור צבאם, the editors discuss the problem of combining the two elements of “poverty” and “their host,” stressing that lines 7 and 8 seem to confirm that צבאם here refers to the heavenly host.<sup>79</sup> Tigchelaar cautiously suggests that there has been an inversion of the letters in מסחור to מחסור. The root סחר in Hebrew and Aramaic is used of the “going around” of merchants, but the Akkadian *saharu* is used of planets and stars. Thus here the term may denote the circuit of the heavenly host.<sup>80</sup> These points are of significance because if Tigchelaar is correct in his suggestions - and they both seem feasible - then we may dispense

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<sup>74</sup>Tigchelaar, *To Increase Learning*, 178.

<sup>75</sup>*DJD XXXIV*, 82. So, too, García Martínez and Tigchelaar, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition*, 849.

<sup>76</sup>Elgvin, “Analysis,” 239.

<sup>77</sup>Milik, *The Books of Enoch*, 187.

<sup>78</sup>This is based on taking למשור as an infinitive, hence “to orbit in an orbit” or “to keep station in a station.”

<sup>79</sup>*DJD XXXIV*, 84-85.

<sup>80</sup>Tigchelaar, *To Increase Learning*, 179.

with three of the suggested meanings for lines 4-5 given by the editors in favour of their fourth, namely that these lines refer “to the heavenly bodies as giving their chronological signs to all lands and peoples.”<sup>81</sup>

Line 6 closes with the statement that “the מִשְׁפָּט of them all belongs to him.” There is general agreement that the reference to “him” is to God, but Tigchelaar differs from the editors in preferring “regulation” as a translation of מִשְׁפָּט. Lines 7-9 then take up the thought of the heavenly bodies regulating the seasons, borrowing language from Genesis 1:14. Again, Tigchelaar differs in his rendering of part of verse 9 from the editors: where they take פְּקֻדָּתָם as “their visitation,” Tigchelaar prefers “their assignment(s),” based on the following verb being reconstructed as שְׁלִימוֹ from 4Q418 209 1.<sup>82</sup> He notes the similarity of this phrase, “They will complete their assignments,” with the Ethiopic of *1 Enoch* 5:3.<sup>83</sup>

The stress on the fidelity of the heavenly bodies that Tigchelaar has isolated and highlighted is indeed reminiscent of *1 Enoch* 2-5. As it does there, the material here leads into a discussion of the judgement and destruction of wickedness (lines 10-14). It should not be overlooked that the righteous are described as “his faithful children” (line 10: בְּנֵי אֱמֶתוֹ), with the implication that those who were “defiled in it” (wickedness, that is; line 11) were unfaithful; that is, their sin comprised *infidelity*. We have, then, a suggestion that the

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<sup>81</sup>DJD XXXIV, 84. The other suggestions are that the lines refer i) to God's law being binding on all people ii) to the instruction to the maven being so binding or iii) to God's blessing being universal. The bracketing of these lines with references to the role of the heavenly host would seem to militate against such readings.

<sup>82</sup>Tigchelaar, *To Increase Learning*, 179. Cf. Elgvin's translation, “their order,” (“Analysis,” 239, 242)

<sup>83</sup>This phrase is not found in the Aramaic fragments. The Ethiopic is *gēbērōmū*; Dillmann (*Lexicon Linguae Ethiopicae cum Indice Latino*, [repr. New York: Ungar, 1955], 1163) lists this verse under the meaning “*labor, operatio, opera, opus*.”



cosmological section serves a paraenetic function, teaching that fidelity to God involves emulating the fidelity of the heavenly bodies by properly obeying one's appointed tasks in life.

This suggestion of a paraenetic function may be reinforced by lines 14 and 15, depending on how one takes the variant in line 15. These verses are difficult to reconstruct; on the basis of 4Q418 2, line 14 can be reconstructed as beginning with a reference to all the periods of eternity, followed by the statement that God is “the God of Truth”, or “fidelity” (אמת). This is followed by the statement “and from before the years of [” followed by a lacuna. Line 15 then opens with the textual variant: 4Q416 has להכון צדק בין טוב לרע while 4Q418\* 2 has להבין צדק for the first two words. The editors discuss the possible interpretations:

There are two possible readings: (a) ‘for the righteous to distinguish/to understand the difference between (להבין) good and evil’ (or even ‘for Him [i.e. God] to make the righteous understand . . .’) thus 4Q418 and (b) ‘to establish (להכון) a right measure between good and evil’ (4Q416) or even (b) ‘for a right measure to be established (Nip'al להכון) between good and evil’. The former (*lectio facillior*) uses an idiom frequent in Biblical and Qumran Hebrew.<sup>84</sup>

Elgvin follows the second of the editors' interpretations, but the editors prefer the former. Tigchelaar agrees, but draws in further material from 4Q418 221 and 222 to suggest that the subject of the infinitive is not God but the sage.<sup>85</sup> The argument is interesting, but ultimately speculative. However, Tigchelaar's suggested reconstruction of the lacuna is interesting:

‘For He is a God of truth, and from before the years of [old He has opened up (for . . .)

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<sup>84</sup>DJD XXXIV 87-88.

<sup>85</sup>Tigchelaar, *To Increase Learning*, 188.

understanding and insight, to make the righteous understand . . .”<sup>86</sup>

The central point of this is that the text seems to be stressing that the righteous are brought to understand the difference between good and evil. In a text that has begun with a lengthy consideration of the fidelity of the heavenly bodies and of the deliverance of the “faithful children”, the notion of fidelity would appear to be the pre-eminent feature of this difference, with the cosmological discourse thus serving a paraenetic function, a function in keeping with Jewish thought.<sup>87</sup> Tigchelaar concludes:

The emphasis is not on God's orderly rule, but on the heavenly bodies' obedience: in accordance with their determined tasks they run their courses. This topic is common in Early Jewish literature, **but whereas in other texts the simile is used in a more general sense (nature obeys God's laws, so you should too), *Instruction* stresses in its other parts that every living being has been allotted his or its own position in life and tasks.**<sup>88</sup>

Several points are of enormous significance here. First, the cosmological and eschatological elements cannot be separated: the description of judgement is connected fundamentally to the cosmological discussion both structurally and conceptually. Whether the addressee has or has not emulated the fidelity of the heavenly bodies determines how he will be judged. Second, despite this futurist eschatological perspective, there is no sense of an *Interimethik* that replaces older law: the whole image requires the sense that ethics are about fulfilling God's appointed tasks within his creation, i.e. living in true fidelity with his will as Creator. Third, the righteous are those who should be able to behave with the same fidelity as the heavenly bodies, precisely because they have been enabled to distinguish between good

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<sup>86</sup>*Ibid.*, 190.

<sup>87</sup>See M.E Stone, “The Parabolic Use of Natural Order in Judaism of the Second Temple Age” in *Gilgul: Essays on Transformation, Revolution and Permanence in the History of Religions. Dedicated to R.J. Zwi Werblowsky* (ed. S. Shaked, D. Shulman, G.G. Stroumsa; SHR 50; Leiden: Brill, 1987), 298-308.

<sup>88</sup>Tigchelaar, *To Increase Learning*, 193. Emphasis mine.

and evil, a point that highlights the role of the inaugurated eschatology we have discussed previously, and specifically the notion of revealed wisdom that seems so central to that eschatology. Indeed, on this last point, it would be of no surprise if the lacuna at the end of line 14 contained some reference to the **לִי נְהִיָּה** that we have seen to be so important.<sup>89</sup>

The presence of the creation discourse and eschatological material at the beginning of the work clearly establishes an eschatological and ethical framework in which the rest of the work is to be understood.<sup>90</sup> In particular, this emphasises that the overarching concern of the text is to enable one to emulate the heavenly bodies by fulfilling one's allotted role or position within creation and thus to be delivered from the coming judgement or to be judged favourably.

## Admonitions in *4QInstruction*

Having examined the framework provided by the introductory discourse, we may now examine the admonitory material. As mentioned already, among Jewish instruction material, the admonitions of *4QInstruction* are formally most similar to Proverbs 22:17-24:34 and Proverbs 25-27. Often in *4QInstruction*, the admonitions are introduced with the formula, **וְאַתָּה בֶּן מְבִין**, (sometimes **וְאַתָּה בֶּן מְבִין**), probably best translated, “and you, understanding one.”<sup>91</sup> This phrase seems to take the place of the “my son” address common in such

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<sup>89</sup>This would sit happily with Tigchelaar's reconstruction of the lacuna.

<sup>90</sup>As Harrington notes, *Wisdom Texts from Qumran*. (London: Routledge 1996), 41.

<sup>91</sup>Note, however, that Lange, *Weisheit*, 52-53, translates the phrase variously as vocatives (“Du Lehrer” in 4Q418 123 ii 5, page 56), indicatives (“Du bist Ratgeber,” 4Q417 1 i 1, page 52), and sometimes as part of the argument (“und du wirst einsehen” 4Q417 1 i 13-14, page 53). Note the criticisms of Lange's inconsistent rendering of this phrase in *DJD XXXIV*, 161.

instructions. As with Proverbs 22:17-24: 34 or Proverbs 25-27, the admonitions cover an extensive range of life situations from family life, agriculture and financial matters to courtly concerns, both royal and legal. Linking this range of subject matter to the introduction that we have just studied, Tigchelaar comments:

The admonitory sections lay down rules of behaviour befitting to persons in specific trades or social positions, whereas the cosmological or eschatological sections emphasise the general principle that everything has its own rules by which it should abide.<sup>92</sup>

The question we must ask regards whether the content of the admonitions, either in their imperatives or in their motives, has been affected by the eschatology of *4QInstruction*. Do they differ, in this respect, from the non-eschatological material found in the Proverbs passages listed above? In order to address this question, the admonitions found in 4Q416 1&2 and 4Q417 1&2<sup>93</sup> shall be grouped into three categories: eschatological admonitions in which the command itself is eschatological in nature; admonitions with eschatological motives; and admonitions with no obvious eschatological signatures.

## 1: Eschatological Admonitions

A number of times, the understanding one is enjoined to “gaze upon נִרְאֶה נְדִיָּה.”

Bearing in mind our earlier discussion of this phrase, such admonitions carry clear eschatological connotations. Perhaps the most striking is found in 4Q417 2 i 10-12:

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<sup>92</sup>Tigchelaar, *To Increase Learning*, 248.

<sup>93</sup> I have chosen to limit the discussion to these fragments in order to allow a sufficiently thorough examination of the material. Obviously it would be desirable to examine all of the admonitions, but this would require more space than can be justified here. The points that will be made are demonstrated sufficiently by the material found within these fragments.

Gaze upon רַז נְהִיָּה and grasp<sup>94</sup> the birth-times (מִוְלָדִי)<sup>95</sup> of salvation. And know who is to inherit glory and toil. Has not [rejoicing been appointed for the contrite of spirit] and for those among them who mourn, eternal joy.<sup>96</sup>

Here, three admonitions are presented in parallel, the latter two reinforcing the sense of the first as being eschatological. The rhetorical question that follows takes the place of the motive clause and presents the eschatological reversal of circumstances as an encouragement to the addressee. This admonition is all the more striking because it is embedded in a block of admonitions that are concerned with more mundane matters, a block to which we shall return later.

Although less striking, the large block of material in 4Q417 1 i is still impressive in its sustained argument for the importance of considering רַז נְהִיָּה. Much of this text is fragmentary, but it may be fairly confidently supplemented with the fragments 4Q418 43, 44, 45 and 4Q418a. After the standard address to the understanding one, lines 2 and 3 call the addressee to gaze upon and ponder “the wondrous mysteries of the God of the Awesome Ones” and רַז נְהִיָּה. Lines 3 and 4 follow the last admonition with וּמַעֲשֵׂי קֶדֶם לְמָה [ נְהִיָּה וּמָה נְהִיָּה בְּמָה ]. The combination of tenses and particles here is difficult to identify: the editors suggest that “the works of old” is followed by a temporal sequence reading “what is to come, for what purpose it is to come, in what circumstances it is to come.”<sup>97</sup> Harrington, in his own later work, prefers to see it as a reference to a knowledge of past, present and

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<sup>94</sup>Translating קָח as being from לְקָח. The editors discuss the justification for their translation “to understand” in *DJD XXXIV*, 182.

<sup>95</sup>See Jastrow, p.742.

<sup>96</sup>See the discussion of the reconstruction of the lacuna in *DJD XXXIV*, 182, where the editors give four possibilities. I have followed this particular reconstruction as the chiasm of “rejoicing . . . contrite in heart; those who mourn . . . joy” seems appropriate.

<sup>97</sup>*DJD XXXIV* 157. cf. Lange's “Urzeit, warum etwas entsteht und was entsteht.” *Weisheit*, 52.

future: “[...]of old to what is and what is to be, in what [...]”<sup>98</sup> It seems, at least, that some consideration of the future is being urged.

Line 6 is reminiscent of Psalm 1:2 in its language of meditating day and night upon רָאָה נְהִיָּה.<sup>99</sup> A continual study of this will enable the addressee to know “truth and iniquity, wisdom and foolishness.”<sup>100</sup> Line 7 then takes up this *two-ways* imagery and speaks of the eschatological punishment that is to come (פְּקוּדַת עֵד) before line 8 resumes the idea of the addressee discerning between good and evil, where this time the focus is on “their deeds.”

Lines 8c-12 then provide a theological foundation for these claims regarding the value of pondering רָאָה נְהִיָּה: the God of knowledge is the foundation of truth (סֹד אֱמֶת)<sup>101</sup> and by the same רָאָה נְהִיָּה that is now being pondered, God has ordered the world.<sup>102</sup> This point is very significant because it draws together the notion of a wisdom that must be revealed, characteristic of *4QInstruction* and *1 Enoch*, as we have seen, with the traditional notion of a wisdom that is immanent in creation and that undergirds the moral order. Wisdom here still undergirds creation and the moral order, but it is a wisdom that requires to be

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<sup>98</sup>D.J. Harrington, *Wisdom Texts from Qumran*. Translation on page 52, comments on page 54.

<sup>99</sup>In Psalm 1, of course, the reference is to God's law.

<sup>100</sup>This point reinforces our earlier suggestion that some reference to רָאָה נְהִיָּה may have been in the lacuna in 4Q416 line 14. Note the similar vocabulary in both texts.

<sup>101</sup>See the discussion of this phrase in *DJD XXXIV*, 158.

<sup>102</sup>Note the *DJD XXXIV* discussion of these verses, 158. The sense of the verses is difficult, and made more so by a large wear pattern on the manuscript, but it seems to indicate that רָאָה נְהִיָּה functions as a kind of underlying order, governing truth and its deeds. Elgvin, “Wisdom With and Without Apocalyptic,” in Falk, Martinez and Schuller, *Sapiential Texts*, 24-25 prefers to read these verses as relating to creation, but the only noun that can provide an antecedent to the suffixes on אֱסֹד (foundation) and מַעֲשֵׂיָם (deeds) is אֱמֶת. Nevertheless, the similarity to Proverbs 8:23-31 that Elgvin notes is striking and it may be that the text is bringing together the idea of Wisdom being the underlying order of creation, as Proverbs 8 presents it, with the idea of רָאָה נְהִיָּה being the underlying order of truth, and thus the true underlying principle of creation.

revealed. The fact that this very same Wisdom will also play its role in the judgement that is to come draws creation and eschatology together under the one unifying concept.

Line 12 resumes the admonition: the addressee is to investigate these things carefully.<sup>103</sup> Lines 14-16 introduce a parallel admonition to consider the preordained future,<sup>104</sup> which leads into a discussion of the contrast between the spiritual people who possess the Book of חֵן/יָהֵן, and the spirit of flesh. This point serves as a negative parallel to line 8: here, the spirit of flesh cannot discern between good and evil.

All of this builds up to another admonition to gaze on יְהוָה in line 18. This time, the admonition is paralleled by the phrase “and know [the paths of] everyone that lives and the manner of his walking that is appointed for his deeds.” It is striking that these eschatological admonitions have here reached a point where they serve a paraenetic function closely linked to the purpose of the creation discourse in 4Q416 1.

## 2: Admonitions with Eschatological Motives

After the eschatological admonitions discussed above, 4Q417 1 i line 23 urges the addressee to “act with strength”<sup>105</sup> and to “not be contaminated”<sup>106</sup> by evildoing.” The

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<sup>103</sup>The verb is שָׁרַר which carries such a sense of careful enquiry. See *BDB*, 205 (meaning 7), also R.L. Harris, G.L. Archer and B.A. Waltke, *A Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, (Chicago: Moody, 1980), 198.

<sup>104</sup>These lines contain a number of problems, such as the meaning of פֶּלַח/תַּצֵּחַ in line 14 (regarding which, see *DJD XXXIV*, 161-162), the question of the meaning of “the children of שֹׁרֵר” in line 15 (regarding which, see Harrington, *Wisdom Texts*, 55) and the reference to the book of חֵן/יָהֵן in line 16, (regarding which, see my discussion in chapter 2).

<sup>105</sup>*Hitpa’el* imperative of פָּחַץ.

<sup>106</sup>The verb is פָּחַץ which the editors (*DJD XXXIV* 167) suggest is best read as a passive of נָגַע followed by an

beginning of the motive clause requires some reconstruction<sup>107</sup> but most of the clause is clear: the one who is contaminated “will not be held innocent (לֹא יִנְקָה).” This statement is made thoroughly eschatological by the following clause which says that “according to his inheritance (נַחֲלָתוֹ) he will be declared guilty.”<sup>108</sup> In the context of the preceding lines 1-22, such a statement carries the clear connotation of future judgement. Thus, we have non-eschatological admonitions (“Act with strength . . . Do not be contaminated”) followed by eschatological motive clauses anticipating judgement.

A more subtle example of eschatological motivation is found in 4Q417 2 i 2-7. Here, the reader is enjoined to forgive the noble<sup>109</sup> without reproach, an admonition followed by an uncertain clause that may refer to someone who is either bound or bewitched.<sup>110</sup> In either case, the reader<sup>111</sup> is in the position of having to address this person. Line 3 warns the reader not to confound<sup>112</sup> his addressee's spirit, a command followed by what appears to be an obscure motive clause translated by the editors as “for in silence (calmness) thou hast spoken.”<sup>113</sup> Although generally לֹא יִנְקָה introduces motive clauses in *4QInstruction*, this hemistich may make more sense if it is taken as introducing a causal clause: “because בְּדַמְמָה you have spoken.” It may be that a more appropriate rendering of בְּדַמְמָה is “in a whisper,” a reading that takes into account the way the noun is used in 1 Kings 19:12. If this

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instrumental *bet*, with the meaning “do not be contaminated by.”

<sup>107</sup>See *DJD XXXIV*, 167.

<sup>108</sup>Assuming the reconstructed verb at the end of line 24 to be the *hip'il* of רָשַׁע.

<sup>109</sup>The precise meaning of הַנָּשִׂא is unclear in Qumran Hebrew.

<sup>110</sup>See *DJD XXXIV*, 178.

<sup>111</sup>I shall use the term “reader” throughout this section in order to avoid confusion with the reader’s own addressee.

<sup>112</sup>Another difficult term: see *DJD XXXIV*, 178.

<sup>113</sup>It is not clear how this motive clause would function. The editors (*DJD XXXIV*, 179) discuss several options none of which clarify matters greatly.



reading is correct, and if we perhaps read ׀׀ as an emphatic “but,” then the line might read:

But do not confound his spirit because you have spoken in a whisper []

Such a reading would explain the seeming contradiction of lines 2 and 4; the reader is instructed not to reproach the noble, but in doing so, he is not to confound him by remaining silent or mumbling a rebuke. Instead, as line 4 takes up the thought, the reader is to “make haste to recount a rebuke,” but to do so humbly, aware of his own sins: “But do not overlook your own sins.” The lacuna which follows this last admonition almost certainly contains a reference to God<sup>114</sup> so that he is the subject of ׀צדק׀.<sup>115</sup> Thus, line 5 opens, “he (God) will declare [object] righteous, just like you.” With the strong possibility that there is a reference to forgiveness in the lacuna at the end of this line, so that line 5 ends “with . . . forgiveness] will he work,”<sup>116</sup> we have here a flow of thought that either indicates that God will forgive the sinner as much as he has forgiven the reader, or that he will forgive the sinner as much as the reader has forgiven them.<sup>117</sup> In either case, the logic is that the reader's behaviour is to take into account the forgiveness and justification he has already received, that are connected to his eschatological future, and to behave towards his addressee in a way that acknowledges that this person too may receive such forgiveness. The eschatological dimension of this becomes clearer when we appreciate that the implied analogy is between God as judge, an eschatological notion in *4QInstruction*,<sup>118</sup> and the reader as judge. Indeed, this point emerges further in the admonition that begins in the second half of line 13, where the reader is to

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<sup>114</sup> Note the comments in *DJD XXXIV*, 179

<sup>115</sup> The editors argue that this should be taken as a declaratory *pi'el* form. The pronoun ׀׀׀׀ they take to be subjective, relating back to the occurrence of “God” or equivalent in the lacuna.

<sup>116</sup> Line 5 and first word of line 6. See *DJD XXXIV*, 179.

<sup>117</sup> Both options are discussed by *ibid.*, 179. The editors note the similarity of the latter possibility with Matthew 6:12.

<sup>118</sup> See 4Q416 1, lines 10ff.

pronounce his judgements like (or “as”) a righteous ruler. Again, he is not to overlook his own sins (line 14) and is to be humble. Verses 15 and 16 then take up judgement language using theophanic imagery to speak of God's anger before concluding with the questions, “Who will be declared righteous when he gives judgement? And without forgiveness how can any man stand before him?”<sup>119</sup> The logic is parallel to the admonitions discussed above: again, the reader is urged to judge in the knowledge that he himself will be declared righteous only by God's gracious forgiveness. Thus again, the eschatological judgement motivates and shapes present behaviour in a way that is more subtle than merely warning the reader to be righteous because of the prospect of judgement.<sup>120</sup>

### 3: Admonitions With No Eschatological Signatures

Immediately after the section discussed above in 4Q417 2 i, the text contains a series of admonitions regarding food, poverty and finance (lines 17-28). Neither the admonitions nor the motive clauses are eschatological. Line 17 contains the admonition to gather “surpluses” (מותר יכה), cf. the use of the noun in Proverbs 14:23 and 21:5) for the provision of those that lack in their poverty.<sup>121</sup> The line is interesting because the reconstruction from 4Q418 64 contains the only occurrence of מותר in 4QInstruction. Given the lack of distinctively Qumran vocabulary in 4QInstruction, however, the term should simply be treated as “community”

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<sup>119</sup> The last clause is fragmentary. See *DJD XXXIV*, 185

<sup>120</sup> Further examples in which the eschatological future plays a role in motivating behaviour are found in the admonitions concerning poverty. See the discussions in Catherine M. Murphy, *Wealth in the Dead Sea Scrolls and Qumran Community*, (STDJ 40; Leiden: Brill, 2001), 163-209 and Goff, *Worldly and Heavenly Wisdom*, 206-214.

<sup>121</sup> The line actually begins with an address to the poor, but the admonition in line 17 is aimed at those with surplus food. The next line then reverts to the poor one as addressee.

generally, or even as having adverbial force: “together.” Line 18 then enjoins the poor one to take what he needs from this collection without payment. The series of admonitions is then followed by an explanatory clause: “for your/his treasure house [God]<sup>122</sup> will not make to be lacking in anything . . . [According] to his command will everything come into being (כֹּל יִהְיֶה).” This motive clause is intriguingly subtle: it may refer to the poor one, providing consolation that his need will be met by God the Creator; or it may refer to the giver of surplus, stressing that to give is not to impoverish one's own storehouse, for God will ensure that it does not lack anything. In either case, the basis of the clause is the same: God is the Creator and Provider.<sup>123</sup>

This series of admonitions flows naturally into the warning in line 20 against gluttony (already the reader has been warned to take no more than his share from the collection in line 18). This warning is motivated by a לֹא-clause: “lest by gluttony you shorten your life.” It is striking that the consequence in view is not an eschatological one. Similarly, the following admonitions on financial matters all lack eschatological motives.

4Q416 2 ii 3ff., which would have probably occurred after the texts discussed above in *4QInstruction*, contain some interesting material discussing financial matters further. The discussion in lines 3-6 about repayment leads in to an admonition not to exchange<sup>124</sup> one's holy spirit (רוּחַ קִדְשִׁיכֶם) for any price. The motive clause reads: “for no price is equal in value to it.” The reference is probably to selling oneself into slavery and seems to be

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<sup>122</sup> The editors are surely correct that there must have been a reference to God somewhere in the lacuna at the end of 19 that provided the subject for the 3m.s. verbs. *DJD XXXIV* 187.

<sup>123</sup> A very similar block of material occurs in 4Q416 2 i:21- ii:3, where again the subject matter is the provision of food, and again the emphasis falls on the nature of God as the Provider.

<sup>124</sup> For this verb, תָּמַר, and the potential variants see *DJD XXXIV*, 98. The editors are probably correct in seeing תָּמַר as the root, based on the context of financial exchange.

paralleled by line 17: “Do not sell yourself (נפשכה) for a price.” In neither of these admonitions is there any indication of eschatological motivation; even the reference to pledging one's inheritance as surety (line 18) that parallels the admonition in line 17<sup>125</sup> cannot be taken in any eschatological sense; instead it seems to be recognising the risk of losing one's inheritance through a pledge and then being forced into slavery, thus also losing ownership of one's own body. The rest of the column, which continues to discuss appropriate behaviour in poverty, finishing with the treatment of one's wife,<sup>126</sup> likewise contains no eschatological motives for its admonitions.

The point that arises from this discussion is that while the prospect of future judgement may function as a motive for right living, it is not the sole or even primary such motive. Many of the motive clauses simply relate to the world in which the addressee lives. The point may be developed by noting three points where Creation-patterns connected to the introductory discourse in 4Q416 1 form the basis for a particular admonition.

In 4Q416 2 iii 8, in the midst of a series of admonitions dealing with poverty, the impoverished addressee is warned not to desire anything beyond his “inheritance” (נחלתצה) and not to be consumed<sup>127</sup> by it, “lest you displace your boundary (גבולצה).” The *DJD* XXXIV editors recognise that in its use of this latter phrase, the text is drawing upon Deut 19:14 and 27:17, noting that the references in these verses to the shifting of boundary-markers are sometimes taken up with a metaphorical sense in sapiential contexts to refer to

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<sup>125</sup> *DJD* XXXIV, 93 translates “For [no] price [s]ell thy glory, Or pledge money for thy inheritance (?), Lest it (the money?) dispossess also thy body.” See also their discussion, 106.

<sup>126</sup> The terminology referring to the wife has often been discussed as a background to Paul's language in 1 Thessalonians 4:4. See the discussion in *DJD* XXXIV 109-10 and Elgvin, “To Master his own Vessel: 1 Thess 4:4 in the Light of New Qumran Evidence,” *NTS* 43 (1997) 604-619.

<sup>127</sup> Following García Martínez/Tigchelaar *Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition*, for the sense of בלע against *DJD* XXXIV, 116, where the verb is read as “confuse.”

transgression or neglect of the Law.<sup>128</sup> The editors struggle, however, to make sense of the use of the phrase here. When understood against the background of Tigchelaar's discussion of 4Q416 1, though, the phrase makes perfect sense. It will be recalled that the introductory discourse of this fragment teaches that each creature has its own allotted role and position in life. The language here of "boundaries" seems conceptually connected with this: for the poor addressee to strive for more than he has been allotted is to risk shifting his boundary and thus breaking fidelity with his Creator's will. Such an understanding of the admonition is connected logically with the following lines (9-12), in which the possibility of the addressee being elevated to a higher position by God<sup>129</sup> is discussed. It is interesting that the editors suggest that the meaning of נַחֲלָה, which occurs in lines 8, 10 and 11, is consistently that of "allotted station." All of this points towards this whole discussion of poverty being grounded in the creation-theology of the introductory discourse.

The second example of a creation-pattern is more problematic, but nevertheless worth noting. In 416 2 iii, lines 15-19, there is found an admonition to honour one's parents even when in a situation of poverty. The text suggests that parents are to be honoured because their relationship to the addressee is comparable to that of God.<sup>130</sup> The specific point of comparison is that of the role played in the "creation" of the addressee by his parents: according to the most likely translation of כּוֹר הוֹרִיכָה they are "the oven of your origin."<sup>131</sup> This phrase is

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<sup>128</sup> *DJD XXXIV*, 116.

<sup>129</sup> Note the editors' discussion of the alternation of singular/plural forms of הַשִּׁכְכָה between 4Q416 and the parallel fragment of 4Q418.

<sup>130</sup> See *DJD XXXIV* 120-1. The first reference is to the father as being כָּאֵב ("as a father"), although the editors argue that the parallel reading in 418, כָּאֵל, fits the context best. The second is to the mother being כְּאֵדֹנִי ("as the Lord/ a master"). The editors argue for the latter term being a reference to God.

<sup>131</sup> García Martínez/Tigchelaar, *Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition* 2:853.

very problematic,<sup>132</sup> but if הורִיכָה is understood as being derived from הָרָה,<sup>133</sup> all of the options for understanding it carry the sense that the parents are compared to God the Creator as the (lesser) “creators” of the addressee. The addressee is therefore to “serve” them (line 17) as man is to serve the Creator God, a subordination grounded in Creation itself. It is striking that such an attitude is presented in lines 17-18 as being required of the addressee because of the possession and understanding of רַז נְהִיָּה. The editors suggest that the verb גָּלָה (“opened”) should be emended to its 3<sup>rd</sup>. plural form גָּלוּ so that the parents are the ones who have opened the addressee's ear to the mystery.<sup>134</sup> I am less convinced than the editors that such an alteration is necessary in the context and prefer to see God as the agent, but regardless of this issue, the text makes a close link between possession and understanding of רַז נְהִיָּה and ability to fulfil the creation pattern.

The third example is found in 416 2 iv, where there is a discussion concerning the authority of the addressee over his wife. The text seems to be concerned with maintaining appropriate patterns of submission, so that each man has authority only over his own wife. As with the discussion of poverty in 4Q416 2 iii 8, the notion of allotted positions and roles underlies the admonition: any man who attempts to have dominion over a woman other than his own wife has “displaced the boundary of his life” (line 6). The important point for our argument is that the basis of the argument is the creation story; the passage begins with a quote from Gen 2:24 (“For this reason a man will leave his father and mother, cleave to his

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<sup>132</sup> See *DJD XXXIV*, 121.

<sup>133</sup> The other possible option, not mentioned by the editors, is to see the word as being derived from הָרָה/יָרָה, “to teach,” so that the parents are the “oven of your instruction.” This is attractive and circumvents the problems discussed by the editors, but it is difficult to see how such a reading would fit the context. The similarity of the phrase here with 1QH III may also point us in the direction of the reading adopted by the editors.

<sup>134</sup> *DJD XXXIV*, 122.

wife and the two shall become one flesh.”) and thereafter is full of allusions to Genesis 2-3: “he has given you dominion over her,” (Gen 3:16), “he has separated her from her mother,” (Gen 2:24) “[she shall be] for you, to be one flesh,” (Gen 2:24). Yet the Genesis allusions are fused with the concern of the creation discourse in 4Q416 1 that each creature has its allotted role and that the boundaries of these allotments are not shifted.

These examples demonstrate that alongside the prospect of future judgement, *4QInstruction* makes use of patterns within the creation, drawn from the creation discourse of 4Q416 1, as a basis for right living. The question may now be asked as to whether these two elements are simply distinct motivating factors in the ethics of *4QInstruction* or whether there exists a more subtle relationship between them. In order to do this, the relationship between creation, eschatology and ethics in *4QInstruction* must be examined more closely. In particular, we will return to the phrase **לֹא נִהְיֶה**, which I will suggest is crucial to the interface between the three.

## Creation, Eschatology and Ethics: Clarifying the Interface

We have already noted that obedience is presented, in *4QInstruction*, as fulfilling one's allotted role within creation. The text seems to present **לֹא נִהְיֶה** as being necessary to such obedience, a fact that emerges particularly in 417 1 i (supplemented by 418 fragments 43-45). We have examined this text already, but a closer reading is now required.

Lines 8-13 of 417 1 i develop the theme of reflecting on **לֹא נִהְיֶה** that is the subject of lines 1-7. The section begins part-way through line 8 with a reference to God as the

“foundation of truth,”<sup>135</sup> a reference that is immediately followed by a description of that truth being constructed upon **רִצֵּן נְהִיָּה**:

And by/on **רִצֵּן נְהִיָּה** he has laid out/expounded<sup>136</sup> its (truth's)<sup>137</sup> foundation, and its deeds [he has prepared with all wisdom].<sup>138</sup>

The following lines develop this idea of the construction of truth using language that seems deliberately to employ the vocabulary of creation: **מַעֲשֵׂיָהּ** (“deeds/acts/creatures” + suffix) occurs twice in line 9 and once in line 10; **צִרָהּ** (“he fashioned it”) occurs in verse 9; **תּוֹצְאוֹתֶיהָ** (“origins”<sup>139</sup> + 3pl suffix) occurs in 13 as does **גְּבוּרֹת מַעֲשֵׂיָהּ** (“his mighty works/acts”).

I would suggest that this use of creation-vocabulary seems to be intended to identify **רִצֵּן נְהִיָּה** as the foundation of the truth that undergirds and orders all creation, a role often played by Wisdom in Jewish thought.<sup>140</sup> The community that possesses and reflects upon **רִצֵּן נְהִיָּה** is therefore able to understand creation in a way that those outside that community can never share.<sup>141</sup> This becomes the basis for the fidelity of the community to their allotted

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<sup>135</sup> **סֹד אִמָּה**. For a discussion of this phrase, see *DJD XXXIV*, 158.

<sup>136</sup> The editors discuss the various options for **פָּרַשׁ**, *DJD XXXIV*, 158.

<sup>137</sup> Again, see *DJD XXXIV*, 158 for the justification of seeing **אִמָּה** as the referent of the female suffixes.

<sup>138</sup> The last clause is reconstructed from the fragments of 4Q418.

<sup>139</sup> This may be translated as “outcomes” or “origins”, the editors (*DJD XXXIV*, 160) favouring the former. The context does not particularly help in deciding which should be followed as it is preceded by creation vocabulary and followed by eschatological vocabulary. I would prefer to read this as indicating origin rather than outcome, but my case hardly rests upon this one word.

<sup>140</sup> See the discussion of how this relates to the description of Wisdom in Proverbs 3:19 in Goff, *Wordly and Heavenly Wisdom*, 61-66, Elgin, “Wisdom and Apocalypticism,” 235, Lange, *Weisheit*, 40-62.

<sup>141</sup> It is interesting to note that the passage discussed above in 416 2 iii, speaking of honouring parents, precedes a final admonition to honour them with the words, “and since he has opened your ears to/by (**בְּ**) **רִצֵּן נְהִיָּה**,” The point would seem to be that the addressee is able to honour them according to the creation pattern because his



role within creation, a fact that emerges from lines 10-12 of 4Q17 1 i: man is intended to know these things “together with how he should walk perfect in all his actions” (line 12). This crucial step allows us to bring together Tigchelaar's discussion of the creation discourse in 4Q416, which opens *4QInstruction*, with the centrality of the concept of רָצוֹן נְהִיָּה to the work as a whole.<sup>142</sup> It also allows us to return to the question of whether the Eden imagery in 4Q423 1,2 is metaphorical or not: in a text in which a return to a state of fidelity to creation patterns is the ultimate goal, a return made possible by the eschatological possession of רָצוֹן נְהִיָּה, it is reasonable to regard the Eden imagery as depicting the ideological community's actual perception of itself as a restored creation or, to use language that is more faithful to *4QInstruction*'s own categories of obedience and sin,<sup>143</sup> as an Edenic oasis of order in the midst of a world tainted by the spirit of flesh, in which the boundaries have all been shifted.

## Structural Observations

Before drawing some conclusions, three observations regarding the structure of the work are in order:

First, the presence of the creation discourse and eschatological material at the

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ears have been opened to or (more likely) by רָצוֹן נְהִיָּה.

<sup>142</sup> The point I am highlighting is consonant with the recent work of Goff, *Wordly and Heavenly Wisdom*, who never seems, however, to make explicit this connection between creation, eschatology and fidelity.

<sup>143</sup> The language of “restored creation” may not be ideal, as it may be suggestive of the idea of a Fall. This idea is not necessarily found within *4QInstruction*, as Collins notes in “The Mysteries of God: Creation and Eschatology in *4QInstruction* and the Wisdom of Solomon,” in *Wisdom and Apocalypticism in the Dead Sea Scrolls and in the Biblical Tradition*, (ed. F. García Martínez, Leuven: Peeters, 2003), 302.

beginning of the work clearly establishes an eschatological framework in which the rest of the work is to be understood,<sup>144</sup> a point that may be developed by noting that, in addition, the first block of admonitions are those we classed as eschatological admonitions.

Second, eschatological admonitions and material surface almost intrusively on less eschatological material (for example 4Q417 2 i 11). The fragment 4Q418 69 may also be noted in this respect; its eschatological discourse, clearly framed in dualistic terms, appears in the middle of otherwise non-eschatological second person singular admonitions.

Third, while there is a loose structuring of admonitions according to content, this is very loose; often admonitions that are linked thematically are not grouped together but are separated by other material.

## **4QInstruction: Conclusions**

On the strength of the analysis above, several important conclusions may be reached:

1. While the paraenetic material is clearly found in an eschatological context, the concept of ethics is related to creation. *4QInstruction* clearly looks forward to a future judgement at which will be seen a dualism between the “the foolish” and “the wise.” The wisdom of the latter group arises from their possession of **רַזְנִיָּה**, a wisdom revealed by God in “the birth times of salvation” that enables the addressee,

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<sup>144</sup>As Harrington notes, *Wisdom Texts*, 41.

and the group to which he belongs, to live according to the design plan of the Creator-God. **רַן נְהִיָּה** is capable of such an effect because it itself is the underlying principle of all creation, this role being comparable to that played by “Wisdom” in much Jewish literature. As a consequence of the possession of this revealed wisdom, the addressee is enabled to emulate the fidelity of the heavenly bodies to their allotted role within creation and thus to be judged favourably.

2. While obviously eschatological considerations can function as motives for right living, so too can seemingly non-eschatological motives. Within an eschatology that understands the remnant to be a new creation and perceives ethics to be a matter of returning to a state of fidelity to creation, we may have to broaden the category of what is understood to be “eschatological.” The use of patterns within creation as a basis for right living may not at first seem to be an eschatological idea, but within the schema discussed above it can, in fact, be regarded as such.
3. Obviously eschatological and seemingly non-eschatological admonitions can exist side by side in the same work. This need not reflect careless redaction, but rather the kind of “restored-creation” eschatology that has been seen to undergird the text.
4. The fact that the underlying order of creation cannot be grasped by reflection, but must be revealed may help to explain why *4QInstruction* is characterised by admonitions and not proverbs, the latter form indicating truths that are self-evident or that have been distilled by meditation.

### Excursus 3: The Restored Glory of Adam.

The concepts that have been identified above, especially in *4QInstruction*, seem fairly closely related to an idea found elsewhere in the Dead Sea Scrolls, that to those who belong to the elect remnant, the glory lost by Adam is restored. Alexander Golitzin has examined this idea in the Dead Sea Scrolls and in Syriac Christian mystical writings from the 4<sup>th</sup> century,<sup>145</sup> noting the presence in each group of texts of a cluster of ideas associated with Adamic glory. These ideas include the restoration of the divine glory, the fellowship of the redeemed with the angels, the bestowal of garments of glory or light and the vision of the divine glory. Some citations from the Rule of the Community (1QS) may help to illustrate how they operate:

These are the counsels of the spirit for the sons of truth in the world. And the visitation of those who walk in it will be for healing, plentiful peace in a long life, fruitful offspring with all everlasting blessings, eternal enjoyment with endless life, and a crown of glory with majestic raiment in eternal light. (1QS IV 6-8)

In this way the upright will understand knowledge of the Most High, and the wisdom of the sons of heaven will teach those of perfect behaviour. For these are those selected by God for an everlasting covenant and to them shall belong all the glory of Adam. (1QS IV 22-23)<sup>146</sup>

Such language and imagery is frequent in the Scrolls and in the Syriac writings. A key point in Golitzin's argument is that this cluster of ideas related to the glory of Adam was mediated to Syriac circles not by Christian transmission but by common Semitic culture.

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<sup>145</sup> See Alexander Golitzin, "Recovering the 'Glory of Adam': 'Divine Light' Traditions in the Dead Sea Scrolls Present and the Christian Ascetical Literature of Fourth-Century Syro-Mesopotamia," in *The Dead Sea Scrolls as Background to Postbiblical Judaism and Early Christianity: Papers from an International Conference at St Andrews in 2001*, edited by James R. Davila, (STDJ 46; Leiden: Brill, 2003), 275-308.

<sup>146</sup> Translation taken from F. Garcia Martinez *The Dead Sea Scrolls Translated: The Qumran Texts Translated* (trans. W.G.E Watson; 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed; Brill: Leiden, 1996), 6-7.

A similar argument has been made by Crispin Fletcher-Louis,<sup>147</sup> who has made a more extensive examination of the subject within the Dead Sea Scrolls and related literature. His study essentially proposes that a thoroughgoing “angelomorphism” is operative in many of the Dead Sea Scrolls, particularly in liturgical contexts, in which the members of the community are transformed into angelic figures and are, essentially, divinised. Carol Newsom’s review of Fletcher-Louis’ work makes two telling criticisms: first, that he is guilty of seeing his favourite topic under every stone that he turns and, second, that his appreciation of language is rather flat, incapable of dealing with the colourful metaphors often used in literary contexts that are not intended to be taken literally, as Fletcher-Louis seems to do.<sup>148</sup> Nevertheless, these criticisms do not take away from the fact that he has identified just how prevalent the notion of “glory” is in the Scrolls and how, in many cases, this glory seems to be presented using Edenic imagery. The findings of this, and the last, chapter, then, are not concerned with an idea that emerges only in *4QInstruction*, but rather with an idea fairly well attested in the Scrolls and in Semitic-Christian literature of a later period and well-acknowledged by scholarship.

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<sup>147</sup> C. Fletcher-Louis, *All the Glory of Adam: Liturgical Anthropology in the Dead Sea Scrolls* (STDJ 42; Leiden: Brill, 2002).

<sup>148</sup> Carol A. Newsom. Review of C.T. Fletcher-Louis, *All the Glory of Adam*, *DSD* 10 (2003) 431-5.

## Chapter Conclusions

This chapter examined the relationship of the underlying inaugurated eschatology of *1 Enoch* and *4QInstruction* to the kind of forms used in these texts and to the nature of their ethical teaching. In the case of *1 Enoch*, it was noted that the text draws on forms from both the prophetic and sapiential traditions, breaking down the distinction between the two under the influence of the governing paradigm of revealed wisdom. This conclusion should be brought to bear on redactional assessments of gospel/pre-gospel material that have unduly assumed that sapiential and apocalyptic elements reflect different ideologies and, thus, different strata. In the case of *4QInstruction*, it was noted that the text primarily employs the form of the admonition, and that this may include motive clauses utilising both future judgement and creation-patterns. This point supports the claim made in chapter 2 that the community perceives itself to constitute an oasis of restored creation. It also provides important information regarding the way in which eschatology can function within paraenesis: it is too simplistic to assume that the only paraenetic material that should be regarded as “eschatological” or “apocalyptic” is material referring to a future judgement. The eschatological paradigm operative in *4QInstruction* means that, ultimately, all ethical behaviour is eschatological insofar as it represents the recovery of a state of fidelity to patterns within creation, facilitated by the eschatological revelation of wisdom.

Despite their generic differences, therefore, both texts share the idea that the *eschaton* is inaugurated by the revealing of heavenly wisdom, a revealing that has two dimensions: on one hand, a body of wisdom, perhaps made known by an individual revealer figure; on the other, the divine enabling of the remnant community to understand and receive this body of wisdom. The centrality of the concept of wisdom, albeit of a revealed kind, facilitates the

uptake of forms and ideas from the sapiential tradition, while the apocalyptic (revealed) character of this wisdom facilitates the uptake of ideas from the apocalyptic and prophetic traditions. The mixing and fusion of forms and ideas from the two traditions is, therefore, only to be expected. This fact has important implications for redaction- and form-critical approaches to the gospels that have assumed that the presence of forms and elements from each tradition necessarily reflects distinct worldviews and therefore distinct strata.

## **Conclusions to Part 1**

**Part 1** of this study has examined two texts that show a mingling of sapiential and apocalyptic features. The study was intended to ascertain whether these very different texts have certain underlying concepts in common that might help to explain why, despite generic differences, they share a tendency to mix sapiential and apocalyptic features.

The study of *1 Enoch* and *4QInstruction* provided support for the idea that Jewish texts of the Second Temple period could be characterised by an eschatology best described as inaugurated. Moreover, the key role played in this inauguration by the revealing of wisdom was noted. If we construe this eschatology as a narrative or metanarrative then we can see that despite their generic differences both texts are built upon a similar narrative: the past involves the spoiling of God's good world by sin, a spoiling that will be transformed in the future when God appears in judgement, an event preceded by the establishment of a remnant community to whom a salvific wisdom has been revealed.

When this metanarrative is appreciated, the presence of elements usually designated sapiential or apocalyptic is unsurprising. If such a metanarrative underlies a text, then we expect to find references to the coming judgement, to resurrection of the dead, to the reversal of fortunes and so on. But we also, given the stress on the revealing of wisdom, would expect to find the kind of material associated with the wise: instructional material comprising admonitions and reflections on creation, et cetera. The fact that the operative concept of wisdom is different from the traditional concept (of a wisdom immanent in creation) is important, but does not mean that the forms in our texts have become radically dissimilar to their traditional counterparts. More



striking is that this concept of wisdom allows for a juxtaposing and fusing of sapiential material with prophetic material.

It will be important for our study of Matthew, therefore, not to separate all of the forms used from one another, subsuming them under the headings “sapiential” and “apocalyptic,” but rather to appreciate what their role might be within the narrative of the gospel, in relation to the metanarrative that underlies it. Indeed, I would suggest that there is little benefit, from a tradition-history point of view, in focusing on the presence of forms generally associated with one tradition or another: if similar concepts are operative in Matthew’s gospel as are operative in *1 Enoch* and *4QInstruction*, then formal and genre-based distinctions are likely to dissolve, even as they have in these texts.

## **Part Two : The Gospel of Matthew**

## **Chapter 4**

### **Revealed Wisdom and Restored Creation in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7)**

The first part of this study examined a small number of Jewish texts; texts chosen because, like Matthew's Gospel, they exhibit features of both the wisdom and the apocalyptic genres. A cluster of inter-related features was noted, centred on the possession of eschatologically revealed wisdom and including the idea of a restored creation. These concepts help to explain the presence in each of these works of elements from both genres: the revealing of wisdom is characteristic of the apocalypses, yet it is a concept that by its very nature lends itself to a reappropriation of forms associated with traditional wisdom. Moreover, where traditional wisdom draws on the idea that there are certain patterns in creation, with which the wise seek to live in accordance, the texts studied in **Part 1** seem to reflect the idea that only those to whom wisdom has been eschatologically revealed – the true wise – will live according to these; they thus constitute a community within which the design plan of creation has been restored.

The question may now be asked: Are these concepts operative in Matthew's Gospel and might they, therefore, cast light on the relationship of sapiential and apocalyptic elements within that gospel? The purpose of the present chapter is to ask this question of the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7). To approach this question in a satisfactory manner, however, it is necessary to examine the narrative of chapters 1-4 in order that the passage under examination is properly contextualised. Such a study must itself be preceded by a discussion of the origins of

Matthew's gospel and of the extent to which assumptions regarding this origin should be allowed to affect the present study.

## The Provenance, Date and Authorship of Matthew

Since Streeter's seminal work on the gospels<sup>1</sup> it has largely been assumed by scholars that Matthew's gospel was written in Syrian Antioch, probably in the 80s. Regarding the date, it is generally held that Matthew is dependent upon Mark (c.65) and must, therefore have been written some time after this. In addition, some parts of the gospel (22:7; 23:38, parts of chapter 24) are understood as detailed *ex eventu* references to the fall of Jerusalem in 70 C.E. Finally, the level of degeneration of Jewish-Christian relations held to be reflected by some parts of the gospel are believed to reflect a post-85 C.E. situation, possibly after the introduction of the so called *Birkat ha-Minim*. Regarding provenance, the strongly Jewish character of the gospel points to a locality in which the Jewish population was strong, probably in an urban centre.<sup>2</sup> In addition, the extent to which Matthew would later influence the Didache and the writings of Ignatius, both associated with Syria (the latter specifically with Antioch) has been seen as supporting the Antiochene connection.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> B.H. Streeter, *The Four Gospels: A Study of Origins*, (London: Macmillan, 1924), 520-3.

<sup>2</sup> Gerd Thiessen has proposed a more rural setting in Syria, based on the fact that, as he understands it, the work is "theologically much closer to the Didache than to the Antiochene bishop Ignatius, whose abstract paradoxes are out of harmony with Matthew." *The Gospels in Context: Social and Political History in the Synoptic Tradition* (trans. Linda M. Maloney; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991), 251.

<sup>3</sup> For a more in-depth discussion of the background of Matthew, see the various contributions to D.L. Balch, ed., *Social History of the Matthean Community: Cross Disciplinary Approaches* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991),

These arguments, however, are not universally held to be convincing. Donald Hagner<sup>4</sup> and R.T. France<sup>5</sup> have each called into question whether the conclusions given above are actually required by the evidence.<sup>6</sup> First, it is not universally agreed that Matthew draws upon Mark, and even if it does, we do not require a long period of time to have elapsed between the writing of the two works.<sup>7</sup> Second, in Hagner's opinion the fact that Matthew does not seek to disentangle the fall of Jerusalem from the end of the age in his redaction of the Markan eschatological discourse (cf. Luke's version of this) suggests that the destruction of Jerusalem had not yet happened.<sup>8</sup> This line of evidence may be reinforced by the presence of redactional material, unique to Matthew, which refers to practices relating to the temple (5:23-4; 17:24-7; 23:16-22).<sup>9</sup> Third, the question of Jewish-Christian relations, including the possible impact of the *birkat ha-minim*, is complicated and notoriously problematic as a basis for establishing dates.<sup>10</sup> Finally, regarding the

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especially J.D. Kingsbury, "Conclusion: Analysis of a Conversation," 264-65.

<sup>4</sup> Hagner, *Matthew 1-13*, Word Biblical Commentary 33A (Waco: Word, 1993) lxxiii-lxxv.

<sup>5</sup> France, *Matthew*, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 1985) 27-30.

<sup>6</sup> Detailed arguments for an early date are also provided by Robert H. Gundry, *Matthew: A Commentary on his Literary and Theological Art* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982), 599-609.

<sup>7</sup> Hagner, *Matthew 1-13*, lxxiv, comments "Matthew needs only to have been written after Mark – and there is no reason why this needs to have been more than a year or two later, if that." France, *Matthew*, 28, notes also evidence that Clement of Alexandria, unlike most patristic writers, believed Mark to have been written while Peter was still alive, pushing the date of that gospel back.

<sup>8</sup> The question of how the fall of Jerusalem, and specifically the temple, operates within the eschatological schema of Matthew will be taken up in **Chapter 6**.

<sup>9</sup> See Gundry, *Matthew*, 604-5.

<sup>10</sup> See Reuben Kimelman, "Birkat Ha-Minim and the Lack of Evidence for an Anti-Christian Jewish Prayer in Late Antiquity" in Sanders (ed.) *Jewish and Christian Self-Definition*, 226-44. Kimelman is challenged by Lawrence

provenance of the work, Hagner notes the fact “that Antioch is such an attractive hypothesis because we happen to know more about it than about most other cities. It is worth reminding ourselves that Antioch is only a good guess.”<sup>11</sup>

Since a measure of uncertainty must remain regarding both the date and provenance of Matthew, no assumptions will be made in the present study as to either of these issues. It is questionable whether a commitment to one view or another would make a great deal of difference to this study, which is concerned with the literary features of the gospel rather than the socio-historical issues relating to a hypothetical Matthean community.

Regarding authorship, tradition has ascribed the gospel to the disciple Matthew,<sup>12</sup> though few modern scholars would entertain this as a possibility.<sup>13</sup> In the present study, the name Matthew will be used to denote the author of the gospel, though no assumptions will be made as to the true identity of this author. Again, it is arguable that such assumptions should have little impact on a study of the literary features of the gospel. The question of authorship is usually tied to questions concerning the historical context of the gospel, specifically, where it fits within Jewish-Christian relations and the “Parting of the Ways.” The question of the relationship between Christianity and Judaism, and of whether their ways ever truly parted in the early

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Schiffman in *Who Was a Jew: Rabbinic and Halakhic Perspectives on the Jewish Christian Schism*, (Hoboken: Ktav, 1985), 53-61. Kimelman’s view is given further support and defence by Stephen T. Katz, “Issues in the Separation of Judaism and Christianity after 70 C.E.: A Reconsideration,” *JBL* 103 (1984), 43-76.

<sup>11</sup> Hagner, *Matthew 1-13*, lxxv.

<sup>12</sup> The earliest witness to this tradition is found in a statement made by Papias of Hieropolis (dated to the early second century) and cited in Eusebius, *H.E.* 3:39:16.

<sup>13</sup> France, *Matthew*, 30-4, provides argumentation in support of the traditional view, though he warns that “none of this adds up to anything like proof of authorship.”

centuries of the Common Era, is a complicated one, as the comments of Annette Yoshiko Reed and Adam Becker, with regard to the traditional concept of the “Parting,” highlight:

Our literary and archaeological data ... attest a far messier reality than this unilinear spatial metaphor allows.<sup>14</sup>

The relevance of this to the present study is that the desire to locate Matthew within an overly simplistic model of the “Parting of the Ways” can easily lead to the neglect of a proper sensitivity to its literary features.<sup>15</sup> If it is located within anti-Jewish Christianity, then the similarity of those features to other Jewish writings may be ignored or neglected; if it is located within Judaism, then dissimilarities may be ignored in the drive to prove its Jewishness. Since, as Donald Senior comments, “virtually every commentator on Matthew will affirm that this Gospel has strong roots in Judaism and is concerned with issues of traditional importance to Judaism,”<sup>16</sup> it seems best to acknowledge the Jewishness of the Gospel, albeit a Jewishness of a particular and possibly derivative kind, allowing this to provide us with an appropriate conceptual context for our

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<sup>14</sup> Annette Yoshiko Reed and Adam Becker, “Introduction: Traditional Models and New Directions,” in Reed and Becker, eds, *The Ways that Never Parted: Jews and Christians in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages*, TSAJ 95, (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003), 2.

<sup>15</sup> See Anthony J. Saldarini’s comments to this effect, in *Matthew’s Jewish-Christian Community*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 11-12. His own discussion of Jewish-Christian relations is found on pages 12-26. For an overview of the various major proposals as to how Matthew’s gospel relates to Judaism, see Donald Senior, “Directions in Matthean Studies,” in *The Gospel of Matthew in Current Study*, edited by David E. Aune, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001), 7-10.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 11.

interpretation, but also to be aware that this context is a broad, variegated one within which “Judaism” denotes a loose collective.<sup>17</sup>

## The Beginnings of the Matthean Narrative: Matthew 1-4

### a. Fulfilment

There is huge amount of secondary material on Matthew 1-4, a great deal more than can be examined in what is, after all, only a preamble to the primary focus of this chapter. I shall, therefore, focus on one particular study, that of David Bauer, which is concerned with the genealogy of Matthew 1:2-16 and its relationship to the wider context of 1:1-4:17.<sup>18</sup> Bauer’s study employs narrative criticism, but does so in a way that interacts with other methodologies and thus provides one of the most comprehensive and satisfying examinations of these verses to date.<sup>19</sup>

Bauer begins his study by examining Matthew 1:1, which reads, Βίβλος γενέσεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ υἱοῦ Δαυὶδ υἱοῦ Ἀβραάμ. This verse refers, in the first instance, to the genealogy that follows, which expands the readers’ awareness of that narrative world and requires us to extend

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<sup>17</sup> This is not to ignore the complex issues that surround the relationship of Matthew’s intended readership to the Jewish parent group, but simply to stress that however we understand that relationship, the Jewish character of Matthew’s work is not in question.

<sup>18</sup> David R. Bauer, “The ... Function of the Genealogy.” This study has been discussed already as it provides a helpful discussion of the principles involved in the narrative-critical approach. See **Chapter 1**.

<sup>19</sup> I shall focus on the first part of Bauer’s study, which focuses on the genealogy, and make only brief references to the remaining part of his article.



our concept of that world to include the Old Testament narrative.<sup>20</sup> A question of some significance, addressed by Bauer, is whether the phrase βίβλος γενέσεως should be understood as a title to the gospel as a whole, to the genealogy only or to the introductory chapters of the gospel. The first possibility is taken by W.D. Davies,<sup>21</sup> for whom it provides a starting point for his assertion that the gospel as a whole should be understood as describing a new beginning, a new creation. The basis for such a proposal is the connection between the phrase and the LXX translation of Genesis 2:4 and 5:1,<sup>22</sup> where it renders the term תולדות. Hagner cautions against the kind of reading taken by Davies,<sup>23</sup> since the term clearly points, in Matthew 1:1, to the “genesis” of Jesus himself. More detailed arguments against Davies are provided by Bauer,<sup>24</sup> whose rejection of Davies’ arguments is not, however, a rejection of the connection with the Genesis texts. In fact, on the strength of the fact that in Gen 2:4 the phrase introduces a narrative, rather than simply a genealogy, he suggests that Matthew “may therefore be drawing the attention of the ‘implied reader,’ who knows the OT and is directed to the OT repeatedly by Matthew, to a use of the phrase that involves more than a genealogical list.”<sup>25</sup>

Bauer proceeds to notice the ways in which the genealogy establishes certain themes that are developed up to 4:17, which he sees as closing the section introduced by the βίβλος γενέσεως

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<sup>20</sup> See David R. Bauer, “The ... Function of the Genealogy,” 132.

<sup>21</sup> W. D. Davies, *The Setting of the Sermon on the Mount*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1964), 69-72; see also Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:149-60.

<sup>22</sup> Davies and others have also enlarged these very specific contact points to include other occurrences of “genesis” language, in the LXX title and in Gen 6:9 and 37:2. See Bauer, “The ... Function of the Genealogy,” 134-5.

<sup>23</sup> Hagner, *Matthew 1-13*, 9.

<sup>24</sup> Bauer, “The ... Function of the Genealogy,” 134-37.

<sup>25</sup> Bauer, “The ... Function of the Genealogy,” 134

reference. It is worth tracing several of his points in a little detail. He notes, first of all, the fact that βίβλος γενέσεως refers to Jesus (the descendant) rather than to Abraham (the forefather), a surprising fact since this is the opposite of the genealogies in Genesis. He comments,

The unusual practice here of entitling a genealogy according to the name of the last descendant serves to subordinate the forefathers to this last descendant and indicates that they gain their meaning and identity from the final progeny, i.e., from Christ.<sup>26</sup>

He then argues that the genealogy finds its climax in Matthew 1:16, in which the birth of Jesus, “who is called Christ” is mentioned:

As the high point of culmination toward which all of Israel’s history has been moving, Jesus the Christ gives meaning and significance to that history ... This affirmation, made here in the genealogy, forms the theological and hermeneutical basis for the “fulfilment quotations” that punctuate the narrative of the gospel.<sup>27</sup>

Having derived these points from the structural arrangement of the genealogy, Bauer then notes two features of the genealogy. The first is the presence of references to “brothers” in verses 2 and 11. The first reference he notes as being connected to the birth of Israel as a nation, referring as it does to the brothers of Judah (thus introducing the idea of the twelve tribes, that is *all* Israel, rather than simply the tribe to which Jesus belonged):

This reference forms the basis for the presentation, found throughout Matthew’s Gospel of Israel as the son/sons of God, with the privileges and potential that belonged to that role, including possession of the kingdom of God.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid., 140.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., 142. Bauer also argues that 1:1-16 has a chiastic structure that emphasises the title “Christ.” On the fulfilment quotations, see below.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 144.

The latter reference to brothers he notes as being connected to the deportation to Babylon:

Here the people are pictured, not as recipients of covenant, election and promise, but as objects of judgement ... The only event Matthew mentions in the genealogy of Matthew is the Deportation to Babylon, for, as far as he is concerned, this event most accurately depicts the essential character of Israel's history.<sup>29</sup>

Such a theme within the genealogy has obvious connections with the presentation of John's ministry in 3:1-2, as he calls for repentance in the light of the imminence of the kingdom.

The second feature of the genealogy that Bauer notes is the presence of references to women: Tamar (v.3), Rahab (v.5), Ruth (v.5), Bathsheba (v.6) and Mary (v.16). Examining the various options proposed by scholars to explain these references, he suggests that strongest case is to be made for the idea that, with the exception of Mary, they serve to draw attention to the inclusion of Gentiles into the kingdom, thus fulfilling that aspect of the promise made to Abraham that in him, all nations of the earth would be blessed (Gen 12:3).<sup>30</sup> The mention of Mary serves a different purpose: her inclusion anchors the genealogy to the subsequent narrative of the virginal conception and thus to the unique role that God played in the birth of Jesus:

The mention of Mary does not draw attention to her own role as much as it does to the role of God, in that it indicates that Jesus was not the natural son of Joseph, but was the Son of God. In 1:18-25, the emphasis is upon neither the role or character of Mary, nor the anomalous character of the birth, but rather on the divine origin of Jesus.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid., 145-46.

<sup>30</sup> Bauer, 148-49 presents good arguments against A.J. Levine's objections to regarding the women as Gentiles. See *The Social and Ethnic Dimensions of Matthean Salvation History: "Go Nowhere Among the Gentiles ..."* (Matt. 10:56), (Studies in the Bible and Early Christianity 14; New York: Mellen, 1988), 59-88.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., 147-50. These are the primary goals of the references to the women mentioned by Bauer, but he also

This feature allows Bauer to see a connection between the genealogy and the Son of God Christology argued for by Kingsbury.<sup>32</sup>

Bauer's final observation on the genealogy itself<sup>33</sup> is that the breakdown of the genealogy into groups of fourteen generations in 1:17, each culminating with key moments in Israel's history (David's birth in 1:6; the exile in 1:11; the Christ in 1:16), while possibly an instance of *gematria* on David's name,<sup>34</sup> also suggests to the reader a sense of divine purpose within history and, thus, emphasises the ideas isolated above.<sup>35</sup>

What this discussion highlights is that the genealogy, as the "entry point to the narrative world of Matthew,"<sup>36</sup> above all else seems intended to establish the "present time" of the Matthean narrative as the time of fulfilment.<sup>37</sup> The sense of fulfilment is developed by the

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suggests that their marginal status is of significance.

<sup>32</sup> J.D. Kingsbury, *Matthew: Structure, Christology, Kingdom*, (London: SPCK, 1976).

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., 150-152.

<sup>34</sup> See Raymond Brown, *The Birth of the Messiah* (New York: Doubleday, 1977), 69-70.

<sup>35</sup> Bauer, "The ... Function of the Genealogy," 152, has an extended footnote that raises problems with the view that has seen the genealogy as reflecting a chronology derived from the Apocalypse of Weeks. His principal argument is that the focus in Matthew is on the divisibility of the genealogy by the number fourteen, rather than on the total number forty-two (which might otherwise correspond to the end of the sixth week). Still, it is interesting that both see history as being ordered by God into periods based around the number seven; Matthew's genealogy could be seen as arranging history into fortnights. I would be uncomfortable in pushing this too far, however, and would rather not base any conclusions upon such an argument.

<sup>36</sup> I am here paraphrasing the language of Bauer, *ibid.*, 156-59.

<sup>37</sup> The fact that the genealogy ultimately goes back to Abraham (1:1-2) has been noted and developed by Blaine Charette (*The Theme of Recompense in Matthew's Gospel*, 64-72), who sees the significance of the reference to Abraham here, and at further points in the narrative, as deliberately suggestive of the covenant made in Genesis 12:1-

Scriptural quotations employed in the opening chapters of the gospel and often introduced by a passive form of the verb πληρόω (“to fulfil”). Such quotations are found in 1:22-23; 2:5-6; 2:15, 17-18, 23; 3:3 (where it is used of John) and 4:14-16. Each of these quotations is intended to suggest that the coming of Jesus, and the events surrounding that advent, are the fulfilment of prophecies and expectations found within the Hebrew Scriptures.

## **b. New Beginning**

An obvious corollary of this emphasis on fulfilment in the opening chapters of Matthew, however, is the idea that the events surrounding the coming of Jesus signify a new beginning for God's people. This idea has been suggested from a narrative–critical point of view by Perry Kea,<sup>38</sup> who has argued that the genealogy and fulfilment quotations convey such a sense:

The new time evoked by Jesus's presence is a time of eschatological joy and blessing.<sup>39</sup>

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3 and reiterated in Gen 15, a covenant which, of course, is of profound significance within Deuteronomic theology. Such a background, according to Charette, suggests that the idea of the restoration of the land to God's people, and the lifting of curses from it, will be a major theme in the gospel that is introduced by this genealogy.

<sup>38</sup> Perry Kea, “The Sermon on the Mount: Ethics and Eschatological Time,” *SBLSP 1986*, 88-98.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, 91. Kea uses the language that the “plotted time” of Matthew's gospel is a “middle time,” bringing to fulfilment expectations from the past of Matthew's narrative world and establishing the necessary “potentiality” for the future. Kea, interestingly, relates this sense of fulfilment and new beginning to Matthew 13:16-17, where the idea of a revelation unavailable to previous generations is in view.

While the use of the term “eschatological” may be premature at this point in our study, the material studied in this and following chapters will support the validity of its use.

As part of this idea of a “new beginning,” it is possible to make a more cautious appropriation of the long-standing belief, advocated by many scholars, that there is a “New Moses” typology operative in the opening chapters of Matthew and, indeed, throughout the gospel.<sup>40</sup> The core ideas cited in defence of such a position include the possibility of the gospel being deliberately structured in five-fold form, as a kind of Matthean Pentateuch,<sup>41</sup> and the presence of deliberate allusions to the opening chapters of Exodus in Matthew 1-4. Caution should be exercised in considering the “New Moses” idea: the structural arguments for a Matthean Pentateuch in particular are generally acknowledged to be problematic.<sup>42</sup> Nevertheless, the suggestion that there are deliberate allusions being made to the Exodus account is, if correct, of major conceptual importance to all that follows and so some assessment of this must be made.

Several features of the narrative of Matthew 1-4 are often taken as intentionally reminiscent of the story of Moses and the Exodus: the flight to Egypt (2:13-15), culminating with the return from Egypt, described as fulfilling the words of Hosea 11:1; the murder of the innocents (2:16-18); and the period of Jesus testing in the wilderness (4:1-11) are the key features. As Davies<sup>43</sup> and France<sup>44</sup> both note, however, much of the imagery often regarded as

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<sup>40</sup> Most recently, Dale C. Allison has developed this point in *The New Moses: A Matthean Typology*, (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1993).

<sup>41</sup> This idea was first expressed in developed form by B.W. Bacon in his “The Five Books of Matthew against the Jews,” *ExpTim* 15 (1918), 55-66 and, in more developed form, in *Studies in Matthew*, (New York: Holt, 1930).

<sup>42</sup> See France's summary of the criticisms of the theory, in: *Matthew: Evangelist and Teacher*, (Exeter: Paternoster, 1989), 142-145.

<sup>43</sup> W.D. Davies, *The Setting of the Sermon on the Mount*, 47-48.

reflecting a New Moses-typology may actually reflect a New Israel-typology.<sup>45</sup> It is surely of note that the passage in Hosea 11:1, cited in Matt 2:15, refers not to Moses but to Israel as a nation. It seems safer, therefore, to speak of a new beginning for Israel, parallel to that experienced in their liberation from Egypt: a new Israel is being birthed in the coming of Jesus.

If correct, however, this point still leaves open an important connection with Moses, for at the heart of the Exodus account is the idea of a revelation being made to Israel through that figure. If, therefore, allusion is being made to the Exodus, and that allusion is intended to suggest that a new Israel is being born, then the reader may expect to find an evidence of a fresh revelation being made, of a “new Sinai.” As the study turns to the Sermon on the Mount, I shall argue that this block of teaching is presented in precisely these terms and thus presents itself as a work of radical newness.

### **Wisdom Ideas in the Gospel’s Introduction?**

Before turning to Matthew 5-7, one aspect of the opening chapters of Matthew deserves further attention, that of the visit of the Magi (2:1-12). Witherington<sup>46</sup> connects this feature with the depiction of Jesus as the Son of David, the one greater than Solomon, whom we would expect seers or counsellors to visit. Witherington's overall view of Matthew's gospel - that it portrays Jesus as “the one greater than Solomon,” and draws primarily upon a Wisdom-Christology – has been provisionally critiqued already and will be properly assessed in the next chapter and in the

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<sup>44</sup> France, *Matthew: Evangelist and Teacher*, 186.

<sup>45</sup> So, too, Witherington, *Jesus the Sage*, 350.

<sup>46</sup> Witherington, *Jesus the Sage*, 353.

conclusion of this study; at this stage, it is sufficient to note that the presence of figures representative of wisdom, who have specifically come to honour Jesus, prepares the reader for the fact that Jesus will likewise be a figure of wisdom. Furthermore, the fact that foreign sages are coming to worship him suggests that his wisdom will not just be for the descendants of Abraham, but for the whole world, an idea at home in some of the eschatological scenarios we have studied already and which will connect with ideas that will be developed in later chapters. Finally, it may be noted that as figures of wisdom, the magi probably represent “mantic wisdom,” setting the stage for the great transmitter of revealed wisdom.

## **Revealed Wisdom in the Sermon on the Mount**

### **i. Jesus, Revelation and Law**

The opening chapters of Matthew's gospel, then, prepare its reader for a story of momentous import: it is (certainly) presented as being the time of the fulfilment of Old Testament expectation, and (possibly) as the time of Israel's re-birth. At its heart is Jesus, the Son of David taking his rightful place as anointed king. That king enters the world in the midst of events reminiscent of the Exodus and undergoes a time of testing in the wilderness similar to that experienced by Israel, but with one great difference: where his forefathers failed, Jesus triumphs.<sup>47</sup> It is within such a dramatic context, then, that the Sermon on the Mount is encountered by the reader of Matthew's Gospel. It is, therefore, hardly surprising to find an emphasis on the uniqueness of Jesus' authority within the Sermon. We must examine this

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<sup>47</sup>See Psalm 95:7-11 for this idea of failed testing in the wilderness.



emphasis and ask whether it reflects the idea of eschatologically revealed wisdom that we have seen in Part 1.

Matthew brackets the Sermon with references that suggest the authority of Jesus over and against the leaders of the day. The significance of Jesus' sitting to teach in 5:1 has been frequently noted,<sup>48</sup> as has the response of the crowd to his teaching in 7:28-9: astonishment (ἐξεπλήσσοντο) at his authority, which is specifically contrasted with that of the scribes (ἦν γὰρ διδάσκων αὐτοὺς ὡς ἐξουσίαν ἔχων καὶ οὐχ ὡς οἱ γραμματεῖς αὐτῶν).<sup>49</sup> Several features of the narrative make it difficult to reduce this authority, as does Betz,<sup>50</sup> to simply that of a rabbi, albeit a venerated one.

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<sup>48</sup> See, Hagner, *Matthew 1-13*, (Waco: Word, 1993), 86; Luz, *Matthew 1-7: A Commentary*, (trans. W.C. Linss, Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1990), 224; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:424; Gundry, *Matthew*, 66. The reference to sitting is not found in Luke.

<sup>49</sup> Matthew's language here echoes that found in Mark 1:22 (see also Luke 4:32). In both of these accounts it is linked to Jesus teaching in the synagogue in Capernaum. Matthew is unique not only in shifting the crowd's reaction to this point in the narrative, but also in allowing the reader access to the teaching that elicits the response. In Matthew, it is specifically the content of the Sermon on the Mount that is presented as coming with such authority. From a narrational point of view, then, the response of the crowds highlights the remarkable authority embodied in the Sermon.

<sup>50</sup> H.D. Betz, "The Problem of Christology in the Sermon on the Mount," in T.W. Jennings, ed., *Text and Logos: The Humanistic Interpretation of the New Testament, (Festschrift for Hendrikus W. Boers)* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1990), 191-209.

First, the mountaintop setting is suggestive of Moses-type imagery.<sup>51</sup> There are, as has been seen, clear allusions being made in the opening chapters of Matthew to the Exodus narrative, and this prepares the reader for the idea that some fresh revelation will be made by God as it was in the original Exodus. Given such a context, it is hard to resist the idea that the mountaintop scene of Matthew 5:1 is intended to parallel Sinai in some sense. Davies and Allison specifically argue that the use of “when he had gone up . . . when he had come down” (5:1; 8:1) at the beginning and end of the Sermon reinforce the Mosaic connotations.<sup>52</sup> This aspect of the setting may be contrasted with that of Luke, who presents this teaching as being delivered on a level place (Luke 6:17).

Second, moving in from the two ends of the Sermon, further elements in Jesus’ language suggest that his message comes with a level of authority that can only be described as divine. Leaving aside for the time being the block of teaching known as the Beatitudes and the discussion of the Law in 5:17-20, the language used in the so-called “antitheses” (5:21-48) should be noted.<sup>53</sup> Here, Jesus dialogues with familiar tradition regarding the keeping of the Law, introducing these traditions with the words, “You have heard that it was said . . .” (Ἠκούσατε ὅτι ἐρρέθη) before introducing his own teaching with the words “But I say to you . . .” (ἐγὼ δὲ λέγω ὑμῖν). The combination of phrases has been understood by Hans Dieter Betz as introducing

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<sup>51</sup> For a full discussion of the Mosaic allusions, including a refutation of those who disagree that such allusions are present here, see Allison, *The New Moses*, 172-80. While unconvinced by Allison’s thesis as a whole, I find this specific section of it to be well argued.

<sup>52</sup> *Matthew*, 1:424. See also Allison’s comments, *The New Moses*, 179-180, for this last point.

<sup>53</sup> While much of the material found in the antitheses is found also in Luke, the arrangement in “antithetical” form is unique to Matthew.

rabbinic debate over tradition.<sup>54</sup> But the view that Jesus is simply introducing his own teaching as a rabbinic counter-position is problematic for two reasons. First, Martin Hengel has argued that the word ὑμῖν does not occur in the introduction of rabbinic counter-positions and so, on formal grounds Betz's position is problematic.<sup>55</sup> Second, and more importantly, there is a lack of exegetical support in the argumentation of Jesus. He does not seek to provide a basis for what he says in the authority of Scripture; rather the authority is entirely his own. Such a feature is not consonant with the notion that his authority is simply that of a rabbi – in such a case we would expect exegetical support to be adduced - but it is consonant with the idea that his authority is that of a revealer of the divine will.<sup>56</sup>

This point is reinforced at the other end of the Sermon by the words in 7:24&26: “Anyone who hears these words of mine . . .” (Πᾶς οὖν ὅστις ἀκούει μου τοὺς λόγους τούτους). Two points should be noted here regarding these words. First, if the general agreement that the parable of the wise and foolish builders is eschatological in nature<sup>57</sup> is correct, then fidelity to the words

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<sup>54</sup> Hans Dieter Betz, *The Sermon on the Mount: A Commentary on the Sermon on the Mount, Including the Sermon on the Plain (Matthew 5:3-7:27 and Luke 6:20-49)*, (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995), 215.

<sup>55</sup> M. Hengel, “Zur matthäischen Bergpredigt und ihrem jüdischen Hintergrund,” *TRu* 52 (1987) 376. Also, see Hagner, *Matthew 1-13*, 111. See also the further discussion of this passage below, which will deal more fully with the question of precisely what is being interacted with and the nature of that interaction.

<sup>56</sup> Regarding the distinction with rabbinic argumentation, note also the comments of David Daube (*The New Testament and Rabbinic Judaism* [London: Athlone Press, 1956], 57-58) regarding the antitheses: “The tone is not academic but final, prophetic, maybe somewhat defiant. Nor is there any reasoning.”

<sup>57</sup> See Bornkamm, “End-Expectation and Church in Matthew,” in G. Bornkamm, G. Barth and H.J. Held, *Tradition and Interpretation in Matthew*, (trans. P. Scott ; London: SCM Press, 1963), 16-17; also Daniel Marguerat, *Le Jugement dans l'Evangile de Matthieu*, 22, 24, 203-211.

uttered by Jesus serves as the criterion by which the wise and the foolish are judged, a startling re-appropriation of the role formerly played by Torah. Second, the use of “rock” imagery in the parable draws upon imagery associated with God himself,<sup>58</sup> thus again reinforcing the impression that the authority of Jesus’ words is nothing less than that of God. The Christological dimensions of this point may only be properly discussed in the context of the gospel as a whole. At the present stage of the discussion, it is appropriate only to note that the language accords, at the very least, the status of divine revelation to Jesus’ teaching.

The passage in 5:17-20 that deals with the question of the relationship of Jesus to the Law may now be dealt with. Discussions of these verses have focused on the significance of ἦλθον (“I have come”), πληρῶσαι (“to fulfil”) and the double occurrence of ἕως ἂν (“until”) in 5:18. Most would agree that in the context of the gospel, and especially in the light of the “fulfilment” emphasis throughout the opening chapters of Matthew,<sup>59</sup> ἦλθον should be understood as having eschatological connotations.<sup>60</sup> There is less agreement, however, about πληρῶσαι and ἕως ἂν.

The use of πληρῶσαι has broadly been understood in three ways:<sup>61</sup> 1) to keep the ethical commands of the Law<sup>62</sup> 2) to fulfil the prophecies and types of Jesus’ life and ministry (and possibly his death)<sup>63</sup> 3) to teach the law in such a way as to bring out its definitive meaning,

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<sup>58</sup> See, for example, Gen 49:24; Deut 32:4, 18, 30, 31, 37; 1Sam 2:2; 22:47; Psalm 89:26; 94:22; 95:1. Many other examples could be cited.

<sup>59</sup> See, for instance, Matt. 1:22; 2:15,17; 2:23; 3:15; 4:14, as well as our discussion of new Moses/Israel typology.

<sup>60</sup> See the discussion in Marguerat, *Le Jugement*, 124.

<sup>61</sup> I am here following the breakdown offered by Hagner, *Matthew 1-13*, 105-6

<sup>62</sup> So Luz, *Matthew 1-7*, 260-5; Marguerat, *Le Jugement*, 131.

<sup>63</sup> Gundry, *Matthew*, 78-81.

possibly by adding to it.<sup>64</sup> It is surely of some importance that almost all of the occurrences of πληρόω in Matthew refer to the fulfilment of prophecy<sup>65</sup> and that the reference here is to both the Law and the Prophets, so that a simple reduction of meaning to “obedience” is impossible. Nevertheless, the fact that the text goes on to speak of the judgement that awaits those who diminish the importance of the Law (19-20) means that the ethical dimension of “keeping” the Law remains central to the text. This point is of fundamental importance: whatever disagreements may be held by scholars regarding these phrases, it is beyond doubt that they reflect the highest possible respect for the Law.

This is a crucial departure point for discussions of the antitheses. As Jesus delivers his teaching with the words, “But I say to you . . .,” it is regarded by some scholars as impossible that this should refer to the Law, given the preceding statements, and that instead it must refer to rabbinic interpretations.<sup>66</sup> Three points, however, require to be taken into account. First, as Gundry notes,<sup>67</sup> the adversative is weak: δὲ is used, rather than the much stronger ἀλλὰ. Second, the common drift of each of the so-called antitheses is towards intensification of the commandments, a fact that may suggest that we are party to more than just the to and fro of rabbinic argument. The terminology of “antithesis” may in itself, therefore, be misleading, since it suggests *denial* of a command, rather than *intensification*. Third, the fact is that, with the

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<sup>64</sup> Betz’s interpretation should probably also be grouped within this category. See *Sermon on the Mount*, 173-9.

<sup>65</sup> So Matt. 1:22; 2:15,17; 2:23; 3:15; 4:14; 5:17; 8:17; 12:17;13:35; 21:4; 26:54; 26:56; 27:9 (but not 13:48 and 23:32).

<sup>66</sup> See Hagner, *Matthew 1-13*, 111 and, J. Jeremias, *NT Theology* (Trans J. Bowden, 2 vols; London: SCM, 1974), 1:144-45.

<sup>67</sup> Gundry, *Matthew*, 83; also Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:507.

exception of “and hate your enemy” in 5:43,<sup>68</sup> there is no citation of anything but Scripture by Jesus. Betz has argued that the use of ἠκούσατε (“you have heard”) points “by implication”<sup>69</sup> to the hearing of *traditions* concerning the Law, a case he sees as being supported by the reference to the “men of old” (τοῖς ἀρχαίοις).<sup>70</sup> The negative discussion must, therefore, challenge as flawed the *traditional* understanding of the Torah:

Rather than constituting a proof verified by antiquity, the chain of tradition is judged to be a history of error.<sup>71</sup>

Against this, however, stands the fact that what they have heard (with the exception of 5:43) are the very words of the Law: the citation formula in each of the antitheses introduces Scripture. Moreover, it is not clear that when Jesus discusses the practice of implementing the Law in the first antithesis he is implying that there is something *wrong* with this practice, that there is “error,” to use Betz’s language. Ultimately, Betz has based his point on a single possible implication of the word ἠκούσατε, but it is an implication that is not necessary, particularly in a society heavily dependant on oral transmission within which the Torah would primarily have been “heard.”<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> This phrase, of course, is not found in the Law. Some have argued that its background is in the Qumran texts (1QS 1:4, 10-11; 9:21-26). It may, though, reflect the sentiment expressed in Pss. 26:5, 139:21-22 and Deut 7:2, 30:7.

<sup>69</sup> Betz, *Sermon*, 215

<sup>70</sup> John Kampen, “The Sectarian Form of the Antitheses within the Social World of the Matthean Community,” *DSD* 1 (1994), 343-45, provides a helpful discussion of this term, although his eventual conclusion – that it refers, in the Matthean text, to the Qumran sectarians – is based upon slender terminological evidence that ignores the function of this section within the Sermon on the Mount.

<sup>71</sup> Betz, *Sermon*, 215.

<sup>72</sup> For further criticisms of the argument that the reference is to traditional interpretations rather than to the OT itself,

The view that Jesus is countering either traditional views of the Law or rabbinic opinions must, then, be rejected. The interpretation that he is rejecting Torah would, however, seem to go against 5:17-20, so that we are pushed in the direction of agreeing with Davies and Allison that the unfortunately-named antitheses are actually intensifications of Torah, not corrections. Such intensifications imply that there is an inadequacy in the standards found in Torah, which therefore need to be supplemented with revealed wisdom. This idea is similar to that observed in the study of *1 Enoch* and *4QInstruction*.

## ii. Jesus, Eschatology and Pre-Existent Wisdom

In the survey of literature in **Chapter 1**, it was noted that there existed a stream within Jewish thought—testified to particularly by Sirach 24—that saw Torah as “the historical manifestation in Israel of a pre-temporal wisdom.”<sup>73</sup> It was noted that this evidence suggests that wisdom was not to be simply identified with Torah, but was, at least in the understanding of certain writers, the greater category. To quote Witherington, “That Wisdom is embodied or expressed in Torah does not mean it is exhausted thereby.”<sup>74</sup> The centrality of wisdom to creation is important in this context. The idea arises in Proverbs 6:22-31 and possibly in Job 28:25-7 and is sustained in Sirach 39:12-35. Within one of the fragments of *4QInstruction*<sup>75</sup> studied in chapter

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see Gundry, *Matthew*, 84 and Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:506-509.

<sup>73</sup> Gabrielle Boccaccini, *Middle Judaism: Jewish Thought 300 B.C.E.-200C.E.*, (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991), 88-89.

<sup>74</sup> Witherington, *Jesus the Sage*, 96. Against those who simply identify Wisdom with Torah, see Witherington's comments on 98.

<sup>75</sup> 4Q417 li 8-13

3, the idea seems to have been re-appropriated in terms of *סוד נהייה*, the “Mystery of Existence,” the wisdom revealed to the elect upon which creation has been founded. Is it possible that what underlies the antitheses is the idea that the Law is merely an earthly expression of wisdom and that Jesus is now revealing that wisdom in its truest sense? Several lines of argumentation may be drawn.

First, when the Sermon on the Mount is set within the context of Matthew’s gospel it may be seen as part of a work of wisdom and as the words of a figure closely associated with wisdom itself. Crucial to this point is the depiction of Jesus in 11:28-30, which will be discussed in the following chapter. This text almost certainly draws on the imagery of Sirach 6:23ff and 51:26ff. Assuming at this stage that Deutsch<sup>76</sup> and Witherington<sup>77</sup> are correct in arguing for this background to the text, which, of course, is concerned with revelation (11:25-27), then the reader of Matthew’s gospel is challenged to see the Sermon on the Mount as the teaching of one so closely associated with Wisdom that he can speak of himself in terms usually reserved for Wisdom itself. This impression is reinforced by the use of forms within the Sermon that are associated with the Wisdom tradition (parables, beatitudes,<sup>78</sup> et cetera).

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<sup>76</sup> C. Deutsch, *Hidden Wisdom and the Easy Yoke: Wisdom, Torah and Discipleship in Matthew 11:25-30*, (JSNTSup 18; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1987); and “Wisdom in Matthew: Transformation of a Symbol,” *NovT* 32 (1990), 13-47

<sup>77</sup> Witherington, *Jesus the Sage*, 361. Note the repudiation of the challenges levelled by Stanton at the Wisdom associations of this passage.

<sup>78</sup> Note Guelich’s argument that formally the Matthean beatitudes resemble the beatitudes of the Wisdom tradition rather than those found in apocalypses. “Matthean Beatitudes: ‘Entrance-requirements’ or Eschatological Blessings?” *JBL* 95 (1976): 415-434.



Second, the temporal nature of the Torah is reflected in 5:18. There has been much discussion of the two ἕως ἄν clauses and whether they are to be understood differently.<sup>79</sup> The important point at this stage in the discussion, however, is simply that the use of παρέλθῃ (“pass away”) in conjunction with the description of the end of the created realm<sup>80</sup> points, as Betz notes, to the createdness of Torah<sup>81</sup> and its shared transience with creation. The reader of Matthew’s gospel will be struck also by the similarity of this phrase with that found in 24:35:

Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.

The tense may be different, but the same verb (παρέρχομαι) is used. Indeed, so close is the link between the two verses that the Latin manuscript (c) has inserted these words into the text of Matthew 5:18. The point of note should be obvious: Torah is portrayed as an earthly and temporal thing, while Jesus’ teaching is presented as eternal.

Third, the climactic parable of the Sermon on the Mount presents the response to Jesus’ words in terms of wisdom and folly, reinforcing the sapiential impression of the sermon as a whole. Not only does it serve this function, however: the parable clearly equates wisdom with Jesus’ teaching since the wise man is the one who “hears these words of mine and puts them into practice” (7:24).

With these lines of argumentation in place, two other features may now be noted. First, the climax of 5:17-20 is the statement that the righteousness of Jesus’ followers must exceed that

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<sup>79</sup> See the summary of the discussion in Hagner, *Matthew 1-13*, 107

<sup>80</sup> “Heaven and earth” here is a reference to the created realm. The word pair is generally used in Matthew with this sense.

<sup>81</sup> Betz, *The Sermon on the Mount*, 183. Also see Bornkamm, *Gesammelte Aufsätze*, BET 18 (Munich: Chr. Kaiser, 1958), 4.77-8. The eternity of Torah is a later rabbinic idea, so Georg Strecker, *Die Bergpredigt: ein exegetischer Kommentar* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1984), 58, should, therefore, not be followed.

of the scribes and Pharisees. Had the reference here simply been to the Pharisees, then we might see this as to be paralleled with the scorn for the Pharisees seen in the Damascus Document 1:18-20 (as it is generally read). However, with the reference to the scribes also found in the text, it may be suggested that at this point in the text<sup>82</sup> there is nothing pejorative in the mention of these groups and that they are instead mentioned because they constitute two groups known for their commitment to the Law. The challenge of this verse would, then, be for a righteousness that does not diminish the Law, but rather goes beyond it, a notion that would be in keeping with the idea that Torah is but an earthly and therefore inferior expression of heavenly wisdom.

The second point is that the whole discussion of the relationship of Jesus and his teaching to the Law (in 5:17-48) is linked by the “fulfilment” language of 5:17&18 to the opening chapters of Matthew and thus to the emphasis already noted that these chapters present Jesus as the culmination of expectation. This serves to develop a sense of his teaching as being eschatological, but also serves to make that teaching central to Matthew’s eschatology. Again, this represents a significant similarity with the texts studied in **Part 1**.

To conclude this point: the opening chapters of Matthew’s gospel convey the sense that a time of eschatological fulfilment has come and that as Jesus goes up on the mountain a new revelation will be given. His own language within the Sermon on the Mount suggests that his speech carries divine authority and that the wise are distinguished from the foolish on the strength of their response to that teaching. The use of wisdom forms and imagery, particularly seen

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<sup>82</sup> In Matthew 23, both groups will be denounced, but this is a later stage in Matthew’s narrative, after the rejection of Jesus’ wisdom by these groups.

against the background of the gospel as a whole, suggests that wisdom is being revealed in Jesus' words and that this wisdom is of a more fundamental and lasting nature than Torah.

## **Restored Creation in the Sermon on the Mount**

Having established that Jesus is presented as an eschatological revealer in the Sermon on the Mount, the question of whether his revelation is presented as facilitating a recovery of Creation may now be asked.

### **The Beatitudes (5: 5-12): Hoping for a Better World**

There is certainly some suggestion in the beatitudes that open the Sermon of a future in which the Earth will no longer be held under the sway of sinners.<sup>83</sup> The fact that the meek shall "inherit the earth" (5:5) is of note,<sup>84</sup> as is the emphasis on the righteousness (or "justice",

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<sup>83</sup> Perry Kea, "The Sermon on the Mount: Ethics and Eschatological Time," 87-92, notes that the great problem addressed by Jesus' advent is the lack of righteousness in Israel. He highlights, from a narrative point of view, the surprising fact that the Sermon does not open with a call to righteous conduct, but rather with the beatitudes. In Kea's view, this has Christological importance, stressing the presence (or inbreaking) of the kingdom in Jesus Immanuel.

<sup>84</sup>It may be of relevance that the phrase "inherit the earth" occurs in 4Q475, a fragment that speaks of restored creation and a renewed earth. There is no clear reference to the "meek" in this fragment, however; the parallel is, therefore, incomplete. See Elgvin, "Renewed Earth and Restored Creation: 4Q475," in *The Provo International Conference on the Dead Sea Scrolls: Technological Innovations, New Texts and reformulated Issues* (STDJ 30; Leiden: Brill, 1999), 577-91. See also Charette's discussion of the "earth" theme in the Beatitudes in *The Theme of Recompense*, 84-91. Charette sees the reference as being part of Matthew's eschatological scheme, in which the

depending on the translation of δικαιοσύνη<sup>85</sup>) after which some hunger and thirst (5:6).<sup>86</sup> The background of the beatitudes in Isaiah 61 and 66 may also be of some significance, given that the portrayal of the transformation of God's people in that part of the prophetic book climaxes in "new creation" imagery (Is. 65:17-25; 66:22).<sup>87</sup>

### **The Antitheses (5:21-48): Recovering Eden**

More substantial evidence may be seen, however, in the antitheses (5:21-48), in which Jesus cites regulations from the Torah with the words "you have heard it said ..." before providing his own, more intense moral position with the words "but I say unto you ..." Some have seen this as simply reflecting the cut and thrust of rabbinic debate, so that the citation formula refers to the interpretation of Torah taken by Jesus' opponents (and not the Torah itself).<sup>88</sup> The problem with such a view is that what is actually cited is, with the exception of a

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"land" promise of the Abrahamic covenant and Deuteronomic material comes to point towards the renewed earth in the eschaton.

<sup>85</sup> Hagner, *Matthew 1-13*, 93. It is worth noting that the presence of δικαιοσύνη in this verse is generally held to be Matthean redaction. This creates a strong link between this future state and the present behaviour of the disciples in 5:20.

<sup>86</sup> There is an issue here, of course, as to whether the beatitudes should be seen as "eschatological blessings" or "entrance requirements." Guelich, "The Matthean Beatitudes: Entrance Requirements or Eschatological Blessings?," *JBL* 95 (1976), 432-33 and Davies and Allison 1:439-40, argue for the former, while Betz, *Essays on the Sermon on the Mount*, 33, argues for the latter. The discussion will be taken up below.

<sup>87</sup> For this background, see Gundry, *Matthew*, 69-73; Davies and Allison, *Matthew vol i*, 436-9. See also Adrian M. Leske's arguments that the beatitudes and the salt and light sayings (5:13-16) draw heavily upon Isaiah 40-66 ("The Beatitudes, Salt and Light in Matthew and Luke," *SBLSP* 1991, 817-39).

<sup>88</sup> So Betz, *Sermon*, 200-14; also Hagner, *Matthew 1-13*, 111-2. Anthony Saldarini, in *Matthew's Christian-Jewish*

single clause,<sup>89</sup> Torah. The inference of the antitheses seems to be that it is Torah itself that is inadequate and needs to be intensified, rather than the Pharisaic interpretation of it. This point may be reinforced by 5:20, which requires a righteousness that exceeds that of “the Pharisees and the teachers of the law,” the two groups most widely identified as being exemplars of Torah-faithfulness.<sup>90</sup> This does not imply a rejection of Torah (as 5:17-19 make clear), but rather an acknowledgement of its inadequacy.<sup>91</sup>

What is striking about the antitheses is that, with the exception of the final antithesis, no rationale is provided for the intensification of the requirements of Torah: Jesus simply heightens the moral requirements of the regulations and warns of the consequences of transgression. A rationale for each may, however, be found in the design plan of Creation. This is most easily demonstrated in the case of the two antitheses dealing with marital ethics (5:27-30 and 5:31-2). The reader of Matthew’s Gospel as a whole will be struck by the fact that when Jesus returns to the subject of marital ethics in 19:3-12, his moral position is entirely based upon the Creation narrative (19:4-6) and is critical of the Mosaic provision for divorce (19:7-9), of which it is said, “It was not this way from the beginning.” Thus, the Creation provides the true paradigm which the Torah reflects imperfectly. Returning to the Sermon on the Mount, the same reader would

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*Community*, 124-64, also takes this approach, but fails to deal with the issues that are outlined here. In fact, it is a striking omission from his work that he fails to interact with the *antitheses*-unit as a whole, particularly the importance of the contrast established between Jesus’ words and those of Torah by the structural arrangement.

<sup>89</sup> “... and hate your enemy.” (5:43). Even here, however, we might note the closeness of the sentiment to Psalm 139:21-2 before writing it off as unbiblical.

<sup>90</sup> We might paraphrase this verse: “unless your righteousness exceeds that of the best law-keepers, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven.”

<sup>91</sup> Cf. Romans 8:3.

surely read these two antitheses as reflecting Jesus' understanding of the ethics inherent to the design of Creation. What, though, of the other antitheses?

The final antithesis, concerning love for enemies (5:43-48), is the only one to carry an explicit rationale: "that you may be sons of your father in heaven." The function of this clause is to root behaviour in the imitation<sup>92</sup> of God, "who causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous." Essentially, the believer is being called to deliberately *resemble* God or, to put it another way, to be his *image*. The son/father imagery is highly suggestive here of the *imago dei* of Genesis 1:26, particularly where that image is understood as functional and not simply ontological.

Such a connection between the *imitatio dei* and the *imago dei* is well-established. The text of Gen 1:26 itself is open to an interpretation that sees the *imago dei* in functional terms, with mankind made to be God's "representative" on earth. Such an interpretation of the term צֶלֶם is discussed by Gordon Wenham<sup>93</sup> who, having discussed the various possibilities for understanding the term, concludes,

The strongest case has been made for the view that the divine image makes man God's vice-regent on earth. Because man is God's representative, life is sacred: every assault on man is an affront to the creator and merits the ultimate penalty (Gen 9:5-6).<sup>94</sup>

This last point, on the sanctity of human life, will have implications for another of the antitheses, but at this stage in the argument, the key point is that as God's representative on earth, man is

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<sup>92</sup> Note also the language of 5:48: "Ἐσεσθε οὖν ὑμεῖς τέλειοι ὡς ὁ πατὴρ ὑμῶν ὁ οὐράνιος τέλειός ἐστιν; "You shall be perfect, therefore, even as your father in the heavens is perfect."

<sup>93</sup> Gordon Wenham, *Genesis 1-15*, (WBC 1; Waco: Word, 1987), 30-31.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*, 32.

surely expected to behave in a God-like way. Lest it be suggested that such an idea does not necessarily correspond with the understanding of Genesis 1:26 that Jesus and his contemporaries may have had, we may note Martin Buber's study of *imitatio dei* in Jewish religiosity,<sup>95</sup> which draws upon ancient and more contemporary Jewish writings and argues,

“For in the image of God made He man.” It is on this that the imitation of God is founded. We are destined to be like him, this means that we are destined to bring perfection out of ourselves, in actual life, the image in which we were created ...<sup>96</sup>

While Buber's language does not correspond entirely with the argument being made in the context of this antithesis, it establishes the central point: the *imitatio dei* is intimately connected to *imago dei* and such a connection was made in ancient times as well as in modern. As this antithesis calls the reader to *imitatio dei*, surely the use of son/father imagery would be naturally connected with the *imago dei*.

Conceptually, this final antithesis seems closely linked to the previous one, which concerns non-retaliation (5:38-42): both passages are concerned with the treatment of those with whom some form of enmity exists. It seems legitimate to suggest that in two closely linked antitheses, a similar rationale may be operative; consequently, it seems legitimate to suggest that the *imago dei* rationale governs both of these pericopae and that the reader of Matthew's gospel would naturally associate the non-retaliatory treatment of those who have wronged him with the love of God/the sons of God for enemies.

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<sup>95</sup> Martin Buber, *Israel and the World: Essays in a Time of Crisis*, (2<sup>nd</sup>. Edition, New York: Schocken Books, 1973), 66-77.

<sup>96</sup> Buber, *Israel and the World*, 73.

Although not so immediately obvious, the *imago dei* may also provide the rationale for the first antithesis, concerning murder and contempt (5:21-22). Conceptually, the discussion is similar to material found in 2 Enoch 44, where the sinfulness of treating another human with contempt lies in the fact that God has made man “in a facsimile of his own face.”<sup>97</sup> We have noted above, in the discussion of Genesis 1:26, that such a standpoint is the logical and contextual implication of man’s status as the representative of God. That such a concern is at work here may be supported by the reference to worship in 5:23-24, to which we may compare James 3:9, in which the inconsistency of worshipping God with the same mouth that curses “men made in God’s likeness” is the basis for James’ standards of acceptable speech. Again, therefore, the ethical expectations of Jesus in these antitheses seem to stem from the very pattern of Creation itself, specifically the respect required towards all who bear (or function as) the image of God.

This leaves unexplained only the antithesis concerning oath-taking (5:33-7). Davies and Allison note that the oaths under consideration in 5:33-37 may not be promissory vows, but rather oaths related to the truthfulness of one’s speech.<sup>98</sup> This certainly seems consistent with the “yes, yes” and “no, no” reference. Kennedy has argued that the ὅτι clauses do not provide justification for Jesus’ prohibition, but rather introduce the reasons for the oath-taker swearing by

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<sup>97</sup> 2 Enoch 44:1. The translation is Francis Andersen’s in “2 Enoch,” 171. We must be cautious in our use of 2 Enoch, as it is an open question as to whether the text is Jewish or Christian; if it is the latter then the similarity between the two texts may be the result of the influence of Matthew 5:21-22 on the author(s) of the apocalypse. The point being made, however, is defensible on the internal evidence of Matthew and is supported by the comparison with James 3:9.

<sup>98</sup> Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:535-6.



a particular thing.<sup>99</sup> Taking these together, it may be suggested that the point of this antithesis is not to prohibit the taking of vows, but rather to encourage a transparent truthfulness that needs recourse to no oaths.<sup>100</sup> Given that one of the great characteristics of God is his truthfulness (cf. Titus 1:2), it is at least possible that such honesty is required because it should be a characteristic of those who are God's image and representation on earth. The need to go beyond such transparent truthfulness is portrayed as being from "the evil one" (5:37). While no final case can be made for the *imago dei* being the rationale behind the antithesis on oath-taking, it remains a possibility; one that would seem to be consistent with the context.

It is worth, at this point, returning to the question of marital ethics. It has been established already that when Jesus returns to the question of marriage and divorce in Matthew's narrative, his standards are explicitly drawn from the creation account and explicitly regard the Mosaic Torah, with its provision for divorce-certificates, as an inadequate reflection of creation. It is interesting to note that the teaching does not simply cite Gen 2:24 ("For this reason . . . et cetera") but also cites Gen 1:27 ("The Creator made them male and female"), the passage in which the *imago dei* is found. This suggests that this concept is important to the argument (although the phrase "in his image" is not quoted), which can be seen as redressing the inequity of rights for

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<sup>99</sup> G. Kennedy, *New Testament Interpretation Through Rhetorical Criticism*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1984), 56. The point of course fits with the fact that otherwise in the antitheses, no argument is provided for patterns of behaviour until the "that you might be sons" statement.

<sup>100</sup> So Davies and Allison, *Matthew vol. i*, 536. Note that Bauckham's discussion of James 5:12, a text which clearly draws upon this, argues for the same kind of understanding. See his *James: Wisdom of James, the Disciple of Jesus the Sage*, (London: Routledge, 1999), 101.

women (note that it is the man who commits adultery). Male and female are both in the image of God.

To summarise the argument thus far: no rationale is provided for Jesus' intensification of Torah in the so-called antitheses, but a study of the rest of the gospel and a sensitivity to parallel ethical standards elsewhere in the New Testament and in Judaism suggests that the ethical standards derive from the original design of creation.<sup>101</sup> Moreover, it is arguable that the standards are, more specifically, based upon the idea that man and woman are made in/as God's likeness. In support of this, we may now note a further structural feature: the language of "brother" creates an *inclusio* between the first and last antithesis. The *inclusio*, however, serves to focus attention on the radical nature of the final antithesis: love is not to be reserved for brothers, but is to be shown also to enemies. By drawing attention to the final antithesis, the inclusion also draws attention to its rationale, which as we have seen, is based upon the *imitatio/imago dei*. Thus, those who receive Jesus' teaching and put them into practice (7:24) recover a state of fidelity to creation's design plan. To return to an earlier point, and to anticipate a later one: the righteousness that exceeds that of the Scribes and the Pharisees (5:20) is one that reflects a true fidelity to the ethos of creation. Yet this recovery of creation represents only the inauguration of a restoration that will be fully seen at the *parousia* (cf 19:28): at this point in time, there are still enemies to love and an evil one to lead the believer astray.

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<sup>101</sup> Benno Przybylski, *Righteousness in Matthew and his World of Thought*, SNTSMS 41, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), 81-83, argues that the antitheses simply reflect the principle of making a fence around the Law. Against this, however, it should be noted that Jesus in Matthew elsewhere condemns the Pharisees for laying heavy burdens upon men (23:4). Thus, some principle must be understood as being at work to determine what is to be seen as a legitimate intensification of Torah, what kind of "fencing" takes place.

## Matthew 6:19-34: Earthly Goods, the Kingdom and the Restoration of the Creature-Creator Relationship

A further section that may reflect the idea of restored creation, and which is of particular interest as it draws on both sapiential and apocalyptic elements, is found in 6:19-34. Two sub-sections within the pericope are linked by the subject matter of earthly goods and the kingdom (6:19-21, 25-34). This fact should caution the reader against seeing the latter section as *simply* a discussion of anxiety;<sup>102</sup> it indicates that what we are actually dealing with is a discussion of what true kingdom-centredness<sup>103</sup> (see 6:21) looks like and of the implications that such a centredness should have on one's attitude to earthly goods.

Sandwiched between the two passages concerned with earthly goods is the discussion of the eye as the lamp of the body (6:22-23), which Matthew has relocated to this point in the Sermon.<sup>104</sup> At first glance, these verses seem to interrupt the flow of the material, but a closer examination reveals that they serve an important function within the whole unit. Although the terminology is, in my view, far too vague, Brooks' argument that what we are dealing with here is "apocalyptic paraenesis" (in which the light and darkness imagery reflect inner moral dualism), is suggestive and worth exploring.<sup>105</sup> Betz<sup>106</sup> and Allison<sup>107</sup> have both advocated the idea that the

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<sup>102</sup> Betz, for example, focuses on this aspect of 6:25-34. See

<sup>103</sup> "The 'treasure' makes clear where the person's 'center' is located and what is most important to him or her." Ulrich Luz, *Matthew 1-7: A Commentary*, (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1990), 396.

<sup>104</sup> The parallel occurrence is in Luke 11:34-36.

<sup>105</sup> S.H. Brooks, "Apocalyptic Paraenesis in Matthew 6:19-34," in *Apocalyptic and the New Testament: Essays in Honour of J. Louis Martyn*, (ed. Joel Marcus and Marion L. Soards JSNTSup 24; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic

discussion of the eye as the lamp of the body reflects the idea of *extramission*<sup>108</sup> of light rather than *intromission*,<sup>109</sup> which only became standard after the fifteenth century. Allison in particular has drawn on the Jewish background to this and suggested that the stress is on one's inner nature of light or darkness as something that is transmitted to the world through the eyes. Davies and Allison also provide a convincing argument against assuming that the condition of the protasis ("if your eye is good") is fulfilled in the apodosis ("then your whole body will be full of light"), citing Matthew 12:28 ("If I by the Spirit of God cast out demons, then the kingdom of heaven has come upon you") as an example of a "conditional sentence in which the causal condition is found not in the protasis but in the apodosis, and in which the protasis names the effect."<sup>110</sup> The use of the future tense (ἐσται), which is not sufficiently discussed by Davies-Allison, may serve a paraenetic function: strive towards attaining a state of inner light in the future by which one's eye will be good. The sense then would be: "when your whole body is full of light, *then* your eye is good."<sup>111</sup> Contextually it seems that ἀπλοῦς ("sound/healthy") should be given an ethical

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Press, 1989), .

<sup>106</sup> Hans-Dieter Betz, "Matthew 6:22f and Ancient Greek Theories of Vision," in *Text and Interpretation: Studies in the New Testament Presented to Matthew Black*. (ed. Ernest Best and Robert M. Wilson; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 43-46.

<sup>107</sup> D.C. Allison, "The Eye is the Lamp of the Body (Matthew 6:22-23 = Luke 11:34-36)" *NTS* 33 (1987): 61-83.

<sup>108</sup> That is, the idea that sight involves light leaving the body through the eyes.

<sup>109</sup> Intromission is the idea that sight involves the entrance of light into the body through the eyes. This, of course, parallels modern understandings of the phenomenon of vision, which are so much a part of our own knowledge that we can be apt to forget that the ancient world did not conceive of sight in the same way.

<sup>110</sup> Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:637

<sup>111</sup> It is interesting to note that the emphasis falls on "wholeness," on the thoroughgoing absence of darkness.

sense.<sup>112</sup> Contrasting the picture with that of the ‘evil eye’ in the Ancient Near East<sup>113</sup> (symbolic of greed), and relating ἀπλοῦς to the use of the cognate adverb ἀπλῶς in James 1:5, where it bears the sense ‘generously,’<sup>114</sup> Hagner suggests that the image is of “an eye that is not attached to wealth, but is ready to part with it.”<sup>115</sup>

Regardless of whether this last point is correct, the discussion above should have established one key point: the light or darkness associated with the eye is that of a person’s inner being; it is not external to the person. Given this fact, the text reflects a light/darkness dualism similar to that seen in certain Qumran manuscripts, notably The Rule of the Community (1QS) 3-4, often referred to as the Treatise on the Two Spirits. As with Matthew 6:24, in which the impossibility of serving both God and Mammon<sup>116</sup> is stated, the stress in 1QS 3-4 falls on the service of two masters: the Prince of Lights and the Angel of Darkness. The establishment of a righteous community and the transformation of that community into one of light, one aligned with the Prince of Lights and not the Angel of Darkness, is depicted as the restoration of Adam’s glory, a restoration made possible by the understanding of the “wisdom of the sons of heaven”

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Compare this to the idea in 4Q186 that even the good are stained by darkness to some degree.

<sup>112</sup> Guelich, *The Sermon on the Mount* (Waco: Word, 1982), takes the *good/bad* distinction as referring to “health” and “disease,” but this is to ignore the strong ethical thrust of the passage as a whole.

<sup>113</sup> See G. Harder, “Πονηρός, Πονηρία” *TDNT* 6.555-6.

<sup>114</sup> This sense is also advocated for ἀπλοῦς by H.J. Cadbury, “The Single Eye,” *HTR* 47 (1954), 69-74.

<sup>115</sup> Hagner, *Matthew 1-13*, 158.

<sup>116</sup> On the word “mammon,” see J. Dupont, “Dieu ou Mammon, (Mt 6:24; Luke 16:13)” in his *Études sur les Évangiles synoptiques* (BETL 70; 2 vols; Leuven: Peeters and Leuven University, 1985), 2.551-67; R.T. France, “God and Mammon,” *EvQ* 51 (1979), 3-21. Differently, B.A. Mastin, “Latin Mam(m)ona and the Semitic Languages : a False Trail and a Suggestion.” *Biblica* 65 (1984), 87-90.

(1QS 4: 22-23).<sup>117</sup> The imagery of the good and bad eyes thus connects with ideas seen in a text that is sharply dualistic and in which the key ideas of revealed wisdom and restored creation are central.

The “good eye” passage in Matthew 6:22-23 is linked closely to 6:19-21 in two ways: first, a dualism runs through both sub-sections, between those who store up treasures on earth and in heaven, respectively, and between those whose inner natures are light and darkness, respectively. Second, the stress on the “heart” in 6:21 leads into the discussion of the eye as being the lamp from which one's inner state (symbolically, one's heart) shines out to the world. Contextually, this understanding would seem to suggest that the importance of the “eye” is that it symbolises what one's attention is focused on, an understanding consonant with the view put forward by Hagner, above, and appropriate to the negative background of the “evil eye” in the Ancient Near East.<sup>118</sup> Thus, one's attitude to earthly goods reflects one's inner nature, whether it be light or darkness. Matthew 6:24 drives this dualism home in a way that stresses what is to be rejected: “you cannot serve both God and Mammon” emphasises that the dualism relates to an improper elevation of the things of this world to the status of “master.” Matthew 6:19-24, then, warns of the need for a proper attitude towards the earth and its goods in the context of an absolute dualism.

Moving into 6:25-34, however, the emphasis shifts onto the disciples' anxiety over earthly goods. In urging his disciples to have the correct attitude to earthly possessions, Jesus

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<sup>117</sup> Hebrew: חכמה בני שמים

<sup>118</sup> This interpretation is followed by Charette, *The Theme of Recompense*, 102-3, who also notes the presence, in 20:15, of a reference to the eyes of the disgruntled vineyard workers as being “evil.” This reference implies that “envy” or “greed” are indeed the key referents of the “evil eye.”

points them in the direction of the birds of the air and the flowers of the field.<sup>119</sup> Clearly the primary function of this is to teach the disciples the nature of God's fatherly care,<sup>120</sup> yet there is also an important sense in which the birds and the flowers model a proper harmony of Creator and creature for the disciples.<sup>121</sup> There is, perhaps, an intentional irony in the text: the birds do not sow or reap, yet they are fed by the Heavenly Father; the flowers do not labour or spin, yet they are clothed by the Heavenly Father; but the pagans "run after these things," elevating Mammon to the position of Master (a position that only God should occupy), and as such have no promise that "these things will be given" to them by a Heavenly Father.

Two points should be noted. First, while commentators have sought to find a background to this passage in Proverbs 6:6-11,<sup>122</sup> the emphasis on God's fatherly care and provision for the birds and flowers bears more similarity to Job 38:39-39:30 and Psalm 147:8-9, where also it is the non-domestic species that are the objects of consideration. This accords also with the paraenetic function of the passage in Matthew: not to encourage activity, as Proverbs does, but rather to encourage trust in God's fatherly provision. The focus on the non-domestic species in Job 38:39-39:30 has been seen by William P. Brown as intended to challenge Job's depiction of

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<sup>119</sup> On the use of natural analogies in wisdom literature, see the brief discussion in **Chapter 1**. It is perhaps worth noting Goff's observation that *4QInstruction*, despite giving pre-eminence to **רַבִּי נְהִיָּה**, continues to draw insights from nature (*Worldly and Heavenly Wisdom*, 52-3).

<sup>120</sup> Note the language of fatherhood in Matt 6:26&32.

<sup>121</sup> See J.F. Healey "Models of Behavior : Matt 6:26 (// Luke 12:24) and Prov 6:6-8." *JBL* 108 (1989): 497-498

<sup>122</sup> See Healey, "Models," for this approach. John N. Jones, "'Think of the Lilies' and Prov 6:6-11," *HTR* 88 (1995), 175-77, argues that the passage in Matthew deliberately inverts the meaning of Prov 6:6-11, which is certainly consistent with the point made in this chapter.

these same animals as symbolic of his own outcast and derelict status:<sup>123</sup> by stressing God's providential care of the animals and, just as importantly, their inherent dignity, God challenges Job's self-image and his perception of his own status.<sup>124</sup> In illustrating its point by means of non-domestic species of plant and animal, Matthew 6:25-34 may reflect similar concerns: the reader is not to be concerned with chasing after the things the pagans pursue (might clothes and food represent status?), for what is needful will be given by God (6:32) in his capacity as Father. Thus, the “status” of the reader, an issue of some importance to a Jewish-Christian readership in possible conflict with a Jewish parent group, is not to be a source of anxiety.

Second, this advice is not a universal lesson drawn from creation, but is a specific eschatological teaching to the elect reader. It is those who “seek first the kingdom and his righteousness” (6:33) that can rest in the knowledge that what is needful will be given to them. Both of these elements take us back to the opening sections of the Sermon on the Mount. In the

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<sup>123</sup> Brown, *The Ethos of the Cosmos: the Genesis of Moral Imagination in the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 317-77.

<sup>124</sup> It is possible that 6:27 is concerned with *stature*, depending on how one understands ἡλικίαν. Luz, *Matthew 1-7*, 406, takes this as a reference to height as does, with some caution, Leon Morris, *The Gospel According to Matthew* (Leicester: Inter Varsity Press, 1992), 158-9. Against these, however, Davies and Allison, *Matthew 1*: and Hagner, *Matthew 1-13*, 164, take the noun as referring to “age” and thus life-span. Luz's argument that, when referring to age, ἡλικίαν always refers to a definite quantity of age, rather than an open ended idea of *life-span* (thus, in the present context, favouring his view that the term here refers to stature) is not answered by any following the alternative interpretation.

While Luz's understanding of ἡλικίαν would reinforce my suggestion that status is in view in Mat 6:27, it remains the case that the noun more normally refers to “age.” This does not mean that status issues are not operative in the context; it simply means that they are not the point of this verse, about which more shall be said below.



beatitudes, the “kingdom” (βασιλεία) is presented as the eschatological possession of the remnant, and “righteousness” is one of their characteristics, indeed, it is something that they thirst for. Returning to an earlier point, the righteousness that exceeds that of the Pharisees, is one that reflects a true fidelity to the ethos of creation. Those who display such righteousness enjoy security *within* that creation.

In drawing this together, the point of the section is that the disciple is to have the correct attitude to worldly goods and that this attitude should involve complete trust in God’s providential care. The birds of the air are held up as an example of the correct attitude and behaviour and are thus depicted as being in proper harmony with their Creator and Provider. Against this, those who “run after these things,” are centred in the wrong place: their fixation on earthly things means that they are disjoined from the care of the Creator of that earth. The point of the image, therefore, is again suggestive of a properly restored relationship with the Creator.

### **Is There an Eschatological Sub-Text in Matthew 6:19-34?**

This much lies on the surface of the text. However, it is possible that there is a dimension to this passage that has tended to be overlooked by scholars. This dimension is only appreciated when one acknowledges the presence of certain logical problems in the very structure of the argument; problems that, I would suggest, are intended to cause the reader to reflect upon more subtle aspects of Jesus’ teaching.

There are two such problems. First, as Luz notes, “every ‘starved sparrow’ refutes Jesus.”<sup>125</sup> Second, and more important, the flow of the part of the argument concerned with the

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<sup>125</sup>Matthew 1-7, 402. His point draws on J. Weiss, *Das Matthäus -Evangelium*, (SNT 1, 2<sup>nd</sup>. ed.; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1907), 293.

“flowers of the field” is logically problematic if it is understood as referring to any kind of present-time clothing with glory. The argument suggests that Solomon's greatest splendour is less than that of the flowers' clothing (οὐδὲ Σολομὼν ἐν πάσῃ τῇ δόξῃ αὐτοῦ περιεβάλετο ὡς ἐν τούτων) and goes on to argue from lesser to greater: “if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is in the field and tomorrow is cast into the oven, how much more you, oh ye of little faith?”<sup>126</sup> Yet it is quite obvious that none of Jesus' hearers and, surely, of Matthew's readers would possess clothing that exceeds the thing that exceeds the splendour of Solomon.

Three possibilities present themselves. 1) The argument may be superficial or general and, therefore, to modern sensibilities at least, flawed. 2) The argument may reflect some idea of ‘moral’ clothing, roughly corresponding to language found elsewhere in the New Testament. 3) The argument may suggest some idea of future clothing with glory at the time of the eschatological reversal.

The following arguments are offered in support of the third possibility:

1. The context provided by 6:19-21 suggests that the reader is to be concerned with what lasts; that is, with heavenly treasures that will never succumb to moth, rust and thieves. Thus, the emphasis is on a realm that, unlike this transient Earth, is eternal. This points the reader in an eschatological direction.

2. The context provided by 7:1-2 is one of judgement. While this is not necessarily a reference to the Great Judgement, the reader of the Sermon on the Mount as a whole – even more so the reader of Matthew as a whole – would surely see some kind of allusion

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<sup>126</sup> Translation follows Davies-Allison, *Matthew* 1:651.

being made to the final judgement, even if only on a secondary level. Thus on both sides, the passage is set in a context of future eschatological events.

3. Matthew's redaction of the "eye" saying to this point in the text, interrupting an otherwise natural flow of material concerned with possessions, introduces dualistic light/darkness language into the text.
4. Elsewhere in the New Testament, the idea of a future clothing in glorious heavenly garments is found. The most notable examples are 2 Cor 5:1-5 and Revelation 3:4-5.

As mentioned in previous chapters, Alexander Golitzin has examined this idea in the Dead Sea Scrolls and in Syriac Christian mystical writings from the 4<sup>th</sup> century,<sup>127</sup> noting the presence in each group of texts of a cluster of ideas associated with Adamic glory. These ideas include the restoration of the divine glory, the fellowship of the redeemed with the angels, the bestowal of garments of glory or light and the vision of the divine glory. Some citations from the Rule of the Community (1QS) may remind us how they operate:

These are the counsels of the spirit for the sons of truth in the world. And the visitation of those who walk in it will be for healing, plentiful peace in a long life, fruitful offspring with all everlasting blessings, eternal enjoyment with endless life, and a crown of glory with majestic raiment in eternal light. (1QS 4:6-8).

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<sup>127</sup> See Alexander Golitzin, "Recovering the Glory of Adam."

In this way the upright will understand knowledge of the Most High, and the wisdom of the sons of heaven will teach those of perfect behaviour. For these are those selected by God for an everlasting covenant and to them shall belong all the glory of Adam. (1QS 4:22-23)<sup>128</sup>

The similarity of the light/darkness imagery in Matthew 6:22-3 with 1QS 3&4, the passage cited in part above, has already been noticed. The fact that we have in Matthew 6:19-34 a reference to being clothed with splendour, in the context of a light/darkness dualism that runs through the whole section, seems to suggest that we are in the same thought world as that found in 1QS 3&4 and studied more widely by Golitzin. To sum up: the eschatological context and the conceptual similarity with 1QS 3&4, increased by Matthew's insertion of the discussion of the eye as the lamp of the body at this point in the material, may suggest that something similar to the concept of "the glory of Adam," seen in the Dead Sea Scrolls and Syriac Christian writings, undergirds this text.

Certainty regarding whether such a reading is intended is, of course, impossible. But it is interesting that when this reading is configured into the passage as a whole, the effect is to cast the whole passage into a fresh eschatological light and to explain some of the more subtle aspects of its language. Specifically, the Greek of the last part of 6:25 is literally "Is not life more than (πλεῖόν) food and the body [more than] the garment?" The NIV rendering of this ("is not life more important than ...") interprets πλεῖόν as implying the word 'important' and inserts the word into the text. Yet, if the parallel argument, concerning the lilies of the field (6:28-30), is understood as referring to an eschatological clothing with glory, the more literal translation of verse 29 makes perfect sense: life is indeed *more* than food and the body *more* than clothing, for

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<sup>128</sup> Translation taken from F. García Martínez *The Dead Sea Scrolls Translated*, 6-7.

both of these things are part of the present world and each person's horizon extends beyond that world and into eternity. Similarly, the warning of verse 27, "who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life,"<sup>129</sup> now links much more closely with 6:19-21: since worrying cannot add to the span of one's life, it is all the more important to be ready for, and aligned with, the eternal kingdom of God. Finally, the promise "Seek first his kingdom and his righteousness and all these things will be given to you as well," now connects much more closely with both 6:19-21 and, indeed, the rest of chapter 6, in which the idea of the "reward" is so dominant. The approach that sees Matthew 6:25-34 simply as an extended exhortation not to be anxious, rather than as a fundamentally eschatological text, fails to explain Matthew's arrangement of the material and to acknowledge the conceptual associations that the ideal reader ought to make on the basis of this arrangement.

To conclude our study of Matthew 6:19-34: This part of the Sermon on the Mount has, at its heart, the idea of a restored relationship with the Creator. By drawing upon creation-imagery as providing models for obedience, the section not only identifies itself with traditional Jewish wisdom, it also depicts obedience as a matter of fidelity to patterns within creation. Furthermore, the text teaches that the disciple has a proper attitude to earthly goods by virtue of his or her inner nature being one of light. This idea, understood against the background of the "recovered glory of Adam" traditions, could in itself imply a restored creation. But such an idea is both developed and refined by the eschatological sub-text of the section: while one's inner nature may, here and now, be one of restored light or glory, only in the age to come will the glorious splendour of Adam be truly recovered. Thus, the text would seem to reflect the "inaugurated" character of the

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<sup>129</sup> There is, of course, a translation issue with this verse, which can also be rendered as "add a single cubit to his height." A brief discussion of this issue is given above.

eschatology of the texts that have been studied in **Part 1**; any suggestions of a fully realised eschatology are incapable of dealing with the aspects of the text that have been outlined here.<sup>130</sup>

## Native Categories in the Sermon on the Mount

That the concept of eschatologically revealed wisdom is operative in the Sermon on the Mount has now been demonstrated; a less certain but still strong case has been made that the idea of restored creation is also operative. It will be helpful at this stage to begin to examine in more detail the native categories of the Sermon on the Mount under which these concepts appear, the terminology used in the Sermon itself. Three categories may be mentioned in this regard: kingdom (of heaven), reward, and righteousness. The final category has been sufficiently discussed within the analysis above, but the other two categories require to be isolated and discussed more fully.

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<sup>130</sup> It is interesting to compare my conclusions, with regard to creation-patterns and ethics, with those of Markus Bockmuehl in his “Natural Law in the New Testament,” in *Jewish Law in Gentile Churches: Halakhah and the Beginning of Christian Public Ethics*, (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2000), especially 122-6. Bockmuehl notes that while much of Jesus’ ethical teaching seems to be linked to natural order, elements of it, particularly those concerned with the family, give priority to the Kingdom over creation. He concludes (126): “For the Jesus tradition, the moral order of creation is part of the will of God; and yet the *right reading* of creation is not self-authenticating, but remains contingent on the perspective of the Kingdom.” This point seems similar to that which I have argued: creation is seen as providing the patterns for right living, but only when set within a particular eschatological context.

## Kingdom (of Heaven)

The language of “kingdom (of heaven)” is used sparingly throughout the Sermon on the Mount. Nevertheless, the references are clearly of major importance for the understanding of the eschatology of the Sermon and even where the phrase does not occur, the concept may well be foundational to the thought.

Within Matthew, the phrase “kingdom of heaven” occurs first within the preaching of John the Baptist that “the kingdom of heaven is near” (3:2). In turn, of course, John's words are given a background by Matthew: the various signs within the infancy narratives of Jesus' royal status, such as the Davidic lineage stressed within the genealogy (1:1-17), the royal throne name Immanuel (1:23) and the coming of the Magi to worship “the king of the Jews” (2:1-12). The juxtaposing of the Baptist's proclamation with the baptism of Jesus himself forges a strong link between the *king* and the *kingdom*. The phrase, “the kingdom of heaven is near,” reappears in 4:17 on the lips of Jesus. Here, the phrase is uttered as Jesus own ministry in the area of Capernaum is presented as the fulfillment of Isaiah 9:1,2. The imagery of dawn that is found in the Isaiah quote is suggestive of inauguration, an idea consistent with the language of the kingdom being “near”:<sup>131</sup> the kingdom is still in its birth stages.

Within the Sermon on the Mount, the phrase occurs first in 5:3 and 5:10, verses which form an inclusio within which the other Beatitudes are found. Before proceeding to discuss this

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<sup>131</sup> On the use and meaning of ἡγγικεν see the discussion in Hagner, *Matthew 1-13*, 47-8, which draws upon K.W. Clark, “Realized Eschatology,” *JBL* 59 (1940) 367-83. See also the discussion of “kingdom of heaven/God” in Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:389-392. Both of these studies emphasise that the kingdom is imminent rather than present, but the imagery found in the Isaiah 9:1,2 quote suggests that this imminence be understood as the imminence of the day at dawn.

unit, some discussion of the relationship of the material here to that found in Luke is required. On the subject of the relationship between the Matthean Beatitudes and the Blessing/Woe passage found in Luke, the following may be noted:

1. It is now widely held that, with the exception of 5:10, the Beatitudes were inherited by Matthew largely in their present form. 5:10 is usually deemed to be Matthean redaction on the basis of word statistics, as is the addition of τὴν δικαιοσύνην (verse 6), and the alteration to τῶν οὐρανῶν in 5:3. There is disagreement regarding the addition of τῷ πνεύματι, whether this is Matthean or pre-Matthean redaction.<sup>132</sup> Against the view that the unit as a whole is pre-Matthean, Gundry suggests that the unparalleled Matthean beatitudes are compositions of the author himself.<sup>133</sup> His suggestion, however, comes without any supporting argumentation, unlike the detailed transmission reconstructed by Davies-Allison and Luz.
2. Only 5:3-4, 6 and 11-12 are found in both Matthew and Luke, so that the remaining Matthean beatitudes are generally ascribed to Q.<sup>matt</sup> Hagner cautions against assuming that this material does not go back to Jesus, suggesting that such a conclusion goes beyond the evidence.<sup>134</sup> Few, however, mirror Hagner's caution.
3. Matthew employs 3<sup>rd</sup> person forms, while Luke uses 2<sup>nd</sup> person forms. Which is original is not clear. Gundry suggests that the 3<sup>rd</sup> person form in Matthew is deliberate

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<sup>132</sup> Davies-Allison, *Matthew*, 1:434-6; Luz, *Matthew 1-7*, 226-229

<sup>133</sup> *Matthew*, 70-73.

<sup>134</sup> Hagner, *Matthew 1-13*, 90.



mimesis of Old Testament forms by the synoptist;<sup>135</sup> Luz, on the other hand regards the alteration as pre-Matthean.<sup>136</sup>

On the basis of this discussion, the following is suggested: since he largely inherited the unit, we should be cautious about drawing conclusions about Matthew's theology from the internal arrangement of the beatitudes or from the differences between the Matthean group and the Lukan group. Nevertheless, as an independent unit, the beatitudes have been located at a particular point within the Sermon on the Mount and this may be significant.

The structure of the section 5:3-12 is not a matter of agreement among scholars: some see 5:11-12 as inseparable from the others<sup>137</sup> while others<sup>138</sup> do separate them. There are, in my view, arguments for both positions. The repetition of “kingdom of heaven” and the use of the present tense verb in the motive clauses of verses 3 and 10 suggests an obvious inclusio that creates a distinct sub-unit out of the verses in-between. This correlates also with the shift to 2<sup>nd</sup> person forms in 11-12, suggesting that these latter verses form a distinct address. Yet the overlap in “blessing” terminology and the conceptual link with 5:10, which speaks of persecution, creates a link between 3-10 and 11-12. The “kingdom of heaven” inclusio, whether pre-Matthean or Matthean, affects how the unit is read and understood and cannot, therefore, be ignored.

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<sup>135</sup> *Matthew*, 68.

<sup>136</sup> Luz, *Matthew 1-7*, 227.

<sup>137</sup> So Davies-Allison, *Matthew*, 1: 430; D. Daube, *The New Testament and Rabbinic Judaism*, 196-201; Betz, *Sermon*, 147; Luz, *Matthew*, 226.

<sup>138</sup> Guelich, *Sermon on the Mount*, 93; E. Schweitzer, *The Good News According to Matthew* (London: SPCK, 1976), 82; Gundry, *Matthew*, 73.

The use of the phrase “Kingdom of Heaven” in the opening chapters of Matthew was discussed above. The references in the Sermon on the Mount cannot be treated in isolation from these earlier occurrences of the phrase, for the reader of the gospel must inevitably understand them in the light of how they have already been used. When Jesus first uses the phrase in the Beatitudes, then, it is coloured by this sense, that the kingdom has begun to be seen, but is still not fully realised. This fact may be reflected in the tense pattern found within the Beatitudes: the opening and closing beatitudes, in which the phrase under discussion occurs, employ the present tense of the verb εἶμι, while the other beatitudes employ a range of verbs, both active and passive, all of which are future. This use of tenses may reflect the sense of the kingdom as being part of an inaugurated eschatology.<sup>139</sup> Such an understanding of the kingdom is reflected and developed by the parables of Matthew 13: 31-34.

Three points may now be made regarding this kingdom. First, as the beatitudes found within the inclusio of 5:3 and 10 make clear, it is the realm of future blessing for the righteous. The various ὅτι clauses, being found between the two references to βασιλεία are best understood as revealing truths about that kingdom so that the comfort, inheritance, filling, et cetera, are all blessings given within the kingdom. This links with the concept of “reward,” about which more will be said below.

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<sup>139</sup>See Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:446, who accept that the present tense used in 5:3 and 10 is proleptic or futuristic present, but go on to say that “perhaps the present also hints at the fact that the kingdom is already in some sense present . . . and therefore a blessing enjoyed even now.”

Second, the idea of kingdom is closely linked with ethically correct behaviour. In 5:10, it is those who are persecuted because of “righteousness” who possess the kingdom of heaven; in 5:19, one's keeping of the commandments dictates one's status within the kingdom; in 5:20 a “righteousness” surpassing that of the scribes and Pharisees is a condition of entrance into the kingdom. In 6:10, the petition that the kingdom “come” is paralleled by the petition that God's will be done on earth. Similarly, the action of seeking first “his kingdom” is to be accompanied by seeking “his righteousness.” Eschatology is thus linked inseparably with ethics.<sup>140</sup>

Third, the kingdom seems to reflect a “remnant” idea. The emphasis on hypocrisy in 6:1-18 reflects the idea that many delude themselves regarding their status, their outward actions revealing the fact that they are just “actors.”<sup>141</sup> More significant is the discussion of 7:13-23. Whatever the relationship of the roads to the gates, the point of 7:13-14 is to stress the smallness of the way leading to life and how few find it, by contrast to the many who take the way to destruction. The following verses (15-19) take up the idea of hypocrisy once more, speaking now of the false prophets who infiltrate the kingdom but are not part of it. It is interesting that the language used of these prophets in verses 16-19 is that of plants. “Planting” language, as we have noted in earlier chapters, is frequently associated with the idea of a remnant, especially within the material found in Second Isaiah. The true remnant will bear fruit; to take up the language of verses 21-23, they will “do the will of my Father, who is in the heavens.” Conceptually, there is a strong link between this latter thought and several of the parables through the rest of the gospel (notably the Parable of the Sower in 13:1-23 and the parable of the weeds in 13:24-30, both, of course, so-called “kingdom” parables). It may be of interest to consider the question of how these

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<sup>140</sup> This point is well made by Betz in the introductory discussion of beatitudes in *The Sermon on the Mount*, 92-97.

<sup>141</sup> Gundry, *Matthew*, 102, highlights the importance of this sense of οἱ ὑποκριταὶ to the argument.

discussions relate to the actual situations of Matthew's intended readers. If, as many hold, the gospel was written to Jewish Christians, and if, as is now more widely held, the parting of the ways was neither as early nor as complete as was once believed, then it is possible that the intended readers of Matthew's gospel were still part of the Jewish communities and synagogues. This may call for a re-think of some of these passages and whether they reveal tension between a "Matthean group" and other Christians or tension between the Jewish Christians and the Jewish parent group. Such a discussion is beyond the range of this study, however; it is sufficient to note that the true kingdom is depicted as a truly faithful remnant community in the midst of a wider community deluded as to their status.

## Reward

Blaine Charette's study of recompense, both in terms of reward and punishment, in Matthew's gospel provides a detailed analysis of the concept of the reward intended for the righteous and its background in Old Testament imagery. As has been mentioned already, at the heart of his understanding of "reward" is the idea of the restoration of the land to God's people, albeit a renewed land in the time of eschatological renewal:

At the time of the renewed creation the kingdom will have come in its completion and the inheritance long promised will be fully realized.<sup>142</sup>

The connection between "reward" and "kingdom" should not be overlooked. The three native categories that have been identified here—righteousness, reward and kingdom—are inseparable and discussion of one inevitably overlaps with discussion of the others.

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<sup>142</sup> Charette, *The Theme of Recompense*, 88.

Charette's study provides a far more detailed and comprehensive examination of the theme of reward than can be provided here in the space available. Nevertheless, some specific comments regarding the occurrence of the concept in the Sermon on the Mount may be made, since not all of these are identified by Charette.

Structurally, the terminology of "reward" (μισθός) links the antitheses (where it occurs in 5:46) to the section on "secret" obedience (6:1-18) where both μισθός and the verb ἀποδίδωμι occur as keywords. Just as the *terminology* links these two sections, the *concept* links the section on secret obedience with the following section on heavenly treasures (6:19-34). It is, therefore, a pervasive theme within the Sermon. Two points may be made in regard to the concept.

First, the emphasis on reward clearly involves the reader being oriented towards the future, when the reversal of circumstances will be seen.<sup>143</sup> At its heart, the idea of reward is eschatological and reflects an eschatology that retains strongly futurist elements.

Second, the reward is closely linked to the *imitatio dei*. In 5:46, those who love only those who reciprocate have no reward, because they are not being perfect even as their heavenly father is perfect. The *imitatio* emphasis becomes even stronger in 6:1-18, where acts of righteousness are to be performed in secret (ἐν τῷ κρυπτῷ) and then rewarded by "your Father, the one who sees in secret." The construction of this sentence is: ὁ πατήρ σου ὁ βλέπων ἐν τῷ κρυπτῷ ἀποδώσει σοι. This leaves open the possibility of translating "your Father who sees what is done

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<sup>143</sup> Betz, *Sermon*, argues that the experience of being rewarded in this life diminishes that which is to come, on the strength of "they have received their reward in full" (6:2,5,16). Whether correct or not, this still leaves the orientation of the passage as being towards the expected future.

in secret.”<sup>144</sup> However, verse 18 contains a reference to God being the one who is “in secret” (τῷ πατρὶ σου τῷ ἐν τῷ κρυφαίῳ) that contains no reference to “seeing.” In this verse, it is impossible to understand the reference as being to the secrecy of God’s observation; rather the reference is to the secretness of God himself. The emphasis, then, falls not on the fact that God sees what is secretly done, but rather that he himself is the one who is “in secret.” What seems to have been largely overlooked by scholars is this link between proper acts of righteousness, which should be carried out “in secret,” and the God for whom they are carried out, a God who is also “in secret.” There seems again, therefore, to be an emphasis on *imitatio dei* in these verses.

## Chapter Conclusions

The concept of wisdom operative in the Sermon on the Mount is one of *revealed* wisdom. It is thus similar in nature to that found within the other texts that we have studied and is in accordance with the concept of wisdom associated with the genre apocalypse. The emphasis on the kingdom as a reality beginning to be seen agrees with the inaugurated eschatology we have noted in the other texts studied. Within the narrative of Matthew's gospel, Jesus is the one who reveals wisdom during this time of the inauguration, an idea beginning to emerge in the early stages of the gospel and which we will explore more fully in the next chapter.

Also similar to the works we have studied is the idea that revealed wisdom seems to enable the one who responds appropriately to attain a true righteousness that reflects that ethical pattern of the creation itself. This righteousness is essential for those living in the kingdom.

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<sup>144</sup> So NIV. Other versions resist the temptation to insert “what is done.”

Those who do not exhibit such a righteousness are presented as full of darkness, bearing bad fruit and facing destruction or hell, language suggestive of a dualism characteristic of the genre apocalypse that is now presented in the context of a wisdom discourse.

This transformation of the concept of wisdom seems best to explain the way in which the barriers and distinctions between the two genres of apocalypse and wisdom dissolve in the Sermon. To seek to isolate forms and elements from each genre within the Sermon is impossible. One can isolate and categorise the “sapiential forms” within the Sermon on the Mount, as Kloppenborg does in his treatment of Q,<sup>145</sup> but the content of these forms draws upon eschatological ideas characteristic of the apocalypses. A prime example of this is that of the beatitudes in 5:3-12, categorised as sapiential by Kloppenborg<sup>146</sup> yet comforting the disciple by means of the prospect of reversal. Likewise, the imitation of God in loving enemies in 5:43-48 – a sapiential idea, according to Kloppenborg<sup>147</sup> – now carries an eschatological dimension connected to the revealing of wisdom to the elect. Whether the eschatological imagery employed in the Sermon should be categorised as apocalyptic (as Sim does) is a question best addressed by detailed comparison of the alleged parallels. But under the influence of the ideas isolated above, it is surely to be expected that Matthew would naturally draw on such material, or on more generally prophetic material, juxtaposing and hybridising it with sapiential forms and ideas, in his presentation of Jesus as the eschatological revealer of wisdom. Whatever the merits or demerits of Kloppenborg's analysis of the transmission history of Jesus' teaching, and of the strata therein,

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<sup>145</sup>John S. Kloppenborg, *The Formation of Q*, 171-249

<sup>146</sup>*Ibid.*, 172-3. Note also the discussion of these forms in Betz, *The Sermon on the Mount*, 97-105, where the wisdom background to the beatitudes – both within and without Judaism – is stressed.

<sup>147</sup>Kloppenborg, *The Formation of Q*, 180-1.

here in Matthew that teaching finds itself cast into a fresh whole, an indivisible trinity of form, ethics and eschatology.



## **Chapter 5**

### **Eschatological Time and the Nature of Jesus' Revelation in Matthew 11-12**

The importance of chapters 11 and 12 to an understanding of the Gospel of Matthew as a whole has increasingly been accepted by scholars. Studies such as those by Verseput<sup>1</sup> and, more recently, Lybæk<sup>2</sup> have demonstrated that the section is a carefully constructed presentation of two themes that are crucial to the gospel as a whole: first, the status of Jesus as Messiah/Coming One and, second, his rejection by the Jewish leaders. The second of these themes, in particular, may highlight the centrality of these chapters to the gospel, since the narrative critical studies of both Matera<sup>3</sup> and Kingsbury<sup>4</sup> have seen the rejection of Jesus by Israel to be the “turning point of its narrative logic.”<sup>5</sup>

Both of the themes mentioned above are of interest to our present study since they are intimately connected with the idea of Jesus as the one who reveals wisdom to a remnant in the eschatological period. As I shall argue below, at the heart of these two chapters that are, in turn, at the heart of the gospel, Matthew 11:25-30—a sub-section clearly dealing with the concept of “revelation” and often understood to be identifying Jesus with Wisdom itself—is given a place of primary importance by the author. Two questions must be asked of this section and its context:

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<sup>1</sup> Donald P. Verseput, *The Rejection of the Humble Messianic King: A Study of the Composition of Matthew 11-12*, (European University Studies; Theology 291; Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1986).

<sup>2</sup> Lena Lybæk, *New and Old in Matthew 11-13: Normativity in the Development of Three Theological Themes*, (FRLANT 198; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 2002).

<sup>3</sup> Frank Matera, “The Plot of Matthew’s Gospel,” *CBQ* 49 (1987), 233-53

<sup>4</sup> Jack Kingsbury, “The Plot of Matthew’s Story,” *Interpretation* 46 (1992), 347-56

<sup>5</sup> John Yueh-Han Yieh, *One Teacher: Jesus’ Teaching Role in Matthew’s Gospel Report* (BZNW 124; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2004), 30.

first, what is the nature of the wisdom revealed by Jesus? Second, what is his relationship to that wisdom?

These questions are essential because I have been arguing that the central concept of wisdom in the texts studied in part 1 is that it comprises a body of knowledge, divinely revealed to a remnant in the last days and assimilating concepts associated with traditional wisdom. It is, therefore, a wisdom “from above” and many would happily, therefore, call it “apocalyptic,” even though in many ways it presents itself as “sapiential.” Some have argued that the depiction of wisdom in Matthew 11:25-30 is contrary to this idea. Thus, according to Luz, “It cannot be denied that Jesus contradicts a broad stream of apocalyptic, Essene, and rabbinic thinking.”<sup>6</sup> Similarly, Lybæk, arguing against those who would read these verses against the background of apocalypticism, says, “The implication of these interpretations is an understanding of heavenly mysteries as something which is imparted only to a certain group of the elect. This is not so. For Matthew, the heavenly mysteries consist in God’s compassion for God’s people. This is knowledge openly available unless one’s heart is hardened.”<sup>7</sup>

The first question, then, concerns whether we can see a similar concept of wisdom operative in Matthew 11-12 as we saw in the texts studied in **Part 1**. The wisdom in these chapters may legitimately be seen as similar to that observed in those texts if it is:

- i. clearly depicted as being revealed in the eschatological period,
- ii. clearly depicted as being revealed to a small remnant within a wider body of unfaithful Israel,

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<sup>6</sup> Ulrich Luz, *Matthew 8-20* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2001), 163.

<sup>7</sup> Lybæk, *New and Old*, 205. Her comments here are surprising, given her emphasis throughout on the eschatological nature of these chapters.

iii. suggestive of an insufficiency in Torah.

If these three characteristics are true of it, then the assessments of Lybæk and Luz of the nature of wisdom in Matthew 11-12 are untenable and a background in apocalyptic concepts will be preferred.

The second question concerns the relationship of Jesus to the wisdom that he reveals. Specifically, should Jesus be understood as being identified not merely *with* but actually *as* that wisdom? This is the suggestion of those who have sought to argue for a “Wisdom-Christology” in Matthew 11:25-30 and, by implication, in the gospel as a whole. An assessment of this idea will be an important part of this chapter.

In what follows, then, Matthew 11-12 will be studied and these two questions borne in mind. Once the chapters have been studied in full and conclusions given, some suggestions will be made as to how the concept of wisdom continues to be developed in chapter 13.

Two further comments regarding the following study are required. First, it should be clear from the discussion above that this chapter will be largely taken up by questions concerning the eschatological character of the time in which Jesus taught, the character of the wisdom he revealed and his relationship to that wisdom. The issue of restored creation will not occupy a significant part of the discussion in this chapter. Nevertheless there will be points at which the idea of restored creation may well be implied, and I shall seek to draw attention to these. Second, since there is a great deal of material in these chapters that Matthew seems to have deliberately brought together, it seems best to work through the pericopae one by one and allow the narrative connections to arise naturally. Inevitably, it will be the case that some of the text units will be more significant than others and the space devoted to each will reflect this.

## 1: John's Question and Jesus' Response

After a transitional sentence (11:1) that continues to present Jesus' ministry in didactic terms, Matthew relates that John, having "heard of the works of the Christ," sends his disciples to ask if he is the Coming One (ὁ ἐρχόμενος) or if they are to expect another. The reference to "works" (ἔργα) has often been seen as part of an *inclusio* with 11:19, where wisdom's works are referred to (probably redactionally)<sup>8</sup>. As Verseput<sup>9</sup> notes, however, there is no natural segregation of this section from the rest of Matthew 11-12 and no obvious function to the *inclusio*. Instead, it is better to appreciate that the references in verses 1 and 19 create a link between this whole section and the description of Jesus public ministry as depicted in chapters 5-9.<sup>10</sup>

Discussion of John's question has inevitably centred on the meaning of ὁ ἐρχόμενος, and whether appropriate background texts may be identified for the term.<sup>11</sup> For the most part, this discussion does little to advance an understanding of the scene, but one interesting point is made by Novakovic. Developing a trajectory of "end-time expectation" from Hab 2:3, through its interpretation in various texts (including rabbinic works and 4QHabPesh), and into Matthew 11:3, she notes that John's question reflects a broad concern over the delay or hidden-ness of the end-time but also emphasises the close identification of that end-time with a person: "John's question in fact does not refer to the recognition of the messianic time, but to the recognition of

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<sup>8</sup> Cf. Luke 7:35. See M.D. Johnson, "Reflections on a Wisdom Approach to Matthew's Christology," *CBQ* 36 (1974) 57-58; J.S. Kloppenborg, "Wisdom Christology in Q," *Laval Theologique et Philosophique* 34 (1978), 130.

<sup>9</sup> *Rejection*, 116

<sup>10</sup> "Being defined in 11:4 as what has been heard and seen, and being described in 11:5 as healing and preaching, it refers back not only to the miracle chapters 8-9, but also to the sermon on the mount, 5-7, interpreting Jesus' authoritative words and his mighty deeds as messianic." Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:240.

<sup>11</sup> Usually suggested are Gen 49:10 Ps 118:26; Is 59:20; Hab 2:3; Zech 9:9; and 14:5. See Verseput, *Rejection*, 63; Luz, *Matthew* 8-20, 133.

the Messiah himself, as the emphatic pronoun σὺ and the terms ὁ ἐρχόμενος and ἕτερον clearly indicate.”<sup>12</sup>

Whatever uncertainties there may be regarding which texts lie behind this question, Verseput is surely correct in stating that the point of the question within the narrative is its answer.<sup>13</sup> Jesus begins by commanding them to tell John what they “hear and see.” Luz makes the interesting point that the positioning of “hear” at the beginning of the response (i.e. before “and see”) and final positioning of the reference to the gospel being preached in verse 5 creates a chiasmic bracket around the miracle report, a structure that he takes as giving pre-eminence to Jesus’ teaching, as it is found in the Sermon on the Mount.<sup>14</sup> If the observation is correct, then even here Matthew, or the tradition on which he drew, is concerned to foreground Jesus’ teaching within this eschatological section.

As with John’s question, much discussion has arisen as to the background of Jesus’ account of his ministry in 11:4-5. Most would see Isaiah 26:19; 29:18; 35:5-6 and 61:1<sup>15</sup> as providing this background, though, as Novakovic notes,<sup>16</sup> none of the passages is quoted. Instead, the Matthean text draws upon the vocabulary of these verses (τυφλοὶ ἀναβλέπουσιν καὶ χωλοὶ περιπατοῦσιν, λεπροὶ καθαρίζονται καὶ κωφοὶ ἀκούουσιν, καὶ νεκροὶ ἐγείρονται καὶ πτωχοὶ

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<sup>12</sup> Lidija Novakovic, *Messiah, the Healer of the Sick: a Study of Jesus as the Son of David in the Gospel of Matthew*, (WUNT 2.170; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003), 159.

<sup>13</sup> Verseput, *Rejection*, 66.

<sup>14</sup> Luz, *Matthew 8-20*, 134.

<sup>15</sup> In addition to the Biblical texts suggested as background, 4Q521, the so-called *Messianic Apocalypse* from Qumran, is often discussed. This text also seems to draw on these Isaianic passages. See G.G. Xeravits, “Wisdom Traits in the Qumranic Presentation of the Eschatological Prophet,” in *Wisdom and Apocalypticism in the Dead Sea Scrolls and in the Biblical Tradition*. (edited by F. García Martínez; BETL 168; Leuven: Peeters, 2003), 183-192, for a discussion of this text, particularly whether the term “apocalyptic” should be applied to it.

<sup>16</sup> *Messiah*, 160. See her helpful table of vocabulary parallels on this page.

εὐαγγελίζονται), departing most obviously from the source texts by using present tenses rather than futures.<sup>17</sup> In the context of such strong allusive similarity, this shift in tense is all the more conspicuous and has the effect of creating a sense of fulfilment within the passage.<sup>18</sup> What is striking is that Jesus' response, by referring to the events of his ministry in third person (possibly intended to be understood as divine-passive<sup>19</sup>) forms, centres not on his own personal status, but rather on the significance of those events as indicating that the present time is the time of salvation. Thus, where John's question is concerned not with the messianic time but with the person of the Messiah, Jesus' response focuses on the former and evades the latter.<sup>20</sup> This point is important because it gives primary importance to the eschatological dimension within this section. On this level, at least at this point in the text, it is more important *when* Jesus is than *who* Jesus is.

It is this issue that is developed by Novakovic in her treatment of the connection between messianic expectation and the healing ministry of Jesus. The conclusion of her study is as follows:

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<sup>17</sup> Cf. the LXX text of Isaiah 35:5-6: τότε ἀνοιχθήσονται ὀφθαλμοὶ τυφλῶν καὶ ὦτα κωφῶν ἀκούσονται ὅτε ἀλείται ὡς ἔλαφος ὁ χωλός καὶ τρανὴ ἔσται γλῶσσα μογιάλων ὅτι ἐρράγη ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ ὕδωρ καὶ φάραγξ ἐν γῇ διψώση. The tenses in Isaiah 61:1 are not, of course, future.

<sup>18</sup> It may be of interest to note James R. Davila's argument that 11QMelchizedek attests eschatological expectation drawing upon Isaiah 61:1. See "Melchizedek, the 'Youth,' and Jesus," 269-71. The argument refines Margaret Barker's "The Time is Fulfilled: Jesus and Jubilee," *SJT* 53 (2000), 22-32.

<sup>19</sup> Of the verbs that occur in Matt 11:5, three are active (the blind see, the lame walk and the deaf hear) and three are passive. In the case of the active verbs the obvious inference is that God is the ultimate agent of this healing. Whether we should read the forms as divine passives is, on one level, immaterial: the key point is that Jesus' answers John's question not with a statement about his actions, with verbs in which he is the subject, but with a statement about events currently taking place.

<sup>20</sup> See Luz, *Matthew* 8-20, 134-5.

Matthew's exegetical activity and clarifying comments show that although Jesus' healings cannot authenticate his messianic vocation, they can facilitate human recognition of the messianic character of the time in which they take place and through this contribute to the revelation of Jesus' messianic identity.<sup>21</sup>

This emphasis on Messianic *time* rather than Messianic *identity* is doubly important for the present study. First, as already noted, it emphasises the eschatological context of Jesus' revelation: the plotted time of Matthew's gospel is eschatological time. Second, it renders untenable one particular aspect of the "Wisdom-Christology" seen in Matthew's gospel by Witherington, who sees the miracle accounts in 8-9, which lie behind these verses, as presenting Jesus as the Solomonic king.<sup>22</sup>

Witherington, and those whose work he has developed,<sup>23</sup> have drawn upon Josephus' *Antiquities* 8.2.5 (together with seemingly related Jewish traditions and the archaeological discovery of medieval<sup>24</sup> incantation bowls bearing Solomon's name) in which Solomon is presented as an exorcist. A full refutation of the idea that this provides the background to the use of the title "Son of David" in Matthew 8-9 may be found in Novakovic,<sup>25</sup> but two obvious problems may be noted. First, Solomon's activity in the Josephus account is very much portrayed as an art, one that can be learned and emulated by others (a fact witnessed to by the description of

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<sup>21</sup> Novakovic, *Messiah*, 190.

<sup>22</sup> Witherington, *Jesus the Sage*, 357.

<sup>23</sup> Loren Fischer, "Can this be the Son of David?" pages 82-97 in *Jesus and the Historian*, edited by F.T. Trotter (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1967); Klaus Berger, "Die königlichen Messiastraditionen des Neuen Testaments," *NTS* 20, (1973/4), 1-44; Denis C. Duling, "Solomon, Exorcism and the Son of David," *HTR* 68 (1975), 235-252 and "The Therapeutic Son of David: an Element in Matthew's Christological Apologetic," *NTS* 24 (1977/8), 392-410.

<sup>24</sup> The bowls in fact date from around 600 C.E.

<sup>25</sup> *Messiah*, 96-109.

Eleazer, who follows Solomon's teaching and casts out demons). This contrasts with the presentation of Jesus' healing as miraculous expressions of divine power in Matthew 8-9. It also means that there would be nothing unique about Jesus performing this art: he would be no more the Son of David than Eleazer was. Second, the Matthean narrative consistently prefers to depict and describe Jesus' miraculous work as *healing* rather than *exorcism*, often altering accounts of exorcism in a more "therapeutic" direction.<sup>26</sup> While healing and exorcism may not be clearly distinct from one another in the ancient world, these deliberate alterations would seem at odds with an attempt to present Jesus as a new Solomon, given that the latter was remembered as an exorcist more than as a healer. In short, a supposed Solomon typology cannot be defended in Matthew 8-9 and cannot, therefore, underlie 11:4-6. This will have major implications for our assessment of whether a wisdom Christology is operative in these chapters as a whole.

## 2: The Status of John

The narrative proceeds to Jesus' assessment of John and his relation to the kingdom of heaven. The debates over the precise meaning of the rhetorical questions that introduce this section (11:7-9) need not concern us.<sup>27</sup> Two points are of significance, however. First, it may be significant that Jesus asks the crowd, "Why [or "what"] did you go out to the wilderness (εἰς τὴν ἔρημον) [to see]."<sup>28</sup> This obviously connects with the citation of Mal 3:1 in verse 10, providing it is related back to the description of John's ministry in 3:3. This fact suggests that the reference is

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<sup>26</sup> See Novakovic, *Messiah*, 104.

<sup>27</sup> For a full discussion of this, see Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:246-249.

<sup>28</sup> 11:7. See the discussion of the grammar and syntax of this verse in Luz, *Matthew 8-20*, 136 and Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:247.



intended to carry eschatological significance. Second, the questions come to their climax in verse 9: “A prophet? Yes, I tell you, even more than a prophet.” The discussion is concerned to highlight the unique status of John as “the messenger,” the new Elijah, and this only makes sense if the concern is an eschatological one. The discussion of John, then, also seems concerned to foreground the present time as being eschatological.

The quotation from Mal 3:1 (and Exodus 23:20: see below) leads in to the statements in verse 11 that “among those born of women there has arisen no-one greater than John the Baptist but the smallest (μικρότερος) in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.” There are three general options put forward for the significance of μικρότερος ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ τῶν οὐρανῶν. 1) It may refer to Jesus as the one who is younger than John.<sup>29</sup> 2) It may refer to those who will be in the future kingdom so that the statement “is contrasting the present state of the greatest of men with the future state of the least in the coming kingdom.”<sup>30</sup> 3) It could refer to those now in the kingdom of heaven, so that John himself is understood as being excluded from the kingdom.

The first of these possibilities seems unlikely: it is hard to imagine Matthew portraying Jesus as the lesser one or the least, although, as shall be seen below, there may be a subtle connection here with the parables of chapter 13. This leaves the second and third options. It may be wise to heed the verdict of Luz that “a precise interpretation of the logion remains difficult.”<sup>31</sup> Nevertheless, Lybæk has noted the redactional alteration of the word order in Matthew, whereby μέζων is removed from its initial position in the first clause (as witnessed by Luke 7:28a) and

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<sup>29</sup> Cullmann, *The Christology of the New Testament* (London: SCM Press, 1963), 32.

<sup>30</sup> Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:251. These comments are summarising the views of J.C. O’Neill, *Jesus the Messiah: Six Lectures on the Ministry of Jesus* (London, 1980), 10-11. See also Versepunt, *Rejection*, 87-89.

<sup>31</sup> Luz, *Matthew 8-20*, 140.

shifted to near the end of the phrase, creating a structural parallel with the second clause, in which μέζων is also found near the end:

The result is a structure whereby the first sentence as a whole has the meaning of a superlative which the second superlative stands in relation to, and is contrasted with ... In this construction, ὁ μικρότερος is to be understood in relation to the previous sentence (no one is greater than John, but the least is greater than him in the βασιλεία). Therefore ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ τῶν οὐρανῶν is no longer to be understood as an attribute to ὁ μικρότερος, but as the presence of a new reality which goes beyond human measure.<sup>32</sup>

Lybæk's point, fundamentally, is that the contrast is no longer between those born of woman and those in the kingdom (she reconstructs the sense of the second clause as "but the least [of those born of woman] in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he") but rather between those who are in and those who are not in the kingdom.<sup>33</sup> The emphasis, then, falls on the nature of the kingdom and the status of its occupants, with John serving as the point of comparison, representing as he does the greatest of humanity.

Lybæk also notes the insertion by Matthew of the opening verb ἐγήγερται (a perfect form), but does not develop the significance of this as she might have. In the Lukan version, both clauses have the verb ἐστίν, but in Matthew's account the opening clause is now presented in the perfect tense. This shift seems to have largely been ignored by commentators but seems to me to suggest an important temporal issue: by contrasting the verb tenses, the Matthean account draws attention to the present tense of the second clause ("there *has not* arisen one greater than John ...

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<sup>32</sup> Lybæk, *Old and New*, 176.

<sup>33</sup> Lybæk moves then to the conclusion that the texts contrasts this age with the age to come, suggesting that this point should be appreciated within the "already/not yet" of the ὁ ἐρχόμενος motif. (p. 177). The latter comment is helpful, but it is not clear to me how she came to the first part of the conclusion.

in the kingdom, the least *is* greater than he”), suggesting that the kingdom is a present reality, an interpretation that is consistent with the verses that follow.

Verse 12 is, of course, one of the most opaque verses in the New Testament, with discussion centring on whether βιάζεται is middle or passive and whether its meaning is linked to the cognate βίασται, which occurs immediately after. Most of this discussion is of little importance for the present study, although it seems to me that the pejorative associations of βιάζομαι and of βίασται<sup>34</sup> require that we read the verse as “the kingdom of heaven suffers violence and violent men seize it.” What is of more interest is the fact that the kingdom is depicted as having experienced this “from (ἀπὸ) the days of John the Baptist.” This reading is consistent with the context of Matthew 11-12, with its emphasis on the rejection of the Messiah and his kingdom, and with that of the gospel as a whole, with its depiction of that rejection ultimately becoming violent. Here, the point of note is that the kingdom is depicted as having been a reality since John began his work as a forerunner.

This idea is further developed by the depiction of John as Elijah in verse 14. This verse alludes back to the citation of Mal 3:1 in verse 10, a citation that most would agree is a hybrid of Mal 3:1 and Ex 23:20.<sup>35</sup> Within the context of Malachi, Elijah is portrayed as an eschatological figure,<sup>36</sup> and even if there was no widespread or unified expectation of his return as a messianic forerunner in the time of Jesus,<sup>37</sup> such an understanding of Elijah clearly underpins what is said in this verse. Again, the effect is to foreground the sense of the present time as the eschatological one, the time of salvation.

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<sup>34</sup> See Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:256 and Luz, *Matthew 8-20*, 140-2.

<sup>35</sup> See Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:249-250; Lybæk, *New and Old*, 138-148.

<sup>36</sup> See Mal 4:5.

<sup>37</sup> See Lybæk’s footnote (19) in *New and Old*, 142.

Verse 15 ends this section with the phrase “He who has ears, let him hear.” This is the first occurrence in Matthew’s gospel of this phrase, which will recur in the parables of chapter 13. The words allude back to Isaiah 6:9, Jeremiah 5:21 and Ezekiel 12:2, in which those who have ears but do not hear are mentioned. On first reading, then, it simply seems to be suggesting that the hearer is to pay real attention to his words and to seek to genuinely understand their import. In chapter 13, however, the phrase occurs in verses 9 and 43 and is given a deeper meaning by the discussion of Jesus’ use of parables in 13:10-17. In this discussion the disciples are told that it has been given them (δέδοται) to know (γινῶναι) the secrets (μυστήρια) of the kingdom of heaven. The vocabulary seems remarkably similar to that seen in the texts we studied in part 1, especially that of *4QInstruction*, although the reference to the kingdom of heaven sets this apart and draws on Matthew’s distinctive categories. The emphasis falls on the divine “gift” of knowledge, an idea further developed in the application of the adjective “blessed” to the ears and eyes in 13:16. This reference is not simply to the body of knowledge they have received, but also to the (surely divine) transformation of their eyes and ears, since they are contrasted in verses 13 and 14 with those who have eyes and ears but do not see or hear. All of this is made explicitly eschatological by the following verse, which speaks of the prophets and righteous men of the past who longed to see and hear these things.<sup>38</sup>

This apocalyptic aspect of Matthew 13—and here, surely, we are justified in using the term, since it denotes revelatory ideas—has been highlighted by David Orton.<sup>39</sup> He comments:

For it is not only the parables that the disciples understand, but to them it is “given” to know the “mysteries” of the kingdom (13:11) ... All this is in contrast to “them” (v.11) who do *not*

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<sup>38</sup> Robert Hammerton-Kelly, *Pre-Existence, Wisdom and the Son of Man*, 74-5, notes the ways in which the Matthean redaction emphasises the inability of those outside the group to understand the parables.

<sup>39</sup> Orton, *The Understanding Scribe: Matthew and the Apocalyptic Ideal*.

understand and do not see and hear (v.13) and whose blind inability to understand is in specific fulfilment of Scripture. This, then, is an eschatological moment that merits its own full formula quotation (vv. 14,15).<sup>40</sup>

Orton goes on to note the frequency with which forms of the verb συνίημι/συνίω, meaning *to understand*, occurs in Matthew 13: six out of nine occurrences in Matthew occur in this chapter,<sup>41</sup> which is, of course, concerned with “the kingdom.” This fact points to the central importance of “understanding” in chapter 13 and its association with the eschatological kingdom. Comparing the language with that used in Daniel 11-12, and speaking in particular of 13:51ff., Orton concludes:

We have already noted that Matthew sees the blindness of the opponents of Jesus as the eschatological fulfilment of the scriptures (13:14f.). My suggestion is that he probably also sees the understanding of the disciples as the eschatological fulfilment of the scripture, namely Daniel 11 and 12, identifying the disciples with the *maskîlîm*.<sup>42</sup>

It is worth noting that this apocalyptic teaching in Matthew 13 reflects the two dimensions of the revealing of wisdom seen in **Part 1**: on one hand, there is a revealer-figure who teaches and proclaims divine truths; on the other, there is an absolute requirement for the miraculous enabling of understanding, without which those truths will fall on deaf ears.<sup>43</sup>

The reader of Matthew, then, sensitive to the development of the phrase referring to the one who has “ears to hear” in chapter 13 can see the first hints emerging in 11:15 of an emphasis

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid., 143.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., 143.

<sup>42</sup> Orton, *The Understanding Scribe*, 145.

<sup>43</sup> Cf. also Matthew 16:17.

on the eschatological revelation of knowledge to a remnant within an unfaithful parent group.

The eschatological significance of John the Baptist is closely connected to this idea.

### 3: The Opposition of this Generation

The short section 11:16-19 continues to develop the idea of the present time as the eschatological one, while also beginning to make explicit the “opposition” theme of the gospel. The work of Lövestam<sup>44</sup> has demonstrated the pejorative associations of the phrase “this generation,” so that we are immediately conscious of this theme of opposition to God. Various interpretations have been made of the simile that Jesus uses: some see Jesus and John as the children whose call is declined,<sup>45</sup> while others see “this generation” as the ones who call.<sup>46</sup> Problematic to the first of these interpretations are two facts: first, it is *this generation* that are “like children calling” and, second, the order of John the ascetic and then Jesus found in the interpretation (11:18-19) is incompatible with the call of the children which has *dancing* first and *mourning* second. Thus, the latter interpretation should be favoured, that it is the generation who call out the words of verse 17.<sup>47</sup> The central point of parable and interpretation, then, is essentially that *this generation* moan, “You never play our game!”

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<sup>44</sup> E. Lövestam, *Jesus and “This Generation”: A New Testament Study* (Coniectanea Biblica NT 25; Stockholm: Almqvist and Wiksell, 1995).

<sup>45</sup> So Verseput, *Rejection*, 113-114; T.W. Manson, *The Sayings of Jesus*, (London: SCM, 1964), 70, J. Schmid, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus*, (Regensburg: Pustet, 1956), 194; E. Schweitzer, *Matthew*, 264.

<sup>46</sup> Davies and Allison, *Matthew vol. ii*, 262.

<sup>47</sup> The objection of Verseput (*Rejection*, 113), that this casts John and Jesus in an active role in the interpretation and a passive role in the parable does not stand examination, for in both parable and interpretation the act of speech/denunciation is the key action being performed. This generation are thus “active” in both.

Contextually, what is important is that they say this about two figures already presented within Matthew 11 as eschatological figures, who are part of the plan and work of God. This, as we shall see, is developed in chapter 12, where Matthew makes explicit that this rejection of Jesus and John is a rejection of God's eschatological work. The children of this generation resent Jesus and John not playing their games (the rules of which seem always to be changing!), but in truth they are rejecting God's way of playing.

The section ends with a statement that most scholars see as reflecting Matthean redaction: "Wisdom is proved right by her works (τῶν ἔργων αὐτῆς)." The parallel phrase in Luke reads "children" instead of "works." The probable alteration in Matthew has the effect of reminding the reader of 11:2, which in turn refers back to the miracles of chapters 8-9. As we have seen, Novakovic has argued that these miracle-stories, in which Matthew emphasises that Jesus is the Son of David, are significant primarily because of their eschatological significance. It is only as a consequence of this that they have any significance in revealing Jesus messianic identity. The phrase "wisdom is proved right by her works," therefore takes on a distinctly eschatological hue, one that yet again foregrounds the eschatological nature of the present time rather than the person of Jesus himself.

This understanding of "works" is borne out by the subsequent section (11:20-24) in which Jesus denounces the cities in which most of his miracles had been performed. The key again is the theme of opposition and blindness, a failure to understand the significance of the works, but now a new element begins to be introduced: the surprisingly positive, if hypothetical, reception of Jesus actions by the pagan cities. The point, only hinted at here but developed below, is one of reversal: those expected to be receptive are blind and those expected to be blind are receptive. Within the structure of chapter 11, this prepares the way for the key section of verses 25-30.

## 4: The Miracle of Revelation and the Easy Yoke

As Lybæk notes,<sup>48</sup> Matthew 11:25-30 holds a unique place in the gospel, being both introduced and followed by the phrase “at that time.” While the phrase is transitional, it both unites and separates units of material and is used only three times in the gospel.<sup>49</sup> The use of the phrase gives a sense of structural importance to these verses: they are at the heart of chapters 11-12, just as these chapters are at the narrative heart of the gospel as a whole, at least as far as the central thread of the rejection of Jesus is concerned. The theme of “revelation” is thus at the very centre of Matthew’s narrative.

The question of the unity of these verses and their place within the hypothetical Q document need not concern us, except insofar as verses 28-30 are unique to Matthew.<sup>50</sup> Either he has composed this material himself, or he has maintained tradition not maintained by the other gospels. From a compositional view, the importance lies in the mutual light cast on each part of the section by the other.

The opening thanksgiving is interesting in describing God as “Lord of heaven and earth.” The phrase obviously presents God as sovereign over all of creation, but it also reminds the reader of the kind of view of reality common to the apocalyptic writing, namely that there is a heavenly dimension to existence that is not visible but is real nonetheless, which when comprehended casts the reality that greets our senses into a fresh light. If this is correct, then the opening thanksgiving prepares the reader (or hearer) for an idea of revelation that is appropriate to those writings.

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<sup>48</sup> *New and Old*, 149.

<sup>49</sup> The third occurrence is in 14:1.

<sup>50</sup> Most scholars agree that 11:25-27 is from Q, while 28-30 are from M. See Deutsch, *Hidden Wisdom*, 48-49.



The reason for the praise is the fact that God himself has hidden “these things” from the wise and the learned and revealed them to little children (νηπίοις). In the context, “these things” must, initially at least,<sup>51</sup> refer to the apprehension of the significance of the works of Jesus. Most commentators acknowledge that this verse represents an inversion of Wisdom thinking: the wise and learned are no longer those who properly grasp the truth, which instead is grasped by the “babes,” an idea that corresponds to the “simple” of Proverbs. But as we have already noted, Luz and Lybæk have argued against this idea corresponding to the apocalyptic idea of wisdom revealed to a remnant, instead seeing this as open to all whose hearts are not hard. The problem with this view is that it fails to take into account the active role of God as the one who hides and reveals. When read in conjunction with Matthew 13, where the same idea is presented in terms of God enabling certain eyes and ears to understand, and thus “blessing” them, it is difficult to get round the fact that this text presents God as actively enabling a certain group to understand a certain body of truth and actively preventing others from gaining access to that truth. The welcome to all who will come to Jesus in 11:28-30 should not be taken to diminish this strong emphasis on the divine opening of eyes and ears, strongly reminiscent as it is of the concepts studied in part 1. The comment of Luz,<sup>52</sup> that the Father does not reveal himself to the religious elite, whether of apocalyptic, Essene or scribal type, misses the key point that if there is any elitism seen in the apocalyptic texts—at least those studied in **Part 1**—it is solely based on the possession of revealed wisdom.

The use of aorist tenses for “hidden” and “revealed” conveys the sense that the present time is that in which this revelation has now taken place. This represents an important departure from the constituent works of *1 Enoch*, where the narrative setting requires that this revelation is

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<sup>51</sup> Once the reader encounters the reference to “all things” in 11:27, this sense may be expanded appropriately.

<sup>52</sup> *Matthew 8-20*, 163

a future event (although to the reader, of course, it is a present/past reality), but it is similar to *4QInstruction* and the way in which that text makes use of the apocalyptic idea of revelation as something that has already taken place.<sup>53</sup> Within the narrative of Matthew, the significance of the tenses is made clear by verse 27, in which the Son's<sup>54</sup> role in this revelation is presented.

The reference to, and significance of, the mutual knowledge<sup>55</sup> of Father and Son is difficult to understand: probably Luz is right in seeing the point of the image being “the knowledge of like by like,”<sup>56</sup> implying a unique relationship between God and Jesus that is based upon who Jesus is, rather than anything he has done or experienced.<sup>57</sup> It is certainly striking that in 11:25-7 there is a great emphasis placed on the Father-Son relationship as key to the theme of revelation, as Kingsbury notes:

The fivefold use of the word “Father” coupled with the threefold use of the term “the Son” as well as the key position in vs. 27 of the verb “to know,” indicate that “knowledge” and the “personal relationship” of the Son with the Father are two prominent themes.<sup>58</sup>

This is suggestive of a very high Christology indeed, and it is noteworthy that it is in such a “Son-Christology” rather than in an obvious reference to Wisdom that the act of revelation is given its foundation. Witherington suggests that this knowledge of Father and Son is modelled on the intimacy of Wisdom and God,<sup>59</sup> but provides no evidence in support. In the absence of such

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<sup>53</sup> See Chapter 2.

<sup>54</sup> Regarding the use of “Son” in this verse, see the discussion of Luz, *Matthew 8-20*, 165-6

<sup>55</sup> Regarding the meaning of ἐπιγινώσκει as “knows” rather than “chooses,” see Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:281. This discussion challenges attempts to understand the knowledge depicted in verse 27 as that of “election.” The fundamental problem is that it is difficult to see how the Son “elects” the Father.

<sup>56</sup> Luz, *Matthew 8-20*, 168.

<sup>57</sup> “The being of the one who knows is not an act that could be separated from the self.” Luz, *ibid.*, 168.

<sup>58</sup> Kingsbury, *Matthew: Structure, Kingdom, Christology*, 64.

<sup>59</sup> *Jesus the Sage*, 350.

evidence, we are left with the more obvious connection that Matthew would have us make: Jesus' revelatory ability stems from his unique relationship with God ("no-one knows the Father except the Son"). To return to Luz's point, that the stress seems to be on "the knowledge of like by like," the fact that 11:27 refers to the exclusivity of the Father's knowledge of the Son, as well as that of the Son's knowledge of the Father, seems intended to stress the absolute uniqueness of this relationship and thus the inability of anyone other than the Father's Son being capable of filling such a role.

Whether this is the best understanding of the text or not, these difficult verses obviously reach their purpose in the final clause, which refers to Jesus' subsequent revelation to "those to whom he wills to reveal." Again, it is impossible to avoid the centrality of the idea of an elect group, chosen by the Son to be recipients of revelation. Moreover, it is striking that the construction suggests that what is revealed is nothing less than a knowledge of God himself. Such an idea is strongly reminiscent of 1QS 4:22, in which the elect are given "knowledge of the Most High," a point that becomes more significant when we appreciate that this reference leads in to line 23, where the same elect are given "all the glory of Adam." The obvious association intended by the Community Rule is that intimate knowledge of God is a fundamental part of the recovered "glory of Adam." We have already seen that such ideas may well be operative in the Sermon on the Mount: the presence of a reference here to the revealing of knowledge of God himself suggests that the concept of restored creation, of the recovered glory of Adam, while not explicit in Matthew 11-12 may nevertheless be present in the background.

Since the important works of M. Jack Suggs<sup>60</sup> and Celia Deutsch,<sup>61</sup> verses 28-30 have been understood by many scholars as containing sapiential motifs borrowed primarily from

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<sup>60</sup> *Wisdom, Christology and Law in Matthew's Gospel*.

<sup>61</sup> *Hidden Wisdom and the Easy Yoke: Wisdom, Torah and Discipleship in Matthew 11:25-30*.

Sirach 6:18-22, 28-30 and 51:23-27 in order to build a “Wisdom Christology.”<sup>62</sup> The primary points of correspondence are the terms “yoke” and “toil,” and the phrase “find rest.” As both Verseput<sup>63</sup> and, in a more influential study, Stanton<sup>64</sup> have noted, this is a rather slender correspondence. Moreover, Stanton points out the absence of two key ideas of the Matthean text in the Sirach passages: the idea of those who are “weary and heavy laden” and the idea of Jesus as the one who is “meek and lowly.” The response of Witherington to the first of these criticisms is to suggest that Stanton has ignored the heavily sapiential character of the rest of Matthew 11.<sup>65</sup> As we have seen, however, this reflects his flawed assessment of the significance of Jesus’ therapeutic ministry as “Solomonic.” The second criticism, regarding the absence of the two key ideas, is not addressed by Witherington.

Despite Stanton’s comments, others continue to see some kind of allusion to Sirach here, notably Lybæk,<sup>66</sup> who surprisingly makes no attempt to respond to Stanton’s criticism. Her understanding of the relationship with the Sirach texts, however, is rather more subtle than previous works, understanding the Matthean text to be making no more than “implied allusion”<sup>67</sup> to them. This is probably a fair assessment, since the common presence of two nouns and one verb at the heart of these passages is, while a slender correspondence, still more than can be accounted for by chance, particularly when it is noted that they occur in just two verses in Sirach 51:26-27. However, if the correspondence is simply that of implied allusion then surely we must

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<sup>62</sup> This idea predated the work of Deutsch and Suggs. See the summary of earlier contributions in Stanton, *Gospel for a New People*, 366-8, and also in the present work, see **Chapter 1**.

<sup>63</sup> *Rejection*, 145.

<sup>64</sup> *The Gospel for a New People*, 369.

<sup>65</sup> *Jesus the Sage*, 361.

<sup>66</sup> *New and Old*, 148-58.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, 150.

be especially cautious in identifying significant theological points being made through subtle alterations of the text alluded to.

Specifically, we must ask: are Lybæk and the others who follow this approach justified in attaching the significance they do to the fact that Jesus speaks of “*my* yoke” rather than “*wisdom’s* yoke”? Does this justifiably indicate that “he is speaking not simply as a teacher of wisdom, but implicitly as wisdom personified”?<sup>68</sup> Even if the allusion were more clearly demonstrable, we would still have to be cautious about drawing such conclusions in a gospel which seeks so explicitly to draw attention to Jesus’ teaching: the shift to “*my* yoke” in that case could reflect the concern to give pre-eminence to Jesus’ own teaching or his interpretations of the Law. In the absence of such clear allusion even greater caution is called for, especially given the lack of a consistent effort to present Jesus as Wisdom Incarnate elsewhere in the gospel. We may also note, at this point, the words of David Orton concerning a similar alteration to first-person language in 23:34:

In Sirach, the scribe and the figure of Wisdom speak in unison; in particular, Ben Sira himself in his aspirations to prophetic inspiration is indistinguishable in tone from the similarly inspired figure of Wisdom in ch. 24 ... perhaps like Ben Sira the inspired Teacher in Matthew’s Gospel naturally uses first-person wisdom language. It is difficult to be sure.<sup>69</sup>

Orton’s words raise the possibility that the language here may simply reflect the close association of Jesus with the wisdom that he reveals: he speaks in unison with this wisdom, rather than actually *being* Wisdom. Such a possibility would seem to be justified by Sirach 51:23-28, in

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<sup>68</sup> Ibid., 151.

<sup>69</sup> *The Understanding Scribe*, 154.

which Ben Sira's own wisdom, shared with those who come to his school, is described in first-person language that could easily be placed on the lips of Wisdom herself.

If there is not a Wisdom-Christology operative in these verses, why do they make such an implied allusion to Sirach 6 and 51? One possibility is that, in fact, such allusions are not of primary importance within the text. This is the view of Davies and Allison, who see the background of Matthew 11:25-30 lying instead in traditions associated with Moses:

As we shall argue, the declaration about Father and Son knowing each other is grounded in Exodus 33.12-13, where God knows Moses and Moses prays that he might know God; and the promise of rest in Mt 11.28 is modelled upon Exod 33.14. Further, in deeming himself to be meek (v.29) Jesus is taking up a chief characteristic of Moses ... and in referring to his 'yoke' (v.29) he is using a term often applied to the law which was given through Moses.<sup>70</sup>

The main criticism against this argument is that Davies and Allison argue that "the differences are as important as the similarities," yet those differences become so frequent—indeed, in *each* of the points of correspondence, a difference may be seen—that one wonders whether or not the comparison is valid at all. After all, there must be substantial similarity for any allusion to work.

In my view, the wisdom allusions of this text remain the most obvious, but we should be careful of building too much upon them. I would suggest that the most likely explanation of the allusions is parallel to the phenomenon discussed in **Part 1** of this study: once a shift has been made towards an apocalyptic understanding of revealed wisdom, the concept assimilates forms and motifs appropriate to the sapiential literature. Here, the assimilation of language found in Sirach is a natural corollary of the idea of revealed wisdom found in verses 25-27.

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<sup>70</sup> *Matthew*, 2:272. See, further, their comments on the text on pages 273-293. See also Dale Allison's more developed argument in *The New Moses*, 218-235, regarding which my criticisms still hold true.

Acknowledging this, however, does not absolve us of the responsibility to be sensitive to the range of allusions that may be made to texts and traditions that lie behind even the Sirach text.

What, then, is the purpose of the images of the “toiling,” of the “easy yoke,” and of “rest”? Within the Sirach passages the yoke represents the idea of submission to—and service of—Wisdom, as supremely embodied within Torah. There is no sense of the term being used there to denote particular interpretations of Torah or of specific halakhic approaches: it is Torah itself *as representative of Wisdom* that is in view. The associations of the term “yoke” with Torah are reflected also in texts such as Jeremiah 5:5, 2 Baruch 41:3; further examples of Torah as an expression of Wisdom are found in Baruch 3:9; 2 Baruch 38:4; T. Levi 13:1-9. All of these reinforce the suspicion that a play on this idea of Torah as Wisdom is crucial to our text.

A further important contribution can be made to an understanding of the passage by the use of the term in Jeremiah 2:20,<sup>71</sup> in which Israel is described as breaking off her yoke, saying “I will not serve you.” Lybæk<sup>72</sup> notes the link between this passage and Jer 6:16, in which the metaphor for service is not the “yoke” but the “way”: “I will not walk in it,” Israel says. The importance of this link is that the latter passage describes walking in “the good way” (which Israel has now rejected) as bringing “rest for your souls.” The “yoke,” then, represents more than just Torah: as Jer 2:20 makes clear, it represents proper service of God (“I will not serve *you*”) and submission to him. This service is, of course, closely tied to Torah-observance; nevertheless, the emphasis falls upon the relationship between God and his people, the relational aspect of the submission.

This submission, according to Jer 6:16, brings “rest.” In context, this rest must be representative of the covenant blessings, most conspicuously that of dwelling at peace within the

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<sup>71</sup> Similarly Jeremiah 5:5.

<sup>72</sup> *New and Old*, 156-157

land,<sup>73</sup> since the surrounding verses speak of the loss of that very thing. Such an idea may well be at the heart of the “rest” imagery in Matthew 11:28. It will be recalled from **Chapter 4** that Blaine Charette<sup>74</sup> has made a strong case for the idea of “reward” in Matthew as drawing on Deuteronomic promises of possession of the land. As noted already, Charette sees these promises as taking on an eschatological hue in Matthew: they anticipate the renewal of creation and the possession of the new earth by the elect. The fact that Jesus’ promise of rest in 11:28 follows so closely a discussion of the judgement to come (11:22-24), and this in the context of a wider chapter so concerned with eschatology suggests that Charette’s idea of eschatologised Deuteronomic motifs may well be at the heart of the image of rest.<sup>75</sup> Such an interpretation would require, of course, that the rest offered by Jesus remains largely a future reality for his disciples, though this is hardly troubling since it resembles so strongly the passage concerning freedom from anxiety (6:25-34) studied in **Chapter 4**. This latter passage also suggests that the disciple’s existence is to be one free of anxiety (an idea comparable to finding rest?) though the basis for this peace is the future state.

If Charette’s proposition is not persuasive, the Jeremiah 2:2/6:16 background to Matt 11:28-30 still suggests that what we have in Jesus’ words is an image of finding true blessing through service of and submission to God. The use of the possessive μου can now be appreciated: Jesus is the one who truly shows how God is to be served, an idea that implicitly suggests that his revelation is a better guide than Torah. The description of the recipients of this invitation as “all

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<sup>73</sup> Cf. Deut 28 & 30.

<sup>74</sup> In *The Theme of Recompense in Matthew’s Gospel*.

<sup>75</sup> See also B. Charette, “‘To Proclaim Liberty to the Captives’: Matthew 11:28-30 in the Light of OT Prophetic Expectation,” *NTS* 38 (1992), 290-97. This article has been criticised by Byrskog, *Jesus the Only Teacher*, 303, for failing to pick up on the obviously didactic significance of μαθητεύειν and for importing “quasi-political” connotations instead. While Byrskog’s main point is well-taken, he may, however, have failed to understand the essentially eschatological thrust of Charette’s proposal.



who toil and are burdened,” suggests that they are pursuing this rest in the wrong way, only becoming more burdened. In view of the Matthean context – the growing sense of hostility and particularly the Sabbath controversies in chapter 12 – we should probably see a reference to Pharisaic practice here. This suspicion is reinforced when we compare the image of Jesus’ yoke being “easy” and his burden “light” with the language of 23:4, where the Pharisees place “heavy loads” on men’s shoulders.<sup>76</sup>

To conclude the discussion of this section: at the heart of a section of Matthew’s gospel which constantly foregrounds the idea of the present time as eschatological, this section in turn foregrounds the idea of revelation. This revelation is to an elect group chosen by the Son to receive such knowledge, whose reception involves a divine opening of ears and eyes. This idea of revelation parallels that seen in our study of the texts in **Part 1**. Moreover, the suggestion that the imparted knowledge is nothing less than a knowledge of God himself is conceptually similar to 1QS 4:22, where this knowledge represents the recovered glory of Adam and fits within a schema of restored creation. While this point is less certain, it may suggest a further point of similarity to the concept of revelation observed in the texts studied in **Part 1**.

## 5: The Sabbath Controversies

As has already been noted, the phrase “at that time” occurs in both 11:25 and 12:1, serving both to bind and to separate units from one another. As our study moves from the section just studied into the Sabbath controversies, it is the *binding* function that stands out most

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<sup>76</sup> I have not addressed, at this stage, the significance of the language of Jesus being “gentle” (πραῦς) and lowly in heart (ταπεινὸς τῇ καρδίᾳ). This will be discussed below in the context of the citation of Isaiah 42:1-4.

strongly: in some sense that may not be immediately obvious, this section is related to what has gone before. One crucial link is made by Lybæk,<sup>77</sup> who notes that the “rest” idea, which is at the heart of the Sabbath, links these passages to 11:28-30. Luz<sup>78</sup> notes further links: the Pharisees represent the “wise and understanding” from whom God has hidden truth, while the disciples represent the “*νηπίοι*” and “mercy” represents the “easy yoke.” On one level, then, the Sabbath controversies function as an object lesson contrasting the heavy loads of the Pharisees with Jesus’ easy yoke. Reading more closely, however, the controversies have important Christological and eschatological functions.

The first controversy is occasioned by the disciples picking ears of grain on the Sabbath (12:1), an action denounced by the Pharisees (12:2), whose complaint Jesus challenges using two arguments, one usually regarded as *haggadic* (12:3-4), the other as *halakhic* (12:5-6). Crucial to understanding both of these arguments is the use of Hosea 6:6 (“Mercy I desire, and not sacrifice”) in 12:7 and its relation to the statement of verse 6 that “one greater than the temple is here.” The Hosea text is cited also in 9:13, where it occurs between the statements “It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick,” (9:12) and “I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners.” An important point should be noted here: in both passages, practices associated with “boundary-maintaining” or “identity” are central. In Matthew 9:9-13, the Pharisees are offended by Jesus’ practice of eating with “tax-collectors and sinners”—those, in other words, who are not on the right side of the purity lines and thus indistinguishable from the Gentiles. In Matthew 12, the concern is with the Sabbath, equally a boundary maintaining practice. This point has some implications for our understanding of the function of the Hosea quote, for it strongly suggests that the term “sacrifice” (*θυσίαν*) is here being used to denote the external (boundary-maintaining)

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<sup>77</sup> *New and Old*, 158-9.

<sup>78</sup> *Matthew 8-20*, 180.

aspects of law keeping. This interpretation is consistent with the original context in Hosea 6:6, where the phrase is paralleled by “acknowledgment of God and not burnt offerings,” and emphasises that external conformity to the law is less important than internal acknowledgement, or that the former is worthless without the latter.<sup>79</sup> Thus, in Matthew 9:13, the negative clause (“not sacrifice”) corresponds to the two negative clauses on either side: “not the healthy”/ “not the righteous.” The point thus being made is a stark one: health and righteousness may be simply external, superficial features, but Jesus has come to call those who know they are lost to true salvation, and who, when this point is examined against the context of all that has been seen so far, understand what true salvation is. Once this understanding of Matthew 9:13 is brought to Matthew 12, important ideas begin to emerge.

The first argument of Jesus utilises the story of David and his men eating the showbread (1 Sam 21:1-7). Although evidence can be adduced for this story being understood by Jesus and his contemporaries as having taken place on the Sabbath,<sup>80</sup> the primary relevance of it to the situation seems to be that a commandment is deemed not to have been binding in a certain situation where other issues are involved. Specifically, because of the hunger of David and his companions (verse 3) they were allowed to do that “which was not lawful for them to do, but only for the priests” (verse 4). Bearing in mind the structural importance of the Hosea quote, which comes at the climax of these two arguments, it is appropriate to begin to bring what we have observed already of its purpose in Matthew 9:13 to bear on the present text. When we do this, it seems that the first example centres primarily on the mercy of God: within God’s house (12:4), David is allowed to eat what would ordinarily be forbidden to him because God has mercy

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<sup>79</sup> This feature of the text is more conspicuous in the MT than in the LXX. In the former, it is  $\tau\omicron\pi$  that is desired.

The selection of LXX  $\epsilon\lambda\epsilon\omicron\varsigma$  in the gospel text is important for the development of Jesus’ argument.

<sup>80</sup> See Luz, *Matthew 8-20*, 181.

on his need. Thus, a requirement of the Law specifically tied to the cult is set aside because of mercy, this being more important to God (who, of course, is the one showing the mercy) than sacrifice. Importantly, this takes place within God's house, the temple.

The second argument concerns the innocence of the priests who have broken the Sabbath commandment in order to perform the Sabbath sacrifices. The argument is generally taken to be of the *qal wahomer* kind: the temple service takes precedence over the Sabbath command, and since one *greater* than the temple is here, the command may again be set aside.<sup>81</sup> If the general assumption is correct, that μεῖζόν refers to Jesus,<sup>82</sup> then understanding the argument requires an understanding of this expression and how it relates to the context, especially the Hosea 6:6 quotation.

The use of the neuter πλεῖον in parallel constructions to this one in 12:41-42, where the use is more obviously Christological, suggests that Luz is wrong to argue against a Christological sense here. Nevertheless, there may be a subtle point being made by the use of the neuter: it may be used in order to point not towards Jesus himself but the activity of God in and through Jesus (cf. the discussion below of the Beelzeboul controversy). Considering this possibility opens the door for an understanding of the text that builds constructively on the suggestions made by Luz that what is "greater than the temple" is "mercy"<sup>83</sup> and seeks to integrate the dominance of the "temple" and "priest" language used in the arguments.

As has been noted, the first story explicitly takes place "in God's house." There, mercy is shown to David and his companions who are, essentially, treated as though they were priests and allowed to eat the showbread. In the second argument, the priests within God's house are

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<sup>81</sup> Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:314.

<sup>82</sup> Against this, see Luz, *Matthew 8-20*, 181-2.

<sup>83</sup> Luz, *Matthew 8-20*, 181-2.

innocent (ἀναίτιοί) of breaking the Sabbath commandment because their work takes place within the temple. In both instances, attention is drawn to the temple context and the rights and privileges of the priests. It is important that Jesus applies to the disciples the same term used of the priests (12:7: they are ἀναίτιους), suggesting that just as David and his disciples were essentially given the same privileges as priests, and thus exonerated of blame for breaking a commandment, so the disciples are given the same privileges as priests, and thus exonerated. When Jesus says, “one greater than the temple is here,” the most obvious association would be with God himself,<sup>84</sup> but with the use of the neuter μέζον, it may be suggested that hearers would be drawn to think of divine activity. In the context, the obvious divine activity would be that of God’s mercy, the point being that such mercy is present in the ministry of Jesus and that, just as the temple operated as a sphere within which mercy is shown and the privileges of priesthood acknowledged, now the companionship of Jesus—or belonging to the community of his followers—operates as such a sphere.

While this interpretation may seem less obviously Christological than the traditional association of μέζον with Jesus himself, it retains a sharp eschatological thrust which is only fully appreciated once the other “greater than/more than” sayings are studied, for it implicitly suggests Jesus is now the locus of God’s mercy, not the temple. The quote from Hosea 6:6 takes on a fresh hue once this point is seen: when Jesus says, “if you had only understood what this means: I desire mercy and not sacrifice,” the drive is surely towards recognizing that the cult, and possibly all of the law’s externals, do not have the level of importance attached to them by the

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<sup>84</sup> Some (e.g. Witherington, *Jesus the Sage*, 361, although he does acknowledge the primary reference to be to God’s presence) would see the reference as being to Wisdom. This, however, can only work if the section 11:25-30 is understood as speaking of Wisdom incarnate.

Pharisees. Now that God is expressing or revealing himself in greater ways through the ministry of Jesus, their time has passed.<sup>85</sup> The Pharisees' blindness to truth is starkly apparent.<sup>86</sup>

The second Sabbath controversy is tightly linked to the first<sup>87</sup> within the Matthean narrative. As is common within narratives of this gospel the account is tighter and briefer than the parallels in the other synoptics, but the main abbreviation also serves an important narrative function: by removing the reference to the Pharisees' scrutiny of Jesus and his knowledge of their thoughts and simply having the Pharisees confront Jesus over the issue of healing on the Sabbath, the sense of active hostility towards Jesus is intensified. The insertion of the possessive "their" to the reference to the synagogue (τὴν συναγωγὴν αὐτῶν), reflects common Matthean practice,<sup>88</sup> but it also intensifies the sense of hostility: the synagogues are now the province of the Pharisees and the mercy of God has no place there.<sup>89</sup>

The question asked of Jesus—"Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbaths?"—is interesting: the Mishnah allows for the saving of life in immediate danger,<sup>90</sup> but this hardly corresponds to the situation here. The evidence surveyed by Davies and Allison suggests that "the dominant opinion in the Mishnah was held by many if not most teachers in Jesus' day: one should not heal on the

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<sup>85</sup> I shall return to this point in the next chapter, where the wider presentation of the temple within Matthew will be examined and the idea of its redundancy given more support.

<sup>86</sup> Samuel Byrskog makes an interesting link between the Hosea 6:6 quote, the healing ministry and Jesus' status as teacher. See the discussion in *Jesus the Only Teacher*, 270-73.

<sup>87</sup> Cf. Luke 6:6, which reads "on another Sabbath."

<sup>88</sup> 4:23, 9:35, 10:17, 13:54. Note also the occurrence of ἐν ταῖς συναγωγαῖς ὑμῶν in 23:34. This phenomenon of the Matthean text is often taken as evidence of the church-synagogue split.

<sup>89</sup> Davies and Allison comment, "In the First Gospel, the synagogue is the place of confrontation." *Matthew*, 2:317.

<sup>90</sup> *m. Yoma* 8.6.

Sabbath.”<sup>91</sup> Jesus’ answer to the question is, according to Verseput, quite unlike any rabbinic arguments,<sup>92</sup> the approach being based, in his eyes, primarily on an emotional appeal: “which of you, having (but) one sheep, if it falls into a pit on the Sabbath, will he not take hold of it and pull it out?”<sup>93</sup> Verseput may or may not be correct: a second possibility is that the stress on the uniqueness of the sheep may be intended to highlight its financial value to the owner. This latter possibility may be supported by the emphasis on value in verse 12; it certainly escapes the charge of anachronism that may be levelled at Verseput’s interpretation, which may read into the text the kind of sentimental attachment we feel in the modern world towards pets. Whether or not the formulation of the response is unique to the Jesus tradition, the issue of his example seems to have been more widely discussed, a fact attested by later rabbinic writings<sup>94</sup> and by a reference in the Damascus Document, where such action is forbidden. This last reference is found in CD 11:13-4. It may be of interest that in line 16 of this column, if a human falls into a place of water he is also to be left there, a position antithetical to that taken by Jesus. The illustrative example chosen by Jesus, therefore, seems to have been a well-accepted focus for discussion.

The most striking aspect of the incident, however, lies in the uniquely Matthean conclusion, “Therefore it is lawful (ἐξεστίν) to do good (καλῶς ποιεῖν) on the Sabbath.”<sup>95</sup> The startling significance of this seems to be ignored by most commentators: Jesus has provided no exegetical support for his statement,<sup>96</sup> but still freely makes a pronouncement on the legality of

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<sup>91</sup> *Matthew*, 2:318.

<sup>92</sup> Verseput, *Rejection*, 180. He follows H. Greeven, “Wer unter euch,” in *Wort und Dienst* 3 (1952), 86-101.

<sup>93</sup> Luz, *Matthew 8-20*, 187, agrees with this understanding; Davies and Allison, however, remain uncertain as to whether the εἷς denotes simply “a sheep” or “only one sheep,” *Matthew*, 2:319.

<sup>94</sup> e.g. *b. Sabb.* 128.

<sup>95</sup> In Luke and Mark, Jesus asks the crowd, “Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do harm, to save life or to harm?”

<sup>96</sup> Cf. my discussion of the antitheses in Matthew 5:21-48, in **Chapter 4**.

the issue. While the use of ἔξεστιν links in with 12:2, 4 and 10, its occurrence here, at what is effectively the didactic climax<sup>97</sup> of the Sabbath controversy, leaves the reader with the strong sense that the *detail* of Torah does not have a prominent role within Jesus' teaching, since Jesus does not need to provide detailed halakhic arguments to defend his position. From an eschatological point of view, this is consistent with the idea that Torah has now been surpassed by the greater revelation that has come with Jesus: those who wish to find true rest, true relationship with God, can no longer look for it primarily in Torah; they must find it in the authority of Jesus.

## 6: The Servant

Jesus now withdraws from "that place," continuing to heal those who are sick and warning them not to tell who he was (12:15-16). This description leads into the lengthy citation of Isaiah 42:1-4.<sup>98</sup> This quotation is the longest in the gospel, a fact that alone would cause the reader to regard it as important. Also, it seems to represent a mixed text-type, following neither LXX nor MT consistently, and departing from both at points. Commentators differ on whether the text had a pre-history or whether Matthew has deliberately drawn from different text types and freely altered even these. This question is linked to a further one: has the citation been altered

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<sup>97</sup> The narrative, of course, climaxes with the healing itself and the Pharisees plotting. But the teaching climaxes here.

<sup>98</sup> A thorough discussion of Matthew's use of these verses is found in Richard Beaton, *Isaiah's Christ in Matthew's Gospel* (SNTSMS 123; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).



to fit its context, or has the context been shaped around the citation? Ultimately, given the lack of clear criteria for judgement, answers to these questions are subjective, as Verseput notes.<sup>99</sup>

What is impressive, and more clearly demonstrable, is the extent to which each line of the citation can easily be linked to the context of chapters 11-12, particularly in the sense that these chapters bring into focus certain themes running through the whole book. Also striking is the extent to which the use of aorist tenses reinforces the idea of the “pre-temporal”<sup>100</sup> purpose of God, and thus the sense of eschatological fulfilment.

The use of *παῖς* to translate *עֶבֶד* is sometimes taken as an allusion to the baptism narrative.<sup>101</sup> The fact, however, that the term occurs in LXX translation of Isaiah 42:1 suggests that we should be cautious in making such pronouncements, as does the fact that an allusion to the baptism narrative would have been more likely to have used *υἱός* (cf. Matthew 3:17). The language of the parallel phrase, however (*ὁ ἀγαπητός μου εἰς ὃν εὐδόκησεν ἡ ψυχὴ μου· θήσω τὸ πνεῦμά μου*) is suggestive of such an allusion: it is difficult to see how *ὁ ἀγαπητός μου* could function as a translation of *בְּחִירִי*.<sup>102</sup> The verb forms in both of these parallel phrases are aorist, a shift from LXX. The use of the aorist *ἡρέτισα* (“I have chosen,” from *αἵρεσιζω*) in place of *ἀντιλήμψομαι* (“I will uphold”<sup>103</sup>) is of particular importance: this alteration roots the whole citation in the election of God, retaining the sense of *בְּחִירִי* that would otherwise have been lost by the translation *ὁ ἀγαπητός μου* and, thus, giving the reader a new sense of the significance of the baptism of Jesus within the counsel of God: the coming of Jesus, his baptism and his

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<sup>99</sup> *Rejection*, 194.

<sup>100</sup> This phrase is used by Verseput, *Rejection*, 196.

<sup>101</sup> So Jeremias, “*παῖς θεοῦ*,” *TDNT* (1967), 5:700-1.

<sup>102</sup> *בְּחִירִי* is always translated in LXX as *ἐκλεκτός*, apart from in Isaiah 65:22, where it is rendered as *λαός*.

<sup>103</sup> This is a future middle form.

subsequent ministry represent the fulfilment of God's long-established plans. The reference to the gift of the Spirit in the next line maintains this baptismal allusion; it is interesting to note that here the tenses have been changed in the opposite direction, with the aorist of LXX (ἔδωκα) being replaced by the future form (θήσω). The effect is a much sharper sense of the present reality being a fulfilment of past prophecy.

While the Spirit-reference is given a strong sense of being a baptismal allusion by the alteration of the previous line, it also connects with the Beelzeboul narrative of 12:22-37, which immediately follows this citation. This fact reinforces the eschatological sense of that narrative, as we shall see. The language of τοῖς ἔθνεσιν in the 12:18 connects with both 11:20-24 and 12:41-42, suggesting a ministry that goes beyond the ethnic borders of Israel and developing a theme that will ultimately climax in 28:19. Such a theme is, of course, important within Deutero-Isaiah, but there it does not carry the polemic edge that it gains from its context here, namely that at least part of the reason for the Gentile mission is the rejection of the Messiah by the Jewish leaders.

Verse 19 refers to the quietness of the Servant's ministry. Some have connected this with Jesus' command to the crowds not to reveal his identity (12:16).<sup>104</sup> Probably the most important idea in this verse, however, is that of the refusal to pursue one's rights: οὐκ ἐρίσκει, in particular, conveys such a sense,<sup>105</sup> and the use of ἐρίζω at the beginning of the clause probably influences the significance of the other verbs. The Servant is someone who will not loudly pursue the rights that are rightfully his. What seems of particular importance is the connection between this point

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<sup>104</sup> So Versepunt, *Rejection*, 198.

<sup>105</sup> See B. Gärtner "The Habakkuk Commentary (DSH) and the Gospel of Matthew," *ST* 8 (1955), 20-21. See also, R.H. Gundry, *The Use of the Old Testament in St. Matthew's Gospel with Special Reference to the Messianic Hope* (NovTSup 18; Leiden: Brill, 1967), 113.

and the subsequent verse, which speaks about the Servant's tender treatment of "bruised reeds" and "smouldering wicks." These verses are obviously metaphorical: according to Novakovic,<sup>106</sup> they refer primarily to Jesus' gentle treatment and healing of the sick, though also more generally to the compassion of his ministry. It seems to me that these verses cast light upon the idea of 11:29, in which Jesus' gentleness (πραῦς) and humility (ταπεινὸς τῇ καρδίᾳ) lie at the heart of his promise that his yoke is easy: as one not driven by his own rights and by self-interest, the servant treats with tenderness those who are imperfect. So, too, in 11:29, it is as the one who is gentle and lowly that Jesus promises the tender treatment of all who would come to him. The reader of Matthew's gospel, aware of the status of its central character (as demonstrated not least by the voice at the baptism), surely cannot see anything but the forsaking of status and rights in the application of the adjective ταπεινὸς to Jesus in 11:29. The link, then, seems obvious: unmotivated by his own self-interest, Jesus will treat with tenderness those all too aware of their failure to find rest in their own toil.

The promise of tenderness is given "until he leads to victory justice (ἕως ἂν ἐκβάλῃ εἰς νῆκος τὴν κρίσιν)." The phrase conveys the sense that the ministry of the Servant is moving towards an eschatological goal: the language of "judgement" or "justice" connects with the language of 11:20-4 and 12:37, 41, 42, and indeed conceptually with the whole of the Beelzeboul controversy (12:22-37) and the signs discussion (12:38-45). The phrase also leads into the final statement, that "in his name (τῷ ὀνόματι αὐτοῦ) the nations will put their hope." The text seems to follow LXX rather than MT, using ὀνόματι rather than translate מְשִׁיחַ. This may be intended to recall the naming of Jesus in 1:23&25; whether or not this is the case, the verse certainly has the effect of making the Servant central to the eschatological hope, which again involves "the

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<sup>106</sup> *Messiah*, 142-4.

nations.” Once again, a link to the final verses of the gospel (esp. 28:19) may also be suggested to the sensitive reader.

The citation of Isaiah 42:1-4, then, provides a Scriptural foundation for the eschatological nature of the events taking place in Jesus’ ministry and for the character of that ministry. It also develops the contrast of the rejection of Jesus by Israel and the acceptance of him by the nations, reinforcing the fact that those who will accept Jesus teaching represent a minority or remnant among the people of Israel and justifying also the inclusion of Gentiles in that group.

## **7: The Beelzeboul Controversy**

The dominant idea throughout the Beelzeboul controversy in 12:22-37 is that of the activity of the Spirit as indicating the presence of the kingdom and thus the eschatological period. The key verse within this is 12:28, in which the Matthean version of the story speaks of Jesus driving out demons “by the Spirit of God,” by contrast to the Lukan “by the finger of God.” The difference between the two accounts creates an important connection with the quotation from Isaiah 42:1-4, in which the Spirit is put upon the Servant: the point is essentially that Jesus’ practice of exorcism is indicative of the eschatological character of his ministry.

This idea is further developed by the image of the strong man tied up in 12:29. The point of the image is obvious: it is only because Satan is bound that Jesus is able to plunder him, liberating the people who are his possessions.<sup>107</sup> Some have seen the story of the temptation as providing the background to this verse, understanding the victory of Jesus in the wilderness as

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<sup>107</sup> See Luz, *Matthew 8-20*, 204-5; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:342-3.

representing the moment of binding,<sup>108</sup> although Verseput argues that “an insurmountable objection to this view is evident in the nature of the temptation itself, since Jesus’ faithfulness to the Father is tested and proven, but he himself does not go on the attack. His success in withstanding the trial can hardly be said to have harmed Satan.”<sup>109</sup> Nevertheless, the narrative of the temptation is introduced by a reference to the Spirit (4:1, note also 3:16), and it does constitute the most explicit confrontation between Jesus and Satan within the gospel up to this point, so perhaps we should not rule it out with too much haste. Primarily, though, the importance of the discussion here is that Satan has been bound by the Spirit and that this represents a crucial aspect of God’s eschatological work. This undergirds the strength of the warning in 12:31-32 against blaspheming the Holy Spirit: in keeping with the whole of these two chapters, Jesus is pointing away from his own personal significance towards that of the time in which his ministry occurs, the time of the Spirit’s work and thus of God’s kingdom. Those who speak ill of the Spirit are rejecting the very eschatological work of God.

The imagery of this section is categorised by Sim as “apocalyptic,”<sup>110</sup> a view with which most would concur. It is important, though, to note the way in which it contributes to a developing dualism that relates also to the possession of revealed wisdom: the exorcistic work of Jesus is part of the eschatological binding of Satan and overturning of his power, just as the revelatory work of Jesus is part of the eschatological age. Those who are freed from Satan’s power are free to receive the revelation and rest that Jesus offers.

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<sup>108</sup> So T. Zahn, *Matthäus*, 459; J. Jeremias, *The Parables of Jesus* (Trans. S.H. Hooke. London : SCM Press, 1954), 98-9; G.R. Beasley-Murray, “Jesus and the Spirit,” in *Melanges biblique en homage au R.P. Beda Rigaux*, edited by A. Descamps and A. de Halleux (Gembloux: Ducolot, 1970), 471. More recently, N.T Wright has developed this idea in the context of Historical Jesus research in *Jesus and the Victory of God*, (London: SPCK, 1996), 457-459.

<sup>109</sup> Verseput, *Rejection*, 410.

<sup>110</sup> David C. Sim, *Apocalyptic Eschatology in the Gospel of Matthew*, 77-9.

Indeed, it is striking that this dualism is developed in 12:33-35 in the image of the two trees. This image, which is essentially a *mashal* and thus has sapiential associations, conveys a single primary idea: outward actions, particularly those of speech (verse 34), express the reality of one's nature. By speaking against the Spirit, the words of the Pharisees have testified to their evil nature (verses 34&35): they are a brood of vipers, incapable of good speech. Thus, Matthew's narrative sets the Pharisees' actions within a dualistic context where their rejection of Jesus' actions and teaching reflects their belonging to Satan's kingdom.

Once again, therefore, there is a close link between the apocalyptic construal of reality and the fusion of elements from both apocalyptic and sapiential genres: Jesus' revelatory activity, the wisdom that he openly offers to give, is strongly set within an apocalyptic context that centres on dualistic ideas and the existence of a demonic reality. It may be worth noting the fact that the overall impression of this passage is one in which the kingdom has not yet fully arrived: the demonic activity, and Jesus' conflict with it, reflect an inaugurated rather than a realised eschatology. The hope of a world free of evil, in which creation has been renewed, remains a hope for the future.

## **8: More than Jonah; More than Solomon**

The next section of these chapters takes up once more the pejorative idea of the "generation." With what may or may not be irony, given the preceding miracle accounts and the

eschatological claims of Jesus<sup>111</sup> the Pharisees and Scribes<sup>112</sup> ask for a sign. The response of Jesus is to promise only one sign, that of Jonah, and whereas the Lukan account focuses on the significance of Jonah as a sign to the Ninevites (Lk 11:30), the Matthean account develops the loose parallel between Jonah's sojourn in the belly of the fish and Jesus' sojourn in the heart of the earth.

The key idea within this section, however, is that "something more than Jonah is here," (12:41), an idea paralleled by a second idea, that "something greater than Solomon is here" (12:42). As with 12:6, a neuter form occurs: here it is πλεῖον. Few would dispute that the reference is in some sense Christological,<sup>113</sup> but the neuter form leaves open the possibility here (as in verse 6) that the significance is not so much in Jesus himself, but in the activity of God taking place in the ministry of Jesus. We can now see how appropriate such an understanding of the neuter form is, having noted the emphasis of the preceding sections, especially the Beelzeboul controversy, as being on the character of the present time as eschatological rather than on Jesus own person.

In both 12:41 and 42, the comparisons are to figures acknowledged by those outside the circle of Israel – Jonah and Solomon - and the images draw attention to the negative comparison between those of "this generation" and the outsiders (the Ninevites and the Queen of the South)

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<sup>111</sup> Note the comment of Versepunt, *Rejection*, 254-5, that "The first gospel strategically positions the request for a sign at the end of Jesus' counter-argument, thereby displaying it as a brazen response given in the face of Jesus' most unambiguous eschatological claim."

<sup>112</sup> The solidarity of the two groups is a striking development in the Matthean narrative.

<sup>113</sup> Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:358, note that in Matthew the reference is explicitly Christological but discuss various possibilities for what the phrase may have meant within the pre-Matthean tradition and to Jesus himself. C.H. Dodd, *The Parables of the Kingdom*, 46-47, saw it as a reference to the kingdom. R.H. Fuller, similarly, saw the term as referring to the preaching of the kingdom, in *The Mission and Achievement of Jesus* (Studies in Biblical Theology 12; London: SCM Press, 1954), 34-5.

who will arise to condemn them.<sup>114</sup> The occurrence of Solomon as one of the figures of comparison is used by Witherington<sup>115</sup> as part of his argument for a thoroughgoing Wisdom-Christology. As we have seen, however, such a Christology does not characterise these chapters as a whole and even here the parallel comparison with Jonah lessens the sapiential impression left by the Solomon reference.<sup>116</sup> More appropriate as a description of both comparisons is that both Jonah and Solomon are “revealer” figures in some sense. One is a revealer associated with the prophetic tradition while the other is a revealer associated with the wisdom tradition; both, though, reveal. Moreover, both reveal to those outside Israel.

The real significance of this section lies outside these verses. The image of something greater than Jonah and Solomon suggests a greater revelation to those outside Israel. Again, the place where this finds its fullest expression is in the commission in 28:19-20. Thus, the significance of these verses is indeed Christological, but not in the sense that it is often taken as being. Rather the significance is in pointing to the present time as eschatological and to the contrast between those who should be in the kingdom, but who are rejecting the Christ (and his teaching), and those outside, who are being brought in by accepting his teaching. As part of Matthew’s narrative of conflict, this section once again reinforces the idea that those who receive Jesus’ revealed wisdom are a minority or remnant that now includes, significantly, Gentiles.

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<sup>114</sup> Cf. Matthew 11:21-24.

<sup>115</sup> *Jesus the Sage*, 361.

<sup>116</sup> Witherington relegates the Jonah reference to a footnote. *Jesus the Sage*, 361.



## 9: The Empty House and the Seven Unclean Spirits

The brief section in 12:43-45 takes up the theme of demonic reality that occupied the Beelzeboul controversy of 12:22-37. In Luke's account (Lk 12:24-26), this saying actually follows immediately after the Beelzeboul section and it is not immediately obvious why Matthew has chosen to separate the saying from its more conceptually appropriate context. The reason, however, seems to lie in the mention of "this wicked generation" in the final clause of verse 45. As mentioned above, this phrase was used by Jesus in verse 39 to describe his contemporaries; there it leads into the whole of the Jonah/Solomon section, in which, as has just been suggested, the point is forcefully made that this generation is to be excluded from the kingdom that it believes itself to occupy. Matthew's interruption of the spirit material with the Jonah/Solomon pericope, then, seems intended to establish the corrupt nature and lost status of "this generation."

The saying in 12:43-45 seems intended, in the Matthean redaction, to add a sobering spiritual dimension to this judgement. Wright suggests that the language of "house" in verse 44 points to this saying actually being concerned with the temple.<sup>117</sup> The proposal is attractive, particularly when connected with Matthew 23:38, in which the house – here undoubtedly the temple – is left desolate. The parallel is suggestive: the temple is clean and ordered, but empty, a shell devoid of God's glory. However, the proposition remains rather speculative and seems not to do justice to the fact that the logic of the saying is that the house = the man = the generation itself.

Wright's proposal does, however, raise the question of what is referred to in the first exorcism of the man who represents "this generation." Under his proposal that the house represents the temple, he suggests various possibilities: the Maccabean revolt, the Pharisaic

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<sup>117</sup> N.T. Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God*, (London: SPCK, 1996), 456.

movement and Herod's rebuilding program.<sup>118</sup> Since we have noted that the logic of the saying requires that the man represents the generation itself, rather than the temple, it seems that we should look for an explanation that suggests an event in the past of the *people* of Israel in which they were purged of evil. Moreover, since the first exorcism in the saying was successful, it seems we should look for our referent in successful "purgings" of the people. The Maccabean revolt may fit this requirement, since the rejection of Hellenistic customs was a major part of that movement. However, a more likely candidate would seem to me to be that of the Babylonian exile, intended in the Deuteronomic scheme to be a purging event that would cause the people to abandon their idolatry (see Deut 30:1-10). Ultimately, this too is a speculative proposition, but it seems a plausible connection to make.

The use of the future tense in the final clause seems to suggest that the occupation of "this generation" by the evil spirits has not yet happened in full, although the near context of the Beelzeboul controversy suggests that it is a reality beginning to be seen. Within the narrative flow of Matthew 11-12, the saying seems intended to make a shocking point: those who believe themselves to be citizens and rulers of God's kingdom (cf. 23:13) are, in truth, under the control of evil power, while those they regard as "unclean," the Gentile and sinful outsiders, are being brought into the kingdom.

## 10: The True Family of Jesus

This idea is vividly taken up in the story in verses 46-50, in which the category of "family" is employed as an "insider" category: those who "do the will of my father in heaven" are now the brothers and sisters and mother of Jesus. The uniquely Matthean use of "my Father in

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<sup>118</sup> Ibid., 456

Heaven” for God (cf. Luke 8:21; Mark 3:35) creates a stronger sense of family, completing as it does the essential core of a family (father, mother and children). It also, of course, calls to mind the language of 11:25-27, suggesting that those to whom the Son reveals the Father are, by living in obedience with his will, brought in not just to Jesus’ family but to the family of God himself, a fact supported by the absence of a reference to a father-figure in 12:50.

What is most striking about the section as a whole is that Matthew has relocated it to this point in his narrative, thus connecting it closely to the apocalyptic dualism of the preceding sections, at the heart of which is the obduracy of the Pharisees and crowds<sup>119</sup> and the contrasting obedience of those who will accept the revelation and rest offered by Jesus.

## Chapter Conclusions

At the beginning of this chapter, I suggested that the crucial question to be addressed with regard to Matthew 11-12 is that of the kind of wisdom that is revealed by Jesus. In addition, I suggested that it was important to recognise what his relation to that wisdom is. It is clear that, contrary to Lybæk and Luz, the wisdom associated with Jesus is of an eschatological character, is given only to a remnant who are divinely enabled to receive it and is connected to an underlying dualism. Moreover, the requirement for such revelatory activity is suggestive of a deficiency in Torah, and the appropriation of language often associated with Torah (“yoke”) has the effect of suggesting that the teaching of Jesus is now to be the central embodiment of wisdom for God’s people. Attempts to see a thoroughgoing Wisdom-Christology in these chapters, however, ignore

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<sup>119</sup> On the Matthean use of “crowds” as an ambiguous, and certainly less than positive term, see Verseput, *Rejection*, 46-48.

the constant emphasis of Jesus on the character of the present time as eschatological, rather than on himself. Nevertheless, there can be no doubt that while Jesus is not to be identified as Wisdom Incarnate, he is undoubtedly unique as the one who reveals God himself and in doing so gives rest. The nature of the salvation in view shares some important features with that envisaged in the Community Rule: knowledge of God himself is an important part of the recovered glory of Adam. Thus, while explicit references to restored creation are absent in these chapters, the idea may not be entirely absent from this central section of teaching (11:25-30).

As the narrative develops into the parables of chapter 13, these themes develop. In 13:10-17, discussed above, the requirement of divine transformation is central, a reality that functions as part of the Matthean dualism.<sup>120</sup> Above all else, the chapter as a whole develops the idea that a remnant group are miraculously enabled to understand the truth as it is embodied in Jesus' teaching and that this is of fundamental importance in the judgement that is to come. The eschatological ideas of chapters 11-12 are thus taken up, as is the theme of obduracy, now explicitly given a theological rationale. And at the heart of all this is the teaching, the revelation of Jesus.

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<sup>120</sup> See Sim's discussion of the dualism that underlies these parables and this chapter as a whole within the Matthean worldview. *Apocalyptic Eschatology*, 78-9, 84-5.

## **Chapter 6**

### **Wisdom, Apocalyptic and the Fall of the Temple in Matthew 24-25**

The final section of Matthew to be examined in detail is that of Matthew 24-25. These chapters are of obvious interest to our study because they contain two blocks of teaching widely regarded as “apocalyptic” (chapter 24:4-44 and 25:31-46) and also a block of teaching that develops the eschatological teaching of chapter 24 using *meshalim*, thus further developing the idea that Jesus is a sage (24:45-25:30). Moreover, these *meshalim* are—as shall be argued below—eschatological and, indeed, prophetic in nature. The section as a whole will cast some interesting light, therefore, on our study of how sapiential and apocalyptic elements relate to one another: if the ideas of eschatologically revealed wisdom and of restored creation are indeed the keys to understanding Matthew’s development of wisdom/apocalypse, then we must surely expect to encounter them here. What will, however, prove to be of particular interest is the role played within these chapters by the destruction of the temple. That the destruction of the temple dominates these chapters will be argued below, and in light of this fact certain questions suggest themselves: Why does the future fall of the temple occupy such a large part of the wisdom revealed by Jesus? Why is it described in language usually described as “apocalyptic”? How does it relate to the eschatological scenario developed by Matthew?

Central to the thesis of this chapter will be the fact that Matthew has highlighted the eschatological character of the fall of the temple. There is, therefore, a coordination of the events surrounding the fall of Jerusalem and of the consummation of the *eschaton*. The suggestion that

will be proposed is that this move highlights the eschatological character of the plotted time of the gospel in a way that is appropriate to the schema of inaugurated eschatology that has been developed in the gospel. Moreover, by relating the destruction of the temple to the criteria utilised in the judgement parables of 24:45-25:46, Matthew depicts the fall of the temple as being a consequence of the rejection of Jesus' wisdom, thus subverting the traditional material to his concern to depict Jesus as the eschatological revealer.

Certain narrative features suggest that the reader is further intended to associate the fall of the temple with the renewal of creation. Crucial to this will be the idea, reflected in certain Jewish writings, of the temple as being a microcosm of creation, an ordered Eden in the midst of a chaotic, fallen world. I will suggest—with a measure of caution—that this dimension of the temple's significance has now become, in Matthew's eschatological schema, redundant. Yet the eschatological redundancy of the temple is connected, in Matthew, not simply to Jesus' teaching, as we might expect, but also to his death and resurrection. This point is hugely important to an assessment of Matthew's soteriology: the emphasis on the salvific importance of Jesus' revealed wisdom might cause us to conclude that this has now become *the* key element of salvation in Matthew's schema, but in fact it appears that the central importance of the death and resurrection of Jesus is retained.

## **Matthew 24-25 in Context**

Matthew 24-25 is found in the wider context of a section of the Matthean narrative that takes place within Jerusalem and that is given over to Jesus' critique or judgement of the people of Israel, and particularly their leaders. There are numerous options for how the reader should break the latter chapters of Matthew into sections, but the geographical location obviously creates

a certain unity of the material from chapter 21 onwards. More specifically, some commentators have seen a unit comprising chapters 21-25. Luz groups these chapters under the heading “The final reckoning with Israel and the judgement of the community.”<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, as Alastair Wilson points out,<sup>2</sup> Luz’s discussion fails to explore the possible connections between the narrative of chapters 21-23, understood by Hagner as constituting a unit,<sup>3</sup> and the eschatological material of chapters 24-25, which are to all intents treated by Luz as a distinct sub-unit. Wilson himself suggests that there is an *inclusio* between 21:1-11 and 25:31-46, based around the idea of the coming king. He notes that Davies and Allison describe 21:1-11 as “one of many texts that recount the triumphal arrival (*parousia*) of a ruler or military hero.”<sup>4</sup>

There can be little doubt that 25:31 is also a report of such a *Parousia*, since we find several of the distinctive characteristics of such a report in the text: the verb of arrival (Ὅταν δὲ ἔλθῃ), the attendant crowd (καὶ πάντες οἱ ἄγγελοι μετ’ αὐτοῦ), the acclamation of the king (ἐν τῇ δόξῃ αὐτοῦ).<sup>5</sup>

In addition, it might be noted that chapters 24-25, a unit in their own right as the last great discourse of Jesus,<sup>6</sup> are bound to the narrative of chapters 21-23, which take place largely in the

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<sup>1</sup> U. Luz, *The Theology of the Gospel of Matthew*, (Trans. J.B. Robinson. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995). 117.

<sup>2</sup> Alistair I. Wilson, *When Will These Things Happen: A Study of Jesus as Judge in Matthew 21-25* (Paternoster Biblical Monographs; Carlisle: Paternoster, 2004), 68.

<sup>3</sup> See D.A Hagner, *Matthew 14-28*, (WBC 33B; Waco: Word, 1995), 591.

<sup>4</sup> Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 3:111.

<sup>5</sup> Wilson, *When Will These Things Happen*, 70.

<sup>6</sup> See France, *Matthew*, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press), 333; Bacon, *Studies in Matthew*, (London: Constable, 1930), 236-249, sees this as the speech dimension of the “fifth book” of Matthew. Bacon’s breakdown of the Matthean texts is represented in Allison, *The New Moses*, 295.

temple, by the disciples' wonder at the buildings of the temple (24:1) and the subsequent prophecy by Jesus of their destruction.

The chapters under examination in this part of our study are, therefore, firmly placed in a context that is concerned with Jerusalem generally and, in particular, with the temple. Given that within this geographical context Jesus enters into conflict with the various official and unofficial leaders of the Jewish people, it is hard to avoid the conclusion that the temple is functioning within the narrative as the symbolic heart of Israel. It becomes difficult and even artificial, therefore, to separate judgements pronounced upon the temple from judgements pronounced upon the people.

It is worth, at this point, making a brief over-view of chapters 21-23 in order to appreciate how they may contribute to the developing narrative and provide the conceptual context for chapters 24-25.

21:1-11 contain the description of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem. Several points unique to Matthew should be noted. First, the humility or gentleness of Jesus (cf. 11:28-30) is made explicit in the way in which the symbolism of his entry on a donkey is related back to Zechariah 9:9, with the key word *πραῦς*. Second, his kingly status is acknowledged using the title, "Son of David." Third, the "whole city" is stirred by the entry and when they enquire who this is, the answer is given, "Jesus, the prophet from Galilee." Thus, Jesus' prophetic status is foregrounded at this point in the narrative, a fact that makes the character of the subsequent temple-cleansing more explicitly that of a prophetic act.<sup>7</sup> Finally, the Matthean narrative immediately moves from the entry into Jerusalem into the temple-cleansing (21:12-17) without the delay seen in the other

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<sup>7</sup> Wright, in particular, has drawn attention to this aspect of the significance of Jesus' action. See *Jesus and the Victory of God* (London: SPCK, 1996), 413-428.



synoptics. This aspect of the narrative reinforces the reader's sense of the importance of the temple within this part of the gospel story.

Various opinions have been put forward as to the significance of the temple cleansing,<sup>8</sup> but the reference to Jeremiah 7, a chapter in which Israel is condemned for using religious behaviour to mask their neglect of righteousness (particularly on a humanitarian level: see 7:6) suggests that the temple is a “den” because it is a place in which those who are in God's eyes criminals can be sheltered from justice. His action is, therefore, not intended to simply be a condemnation of the sellers in the temple, but rather—with Wright—to disturb the practice of the temple, foreshadowing the destruction to come and expressing God's anger that sacrifice should be a mask to cover the neglect of true righteousness. Garland comments,

The den is not the place where bandits do their robbing; it is the place of security where they retreat after having committed their crimes.<sup>9</sup>

One of the striking features of the narrative is the fact that Jesus engages in a ministry of healing (or of mercy: cf. 9:13, 12:7) which draws praise of him as the “Son of David” from the children; the contrast of this with the indignation of the Jewish leaders at the miraculous healings seems to be deliberate, so that Garland comments,

The praise God prepared for himself does not come from the priests and the elders of the people, but from babes.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> For these various opinions, see the discussion just cited in Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God*.

<sup>9</sup> David Garland, *Reading Matthew: A Literary and Theological Commentary on the First Gospel* (London, SPCK, 1993), 212.

<sup>10</sup> Garland, *Reading Matthew*, 213.

The cleansing of the temple is then followed by another prophetic-act: the withering of the fig-tree (21:18-22).<sup>11</sup> That this serves as an acted parable of judgement upon fruitless Israel is widely acknowledged,<sup>12</sup> but we might also note the fact that many have seen the reference to “this mountain,” in verse 21 as specifically being a reference to the temple mount on, or near, which it was spoken;<sup>13</sup> thus, the importance of the temple within the story is again reinforced.

This incident is immediately followed by another temple incident, as Jesus’ authority is questioned by the chief priests and elders (21:23-27). As Wilson notes, the reply is one of a riddle and reinforces the impression of Jesus as being a sage.<sup>14</sup> It also, however, recapitulates a theme from 7:29 that will be taken up again in 28:18: the authority of Jesus. This leads into a series of *meshalim* (21:28-22:14) concerned with the relationship of Israel to God as those who have been given special privileges that have been ignored or neglected. These are linked to the authority discussion in two ways. The first is the mention of John in 21:25-26, which sets the scene for the first *meshal* in 21:28-32. The second is the idea of authority, linked to that of status, which is taken up in the second *meshal*, in which the son and heir of the landowner, the one whose authority ought to be respected (21:37) is put to death.

The *meshalim* are followed by a series of dialogues between Jesus and the Jewish leaders that culminate in his pronouncement of seven prophetic woes upon the teachers of the law and

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<sup>11</sup> Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 3:148 note this fact, describing the miracle as “a prophetic act of power, something like a *semeion* in the Johannine sense.” They also provide extensive bibliography of discussions of the miracle.

<sup>12</sup> Wright notes the connection of this act with Jeremiah 8:11-13, a passage that closely follows the “den of robbers” text (Jer 7:3-15) in *Jesus and the Victory of God*, 421-22

<sup>13</sup> For, example, Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God*, 494-5. He also notes a messianic thrust to the parable, based on an allusion to Zechariah 4:6-7.

<sup>14</sup> *When Will These Things Happen*, 208: “Jesus adopts the methods of the skilled teacher, effectively exercising the authority which is being questioned and placing those who claim authority for themselves in the position of the student.”

the Pharisees (chapter 23). These woes in turn culminate with the lament over Jerusalem, the city that kills prophets and stones those sent to it, whose house is now left desolate (23:38). This last statement is elaborated with a γὰρ clause in 23:39:

For I tell you, you will not see me again until you say, “Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.”

As France notes<sup>15</sup> this last statement is dramatically enacted within the narrative as Jesus leaves the temple (24:1).

This discussion highlights two important features of the narrative of chapters 21-23. First, the portrayal of Jesus as both a prophetic figure and as a sage is important throughout these chapters. The actions of Jesus in the temple are introduced by a reference to his prophetic status (21:11) and are interpreted by a series of *meshalim* that reinforce the portrayal of Jesus as a Sage. The reader is thus reminded not only of Jesus’ wisdom and sagacity, but of the revelatory character of his ministry and of his wisdom. Second, the focus of these chapters is on the temple as being at the heart of Jerusalem, which is in turn at the heart of the people of Israel. As we approach the “apocalyptic” discourse of chapter 24, therefore, the temple ought to be in our minds as readers, a fact reinforced by later references to the temple that shall be noted below. When the disciples inspire Jesus’ prophetic words of the temple’s destruction, in 24:2, by admiring the buildings of the temple we are surely intended as readers to see this as being at the heart of Jesus’ reply to the question of 24:3—“When will these things happen?”—and not just tangentially related. This fact will be of importance to the interpretation of chapters 24-25.

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<sup>15</sup> France, *Matthew*, 332 & 336.

## Matthew 24: An Apocalyptic Discourse?

The material in Matthew 24 reflects, in the minds of most scholars, Matthew's redaction of the material found in Mark 13. The term "apocalyptic" has been widely applied to this material; indeed, some have termed Mark 13 "an apocalypse" in its own right and have even suggested that the material there, and in the parallel accounts, were drawn from a pre-Christian Jewish apocalypse.<sup>16</sup> This latter view is largely rejected today because of the absence of certain key aspects of the apocalyptic genre, such as the visionary nature of what is described.<sup>17</sup>

According to the discussion of the genre in **Chapter 1**, Mark 13 and its parallels cannot be described as an apocalypse.<sup>18</sup> Even the term "apocalyptic" should be applied to the material with some caution: it is hard to resist the conclusion that some scholars use the term simply because the material is eschatological and because the meanings of the two terms are, popularly, collapsed. According to our own parameters, the most important question is whether the imagery of Matthew 24 draws upon that found in the apocalypses and may, therefore, be described as "apocalyptic."<sup>19</sup> A full discussion of the imagery and what it refers to will be provided below, but at this point, the key fact that should be noted is the allusion to the revelatory parts of the book of

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<sup>16</sup> See the discussion of this in G.R. Beasley-Murray, *Jesus and the Future*, (London: Macmillan, 1954), 1-80.

Probably the best example of this approach within Matthean scholarship is A.H. McNeile, *The Gospel According to Matthew*, (New York: St Martin's Press, 1915); see especially 343-44.

<sup>17</sup> See Rowland, *The Open Heaven*, 44-47.

<sup>18</sup> See **Chapter 1**.

<sup>19</sup> For a number of reasons, including the absence of explicit revelatory features, Rowland prefers not to regard Mark 13 and its parallels as apocalyptic. See *The Open Heaven*, p.43-47. To some extent, I am in agreement with Rowland, particularly in his reticence to apply the term to these verses simply on the basis of the eschatology found within them. His caution is an important corrective to those who describe this material as apocalyptic and then immediately assume that it speaks of a literal end-of-the-world scenario. Nevertheless, as will be suggested below, some of the material seems to explicitly draw on apocalyptic material and is, therefore, at least in a derivative sense, "apocalyptic."

Daniel in 24:15 and 30, both crucial verses to this whole section. Few would call into question the apocalyptic character<sup>20</sup> of the book of Daniel; if it does indeed lie in the background of these passages then we have no difficulty in referring to Matthew 24:15 and 30 as apocalyptic. These verses are inseparable from their context, which draws on material less easily described as “apocalyptic” from various streams of Jewish tradition.<sup>21</sup> It may be argued that the surrounding verses are made apocalyptic by 24:15 and 30, so that they are essentially guilty-by-association, but it is probably better to regard the discourse as a whole as “prophetic,” with the occurrences of apocalyptic imagery in 24:15 and 30 playing a central role. In either case, Jesus is clearly portrayed as one who prophetically reveals God’s plan.

Acknowledging the apocalyptic or prophetic character of these verses, however, raises another problem: what precisely do they refer to? The answers to this question are diverse: on one hand, Dale C. Allison<sup>22</sup> claims to be reclaiming the heritage of Schweitzer by seeing Jesus as a prophet of the imminent end and understanding these words in a fairly literal sense as depicting the end of the present cosmos. On the other hand, G.B. Caird<sup>23</sup> and N.T. Wright<sup>24</sup> have argued that these verses refer exclusively to the destruction of Jerusalem, centred on the fall of the temple, and do so using language that should be understood as metaphorical. In between these

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<sup>20</sup> At least, few would challenge this generic classification. It has, of course, been suggested that Daniel is not apocalyptic in the sense that it does not reflect the worldview of the “apocalyptic” movement. See Sacchi, *Jewish Apocalyptic and its History*, (trans. W.J. Short; JSPSup 20; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), 26. Boccaccini, *Beyond the Essene Hypothesis*, 83-4.

<sup>21</sup> Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 3:326-70, provide thorough descriptions of possible “parallels” and “background.”

<sup>22</sup> See, in particular, his essay responding to N.T. Wright’s position: “Jesus and the Victory of Apocalyptic,” in *Jesus and the Restoration of Israel: A Critical Assessment of N.T. Wright’s Jesus and the Victory of God*, (ed. Carey C. Newman; Downers Grove: Inter Varsity Press, 1999), 126-141.

<sup>23</sup> See especially *The Language and Imagery of the Bible*, (London: Duckworth, 1980), *in toto*, and *New Testament Theology*, completed and edited by L.D. Hurst (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), 250-67.

<sup>24</sup> See *The New Testament and the People of God*, 280-338.

two positions are a multitude of opinions. For the purpose of my thesis, I wish to categorise these views according to how they understand the fall of the temple, or the destruction of Jerusalem, to be referred to in these verses.

## The Referent(s) of Matthew 24:4-44

The various understandings of Matthew 24, and specifically 24:4-44, may be broadly categorised into four main groups:

1. Matthew 24:4-44 refers exclusively to the fall of the temple in a non-eschatological sense, that is, it does not speak of the end of the present cosmos.
2. Matthew 24:4-44 refers exclusively to the *eschaton* and does not refer to the temple at all.
3. Matthew 24:4-44 refers to the fall of the temple as part of an eschatological scenario, the details of which are impossible to separate from one another.
4. Matthew 24:4-44 refers, in part, to the fall of the temple, but this event is deliberately separated in Matthew's redaction from future/final elements of the eschatological scenario.

The first of these approaches is currently associated with N.T. Wright, who has argued that the destruction of Jerusalem and the fall of the temple are depicted throughout chapter 24. The Daniel language of verse 31, and the imagery of the surrounding verses, are understood as being metaphorical descriptions of Jesus' vindication as these events happen and the language of being "taken" in verses 39-41 is understood by him as being a reference to "secret police coming in the night, or of enemies sweeping through a village or city and seizing all they can."<sup>25</sup> This

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<sup>25</sup> Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God*, 366.

interpretation of 24:4-44 has consequences for Wright's interpretations of the *meshalim* of 24:44-25:46, which he sees as also describing these events.<sup>26</sup> The usual criticism of Wright is that he wrongly argues for the "apocalyptic language" of the passage as being figurative and metaphorical, rather than literal. This point shall be discussed below, where Wright's treatment of the Danielic source material—which is essentially the same as that of G.B. Caird—will be critiqued more fully in the context of a discussion of Matthew 24:30-31. Wider narrational criticisms may be levelled at Wright, however, as does Wilson,<sup>27</sup> who draws on David Garland's narrative study of the *meshalim* in Matthew 24-25 and isolates five problems with Wright's approach, at least as far as the Matthean text is concerned:

1. There is a recurrent theme of "reward" in several of the parables, which is not easily accounted for on Wright's interpretation.
2. The parable of the sheep and goats clearly has a future referent and there is no obvious point of transition into such a future sphere of concern other than 24:36.<sup>28</sup>
3. Wright interprets the word "taken" in a sinister way, but this is not the only way in which the verb can be understood. France, for example, argues for a more positive sense of "take someone to be with you."<sup>29</sup>
4. There is a clear contrast between Jesus' exhortation to "read the signs" (24:32) and the emphasis throughout the *meshalim* that there will be no sign. Garland suggests that certain

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<sup>26</sup> See *The New Testament and the People of God*, 280-338. It should be noted that Wright does not disavow *any* notion of a second coming or of a climactic renewal of creation (see "In Grateful Dialogue: A Response," in Newman, ed., *Jesus and the Restoration of Israel*, 268-70, where he speaks of "lively" expectations for the future); simply that this text is not concerned with such an event.

<sup>27</sup> *When Will These Things Happen*, 228-9.

<sup>28</sup> This point will be examined further below, as we look at the views of Wilson and France.

<sup>29</sup> *Matthew*, 220.

of the *meshalim* answer the question “what will be the sign of your coming?” in 24:3 with “there will be no sign.”<sup>30</sup>

5. The term *parousia* is used in the disciples’ question and in the section from 24:36 onward but not elsewhere in the account (except its “parenthetical” use in 24:27<sup>31</sup>).

These criticisms highlight significant problems in Wright’s understanding of Matthew 24-25 and demonstrate that an interpretation of these chapters that excludes an end-time scenario is difficult to sustain throughout.

An example of the second approach, in which the discourse is regarded as exclusively eschatological, is Fred Burnett’s study of Matthew 24, mentioned already in the literature survey in **Chapter 1**.<sup>32</sup> The key to Burnett’s approach lies in Matthew’s redaction of the disciples’ question in 24:3. In Mark 13:4 and Luke 21:7, the core question “when will these things happen?” is followed by another “and what will be the sign that they are all about to be fulfilled?”<sup>33</sup> In Matthew 24:3 this is altered to “and what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?” Burnett’s interpretation of 23:38 and 24:1 is that these verses reflect the rejection and withdrawal of Wisdom from Israel; understood against this background, he sees Jesus’ prediction of the fall of the temple in 24:2 as simply the physical outworking of that withdrawal. On the basis of this, he argues that Matthew’s redaction of the disciples’ question

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<sup>30</sup> *Reading Matthew*, 240

<sup>31</sup> See France, *Matthew*, 342 & 347. The relevance of this point will be explored below.

<sup>32</sup> Burnett, *The Testament of Jesus-Sophia*, esp. 183-224. Others who have taken this approach include Joachim Gnllka, *Das Matthäusevangelium*, (HKNT; Freiburg: Herder, 1988) 2: 309-333; Daniel J. Harrington, *The Gospel of Matthew* (Sacra Pagina; Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1991), 331-41; Jack D. Kingsbury, *Matthew: Structure, Christology, Kingdom* (London: SPCK, 1975) 29-30.

<sup>33</sup> In Luke, this is “... and what will be the sign that they are about to take place?” (τί τὸ σημεῖον ὅταν μέλλῃ ταῦτα γίνεσθαι.).



creates a *caesura* between 24:2 and 24:4, a position that he supports by arguing that the καὶ in 24:3 is “epexegetical,” meaning that the verse should be read as “Tell us, when will this happen, that is (καὶ), what will be the sign of your Parousia and the consummation of the Age?”<sup>34</sup> Understood in this way, the question, according to Burnett, is now purely eschatological and no longer refers in any sense to the fall of the temple.

Burnett’s argument is problematic for several reasons. First, as I have already argued in **Chapter 1**, his understanding that Jesus’ departure from the temple represents the rejection and withdrawal of Wisdom is difficult to sustain. Second, if the καὶ is indeed epexegetical, then the fall of the temple is still the basic point of reference for the question. Third, his approach forces him into an anachronistic interpretation of 24:15 as referring to the desecration of Christian sanctuaries. Burnett’s position, then, seems to be an impossible one to sustain, and while the first criticism is levelled uniquely at his argument, the second and third criticisms highlight problems with all approaches within this category.

In the third category of approaches to Matthew 24:4-44, in which the discourse is understood as depicting an eschatological scenario that includes the fall of the temple, may be grouped the views of the greatest number of contemporary scholars, despite a great deal of diversity in the details of their interpretations. Meier, for example, sees a single prophecy with two fulfilments,<sup>35</sup> while Davies and Allison understand the verses as depicting “the entire post-Easter period, interpreted in terms of the messianic woes.”<sup>36</sup> Sim shares this understanding of Matthew 24, seeing the references to the fall of Jerusalem as serving the purposes of a historical

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<sup>34</sup> Burnett, *The Testament of Jesus-Sophia*, 207.

<sup>35</sup> J.P. Meier, *Matthew*, (NT Message 3; Wilmington: Glazier, 1980), 283.

<sup>36</sup> Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 3:331. For the messianic woes, see pages 331-333.

review, lending credibility to the eschatological details that will follow.<sup>37</sup> These approaches are in one sense rather diverse, but at the same time they all regard the fall of the temple as belonging to a prophecy that concerns an eschatological scenario, within which it plays a key role, whether as a type of the last judgement or as an antecedent to it. Ultimately, the question of whether these approaches should be favoured above those that belong to category (4), below, is not an easy one to settle, a fact to which the current state of the debate testifies, and will hinge largely upon our understanding of the redaction of the disciples' question in 24:3 and of the referents of 24:29-31.

The fourth approach is associated with R.T. France and Alistair Wilson.<sup>38</sup> France, breaks the chapter down as follows:

- (i) Jesus foretells the destruction of the temple (24:1-2)
- (ii) Warnings against premature expectation (24:3-14)
- (iii) The coming crisis in Judea (24:15-28)
- (iv) Climax of the crisis within "this generation" (24:29-35)
- (v) The unexpected *Parousia* of the Son of Man (24:36-25:13)
- (vi) The Parable of the Talents (25:14-30)
- (vii) The Last Judgement (25:31-46)<sup>39</sup>

Within this proposed structure, France sees verses 4-14 as specifying the kind of events which will be regarded by many as signifying the end but which the disciples are not to understand in this way. These verses thus serve as "a warning against premature expectation."<sup>40</sup> He then sees

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<sup>37</sup> Sim, *Apocalyptic Eschatology*, 160-169.

<sup>38</sup> Wilson, *When Will These Things Happen*, esp. 109-74.

<sup>39</sup> The headings are taken from France, *Matthew*, 336-58.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 337.

verses 15-28 as relating specifically to the fall of Jerusalem and its temple, with a deliberate transition in verse 36 into a discussion of the end of the age, a transition that effectively separates the two events from one another. The reference to the Son of Man “coming on the clouds” in 24:30-31 is understood as a metaphorical presentation of Jesus’ vindication at the fall of Jerusalem, drawing on the imagery of Daniel 7:13,<sup>41</sup> and the reference to the visibility of the coming of the Son of Man in 24:27 is understood as a parenthetical reference to the *parousia*, intended to contrast the secret announcements of false messiahs with the true appearance of the Son of Man.<sup>42</sup> Thus, France’s approach sees two events, and only two events, as being referred to in Matthew 24:4-44: the fall of Jerusalem (particularly the temple) and the *parousia* of the Son of Man. No events are described in the interim between these two events except, possibly, those that are specified as *not* belonging to the *parousia*.

France’s interpretation of these verses and his understanding of their structure is attractive for two main reasons:

1. The interpretation provides a good explanation of Matthew’s redaction of the disciples’ question in 24:3. According to France, and those who follow this interpretation, this alteration effectively turns a two-part question about one event into a question about two events: the fall of the temple and the coming of Jesus at the end of the age.<sup>43</sup> Given that such an alteration has been made at the outset of this discourse, it is reasonable to expect

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<sup>41</sup> Ibid., 344. France comments, “the word *parousia* is *not* used here.” (Emphasis original)

<sup>42</sup> See France, *Matthew*, 342 and, especially 347, where he writes that the word *parousia* “has been conspicuously absent from vv.4-35 (except to state in v. 27 that the *parousia* is to be distinguished from the period then under discussion).”

<sup>43</sup> See France, *Matthew*, 337.

that it would be reflected in the discourse itself, in Matthew's redactional re-arrangement of his source material.

2. Formally, the approach acknowledges the shift from predominantly 2<sup>nd</sup> person forms in 24:4-35 to more detached language in 24:36-40. Wilson comments, "While it could be argued that this is Matthew's editorial work serving to apply the passage specifically to the readers within his community, the more natural reading, on the assumption that Matthew is a faithful recorder of traditional material, is that it is the disciples who will witness and experience the events described."<sup>44</sup>

These specific points seem to be largely unaddressed by the approaches grouped together under category (3) above. However, those who have followed this approach have tended to base their interpretation of Matthew 24:30-31 upon a particular understanding of Daniel 7, one substantially similar to that of G.B. Caird and N.T. Wright (whom I have grouped, of course, in category 1) and this understanding may be seriously flawed. It is important, therefore, to make some kind of assessment of these verses and of their interpretation by the scholars mentioned above. Since verse 30 is linked to verse 29 by the temporal phrase καὶ τότε, some examination of that verse must begin our study.

## **The Son of Man Coming on the Clouds**

Matthew 24:29 employs cosmic imagery that seems to fuse Isaiah 13:10 and 34:4 in a "free conflation."<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> Wilson, *When Will These Things Happen*, 139. Cf. Garland, *Reading Matthew*, 235.

<sup>45</sup> Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 3:357.

The sun will be darkened and the moon will not give its light,

The stars will fall from the sky and the heavenly bodies will be shaken.

Davies and Allison read this as a description of the darkness of the *Endzeit*, suggesting that such darkness may reflect the common idea that the end-time reprises *Urzeit*.

Perhaps the falling of the stars and the resultant darkness develop the *Urzeit/Endzeit* correlation in more than one way. Jewish legend spoke of a falling of stars near the beginning of the world: the fall of Satan and his host was often depicted as a crash of stars from the sky: 1 En 86.1-3; 88.1-3; Rev 12.4; Apoc. Elijah 4.11; cf Isa 14.12.<sup>46</sup>

Such an understanding of Matthew 24:29 is rejected by Wright,<sup>47</sup> France<sup>48</sup> and Wilson,<sup>49</sup> who note that in neither Isaiah 13:10 nor 34:4 is there any suggestion that what is being spoken of is the end of the world or eschatological judgement. It is quite clear in each text that what is being spoken of is an event of temporal destruction brought about by God's judgement: in the case of 13:10, this is the destruction of Babylon; in the case of 34:4 it is that of Edom and other surrounding nations. This is not to say that such language could not be drawn upon in dramatic ways within the apocalyptic tradition, but these scholars may be correct in urging that we pause and consider whether the cosmic language in Matthew is also being used to denote temporal destruction. Given that Jesus' speech has been occasioned by a question regarding Jerusalem's destruction, and given that most of the descriptions that precede verse 29 would be quite readily explained as describing such an event, the Isaianic meaning may be more plausible than that of *I*

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<sup>46</sup> Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 3:358.

<sup>47</sup> *Jesus and the Victory of God*, 513.

<sup>48</sup> *Matthew*, 343-44.

<sup>49</sup> *When Will These Things Happen*, 154-56.

*Enoch* 86 or 88, which are part of a work that is concerned with cosmology and calendrical issues and that employs a complex and nuanced interplay of stars and angels within its symbolic framework.<sup>50</sup> This would suggest that it is at least plausible to regard Matthew 24:29 as a metaphorical depiction of the fall of Jerusalem, presenting it as an act of divine judgement, using language previously used of Israel's enemies.

It is in verses 30 and 31, however, that problems arise in the approach taken by Caird et al. 24:30 opens with a reference to the sign of the Son of Man:

At that time the sign of the Son of Man (τὸ σημεῖον τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου) will appear in the sky, and all the nations of the earth will mourn. They will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky, with power and great glory.

The reference to the “sign” of the Son of Man has various possible interpretations. It is possible that the genitive is one of apposition, in which case the sign *is* the Son of Man, or his coming.<sup>51</sup> A second possibility, popular among the church fathers, is that the sign was the cross.<sup>52</sup> A third possibility is that the term is equivalent to the Hebrew term **דגל**, which means “banner” or “ensign.” Glasson sees the imagery as pointing towards the raising of a standard as a rallying point for an eschatological battle.<sup>53</sup> Davies and Allison provide arguments in support of this last

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<sup>50</sup> For this fact, see Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch*, 288: “In *1 Enoch* 86:1-3 stars are an image for the watchers, and in Daniel 12:3 and *1 Enoch* 104:2, stars and angels may even be identified with one another.”

<sup>51</sup> So W.C. Allen, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to St. Matthew*, (ICC; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1912), 258-9; Lindars, *Son of Man*, 128-9; Meier, *Matthew*, 287.

<sup>52</sup> This view is seen in, for example, Cyril of Jerusalem, *Cat.* 15:22; Chrysostom, *Homily on Matthew*, 76:3.

<sup>53</sup> Glasson, T.F. “The Ensign of the Son of Man (Matt 24.30)” *JTS* 15 (1964), 299-300.

interpretation, including, importantly, the fact that the LXX often translates כּ as σημεῖον. They themselves favour a combination of this understanding with the idea that the sign was the cross.<sup>54</sup>

The mention of the sign of the Son of Man leads in to the description of his coming upon the clouds of heaven (ἐπὶ τῶν νεφελῶν τοῦ οὐρανοῦ), which is the focal point of the interpretation taken by Caird, Wright, France and Wilson. The background to this description lies in Daniel 7:13, in which one like a son of man approaches the throne of the Ancient of Days “with the clouds of heaven.”<sup>55</sup> As Caird notes, the direction of this coming in Daniel is heavenward, rather than earthward,<sup>56</sup> and there is nothing to suggest that this direction is different from that seen in Matthew 24:30 and its parallels. More importantly, regarding this Danielic background, Caird claims that “the entire scene is symbolic.”<sup>57</sup> What, however, might be denoted in that symbolism? Caird and Wright favour the idea that the “one like a son of man” represents Israel as a nation (note the collective “saints of the Most High” in 7:18,22,27), just as the beasts described in Dan 7:2-7 represent successive empires.<sup>58</sup> According to Wright,<sup>59</sup> the significance of Israel being depicted as resembling a human surely lies in the stark contrast with the bestial, inhuman nature of the other nations, as they are represented. This undergirds his suggestion that the imagery denotes some idea of Israel being a “true humanity” in the midst of a populace that

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<sup>54</sup> *Matthew* 3: 359-60.

<sup>55</sup> The strong correspondence with Daniel 7:13 means that, whatever the rights and wrongs of the idea that *bar nasha* in the gospel/historical Jesus traditions is simply a circumlocution, we are clearly dealing at this point in our text with an allusion to a specific text. A full discussion of the coming Son of Man sayings in Matthew can be found in Wilson, *When Will These Things Happen*, 161-72.

<sup>56</sup> Caird, *New Testament Theology*, 377.

<sup>57</sup> Caird, *New Testament Theology*, 377.

<sup>58</sup> See Wright, *New Testament and the People of God*, 291-92.

<sup>59</sup> *New Testament and the People of God*, 292-295.

has lost its humanity by turning from God.<sup>60</sup> Israel shall be seen to have been correct to trust in and follow God. The one like a son of man, and his coming with the clouds, is a symbol of vindication in the face of the arrogance of God's enemies, whose boasting (Dan 7:8,11-2,23-25) is silenced by the exaltation of the saints.

Coming to Matthew 24:30 with this background in mind, it would be reasonable to expect that the explicit allusion to Daniel also carries such symbolic value. Wright, Caird, France, and now Wilson all take it this way, believing that when properly contextualised, the most obvious "vindicating" event would be the fall of the temple, which vindicates Jesus and his disciples as being the true people of God over and against those who have illegitimately taken over sovereignty of God's kingdom, those challenged and polemicised throughout chapters 21-23.

If this point is granted, it becomes possible to read the language of 24:31 as reflecting this use of metaphor. As has been mentioned already, the image of the "ensign" or "banner" is one that conveys the idea of rallying. Such imagery is natural in the context of triumph, but may also connect with wider themes within the gospel of the gathering of a remnant from throughout the world. Such an idea has been encountered already in 12:38-42 and will close the book dramatically in 28:19. Garland suggests that the image of angels gathering the elect from the four winds seems most naturally to symbolise, in language at home in apocalyptic writings, the global vision of this gospel.<sup>61</sup>

Given that the original sense of Daniel 7 is so important to the interpretation of Matthew 24:30 advocated by Caird and those who have followed him, some assessment of their

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<sup>60</sup> "The symbol is obviously pregnant with the meaning of Genesis 2, evoking the idea of the people of God as the true humanity and the pagan nations as the animals." *New Testament and the People of God*, 292.

<sup>61</sup> See Garland, *Reading Matthew*, 239.



treatment of this passage is in order. Of particular importance in this regard is the work of John Collins on the Daniel text.<sup>62</sup> Collins provides a thorough and insightful study of Daniel 7 with an extended discussion of the identity of the Son of Man figure and of the “holy ones of the Most High.”<sup>63</sup> As a matter of historical fact, he notes that the corporate understanding of the Son of Man as a symbol of Israel does not appear in Jewish exegesis of the text until the medieval period<sup>64</sup> and first appears in Christian exegesis in the 4<sup>th</sup>. century writings of Ephrem Syrus,<sup>65</sup> a point that raises serious problems for the argument that Jesus and his contemporaries (or the author of Matthew’s Gospel, for that matter) would have naturally understood the Son of Man imagery as symbolic of national vindication. Moreover, his close examination of the unfolding scenario of Daniel 7 demonstrates that while the beasts that rise from the sea are clearly allegorical representations of pagan kingdoms, the one like a Son of Man cannot be categorised in like manner: no allegorical/symbolic significance is assigned to him within the text, unlike the beasts from the sea (Daniel 7:17), and his appearance is coordinated with the description of God as the Ancient of Days, which is not symbolic but rather, to use Collins’s categorisation “mythic-realistic.” This phrase indicates that an actual, real heavenly figure is being described in language

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<sup>62</sup> See his commentary, *Daniel: A Commentary on the Book of Daniel, with an Essay, “The Influence of Daniel on the New Testament,”* by Adela Yarbro Collins. Hermeneia. (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1994), 274-324. Wright rejects the kind of interpretation taken by Collins, but his rejection is based on a broad conceptual discussion of kinds of “representation” rather than on a detailed analysis of the literary structure of Daniel 7, such as that provided by Collins.

<sup>63</sup> See his excurses, “One Like a Human Being,” on pages 304-10; and “Holy Ones,” on pages 313-17. Also note the comments that follow the latter excursus on 317-18.

<sup>64</sup> *Daniel*, 307.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, 308.

drawn from the religio-historical background. Thus, the one like a Son of Man is best understood as a real heavenly figure, distinct from God,<sup>66</sup> and not a representation of Israel.

In addition, Collins provides strong arguments that the references to the “Holy Ones of the Most High” should be understood as being to angels, and not to Israel. He notes the use of the term “holy ones” in a broad range of Jewish texts, almost always indicating angelic figures,<sup>67</sup> and his argument is clinched by the fact that in Daniel 4:10, 14, 20 and 8:13 the term “holy one(s)” is used in connection with heavenly beings.<sup>68</sup> The objection that this would make the vision irrelevant to the disenfranchised Jews to whom it speaks<sup>69</sup> is dismissed by Collins, who notes the angelic warfare portrayed in Daniel 10-12 and concludes, “To the pious Jews of the Maccabean era, who had a lively belief in supernatural beings, nothing could be more relevant than that their angelic patrons should “receive the kingdom.”<sup>70</sup>

Returning to Matthew 24:30-31, the view that the Son of Man coming with the clouds of heaven should be understood as symbolic of the vindication of God’s people—on the basis that it would have been understood in this way by those familiar with its original sense in Daniel 7:13—must be rejected as without foundation. Instead, if the original sense of Daniel 7 does inform this passage—and we must be prepared for the fact that either Matthew or the traditions he handled may have departed to some extent from that original sense—then the language would be more likely to be understood by first century readers as referring to the enthronement of a heavenly figure. It is here that the most obvious and significant departure from the Danielic source material

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<sup>66</sup> Collins suggests that Michael may be in view, and presents good arguments in favour of this, but acknowledges that precise identification is impossible.

<sup>67</sup> *Daniel*, 313-17.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, 318.

<sup>69</sup> See L.F. Hartman and A.A. DiLella, *The Book of Daniel*, (AB 23; New York: Doubleday, 1978), 91.

<sup>70</sup> Collins, *Daniel*, 318.

has been made by the gospel writers and by nascent Christianity, for this heavenly figure has now been explicitly identified with Jesus. That this is the case is made clear by the three-way link between this description of the Son of Man coming with the clouds, the later description of the *parousia* of the Son of Man (24:36-41) and the second half of the disciples' question in 24:3:

“What will be the sign of **your** *parousia* and of the end of the age?”

It is more plausible, then, to see Matthew 24:30 as referring to the heavenly enthronement of Jesus, an understanding that dovetails nicely with the commissioning of the angels to gather the elect in verse 31 (similar imagery occurs in Matthew 13:39-41, where it is undoubtedly connected to eschatological judgement): the angelic host here seems reminiscent of the description of the holy ones in Daniel 7. It is not clear, however, that this event should necessarily be equated with the *parousia*, the description of which does not begin until 24:36 (although the two events are clearly inseparable).

The question of when this enthronement takes place remains difficult to answer. If, as Davies and Allison suggest, the “sign of the Son of Man” is the cross, functioning as the eschatological banner,<sup>71</sup> then perhaps it is seen as taking place at the death of Jesus. It would be difficult on such an interpretation, however, to understand the significance of the temporal language of verse 29 (Εὐθέως δὲ μετὰ τὴν θλίψιν τῶν ἡμερῶν ἐκείνων: “Immediately after the distress of those days ...”) and of verse 30 (καὶ τότε: “and then ...”). If even some of the imagery preceding these temporal references depicts the fall of Jerusalem, then they would seem to locate the enthronement as occurring *after* that event. It seems more likely, then, that verse 30 does not indicate an expectation that the enthronement will take place at a specific point in time,

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<sup>71</sup> *Matthew* 3: 359-60.

but rather reflects a simple expectation of the future enthronement of Jesus, a prerequisite of the judgement that he will subsequently enact at his *parousia*.

To return to the four categories of approach to Matthew 24, the first and second approaches have been rejected as untenable. The fourth approach is attractive for many reasons, but its central claim that Matthew 24:30-31 would be understood by anyone familiar with Daniel 7 as being a symbolic description of the fall of Jerusalem cannot be sustained in the light of Collins's study (a criticism that also further undermines the first approach). Nevertheless, the observation that there is a preponderance of 2<sup>nd</sup> person forms in the verses prior to 24:36 and the attempt to explain Matthew's redaction of the disciples' question in 24:3 remain helpful. I would suggest that rather than function to separate imminent events from more remote ones, as France and Wilson suggest, these elements of Matthew's arrangement draw attention to the fact that the events that will be witnessed by the disciples—particularly those surrounding the destruction of Jerusalem and the fall of the temple—are part of an eschatological scenario. Thus, the redaction draws attention to the fact that inaugural events within the eschatological scenario have been *witnessed*, a fact that reinforces the sense that the present time is eschatological. This point continues to be valid if (as seems necessary) the fourth approach is rejected in favour of the third, in which Matthew 24:4-44 refers to the fall of the temple as part of an eschatological scenario, the details of which are impossible to separate from one another. In either case, the words of France could be validly cited:

The fact that the destruction of the temple and the “close of the age” can be dealt with together in the same chapter indicates that there is a close *theological connection* between them.<sup>72</sup>

## **The Coordination of the Fall of the Temple and the Last Judgement**

The study thus far has focused on verses 1-35 of Matthew 24, which have been understood as moving from a question regarding the fall of the temple to a description of the return of the exalted Jesus and thus as reinforcing the sense that the present time is eschatological. The following verses, from 24:36 on, are understood by R.T. France as answering the second half of the disciples’ question, concerning “the end of the age,” and only Wright, whose argument has been rejected above, would significantly challenge this understanding of what these verses refer to.

This material then gives way to a series of *meshalim* concerned with the final judgement. I want to propose, in what follows, that Matthew’s arrangement of material in these *meshalim*, coordinates the destruction of the temple with the final judgement. Specifically, it draws attention to the connections that exist between the criteria that are used in the judgement on the temple (or on Israel) and in the final judgement.

### **The *Meshalim*: Prophecy and Paraenesis**

Before studying the detail of the *meshalim* found in 24:45-25:46, it is of interest to note that their use at this point in the text continues to reinforce the idea that Jesus is a figure of

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<sup>72</sup> *Matthew*, 334.

wisdom. As noted in the discussion of *meshalim* in **Chapter 1**, Matthew presents the form as sapiential. The presence at this point in the narrative of a series of *meshalim*, brought together stylistically, reinforces strongly the idea that Jesus is a sage. The fact that they are being used to teach eschatological truths, with ideas more strongly associated with the genre apocalypse, indicates that Matthew's conception of Jesus is that of a sage rather more in the mould of Enoch or Daniel than of Ben Sira: he is a revealer of eschatological truths. Nowhere is this more strongly seen than in 25:31-46, in which the depiction of judgement is presented using figurative imagery that may well draw upon the Son of Man imagery in the Parables of Enoch. The presentation of Jesus' wisdom here, therefore, is reminiscent of that seen in the texts studied in **Part 1**, each of which in their own way attested to such a fusion of sapiential and apocalyptic traditions. As an aside, this strong Jewish background ought to give scholars cause for caution in pronouncing these *meshalim* a late innovation, at least on the basis of the fact that they reflect such a fusion. Pure sapiential and pure apocalyptic texts are not well attested in the New Testament period. More relevant to the present study is the fact that it is one more piece of evidence that Matthew is concerned to present Jesus as a figure of great wisdom and will do so in his arrangement of material, some of which is not found in the other gospels.<sup>73</sup>

As far as the content of the *meshalim* is concerned, Garland identifies several narrative themes:

- (a) The sudden arrival of something or someone that creates a crisis appears in all five parables (24:37,39,43,44,46;25:6,19).
- (b) A key figure is delayed in three of the parables (24:48;25:5,19)

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<sup>73</sup> For the question of the relationship of this material to the other gospels and to the hypothetical sources, see Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 3:385-6, 391-4, 402-4, 417-8. Actually, only 25:31-46 is generally seen as a thoroughly Matthean composition.

(c) The exhortation to watch (24:42,43;25:13) and be ready (24:44; 25:10) for the unknown time of arrival (24:37,42-44,50;25:10) sets the tone for the first four parables. (d) The division of the characters into two separate categories (the wise, the faithful and good versus the wicked, foolish and hesitant, 24:45,48;25:2,21,23,26) appears in the last four parables. (e) The last three parables also contain a judgement scene in which the faithful and ready receive a joyous reward (24:46; 25:10-11,21,23), and the unfaithful and unready are banished and/or ruthlessly punished (24:39,51;25:10,30).<sup>74</sup>

The fact that the parables are concerned with the last judgement at the time of Jesus' return is hard to avoid when these themes are appreciated and when they are related back to the disciples' question in 24:3. The basic paraenetic function is obvious: be ready for that return by being careful to honour the Lord. This idea of honouring the Lord, or the "master," is developed in several ways. In the first *mashal* (24:45-51), the servant is specifically required to care for his fellow servants (24:45); in the second (25:1-13), the virgins are expected to take part in the wedding banquet festivities, something they can only do properly with lamps properly fuelled; in the third (25:14-30), the servants are entrusted with their master's property and expected to want to "grow" that property<sup>75</sup> and thus expand his estate; in the final *mashal* (25:31-46),<sup>76</sup> the basis for the separation of the two groups is not, fundamentally, their commitment to humanitarianism

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<sup>74</sup> *Reading Matthew*, 239.

<sup>75</sup> On the use of agricultural imagery in this *mashal*, see Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 409, and Gundry, *Matthew*, 507-8, who comments that there is a "desire to portray the master's activity in terms that symbolize gathering his disciples into a true synagogue."

<sup>76</sup> I shall use the term *mashal* with regard to this section of the text despite some concerns over whether the terminology is appropriate. I am inclined to regard the extended metaphor of sheep and goats as warranting the categorisation.

but rather their attitude to Jesus as it is expressed in that humanitarian concern.<sup>77</sup> They are thus judged on whether they have honoured Jesus as king.

This paraenetic function has obvious relevance for Christians, such as those for whom, at least in part, Matthew wrote. On this level, there are some interesting connections to be noted with wider ethical and theological themes in the gospel. The care for fellow servants in the first *mashal* connects with the emphasis on brotherly love in 5:21-26; the imagery of the virgins' lamps may draw on that found in 5:14-16; the agricultural imagery in the parable of the talents may reflect the use of such language in connection with the kingdom in 12:30 and, especially, in 13:1-23;<sup>78</sup> finally the humanitarian aspects of fidelity to the king in the final *mashal* seem to reflect ideas found throughout the gospel relating to Jesus' compassion on and concern for the needy (e.g. 6:1-4, 15:14, 32), but the parable also relates back to the missionary discourse of chapter 10 and also to 18:1, both of which contain the idea of receiving Jesus by receiving his representatives. There are, therefore, numerous ways in which the *meshalim* relate to Matthew's presentation of the responsibilities of those who are Jesus' followers.

Yet, there are also ways in which these *meshalim* can be seen as relating to the judgement on Israel represented by the fall of the temple, as described in chapter 24 and as announced by the woes of chapter 23. The reference to the wicked servant's cruel treatment of his fellows (24:48-9) is easily connected with the introduction to the series of woes in chapter 23 (23:2-7). This section makes clear, in a kind of thesis statement for all that will follow, that these were pronounced upon the Jewish leaders for their oppression of fellow Jews (23:4). The proposal that the servants' behaviour should be connected with that of the Jewish leaders receives support from the fact that

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<sup>77</sup> So Garland, "Reading Matthew," 244-245.

<sup>78</sup> More shall be said on this below.



the judgement on the cruel servant is to be assigned a place “with the hypocrites” (24:51), a term used in the introduction to all but one of the woes pronounced on the Jewish leaders (23:13,15,23,25,27,29; cf. also 23:28). The point seems to be that the behaviour of the wicked servant is a hypocrisy, parallel to that of the Jewish leaders who received judgement as the temple fell.

A strong link with the woes may also be seen with the parable of the talents. By means of repetition, the parable draws attention to the expectation of the master that he will reap where he has not sown and will gather where he has not scattered.<sup>79</sup> This imagery is agricultural, a fact that in itself is striking in an otherwise financial parable.<sup>80</sup> It becomes all the more striking when we consider the fact that such language is used in an extended sense in the parables of chapter 13. The most obvious connection is with 13:23, in which the image of the great harvest is to be found. Similar language is also used by Jesus in 12:30. The link between all of these images is the idea that the master has an expectation that his estate will grow and is, in the parable of the talents at least, displeased with those who hoard it unproductively.<sup>81</sup> This is the very accusation levelled at the Jewish leaders in 23:13:

You shut the kingdom of heaven in men’s faces.

Indeed, there is a shocking twist given to this verse in the subsequent woe:

You travel across land and sea to win a single proselyte, and when he becomes one, you make him twice as much a son of Gehenna as you are. (23:15)

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<sup>79</sup> 25:24-7.

<sup>80</sup> See Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 3:409; Gundry, *Matthew*, 507-8.

<sup>81</sup> Note also the description of this servant as “worthless” or “unprofitable” (ἄχρηστος). See also Lane C. McGaughey, “Fear of Yahweh and the Mission of Judaism: a Postexilic Maxim and its Early Christian Expansion in the Parable of the Talents.” *JBL* 94 (1975), 235-245.

Not only does this verse stress the anti-Kingdom nature of the Jewish leaders' proselytising (in describing converts as sons of Gehenna), but it also stresses the paucity of this work: it is a single (ἑνᾶ) convert that is made.

Finally, the *mashal* of the sheep and goats speaks of a universal judgement on all humanity (25:32) and while the criterion of judgement is ultimately their attitude to the King,<sup>82</sup> that attitude is exposed by the extent to which they have shown humanitarian concern for "the least of these brothers of mine" (25:40,45). Again, a link may be seen with the woes pronounced upon the Jewish leaders. In 23:23-4, they are condemned for neglecting "the more important matters of the law: justice, mercy and faithfulness." The condemnation pronounced upon the nations of the world is, therefore, linked to that pronounced upon the Jewish leaders.

As mentioned above, N.T. Wright has argued that the true referent of the parable of the talents is Jesus' coming to Jerusalem and the pronouncement of judgement upon the Jewish leadership.<sup>83</sup> Elements of his argument are interesting and helpful, not least his recognition that the servants in the parable are in a position of trust, which one servant fails to live up to and from which he is then ejected.<sup>84</sup> An essential part of Wright's argument, however, is that the natural connection to be made by the reader is with the coming of Jesus into Jerusalem, an event which, in the parallel account of Luke 19:28-44, immediately follows the parable. In Matthew's account, however, the parable has been shifted into a context that follows Jesus "departure" from the temple (24:1). This fact, combined with the fact that it is juxtaposed with the parable of the sheep and goats, clearly descriptive of the last Judgement, means that in its Matthean context the most

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<sup>82</sup> As noted above, see Garland, *Reading Matthew*, 243-5.

<sup>83</sup> *Jesus and the Victory of God*, 632-40.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, 638.

obvious association of the “coming” of the master<sup>85</sup> is not with Jesus’ arrival in Jerusalem, but with the final judgement. The connections Wright has made with the judgement of the Jewish leaders remain valid, however, and taken together with the connections I have proposed above, with the woes of chapter 23, they point to a significant fact: the judgement of the Jewish leadership and the destruction of the temple, while separated temporally from the last judgement are nevertheless coordinated with it by Matthew. That is, he has drawn attention to the associations between the two events, to the level of continuity that exists between them.

This point requires to be set in the context of Matthew’s wider narrative. As noted already, Jesus has been portrayed as the one revealing eschatological wisdom, including the proper manner of behaviour expected of those who are the people of God, the true righteousness. The narrative of Matthew has stressed, however, that this revelation of wisdom has been rejected by the Jewish leaders and, indeed, by all Israel, with the exception of those whose ears have been miraculously opened. The conflict between Jesus and the Jewish leadership that took place in the temple courts, the pronouncement of woes upon them and the symbolic departure of Jesus from the temple represent the culmination of that rejection. The prophesied destruction of the temple, then, is portrayed by Matthew as being the consequence of the rejection of Jesus’ wisdom and thus a type of the final judgement, when all humanity—not just the Jewish leadership—will be held accountable for its reaction to that wisdom.

This point seems to be confirmed by the use of “wisdom” language in the first two *meshalim*. In the first (24:45-51) it is the “faithful and wise” servant (ὁ πιστὸς δοῦλος καὶ φρόνιμος) who is blessed (μακάριος) on his master’s return and made ruler of all his goods.<sup>86</sup> In

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<sup>85</sup> 25:19 speaks of this coming as follows: μετὰ δὲ πολλὸν χρόνον ἔρχεται ὁ κύριος τῶν δούλων ἐκείνων

<sup>86</sup> Cf. Matthew 5:5?

the second (25:1-12), the virgins are divided into two groups: the wise and the foolish (πέντε δὲ ἐξ αὐτῶν ἦσαν μωραὶ καὶ πέντε φρόνιμοι) and, of course, it is the wise who are allowed to participate in the celebrations. When these stories are read in the light of Matthew 7:24-27, where it is the *practice* of Jesus' teaching that represents wisdom, then their true significance emerges: they are not simply about readiness and fidelity, but concern the fact that such fidelity is specifically to the wisdom of Jesus, in all its practical aspects. These *meshalim* depict a person's future, which, like that of the temple, will be determined by that person's response to Jesus' teaching. As Garland notes, this is true even in the case of the image of the sheep and the goats, where the importance of the humanitarian actions lies in the fact that they are performed in service of the King.<sup>87</sup>

By means of this coordination, Matthew has turned the fall of the temple into a type of the final judgement and has made it serve his concern to depict Jesus' teaching as crucial to salvation. Thus, the importance of Jesus as the revealer of wisdom has been reinforced and the importance of accepting and abiding by that wisdom emphasised.

Is this all that there is to the relationship between the fall of the temple and the *parousia*, however, or do these connections represent one distinctive aspect of a broader association that links the two events? In order to answer this question, it is necessary to examine Matthew's wider presentation of the temple and its destruction.

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<sup>87</sup> *Reading Matthew*, 243-5.

## The Temple in Matthew's Wider Narrative

The first point within Matthew's narrative where the temple plays a key<sup>88</sup> role is in 12:1-8. The statement made in 12:6, that "one/something greater than the temple is here," was examined in **Chapter 5**, where I argued that in its context in 12:1-8, this is not an isolated Christological statement; rather it serves as the climax of the argument as a whole. The material in this argument emphasises the liberties of priests and the possibility of those who were not truly priests enjoying those same freedoms when in the presence of that which is "greater than the temple," which I suggested should be understood as a reference to the presence of God as he works in and through Jesus' ministry.

An interesting narrative feature may now be noted: providing we are willing to allow that *πλεον* and *μειζόν* are essentially the same in meaning, the reference to the "one/something greater than the temple" naturally associates itself with the statements of 12:41-42 that one "greater than Jonah/Solomon is here."<sup>89</sup> This is of interest for two reasons. First, Solomon was, of course, closely associated with the temple, even though his original temple was destroyed. Second, Matthew has expanded the reference to the sign of Jonah by adding the reference to the three days and three nights that the prophet was in the belly of the fish and linking this to the time spent by the Son of Man in the heart of the earth. This is of interest because the next time the reader of Matthew's narrative will encounter a reference to "three days," it is in the context of the accusation brought against Jesus, that he claimed that he would destroy the temple and rebuild it

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<sup>88</sup> There is mention of the temple, of course, in 5:23-24.

<sup>89</sup> Lybaek treats this material as part of a complex.

in three days (26:61), a charge repeated in 27:40 as Jesus is mocked upon the cross. On the lips of Jesus' enemies, this may be construed in a negative sense, as an idea that Matthew wishes to deny, yet the evangelist continues to develop the association between Jesus' death and the destruction of the temple, as will be shown below.<sup>90</sup>

It is important now to note a further point that also relates back to the reference to "one greater than the temple." In 23:16-22, Jesus pronounces a woe upon the Jewish leaders for a specific aspect of their beliefs:

You say, "If anyone swears by the temple it means nothing; but if anyone swears by the gold of the temple, he is bound by his oath." You blind fools! Which is greater: the gold, or the temple that makes the gold sacred? You also say, "If anyone swears by the altar it means nothing; but if anyone swears by the gift on it, he is bound by his oath." You blind men! Which is greater: the gift, or the altar that makes the gift sacred? Therefore, he who swears by the altar swears by it and everything on it. And he who swears by the temple swears by it and the one who dwells in it. And he who swears by heaven swears by God's throne and the one who sits on it.

The most striking aspect of this passage, other than the fact that it is the longest of the woes and thus calls attention to itself, is that it essentially presents the sanctity of the various objects mentioned in relational terms: the gold is sacred because it is in the holy temple, the gift is sacred because it is on the altar (of the holy temple) and the temple is sacred because it is where God dwells. The point is effectively that the Jewish leaders have given pre-eminence to the wrong things (the gold and the gift) because they have failed to recognise that what *actually* makes the temple and its contents sacred is God's presence. It may not be immediately obvious, but this is essentially a way of saying that the temple is not in and of itself special: it derives its sanctity

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<sup>90</sup> For the probability that the saying reflects actual claims of Jesus, see Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God*, 493-4.

from its relation to God. When we bring this fact back to Matthew 12:6 and the statement that “one greater than the temple is here,” it leads to some interesting conclusions. Of greatest importance is the fact that what is most obviously “greater than the temple” is God himself. This may reflect a high Christology, or it may possibly reflect a sense of God working *through* and *in* Jesus’ ministry.<sup>91</sup> But it also highlights that God’s sanctifying presence is not confined to the temple and that the temple is not *necessary* to God’s purposes. This may suggest that the reference to something greater than the temple, in a context in which Jesus essentially argues that his disciples should enjoy the same liberties as priests, implies that the temple is now redundant as the locus for God’s blessing.

Of climactic significance in the account of Jesus’ passion is the reference to the tearing of the temple veil in 27:50-53. Matthew recounts this traditional story with a significant addition: as the veil is torn, graves burst open and the bodies of holy people are raised to life. If we regard the tearing of the veil as conveying an idea of redundancy, as a physical corollary of the departure of Jesus from the temple and his statement that it is now desolate, then the fact that this symbol is accompanied by the resurrection of many creates a strong sense of association with the resurrection that is to come at the renewal, the *παλιγγενεσία* (19:28).<sup>92</sup> This proleptic resurrection may well represent a proleptic renewal and it is arguable that the earthquake that accompanied the tearing also develops this idea: earthquakes were often associated in Jewish literature with the renewal of creation.<sup>93</sup> The link between this earthquake and the temple is made stronger by the

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<sup>91</sup> See the discussion above, **Chapter 5**.

<sup>92</sup> This is assuming the traditional association of resurrection with the renewal of creation. See N.T. Wright, *The Resurrection of the Son of God*, 146-206.

<sup>93</sup> For eschatological earthquakes, see Zech 14:5; *1 Enoch* 1:6-7; 102:2; 4 Ezra 5:8; 6:13-16; 9:3; 2 Bar 27:7; 70:8; T. Levi 4:1. These earthquakes are associated with the renewal or restoration of creation. See Lars Hartman, *Prophecy*

use of the same term for the rending of the veil as is used for the splitting of the rocks

(ἐσχίσθη/ἐσχίσθησαν).<sup>94</sup> A further link may be made, this time between the earth that is shaken in 27:51 and the same earth that is covered in darkness in 27:45. The point of this would seem to be that the death of Jesus has significance for creation, which is covered in darkness and then shaken and rent: the establishment of connections with the temple veil would seem to link the temple to this cosmic significance.

One final point is worth making in connection with the tearing of the veil. The many who are raised to life at the same time as the veil is torn only enter the city and appear to people *after* Jesus' own resurrection (27:53). While this point may have an apologetic function, explaining why the sightings were not more widely seen and marvelled at, it may also connect with the "three days" idea noted above. The three days are not mentioned in this passage, but they are implied: only after three days, when Jesus is raised, will people see the true importance and significance of what he has done, as those proleptically raised appear to many in the holy city.

The narrative of Matthew, then, seems to make some kind of connection between the rending of the veil and the renewal of creation. Combined with the elements discussed above, this points to the fact that, in Matthew, the fall of the temple has a broad eschatological significance; it is not simply linked to the Great Judgement by the criteria that are used. The redactional alteration of the disciples' question in an explicitly eschatological direction, while allowing the following discourse to be divided into two sections - one dealing with the temple, the other with the *parousia* – also makes explicit the eschatological nature of the temple's destruction. To rephrase this statement: the fact that, in Matthew's account, the disciples ask about the "end of

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*Interpreted: The Formation of Some Jewish Texts and of the Eschatological Discourse Mark 13 Par.* (ConBNT 1; Lund: Almqvist & Wicksell, 1966), 71-6.

<sup>94</sup> See Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 3:628.



the age” in connection with the fall of the temple surely points to the fact that Matthew wants his readers to understand this event as eschatological, as “theologically coordinated” with the *parousia*. Were it not for the connections that have been demonstrated above, it would be possible to view the Matthean redaction as having the opposite purpose, as being intended to separate the two events; in the light of those connections, however, it seems clear that Matthew wishes instead to coordinate them. Matthew has foregrounded the eschatological associations of the fall of the temple.

Why, then, has Matthew coordinated the fall of the temple with the *parousia* and the last judgement? I have already proposed one reason: the coordination draws attention to the fact that it is the response to Jesus’ wisdom that determines how one is judged by God. Two other reasons may now be proposed. The first of these needs little elaboration and defence, as it seems to proceed naturally from the discussion above and is essentially an extension of my conclusion regarding Matthews arrangement in 24:1-44. The second, however, is more speculative and requires some further discussion.

1. The coordination of these events reinforces the sense that the present time (as far as the reader is concerned) is eschatological. If the fall of the temple is an eschatological event, then the *eschaton* has begun. This fact would be defensible even if the temple had not, in fact, fallen yet, since the narrative concerning the tearing of the temple veil—a well established part of the historical-Jesus tradition—is key to Matthew’s presentation. If the temple had, in fact, fallen, then this dimension of Matthew’s narrative is stronger yet.
2. The coordination of the destruction of the temple with eschatological events reflects the idea of restored creation. Matthew’s addition to the narrative of the rending of the veil, his

description of a proleptic resurrection, seems to link the fall of the temple with the restoration of creation that will happen in connection with the *parousia* (cf. 19:28). This point requires further discussion.

## **The Temple, Cosmology and the Creation**

Why does Matthew seem to link the fall of the temple with his eschatological scenario and, in the case of the rending of the veil, particularly with a renewed creation? One possibility acknowledges a widely attested stream of thought within Judaism and provides an explanation for this phenomenon of the Matthean composition that would reinforce the suggestion of a restored-creation schema in the Sermon on the Mount. That solution is centred on the popular understanding of the Temple as being a microcosm of creation; my suggestion is that Matthew's concern to present the believing community as constituting the firstfruits of the new eschatological creation requires that the Second Temple (as microcosm) is redundant. Thus, the fall of the Temple represents an important aspect of the beginning of the eschatological period, a necessary flip-side to the idea of the believing community as restored creation.

The idea that the Temple was understood within early Judaism as being a microcosm of Creation has received a great deal of attention in recent years.<sup>95</sup> The most explicit example of this line of thinking is to be found in the writing of Ben Sira (chapters 24-50), which will be discussed below, but this work merely develops associations that go back to the texts of Genesis 1 and

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<sup>95</sup> For a summary of scholarship on this point, as well as his own original contribution to the subject, see Greg Beale, "The Final Vision of the Apocalypse and its Implications for a Biblical Theology of the Temple," in *Heaven on Earth: The Temple in Biblical Theology* (ed. T.D. Alexander and S. Gathercole; Carlisle: Paternoster, 2004), 191-211.

Exodus 25-31. These associations were identified by Joseph Blenkinsopp,<sup>96</sup> who argued that the post-exilic *priestly* author established strong linguistic and structural connections between the description of the Tabernacle (as forerunner of the Temple) and the Creation account of Genesis 1. Kearney, similarly, saw a pairing between the seven days of the Creation week and the seven speeches made to Moses in Exodus 25-31.<sup>97</sup> The most transparent example of these associations, as Fletcher-Louis notes,<sup>98</sup> is the third speech, containing the command to construct the bronze laver. In the Solomonic Temple, this is simply called “the Sea” (2 Chron 4:1-5). The correspondence with the third day of Creation is strong, but is only the most explicit example of a range of associations widely acknowledged by scholars as linking Genesis 1 and Exodus 25-31 (and indeed a variety of other texts in the Hebrew Bible).<sup>99</sup> Scholars have also noted the fact that such associations between temple and creation (or temple –building and world-building) are hardly unique to Judaism, but are widely attested in the literature of the Ancient Near East,<sup>100</sup> a fact that would seem to give credibility to the idea that the associations are deliberate within the Biblical material and not just the loose speculation of modern scholars.<sup>101</sup>

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<sup>96</sup> J. Blenkinsopp, “The Structure of P,” *CBQ* 38 (1976), 275-92.

<sup>97</sup> P.J. Kearney, “Creation and Liturgy: the P redaction of Exodus 25-40,” *ZAW* 89 (1977), 375-387

<sup>98</sup> C. Fletcher-Louis, *All the Glory of Adam: Liturgical Anthropology in the Dead Sea Scrolls* (STDJ 42; Leiden: Brill, 2002), 63.

<sup>99</sup> See, for example, Fletcher-Louis, *All the Glory of Adam*, 63-64; Jon Levenson, *Sinai and Zion*, (Minneapolis: Winston, 1985), 111-76; idem, *Creation and the Persistence of Evil: The Jewish Drama of Divine Omnipotence* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1988), 78-99; idem, “The Temple and the World,” *Journal of Religion* 64 (1984) 275-98. Levenson’s works trace the idea more widely through Biblical material. One of the most obvious and significant instances of the idea is, of course, Psalm 78:69.

<sup>100</sup> Beale provides a good summary of some of the evidence for this. See, “The Final Vision,” 195-7.

<sup>101</sup> It should be noted that Josephus also expressed such a cosmological understanding of the temple (*Ant.* 3.123, 3.181).

Sirach 24 and 50 develop these associations with regard to Wisdom and the high priesthood. Sirach 24 is, of course, the great hymn to Wisdom in which the creative role of this hypostasised divine attribute is recognised and linked to her role in giving life to Jerusalem and its temple (24:13-31). Sirach 50 is the song of praise for Simon the high priest. As Fletcher-Louis has noted,<sup>102</sup> there are extensive linguistic parallels between the two sections: both Wisdom and Simon are described as coming out of the sanctuary/holy tent, being a shoot/taking root, being a cedar of Lebanon, a cypress trees, roses, or an olive tree. Moreover, the priest's fulfilment of his duties is described using language reminiscent (particularly in its Greek translation) of Genesis 2:2, which describes the completion of the creative work: both texts use the verb συντελέω to denote completion. Commenting on the Greek translation of Sirach 50, Hayward comments, "It is highly likely, therefore, that the high priest's completion of the order, *kosmos*, of the daily sacrifice, referred to in 50:19, belongs to the same kind of continuum as God's ordering of the works of creation."<sup>103</sup>

This last point brings us, in one sense, to the heart of the matter: order. It has long been acknowledged that one of the key concerns in the creation narrative is to laud *order* as being at the heart of the original plan of Creation.<sup>104</sup> Here, the temple and its worship is depicted as a

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<sup>102</sup> *All the Glory of Adam*, 74.

<sup>103</sup> Robert Hayward, "Sacrifice and World Order: Some Observations on ben Sira's attitude to the Temple Service," in *Sacrifice and Redemption: Durham Essays in Theology*, edited by S.W. Sykes (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 29. See the whole article for further aspects of this connection. Also, see Fletcher-Louis, *All the Glory of Adam*, 76-81. Fletcher-Louis is helpful in identifying some of the linguistic connections made within the intertextual web of Ben Sira's readings. However, his tendency is to read his own interest in angelomorphism into all of these texts. Carol Newsom is probably correct in her criticism of Fletcher-Louis, that his appreciation of language is too flat, failing to take into account the figurative character of much human communication. (see her review of this book in *Dead Sea Discoveries* 10 [2003] 431-5).

<sup>104</sup> See William Brown, *The Ethos of the Cosmos*, 35-61. Note the similarity of this concern with the idea of

place of true order, properly emulating the creative work of God and functioning not merely as a microcosm of creation, but specifically as a microcosm of the original creation, before sin destroyed order.<sup>105</sup> On this level, it is interesting that Sirach 24:22 depicts the wisdom that now indwells the temple as bringing a freedom from shame and from the curse of labour, i.e., from the curse pronounced in Gen 3. Like the community reflected in *4QInstruction*, which understood itself to be an Edenic oasis, in which the boundaries, and thus the order, of Creation had been restored, the temple (and its priesthood) is presented by Ben Sira as being given Edenic life by the Wisdom that indwells it.<sup>106</sup>

If it is the case that the temple is depicted as Edenic in this literature, it is also the case that Eden is presented in cultic terms in a number of texts. Jubilees 8:19, for example, attests such an idea, referring to Eden as “the Holy of Holies and the residence of the Lord.”<sup>107</sup> George J. Brooke notices a number of points within the scrolls found at Qumran where the cultic status of Eden is seen;<sup>108</sup> he links such an understanding of the Garden to the self-perception of the Qumran community as a faithful remnant existing apart from the temple:

The language of Eden and Adam was present in the tradition at every stage and could be used conveniently to satisfy all members of the movement that there was a place for them in the purposes of God whose desire for right worship would see Eden restored, and in Jerusalem at that.

Whereas at the outset with *Jubilees* Adam had been ordained and the community designed as

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“boundary-markers” in *4QInstruction* and CD, as described in **Chapter 3**, above.

<sup>105</sup> This point is noted also by Boccaccini, *Beyond the Essene Hypothesis*, 71-2.

<sup>106</sup> See also Randall Argall, *1 Enoch and Sirach*, 77.

<sup>107</sup> See the discussion of this imagery, and of its ramifications within Jubilees, in J.T.A.G.M. Ruitgen, “Visions of the Temple in the *Book of Jubilees*,” in Beate Ego, Armin Lange and Peter Pilhofer eds. *Gemeinde ohne Tempel/Community Without Temple*, (WUNT 2:118; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1999), 215-227.

<sup>108</sup> George J. Brooke, “Miqdash Adam, Eden and the Qumran Community,” in Ego, Lange and Pilhofer eds., *Gemeinde ohne Tempel*, 285-301.

priestly, in the end the whole community would be fully human, as God had originally intended for Adam.<sup>109</sup>

It is tempting at this point to draw comparisons between Brooke's argument and with my own conclusions regarding the Sermon on the Mount. Such a comparison would, however, require a more thorough evaluation of his argument – and of general assumptions regarding the relationship between the Qumran sectarians and the temple - than can be provided here. Instead, it is adequate to note that a number of texts attest that a connection is to be made between Eden and the temple.

Interestingly, this connection has also been detected in Ezekiel's vision of the eschatological temple,<sup>110</sup> and this allows us to draw in a further point of significance. The expectation that the temple would be rebuilt in the *eschaton* is attested by the book of Dream Visions (*1 Enoch* 90:29) and by Jubilees (1:15-17, 26-29), in both cases together with a negative appraisal of the present temple.<sup>111</sup> Revelation 21-22 provides an interesting development of this idea: the whole of Jerusalem is depicted as a place of worship and as a restored Eden, but the stress is that within this there is no temple, "for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb" (Rev 21:22). It is impossible to know how widespread the expectation of an eschatological temple was, but the fact that it appears in these texts, in which Eden and the temple are so connected, raises the possibility that Matthew was aware of such a view and even subscribed to it.

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<sup>109</sup> Brooke, "Miqdash Adam," 298.

<sup>110</sup> See Susan Niditch, "Ezekiel 40-48 in a Visionary Context," *CBQ* 48 (1986), 208-24.

<sup>111</sup> See Boccaccini, *Beyond the Essene Hypothesis*, 92-93; 101.

When this discussion is brought to Matthew, it raises two possible solutions to the problem under consideration, regarding why Matthew has developed the eschatological significance of the fall of the temple.

The first possibility is that Matthew understands those who have received Jesus wisdom to be living in a state of restored fidelity to the patterns of creation, and thus to have taken the place of the temple as the place within which the order of creation is restored. Indeed, we can imagine that Matthew, aware of elements within the Jesus tradition that predicted the fall of the temple using apocalyptic language (see Mark 13), aware too of the associations between Jesus' resurrection and the "rebuilding" of the temple,<sup>112</sup> would have made precisely this connection. Thus, rather than trying to separate the predictions concerning the fall of the temple (a past event as far as the evangelist is concerned) from predictions of future eschatological events—the judgement spoken of in Matt 25—he makes more explicit the connection between them: the *eschaton* has come, the new creation has begun to exist, the temple has fallen because it has now become redundant, and a judgement must come, for that too will be part of the *eschaton*.

The second possibility is in a sense the inverse of the first: Matthew understands the present time to be eschatological and must, therefore, account for why a new temple has not yet been built. Under this pressure he develops the idea that the community that has accepted Jesus' wisdom represents a restored creation and implies that this fulfils the expectation that a new temple would be built after Jesus' resurrection on the third day, a community that fulfils the function of the temple by recovering the true order of creation and that operates as a "righteous planting," crucial to God's will for the restoration of all nations. This suggestion remains speculative, since at no point does Matthew specify that the Christian community constitutes a

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<sup>112</sup> See N.T. Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God*, 493-4.

new temple. However, the references to the rebuilding of the temple are not explained in any other way within Matthew and the idea does seem similar to that developed elsewhere within the New Testament, especially in the relatively early Pauline writings.<sup>113</sup>

If either of these proposals is held to be plausible, then it means that here in these chapters of Matthew the idea of restored creation is operative. If, however, it is felt that the connection with cosmology and creation is tenuous, we are still left with an important narrative consequence to the depiction of the temple's destruction as being eschatological: this device reinforces the idea that the plotted time of the gospel is eschatological time and therefore confirms that Jesus' revealing of wisdom is not merely that of a prophet but rather that of an eschatological revealer.

### **The Fall of the Temple, the Death of Jesus and the Hostility of Israel**

Two final points should be noted before we leave behind this study of the fall of the temple in Matthew's eschatological scenario.

First, whatever the significance of the temple's destruction within Matthew's eschatological scenario, it is primarily linked within the narrative not to Jesus' teaching but to his death and resurrection, a fact highlighted by the fact that the veil is torn at the point of Jesus' death. If I am correct in suggesting that salvation is depicted in creational terms then this fact has important implications for Matthew's soteriology: Jesus' wisdom may well facilitate a recovery of the order of creation, but this aspect of salvation cannot be separated from the significance of his death. In appraising the extent to which Matthew has developed Jesus' revelatory role within

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<sup>113</sup> 1 Cor 3:16-17; 2 Cor 6:16. Eph 2:21 also develops this idea, although its authorship is more debatable. Note also 1 Peter 2:5.



his soteriology, we must avoid the conclusion that this has taken the place of his death. Rather, *both* the revealed wisdom of Jesus and his death/resurrection are depicted as eschatological events facilitating a recovery of creation. It may be interesting for further research on Matthew to examine the cosmic significance of the death of Jesus and of the Matthean concept of the atonement.

Second, we should not lose sight of the fact that the fall of the temple remains an act of judgement. Within the narrative, it serves as the climax of the Jewish leadership's rejection of Jesus and Jesus' forsaking of them. It is interesting to note, at this point, one of Garland's narrative insights into the gospel. He notes that Jesus' healing of the blind and the lame in the temple speaks of the inadequacy of that building and its authorities:

The temple and its purity system failed to make these people whole and only promoted social injustice by stigmatizing them and excluding them according to purity classifications.<sup>114</sup>

Read against the background of our discussion above, the point is clear: not only is the temple not essential to God's purposes, it is inadequate to the task of restoring creation and, indeed, has begun to stand in the way of God's will. It is Jesus and his ministry that will now effect a true restoration of creation, as signified in these healings. This verdict of inadequacy and failure is reinforced, in Garland's understanding by the withering of the fig-tree:

The tree that has not borne fruit is not pruned or fertilized but condemned and destroyed. Likewise the temple will also be destroyed.<sup>115</sup>

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<sup>114</sup> Garland, *Reading Matthew*, 213.

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*, 213.

Taking this together with the earlier points, the verdict on the temple is twofold: it is redundant, its time having passed, and, even in its time, it has failed to fulfil the purpose allotted it in God's purposes, as that purpose was reflected by the biblical texts discussed above in the context of the temple and cosmology.

The judgement on the temple, therefore, is to be equated with the judgement on the Jewish leaders. Within Matthew's narrative, this reinforces the portrayal of the truly righteous, those who have accepted Jesus' teaching, as a remnant within a parent group. This parent group is condemned, and the destruction of its key institution is presented as part of that condemnation. This idea dovetails with the theme of Gentile inclusion within the remnant, the true people of God.

## Conclusions

Chapters 24 and 25 of Matthew contain material generally understood as "apocalyptic." They also contain a series of *meshalim* that have a clear paraenetic function and which present, in sapiential form, further teaching on the Great Judgement. They represent a fusion of the sapiential and apocalyptic traditions and further reinforce the presentation of Jesus as a figure of Wisdom, revealing truths in the eschatological time. They also reinforce the portrayal of the elect remnant as "the wise."

The context of these chapters, however, is very much focused on the temple and this has to be allowed to influence our understanding of the description of events presented in chapter 24, which are best understood as containing both a prediction of the destruction of Jerusalem and a description of the *parousia* of the Son of Man. Matthew's alteration of the disciples' question in

24:3 seems primarily intended to emphasise the fact that certain events of the eschatological scenario (those surrounding the fall of the temple) will be witnessed by the disciples. If these events lie in Matthew's past, as seems likely, then this point would reinforce the sense that the present time is eschatological; even if Matthew was written prior to the fall of the temple, the same conclusion could be reached by means of the account of the tearing of the temple veil. The redaction also makes numerous connections between the discussion of the destruction of the temple—particularly the depiction of that event as an act of judgement on those who have rejected Jesus—and the *meshalim* of chapter 25. This association draws attention to the significance of the wisdom revealed by Jesus as determinative of how one is judged.

The wider narrative of Matthew suggests that the fall of the temple is further linked to Matthew's eschatology. Certain elements in the narrative suggest that the temple is now redundant and Matthew's resurrection addition to the story of the tearing of the veil suggests some kind of link between the destruction of the temple and the renewal of creation. On one level, this may be understood as reflecting Matthew's inaugurated eschatological schema: the fall of the temple indicates that the present time of the reader is eschatological. On another level, the creational or cosmic significance of the tearing of the temple veil may, arguably, be linked to the idea that the temple is a microcosm of creation: now the community that has accepted Jesus' teaching fills this role and the temple is redundant. This point leads us also to an important aspect of Matthew's theology: the significance of Jesus' teaching is not allowed to overshadow that of his death and resurrection, since the fall of the temple is more closely linked within the narrative to the latter than to the former.

## **Thesis Conclusions**

An examination of secondary literature on Matthew demonstrates a scholarly recognition of the fact that the evangelist has developed both apocalyptic and sapiential elements from his sources. Most literature has tended to examine one or other of these aspects of Matthean redaction. On one hand, a number of different explanations have been offered for Matthew's developed apocalyptic aspect: some have seen this as being a paraenetic phenomenon (Bornkamm), perhaps as part of Matthew's theological schema within which fidelity to Jesus has become of primary importance (Marguerat); others, however, have seen this as being a sociological phenomenon (Stanton; Hagner; Sim), possibly driven by tensions between the Matthean community and Judaism but certainly reflecting the oppressed context of Matthean Christianity. On the other hand, the study of Matthew's sapiential developments has largely been concerned with the importance of "Wisdom-Christology" within the gospel. Some preliminary criticisms may be made of these works, particularly concerning their slender textual basis. However, the observation that Matthew has developed the sapiential component of his sources, especially as it is made in Ben Witherington's thorough demonstration of the fact that Matthew presents Jesus as a sage, is to be accepted.

While some specific criticisms may be levelled at each of the works under examination, the most important general observation to be made is that the question of how these two striking features of Matthean redaction might relate to one another remains largely unaddressed (except in a cursory manner by Orton and Witherington). From this point emerges the primary purpose of this study: to begin to answer the question of how these two elements might relate to one another.

Are they a redactional coincidence, or do they relate in a more subtle fashion within Matthew's narrative? If the latter proves to be the case, is the Wisdom-Christology seen by many scholars as being crucial to Matthew a key part of this relationship?

Closely related to this central issue is the question of how sapiential and apocalyptic elements might relate in the pre-gospel tradition. The work of Kloppenborg and Crossan is of primary importance here, since both scholars have focused precisely on this question as part of their reconstruction of the stratification of pre-gospel traditions. Of particular note is the fact that each discerns strata, at least in part, on the basis of eschatology, associating a realised eschatology with a sapiential stratum and a futurist eschatology with an apocalyptic one. In addition, Kloppenborg, whose work undergirds that of Crossan, makes a great deal of the fact that apocalyptic material intrudes upon and breaks the flow of thematically related sapiential material, citing this as evidence for its secondary nature.

In beginning to approach the question of how sapiential and apocalyptic elements might relate to one another within the Matthean narrative, a key principle is suggested by the research of John J. Collins on the generic compatibility of wisdom and apocalypse. His work establishes the fact that there are a number of works of mixed type in early Judaism and that the question of how their elements relate to one another must move beyond a form-critical attempt to isolate strata, towards an examination of the underlying concepts and worldviews of these texts.

Such an approach requires us to move beyond simple redaction-critical approaches and employ a composition-critical method. The present study, therefore, approaches Matthew in this way, employing a comparison with two mixed-type Jewish texts from the Second Temple period—*1 Enoch* and *4QInstruction*—in order to cast light on the gospel. The constituent books of *1 Enoch* are clearly apocalyptic, but have numerous sapiential features; *4QInstruction* belongs

to the category of wisdom writings, but contains some elements derived from the apocalyptic genre. Since they, like Matthew, are mixed, the study was intended to establish whether any features of the underlying worldview of these texts might explain their combination of sapiential and apocalyptic features; the conclusions of this research would then be brought to Matthew, in order to ascertain whether these features are present also in the gospel text.

## **1. Generic Compatibility and Underlying Eschatological Concepts in *1 Enoch* and *4QInstruction***

The research of John Collins, mentioned above, suggests that the underlying concepts of a given text may explain the presence of sapiential and apocalyptic elements within that text. This, indeed, proves to be the case with *1 Enoch* and *4QInstruction*. These texts are marked by an inaugurated eschatology, within which the revealing of wisdom to an elect group—set apart from unfaithful Israel—plays a key role. On a formal level, this narrative stress on an essentially apocalyptic (revelatory) idea of “wisdom” facilitates the uptake of ideas and forms from the sapiential tradition (also concerned with “wisdom”) and their fusion with forms and language more appropriate to a prophetic/apocalyptic context. Thus, the formal distinctions of wisdom and apocalyptic begin to dissolve or blur as a consequence of the governing idea of revealed wisdom.

The idea that creation will be restored as part of the eschatological scenario also characterises both texts. In *4QInstruction*, however, this seems to have become fused with the idea of revealed wisdom, which enables the elect to fulfil the design plan of creation in a way that those outside their community are unable to emulate. Thus, the restoration of creation patterns is a realised—not just a future—aspect of the eschatology of *4QInstruction*.

As an example of an *instruction* influenced by this confluence of traditions, *4QInstruction* also bears witness to a lack of concern for tight topical or formal arrangement of material. Moreover, within its loosely-arranged material, the stress may fall variously upon realised or future aspects of its inaugurated eschatology, in a way that could be mistaken for careless redaction of strata by a scholarship insensitive to the subtleties of its eschatology.

As part of the present study, these conclusions undergird all that follows: if these Jewish texts of mixed type exhibit the kind of eschatology described here, and if that eschatology is closely related to their use of sapiential and apocalyptic elements, then is it not possible that Matthew's Gospel—a text with strong roots in Judaism—also exhibits such an eschatology, and that in that work, too, such a concept undergirds the occurrence of both sapiential and apocalyptic elements? Moreover, is it not possible that the ethical teaching of Matthew is rooted in the idea of the restoration of creation?

In addition, however, these conclusions regarding eschatology and generic/formal issues may well be important to the study of Second Temple Judaism. They certainly provide some interesting lines of enquiry to bring to other texts of this period, particularly those combining sapiential and apocalyptic elements. Perhaps such an inaugurated eschatology is more widespread in Jewish literature than has yet been realised.

## **2. Inaugurated Eschatology and the Pre-Gospel Tradition**

The conclusions outlined above also have some implications for the work of Kloppenborg and Crossan, concerned with the pre-gospel tradition. However Hellenised it may have been, this tradition was deeply rooted in Judaism and the evidence of Jewish texts such as *1 Enoch* and

*4QInstruction* is therefore of relevance to it. Two principal criticisms of this work are suggested by the study of *1 Enoch* and *4QInstruction*.

First, distinguishing strata on the basis of whether they are marked by realised or future eschatologies would seem to be overly simplistic and ignores the possibility of an inaugurated eschatology. Whether or not this latter eschatology does indeed characterise Q must be assessed in the context of a discussion of the hypothetical gospel source; the present work simply suggests that such an assessment will be a crucial aspect of future research on the pre-gospel traditions and that the work of Kloppenborg and Crossan cannot be fully accepted until they integrate this criticism into their own research.

Second, the idea that the disruption of a tight topical or formal arrangement indicates the presence of secondary intrusions must be questioned in the light of our study of *4QInstruction*, where apocalyptic material sometimes intrudes rather randomly upon instructional material, and within which topical arrangements are loose, often broken up by other material.

These two criticisms are, in fact, of major importance, since they cut to the heart of the analysis of pre-gospel traditions provided by Kloppenborg and Crossan. As such, they are of importance to all discussions of the pre-gospel tradition and the process by which it may have developed. The effect of these criticisms upon this discussion may well prove of further importance to research on the Synoptic Gospels, as they highlight some serious weaknesses in the idea that apocalyptic or sapiential “trajectories” may be traced through the strata of Q and into the Synoptics. If the hypothetical stratification of Q breaks down, then the evidence for such trajectories becomes questionable.



### 3. Inaugurated Eschatology and Matthew

A significant amount of evidence points to the fact that Matthew's eschatology is also inaugurated, and that it centres upon the revealing of wisdom to an elect group.

The narrative preceding the Sermon on the Mount suggests to the reader that he or she is reading about events of eschatological significance, depicted in terms of both *fulfilment* and *new beginning*. Moreover, the teaching found within the Sermon itself cannot adequately be explained only as *halakah* concerning the proper interpretation of Torah; rather, the only adequate category is that of revealed wisdom. This is demonstrated by a number of aspects of the text: the presence of Moses/Sinai imagery in 5:1 and 8:1, bracketing the teaching of Jesus, is suggestive of a fresh revelation; the so-called "antitheses" of 5:21-48 make ethical pronouncements with no recourse to Scripture or to any authority other than Jesus' own, giving them the character of a prophetic message; the fact that one's response to Jesus' words becomes the criterion by which one is judged (7:24,26) reinforces the impression that he is revealing wisdom by which those who receive it can live in righteousness. Thus, Jesus is presented as a revealer of wisdom in the context of the inauguration of the eschatological time.

This is developed in Matthew 11-12, arguably the narrative centre of the gospel. These chapters are essentially concerned to place the general Jewish rejection of Jesus and his teaching—and, conversely, the positive Gentile response—within an eschatological framework. Thus, the reply to John's question concerning Jesus' messianic identity (11:2-6) focuses instead on the character of the present time as eschatological, as does Matthew's alteration of tenses in the statement concerning the greatness of the Baptist (11:11). The redactional alteration of the phrase "Wisdom is proved right by her children" to "Wisdom is proved right by her works" (11:19) recalls 11:2, which in turn recalls the miracle stories of chapters 8 and 9. Novakovic's

study of the Davidic associations of these miracles suggests that their key significance is eschatological rather than Christological; the latter may only be derived from the former. Thus, the alteration again develops the idea that the present time is eschatological. In its context, closing the section that presents “this generation” as children in the marketplace, it also draws attention to the fact that Jesus’ contemporaries are rejecting his eschatologically revealed wisdom, a fact that will be developed in later chapters of Matthew. Again, the idea that the present time is eschatological is probably intended by the depiction of Jesus as greater than the temple in the context of the Sabbath controversies (12:6).

The other sections of narrative in Matthew 11-12 also involve this eschatological dimension. Crucially, though, they develop the idea that the rejection of Jesus’ eschatological wisdom is a consequence of a spiritual blindness arising from Satanic influence upon Israel; understanding therefore requires a divine enabling. The latter dimension of this begins to emerge in the statement of 11:15, concerning John’s eschatological status: “He who has ears, let him hear.” Similar language occurs in Matthew 13:9 and 43, in the context of Jesus’ parables. Matthew 13:10-17, which articulates the parable-theology that underlies this chapter, depicts Jesus’ revelation as only being understood by those who have been divinely enabled to do so. It is impossible, therefore, to see Jesus’ wisdom as open to all (as Lybæk and Luz have argued): rather, it is a wisdom for an elect group, who are miraculously enabled to understand it. It becomes clear in the remaining sections of Matthew 11-12 that few among Israel belong to this group: the accusation that his exorcistic ministry is enabled by Beelzeboul is depicted as a blasphemy against the eschatological work of God’s Spirit, as he liberates God’s people from the Satanic powers that occupy them; this is taken up by the passage on the seven unclean spirits. Together, these passages imply that Israel is a haunt of demonic powers and that their rejection of

Jesus' wisdom is a consequence of this. The redefining of insider/outsider that takes place in the incident with Jesus' family—now it is those who do the will of God, something possible only for those to whom Jesus has revealed that God (11:25-30), who are his family—is a natural corollary of this and a fitting conclusion to the narrative web of chapters 11 and 12.

None of this implies that Torah is evil: as throughout the gospel, Matthew seeks in these chapters to locate Jesus within a matrix of Old Testament expectation, through a number of allusions and by his creative citation of Isaiah 42:1-4. But there is, surely, the same implication that Torah is inadequate as was observed in the Sermon on the Mount: only Jesus' wisdom can truly give rest and show people how they are to walk before God.

Matthew 24-25 develop these themes still further. The fall of the temple is depicted as being part of an eschatological scenario, with Matthew's redaction of the disciples' question (24:3) and his heavy use of second-person forms laying stress upon the fact that it will be witnessed by those disciples. This says clearly that the present time is eschatological. Nevertheless, here more than at any other point in the gospel the fact that Matthew's eschatology is inaugurated rather than realised is clear, as the discussion of the fall of the temple leads naturally into a discussion of the enthronement of Jesus and his return for judgement. Non-eschatological readings of this material have been proposed by Wright, but there are strong narrative arguments against these. Thus, the gospel retains an important future dimension to its eschatology.

Again, though, the importance of Jesus' revelation is emphasised within this. A web of connections exists between the depiction of the fall of the temple as a result of Israel's rejection of Jesus and the criteria used in the final judgement, as reflected in the eschatological parables of chapter 25. This has the effect of turning the destruction of the temple into a type of what will

befall those who reject Jesus' wisdom. The fall of the temple prefigures the last judgement in a way that draws attention to the importance of receiving Jesus and his teaching.

In summary, it is quite clear that throughout Matthew an inaugurated eschatology, similar to that seen in *1 Enoch* and *4QInstruction*, is operative, within which Jesus is depicted as a revealer of heavenly wisdom to an elect minority divinely enabled to understand his teaching. Matthew's concern to present Jesus as a sage—so well demonstrated by Witherington—accords well with this, and it is unsurprising that the sapiential aspect of the gospel is so well developed. But we should not lose sight of the fact that this is essentially an apocalyptic view of revelation, differentiated from other prophetic models by the emphasis on wisdom being revealed to an elect minority. The developed apocalyptic aspect of the gospel is also, therefore, explained.

Thus, the concept of "inaugurated eschatology" is the key to explaining why Matthew has developed both sapiential and apocalyptic elements within his narrative. Previous theories have concerned one or other of these dimensions of Matthew's Gospel; the thesis developed here is capable of explaining both. This point may have far reaching implications for research on Matthew, as it raises several interesting questions: is such an eschatology unique to Matthew among the Synoptics or do the other gospels exhibit it also? How might Matthew's inaugurated eschatology relate to that of Paul? Does such an eschatology extend into the writings of the early Fathers, or is it a more distinctively Jewish concept? The list of questions could, perhaps, be multiplied: if eschatology is a key element of Matthew's narrative, then identifying the nature of that eschatology must inevitably have implications for Matthean and New Testament studies.

## 4. Restored Creation in Matthew

A more cautious case may be made for the idea being operative in Matthew that Jesus' wisdom enables the community that lives by it to recover a state of fidelity to God's creation patterns and thus to constitute, in some sense, a restored creation.

There is some evidence that suggests the character of the ethical requirements in the Sermon on the Mount is best explained as a recovery of the pristine standards of the original creation. This emerges particularly from a study of the antitheses (5:21-48): those concerning marital ethics (5:27-30 and 5:31-2) may be compared with the discussion of marriage in 19:3-12, where the creation narrative provides the basis for Jesus' stance on marriage and where the Mosaic provision for divorce is regarded in a negative light; the antithesis concerning love for enemies (5:43-48; this may also be true of the preceding one, in verses 38-42, concerning retaliation) is grounded in the *imitatio dei*, which in turn is grounded in the *imago dei*; though less demonstrable and less certain, the idea of *imago dei* may be argued to underlie the other two antitheses, with contempt for those bearing God's image being prohibited (5:21-22) and absolute truthfulness being expected from those made in that image (5:33-37).

Further evidence for the idea of the restoration of creation is also seen in 6:19-34, a passage which draws in sapiential fashion upon natural images to speak of the restoration of the creature-Creator relationship and to depict the proper character of dependence upon God, the Creator, within the kingdom. The text proves to be doubly interesting, however: it fuses these natural images with an apocalyptic dualism and is undergirded by an eschatological outlook within which the "reward" for a restored relationship with the Creator will only be truly known in the future. In addition to suggesting the idea of restored creation, therefore, the text serves to demonstrate that Matthew's eschatology is inaugurated rather than fully realised.

There is little to be seen of the idea of restored creation in Matthew 11-12, although the stress on the revelation by Jesus of God himself—not merely his will—in 11:25-30, is similar to that found in the “glory of Adam” passage in 1QS 4:22-3. It may be best not to make too much of this link, but it is suggestive nonetheless.

Finally, the idea of restored creation may be present in the gospel’s interpretation of the fall of the temple. The eschatological associations of the fall of the temple have already been noted as drawing attention to the fact that it is the response to Jesus’ wisdom that determines how one is judged: the destruction of the temple serves as a type of the final judgement. This, however, appears to be just one part of a broader association that Matthew establishes between the fall of the temple and the eschatological period. The suggestion that “something greater than the temple is here” (12:6) may imply that the temple has been superseded; moreover, by means of the related “greater than Jonah” section, Matthew establishes some interesting narrative links between this pericope and the resurrection of Jesus after three days. Most striking, though, is Matthew’s alteration of the account of the tearing of the temple veil (27:51-2), to which he adds an account of a proleptic resurrection from the dead, possibly prefiguring cosmic renewal. One explanation for these phenomena of Matthew’s narrative is that he understood the temple, widely regarded in Jewish thought of this period as a microcosm of creation, as having been superseded. If Matthew saw a new creation being ushered-in, in the form of the eschatological community who follow Jesus teaching, the need for the temple would now be a thing of the past. The presentation of the temple in 23:16-22, in which its greatness is depicted as being derived from the presence of God, rather than being inherent, may reinforce the suspicion that Matthew wants to depict the temple as not strictly necessary. It should be noted, however, that the rending of the veil and the references to the rebuilding of the temple after three days are connected not to Jesus’

teaching, but rather to his death and resurrection, a point that cautions against the idea that Matthew may have relegated these aspects of Jesus' significance in his obsession with Jesus' teaching.

In summary, there is evidence for the idea of restored creation in Matthew, and in the case of the antitheses it opens up some fruitful lines of enquiry. As a whole, however, the evidence is less compelling than that for an inaugurated eschatology and, perhaps significantly, depends heavily on a comparison with other Jewish literature, especially in the case of the presentation of the temple. The evidence, then, suggests that this is a possibility, but one that requires further research.

## **5. Wisdom Christology in Matthew**

An important aspect of this study has been an evaluation of the arguments for a Wisdom-Christology being operative in Matthew. The small number of texts that are held to support such a view place sayings ascribed to personified Wisdom, either in Q or in Sirach, on the lips of Jesus. Witherington has made an important contribution to the discussion by examining this phenomenon in the context of Matthew as a whole, providing evidence that the evangelist is concerned to present Jesus as a figure of wisdom, a sage.

The idea that I have outlined in this study—that Jesus is an eschatological revealer of wisdom—seems to me capable of explaining a greater number of features of Matthew's Gospel than does the idea of a Wisdom-Christology. It easily explains the placing of wisdom-sayings on the lips of Jesus, as one closely identified with Wisdom. It also explains why Matthew has arranged his material in such a way as to emphasise that Jesus is a sage. But, importantly, it also

explains the fact that Matthew has developed apocalyptic ideas and elements to a greater extent than the other gospels, something that Wisdom-Christology fails to do.

Those who have argued for a Wisdom-Christology in Matthew and elsewhere in the New Testament, have done so with two goals in view. The first is to explain the development of the doctrine of pre-existence in early Christianity and to provide a Jewish background to this view; Robert Hammerton Kelly, in particular, has sought to do this.<sup>1</sup> There is nothing, however, in Matthew's redaction to suggest such a concern with pre-existence; his narrative simply does not address itself to this issue—unlike, for example, the prologue to John's Gospel (John 1:1-18).

The other goal of those who have argued for a Wisdom-Christology is to defend the idea that a "high" Christology, in which Jesus is portrayed as divine, goes back to the early Church and possibly the historical Jesus; Ben Witherington's work is an example of this. Does abandoning the idea that such Christology is operative in Matthew mean abandoning such a Christology? Not, I think, if the relationship between the idea of revelation and the depiction of Jesus as "Son of God" is appreciated.

In a famous study of Matthew, Jack Kingsbury argued that the primary Christological title in Matthew is "Son of God" and that all other titles are of lesser importance and ultimately are subordinated to this.<sup>2</sup> Kingsbury has been criticised for minimising the significance of the other titles and for illegitimately transferring their significance to "Son of God,"<sup>3</sup> criticisms that are

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<sup>1</sup> *Pre-Existence, Wisdom and the Son of Man: A Study of the Idea of Pre-Existence in the New Testament* (SNTSMS 21; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973).

<sup>2</sup> J.D. Kingsbury, *Matthew: Structure, Christology, Kingdom* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1975).

<sup>3</sup> See Byrskog, *Jesus the Only Teacher*, 291.



valid and widely acknowledged. Yet the importance of the title Son of God within the Matthean narrative is undeniable.<sup>4</sup> What is striking is that the title relates strongly to our key theme of eschatological revelation. That this is the case may be seen in the account of Peter's confession that Jesus is "the Christ, the Son of God," an insight that he is informed was possible only because of divine revelation (16:16-17). This instance of association of Jesus' Sonship with revelation is one in which that Sonship is the *content* of revelation and in which, by implication, God is the revealer. Such an emphasis is consistent with the theology of the works studied in **Part 1**, especially the Animal Apocalypse and *4QInstruction*, where God is the one who opens eyes or ears and thus may be understood as the one enabling understanding. Yet in other contexts, notably in 11:25-30, Jesus' Sonship is not the content of revelation, but rather the basis for his ability to function as a revealer. The emphasis in these verses that Jesus' Sonship functions as such a basis is not what we would expect if a Wisdom-Christology was operative in the gospel. The overlap of vocabulary with Sirach 6 and 51 is easily explained: the central emphasis on Jesus as a revealer of wisdom facilitates the uptake of language from the sapiential tradition, just as was the case in *1 Enoch* and *4QInstruction*. As for the fact that it occurs in first-person form, Sirach 51 attests to the fact that the sage could often speak as one closely identified with the wisdom he transmits, without requiring that he is in some sense the incarnation of divine Wisdom. The alternative proposal of Davies and Allison—that the allusion is to Moses—is tenuous and has found little support.

It is at this point that the portrayal of Jesus in Matthew differs radically from the portrayal of Enoch in the works that make up *1 Enoch*. Enoch is a wise man, taken to heaven and given

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<sup>4</sup> Thus, for instance, the Matthean expansion of Peter's confession: "You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God" (Matt 16:16).

revelation of cosmic and eschatological truths which he then transmits to a remnant group. He is certainly portrayed as humanly unique but the basis for the knowledge that he transmits is that of the revelation that he himself receives. By contrast, Jesus is a figure capable of revealing salvific wisdom not because of what he has been shown, but because of who he is: he is the Son and because he is the Son he has a unique knowledge of the Father, the kind of knowledge of someone that only a family member can have. Given the importance of the theme of revelation to Matthew, and given the importance of 11:25-30 on a narrational level to the gospel, this means that our study actually dovetails with this aspect of Kingsbury's work. A major part of Matthew's concern to present Jesus as the Son of God is his concern to present him as the revealer and surely the converse is also true: a major part of his concern to present him as revealer is his concern to present him as Son of God. Thus, by rejecting the Wisdom-Christology proposals of Suggs, Deutsch and Witherington we have not abandoned a major plank for seeing Matthew as displaying a high Christology. Quite the opposite: a "revealer-Christology," as Matthew develops it, requires a view of divine Sonship that is as high as one can imagine, for the Sonship is not one of status, but of actual relationship.

In fact, this point brings us back to the question of the significance of the "Son of David" title and Matthew's distinctive use of it. I have argued already that this is primarily a Messianic title, indicating that Jesus is the Davidic king. On this level it functions, in Matthew, primarily as an eschatological phrase, indicating that the present time is the messianic time, the time of the King. What is important here is that the connection of this the title Messiah, or Christ, in 16:16 with the title "Son of God" indicates a development in understanding of the Davidic Messiah: he is no longer simply David's Son but also God's Son. The roots of this idea may be traced to the covenant of 2 Samuel 7:14; it seems that Matthew reflects the growing Christian conviction that

this language was truly fulfilled in Jesus, the one who was both David's son and God's Son.

Solomonic connections may be noted here, but it seems striking that Matthew does not develop these in a sapiential but rather in an eschatological direction, as Novakovic's study effectively demonstrates.

The present study therefore provides support for Kingsbury's primary suggestion, that the "Son of God" title is of special importance within the Matthean presentation, yet is also suggests that the interweaving of the various titles used of Jesus is complex and, to some extent at least, driven by his concerns to present Jesus as the eschatological revealer.

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## **Additional Material**

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