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## New Creation in Matthew's Gospel

If nothing else is mentioned quotes from the Bible are taken from the NRSV.

Abbreviations are following SBL handbook of style second edition.

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## Dissertation Summary

The purpose of this dissertation is to investigate the presence and meaning of the motif of new creation in Matthew's Gospel. New creation in this study is generally defined as an eschatological expectation which refers to protology and involves divine agency. In other terms it may also be called an Urzeit-Endzeit correlation.

The reason for the investigation is the fact that scholars have seen the motif of new creation in Matthew 1:1 which alludes to the book of Genesis and 19:28 which speaks of the rebirth of the world. Given the presence of the motif in Matthew it is reasonable to investigate whether the motif is present elsewhere in the Gospel as well as the meaning of this motif in Matthew.

The method used for this investigation is intertextual following Umberto Eco's concept of cultural encyclopedia and model reader combined with Richard Hay's seven criteria for evaluating possible allusion to the OT in the NT.

The thesis falls in two major parts. Part 1 investigates the configuration of the motif of new creation in the cultural encyclopedia of Matthew. Texts from the Old Testament prophetic literature, the Old Testament Pseudepigrapha and the Dead Sea Scrolls are surveyed with the motif of new creation in view. The result of this investigation provides a lens through which new creation may be discerned by equipping the modern reader with the knowledge of Matthew's model reader.

Part 2 investigates Matthew on the basis of the discoveries found in part 1. This involves tracing patterns of new creation found in the cultural encyclopedia in Matthew, discerning imagery, and discovering intertextual links. In accordance with the outlined method and criteria it is demonstrated that the motif of new creation is indeed present throughout Matthew's gospel.

The result of the investigation of Matthew sheds light on the eschatology of Matthew as well as the entire mission of Jesus in Matthew. It is demonstrated that the motif of new creation serves as a theological sub-structure in Matthew and impacts the interpretation of Matthew from the beginning to the end. The results thus impact the interpretation of the birth of Jesus, his death and resurrection, miracles and ethical teaching. Importantly, new creation is inextricably connected with the Kingdom of Heaven in Matthew as well as Jesus' self-designation as the Son of Man.

Finally, the motif of new creation is of major significance for the understanding of major theological categories in Matthew. It has implications for the Christology, eschatology, ecclesiology and soteriology of the Gospel.



# 1 Introduction

“In the person of Jesus Messiah, his son, God has drawn near to abide to the end of time with his people, the church, thus inaugurating the eschatological age of salvation.”<sup>1</sup>

This quote from Jack Dean Kingsbury emphasizes the eschatological significance of the coming of Jesus in Matthew's Gospel, an emphasis that has become commonplace among modern New Testament scholars. As Dale Allison writes, “Perhaps the preeminent contribution of modern NT scholarship has been the demonstration that eschatology lies at the heart of Jesus’ message and indeed at the heart of all the NT.”<sup>2</sup>

G. K. Beale takes the centrality of eschatology even further, proposing that the general notion of eschatology is more specifically “new creation”.<sup>3</sup> The motif of new creation can generally be defined as the thought that the end corresponds with the beginning and as such it is a return to paradise,<sup>4</sup> to Eden with all that it includes of physical and moral restoration for the entire created order. With regard to cosmic renewal, new creation in this study can refer both to a completely new creation after prior destruction of the old and also renewal of the existing cosmos. Both ideas exist side by side in first-century Judaism and early Christianity.<sup>5</sup>

The motif of new creation is part of the eschatological visions found in the Old Testament in the present canon and parts of the New Testament.<sup>6</sup> New creation also occurs in the non-canonical literature of Second Temple Judaism. In the Old Testament the prophets give voice to this vision, both talking about new heavens and a new earth (see Isa 65:17-18, 66:22), as well as a new heart (cf. Jer 31:31-34; Ezek 36:26-27). This vision of a cosmological as well as an anthropological new creation is also found in the New Testament (John 3:1-8; Acts 3:21; Rom 6:4; 2 Cor 4:16; Eph 2:15,

<sup>1</sup> Jack Dean Kingsbury, *Matthew as Story* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1988), 42.

<sup>2</sup> Dale C. Allison, “Eschatology,” ed. Joel B. Green and Scott McKnight, *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1992), 206.

<sup>3</sup> G. K. Beale, “The Eschatological Conception of New Testament Theology,” in *The Reader Must Understand: Eschatology in Bible and Theology*, ed. Kent E. Brower and Mark W. Elliott (Leicester: InterVarsity Press, 1997), 12.

<sup>4</sup> The correspondence of the end and the beginning was first formulated as “Urzeit and Endzeit” by Hermann Gunkel, *Schöpfung Und Chaos in Urzeit Und Endzeit: Eine Religionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung Über Gen 1 Und Ap Joh 12* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1895) In this study Gunkel chose these words from the Epistle of Barnabas as his motto: Ἰδοὺ, ποιῶ τὰ ἔσχατα ὡς τὰ πρῶτα: ὙBehold, I make the last things like the first. (Barn. 6:13).

<sup>5</sup> Edward Adams, *The Stars Will Fall from Heaven: Cosmic Catastrophe and the World's End in the New Testament and Its World*, LNTS 347 (London; New York: T&T Clark, 2007), 256 cf. 171f., 179f.

<sup>6</sup> I am fully aware that the term 'Old Testament' may be considered derogatory. It is, however, used here in a non-ideological and descriptive way for the sake of convenience. The collection of texts that are known by that term today was for Matthew simply 'the Law and the Prophets' (Matt 5:17; 11:13; 22:40) or 'the Scriptures' (Matt 22:29). For a discussion of the Old Testament of Matthew see chapter 2

4:23-24; Tit 3:5; 2 Pet 3:13; Rev 21:1, 21:5). The motif can similarly be found in apocalyptic Judaism (cf. e.g., Jub. 1:29; 1 En. 72:1; 4 Ezra 6:13-16).

The present thesis takes its cue from Beale's proposal and focuses exclusively on Matthew's Gospel. Beale's article provided the initial inspiration for this thesis, as he argues for the presence of new creation in the Gospels and provides examples from Matthew.<sup>7</sup> Beale's arguments can, however, be elaborated with regard to Matthew.

The aim of this thesis is to demonstrate that new creation is an important component in the theology of Matthew. The research question for the thesis is:

Is new creation present in Matthew and what is the meaning of new creation in Matthew?

Matthew<sup>8</sup> was steeped in the Old Testament, and the relevance of Jewish apocalyptic for the interpretation of the Gospel is also widely recognized.<sup>9</sup> Surprisingly, however, little has been written on the motif of new creation in Matthew. To my knowledge there is no extensive treatment on the motif in Matthew's Gospel other than brief discussions in articles and monographs on other themes in Matthew.<sup>10</sup>

In Matthew's Gospel, the motif of new creation is found explicitly in the use of the word *παλιγγενεσία*: 'rebirth' (Matt 19:28).<sup>11</sup> Considering the emphasis on fulfillment of prophecy in Matthew—especially the extensive use of the book of Isaiah and apocalyptic language—it would be surprising if this motif, which is so prominent in the relevant background literature, both canonical and non-canonical, did not also to some extent appear in Matthew.

This project investigates the motif of new creation in Matthew's Gospel in order to shed light on the eschatology of Matthew as well as the entire mission of Jesus in the Gospel. The results of the investigation will impact the interpretation of the miracles of Jesus, his ethical teaching and death

<sup>7</sup> Beale, "The Eschatological Conception of New Testament Theology," 24–25, 33.

<sup>8</sup> 'Matthew' is used in this study as the designation for the anonymous author of Matthew's Gospel.

<sup>9</sup> David C. Sim, "Matthew 22.13 a and 1 Enoch 10.4 a: A Case of Literary Dependence?," *Journal for the Study of the New Testament*, no. 47 (1992): 3–19; Anthony J. Saldarini, *Matthew's Christian-Jewish Community* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 4–5; David C. Sim, *Apocalyptic Eschatology in the Gospel of Matthew*, SNTSMS 88 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); Matthias Henze, *Jewish Apocalypticism in Late First Century Israel: Reading "Second Baruch" in Context*, TSAJ 142 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), 339–49; Leslie W. Walck, *The Son of Man in the Parables of Enoch and in Matthew*, JCTC 9 (New York; London: T&T Clark, 2011); Amy E. Richter, *Enoch and the Gospel of Matthew*, PTMS 183 (Eugene: Pickwick Publications, 2012).

<sup>10</sup> See the state of research below.

<sup>11</sup> *παλιγγενεσία* *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000). An extended discussion of this term is provided in chapter 6.1.3.2.

and resurrection. The motif of new creation may thus serve as a theological sub-structure in the Gospel.

The first step of the investigation is an overview of the research that has already been done in the area.

## 1.2 State of Research

Most treatments of the motif of new creation in Matthew center around a discussion of the meaning of Matt 1:1, as well as Matt 19:28 with the word *παλιγγενεσία*. The following overview will primarily focus on extended scholarly treatments of these verses.<sup>12</sup>

N. A. Dahl (1964) touches briefly on the relationship between eschatology and creation in the synoptics in an article on creation and 'realized eschatology' in the New Testament in order to call attention to the motif. "Here, too," he writes, "we must take care not to elaborate with a false antithesis between eschatology and the work and will of God the Creator. The miracles of Jesus should, for instance, hardly be understood as *either* eschatological signs *or* deeds of mercy; they are one of these things in being the other. In a similar way, the moral teaching of Jesus insists upon the original will of God for the last days, in which the Kingdom of God is proclaimed on earth."<sup>13</sup> However, due to the nature of the essay he does not pursue the investigation further.

Scholars frequently cite W. D. Davies' "The Setting of the Sermon on the Mount" (1964), in which Davies argues that the role of the Spirit in the origins and baptism of Jesus are allusions to the creative role of the Spirit in Gen 1:2<sup>14</sup>. Davies also argues that Matt 1:1, (*Βίβλος γενέσεως*) is an allusion to the book of Genesis, which suggests a new genesis/creation through Jesus.<sup>15</sup> The commentary on Matthew's Gospel by W. D. Davies and Dale Allison (1988) restates these interpretations.<sup>16</sup> Allison argues for a new creation motif coexistent with the new exodus motif.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>12</sup> The overview concentrates on newer research and thus only considers work from the last fifty years.

<sup>13</sup> Nils A. Dahl, "Christ, Creation and the Church," in *The Background of the New Testament and Its Eschatology*, ed. W. D. Davies and David Daube (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1964), 442.

<sup>14</sup> Also Christopher Rowland, *The Open Heaven: A Study of Apocalyptic in Judaism and Early Christianity* (London: SPCK, 1982), 248–52; Dale C. Allison, "The Baptism of Jesus and a New Dead Sea Scroll," *Biblical Archaeology Review* 18 (1992): 58–60; G. K. Beale, *New Testament Biblical Theology, A: The Unfolding of the Old Testament in the New* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2011), 413.

<sup>15</sup> W. D. Davies, *The Setting of the Sermon on the Mount* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1964), 67–73.

<sup>16</sup> W. D. Davies and Dale C. Allison, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to Saint Matthew. Vol. I: Commentary on Matthew I-VII*, ICC (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1988), 149–55. See Davies and Allison for commentaries cited in support for this view. Richard T. France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 28, gives support for this view but does not develop the theme.

<sup>17</sup> Dale C. Allison, *The New Moses: A Matthean Typology* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993), 200–207. More recently Allison restated the case in *Studies in Matthew: Interpretation Past and Present* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005), 157–62. The purpose of Allison's essay is not explicitly to argue for a new creation-interpretation

Herman C. Waetjen (1976) has similarly found signs of new creation in Matthew.<sup>18</sup> According to Waetjen the genealogy in Matthew is modeled on two different eschatological frameworks. According to one (Daniel 2 and 7) Jesus initiates the fourth and final age of history, and according to the other (2 Baruch 53-74) Jesus is the end of history, bringing about the end of the current world order and initiating a new creation.<sup>19</sup> The superscription in Matt 1:1 therefore has the genealogy as its immediate object since it presents Jesus as the culmination of the history of Israel. It is, however, also a superscription for the entire narrative since Jesus “begets a new beginning.”<sup>20</sup> Waetjen also observes that the purpose of the genealogy is, on the one hand, to show continuity with the story of Israel since Jesus is the son of Abraham and David. On the other hand, the genealogy introduces discontinuity, since Jesus is also a new creation of the Holy Spirit and the beginning of a new creation.<sup>21</sup>

In a 1993 article, David Sim has argued that *παλιγγενεσία* should be understood not only as a temporal reference to a new age that will succeed the present age, but also as the re-creation of the cosmic order after its prior destruction at the eschaton. Sim primarily finds evidence for this view in the two references in Matthew (5:18 and 24:35) that predict the end of the present cosmic order.<sup>22</sup>

Notable contributions have also come from G. K. Beale. In the aforementioned 1997 article he, besides pointing to Matt 1:1 and 19:28, argues that the apocalyptic signs accompanying the death of Jesus in Matt 27 should be interpreted as signaling “the end of the old creation and the inauguration of a new creation.”<sup>23</sup> According to Beale, resurrection is also equivalent to new creation, which then also means that it is present in Matthew. He furthermore sees Jesus presented as the last Adam who inaugurates the new creation in the synoptic gospels.<sup>24</sup> More recently he has argued for a new creation motif throughout the Christian canon, noting that the miracles of Jesus should be understood in terms of new creation.<sup>25</sup>

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of Matt. 1:1 but rather a plea for a translation of 1:1 that makes the allusion to Genesis in Matt. 1:1 more visible. Nevertheless, his article ends on a note of new creation. (Allison, 162).

<sup>18</sup> Herman C. Waetjen, “Genealogy as the Key to the Gospel According to Matthew,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 95, no. 2 (Je 1976): 205–30.

<sup>19</sup> Waetjen, 213.

<sup>20</sup> Waetjen, 215.

<sup>21</sup> Waetjen, 216–29. “In terms of his origin by the creative activity of the Spirit and the disjunction which his birth introduces, the end of Israel's history and the beginning of a new creation, he is first and foremost the Son of Man. On the other hand, he is also the Son of David on the basis of his adoption by Joseph.” (Waetjen, 224).

<sup>22</sup> David C. Sim, “The Meaning of Palingenesia in Matthew 19.28,” *Journal for the Study of the New Testament*, no. 50 (1993): 3–12; The argument is restated in Sim, *Apocalyptic Eschatology in the Gospel of Matthew*, 111–14.

<sup>23</sup> Beale, “The Eschatological Conception of New Testament Theology,” 19.

<sup>24</sup> Beale, 25–28.

<sup>25</sup> Beale, *New Testament Biblical Theology, A*, 388–91; See also Beale's earlier publication, “The Eschatological Conception of New Testament Theology.”

Using John Foley's work of "traditional referentiality," Warren Carter (2004) contends that "the phrase βίβλος γενέσεως in Mt. 1.1 evokes not just two isolated verses (Gen 2.4; 5.1), but the larger Genesis accounts of which they are a part."<sup>26</sup> This means, according to Carter, that the opening words of the Gospel assert the sovereign and creative purposes of God for the world by evoking the Genesis creation account.<sup>27</sup>

Raick Heckl similarly sees Gen 5:1-6:4 as a subtext for the first chapter of Matthew.<sup>28</sup> According to Heckl, a parallel between Matt 1:1 and Gen 5:1 is established through the similar wording as well as the subsequent genealogy. Through this parallel, he argues that Matthew places the story of Jesus in contrast to the story of Adam. The story of Adam represents a story of decay while the story of Jesus, beginning with Abraham, represents God's new way for humanity – as "Heilsgeschichte".<sup>29</sup> Heckl sees the inclusion of the four women in Jesus' genealogy – Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, and Bathsheba – as a way of emphasizing the virginity of Mary by way of contrast.<sup>30</sup> Similarly, the story about the supernatural birth of Jesus is related antithetically to the narrative about the angels and the daughters of men in Gen 6:1-4 (see 1 Enoch 6-9). Heckl concludes that the intertextuality between Matt 1 and Gen 5:1-6:4 depicts an Adam-Christ-typology in which Christ—as a new creation through the Spirit of God—brings salvation from sin (1:21) and the presence of God (1:23).<sup>31</sup>

Jonathan Pennington (2008) has also argued for a motif of new creation in Matthew. Building on the arguments of Davies and Allison, he adds further connections between Matthew and Genesis, arguing that the language of heaven and earth in Matthew is both cosmological and theological.<sup>32</sup> Pennington argues that the origin of Matthew's *Weltbild*, the conception of the physical world, and *Weltanschauung*, the theological world-view, is to be found in the Old Testament and particularly in Genesis, which begins with the language of heaven and earth. In addition to Matt 1:1, Pennington points to 19:28 and the word παλιγγενεσία. Pennington agrees with David Sim on the meaning of

<sup>26</sup> Warren Carter, "Matthew and the Gentiles: Individual Conversion and/or Systemic Transformation?," *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 26, no. 3 (2004): 262.

<sup>27</sup> Carter, 264.

<sup>28</sup> Raik Heckl, "Der biblische Begründungsrahmen für die Jungfrauengeburt bei Matthäus. Zur Rezeption von Gen 5,1–6,4 in Mt 1," *Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und Kunde der Älteren Kirche* 95, no. 3/4 (June 28, 2004): 161–80.

<sup>29</sup> Heckl, 165–66.

<sup>30</sup> Heckl, 168–69.

<sup>31</sup> Heckl, 180.

<sup>32</sup> Jonathan T. Pennington, "Heaven, Earth, and a New Genesis: Theological Cosmology in Matthew," in *Cosmology and New Testament Theology*, ed. Jonathan T. Pennington and Sean M. McDonough, LNTS 355 (London: T&T Clark, 2008), 33. "[W]hatever conception of the physical world (*Weltbild*) existed in the mind of Matthew, it was certainly not divorced from his theological constructs regarding God and creation, what we may call his *Weltanschauung*."; (Pennington, 33).

the word and furthermore argues for an intertextual link to the book of Genesis in *παλιγγενεσία* – 'genesis again'.<sup>33</sup>

Further arguments can be found in Pennington's book, *Heaven and Earth in the Gospel of Matthew* (2007).<sup>34</sup> Here Pennington makes an important observation regarding the connection between the Kingdom of Heaven and the Jewish hope for a restored Davidic kingdom. According to Pennington, the Kingdom of Heaven plays an important role in connection to covenant and land in Jewish thought, as it represents a critique of the earthly hope of a Jewish kingdom. This does not mean, however, that the land has become spiritualized.

Instead, the critique concerns the nature of this coming kingdom in regards to its ethical practicalities, social relationships, and Gentile inclusion. After all, the great Christian prayer is that God's (heavenly) kingdom would come on earth (6:9-10); the Christian hope is not for an ethereal, heaven situated existence, but the consummation of the heavenly realities coming into effect on the earth; not for a destruction of the earth and a kingdom that exists only in heaven, but for a *παλιγγενεσία*, a new genesis (19:28).<sup>35</sup>

The only substantive critique of the interpretation of Matt 1:1 as pointing to new creation comes from John Nolland (1996). Nolland provides a full discussion of evidence and arguments and concludes by dismissing any notion of new creation in Matthew with regard to both Matt 1:1 and 19:28.<sup>36</sup> He begins by asserting that *παλιγγενεσία* in 19:28 does not provide a link to the biblical creation tradition but was chosen for its wider Hellenistic associations.<sup>37</sup> With regard to 1:1 Nolland provides several points:

- A subjective genitive reading of βίβλος γενέσεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ υιοῦ is improbable since it seems better to see Jesus Christ as a parallel to Abraham and David.<sup>38</sup>
- The genealogy provides an outline of the history of God's people with an emphasis on continuity – the idea of new creation seems intrusive as it introduces discontinuity.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>33</sup> Pennington, "Heaven, Earth, and a New Genesis," 43.

<sup>34</sup> Jonathan T. Pennington, *Heaven and Earth in the Gospel of Matthew*, NovTSup 126 (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2007).

<sup>35</sup> Pennington, 326–227.

<sup>36</sup> John Nolland, "What Kind of Genesis Do We Have in Matt 1.1," *New Testament Studies* 42, no. 3 (Jl 1996): 463–71; David R. Bauer, "The Literary and Theological Function of the Genealogy in Matthew's Gospel," in *Treasures New and Old: Contributions to Matthean Studies*, ed. David R. Bauer and Mark Allan Powell, Society of Biblical Literature Symposium Series 1 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1996), 136–37.

<sup>37</sup> Nolland, "What Kind of Genesis Do We Have in Matt 1.1," 465; See, however, a modification of this statement in John Nolland, *The Gospel of Matthew: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, NIGTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005), 799.

<sup>38</sup> Nolland, "What Kind of Genesis Do We Have in Matt 1.1," 466.

<sup>39</sup> Nolland, 466–67.

- Βίβλος γενέσεως points backward rather than forward as the Hebrew expression it has been translated from in the context of Gen 2:4 and 5:1. It is thus a reference to origins.<sup>40</sup> Nolland thinks that this is also the most common usage of γένεσις in contemporary sources.<sup>41</sup>
- Γένεσις in 1:18 should be translated as 'birth/origin', which in turn also is the best sense in 1:1 since they are a linked pair.<sup>42</sup>
- Other than wording, Nolland finds few links in terms of content between Matt 1:1 and Gen 2:4 and 5:1.<sup>43</sup>

In the end, Nolland does not know what to make of the link with Genesis in Matt 1:1. He nevertheless concludes about the intentions of Matthew that “he may have wanted to borrow from the early chapters of Genesis the sense of importance which he considers attaches to the origins of this figure Jesus about whom he intends to write.” Nolland does not think that is very much.<sup>44</sup> However, as Thomas Hieke notes, this is actually quite substantial.<sup>45</sup>

While Hieke (2003) is unready to interpret Matt 1:1 as pointing to a new creation through Jesus, he is able to conclude that Matt 1:1 evokes central aspects and concepts from the book of Genesis that in subtle ways attribute enormous significance to Jesus. “Es geht vielleicht zu weit, damit Jesus als eine eschatologische neue Schöpfung angedeutet zu sehen. Aber immerhin wird damit dem Jesusgeschehen eine Bedeutung beigemessen, die den Ereignissen der Welt- und Menschen Schöpfung gleichkommt.”<sup>46</sup>

Similarly to Hieke, Moisés Mayordomo-Marin (1998) is reluctant to draw conclusions regarding the meaning of the allusion to Genesis. He follows Ulrich Luz in regarding a new creation understanding as a theological *Überinterpretation*, while affirming that the allusion attributes tremendous importance to Jesus.<sup>47</sup>

<sup>40</sup> A point which is disputed by Thomas Hieke, “Biblos Geneseos: Mt 1,1 Vom Buch Genesis Her Gelesen,” in *Biblical Canons*, ed. J.-M. Auwers and H. J. de Jonge, BETL 163 (Leuven University Press, 2003), 639.

<sup>41</sup> Nolland, “What Kind of Genesis Do We Have in Matt 1.1,” 467–68.

<sup>42</sup> Nolland, 469.

<sup>43</sup> Nolland, 470.

<sup>44</sup> Nolland, 469.

<sup>45</sup> Hieke, “Biblos Geneseos,” 646. In some ways Nolland's criticism also seems to be beside the point, since much of it goes along the lines of translation. No one is however proposing a translation that involves translating genesis as creation, but simply that the context in which the phrase βίβλος γενέσεως is found in the LXX is the story of creation and in this sense may also be applied to Matt 1:1.

<sup>46</sup> Hieke, 646–47.

<sup>47</sup> Moisés Mayordomo-Marin, *Den Anfang hören: Leserorientierte Evangelienexegese Am Beispiel Von Matthäus 1-2*, FRLANT 180 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1998), 213.

In the latest edition of his commentary on Matthew, Ulrich Luz (2002) considers the proposal by Davies and Allison to be improbable. “Es ist wahrscheinlich kaum möglich, den Titel im Sinne einer Theologie der neuen Schöpfung durch Christus zu interpretieren.”<sup>48</sup> At the same time he recognizes the importance of the allusion and proposes that Matthew is writing a new book of Genesis that has a different content than the first book of the Old Testament.<sup>49</sup>

Finally, a mention should be made of Grant Macaskill, who in his doctoral dissertation, “Revealed Wisdom and Inaugurated Eschatology in Ancient Judaism”, argues for the possibility of reading the Sermon on the Mount in terms of restored creation.<sup>50</sup> Macaskill reads Matthew in light of eschatological scenarios from 1 Enoch and 4Q*Instruction* and finds a similar type of inaugurated eschatology in all three writings in which wisdom is revealed to the elect. In 4Q*Instruction* the revelation of wisdom “enables the elect to live according to the will of the Creator, to live within a renewed Edenic oasis.”<sup>51</sup> According to Macaskill, this idea may also be shared by Matthew.

### **1.2.1 Conclusion and Direction for Further Research**

Several scholars have accepted the interpretation of Matt 1:1 as signaling new creation, though general skepticism and even outright rejection abounds. While critics may first recognize the allusion to Genesis, they shy away from commenting on the exact significance of the first two words in Matthew. The main reason for this hesitation seems to be the assumption that the motif is not found anywhere else in the Gospel. Graham Stanton for example writes:

The recent attempt by W. D. Davies and D. C. Allison to take Matt 1.1 not only as a title, but also as a reference to the new creation brought about by Jesus Christ is interesting but unconvincing. While Paul (and perhaps John 1.1) sees the coming of Jesus as the counterpart of the creation account narrated in Genesis, there is no evidence which suggests that Matthew did so.<sup>52</sup>

<sup>48</sup> Ulrich Luz, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus. 1. Teilbd. Mt 1-7*, 5., völlig neubearb. Aufl., EKK, 1/1 (Zürich: Benzige; Neukirchener Verlag, 2002), 119; So also Donald A. Hagner, *Matthew 1-13*, Word Biblical Commentary 33A (Dallas: Word Books, 1998), 9. See also Joel Kennedy, *The Recapitulation of Israel: Use of Israel's History in Matthew 1:1-4:11*, WUNT II 257 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008), 56: “As enticing as this view might be from a theological standpoint, it simply cannot be sustained as primary explanation for this phrase. The indications from both the genealogy and the rest of the Gospel do not add fundamental support for defending this use, particularly the new creation emphasis, which is not a particularly strong theme in Matthew.”

<sup>49</sup> Luz, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus. 1. Teilbd. Mt 1-7*, 119.

<sup>50</sup> Grant Macaskill, *Revealed Wisdom and Inaugurated Eschatology in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity*, JSJSup 115 (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 181–95.

<sup>51</sup> Macaskill, 195.

<sup>52</sup> Graham Stanton, *A Gospel for a New People: Studies in Matthew* (Westminster John Knox Press, 1993), 13.



At first glance it may seem that Stanton is correct. Yet there are good reasons to research the topic of “new creation” in Matthew, even if it appears not to be a strong motif in this Gospel. To begin with, according to Sim, the motif of new creation is found explicitly in Matthew through the use of the word *παλιγγενεσία*: ‘rebirth’ or ‘genesis again’ (Matt 19:28). In addition, scholars have found traces of new creation in several parts of Matthew, such as the ethical teaching, the miracles, and the death and resurrection of Jesus. Furthermore, when considering the emphasis on the fulfillment of prophecy in Matthew and especially the extensive use of the book of Isaiah, Isaiah may well have shaped the eschatological vision in Matthew's Gospel. The latter parts of Isaiah speak of new heavens and a new earth (Isa 65:17, 66:22). Scholarly work on the motif of new creation in Paul has pointed to Isaiah as one of the main sources for the motif.<sup>53</sup>

Waetjen, Sim and Heckl have demonstrated the relevance of Jewish apocalyptic writing in the interpretation of Matthew.<sup>54</sup> More work can nevertheless be done in this area.<sup>55</sup> It is also interesting that Pennington's work draws attention to the fact that the book of Genesis serves as a subtext for Matthew. While references to Genesis do not necessarily imply new creation, there is also a possibility that it does. However, little has been written on the use of Genesis in Matthew beyond discussions of Matt 1:1.<sup>56</sup>

Given the current state of scholarship, there is therefore a need to do more work on the possible intertexts of Matthew's Gospel to determine the extent—and, consequently, the meaning—of the motif of new creation.

Much of the critique of seeing new creation in Matthew is based on the lack of clear lexical references. Many of the proposals for new creation are also based solely on incidental words, critics insist, making the arguments thin and the case appear weak. The presence of a motif is

<sup>53</sup> Ulrich Mell, *Neue Schöpfung*, BZNW 56 (Berlin; New York: de Gruyter, 1989); Moyer V. Hubbard, *New Creation in Paul's Letters and Thought*, SNTSMS 119 (Cambridge University Press, 2002); Harry A. Hahne, *The Corruption and Redemption of Creation: Nature in Romans 8.19-22 and Jewish Apocalyptic Literature*, LNTS 336 (New York: T&T Clark, 2007); T. Ryan Jackson, *New Creation in Paul's Letters: A Study of the Historical and Social Setting of a Pauline Concept*, WUNT II 272 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010); On the use of Isaiah in Matthew see Richard Beaton, *Isaiah's Christ in Matthew's Gospel*, SNTSMS 123 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002); Richard Beaton, “Isaiah in Matthew's Gospel,” in *Isaiah in the New Testament*, ed. Steve Moyise and Maarten J. J. Menken, New Testament and the Scriptures of Israel (London; New York: T&T Clark, 2005), 63–78.

<sup>54</sup> Waetjen, “Genealogy as the Key to the Gospel According to Matthew”; Heckl, “Der biblische Begründungsrahmen für die Jungfrauengeburt bei Matthäus. Zur Rezeption von Gen 5,1–6,4 in Mt 1.”

<sup>55</sup> See, however, Henze, *Jewish Apocalypticism*, 321–49; Walck, *The Son of Man in the Parables of Enoch and in Matthew*; and Richter, *Enoch and the Gospel of Matthew*.

<sup>56</sup> Pennington, “Heaven, Earth, and a New Genesis,” 36; The latest contribution is Leroy Andrew Huizenga, *The New Isaac: Tradition and Intertextuality in the Gospel of Matthew*, NovTSup 131 (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2009). Huizenga gives reasons for the neglect of the figure of Isaac in Matthew. It could however be argued that there has been a general neglect of the book of Genesis in Matthew.

nevertheless not dependent on the explicit mentioning of the motif in the text. The use of themes and imagery that are part of the motif in the cultural background of the text are also indicative of its presence.

The way forward is to survey the literary sources which may have influenced the theology of Matthew with the motif of new creation in view. These sources include the Old Testament and Second Temple Jewish literature. The survey of these texts will demonstrate which themes and imagery are part of the motif of new creation at the time of Matthew. The findings will serve as a heuristic tool in the search for the motif of new creation in Matthew.

Before commencing the survey, it is necessary to make a few methodological remarks.

## 1.3 Definitions and Intertextuality

### 1.3.1 New Creation – A Working Definition

Before embarking on a survey of texts in search of new creation, a preliminary working definition of new creation is required. New creation has three basic characteristics:

1. New creation is eschatological. Eschatology is a difficult term, but in this study it refers to an expectation describing a future radically discontinuous with the present that is presented with a sense of finality.<sup>57</sup> The sense of finality is expressed primarily through the expectation of the end of all evil<sup>58</sup> and thus eternal security within the attained future state.
  - At this point it is not necessary to decide whether new creation is to be understood literally or metaphorically as a description of a glorious future that is significantly discontinuous with the present state. The discontinuity does not necessarily imply replacement, but a decisive change of circumstances is necessary. Gowan defines the discontinuity as a change of “circumstances that scarcely could be expected to arrive as the result of normal, or even extraordinary, human progress.”<sup>59</sup> Arnold speaks of transformation but not transcendence of the circumstances of history.<sup>60</sup>

<sup>57</sup> Here I follow the definitions of eschatology in the Old Testament found in Henning Graf Reventlow, “The Eschatologization of the Prophetic Books: A Comparative Study,” in *Eschatology in the Bible and in Jewish and Christian Tradition*, ed. Henning Graf Reventlow, JSOTSup 243 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), 187; Donald Gowan, *Eschatology in the Old Testament*, 2nd ed. (London: T&T Clark, 2000), 1–2; Bill T. Arnold, “Old Testament Eschatology and the Rise of Apocalypticism,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Eschatology*, ed. Jerry L. Walls (Oxford University Press, 2008), 24; Elmer A. Martens, “Eschatology,” ed. J. G. McConville and Mark J. Boda, *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Prophets* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2012), 178.

<sup>58</sup> Gowan, *Eschatology in the Old Testament*, 2.

<sup>59</sup> Gowan, 1–2.

<sup>60</sup> Arnold, “Old Testament Eschatology and the Rise of Apocalypticism,” 24.

2. New creation refers to protology. I have already mentioned the idea of an Urzeit/Endzeit correlation and new creation is present where circumstances are described in terms evoking the first creation. This primarily concerns references or allusions to Gen 1-3 but also to the account of the flood in Gen 5-9, which may be considered a second creation.<sup>61</sup>

Specifically I will look for the presence of the following motifs, of which only one needs to be found in conjunction with the other major characteristic for new creation to be present in a text:

- Creation language echoing the cosmic or anthropological creation in Genesis 1-2.
- Garden of trees and rivers similar to the description of the garden of Eden (Gen 2:8-14), particularly the Tree of Life.
- Absence of death and conversely the presence of human longevity or eternal life (2:17: 3:19: 6:3).
- Obedience to God's commandments (Gen 2:16-17; 3:11).
- Absence of human wickedness (the evil heart) (Gen 6:5; 6:13).
- Restored relationship to God (Gen 3:8-10).
- End of barrenness – although Eve is not barren, the curse upon her is a threat to the fruitfulness of humanity so humans are not able to multiply and fill the earth (Gen 3:16 cf. 1:28).
- Absence of suffering and pain – included here is illness and infirmities (Gen 3:16-17).<sup>62</sup>
- Absence of hard labor and the presence of agricultural fruitfulness – i.e. the removal of the curse on the land (Gen 3:17 cf. Gen 1:29).
- Renewal through cosmic judgment and destruction (Gen 6-9).

<sup>61</sup> Daniel R. Streett, "As It Was in the Days of Noah: The Prophets' Typological Interpretation of Noah's Flood," *Criswell Theological Review* 5, no. 1 (September 1, 2007): 37–38; Lutz Doering, "Urzeit-Endzeit Correlation in the Dead Sea Scrolls and Pseudepigrapha," in *Eschatologie - Eschatology: The Sixth Durham-Tübingen Research Symposium*, ed. Hans-Joachim Eckstein, Christof Landmesser, and Hermann Lichtenberger, WUNT 272 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), 23–31.

<sup>62</sup> For this connection see Larry Paul Hogan, *Healing in the Second Temple Period*, NTOA 21 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1992), 4.

3. New creation comes about through divine agency. Creation is a prerogative of God, and so also is new creation.

According to Matthew Black, Isaiah 65:17-25 is the *locus classicus* for the hope of new creation in the Old Testament, since it “might well be held to warrant most of the later tradition”.<sup>63</sup> In this passage the characteristics of new creation are clearly present through the description of radically different circumstances for human flourishing, a sense of finality through the absence of evil, and numerous connections to Genesis 1-3.<sup>64</sup> All of this is brought to realization through God's sole action: “For *I* am about to create new heavens and a new earth.” (Isa 65:17a)

This is a working definition. By the end of the survey of the relevant texts a clearer, more nuanced and specific description will be available through an overview and categorization of the findings in the next three chapters.

### **1.3.2 New Creation As The Final Horizon**

This thesis is a study of the impact of the eschatological hope of new creation in Matthew's Gospel. It must, however, be asked what is actually meant by new creation and how the hope of new creation relates to other aspects of early Jewish eschatology.

E. P. Sanders has famously stated about early Jewish eschatology that “[i]n general terms it may be said that ‘Jewish eschatology’ and ‘the restoration of Israel’ are almost synonymous.”<sup>65</sup> This means that the eschatology of first-century Judaism was centered upon a nationalistic hope. This hope also finds resonance in Matthew, and studies have noted how exile and restoration influence the theology of Matthew.<sup>66</sup> However, although it may be granted that the restoration of Israel is a central element in early Jewish eschatology and consequently also early Christian eschatology, New Testament eschatology goes beyond the national only.<sup>67</sup> This expansion is well in line with Old

<sup>63</sup> Matthew Black, “The New Creation in First Enoch,” in *Creation, Christ and Culture: Studies in Honour of T. F. Torrance*, ed. Richard W. A. McKinney, Reprint (London; New York: Bloomsbury, 2016), 14. So also Paul D. Hanson, *The Dawn of Apocalyptic: The Historical and Sociological Roots of Jewish Apocalyptic Eschatology*, Rev. ed. (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1979), 155–61; David M. Russell, *The “New Heavens and New Earth”: Hope for the Creation in Jewish Apocalyptic and the New Testament* (Philadelphia: Visionary Press, 1996), 2; Hubbard, *New Creation in Paul's Letters and Thought*, 16.

<sup>64</sup> For connections to Genesis 1-3 see the treatment of the passage in chapter 2

<sup>65</sup> E. P. Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism* (Philadelphia: Augsburg Fortress Publishers, 1985), 97.

<sup>66</sup> N. T. Wright, *The New Testament and the People of God*, Christian Origins and the Question of God 1 (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992); Mervyn Eloff, “From the Exile to the Christ: Exile, Restoration and the Interpretation of Matthew's Gospel” (Stellenbosch: Stellenbosch University, 2002), <http://ir1.sun.ac.za/handle/10019.1/52854>; Young S. Chae, *Jesus as the Eschatological Davidic Shepherd: Studies in the Old Testament, Second Temple Judaism, and in the Gospel of Matthew*, WUNT II 216 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006).

<sup>67</sup> This point is also generally recognized by the scholars who emphasize the restoration of Israel and end of exile. E. P. Sanders' sweeping statement nevertheless gives an impression of a purely nationalistic eschatology.

Testament visions of the eschaton, echoed by many Second Temple apocalyptic texts, where a cosmic and universal scope is present (e.g., Isa 2:2-4; 25:6; 65:17-25; Dan 2:35 cf. 2:44; Mic 4:1-4; Hab 2:14; Zech 14:9; 1 Enoch 90:37-38; 2 Bar. 68:5; 4 Ezra 6:26; Apoc. Mos. 13:3; 1QHa XIV 14-17). The restoration of Israel may then be viewed as a step toward the restoration of the entire creation.<sup>68</sup>

In actual fact, therefore, in the New Testament in general and in Matthew in particular the scope of the eschatological hope is universal and includes all peoples (Matt 24:31; 25:32; 28:19). Furthermore, there is an anticipation of the end of the present age and a hope for a coming age (Matt 12:32) coupled with a hope of a resurrection that results in a transformed human existence (Matt 13:43; Matt 22:30). These factors especially indicate that the restoration in terms of fulfillment of the Old Testament envisioned in Matthew goes beyond political and nationalistic restoration.<sup>69</sup>

Matthew particularly looks to Isaiah in the description of Jesus as the fulfillment of the Old Testament hopes (Matt 1:22-23; 3:3; 4:15-16; 8:17; 12:18-21; 13:14-15; 15:7-9; 21:13). And especially Isaiah paints a vision of a future restoration in language that extends beyond Israel to the entire creation.

Again, it is instructive to look at the expectation of 'new creation' in Isaiah 65:17-25. It is striking that this description is found in the context of Israel's restoration from exile. Elsewhere in Isaiah the end of exile is described as a New Exodus (Isa 43:16-21). Even in that passage God's redemption is described in terms of creation: "I am about to do (עָשֶׂה) a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert." (Isa 43:19) This leads Carroll Stuhlmueller to talk about creative redemption in Deutero-Isaiah.<sup>70</sup> Ulrich Mell also notes the presence of creation-verbs together with newness in Isa 40-55 and suggests that these chapters are the origin of the motif of new creation in Jewish and Christian literature.<sup>71</sup> Peter Enns too renders the redemption envisioned in Isaiah as new creation, writing that "New Exodus is closely aligned with new creation; there is a connection between creation and redemption: to redeem is to re-create. – The last exodus leads to the new creation."<sup>72</sup>

<sup>68</sup> Wright, *The New Testament and the People of God*, 389.

<sup>69</sup> See the critique of Sanders among others by Jacques Schlosser, "Scholarly Rigor and Intuition in Historical Research into Jesus," in *Handbook for the Study of the Historical Jesus*, ed. Tom Holmén and Stanley E. Porter, vol. 1 (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2011), 502–5.

<sup>70</sup> Carroll Stuhlmueller, *Creative Redemption in Deutero-Isaiah*, AnBib 43 (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1970).

<sup>71</sup> Mell, *Neue Schöpfung*, 47.

<sup>72</sup> Peter Enns, "Exodus/New Exodus," in *Dictionary for Theological Interpretation of the Bible*, ed. Kevin J. Vanhoozer et al. (London: Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005).

This conclusion gains further support from the fact that in early Judaism Israel's exile was understood to parallel Adam's expulsion from Eden (4QpHos<sup>b</sup> frags. 7-8; Gen. Rab 19.9).<sup>73</sup> Ultimately redemption and salvation would be an overcoming of the sin of Adam and a return to Eden. It is this perspective that is the focus of this study. It is not a proposal which disqualifies the idea of end of exile in Matthew. The ultimate restoration is, however, not a return to the land as it was before the exile but to the blessings of Eden (Ezek 34:26-31; Jer 31:12).<sup>74</sup> It is this perspective that will be employed in the survey of the Jewish and early Christian writings.

### 1.3.3 Intertextuality

As I mention the term intertexts in the section above, it is relevant to ask what is meant by intertexts. Understood in its broadest sense, the term intertextuality refers to the interrelatedness of texts and was first coined by Julia Kristeva, who argued that every text is constructed as a mosaic of quotations, that any text is the absorption and transformation of other texts.<sup>75</sup> For Kristeva text does not only refer to written texts but also the whole societal and cultural order, materialized in signs, which she calls the General Text.<sup>76</sup> With this broad definition of text, every text has a relation to every other text regardless of time and space. Kristeva's project was a post-structuralist venture that potentially may result in a dissolution of the text and a disappearance of the author. In that sense, it is the opposite of the search for the historical meaning of a text.<sup>77</sup>

For this reason biblical scholars have taken a more restrictive approach to intertextuality in which an intertext is a written text or a collection of written texts.<sup>78</sup> This is the approach taken by Dale Allison, who defines intertextuality as "deliberate literary borrowing, the sort of borrowing that a text encourages its audience to discover, and recognition of which enlarges meaning."<sup>79</sup> Initially the

<sup>73</sup> James M. Scott, *On Earth as in Heaven: The Restoration of Sacred Time and Sacred Space in the Book of Jubilees*, JSJSup 91 (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2005), 132–36 with further references; Seth D. Postell, *Adam as Israel: Genesis 1-3 as the Introduction to the Torah and Tanakh* (Cambridge: James Clarke & Co, 2012), 8.

<sup>74</sup> Jonathan Huddleston, *Eschatology in Genesis*, FAT II 57 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2012), 147–51.

<sup>75</sup> Joshua Levinson, "Intertextuality, Introduction," in *Encyclopedia of the Bible and Its Reception*, ed. Dale C. Allison et al., vol. 13 (Berlin; Boston: de Gruyter, 2016), 203.

<sup>76</sup> W. J. C. Weren, *Studies in Matthew's Gospel: Literary Design, Intertextuality, and Social Setting*, BIS 130 (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 93.

<sup>77</sup> See the critique of the use of intertextuality in biblical studies by Thomas R Hatina, "Intertextuality and Historical Criticism in New Testament Studies: Is There a Relationship?," *Biblical Interpretation* 7, no. 1 (January 1999): 28–43.

<sup>78</sup> Levinson, "EBR," 204.

<sup>79</sup> Dale C. Allison, *The Intertextual Jesus: Scripture in Q* (Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 2000), ix. See also Wim Weren: "My definition of intertextuality is as follows. Intertextuality is an overarching concept that enables us to identify and describe various types of relations between text A and one or more other texts or text groups from other books (whether or not from the same author), and to determine how these relations are constitutive for the meaning(s) and function(s) of the texts in question. 'Other texts' refers to concrete previous texts. This implies that we must take account of the position of the texts on a chronological axis. A later text cannot influence the

task is then to detect in Matthew explicit or implicit quotations of and allusions to prior texts that may have been available to Matthew with the motif of new creation in view. This task needs to be slightly modified, however, since Allison's definition in some respects is too narrow. The definition of intertextuality by Levison is instructive:

[I]ntertextuality is less a name for a work's relation to particular prior texts than a designation of its participation in the discursive space of a given culture. What is relevant to textual interpretation is not, in itself, the identification of a particular intertextual source, but the more general discursive structure to which it belongs. Intertextuality attempts to reconstruct the network of relationships between a text and the various discursive practices and cultural codes which are realized and contested in texts and articulate for it the possibilities of that culture.<sup>80</sup>

What Levison, following Culler,<sup>81</sup> calls 'the discursive space of a given culture' can potentially be any cultural setting regardless of the text's origin. In the present study, however, the given culture is the original setting of the text. In that sense 'the discursive space of a given culture' is equivalent to Umberto Eco's concept of 'encyclopedia'. The term encyclopedia is used by Eco to describe the framework of the cultural knowledge in which the text is situated, and since it pertains to knowledge of culture we can call it the 'cultural encyclopedia'.<sup>82</sup> Although these concepts do not necessarily include written texts, the reconstruction of the 'cultural encyclopedia' of a given reader is primarily accessible through the study of written texts as the fundamental source of the concepts and ideas that form the cultural encyclopedia of a given historical setting.

In the survey of possible intertexts for Matthew I have also included texts that may have been written later than Matthew and were thus not available to Matthew at the time of writing. These texts are, however, so close to Matthew in time that they may exhibit thoughts and ideas that were present in the culture prior to the time of writing.

In general, it must be noted that the purpose of the study is not to suggest that Matthew alludes to all or any of the texts that are surveyed in chapters two, three and four. Rather, the analysis of the texts serves to describe the 'cultural encyclopedia' of the model reader of Matthew. The model reader is the reader that the author had in mind when writing the text:<sup>83</sup> that is, a reader presupposed

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formulation of an earlier one. *Studies in Matthew's Gospel*, 94.

<sup>80</sup> Levinson, "EBR," 204.

<sup>81</sup> Jonathan Culler, *The Pursuit of Signs: Semiotics, Literature, Deconstruction* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1981), 38.

<sup>82</sup> Umberto Eco, *The Role of the Reader: Explorations in the Semiotics of Texts* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1979), 7.

<sup>83</sup> Lidija Novaković, *Messiah, the Healer of the Sick: A Study of Jesus As the Son of David in the Gospel of Matthew*, WUNT II 170 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003), 9.

by the text who possess the encyclopedic competence to decode the meaning of the text. According to Eco, “the author has thus to foresee a model of the possible reader supposedly able to deal interpretatively with the expression in the same way as the author deals generatively with them.”<sup>84</sup> As such, although the approach of this study is reader-oriented it is distinct from other reader-oriented approaches since the model reader is a restricted by the text.<sup>85</sup> Huizenga remarks that Eco in later writings speaks of the *intentio operis*: “The Model Reader and the text are two sides of the same coin, for the Model Reader is the reader that the text requires for its proper actualization.”<sup>86</sup>

In the following chapters, to the extent that it is possible, I reconstruct the 'cultural encyclopedia' of the model reader of Matthew with regard to the motif of 'new creation'. By doing so, I intend to reach the proper actualization of Matthew to the extent that the text intended to communicate a message about new creation.<sup>87</sup>

The survey of texts is not done with the aim to trace a development of the motif of new creation as it is done in a tradition-historical approach. The purpose is to reconstruct the motif of new creation as it was present in the cultural encyclopedia at the time of Matthew. The purpose of the survey is then synchronic and not diachronic. This approach follows the one used by Leroy Huizenga with the purpose of locating the Akedah in Matthew: “We are interested in synchronic semiotic snapshot of aspects of the Akedah available in the encyclopedia at roughly the time of the setting and composition of the Gospel.”<sup>88</sup> This quote also applies to this study with the purpose of locating new creation in Matthew.

It must be said that such a venture has its limitations, since it is impossible to make a total and exact reconstruction. The goal/aim here is to locate and represent the motif of new creation on the map of Jewish religion at the time when Matthew was written. However, “map is not territory”.<sup>89</sup> A map is not reality; it is only a representation and does not include everything that may be present in a given territory. Yet a correct map is still enough to be able to navigate a territory. In other words it is a heuristic tool that makes it possible to locate the motif of new creation in Matthew.

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<sup>84</sup> Eco, *The Role of the Reader*, 7.

<sup>85</sup> “It is perhaps the strictest.” Huizenga, *The New Isaac*, 29.

<sup>86</sup> Huizenga, 29.

<sup>87</sup> For a similar approach see Rodrigo J. Morales, *The Spirit and the Restoration of Israel: New Exodus and New Creation Motifs in Galatians*, WUNT II 282 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010), 7–9.

<sup>88</sup> Huizenga, *The New Isaac*, 75.

<sup>89</sup> An expression coined by Alfred Korzybski and notably developed in area of the study of religion by Jonathan Z. Smith, *Map Is Not Territory, Studies in the History of Religions* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978), 289–309.



Finally, it must be admitted that the approach runs the risk of appearing arbitrary. How does one avoid the danger of constructing instead of reconstructing? Rodrigo J. Morales addresses this question by pointing to *multiply attested collocations of themes*.<sup>90</sup> This formulation indicates that the reconstruction of the motif of new creation in the cultural encyclopedia of Matthew is not based on a single text but on observations drawn from several texts that all share a number of the elements outlined in the definition above. When a similar collocation of themes is observed in a text in Matthew, it makes it probable that the motif of new creation is also being employed there.

In addition the seven criteria formulated by Richard Hays for evaluating possible allusions to the Old Testament in the NT are useful. They can be summarized briefly as follows:

1. *Availability*. This concerns the availability of the source of the echo for the original author and readers.
2. *Volume*. This criterion concerns the loudness of the proposed connection or how explicit or overt it is. Here verbal correspondence, the relative prominence of the proposed Old Testament passage in Judaism and the rhetorical weight of the echo come into play.
3. *Recurrence or Clustering*. This criterion concerns the importance of an intertext for the author. How often does the author cite or allude to the same passage.
4. *Thematic Coherence*. How does the potential echo fit with the overall argument. Does it help to clarify the reasoning?
5. *Historical Plausibility*. This criterion concerns the probability of the echo in light of the original historical context of the text. How does the use of a given text compare to the way it is used in other first-century sources? This is a guard against anachronistic readings.
6. *History of Interpretation*. Have other interpreters throughout history seen the same connections?
7. *Satisfaction*. This criterion asks whether the proposed intertextual reading illuminates the surrounding discourse. In contrast with the criterion of thematic coherence satisfaction concerns the work as a whole.<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>90</sup> Morales, *The Spirit and the Restoration of Israel*, PAGE NUMBER.

<sup>91</sup> Richard B. Hays, "'Who Has Believed Our Message?' Paul's Reading of Isaiah," in *The Conversion of the Imagination: Paul as Interpreter of Israel's Scripture* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005), 34–45.

Hays's seven criteria are formulated with the aim of understanding Paul's use of the Old Testament, and similarly to Allison, he restricts intertextuality to prior written texts. The aim of this study is different since the purpose is to detect intertextual links between Matthew and the cultural encyclopedia of Matthew with regard to new creation. Despite this difference Hays's criteria remain helpful. To this end Leroy Huizenga has provided a revamped edition of Hay's criteria.<sup>92</sup> They may be briefly summarized and adapted to the motif of new creation in Matthew in the following way:

1. *Availability*. This criterion is crucial for the present work, as the purpose of the first part of this study is to demonstrate the availability and configuration of the motif of new creation for Matthew and his readers.
2. *Volume*. Here the points mentioned above with regard to volume may be repeated. However, the traditions of interpretation attached to that text in the cultural encyclopedia of Matthew are also considered in the evaluation.
3. *Recurrence or Clustering*. This criterion is expanded to include allusions to post-biblical traditions.
4. *Thematic Coherence*. This criterion remains unchanged: How does the potential use of the motif of new creation fit within the overall argument. Does it help to clarify the reasoning?
5. *Historical Plausibility*. This criterion is not significantly changed. One of the aims of reconstructing the cultural encyclopedia is to situate the Gospel firmly in its original context.
6. *History of Interpretation*. This is an important criterion. If other interpreters have seen a connection, it enhances the probability that the connection may also have been intended by the author and detected by the original readers. Early interpreters are particularly important.
7. *Satisfaction*. This criterion has not changed in this revamped version: This criterion asks whether the proposed intertextual reading illuminates the surrounding discourse. In contrast with the criterion of thematic coherence, satisfaction concerns the works as a whole.

These criteria will guide the investigation conducted in this study. In the final conclusion the findings will be evaluated in light of them.

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<sup>92</sup> Huizenga, *The New Isaac*, 63–65.

### 1.3.5 The Setting of Matthew

In order to discern which texts should be included in the survey it is necessary to take a look at the historical setting of Matthew, the so called Sitz im Leben.

What can be said about the setting of Matthew? Little can be said for certain, but nevertheless enough to set proper limits for the selection of texts that may be part of the cultural encyclopedia in which Matthew was originally situated. It is almost universally agreed that Matthew was written by a Jewish Christian for Jewish Christians in the second half of the first century CE (60 -90).<sup>93</sup> This is of course the bare minimum of what can be said about the setting of Matthew, which is a much studied and complicated subject.<sup>94</sup> It is nevertheless enough to delineate which texts should be included in the survey.

In accordance with the Jewish setting of Matthew in the first century, the survey in part one exclusively concentrates on the Old Testament and Second Temple Jewish writings and omits Greco-Roman sources. Second Temple Jewish literature will be limited to the OTP and the Dead Sea Scrolls (DSS), since the configuration of the motif of “new creation” can be found there in a representative manner. Other sources mentioning “new creation”, such as the work of Josephus and Philo, often of a more discursive, rather than prophetic or poetic kind, will be drawn upon in the context of individual pericopes.

## 1.4 Outline

In accordance with the considerations stated above, the project is outlined as follows:

The work falls into two parts. The first part, chapters 2 to 5, is a reconstruction of the 'cultural encyclopedia' of the model reader of Matthew with regard to new creation. The second part, chapters 6 to 12, reads Matthew through the lens of the 'cultural encyclopedia' constructed in the previous chapters. Chapter 13 contains the general conclusions of the work.

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<sup>93</sup> For a historical overview of positions on the date of Matthew up until 1988 see Davies and Allison, *Matthew. Vol. I*, 127–37; See also Hagner, *Matthew 1-13*; Nolland, *The Gospel of Matthew*; France, *Matthew*; Ulrich Luz, *Matthew 1-7, A Commentary*, trans. James E. Crouch, Rev. ed., Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2007). On Matthew and Judaism see Davies and Allison, *Matthew. Vol. I*, 26–27; Saldarini, *Matthew's Christian-Jewish Community*, 11–26; Luz, *Matthew 1-7, A Commentary*, 45–60; Matthias Konrad, *Israel, Kirche und die Völker im Matthäusevangelium*, WUNT 215 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2007), 379–91.

<sup>94</sup> The reconstruction of the congregation behind the Gospels is central to a traditional redaction-critical approach. Studies into the genre of the Gospels have questioned this venture, however. See Richard A. Burridge, *What Are the Gospels?* (Cambridge University Press, 1992); Richard Bauckham, *The Gospels for All Christians: Rethinking the Gospel Audiences* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998).

Chapter 2 surveys the Old Testament for the motif of new creation in order to discern patterns, categories and imagery of new creation that may be used to trace its presence in Matthew. This chapter concludes with a summary and categorization of the findings.

Chapters 3 and 4 survey the OTP and Qumran. The non-canonical literature of Second Temple Judaism was part of the religious milieu in which the Gospel of Matthew was written. It is thus relevant to survey the literature for the motif of new creation with the same purpose as in chapter 2. These chapters include a survey of the Old Testament Pseudepigrapha and the Dead Sea Scrolls.

Chapter 5 provides a synthesis and overview of the findings in the previous three chapters and establishes the heuristic tool for tracing new creation in Matthew.

In chapters 6 to 12 I approach Matthew's Gospel. I begin by establishing a temporal eschatological framework of Matthew – i.e. a discussion of the realized, inaugurated and future aspects of the eschatology in Matthew – and propose that new creation is a part of the eschatological timeline found in Matthew. On the basis of the discoveries found in the previous chapters, I trace new creation in Matthew. This involves tracing patterns of new creation found in the previous survey in Matthew, discerning imagery, and discovering intertextual links to the relevant background literature.

The final chapter offers a summary of the findings in the study and a conclusion, along with an outlook to the significance of the motif of new creation with regard to major categories in the theology of Matthew. What are the implications for Christology, soteriology, ecclesiology and eschatology in Matthew?

## Part 1: New Creation in the Cultural Encyclopedia of Matthew

### 2 New Creation in the Old Testament Prophetic Literature

In this chapter I survey the Old Testament for language and imagery of new creation using the working definition formulated in the introduction, paying particular attention to eschatological texts that refer to protology and involve divine intervention. This survey is the first step in reconstructing the cultural encyclopedia of Matthew in order to create a lens through which the language of new creation can be discerned in Matthew's Gospel.

The importance of the Old Testament for Matthew is clear. There are about fifty-four quotations of the Old Testament in Matthew's Gospel.<sup>95</sup> In addition to quotations uttered by persons in the narrative, a number of quotations are found in the author's own editorial comments. Based on this, Matthew is obviously well versed in the Old Testament and draws heavily on several texts from the Old Testament. Thus, it is natural to look for the motif of new creation there. I offer only a brief survey as more space in this study is devoted to sources dated closer to Matthew and the reception and developments of the themes and categories found there. The use of secondary literature will also be limited due to the nature of the survey.

Although the exact expression 'new creation' does not occur in the Old Testament, the expectation of a new heaven and a new earth is expressed in Isa 65:17-25 and Isa 66:22. This is in addition to other texts in the prophetic literature that concern renewal of creation. The hopes of restoration found in these texts are the sources of the motif of new creation encountered in the Old Testament Pseudepigrapha, the Dead Sea Scrolls and early Christianity.<sup>96</sup>

#### 2.1 Matthew's Bible

Scholarship on the Old Testament in the past one hundred years has in large part been dedicated to questions of source-criticism, with the result that texts are often interpreted and analyzed on the basis of alleged compositional layers. Such an approach to the text would, however, be anachronistic in this case, as the purpose here is to discern the influence of the texts on an early

<sup>95</sup> Steve Moyise, *The Old Testament in the New: An Introduction*, Continuum Biblical Studies Series (New York; London: Continuum, 2001), 24. For a list of quotations see Kurt Aland et al., eds., *The Greek New Testament*, 4th Rev. Ed. (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft: United Bible Societies, 2001), 888–89.

<sup>96</sup> Hubbard, *New Creation in Paul's Letters and Thought*, 11.

Christian writer. By the time Matthew's Gospel was written, the “final form” of the Old Testament texts had already long been completed.<sup>97</sup>

This does not mean that every writer in the first centuries used the same uniform text version of the Old Testament. Final form in this context only refers to the overall composition of a book and its attribution to one author.

Regarding text versions, it is also a question which text-form of the Old Testament Matthew used. Maarten Menken, who has done considerable work on the Old Testament text of Matthew, argues that Matthew had access to scrolls in Hebrew and Greek and produced his own translation of the Old Testament passages based on a reading of the texts. In addition, he also thinks that Matthew was part of a trend to produce Greek translations of the Old Testament that were closer to the Hebrew text than the LXX. This implies that Matthew knew both Hebrew and Greek and was familiar with the Old Testament text beyond the cited passages.<sup>98</sup> According to Menken, Matthew drew his quotations from a continuous biblical text.<sup>99</sup>

Menken's conclusion regarding Matthew's proficiency with languages coupled with the textual diversity both in Hebrew and Greek in the first century makes it difficult to determine which text-version Matthew used. The emphasis in this study is not, however, on verbal parallels, but rather on imagery and motifs taken from the Old Testament that in most instances can be detected regardless of the textual variant.

### 2.3 Old Testament Eschatology and Creation

Two questions regarding the general features of eschatology and creation in the Old Testament are relevant to ask before launching into a survey of specific passages. First, what is the nature of Old Testament eschatology? And second, what is the role of creation within Old Testament theology and Old Testament eschatology in particular?

The first problem, that of eschatology in the Old Testament, can be dealt with briefly. Eschatology is an immensely controversial subject in biblical studies generally and even more of one when it comes to the Old Testament specifically. The term was originally coined in the context of Christian

<sup>97</sup> Emanuel Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible*, Rev. edition (Minneapolis; Assen: Augsburg Fortress Publishers, 2001), 155–97.

<sup>98</sup> Maarten J. J. Menken, *Matthew's Bible: The Old Testament Text of the Evangelist* (Leuven: Peeters Publishers, 2004). Others have argued that Matthew may have been capable in both Hebrew and Greek. Robert Horton Gundry, *The Use of the Old Testament in St. Matthew's Gospel, with Special Reference to the Messianic Hope* (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 1975), 172; Davies and Allison, *Matthew. Vol. I*, 33, 45.

<sup>99</sup> Menken, *Matthew's Bible*, 280.

dogmatics and primarily concerned matters of the final destiny of individuals. The Old Testament hope is for Israel as a nation and by extension the whole world, primarily in a this-worldly sense. It has thus been questioned whether one can speak of eschatology in the Old Testament.<sup>100</sup> What is found in the Old Testament is nevertheless a hope for the future in which the world will be changed radically. It is therefore possible to speak of eschatology in the Old Testament. As Donald Gowan argues, since eschatology is about the end, it ultimately points to the end of evil:

The Old Testament vision of the future deals throughout with the world in which we now live. All was made by God, so nothing is bad in itself, but sin has by now left it hopelessly corrupted. These texts promise transformation as the radical victory over evil. To the challenge that has been raised concerning the appropriateness of calling the Old Testament hope “eschatology,” asking “end of what?” it will be shown that a clear answer can be given. The answer is: “the end of evil.”<sup>101</sup>

What then is the place of creation in Old Testament eschatology? Old Testament scholarship in the twentieth century has been dominated by G. von Rad's view that the Israelite doctrine of creation developed late in the biblical tradition and is secondary to faith in God's saving action in history. According to von Rad, redemption and election are the fundamental categories in Old Testament theology.<sup>102</sup>

The consequence of von Rad's argument is that the presentation of creation becomes motivated by the divine purpose of redemption.<sup>103</sup> In this sense protology becomes the source of the imagery of ultimate restoration in the redemptive purposes of God. Eschatology remains within the confines of history, and creation serves as a cosmic foil against which soteriological pronouncements stand out more effectively or are wholly incorporated into the complex of soteriological thought.<sup>104</sup>

Von Rad's views on the marginal role of the doctrine of creation has been largely dismissed by critics such as Claus Westermann and H. H. Schmid.<sup>105</sup> Westermann has argued that God as a creator is not an article of faith but a fundamental premise running through the Old Testament.<sup>106</sup> H. H. Schmid concurs with Westermann, asserting that “All factors considered the doctrine of

<sup>100</sup> Henning Graf Reventlow, ed., *Eschatology in the Bible and in Jewish and Christian Tradition*, JSOTSup 243 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), 169–73.

<sup>101</sup> Gowan, *Eschatology in the Old Testament*, 2.

<sup>102</sup> Gerhard von Rad, “The Theological Problem of the Old Testament Doctrine of Creation,” in *Creation in the Old Testament*, ed. Bernhard W. Anderson, IRT 6 (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984), 53.

<sup>103</sup> Rad, 60.

<sup>104</sup> Rad, 63.

<sup>105</sup> Walter Brueggemann, *Theology of the Old Testament: Testimony, Dispute, Advocacy* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1997), 160.

<sup>106</sup> Claus Westermann, “Biblical Reflection on Creator-Creation,” in *Creation in the Old Testament*, ed. Bernhard W. Anderson, IRT 6 (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984), 93.

creation, namely, the belief that God has created and is sustaining the order of the world in all its complexities, is not a peripheral theme in biblical theology but is plainly the fundamental theme.”<sup>107</sup>

According to Schmid, creation is the comprehensive horizon of Old Testament theology and not simply an aspect of a theology that is primarily concerned with history. This means that the cosmic element of redemption is not an afterthought to national election and redemption. It is rather the other way around; cosmic redemption is the original purpose in Israel's election and redemption.

Anderson makes a similar remark when he writes that creation basically is an eschatological doctrine, meaning that the end is anticipated in the beginning.<sup>108</sup> He concludes:

It is characteristic of eschatology that the visions of the end time are drawn in terms of the pictures of first things. Creation anticipates the consummation; and the consummation is the fulfillment of the beginning. The goal of history will be a return to the beginning, not in the sense of a historical cycle that repeats itself, but in the sense that the original intention of the Creator, frustrated by creaturely rebellion and threatened by the insurgent powers of chaos will be realized.<sup>109</sup>

Creation – in the sense of the beginning and original purposes of God for the world – ultimately points to eschatology, since eschatology is concerned with the hope of a restoration of what was or experienced as lost. That is, the experience of an imperfect world is seen as removed from the original divine intention and the faithful yearn for a return to “paradise”. It involves the defeat of an enemy, an enemy that may have different names such as Chaos, Satan, Pharaoh or Babylon. The texts may initially point to a political and historical reality, but they ultimately confirm that the horizon of Old Testament theology and eschatology is not only national but universal.

In support of this view, Anderson states that Davidic covenant theology is cosmic rather than historical. The king acts as a mediator of the cosmic created order through his righteous rule and thereby provides the security, health, and peace of society (Ps 72).<sup>110</sup> The king rules from Zion, the place God has chosen to dwell. The ultimate king is however Yahweh, who alone is spoken of as 'King of Zion'.<sup>111</sup> The earthly king is appointed to execute the rule of Yahweh, the deliverer of Israel and creator of the world (Ps 74:12-17).

<sup>107</sup> Hans Heinrich Schmid, “Creation, Righteousness, and Salvation: ‘Creation Theology’ as the Broad Horizon of Biblical Theology,” in *Creation in the Old Testament*, ed. Bernhard W Anderson, IRT 6 (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984), 111.

<sup>108</sup> Bernhard W. Anderson, *From Creation to New Creation: Old Testament Perspectives* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1994), 34.

<sup>109</sup> Anderson, 38.

<sup>110</sup> Bernhard W. Anderson, “Introduction: Mythopoeic and Theological Dimensions of Biblical Creation Faith,” in *Creation in the Old Testament*, ed. Bernhard W. Anderson, IRT 6 (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984), 8.

<sup>111</sup> Ben C. Ollenburger, *Zion, the City of the Great King: A Theological Symbol of the Jerusalem Cult*, JSOTSup 41 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1987), 64.



Donald Gowan therefore convincingly argues that the center of Old Testament eschatology is Zion,<sup>112</sup> a motif that is tied together with new creation imagery since Zion and particularly the temple are often described as a fruitful garden (1 Kgs 5-6; Isa 51:3; Ezek 36:35; Joel 2:3).<sup>113</sup> This motif corresponds with a belief that was widespread among religions of the ancient Near East, a belief in a “world mountain” that was the paradigm of all origins.<sup>114</sup> The expulsion of Eden is a stock motif in the prophetic corpus, and the language of the loss of Eden is applied to the loss of the temple in Jerusalem or the threat of losing its blessings (Jer 4:23-26; Joel 2:3).<sup>115</sup> As we shall see, the passages about ultimate restoration often center on the mountain of the Lord and draw on imagery from the Eden narrative.

This eschatological focus on Zion is further substantiated by the idea that the Temple is both the center of Israel and navel of the cosmos (Ezek. 5:5; 38:12; 48:8).<sup>116</sup> In the end all people will come to the holy mountain of the Lord (Isa 2:2; Mic 4:1; Ezek 40:2; Zech. 14:10). According to G. K. Beale, the thought in the Old Testament is that the Temple borders will be expanded and encompass the whole earth.<sup>117</sup> He finds this motif both in the Old Testament and in subsequent Jewish writings (Isa. 54:2-3; Dan 2:34-35, 44-55; 1 Enoch 90:28-36; Sib. Or. 5:414-432). The goal of this vision centered upon Zion and the temple is a return to the ideal state of paradise – a new creation.<sup>118</sup>

## 2.4 Selection of Texts

In the following pages I provide a survey of texts from the Old Testament prophets that contain the language of new creation as defined in the introduction, texts containing eschatology, protology and divine agency. The texts are treated in canonical order.<sup>119</sup> The survey is by no means comprehensive, but is nonetheless representative, focusing on the prophetic texts that are the most significant for Matthew.

<sup>112</sup> Gowan, *Eschatology in the Old Testament*, 3.

<sup>113</sup> G. K. Beale, *The Temple and the Church's Mission: A Biblical Theology of the Dwelling Place of God*, New Studies in Biblical Theology 17 (Downers Grove: Apollos, 2004), 66–80.

<sup>114</sup> Michael A. Fishbane, *Text and Texture, Close Readings of Selected Biblical Texts* (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 1998), 111.

<sup>115</sup> Huddleston, *Eschatology in Genesis*, 147–48.

<sup>116</sup> Bernhard W. Anderson, *Creation Versus Chaos: The Reinterpretation of Mythical Symbolism in the Bible* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1987), 117–18.

<sup>117</sup> Beale, *The Temple and the Church's Mission*, 81–166.

<sup>118</sup> Beale, *New Testament Biblical Theology, A*, 753.

<sup>119</sup> The order has no particular significance since the purpose is not to trace a development of the motif of new creation but its configuration at the time of Matthew.

The selection of texts is based on the influence of the writings in the first century, the influence on Matthew based on the number of citations and allusions in Matthew, the connections drawn in scholarly publications and finally the eschatological character of the writings.

Several copies of Old Testament prophetic books were found among the DSS. Of these the book of Psalms, which was considered a prophetic book, is attested by 36 copies,<sup>120</sup> 21 copies were found of Isaiah, 8 copies of Daniel, 8-9 copies of the minor Prophets and 6 copies of both Jeremiah and Ezekiel.<sup>121</sup> It is likely that the findings at Qumran do not reflect only the particular interest of the group associated to the caves. All the copies were probably not produced at Qumran but collected from other parts of the land, and the findings likely reflect a widespread use of these texts.<sup>122</sup>

The following table lists the number of citations and allusions to the Old Testament prophets according to appendix III in NA28.<sup>123</sup> The list is ordered according to the sum of citations and allusions.

Table 1: Old Testament citations and allusions in Matthew

Old Testament Book	Citations	Allusions
Isaiah	15	66
Psalms	14	54
Jeremiah	3	37
Daniel	7	23
Ezekiel	0	20
Zechariah	3	13
Malachi	1	8
Micah	2	5
Joel	0	7
Jonah	1	5
Hosea	3	2
Haggai	0	4
Habakkuk	0	3

<sup>120</sup> For the book of Psalms as prophetic see Eugene Ulrich, "Hebrew Bible," ed. Craig A. Evans and Stanley E. Porter, *Dictionary of New Testament Background* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2000).

<sup>121</sup> For numbers see James C. VanderKam, *The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012), 3.

<sup>122</sup> VanderKam, 2.

<sup>123</sup> The use of the appendix in NA28 does not indicate that the list provided there is exhaustive or definitive. The list is nevertheless an extensive and qualified starting-point for the choice of texts to be included in the survey.

Amos	0	2
Zephaniah	0	1

From this list Isaiah, Psalms, Jeremiah, Daniel, Ezekiel and Zechariah stand out as the most influential writings for Matthew. They correspond with the findings at DSS, and it has also become clear that of the minor prophets Zechariah was the most influential in Matthew. All of these writings contain eschatological material.

Extensive work has been done on the influence of Isaiah, Ezekiel, Jeremiah and Zechariah on Matthew.<sup>124</sup> The influence of Isaiah can be observed by the number of explicit quotes. Quotations from Jeremiah and Zechariah are more sparse. No quotations of Ezekiel can be found in Matthew according to the index in NA28. When scholars argue for the influence of these prophets on Matthew, they look beyond quotations to include allusions and the use of concepts and motifs. Charlene McAfee Moss in her work on Zechariah in Matthew suggests that the first Gospel is replete with the implicit or allusive use of scripture.<sup>125</sup> C. A. Ham outlines his approach thus:

It examines the explicit citations from Zechariah, assessing the continuity or discontinuity between early Jewish and early Christian interpretations of these passages and describing the distinctive interpretations of these texts in the context of Matthew's Gospel. It considers the probable presence and intention of both textual and conceptual allusions to Zechariah through a literary and exegetical analysis of themes derived from and related to the Zechariah material which contributes to Matthew's portrayal of Jesus and his mission.<sup>126</sup>

A similar approach is followed here both with regard to continuity and discontinuity between early Jewish and early Christian interpretations as well as the attention to both textual and conceptual allusion. There is, however, also a significant difference in the fact that this project is concerned with a particular theme in the Old Testament drawn from a number of Old Testament writings and its influence on Matthew, rather than on a number of themes drawn from a single writing.

Only a minority of the passages treated in this chapter are explicitly quoted in Matthew. What I argue here is not that Matthew consciously pointed his readers to specific texts in the Old Testament. Rather, because the texts have been used and interpreted in early Jewish literature as

<sup>124</sup> Beaton, "Isaiah in Matthew's Gospel"; Michael Knowles, *Jeremiah in Matthew's Gospel: The Rejected-Prophet Motif in Matthean Redaction*, JSOTSup 68 (Sheffield: T&T Clark, 1993); Charlene McAfee Moss, *The Zechariah Tradition and the Gospel of Matthew*, BZNW 156 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2008); Clay Alan Ham, *The Coming King and the Rejected Shepherd: Matthew's Reading of Zechariah's Messianic Hope*, New Testament Monographs 4 (Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2005); Chae, *Jesus as the Eschatological Davidic Shepherd*.

<sup>125</sup> Moss, *The Zechariah Tradition and the Gospel of Matthew*, 1.

<sup>126</sup> Ham, *The Coming King and the Rejected Shepherd*, 15.

well as other New Testament writings, they played a role in the thought-world of Matthew. Thus, they are an important factor in the eschatological expectations of the readers of Matthew's Gospel.<sup>127</sup>

The particular texts are chosen in accordance with the initial definition outlined in the introduction. The survey begins with the Psalms.

## **2.4 Psalms**

The book of Psalms was the most widely used portion of the Old Testament in early Judaism, since it was used in public worship in the Temple and the synagogues as well as in private piety.<sup>128</sup> The influence is evidenced by the different copies of the Psalms found among the DSS, which is the highest number of any of the Old Testament writings. Furthermore, the Psalms is the most cited Old Testament writing in the New Testament.<sup>129</sup>

In the Psalms language of new creation is found with reference to both humans and cosmos. The following will just be a presentation of a few examples.

### **2.4.1 God Rules the Earth from Zion**

The eschatological character of the Psalms is expressed in various ways.<sup>130</sup> It was argued above that Zion is the center of Old Testament eschatology. God's kingship on Zion also features prominently in the Psalms. The following examples illustrate this. To begin with, salvation comes from Zion (Ps 14:7; 53:6), God will defeat his enemies from Zion (Ps 2; 110), and rules over all the earth (Ps 2; 72).

Furthermore, Psalm 78:69 describes the establishment of the Temple on Zion by comparing it to the creation of the world: "He built his sanctuary like the high heavens, like the earth, which he has founded forever."

<sup>127</sup> See a similar approach in Morales, *The Spirit and the Restoration of Israel*, 7.

<sup>128</sup> Steve Moyise and Maarten J. J. Menken, eds., *The Psalms in the New Testament*, New Testament and the Scriptures of Israel (London; New York: T&T Clark, 2004), 1.

<sup>129</sup> Darrell D. Hannah, "Isaiah within Judaism of the Second Temple Period," in *Isaiah in the New Testament*, ed. Steve Moyise and Maarten J. J. Menken, New Testament and the Scriptures of Israel (London ; New York: T&T Clark, 2005), 7.

<sup>130</sup> For eschatology in the Psalms see David C. Mitchell, *The Message of the Psalter: An Eschatological Programme in the Book of Psalms*, JSOTSup 252 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997).

In addition, Psalm 87 describes an eschatological scenario in which all the nations are going to Zion to worship Yahweh. The psalm further makes the claim that everyone is born there (Ps 87:5),<sup>131</sup> and as the nations come to Zion they return to their origins and the source of life (Ps 87:7). As such Zion is depicted as the center of the earth. Consequently, the restoration of Zion spells the restoration of the land and the world.

Psalm 74 also prays for the restoration of Zion and recalls God's actions as creator of the world when the forces of chaos were defeated (Ps. 74:12-17). God's mighty actions in the beginning are used to invoke an intervention against the enemies of the people. K. Schifferdecker writes: “the theme of God’s creating the world through the defeat of chaos monsters is used to urge God to re-create the world in which the psalmist lives in order that it might conform to the good order established at that primordial beginning.”<sup>132</sup> In this way the redemptive acts of God in the past are described in terms of creation and anticipate a future redemption in which evil will be ultimately defeated and the created order will be reestablished free of threats.

Finally, the thought of God defeating the powers of chaos is expressed elsewhere in the Psalms (89:9-18; 142; 144). God rules as the creator while His creative power brings salvation to Israel. Significantly the description of creation in Psalm 74 may also recall Exodus (74:13-15 cf. 78:13-16; Ex. 14:21-22). Redemption and creation is thus closely connected in the Psalms.

So far this concerns the renewal of society and the world, though a part of this scenario is, of course, also the renewal of the individual. This thought is expressed in Psalm 51, to which we turn next.

### **2.4.2 Creation and Newness in the Psalms (Psalm 51 and 104)**

Creation and newness are only found together twice in the psalms. In Psalm 51:10 and in Psalm 104:30.<sup>133</sup>

Ps 51:10 it is a prayer for the renewal of the heart. The theme of righteous living and adherence to the Torah is a pervasive theme in the Psalms, but this passage seems to express a hope of transformation that is eschatological in nature.

<sup>131</sup> Marvin Tate, *Psalms 51-100*, Word Biblical Commentary 20 (Waco: Word Books, 1991), 392.

<sup>132</sup> Kathryn Schifferdecker, “Creation Theology,” ed. Tremper Longman III and Peter Enns, *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Wisdom, Poetry & Writings* (Downers Grove: IVP Academic, July 6, 2008), 64.

<sup>133</sup> Note that in many other copies and translations of Psalm 51 the verse is verse twelve. The NRSV edition of Psalm 51 is shorter since the preface which explains the setting of the psalm is not counted as verses.

Psalm 51 is a psalm of repentance. In this psalm David is asking for forgiveness of sins and a new creation of heart and spirit: “Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me.” (Ps. 51:10). The heart in the Old Testament, although used occasionally with reference to its physiological functions, is primarily “the seat for mental or spiritual powers and capacities”.<sup>134</sup> According to H. W. Wolff the heart is first and foremost the organ of understanding and will, the center of a person called to reason and hear the word of God.<sup>135</sup>

The heart needs to be receptive to the word of God, which will provide an inward change. What is asked for is to be brought out of the sinful nature, as David states that he has been subject to sin from birth (51:7).<sup>136</sup> A new heart and a new spirit is a prayer for new creation, a hope to partake in the prophetic promises of redemption and renewal for Israel.<sup>137</sup> “[I]n this petition the one praying the psalm implores the grace of the new covenant.”<sup>138</sup>

Finally, the psalm closes with a prayer for the renewal of Zion. This is important in light of the considerations above with Zion as the center of Old Testament eschatology. The renewal of the individual is connected to the renewal of Zion.

Psalm 104 is a psalm in which God is praised as the creator and sustainer of creation. The interesting verse for my purposes is verse 30: “When you send forth your spirit, they are created; and you renew the face of the ground.” This verse could be taken as reference to the continual renewal of creation sustained through God's power.<sup>139</sup> Adam Yates, however, argues that it points to the eschatological renewal of creation.<sup>140</sup> The preceding verse echoes Gen 3:19 and the death of humans because Gods life-giving spirit is taken away from them. Verse 30 is then naturally understood as an eschatological reversal of the curse of death perhaps even resurrection when God will renew creation.

<sup>134</sup> Ludwig Koehler et al., “לב,” *HALOT* (Leiden: Brill, 2000).

<sup>135</sup> Hans Walter Wolff, *Anthropology of the Old Testament*, trans. Margaret Kohl (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1974), 51–55.

<sup>136</sup> Frank-Lothar Hossfeld and Erich Zenger, *Psalms 2: A Commentary on Psalms 51-100*, ed. Klaus Baltzer, trans. Linda M. Maloney, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2005), 15. I do not enter into a discussion about authorship of the Psalm. The psalm is simply ascribed to David.

<sup>137</sup> Hossfeld and Zenger, 21.

<sup>138</sup> Hossfeld and Zenger, 21.

<sup>139</sup> So Hans-Joachim Kraus, *Psalms 60-150*, CC (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993), 303; Leslie C. Allen, *Psalms 101-150*, Revised, Word Biblical Commentary 21 (Dallas: Word Books, 2002), 47; Frank-Lothar Hossfeld and Erich Zenger, *Psalms 3: A Commentary on Psalms 101-150*, ed. Klaus Baltzer, trans. Linda M. Maloney, Hermeneia (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 2011), 57.

<sup>140</sup> John W. Yates, *The Spirit and Creation in Paul*, WUNT II 251 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008), 30–31.

## 2.5 Isaiah

Isaiah was an influential book in the first century, as is well attested by the findings at Qumran.<sup>141</sup> It is also the second most cited Old Testament writing in the New Testament.<sup>142</sup> Apart from these quantitative reasons, Isaiah is also of importance for qualitative reasons. This is to say that the clearest expression of the hope for a new creation in the Old Testament is also found in the prophecies of Isaiah. The hope is expressed in various places throughout the book. The theme builds until it reaches its climax in the latter parts of the book where the direct expression “new heaven and new earth” appears (65:17; 66:22).

The first text under consideration is Isaiah 11, a significant passage concerning the motif of new creation. It has had a significant impact on other parts of Isaiah as well as texts in Second Temple Judaism.<sup>143</sup>

### 2.5.1 Isaiah 11:1-9 The Kingdom of the Righteous King

- A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse,  
and a branch shall grow out of his roots.
- 2 The spirit of the LORD shall rest on him,  
the spirit of wisdom and understanding,  
the spirit of counsel and might,  
the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD.
- 3 His delight shall be in the fear of the LORD.
- He shall not judge by what his eyes see,  
or decide by what his ears hear;
- 4 but with righteousness he shall judge the poor,  
and decide with equity for the meek of the earth;  
he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth,  
and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked.
- 5 Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist,  
and faithfulness the belt around his loins.
- 6 The wolf shall live with the lamb,  
the leopard shall lie down with the kid,  
the calf and the lion and the fatling together,  
and a little child shall lead them.

<sup>141</sup> VanderKam, *The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Bible*, 3.

<sup>142</sup> Hannah, “Isaiah within Judaism of the Second Temple Period,” 7.

<sup>143</sup> Michael A. Knibb, “Isaianic Traditions in the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha,” in *Writing and Reading the Scroll of Isaiah: Studies of an Interpretive Tradition*, ed. Craig C. Broyles and Craig A. Evans, vol. 2, 2 vols., VTSup 70 (Leiden; New York: Brill, 1997); 11.1 may also be referred to in Matt. 2.23, where it is said that the prophets say that he (the Messiah) should be called a nazarene – this expression may come from the Hebrew word for branch in 11.1

– נָזַר. See Nicholas G. Piotrowski, “Scripture and Community: The Socio-Rhetorical Effect of Matthew’s Prologue-Quotations” (ProQuest Dissertations Publishing, 2013), 196–200, <http://search.proquest.com/docview/1431982236>.

- 7 The cow and the bear shall graze,  
their young shall lie down together;  
and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.
- 8 The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp,  
and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den.
- 9 They will not hurt or destroy  
on all my holy mountain;  
for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD  
as the waters cover the sea. (Isa 11:1-9)

Konrad Schmid considers 11:1-5 and 11:6-9 as two separate texts, since he cannot reconcile the justice of verse 4 and the peace in 6-9.<sup>144</sup> According to Schmid verses 6-9 do not fit with the royal ideology found in 1-5. Their juxtaposition nevertheless makes sense since 11:9 evokes Zion with the mention of the holy mountain. As we have seen above Zion is integral to royal ideology, as the rule of the righteous king results in paradisaical conditions. Schmid's conclusion does not take into account that peace and justice go together. Peace in the land involves the defeat of the enemies of the land. This perspective is expounded by H. H. Schmid, who argues that creation is the primary horizon for understanding redemption in the Old Testament. Thus, righteousness is to be understood as world ordering and is as such a creational term.<sup>145</sup> Marlow notes that in Isaiah the justice of the King is connected with creation-language:

In Isaiah, this royal ideology is combined with concepts of justice (טִבְּרָן) and righteousness (יִשְׁרָאֵל) to denote the maintaining or breaking of creation order. Justice and righteousness are associated with the reign of an ideal king (Isa 11:1–5; 32:1; see also Jer 23:5) and also with the well-being of the entire created order, not just human society (Isa 11:6–9; 32:15–17).<sup>146</sup>

This is exactly what is present here. The ideal king will come from the stump of Jesse, and he will rule with wisdom and justice. As a result his kingdom will be like Eden. Although the word, Eden, is not used here, the imagery is surely meant to evoke it.<sup>147</sup> Particularly the description in 11:8 of the child playing near snakes without being in danger indicates the reversal of Gen 3:15. It is also a vision of peace among animals normally considered mortal enemies. This description is used to show that destruction of evil is complete. This description clearly goes beyond what may be expected in a purely national hope.

<sup>144</sup> Konrad Schmid, "New Creation Instead of New Exodus: The Innerbiblical Exegesis and Theological Transformations of Isaiah 65:17–25," in *Continuity and Discontinuity: Chronological and Thematic Development in Isaiah 40-66*, ed. Lena-Sofia Tiemeyer and Hans M. Barstad, FRLANT 255 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2014), 185.

<sup>145</sup> Schmid, "Creation, Righteousness, and Salvation."

<sup>146</sup> H. F. Marlow, "Creation Theology," ed. J. G. McConville and Mark J. Boda, *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Prophets* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2012), 107.

<sup>147</sup> J. Alec Motyer, *The Prophecy of Isaiah: An Introduction & Commentary* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1993).



A significant motif is the holy mountain of the Lord – Zion, the location of the Temple and the presence of God with his people. This motif is also found in Isa 2.2-4 and is, as will be evident in the following sections, a recurring motif in connection with restoration and renewal passages.

The vision is universal and it is the earth that is filled with the knowledge of the Lord (11:9).<sup>148</sup> The translation *the earth* rather than “the land” in verse 9 is justified by the parallel of *the sea*.<sup>149</sup>

The next passage also depicts cosmic restoration centered upon Zion but only after a cosmic upheaval.

### **2.5.2 Chapters 24-27 – 'The Isaianic Apocalypse'**

These chapters have been called an apocalypse, since the vivid imagery in the passage brings reminiscences of apocalyptic literature.<sup>150</sup> It is exactly this imagery that is interesting for this survey. Concerning the passage as a whole, Daniel R. Street has observed that “the Genesis flood narrative functions as a key element in the story's allusive substructure.”<sup>151</sup> Street notes that God judges the world in such a way that it returns to primeval chaos. The clearest reference to the Genesis flood is in 24:18b, where the windows of heaven are opened (cf. Gen 7:11; 8:2). The following verses describe how destruction comes upon the earth as God punishes both humans (26:21) and angels (24:21-22) for their sins. But chaos will not persist, and God will conquer chaos. 27:1 describes how God will kill the chaos-monster, Leviathan. Out of the judgment and destruction a new and restored creation will emerge as the vineyard of the Lord will fill the whole world with fruits (27:6).

The hope of restoration is again connected to a mountain. In 25:6-10a the salvation of the Lord is described in terms of a feast on a mountain for all nations. The context is one of judgment upon the enemies of the Lord. The Lord defeats the enemies and he is the King of Zion (24:23). The mountain and Zion are clearly synonymous. However, the focus on Zion does not mean that salvation is exclusive; it includes all the peoples (25:6) who are present at the feast of the Lord.

Salvation is universal.<sup>152</sup>

<sup>148</sup> John D. W. Watts, *Isaiah 1-33*, Word Biblical Commentary 24 (Dallas: Word Books, 1998), 173.

<sup>149</sup> Watts, 173; For a universal interpretation see also Motyer, *The Prophecy of Isaiah*, 123; Brevard S. Childs, *Isaiah: A Commentary*, OTL (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001), 103.

<sup>150</sup> See an overview in Neil O. Skjoldal, “The Function of Isaiah 24-27,” *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 36 (1993): 163–67.

<sup>151</sup> Streett, “As It Was in the Days of Noah,” 46. Dan G. Johnson, *From Chaos to Restoration*, 81–82. does not think that there is an allusion to the flood but rather to the exodus narrative. Johnson, however, overlooks that the exodus narrative itself plays on the overall structure of the flood narrative and God's elect are eventually saved through the water which destroys his enemies. The exodus event is accordingly spoken of as the creation of God's people (Isa. 51:9-11).

<sup>152</sup> Andrew Chester, *Future Hope and Present Reality: Volume I: Eschatology and Transformation in the Hebrew Bible*, WUNT 293 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2012), 286.

A remarkable feature of this passage is the defeat of death that is likened to a veil over all the peoples (25:7-8). The end of death is the most clear sign that the hope described here goes beyond a mere defeat of political enemies. It is a hope of an end to the enemy of life itself, and it is a universal hope since death is a threat to all people.

The defeat of death is also in view in 26:19. Here resurrection is described since the dead shall become alive. The return from death to life is expressed in three parallel sayings expressing the hope of a bodily resurrection that will cause joy as the earth will give birth to the dead.<sup>153</sup>

A similar scenario of destruction and restoration is found in Isaiah 34-35, which has at times been called the 'Little Apocalypse' in comparison with Isa 24-27.<sup>154</sup> Isaiah 34-35 is the focus of the next part of the survey.

### **2.5.3 Isaiah 34-35 – A Blooming Desert**

The reasons for calling these chapters the 'Little Apocalypse' are the close thematic connections between chapters 34-35 and 24-27. Both refer to universal judgment (24:1-12 and 34:1-3), both speak of the destruction of the elements (24:19-20; 34:4) and of the “host of heaven” (24:21; 34:4), and both use a specific, contemporary enemy of Israel to illustrate the principle of judgment. In terms of restoration, both passages speak of fruitfulness, prosperity and peace for God's people (27:6; 35:1-2, 9) and a regathering of the people (35:8-10).<sup>155</sup>

In 35:1-10 the restoration hope is described with imagery of a blooming desert (1-2, 6b-7). Hans Wildberger chooses the following headline for the section: "Changing the Land to Paradise and Return of the Redeemed to Zion." He furthermore comments on 35:6: "One might say that a whole new act of creation takes place (cf. Gen. 2:6); in any event, a new phase in time is to begin, in which even the desert will be fruitful."<sup>156</sup>

Overall it is a message of comfort, and God will come with a healing salvation (5-6a). It is particularly the perspective of healing that is accentuated in this passage: “Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy.” (Isa 35:5-6). This has already been touched upon in Isa 33:24: “And no inhabitant will say, “I am sick”; the people who live there will be forgiven their

<sup>153</sup> Chester, 287–88.

<sup>154</sup> Peter D. Miscall, *Isaiah 34-35: A Nightmare / A Dream*, JSOTSup 281 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), 17.

<sup>155</sup> Skjoldal, “The Function of Isaiah 24-27,” 171.

<sup>156</sup> Hans Wildberger, *Isaiah 28-39*, CC (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2002), 352.

iniquity.” Here sickness is connected with sin, and the removal of sin involves the forgiveness from God at a time when he will rule and judge and bring salvation to his people (Isa 33:22).

This passage thus speaks of material transformation both for the land and people – a restoration that involves the creative power of God.

The creative power of God is especially in focus in the latter parts of Isaiah. When discussing creation theology in the Old Testament prophets, scholars frequently refer to Isaiah 40-55, which will be treated in the next section.

#### **2.5.4 Isaiah 40-55 Creative Redemption<sup>157</sup>**

These chapters contain the highest concentration of creation verbs in the Old Testament: ברא occurs 16 times, עשה occurs 12 times and יצר occurs 11 times.<sup>158</sup> Here creation encompasses all of God's actions in history. Carroll Stuhlmueller writes: “History is a continuation of the creative power of God.”<sup>159</sup> The chapters are replete with descriptions of the creative actions of God. He created the world (40:26; 40:28; 42:5; 44:24; 45:12; 45:18) and is the maker of Israel (43:7; 43:15. 21; 44:2. 21. 24; 45:11; 46:4; 49:5; 51:13; 54:5). The remarkable feature here is that the promised redemption is also described as the Lord's creation. For this reason Stuhlmueller speaks of *Creative Redemption*.<sup>160</sup> Herman Gunkel further observed Edenic imagery in the promises of salvation throughout these chapters: 41:18-20; 43:19; 49:10-13; 55:13.<sup>161</sup>

A number of these passages are best understood in terms of return from exile, a national restoration of Israel and a new exodus spoken of in terms of re-creation of the people. The first creation was the Exodus (Isa. 51:9-11). In Isa. 43.16-21 there is a juxtaposition of the former and the new Exodus. The first exodus now serves as a basis for the promise of [the/a] new Exodus. This time it is a way through the wilderness. It is something new which God is doing for his people and it goes beyond what was achieved in the first exodus. There is a paradise motif in v 20a similar to what is found in 11:6-8. Stuhlmueller argues that the formulations in v 19 suggests that this new formation of Israel is something startling and beyond human ability.<sup>162</sup> Bernhard Anderson writes: “Second Isaiah

<sup>157</sup> Cf. Stuhlmueller, *Creative Redemption in Deutero-Isaiah*.

<sup>158</sup> See statistics and table in Anderson, *Creation versus Chaos*, 123–26.

<sup>159</sup> Carroll Stuhlmueller, “Theology of Creation in Second Isaiah,” *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 21, no. 4 (October 1959): 435.

<sup>160</sup> Stuhlmueller, *Creative Redemption in Deutero-Isaiah*.

<sup>161</sup> Hermann Gunkel, *Genesis, übersetzt und erklärt*, 3. neugearb. Aufl., vol. 1, Göttinger Handkommentar zum Alten Testament (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1910), 35.

<sup>162</sup> Stuhlmueller, *Creative Redemption in Deutero-Isaiah*, 70.

understands the 'New Exodus of salvation' to be a new creation, comparable to the event of creation of Israel in the first Exodus.<sup>163</sup>

According to Hubbard, the former things/new things spoken of here are alluded to by Paul in 2 Corinthians 5:17: “So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!” Paul thus applies the language of Isaiah about the redemption of Israel to the transformation of the individual believer through Christ.

An interesting feature is the role of the servant of the Lord in these chapters. In the first of the so-called servant songs, the servant is empowered by the Spirit to bring justice to the nations (42:4). This is in line with the task of the king (Ps. 72), a task that is also ascribed to the righteous king in Isaiah 11.<sup>164</sup> The universality of the servant's task is pointed out through the description of God as the creator of heaven and earth and all humans (42:5). This servant is the agent of God in the restoration that will come to Israel – a new thing will spring forth (Isa. 42:9).

Another important theme of these chapters is the reign of God. The messenger exclaims: “Your God reigns!” (Isa. 52:7) He is the king of Israel (Isa. 44:6). The message of comfort to the people is the coming of the Lord who rules (40:9-11).<sup>165</sup> The reign of God goes beyond Israel. It is universal as God is the creator (40:28) enthroned above the circle of the earth (40:22). The universal kingship of God is foundational for the restoration Isaiah envisions.

The restoration initially expected is local and national. There is, however, an emphasis on newness and universality. What is to come is something entirely new, a new period in history.<sup>166</sup> The motif of renewal and new exodus points forward to a radical universal transformation that is found in the latter parts of Isaiah.

### **2.5.5 Isaiah 65:17-25 New Heavens and New Earth**

<sup>17</sup>For I am about to create new heavens  
and a new earth;  
the former things shall not be remembered  
or come to mind.

<sup>18</sup>But be glad and rejoice forever  
in what I am creating;  
for I am about to create Jerusalem as a joy,

<sup>163</sup> Anderson, *Creation versus Chaos*, 129.

<sup>164</sup> Morales, *The Spirit and the Restoration of Israel*, 19.

<sup>165</sup> Klaus Baltzer, *Deutero-Isaiah: A Commentary on Isaiah 40-55*, ed. Peter Machinist, trans. Margaret Kohl, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2001), 34.

<sup>166</sup> Russell, *The “New Heavens and New Earth,”* 66.

and its people as a delight.

<sup>19</sup>I will rejoice in Jerusalem,  
and delight in my people;  
no more shall the sound of weeping be heard in it,  
or the cry of distress.

<sup>20</sup>No more shall there be in it  
an infant that lives but a few days,  
or an old person who does not live out a lifetime;  
for one who dies at a hundred years will be considered a youth,  
and one who falls short of a hundred will be considered accursed.

<sup>21</sup>They shall build houses and inhabit them;  
they shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit.

<sup>22</sup>They shall not build and another inhabit;  
they shall not plant and another eat;  
for like the days of a tree shall the days of my people be,  
and my chosen shall long enjoy the work of their hands.

<sup>23</sup>They shall not labor in vain,  
or bear children for calamity;  
for they shall be offspring blessed by the LORD—  
and their descendants as well.

<sup>24</sup>Before they call I will answer,  
while they are yet speaking I will hear.

<sup>25</sup>The wolf and the lamb shall feed together,  
the lion shall eat straw like the ox;  
but the serpent—its food shall be dust!

They shall not hurt or destroy  
on all my holy mountain,  
says the LORD. (Isa 65:17-25)

Isaiah 65:17-25 provides the most comprehensive description of the hope of a new creation in the Old Testament. Again there is a contrast between the former things and the new things. In this text the vision encompasses the people as well as their world.<sup>167</sup>

Here we have a description of how God will create new heavens and a new earth. The promise is closely connected to the language of restoration of the land. It is described as a restoration of Jerusalem (Isa 65:18), issuing in an absence of untimely death. There is a description of living safely in the land and reaping the fruits of one's work. People will live in close relationship to God (Isa 65:24). Ultimately the promise also involves peace among the animals – a total absence of evil (Isa 65:25).

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<sup>167</sup> Russell, 75.

These features may indicate a reversal of the primeval curses found in Genesis 3. Jonathan Huddleston suggest that Isa 65:23 recalls Gen 3:16-19 with its juxtaposition of vain labor and disastrous childbirth.<sup>168</sup>

“They shall not labor in vain, or bear children for calamity; for they shall be offspring blessed by the LORD – and their descendants as well.” (Isa 65:23)

<sup>16</sup>To the woman he said,  
 “I will greatly increase your pangs in childbearing;  
 in pain you shall bring forth children,  
 yet your desire shall be for your husband,  
 and he shall rule over you.”

<sup>17</sup>And to the man he said,  
 “Because you have listened to the voice of your wife,  
 and have eaten of the tree  
 about which I commanded you,  
 ‘You shall not eat of it,’  
 cursed is the ground because of you;  
 in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life;  
<sup>18</sup>thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you;  
 and you shall eat the plants of the field.

<sup>19</sup>By the sweat of your face  
 you shall eat bread  
 until you return to the ground,  
 for out of it you were taken;  
 you are dust,  
 and to dust you shall return.”(Gen 3:16-19)

A further connection the first chapters of Genesis may also be the description of the vegetarianism of the animals (see Gen 1:30), while the snake eating dust possibly alludes to Gen 3:15.<sup>169</sup>

Summing up, the description found here can be seen as a complete reversal of the primeval curses (Gen. 3.16-19); the curses placed on procreation and the work and life of humans have now been lifted.

Isaiah ends with a description of life in the world to come, as Isa 66:22 repeats the intention of the Lord to make new heavens and a new earth.

<sup>168</sup> Huddleston, *Eschatology in Genesis*, 150.

<sup>169</sup> Huddleston, 150; See also J. van Ruiten, “Eve’s Pain in Childbearing? Interpretations of Gen 3:16a in Biblical and Early Jewish Texts,” in *Eve’s Children: The Biblical Stories Retold and Interpreted in Jewish and Christian Traditions*, ed. Gerard P. Luttikhuisen (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2003), 9–11.

## 2.6 Jeremiah

Although the book of Jeremiah is only represented by 6 different copies among the DSS,<sup>170</sup> the tradition and texts that have developed about Jeremiah and his scribe Baruch evidence the significance of Jeremiah for Judaism (2 Macc 2:1-8; 15:12-16; The Letter of Jeremiah, Baruch, 2 Baruch, 3 Baruch, 4 Baruch).<sup>171</sup>

The book of Jeremiah is the longest book of the Old Testament. It contains more lament than hope and there are several passages of destruction. In 4:23 the language of destruction recalls Genesis 1 as the loss of Jerusalem is described as a return to primeval void and darkness (cf. Gen 1:1).

<sup>23</sup>I looked on the earth, and lo, it was waste and void;  
and to the heavens, and they had no light.

In contrast, the land originally given to the people is described as a garden of fruits that recalls the garden of Eden (Jer 2:7).<sup>172</sup>

<sup>7</sup>I brought you into a plentiful land (orchard)  
to eat its fruits and its good things.  
But when you entered you defiled my land,  
and made my heritage an abomination.

The strongest description of restoration is found in Jeremiah 31, which contains a transformative vision of the land and the people. Jer 31:22 has the only occurrence of the verb בָּרָא, “create,” in Jeremiah. William L. Holladay suggests that here Yahweh intends to bring about a new beginning in Israel comparable to Genesis 1.<sup>173</sup> Henk Leene argues that the puzzling passage in 31:22b should be translated, “For Yhwh has created something new on earth: a woman surrounds a man”. The woman refers to Zion and the man to Judah. This is then a message of an expansion of Zion to include the whole of Judah, and the new creation is an expansion of the holy place to the entire land.<sup>174</sup> God's presence with the people will transform the land.

It is also in chapter 31 in Jeremiah that the promise of a new covenant and the transformation of the people is found:

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<sup>170</sup> VanderKam, *The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Bible*, 3.

<sup>171</sup> J. A. Dearman, “Jeremiah: History of Interpretation,” ed. J. G. McConville and Mark J. Boda, *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Prophets* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2012), 441–42.

<sup>172</sup> Huddleston, *Eschatology in Genesis*, 147.

<sup>173</sup> William L. Holladay, *Jeremiah 2: A Commentary on the Book of the Prophet Jeremiah, Chapters 26-52*, ed. Paul D. Hanson, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1989), 194–95; So also Anderson, *From Creation to New Creation*, 193.

<sup>174</sup> Henk Leene, *Newness in Old Testament Prophecy: An Intertextual Study*, Oudtestamentische Studiën 64 (Boston: Brill, 2014), 201–2.

<sup>31</sup> The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. <sup>32</sup> It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt—a covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, says the LORD. <sup>33</sup> But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. <sup>34</sup> No longer shall they teach one another, or say to each other, “Know the LORD,” for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the LORD; for I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more. (Jer 31:31-34)

This is the only place in the Old Testament where the term “new covenant” appears. The newness is underlined by the contrast to the old covenant. The new covenant is compared to the covenant of the Exodus (Jer 31:32). In this covenant God will write his law on the hearts of the people (Jer 31:33; also 24:7; 32:39-40). This vision is the solution to the plight described throughout Jeremiah. The disobedient heart which is full of sin is in desperate need of circumcision and cleansing according to Jeremiah (Jer 4:4; 4:14; 5:23-24; 7:24; 9:13; 11:8; 17:9). The notion of circumcision of the heart is equivalent to the creation of a clean heart in Psalm 51 discussed above. In Jeremiah 31 the role of the word of God for the inward change is clear. The law written on the hearts results in perfect obedience and there will be no reason for rebuke (31:34).

The people are, however, unable to change their ways by themselves. A divine intervention is needed. The new covenant involves a transformation of the wicked heart and results in a renewed humanity.<sup>175</sup>

The context connects the covenant with God as the creator. Just as the judgment upon the people is described as de-creation (Jer 4:23), so is the restoration described as re-creation:

<sup>28</sup> And just as I have watched over them to pluck up and break down, to overthrow, destroy, and bring evil, so I will watch over them to build and to plant, says the LORD. (Jer 31:28)

Changdae Kim observes that verbs used about the LORD's actions both to destroy and rebuild are used elsewhere in Jeremiah about the LORD's sovereignty as creator (cf. Jer 1:10; 18:7-10).<sup>176</sup> The verses following the covenant promise also highlight the LORD as creator (Jer 31:35-37). In those verses, the promise of the new covenant is secured in the fact that the LORD is the creator of the world.<sup>177</sup> The restoration and the new covenant may then be seen as an act of creation. It is

<sup>175</sup> Gowan, *Eschatology in the Old Testament*, 81.

<sup>176</sup> Changdae Kim, “Jeremiah’s New Covenant Within the Framework of the Creation Motif” (Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, 2006), 178.

<sup>177</sup> Bob Becking, *Between Fear and Freedom: Essays on the Interpretation of Jeremiah 30-31*, Oudtestamentische



furthermore important to note that in the Old Testament, covenant is related to creation in the Noahic covenant in which God makes a covenant with every living creature promising never to flood the world again.<sup>178</sup> Invoking creation-language here establishes a link to the Noahic covenant. Changdae Kim argues that the new covenant signifies both the creation of a future Israel and a new beginning in a way that corresponds to that of the Noahic covenant.<sup>179</sup>

Finally the promises of restoration are firmly connected with the restoration of Zion (Jer 31:38-40). This again confirms the centrality of Zion in Old Testament eschatology.

Jeremiah's prophecy of a new covenant features heavily in the New Testament indicating that the writers saw the prophecy as fulfilled in the coming of Jesus (Heb 8:8-12; cf. Luke 22:20; 1 Cor. 11:25; 2 Cor. 3:6; Heb 9:15; 12:24).

## 2.7 Ezekiel

Like the book of Jeremiah, the book of Ezekiel has 6 different copies at Qumran. Despite the relatively small number of manuscripts it was a book that was held in high esteem by the community, since a considerable number of quotations from the book are found in their writings.<sup>180</sup> There are furthermore indications that Ezekiel was important for both Jewish and Christian apocalyptic. This is clearly the case for the book of Revelation.<sup>181</sup>

### 2.7.1 A New Spirit and a New Heart

In Ezekiel, as in Isaiah and Jeremiah, the plight of the people of Israel can be traced back to the hearts of the people. "But the house of Israel will not listen to you; for they are not willing to listen to me; because all the house of Israel are of a hard heart forehead and of a stubborn heart" (Ezek 3:7).

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Studiën = Old Testament Studies 51 (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2004), 271–72.

<sup>178</sup> Patrick D. Miller, "Creation and Covenant," in *Biblical Theology: Problems and Perspectives in Honor of Christiaan Becker*, ed. Steven J. Kraftchick, Charles D. Meyers Jr., and Ben C. Ollenburger (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1995), 168.

<sup>179</sup> Kim, "Jeremiah's New Covenant Within the Framework of the Creation Motif," 16.

<sup>180</sup> Walther Zimmerli, *Ezekiel I: A Commentary on the Book of the Prophet Ezekiel, Chapters 1-24*, ed. Klaus Baltzer, Frank Moore Cross, and Leonard Jay Greenspoon, trans. Ronald E. Clements, Hermeneia (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1979), 74.

<sup>181</sup> Steve Moyise, "Ezekiel (Book and Person)," in *Encyclopedia of the Bible and Its Reception*, ed. Dale C. Allison et al., vol. 8 (Berlin; Boston: de Gruyter, 2014), 591–92.

The solution to this plight is a replacement of the heart. The people will be given a new heart and a new spirit, and they will be obedient to the Lord. This motif is found in connection with the Lord's intention to regather the people to Israel in Ezek 11:19 and 36:26-27:<sup>182</sup>

I will give them one heart, and put a new spirit within them; I will remove the heart of stone from their flesh and give them a heart of flesh (Ezek 11:19)

<sup>26</sup> A new heart I will give you, and a new spirit I will put within you; and I will remove from your body the heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. <sup>27</sup> I will put my spirit within you, and make you follow my statutes and be careful to observe my ordinances. (Ezek 36:26-27)

We have already seen the motif of a changed heart in the Psalms and Jeremiah. It is furthermore found in Deuteronomy 30, where it is described as a circumcision of the heart (Deut 30:6).

There is solidarity between nature and humanity, as both are seen as members of the same category: creation. This idea is found throughout the Old Testament. Numbers 35:33-34 describes how blood pollutes the land and how the Lord's presence among the Israelites is the reason why they should not defile the land. In Deuteronomy 28 the curses that will come upon the Israelites if they do not obey the commandments includes drought (Deut 28:24) and the destruction of crops (Deut. 28:38-42).

In Ezekiel 36 the alienation between humanity and the earth is removed through the implanting of a new heart.<sup>183</sup> The chapter describes how the entire land is transformed as the people return to the land. The passage opens with an address to the mountains of Israel and ends with God giving the people a new spirit and a new heart. Gowan calls this an excellent example of the comprehensiveness of Old Testament eschatology.<sup>184</sup> The transformation of nature and of humans go together, and the land will be like the garden of Eden:

And they will say, "This land that was desolate has become like the garden of Eden; and the waste and desolate and ruined towns are now inhabited and fortified." (Ezek 36:35)

There are two major frameworks for this restoration: (1) the king and (2) the covenant. (1) First, Ezekiel 34 expresses the hope for a Davidic king who will be the shepherd of the people (34:23-24). (2) And second the covenantal formulation, "They will be my people and I will be their God", is found in several places in Ezekiel (11:20; cf. 14:11; 36:28; 34:30; 37:23. 27).<sup>185</sup> Ezek. 37:23-28

<sup>182</sup> The phrase 'a new heart' is also found in 18:31, where it is not a part of a promise but an exhortation to the people to change their hearts.

<sup>183</sup> Russell, *The "New Heavens and New Earth,"* 69.

<sup>184</sup> Gowan, *Eschatology in the Old Testament*, 101.

<sup>185</sup> That this is a covenantal formulation is clear from the use in Gen 17:8 ; Jer 31:33.

expresses these themes together as the people will be gathered and reunited under one Davidic king (Ezek 37:22; 24) and God will establish an everlasting covenant (Ezek 37:26) and he will dwell among them (Ezek 37:27-28).

In Ezekiel 37 we also find the stunning passage about bones that become alive. That is the next passage under consideration.

### **2.7.2 Ezekiel 37:1-14 – A Dead People Becomes Alive**

The hand of the LORD came upon me, and he brought me out by the spirit of the LORD and set me down in the middle of a valley; it was full of bones. <sup>2</sup> He led me all around them; there were very many lying in the valley, and they were very dry. <sup>3</sup> He said to me, “Mortal, can these bones live?” I answered, “O Lord GOD, you know.” <sup>4</sup> Then he said to me, “Prophecy to these bones, and say to them: O dry bones, hear the word of the LORD. <sup>5</sup> Thus says the Lord GOD to these bones: I will cause breath to enter you, and you shall live. <sup>6</sup> I will lay sinews on you, and will cause flesh to come upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and you shall live; and you shall know that I am the LORD.” <sup>7</sup> So I prophesied as I had been commanded; and as I prophesied, suddenly there was a noise, a rattling, and the bones came together, bone to its bone. <sup>8</sup> I looked, and there were sinews on them, and flesh had come upon them, and skin had covered them; but there was no breath in them. <sup>9</sup> Then he said to me, “Prophecy to the breath, prophecy, mortal, and say to the breath: Thus says the Lord GOD: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live.” <sup>10</sup> I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood on their feet, a vast multitude. <sup>11</sup> Then he said to me, “Mortal, these bones are the whole house of Israel. They say, ‘Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are cut off completely.’ <sup>12</sup> Therefore prophecy, and say to them, Thus says the Lord GOD: I am going to open your graves, and bring you up from your graves, O my people; and I will bring you back to the land of Israel. <sup>13</sup> And you shall know that I am the LORD, when I open your graves, and bring you up from your graves, O my people. <sup>14</sup> I will put my spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you on your own soil; then you shall know that I, the LORD, have spoken and will act,” says the LORD.

This passage expresses the restoration hope in Ezekiel in the most radical way. The passage as a whole is normally understood as a metaphorical description of the national restoration of Israel. The people are described as dead: not just as lifeless bodies but as a pile of bones. They are beyond hope of coming back to life. However, in later Jewish interpretation the passage was seen as depicting individual resurrection.<sup>186</sup>

<sup>186</sup> John W. Olley, “Trajectories of Ezekiel (Part 2): Beyond the Book,” *Currents in Biblical Research* 10, no. 1 (October 1, 2011): 56–57, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1476993X10368017>. Olley cites Pseudo-Ezekiel (4Q385) as the earliest example.

Andrew Chester argues that the use of  $\pi\lambda\gamma$  in verses 5-6 and 9-10 may be an allusion to Gen. 1:2.<sup>187</sup> This may be further underlined in verse 14, which explicitly states that it is the spirit of God which will bring the people back to life. In addition, when taking the preceding chapters into consideration where, as we have seen, restoration is painted in the language of a return to Eden, the restoration described here may well be seen as a new creation.<sup>188</sup>

### **2.7.3 Ezekiel 40-48 – The Eschatological Temple**

Ezekiel is portrayed as a priest who received his visions in the temple. This has impact on the content of the visions that center upon the temple. In chapters 40-48 his vision of restoration takes the shape of a new Temple. Fishbane observes that “Ezekiel describes the base platform of the altar as *heq ha'aretz*, 'the bosom of the earth' and its summit as *har'el*, 'the mountain of God'.”<sup>189</sup> The Temple with the altar at its center is thus presented as the center of the world.

In Ezekiel 47:1-12 the prophet describes the impact of the new temple on the surrounding land:

Then he brought me back to the entrance of the temple; there, water was flowing from below the threshold of the temple toward the east (for the temple faced east); and the water was flowing down from below the south end of the threshold of the temple, south of the altar. <sup>2</sup> Then he brought me out by way of the north gate, and led me around on the outside to the outer gate that faces toward the east; and the water was coming out on the south side. <sup>3</sup> Going on eastward with a cord in his hand, the man measured one thousand cubits, and then led me through the water; and it was ankle-deep. <sup>4</sup> Again he measured one thousand, and led me through the water; and it was knee-deep. Again he measured one thousand, and led me through the water; and it was up to the waist. <sup>5</sup> Again he measured one thousand, and it was a river that I could not cross, for the water had risen; it was deep enough to swim in, a river that could not be crossed. <sup>6</sup> He said to me, “Mortal, have you seen this?” Then he led me back along the bank of the river. <sup>7</sup> As I came back, I saw on the bank of the river a great many trees on the one side and on the other. <sup>8</sup> He said to me, “This water flows toward the eastern region and goes down into the Arabah; and when it enters the sea, the sea of stagnant waters, the water will become fresh. <sup>9</sup> Wherever the river goes, every living creature that swarms will live, and there will be very many fish, once these waters reach there. It will become fresh; and everything will live where the river goes. <sup>10</sup> People will stand fishing beside the sea from En-gedi to En-eglaim; it will be a place for the spreading of nets; its fish will be of a great many kinds, like the fish of the Great Sea. <sup>11</sup> But its swamps and marshes will not become fresh; they are to be left for salt. <sup>12</sup> On the banks, on both sides of the river, there will grow all kinds of trees for food. Their leaves will not wither nor their fruit fail, but they will bear fresh fruit every month, because the water for them flows from the

<sup>187</sup> Andrew Chester, “Resurrection and Transformation,” in *Auferstehung-Resurrection: The Fourth Durham-Tübingen Research Symposium: Resurrection, Transfiguration and Exaltation in Old Testament, Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity*, ed. Hermann Lichtenberger and Martin Hengel, WUNT II 135 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001), 49.

<sup>188</sup> Chester, 48–53; Yates, *The Spirit and Creation in Paul*, 38–41.

<sup>189</sup> Fishbane, *Text and Texture*, 118.

sanctuary. Their fruit will be for food, and their leaves for healing.”

In this passage there is a description of a river, a revitalizing stream, which transforms the world it comes into contact with. The water changes the water in the Dead Sea to healthy water as it runs into it. The description is Edenic (cf. Gen. 2:9-10). Furthermore, the description of the life in the water (47:9) with the word  $\text{רָשׁוּ}$  recalls Genesis 1:20: “And God said, “Let the waters bring forth swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the dome of the sky.””<sup>190</sup> with the phrase  $\text{לְעֵץ־חַיִּים מְאֻכָּל}$  the description of the trees on the bank of the river (47:12) recall Gen. 2:9: “Out of the ground the LORD God made to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food, the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil,”

The trees will provide never-ending abundance, producing fruit with a much higher frequency than normal, and leaves will provide healing, all because of the stream from the Temple that signals the end of separation between God and his people. According to Martha Himmelfarb “Ezekiel's eschatological Eden at Zion surpasses the Eden of past.”<sup>191</sup>

## 2.8 Daniel

The book of Daniel was highly influential with regard to eschatology in Judaism and Christianity of the first century.<sup>192</sup> Among the writings of the NT Daniel is only mentioned by name in Matthew (24:15).

In the book of Daniel the main text under consideration is Daniel 7:2-14:

I, Daniel, saw in my vision by night the four winds of heaven stirring up the great sea,<sup>3</sup> and four great beasts came up out of the sea, different from one another. <sup>4</sup>The first was like a lion and had eagles' wings. Then, as I watched, its wings were plucked off, and it was lifted up from the ground and made to stand on two feet like a human being; and a human mind was given to it. <sup>5</sup>Another beast appeared, a second one, that looked like a bear. It was raised up on one side, had three tusks in its mouth among its teeth and was told, “Arise, devour many bodies!” <sup>6</sup>After this, as I watched, another appeared, like a

<sup>190</sup> Walther Zimmerli, *Ezekiel 2: A Commentary on the Book of the Prophet Ezekiel, Chapters 25-48*, ed. Paul D. Hanson and Leonard Jay Greenspoon, trans. James D. Martin, Hermeneia (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1983), 513.

<sup>191</sup> Martha Himmelfarb, “The Temple and the Garden of Eden in Ezekiel, the Book of Watchers, and the Wisdom of Ben Sira,” in *Sacred Places and Profane Spaces: Essays in the Geographics of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam*, ed. Jamie S. Scott and Paul Simpson-Housley, vol. no. 30, Contributions to the Study of Religion (New York: Greenwood Press, 1991), 65.

<sup>192</sup> Maarten J. J. Menken, “Daniel (Book and Person), New Testament,” in *Encyclopedia of the Bible and Its Reception*, ed. Hans-Josef Klauck et al., vol. 6 (Berlin; Boston: de Gruyter, 2012), 95; Peter W. Flint, “Daniel (Book and Person), Judaism, Second Temple and Hellenistic Judaism,” in *Encyclopedia of the Bible and Its Reception*, ed. Hans-Josef Klauck et al., vol. 6 (Berlin; Boston: de Gruyter, 2012), 96–100.

leopard. The beast had four wings of a bird on its back and four heads; and dominion was given to it. <sup>7</sup> After this I saw in the visions by night a fourth beast, terrifying and dreadful and exceedingly strong. It had great iron teeth and was devouring, breaking in pieces, and stamping what was left with its feet. It was different from all the beasts that preceded it, and it had ten horns. <sup>8</sup> I was considering the horns, when another horn appeared, a little one coming up among them; to make room for it, three of the earlier horns were plucked up by the roots. There were eyes like human eyes in this horn, and a mouth speaking arrogantly. <sup>9</sup> As I watched, thrones were set in place, and an Ancient One took his throne, his clothing was white as snow, and the hair of his head like pure wool; his throne was fiery flames, and its wheels were burning fire. <sup>10</sup> A stream of fire issued and flowed out from his presence. A thousand thousands served him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood attending him. The court sat in judgment, and the books were opened. <sup>11</sup> I watched then because of the noise of the arrogant words that the horn was speaking. And as I watched, the beast was put to death, and its body destroyed and given over to be burned with fire. <sup>12</sup> As for the rest of the beasts, their dominion was taken away, but their lives were prolonged for a season and a time. <sup>13</sup> As I watched in the night visions, I saw one like a human being coming with the clouds of heaven. And he came to the Ancient One and was presented before him. <sup>14</sup> To him was given dominion and glory and kingship, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that shall not pass away, and his kingship is one that shall never be destroyed. (Daniel 7:2-14)

Daniel 7 can be read as an account of new creation. In Dan 7:2, the winds over the water recall creation accounts from Babylon and Canaan, and the beasts are often compared to the chaos monsters of Mesopotamian myths.<sup>193</sup> Robert R. Wilson argues that the author of Daniel may have borrowed the imagery from Mesopotamian or Persian sources, but, nevertheless, Daniel maintains Genesis 1 as the fundamental statement of reality.<sup>194</sup>

Accordingly, the defeat of the monsters in Daniel's vision is to be understood as a reordering of the world comparable to the order that God imposed on chaos in Genesis 1.<sup>195</sup> The main difference is that Daniel describes the new order as an eternal kingdom, thus implying that the threat of chaos is completely eliminated.

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<sup>193</sup> The vision in Daniel 7 is interpreted by modern scholars to be a piece of coded historiography. But Wilson rightly remarks that most readers before the modern period read the chapter as a prophecy of future events. This certainly includes Matthew and his first readers. Robert W. Wilson, "Creation and New Creation: The Role of Creation Imagery in the Book of Daniel," in *God Who Creates: Essays in Honor of W. Sibley Towner*, ed. William P. Brown and S. Dean McBride (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 194; Also John Goldingay, *Daniel*, Word Biblical Commentary 30 (Dallas: Word Books, 1989); John J. Collins, *Daniel: A Commentary on the Book of Daniel*, ed. Frank Moore Cross, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993); André Lacocque, "Allusions to Creation in Daniel 7," in *The Book of Daniel: Composition and Reception*, ed. John J. Collins and Peter W. Flint, vol. 1, 2 vols., VTSup 83 (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2001), 114–31.

<sup>194</sup> Wilson, "Creation and New Creation: The Role of Creation Imagery in the Book of Daniel," 200.

<sup>195</sup> For this understanding of creation in the Old Testament see Job 38

There are more references to Genesis 1 in Daniel that can strengthen Wilson's argument. Pennington points out that Daniel employs heaven and earth pairs that may allude to Genesis 1.<sup>196</sup> It is also interesting to note how the rule of Nebuchadnezzar is described in language which recalls Genesis 1:<sup>197</sup>

[You are the one] into whose hand he (God) has given human beings, wherever they live, the wild animals of the field, and the birds of the air, and whom he has established as ruler over them all—you are the head of gold. (Dan 2:38)

Then God said, “Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.” (Gen 1:26)

Nebuchadnezzar is depicted as Adam, ruling the earth, as well as falling from glory. Ephrem the Syrian (ca. 306-373 AD) in his “Hymns on Paradise” (363-373 AD) compares Adam and Nebuchadnezzar.<sup>198</sup> Ephrem's focus is mainly on Daniel 4, but Daniel 2 anticipates the fuller description of Nebuchadnezzar's *hubris* in chapter 4 and his fall from glory.<sup>199</sup> Already Hippolytus saw a connection between Daniel 2, 4 and 7.<sup>200</sup> In both Daniel 2 and 7 the kingdoms of the earth are defeated and replaced by a Kingdom established by God.

André Lacocque argues that the “Son of Man” in Daniel is an Adamic figure. He points to the delegation of power by God as a central motif and recognizes the contrast between the bestial rulers and the true human ruler. “As the 'Adamic' has become bestial (in the first section of the chapter), so also the 'Adamic' is restored in its humanness and, according to its status granted by creation, is 'given dominion over the works of God's hands, and all things are put under its feet.' (Ps 8:7; cf. Job 7:17; Gen 1:28)”<sup>201</sup> The kings in Daniel's visions about the four kingdoms have been delegated to rule in a manner comparable to the rule of Adam in Genesis 1:26-28. Ultimately the Kingdom will be given to the Son of Man – true humanity.

Further support for this interpretation comes from the “Animal Apocalypse” (1 Enoch 85-90). In this text, which will be treated in more detail later, a messianic figure is depicted as a second Adam. Nickelsburg has identified parallels between Daniel 7 and the “Son of Man”, and the connections

<sup>196</sup> Pennington, *Heaven and Earth*, 273 n. 69.

<sup>197</sup> Goldingay, *Daniel*, 49.

<sup>198</sup> Matthias Henze, “Nebuchadnezzar's Madness (Daniel 4) in Syriac Literature,” in *The Book of Daniel: Composition and Reception*, ed. John J. Collins and Peter W. Flint, vol. 2, VTSup 83 (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2001), 556–64.

<sup>199</sup> Goldingay, *Daniel*, 49.

<sup>200</sup> Henze, “Nebuchadnezzar's Madness,” 554.

<sup>201</sup> Lacocque, “Allusions to Creation in Daniel 7,” 126.

between Daniel 7 and the Animal Apocalypse has recently been explored by Simon J. Joseph.<sup>202</sup> Joseph suggests that there is literal dependence between the two works and that one of the writings challenges the other depending on which one is the earliest.<sup>203</sup>

Daniel furthermore contains the clearest description of resurrection in the Old Testament:

At that time Michael, the great prince, the protector of your people, shall arise. There shall be a time of anguish, such as has never occurred since nations first came into existence. But at that time your people shall be delivered, everyone who is found written in the book. <sup>2</sup>Many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. <sup>3</sup>Those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the sky, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever. (Dan 12:1-3)

The text predicts a time of immense hardship from which the faithful will be delivered in the end (12:1). This deliverance involves the resurrection of many but not everyone, but resurrection is not deliverance in itself since it is followed by either everlasting life or everlasting contempt (12:2). The wise, however, will shine like the sky and the stars (12:3).

The text clearly concerns individual resurrection from actual death to eternal life.<sup>204</sup> It is, however, not clear what kind of bodily resurrection it envisions, if it envision bodily resurrection at all. The expectation of shining like the sky and the stars may imply some kind of bodily existence, and at [the very] least involves a transformation of the righteous.

The text in itself does not provide clear evidence of new creation. In the context of Daniel as a whole it is nevertheless part of an eschatological vision which predicts a Kingdom that will encompass the entire earth (Dan 2) and a Kingdom given over to restored humanity (Dan 7).

As we shall see, later literature drawing on this text combines resurrection with new creation (4 Ezra 7:32-44; 2 Bar. 50:1-51:13; Apoc. Mos. 13:2-3; LAB 3:10).

## 2.9 Zechariah

The book of Zechariah is the longest of the minor prophets. The book of Zechariah is very closely related to the NT. In 1961, Paul Lamarche published his studies on the structure and messianism of Zech 9–14 and concluded that Zech 9–14 is the most quoted section of the prophets in the passion narratives of the Gospels.<sup>205</sup> Clay Alan Ham accounts for three citations from Zechariah in Matthew

<sup>202</sup> Simon J. Joseph, "Was Daniel 7.13's 'Son of Man' Modeled after the 'New Adam' of the Animal Apocalypse (1 Enoch 90)? A Comparative Study," *Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha* 22, no. 4 (2013): 269–94.

<sup>203</sup> Joseph, 283.

<sup>204</sup> Chester, *Future Hope and Present Reality*, 291–95.

<sup>205</sup> Ralph L. Smith, *Micah-Malachi*, Word Biblical Commentary 32 (Waco: Word Books, 1984), 167.



and 16 potential allusions.<sup>206</sup> In addition, other than Ezekiel, Zechariah has probably influenced the author of the Revelation more than any other Old Testament book.<sup>207</sup>

The focus will be on the concluding vision in Zechariah 14, a text that is clearly eschatological describing significant changes in the geography as well as containing allusions to Eden.

### **2.9.1 Zech 14:4-11 The LORD will become king over all the earth**

<sup>4</sup> On that day his feet shall stand on the Mount of Olives, which lies before Jerusalem on the east; and the Mount of Olives shall be split in two from east to west by a very wide valley; so that one half of the Mount shall withdraw northward, and the other half southward. <sup>5</sup> And you shall flee by the valley of the LORD's mountain, for the valley between the mountains shall reach to Azal; and you shall flee as you fled from the earthquake in the days of King Uzziah of Judah. Then the LORD my God will come, and all the holy ones with him.

<sup>6</sup> On that day there shall not be either cold or frost. <sup>7</sup> And there shall be continuous day (it is known to the LORD), not day and not night, for at evening time there shall be light.

<sup>8</sup> On that day living waters shall flow out from Jerusalem, half of them to the eastern sea and half of them to the western sea; it shall continue in summer as in winter.

<sup>9</sup> And the LORD will become king over all the earth; on that day the LORD will be one and his name one.

<sup>10</sup> The whole land shall be turned into a plain from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem. But Jerusalem shall remain aloft on its site from the Gate of Benjamin to the place of the former gate, to the Corner Gate, and from the Tower of Hananel to the king's wine presses. <sup>11</sup> And it shall be inhabited, for never again shall it be doomed to destruction; Jerusalem shall abide in security.

The significance of this passage with regard to Matthew is Matthew's extensive use of Zechariah 9-14 in the passion narrative. This influence has been observed by several interpreters.<sup>208</sup> What makes this interesting is the distinctive apocalyptic and eschatological nature of Zechariah 9-14. In this passage from the final chapter of the book, Zechariah's vision of the final defeat of God's enemies and restoration of Jerusalem is described.

<sup>206</sup> Ham, *The Coming King and the Rejected Shepherd*, 12–13.

<sup>207</sup> Smith, *Micah-Malachi*, 76.

<sup>208</sup> Paul Foster, "The Use of Zechariah in Matthew's Gospel," in *The Book of Zechariah and Its Influence*, ed. C. M. Tuckett (Burlington: Ashgate, 2003), 65–85; Ham, *The Coming King and the Rejected Shepherd*; Mark Black, "The Messianic Use of Zechariah 9-14 in Matthew, Mark, and the Pre-Markan Tradition," in *Scripture and Traditions, Essays on Early Judaism and Christianity in Honor of Carl R. Holladay*, ed. Patrick Gray and Gail R. O'Day, NovTSup 129 (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2008), 97–114; Moss, *The Zechariah Tradition and the Gospel of Matthew*; Clay Alan Ham, "Reading Zechariah and Matthew's Olivet Discourse," in *Biblical Interpretation in Early Christian Gospels, Volume 2: The Gospel of Matthew*, ed. Thomas Hatina, LNTS 310 (London: T&T Clark, 2008), 85–97; John Nolland, "The King as Shepherd. The Role of Deutero-Zechariah in Matthew," in *Biblical Interpretation in Early Christian Gospels, Volume 2: The Gospel of Matthew*, ed. Thomas Hatina, LNTS 310 (London: T&T Clark, 2008), 133–46; Dale C. Allison, "The Scriptural Background of a Matthean Legend: Ezekiel 37, Zechariah 14, and Matthew 27," in *Life Beyond Death in Matthew's Gospel: Religious Metaphor or Bodily Reality?*, ed. Wim Weren, Huub Van de Sandt, and Joseph Verheyden (Leuven: Peeters, 2011), 153–88.

Zechariah 14 speaks of the day of the Lord, when the Lord will defeat the nations that rise up against Jerusalem. There will be dramatic changes in geography (Zech. 14:4) as well as in weather and the movement of the sun: "it will be one long day." (14:6-7) Smith comments: "The saying talks about the change in seasons and in day and night. The implication is that conditions in the universe will revert back to prediluvian times before "the fall.""<sup>209</sup>

Again we find Edenic motifs in the restoration language about Jerusalem in the passage about the living water that will flow out of the city (Zech 14:8). This passage is generally regarded as related to Ezek 47:1-12 in scholarship, with the Zechariah passage usually considered later.<sup>210</sup>

The proclamatory message in 14:9, "And the Lord will be King of all the earth," makes clear that the dramatic changes signal the time when God will finally implement his rule over all the earth. The breaking of this rule involves cosmic changes.

Zech 14:10 apparently makes little sense in terms of restoration and water flowing out of Jerusalem. Why is the land described as becoming a desert plain? The point is, however, not the transformation of the land into a dry plain, but the lowering of the land in order to exalt Jerusalem. The language may be symbolic and point to the defeat of Jerusalem's rivals. Jerusalem will be the supreme power. This is in line with the central theme of chapter 14 – the defeat of Jerusalem's enemies and the exaltation of the city.

Although there seems to be a discrepancy between the universal perspective in 14:9 and the more local orientation in 14:10-11, this may be due simply to the central role of Jerusalem and Israel in the restoration of the cosmos (cf. Rev 21). With Zion as the center, renewal will spread through Israel to the entire world. The universal perspective is reinforced in Zech. 14:16 where all peoples are said to go to Jerusalem to worship "the king, the Lord of Hosts".

## 2.10 Summary

This survey of a selection of the visions of restoration found in the prophetic literature of the Old Testament most relevant for Matthew has demonstrated these texts as the possible origins of the hope for a new creation found in Second Temple Judaism and early Christianity. The survey has provided significant insights into the imagery and language used in connection with the motif of new creation.

<sup>209</sup> Smith, *Micah-Malachi*, 288.

<sup>210</sup> Terje Stordalen, *Echoes of Eden: Genesis 2-3 and Symbolism of the Eden Garden in Biblical Hebrew Literature* (Leuven: Peeters, 2000), 368.

### **2.10.1 Eschatology**

Although the passages in their original context speak of a future glorious period within history and not an otherworldly hope, the changes are in many cases so radical that there will be a clear before and after. Furthermore, there is a sense of perpetuity in many of the passages. The changes will be permanent and the threat of evil will be completely eradicated never to return (Dan 7). The fundamental notion of the doctrine of creation also makes way for a cosmic and universal horizon in the restoration hopes.

In several of the passages, Zion is the center of the eschatological restoration, which initially seems to be a nationalistic hope (Isa 11:9; 25:6; 51:3; 65:18, Jer 31:22). The restoration from Zion, however, extends beyond the borders of Israel, and all people will eventually come to Zion (Isa 2; 11).

### **2.10.2 Protology**

What is striking is the use of the Eden tradition in the passages about restoration from Zion, both with regard to the reversal of the curses and the state to which things will be restored. The people will be fruitful and multiply (Ezek 36:37-38). The return from exile is presented as a return to Eden. This is done through explicitly calling Jerusalem the garden of Eden and through motifs such as flowing rivers and a fruitful garden. (Isa 51:3; Ezek 47:1-12, Zech 14:8) Agricultural imagery is used in several places including seeds, fruit and eschatological sprouting. (Ezek 34:27; 36:30)

Other major traditions from the past are used to describe the future restoration. The coming destruction and renewal are compared to the Genesis flood in Isaiah 24-26. The return from exile is described as a new Exodus (Isa 43:16-21). There will also be a new covenant (Jer 31:31). In all instances, the new surpasses the former and is connected with God as the creator.

The prophets point forward to a time when everything will be in harmony (Isa 11:6-9). Nature will be transformed to provide the perfect conditions for human life. There will be an *abundance of food* as the earth will be fruitful. It will also be the end of barrenness and untimely death (Isa 65:20-22). There will be *healing* for sickness (Isa 35:5-6; Ezek 47:12).

Conversely, humanity is transformed in order to prevent human wickedness from bringing curses upon the earth and humanity again. The hope for a moral restoration is described as hope for a new heart (Ps 51:1; Jer 31:33, Ezek 11:19; 36:26).

### **2.10.3 Divine Agency**

A messianic figure is not found in many passages. The restoration is primarily brought about by God, who will once again dwell among his people and be king in Zion with a rule that extends beyond Israel to the whole earth. In connection with this hope, there is, however, also sometimes the hope of an earthly *Davidic king* who will exercise the will of God (Isa 11:1-9). The servant in Isaiah is also an important figure in the restoration God will bring to Israel and the world (Isa 42:1-9).

### 3 New Creation in the Old Testament Pseudepigrapha

The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha (OTP) bring important insights into the religious thought of Second Temple Judaism – the religious milieu in which the Gospel of Matthew was authored and the events accounted in the Gospel took place.

A survey of the OTP is another step in the process of constructing a lens through which elements of new creation can be discerned in Matthew. It is generally agreed that the OTP provide valuable information about Second Temple Judaism and thus may provide important insights regarding the context of early Christianity.<sup>211</sup>

There is, nevertheless, also good reason to be cautious. The main reason for this stems from the fact that the earliest manuscripts for most of the writings are very late and are mainly found within Christian settings. This raises the problem of whether the writings in fact represent Jewish ideas or whether they in fact have been edited by Christians later on.<sup>212</sup>

Despite these challenges, it remains the case that we can confidently demonstrate the presence of traditions within Matthew's Gospel that the text shares with earlier (and contemporaneous) Jewish apocalypses.<sup>213</sup> Hence, even if we cannot be entirely certain whether the author of Matthew read *I Enoch* or *Jubilees*, or even in what form he would have read them, the traditions we encounter within such works still function as evidence for the kinds of ideas and terminology with which the author may have been familiar. In other words, I am not asserting here that the author of Matthew has drawn upon this or that piece of Second Temple apocalyptic literature as a direct literary source. He may or may not have. Instead, the survey of such texts simply aims to examine how other apocalyptic works framed the motif of new creation, for this could shed vital illumination upon the unique configuration of the issue in Matthew. Furthermore, given the evident influence of the Old Testament upon Matthew's Gospel, it is important to remember that his use of the Old Testament did not arise in a vacuum, but was mediated to him through prior exegetical traditions, including the apocalyptic traditions of Second Temple Judaism.

<sup>211</sup> James H. Charlesworth, *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha & the New Testament* (Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 1998), 68–69.

<sup>212</sup> James R. Davila, *The Provenance of the Pseudepigrapha: Jewish, Christian, Or Other?*, JSJSup 105 (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2005); James R. Davila, "The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha as Background to the New Testament," *The Expository Times* 117, no. 2 (January 11, 2005): 53.

<sup>213</sup> For an extensive treatment of apocalyptic in Matthew see Sim, *Apocalyptic Eschatology in the Gospel of Matthew*.

### 3.1 Selection of Writings

The selection of writings is made on two premises: first on the basis of James Davila's assessment of the OTP with regard to their origins and second on the relevance of the content of the qualified writings (that is, whether or not the motif of new creation is present in the writings). According to Davila, the following pseudepigrapha are “Jewish beyond reasonable doubt and were written either within a century of the crucifixion of Jesus or earlier and may be confidently used for background to the New Testament writings.”<sup>214</sup>

1. 1 Enoch<sup>215</sup>
2. Jubilees
3. 2 Baruch
4. 4 Ezra
5. Testament of Moses
6. Psalms of Solomon
7. Pseudo-Philo's Biblical Antiquities (LAB)

Secondly, of these writings the Testament of Moses does not contain any relevant findings and is therefore absent from the survey. On the other hand, Life of Adam and Eve/the Apocalypse of Moses is included as it is listed in 'A Comparative Handbook to the Gospel of Mark' and proved to contain relevant findings.<sup>216</sup>

<sup>214</sup> Davila, “The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha as Background to the New Testament,” 56. Davila has provided a penetrating study of the provenance of the Pseudepigrapha. He questions the former method of discerning the Jewishness of the pseudepigrapha and reverses the method. Instead of assuming that the writings are Jewish unless they can be shown to be Christian he works on the premise that the works are Christian until it can positively be shown that they are Jewish either on external or internal grounds.

<sup>215</sup> According to Davila, the book of Similitudes, also known as parables (1 Enoch 37-71), though probably not written within a century after the crucifixion, is Jewish beyond reasonable doubt. (Davila, 56). The majority of scholarship, however places the book of Similitudes at some time around the turn of the era. So John J. Collins, “Enoch, Books Of,” ed. Craig A. Evans and Stanley E. Porter, *Dictionary of New Testament Background* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2000), 316. George W. E. Nickelsburg and James C. VanderKam, *1 Enoch: The Hermeneia Translation* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2012), 6.

<sup>216</sup> Daniel M. Gurtner, *A Comparative Handbook to the Gospel of Mark: Comparisons with Pseudepigrapha, the Qumran Scrolls [i.e. Scrolls], and Rabbinic Literature*, ed. Bruce D. Chilton and Darrell L. Bock, *The New Testament Gospels in Their Judaic Contexts 1* (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2010), 3.

A number of the writings may be classified as apocalypses, and all the writings contain apocalyptic imagery.<sup>217</sup> Here it is important to note that there has been a debate regarding the terminology. The main discussion concerns the definition of apocalyptic and particularly the role of eschatology in apocalyptic thought.

### 3.2 Apocalyptic and Eschatology

The role of eschatology in Jewish apocalypses has at times been overemphasized. This may be exemplified by Paul Hanson, who argued that “apocalyptic eschatology constitutes the heart of the major apocalyptic works.”<sup>218</sup> The overemphasis on eschatology has been rightly criticized by Christopher Rowland, who argues that the key to the whole apocalyptic movement lies in the phenomenon of God revealing divine mysteries directly to humanity.<sup>219</sup> Eschatology, nevertheless, has a critical function in many if not most of the writings classified as apocalypses. It has become common to argue that there is a huge difference between prophetic and apocalyptic eschatology found in non-biblical literature of second temple Judaism.

According to many traditional models, prophetic eschatology can generally be characterized as earthly and “this-worldly” since it is focusing on restoration within history. That is also, to a large degree, evident in the survey of new creation in the Old Testament in the present work. Opposed to this perspective apocalyptic eschatology is generally described as other-worldly coupled with a pessimistic outlook for the present world leading to a sharp dualism between the present age and the coming age.<sup>220</sup> Thus, according to this model prophetic eschatology emphasizes continuity whereas apocalyptic eschatology emphasizes discontinuity. As an example of this view Fletcher-Louis cites H. H. Rowley: “The prophets foretold the future that should arise out of the present, while the apocalypticists foretold the future that should break into the present . . . The apocalypticists had little faith in the present to beget the future.”<sup>221</sup> The distinction is maintained despite recognizing the organic connections between Old Testament and Apocalyptic eschatology. The shift is traditionally explained as being due to the influence of Persian Zoroastrianism.<sup>222</sup>

<sup>217</sup> There is a lot of confusion and discussion over the word apocalyptic – for a historical survey of research see Crispin H. T. Fletcher-Louis, “Jewish Apocalypticism,” in *Handbook for the Study of the Historical Jesus*, ed. Tom Holmén and Stanley E. Porter, vol. 3, 4 vols. (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2011), 1569–1607.

<sup>218</sup> Hanson, *The Dawn of Apocalyptic*, 8.

<sup>219</sup> Rowland, *The Open Heaven*, 9.

<sup>220</sup> Fletcher-Louis, “Jewish Apocalypticism,” 1570; See Hanson, *The Dawn of Apocalyptic*, 11.

<sup>221</sup> Cited in Fletcher-Louis, “Jewish Apocalypticism,” 1570.

<sup>222</sup> Fletcher-Louis, 1570.

The problem with this kind of definition is of course that it is not that simple. It has been pointed out that not all apocalyptic works have an apocalyptic eschatology similar to the one described above.<sup>223</sup> As we shall see, some writings do not emphasize the discontinuity between this age and the next as suggested by the model. The approach taken here is to read each work on its own terms.

Although the motif of new creation has a classic place in Jewish apocalyptic literature, the actual expression is extremely rare (1 En.72:1; Jub.1:29; 4:26; 2Bar. 44:12). Therefore, the texts have been selected not so much on a terminological basis, but rather for their portrayal of eschatological scenarios in which the thought of cosmic and anthropological renewal and restoration is expressed. This particularly involves developments of new creation motifs in the Old Testament found in the previous chapter.

By no means should the following be regarded as an exhaustive discussion of the topic as it pertains to Jewish apocalyptic. However, it is hoped that the selection provides a sufficiently fair and judicious treatment of the topic.

### 3.3 Matthew and the Apocalypses

Apocalyptic writings were prevalent in the second temple period, and it is therefore not surprising that apocalyptic imagery is also found in the Gospel of Matthew.<sup>224</sup> Matthew is not an apocalypse as it not revelatory literature in the sense that visions are given to a seer. Nevertheless, a number of similarities can be found between Matthew and Jewish apocalyptic literature.

David Sim identifies eight major motifs in what he terms as apocalyptic eschatology found in Matthew's Gospel: 1. Dualism 2. Determinism 3. Eschatological woes 4. The arrival of the savior figure 5. The judgment 6. The fate of the wicked 7. The fate of the righteous 8. The imminence of the end. As described there is no such thing as one type of apocalyptic eschatology, a point which Sim acknowledges. According to Sim it is, however, possible to identify substantial clusters of the motifs listed above in any document that has an apocalyptic-eschatological perspective.<sup>225</sup> According to Sim, the end-time scenario in Matthew “conforms to that of Jewish apocalyptic-eschatological schemes, although it is presented in strictly Christian terms.”<sup>226</sup>

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<sup>223</sup> Rowland, *The Open Heaven*, 23–29.

<sup>224</sup> Wright, *The New Testament and the People of God*, 280.

<sup>225</sup> Sim, *Apocalyptic Eschatology in the Gospel of Matthew*, 34.

<sup>226</sup> Sim, 246.



Besides Sim, who provides the most comprehensive treatment, a number of scholars have written about the presence of apocalyptic material in Matthew.<sup>227</sup> Of special interest for our purposes is Donald Hagner, who argues that “Mt's eschatology has an apocalyptic orientation; it contains not simply an expectation of the 'end things' but also a radical transformation of the present order by supernatural agency in the future.”<sup>228</sup>

Despite the similarities between Matthew and the apocalypses I am not asserting that Matthew has drawn upon certain texts found in the OTP. It is extremely difficult if not impossible to determine the nature of the relationship between Matthew and any of the pseudepigrapha.

In a recent dissertation, Amy Richter has investigated the relationship between 1 Enoch and Matthew. While Richter is careful not to claim literary dependence, she nevertheless argues that the author of Matthew's Gospel was familiar with the ideas in 1 Enoch to the extent that it served as a template for the Gospel.<sup>229</sup> This claim is very hard to substantiate, and Gurtner's critique gets right to the point: “That she finds in Matthew ‘motifs and allusions to material that one also finds in 1 Enoch’ (19) tells us no more than they have some things in common, perhaps to be expected in the complexity of Jewish texts in antiquity.”<sup>230</sup> I intend to avoid this pitfall. The purpose here is to examine how the motif of new creation is described and used in apocalyptic literature in order to discern the presence and use of the topic in Matthew. It is part of constructing the appropriate lens for reading Matthew in context.

All translations are from the two volumes of the Old Testament Pseudepigrapha edited by James Charlesworth and I will survey the texts in the order in which they appear there.<sup>231</sup>

### 3.4 1 Enoch (3<sup>rd</sup> century B.C.E. - 1<sup>st</sup> Century C.E.)

1 Enoch is a highly complex text that consists of texts written over a longer period. They are, however, all ascribed to Enoch and focus on the coming judgment. The work roughly falls into five parts: the Book of Watchers (1-36) (250-200 B.C.E)<sup>232</sup>; the Parables of Enoch (37-71) (50 B.C.E –

<sup>227</sup> See Sim, 3–15 for an overview.

<sup>228</sup> Donald A. Hagner, “Apocalyptic Motifs in the Gospel of Matthew: Continuity and Discontinuity,” *Horizons in Biblical Theology* 7, no. 2 (1985): 56.

<sup>229</sup> Richter, *Enoch and the Gospel of Matthew*.

<sup>230</sup> Daniel M. Gurtner, “Review of ‘Enoch and the Gospel of Matthew’ by Amy E. Richter,” Review of Biblical Literature, March 15, 2013, [http://www.bookreviews.org/pdf/8608\\_9436.pdf](http://www.bookreviews.org/pdf/8608_9436.pdf).

<sup>231</sup> James H. Charlesworth, ed., *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha, Vol. 1: Apocalyptic Literature and Testaments* (New York; London: Doubleday, 1983); James H. Charlesworth, ed., *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha, Vol. 2: Expansions of the “Old Testament” and Legends, Wisdom and Philosophical Literature, Prayers, Psalms and Odes, Fragments of Lost Judeo-Hellenistic Works* (New York; London: Doubleday, 1985).

<sup>232</sup> Nickelsburg and VanderKam, *1 Enoch: The Hermeneia Translation*, 3.

50 C.E.)<sup>233</sup>; the Astronomical Book (72-82) (200-150 B.C.E.)<sup>234</sup>; the Dream Visions (83-90) (200-150 B.C.E.)<sup>235</sup>; and the Epistle of Enoch (91-105) (200-100 B.C.E.)<sup>236</sup>. Yet, it must, be noted that the Epistle contains the “Apocalypse of Weeks” and that the book is rounded off by a series appendices (106-108). It is evident from the dates that the literary order does not reflect the chronological order.

Overall the parts express a common worldview in which the present world is described as evil and unjust and awaits a coming judgment and subsequent renewal. Chronologically the parts represent developing stages of the Enochic tradition.<sup>237</sup>

1 Enoch is considered an important source for insights into the religious thought of Second Temple Judaism. In the preface to the latest translation, Nickelsburg and VanderKam state that it is “arguably the most important Jewish writing that has survived from the Greco-Roman period.”<sup>238</sup>

The only complete manuscripts of 1 Enoch as we know it today are in the Ethiopic (Ge'ez) version. There are fragments of the work in Aramaic, Greek and Latin. The Ethiopic version is a translation of the Greek version, which is a translation of an Aramaic version. English translations are based on the Ethiopic with support from the Greek and Aramaic, as the latter versions are too fragmented to be the basis of a translation.<sup>239</sup> Given the state of Greek manuscripts and my lack of proficiency in Ge'ez, the basis for the survey is an English translation used standardly in scholarship.<sup>240</sup>

In the following selections from 1 Enoch, the texts are treated in the order in which they occur in the translations based on the order in the Ethiopic manuscripts. While there are some thematic and ideological similarities between the parts of the book there is also vast variety, thus it is best “to access the relevant material through the lens of its individual books.”<sup>241</sup>

The following survey will include three sections from the Book of Watchers (5:4-10; 10:16-11:2; 25:3-6), one section from The Similitudes (45:3-6), one section from The Dream Visions (90:37-38) and finally one section from the appendix to 1 Enoch (107:1-3).

<sup>233</sup> Nickelsburg and VanderKam, 5.

<sup>234</sup> Nickelsburg and VanderKam, 6.

<sup>235</sup> Nickelsburg and VanderKam, 9.

<sup>236</sup> Nickelsburg and VanderKam, 12.

<sup>237</sup> Nickelsburg and VanderKam, 1.

<sup>238</sup> Nickelsburg and VanderKam, vii.

<sup>239</sup> Nickelsburg and VanderKam, 13.

<sup>240</sup> Charlesworth, *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha, Vol. 1*.

<sup>241</sup> Mark B. Stephens, *Annihilation or Renewal? : The Meaning and Function of New Creation in the Book of Revelation*, WUNT II 307 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), 53.

### 3.4.1 Curse and Blessing (*Book of Watchers, 1 Enoch 5:4-10*)

The Book of Watchers is one of the earliest parts of 1 Enoch, dating from the third century B.C. This text is found in the introduction to the Book of Watchers, the first of three major recognized parts of BW (ch. 1-5, 6-16, 17-36). Each section is probably written by different authors. Chapters 1-5 may also serve as an introduction to the entire 1 Enoch.

<sup>4</sup>But as for you, you have not been long-suffering and you have not done the commandments of the Lord, but you have transgressed and spoken slanderously grave and harsh words with your impure mouths against his greatness. Oh, you hard-hearted, may you not find peace! <sup>5</sup>Therefore, you shall curse your days, and the years of your life shall perish and multiply in eternal execration; and there will not be any mercy unto you. <sup>6</sup>In those days, you shall make your names an eternal execration unto all the righteous; and the sinners shall curse you continually—you together with the sinners. <sup>7</sup>But to the elect there shall be light, joy, and peace, and they shall inherit the earth. To you, wicked ones, on the contrary, there will be a curse. <sup>8</sup>And then wisdom shall be given to the elect. And they shall all live and not return again to sin, either by being wicked or through pride; but those who have wisdom shall be humble and not return again to sin. <sup>9</sup>And they shall not be judged all the days of their lives; nor die through plague or wrath, but they shall complete the (designated) number of the days of their life. <sup>10</sup>And peace shall increase their lives and the years of their happiness shall be multiplied forever in gladness and peace all the days of their life. (1 Enoch 5:4-10)

The emphasis is on the coming judgment, which is the dominating theme in 1 Enoch.<sup>242</sup> In the text, the curses for the wicked and the blessings for the elect are outlined. While it is not immediately clear that renewal of creation is involved here, a closer reading reveals that the blessings draw on central Old Testament texts on the renewal of creation.

1 Enoch 5:4-10 is a message of judgment on the wicked and a promise to the elect about the blessings they will receive (5:7) – they will have “light, joy and peace, and they shall inherit the earth”. There will be a moral restoration on account of the wisdom given to the elect (5:8), which will consequently result in human longevity (5:8-9). There is, however, no mention of eternal life. The promise is therefore the defeat of untimely death. As already mentioned, the description of the blessings are reminiscent of Old Testament renewal texts, most importantly Isa 65:17-25 and perhaps also Jer 31:33-34 and Ezek 36:25-27.<sup>243</sup>

The connections to Jeremiah and Ezekiel involve the moral restoration that is described in the passage. The plight here is human transgression against the commands of the Lord. Nature, on the other hand, is working according to the order set by God. The specific transgression is that the

<sup>242</sup> Hahne, *The Corruption and Redemption of Creation*, 141.

<sup>243</sup> George W. E. Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch: A Commentary on the Book of 1 Enoch. 1: Chapters 1-36; 81-108*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2001), 40.

wicked have spoken against God. They have impure mouths and are hard-hearted (5:4). In contrast to this, the elect will be given wisdom so that they will not sin for ever.

The following categories regarding eschatological renewal may be deduced from the text: Moral restoration (implied transformation of the heart on the grounds that the wicked are described as hard-hearted), the promise of the land (universal) and human longevity.

In the chapters following the introduction there is a large literary unit stretching from chapters 6 to 11. This section is foundational for the world view in the Book of Watchers, as it expands the story from Genesis explaining the origins of evil in the angelic rebellion (6:1-4).<sup>244</sup> More importantly the judgment upon evil and the restoration of the world through the flood in Genesis are not only retold, but the retelling also flows over into eschatology: there is an “analogical identification between the days of Noah and the days of the implied reader.”<sup>245</sup> The next passage under discussion is from the end of this section.

### **3.4.2 Restoration after Destruction (Book of Watchers, 1 Enoch 10:16-11:2)**

The context of this piece is a description of the archangels Raphael, Gabriel and Michael's task to punish the Watchers because of the evil they have brought upon the earth. The transgression of the watchers is central to the worldview of 1 Enoch since it constitutes the origin of evil on earth. The tradition is a development of Genesis 6:1-4.

In 1 Enoch 10 we find a description of how the archangel Michael is commissioned with restoring the earth after the destruction of evil and punishment of the watchers. Already in 10:7, Raphael is commanded to heal the earth that the angels have corrupted.<sup>246</sup> In 10:16-11:2 we have a more elaborate description of the healing of the earth:

<sup>16</sup>Destroy injustice from the face of the earth. And every iniquitous deed will end, and the plant of righteousness and truth will appear forever and he will plant joy. <sup>17</sup>And then

<sup>244</sup> This may also be where the explanation of the origin of demons and evil spirits, which feature so prominently in the NT, is found. See Archie T. Wright, *The Origin of Evil Spirits: The Reception of Genesis 6: 1-4 in Early Jewish Literature*, WUNT II 198 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013).

<sup>245</sup> Stephens, *Annihilation or Renewal?*, 55. Stephens furthermore observes that this kind of identification is also found in the Old Testament and the New Testament (Isa. 54:1; Matt 24:37-38; Luke 17:26-27; 1 Pet 3:20) (Stephens, 55 n. 4); See also Streett, “As It Was in the Days of Noah,” 33–51.

<sup>246</sup> In the translation in Charlesworth, *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha, Vol. 1*, the phrase in 10:7 is translated “give life to the earth” whereas Nickelsburg in his commentary renders it “heal”. (Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch 1*, 215). The description of the imprisonment of Asael in these verses is interesting. It says: “Bind Azaz’el hand and foot (and) throw him into the darkness!” (1 Enoch 10:4a). The wording is very similar to Matthew 22:13a and may well be a case of literary dependence. See the convincing argumentation by Sim, “Matthew 22.13 a and 1 Enoch 10.4 A,” 3–19.

all the righteous ones will escape; and become the living ones until they multiply and become tens of hundreds; and all the days of their youth and the years of their retirement they will complete in peace. <sup>18</sup>And in those days the whole earth will be worked in righteousness, all of her planted with trees, and will find blessing. <sup>19</sup>And they shall plant pleasant trees upon her—vines. And he who plants a vine upon her will produce wine for plenitude. And every seed that is sown on her, one measure will yield a thousand (measures) and one measure of olives will yield ten measures of presses of oil. <sup>20</sup>And you cleanse the earth from all injustice, and from all defilement, and from all oppression, and from all sin, and from all iniquity which is being done on earth; remove them from the earth. <sup>21</sup>And all the children of the people will become righteous, and all nations shall worship and bless me; and they will all prostrate themselves to me. <sup>22</sup>And the earth shall be cleansed from all pollution, and from all sin, and from all plague, and from all suffering; and it shall not happen again that I shall send (these) upon the earth from generation to generation and forever. <sup>11</sup>“And in those days I shall open the storerooms of blessing which are in the heavens, so that I shall send them down upon the earth, over the work and the toil of the children of man. <sup>2</sup>And peace and truth shall become partners together in all the days of the world, and in all the generations of the world.” (1 Enoch 10:16-11:2)

Although the initial reference is of course to the flood, the language of restoration goes beyond that. Nickelsburg comments: “The renewal of the human race and the postdiluvian world are a paradigm for the renewal or re-creation of the world after the coming judgment and for the re-creation of the human race, which has been devastated by the giants.”<sup>247</sup> Again there is also an echo of Isaiah and promise of “new heaven and earth”.<sup>248</sup>

This vision of restoration employs the flood imagery of the judgment of God on the sinful world and uses it to describe the coming judgment and renewal of the world (10:18). There is promise of peace on earth (10:17), fertility in abundance (10:18-19), and human longevity. There is, however, no mention of resurrection, and again there is no mention of eternal life. Furthermore there will be a moral restoration (10:21), absence of evil (10:22), nutritional abundance (11:1) – and eternal bliss (11:2).

### **3.4.3 A Return to Eden Replanted (Book of Watchers, 1 Enoch 25:3-6)**

The final text from the Book of Watchers is a promise of a return to Eden for the righteous.

And he answered me and said, “This high mountain that you saw, whose peak is like the throne of God, is the seat where the Great Holy One, the lord of glory, the King of eternity, will sit, when he descends to visit the earth in goodness. <sup>4</sup>And (as for) this fragrant tree, no flesh has the right to touch it until the great judgment, in which there will be vengeance on all and consummation forever. Then it will be given to the

<sup>247</sup> Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch 1*, 224.

<sup>248</sup> Nickelsburg, 226; Doering, “Urzeit-Endzeit,” 28.

righteous and the pious,<sup>5</sup> and its fruit will be food for the chosen. And it will be transplanted to the holy place, by the house of God, the King of eternity.<sup>6</sup> Then they will rejoice greatly and be glad, and they will enter into the sanctuary. Its fragrances will be in their bones, and they will live a long life on earth, such as your fathers lived also in their days, and torments and plagues and suffering will not touch them.” (1 En 25:3-6)

The context of this passage is one of Enoch's heavenly journeys in which he sees seven mountains of which one in particular interests him because of the tree that stands there. The answer given by Michael, who is with him, includes a scenario in which the tree – the Tree of Life<sup>249</sup> – will be replanted in the Temple and the righteous and pious will enter the temple-garden. There they will experience longevity and be free from affliction similarly to the expectation in Isaiah 65.<sup>250</sup>

A particularly interesting feature here is the relocation of the tree of life to the Temple, which presents an expectation in which Zion transforms into an eschatological Eden, a scenario which is also found in the Old Testament (cf. Ezek 47:1-12).<sup>251</sup>

So far we have been looking at examples of new creation in the Book of Watchers. The next text is from The Similitudes.

### **3.4.3 Transformation of Heaven and Earth (The Similitudes, 1 Enoch 45:3-6).**

The Similitudes or Book of Parables was originally a separate Enochic writing.<sup>252</sup> Most scholars date it to around the beginning of the common era.<sup>253</sup> The book has three major sections called “parables” (chaps. 38-44; 45-57; 58-69). “Parables” here are revelatory discourses in which Enoch describes his visions about “secret” or “hidden things” concerning the judgment of God on the wicked and his vindication of the righteous.

<sup>3</sup>On that day, my Elect One shall sit on the seat of glory  
and make a selection of their deeds, their resting places will be without number, their  
souls shall be firm within them when they see my Elect One, those who have appealed

<sup>249</sup> This is the interpretation of most recent interpreters. So Eibert J. C. Tigchelaar, “Eden and Paradise: The Garden Motif in Some Early Jewish Texts,” in *Paradise Interpreted: Representations of Biblical Paradise in Judaism and Christianity*, ed. Gerard P. Luttikhuisen, Themes in Biblical Narrative 2 (Leiden ; Boston: Brill, 1999), 37–62; David E. Aune and Eric Stewart, “From the Idealized Past to the Imaginary Future: Eschatological Restoration in Jewish Apocalyptic Literature,” in *Restoration: Old Testament, Jewish and Christian Perspectives*, ed. James M. Scott, JSJSup 72 (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2001), 170; Doering, “Urzeit-Endzeit,” 37; Nickelsburg and VanderKam, *1 Enoch: The Hermeneia Translation*, 44.

<sup>250</sup> Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch 1*, 314–15.

<sup>251</sup> Himmelfarb, “The Temple and the Garden of Eden in Ezekiel, the Book of Watchers, and the Wisdom of Ben Sira,” 69; Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch 1*, 315.

<sup>252</sup> Nickelsburg and VanderKam, *1 Enoch: The Hermeneia Translation*, 3.

<sup>253</sup> George W. E. Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch: A Commentary on the Book of 1 Enoch. 2: Chapters 37-82*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2012), 58.

to my glorious name, <sup>4</sup>On that day, I shall cause my Elect One to dwell among them, I shall transform heaven and make it a blessing of light forever. <sup>5</sup>I shall (also) transform the earth and make it a blessing, and cause my Elect One to dwell in her. Then those who have committed sin and crime shall not set foot in her. (1 Enoch 45:3-6)

In this passage there is clear language about the transformation of heaven and earth (45:4b-5a). There is no mention of destruction. Rather, the present order will be transformed into a place of greater glory.<sup>254</sup> Later the second parable states that “all will become angels in heaven” (51:4). Thus, we also find the notion of anthropological transformation. It is not clear what the exact meaning of becoming angels in heaven is, but it surely implies a transformation of humanity.

Elsewhere in the Similitudes the vision of person sitting on a throne of glory is also connected with the eradication of all evil: “Thenceforth nothing that is corruptible shall be found; for that Son of Man has appeared and has seated himself upon the throne of his glory; and all evil shall disappear from before his face” (1 Enoch 69:29a). There is therefore a close connection between the implementation of the power and rule of God’s chosen ruler and the final defeat of evil in the world.

#### **3.4.4 The New Creation (*The Astronomical Book, 1 Enoch 72:1*)**

The Astronomical Book is one of the oldest Jewish documents attributed to Enoch. The earliest copy of the book dates from 150-200 B.C.E., and the composition may be in the third century, B.C.E or even earlier.<sup>255</sup>

The larger portion of the Astronomical Book (72:1-80:1; 82:1-20) is a quasi-scientific description of the movements of the sun, moon and stars. The title of the book sets forth the purpose: “The Book of the Itinerary of the Luminaries of Heaven” (72:1). The author gives a painstakingly detailed description of the cycles of the sun, moon and stars in order to defend a 364-day year. The verse under discussion serves as the introduction to the book of luminaries and is clearly marked as the opening words:

The Book of the Itinerary of the Luminaries of Heaven: the position of each and every one, in respect to their ranks, in respect to their authorities, and in respect to their seasons; each one according to their names and their places of origin and according to their months, which Uriel, the holy angel who was with me, and who also is their guide, showed me—just as he showed me all their treatises and the nature of the years of the world unto eternity, till the new creation which abides forever is created. (1 Enoch 72:1)

<sup>254</sup> Hahne, *The Corruption and Redemption of Creation*, 101.

<sup>255</sup> Nickelsburg and VanderKam, *1 Enoch: The Hermeneia Translation*, 6.

This is one of the few places where the expression “new creation” actually appears (72:1). There is, however, not much content here regarding how the new creation will be established or what it entails. It can simply be observed that the term appears here, and that there is an expectation of an everlasting age after the present.<sup>256</sup> Yet, the appearance of the term gives an important and unambiguous proof of the presence of the motif in the Enochic tradition.

Nickelsburg again sees a parallel to Isaiah as “new creation” may allude to Isaiah’s prophecy of a new heaven and new earth.<sup>257</sup>

### **3.4.5 Transformation of Humanity (The Dream Visions, 1 Enoch 90:37-38)**

In the Dream Visions, Enoch recounts two dream visions about future events. In the second vision (85-90), the Animal Apocalypse, he sees the history of the world played out in allegorical form. Human beings are depicted as animals, the sinful angels as fallen stars, and the seven archangels as human beings. The text under consideration here is from the end of the vision and depicts anthropological transformation in the end-time.

<sup>37</sup> Then I saw that a snow-white cow/bull was born, with huge horns; all the beasts of the field and all the birds of the sky feared him and made petition to him all the time. <sup>38</sup> I went on seeing until all their kindred were transformed, and became snow-white cows/bulls; and the first among them became something, and that something became a great beast with huge black horns on its head. (1 Enoch 90:37-38)

The white bull seems to be a symbol for the Messiah.<sup>258</sup> Through the appearance of this bull, all other species are transformed. According to Nickelsburg, this is a return to the primordial unity, a reversal of Babel.<sup>259</sup> This is therefore a vision of universal salvation in which some of the gentiles become righteous and take part in the eschatological blessings.

Nickelsburg identifies Ezekiel 34 as a probable background for the entire vision. The white bull is thus a Davidic messiah who will become a leader of the people. He furthermore identifies parallels to Daniel 7 in which the one like a son of man receives the power to reign similarly to the white bull.<sup>260</sup>

<sup>256</sup> Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch 2*, 414.

<sup>257</sup> Nickelsburg, 414.

<sup>258</sup> Doering, “Urzeit-Endzeit,” 49.

<sup>259</sup> Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch 1*, 406; So also Doering, “Urzeit-Endzeit,” 49.

<sup>260</sup> Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch 1*, 406; So also Joseph, “Was Daniel 7.13’s ‘Son of Man’ Modeled after the ‘New Adam’ of the Animal Apocalypse (1 Enoch 90)? A Comparative Study.”



The eschatological figure is born as a white bull like Adam (85:3), Seth (85:9), Noah (89:1), Shem (89:9), Abraham (89:10) and Isaac (89:11). It is hard to pinpoint the exact meaning of the imagery. The imagery is nevertheless significant because it indicates a return to the beginning, and as the bull is born from a sheep, his irregular birth is a reverse counterpart of the earlier irregular births in which the wild animals (the gentiles) were born from white bulls. Furthermore, *all* the bulls are white: “There is no red bull to be slain or any black bull to slay him. The creation cannot go awry as it did with the first two beginnings. God rejoices because the intended divine purpose will be fulfilled. The third era will have no catastrophic end.”<sup>261</sup>

Finally, Nickelsburg concludes that what is depicted here is an unparalleled soteriological scheme that is not found elsewhere in pre-Christian Jewish literature, a scheme that is in close analogy with the two-Adams theology of Paul.<sup>262</sup>

This vision, with its atypical imagery, clearly employs Urzeit/Endzeit correlations with regards to human society. In the end it will be as it was in the beginning since the Messiah will reverse the effects brought by the fallen angels (86:1-6).

### **3.4.6 The Increase of Wickedness and the Righteous Generation (1 Enoch 107:1-3)**

This text is an appendix to 1 Enoch and describes the miraculous birth of Noah. It portrays Noah as a preserver of the human race and provides a conclusion to the corpus with a story of promise of salvation for the righteous.

Then I beheld the writing upon them that one generation shall be more wicked than the other, until a generation of righteous ones shall arise, wickedness shall perish, sin shall disappear from upon the earth, and every good thing shall come upon her. <sup>2</sup>“And now, my son, go and make it known to your son Lamech that this son who has been born is his son in truth—and not in falsehood.” <sup>3</sup>And when Methuselah had heard the words of his father Enoch—for he revealed to him everything in secret—he returned (home). And he called the name of that son Noah, for he will comfort the earth after all the destruction. (1 Enoch 107:1-3)

The scenario here is similar to the one in 91:6-7. After the flood in which God has judged the earth, even stronger iniquity comes upon the earth. And evil will continue until the righteous generation will arise. While there is no mention of judgment here, the end of evil and violence presumes a

<sup>261</sup> Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch 1*, 407.

<sup>262</sup> Nickelsburg, 407; See also Joseph, “Was Daniel 7.13’s ‘Son of Man’ Modeled after the ‘New Adam’ of the Animal Apocalypse (1 Enoch 90)? A Comparative Study.”

second great judgment parallel to the flood. Again the flood is used as a prototype of God's judgment of the world:

As is typical of the Enochic material, the sin, judgment, and renewal at the time of Noah will be replicated at the eschaton, when God will judge a thoroughly perverse and sinful world, deliver the righteous few, and usher in an era of perfect and full righteousness and blessing. Thus the Noah story not only concludes the narrative of events in Enoch's fictive world, but also points beyond the anticipated eschatological judgment, with its massive destruction, to the joy of final salvation in an incorruptible world.<sup>263</sup>

The emphasis here is on the cessation of evil and sin and the arrival of good things upon the earth, a return to paradise when everything was good (Gen. 1:31).

### **3.4.7 Summary: New Creation in 1 Enoch**

New Creation has a central place in the eschatology of 1 Enoch. It is most frequently depicted in flood imagery. The earth will be cleansed and humans will be morally restored in a reversal of the consequences of the fallen angels. The state of bliss is described in terms of a permanently secured place without evil and with abundance in every sphere of life.

We now turn to another greatly important writing, the book of Jubilees.

## **3.5 Jubilees**

Jubilees is a rewriting of Genesis-Exodus. It is ascribed to Moses, who is given revelations. The name refers to the concept of a jubilee, a 49-year period. The book systematically orders the entire history of the world into a series of jubilees (1:26). The book is usually regarded as an apocalypse or at least standing in close relationship to Jewish apocalyptic.<sup>264</sup> It is typically dated to the second century B.C.E.<sup>265</sup> Jubilees was originally written in Hebrew, however only fragments exist of copies of the text in Hebrew. The oldest complete copies of Jubilees are written in Ge'ez probably translated from a lost Greek translation.<sup>266</sup> Portions of the Greek text have been reconstructed based on citations in Greek and Latin writings.<sup>267</sup> None of the texts discussed here are available in Greek, and the basis of the survey is an English translation based on the Ge'ez version.

<sup>263</sup> Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch 1*, 538–39.

<sup>264</sup> Hubbard, *New Creation in Paul's Letters and Thought*, 27.

<sup>265</sup> Hahne, *The Corruption and Redemption of Creation*, 68.

<sup>266</sup> James C. VanderKam, "Recent Scholarship on the Book of Jubilees," *Currents in Biblical Research* 6, no. 3 (2008): 406–7.

<sup>267</sup> Michael S. Heiser and Ken M. Penner, *Old Testament Greek Pseudepigrapha with Morphology* (Bellingham: Lexham Press, 2008).

There has been a discussion whether eschatology plays a significant role in Jubilees due to the remarkably few passages that explicitly treat the subject. Nevertheless, while halakhic matters appear to be the book's primary concern, these matters are to be understood within a broader eschatological framework.<sup>268</sup>

The eschatological outlook is, however, different from most other apocalypses since it envisions a transformation brought about by gradual human improvement and growth in righteousness rather than a sudden divine intervention. "There is no suggestion the cosmic renewal is preceded by any kind of violent catastrophe, rather the descent of God to the earth is so that he can dwell with his people."<sup>269</sup>

The restoration of creation is already mentioned in the beginning of the book as the ultimate goal of history when it states:

[F]rom [the day of creation until] the day of the new creation when the heaven and earth and all of their creatures shall be renewed according to the powers of heaven and according to the whole nature of earth, until the sanctuary of the LORD is created in Jerusalem upon Mount Zion. And all of the lights will be renewed for healing and peace and blessing for all of the elect of Israel and in order that it might be thus from that day and unto all the days of the earth. (Jub. 1:29)

This passage serves as a condensed summary of the history of the world from creation to new creation, a history that will be revealed to Moses. Before this passage, there are almost direct quotations from Deuteronomy and a promise of restoration of God's people after they have repented (1:15-25). Based on the wholehearted repentance of the people, there will be a spiritual and moral transformation of the people described in terms of being transplanted (1:15), the cutting of the foreskin of their heart (1:23a cf. Deut 30:6), and the creation of a holy spirit in them (1:23b cf. Ps 51:11).

Thus, we have here a moral and spiritual transformation of humanity that ultimately results in the transformation of the entire cosmos (1:29a). The idea of the renewal of the present creation also finds expression in 4:26, where it also is underlined that this is an ultimate goal that will last forever. This permanent state is also explicitly applied to humans, who will have "a new and righteous nature." (5:12)

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<sup>268</sup> Stephens, *Annihilation or Renewal?*, 75.

<sup>269</sup> Stephens, 76.

The mention of Mount Zion in this context is expected in light of the expectations found in the Old Testament prophets. As described in the previous chapter Zion was central to the eschatological expectations. In Jubilees this is even more accentuated. Together with Sinai and Eden, Zion is one of three holy places on earth and the navel of the earth (8:19), and Zion will be the epicenter for the renewal of creation: “Mount Zion, which will be sanctified in the new creation for the sanctification of the earth. On account of this the earth will be sanctified from all sin and from pollution throughout eternal generations.” (4:26b). In Jub 1:29 the establishment of the temple is also central to the expectation of the renewal of the earth: “[U]ntil the sanctuary of the LORD is created in Jerusalem upon Mount Zion.” (cf. 1:27)

James M. Scott argues that the heart of the eschatological expectation in Jubilees is the relationship between the earthly and the heavenly cultus.<sup>270</sup> The earthly temple corresponds to a heavenly temple (Jub 6:18; 31:13-17), and the renewal of creation comes through “the general resynchronization of the cultic practice of all Israel in the Land to the rhythms of the divinely instituted creative order, whereby the whole Land is considered Temple land and the whole world comes under Israel’s rule.”<sup>271</sup> In Jubilees Eden is described as a temple (8:19),<sup>272</sup> though the final sanctuary in the new creation will be on Zion. This leads Adams to conclude: “Envisaged here is a revamped creation, with Jerusalem, and her newly established temple, at its center.”<sup>273</sup>

Scott also points out that there is rigorous symmetry in the way history is presented so that the end exactly corresponds with the beginning.<sup>274</sup> This feature is particularly expressed through the gradual process of renewal described in Jubilees 23.

<sup>26</sup>And in those days, children will begin to search the law,  
and to search the commandments  
and to return to the way of righteousness.

<sup>27</sup>And the days will begin to increase and grow longer  
among those sons of men, generation by generation,

<sup>270</sup> Scott, *On Earth As In Heaven*, 5.

<sup>271</sup> Scott, 143. Interestingly for our purposes, in the conclusion to his work, Scott poses the following statement: “First, with respect to *Jubilees*’ conception of sacred space, the title of the present study itself, *On Earth as in Heaven*, invites comparison, for example, with the Lord’s Prayer (Matt 6:7–15; Luke 11:1–4), especially the third petition in Matt 6:10b. To what extent, if any, does this prayer presuppose the kind of coordination between heaven and earth that *Jubilees* expects will come about during Israel’s restoration, which culminates in the new creation and the establishment of the eschatological Temple as the central sanctuary in the Land on Zion? Or to frame the question more broadly: Does the historical Jesus himself have a basically heavenly expectation, an earthly expectation, or a combination of these? If the latter, how does Jesus conceive of the relationship between heaven and earth? To what degree is Jesus’ expectation informed by priestly conceptions of sacred space, including the traditional Land of Israel and the Temple?” (Scott, 227).

<sup>272</sup> See further evidence in Doering, “Urzeit-Endzeit,” 31–32.

<sup>273</sup> Adams, *The Stars Will Fall from Heaven*, 68.

<sup>274</sup> Scott, *On Earth As In Heaven*, 132.

and year by year, until  
 their days approach a thousand years,  
 and to a greater number of years than days.  
<sup>28</sup>And there (will be) no old men and none who is full of days.  
 Because all of them will be infants and children.  
<sup>29</sup>And all of their days they will be complete  
 and live in peace and rejoicing  
 and there will be no Satan and no evil (one) who will destroy,  
 because all of their days will be days of blessing and healing.  
<sup>30</sup>And then the LORD will heal his servants,  
 and they will rise up and see great peace.  
 And they will drive out their enemies,  
 and the righteous ones will see and give praise,  
 and rejoice forever and ever with joy;  
 and they will see all of their judgments and all of their curses among their enemies.  
<sup>31</sup>And their bones will rest in the earth,  
 and their spirits will increase joy,  
 and they will know that the LORD is an executor of judgment;  
 but he will show mercy to hundreds and thousands,  
 to all who love him. (Jubilees 23:26-31)

Jubilees 23:26-31 is the key eschatological passage of the book and provides an explication of the expectation expressed in the beginning of the book. The gradual process of improvement which ends up in eschatological renewal consciously echoes that of Isa 65:17-25.<sup>275</sup> There is a sense of synergy between the people and God since the initial step towards renewal is repentance and obedience to the law. Ultimately however it is God who heals his servants (30). Earlier in the book it is also evident that moral transformation comes through a divine transformation of the heart (1:23-24).

The text explicates 'new creation' in 1:29 and 4:26. There is an emphasis on the return to law (26), which in turn results in human longevity (26-28), the absence of evil (29), healing, victory and worship (30). It is clearly not an otherworldly hope, but a description of the attainment of a life of fulfillment on earth. The expectation seems to be a return to a antediluvian state, when people lived to a much older age.

An interesting aspect is, however, the absence of the idea of resurrection and eternal bodily life; instead the bones will rest in the earth, and the continued life is a life as a spirit (23:31).<sup>276</sup>

<sup>275</sup> Scott, 121.

<sup>276</sup> George W. E. Nickelsburg, *Resurrection, Immortality, and Eternal Life in Intertestamental Judaism and Early Christianity*, Expanded Edition (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2007), 31–33; John J. Collins, *The Apocalyptic Imagination, an Introduction to Jewish Apocalyptic Literature*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1998), 82. Others see it as an example of poetic hyperbole, describing those who die with the certain assurance that God will vindicate the righteous (See O. S. Wintermute, "Jubilees," in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha, Vol. 2: Expansions of the "Old Testament" and Legends, Wisdom and Philosophical Literature, Prayers, Psalms and Odes*,

### 3.6 2 (Syriac) Baruch (70-120 C.E.)<sup>277</sup>

2 Baruch uses the fictive setting of the aftermath of the first temple's destruction to explain a world after the destruction of the second temple in 70 C.E. The author takes on the persona of Jeremiah's secretary, Baruch.

The text probably dates from the end of the first century C.E. based on the absence of any references to Bar Kokhba (ca. 135 C.E.) and a possible reference to the destruction of the temple in 32:2-4 that seems to be a fairly recent event.<sup>278</sup> Gurtner argues that the text should be dated more precisely to 95 C.E. on the basis of 1:1: "And it happened in the twenty-fifth year of Jeconiah, the king of Judah, that the word of the Lord came to Baruch, the son of Neriah". He takes the twenty-fifth year as an indication of the span of years after the beginning of the Babylonian exile (i.e. the destruction of the temple in 70 C. E.).<sup>279</sup>

The major problem of the world according to 2 Baruch is the impact of humanity's sin. This is the root of all evils originating in the fall of Adam. "With the 'fall' of Adam comes death (17:3), sorrow (73:2-3), suffering (56:5-6), affliction (51:14), tribulation (15:8), pain (56:5-6), hard labor (15:8; 48:50), as well as a greater predisposition to sin (21:19)."<sup>280</sup> This is the deeper evil behind the current situation of the destruction of the temple, which is a symptom of the whole world being corrupt and approaching its end on account of the sin of humanity.

The eschatology of 2 Baruch seeks to bring a solution to this problem. Through a variety of eschatological scenarios, 2 Baruch places a concerted focus on the hope of a future world as a way of counterbalancing the present experience of corruption and degradation (44:9). The language employed to describe this hope tends to be dualistic, in the sense that the text speaks of the old world ending and a new world beginning (44:9; 48:50; 54:21; 83:7; 85:10). Whether such language implies an absence of material continuity between the two worlds is a matter of debate and is beyond the purpose of this investigation.

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*Fragments of Lost Judeo-Hellenistic Works*, ed. James H. Charlesworth (New York; London: Doubleday, 1985), 102.). The issue is difficult to decide and largely superfluous to our investigation.

<sup>277</sup> While the works under discussion may originate in a time later than that of Matthew, the thoughts expressed are probably of earlier origin and thus relevant for the purpose of the investigation. "Few would accept either *2 Baruch* or *4 Ezra* as originating before 70 C.E., though they do seem to depend on pre-70 sources." So Daniel M. Gurtner, *Second Baruch - A Critical Edition of the Syriac Text*, Jewish and Christian Texts in Contexts and Related Studies (London: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2009), 216.

<sup>278</sup> Gurtner, 216.

<sup>279</sup> Gurtner, 18.

<sup>280</sup> Stephens, *Annihilation or Renewal?*, 100.

According to Hahne, the sequence of eschatological events in 2 Baruch is this: (1) There will be a period of worldwide tribulation, which is part of the cleansing of the world (26: 1-29:2;32:1-6; 39:1-6; 48:31-37a; 70:1-10). (2) The Messiah will come and defeat the wicked rulers and then establish his idyllic earthly kingdom (29:3-8; 39:7-40:3; 48:37b-41; 70:9). (3) The Messiah will return to glory (30: 1; cf. 4 Ez. 7:29 where he dies). (4) This world age will come to an end (54:21; 83:7). (5) All people will be resurrected and judged (30: 1-2; 54:21). (6) The new world will come (32: 1-6), (7) The righteous will receive their eternal blessing and the wicked will receive eternal punishment (30:3-5).<sup>281</sup>

What is important to note is that the motif of the renewal of creation and a reversal of the consequences of sin has a prominent place in the eschatological expectations of the book, as we shall see.

### **3.6.1 The World Will Not Be Forgotten (4:1-6)**

This passage sums up the situation and promise of 2 Baruch:

<sup>1</sup>And the Lord said to me:

This city will be delivered up for a time,  
And the people will be chastened for a time,  
And the world will not be forgotten.

<sup>2</sup>Or do you think that this is the city of which I said: On the palms of my hands I have carved you? <sup>3</sup>It is not this building that is in your midst now; it is that which will be revealed, with me, that was already prepared from the moment that I decided to create Paradise. And I showed it to Adam before he sinned. But when he transgressed the commandment, it was taken away from him—as also Paradise. <sup>4</sup>After these things I showed it to my servant Abraham in the night between the portions of the victims. <sup>5</sup>And again I showed it also to Moses on Mount Sinai when I showed him the likeness of the tabernacle and all its vessels. <sup>6</sup>Behold, now it is preserved with me—as also Paradise. (2 Baruch 4:1-6)

In the midst of destruction Baruch is told that this is chastening and the world will not be forgotten (4:1). Jerusalem and the temple, which is now destroyed, was never the place which God originally had intended (4:2-3). The plans for a return to paradise and a greater temple remain with God (4:6).

We therefore find evidence of a hope for an eschatological temple and a return to paradise. Two things that seemingly go together.

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<sup>281</sup> Hahne, *The Corruption and Redemption of Creation*, 134–36.

### 3.6.2 Two-phase Restoration (29:1-30:1)

Throughout 2 Baruch the thought of a restored paradise plays an important part. There is, however, a two-part restoration. First in the earthly messianic kingdom and, secondly, in the world to come. The Messiah and the messianic kingdom are first described in chapter 29-30. The first phase is described in 29:1-8 and the second phase is from 30:1:

That which will happen at that time bears upon the whole earth. Therefore, all who live will notice it. <sup>2</sup>For at that time I shall only protect those found in this land at that time. <sup>3</sup>And it will happen that when all that which should come to pass in these parts has been accomplished, the Anointed One will begin to be revealed. <sup>4</sup> And Behemoth will reveal itself from its place, and Leviathan will come from the sea, the two great monsters which I created on the fifth day of creation and which I shall have kept until that time. And they will be nourishment for all who are left. <sup>5</sup> The earth will also yield fruits ten thousandfold. And on one vine will be a thousand branches, and one branch will produce a thousand clusters, and one cluster will produce a thousand grapes, and one grape will produce a cor of wine. <sup>6</sup> And those who are hungry will enjoy themselves and they will, moreover, see marvels every day. <sup>7</sup>For winds will go out in front of me every morning to bring the fragrance of aromatic fruits and clouds at the end of the day to distill the dew of health. <sup>8</sup>And it will happen at that time that the treasury of manna will come down again from on high, and they will eat of it in those years because these are they who will have arrived at the consummation of time. <sup>30</sup><sup>1</sup>And it will happen after these things when the time of the appearance of the Anointed One has been fulfilled and he returns with glory, that then all who sleep in hope of him will rise. (2 Baruch 29:1-30:1)

Leading up to this passage, Baruch wants to know which parts of the earth will be affected by the end-time woes. 29:1 states clearly that the events will be universal. It does seem, however, that the appearance of the Messiah is initially restricted to Israel.<sup>282</sup> His appearance will bring an abundance of food as Behemoth and Leviathan will be given for people to eat and because of extraordinary fertility in the land (29:5-8). It is this feature of the text which may imply new creation through the defeat of the chaos monsters and a restored fertility of the earth.<sup>283</sup>

Interestingly the text parallels the Exodus with the consummation of time by predicting manna to come down from heaven again. This scenario, which strikingly describes the messianic age solely in imagery of abundance of food, is only the first stage of the appearance of the Messiah. 30:1 marks a beginning of a new phase in which the Messiah will return with glory and bring about resurrection of the righteous.

<sup>282</sup> Henze, *Jewish Apocalypticism*, 295.

<sup>283</sup> Liv Ingeborg Lied, *The Other Lands of Israel: Imaginations of the Land in 2 Baruch*, JSJSup 129 (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2008), 222–23.



Henze believes that 30:1 may have received a Christian gloss since it speaks of the resurrection of those who sleep in the hope of the Messiah, which is unique for Jewish literature.<sup>284</sup> Regardless of that observation, Henze believes that the text displays a two-phase messianism as argued by Klaus Koch. He concludes:

*Second Baruch* never speaks unambiguously of a sequence of two messianic manifestations; neither is there an account in *2Bar* of the absence or death of the Messiah. Still, Koch's observation that *2Bar* presupposes the belief of two distinct phases in the Messiah's visitation – an initial phase during historical time that will be felt in Israel only and a second phase that will inaugurate the world to come and fundamentally change human life and the world at large – presents the most plausible interpretation of *2Bar*'s messianic passages.<sup>285</sup>

Henze furthermore observes that a two-phase messianism is not so uncommon for Jewish thought as might be expected.<sup>286</sup>

### **3.6.3 The Mighty One Will Renew His Creation (32:1-6)**

The messianic kingdom on earth does not bring about the full renewal of the world. This will be brought by God in the end-times. The end-times will be accompanied by tribulations, and Baruch encourages the people to persevere in the face of the troubles:

<sup>1</sup>You, however, if you prepare your minds to sow into them the fruits of the law, he shall protect you in the time in which the Mighty One shall shake the entire creation. <sup>2</sup>For after a short time, the building of Zion will be shaken in order that it will be rebuilt. <sup>3</sup>That building will not remain; but it will again be uprooted after some time and will remain desolate for a time. <sup>4</sup>And after that it is necessary that it will be renewed in glory and that it will be perfected into eternity. <sup>5</sup>We should not, therefore, be so sad regarding the evil which has come now, but much more (distressed) regarding that which is in the future. <sup>6</sup>For greater than the two evils will be the trial when the Mighty One will renew his creation. (2 Baruch 32:1-6)

Here there is an interesting parallel between the temple and creation. The destruction and renewal of the temple seem to go hand in hand with the destruction and renewal of the world. This is in line with recent research that suggests that the temple described in the Old Testament is to be viewed as a microcosm.<sup>287</sup> In 2 Baruch the destruction of the temple and the destruction of creation are

<sup>284</sup> Henze, *Jewish Apocalypticism*, 297.

<sup>285</sup> Henze, 298 With reference to; Klaus Koch, "Messias Und Menschensohn," in *Vor Der Wende Der Zeiten: Beiträge Zur Apokalyptischen Literatur* (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 1996), 260.

<sup>286</sup> Henze, *Jewish Apocalypticism*, 298; Henze cites David Berger, "Three Typological Themes in Early Jewish Messianism: Messiah Son of Joseph, Rabbinic Calculations, and the Figure of Armilus," *AJS Review* 10, no. 2 (1985): 142–43.

<sup>287</sup> Beale, *The Temple and the Church's Mission*, 29–80; Jens Bruun Kofoed, *Til Syvende Og Sidst: Skabelse, Tempel*

profoundly interconnected. “The demolition of the Holy City implies nothing less than the reversion of historical time – the undoing of creation and the return of the universe to its primordial status, its condition before time.”<sup>288</sup> This connection between the temple and creation also aligns with the findings in the Old Testament prophets with Zion as the cosmic mountain (Ps 48; Isa 2:2; Ezek 5:5; 38:12; 48:8; Mic 4:1).

### **3.6.4 Transformation of Humans (51:1-14)**

Again and again 2 Baruch states that the new world will be eternal since those who enter it will be preserved from corruption (44:12). However, it is not only the non-human world that will be transformed. 51:1-14 speaks of the transformation of humans:

<sup>1</sup>And it will happen after this day which he appointed is over that both the shape of those who are found to be guilty as also the glory of those who have proved to be righteous will be changed. <sup>2</sup>For the shape of those who now act wickedly will be made more evil than it is (now) so that they shall suffer torment. <sup>3</sup>Also, as for the glory of those who proved to be righteous on account of my law, those who possessed intelligence in their life, and those who planted the root of wisdom in their heart—their splendor will then be glorified by transformations, and the shape of their face will be changed into the light of their beauty so that they may acquire and receive the undying world which is promised to them. <sup>4</sup>Therefore, especially they who will then come will be sad, because they despised my Law and stopped their ears lest they hear wisdom and receive intelligence. <sup>5</sup>When they, therefore, will see that those over whom they are exalted now will then be more exalted and glorified than they, then both these and those will be changed, these into the splendor of angels and those into startling visions and horrible shapes; and they will waste away even more. <sup>6</sup>For they will first see and then they will go away to be tormented. <sup>7</sup>Miracles, however, will appear at their own time to those who are saved because of their works and for whom the Law is now a hope, and intelligence, expectation, and wisdom a trust. <sup>8</sup>For they shall see that world which is now invisible to them, and they will see a time which is now hidden to them. <sup>9</sup>And time will no longer make them older. <sup>10</sup>For they will live in the heights of that world and they will be like the angels and be equal to the stars. And they will be changed into any shape which they wished, from beauty to loveliness, and from light to the splendor of glory. <sup>11</sup>For the extents of Paradise will be spread out for them, and to them will be shown the beauty of the majesty of the living beings under the throne, as well as all the hosts of the angels, those who are held by my word now lest they show themselves, and those who are withheld by my command so that they may stand at their places until their coming has arrived. <sup>12</sup>And the excellence of the righteous will then be greater than that of the angels. <sup>13</sup>For the first will receive the last, those whom they expected; and the last, those of whom they had heard that they had gone away. <sup>14</sup>For they have been saved from this

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*Og Hvile i Biblen Og Den Gamle Orient* (Copenhagen: Museum Tusulanum Press, 2015), 298–318; Crispin H. T. Fletcher-Louis, “The Destruction of the Temple and the Relativization of the Old Covenant: Mark 13:31 & Matthew 5:18,” in *The Reader Must Understand: Eschatology in Bible and Theology*, ed. Kent E. Brower and Mark W. Elliott (Leicester: InterVarsity Press, 1997), 156–62.

<sup>288</sup> Henze, *Jewish Apocalypticism*, 253.

world of affliction and have put down the burden of anguishes. (2 Baruch 51:1-14)

The passage is God's answer to Baruch about which bodily form humans will have after the resurrection (49:2). The answer is initially that they will have the same form as they had before they died, but that is only until the judgment (50:1-4). After the judgment the wicked will be made more evil and suffer (51:2). The righteous on the contrary will be made glorious (51:3). They will be like angels and stars (51:10) being able to take any shape they want. There is, however, an indication of recognizability despite the seemingly radical transformation, since 51:13 probably speaks about a reunion between people who have passed away at different times.

Within 2 Baruch death and physical suffering in this world are a result of Adam's transgression (17:3; 54:15; 56:6). This passage describes a reversal of the consequences of Adam's sin.<sup>289</sup> The righteous will live for ever receiving the undying world (51:3) and no longer age (51:9). They will be free from suffering (51:14).

The location for the blessed life is called the heights of that world (51:10). This may be a reference to the high mountain of God that we have already seen elsewhere both connected to Eden and to Zion and the Temple.<sup>290</sup> What is expressed is therefore not an other-worldly hope. Despite the focus on the end of the present world in 2 Baruch there is no passage that unambiguously states that the present earth will be destroyed. Rather, it in fact says that "heaven and earth will stay forever" (19:3).<sup>291</sup> In the passages discussed above there were phrases that emphasized the value of the present world, which will not be forgotten (4:1). The Messianic age will bring fruitfulness to this world (29:5), and creation will eventually be renewed (31:6; 57:2).

Liv Ingeborg Lied interprets this in the sense that certain aspects of the present world will be transposed and transformed into the heavenly world.<sup>292</sup> It nevertheless seems better to understand it the other way around. Because of Adam's sin the true temple and paradise were removed from this world to preserved with God (4:3-6). In the new world paradise and the temple will again return to a renewed creation (6:6-9; 51:11). Preceding the description in chapter 51 Baruch also asks: "Or will you perhaps change these things which have been in the world, as also the world itself?" (49:3c)

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<sup>289</sup> Henze, 316.

<sup>290</sup> Eugen J. Pentiu, "The Nature of the Resurrected Bodies: 2 Baruch and the New Testament," in *Fourth Ezra and Second Baruch: Reconstruction after the Fall*, ed. Gabriele Boccaccini, Matthias Henze, and Jason M. Zurawski, JSJSup 164 (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2013), 327.

<sup>291</sup> Adams, *The Stars Will Fall from Heaven*, 84–85.

<sup>292</sup> Lied, *The Other Lands of Israel*, 303.

This seems to be exactly the scenario found in chapter 51. Humanity as well as the rest of creation will be transformed; it will become paradise on earth.

There is clearly an Urzeit/Endzeit correlation here, although eschatology seems to exceed protology with the description of the glorious transformation. The text furthermore indicates a renewed world with the mountain of God as its center. That 2 Baruch envisions renewal of the present creation is also evident from the next passage under consideration.

### **3.6.5 Beginning with Abraham (57:1-3)**

<sup>1</sup> And after these you saw the bright waters; that is the fountain of Abraham and his generation, and the coming of his son, and the son of his son, and of those who are like them. <sup>2</sup> For at that time the unwritten law was in force among them, and the works of the commandments were accomplished at that time, and the belief in the coming judgment was brought about, and the hope of the world which will be renewed was built at that time, and the promise of the life that will come later was planted. <sup>3</sup> Those are the bright waters which you have seen. (2 Baruch 57:1-3)

This passage is part of Remiel's extensive explanation of the vision of the cloud. In this vision in 2 Baruch 53, thirteen waters fall from a cloud before the cloud is overcome by a lightning bolt and forced to the ground. Remiel explains that these waters signify thirteen periods in the history of the world. The waters shift between bright and black symbolizing good and wicked times respectively. The first waters are dark and symbolize the fall and the flood, while the second are bright and represent the time of Abraham and his generation.

2 Baruch explains that eschatological faith began with Abraham. He is described as obedient to the Torah before it was written, and both the belief in the judgment and the renewed world began with him.

### **3.6.6 The Appearance of the Messiah (73:1-74:4)**

Ultimately the final waters are bright and mark the appearance of the Messiah, who will defeat all enemies of Israel and sit on the throne of the kingdom in eternal peace (73:1-74:4):

<sup>1</sup> And it will happen that after he has brought down everything which is in the world, and has sat down in eternal peace on the throne of the kingdom, then joy will be revealed and rest will appear. <sup>2</sup> And then health will descend in dew, and illness will vanish, and fear and tribulation and lamentation will pass away from among men, and joy will encompass the earth. <sup>3</sup> And nobody will again die untimely, nor will any adversity take place suddenly. <sup>4</sup> Judgment, condemnations, contentions, revenges, blood, passions, zeal, hate, and all such things will go into condemnation since they will be uprooted. <sup>5</sup> For these are the things that have filled this earth with evils, and because of them life

of men came in yet greater confusion. <sup>6</sup>And the wild beasts will come from the wood and serve men, and the asps and dragons will come out of their holes to subject themselves to a child. <sup>7</sup>And women will no longer have pain when they bear, nor will they be tormented when they yield the fruits of their womb. <sup>74</sup><sup>1</sup>And it will happen in those days that the reapers will not become tired, and the farmers will not wear themselves out, because the products of themselves will shoot out speedily, during the time that they work on them in full tranquility <sup>2</sup>For that time is the end of that which is corruptible and the beginning of that which is incorruptible. <sup>3</sup>Therefore, the things which were said before will happen in it. Therefore, it is far away from the evil things and near to those which do not die. <sup>4</sup>Those are the last bright waters which have come after the last dark waters. (2 Baruch 73:1-74:4)

The characteristics of this kingdom, as has been seen many times, echo Isaiah 65:17-25. There will be joy (73:1-2 cf. Isa 65:18), there is the absence of sorrow (73:2 cf. Isa 65:19), and the absence of untimely death (73:3 cf. Isa 65:20). 73:6, with the description of serpents coming out of their holes and being subject to children, most likely indicates literary dependence on Isa 11:8: “The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder’s den.”

There are also clear references to Gen 3 and the curses afflicted upon Adam and Eve. 73:7 and the absence of pain in childbearing is a reversal of the curse upon Eve (Gen 3:16). The land will no longer be cursed and therefore the hardship of working with land to produce crops will be gone (cf. Gen 3:17-19). This all indicates a return to a prelapsarian state and paradise.<sup>293</sup>

It is also important to notice that the emphasis on healing in the beginning may be implicit in the passages from Isaiah (73:2) and are mentioned as the first thing in the messianic kingdom.

### 3.7 4 Ezra

The writing known as 4 Ezra is part of 2 Esdras. The story is set shortly after the destruction of Jerusalem in 570 B.C.E. The author is identified as Ezra the scribe.

Evidence suggests that 4 Ezra should be dated to the end of the first century C.E. Like 2 Baruch it is a reaction to the destruction of the temple in 70 C.E. and it articulates a theology in wake of the disaster. The plot revolves around the question of God's justice. In light of the destruction of Jerusalem, Ezra questions the purposes of God. The aim of the book is to bring consolation to the readers. They may not get any explanation as to why they suffer, but they do gain an assurance that God is in control.<sup>294</sup>

<sup>293</sup> Aune and Stewart, “From the Idealized Past to the Imaginary Future,” 73.

<sup>294</sup> George W. E. Nickelsburg, *Jewish Literature Between the Bible and the Mishnah a Historical and Literary Introduction* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 2005), 294.

Within this setting we find the hope for God's deliverance, which entails both cosmic and anthropological renewal. The book both speaks of new heavens and a new earth and a transformation of the heart.

Just like in 2 Baruch the major problem in 4 Ezra is the sin of humanity, which is the cause of suffering in the world, especially the suffering of Israel at the hands of its enemies. Since Adam, sin is unavoidable because of the evil heart, which prevents humans from living according to the law of God, and Ezra questions the justice of God in punishing sin:

<sup>20</sup>Yet you did not take away their evil heart from them, so that your law might produce fruit in them. <sup>21</sup>For the first Adam, burdened with an evil heart, transgressed and was overcome, as were also all who were descended from him. <sup>22</sup>Thus the disease became permanent; the law was in the hearts of the people along with the evil root; but what was good departed, and the evil remained. (4 Ezra 3:20-22).

Since everyone sins, why are some punished and others are not? Is it not injustice?

The eschatology of 4 Ezra mingles nationalist/election themes in the hope of the deliverance of Israel over her enemies with universal/creation themes that point to the restoration of humanity through the removal of the evil heart and the redemption of creation.

The hope for salvation and a better world is articulated clearly in 6:26-28:

<sup>26</sup>And they shall see the men who were taken up, who from their birth have not tasted death; and the heart of the earth's inhabitants shall be changed and converted to a different spirit. <sup>27</sup>For evil shall be blotted out, and deceit shall be quenched; <sup>28</sup>faithfulness shall flourish, and corruption shall be overcome, and the truth, which has been so long without fruit, shall be revealed. (4 Ezra 6:26-28)

This prediction of redemption appears at the end of the first part of the book. Prior to this, a number of woes have been pronounced and there is mention of a remnant - "whoever remains". These survivors will be saved. There is the promise of the transformation of the heart, a removal of evil and faithfulness and truth will flourish.<sup>295</sup> The transformation of humanity is also described in different terms in 7:97, where the outward appearance, shining like the sun and the stars, points to a new righteous and incorruptible nature.

The renewal of the world also finds expression in chapter 7, which presents this eschatological scenario:

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<sup>295</sup> According to Michael E Stone, *Fourth Ezra: A Commentary on The Book of Fourth Ezra*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1990), 172, the expectation of the change of heart is associated with the hope for the coming Elijah, which is expressed in Malachi.

7:26 Description of the messianic woes (signs)

7:26–28 Revelation of the eschatological Jerusalem, the Redeemer,  
and the 400-year messianic kingdom

7:29–30 The death of the Messiah, and creation's reversion to prime-  
val silence for seven days

7:31–32 New Creation and resurrection

7:33–44 God revealed on his throne and judgment executed

In this passage, the eschatological redemption has two stages. The first stage is the messianic kingdom and the second is the final judgment and eschatological transformation. In the messianic kingdom, the transformation has already begun and will eventually be completed. This is in particular suggested by the description of the death of the Messiah, when the world is returned to a state of primordial silence (7:30). This suggests a new creation: “All the imagery and vocabulary employed here suggests the depiction of a new genesis, in particular the references to ‘seven days,’ ‘first beginnings,’ as well as the presence of silence.”<sup>296</sup> Stephens notes that the primordial silence indicates some kind of destruction of the cosmos and marks a discontinuity. Nevertheless, there are indicators of continuity as well – the world is depicted as “sleeping” and will be “awakened” (7:31) – and the text speaks of the renewal of creation – all that is corruptible shall perish (4 Ezra 7:31c) (*creaturam renovare*).<sup>297</sup> The sleeping and awakening of the world clearly play on resurrection language: humans shall rise (7:32), and the righteous shall be transformed into a new and incorruptible life (7:97).

For our purposes, it is, however, sufficient to establish that the eschatology of 4 Ezra involves a redemption of creation that has a stage of inauguration before completion. This involves both a cosmic renewal when God will “renew the creation” (7:75) and an anthropological renewal (7:97).

The need for renewal of the heart is strongly emphasized throughout the book, and imagery of producing fruit from the heart is employed (8:6). Humans are furthermore likened to plants who have been sown in the world (8:41).

<sup>296</sup> Stephens, *Annihilation or Renewal?*, 110.

<sup>297</sup> Stephens, 110; Hahne also concludes that the “end of the world” generally refers to the end of the present age, not the destruction of the earth. *The Corruption and Redemption of Creation*, ?

### 3.8 Life of Adam and Eve / Apocalypse of Moses

The Apocalypse of Moses (Ap. Mos.) and the Life of Adam and Eve (LAE) are two recensions of a midrash on Gen. 1-4. They focus on the Fall and its results, the expulsion of Adam and Eve from Paradise and their deathbed reflections and instructions to their children. The author is widely acknowledged to be Jewish. The work was probably written in the late first century C.E.<sup>298</sup>

Although it is not an apocalypse but generally classified as midrash, the work has many of the traits of an apocalypse. These traits include heavenly visions in which secret knowledge is imparted with an angel serving as a guide (LAE 25-29), a typical apocalyptic historical overview in some manuscripts (LAE 29:4-15), the pervasiveness of sin (LAE 44:3 [=Apoc. Mos. 14:2]; 49:3; 50:2), an eschatology similar to the one found in other apocalypses, involving resurrection LAE 47:3; Apoc. Mos. 10:2; 13:3; 37:5; 41:3; 43:2), judgment (LAE 39; 47:3; 49:3; 50:2; Apoc. Mos. 10:2; 14:2; 37:5; 41:3; 43:2), the removal of the evil heart (Apoc. Mos. 13:3-5) and paradise will be given to the righteous (LAE 29:9-13; 49:3; 51:2; cf. 2 Baruch 50:1-51:14).<sup>299</sup> It differs from most apocalypses in its lack of pessimism, end-time imminence and the largely narrative style.<sup>300</sup>

In both the Apocalypse of Moses and the Life of Adam and Eve the fact that humanity is under God's judgment and will ultimately face God's judgment is emphasized. There will be two judgments: one with water and one with fire: “and the archangel Michael said to us, ‘Because of your collusion, our LORD will bring over your race the wrath of his judgment, first by water and then by fire; by these two the LORD will judge the whole human race.’” (LAE 49:3)

The judgment by water clearly refers to the flood. The judgment by fire is most likely a reference to the end of the world, a scenario also found elsewhere in Jewish and Christian literature (Josephus Ant. 1.70–71; Mek. Amalek 3.14; 2 Peter 3:13).<sup>301</sup> Again the flood is paradigmatic of the coming judgment.

Life in the present world is full of hardship and labor because of the expulsion from Paradise. There is, however, comfort in the hope of rest:

Then, when they had mourned for four days, the archangel Michael appeared to them and said to Seth, “Man of God, do not prolong mourning your dead more than six days, because the seventh day is a sign of the resurrection, the rest of the coming age, and on

<sup>298</sup> Hahne, *The Corruption and Redemption of Creation*, 143.

<sup>299</sup> Hahne, 145.

<sup>300</sup> Hahne, 144–45.

<sup>301</sup> An important parallel is also the Stoic thought of the rebirth of the world through cosmic conflagration. see Freidrich Büchsel, “γίνομαι, γένεσις, γένος, γένημα, ἀπογίνομαι, παλιγγενεσία,” ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley, Gerhard Kittel, and Gerhard Friedrich, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964), 686.



the seventh day the LORD rested from all his works.” (LAE 51:2)

In this verse we find the thought of resurrection coupled with the new creation motif. The life in the coming age is a conquering of death and a rest from the hardship of the present life. It is a return to the original perfection. This is even more clearly expressed in another passage:

And God sent Michael the archangel, and he said to them, “Seth, man of God, do not labor, praying with this supplication about the tree from which the oil flows, to anoint your father Adam; it shall not come to be yours now but at the end of times. <sup>3</sup> Then all flesh from Adam up to that great day shall be raised, such as shall be the holy people; <sup>4</sup> then to them shall be given every joy of Paradise and God shall be in their midst, <sup>5</sup> and there shall not be any more sinners before him, for the evil heart shall be removed from them, and they shall be given a heart that understands the good and worships God alone.” (Apoc. Mos. 13:1-5)

At the end of time there will be a resurrection, and the holy ones will experience the life of original Eden with God in their midst (13:4). There will be a transformation of humanity as the evil heart will be removed and replaced with a good heart (13:5).

In summary, LAE and Apoc. of Moses, while mainly focusing on the consequences of the fall, also express a hope for a reversal. Although the world will be judged, the ultimate destiny is resurrection and a return to Paradise, which will involve both anthropological and cosmological renewal.

### 3.10 Psalms of Solomon

Psalms of Solomon is a text probably composed sometime between 70 C.E. and 100 C.E.<sup>302</sup> It contains a collection of 18 psalms that exist in Greek and Syriac, but was probably originally written in Hebrew. The psalms express a reaction of a group of devout Jews to the capture of Jerusalem by the Romans in the first century B.C.E.<sup>303</sup>

Psalms 17 and 18 are considered especially important for New Testament studies because of their portrayal of the Messiah. Of particular interest for the purposes of this survey, however, is Psalm 14:

<sup>1</sup>The Lord is faithful to those who truly love him,  
to those who endure his discipline,

<sup>2</sup>To those who live in the righteousness of his commandments,  
in the Law, which he has commanded for our life.

<sup>302</sup> R. B. Wright, *Psalms of Solomon: A Critical Edition of the Greek Text, Jewish and Christian Texts in Contexts and Related Studies 1* (London; New York: T&T Clark, 2007), 1–7.

<sup>303</sup> R. B. Wright, “Psalms of Solomon,” in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha, Vol. 2: Expansions of the “Old Testament” and Legends, Wisdom and Philosophical Literature, Prayers, Psalms and Odes, Fragments of Lost Judeo-Hellenistic Works*, ed. James H. Charlesworth (New York: Doubleday, 1985), 639.

- <sup>3</sup>The Lord's devout shall live by it forever;  
 the Lord's paradise, the trees of life, are his devout ones.  
<sup>4</sup>Their planting is firmly rooted forever;  
 they shall not be uprooted as long as the heavens shall last,  
<sup>5</sup>For Israel is the portion and inheritance of God. (Psalms of Solomon 14:1-5)

This text is the first part of a psalm describing the judgment of God and the ultimate fate of humans. The first part describes the destination of the righteous, whereas the second is a description of the fate of sinners. What is expressed with regard to the righteous is a hope of a return to paradise where they will live for ever. The devout are “the trees of life” and a “planting”, a metaphor used about the wisdom and righteousness in the Psalms (e.g. Ps 1) and Proverbs (3:18).<sup>304</sup> Since the righteous are the trees of life they are also in themselves paradise. It is important to notice that this not a future predication. Paradise is in some sense present in the community of believers in the present.

The text is clearly an instance where eschatology matches protology. The expression, “as long as the heavens shall last,” is probably indicating a belief in the permanence of creation and thus means forever.

### 3.11 Pseudo-Philo's Biblical Antiquities (LAB)

This work is often referred to by its Latin title, *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* (LAB). The work falls under the genre of “rewritten Bible”, as it freely retells part of the story from Adam to David. However, the eschatological visions found in the LAB do have affinities to those found in apocalypses. LAB is often connected with 4 Ezra and 2 Baruch, with which it shares theology and themes, especially with regard to eschatology. All three works were probably composed in Israel in the late first century C.E.<sup>305</sup>

The focus of eschatology in LAB is on what happens after death and what happens at the consummation when God will judge the world. In LAB, we find the concept of two ages and the idea that, after the eschatological judgment, a new age, ‘the world to come’, will begin (3:10; 16:3; 19:7, 13; 32:17; 62:9).<sup>306</sup> An elaborate description of the world to come is found in 3:10:

<sup>304</sup> Doering, “Urzeit-Endzeit,” 48.

<sup>305</sup> Daniel J. Harrington, “Afterlife Expectations in Pseudo-Philo, 4 Ezra, and 2 Baruch, and Their Implications for the New Testament,” in *Resurrection in the New Testament: Festschrift J. Lambrecht*, BETL 165 (Leuven: Peeters, 2002), 21.

<sup>306</sup> Daniel J. Harrington, “Pseudo-Philo - A New Translation and Introduction,” in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha, Vol. 2: Expansions of the “Old Testament” and Legends, Wisdom and Philosophical Literature, Prayers, Psalms and Odes, Fragments of Lost Judeo-Hellenistic Works*, ed. James H. Charlesworth (New York; London: Yale University Press, 1985), 301.

But when the years appointed for the world have been fulfilled, then the light will cease and the darkness will fade away. And I will bring the dead to life and raise up those who are sleeping from the earth. And hell will pay back its debt, and the place of perdition will return its deposit so that I may render to each according to his works and according to the fruits of his own devices, until I judge between soul and flesh. And the world will cease, and death will be abolished, and hell will shut its mouth. And the earth will not be without progeny or sterile for those inhabiting it; and no one who has been pardoned by me will be tainted. And there will be another earth and another heaven, an everlasting dwelling place. (LAB 3:10)

This verse is found in connection with the retelling of the flood, where God makes the promise not to destroy the earth again (3:9a). This promise is, however, only until the “appointed years for the world have been fulfilled” (3:10a). At that time, there will be a general resurrection, and God will judge everyone according to the work of the each person. This will be the time for the new world, as this world will end and death and evil will be destroyed. The description of the world to come in many respects resembles the description in Isaiah 65, since it ends with the promise of “another earth and another heaven.” The renewal of the earth is also found explicitly in 16:3a, “until I remember the world and renew the earth,” and 32:17, “For I will sing a hymn to him in the renewal of creation”.

### 3.12 Summary

Collins has argued that one of the major characteristics of the Jewish apocalypses is a concern with cosmic transformation. He notes also that all apocalypses deal with the underlying problem that “this world is out of joint.”<sup>307</sup> As we have seen, the reason for the world being out of joint is in many instances human sin. There is a solidarity between humanity and the natural world, and human sin profoundly affects the creation. Consequently, cosmic transformation or new creation requires human transformation. This is reflected in a number of the texts (1 En. 5:4-10, Jub. 23:26-31, 4 Ezra 6:25-28, 2 Bar. 73:1-7).

The most common feature of the apocalypses is the vision of the imminent judgment of the wicked and the world. This judgment is often described in terms reminiscent of the flood story in Genesis (1 En 10:16-11:2; 107:1-3, LAE 49:3, LAB 3:10). The imagery most commonly applies to the description of the high degree of wickedness in the end time similar to that at the time of the flood. Sometimes, however, the flood serves as a type of new creation or renewal of the world. In these passages, the flood not only functions as a judgment but also brings renewal and the cleansing of the world.

<sup>307</sup> John J. Collins, “The Jewish Apocalypses,” *Semeia* 14 (1979): 27–28.

The renewal of the world involves the absence of evil and suffering, brings about healing and entails fertility and nutritional abundance. The absence of evil involves a conquering of the evil forces in the world. This aspect is especially important in Jubilees, where Satan and demons lead people astray and persuade them to sin (Jub. 10:1-5; 11:4-5, 7-8; 15:31-32; 48:9-12, 15-18). They also cause physical illness (Jub. 10:11-12). It is therefore an important point in the eschatological vision of Jubilee that “there will be no Satan and no evil one” (Jub. 23:29).

A preferred expression for the sinfulness of humanity is the hard or evil heart. The transformed humanity has received a new heart created through a new spirit (Jub. 1:22), or the evil heart is simply removed (4 Ez. 6:26). It is not always evident whether the transformation is due to human or divine agency.

Imagery from nature is also used about transformed humanity, as the righteous are described as shining suns and stars. Humans are also portrayed as plants bearing fruit, and the heart is the ground in which the seed of the law is sown to bear the fruits of salvation (2 Bar, 4 Ezra, Psalms of Solomon).

Except for Jubilees, which may portray some kind of synergism, the transformation or new creation is brought about through divine intervention. In some writings a messianic figure appears who marks the beginning of the end and also brings about renewal and transformation (1 En., 2 Bar., 4 Ezra). In both 2 Baruch and 4 Ezra the messiah set up a kingdom that inaugurates the transformation.

## 4 New Creation in the Dead Sea Scrolls

In this chapter I will survey the Dead Sea Scrolls (DSS) for descriptions of new creation.

The DSS, particularly the ones found at Kirbet Qumran, are of immense value for the study of early Christianity.<sup>308</sup> The DSS are generally dated between 200 BCE and 100 CE and are considered to be of Jewish origin by the majority of scholars.<sup>309</sup>

Many of the scrolls found at Qumran are copies of much of the literature discussed in the preceding chapters. The scrolls provide evidence of the importance and influence of many canonical and non-canonical texts in Judaism around the turn of the era. Generally the scrolls can be divided into biblical, non-biblical and sectarian writings.<sup>310</sup>

The present chapter surveys the sectarian writings that describe the beliefs and religious practices of the people who produced them.<sup>311</sup> These writings include the Community Rule (1QS, 1QSa and 1QSB), the Damascus Document (CD), the War Scroll (1QM), the Pesharim, and the Hodayot (1QH<sup>a</sup> and 1QH<sup>b</sup>).<sup>312</sup> This does not mean that all these texts are discussed in this chapter. They are only included in the discussion insofar as they contain relevant findings. In addition to the generally recognized sectarian writings, the survey includes writings that may not be classified as sectarian with certainty such as 4QInstruction; 4QRenewed Earth and 11QTemple. as they provide relevant material.

Due to the findings of a number of apocalyptic writings at Qumran – including multiple copies of Daniel, 1 Enoch and Jubilees – it is evident that there was an interest in apocalyptic thought. Gabrielle Boccaccini suggests that the Qumran library shows evidence suggesting that it belonged to a group with roots in Enochic Judaism.<sup>313</sup> Others are more reluctant to identify the community with apocalyptic thought.<sup>314</sup> It is, however, evident that the presence of apocalyptic writings in the

<sup>308</sup> Lawrence H. Schiffman and James C. VanderKam, eds., *Encyclopedia of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), vii.

<sup>309</sup> For references to scholars who believe that the scrolls are of Christian or other origin see VanderKam, *The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Bible*, 118.

<sup>310</sup> Schiffman and VanderKam, *EDSS*; Although see Gabriele Boccaccini, “Qumran and the Enoch Groups: Revisiting the Enochic-Essene Hypothesis,” in *The Bible and the Dead Sea Scrolls*, ed. James H. Charlesworth, vol. 1 (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2006), 37–38, who criticizes the classification for being anachronistic.

<sup>311</sup> John J. Collins prefers the term 'movement' since it is not evident that there was a single community. *The Apocalyptic Imagination, an Introduction to Jewish Apocalyptic Literature*, 146. I will nevertheless use the term community here in an inclusive sense. So also Paul Swarup, *The Self-Understanding of the Dead Sea Scrolls Community: An Eternal Planting, a House of Holiness*, LSTS 59 (London; New York: T&T Clark, 2006), x.

<sup>312</sup> Collins, *The Apocalyptic Imagination, an Introduction to Jewish Apocalyptic Literature*, 146.

<sup>313</sup> Boccaccini, “Qumran and the Enoch Groups”; So also Collins, *The Apocalyptic Imagination, an Introduction to Jewish Apocalyptic Literature*, 146.

<sup>314</sup> So Rowland, *The Open Heaven*, 38–42; George W. E. Nickelsburg, “Apocalyptic Texts,” ed. Lawrence H.

Qumran library also affected the sectarian writings, which share many traits with apocalyptic writings such as a strong emphasis on the struggle between good and evil in this world, the expectation of the final defeat of evil through divine intervention, the imminence of the end, judgment and eternal life.<sup>315</sup>

That the community at Qumran had an eschatological orientation is expressed through the abundant use of the phrase “the end of days,” which occurs more than thirty times in the scrolls.<sup>316</sup> The eschatological orientation cannot solely be concluded by the presence of that particular phrase since it is not equally distributed and does not appear at all in some of the major texts.<sup>317</sup> Hopes of an eschatological character describing radical changes with a sense of finality are nevertheless articulated throughout the writings.

It is, however, clear that it is necessary to speak of eschatologies rather than an eschatology in the DSS, since diverging views are expressed in scrolls. One particular point of discussion is to what extent the community operated with a realized eschatology. Some passages seem to express an expectation of a final testing as well as salvation in the present age (1QH IV 26; 1QH XI 19-22; XIX 10-14; 4Q394-399).<sup>318</sup>

Puech, however, writes about the eschatology at Qumran that they did not adopt a realized eschatology:

They awaited the arrival of the messianic kingdom at the end of the eschatological war at the finish of the final Jubilee, the Day of the Lord or the Last Judgment. The latter assures resurrection of the just dead and the transformation of the living just into the glory of Adam upon an earth purified by fire and renewed, in the company of angels in the presence of God, but also eternal damnation of the impious vanquished and coagulated in eternal fire of hell with Belial and his angels.<sup>319</sup>

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Schiffman and James C. VanderKam, *EDSS* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 34.

<sup>315</sup> John J. Collins, *Apocalypticism in The Dead Sea Scrolls* (London; New York: Routledge, 1997), 150–51.

<sup>316</sup> Annette Steudel, “אחרית הימים in the Texts from Qumran,” *Revue de Qumran* 16, no. 2 (62) (1993): 227; A phrase which always appears in the context of scripture interpretation see Albert L. A. Hogeterp, *Expectations of the End: A Comparative Traditio-Historical Study of Eschatological, Apocalyptic and Messianic Ideas in the Dead Sea Scrolls and the New Testament*, STDJ 83 (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2009), 6.

<sup>317</sup> John J. Collins, “Eschatology,” ed. Lawrence H. Schiffman and James C. VanderKam, *EDSS* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 257.

<sup>318</sup> Steudel, “אחרית הימים in the Texts from Qumran,” 231; Crispin H. T. Fletcher-Louis, *All the Glory of Adam: Liturgical Anthropology in the Dead Sea Scrolls*, STDJ 42 (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2002), 89.

<sup>319</sup> Émile Puech, “Resurrection: The Bible and Qumran,” in *The Bible and the Dead Sea Scrolls*, ed. James H. Charlesworth, vol. 2 (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2006), 279.

The rejection of a realized eschatology does not mean that a present experience is impossible. Rather, the full realization just lies in the future. In that sense one could speak of an inaugurated eschatology.

Puech's summary of the eschatology may be a bit too sweeping in light of the diverging eschatologies found in the scrolls.<sup>320</sup> The summary serves to highlight that the eschatological expectations found in the scrolls does indeed include transformation of humanity and renewal of creation. The presence of transformation of humanity and renewal of creation becomes evident in the following survey.

The survey will begin with texts from the Hodayot.

#### 4.1 New Creation in the Hodayot (1QH)

The first text from the Hodayot presents the expectation of judgment on the world and salvation of the righteous.

<sup>13</sup>[Even though you burn] the foundations of mountains and fire [sears] the base of Sheol, those who ... [...] in your regulations. <sup>14</sup>You [protect] the ones who serve you loyally, [so that] their posterity is before you all the days. You have raised an [eternal] name, <sup>15</sup>[forgiving] offence, casting away all their iniquities, giving them as a legacy all the glory of Adam [and] abundance of days. (1QHa IV 13-15)<sup>321</sup>

The fire that burns the foundations of the mountains and even to the base of Sheol is a description of the judgment of God, perhaps even referring to a cosmic conflagration.<sup>322</sup> The righteous are of course protected from the judgment, and their destiny is described here as “all the glory of Adam” and a long life, perhaps even eternal life (cf. CD III 20).

The glory of Adam could both be understood anthropologically and cosmologically as the restoration of the likeness of God in humans and of humans to Eden. This may be deduced from 4Q504, which says that “Adam was created in the likeness of your (God’s) glory and walked in the land of glory (Eden).” (4Q504 frag. 8, 4-7) The description here nevertheless points in the direction of the transformation of human nature, since it is found in connection with forgiveness of sins.

<sup>320</sup> Hogeterp, *Expectations of the End*, 4–5.

<sup>321</sup> If nothing else is indicated, all translations are from Florentino García Martínez and Eibert J. C. Tigchelaar, eds., *The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition*, 2nd ed., 2 vols. (Leiden; New York: Brill, 1999).

<sup>322</sup> Puech, “Resurrection,” 273.

Abundance of days may also be understood as a parallel to the glory of Adam, implying the overcoming of death and human longevity through the transformation of human nature. The same idea may then be expressed in 1QHa V 22c-24a: “Only by your goodness <sup>23</sup> is man acquitted, [purified] by the abundance of [your] compa[ssion.] You embellish him with your splendour, you install [him over an abun]dance of pleasures, with everlasting peace <sup>24</sup> and length of days.” If this text can be taken as a parallel to 1QHa IV 13-15 “the glory of Adam” may be something in which the community already participates.<sup>323</sup>

According to Doering, this is the meaning of 1QH<sup>a</sup> IV 15 (and could also be the case in CD III 20): “You have raised an [eternal] name, 15 [forgiving] offence, casting away all their iniquities, giving them as a legacy all the glory of Adam [and] abundance of days,” (See also 4Q171 III 1; 4Q418 frag. 81). Doering refers to Émile Puech who has suggested that “the Glory of Adam” relates to resurrection and new creation<sup>324</sup> and furthermore points to the aspect of cleansing and forgiveness of sin in connection with “the glory of Adam”. This leads him to conclude: “In this sense it is a *proleptic* recapitulation of *Urzeit* in *Endzeit*.”<sup>325</sup>

The primary meaning is then anthropological renewal. An interpretation in terms of restoration of Eden as the land of Glory should, however, not be excluded.

One text that may describe a scenario of renewal of the non-human world is 1QHa V 16b-18: “[F]or you have shown them what they had never s[een, ...] what was there from of old and creating <sup>18</sup> new things, demolishing ancient things and [erec]ting what would exist for ever.”

This text speaks of the creation of new things after the destruction of the old and the establishment of eternal things perhaps envisioning new creation.<sup>326</sup> Another text in the *Hodayot* speaks of the renewal of all things with the renewal of man:

For the sake of your glory, you have purified man from offence, so that he can make

<sup>323</sup> According to Fletcher-Louis, *All the Glory of Adam*, xii, Qumran held an “angelomorphic anthropology,” in which the original state of humanity is construed in divine/angelic terms. Through liturgical practice in the temple human ontology is transcended and becomes divine. “The liturgy calls for the remembrance of Adam’s original state as the basis for future restoration of the true Adam-in-Israel.” (Fletcher-Louis, 94). See however Boccaccini, “Qumran and the Enoch Groups,” 273, who reads this passage as a description of universal conflagration and renewal and a completely future event. See also the critique of Fletcher-Louis by Doering, “Urzeit-Endzeit,” 43 n. 137.

<sup>324</sup> Doering, “Urzeit-Endzeit,” 42.

<sup>325</sup> Doering, 43 See also; Émile Puech, “Messianism, Resurrection, and Eschatology at Qumran and in the New Testament,” in *The Community of the Renewed Covenant: The Notre Dame Symposium on the Dead Sea Scrolls*, ed. Eugene C. Ulrich and James C. VanderKam, CJA 10 (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1993), 250–51 and; Fletcher-Louis, *All the Glory of Adam*, 97: “Indeed, the idea that the community already has Adam’s glory is consistent with the fact that the community have also returned to the pre-lapsarian world of Eden.”

<sup>326</sup> J. Duncan M. Derrett, “New Creation: Qumran, Paul, the Church, and Jesus,” *Revue de Qumran* 13, no. 1/4 (49/52) (1988): 599; Jackson, *New Creation in Paul's Letters*, 54.



himself holy <sup>11</sup>for you from every impure abominations and guilt of unfaithfulness, to become united wi[th] the sons of your truth and in the lot with <sup>12</sup>your holy ones, to raise the worms of the dead from the dust, to an ever[lasting] community and from a depraved spirit, to [your] knowledge, <sup>13</sup>so that he can take his place in your presence with the perpetual host and the spirits [...], to renew him with everything<sup>14</sup> that will exist, and with those who know in a community of jubilation. (1QH XIX 10-14)

Here we find the restoration of a believer described to the community. The emphasis is on cleansing and purification that makes fellowship possible again (10-11). The passage about raising “the worms of the dead from the dust” (12) may be about resurrection but could also be understood metaphorically as a description of the experience of being restored to the community.<sup>327</sup> The restoration nevertheless results in the renewal of “everything that will exist” (14), meaning that the restoration of humans entails restoration for the rest of creation as well.<sup>328</sup>

A similar scenario appears in a text that uses plant imagery to describe the role of the righteous community in the world:

They will respond to your glorious commands, and they will be your princes in the lo[t of your holy ones. Their root] <sup>15</sup> will sprout like a flo[wer of the field f]or ever, to make a shoot grow in branches of the everlasting plantation so that it covers all the wo[rld] with its shade, [and] its [crown] <sup>16</sup> (reaches) up to the skie[s, and] its roots down to the abyss. All the streams of Eden [will water] its [bra]n[ch]es and they will be [seas without] <sup>17</sup> limits; and its forest will be over the whole world, endless, and as deep as to Sheol [its roots.] (1QH<sup>a</sup> XIV 14-17)

Preceding this piece there is a description of how God has chosen a remnant of his people. People who will be purified from guilt (8) forgiven (9) and taught the law. Consequently, they will keep the commands of God. This is a scenario which has similarities to the one found in the description of the new covenant in Jeremiah 31. Both texts include the forgiveness of sins and giving of the law.

The following description of people as plants, which will sprout and grow and fill the whole world, is clearly an Urzeit/Endzeit typology. This is clear since the tree is watered by the streams of Eden (16). The use of the plant metaphor for a righteous person is well-known in the Old Testament (e.g. Ps 1:3; Isa 61:3 Jer. 17) and the OTP (e.g. Jub. 1:16-17; 1 En. 93:2). It is also used elsewhere in the DSS (1QH<sup>a</sup> XVI 5-21; 1QS VIII 4-7; 1QS XI 7-9). In this context the metaphor has eschatological features since the plant will sprout for ever; it is everlasting and will cover the whole world with its

<sup>327</sup> For an overview of different views see Hogeterp, *Expectations of the End*, 288–89.

<sup>328</sup> Russell, *The “New Heavens and New Earth,”* 117.

shade, and its forest will be over the whole world.<sup>329</sup> The imagery also becomes a way of describing the expansion of the garden of Eden, the sanctuary of God to the whole world.<sup>330</sup>

The text then envisions a time when God will establish the chosen remnant and chooses the imagery of fruitful plants possibly drawn from Isaiah, particularly 27:6 and 37:31-32, to describe this scenario.<sup>331</sup> In the DSS this imagery is explicitly connected to Eden and the remnant is a planting in Eden. Earlier in the text this is also described in terms of being among the angels (13). The restoration also has cosmic implications since the tree will grow to cover the whole world.

Interesting parallels to the imagery of a cosmic tree are also found in Daniel 4 and Ezekiel 17 and 31. According to Paul Swarup the community may have adapted the negative symbolism of Daniel 4 and Ezekiel 31, which use the imagery of proud kings ready to be felled. In the application of the imagery to the community the image is transformed into a positive symbol. The community sees themselves as God's planting that will extend throughout creation and be a source of blessing to the nations.<sup>332</sup> The end-goal is that all the world will be filled with the trees of Eden and as such become like Eden, a renewal of all creation with the renewed community as the epicenter of that renewal.

Similar imagery and expectation is also found in the next major text, the Community Rule (1QS).

## 4.2 New Creation in the Community Rule (1QS)

The imagery of people like plants implies that Eden is essentially the community of believers. They are also the true sanctuary of God. This aspect is expressed in texts where the community is described as the new temple or the new Jerusalem. The imagery is complementary since Eden was understood to be a sanctuary (4Q265 Frg. 7 II 11-16a). The designations of the community as an eternal planting and a Holy of Holies are found together in 1QS VIII:

When such men as these come to be in Israel, <sup>5</sup>then shall the party of the Yahad truly be established, an “eternal planting” (Jubilees 16:26), a temple for Israel, and—mystery!— a Holy <sup>6</sup>of Holies for Aaron; true witnesses to justice, chosen by God’s will to atone for the land and to recompense <sup>7</sup>the wicked their due. They will be “the tested wall, the precious cornerstone” (Isa 28:16) whose <sup>8</sup>foundations shall neither be shaken nor swayed, a fortress, a Holy of Holies <sup>9</sup>for Aaron, all of them knowing the Covenant of Justice and thereby offering a sweet savor. They shall be a blameless and true house in

<sup>329</sup> Patrick A. Tiller, “The ‘Eternal Planting’ in the Dead Sea Scrolls,” *Dead Sea Discoveries* 4, no. 3 (1997): 331.

<sup>330</sup> For the understanding of Eden as a sanctuary in the DSS see 4Q265 cf. Jub. 3:8-27; 8:19 Florentino García Martínez, “Man and Woman: Halakah Based upon Eden in the Dead Sea Scrolls,” in *Paradise Interpreted: Representations of Biblical Paradise in Judaism and Christianity*, ed. Gerard P. Luttikhuisen, Themes in Biblical Narrative 2 (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 1999), 112–13.

<sup>331</sup> Swarup, *Self-Understanding*, 21–22.

<sup>332</sup> Swarup, 30, 195; See also Tiller, “The ‘Eternal Planting’ in the Dead Sea Scrolls,” 331.

Israel, <sup>10</sup>upholding the covenant of eternal statutes. They shall be an acceptable sacrifice, atoning for the land and ringing in the verdict against evil, so that perversity ceases to exist. (1QS VIII 4b-10a)<sup>333</sup>

The text portrays a time when a true leadership will be established in the community so that it will be able to fulfill its calling described with a series of parallel epithets: an eternal planting, a temple for Israel, a Holy of Holies for Aaron. The titles express the self-understanding of the community.<sup>334</sup> The role of the community will be to atone for the land and judge the wicked (6-7). Ultimately the service of the community will result in the complete eradication of evil (10).

According to Derrett this text shows that the community at Qumran saw “new creation as beginning within the community, the nucleus of the New Jerusalem.”<sup>335</sup> The community provides atonement for the land so that perversity ceases to exist (10a). The community saw themselves as preparing “a way for the LORD” (Isa 40:3) to come for redemption (1QS VIII 14). Thus, as the true temple and “eternal planting” the community is the epicenter of renewal for the land and eventually for the whole world.

The community is made up of renewed individuals chosen by God: “To those whom God has selected he has given them as everlasting possession; and he has given them an inheritance in the lot of <sup>8</sup>the holy ones. He unites their assembly to the sons of the heavens in order (to form) the council of the Community and a foundation of the building of holiness to be an everlasting plantation throughout all <sup>9</sup>future ages” (1QS XI 7b-9a). Human renewal begins with the heart, because the problem of human sinfulness lies in the heart. One example of this follows directly from the texts just cited: “However, I belong to evil humankind, to the assembly of unfaithful flesh; my failings, my iniquities, my sins, {...} with the depravities of my heart.” (1QS XI 9b) The same notion is expressed in many texts.<sup>336</sup> The entrance into the community requires a transformation: “No-one should walk in the stubbornness of his heart in order to go astray following his heart <sup>5</sup>and his eyes and the musings of his inclination. Instead, he should circumcise in the Community the foreskin of his tendency and of his stiff neck in order to lay a foundation of truth for Israel, for the Community of the eternal <sup>6</sup>covenant.” (1QS V 4-6)

<sup>333</sup> Translation from Martin G. Abegg Jr., Edward M. Cook, and Michael O. Wise, eds., *The Dead Sea Scrolls: A New Translation* (New York: HarperOne, 2005), 129.

<sup>334</sup> Swarup, *Self-Understanding*.

<sup>335</sup> Derrett, “New Creation,” 599.

<sup>336</sup> 1QS VII 24; IX 10; XI 9; 1QM XIV 7; 1QH<sup>a</sup> IV 19; XII 14 and many others. For an extensive overview see Loren T. Stuckenbruck, “The ‘Heart’ in the Dead Sea Scrolls: Negotiating Between the Problem of Hypocrisy and Conflict Within the Human Being,” in *The Dead Sea Scrolls in Context: Integrating the Dead Sea Scrolls in the Study of Ancient Texts, Languages, and Cultures*, ed. Armin Lange, Emanuel Tov, and Matthias Weigold (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2011), 439.

It is important to notice that human renewal also involves physical renewal. Just as the removal of evil from the earth brings restoration and fruitfulness so does the transformation of the human heart and the deliverance from evil spirits involve freedom from afflictions and illness:<sup>337</sup>

These are the foundations of the spirit of the sons of truth (in) the world. And the reward of all those who walk in it will be healing, <sup>7</sup>plentiful peace in a long life, fruitful offspring with all everlasting blessings, eternal enjoyment with endless life, and a crown of glory <sup>8</sup>with majestic raiment in eternal light. (1QS IV 6b-8)

The transformation of the heart is at times called circumcision, as we saw above, while in other texts the change is described as purification. This is the case in “Instruction on the two spirits” which forms part of “The Community Rule.”<sup>338</sup>

God, in the mysteries of his knowledge and in the wisdom of his glory, has determined an end to the existence of injustice and on the appointed time <sup>19</sup>of the visitation he will obliterate it for ever. Then truth shall rise up forever (in) the world, for it has been defiled in paths of wickedness during the dominion of injustice until <sup>20</sup>the time appointed for the judgment decided. Then God will refine, with his truth, all man’s deeds, and will purify for himself the structure of man, ripping out all spirit of injustice from the innermost part <sup>21</sup> of his flesh, and cleansing him with the spirit of holiness from every wicked deeds. He will sprinkle over him the spirit of truth like lustral water (in order to cleanse him) from all the abhorrences of deceit and (from) the defilement <sup>22</sup> of the unclean spirit, in order to instruct the upright ones with knowledge of the Most High, and to make understand the wisdom of the sons of heaven to those of perfect behaviour. For those God has chosen for an everlasting covenant <sup>23</sup>and to them shall belong all the glory of Adam. There will be no more injustice and all the deeds of trickery will be a dishonour. Until now the spirits of truth and injustice feud in the heart of man: <sup>24</sup>they walk in wisdom or in folly. In agreement with man’s inheritance in the truth, he shall be righteous and so abhor injustice; and according to his share in the lot of injustice, he shall act wickedly in it, and so <sup>25</sup>abhor the truth. For God has sorted them into equal parts until the appointed end and the new creation.(1QS IV 18-25)

This text expounds a view of present reality in which evil and wickedness are allowed to exist (18). In the end, however, God’s judgment will come, and truth shall conquer wickedness and perversity (19-20). This also entails purification of the elect (some), along with wisdom, which essentially means right behavior, and an eternal covenant. This scenario is described in terms similar to the description of the restoration of the people of Israel in Ezekiel 36:

<sup>25</sup> I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses, and from all your idols I will cleanse you. <sup>26</sup> A new heart I will give you, and a new spirit I will put within you; and I will remove from your body the heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. <sup>27</sup> I will put my spirit within you, and make you

<sup>337</sup> Hogan, *Healing in the Second Tempel Period*, 141–43, 165.

<sup>338</sup> Doering, “Urzeit-Endzeit,” 41–42.

follow my statutes and be careful to observe my ordinances. <sup>28</sup> Then you shall live in the land that I gave to your ancestors; and you shall be my people, and I will be your God. (Ezek 36:25-28)

The author of 1QS may well have been dependent on Ezekiel in composing the text. The major difference is the focus on spirits in 1QS, which will be removed from the innermost part (line 20), whereas Ezekiel speaks of the heart of stone (26).

Again we find the expression “all the glory of Adam”. As discussed above this may refer both to the renewal of the non-human world in terms of a return to Eden and a renewal of humanity. Here the context focuses on human renewal and the end of the struggle between the two spirits in the human heart. In light of the similarities with Ezekiel 36 it is, however, likely that the Glory of Adam in this context refers to Eden. Ezekiel 36:35 states: “This land that was desolate has become like the garden of Eden.”

That new creation in one way or the other is in view is clear from the expression at the end of the passage (25). New creation is here parallel with the appointed end and is therefore a future expectation. That does not mean, however, that renewal cannot be experienced in the present for those predestined according to the spirit of truth.

The texts considered from 1QS focus primarily on the renewed person and community and, only as corollary to that, the renewal of the land. The text under consideration in the next section concentrates on the land as the inheritance of the community.

## 4.3 New Creation in the Pesharim

### 4.3.1 A pesher on Psalm 37 (4Q171)

The idea of renewal of land is expressed through the notion of “inheriting the land”. This expectation is often described in eschatological terms that include Edenic blessings.<sup>339</sup>

A pesher on Psalm 37 reads:

But they who hope in YHWH will possess the land. Its interpretation: <sup>5</sup>they are the congregation of his chosen ones who carry out his will. *Ps 37:10* A little while, and the wicked will be no more. <sup>6</sup>*Blank* <sup>7</sup>*Ps 37:10* I will stare at his place and he will no longer be there. Its interpretation concerns all the wickedness at the end <sup>8</sup>of the forty years, for they will be completed and upon the earth no [wic]ked person will be found. <sup>9</sup>*Ps 37:11* And the poor shall possess the land and enjoy peace in plenty. Its interpretation concerns <sup>10</sup>the congregation of the poor who will tough out the period of distress and

<sup>339</sup> Stephens, *Annihilation or Renewal?*, 90–93.

will be rescued from all the snares of <sup>11</sup>Belial. Afterwards, all who shall possess the land will enjoy and grow fat with everything enjoy[able to] <sup>12</sup>the flesh. (4Q171 II 4b-12)

This eschatological interpretation of Psalm 37 encourages continued faithfulness since the wicked will soon be eradicated. Those who hope in YHWH, the poor, will possess the land and enjoy peace and an abundance of food. The snares of Belial refer to the temptations of evil and thus imply moral restoration.

Initially this is not obviously about new creation although the circumstances are changed into an ideal situation. The restoration to the land is later in the same text described as the inheritance of Adam which indicates an Urzeit/Endzeit typology:

<sup>1</sup>those who have returned from the wilderness, who will live for a thousand generations, in salva[tio]n; for them there is all the inheritance of <sup>2</sup>Adam, and for their descendants for ever. (4Q171 III, 1-2)

The inheritance of Adam may be a reference to Eden and an expectation that the land will be restored to Edenic conditions. The return from exile is then described in terms of protology. What is particularly emphasized here is the hope of a long or perhaps even eternal life. The features of human longevity focus on progeny together with peace, and plenty from the previous passage suggests that what is described here is a reversal of the curses of Genesis 3.<sup>340</sup>

In another section of the pesher the restoration of the land is again described:

For those who are blessed [by him shall possess] the land, but those who are cursed by him [shall be cut] off. <sup>10</sup>Its interpretation concerns the congregation of the poor [to whom is] the inheritance of the whole ... [...] <sup>11</sup>They will inherit the high mountain of Isra[el and] delight [in his] holy [mountain]. (4Q171 III, 8-11)

Again the unrighteous will be punished, and the land is promised to the poor. They will inherit the high mountain of Israel, his holy mountain. Here the interpreter brings the psalm together with Isa 57:13: "But whoever takes refuge in me shall possess the land and inherit my holy mountain." The holy mountain is of course a reference to Zion and the inheritance of Adam then stands as a parallel to Zion. This is not surprising in light of texts from the Old Testament and the OTP which portray Zion as Eden (Ezek 20:40; 34:14; Jub. 3:8-27).

<sup>340</sup> So Michael O. Wise, "'4QFlorilegium' and the Temple of Adam," *Revue de Qumran* 15, no. 1/2 (57/58) (1991): 127–28; Puech, "Messianism, Resurrection, and Eschatology at Qumran and in the New Testament," 252; Stephens, *Annihilation or Renewal?*, 92.

The key expression in this text is of course the inheritance of Adam, which indicates a hope of restoration resembling Eden and therefore new creation. The restoration is nevertheless not detached from a restoration of the land, and it is not clear in this text whether the restoration extends beyond the land.

The restoration of Zion to Eden is also the theme of the next text under consideration, which concerns the hope for an eschatological temple.

### 4.3.2 New Creation in 4QFlorilegium

4QFlorilegium is a thematic pesher combining quotations from Deut 33, 2 Sam 7 and Psalms 1-2 and 5. Because of the frequent occurrence of the term “the last days”, scholars have called the text an “eschatological midrash.”<sup>341</sup>

One section of the composition is particularly interesting for our purposes:

This (refers to) the house which [he will establish] for [him] in the last days, as is written in the book of <sup>3</sup> [Moses: *Exod 15:17–18* «The temple of] YHWH your hands will est[a]blish. YHWH shall reign for ever and ever». This (refers to) the house into which shall not enter <sup>4</sup> [... for] ever either an Ammonite, or a Moabite, or a bastard, or a foreigner, or a proselyte, never, because his holy ones are there. <sup>5</sup> «Y[HW]H [shall reign for] ever». He will appear over it for ever; foreigners shall not again lay it waste as they laid waste, in the past, <sup>6</sup> the tem[ple of I]srael on account of their sins. And he commanded to build for himself a temple of man, to offer him in it, <sup>7</sup> before him, the works of thanksgiving. (4Q174 Frags. 1 Col. I, 2b-7a)

This is a passage that describes first “the temple of YHWH”, the eschatological temple which God himself will build (2-5), and secondly the “temple of Israel” (6a), referring to the temple of Solomon and perhaps also the second temple.<sup>342</sup> Last there is mention of a “temple of man” (6b) or temple of Adam (מקדש אדם). The meaning of this expression is debated.<sup>343</sup> There nevertheless appears to be a basic agreement among recent interpreters that there is reference to Adam here and a use of an Urzeit-Endzeit typology in which the eschatological temple will be like the garden of Eden, the temple of Adam.<sup>344</sup>

<sup>341</sup> G. J. Brooke, “Florilegium,” ed. Lawrence H. Schiffman and James C. VanderKam, *EDSS* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 297.

<sup>342</sup> Doering, “Urzeit-Endzeit,” 44.

<sup>343</sup> For an overview of proposals see Wise, “‘4QFlorilegium’ and the Temple of Adam,” 107–10.

<sup>344</sup> Wise, 130; G. J. Brooke, “Miqdash Adam, Eden and the Qumran Community,” in *Gemeinde Ohne Tempel: Community without Temple*, ed. Beate Ego, Armin Lange, and Peter Pilhofer, WUNT II 118 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1999), 288–89; Fletcher-Louis, *All the Glory of Adam*, 42; Scott, *On Earth As In Heaven*, 141; Adela Yarbro Collins, “The Dream of a New Jerusalem at Qumran,” in *The Bible and the Dead Sea Scrolls*, ed. James H. Charlesworth, vol. 3 (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2006), 246; Swarup, *Self-Understanding*, 121–23; Doering, “Urzeit-Endzeit,” 44–45.

Brooke has furthermore suggested that the expression at the same time refers to a temple made up by men so that the community is a temple. This means that the text presents the community as a proleptic and interim manifestation of the end-time temple that will be established by God, and both temples involve a return to Eden.<sup>345</sup>

This interpretation is plausible in light of other texts in which the community is described as a sanctuary and even Eden in the same passage (1QS VIII 5; 1QS IX 6).<sup>346</sup> 4QFlorilegium presents an expectation of a new creation in connection with an expectation for an eschatological temple. The new temple and the new creation is, however, already proleptically present through the temple made up by the members of the community.

#### 4.4 New Creation in the Temple Scroll (11QTemple)

Also interesting for the purposes of this study is the Temple scroll. We have already seen how Zion and the Temple is central to the eschatology of the Old Testament and also plays a pivotal role in many of the books of the OTP and in some texts already treated in this chapter.

The Temple scroll is the longest intact scroll found at Qumran, consisting of a rewriting of the Pentateuch from the end of Exodus to the end of Deuteronomy.<sup>347</sup> It mainly contains descriptions for the construction of the temple as well as laws and regulations regarding the temple. Wise contends that the description of the temple in the Temple scroll is a development of the eschatological temple found in Ezekiel 40-48.<sup>348</sup> Generally, however, the text does not present itself as an eschatological text. There is nevertheless one passage that speaks of the establishment of the eschatological temple:

<sup>7</sup>I shall accept them. They shall be for me a people and I will be for them for ever; and I shall dwell <sup>8</sup>with them for ever and always. I shall sanctify my [te]mple with my glory, for I shall make my glory reside <sup>9</sup>over it until the day of creation, when I shall create my temple, <sup>10</sup>establishing it for myself for all days, according to the covenant which I made with Jacob at Bethel. (11QTa XXIX 7-10)

<sup>345</sup> Brooke, "Miqdash Adam, Eden and the Qumran Community," 288–89; Fletcher-Louis, *All the Glory of Adam*, 42; Swarup, *Self-Understanding*, 121–23; Doering, "Urzeit-Endzeit," 45.

<sup>346</sup> For further arguments and references see the discussion of 1QHa IV 13-15 above.

<sup>347</sup> Florentino García Martínez, "Temple Scroll," ed. Lawrence H. Schiffman and James C. VanderKam, *EDSS* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 927.

<sup>348</sup> Wise, "'4QFlorilegium' and the Temple of Adam," 130.



Of particular interest here is verse 9, which talks about the day of creation. The phrase must refer to a future day of creation, and it is therefore reasonable to assume that re-creation or new creation is implied. Mell argues that it should be understood to refer to the day of *new* creation.<sup>349</sup> Mell argues for a parallel with Jubilees 1:29, which has the phrase “until the day of new creation”, with the description of the establishment of the Temple on Zion.

Significantly the temple will be established by God alone; it is not built by men, but created by God. The temple is in itself an eschatological new creation.

Mell furthermore suggests that the mention of the covenant with Jacob at Bethel indicates a universal perspective. The promise of God to Jakob is the promise of the land and a multitude of descendants but also significantly that all the families of the earth shall be blessed in him and in his offspring (Gen 28:14).<sup>350</sup> This suggestion resonates with the idea that the community saw themselves as the nucleus for the renewal of the earth.<sup>351</sup>

## 4.5 New Creation in other texts

The hope of restoration of the land described in Edenic language is also found in other texts which are not part of the so-called major texts.

### 4.5.1 4QRenewed Earth (4Q475)

Elsewhere, the restoration of the earth is explicitly described as a return to Eden. This is the case in 4QRenewed Earth:

<sup>1</sup> [...] ... and through the power of an enemy [...] <sup>2</sup> [...] they have [for]gotten them, and they have not searched them, and like a scorner (?) [...] <sup>3</sup> [...] ... in their midst, and he will tell them all [...] <sup>4</sup> [...] al]l the world, and there will be no more guilty deeds on the earth and not [...] <sup>5</sup> [...] destr]oyer, and every adversary; and all the world will be like Eden, and all [...] <sup>6</sup> [...] and] the earth will be at peace for ever, and ... [...] ... [...] <sup>7</sup> [...] beloved son, and he will let him inherit it all, and [...] <sup>8</sup> [...] ... for ... [...] <sup>9</sup> [...] ... [...] (4Q475 1-9)

Due to the very fragmented condition of the text it is necessary to be cautious about concluding too much from it. In line 5 T. Elgvin reads 'moth' instead of 'Eden', which is the reading by Martinez and Tigchelaar. Doering argues that Eden is the more likely reading according to the possible reconstruction of the manuscript.<sup>352</sup> Elgvin nevertheless sees the text as a description of universal

<sup>349</sup> Mell, *Neue Schöpfung*, 106–10.

<sup>350</sup> Mell, 109.

<sup>351</sup> Derrett, “New Creation,” 24.

<sup>352</sup> Doering, “Urzeit-Endzeit,” 22 n. 19.

destruction and rebirth akin to scenarios found in apocalyptic literature. Taking the context into account, 'Eden' appears to be the reading that makes best sense.

Elgvin comments that he doesn't think that it had an origin within the Yahad since the community does not feature as the place from which renewal begins.<sup>353</sup> That the Yahad saw themselves as the nucleus of renewal is a common feature as we have seen.

#### 4.5.2 4QPsalms<sup>f</sup> (4Q88)

This passage has been called the 'Eschatological Hymn':<sup>354</sup>

[Bec]ause he comes to judge <sup>6</sup> every cre[at]ure, to obliterate evil-doers <sup>7</sup> from the earth, [the sons] of wickedness will not <sup>8</sup> be found. The heavens [will give] their dew, <sup>9</sup> and there will be no corru[pt dealing in] their [terri]tories. The earth <sup>10</sup> [will give] its fruit in its season, and <sup>11</sup> its [pro]duce will not fail. The fruit-trees <sup>12</sup> [...] of their grape-vines, and <sup>13</sup> their [spring]s will not deceive. *Blank* <sup>14</sup> The poor will eat and those who [f]ear YHWH will be replete. (4Q88 IX 5b-14)

The passage refers to the judgment of God when the wicked will be removed from the earth. At that time restoration will come to the earth as heaven and earth will be renewed to provide nutritional abundance for the righteous. The judgment of the wicked and removal of evil from the world is clearly a precondition for the renewal of heaven and earth, and so moral restoration is connected to restoration of the non-human world.<sup>355</sup>

#### 4.6 Summary

This survey of the DSS has provided evidence that new creation was a part of the theology of the people who used the scrolls.

Overall it is hard to distinguish between cosmological and anthropological new creation since they are intertwined (1QH XIX 10-14). The cosmological new creation seems to be contingent upon an anthropological new creation, and the emphasis of the writings is surely on the community and the individual as a part of the community as new creation. This is sometimes described as present reality. The transformation of the world is primarily in the future, but paradise can in some sense be

<sup>353</sup> Torleif Elgvin, "Renewed Earth and Renewed People: 4Q575," in *The Provo International Conference on the Dead Sea Scrolls: Technological Innovations, New Texts, and Reformulated Issues*, ed. Donald Wayne Parry and Eugene Charles Ulrich, STDJ 30 (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 1999), 576; Torleif Elgvin, "4QRenewed Earth," in *Qumran Cave 4, XXVI. Cryptic Texts and Miscellanea, Part 1*, ed. Stephen J Pfann, DJD 36 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000), 465.

<sup>354</sup> García Martínez and Tigchelaar, *DSSSE*, 280.

<sup>355</sup> Jackson, *New Creation in Paul's Letters*, 54.

experienced in the community. In general the expectation is centered upon the community as the nucleus of renewal.

The following expectations of new creation may be detected at Qumran:

1. The general expectation of new creation is explicitly expressed through presence of the terms “new creation” (1QS IV 25) and “renewal of the earth.” (4Q475 5)
2. Eden imagery of trees and rivers.

This is present in many passages. This imagery is applied to the community who are called an 'eternal planting', a tree watered by the streams of Eden that will cover the whole world as well stand in a forest extending throughout the entire world (1QH<sup>a</sup> XIV 14-17).

This terminology is juxtaposed with the designation of the community as the temple (1QS VIII 4b-10a; 1QS XI 7b-9a; 4Q174 frag. 1 col. 6) thereby equating Eden and the temple. The community may be seen as a proleptic realization of a temple garden while also expecting a future eschatological temple in the new creation (1QTa XXIX 9)

The terms “Glory of Adam” and “inheritance of Adam” may also refer to the regaining of Eden (4Q171 III, 1-2; 1QS IV 23).

3. Overcoming of death and human longevity is present through the expectation of a long life that probably indicates eternal life (1QH<sup>a</sup> IV 15 cf. CD III 20; 1QS IV 6b-8; 4Q171 III 1-2). Texts on the resurrection in DSS also belong to this category.
4. Moral restoration and restored relationship to God is acquired through the entry into the community, which involves radical changes for the individual.

The entry involves forgiveness of sin, the cleansing and transformation of the evil or stubborn heart described as circumcision (1QS V 4-6; 1QS IV 20-23). The heart imagery is largely drawn from Jeremiah 31 and Ezekiel 36, and the term “eternal covenant” is also prevalent in the passages describing moral restoration (1QS IV 22; 1QS VIII 10a).

Plant imagery is also used to describe moral restoration (1QH<sup>a</sup> XIV 14-15).

The entry into the community is even described as a resurrection, which may be the strongest expression of the radical change perceived to take place (1QH XIX 12).

The term “Glory of Adam” is clearly important with regard to anthropological renewal, although it is not clear whether it refers to moral or physical renewal (1QS IV 23; 1QH<sup>a</sup> IV 15).

5. Fruitfulness.

Human and agricultural fruitfulness is present as part of the expectation of inheriting land (1QS IV 7; 4Q171 II 9-12). In these passages references to Eden are also made. A hope for universal fruitfulness is also expressed (4Q88 5b-14).

6. Absence of suffering and pain.

The hope for the absence of suffering and pain is present through an expectation of peace and healing (1QS IV 6b-8).

7. Renewal through cosmic judgment and renewal may be expressed as an expectation of cosmic conflagration (1QH<sup>a</sup> IV 13-15).

## 5 Summary: New Creation in The Cultural Encyclopedia of Matthew

This chapter summarizes the three preceding chapters, acting as an overview of the findings. The chapter refines the working definition of new creation formulated in the introduction in order to craft a more nuanced lens through which to read Matthew.

Initially the definition consisted of three major features that defined the motif of new creation. It is eschatological, it refers to protology and it involves divine agency.

### 5.1 Eschatology

The initial definition of eschatology was formulated as expectations of a future radically discontinuous with the present that is presented with a sense of finality.

The nature of the future change that is expected in the different texts surveyed does not present a unified picture with regard to the degree of discontinuity. The texts can describe the future change in terms of transformation, renewal and replacement of the old.

In some Old Testament texts it is not clear if the language is simply a metaphorical hyperbole for a glorious future in the land (Isa 65:17-25). Its subsequent use in the texts, however, makes this reading less probable. The expectation of a divine cosmic intervention is presented in a very literal way in apocalyptic literature.

The sense of finality is expressed in the expectation for an end or the defeat of evil. This is described in terms of the end of war (Isa 2:4), suffering, illness, death (Isa 65:17-25) and even harmony among the animals as well as between animals and people (Isa 11:6-9). The defeat of the enemies of the people of God is also central (Ps 2; 110; Dan 7:1-12; Zech 14:2-3; Jub. 29:30). In the apocalypses and the DSS evil is commonly attributed to the devil, demons or other other-worldly beings (1 Enoch 6-8; Jub 29:29, 4Q171 II 10-11; 4Q475 1-9).

The periodization of history is also an important element in the eschatology found in the apocalypses. This element emphasizes the sovereignty of God over history (Daniel 2; 7; 1 Enoch 85-90, 2 Baruch 53).

Another development in the apocalyptic literature is the heightened emphasis on the imminent judgment. The expectation of judgment is present in the Old Testament texts, but the judgment scene with God or his chosen agent judging individuals is a more frequent motif in the apocalypses (1 Enoch 45:3; 4 Ezra 6:18; 7:33-35; 2 Bar. 48:39-40; 83:2; LAB 3:10).

Central features in the eschatology of the Old Testament, the OTP and the DSS are Zion, Jerusalem and the temple. The eschatological hopes are fixed upon this national and geographical location. The important point is nevertheless that although the eschatological hopes are set upon this particular place, the hopes of restoration extend beyond the land and the nation. Zion functions as an epicenter for the renewal of the world. This is because the king of Zion is not only the king of Israel but the king and creator of the world, and eventually God will be king over all the earth. This important feature is highlighted through the use of protology in the eschatological hopes attached to Zion.

## 5.2 Protology

Zion is explicitly compared with Eden (Ezek 36:35) and the restoration of Zion with the establishment of the eschatological temple is connected with the recovery of paradise (2 Bar 4:1-6). The restoration of Zion spells the restoration of the land (Isa 65, Ezek 47, Zech 14) and of the entire earth (Jub. 1:29; 2 Bar 32:1-6; 11QTa XXIX 7-10). These passages describe a restoration that flows out of Zion to the land and the nations. Other passages describe how in the last days the nations will come to Zion (Ps 87; Isa 2; Micah 4), which will be restored to Edenic harmony (Isa 11).

In Isa 24-28, which describes cosmic destruction in terms echoing the Genesis flood, God defeats the forces that stand against him on Zion, and ultimately the victory is celebrated in a lavish banquet for all the nations on Zion (Isa 25:6). In apocalyptic literature the flood also serves as a type for future cosmic destruction and the eventual renewal that follows (1 En. 10:16-11:2; 107:1-3; 4 Ezra ; LAB 3:10).

In an astonishing development in the DSS the Qumran community is itself described as the temple of Israel and the nucleus for the renewal of the land and the world (1QS VIII 4b-10a; 4Q174 frags. 1 I 2b-7a).

Imagery that may echo Eden is that of rivers and trees. The restored Zion is often described as life-giving river flowing out of (Ezek 47; Zech 14) a place flourishing with trees (Isa 54; Ezek 36) and the place where the tree of life will be transplanted (1 En. 25:5-6).

Plant and tree imagery is also applied to humans who are like trees or plants either individually or collectively (4 Ez. 8:41). The restoration of Israel is described as the planting of the people in the land, a restoration that will result in fruits for the whole world (Isa 27:6).<sup>356</sup> In apocalyptic literature and Qumran, plant imagery is explicitly connected to the eschatological hope of a return to Eden and new creation (Jub. 1:16-18, 29; Ps. Sol. 14:3) that will cover the whole world (1QH<sup>a</sup> XIV 14-17). The imagery of plants and trees in many cases indicates moral renewal, which is an important theme in the texts surveyed.

Moral renewal is a key aspect of the future hope, since the end of evil not only points to the defeat of external enemies but also the end of sin and wickedness (1 En. 1QS IV 23). The renewal is described in terms of cleansing and transformation. In the DSS “the glory of Adam” includes the aspect of moral renewal (1QH<sup>a</sup> IV 15; 1QH XIX 10-14; 1QS IV 18-25). Another image used to describe moral renewal is the heart.

The motif of the transformation of the heart is found in several passages in each of the three groups of texts. The problem of the evil heart is prominent in the Old Testament prophetic literature (Isa 29:23, Jer 4:14; 17:9, Ezek 3:7). It is furthermore found in several texts from the OTP and Qumran (cf. 1 En. 5:4; 4 Ezra 7:48; 1QS XI 9b). In the apocalyptic texts the problem of the evil heart is connected with the sin of Adam (Apoc. of Moses 13:3-5; 4 Ezra 3:20-22; 4:30). The evil heart is perhaps a reference to the connection between the heart and the wickedness of humanity in Gen 6:5.

Throughout these texts there is nevertheless a hope for a changed heart (Ezek 36:25-28; Jer 31:31-34; 4 Ez. 6:26; 8:6). A change that may be effected in present (Ps 51:10) but ultimately is connected with a future renewal of all things. In Jubilees and 1QS the transformation of the heart is part of scenarios that speak of new creation or renewal of creation (Jub. 1:22-29; 1QS IV 18-25).

Moral renewal and heart-imagery is furthermore virtually always found in the context of a new covenant, which indicates a restored relationship between God and the people. There is a close relationship between covenant and creation. The breaking of the covenant involves curses on the land and expulsion from the land, and conversely the upholding of the covenant brings blessings on the people as well as the land. The eschatological new covenant points forward to a time when humanity is transformed. At that time the covenant will no longer be broken and the blessings will

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<sup>356</sup> A number of other Old Testament texts also describe people as plants, but the meaning is neither clearly eschatological nor does it evoke Eden. Thus, it is not included in the survey of the new creation in the Old Testament prophets.

be forever secured for the covenantal people. The promises include the world which they will inherit as part of the covenantal promises.

Ultimately a number of texts describe a transformation involving a change in physical appearance. The righteous will be radiating in glory like stars and angels (Dan 12:3; 2 Bar. 51:5.10 ; 4 Ezra 7:97). Physical transformation may also be included in the expression “the glory of Adam” in the DSS.

The expectation of long life or eternal life is expressed in a number of texts (Isa 65:, 2 Bar. 51:9; 1QH<sup>a</sup> IV 15 cf. CD III 20; 1QS IV 6b-8; 4Q171 III 1-2). This motif harkens back to an antediluvian state in which people lived long lives (1 En. 5:9-10; Jub. 29:27-29). Eternal life of course implies the absence of death and takes the expectation back to a prelapsarian state.

Other reversals of the curses found in Genesis 3 are also found in the material surveyed. The reversal of the curse of pain in childbirth (2 Bar. 73:7) is seen in some texts and is implied through the increasing fertility of humans and absence of children dying at birth (Isa 65:23; Ezek 36:10-11).

The reversal of the curse on the earth is also a recurring motif both through descriptions of abundant fertility of the land (Ezek 36:30; 1 En. 10:19; 2 Bar. 29:5-6) and the absence of hard labor needed for the land to bear fruits (2 Bar. 74:1). The land is at times described as a desert that will eventually bloom and flourish (Isa 35:1-2; Isa 51:3; Ezek 36:35). Particularly the vision of the eschatological temple in Ezek 47 describes the restoration of the land with the new temple at its center in Edenic terms.

The fertility of the land results in the abundance of food (4Q171 II 4b-12; 4Q88 IX 5b-14). Food will even come down from heaven like the manna in the Exodus account (2 Bar. 29:8). A particularly striking motif in this connection is the food of Eden, the fruit of the tree of life that will be given to the righteous (1 En. 25:4-6).

Healing and the absence of illness is also a recurring motif (Isa 35:5-6, Jub. 1:29; 23:29-30, 2 Bar. 73:2, 4 Ezra, 1QS IV 6b-8). At times this is connected to the forgiveness of sins, which affects the healing (Isa 33:24).

In sum, it is an expectation of the complete absence of all evil and suffering.



### **5.3 Divine Agency**

In almost all the instances of new creation found in the preceding chapters the change is brought about through divine intervention.

Only the scenario in Jubilees 23 may be seen as a kind of synergism. If the Jubilees as a whole is taken into account, it is nevertheless clear that transformation and renewal ultimately come from God who circumcises the hearts of the people and eventually brings about new creation through the establishment of an eschatological temple (Jub. 1:19-29).

A messianic figure is present in some of the passages (Daniel 7:13-14; 1 Enoch 45; 2 Baruch; 4 Ezra). This figure is, however, not the agent of new creation, but the time of his appearance indicates the beginning of the defeat of God's enemies and the renewal of the world.

This overall description of the elements that are part of the motif of new creation in the cultural encyclopedia of Matthew and his model reader can now help us to detect the extent of the presence of new creation in Matthew.

Given the centrality of Jerusalem, Zion and the temple in the eschatological expectations, the first step will be to consider the role of Jerusalem and the temple in Matthew.

## Part 2: New Creation in Matthew

### 6 Outline: New Creation in Matthew

What we have seen in the preceding chapters is that the motif of a “new creation” is widespread in the various eschatological expectations found in the Old Testament and ancient Judaism as they are expressed in the OTP and DSS. The eschatological expectation of a new creation is especially prevalent in the apocalyptic writings of second temple Judaism.

The task of the following pages is to investigate whether it is also present in Matthew and what it means for the interpretation of Matthew. This chapter argues that new creation forms the eschatological vision of Matthew, including a number of the elements outlined as part of the motif of new creation in Matthew's cultural encyclopedia. The investigation will not be exhaustive and more elements of new creation may be present in Matthew. The intention of the investigation is to be indicative by showing that new creation is indeed present in every major aspect of Jesus' ministry in Matthew from the beginning of the Gospel to the end.

The investigation begins with the broad view of history and the eschatological vision of Matthew. This section argues that renewal of creation is part of Matthew's eschatological vision and that Matthew presents a view of history that extends from creation to new creation. This provides an overall eschatological framework for Matthew in light of which the rest of the Gospel may be read.

The second section examines the beginning of Matthew (Matt 1-4). The major part of the section is on Matt 1, with special focus on Matthew's first two words and the meaning of the allusion to the book of Genesis. The importance of these chapters for our purpose is the way in which Jesus is presented as the fulfillment of the Old Testament promises. I argue that in this fulfillment the coming of Jesus is presented as a new beginning for Israel and consequently for the whole world.

Having established the eschatological framework of the narrative in Matthew with the end and the beginning, the following chapters treat the words and works of Jesus in Matthew. Firstly, I show that the central and overarching theme of the kingdom in Matthew is closely connected to new creation. This is evident both in the Jewish background for the kingdom and consequently also in Matthew. I go on to argue that the parables of growth present the kingdom as new creation, since they envision universal dominion and transformation through the expansion of the kingdom of the creator.

Secondly the miracles of Jesus done in the context of the coming kingdom are shown to be proleptic manifestations of new creation in terms of healing, nutritional abundance, defeat of evil and that Jesus in all this is portrayed as someone with divine creative power.

The final chapter focuses on the motif of moral restoration, arguing that the commandments of Jesus in Matthew should be understood in terms of new creation as the restoration of God's original intentions. I show that this theme is linked with the vision of a new covenant and the moral restoration of humans through the transformation of the heart. To this end the imagery of people as plants that was part of the new creation motif as described in previous chapters is employed in Matthew. Finally the future eschatological transformation of the righteous is examined and shown to be congruent with the motif of new creation.

## 7 Eschatology in Matthew: The End as a New Beginning

This section discusses the view of history in the Gospel of Matthew and its eschatology. I propose an eschatological framework in which the narrative is to be understood. In doing so, I address the following questions: How does Matthew envision the time-line of history? How do the present and the coming ages relate to each other in Matthew's view? Does Matthew operate with an overlap of the ages? And lastly, should we speak of proleptic inauguration or just foreshadowing or anticipation of a new age in Matthew?<sup>357</sup>

Next, the question whether new creation has a place in the eschatological vision of Matthew is answered on the basis of an analysis of the word *παλιγγενεσία* (Matt 19:28). In addition, on the basis of a close reading of the account of the death and resurrection of Jesus in Matthew, I argue that that event is portrayed as an eschatological turning of the ages and the beginning of new creation. A central element in this treatment is the role of the Temple in Matthew, which is treated in connection with the description of the rending of the veil in Matt 27:51.

Before launching into the details of my proposals, I would like to survey different representative positions on Matthew's eschatology, thus covering the relevant spectrum of opinion. Donald Hagner summarizes the main points of discussion regarding Matthean eschatology. The first point is that there is a present–future tension in the presentation: the coming of Jesus fulfills some eschatological expectations—a ‘realized’ eschatology — and yet there is an even stronger emphasis on the future judgment of the wicked and blessing of the righteous — a ‘future’ eschatology. The second point is that there is an imminence–delay tension in Matthew’s presentation: some sayings suggest a fulfillment within a generation, while others suggest a significant interim period or substantial delay.<sup>358</sup>

<sup>357</sup> Macaskill, *Revealed Wisdom and Inaugurated Eschatology in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity*, 24.

<sup>358</sup> Donald A. Hagner, “Matthew’s Eschatology,” in *To Tell the Mystery: Essays on New Testament Eschatology in Honor of Robert H. Gundry*, ed. Moisés Silva and Thomas E. Schmidt (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 1997), 64–66. An example in which future and imminent aspects are prominent is David Sim. In his dissertation on the apocalyptic eschatology in Matthew he emphasizes the imminence of the end as an integral part of the eschatological expectation in Matthew without mention of a realized or proleptic eschatology. See Sim, *Apocalyptic Eschatology in the Gospel of Matthew*. Strecker on the other hand emphasizes the aspect of delay and argues that the theological-historical context implied by the Gospel is one where imminence is not emphasized. There are also texts that suggest the church is expected to have a long-term role to play. See Georg Strecker, *Der Weg der Gerechtigkeit*, 82 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1971), 41–49.

## 7.1 The Tensions in Matthean Eschatology

Different proposals have been made to solve the tensions. Donald Hagner offers one of them. In his survey of Matthew's eschatology, Hagner begins by confirming the complexity of the eschatological statements in Matthew. A complexity that has been interpreted as an inconsistency on the part of the evangelist or simply read as irreconcilable, but nevertheless intentional, tension in the eschatology of Matthew. Hagner outlines the verses favoring each aspect, and while he is not ready to label Matthew as incoherent, he does not offer a solution to the tension. He concludes that Matthew may have been wrong about his expectation for an immediate *parousia*.<sup>359</sup> Hagner deems it unthinkable for Matthew to separate the fall of Jerusalem, the coming of the Son of Man and the end of the age: "They are part of the same complex of events; as the evangelist's added εὐθέως in 24:29 may indicate, the destruction of Jerusalem was to be followed 'immediately' by the *parousia* of the Son of Man."<sup>360</sup>

It is these three events in the eschatology of Matthew that are the focus in the discussion of Matthean eschatology. The question at stake is how the fall of Jerusalem, the coming of the Son of Man and the end of the age relate to each other. With attention to the purpose of this thesis, additional questions must be added regarding the relationship between history and creation. What is the fate of the cosmos in Matthew's theology? And does Matthew have a cosmic dualism?<sup>361</sup>

The following survey is best thought of as reviewing suggestions for dealing with the tensions of Matthean eschatology that Hagner has rightly pointed out. The suggestions are categorized according to the writers' views on what and when *the end* is according to Matthew. The survey includes three basic categories. (1) First is a position maintaining that end-of-the-world language in Matthew is metaphorical and refers to events within history of cosmic significance. (2) Second is the position maintaining that the eschatology in Matthew does indeed involve an end of the world in the future but that, in addition, the end in a sense has already come. This position can be labeled as 'proleptic' or 'inaugurated eschatology'. (3) Third is the position maintaining that the eschatology of Matthew is exclusively futuristic and involves a literal end of the present physical world.

The authors included in the survey are representative of each of these positions, though individual scholars may present their position slightly different within the three major positions.

<sup>359</sup> Hagner, "Matthew's Eschatology," 70.

<sup>360</sup> Hagner, 69.

<sup>361</sup> This question is at the center of the debate regarding apocalyptic eschatology. Rowland, *The Open Heaven*; Fletcher-Louis, "Jewish Apocalypticism."

## 7.2 Eschatology in Matthew – a Survey of Suggestions

### 7.2.1 *The End of the Temple as a “Metaphorical”<sup>362</sup> End of the World*

*N.T. Wright*

N. T. Wright has treated early Christian eschatology in his works on the historical Jesus, primarily discussing Mark 13 while also touching upon Matt 24.<sup>363</sup> He has also written a more popular level commentary on Matthew.<sup>364</sup> His views have been of major influence in Matthean scholarship. As we shall see both R. T. France and Crispin Fletcher-Louis follow Wright.<sup>365</sup>

Wright argues that Jesus never spoke of the end of the created world. Rather, the passages that use the language of cosmic destruction should be understood metaphorically as describing major political upheavals.<sup>366</sup> While Wright actually refers to the Jewish expectation of cosmic destruction, he nevertheless believes that the language of the passing away of heaven and earth is not to be taken literally. Wright writes:

Many if not most second-Temple Jews, then, hoped for the new exodus, seen as the final return from exile. The story would reach its climax; the great battle would be fought; Israel would truly ‘return’ to her land, saved and free; YHWH would return to Zion. This would be, in the metaphorical sense, the end of the world, the ushering in at last of YHWH’s promised new age.<sup>367</sup>

And he further writes:

Matthew 24:3, therefore, is most naturally read, in its first-century Jewish context, not as a question about (what scholars have come to call, in technical language) the ‘parousia’, but as a question about Jesus ‘coming’ or ‘arriving’ in the sense of his actual enthronement as king, consequent upon the dethronement of the present powers that were occupying the holy city.<sup>368</sup>

In his commentary Wright expounds this view further. First he writes on Matt 24:29:

<sup>362</sup> This term has been the source of much confusion and it is important to understand that metaphorical does not decrease the significance of the events, which are described with language of metaphor. According to Wright metaphorical basically means non-literal but does nevertheless refer to something concrete. .N. T. Wright, “In Grateful Dialogue: A Response,” in *Jesus & the Restoration of Israel: A Critical Assessment of NT Wright’s Jesus & the Victory of God*, ed. Carey C. Newman (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1999), 261–63.

<sup>363</sup> N. T. Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God*, Christian Origins and the Question of God 2 (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1996), 339–66.

<sup>364</sup> N. T. Wright, *Matthew for Everyone, Part 1: Chapters 1-15* (London: SPCK, 2004); N. T. Wright, *Matthew for Everyone, Part 2: Chapters 16-28* (London: SPCK, 2004).

<sup>365</sup> See also Alistair I. Wilson, *When Will These Things Happen: A Study of Jesus as Judge in Matthew 21-25* (Carlisle: Paternoster, 2004).

<sup>366</sup> Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God*, 193–242.

<sup>367</sup> Wright, 209.

<sup>368</sup> Wright, 346.

For Isaiah, and for those who read him in the first century, the one thing it didn't mean was something to do with the actual sun, moon and stars in the sky. That would make a quite different tune. This language was well-known, regular code for talking about what we would call huge social and political convulsions. When we say that empires 'fall', or that kingdoms 'rise', we don't normally envisage any actual downward or upward physical movement. Matthew intends us to understand that the time of the coming of the son of man will be a time when the whole world seems to be in turmoil.<sup>369</sup>

And on Matt 24:36:

It is vital, therefore, to read the passage as it would have been heard by Matthew's first audience. And there, it seems, we are back to the great crisis that was going to sweep over Jerusalem and its surrounding countryside at a date that was, to them, in the unknown future—though we now know it happened in AD 70, at the climax of the war between Rome and Judea.<sup>370</sup>

Thus, according to Wright, the eschatological perspective of Jesus in Matthew goes no further than to the destruction of the temple in 70 CE. This event is the referent of both the 'coming of the Son of Man' sayings in Matthew as well as those about the end of the age.<sup>371</sup>

For Wright, it is very important to emphasize that in the eyes of first-century Jews the end of the space-time universe is out of the question. Rather, what is expected are major events within history but not the end of history. Wright seems to overstate his case when he simply writes that no contemporary Jew expected the literal end of the world.<sup>372</sup> There certainly are examples of language of cosmic catastrophe in the Old Testament and post-biblical literature as well as other contemporary sources that have a non-literal meaning.

Yet, it is evident from the survey in the present study of new creation in Jewish apocalyptic literature that the sources do not allow for Wright's sweeping conclusion. Similarly, Harry A. Hahne surveys an even broader selection of Jewish apocalyptic literature on the subject of nature and concludes that

Jewish apocalyptic writings differ in their view of the relationship between the old creation and the new creation. They are fairly evenly divided between two approaches: (1) a new creation with a new heaven and earth; or (2) the renewal of the present creation. Several works hold both ideas in tension, although one idea dominates.<sup>373</sup>

<sup>369</sup> Wright, *Matthew for Everyone, Part 2*, 122.

<sup>370</sup> Wright, 126–27.

<sup>371</sup> N. T. Wright, *The Resurrection of the Son of God*, Christian Origins and the Question of God 3 (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003), 645.

<sup>372</sup> Wright, *The New Testament and the People of God*, 333.

<sup>373</sup> Hahne, *The Corruption and Redemption of Creation*, 159.

This shows that expectations were more varied than Wright seems to allow for. This is also the conclusion in recent studies by Edward Adams<sup>374</sup> and Mark B. Stephens.<sup>375</sup> It is thus clear that the evidence cannot support the sweeping conclusion of Wright.

G. B. Caird, whom Wright builds on with regard to the interpretation of apocalyptic imagery, seems to have a more balanced view and acknowledges that first-century Jews believed that the world had a literal beginning and would have a literal end.<sup>376</sup>

#### *Crispin Fletcher-Louis*

Crispin Fletcher-Louis, who generally argues along similar lines as Wright, nevertheless objects to Wright's separation of history and creation. He provides several good points in his critique, nothing that:

Wright makes much of the claim that Jesus' aims and vision belong to a grand salvation-historical meta-narrative: sin-exile-and-return. In so doing, and with some older Old Testament scholarship exemplified by the work of G. von Rad, he drives a wedge between history and creation: the cosmos has no other role in the historical drama than to provide the staging. Old Testament scholarship has since moved on and it is increasingly clear that history and creation are a tightly-knit whole in the biblical worldview."<sup>377</sup>

Fletcher-Louis's point is of importance for the purposes of this study as it is exactly the connection between history (or, more precisely, salvation-history) and creation that is investigated in this thesis.

Thus, while Wright's approach certainly has corrected some misunderstandings regarding the interpretation of the imagery of cosmic-catastrophe, his major conclusion is too sweeping in terms of the evidence, and a more balanced view is necessary.

#### *R.T. France*

R. T. France argues along similar lines as Wright in his commentary on Matthew.<sup>378</sup> He argues that Matt 24:4-35 is concerned with the destruction of the temple and that the ultimate end only comes in play in v. 36-44. Here France's position is different from Wright's, since he allows that 24:36-51 is referring to the second coming of Christ at the end of the age. In Wright's interpretation the Second Advent is never in view in these passages.

<sup>374</sup> Adams, *The Stars Will Fall from Heaven*.

<sup>375</sup> Stephens, *Annihilation or Renewal?*

<sup>376</sup> G. B. Caird, *The Language and Imagery of the Bible* (London: Duckworth, 1980).

<sup>377</sup> Crispin H. T. Fletcher-Louis, "Jesus and Apocalypticism," in *Handbook for the Study of the Historical Jesus*, ed. Tom Holmén and Stanley E. Porter, vol. 3 (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2011), 2903–4.

<sup>378</sup> France, *Matthew*.



According to France, the formula “until heaven and earth pass away” in 24:35 and 5:18 hardly refers to an actual dissolution of heaven and earth but functions rhetorically as a foil to the positive declarations.<sup>379</sup>

Commenting on 19:28, France does allow that Matthew may expect the destruction of the present world, but not on the grounds of 5:18 and 24:35. Rather, the interpretation rests on the basis of the general use of *παλιγγενεσία* in Greek and Jewish sources.

### **7.2.2 A Dualistic Eschatology with an Overlap of the Ages (The end of Jesus as the end of the World)**

*D. C. Allison*

A prominent contributor to the discussion is Dale C. Allison Jr. Allison is often described as a loyal defender of the heritage of Schweitzer. As an example, Macaskill summarizes Allison's view: “Dale C. Allison claims to be reclaiming the heritage of Schweitzer by seeing Jesus as a prophet of the imminent end and understanding these words (Matt 24:4-44) in a fairly literal sense as depicting the end of the present cosmos.”<sup>380</sup> Allison has since modified his view with regard to Schweitzer:

Although I once subscribed to and publicly defended Schweitzer's “thorough-going eschatology,” I do so no longer. I suppose I was the victim of system-mongering, of the rationalistic impulse to make all the pieces of the tradition fit snugly together without remainder. I have come to see that too much associates itself only obliquely, if at all, with eschatology, that the puzzle will always have large lacunae, and that we will always be left with pieces that go nowhere. Nonetheless, Jesus did, when gazing about, perceive a perishing world, and in accord with then contemporary readings of the prophetic oracles of the Hebrew Scriptures, he hoped for a recreated world, a heaven on earth, a paradise liberated from devils and illness. And this was for him no vague inkling or tangential thought but a consuming hope.<sup>381</sup>

It also must be noted that Allison took up the heritage of Schweitzer in the context of the historical Jesus. When it comes to Matthew and the early church, Allison argues that the Gospel writer affirms the apocalyptic expectation of Jesus but also argues that the eschatology of Jesus had been reinterpreted in light of the death and resurrection of Jesus and the delay of the *parousia*.<sup>382</sup>

<sup>379</sup> France, 930–31.

<sup>380</sup> Macaskill, *Revealed Wisdom and Inaugurated Eschatology in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity*, 163.

<sup>381</sup> Dale C. Allison, *The Historical Christ and the Theological Jesus* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009), 96.

<sup>382</sup> Dale C. Allison, *The End of the Ages Has Come, an Early Interpretation of the Passion and Resurrection of Jesus* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1987), 148.

With regard to the imminent end, Allison, like Hagner, takes Matt 24:34 at face value and concludes that Matthew (like Jesus) was wrong in his expectation of the imminent end. Allison does not connect the coming of the Son of Man with the fall of Jerusalem, but simply holds that the end, in Matthew's view, would come within a generation.<sup>383</sup> According to Allison, Matt 24:4-44 depicts “the entire post-Easter period, interpreted in terms of the messianic woes.”<sup>384</sup>

Allison sees the fulfillment of these woes already in the description of Jesus' passion as he notes a number of parallels between Jesus' eschatological prophecies and what happens in the subsequent chapters.<sup>385</sup> According to Allison the description of the death and resurrection of Jesus in Matthew is in the language of an eschatological event: “... the end of Jesus is spoken of as though it had concurred with the end of the age. ... In Matthew this age and the age to come seemingly overlap.”<sup>386</sup>

Allison prefers *inaugurated eschatology* to *realized eschatology* since in some strands of early Jewish thinking eschatology is best thought of as in process: the final sequence had been set in motion.<sup>387</sup> Allison finds parallels to this understanding in Deutero-Isaiah, 1 Enoch and Jubilees.<sup>388</sup>

With the phrase “the end of the present cosmos”, Macaskill's description does not do justice to Allison's view, which is that eschatological language in the New Testament “concerns the climax of Israel's history and the remaking – not the end – of the natural world.”<sup>389</sup> Thus, it is transformation, not abolition of the cosmos, that is in view. He also ascribes this view to Weiss and Sanders.

Nevertheless, Allison may be classified in the category of scholars who think Matthew has a cosmological dualism, as he sees a significant break when the present age ends and the coming age finally breaks through, a break similar to that of the flood of Noah.<sup>390</sup>

*John P. Meier*

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<sup>383</sup> W. D. Davies and Dale C. Allison, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to Saint Matthew. Vol. III: Commentary on Matthew XIX-XXVIII*, ICC (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1997), 368.

<sup>384</sup> Davies and Allison, 331.

<sup>385</sup> Allison, *Studies in Matthew*, 85.

<sup>386</sup> Allison, *The End of the Ages Has Come, an Early Interpretation of the Passion and Resurrection of Jesus*, 49.

<sup>387</sup> Allison, 150.

<sup>388</sup> Allison, 104.

<sup>389</sup> Wright, “In Grateful Dialogue: A Response,” 134.

<sup>390</sup> Wright, 129 n. 5.

In his study of the law in Matthew, John P. Meier suggests that “salvation-history is the key to the higher synthesis which is Mt's gospel.”<sup>391</sup> Meier is here referring to the synthesis of tradition and redaction in Matthew according to the redaction-critical approach. The specific purpose is to explore the understanding of the law in Matthew with special attention to Matt 5:17-20. According to Meier, Matthew's view of the law is best understood from a salvation-historical point of view.

Meier finds a starting point for salvation-history by focusing on the tensions in Matthew between Jesus' ministry to Israel only (10:5-6, 15:24) and the commission to the world (28:16-20). The change in perspective leads Meier to argue that something has changed with the death and resurrection of Jesus.

Meier explores the description of the death and resurrection of Jesus in Matthew. There he highlights the use of apocalyptic images and themes that signal the in-breaking of the kingdom in a more realized sense than earlier in the Gospel. According to him it is “the one great inauguration of the new aeon”.<sup>392</sup>

Moving on to discuss Matt 5:17—20, Meier focuses on 5:18 as the key verse. According to Meier the qualifying clauses regarding the validity of the law, the passing of heaven and earth<sup>393</sup> and that everything will be accomplished refer to the death and resurrection of Jesus. The death and resurrection of Jesus are the culmination of his entire mission - a fulfillment of everything that must happen (cf. Matt 26:54, 56): “The death-resurrection of Jesus is *die Wende der Zeit*, the turning point between the old and the new aeon.”<sup>394</sup>

Meier thus argues for a high degree of realized eschatology in Matthew. However, he maintains that the old aeon has only ended in principle and the final destruction still lies in the future. “The final, visible separation that destroys the old age once and for all still lies in the future, since the harvest is expressly said to be the *synteleia aiónos* (13:39,40).”<sup>395</sup>

### **7.2.3 The End is 'Literal' and Lies Exclusively in the Future**

*Ulrich Luz*

<sup>391</sup> John P. Meier, *Law and History in Matthew's Gospel: A Redactional Study of Mt. 5: 17-48*, AnBib 71 (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1976), 23.

<sup>392</sup> Meier, 30–35.

<sup>393</sup> Meier comments regarding 'the end of the world': “As for the passing of heaven and earth, both the rabbis and the apocrypha reflect two different views: (1) a purification and transformation of the earth (sometimes referred to as a 'new world'); (2) a slipping of the world back into primordial chaos, or a complete annihilation, to be followed by a 'new creation' in the strict sense.” (Meier, 49 n. 25.) See further references in note 28.

<sup>394</sup> Meier, 64.

<sup>395</sup> Meier, 39.

Ulrich Luz is considered a major authority on Matthew's Gospel mainly due to his major commentary on Matthew.<sup>396</sup>

In his commentary he rejects the view that Matthew operates with a non-linear time line. He considers what he calls the eschatological interpretation of the death of Jesus in Matt 27:51-53:

Does that mean, therefore, that the death of Jesus involves not only the decisive turning point of the story of Israel but also the apocalyptic epochal transition or a prolepsis of the *parousia*? That this turning point takes place in the midst of history raises the question about the capability of linear structures of time.<sup>397</sup>

Against this he states:

Finally, Matthew has elsewhere clearly said how and when he expects the apocalyptic turning point—namely, in the near future at the *parousia* of the Son of Man (24:29–31). Thus in my opinion it makes no sense to “overload” the text apocalyptically and then later to determine that the Matthean eschatology cannot be understood in categories of linear time.<sup>398</sup>

According to Luz, the eschatological expectation outlined in Matthew 24:4-44 concerns both the destruction of the Temple as well as the end of the world. Since Matthew writes after the fall of the Temple these are two separate events.

According to Luz, *end of the world* must be interpreted literally and does not refer to history but to the collapse of the cosmos.<sup>399</sup> Furthermore *parousia* is closely connected to the end and denotes the Second Advent of Jesus as the heavenly judge of the world.<sup>400</sup>

Luz thinks it is clear that Jesus was wrong about the immediate expectation of his return as it is recorded in Matthew.<sup>401</sup> But it does not seem to have become a problem yet by the time of Matthew. Furthermore and more importantly, the main concern for Matthew is not when the judgment will take place, but rather that it will take place and that one must be ready.<sup>402</sup> Thus, the first part of the eschatological discourse provides a context for the paranses in the remainder of the eschatological discourse – Matt 24:42-25:46.

<sup>396</sup> Luz, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus. 1. Teilbd. Mt 1-7*; Ulrich Luz, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus. 2. Teilbd.: Mt 8-17*, EKK, 1/2 (Zürich: Benziger; Neukirchener Verlag, 1990); Ulrich Luz, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus. 3. Teilbd. Mt 18-25*, EKK, 1/3 (Zürich: Benziger Verlag; Neukirchener Verlag, 1997); Ulrich Luz, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus. 4. Teilbd.: Mt 26-28*, EKK, 1/4 (Zürich: Benziger; Neukirchener Verlag, 2002); Ulrich Luz, *Studies in Matthew* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005).

<sup>397</sup> Ulrich Luz, *Matthew 21-28: A Commentary*, ed. Helmut Koester, trans. James E. Crouch (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress Publishing, 2005), 565.

<sup>398</sup> Luz, 571.

<sup>399</sup> Luz, 286.

<sup>400</sup> Luz, 190.

<sup>401</sup> Luz, 209.

<sup>402</sup> Luz, 288.

Luz's emphasis on the ethical dimension of eschatology leans heavily on Günter Bornkamm's essay on eschatology and ecclesiology in Matthew.<sup>403</sup> This at times gives the impression that future events are only important as warnings and encouragements in the present time.

*David Sim*

The monograph<sup>404</sup> by Sim on the topic of apocalyptic eschatology in Matthew makes a number of important observations relevant for this thesis, the most important one being the major place of apocalyptic eschatology in Matthew.

Future and imminent aspects are prominent in the work of Sim. He emphasizes the imminence of the end as an integral part of the eschatological expectation in Matthew, while there is no mention of the notion of realized or proleptic eschatology.<sup>405</sup>

According to Sim, the destruction of the temple was a past event at the time when Matthew wrote the Gospel.<sup>406</sup> This has a bearing on Sim's interpretation since he concludes that 24:4ff. mainly refers to the coming of the Son of Man at the end of the age and only very briefly to the destruction of the temple. According to Sim, the destruction of the temple is only seen as an eschatological event of minor importance since it is only the beginning of the birth pangs (Matt 24:8). Sim identifies Matthew's time of writing after the Jewish War as a period when the Matthean community struggled with persecution and false teachers.<sup>407</sup> What remained was only the preaching of the gospel throughout the world, something that Matthew, according to Sim, believed was almost completed.

Matthew thus expects the coming of the Son of Man to be in the immediate future. Sim explicitly states that Matthew upholds a cosmic dualism, which, according to Sim, is in line with Jewish apocalyptic eschatology. At the arrival of the Son of Man the cosmos will collapse.<sup>408</sup> This view is explicit in Sim's article on the interpretation of Matt 19:28.<sup>409</sup> Here Sim argues that 19:28 together with 5:18 and 24:35 mean that Matthew believed that heaven and earth would pass away. The word

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<sup>403</sup> Gunther Bornkamm, "End-Expectation and Church in Matthew," in *Tradition and Interpretation in Matthew*, by Gunther Bornkamm, Gerhard Barth, and Heinz Joachim Held, trans. Percy Scott (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1963), 15–51.

<sup>404</sup> Sim, *Apocalyptic Eschatology in the Gospel of Matthew*.

<sup>405</sup> Sim, 148–54.

<sup>406</sup> This view is of course the general consensus among scholars, but it does not always effect the interpretation in the same way as it does for Sim.

<sup>407</sup> Sim, *Apocalyptic Eschatology in the Gospel of Matthew*, 167.

<sup>408</sup> Sim, 168–69.

<sup>409</sup> Sim, "The Meaning of Palingenesia in Matthew 19.28."

*palingenesia* means the total re-creation of the cosmos.<sup>410</sup> Sim thus places re-creation of the cosmos within the eschatological vision of Matthew.

Following a redaction-critical approach Sim focuses on the social setting of the Gospel and lets a reconstruction of the community behind the Gospel guide his interpretation. This approach hampers Sim's reading of the text since in his employment of it the Gospel is read as a story about an exclusive Christian sect trying to legitimate itself rather than a story about Jesus. Recent studies in the gospel-genre have argued that gospels are stories about Jesus intended for a general audience.<sup>411</sup>

### *Edward Adams*

Another representative of the position that the cosmic language is to be taken literally is Edward Adams.

Adams's work on the topic of Matthean eschatology responds to N. T. Wright's view that Jesus' language of cosmic catastrophe refers to events within history.<sup>412</sup> Adams surveys the language of cosmic catastrophe in a number of texts from the Old Testament Pseudepigrapha and the Dead Sea Scrolls. He concludes that the language of cosmic catastrophe is to be understood literally rather than as metaphorical language concerning religious and political events.

For Adams, Matthew then has a cosmic dualism and envisions a cosmic breakdown. But the expectation is not complete annihilation, but rather a return to pre-creation chaos.<sup>413</sup> Following Sim Adams interprets 19:28 as a reference to the total re-creation of the cosmos and sees the beatitude of Matt 5:5 as anticipating "a state of earthly future blessedness."<sup>414</sup>

On the question on the imminence of the *parousia* Adams contends that *all these things* in 24:34 includes all the events described in vv. 4-24, but not the *parousia* of the Son of Man. As he writes, "The fulfillment of 'all these things' brings the *parousia* near, indeed 'at the very gates'. Yet 'about that day and hour no one knows' (v. 36)."<sup>415</sup> Accordingly, the subsequent parables envisage a period of delay.

According to Adams, Matthew is thoroughly dualistic concerning the present and the coming age. In a note in which Adams discusses different interpretations of 5.18 and 24.35 in Matthew, he refers to John P. Meier's suggestion that the description of the death of Jesus in Matthew means that

<sup>410</sup> Sim, 11.

<sup>411</sup> Burridge, *What Are the Gospels?*; Bauckham, *The Gospels for All Christians*.

<sup>412</sup> Adams, *The Stars Will Fall from Heaven*.

<sup>413</sup> Adams, 21.

<sup>414</sup> Adams, 172.

<sup>415</sup> Adams, 171.

Matthew perceives the event to be the *Wende der Zeit*.<sup>416</sup> However, Adams does not think that Matthew has an overlap of the ages.<sup>417</sup> This view sets him apart from a host of scholars who emphasize realized eschatology to the degree that the new age has already begun.

### **7.2.4 Summary**

So far, the survey has been a presentation of dominant positions on three key events in Matthew's eschatology: the coming of the Son of Man, the destruction of the temple and the end of the age. The different interpretations highlight the difficulties the text presents for the interpreter.

Luz, Sim and Edwards, while employing different methods, emphasize the future and final character of the eschatology in Matthew. Allison and Meier allow for a more realized eschatology while still holding that the ultimate end is in the future and involves a radical break between this age and the age to come. For Wright it is important to point out that the eschatology of Matthew is realized within history. According to him, the end is not cosmic but rather political; Matthew's eschatology ascribes huge significance to the fall of the temple in CE 70. France similarly acknowledges the importance of the fall of the temple but nevertheless sees an end beyond that point.

With regard to the role of creation in Matthew's eschatology, it is significant that, according to Allison, Adams, Fletcher-Louis and Sim, renewal of creation is a part of the eschatological vision of Matthew. Also Fletcher-Louis's comment regarding the relationship between history and creation is especially significant. As we shall see, Matthew connects the story of Jesus not only to the story of Israel but also to the story of the world from creation to consummation (new creation).

## **7.3 Eschatology in Matthew – a Proposal**

What I argue is that the eschatology of Matthew goes beyond history and politics and is concerned with creation.

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<sup>416</sup> Meier, *Law and History*, 64.

<sup>417</sup> Adams, *The Stars Will Fall from Heaven*, 170 n. 193.; I.c. also Sim, "The Meaning of Palingenesia in Matthew 19.28," 9–11.

As most of the scholars mentioned suggest, Matthew does have an overlap of the ages. In other words, what we find in Matthew is a proleptic or inaugurated eschatology.<sup>418</sup> This is the position of Allison and Meier, and a number of other recent contributions have expressed a similar viewpoint.<sup>419</sup> In order to establish my thesis, I first build on the arguments from Ben Cooper with regard to eschatology and salvation history in Matthew.<sup>420</sup> Secondly, I combine the views of Cooper with Mervynn Eloff's work on salvation history, which opens the perspective to the history of Israel and the world.<sup>421</sup> This provides a timeline of history that begins with creation and ends in new creation.

The strength of Cooper's work is that it is a text-based approach focusing on the narrative of Matthew. One problem with a number of studies on Matthew has been that the Gospel is interpreted in the light of Mark or a perceived Matthean community.<sup>422</sup> Another problem is that the Gospel has been interpreted with a certain model of Jewish eschatology in mind. The view on Jewish eschatology is the fundamental point of disagreement between Allison and Wright on eschatology in Matthew.<sup>423</sup>

<sup>418</sup> The term proleptic or inaugurated eschatology is a synthesis of the positions of A. Schweitzer (consistent eschatology) and C. H. Dodd (realized eschatology). The origin of the model is traditionally ascribed to German scholars J. Jeremias, O. Cullmann and W. G. Kümmel. D. E. Aune provides a definition: "[T]he label 'proleptic eschatology' is useful for indicating that there is a tension between present and future in Jesus' understanding of the kingdom of God, in which the present is a critical stage in the full future realization of the kingdom of God. The positions of consistent eschatology and realized eschatology can only be maintained by ignoring or minimizing present or future elements in the eschatological teaching of Jesus." "Eschatology (Early Christian)," ed. David Noel Freedman, *The Anchor Bible Dictionary* (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 600.

<sup>419</sup> Meier, *Law and History*; Allison, *The End of the Ages Has Come, an Early Interpretation of the Passion and Resurrection of Jesus*; I.c. also Jeffrey A. Gibbs, *Jerusalem and Parousia: Jesus' Eschatological Discourse in Matthew's Gospel* (St. Louis: Concordia Pub House, 2000), 150–52; Ben Cooper, "Adaptive Eschatological Inference from the Gospel of Matthew," *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 33, no. 1 (2010): 59–80; Don B. Garlington, "'The Salt of the Earth' in Covenantal Perspective," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 54, no. 4 (2011): 715–48. In a recent contribution, Andries van Aarde has expressed the same view. He understands the eschatology of Matthew as an ethical eschatology or social apocalypticism. Here van Aarde takes up the approach of Bornkamm with the focus on function of eschatological expectation for the "Matthean community". However, most importantly van Aarde adds considerations on apocalypticism and the conception of time following Malina. Here it is argued that the tension between imminence and delay must be understood from the perspective of Matthew's perception of time. Following Meier, van Aarde argues that Matthew 27.45-54 signals the point of *Wende der Zeit*. This means that for Matthew the end of the ages has begun. "'On Earth as It Is in Heaven': Matthew's Eschatology as the Kingdom of Heaven That Has Come'," in *Eschatology of the New Testament and Some Related Documents*, ed. Jan G. van der Watt, WUNT II 315 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), 35–63.

<sup>420</sup> Cooper, "Adaptive Eschatological Inference from the Gospel of Matthew."

<sup>421</sup> Mervyn Eloff, "Apo... Eōs and Salvation History in Matthew's Gospel," in *Built upon the Rock: Studies in the Gospel of Matthew*, ed. Daniel M. Gurtner and John Nolland (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), 85–107.

<sup>422</sup> See the criticism by Gibbs, *Jerusalem and Parousia*, 13–14.

<sup>423</sup> Wright, "In Grateful Dialogue: A Response," 126–41.



By taking Matthew's narrative into account in an effort to resolve the tensions in Matthew's eschatology, Cooper ends up with a systematic and convincing approach to Matthean eschatology. The position is first outlined and consequently argued with regard to key points for the interpretation.

### **7.3.1 Cooper: Matthew's Temporal Framework**

Ben Cooper seeks to establish the temporal framework of Matthew's eschatology. Cooper treats Matthew as a persuasive narrative – a narrative designed to evoke an evolving response from its readers. This means that a given eschatological datum needs to be read with the narrative context in mind, which has a bearing on the meaning and significance of the statement.<sup>424</sup>

According to Cooper, Matthew wants to bring his readers from a “Jewish” eschatology to a “Christian” eschatology by means of his narrative. A “Christian” eschatology is an eschatology that is both “proleptic” and “inaugurated”, in which the expected events are first experienced in Jesus, as God's primary eschatological agent. The eschatological events in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus function as a guarantee that they will also be experienced in the future by his followers according to the same pattern.

The pattern is that of tribulation and vindication. This pattern in Jewish literature is also pointed out by Allison<sup>425</sup> and Beale.<sup>426</sup> Cooper acknowledges the diversity of eschatological expectation of first-century Judaism and accordingly does not claim that Matthew addresses *the* eschatology of first century Judaism but merely addresses an example of eschatological expectation of that time. One example of “Jewish” eschatological expectation, which Matthew wants to address, is the one represented by John the Baptist. “Matthew is intending to align a potentially wide range of expectations towards his own view.”<sup>427</sup>

With regard to the temporal order of eschatological events Cooper expands on a suggestion by Janice Capel Anderson. Anderson traces the movements on the temporal plane made by the narrator and the temporal location of certain events referred to within the narrative. From the observations

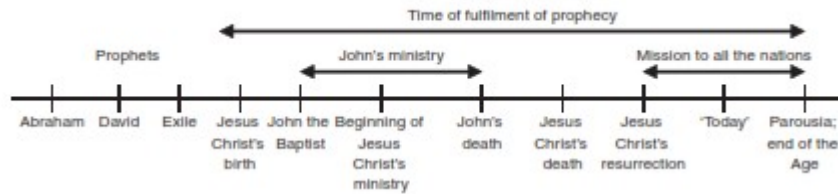
<sup>424</sup> Cooper, “Adaptive Eschatological Inference from the Gospel of Matthew,” 60.

<sup>425</sup> Allison surveys the idea of a final tribulation in Jewish literature and observes that the context and meaning of the idea is very diverse. He nevertheless concludes that the presence of the idea is strong enough to serve as a plausible precedent for the idea in the New Testament. Allison, *The End of the Ages Has Come, an Early Interpretation of the Passion and Resurrection of Jesus*, 24–25.

<sup>426</sup> Beale, *New Testament Biblical Theology*, A.

<sup>427</sup> Cooper, “Adaptive Eschatological Inference from the Gospel of Matthew,” 64.

Anderson builds a time-line of events, which Cooper calls an implied temporal framework. This figure illustrates Matthew's eschatological temporal framework as described by Anderson:<sup>428</sup>



Most importantly, Cooper takes a progressive-adaptive approach when inferring Matthew's temporal framework.<sup>429</sup> This means that the temporal framework is shaped progressively as the narrative is read and more information is revealed. As references to future events occur in the narrative they are organized and reorganized as the narrative progresses. Cooper formulates the rule he is employing as follows:

As the narrative is read, every new reference to a future event is aligned with an existing event on the temporal framework unless there is sufficient warrant for doing otherwise and separating out future events. (However future references where there is some warrant may be marked as uncertain.)<sup>430</sup>

Cooper begins his reading of Matthew's eschatology with John the Baptist, who announces the imminence of the Kingdom of Heavens, the coming of the Lord with warnings of wrath and judgment (Matt 3:2).<sup>431</sup> In light of this future expectation the present is a time for repentance.

The Lord comes, but he does not come with wrath and judgment. Thus John's expectations are *temporally resolved*.<sup>432</sup> John's expectations are not incorrect, they are merely imprecise, and while the Lord has come, judgment and wrath are yet to come.

<sup>428</sup> Cooper, 64.

<sup>429</sup> Cooper refers to Wolfgang Iser among others: "For Iser, reading a text is an adaptive, linear process, 'viewing the text through a perspective that is continually on the move', a process of organizing and reorganizing the various data offered us by the text: 'we question, we muse, we accept, we reject.'" Cooper, 65.

<sup>430</sup> Cooper, 65.

<sup>431</sup> See also Gibbs, *Jerusalem and Parousia*, 35.

<sup>432</sup> Cooper explains his use of the word resolve: "This is using the verb 'resolve' as it is used 'of an object initially perceived indistinctly: to become identifiable, esp. as a number of discrete objects, when seen more clearly', or in science: 'to distinguish part or components of (something) that are close together in space or time; to identify or distinguish individually'. Cooper, "Adaptive Eschatological Inference from the Gospel of Matthew," 67.

Jesus nevertheless continues to proclaim the imminence of the Kingdom of Heaven and warns of the future judgment (Matt 4:17). At this point, Cooper simply groups events of future judgment and vindication together as events in the indeterminate future as it isn't clear from the preaching of Jesus if they should be distinguished.

So far, the future outlook of Jesus is similar to that of John. Jesus, however, adds some qualifications. The first one is that before vindication and judgment there will come tribulation (Matt 10). This is in line with Danielic eschatology, which Cooper argues Matthew has broadly adopted.<sup>433</sup>

Secondly, this tribulation also includes Jesus' own tribulation and vindication found in the so called passion predictions (Matt 16:21; 17:22-23; 20:18-19).

Thirdly, Jesus speaks of a specific judgment of “this generation” (Matt 11:16). The pronouncements concerning this judgment are increasing in intensity as Jesus enters Jerusalem for the last time at the end of the Gospel (Matt 21:41-44; 22:13-14; 23; 24:42-25:46).

Lastly, the judgment of “this generation” includes the fall of the temple, which flows out of the woes against the religious establishment (Matt 23). Ch. 24 is an expansion of the “missionary” speech in chapter 10, and the pattern is again that tribulation will be followed by vindication. The fall of the temple moreover introduces the prediction of a “great tribulation”.

Cooper interprets “the tribulation in those days” to refer to general tribulation in the whole period between *now* and the end. The pattern of tribulation and vindication is apparent throughout. The time of the “great tribulation” and final vindication is nevertheless unknown.

The coming of the Son of Man in 10.23, 16.27-28 and (possibly) 26.64, for example, seems imminent. However the picture in chs. 24-25 is less clear. Somehow one has to fit in a global proclamation before the end (24.14), and at least three of the parables in 24.36-25.30 do seem to imply some sort of delay.<sup>434</sup>

Cooper notes that many analyses of Matthew's eschatology stop here, mentioning Allison and Hagner as examples.<sup>435</sup> However, Cooper wants to take matters a step further. He argues for a “temporal resolution” similar to the one in Matt 3, where the one coming after John eventually came without judgment. Cooper wants to show that “events that have apparently been portrayed as

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<sup>433</sup> Cooper, 70.

<sup>434</sup> Cooper, 73.

<sup>435</sup> Allison, *The End of the Ages Has Come, an Early Interpretation of the Passion and Resurrection of Jesus*; Hagner, “Matthew's Eschatology.”

contemporaneous are teased out and shown to be separate by the subsequent narrative.”<sup>436</sup> Cooper demonstrates how Jesus by the end of the Gospel has been through the predicted tribulation and vindication of chapter 24<sup>437</sup> – this also includes the judgment of the temple as well as apocalyptic signs which anticipates final vindication. He states: “In other words, by the end of the Gospel the Son of Man has been through both tribulation and vindication, such that in some significant sense we may say that he has come.”<sup>438</sup> The point will be expanded upon in the following section on the eschatological nature of the death of Jesus.

Cooper's conclusion aligns with his theory of temporal resolution: “What this suggests in particular is that by the end of the Gospel Matthew wants his readers to separate 'the coming of the Son of Man' into two events: temporally distinct but nevertheless retaining a tight connection.”<sup>439</sup> He consequently produces the following figure:

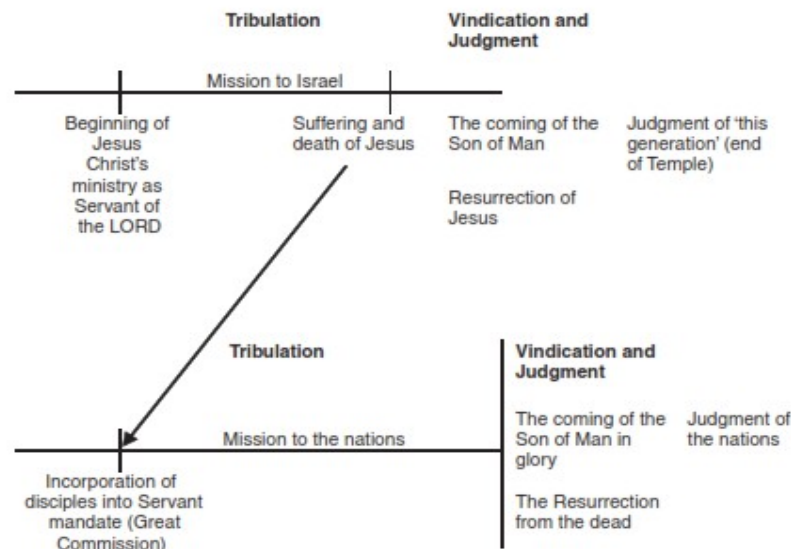


Figure 6. The final implied temporal framework

The figure above is the final implied temporal framework according to Cooper.<sup>440</sup>

<sup>436</sup> Cooper, “Adaptive Eschatological Inference from the Gospel of Matthew,” 74.

<sup>437</sup> See also Allison, *Studies in Matthew*, 85–86 for parallels. Allison also notes that Paul describes the resurrection as the coming of the Son of Man in glory. Allison, “Eschatology.”

<sup>438</sup> Cooper, “Adaptive Eschatological Inference from the Gospel of Matthew,” 74; also Allison, *Studies in Matthew*, 79–108.

<sup>439</sup> Cooper, “Adaptive Eschatological Inference from the Gospel of Matthew,” 75.

<sup>440</sup> Cooper, 77.

Cooper thus ends up with a text-based temporal framework, and he systematically builds his temporal framework according to observations from the text. The pattern that he has drawn out of tribulation and vindication corresponds to a widespread Jewish eschatological scenario.<sup>441</sup> Again this is not a pattern that he brings to the text; instead he draws it from the text and demonstrates the pattern in the narrative on the death and resurrection in Matthew's Gospel. This highlights the proleptic nature of Matthew's eschatology and implies an overlap of the ages in Matthew. Cooper thus provides a coherent and convincing text-based proposal for the eschatological framework in Matthew.

But where does new creation fit into the scenario outlined by Cooper? Cooper has focused on tribulation, vindication and judgment in his overview but not on what lies beyond judgment – the ultimate eschatological hope. For the purposes of this study it is therefore necessary to expand the perspective on Matthew's eschatology.

### **7.3.2 The Bigger Picture – From Creation to the Rebirth of the World (παλιγγενεσία)**

With regard to Matthew's timeline it is interesting to explore the ultimate ends of the story – not only the goal but also the beginning of the greater story that leads up to the story about Jesus, the story from creation to consummation. These points are also included in Matthew's perspective. This is clear from the essay by Mervynn Eloff on Salvation History in the Gospel.<sup>442</sup> This article draws out important points with regard to new creation in Matthew.

Firstly, Eloff draws attention to the well-established point that Matthew firmly connects the story of Jesus with the story of Israel in the genealogy in 1:1-17. Here it becomes clear that Jesus is the fulfillment of the promises to Abraham and David as well as the one who brings an end to Israel's exile.<sup>443</sup>

Moreover, Eloff observes that the extremes of Matthew's historical perspective are creation (Matt 19:8b; 25:34) and consummation (Matt 13:35; 28:20). Eloff's own emphasis, however, is on the return from exile. The observed extremes of history for Matthew, however, imply that even though there are other perspectives that come into play such as the movement from exile to restoration with

<sup>441</sup> Allison, *The End of the Ages Has Come, an Early Interpretation of the Passion and Resurrection of Jesus*.

<sup>442</sup> Eloff, "Apo... Eōs and Salvation History in Matthew's Gospel."

<sup>443</sup> Eloff, 93. In addition, Eloff's article gives a sense of periodization in Matthew's view of history, a concept which is prevalent in Jewish apocalyptic literature.

all that it entails of promises of the land, a new covenant, and new temple, they can be seen as subordinated to the larger story from creation to consummation.

This means that Matthew's perspective goes beyond the story of Israel's exile and restoration. The perspective is universal, which is evident in the fact that there will be a judgment that includes all nations (25:32) and that he sends his disciples to all nations (28:19). The time of universal judgment is also the time of rebirth of the world (παλιγγενεσία) (19:28). Παλιγγενεσία is the ultimate goal of the history where the disciples will receive their rewards after following Jesus through tribulation to vindication.

### a. παλιγγενεσία

David Sim has convincingly argued that παλιγγενεσία in 19:28 refers to a renewal or re-creation of the cosmos in line with eschatological expectations found in the majority of Jewish apocalyptic.<sup>444</sup> There is need for caution regarding Sim's interpretation that Matthew expected the destruction of the present cosmos, for it may be better to speak of renewal of the cosmos without prior destruction.<sup>445</sup> Sim points to Matt 5:18 and 24:35 for evidence that Matthew expected the destruction of the present cosmos, a literal interpretation of these passages has however been questioned by John P. Meier who argues that the passing of heaven and earth refers to the death and resurrection of Jesus.<sup>446</sup> More recently Fletcher-Louis has suggested that it refers to three interlocking events: (1) the destruction of the temple in 70 C.E (2) the death and resurrection of Jesus and (3) the ministry of Jesus.<sup>447</sup>

Below I follow Meier and argue that the death and resurrection of Jesus is a proleptic end of the old and beginning of the new creation. Regardless of which option one chooses it can be argued that the word expresses eschatological new creation understood one way or the other. This is the conclusion of several modern interpreters.<sup>448</sup>

<sup>444</sup> Sim, "The Meaning of Palingenesia in Matthew 19.28."

<sup>445</sup> See the discussion of this point in the context of Jewish Apocalyptic in Hahne, *The Corruption and Redemption of Creation*, XX; See also Stephens, *Annihilation or Renewal?*, XX.

<sup>446</sup> Meier, *Law and History*, 64.

<sup>447</sup> Fletcher-Louis, "The Destruction of the Temple and the Relativization of the Old Covenant." See also N. T. Wright and R. T. France quoted above.

<sup>448</sup> See among others Büchsel, "γίνομαι"; Fred W. Burnett, "Palingenesia in Matt 19:28 : A Window on the Matthean Community?," *Journal for the Study of the New Testament*, no. 17 (February 1, 1983): 60–72; Sim, "The Meaning of Palingenesia in Matthew 19.28"; Robert Horton Gundry, *Matthew: A Commentary on His Handbook for a Mixed Church Under Persecution* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994), 393; Davies and Allison, *Matthew. Vol. III*, 57–58; Donald A. Hagner, *Matthew 14–28*, Word Biblical Commentary 33B (Dallas: Word Books, 1998), 565; Arndt, Danker, and Bauer, *BDAG*; Nolland, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 799; Luz, *Matthew 21–28*; France, *Matthew*, 742.

That *παλιγγενεσία* points to the eschaton is clear from the context in which Jesus promises the disciples that they will sit on thrones and judge the twelve tribes at the time when the Son of Man will sit on his throne of glory.<sup>449</sup> Judgment is elsewhere in Matthew connected to end and the coming age: this is most clear in Matt 25:31-46. Furthermore 19:29 concerns rewards and eternal life. The question is nevertheless if *παλιγγενεσία* includes the meaning of new creation.

The word is only used twice in the New Testament. The other occurrence is in Titus 3:5 where it is used in the context of the believer's regeneration through baptism. This also seems to be the most common use of the word among the church-fathers with a frequent reference to λουτρόν *παλιγγενεσίας*; 'the bath of rebirth/regeneration' from Tit 3:5.<sup>450</sup> Origen, however, combines the anthropological and cosmological new creation in his commentary on Matthew 19:28: αὕτη γάρ ἐστιν ἡ *παλιγγενεσία* καινὴ τις γένεσις οὕσα, ὅτε οὐρανὸς καινὸς καὶ [ἡ] γῆ καινὴ τοῖς ἑαυτοῦς ἀνακαινώσασι κτίζεται καὶ καινὴ διαθήκη παρα δίδοται καὶ τὸ ποτήριον αὐτῆς.<sup>451</sup> (This is the regeneration, being a new genesis, when the new heaven and the new earth, to be created for those who themselves have been renewed and have received a new covenant and the cup of the new covenant.) This is highly significant since it shows that one of the early readers of the Greek text read the word in an almost literal sense. The word derives from *πάλιν* and *γένεσις* and thus means "new genesis".<sup>452</sup>

Outside the New Testament, the word is primarily used about the renewal of the world after conflagration (*ἐκπύρωσις*) in Stoic literature.<sup>453</sup> In the writings of Hellenistic Judaism Philo uses the word extensively in *De aeternitate mundi* as he describes the Stoic position.<sup>454</sup> Philo also employs the word in biblical contexts and uses it to describe the replacement of Abel with Seth (Poster. C., 124) and about life after death (Cherub., 114). Interestingly he uses it about the renewal of humanity after the flood: "*παλιγγενεσίας ἐγένοντο ἡγεμόνες καὶ δευτέρας ἀρχηγέταις περιόδου.*" (Vit. Mos. II, 65). The use here is very close to that of the Stoic with the use of *περίοδοι* that occurs frequently with *παλιγγενεσία* in Stoic literature. Fred W. Burnett, however, points out that Philo uses the words in a different sense and does not present the Flood as a renewal of the world but only purging, a step

<sup>449</sup> Sim, "The Meaning of Palingenesia in Matthew 19.28," 4.

<sup>450</sup> Per a search in the Thesaurus Linguae Graecae (<http://stephanus.tlg.uci.edu/Iris/demo/tsearch.jsp>)

<sup>451</sup> Published in Erich Klostermann and Ernst Benz, *Origenes: Werke: Origenes Matthäuserklärung I: Die Griechisch erhaltenen Tomoi*, Reprint 2015 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1935), 416.

<sup>452</sup> Büchsel, "γίνομαι," 686.

<sup>453</sup> Büchsel, 686; Arndt, Danker, and Bauer, BDAG.

<sup>454</sup> *θεία τοῦ τεχνίτου. Δύναται δὲ κατὰ τούτους ὁ μὲν τις κόσμος αἰδίου, ὁ δὲ τις φθαρτὸς λέγεσθαι, φθαρτὸς μὲν ὁ κατὰ τὴν διακόσμησιν, αἰδίου δὲ ὁ κατὰ τὴν ἐκπύρωσιν παλιγγενεσίας καὶ περιόδοις ἀθανατιζόμενος.* (Aet. Mund. 9) Published in Leopold Cohn, *Philonis Alexandrini opera quae supersunt*, ed. Siegfried Reiter, vol. 6 (Berlin; Boston: de Gruyter, 2013), <http://www.degruyter.com.ep.fjernadgang.kb.dk/view/product/8758>.

towards the *παλιγγενεσία* of the soul attained by the patriarchs.<sup>455</sup> Josephus uses *παλιγγενεσία* about the restoration of the land through a return from exile (*Ant.*, 11,66).

As we have seen the expectation of a new creation was ubiquitous in early Judaism, and it seems reasonable to assume that this is the meaning here through an adaptation of the word from a Stoic understanding into a Jewish context.<sup>456</sup> The idea of a renewal of the world through fire is also attested in early Jewish and Christian literature (1QH<sup>a</sup> IV 13<sup>457</sup>; Josephus, *Ant.* 1.70–71; LAE 49:3; Mek. Amalek 3.14; 2 Peter 3:13).

Based on strict redaction-critical approach J. D. Derrett asserts that Matthew has no language for a new world of his own. Derrett observes that all instances of resurrection in Matthew come from Matthew's sources. He consequently argues that *παλιγγενεσία* means resurrection as a punctual event.<sup>458</sup> He has support on this understanding from such prominent figures as Jerome, Augustine, Beza and Grotius. Derrett asserts that while “‘New World’ needs Resurrection, Resurrection does not need New Age.”

It is however probable that it refers to an extended period based on an understanding of *παλιγγενεσία* as an equivalent to the world to come based on the parallel in Mark that has ‘the coming age’ (Mark 10:30).<sup>459</sup> Luke 22:33, in which the disciples are also promised a role as judges, also speaks of the coming age through the imagery of the eschatological feast (Isa 25:6). In Matthew the context also suggests a new world when 19:29 promises eternal life and compensation for all that has been left behind.

Davies and Allison suggest that this passage draws on Dan 7:13-29, with a Son of Man figure in both passages combined with significant words like thrones (Dan 7:9) and glory (Dan 7:14).<sup>460</sup> The passage also closely resembles passages in the book of Parables in 1 Enoch that describe the Son of Man on a throne of glory. 1 Enoch 62:5: “when they see that Son of man sitting on the throne of his glory,” and 69:29a: “Thenceforth nothing that is corruptible shall be found; for that Son of Man has appeared and has seated himself upon the throne of his glory; and all evil shall disappear from before his face.” Davies and Allison speculate literary dependence between 1 Enoch and Matthew

<sup>455</sup> Fred W. Burnett, “Philo on Immortality: A Thematic Study of Philo’s Concept of Palingenesia,” *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 46, no. 3 (July 1, 1984): 468–69.

<sup>456</sup> So Nolland, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 799.

<sup>457</sup> Boccaccini, “Qumran and the Enoch Groups,” 273.

<sup>458</sup> J Duncan M. Derrett, “Palingenesia (Matthew 19:28),” *Journal for the Study of the New Testament*, no. 20 (February 1, 1984): 51–58.

<sup>459</sup> Davies and Allison, *Matthew. Vol. III*, 56.

<sup>460</sup> Davies and Allison, 54.



here.<sup>461</sup> 1 Enoch 69:29 is particularly interesting, because it describes the disappearance of all that is corruptible and evil as a consequence of the enthronement of the Son of Man. That new creation is implied here is clear when compared to 1 Enoch 45:3-5:

<sup>3</sup>On that day, my Elect One shall sit on the seat of glory  
and make a selection of their deeds,  
their resting places will be without number,  
their souls shall be firm within them when they see my Elect One,  
those who have appealed to my glorious name,  
<sup>4</sup>On that day, I shall cause my Elect One to dwell among them,  
I shall transform heaven and make it a blessing of light forever.  
<sup>5</sup>I shall (also) transform the earth and make it a blessing,  
and cause my Elect One to dwell in her.  
Then those who have committed sin and crime shall not set foot in her.

The figure on the throne is here called the Elect One but the designation refers to the same figure called the Son of Man, the Righteous One or the Anointed One elsewhere.<sup>462</sup> The similarities to 69:29a are clear with the enthronement of the agent of God and removal of evil. In this passage, however, there is a clear expression of new creation through the transformation of heaven and earth (45:4-5).

Overall, then, I can agree with the majority of scholarship, that *παλιγγενεσία* was possibly adapted from Stoic usage and indicates the expectation of new creation. Matthew thus sees history as beginning in creation and ending in new creation.

The end and the new creation is however not only something that lies in the future. The death and resurrection of Jesus in Matthew is described as an eschatological turning of the ages. The beginning of a new creation.

## 7.4 Jesus' Death and Resurrection as an Eschatological Turning-point in Matthew

The interpretation of Jesus' death and resurrection as an eschatological event is key to the eschatological outline proposed by Cooper. This chapter, then, offers a closer look at Matthew's description of this event.

<sup>461</sup> Davies and Allison, 54; Also Nolland, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 799; On this issue see Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch 2*, 72; Walck, *The Son of Man in the Parables of Enoch and in Matthew*; Richter, *Enoch and the Gospel of Matthew*.

<sup>462</sup> Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch 2*, 44.

There are different opinions among interpreters regarding the eschatological character of Jesus' death and resurrection. Cooper, along with a number of other scholars, argues that the darkness, the earthquake, the resurrection of the saints, among other things, are clear signs that something eschatological is taking place.<sup>463</sup>

This view is, however, disputed. As already mentioned, Edward Adams has asserted that Matthew does not have an overlap of ages as Paul does. In this assertion he is in line with Ulrich Luz and David Sim. Responding to the view of Meier (see above) Sim stresses that in Matthew the end and the *parousia* constitute a future event and that at the end of the Gospel the end of the age (13.39f., 49, 24.3, 28.20) (συντέλεια αἰῶνος) is still to come.

Ulrich Luz makes three counter-arguments to the eschatological reading: 1) not all the signs following Jesus' death are traditional eschatological signs; 2) the resurrected holy ones appear in the Jerusalem of the present age; 3) with reference to Matt 24:29-31, Luz points out that for Matthew the end is in the near future at the *parousia* of the Son of Man.<sup>464</sup> For Luz, then, the signs are nothing more than indicators of the worthiness of the one who dies.

It may be conceded that the text of Matthew 27:51-53 can be interpreted differently, although the reluctance to read the passage as eschatological is rather puzzling. Nathan Eubank expresses his puzzlement when he counters the first of Luz's arguments by asking "how many eschatological signs are necessary before one admits that something eschatological is happening".<sup>465</sup> It is also well worth noting that the sign which Luz disqualifies as an eschatological sign, the tearing of the veil,<sup>466</sup>

<sup>463</sup> Hans-Werner Bartsch, "Parusieerwartung und Osterbotschaft," *Evangelische Theologie* 7, no. 1 (1947): 115–126; Meier, *Law and History*; David Hill, "Matthew 27: 51-53 in the Theology of the Evangelist," *Irish Biblical Studies* 7 (1985): 76–87; Raymond E. Brown, *The Death of the Messiah, from Gethsemane to the Grave, a Commentary on the Passion Narratives in the Four Gospels*, ABRL (New York: Doubleday, 1994), 2. 1126; Fletcher-Louis, "The Destruction of the Temple and the Relativization of the Old Covenant"; Davies and Allison, *Matthew. Vol. III*, 639; Gibbs, *Jerusalem and Parousia*, 150–52; Nolland, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 1214; France, *Matthew*, 1074.

<sup>464</sup> Ulrich Luz, *Matthew 21-28, A Commentary*, trans. James E. Crouch, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2005), 571. See also Joost Holleman, *Resurrection and Parousia: A Tradition-Historical Study of Paul's Eschatology in 1 Corinthians 15*, NovTSup 84 (Leiden; New York: Brill, 1996), 138.: "There is no reason to assume that Mt. 27:52-53 is connected with 1 Cor. 15:20; the passage in Matthew is concerned with something different." A different proposal comes from Ronald Troxel, who does not see eschatology as the primary message of the signs but rather that they serve as buildup for the exclamation of the soldier in 27:54. Troxel also prefers 1 Enoch as a background instead of any Old Testament texts. See Ronald L. Troxel, "Matt 27.51–4 Reconsidered: Its Role in the Passion Narrative, Meaning and Origin," *New Testament Studies* 48, no. 1 (2002): 30–47. See however Adelbert Denaux, "Matthew's Story of Jesus' Burial and Resurrection (Mt 27, 57-28, 20)," in *Resurrection in the New Testament: Festschrift J. Lambrecht*, ed. R. Bieringer, Veronica Koperski, and B. Lataire, BETL 165 (Leuven: Peeters, 2002), 134 n.12. Denaux remarks on Troxel's interpretation: "Even when one accepts that v. 54 forms the climax of the passage 51-54, this does not exclude an eschatological interpretation of Jesus' death and resurrection. Mt 27,51-54 should be read together with Mt 28,1-10."

<sup>465</sup> Nathan Eubank, *Wages of Cross-Bearing and Debt of Sin: The Economy of Heaven in Matthew's Gospel*, BZNW 196 (Berlin; Boston: de Gruyter, 2013), 187.

<sup>466</sup> Luz, *Matthew 21-28, A Commentary*, 581.

can be interpreted as connoting the opening of heaven, a well-attested eschatological image.<sup>467</sup> Aside from that, the destruction of the temple in Matthew, which the tearing probably symbolizes, is closely tied to the expectation of the end (24:1-3).<sup>468</sup>

The most serious of these objections is the insistence that for Matthew the end and the *parousia* are future events. As we have seen, this is exactly where there is a tension in Matthew's eschatology, and the future aspect is certainly prominent in Matthean eschatology. Meier and Cooper do address this point, acknowledging that the end of the age is in the future. Meier writes:

Matthew still awaits the *synteleia tou aiōnos* (a phrase which, in this precise form, is peculiar to Matthew in the NT). The breaking in of the kingdom has put an end to the old aeon in principle, but not in full-blown reality. The old age continues, the world is a *corpus mixtum* in which the devil as well as the Son of Man can plant seed (Mt 13:36-43).<sup>469</sup>

Cooper, nevertheless, at the same time emphasizes that the death and resurrection of Jesus have a proleptic and pattern-setting function. In those events, Jesus has gone through the predicted tribulation and has received vindication. What remains is the *parousia* at the end of the age in which Jesus' followers will receive their vindication.<sup>470</sup> The proposals of Meier and Cooper are efforts to resolve the realized/future tension in Matthean eschatology without downplaying either of the aspects.

The character of Cooper's work does not leave room for a detailed analysis of the death-resurrection account in Matthew. In the following sections, I want to examine the signs surrounding the death and resurrection of Jesus in Matthew more closely. Following Meier and Cooper, I argue that the death and resurrection provides the key to the eschatology in Matthew. Furthermore, I contend that the death and resurrection of Jesus in Matthew is to be understood as the end of the old creation and beginning of the new creation. First, however, we will look at the centrality of Jesus' death and resurrection in Matthew in order to establish the fundamental importance of these events in Matthew in general and thus also with regard to eschatology.

<sup>467</sup> Daniel M. Gurtner, *The Torn Veil*, SNTSMS 139 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 200–201.

<sup>468</sup> Eubank, *Wages of Cross-Bearing and Debt of Sin*, 187.

<sup>469</sup> John P. Meier, "Salvation-History in Matthew: In Search of a Starting Point," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 37, no. 2 (1975): 213–14.

<sup>470</sup> Cooper, "Adaptive Eschatological Inference from the Gospel of Matthew," 74–75.

### **7.4.1 The Place of Jesus' Death and Resurrection in Matthew**

Martin Kähler famously wrote that the Gospels can be read as passion-narratives with extended introductions. While this may be an exaggeration and is more true for Mark than the others, Kähler nevertheless makes an important observation.<sup>471</sup> In Matthew the motif of conflict is driving the plot and attempts are made on Jesus' life already from the beginning of the Gospel (2:16-18).<sup>472</sup> The conflict with the Jewish leaders continues throughout the Gospel. Jack Dean Kingsbury traces the theme of conflict in Matthew, stating that “the fundamental resolution of this conflict comes at the end of the story, in the pericopes that tell of Jesus' death and resurrection. In point of fact, the “cross” is the place where Jesus' story reaches its culmination.”<sup>473</sup>

Thus, Matthew's story moves toward the cross as the climax of the Gospel. Already from the beginning it is explicitly stated that Jesus will save his people from their sins (Matt 1:21). The attempt of Herod to kill Jesus (Matt 2:16-18) is told in language that makes it clear that Jesus not only faces the opposition of Herod but also 'all of Jerusalem' and the Jewish leaders who counsel Herod on this question but do not bother to travel with the wise men to worship Jesus.<sup>474</sup>

There are thus a number of predictions and references to Jesus' death and resurrection throughout the Gospel. Ultimately the goal of Jesus' mission becomes explicit in 16:21 where we have the first passion prediction. From that point in the story the conflict intensifies as Jesus moves toward his fate in Jerusalem. And although these predictions are commonly called passion predictions, it is important to note that they all include his resurrection as well.

D. C. Allison has argued that the death and resurrection of Jesus are the central events in Matthew and that a number of texts anticipate the suffering and vindication of Jesus.<sup>475</sup> Jesus' death and resurrection constitute the climax of Matthew's story and interpreting the Gospel without an eye to the passion and resurrection is to overlook the elephant in the room. The ending must be taken into account in order to understand the preceding narrative.

<sup>471</sup> Martin Kähler, *Der sogenannte historische Jesus und der geschichtliche, biblische Christus* (München: ChrKaiser Verlag, 1961), 59–60 n. 1 “Zieht man bei Matthäus die Kindheitsgeschichte und die drei Redesammlungen ab, sieben Kapitel, so ist das Verhältnis wie bei Markus.”

<sup>472</sup> Jack Dean Kingsbury, “The Plot of Matthew's Story,” *Interpretation* 46, no. 4 (1992): 347–356; Luz, *Matthew 1-7, A Commentary*, 11.

<sup>473</sup> Kingsbury, “The Plot of Matthew's Story,” 1992, 347.

<sup>474</sup> Eubank, *Wages of Cross-Bearing and Debt of Sin*, 169–70.

<sup>475</sup> Allison, *Studies in Matthew*, 217–35.

### 7.4.2 Intratextuality<sup>476</sup>

Cooper does not only point to the phenomena in Matt 27:51-53 as being eschatological but also to the entire narrative about the passion and vindication of Jesus. Cooper demonstrates that in this narrative Jesus in many ways fulfills the predicted end-time tribulation of chapters 10 and 24. Cooper thus draws out intratextual references in the Gospel. This feature in Matthew's telling of the story has also been noted by D. C. Allison and he lists the following parallels:<sup>477</sup>

Eschatological exhortations and prophecies	The fate of Jesus
“Keep awake (γρηγορεῖτε), then, for you do not know in what day your Lord is coming (ἔρχεται),” 24:42; “all of them became drowsy and slept” (ἐκάθευδον), 25:5	Jesus tells his disciples to stay awake (γρηγορεῖτε) and then comes (ἔρχεται) and finds them sleeping (καθεύδοντας), 26:38-40
Disciples will be handed over, 10:17, 19, 21; 24:9-10 (all with forms of παραδίδωμι)	Jesus is handed over, 26:2, 15, 16 etc. (all with forms of παραδίδωμι)
“Brother will betray brother to death,” 10:21	Jesus is betrayed by Judas, “one of the twelve,” 26:15-16, 24-25, 46-48
“Then man will fall away” (σκανδαλισθήσονται), 24:10	The disciples fall away, 26:31 (σκανδαλισθήσεσθε), 33 (σκανδαλισθήσονται)
Disciples will flee, 10:23 (φεύγετε); 24:16 (φευγέτωσαν)	The disciples flee (ἔφυγον), 26:56
Disciples will be delivered up to sanhedrins (συνέδρια), 10:17	Jesus appears before a sanhedrin (συνέδριον) of Jewish leaders, 26:59
Disciples will be led (ἀχθήσεσθε) before	Jesus is led (ἀπήγαγον) away to the “governor”

<sup>476</sup> Intratextuality here simply refers to internal textual relations within a written text.

<sup>477</sup> Allison, *Studies in Matthew*, 85–86.

“governors” (ἡγεμόνας) (10:18)	(ἡγεμόνι) Pilate, 27:2; cf. 11-26
The disciples will be flogged (μαστιγώσουσιν) (10:17)	Jesus is flogged (μαστιγῶσαι), 20:19; 27:26
Jesus will reign upon his throne, 19:28; 25:31	Jesus suffers a mock enthronement 27:27.31
The sky will go dark, 24:29	There is supernatural darkness, 27: 45
The temple will be destroyed, 24:1-2	The veil of the temple splits, symbolically destroying the institution, 27:51
There will be earthquakes (σεισμοὶ), 24:7	There is an earthquake (ἡ γῆ ἐσειέθη), 27:51
The disciples will be killed, 10:21 (θάνατον, θανατώσουσιν), 28 (ἀποκτενόντων); 24:9 (ἀποκτενοῦσιν)	Jesus is killed, 26:4 (ἀποκτείνωσιν), 59 (θανατώσωσιν); 27:1 (θανατώσαι)
The dead will rise, 12:41 (ἀναστήσονται), 42 (ἐγερθήσεται), 22:23-33 (ἀνάστασιν, ἀναστήσει, ἀναστάσεως)	Jesus and others rise from the dead, (17:9) (αναστη), 23 (αναστησεται); 20:19 (αναστησεται), 26:32 (ἐγερθηναί); 27:52-53 (ἠγέρθησαν), 64 (ἠγέρθη); 28:6-7 (ἠγέρθη)
Jesus will return as the Son of Man, 24:27, 30, 37, 39, 44; 25:31; etc.	Jesus is vindicated as the Son of Man, 28:18

Allison's observations demonstrate a text that is closely tied together from chapter 24 onwards. They support Cooper's conclusions and once again have the strength of being based on the Matthean text rather than drawing on possible outside references.

It is not only the narrative structure of the Gospel that marks the passion and resurrection of Jesus as climactic events in Matthew. The signs that accompany the event serve to show the significance of it. It is these signs that portray the death and resurrection of Jesus as events with eschatological significance. Each of the signs employs eschatological imagery and intertextual links to thoroughly eschatological texts. In the following the imagery and intertextual links are explored.

### **7.4.3 Intertextuality – The Prodigies of Matt 27:45 and 27:51-53<sup>478</sup>**

I include 27:45 in order to consider all the signs that accompany Jesus on the cross. These verses provide an answer to the mocking and suffering Jesus has undergone in the preceding verses. In these verses (27:45-54) we have four powerful signs – darkness, the splitting of the temple-veil, earthquake and the resurrection of the holy ones – that prompt the soldier to confess that Jesus is the Son of God.

#### **a. The Darkness over the Land**

**27:45:** Ἀπὸ δὲ ἕκτης ὥρας σκότος ἐγένετο ἐπὶ πᾶσαν τὴν γῆν ἕως ὥρας ἐνάτης

The evangelist does not give any interpretation of the darkness, so it is therefore open to a number of interpretations. Luz mentions interpretations in which the darkness is understood as signaling impending disaster, judgment and mourning. He consequently concludes that “this ambiguity demonstrates that it is not enough to interpret the darkness symbolically 'as something' and then to decode its meaning.”<sup>479</sup> It is also not the purpose here to argue for one meaning at the exclusion of others.

The most common interpretations, however, associate the darkness with Amos 8:9-10 and Exod 10:22.<sup>480</sup> Both passages speak of judgment. In Amos, it is a judgment upon Israel. In Exodus, it is the judgment upon Egypt. In Amos this is to happen 'on that day' – denoting the day of the Lord, the eschatological day of judgment.<sup>481</sup> This indicates that there is a connection between the death of Jesus and eschatological judgment, and already here we find indications that the death of Jesus is to be seen as an eschatological event. This view is strengthened by the fact that eschatological

<sup>478</sup> I use the term intertextuality here in a fairly restricted sense of referring to the relationship between written texts that are consciously evoked by the author. See further considerations in Ulrich Luz, “Intertexts in the Gospel of Matthew,” *Harvard Theological Review* 97, no. 02 (2004): 119–137.

<sup>479</sup> Luz, *Matthew 21-28, A Commentary*, 543.

<sup>480</sup> Allison, *Studies in Matthew*, 80–83. Allison lists a number of modern and ancient interpreters stretching as far back as the second century who discern an implicit reference to Amos 8:9-10 and Exod 10:22 in Matt 27:45. See also France, *Matthew*, 1075; Nolland, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 1205.

<sup>481</sup> The motif of darkness and judgment is ubiquitous in the Old Testament and might have its roots in the darkness upon Egypt (list examples).

darkness is also found in the eschatological discourse (24:30). Elsewhere in the Gospel darkness is also associated with judgment (8:12; 22:13).

With regard to the Exodus allusion, G. K. Beale and Dane Ortlund argue that not only does the darkness refer to judgment, but also to a new beginning. Working on the Markan text they observe the similarities in wording between Exodus and Mark. These similarities are more striking in Matthew.<sup>482</sup> In addition, they see a thematic parallel in “a darkness that comes as divine judgment preceding the shed blood of a Passover sacrifice.”<sup>483</sup> Arguing that the plagues of Egypt are a series of de-creative acts in which Egypt returns to primordial chaos, the darkness at the crucifixion functions in a similar way and eventually gives way to re-creation through Jesus' resurrection.<sup>484</sup>

Of other possible Old Testament connections Allison lists Gen 1:2, Jer 15:9 and Zech 14:6-7 LXX.<sup>485</sup> With regard to Gen 1:2, Allison cites W. D. Davies, who writes that the darkness “suggest[s] ... the return of that darkness which was at creation, the earth having, symbolically, returned to the first beginning.”<sup>486</sup> Zech 14:6-7 LXX is an eschatological text, which we have already explored in chapter 2 as a text about new creation. The links to Matt 27:51-54 also include an earthquake (Zech 14:4) and resurrection (see the discussion on Matt 27:52-53 below).

Tying together the different suggestions with regard to the meaning of the darkness it is important to point out that one interpretation does not necessarily exclude another and more than one allusion may well be present in the text. While the darkness certainly signifies the eschatological judgment of the Lord, it may be a bit too quick to conclude that it also involves a return to a primordial chaos, which consequently anticipates a new creation.<sup>487</sup> The verdict must rely on the overall interpretation of the signs surrounding Jesus' death.

Moving on to the signs after Jesus' death-cry (Matt 27:51-53), in addition to the tearing of the temple-veil Matthew describes signs that do not appear in any of the parallels. Where the rending of the veil is found in all three of the synoptic gospels, the earthquake, splitting of rocks and resurrection of the holy ones are unique to Matthew. I argue that the signs are best interpreted first

<sup>482</sup> Allison, *Studies in Matthew*, 83.

<sup>483</sup> Dane Ortlund and G. K. Beale, “Darkness over the Whole Land: A Biblical Theological Reflection on Mark 15:33,” *The Westminster Theological Journal* 75, no. 2 (2013): 227; I.c. also Allison, *Studies in Matthew*, 83. For further connections between Exodus and Matthew see Allison, *The New Moses*, passim.

<sup>484</sup> Ortlund and Beale, “Darkness over the Whole Land,” 228.

<sup>485</sup> Allison, *Studies in Matthew*, 83.

<sup>486</sup> W. D. Davies, *The Sermon on the Mount* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1966), 84; also Isho'dad of Merv who comments that the darkness was “just like it was in the beginning of creation before the light was created.” quoted in Allison, *Studies in Matthew*, 84.

<sup>487</sup> The sequence of judgment before new creation is evident in Jewish apocalyptic expectation as surveyed in a previous chapter (1 Enoch 10:16; 45:3-6; 2 Baruch 51:1-2; 73:1-2; LAB 3:10)



as eschatological signs and secondly as eschatological judgment of the wicked and vindication of the righteous.

## b. The Rending of the Veil

**27:51a:** Καὶ ἰδοὺ τὸ καταπέτασμα τοῦ ναοῦ ἐσχίσθη ἀπ’ ἄνωθεν ἕως κάτω εἰς δύο

The rending of the veil is the most difficult sign to interpret, as there are no previous instances or predictions of this. I consider it most plausible that it refers to the accessibility of God as well as judgment upon the temple. In the context of the Gospel itself it is most natural to see the event as signifying judgment upon the temple, something that is mentioned elsewhere in the Gospel and in fact in the verses leading up to the event (27:40; cf. 22:7; 23:38; 24:2).

One element in the discussion is which veil in the Temple Matthew refers to.<sup>488</sup> Davies and Allison think that it is the outer veil and that it primarily refers to the destruction of the temple predicted by Jesus (22:7; 23:38; 24:2) and repeated during his trial (26:61) and by the mockers at the cross (27:40). Gurtner writes that the accusation regarding the temple before the council (26:61) “is explicitly said to be false” and consequently rejects the symbolism of the rending of the temple-veil to be the destruction of the temple. He furthermore argues that the lexical data makes the inner-veil more probable and therefore opts for that.<sup>489</sup>

A number of the major commentaries on the text, however, do not agree with Gurtner on the interpretation of 26:61.<sup>490</sup> France remarks that although the accusation is false as far as our records go, it may well be implied by other sayings and actions. Thus Jesus talks about something greater than the temple (12:6), performs an 'anti-temple' demonstration (21:12-13), and talks a number of times about the destruction of the temple (22:7; 23:38; 24:2).<sup>491</sup>

Davies and Allison also note the description of that veil by Josephus (Bell. 5:212-214); he writes that the tapestry “portrayed a panorama of the heavens” that would result in a picture of the heavens splitting, a common item of eschatological expectation (LXX Job 14:12; Ps 102:26; Isa 34:4; 63:19; Hag 2:6, 21; Sib. Or. 3:82; Mt 24:29; 2 Pet 3:10; Rev 6:14; Sib. Or. 8:233, 413). But Josephus does

<sup>488</sup> See, however, Marinus de Jonge, “Matthew 27:51 in Early Christian Exegesis,” *Harvard Theological Review* 79, no. 1–3 (January 1, 1986): 67–68, who does not think that it has a place in the exegesis of the passage since it is not an interest of the text itself.

<sup>489</sup> Gurtner, *The Torn Veil*, 170. According to Gurtner the allusions to the destruction of the temple in the rendering of the veil are vague and indirect, but the same could be said about almost every other interpretation. The destruction of the temple is in fact mentioned explicitly and implicitly several times in the Gospel and in the nearby context.

<sup>490</sup> Davies and Allison, *Matthew. Vol. III*, 525; Nolland, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 1126; Luz, *Matthew 21-28, A Commentary*, 427; France, *Matthew*, 1022–23.

<sup>491</sup> France, *Matthew*, 1023.

not only mention the heavens on the tapestry but actually writes that the tapestry depicted the universe: “but before these doors there was a veil of equal largeness with the doors. It was a Babylonian curtain, embroidered with blue, and fine linen, and scarlet, and purple, and of a contexture that was truly wonderful. Nor was this mixture of colors without its mystical interpretation, but was a kind of image of the universe;”<sup>492</sup>

This makes the symbolism go beyond judgment upon the temple or the splitting of the heavens marking the revelation of God. It may well signify the destruction of the cosmos – everything. The description of the temple as the universe in Josephus as well as the Jewish understanding of the temple as a microcosm<sup>493</sup> makes way for an understanding of the event not only as judgment upon the temple but also on the earth.

At this point, it is necessary to take a closer look at Jesus' relationship to the Temple in Matthew and investigate the theme of Old Temple and New Temple in terms of New Creation (cf. 2 Baruch 32:1-6).

## aa. New Temple and New Creation in Matthew

In order to interpret the meaning of the rending of the temple veil at the death of Jesus (Matt 27:51), it is necessary to investigate the role of the temple in Matthew as a component of the eschatological expectation in Matthew.

Before launching into Matthew, however, I want to take a closer look at the eschatological and cosmological meaning of the temple in second temple Judaism.

### (1) The Temple in Judaism – Eschatology and Cosmology<sup>494</sup>

As a part of the centrality of Zion in the eschatology of the Old Testament, the texts of second temple Judaism and early Christianity, the temple located is of course an essential element. This is evident from the previous overview in which temple imagery features heavily in the Psalms as well as the Old Testament prophetic literature. The most important text is Ezekiel 40-48 where there is an extensive description of the eschatological temple built by God which will bring complete renewal to the land (Ezek 47:1-12).

<sup>492</sup> Flavius Josephus, *The Jewish War Books V-VII*, Loeb Classical Library 210 (Harvard University Press, 1997), 67. ὡσπερ εἰκόνα τῶν ὀλων. This translation is justified by the ensuing text where Josephus describes how the tapestry had symbols of fire, earth, sea and heaven (5.213-14).

<sup>493</sup> Jon Douglas Levenson, *Creation and the Persistence of Evil: The Jewish Drama of Divine Omnipotence* (Princeton University Press, 1988), 78–99; Fletcher-Louis, *All the Glory of Adam*, 62; Kofoed, *Til Syvende Og Sidst*, 298–300.

<sup>494</sup> A number of the observations made here have already been made in the survey of the Old Testament, OTP and DSS. For the sake of clarity I will synthesize and repeat the main points here.

Jostein Ådna notes that there are a number of texts from the second century BCE to the first century CE stating that God will build the eschatological temple on Zion, a notion that he traces back to the Song of Moses in Exodus 15:<sup>495</sup>

You brought them in and planted them on the mountain of your own possession, the place, O LORD, that you made your abode, the sanctuary, O LORD, that your hands have established. The LORD will reign for ever and ever. (Exod 15:17-18)

This text was interpreted in apocalyptic literature as pointing toward the future when God finally will reign forever:

I went on seeing until the Lord of the sheep brought about a new house, greater and loftier than the first one, and set it up in the first location which had been covered up – all its pillars were new, the columns new, and the ornaments new as well as greater than those of the first, (that is) the old (house) which was gone. All the sheep were in it. (1 Enoch 90:29)

After this they all will return from their exile and will rebuild Jerusalem in splendor; and in it the temple of God will be rebuilt, just as the prophets of Israel have said concerning it. (Tobit 14:5)

And I shall build my sanctuary in their midst, and I shall dwell with them. And I shall be their God and they shall be my people truly and rightly. (Jubilees 1:17)

E. P. Sanders connects this expectation with the Kingdom and a renewed earth:

There is other evidence which points to the expectation of an otherworldly kingdom in a different sense: one on an earth renewed by God's hand. Most telling is the expectation of a new temple. [...] The idea of a new temple points towards an expectation of a kingdom on earth in which there are analogies to present life.<sup>496</sup>

The evidence for this is clearly found in Jubilees:

... the day of the new creation when heaven and earth and all of their creatures shall be renewed according to the powers of heaven and according to the whole nature of earth, until the sanctuary of the LORD is created in Jerusalem upon Mount Zion. (Jub 1:29b)

For the LORD has four (sacred) places upon the earth: the garden of Eden and the mountain of the East and this mountain which you are upon today, Mount Sinai, and Mount Zion, which will be sanctified in the new creation for the sanctification of the earth. On account of this the earth will be sanctified from all sin and pollution throughout eternal generations. (Jub. 4:26)

<sup>495</sup> Jostein Ådna, "The Role of Jerusalem in the Mission of Jesus," in *The Identity of Jesus: Nordic Voices*, ed. Samuel Byrskog, Tom Holmen, and Matti Kankaanniemi, WUNT II 373 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014), 166–67.

<sup>496</sup> Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism*, 229.

These texts describe a correlation between the renewal of the temple and the new creation. In 4:26 the sanctification of the earth begins in Zion and spreads throughout the earth.<sup>497</sup> As we have seen the correlation between the eschatological temple and new creation is also found in other Jewish texts (1 Enoch 91:12-17; 2 Baruch 32:1-6, 11QTemple 29:7b-10).

The connections between the new temple and new creation are also clearly expressed in the Revelation of John where the entire cosmos has become a temple equivalent to the new heavens and new earth. John's vision draws heavily on the Old Testament expectations of a new temple, particularly Ezekiel 40-48. In the Revelation, however, the temple extends beyond the land to the entire cosmos:<sup>498</sup>

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. <sup>2</sup>And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. (Rev 21:1-2)

<sup>22</sup>I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb. <sup>23</sup>And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God is its light, and its lamp is the Lamb. <sup>24</sup>The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it. <sup>25</sup>Its gates will never be shut by day—and there will be no night there. (Rev 22:22-25)

The expectation of a new temple is clearly connected with new creation, and again there is the idea of an epicenter from which the rule of God will spread throughout the world.

Although the texts just cited point to God as the builder of the eschatological temple, there is also an expectation that the Messiah will build the temple. This tradition can be traced back to 2 Sam 7:<sup>499</sup>

When your day are fulfilled and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come forth from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be his father, and he shall be my son. (2 Sam 7:12-13)

This promise is initially fulfilled by Solomon who builds a temple in Jerusalem. However, after the destruction of the first temple it was again applied to an expectation of a new temple:

Here is a man whose name is Branch; for he shall branch out his place, and shall build

<sup>497</sup> For more on this in Jubilees see Scott, *On Earth As In Heaven*.

<sup>498</sup> Beale, *New Testament Biblical Theology, A*, 642.

<sup>499</sup> Steven M. Bryan, *Jesus and Israel's Traditions of Judgment and Restoration*, SNTSMS 117 (Cambridge University Press, 2002), 193; Michael Patrick Barber, "Jesus as the Davidic Temple Builder and Peter's Priestly Role in Matthew 16:16–19," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 132, no. 4 (2013): 940.

the temple of the LORD. It is he that shall build the temple of the LORD; he shall bear royal honor, and shall sit and rule on his throne. (Zech 6:12)

In Jewish writings from the centuries around the turn of the era there is also evidence of a messianic temple builder. 4Q174 (4QFlorilegium) attests to an eschatological reading of the promises in 2 Sam 7. Bryan argues that the temple of man and house of David both refer to the temple that will be built by the Davidic messiah.<sup>500</sup>

In the Similitudes of 1 Enoch there is a messianic figure who has a role in the establishment of the eschatological temple:<sup>501</sup> “After this the Righteous and Elect One will reveal the house of his congregation.” (1 Enoch 53:6). The pre-70 CE texts are, however, surprisingly scarce. Ådna also mentions TestDan 5:9-13 but a new temple is not explicitly mentioned as part of the new Jerusalem.<sup>502</sup>

A temple built by the messiah is nevertheless mentioned in post-70 CE texts that may draw on earlier traditions. This is found in apocalyptic writings (Sib 5:414-33; 4 Ezra 13), the Targums (Tg. Zech 6:12; Tg. Isa. 53:5), and rabbinic writings (Lev. Rab. 9:6; Midr. Cant. 4:16).<sup>503</sup>

So far we have seen that there was a widespread expectation of an eschatological temple in early Judaism. This temple will be established by God or in some cases the Messiah. The establishment of the eschatological temple will result in the renewal of creation.

The connection between creation and temple is significant for the purposes of this thesis. The temple was seen to be an integral part of creation. To cite one famous example from the Mishnah, “By these things the world is sustained: by the Law, by the temple service, and by the deeds of loving-kindness.”<sup>504</sup> The temple is thus a pivotal element in the world without which the world would fall apart. This also finds resonance in the Old Testament descriptions of the loss of the first temple. Jeremiah, for example, describes the destruction of the temple as a return to pre-creation: “I looked on the earth, and lo, it was waste and void; and to the heavens, and they had no light.” (Jer 4:23)

<sup>500</sup> Bryan, *Jesus and Israel's Traditions of Judgment and Restoration*, 198–99.

<sup>501</sup> Jostein Ådna, *Jesu Stellung zum Tempel, die Tempelaktion und das Tempelwort als Ausdruck seiner messianischen Sendung*, WUNT II 119 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000), 70; Bryan, *Jesus and Israel's Traditions of Judgment and Restoration*, 196.

<sup>502</sup> Ådna, *Jesu Stellung zum Tempel, die Tempelaktion und das Tempelwort als Ausdruck seiner messianischen Sendung*, 71.

<sup>503</sup> Ådna, 71–87; Bryan, *Jesus and Israel's Traditions of Judgment and Restoration*, 193–94.

<sup>504</sup> Cited in Brant Pitre, “Jesus, the New Temple, and the New Priesthood,” *Letter & Spirit Journal*, no. 4 (2008): 47–83.

The cosmological significance of the temple is also described by Josephus. Josephus has elaborate descriptions of the tabernacle and gives interpretations to the cosmological meaning of the design and imagery. In addition to the one already cited above on the tapestry the following quotes are instructive:

As for the inside, Moses parted its length into three partitions. At the distance of ten cubits from the most secret end, Moses placed four pillars, the workmanship of which was the very same with that of the rest; and they stood upon the like bases with them, each a small matter distant from his fellow. Now the room within those pillars was the most holy place; but the rest of the room was the tabernacle, which was open for the priests. (123) However, this proportion of the measures of the tabernacle proved to be an imitation of the system of the world: for that third part thereof which was within the four pillars, to which the priests were not admitted, is, as it were, a Heaven peculiar to God; but the space of the twenty cubits, is, as it were, sea and land, on which men live, and so this part is peculiar to the priests only. (Ant 3.121–123)

[I]f anyone do but consider the fabric of the tabernacle, and take a view of the garments of the high priest, and of those vessels which we make use of in our sacred ministration, he will find that our legislator was a divine man, and that we are unjustly reproached by others: for if anyone do without prejudice, and with judgment, look upon these things, he will find they were every one made in way of imitation and representation of the universe. (181) When Moses distinguished the tabernacle into three parts, and allowed two of them to the priests, as a place accessible and common, he denoted the land and the sea, these being of general access to all; but he set apart the third division for God, because heaven is inaccessible to men. (182) And when he ordered twelve loaves to be set on the table, he denoted the year, as distinguished into so many months. By branching out the candlestick into seventy parts, he secretly intimated the Decani, or seventy divisions of the planets; and as to the seven lamps upon the candlesticks, they referred to the course of the planets, of which that is the number. (Ant 3.180-182)

Although this is a description of the tabernacle, it is reasonable to believe that this also applies to the subsequent temple building. According to Josephus the temple is designed as a microcosm of the world (see also Philo, Mos 2:71-145).<sup>505</sup>

In summary, then, the temple takes a central place in the eschatology of second temple Judaism and is connected to creation both as an integral part of the present creation as well as a new creation.

The next section investigates the role of the temple in Matthew in light of the observations made here.

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<sup>505</sup> For further exploration of this concept in Judaism see Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism*, 249; Crispin H. T. Fletcher-Louis, "Jesus, the Temple and the Dissolution of Heaven and Earth," in *Apocalyptic in History and Tradition* (London: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002), 156–62; Beale, *The Temple and the Church's Mission*, 29–80; Jonathan Klawans, *Purity, Sacrifice, and the Temple: Symbolism and Supersessionism in the Study of Ancient Judaism* (Cary: Oxford University Press, 2005), 111–44; Kofoed, *Til Syvende Og Sidst*.

## (2) The Temple in Matthew

What is Matthew's theology of the temple and what is the relationship between Jesus and the temple? The answer to this question is not easy and diverging answers have been proposed.<sup>506</sup>

However, the most concise answer is provided by Yves Congar:

When the gospel texts are read straight through with a view to discovering the attitude of Jesus towards the temple and all it represented, two apparently contradictory features become immediately apparent: Jesus' immense respect for the temple; his very lively criticism of abuses and of formalism, yet above and beyond this, his constantly repeated assertion that the temple is to be transcended, that it has had its day, and that it is doomed to disappear.<sup>507</sup>

Congar's conclusion is based on all the Gospels, but his answer also applies to Matthew read independently. He captures the puzzling and even paradoxical nature of Jesus' relationship to the temple. In Matthew, the tension is found within a few verses: on the one hand Jesus says, "he who swears by the temple, swears by it and by him who dwells in it" (Matt 23:21) And only a few verses later he says, "See, your house is left to you, desolate" (Matt 23:38).

The positive attitude toward the temple and the cult is found in several places. Matthew describes Jerusalem as the holy city (Matt 4:5) and the city of the great king, the great king referring to either David or to God. Jesus talks positively about bringing gifts to the altar (5:23), and he also talks about the holiness of the temple as the dwelling place of God and how the presence of God sanctifies the temple as well as the city.

On the other hand, it is clear that there is something about the temple under judgment: "See, your house is left to you, desolate." (Matt 23:38); "Then he asked them, 'You see all these, do you not? Truly I tell you, not one stone will be left here upon another; all will be thrown down.'" (Matt 24:2). The reason for this is not because of a negative view of the temple as such but because of the administration of the temple: "He said to them, "It is written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer'; but you are making it a den of robbers.'" (Matt 21:13)

The temple in Matthew is indeed the dwelling place of God, but it is to be destroyed and transcended since something greater has come in Jesus (Matt 12:6). This something greater is not only Jesus himself but also his disciples.

<sup>506</sup> Gurtner believes the attitude towards the temple is altogether positive. Daniel M. Gurtner, "Matthew's Theology of the Temple and the 'Parting of the Ways': Christian Origins and the First Gospel," in *Built upon the Rock: Studies in the Gospel of Matthew*, ed. Daniel M. Gurtner and John Nolland (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), 128–53.

<sup>507</sup> Yves Congar, *The Mystery of the Temple* (Westminster: Newman Press, 1962), 112.

That the role and function of the temple is transferred to Jesus and the disciples is indicated by a number of texts in Matthew. In Matthew Jesus points to his disciples as well as himself as those who are replacing the temple. The most explicit ones are regarding himself.

As already noted a key verse is 12:6, “Here is something greater than the temple.” Although μείζον, “something greater”, is in the neuter and has led to a number of different suggestions, the reference must be to Jesus and his ministry.<sup>508</sup> This accords with the context that focuses on the identity of Jesus in each of the controversy stories following and culminating in the confession of Peter (16:13-20). Also, in Matt 12:41-42, the analogous neuter comparative adjective, πλεῖον (“more”), is used when comparing Jonah and Solomon with Jesus. Also, only God is greater than the temple (23:21-22). It is therefore a strong Christological claim in which Jesus points to himself as the presence of God on earth (cf. Matt 1:23).

That Jesus is replacing the temple in Matthew is also indicated in Matt 21:42 “The stone that the builders rejected, has become the cornerstone; this was the Lord’s doing, and it is amazing in our eyes?” Jesus, in line with the parable, points out that he has been rejected by the Jewish leaders, but he will be vindicated by God.<sup>509</sup> The stone imagery in psalm 118 that is quoted points to the building of the temple. Matthew 21 as a whole, with the cleansing of the temple and cursing of the fig tree, indicates judgment on the Jewish leadership and the destruction of the temple. However, a new people (21:42) and a new temple will take its place. The crown of this new temple is Jesus.<sup>510</sup>

Based on these claims made by Jesus it is not surprising that his opponents level a charge against him about replacing the temple: “This fellow said, ‘I am able to destroy the temple of God and build it in three days.’” (Matt 26:61) This is a discussed verse; however, most interpreters note that Matthew doesn’t claim this to be a false accusation but separates this from the false testimonies.<sup>511</sup>

<sup>508</sup> So Chrysostom and Jerome cited in Thomas Aquinas, *Catena Aurea: Commentary on the Four Gospels, Collected out of the Works of the Fathers: St. Matthew*, ed. John Henry Newman, Catena Aurea: Commentary on the Four Gospels 1 (Oxford: John Henry Parker, 1841), 434; Thomas Aquinas, *Commentary on the Gospel of St. Matthew*, trans. Paul M. Kimball (New York: Dolorosa Press, 2011), 424; W. D. Davies and Dale C. Allison, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to Saint Matthew. Vol. II: Commentary on Matthew VIII-XVIII.*, ICC (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1991), 314; Nolland, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 484; France, *Matthew*, 460–61.

<sup>509</sup> Davies and Allison, *Matthew. Vol. III*, 185.

<sup>510</sup> In the well attested verse 44, which nevertheless is regarded as an interpolation by many, there is a possible allusion to Dan 2:34, thus linking temple and Kingdom. Although this may not be part of the original text the addition of the verse may have been very early.

<sup>511</sup> Davies and Allison, *Matthew. Vol. III*; Nolland, *The Gospel of Matthew*; Barber, “Jesus as the Davidic Temple Builder and Peter’s Priestly Role in Matthew 16.”



According to Davies and Allison the context of this verse confirms that there was an expectation for a messianic temple builder. The question of the high priest “Are you the messiah” is a reaction to the accusation that Jesus will build a new temple. If he were claiming that he would do that, he would in fact be claiming to be the messiah<sup>512</sup>.

Jesus points to himself as someone who will transcend and replace the temple, but he also involves his disciples in this task. In the beginning of the Sermon on the Mount where the disciples through the beatitudes are given blessings as the new people of God, the disciples are also said to be ‘the light of the world’ and ‘a city on a hill’ (Matt 5:14). Both designations can be seen as pointing to a new Zion.<sup>513</sup> The imagery resonates with Isa 2:2-5 where the future role of Zion in the redemption of the world is outlined.<sup>514</sup>

A second text in which the followers of Jesus are described with temple and Zion language is Matt 16:18-19. Here Jesus’ response to Peter alludes to Davidic traditions of temple building (cf. 2 Sam 7:12-13; 1 Chr 17:7-10).<sup>515</sup> The church is then equated with the eschatological temple that the Messiah was expected to build.<sup>516</sup>

The arguments for this interpretation are strong although a number of commentaries overlook the symbolism and purely discuss the verse in light of the catholic – protestant controversy on papal primacy. Barber outlines the arguments: 1) There is a strong Davidic Christology in Matthew, 2) there is temple-community elsewhere in Matthew (Matt 5:14; 18:20; 21:42)<sup>517</sup> 3) the keys to the Kingdom have priestly connotations (cf. Isa 22:22)<sup>518</sup>.

There may also be connections to Isa 28:15-18:

<sup>14</sup>Therefore hear the word of the Lord, you scoffers  
who rule this people in Jerusalem.

<sup>15</sup>Because you have said, “We have made a covenant with death,  
and with Sheol we have an agreement;  
when the overwhelming scourge passes through  
it will not come to us;  
for we have made lies our refuge,  
and in falsehood we have taken shelter”;

<sup>16</sup>therefore thus says the Lord God,

<sup>512</sup> Davies and Allison, *Matthew. Vol. III*, 527.

<sup>513</sup> Hagner, *Matthew 1-13*, 100.

<sup>514</sup> Blaine Charette, *Restoring Presence: The Spirit in Matthew's Gospel* (Sheffield: T&T Clark, 2000), 104.

<sup>515</sup> Barber, “Jesus as the Davidic Temple Builder and Peter’s Priestly Role in Matthew 16” Barber is building on others. He mentions Ådna, Wright and Meyer; See also Davies and Allison, *Matthew. Vol. II*, 603.

<sup>516</sup> Barber, “Jesus as the Davidic Temple Builder and Peter’s Priestly Role in Matthew 16,” 939–42.

<sup>517</sup> Barber, 942–43.

<sup>518</sup> Barber, 944.

See, I am laying in Zion a foundation stone,  
 a tested stone,  
 a precious cornerstone, a sure foundation:  
 "One who trusts will not panic."  
<sup>17</sup>And I will make justice the line,  
 and righteousness the plummet;  
 hail will sweep away the refuge of lies,  
 and waters will overwhelm the shelter.  
<sup>18</sup>Then your covenant with death will be annulled,  
 and your agreement with Sheol will not stand;  
 when the overwhelming scourge passes through  
 you will be beaten down by it.

Verse 16 is particularly important here, as is the context in which Sheol stands as an opponent to the Lord who lays the foundation stone in Zion to counter Sheol. In Matthew, Hades, the Greek translation of Sheol, is present as a threat for the church. This connection was noted already by Eusebius, who identifies the stone in Isa. 28:16 with Jesus' words to Peter.<sup>519</sup>

There is a sense of permanence in these words. The church will prevail against the forces of Sheol – it will never be destroyed and will even overcome death. Davies and Allison conjure a scenario in which the church will be attacked by the forces of the underworld in the end-times but nevertheless prevail. The idea of the victorious people of God brings Daniel 7 to mind and the victorious saints (Dan 7:18). As already argued, Daniel 7 employs creation language in the description of the defeat of the four kingdoms.<sup>520</sup>

In the writings from Qumran there is evidence that Isa 28:16 was applied to the community who saw themselves as the new eschatological temple (1QS VIII 4b-10a; 1QS XI 7b-9a; 4Q174 frag. 1 col. 6). This idea is also found in early Christianity (cf. 1 Cor 3:16; 2 Cor 6:16; Eph 2:21-22; 1 Pet 2:4-8) and may well be present in Matthew as well.

A third text in which the disciples are described in a language connoting the temple is Matt 18:18-20: "Truly I tell you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. <sup>19</sup>Again, truly I tell you, if two of you agree on earth about anything you ask, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. <sup>20</sup>For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them."

<sup>519</sup> Commentarium in Isaiam 28:16 in Joseph Ziegler, ed., *Eusebius Werke: Der Jesajakommentar*, Reprint, vol. 9, Die Griechischen Christlichen Schriftsteller Der Ersten Jahrhunderte 60 (Berlin; Boston: De Gruyter, 2013), 183.

<sup>520</sup> See chapter 2.

Many interpreters have observed that the presence of Jesus is equated with the glory of God, and the disciples become the place where Jesus will be with his people.<sup>521</sup>

The narrative in Matthew explicitly moves toward Jerusalem from Matt 16:21 onward, and the entry into Jerusalem and the temple action is climactic in this regard.<sup>522</sup> The buildup to the confrontation in Jerusalem begins already in the first criticisms of and the confrontations with the Jewish leadership (Matt 3:7-10).

The dramatic act of Jesus in the temple (Matt 21:12-17) points to a destruction of the present temple and the establishment of a future temple. The words of Jesus about the temple as a den of robbers alludes to Jeremiah 7:11. Jeremiah pronounces a warning against the temple in which he calls the temple a den of robbers and warns that if they do not repent the temple will be destroyed (Jer. 7:12-14). A few years later the temple would be destroyed by the Babylonians. Similarly, Jesus pronounces judgment upon the Herodian temple.<sup>523</sup>

Conversely, the reference to Isaiah 56:7, "My house shall be called a house of prayer", points to a future temple. Ådna observes that in the first century CE, Isa 56:7 was generally interpreted as an oracle concerning the eschatological temple.<sup>524</sup> That Jesus' action points to the eschatological temple is furthermore strengthened by the way the action recalls Zechariah 14:21b: "And there shall no longer be traders in the house of the Lord of hosts that day."<sup>525</sup> Although Zechariah is not directly quoted the extensive use of Zechariah in Matt 21-27 supports that Zechariah may also be in the background here.<sup>526</sup>

The use of Zechariah is also helpful in the explanation of other features in the text. The vision of the eschatological temple in Zechariah 14 involves the sanctification of all society:

On that day there shall be inscribed on the bells of the horses, "Holy to the Lord." And the cooking pots in the house of the Lord shall be as holy as the bowls in front of the altar; <sup>21</sup>and every cooking pot in Jerusalem and Judah shall be sacred to the Lord of

<sup>521</sup> So Gundry, *Matthew*, 369; Davies and Allison, *Matthew. Vol. II*, 790; Hagner, *Matthew 14-28*, 533; Ulrich Luz, *Matthew 8-20, A Commentary*, trans. James E. Crouch, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2001), 458; Nolland, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 751; France, *Matthew*, 698.

<sup>522</sup> Donald Versepnt, "Jesus' Pilgrimage to Jerusalem and Encounter in the Temple : A Geographical Motif in Matthew's Gospel," *Novum Testamentum* 36, no. 2 (April 1, 1994): 105–21.

<sup>523</sup> Ådna, "The Role of Jerusalem in the Mission of Jesus," 175. Ådna thinks there is still time for repentance. Jesus, however, does not offer that option. The judgment has already been pronounced.

<sup>524</sup> Ådna, 175.

<sup>525</sup> The Hebrew text in Zechariah literally reads 'Canaanites' instead of 'traders', which is the way the text is rendered in the LXX. The combination with Isa 56:7 here, however, speaks against the idea of excluding gentiles from the eschatological temple.

<sup>526</sup> Bryan, *Jesus and Israel's Traditions of Judgment and Restoration*, 223; Moss, *The Zechariah Tradition and the Gospel of Matthew*.

hosts, so that all who sacrifice may come and use them to boil the flesh of the sacrifice.  
(Zech 14:20-21a)

This can be seen as enacted through the healings that Jesus performs in the temple. Blind and lame people were seen as impure and had restricted access to the temple (Lev 21:18-19; 2 Sam 5:8; 1QS<sup>a</sup> 2:5-22, CD 15:15-17 and m. Hag. 1:1). Jesus heals them and purifies them in the act.

It is also significant that he is praised as the Son of David within the precincts of the temple (Matt 21:15). The action of Jesus is not just a cultic, it is a royal act. He is the true king on Zion. Furthermore, Jesus, by quoting Psalm 8 (Matt 21:16b), points to himself not just as a human king but a divine king. In the psalm, it is God who is praised.

After the temple-action the confrontation with Jewish leaders intensifies, and in the chapters 21-27 the destruction of the temple is mentioned five times (22:7; 23:38; 24:2; 26:61; 27:40). Matt 24:2 is particularly important, because here the disciples connect the end of the temple with the end of the age. This confirms the pivotal role of the temple in the world.

All of this culminates in the rending of the veil in Matt 27:51, which together with the accompanying signs signal both the end of the old temple and creation along with the beginning of a new temple and a new creation.

### **(3) Summary**

The temple was central in the eschatology of first-century Judaism. In the eschatological expectation of a new temple the temple was closely tied to the renewal of the cosmos, since the temple was perceived as a microcosm pointing to the eschatological hope that the presence of God would extend throughout the world (Rev 21).

In Matthew the present temple is acknowledged as the dwelling place of God yet destined for destruction. It stands under judgment because of the people who manage it. It will be superseded by something greater (Matt 12:6). Jesus is himself the presence of God with his people. He is with his disciples, who consequently are the eschatological temple as a community connected to the cornerstone of the new temple.

The close connection between creation and temple means that the expectation of the imminent destruction of the temple in Jerusalem and the notion of the new temple present in Jesus and the church points to the renewal of creation in and through the church, which has the promise of the presence of Jesus to the end of the age (Matt 28:20).

The rending of the veil symbolizes judgment upon the temple and foretells its imminent destruction. In the context of early Judaism this also spells the end of the present creation. That creation is also underlined in the text itself since the rocks are being split (σχιζω) just like the veil.

### c. Earthquake and Splitting of Rocks

**27:51b:** καὶ ἡ γῆ ἐσειέσθη καὶ αἱ πέτραι ἐσχίσθησαν

The earthquake is an obvious apocalyptic sign but may signify a number of different things.<sup>527</sup> However, following the interpretation of the previous signs it also has the meaning of judgment. According to Meier “it symbolizes God's wrathful judgment on the old aeon”.<sup>528</sup> Notice also that eschatological earthquakes are present in Matt 24:7. So the earthquake is signaling an end-time event.

It is important to notice that the same word is used for the rendering of the temple-veil and the splitting of the rocks.<sup>529</sup> This supports an interpretation of the splitting of the temple-veil in terms of judgment, not only on the temple but on the world.

Jerome comments on the earthquake that “what the great signs signify literally is that both heaven and earth and all things were showing that their Lord was crucified.”<sup>530</sup> It is creation reacting to the death of the creator.

The most commonly suggested Old Testament allusions are Ez. 37:1-14 and Zech 14:4-5.<sup>531</sup> In Ezekiel 37:1-14 (LXX) an earthquake precedes the opening of the graves and the resurrection of the dead people (καὶ ἰδοὺ σεισμός, 37:7). Zechariah 14:4-5 is a vision of the Lord standing on the Mount of Olives, which splits in two. Davies and Allison argue that Zech. 14:4-5 stands out as most appropriate.<sup>532</sup> Recently, however, Allison has argued that both Ezekiel and Zechariah stand in the background.<sup>533</sup>

<sup>527</sup> For the use of earthquakes in apocalyptic scenarios see Richard Bauckham, “The Eschatological Earthquake in the Apocalypse of John,” *Novum Testamentum* 19, no. 3 (1977): 224–233.

<sup>528</sup> Meier, *Law and History*, 32.

<sup>529</sup> Gurtner, *The Torn Veil*, 146.

<sup>530</sup> Jerome, *Commentary on Matthew*, ed. Thomas P. Halton, trans. Thomas P. Scheck, The Fathers of the Church 117 (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 2008), 321.

<sup>531</sup> See Allison, “Ezekiel 37, Zechariah 14, and Matthew 27,” 154, for a recent overview of proposed allusions.

<sup>532</sup> Davies and Allison, *Matthew. Vol. III*, 628.

<sup>533</sup> Allison, “Ezekiel 37, Zechariah 14, and Matthew 27.”

These Old Testament texts with earthquakes and the resurrection of the dead are the scriptural context for the resurrection of the holy ones in Matt 27:52-53. The link to Ezekiel and Zechariah will be explored further in the section on the resurrection of the holy ones.<sup>534</sup>

#### d. The Resurrection of the Holy Ones

**27:52-53:** καὶ τὰ μνημεῖα ἀνεόχθησαν καὶ πολλὰ σώματα τῶν κεκοιμημένων ἁγίων ἠγέρθησαν, καὶ ἐξελθόντες ἐκ τῶν μνημείων μετὰ τὴν ἔγερσιν αὐτοῦ εἰσῆλθον εἰς τὴν ἁγίαν πόλιν καὶ ἐνεφανίσθησαν πολλοῖς.

The resurrection of the saints most clearly shows the death of Jesus as an end-time event. The resurrection could well be seen as an anticipation of the general resurrection at the end of the age, and together with the other signs Jesus' death is here portrayed as the beginning of a new age.<sup>535</sup>

The discussion regarding the resurrected saints has primarily focused upon historicity and chronology. The historicity is not of great importance for the present study. The text itself nevertheless gives the impression of an actual event by adding that the resurrected saints appeared to many as a testament to the fact.<sup>536</sup>

The chronology regarding the appearance of the saints may, however, be interpreted in light of the primacy of the resurrection of Jesus for Matthew. The awkward fact that the saints are raised but apparently stay in their graves until after Jesus' resurrection ties the death and resurrection of Jesus together as a single eschatological event.<sup>537</sup> In mentioning Jesus' resurrection at his death Matthew makes explicit that they are not two separate events. The earthquake also makes this link at both occasions. The death as well as the resurrection brings new life to God's people.<sup>538</sup>

The allusions to Ezekiel 37:1-14 and Zechariah 14:4-5 mentioned above reinforce this conclusion because of their association with eschatological resurrection, and the general association between resurrection and the end of the age. There is evidence that both texts were interpreted this way in early Judaism.

<sup>534</sup> Another relevant text may be Isaiah 24-27, where the description of judgment on the earth involves earthquakes (24:19) as well as darkness (24:23). In these chapters there is also a description of the defeat of death (25:7-8) and resurrection (26:19). There is, however, a lack of lexical parallels between Isa 24-27 and Matt 27:51-54.

<sup>535</sup> Waetjen, "Genealogy as the Key to the Gospel According to Matthew," 248; Meier, "Salvation-History in Matthew," 207; Meier, *Law and History*, 30-35.

<sup>536</sup> Nolland, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 1217.

<sup>537</sup> Meier, *Law and History*, 33; Konradt, *Israel, Kirche und die Völker im Matthäusevangelium*, 327.

<sup>538</sup> France, *Matthew*, 1082. The passage is sometimes read in light of 1 Cor 15.20-23 and it is argued that the delay of the appearance of the saints until after his resurrection is in order to make Jesus' resurrection the first. Allison, *The End of the Ages Has Come, an Early Interpretation of the Passion and Resurrection of Jesus*, 45-46; James D. G. Dunn, *Jesus Remembered*, vol. 1 (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2003), 868.

Evidence for the interpretation of Ezekiel 37 as a vision of eschatological resurrection is found in 4QPseudo-Ezekiel, the Ezekiel Apocryphon and Papyrus 967 of LXX.<sup>539</sup>

The reasons for seeing an allusion here are, as mentioned above, the earthquake that precedes the bones being brought back to life and in particular the similarities between LXX Ezek 37:12 (ἀνοίγω ὑμῶν τὰ μνήματα καὶ ἀνάξω ὑμᾶς ἐκ τῶν μνημάτων ὑμῶν) and Matt 27:52-53 (τὰ μνημεῖα ἀνεώχθησαν ...<sup>53</sup> καὶ ἐξελθόντες ἐκ τῶν μνημεῖων).<sup>540</sup> Chae additionally emphasises the aspect of recognition of a divine act, which is the result of the resurrection both in Ezekiel 37:14: “then you shall know that I, the LORD, have spoken and will act,” says the LORD,” and in Matthew with the confession of the soldiers.<sup>541</sup>

The allusion to Zechariah 14:4-5 is perhaps not as clear as the one to Ezekiel since the text does not immediately present itself as a text about resurrection. There is, however, early evidence for a link between the eschatological scenario in Zech 14 and resurrection.

The panels found in a synagogue in Dura Europos dating from C.E. 245-256 are considered to be a depiction of eschatological resurrection and draw their imagery from Ezekiel 37:1-14 and Zechariah 14:4-5.<sup>542</sup> The Ezekiel interpretation of Dura Europos is evident from the depiction of Ezekiel brought by the hand of the Lord to a valley full of body parts, which in turn become bodies that are raised from their graves.

That Zechariah 14:4-5 is also part of the depiction at Dura-Europos is indicated by a mountain that has been split in two with two trees on the top. This scenario resembles the text from Zechariah 14:4-5.<sup>543</sup>

<sup>4</sup> On that day his feet shall stand on the Mount of Olives, which lies before Jerusalem on the east; and the Mount of Olives shall be split in two from east to west by a very wide valley; so that one half of the Mount shall withdraw northward, and the other half southward. 5 And you shall flee by the valley of the LORD's mountain, for the valley between the mountains shall reach to Azal; and you shall flee as you fled from the earthquake in the days of King Uzziah of Judah. Then the LORD my God will come, and all the holy ones with him. (Zech 14:4-5)

<sup>539</sup> Allison, “Ezekiel 37, Zechariah 14, and Matthew 27,” 156–57 Allison provides even more evidence in an extremely well researched article.

<sup>540</sup> For a detailed analysis and additional arguments see Allison, 159–60.

<sup>541</sup> Chae, *Jesus as the Eschatological Davidic Shepherd*, 339–40.

<sup>542</sup> Allison, “Ezekiel 37, Zechariah 14, and Matthew 27,” 163.

<sup>543</sup> Charlene McAfee Moss notes that this is the only occurrence of a cleft mountain in the Bible. *The Zechariah Tradition and the Gospel of Matthew*, 200.

Allison cites two targums that link resurrection with Zech 14:4-5.<sup>544</sup> Allison cites Codex Reuchlinianus: “At that time the Lord will take in his hand the great trumpet and will blow ten blasts upon it to revive the dead”, (Tg. Zech. 14:4-5) and the targum on Cant 8:5: “Solomon the prophet said, When the dead come to life the Mount of Olives will be split and all the dead of Israel will come out from beneath it; and also the righteous who died in exile will come by way of channels under the ground, and will debouch from under the Mount of Olives.”<sup>545</sup>

Both the panel and the targums date more than a century after Matthew, and the question is if such late evidence can be relevant for the interpretation of Matthew. Allison points to the Didache for an earlier text that understands Zech 14:4-5 as prophesying the resurrection:

“And then there will appear the signs of truth: first the sign of an opening in heaven, then the sign of the sound of trumpet, and third the resurrection of the dead – but not of all; rather it is written, ‘The Lord will come, and all his holy ones with him’ (Zech 14:5). Then the world will see the Lord coming upon the clouds of heaven.” (16:6-8).

The quotation of Zech 14:5 in the Didache shows that the tradition of linking resurrection with Zech 14:4-5 dates back to the early second century and probably even earlier. The tradition found in the targums and at Dura-Europos probably does not stem from Matthew or the Didache. If there is any relationship between the two the Jewish tradition would probably be earlier. Resurrection is thus understood as being implied in the eschatological vision in Zechariah at an early stage.

In both Zechariah 14 and Matthew we then find both resurrection and an earthquake, which is implied by the splitting of the mountain in Zechariah 14 and the reference to the earthquake at the time of Uzzia (Zech 14:5). Both employ a passive form of σκίζω as the rocks and the mountain are split (Matt 27:51b; Zech 14:4 LXX). The resurrected ones are called ‘οἱ ἄγιοι’ in both texts (Matt 27:53; Zech 14:5 LXX). In the context of both texts we find eschatological darkness (Matt 27:45, Zech 14:6). Allison furthermore points out that commentators throughout the centuries have linked Matt 27:51-53 and Zech 14:4-5.<sup>546</sup>

In support of the allusion to Zechariah is also the extensive use of Zechariah 9-14 in the passion-narrative in Matthew (26:15; 26:28; 26:31; 27:9). The use of Zechariah in the passion-narrative is apparent in all of the synoptic gospels, but it is particularly remarkable in Matthew. Mark Black lists

<sup>544</sup> Allison, “Ezekiel 37, Zechariah 14, and Matthew 27,” 164.

<sup>545</sup> That resurrection is still associated with the mount of Olives is also visible on the site today as one can find numerous graves on the place because it is believed to be the place where the resurrection will commence at the end of the age. Allison, 162.

<sup>546</sup> Allison, 171–72.



nine occasions where Zechariah 9-14 is quoted or alluded to, from the entry of Jesus into Jerusalem to his death (Ch. 21-27).<sup>547</sup>

Given the strong links of Matt 27:51b-53 to both Ezekiel 37:1-14 and Zechariah 14:4-5 it seems probable that they both stand in the background of the text.<sup>548</sup>

For our purposes it is interesting that both of these passages can be read as pointing to new creation. Both texts were treated in the survey of the Old Testament for new creation with commentators detecting new creation elements in both. This may also be implied in Matthew with elements of de-creation with darkness, judgment on the temple and earthquake and new life in the resurrection.

### e. The 'Confession' of the Soldiers

**27:54:** Ὁ δὲ ἑκατόνταρχος καὶ οἱ μετ' αὐτοῦ τηροῦντες τὸν Ἰησοῦν ἰδόντες τὸν σεισμὸν καὶ τὰ γενόμενα ἐφοβήθησαν σφόδρα, λέγοντες· ἀληθῶς θεοῦ υἱὸς ἦν οὗτος.

The confession of the soldiers is also important.<sup>549</sup> The 'confession' is a reaction to signs and will also have a bearing on the meaning of the signs. Although the phrase 'Son of God' would probably come more easily to a gentile than to a Jew, this is a remarkable outburst. 'Son of God' was credited to prominent men and notably to the emperor but is now applied to a man who has been shamefully executed.<sup>550</sup>

Leading up to the death of Jesus he has been asked if he is the Son of God (26:53) and has been mocked for claiming it (27:40. 43). The confession is an indication that the crucifixion is an exaltation of Jesus as he is revealed as the Son of God. Compare the use in 14:33, where Jesus is proclaimed as the Son of God after walking on the lake.<sup>551</sup>

<sup>547</sup> Black, "The Messianic Use of Zechariah 9-14 in Matthew, Mark, and the Pre-Markan Tradition," 113–14.

<sup>548</sup> Allison argues that both Ezekiel 37 and Zechariah 14 stand in the background for Matt 27:51b-53. He bases this conclusion on the combination of the texts on the Dura Europos panels. According to Allison, there is reason to believe that the texts were combined before the painting of the mural. Allison, "Ezekiel 37, Zechariah 14, and Matthew 27," 173–76.

<sup>549</sup> Troxel, "Matt 27.51–4 Reconsidered."

<sup>550</sup> France, *Matthew*, 1084.

<sup>551</sup> Andrew Angel, "Crucifixus Vincens: The 'Son of God' as Divine Warrior in Matthew," *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly*, no. 73 (2011): 299–317. Jesus is called the Son of God nine times in Matthew. Two times by the devil (4:3. 6), one time by a demon (8:29), by the men in the boat (14:33), by Peter (16:16), by the high priest as a question (26:63), two times by the mockers (27:40. 43), and by the centurion (27:54). Only three times it is a confession or a proclamation (14:33; 16:16; 27:54). Beyond that Jesus is also called my son by God two times (3:17; 17:5).

It is clear that the signs are meant to demonstrate exactly what the soldiers say. While hanging on the cross Jesus has twice been mocked by people who question his identity as the 'Son of God' (27:39-44). The signs serve as God's vindication of his Son: Jesus is the Son of God.

The mocking of Jesus contains these features: Break down the temple, save yourself, come down from the cross, if you are the king of Israel, trust in God, if you are the son of God. Not just some of it, but all of it is filled with irony. Jesus *is* all that they mock him for, and he will accomplish everything that they do not believe he can do. Thus, he is vindicated as the Son of God.

The fear of the soldiers can also be compared with the fear of the disciples in Matt 17:16: ἐφοβήθησαν σφόδρα. Both in the transfiguration and in his death Jesus is revealed as the Son of God by the acts of God, prompting the people who are present to fear and confess. In its own strange way the crucifixion and the events that accompany it serve as the vindication of Jesus as the Son of God.

As a corollary it is also worth noting that Jesus is being accused of being unable to save himself and he is at his death vindicated by God, who 'saves' him and brings judgment upon his enemies.

Having argued so far for an eschatological understanding of Jesus' death, it makes sense to pause here to compare Jesus' death with the description of the end in Matt 24.

#### **7.4.4 The Death of Jesus as the Coming of the Son of Man**

While a number of interpreters see the destruction of the temple in CE 70 as the fulfillment of 24:29-31, it is hard to see where the references to the destruction of the temple are in precisely those verses even though the discourse begins with that. More importantly, none of the advocates for the centrality of the event in CE 70 seems to offer any early Christian sources apart from the Gospels. The gospels may interpret the destruction of the temple as the coming of the Son of Man if one accepts a post CE 70 date. If the destruction of the Temple in CE 70 was understood by early Christians as a vindication of Jesus and a salvation-historical turning-point, one would expect to find evidence for it in post CE 70 Christian sources.

On the other hand, we have seen that the death of Jesus may be interpreted in light of the eschatological discourse and in that light presents the death of Jesus as a fulfillment of 24:29-31:

<sup>29</sup>Immediately after the suffering of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of heaven will be shaken. <sup>30</sup> Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see 'the Son of Man coming on the clouds of

heaven' with power and great glory.<sup>31</sup> And he will send out his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

What is predicted in the context of these verses is tribulation, which will end with the appearance of the sign of the Son of Man. Tribulation will come to the disciples, so Jesus essentially talks about something different from his own tribulation and vindication. Nevertheless the parallels are so clear that it is reasonable to speak of a proleptic fulfillment in Jesus' death.

In addition to Allison's demonstration of the parallels, the eschatological signs accompanying the death of Jesus and the confession of the soldiers make it possible to see the event in Matthew as the exaltation of the Son of Man (cf. Joh. 12:32-34). Then Jesus on the cross serves as the Son of Man visible on a hill outside Jerusalem among all the tribes of the land (24:30a). There he is confessed as the Son of God as he is vindicated through the judgment on the temple (27:51). Sim writes about the ensuing signs: "All these cosmic signs ... act as the prelude to the arrival of the Son of Man".<sup>552</sup> Eventually he will rise in glory (28:2-6; 24:30c), and he will send out his messengers to the ends of the earth (28:16-20; 24:31).<sup>553</sup>

It is probable to interpret Matthew's description of the death of Jesus as a confirmation that Jesus is the Son of God and that he is coming as the Son of Man in fulfillment of 26:64. In the latter the high priest asks Jesus if he is the Son of God, to which Jesus answers that "from now on" he will see the Son of Man. Thus there is an identification between the Son of God and the Son of Man. Gibbs argues that "from now on" refers to the crucifixion, which in this sense can be considered an enthronement.<sup>554</sup>

The resurrection serves as the ultimate vindication. Jesus is saved by God (27:43). As argued above, the death and resurrection of Jesus are closely tied together and best interpreted as one event.<sup>555</sup> Thus, I now turn to the resurrection of Jesus and consider the eschatological meaning of this event.

<sup>552</sup> Sim, *Apocalyptic Eschatology in the Gospel of Matthew*, 104.

<sup>553</sup> The word *angels* can be understood as human messengers. Note the use of *angel* in reference to John the Baptist in 3.1. See further arguments in Gibbs, *Jerusalem and Parousia*, 201–4. See also Wilson, *When Will These Things Happen*, 158.

<sup>554</sup> Gibbs, *Jerusalem and Parousia*, 143–45; For the crucifixion as an enthronement see also Tucker Ferda, "Matthew's 'Titulus' and Psalm 2's King on Mount Zion," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 133, no. 3 (September 1, 2014): 561–81.

<sup>555</sup> Meier, *Law and History*; Dunn, *Jesus Remembered*; Konradt, *Israel, Kirche und die Völker im Matthäusevangelium*; Wim J.C. Weren, "Human Body and Life Beyond Death in Matthew's Gospel," *Deuterocanonical Literature Yearbook* 2009 (2010): 267–284. A further reading which sees the text as *Chaoskampf* may also support the notion of turning of the ages. Here then, the death of Christ is interpreted as a battle in which the powers of chaos are defeated making way for order and new life. Dominic Rudman, "The Crucifixion as *Chaoskampf*: A New Reading of the Passion Narrative in the Synoptic Gospels," *Biblica* 84, no. 1 (2003): 102–107; Angel, "Crucifixus Vincens."

### **7.4.5 The Resurrection of Jesus as New Creation in Matthew**

The passage on the resurrection of Jesus in Matt 28:1-8 does not narrate the resurrection itself.<sup>556</sup> Rather the circumstances surrounding the resurrection are narrated and the encounters with the risen Jesus (Matt 28:9-10; 28:16-20).

28:2-4, with the earthquake and the angel, makes it clear that this is a divine intervention. The earthquake recalls the one at the death of Jesus and the resurrection of the holy ones. The earthquake here may also very well signify an eschatological event. The 'angel of the Lord' radiates divine glory similar to the description of Jesus in the transfiguration (Matt 17:2).<sup>557</sup> Eduard Schweizer comments: "All the elements [of vv. 2-4] recall the signs expected to accompany the coming of the Lord at the end of the world and the irruption of the Kingdom of God."<sup>558</sup>

The account of Jesus' burial and resurrection makes it clear that this is bodily resurrection. This is done even without narrating the resurrection itself.<sup>559</sup> The empty grave in itself is ambiguous but is nevertheless the initial sign for the women that Jesus has risen (28:6). This shows that the body plays a part in his resurrection.<sup>560</sup> It is however Jesus' appearance to the women which underlines the physicality of the resurrection since they touch his feet.<sup>561</sup> Also, while the disciples do not touch Jesus they see him and give no indication that his appearance is significantly different than prior to his death. Furthermore, by placing the resurrection between the scenes about the guards at the tomb (27:62-66; 28:11-15) Matthew wants to show that this is a bodily resurrection accomplished by divine intervention in opposition to the false claims that the disciples had stolen the body.<sup>562</sup>

Matthew's Gospel mentions people being raised from the dead thirteen times. Of these, six passages are about Jesus' resurrection (16:21, 17:9, 17:23, 20:19, 26:32, 27:63-64, 28:6-7). Three passages are about miracles performed by Jesus or his disciples (9:25, 10:8, 11:5). One passage is about the alleged resurrection of John the Baptist (14:2), and another is about the resurrection of the saints at Jesus' death (27:52-53). Two passages speak about a general resurrection at the end of the age (12:41-42; 22:23-33). In these two passages it is first stated that people will rise on the day of judgment (12:41-42), and *the* resurrection is described as one single event at the end of the age

<sup>556</sup> Denaux, "Matthew's Story of Jesus' Burial and Resurrection (Mt 27, 57-28, 20)," 128.

<sup>557</sup> Denaux, 134.

<sup>558</sup> Eduard Schweizer, *The Good News According to Matthew*, trans. David E. Green (Atlanta: Westminster John Knox Press, 1975), 524.

<sup>559</sup> Denaux, "Matthew's Story of Jesus' Burial and Resurrection (Mt 27, 57-28, 20)," 128.

<sup>560</sup> Weren, "Human Body and Life Beyond Death in Matthew's Gospel," 280.

<sup>561</sup> Allison, *Studies in Matthew*, 113-15; France, *Matthew*, 1102.

<sup>562</sup> Denaux, "Matthew's Story of Jesus' Burial and Resurrection (Mt 27, 57-28, 20)," 135.

(22:23-33). These last two passages show that Matthew stands in the tradition where a general resurrection is part of the end-time sequence.<sup>563</sup>

The dramatic events surrounding the resurrection of Jesus distinguish it as something unique compared to the miracles performed by Jesus. This is furthermore underlined by the fact that Jesus' resurrection is predicted a number of times in the Gospel. Jesus' status after his resurrection also points to this uniqueness as the women and disciples immediately worship him when they see him.

Matt 28:16-20 furthermore underlines the exalted status of Jesus after his resurrection. The meeting-place on a mountain reminds the reader of the transfiguration, where Jesus is glorified before the eyes of his disciples (Matt 17:1-8). And there are significant parallels between the description of the Son of Man in Daniel 7 and Jesus' words in Matt 28:18-19.

ἐδόθη μοι πᾶσα ἐξουσία ἐν οὐρανῷ καὶ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς. 19 πορευθέντες οὖν μαθητεύσατε πάντα τὰ ἔθνη (Matt 28:18-19)

<sup>14</sup>καὶ ἐδόθη αὐτῷ ἐξουσία, καὶ πάντα τὰ ἔθνη τῆς γῆς κατὰ γένη καὶ πᾶσα δόξα αὐτῷ λατρεύουσα (Dan 7:14 LXX)

Thus, what we have here is the exalted Son of Man and the beginning of the everlasting Kingdom.<sup>564</sup> We here have a combination of eschatological motifs that indicate an overlap between them. Jesus' resurrection and his exaltation as the Son of Man is combined in such a way in Matthew that the resurrection may be seen as the beginning of the eschatological resurrection similar to the thought of Paul. The question, however, remains: Does it also entail new creation?

It is not uncommon to find statements which posit that resurrection is inextricably linked with new creation. For example Martin Hengel writes how resurrection and new creation are inextricably connected in Jewish literature: "Offenbar konnten sich weite jüdische Kreise die endzeitliche Restitution und Erlösung des Gottesvolkes, und d.h. zugleich seiner einzelnen treu gebliebenen Glieder, in einer erneuerten Schöpfung (Jes 65,17; 66,22; Apk 22,1 vgl. Röm 8,19-23) nicht anders vorstellen."<sup>565</sup> And G. K. Beale suggests that resurrection always implies new creation: "The

<sup>563</sup> See this expectation in Jewish literature: 1 Enoch 51:1-5; 1 Enoch 91:10-11; Ps. Sol. 3:11-12; Sib. Or. 4:181-182; LAE (Apocalypse) 41:3; LAE (Vita) 51:2; LAE (Apocalypse) 13:2-3; Bib. Ant. 3:10; 4 Ezra 6:25-28; 7:26-44; 2 Bar. 50:1-4.

<sup>564</sup> There is also a connection to Paul and Romans 1:3 where the resurrection is portrayed in terms of enthronement. See Timo Eskola, *Messiah and the Throne, Jewish Merkabah Mysticism and Early Christian Exaltation Discourse*, WUNT II 142 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001).

<sup>565</sup> Martin Hengel, "Das Begräbnis Jesu Bei Paulus Und Die Leibliche Auferstehung Aus Dem Grabe," in *Auferstehung-Resurrection: The Fourth Durham-Tübingen Research Symposium: Resurrection, Transfiguration and Exaltation in Old Testament, Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity*, ed. Fredrich Avemarie and Hermann Lichtenberger, WUNT II 135 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001), 168.

resurrection of the body will happen only at the very end of the age, when corruption of all creation would be ended and a new creation was begun. Indeed resurrection is equivalent to new creation, since the way redeemed humans participate in the new creation is through having transformed newly created bodies.”<sup>566</sup>

The connection is logical since resurrection involves transformation of the body and thus similarly entails transformation of the rest of creation. Though it may be an overstatement that resurrection is equivalent to new creation, resurrection is certainly part of an end-time sequence that involves renewal of creation in several passages in Jewish Apocalyptic. Thus for example:

<sup>1</sup>In those days, Sheol will return all the deposits which she had received and hell will give back all that which it owes. <sup>2</sup>And he shall choose the righteous and the holy ones from among (the risen dead), for the day when they shall be selected and saved has arrived. <sup>3</sup>In those days, (the Elect One) shall sit on my throne, and from the conscience of his mouth shall come out all the secrets of wisdom, for the Lord of the Spirits has given them to him and glorified him. <sup>4</sup>In those days, mountains shall dance like rams; and the hills shall leap like kids satiated with milk. And the faces of all the angels in heaven shall glow with joy, because on that day the Elect One has arisen. <sup>5</sup>And the earth shall rejoice; and the righteous ones shall dwell upon her and the elect ones shall walk upon her.<sup>567</sup> (1 Enoch 51:1-5)

Here the resurrection is the first part of an end-time sequence that involves judgment (v. 2) and transformation of the earth (vv. 4-5).<sup>568</sup>

## 7.5 Summary

Matthew's historic scope moves from creation to new creation. It moves from the foundation of the world to the regeneration of the world in a new creation. The new creation is, however, not only something to be anticipated in the future.

Due to the eschatological nature of the death and resurrection of Jesus in Matthew, this event marks the turn of the ages in Matthew. Matthew consequently works with an overlap of the ages in which the end and new beginning have already come in the death and resurrection of Jesus. At the same time, however, the ultimate end of the ages is still in the future.

<sup>566</sup> Beale, *New Testament Biblical Theology, A*, 121.

<sup>567</sup> Charlesworth, *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha, Vol. 1*, 36–37.

<sup>568</sup> For more references see note 563 This sequence of resurrection, judgment and new creation is also found the Book of Revelation (Rev 20:11-21:8).

The turn of the ages in the death and resurrection of Jesus can furthermore be interpreted in terms of cosmic destruction and new creation. The death of Jesus is accompanied by signs of judgment and upheavals in nature with darkness and earthquakes. An important component in the argumentation above is the view that the rending of the veil should be understood as judgment upon the temple as well as the present creation signaling the end of the present creation due to the symbolic significance of the temple and the veil. On the other hand Matthew presents Jesus and the disciples as the eschatological temple, the nucleus of new creation.

In contrast to the signs of judgment and destruction are the resurrection of the holy ones and of Jesus. These events tie the death and resurrection together as one event in Matthew. Jesus is mocked, humiliated and killed on the cross but he is also vindicated, and the resurrection of the holy ones marks the life-giving effect of the death of Jesus.

Finally, Jesus' own resurrection is given primacy in relation to the resurrection of the holy ones and described in unmistakably eschatological terms. The idea of an eschatological resurrection in Jewish thought is closely tied to the idea of new creation and thus marks the onset of of an end-time sequence that involves new creation. The resurrection of Jesus may then be seen as the beginning of the new creation. The eschatological timeline of Matthew may then be illustrated by the following figure:

## 8 Matthew's Beginning as a New Beginning

Beginnings are important. This is particularly the case with narratives. The beginning is a door to the world of the narrative that equips the reader with the basic knowledge necessary to understand the story. This is also the case with Matthew's Gospel.

The beginning of Matthew is a presentation of Jesus Christ. It is about Christ and what he is going to do. What is said about Jesus in the beginning of the story is of primary importance in order to understand the rest of the narrative. The identity of Jesus and what he is going to do is explained both explicitly and implicitly. Or in the words Ulrich Luz, who writes: “[T]he Matthean prologue narrates not only the beginning of the story of Jesus: it is at the same time the narrative anticipation of the story.”<sup>569</sup>

In the previous chapter I looked at the eschatological nature of the end of the Gospel, which involved a proleptic cosmic destruction and new creation in the death and resurrection of Jesus. This chapter examines the beginning of Matthew (Matt 1-4) in order to see how the end and new beginning are anticipated in the opening chapters of Matthew.

### 8.1 The Genealogy in Matthew – Who is Jesus and What Time is It?

Much has been written on the genealogy in Matthew, which is usually seen as a highly significant part of the Gospel.<sup>570</sup> The genealogy identifies the main character of the narrative. It places the “goal” of the genealogy within the flow of a certain history, emphasizing the significance of history and the time in history which has now arrived.

Overall it is clear that the general intention of the genealogy is to demonstrate that Jesus is the fulfillment of the Old Testament promises (Matt. 5:17). Fulfillment of the scriptures of Israel is a major theme in Matthew and especially prominent in the opening chapters. R. T. France writes: “Five of the eleven generally recognized formula-quotations occur within the short section 1:18-2:23, where, together with the genealogy of 1:1-17, they form a concentrated 'manifesto' setting out how Jesus the Messiah fulfills the hopes of Old Testament Israel.”<sup>571</sup>

<sup>569</sup> Ulrich Luz, *Matthew 1-7: A Commentary*, ed. Helmut Koester, trans. James E. Crouch (Fortress Press, 2007), 73.

<sup>570</sup> Waetjen, “Genealogy as the Key to the Gospel According to Matthew”; Davies and Allison, *Matthew. Vol. I*; John Nolland, “Genealogical Annotation in Genesis as Background for the Matthean Genealogy of Jesus,” *Tyndale Bulletin* 47, no. 1 (My 1996): 115–22; Mayordomo-Marín, *Den Anfang hören*; Luz, *Matthew 1-7*; Kennedy, *The Recapitulation of Israel* Among many others.

<sup>571</sup> France, *Matthew*, 13–14.



The very first verse already clearly states that Jesus is the climax of Israel's history and the promised son of David and Abraham. Some commentators have even pointed out that the beginning and the end of the Gospel correspond with the beginning and the end of the Old Testament.<sup>572</sup> There is a totality in the fulfillment that is happening in Matthew – everything will be accomplished (Matt 5:18).<sup>573</sup>

As we have seen in the previous chapters, the hopes in Judaism connected to the Messiah involved a restoration that was not only national but universal. As already argued, the hope in Matthew goes beyond politics and history. The purpose of the following section is to demonstrate that this hope is present even in a text as concerned with the story of Israel as the genealogy is.

### **8.1.1 The opening verse – Matt. 1:1**

The discussion of Matt. 1:1 mainly takes two directions – the range of the first verse and the meaning of Βίβλος γενέσεως. Here I agree with Konradt, who comments that the discussion about the range of the first verse in Matthew is of secondary importance.<sup>574</sup> The primary question is the meaning of the verse, which in turn will give an indication with regard to range of the verse.

What is said about Jesus in Matt 1:1? The very first verse of the Gospel includes a very concentrated description of who Jesus is: Βίβλος γενέσεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ υἱοῦ Δαυὶδ υἱοῦ Ἀβραάμ. In the following section these words will be unpacked in order to see who Jesus is according to Matthew.

The meaning of these words cannot be determined by looking solely at sources outside Matthew but also at how Matthew actually employs them and what the titles mean in Matthew.<sup>575</sup> In the following, I examine each word in Matt. 1:1.

#### **8.1.1.1 Jesus Christ**

“Jesus Christ” will be considered first since it is the central element of 1:1. This name designates the person who is the son of David and the son of Abraham. Everything else in the Gospel serves to demonstrate the identity and significance of Jesus Christ.<sup>576</sup> The name Jesus occurs 152 times in

<sup>572</sup> Pennington, “Heaven, Earth, and a New Genesis,” 38 n.37.

<sup>573</sup> See the proposed interpretation of this verse by Meier, *Law and History*, 41–64.

<sup>574</sup> Matthias Konradt, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus: Neubearbeitung*, NTD - Neubearbeitungen 1 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2015), 26.

<sup>575</sup> Luz, *Matthew 1-7*, 70.

<sup>576</sup> “The story is Christology!” Mogens Müller, “The Theological Interpretation of the Figure of Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew : Some Principal Features in Matthean Christology,” *New Testament Studies* 45, no. 2 (1999): 165.

Matthew and was a quite popular name with Jews before C.E. 70.<sup>577</sup> Jesus is primarily a personal name, although Matthew ascribes Christological significance to the name in 1:21, where Matthew plays on the meaning of the name – the Lord saves.

The whole of “Jesus Christ” may be taken as a personal name, as is so often the case in Paul. Davies and Allison, however, observe that the use of *Christos* by itself in 1:17 and the presence of “Son of David” indicates that the word has messianic content here. The meaning contributes to the theme of fulfillment as Jesus is presented as the promised anointed king. This confirms that the main focus of Matthew's opening chapters is to present Jesus as the fulfillment of the promises of the Old Testament.

### 8.1.1.2 Βίβλος γενέσεως

The remarkable fact about the two first words in Matthew is that this construction is only found in two places in the LXX – Gen. 2:4 and 5:1.<sup>578</sup> As already touched upon in the initial overview of research on new creation in Matthew, the meaning of this connection to Genesis has been discussed by various scholars. Opinions range from whether there is a connection to Genesis at all to the suggestion that the words imply a new creation through Jesus. What follows is a cumulative case for the significance of these two words. A number of the arguments are contestable, but overall it will be clear that the words indicate a new epoch in human history and probably the motif of new creation.

The most common objections to an interpretation in terms of new creation are the fact that the motif of new creation is not particularly strong in Matthew and that it would be more obvious if Matthew had started with Adam. The assertion that the motif is not very strong in Matthew is based solely on lexical observations, and it is observed that explicit creational language is largely absent in Matthew.<sup>579</sup> The aim of this work is, however, to demonstrate that the presence of the motif of new creation does not depend on the presence of words such as *καινή κτίσις*.

<sup>577</sup> Davies and Allison, *Matthew. Vol. I*, 155.

<sup>578</sup> This has been observed by interpreters throughout history. So John Chrysostom, *The Homilies on the Gospel of St. Matthew of S. John Chrysostom, Archbishop of Constantinople*, 1843, 17, [http://commons.ptsem.edu/id/homiliesongospe01john Homili II, loc 5.](http://commons.ptsem.edu/id/homiliesongospe01john%20Homili%20II,%20loc%205.), Hrabanus Maurus, *Hrabanus Mauri Expositio in Matthaem. [I]: (I-IV)* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2000), 12. Aquinas, *Commentary on the Gospel of St. Matthew*, 8. and Hugo Grotius, *Annotationes In Novum Testamentum. Denou Emandatius Editae*, vol. 1 (Groningen: Zuidema, 1826), 12.

<sup>579</sup> Eloff, “From the Exile to the Christ”; Kennedy, *The Recapitulation of Israel*.

What about the absence of Adam? If Matthew had begun the genealogy with Adam rather than Abraham this would, admittedly, have made the case stronger for a new creation motif in Matthew in terms of an old Adam and new Adam theology in Matthew.<sup>580</sup> But his omission is not surprising given that Adam is not generally a figure of hope in Matthew's Jewish-Christian world. Although Adam has a positive role in Jubilees, where he is described as an ideal priest (Jub 2:1-3:32), and there is a hope for “all the glory of Adam” in the DSS, he is more often connected to sin and despair. This is the case in Jewish literature (LAB 13:8-9; 4 Ezra 7:117-120; 2 Baruch 48:42) as well as early Christian writings (Rom 1:18.32; 3:23; 5:12; 1 Cor 15:20-22).

Conversely Abraham is an undisputed figure of hope. 2 Baruch states about Abraham: “[T]he hope of the world which will be renewed was built at that time, and the promise of life that will come later was planted.” (2 Bar 57:2b).<sup>581</sup> Thus, it seems reasonable that Matthew begins with Abraham because of his emphasis on promise and fulfillment. As we shall see, the promises made to Abraham reach back to the very first chapters of Genesis.

It is generally accepted that the first readers of the Gospel would have recognized an allusion to Genesis in βίβλος γενέσεως.<sup>582</sup> Additionally, the text presupposes an extensive knowledge of the Old Testament by its reader as David and Abraham are left unexplained and the significance of the genealogical list would be lost on anyone who does not have extensive knowledge of the Hebrew canon.<sup>583</sup>

The question, however, remains; what to make of the allusion? What was the intention of Matthew and how would the first readers of the Gospel interpret it? M. D. Johnson states that βίβλος γενέσεως is best understood as a “reflection of the toledoth formula in Genesis, in either the Hebrew or Greek form, or both”.<sup>584</sup> That is, the toledoth formula in Genesis serves as a structural marker so

<sup>580</sup> Rabanus argues for Jesus as a new Adam because of the parallel between Matt. 1:1 and Gen. 5:1. “Igitur Matthaëus corrupto humani generis initio per preaeuarictionem in primo Noui Testamenti libro | respondens primo libro Veteris Legis, ubi scriptum est: *Hic est liber generationis caeli et terrae* et rursum *Hic est liber generationis Adae* (Adae uidelicet ueteri, per quem totus corruptus est mundus, Adam opponens nouum, in quo restaurata sunt omnia, et quae in caelo et quae terra consistunt), dedit manifeste intelligi, quod ipsius scripserit secundum carnem generationem, qui electos suos in filiorum Dei assumeret adoptionem. Hrabanus Maurus, *Hrabanus Mauri Expositio in Matthaëum. [I]*, 12. There is also a possible allusion to Adam in Matt 4:1-11. Davies and Allison, *Matthew. Vol. I*, 374. The connections with the Exodus and Israel in the wilderness are, however, stronger. See below.

<sup>581</sup> Henze, *Jewish Apocalypticism*, 341.

<sup>582</sup> This is even accepted by Nolland who nevertheless rejects any notion of new creation. Nolland, “What Kind of Genesis Do We Have in Matt 1.1?”; See also Davies and Allison, *Matthew. Vol. I*; Mayordomo-Marín, *Den Anfang hören*; Luz, *Matthew 1-7*; Pennington, “Heaven, Earth, and a New Genesis”; Konradt, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus*, 2015.

<sup>583</sup> Hieke, “Biblos Geneseos,” 638. Recently, Allison has pleaded for a more open translation of the phrase in order to make the allusion possible to modern readers. Dale Allison, *Studies in Matthew*, 157–62.

<sup>584</sup> Marshall D. Johnson, *The Purpose of the Biblical Genealogies: With Special Reference to the Setting of the Genealogies of Jesus*, SNTSMS 8 (London: Cambridge University Press, 1969), 149.

that one can speak of a toledoth-system in Genesis.<sup>585</sup> The toledoth-formula stands at the beginning of a new narrative section, covering both genealogy and the ensuing narrative until the next toledoth formula. As such, the formula in Matt. 1:1 can be seen as a title for the entire Gospel.<sup>586</sup>

In keeping with the function of the formula in Genesis, Carter argues that the phrase evokes not just Gen. 2:4 and 5:1, but the larger Genesis accounts of which they are a part:

Namely the accounts of God's creation of the world and of humans, as well as accounts of resultant human faithlessness, God's judgment and God's willingness to start again. That is, Matthew's opening phrase evokes the story of God's creative and sovereign purposes for the whole world as the initial context for hearing the story of Jesus.<sup>587</sup>

Carter focuses on the function of this claim in conflict with Roman imperial claims. The purpose of this study, however, is to examine the Gospel within its Jewish setting and the hope of a new creation present in its religious milieu.

In the context of the LXX, the two verses are given special attention by the translators because of the use of the singular form of γένεσις for the plural (ἡ γένεσις). In every other instance, the plural (γενέσεις) is employed (Gen 6:9; 10:1; 10:32; 11:10; 11:27; 25:19). This indicates that what follows is more than a list of descendants. It is rather the origin of cosmos and humanity. This point is obvious in 2:4 where there is no genealogy. In 5:1 it is underlined by the fact that “οἱ ἄνθρωποι” is translated with the plural “ἀνθρώπων”. Per the LXX the text concerns the origin of humans rather than the descendants of the specific person Adam.<sup>588</sup>

There are a number of similarities between the two verses Gen 2:4 and 5:1. Both verses reach back and point forward. 2:4 is pointing back to Gen 1:1 with its use of *heaven and earth* that God had created. At the same time, it marks the beginning of the narrative about life on earth. 5:1 points back to 1:27 and the creation of humankind while heading the genealogy of Noah, thereby marking a break and a new beginning in human history. In addition, both verses have a chiasmic structure as demonstrated by Wenham.<sup>589</sup> It is clear that Gen 2:4 and 5:1 are highly significant in the context of Genesis as they stand at beginnings of new epochs in human history. Could it be that by pointing to

<sup>585</sup> Hieke, “Biblos Geneseos,” 641.

<sup>586</sup> Davies and Allison, *Matthew. Vol. I*, 150–54; Mayordomo-Marín, *Den Anfang hören*, 208–13; Luz, *Studies in Matthew*, 19; For an extensive list of exegetes both old and new who hold this view see Allison, *Studies in Matthew*, 159.

<sup>587</sup> Carter, “Matthew and the Gentiles,” 262.

<sup>588</sup> Susan Brayford, *Genesis*, Septuagint Commentary Series (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 257.

<sup>589</sup> Gordon J. Wenham, “Genesis 1-15,” *Waco: Word, Word Biblical Commentary*, no. 1 (1987): 49, 126.

these significant verses in Genesis Matthew wants to present Jesus as a new genesis, a new heaven and new earth, and a new humanity?

Gen 5:1 is closer to Matt. 1:1 than Gen. 2:4, as the former heads a genealogy and marks the beginning of the story of the flood as the genealogy culminates with Noah and his sons. This connection is interesting in light of the importance of the flood story in Jewish apocalyptic literature as a model for new creation.<sup>590</sup> According to Mussies, the genealogy is modeled after the LXX version of Noah's genealogy in Gen 5.<sup>591</sup> While the line in Gen 5 is interrupted by statements about the age of the father at his eldest son's birth and his own death, Matt 1 similarly contains interruptions but with less consistency. Nolland has, however, made a good case that the annotations in Matt 1 are similar to the ones found in the various genealogies in Genesis. Both genealogies have the basic use of a fixed pattern, which is breached occasionally to give important additional information about the persons in the genealogy.<sup>592</sup> This may again point in the direction of the Genesis flood as a backdrop for Matt 1:1.

The influence of the flood tradition may also be seen in other places in Matthew's Gospel. The only explicit mention of Noah and the Flood is in 24:37-39, the suddenness of the coming of the Son of Man is compared to unexpectedness of the flood. The usage here does not give much indication to go on with regard to an idea of new creation connected to the flood. It nevertheless indicates that Matthew and his readers knew the story well and as such may have detected other allusions to Noah and the flood in the narrative.<sup>593</sup>

The parable of the two houses at the end of the Sermon on the Mount (Matt 7:24-27) uses imagery reminiscent of the genesis flood.<sup>594</sup> The language of the waters of judgment is commonly used in the Old Testament (Isa 28). The imagery of house may also draw on the language of proverbs about the house of the righteous and the wicked. In Genesis Rabbah passages about the house of the righteous (Prov 12:7) and the house of the wicked (Prov 14:11a) are applied to the story of the flood:

<sup>590</sup> See references in the survey earlier in the present work p. XX. Streett, "As It Was in the Days of Noah" Provides an excellent treatment of both canonical and non-canonical passages.

<sup>591</sup> Gerard Mussies, "Parallels to Matthew's Version of the Pedigree of Jesus," *Novum Testamentum* 28, no. 1 (1986): 37. See also Heckl, "Der biblische Begründungsrahmen für die Jungfrauengeburt bei Matthäus. Zur Rezeption von Gen 5,1-6,4 in Mt 1."

<sup>592</sup> Nolland, "Genealogical Annotation in Genesis as Background for the Matthean Genealogy of Jesus." Nolland concludes: "It is likely that Matthew learned his craft for the creation of an annotated genealogy from study of the genealogical material in Genesis." Nolland, 122.

<sup>593</sup> Lövestam suggests that Mt. 24:35f and 2 Pet 3:1f stands in the same stream of tradition. "It is worth noting that Mt contains more material on Peter than the other Gospels and that Peter is given a prominent place there." Evald Lövestam, *Jesus and "This Generation": A New Testament Study*, trans. Moira Linnarud, ConBNT 25 (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell International, 1995), 113.

<sup>594</sup> Davies and Allison, *Matthew. Vol. I*, 721.

When the whirlwind passeth, the wicked is no more; but the righteous is an everlasting foundation (Prov. x, 25). 'When the whirlwind passeth, the wicked is no more' — this refers to the generation of the Flood; 'But the righteous is an everlasting foundation — this refers to Noah, as it is written, These are the generations of Noah: Noah was a righteous man. The wicked are overthrown and are not (ib. xii, 7): this refers to the generation of the Flood ; But the house of the righteous shall stand (ib.) — this refers to Noah: These are the generations of Noah. The house of the wicked shall be overthrown (ib. xiv, n): this refers to the generation of the Flood ; But the tent of the upright shall flourish (ib.) — this refers to Noah: These are the generations of Noah.<sup>595</sup>

There are further links between Jesus and Noah. J. A. Fitzmyer has drawn attention to points of comparison in the birth accounts. The story of the birth of Noah in the Genesis Apocryphon is similar to the birth of Jesus told from the husband's point of view. In both cases a concerned husband is assured by a divine revelation, which gives a command regarding the naming of the child. In both instances the meaning of the name designates the child as a savior of mankind.<sup>596</sup> In addition E. Lövestam has also argued that the predication 'this generation' can be taken as a reference to the wicked generation of the flood.<sup>597</sup> Thus Jesus, just as Noah (2 Peter 2:5), is portrayed like a righteous preacher in an evil generation.

Another important indication of Matthew's familiarity with the idea of a new creation through the flood is his use of *παλιγγενεσία* in 19:28. As we saw in the previous chapter, contemporary Jewish and Christian sources used *παλιγγενεσία* to describe the renewal of the world after the flood. Thus, Philo uses *παλιγγενεσία* of the renewed world after the flood (Vit. Mos. II, 65) and also 1 Clement:<sup>598</sup> “Νῶε πιστὸς εὐρεθεὶς διὰ τῆς λειτουργίας αὐτοῦ *παλιγγενεσίαν* κόσμῳ ἐκήρυξεν, καὶ διέσωσεν δι’ αὐτοῦ ὁ δεσπότης τὰ εἰσελθόντα ἐν ὁμοιοῖα ζῶα εἰς τὴν κιβωτόν.” (Noah, being found faithful, by his ministration preached regeneration unto the world, and through him the Master saved the living creatures that entered into the ark in concord) (1 Clem. 9:4)<sup>599</sup>

<sup>595</sup> Gen. Rab. 30:1. Cited in Lövestam, *Jesus and “This Generation,”* 151; Translation from H. Freedman and Maurice Simon, *Midrash Rabbah* (London: Soncino Press, 1961), 233, <https://archive.org/details/RabbaGenesis>.

<sup>596</sup> Joseph A Fitzmyer, “Contribution of Qumran Aramaic to the Study of the New Testament,” *New Testament Studies* 20, no. 4 (July 1974): 382–407.

<sup>597</sup> Lövestam, *Jesus and “This Generation,”* 151.

<sup>598</sup> Josephus uses *παλιγγενεσία* about the restoration of Israel after the exile. G. Beale thinks this demonstrates that these Jewish writers conceived of these events in terms of new creation. Beale, *New Testament Biblical Theology*, A, 170.

<sup>599</sup> Text and translation from Joseph Barber Lightfoot and J. R. Harmer, *Apostolic Fathers in Greek and English (Lightfoot Edition)*, 2 vols. (London: Macmillan and Co., 1891).

Another possible clue is that the Spirit descending like a dove at the baptism of Jesus can be seen as parallel to the Spirit of God hovering over the first creation in Gen 1:2.<sup>600</sup> It can similarly be seen as the dove of Noah flying over the waters after the deluge, returning with an olive twig.<sup>601</sup> The analogy between baptism and the flood is also employed elsewhere in the New Testament (1 Peter 3:20f.).<sup>602</sup> Since the flood can be seen as a recreation of the world the references to the first creation and the world after the flood can be combined.

Overall it then seems probable that Matthew's use of words in Matt 1:1 allude to Gen 5:1, the creation of humanity as well as the renewal of the world through Noah.

Taking the ending of Matthew into account may shed light on the word usage in verse 1:1. Pennington observes that the wording in Matt. 28:16-20 may allude to the very last word of the Old Testament: "Thus says King Cyrus of Persia: The LORD, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth, and he has charged me to build him a house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Whoever is among you of all his people, may the LORD his God be with him! Let him go up." (2 Chron 36:23).<sup>603</sup> In this way Matthew can be read as a story that sums up the whole story of the people of God from the beginning to the end.

In a similar vein, Luz states that through the reference to Genesis Matthew intends to write a new basic story of faith, the story of Jesus Christ.<sup>604</sup>

All of these observations are of course contestable, and it is too early to conclude anything regarding Matthew's intention regarding the allusion to Genesis other than highlighting that what is about to be narrated is an epochal event deserving to be compared to the creation of heaven and

<sup>600</sup> Tertullian, *Tertullian's Treatises: Concerning Prayer, Concerning Baptism*, trans. Alexander Souter (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1919), 56; Davies, *The Sermon on the Mount*, 36; Allison, "The Baptism of Jesus and a New Dead Sea Scroll," 58–60. Allison brings attention to a fragment of the DSS, in which the Spirit is said to hover over the saints and strengthen them in the end times.

<sup>601</sup> Origen cited in Manlio Simonetti, ed., *Matthew 1-13*, Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture 1a (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2001), 53; Tertullian, *Tertullian's Treatises: Concerning Prayer, Concerning Baptism*, 56; John Chrysostom cited in Aquinas, *Catena Aurea*, 113; Theophylact, *The Explanation by Blessed Theophylact of the Holy Gospel According to St. Matthew: Translated from the Original Greek*, vol. 1, Theophylact's Explanation of the New Testament (House Springs: Chrysostom Press, 1992), 37; Grotius, *Annotationes In Novum Testamentum. Denou Emandatus Editae*, 1:69; Paul Garnet, "The Baptism of Jesus and the Son of Man Idea," *Journal for the Study of the New Testament*, no. 9 (1980): 52–53 Garnet attempts to make a point of the olive twig and an anointing of Jesus are not convincing. David B. Capes, "Intertextual Echoes in the Matthean Baptismal Narrative," *Bulletin for Biblical Research* 9 (1999): 47.

<sup>602</sup> The obvious connections to the Exodus story and Jesus as a new Moses have long been recognized and been thoroughly treated by D. C. Allison. *The New Moses*. However, just like Moses and the people was saved through the water so was Noah and his family.

<sup>603</sup> Pennington, *Heaven and Earth*, 215 n. 69. This point is, however, weakened by the fact that it presupposes a codex that was probably not available to Matthew.

<sup>604</sup> Luz, *Studies in Matthew*, 19.

earth (Gen 2:4) and humans (Gen 5:1). This is of course also quite a lot and ascribes universal significance to the person of Jesus. Benedict Viviano has formulated it well: “Without entangling Matthew in B. W. Bacon's Pentateuchal theory of Matthean composition, we may nevertheless feel confident in asserting that the evangelist is here sending a signal to biblically literate reader that he is writing a new Genesis, a new epoch in the history of salvation.”<sup>605</sup>

The allusion to Gen 2:4 and 5:1 is then pointing to a new beginning and probably a new creation through an eschatological fulfillment of the Old Testament promises.<sup>606</sup> This is furthermore emphasized in the fact that Jesus is the Son of David and the Son of Abraham.

### 8.1.1.3 Son of David, Son of Abraham

Matthew highlights two ancestors of Jesus in the first verse. These two figures are first and foremost connected with the people and the land of Israel. Abraham, the father of the people, who first received the promise of a great people and a land and David, the great king, who received the promises of perpetual dynasty.

'Son of David' is a well-known messianic title in the rabbinic literature and it may even have been a title in the first century BCE.<sup>607</sup> The messianic hope was connected to promises of 2 Sam 7 and the developments of that promise in the prophetic literature (see, e.g., Isa 9:5-6; 11:1-12:6).<sup>608</sup> As a royal title, Son of David is closely connected to the Kingdom of Heaven in Matthew. Matthew even points out that David was not only a king but *the* king (1:6). Gerhardsson argues that it is a secondary title in the Gospel since it is not used by insiders.<sup>609</sup> That conclusion, however, does not seem to account for the way chapters 1-2 in Matthew emphasize that Jesus is the Davidic Messiah.

The very first verse and the genealogy support this point, and Matthew continues to underline the point by citing Isa 7:14, a text that concerns a promised Davidic king, in Matt 1:23. In chapter two it once again becomes clear that Jesus is a king. Here baby Jesus is called the king of the Jews by the magi (2:2) in addition to being juxtaposed with king Herod, who considers Jesus to be a rival for the throne (2:13). Again the Davidic kingship of Jesus is underlined by a quote from the Old Testament and the fact that he is born in Bethlehem (2:6).

<sup>605</sup> B. T. Viviano, “The Genres of Matthew 1-2: Light from 1 Timothy 1:4,” in *Matthew and His World - The Gospel of the Open Jewish Christians - Studies in Biblical Theology*, NTOA 61 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2007), 43.

<sup>606</sup> Gundry, *Matthew*, 13.

<sup>607</sup> Davies and Allison, *Matthew. Vol. I*, 156.

<sup>608</sup> Gundry, *Matthew*, 13.

<sup>609</sup> Birger Gerhardsson, *The Mighty Acts of Jesus According to Matthew*, Scripta Minora Regiae Societatis Humaniorum Litterarum Lundensis, 1978/1979:5 (Lund: LiberLäromedel/Gleerup, 1979), 87–88.



Matthew uses the title “son of David” more than any of the other gospel-writers. Matthew uses it ten times, whereas in both Mark and Luke it is used four times. Son of David is most often connected to the healing ministry of Jesus in Matthew. Remarkably, Jesus is primarily addressed as the Son of David by outsiders who cry for healing or deliverance. The reason for this has been explored by interpreters, but there is no consensus.<sup>610</sup> This question will be treated in more depth in connection with the chapter 5.4 on the miracles of Jesus in Matthew.

That Jesus is the son of Abraham is more than simply stating that he was a Jew. Just like βίβλος γενέσεως Abraham brings the reader back to Genesis and the promises made to Abraham (Gen. 12:1-3, 22:15-18). At this point many commentators on the texts observe a universal perspective in Matthew's Gospel, since the blessing given to Abraham will be for all the nations of the earth. This perspective finds its culmination in 28:19 with the command to go to all nations.<sup>611</sup> There can be no doubt about this point, but what this blessing entails is seldom considered.

Carol M. Kaminski traces the primeval blessing through the Pentateuch and argues that it is one of the leading motives throughout the primeval history, the patriarch-narratives and the history of Israel.<sup>612</sup> Forms or parts of the primeval blessing are indeed found in several places both in the primeval history and the patriarchal narratives (Gen 9:1, 17:6, 22:15-18; 26:22, 35:11, 47:27). The entire narrative in Genesis is thus unified in this motif – the realization of the blessing that was first given to Adam and Eve. The blessing given to Abraham reaches back to the original purpose of creation, which will be realized through the promised seed.<sup>613</sup>

Mervynn Eloff, who opposes the suggestion of Davies and Allison of a new creation being implied with Matthew's first two words, opens up for a creational perspective in the term 'son of Abraham'.

Similarly, the time of creation or the beginning (ἀπ' ἀρχῆς) as Matthew sometimes refers to it, is not merely the time at which the ideal pattern for the kingdom is displayed (19:4), but is also the time from which the gift of the kingdom is purposed (25:34). And each of these poles - *creation* and *consummation* - have connections with the first and last of the loci in Matthew 1:17. For the call of Abram in Genesis 12:1-3 is set against the backdrop of Genesis 1-11 and in particular the loss of the kingdom ideal in the terrible exchange of *blessing* for *curse* and the consequent loss of that *rest in the presence of God* which was God's creation purpose for humanity (Genesis 2: 1-4, cf Genesis 4: 13-14).<sup>614</sup>

<sup>610</sup> For a history of research see Novaković, *Messiah, the Healer of the Sick*, 3–5.

<sup>611</sup> Davies and Allison, *Matthew. Vol. I*, 160; Hagner, *Matthew 1-13*, 110; France, *Matthew*, 35; Although see who thinks that it is a mistake to find a universal perspective here Nolland, *The Gospel of Matthew*.

<sup>612</sup> Carol M. Kaminski, *From Noah to Israel: Realization of the Primeval Blessing After the Flood* (Continuum International Publishing Group, 2005), 143. See also Beale, *New Testament Biblical Theology, A*.

<sup>613</sup> Michael Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985).

<sup>614</sup> Eloff, “From the Exile to the Christ,” 3–26.

He furthermore makes the argument that the promises made to Abraham and David have several similarities:

If we further bear in mind that in Genesis 1:1-2:3 the notion of blessing and rest are closely related to one another in relation to God's purpose for creation (see esp 1:28; 2:2-3: cf 2 Samuel 7:28-29) and trace the development of the Patriarchal promise in the Genesis narrative, then, despite the differences, there are striking similarities between these two promises. In both the recipient is promised a great name and rest / blessing. In both a place and rest / blessing for Israel is secured, prospectively of course in the case of Abram. In both the idea of establishment is present, with Abraham in terms of blessing for the nations; with David in terms of God's presence (the temple) and rule (note the conjunction of God's House and David's house in 2 Samuel 7:13).<sup>615</sup>

Eloff highlights the return from exile as an important element in Matthew's theology on the grounds of Matt 1:11-12 and 1:17. This restoration must go beyond an exclusive national restoration to a universal restoration. Eloff recognizes this when he writes that even though the genealogy does focus on the time of Israel, the descendants of Abraham “are the mediators within the unfolding of salvation-history of God's creation purposes.”<sup>616</sup> As the survey of new creation in the Old Testament demonstrated, this perspective is also evident from the restoration hope found in the Old Testament prophets as well as contemporary Jewish literature.

Konrad Schmid argues that the language of Isa 65:17-25 about the heaven and a new earth is an extension of the mythical horizon of the new exodus in Isa 43:16-21. He understands that just as Isa 43 contrasts the old and the new exodus so does Isa 65 contrast the old and new creation. The hope described in these passages transcends a national and political hope of redemption.<sup>617</sup>

In Jewish literature of the first century this thought is found in 4 Ezra and 2 Baruch. These two writings are probably written after the fall of the second Temple but in the voice of persons living after the fall of the first temple. In both of these writings the ultimate hope for the nation in exile is a return to Eden. The temple that the author of 2 Baruch is hoping for is an otherworldly temple (2 Bar 4:1-7). In 4 Ezra the problem of exile is traced back to Adam as origin of evil in the human heart, and the ultimate restoration involves transformation of the human heart and also a restoration of cosmos (4 Ezra 7:75. 97).

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<sup>615</sup> Eloff, 2–14.

<sup>616</sup> Eloff, 3–26.

<sup>617</sup> Schmid, “New Creation Instead of New Exodus.”

Already by Matt 1:1 Jesus is presented as the fulfillment of the promises made to Abraham, and through the genealogy Matthew shows that Jesus is the culmination of the history of Israel. This is underlined in the following chapters where the history of Israel is recapitulated not only in the genealogy but also in the events of the life of Jesus.<sup>618</sup>

### **8.1.2 The Genealogy – Matt 1:2-17**

More than anything else, the genealogy demonstrates a continuity between Jesus and the story of Israel, as the whole story of Israel is recounted in compressed form in the genealogy.<sup>619</sup> Again Jesus is shown to be the end-goal of that story.

Matthew's structuring of the genealogy into three sets of fourteen serves to demonstrate the coming of Jesus as an epochal event within salvation-history.<sup>620</sup> The meaning of the number fourteen is not easy to determine. What can at least be said is that the structure in the genealogy demonstrates a conviction that God is in control of history – that history has a goal. The systematization and schematization of history is furthermore a very common characteristic of apocalyptic literature.<sup>621</sup> Perhaps Matthew shares the idea that history is predetermined with a number of the writers of the apocalypses.<sup>622</sup> That would be one more reason to read Matthew in light of the eschatological hopes found in the apocalypses.

The most surprising feature of Matthew's genealogy is the significant attention that is given to the exile in Babylon. In the summarizing verse (1:17) it is highlighted as a turning-point in history marking the transition from one epoch to another.

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<sup>618</sup> Kennedy, *The Recapitulation of Israel*.

<sup>619</sup> Kennedy, 77–81.

<sup>620</sup> There has been a lot of discussion regarding the counting of fourteen generations in the last section that only add up to thirteen. Suggestions abound, but none seems to be conclusive or for that matter yield significant theological insights in addition to what is already evident from other features present in the text.

<sup>621</sup> David S. Russell, *The Method & Message of Jewish Apocalyptic, 200 BC-AD 100*, Old Testament Library (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1964), 224. James C. VanderKam and William Adler, eds., *The Jewish Apocalyptic Heritage in Early Christianity*, CRINT 4 (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1996), 29.

<sup>622</sup> This has also led Herman Waetjen to compare the genealogy of Matthew to 2 Baruch 53-74. According to Waetjen history according to Matthew is divided in to four epochs and Jesus marks the end of the third as well as the beginning of the fourth and last epoch. Waetjen, "Genealogy as the Key to the Gospel According to Matthew," 212.

According to Nicholas G. Piotrowski the word μετουκεία in this context points to a specific event, the deportation, rather than a time interval, the duration of the exile. It thus marks the end of the Davidic dynasty and beginning of a continuing exile for Israel, since the return is nowhere mentioned.<sup>623</sup> Although there was a historic return, “The monarchy was not in fact restored.”<sup>624</sup>

In light of this Jesus is the true Davidic King, whose advent marks the beginning of the eschatological restoration of Israel's kingdom.<sup>625</sup>

### **8.1.3 The birth of Jesus – Matt 1:18-25**

These crucial verses in Matthew contain information both on the origin and purpose of Jesus. The genealogy served to prove that Jesus is the heir to the promises made to Abraham and David. It put Jesus firmly in continuity with the history of Israel and retold his earthly origins.

There is, however, also discontinuity, since Jesus is not the son of Joseph, but the son of Mary and conceived through divine action, by the Holy Spirit (1:18): “Jesus is not a natural descendant of Joseph, but his origin is from God. Despite the fact that God is not explicitly said to be his father, the phrase ἐκ πνεύματος ἁγίου (Mt 1:18), indicating God's creative power, implies a divine son-ship of Jesus.”<sup>626</sup>

The creative power is underlined by the use of γένεσις in Matt. 1:18 about the birth of Jesus. The break in the genealogy signals that something radically new has happened in the history of salvation with Jesus. The involvement of God's creative power through the Holy Spirit (Gen 1:2) enhances the probability of new creation interpretation of Matt 1:1.

After establishing the divine origin of Jesus, Matthew states the purpose of Jesus: “He will save his people from their sins.” (Matt 1:21). It has been common among scholars to see LXX Psalm 129:8 [MT 130:8] as the allusive background to this verse.<sup>627</sup> Nicholas G. Piotrowski, however, argues that

<sup>623</sup> Nicholas G. Piotrowski, “‘After the Deportation’: Observations in Matthew’s Apocalyptic Genealogy,” *Bulletin for Biblical Research* 25, no. 2 (2015): 196; See also Eloff, “From the Exile to the Christ”; Mervyn Eloff, “Exile, Restoration and Matthew’s Genealogy of Jesus o Christos,” *Neotestamentica* 38, no. 1 (2004): 75–87; Kennedy, *The Recapitulation of Israel*, 98–102; Jason B. Hood, *The Messiah, His Brothers, and the Nations: (Matthew 1.1-17)*, LNTS 441 (London: T&T Clark, 2011), 83.

<sup>624</sup> France, *Matthew*, 39.

<sup>625</sup> Davies and Allison, *Matthew. Vol. I*, 180.

<sup>626</sup> Lidija Novakovic, “Jesus as the Davidic Messiah in Matthew,” *Horizons in Biblical Theology* 19, no. 1 (January 1, 1997): 153.

<sup>627</sup> An extensive list is provided in Nicholas G. Piotrowski, “‘I Will Save My People from Their Sins’: The Influence of Ezekiel 36:28b-29a; 37:23b on Matthew 1:21.,” *Tyndale Bulletin* 64, no. 1 (2013): 36.

Ezekiel 36:28b-29a; 37:23b “provides a more convincing and more fruitful *conceptual* background for Matthew's programmatic verse.”<sup>628</sup>

Piotrowski's argument is mainly based on the semantic similarities of certain keywords: save, people and sin in both Matt 1:21 and Ezekiel 36:28b-29 and 37:23b. In addition, he observes that these verses in Ezekiel “are the only texts in the entire Old Testament where salvation (ישׁע) is from anything other than external threats.”<sup>629</sup> He furthermore points out that there are strong thematic parallels between Matt 1-2 and Ezekiel 34-37.

The thematic parallels consist of the fact that both texts are concerned with the re-establishment of the Davidic throne and the end of exile.<sup>630</sup> It is furthermore set within a covenantal context that in Matthew is expressed through the prominence of Abraham and David as well as the short phrase “God with us.” (Matt 1:23 cf. Gen 17:8; Jer 31:33).<sup>631</sup>

What is more interesting for the purposes of the present work is that the prophecies of restoration in Ezekiel 34-37 contain the language of new creation. The salvation that God will bring to his people involves a new spirit (Ezek 37:14) and new hearts (Ezek 36:25-27) and a restoration of the land so that it becomes like the garden of Eden (Ezek 36:35). Ezekiel even uses resurrection imagery (37:1-14). The resurrection passage in Ezekiel serves as background for Matt 27:51-3 (see above page 150). This suggests that the salvation from sins which Jesus brings to his people involves a radical renewal of the people as well as the land.

## 8.2 The Renewal of Israel – Matt 2-4

As Matthew begins to tell the story of the life of Jesus, it becomes clear that Jesus signals the beginning of a new Israel. This happens through a reenactment of the Exodus in the life of Jesus.<sup>632</sup>

The clearest expression of this motif comes in the flight to Egypt of Jesus and his family and the quote from Hos 11:1 “Out of Egypt I have called my son.” According to Matthew, Jesus and his family's flight to and return from Egypt is a typological fulfillment of the story of Israel.<sup>633</sup>

<sup>628</sup> Piotrowski, 36.

<sup>629</sup> Piotrowski, 39.

<sup>630</sup> Piotrowski, 46.

<sup>631</sup> Hubert Frankemölle, *Jahwebund und Kirche Christi: Studien zur Form- und Traditionsgeschichte des “Evangeliums” nach Matthäus*, Neutestamentliche Abhandlungen 10 (Münster: Aschendorff, 1974), 18.

<sup>632</sup> Dale C. Allison, “The Son of God as Israel: A Note on Matthean Christology,” *Irish Biblical Studies* 9 (1987): 74–81; Kennedy, *The Recapitulation of Israel*; This does not exclude a Mosaic aspect. see Allison, *The New Moses* There are however significant overlaps between the story of Moses and the story of Israel and Moses does in many ways stand as a representative for the people just as Jesus is shown to do.

<sup>633</sup> France, *Matthew*, 80–81; Luz, *Matthew 1-7*, 120.

The baptism of Jesus also brings to mind the journey of Israel through the sea. Scholars have observed that the geographical setting recalls the Exodus.<sup>634</sup> Jesus emerges from the waters and is proclaimed the 'Son of God', an expression that is used about the nation of Israel in the Old Testament (Exod 4:23; Deut 1:31; 8:5 32:5-6 and of course Hos 11:1).<sup>635</sup>

The narrative continues with the temptation in the desert. Here Jesus is faced with temptations similar to those faced by the people of Israel in the desert (Exod 16, 17, and 32) in addition to responding to them through citations from Deuteronomy.<sup>636</sup> In contrast to Israel Jesus overcomes the temptations. This signals the beginning of the defeat of Satan and is a prime example of the theme of conflict running through the whole Gospel.<sup>637</sup>

The fact that Jesus reenacts the Exodus signals the beginning of a new people of God embodied in Jesus, the Son of God. As already noted, the hope of a new Exodus is transformed into a hope of new creation in Isaiah. That this perspective is present in Matthew is strengthened by the role of the spirit in the first chapters. The Spirit is an active agent in the conception of Jesus (Matt. 1:18; 20), the baptism (3:16-17) and the temptation (4:1).

Rodrigo J. Morales surveys material from the Old Testament prophetic corpus and Jewish texts from the second temple period for the outpouring of the Spirit and concludes: "Many of the texts describe this outpouring with imagery and themes taken from creation and the exodus, suggesting that the restoration of Israel will entail a new creation and/or a new exodus."<sup>638</sup>

It is thus probable that Matthew presents Jesus as a new Israel, which, coupled with the role of the Spirit in the birth and life of Jesus, entails an eschatological renewal of the people of Israel.

<sup>634</sup> Davies, *The Sermon on the Mount*, 27; John P. Meier, *Matthew*, New Testament Message 3 (Wilmington, Delaware: M. Glazier, 1980), 17; David E. Garland, *Reading Matthew: A Literary and Theological Commentary on the First Gospel*, Reading the New Testament Series (New York: Crossroad, 1993), 34; Craig S. Keener, *A Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 116, 118.

<sup>635</sup> Again, this does not exclude other meanings and backgrounds for the Son of God in Matthew. Scholars have rightly seen a reference to Ps 2:7 as well as Isa 42:7. Allison, "The Son of God as Israel," 76; Hagner, *Matthew 1-13*, 58; Nolland, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 158; Jeffrey A. Gibbs, *Concordia Commentary: Matthew 1:1-11:1* (St. Louis: Concordia Pub House, 2006), 183; Kennedy, *The Recapitulation of Israel*, 179-84. From these references Jesus is both the Son of God as the chosen king on Zion and the servant. Both play a significant role in Matthew. In both instances the Son of God can be understood as a representative of the people.

<sup>636</sup> Tertullian, *Tertullian's Treatises: Concerning Prayer; Concerning Baptism*, 71; M. D. Goulder, *Midrash and Lection in Matthew: The Speaker's Lectures in Biblical Studies, 1969-71* (London: SPCK, 1974), 247; Kennedy, *The Recapitulation of Israel*, 187.

<sup>637</sup> Jack Dean Kingsbury, "The Plot of Matthew's Story," *Interpretation* 46, no. 4 (October 1992): 347-56.

<sup>638</sup> Morales, *The Spirit and the Restoration of Israel*, 78; See also Brandon D. Crowe, "The Song of Moses and Divine Begetting in Matt 1,20," *Biblica* 90, no. 1 (January 1, 2009): 47-58. Crowe argues that the imagery of Israel's divine begetting in the Song of Moses (Deut. 32:18) is in view in Jesus' divine begetting in Matt. 1:20.

### 8.3 Summary

The investigation of the first chapters of Matthew's Gospel with a special focus on Matthew 1 has demonstrated that Matthew put a high emphasis on fulfillment of Scripture in his initial presentation of Jesus. In doing this he points the reader back to the beginning of the world as well as the people of Israel. Jesus' coming to the world signals a new beginning which is comparable to the creation of the world and humans. He fulfills the promises made to Abraham and to David and is presented as the climax of the history of Israel. This entails the promise of Israel's renewal.

The possible allusion to the story of the flood and the reenactment of the Exodus in the life of Jesus signals a new beginning both for the people of Israel and the world. Both motifs are closely tied to the presence of the Spirit that plays a prominent role in Matthew 1-4.

Maybe none of the observations made above are conclusive on their own. Taken together, however, they suggest that the first chapters point to a fulfillment of promises and messianic expectations that may well include a renewal of both the people of Israel and in that eschatological process the entire creation.

The next section focuses on the kingdom, which is closely linked to the renewal of Israel. It will nevertheless also become evident that the kingdom includes the renewal of the world.

## 9 Kingdom of Heaven and New Creation

In this chapter I show how the kingdom in Matthew is connected to both creation and new creation.<sup>639</sup> In this chapter I briefly explore the background for the kingdom in the Old Testament and early Jewish literature. Then I proceed to investigate the use of the kingdom in Matthew in terms of the hope of new creation with a specific focus on the parables of growth in Matthew 13.

The Kingdom is the central message of Jesus in the synoptic Gospels. This is the majority opinion among scholars regardless of what approach they bring to the Gospels. The language of king and kingdom is so pervasive that its centrality is undeniable. Of the synoptics, Matthew uses language about the Kingdom more often than other evangelists.<sup>640</sup>

Since the Kingdom is such a dominant feature in Matthew, an investigation of the concept is necessary since it may shape the understanding of other elements in the teaching and ministry of Jesus in Matthew. Due to the centrality of the Kingdom the chapter is key to the argument that new creation may be seen as an important element in Matthew.

The first step is to look at the Old Testament and Jewish background for the Kingdom.

### 9.1 The Kingdom in the Old Testament and Early Jewish Literature

Although the phrase “Kingdom of God” does not appear in the Old Testament, the idea of God as the King of Israel and creation is expressed in several texts. The notion of God as king can be traced back to Exodus, where God has called a people for himself to live under his rule (Exod 15:3.18; 19). In these verses, God is described as liberator of Israel in his function as warrior and king. This idea is found throughout the historic books of the Old Testament.<sup>641</sup>

According to Pennington, the establishment of the Davidic monarchy gives more prominence to the idea of God's kingship.<sup>642</sup> It is, however, clear that the rule of the human kings in Israel is derived from the kingship of God (1 Sam 12:12).

<sup>639</sup> “Zur Charakteristik der Reich-Gottes-Erwartung Jesu gehört überdies ihr schöpfungstheologischer Horizont.” So Matthias Konradt, Matthias Konradt, “Schöpfung Und Neuschöpfung Im Neuen Testament,” in *Schöpfung*, ed. Konrad Schmid, TdT 4 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2012), 124.

<sup>640</sup> “Βασιλεία occurs 55 times in Matthew in variety of phrases, including kingdom of heaven (32x) and kingdom of God (4x).” This is more often than any other Gospel and more frequent than the rest of the NT combined. The same is true for βασιλεύς (“king”) which occurs 22 times in Matthew, 16 in John, 12 in Mark and 11 in Luke.” So Pennington, *Heaven and Earth*, 280.

<sup>641</sup> Craig A. Evans, “Inaugurating the Kingdom of God and Defeating the Kingdom of Satan,” *Bulletin for Biblical Research* 15, no. 1 (2005): 51.

<sup>642</sup> Pennington, *Heaven and Earth*, 256.



The Kingship of God on Zion is particularly expressed in the Psalms. In the so-called Enthronement Psalms, God is declared as king and there are passages about his throne, his rule and his kingdom (Ps 10:16; 45:6; 47:2-8; 74:12; 84:3; 89:18; 93:1; 95:3; 96:10; 97:10; 98:6; 99:1. 4; 103:19; 145:1.11-13; 149:2). It is emphasized that the rule of God is universal and eternal.

In the Psalms, God's kingship is connected with creation (89:9-15). Ollenburger remarks: "It is clear ... that the theme of Yahweh as creator is an important one within the Jerusalem cult tradition, and that it is connected in a significant way to the theme of Yahweh's dwelling on Zion as King."<sup>643</sup>

As observed in the chapter on new creation in the Old Testament, Zion is the center of Old Testament eschatology with the message of "God as king of Zion". Zion is equivalent to the dwelling place of God, the King (Isa 24:21-23).<sup>644</sup>

In terms of future hopes, the Kingdom is interpreted in the context of the hope for Israel's restoration in the prophetic literature. This hope is found particularly in Isaiah, which forms the background for the proclamation of the Kingdom as gospel in the Synoptics:

Get you to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good news; lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good news, lift it up, fear not; say to the cities of Judah, "Behold your God!" See, the Lord comes with might, and his arm rules for him; his reward is with him, and his recompense before him. (Isa 40:9-10)

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news who publishes peace, who brings good news of good, who publishes salvation, who says to Zion, "Your God reigns." (Isa 52:7)

In these two verses, God is a warrior and a King who comes to deliver his people. Although Isaiah contains hopes involving an agent other than God, such as the servant or the Davidic king, it is ultimately God who will act. Ollenburger notes: "[F]or Isaiah the security of Jerusalem is grounded in the kingship of Yahweh on Zion and is dependent upon the acknowledgment of Yahweh's exclusive prerogative."<sup>645</sup>

This prerogative comes from the fact that God alone is the creator of the world: "O LORD of hosts, God of Israel, who are enthroned above the cherubim, you are God, you alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth; you have made heaven and earth." (Isa 37:16)

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<sup>643</sup> Ollenburger, *Zion, the City of the Great King*, 55.

<sup>644</sup> Ollenburger, 23.

<sup>645</sup> Ollenburger, 149.

Since God is the creator of heaven and earth, the coming of his rule through his appointed King also involves language of cosmic rule, eradication of evil and renewal. In the survey of new creation in the Old Testament and the OTP, the imagery of new creation was often found in connection with the rule of God or God's appointed earthly king. The most prominent example is Isa 11, where the messianic kingdom and the righteous rule of the messiah are portrayed as a return to paradise (Isa 11:1-9). Ultimately the restoration of Zion is described as the creation of a new heaven and a new earth (Isa 65:17; 66:22).

Another example of kingdom and new creation in the Old Testament is found in Isa. 24:23: "Then the moon will be abashed, and the sun ashamed; for the LORD of hosts will reign on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem, and before his elders he will manifest his glory." This is a part of the apocalyptic scenario of Isa 24-27 and the proclamation of the rule of God within the creative redemption of deutero Isaiah (52:7). In Ezekiel, the restoration which involves the transformation of humans and nature also involves hope of a Davidic king (Ezek 34-36). Zechariah 14 states that "the Lord will become King of all the earth" (Zech 14:9a) as Jerusalem is transformed and consequently becomes the epicenter for the transformation of the cosmos.

Craig Evans has recently argued for the book of Daniel as the primary background for the proclamation of the Kingdom in the Gospels.<sup>646</sup> The centrality of the Kingdom in Daniel has also been noted in the major commentaries on Daniel. So Collins writes: "[T]hroughout the book the Kingdom of God provides the frame of human history."<sup>647</sup> Goldingay agrees: "The theme that is central to Daniel as it is to no other book in the Old Testament is the Kingdom of God."<sup>648</sup> Evans finds further support for Daniel as background for the Kingdom in the Gospels in Jewish and Christian interpretations of Daniel.<sup>649</sup>

Here it is particularly significant that Dan 2 and 7 are often combined in both Jewish and Christian texts, as well as being applied to Jesus in the latter.<sup>650</sup> Quotes from 4 Ezra and Tertullian are instructive:

After seven days I dreamed a dream in the night; and behold a great wind arose from the

<sup>646</sup> Craig A. Evans, "Daniel in The New Testament: Visions of God's Kingdom," in *The Book of Daniel: Composition and Reception*, ed. John J. Collins and Peter W. Flint, vol. 2, 2 vols., VTSup 83 (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2001), 490–527; Evans, "Inaugurating the Kingdom of God and Defeating the Kingdom of Satan"; See also David Wenham, "The Kingdom of God and Daniel," *The Expository Times* 98, no. 5 (January 2, 1987): 132–34.

<sup>647</sup> John J. Collins, *Daniel: With an Introduction to Apocalyptic Literature*, *Forms of the Old Testament Literature* 20 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1984), 38.

<sup>648</sup> Goldingay, *Daniel*, 330.

<sup>649</sup> Evans, "Daniel in The New Testament: Visions of God's Kingdom," 502–10.

<sup>650</sup> Evans, 507–9.

sea so that it stirred up all its waves (cf. Dan 7:2). And I looked, and behold, this wind made something like the figure of a man come up out of the heart of the sea. And I looked, and behold, that man flew with the clouds of heaven (cf. Dan 7:13).... an innumerable multitude of men were gathered together from the four winds of heaven to make war against the man who came up out of the sea. And I looked, and behold, he carved out for himself a great mountain (cf. Dan 2:34-35), and flew upon it. And I tried to see the region or place from which the mountain was carved, but I could not. (4 Ezra 13:1-7)

Now these signs of degradation quite suit his first coming, just as the tokens of his majesty do his second advent, when he shall no longer remain “a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense” (Isa 8:14), but after his rejection become “the chief cornerstone” (Ps 118:22 cf. Isa 28:16), accepted and elevated to the top place of the temple, even his church, being that very stone in Daniel, cut out of the mountain, which was to smite and crush the image of the secular kingdom (cf. Dan 2:34-35). Of this advent the same prophet says: “Behold, one like the son of man came in the clouds of heaven, and came to the ancient of days; and they brought him before Him, and there was given him dominion and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away; and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed. (Dan 7:13-14)” (Adv. Marc. 3.7)

Both Daniel 2 and Daniel 7 are alluded to in the synoptic Gospels (Dan. 2:45 cf. Luke 20:18 and Dan 7:13-14 cf. Matt 24:30 and par.; Matt 26:64; 28:18). This demonstrates that the Danielic traditions of a final kingdom set up by God were widely present among Jews and Christians in the first centuries.

What is clear from Daniel is the sovereign rule of God. “Every kingdom has been set up by God, including those to be destroyed.”<sup>651</sup> In the end God will establish an everlasting Kingdom: “And in the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed, nor shall this kingdom be left to another people. It shall crush all these kingdoms and bring them to an end, and it shall stand forever.” (Dan 2:44)

Jonathan Pennington has built further on the work of Evans. Pennington notes that the word מְלְכוּת (“kingdom”) occurs fifty-three times in Daniel in the MT.<sup>652</sup> He focuses on chapters 2-7, which he thinks can be set off as a coherent unit, although he recognizes the traditional division into chapters 1-6 and 7-12. An important argument for this observation is the fact that Dan 2:4-7:28 is in Aramaic in the MT.<sup>653</sup> In chapters 2-7 he argues for a chiasm that is framed by the Kingdom in chapters 2 and 7 and has its climax in the confession of Nebuchadnezzar in 4:34-35: “When that period was over, I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted my eyes to heaven, and my reason returned to me. I blessed the Most High,

<sup>651</sup> Evans, 499.

<sup>652</sup> Pennington, *Heaven and Earth*, 272.

<sup>653</sup> Pennington, 271 cites; Collins, Daniel, 1984, 30; Collins, Daniel, 1993, 33–35 in support for this view.

and praised and honored the one who lives forever. For his sovereignty is an everlasting sovereignty, and his kingdom endures from generation to generation.” (Dan 4:34) This observation underlines the importance of God's eternal and sovereign Kingdom in Daniel.

According to Daniel, all earthly Kingdoms are under the control of God in heaven who has given the power to the kings. The earthly kingdoms, nevertheless, stand against God's kingdom, which eventually will defeat the earthly kingdoms. For the purposes of this study it is important to keep in mind that Daniel 7 can be read as an account of new creation as argued in the chapter on new creation in the Old Testament.

The book of Daniel provides precedents for the proclamation of the Kingdom. It is an expectation of the final in-breaking of the rule of God to defeat his enemies and establish his rule on earth. In Daniel as well as other writings in the Old Testament the rule of God is connected with creation and new creation. 4 Ezra also shows evidence of early Jewish expectation of the appearance of the Son of Man and redemption of creation: “This is the interpretation of the vision: As for your seeing a man come up from the heart of the sea, this is he whom the Most High has been keeping for many ages, who will himself deliver his creation. (4 Ezra 13:25-26).

The findings so far can serve as background for the proclamation of the Kingdom in all the synoptic gospels. However, as we shall see, the influence of Daniel is even more accentuated in Matthew. Before moving on to Matthew I will provide a quick note on the Kingdom in the OTP and Qumran. The expectations of Kingdom and restoration we have found in the Old Testament are also found there.

1 Enoch 45:3-5 begins with the vision of the Elect One on the throne of glory (1 Enoch 45:3) and continues with a description of the blessings of the coming age. In 2 Baruch the Messiah and the Kingdom play a very central role in the visions of new creation; see especially 2 Baruch 73:1-74:4. I will just provide the first verses here. The entire section is quoted in chapter X.

<sup>1</sup>And it will happen that after he has brought down everything which is in the world, and has sat down in eternal peace on the throne of the kingdom, then joy will be revealed and rest will appear. <sup>2</sup>And then health will descend in dew, and illness will vanish, and fear and tribulation and lamentation will pass away from among men, and joy will encompass the earth. (2 Baruch 73:1-3)

A similar scenario is found in 4 Ezra 7:28-32:

<sup>28</sup>For my son the Messiah shall be revealed with those who are with him, and those who remain shall rejoice four hundred years. <sup>29</sup>And after these years my son the Messiah

shall die, and all who draw human breath. <sup>30</sup>And the world shall be turned back to primeval silence for seven days, as it was at the first beginnings; so that no one shall be left. <sup>31</sup>And after seven days the world, which is not yet awake, shall be roused, and that which is corruptible shall perish. <sup>32</sup>And the earth shall give up those who are asleep in it; and the chambers shall give up the souls which have been committed to them.

This passage, which is a description of a temporary Messianic kingdom and a subsequent renewal of the world, is preceded by a description of the revelation of Zion and the land (7:26), which indicates a restoration of Israel. The initial restoration of the kingdom in Israel will, however, only temporarily result in new creation after the world has returned to primeval silence. For the purposes of this study the important feature is that the Messianic rule heralds the new creation.

In the writings of Qumran God is also described as the universal king (1QM VI 6; 1QHa XVIII 8; 1QapGen II 4.7.14; X 10; XX 13). The most important scrolls are the War Scroll (1QM) and the texts constituting the Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice (4Q400-407; 11Q17).<sup>654</sup> The connection with new creation is less clear in these texts but may well be assumed in light of the general expectation of a glorious earthly future after the defeat of God's enemies.<sup>655</sup>

The War Scroll contains a vision of an eschatological War in which the sons of light will defeat the sons of darkness, emphasizing the idea of God as King. God is the king of glory who will be with his people and finally defeat evil so that Israel's kingdom will be secured forever (1QM XII 1-18; XIX 1-8). Elsewhere it is emphasized that God is the creator of heaven and earth (1Q33 X 12).

The Songs of Sabbath Sacrifice present a heavenly liturgy in which God's transcendent kingship is the object of praise. The Kingdom is mentioned over twenty times in the songs.<sup>656</sup> Anna Marie Schwemer argues that the songs are the most important pre-Christian texts for the concept of the kingdom of God.<sup>657</sup> The songs emphasize that the kingdom of God is exalted above all other kingdoms as well as its eternity.

<sup>654</sup> Pennington, *Heaven and Earth*, 262.

<sup>655</sup> Erik Sjöberg, "Neuschöpfung in Den Toten-Meer-Rollen," *Studia Theologica - Nordic Journal of Theology* 9, no. 1 (January 1, 1955): 131-36.

<sup>656</sup> Pennington, *Heaven and Earth*, 262.

<sup>657</sup> Anna Maria Schwemer, "Gott als König und seine Königsherrschaft in den Sabbatliedern aus Qumran," in *Königsherrschaft Gottes und himmlischer Kult: im Judentum, Urchristentum und in der hellenistischen Welt*, ed. Martin Hengel and Anna Maria Schwemer, WUNT 55 (Mohr Siebeck, 1991), 45-118.

In 4QDibHama (=4Q504) the kingdom of God is associated with the Davidic kingdom. Within a few lines the Davidic kingdom is described as a perpetual kingdom due to the covenant (frags. 1-2, 4:7-8), the glory of God is being disclosed to the nations from Zion, and the temple is called the house of his majesty.<sup>658</sup>

The connection between the kingdom of God and an eschatological hope is found in the so-called Messianic Apocalypse (4Q521). This speaks of the throne of the eternal Kingdom (4Q521 frag. 2 II, 7) while drawing on Psalm 146 and describing a time of fulfillment of the promises of Isa 35:5 and Isa 61:1.<sup>659</sup> The text goes on to speak of healing for the wounded, that the dead will live (cf. Isa 26:19) (frag. 2 II, 12). Overall it is a reception of the proclamation of the rule of God as good news from Isaiah.

In sum, in the Old Testament as well as intertestamental literature, God is understood as king, ruling over a (universal) kingdom. It was particularly clear in Isaiah that the rule of God is the content of the “good news” (gospel) (Isa 52:7). This corresponds with the gospel of the kingdom in Matthew (Matt 4:23, 9:35). God is expected to finally intervene in history and establish his rule, which will be an eternal kingdom superseding all human kingdoms. This kingdom is most often understood in earthly terms and involves both cosmic and anthropological renewal and a restoration of paradisaical conditions.<sup>660</sup>

In light of this I now turn to the Kingdom in Matthew.

## 9.2 The Kingdom in Matthew as New Creation

The centrality of the Kingdom in Matthew is clear by the sheer number of occurrences of associated words in Matthew: fifty-five occurrences of “βασιλεία” and twenty-two occurrences of “βασιλεύς” in Matthew.<sup>661</sup>

<sup>658</sup> Robert D. Rowe, *God's Kingdom and God's Son: The Background in Mark's Christology from Concepts of Kingship in the Psalms* (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2002), 97.

<sup>659</sup> Craig A. Evans, “From Gospel to Gospel: The Function of Isaiah in the New Testament,” in *Writing and Reading the Scroll of Isaiah: Studies of an Interpretive Tradition*, ed. Craig C. Broyles and Craig A. Evans, vol. 2, VTSup 70 (Leiden; New York: Brill, 1997), 661.

<sup>660</sup> So also Sigurd Grindheim, *God's Equal: What Can We Know about Jesus' Self-Understanding?*, LNTS 446 (London; New York: T&T Clark, 2011), 39: “In the time leading up to the time of Jesus, the expression (Kingdom of God) was increasingly used in an apocalyptic sense invoking the vision of God's ultimate victory over Satan and the establishment of a new world order with paradisaical conditions.”

<sup>661</sup> Pennington, *Heaven and Earth*, 279–80.

The first and last verses of Matthew set the Gospel in a kingdom-framework, although the Kingdom is not mentioned explicitly. In Matt 1:1 Jesus is the Son of David, and in Matt 28:18 he has “all power in heaven and on earth.” Furthermore, the Kingdom serves as a summary of Jesus' work and teaching (4:17. 23; 9:35; 24:14) and the purpose of the majority of the parables is to explain what the Kingdom is like (13:24. 31. 33. 44. 45. 47; 18:23; 20:1; 22:2).

The first words about the Kingdom concern its imminence: “The kingdom is near!” (3:2; 4:17). The Kingdom is coming and this is good news (4:23; 9:35; 24:14). This recalls Deutero-Isaiah with its combination of good news and the rule of God (see above).

In Matthew 3:2-3, John's proclamation of the Kingdom is explicitly connected to Isaiah through the mention of the prophet Isaiah and a quote from Isaiah 40:3:

<sup>2</sup>“Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.” <sup>3</sup>This is the one of whom the prophet Isaiah spoke when he said, “The voice of one crying out in the wilderness: ‘Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.’” (Matt 3:2-3)

Jesus' first proclamation of the Kingdom is also set in the context of fulfillment of Isaiah (Isa 8:23b-9:1) in Matthew 4:14-17. In general, Matthew uses Isaiah throughout the Gospel in different settings in order to demonstrate that Jesus is the fulfillment of the restoration hopes found there (Isa 7:14 in Matt 1:23, Isa 40:3 in Matt 3:3, Isa 8:23b-9:1 in Matt 4:14-17, Isa 53:4 in Matt 8:17, Isa 42:1-4 in Matt 12:18-21, Isa 6:9-10 in Matt 13:13-15, Isa 29:13 in Matt 15:8-9, Isa 56:7 in Matt 21:13, Isa 13:10. 34 in Matt 24:29).

The first thing that is said about the Kingdom in Matthew is that it has come near (ἤγγικεν). The most natural way to understand this is that *the time* of the Kingdom is near. John and Jesus are announcing something that is about to happen.

During Jesus' ministry however, it becomes clear that the Kingdom is not only in the future but also already present, as it is advancing and growing (Matt 11:12; 12:28; 13:31-33). Matt 12:28: “The Kingdom of God has come upon you”, is the clearest expression of the presence of the Kingdom in the person and works of Jesus.

The kingdom can be summarized as including the following features: The kingdom is earthly (Matt 5:5; 6:10) and it has food (26:29). It is like a feast (Matt 8:11 cf. Isa 25:6). The kingdom is equivalent to salvation. (19:23-25).<sup>662</sup> The kingdom is associated with righteousness (Matt 6:33)

<sup>662</sup> “In this regard the concept of the kingdom of God is parallel with the Johannine concept of eternal life (see Life) and the Pauline concept of salvation. Precisely as those who put their faith in the atoning work of Christ are said to possess eternal life, to be in Christ or to be saved, in spite of the fact that eternal life or salvation (see Salvation) are

And the Kingdom is connected to miracles (Matt 4:23; 9:35; 12:28). We will now take a close look at these features.

While the Kingdom is advancing and growing the ultimate hope is that the Kingdom will come in its fullness on earth so that God will rule on earth as he rules in heaven; the Kingdom of Heaven will encompass the earth (Matt 6:10). The Kingdom is therefore an earthly hope and in the beatitudes the promise of the Kingdom of Heaven also involves inheriting the earth (5:5). In fact the Kingdom that the saints will possess was prepared since the foundation of the world (25:34), and the eschatological Kingdom is tied to the very creation of the world.

In the preaching and teaching of Jesus the Kingdom is compared to a wedding-feast (22:1-14), drawing on imagery from the Old Testament, primarily Isa 25:6. This again presents the Kingdom as something very tangible and earthly. Indeed the disciples are going to drink wine with Jesus in the Kingdom (26:29). As we saw earlier, the expectation of new creation often also includes abundance of food. This aspect is explored further in chapter 6.4.5 on the food-miracles.

The proclamation of the Kingdom goes hand in hand with healing and exorcisms (Matt 4:23; 9:35; 12:28). This gives further evidence that the Kingdom involves material transformation and the defeat of evil. This aspect is also more fully investigated in chapter 5.4.

To enter the Kingdom is equivalent to salvation. This is clear from Matt 19:16-26, where the rich young man asks what he must do to inherit eternal life (19:16). Jesus proceeds to speak about the difficulty of entering the Kingdom of Heaven for a rich person (19:23), in response to which the disciples ask “who can be saved.” (19:25) Final eschatological salvation is described in terms of entering the kingdom (5:20; 7:21) and the primary present task is to seek the kingdom (6:33).

From the observations above it is clear that the salvation that Jesus brings is not a hope for a disembodied heavenly existence. It is very earthly and tangible and involves food and healing. This is in spite of the fact that the favorite expression for the Kingdom in Matthew is ‘Kingdom of Heaven’, and Jesus continually speaks about storing up treasures in heaven. But why then all this talk about heaven?

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essentially eschatological concepts, so also believers may be said to have entered into the kingdom of God despite the fact that the kingdom of God, like eternal life and salvation, can be properly experienced only at the end of time.” Chrys C. Caragounis, “Kingdom of God/Kingdom of Heaven,” ed. Joel B. Green and Scott McKnight, *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1992).



The use of the phrase “Kingdom of Heaven” is perhaps the most distinctive feature about the Kingdom in Matthew. The phrase is found thirty-two times in Matthew. This expression is unique to Matthew within the NT. Matthew's use of this expression has traditionally been explained as a reverential circumlocution where “heaven” is used in order to avoid using “God”. This assumption has, however, been challenged by Jonathan Pennington. Pennington observes that there is no example of using “heaven” as a circumlocution for God in the targums, which would be the corpus of literature with the closest affinity to Jesus' usage.<sup>663</sup>

According to Pennington, a better explanation is that Matthew's Kingdom of Heaven draws on Daniel 2-7.<sup>664</sup> As we have already seen Daniel provides an important background for the expectation of the Kingdom in first-century Judaism. The influence of Daniel could be argued for in all the synoptics but is most apparent in Matthew, especially in his use of “Kingdom of Heaven.”

Daniel does not have the exact phrase “Kingdom of Heaven”, but there are a number of comparable phrases: God of Heaven (2:19. 37. 44), God in Heaven (2:28), King of Heaven (4:37) and Lord of Heaven (5:23). 4:26 even says that “Heaven is sovereign.” In Daniel, the Kingdom of Heaven is contrasted to the kingdoms of the earth. The same point lies behind Matthew's use of Kingdom of Heaven.<sup>665</sup> Already Irenaeus saw a background for the Kingdom in Matthew in Daniel, as he saw Matt 12:25 as an allusion to Dan 2:41.<sup>666</sup>

Another indication of the influence of Daniel on Matthew is the use of the epithet “Son of Man”. Although “Son of Man” is found in Matthew, Mark and Luke, it is arguably a more important title in Matthew. In general, the title “Son of Man” is found more often in Matthew (thirty times) than in Mark (fourteen times) and Luke (twenty-five times). Matthew specifically refers to the Kingdom of the Son of Man, which none of the other gospels do (Matt 13:41; 16:28), and he has two mentions of the Son of Man coming with the clouds (Matt 24:30; 26:64 cf. Dan 7:14), whereas Mark and Luke only have one.

Other allusions to Daniel in Matthew include the ending of Matthew (Matt 28:18; cf. Dan 7:14), the furnace of fire (Matt 13:42; 50; cf. Dan 3:6), the revelation of mysteries (Matt 13:11; cf. Dan 2:47) and the abomination of desolation (Matt 24:15; cf. Dan 12:11), which Matthew makes clear is found in Daniel.

<sup>663</sup> Pennington, *Heaven and Earth*, 301.

<sup>664</sup> Pennington, 289–93.

<sup>665</sup> Pennington, 292.

<sup>666</sup> Adv. Hear. 5.26.1 cited in D. Jeffrey Bingham, *Irenaeus' Use of Matthew's Gospel in Adversus Haereses*, *Traditio Exegetica Graeca* 7 (Leuven: Peeters, 1998), 284.

That Daniel provides a background for the understanding of the kingdom in Matthew is important for the purpose of this study because of the creation imagery employed in the description of the defeat of the four kingdoms.<sup>667</sup> In the reception of Daniel in 4 Ezra already touched upon above, the man who flies with the clouds of heaven (4 Ezra 13:3 cf. Dan 7:13) and carves out a great mountain for himself (4 Ezra 13:6 cf. Dan 2:34-35) is explained by “he whom the Most High has been keeping for many ages, who will himself deliver his creation.” (4 Ezra 13:26a). The Kingdom in Daniel is then connected with the renewal of creation both by ancient and modern interpreters.<sup>668</sup>

Supporting the argument that the Kingdom in Matthew is fruitfully understood against the background of Daniel is the fact that several of the allusions to Daniel are found in chapter 13, the quintessential chapter on the Kingdom in Matthew. The next section discusses the parables of growth from that chapter. In line with the vision of Daniel these parables describe the universal and transformative character of the kingdom in the world.

### **9.2.1 Matthew 13:31-33 – Parables of Universal Dominion and Transformation**

We have now seen that the Old Testament and Jewish apocalyptic strongly associate the kingship of God with creation. Furthermore we have seen that the Kingdom of Heaven in Matthew draws from those sources and presents a kingdom generally earthly in nature

Chapter 13 in Matthew is the quintessential chapter on the kingdom in Matthew, in which Jesus tells seven parables about the Kingdom. The parable about the sower is best understood as a parable about the kingdom, although here, as in the other parables, it is not stated explicitly. This is evident from Jesus' answer to the disciples about why he is talking in parables: “To you it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given.” (Matt 13:11). The parable is then also about the secrets of the kingdom.

It is also in 13:11 that we find a strong connection to the kingdom in Daniel through the use of the noun *μυστήριον* together with the kingdom of heaven. This noun also occurs in Daniel 2, where the mystery revealed to Daniel is about how the kingdom of God will defeat all other kingdoms and become a universal kingdom. In both Daniel 2 and Matthew 13 the mystery that is hidden for some and revealed to others is about the kingdom.<sup>669</sup>

<sup>667</sup> See chapter 2.8

<sup>668</sup> Wilson, “Creation and New Creation: The Role of Creation Imagery in the Book of Daniel”; Lacocque, “Allusions to Creation in Daniel 7.”

<sup>669</sup> George Eldon Ladd, *The Presence of the Future: The Eschatology of Biblical Realism* (Grand Rapids, Mich: Eerdmans, 1996), 223–24; Evans, “Daniel in The New Testament: Visions of God’s Kingdom,” 513; Beale, *New*

The BDAG defines the primary meaning of μυστήριον as: “the unmanifested or private counsel of God, (God’s) secret, the secret thoughts, plans, and dispensations of God”.<sup>670</sup> Thus, the mystery concerns Gods actions and His plan for the world, which in Daniel ultimately means that the kingdom of God represented by a small rock will become a mountain encompassing the entire world.<sup>671</sup>

This development from something small to something that dominates and permeates everything is also found in Matthew 13. This can be seen in the parables about the mustard seed and the leaven. These two parables are about the unexpected presence of the kingdom in the world that will eventually be a universal kingdom that transforms everything.<sup>672</sup>

In his seminal article on the parables of growth, Nils Alstrup Dahl argues that the main point of the parables of growth is that the Kingdom initially seems very small and insignificant but will turn out to be a dominating power. The point is, that there is an organic connection between the seemingly initial small Kingdom in the ministry of Jesus and the future Kingdom of God. The word ‘seemingly’ is important for Dahl here, since “the Kingdom is [not] a spiritual or social entity, ‘growing’ developing. The Kingdom is in itself always perfect, only the conditions of its presence change, and are other in this world than they shall be in the coming age.”<sup>673</sup>

In opposition to the liberal theology of his time, Dahl wants to avoid the idea of immanent evolution and gradual growth of the Kingdom. This point is also in accord with the text, which does not present a description of how the Kingdom grows but rather states that it simply does grow, perhaps even in a hidden way as with the leaven. The main point is then to demonstrate the contrast between the small beginning of the Kingdom in the world and the all-dominating end-result. A survey of the possible background for this imagery will reveal that it also carries connotations of new creation.

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*Testament Biblical Theology, A*, 432–33.

<sup>670</sup> Arndt, Danker, and Bauer, *BDAG*, 662.

<sup>671</sup> The rock also has to do with the Temple, which, as we have seen, has creational meaning. (See page 138f. in the present work)

<sup>672</sup> Beale, *New Testament Biblical Theology, A*, 433.

<sup>673</sup> Nils A. Dahl, “The Parables of Growth,” *Studia Theologica - Nordic Journal of Theology* 5, no. 2 (January 1, 1951): 157. Reprinted in Nils A. Dahl, *Jesus in the Memory of the Early Church: Essays* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Books, 1976), 141–66.

The parable of the mustard seed probably alludes to the imagery of lofty trees in Ezek 17:23; 31:6 and Dan 4:9.18.<sup>674</sup> In all these passages the tree is a symbol of a king's political power.<sup>675</sup> In Ezekiel 31 and Daniel 4 the kings are compared to trees who will eventually meet their downfall. The kingdom of heaven is contrasted to these kingdoms. Whereas the trees of the Old Testament will fall, this kingdom is eternal. It is a negative symbol of power which is now used to show the eventual greatness of the Kingdom of Heaven. Taking the influence of Daniel into account, the contrast is even more accentuated in Matthew with the similar language of the rule of Heaven (Dan 4:23) and King of Heaven (Dan 4:34). The tree in Daniel is clearly depicted as a universal Kingdom:

Upon my bed this is what I saw;  
there was a tree at the center of the earth,  
and its height was great.  
The tree grew great and strong,  
its top reached to heaven,  
and it was visible to the ends of the whole earth.  
Its foliage was beautiful,  
its fruit abundant,  
and it provided food for all.  
The animals of the field found shade under it,  
the birds of the air nested in its branches,  
and from it all living beings were fed. (Dan 4:10-12)

The dream is interpreted in terms of an empire reaching the ends of the earth (Dan 4:22). This is also the case with the tree in Ezekiel 31. Through the allusion to these trees it is then clear that the parable of the mustard seed illustrates that the Kingdom of Heaven will eventually become a universal Kingdom.

As we have seen above, Nebuchadnezzar is described as Adam through similar language as that found in Genesis 1. In his *hubris* he becomes an anti-God, and he is cast down and reminded that it is the God of heaven who rules (Dan 4:23).<sup>676</sup> The same goes for Ezekiel 31. Ezekiel 31 may, like Daniel 4, be a way of describing the king as an Adamic figure, who is in fact an enemy of God and is also going to meet his downfall.<sup>677</sup> The mustard seed and the plant that grows from it are

<sup>674</sup> Davies and Allison, *Matthew. Vol. II*, 419; Hagner, *Matthew 1-13*, 385; Nolland, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 550; Matthias Konradt, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus*, vol. Teilband 1, Neue Testament deutsch (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2015), 220.

<sup>675</sup> Christopher M. Tuckett, "The Parable of the Mustard Seed and the Book of Ezekiel," in *The Book of Ezekiel and Its Influence*, ed. H. J. de Jonge and Johannes Tromp (Burlington: Ashgate, 2007), 92.

<sup>676</sup> Matthias Henze cites Jerome and Albertus Magnus for this interpretation *The Madness of King Nebuchadnezzar: The Ancient Near Eastern Origins and Early History of Interpretation of Daniel 4*, JSJSup 61 (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 17.

<sup>677</sup> Stordalen, *Echoes of Eden*, 391–94.

contrasted to these trees; the small mustard seed will miraculously become a tree larger than all other plants (Matt 13:32).

This scenario is like the one described in Ezekiel 17:23, where the tree is the restored Davidic kingdom located on Zion (Ezek 17:22). Targum Jonathan, writing on Ezek 17:22-23, identifies the sprig of Ezek 17:23 with a child of the house of David that will become a mighty kingdom, emphasizing the small beginning that will nevertheless result in greatness.<sup>678</sup> The description of this restoration also brings Isa 11 to mind. Through the restoration the Lord proves his sovereignty and the fact that he humbles the high tree and raises up the small. In its smallness and weakness, the mustard seed is similarly raised up to become the largest of all plants.

Of these parallels with the passages from Ezekiel and Daniel the most interesting for the purposes of this thesis are Ezekiel 31 and Daniel 4, which include language recalling Adam and Eden. With this background in mind the tree in Matt 13 may also recall an Urzeit-Endzeit correlation. The Kingdoms described in Ezekiel 31 and Daniel 4 aspired to become like the rule of Adam in Eden (cf. Gen 1:28-29) but failed like Adam. The Kingdom of Heaven is contrasted to those kingdoms. More specifically, since the passages mentioned from the Old Testament all identify the tree with the king, it is the king of the kingdom of Heaven who is contrasted with the kings who meet their downfall.<sup>679</sup> In Matthew that king is Jesus, the son of David.

The use of the image of a world tree in the Dead Sea Scrolls may shed further light on the text. In the Hodayot the community is described as an enormous tree that covers the whole world with its shade (1QHa XIV 14-17). This is the self-understanding of the community that saw themselves as a chosen remnant (1QHa XIV 8), which despite their smallness would eventually encompass the earth.<sup>680</sup> Interestingly the description of the tree in the Hodayot employs Urzeit/Endzeit imagery by stating that the tree is watered by the streams of Eden (1QHa XIV 16).

The use of the tree imagery in the Old Testament concerns individuals who are or who will become mighty kings in vast kingdoms. In the DSS this imagery is applied to a group of people. In Matthew the imagery probably primarily refers to the humble kingship of Jesus as the Son of David, and as such the parable is messianic.<sup>681</sup> At the same time the role of the disciples in this scenario should not

<sup>678</sup> Eveline van Staalduine-Sulman, "Agricultural Imagery in Targum Jonathan and Matthew," *Aramaic Studies* 11, no. 2 (2013): 218.

<sup>679</sup> For the tree as a symbol for the king in the ancient Near East see Henze, *The Madness of King Nebuchadnezzar*, 78–81.

<sup>680</sup> Swarup, *Self-Understanding*, 21; Tuckett, "The Parable of the Mustard Seed and the Book of Ezekiel," 94.

<sup>681</sup> Tuckett, "The Parable of the Mustard Seed and the Book of Ezekiel," 97.

be dismissed. Similarly to the temple imagery explored above the image can be applied to both Jesus and his disciples, both the king and his people.

With regard to leaven it is a negative metaphor normally used to describe a bad influence (cf. Matt 16:6, 1 Cor 5:6). The amount of flour that is used in the parable is very large, about thirty-five liters of flour. The leaven then indicates the pervasive effects of the Kingdom.<sup>682</sup> The Kingdom grows and expands extraordinarily, and the huge amount of flour may well suggest world-wide transformation through the presence of the kingdom in the world. This transformation is inevitable.<sup>683</sup>

This might suggest progressive transformation similar to the scenario found in Jubilees 23:

<sup>26</sup>And in those days, children will begin to search the law,  
and to search the commandments  
and to return to the way of righteousness.

<sup>27</sup>And the days will begin to increase and grow longer  
among those sons of men, generation by generation,  
and year by year, until  
their days approach a thousand years,  
and to a greater number of years than days.

<sup>28</sup>And there (will be) no old men and none who is full of days.  
Because all of them will be infants and children.

<sup>29</sup>And all of their days they will be complete  
and live in peace and rejoicing  
and there will be no Satan and no evil (one) who will destroy,  
because all of their days will be days of blessing and healing. (Jub 23:26-29)

This is, however, not the exclusive view in Matthew, and following Dahls interpretation gradual growth may not even be implied. Even in chapter 13 the parable of the weeds (Matt 13:24-30. 36-43) suggests a specific point in time when all evil will be eradicated in one final intervention rather than a process of purification. Here the language is also astonishingly similar to Daniel with regard to both the fate of the evil and the righteous (Matt 13:43 cf. Dan 12:3 LXX(Theodotion)).

Taken together the parables of growth illustrate an understanding of the kingdom that is presently small but which will eventually encompass the entire earth. In the case of the mustard seed it will be a world-wide dominion and in the case of the leaven it will result in transformation of the world. New creation may be also be in view through the universal dominion and transformation envisioned in the parables of growth. The connections between the kingdom and creation in Old Testament and the general earthly nature of the kingdom in Matthew supports this interpretation. In addition, the

<sup>682</sup> Ryan S. Schellenberg, "The Kingdom as Contaminant? The Role of Repertoire in the Parables of the Mustard Seed and the Leaven," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 71, no. 4 (2009): 542.

<sup>683</sup> Luz, *Matthew 8-20, A Commentary*, 263.

reference to the beginning of the world in 13:35 may also indicate that much. The parables concern the original purposes of God.

Finally the parable of the wheat and the weeds and the subsequent explanation (13:23-30. 36-43) describe the nature of the presence of the 'children of the kingdom' in the world. They will be living side by side with the 'children of the evil one' until the end of age. Only at the end of the age will evil be eradicated from the world, which here is equated with the kingdom of the Son of Man at the end of the world (13:38 cf. 13:41). In this parable the final worldwide dominion of the kingdom is confirmed. Furthermore, it is important to notice that it is evil that is removed from the world. This last point indicates a cleansing of the world and resonates with the expectation of the final removal of evil from the world found in many of the texts surveyed earlier in this study.

### **9.2.2 The Kingdom, the Son of Man and New Creation**

The observations made in the preceding sections about the kingdom in Matthew also impacts the understanding of the use of the title “Son of Man” in Matthew.

What has been argued so far is that the OT background for the Kingdom in Matthew is to be found primarily in the books of Isaiah and Daniel. These two books in particular express the expectation of the establishment of a universal Kingdom and are both heavily influential on Matthew.

The scholarly debate about the origin and meaning of the designation “son of man” is immensely complex and I will not be able to do justice to it here. Along with many others I will propose that the title in Matthew is drawn from Daniel 7 and the use of the title in 1 Enoch.<sup>684</sup>

This particularly applies to the use the title in connection with the future coming of the Son of Man in glory to judge and to rule (Matt 13:41; 16:27-28; 19:28; 24:30; 25:31; 26:64).

In the survey of the OT for new creation it was argued that Daniel 7 may be seen in terms of new creation. In the vision in Daniel 7 the empires which are depicted as monsters rising from the sea may be understood as chaos monsters which will finally be defeated when God's kingdom is established. The establishment of God's kingdom is then seen as a reordering of the world comparable to the first creation. This new creation will, however be eternally secured since God will establish an eternal kingdom (7:14.16.27).

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<sup>684</sup> The apocalyptic background and particularly Dan 7:13-14 has gained the widest acceptance in the history of interpretation. See Delbert Burkett, *The Son of Man Debate*, SNTSMS 107 (Cambridge University Press, 2000), 22.

In this scenario of defeat of chaos and new creation, the Son of Man is God's chosen regent on earth who is given dominion, glory and kingdom over all peoples and nations forever (Dan 7:14). The Son of Man should be seen as an Adamic figure – a restoration of true humanity which will rule the earth in the manner God intended Adam to rule in the beginning (Gen 1:26-28; Ps 8:7; Job 7:17).<sup>685</sup>

When Jesus in Matthew refers to himself as the Son of Man who will come in his kingdom and glory it should be heard in terms of new creation and the reestablishment of the true Adamic rule.

In Matt 19:28 new creation and the coming of the Son of Man are combined. In that verse there is a clear allusion to Dan 7 and the motif of new creation is present in the word *παλιγγενεσία*. 1 Enoch also connects the appearance of the Son of Man (the Elect One) with new creation (1 Enoch 45:3-5).

Furthermore Joel Marcus argues that the peculiar double definitive (the Son of the Man) used in the Gospels means that the epithet refers to a son of a specific man, namely Adam.<sup>686</sup> Marcus finds support for this view in the Jewish traditions about Adam which present Adam as a figure of sin and despair but also a figure of original glory and a hope for a restoration of this glory. Marcus points to *Testament of Abraham* 11:1-13:8 as a particular case in point where Adam is portrayed as a figure of royal glory and his son Abel is an eschatological judge of the entire creation.<sup>687</sup> In the present study we have also found evidence for this in the expression “all the glory of Adam” in the DSS. Against this background and after testing his thesis against the Son of Man sayings in the synoptic Gospels Marcus concludes: “Jesus as Son of Man, therefore, presents a glorified picture of human destiny, showing humanity eschatologically transformed to fulfill the destiny that God intended for it “in the beginning.”<sup>688</sup>

Marcus also suggests that Son of Man understood as the Son of Adam explains the sayings about the suffering of the Son of Man in the gospels since it simply means that the son Adam is connected with the world's present condition of suffering and death.<sup>689</sup> It is, however, possible to be more specific about which sufferings of humanity the Son of Man identifies with. In Daniel 7 the Son of Man is equated with the saints of the most high and it is this group the kingdom will be given to. The saints will, however, go through persecution before receiving the kingdom and it is this suffering Jesus as the Son of Man also goes through in his passion and death. In this way Jesus as

<sup>685</sup> For further arguments and references see page 45

<sup>686</sup> Joel Marcus, “Son of Man as Son of Adam, Part I,” *Revue Biblique* 110, no. 1 (2003): 40–47; This was argued already by Erasmus. See Burkett, *The Son of Man Debate*, 9.

<sup>687</sup> Marcus, “Son of Man I,” 56–57.

<sup>688</sup> Joel Marcus, “Son of Man as Son of Adam, Part II: Exegesis,” *Revue Biblique* 110, no. 3 (2003): 370.

<sup>689</sup> Marcus, “Son of Man I,” 60–61.



the Son of Man is a representative for a community whose suffering is both pattern-setting and proleptically fulfilling the suffering which his followers will go through (see the table in section 7.4.2).<sup>690</sup>

In chapter seven I argued that sayings about the coming of the Son of Man in glory are best seen as proleptically fulfilled at the death and resurrection of Jesus. After the resurrection, Jesus as the Son of Man has passed through tribulation and persecution and received glory, power and dominion.

Seen against the Danielic background for the kingdom in Matthew and the interpretation of the Son of Man in both Daniel and Matthew as the son of Adam, all of this confirms that the death and resurrection of Jesus in Matthew is to be seen as the inauguration of the new creation through the establishment of the kingdom of the Son of Man.

### 9.3 Summary

What I have argued in this chapter is that the kingdom in Matthew is connected to creation as well as new creation. In the Jewish background it is evident that the kingship of God is closely connected to the fact that God is the creator of the world. The rule of God is also both universal and eternal. In the prophetic literature and especially Isaiah the coming of God as ruler and king is central to the restoration hopes that are expressed. In this context it is also emphasized that God is creator of heaven and earth, and the restoration of God's kingship on Zion is presented in terms of new creation (Isa 65:17). In the book of Daniel the kingship of God is also a significant feature. The expectation found in Daniel for a final kingdom set up by God was widely influential on the presentation of the kingdom found in the Gospel. In Daniel the kingdom is also connected to creation since Daniel 7 can be read as an account of new creation. Other examples from the Old Testament that the hope for the rule of God is also connected with renewal and transformation includes Ezekiel 34-36 and Zechariah 14. Although not particularly prominent the expectation for the rule of God is also found in early Jewish literature in texts drawing especially on the expectations found in Isaiah and Daniel.

Turning to Matthew the kingdom, despite being of heaven, is in fact presented as a very earthly reality. The kingdom is expected to come upon the earth (6:10). In Matthew quotations and allusions to Isaiah and Daniel indicate that the kingdom of heaven in Matthew is best understood against the expectation found there.

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<sup>690</sup> Beale, *New Testament Biblical Theology, A*, 394–400.

The investigation of the imagery used in the parables of the mustard seed and the leaven in Matthew 13:31-33 shows that the kingdom of heaven, despite the humble beginnings, will achieve universal dominion and cause universal transformation. In light of the creational features of the kingdom of God in the Old Testament this also implies new creation through the final eradication of evil and total implementation of the rule of the creator. Since God's universal kingship is embedded in the fact that God has created the world, the defeat of God's enemies in the world and the reestablishment of God's rule is equivalent to re-creation.

This last point will be even more clear when considering the miracles of Jesus in Matthew. This is the topic of the next section.

Finally the use of the epithet Son of Man supports the connection between the kingdom and new creation in Matthew. The most likely background for the Son of Man is Daniel 7 which may be read as an account of new creation and it this apocalyptic scenario which is fulfilled in a proleptic manner in Jesus' death and resurrection.

## 10 Miracles and New Creation

This chapter examines the miracles of Jesus in Matthew in terms of new creation. In Matthew Jesus performs a number of miracles. The miracles can generally be categorized as healings, exorcisms and nature miracles. In this chapter the nature miracles are discussed under two headings, one concerning the two stilling-of-the-storm episodes and the other concerning the two feeding miracles.

The overall argument is that the miracles are best understood within the context of the coming new creational kingdom proclaimed by Jesus. When understood in the context of the kingdom the use of title “Son of David” in connection with miracles and the references to Isaiah make sense. The miracles are then manifestations of the material transformation or re-creation, which is part of the coming of the kingdom.

I first show that for Matthew Jesus is not simply a representative of God. He is God, the creator who by this word can exercise power over sickness, demons and the forces of nature. In the miracles the reality of new creation is proleptically present in the present age.

Second, the background from Isaiah provided by Matthew is shown to support both the understanding of the miracles as part of the new creational kingdom. The quotes anchor the miracles in the comprehensive vision of salvation in Isaiah.

In the final three sections the exorcisms and the nature miracles are examined. Here it is argued that what is seen in these miracles is the defeat of all evil, Jesus as the lord of creation and nutritional abundance. All of these elements are part of the motif of new creation in Matthew's cultural encyclopedia.

### 10.1 Healing, Exorcism and the Kingdom

In Matthew, the healing and exorcisms of Jesus are clearly connected to the Kingdom. This is evident from the summaries of Jesus' ministry in Matt 4:23 and 9:35 and the task of the disciples in 10:7-8, where the preaching of the kingdom and healings/exorcisms go hand in hand. In addition Matthew 12:28 makes that point clear: “But if it is by the Spirit of God that I cast out demons, then the Kingdom of God has come to you.” Here it is explicit that the exorcisms provide evidence for the presence of the kingdom.

Therefore, it is also surprising when this major framework is usually not taken into account when discussing Jesus as a healer in Matthew. For example, in a recent monograph on Jesus as a healer of the sick in Matthew, Lidija Novakovic does discuss the kingdom, despite the fact that the subtitle of the book is “A Study of Jesus as the Son of David in the Gospel of Matthew.”<sup>691</sup> The title Son of David together with the verses mentioned above should make it obvious that the healings and exorcisms are done in the context of the coming kingdom.

The frequent use of title “Son of David” in connection with healing in Matthew (Matt 9:27; 12:23; 15:22; 20:30-31; 21:15) has in fact puzzled many interpreters.<sup>692</sup> As Novakovic states: “It is a well-known axiom accepted by every reputable scholar that the Messiah was neither expected to do miracles nor to be a healer.”<sup>693</sup> She concludes that the connection between the title “Son of David” and the healings and exorcisms cannot be explained from general Jewish expectation about a Davidic Messiah. Curiously, Novakovic ends the monograph by stating: “Matthew's Gospel shows that the dominant feature of Jesus' miracles, especially his miracles of healing, is their eschatological significance. They demonstrate the presence of God's reign within the realm of human history.”<sup>694</sup> However, the healings are not discussed in the context of God's reign in the work. In the end, the solution to the use of “Son of David” in Matthew rests on Matthew's creativity in associating the healings as well as the “Son of David” with the restoration hopes of Israel by citing texts from Isaiah.<sup>695</sup>

<sup>691</sup> Novaković, *Messiah, the Healer of the Sick*.

<sup>692</sup> There are fourteen specific accounts of healing in Matthew. The title Son of David is used four times in these accounts, no title is used five times, Lord is used three times, Son of God and Son of Man is used once each. In addition the title Son of David may also be associated with the healings in the Temple (Matt. 21:9-15). Wayne Baxter, “Healing and the ‘Son of David’: Matthew’s Warrant,” *Novum Testamentum* 48, no. 1 (2006): 38. There are generally three main proposals for the reason behind the use of the title 1) There is no pre-Christian warrant for the connection and the connection is made in Christian hindsight as a Matthean construction (so Christoph Burger, *Jesus als Davidsson, eine traditions-geschichtliche Untersuchung*, FRLANT 98 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1970); Novaković, *Messiah, the Healer of the Sick*.) 2) It should be understood against the tradition of Solomon-as-exorcist. (so L. R. Fisher, “Can This Be the Son of David?,” in *Jesus and the Historian: Written in Honor of Ernest Cadman Colwell*, ed. Frederick Thomas Trotter and Ernest Cadman Colwell (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1968), 82–97; Dennis C. Duling, “Solomon, Exorcism, and the Son of David,” *The Harvard Theological Review* 68, no. 3/4 (1975): 235–52; Jiri Dvoracek, *The Son of David in Matthew’s Gospel in the Light of the Solomon as Exorcist Tradition*, WUNT II 415 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2016). 3) The Davidic shepherd tradition found particularly in Ezekiel 34 provides the background for the healing son of David. (so Baxter, “Healing and the ‘Son of David’”; Chae, *Jesus as the Eschatological Davidic Shepherd*, 247–326; Matthias Konradt, *Israel, Church, and the Gentiles in the Gospel of Matthew*, ed. Simon J. Gathercole and Wayne Coppins, trans. Kathleen Ess, BMSEC (Waco, Texas: Baylor University Press, 2014), 32–64.

<sup>693</sup> Novaković, *Messiah, the Healer of the Sick*, 1.

<sup>694</sup> Novaković, 190.

<sup>695</sup> Novaković, 183–84. This is otherwise an excellent volume. I will to a high degree depend on Novkavic and Konradt in my discussion of Jesus as a healer in Matthew.

Similar conclusions (although with different approaches) are reached by Matthias Konradt, who argues that the Matthean use of “Son of David” in connection with healings “can be understood within the context of the reception of the Old Testament and Early Jewish expectations of salvation.”<sup>696</sup> And Warren Carter, who states: “In the context of the proclamations of 4:17 and 23b, Jesus' healings manifest God's life-giving empire or reign (cf. Isa 35:5-6; Matt 11:2-6).”<sup>697</sup> What Konradt calls “Old Testament and Early Jewish expectations of salvation” and Carter calls “God's life-giving empire or reign” can in light of the evidence presented in the first part of this thesis be more specifically called “new creation”.

The question with regard to the combination of “Son of David”, healing and kingdom is of course how the kingdom of the son of David, i.e. the messianic kingdom, and the kingdom of God relates to each other.

We will return to the distinction between the kingdoms. First it is significant that the Messianic kingdom as described in some pre-Christian Jewish sources includes healing (4 Ezra 7:123; 2 Bar 29:7; 73:2; 4Q521). At the same time, however, it is also true that the Messiah is never clearly described as a healer. This of course poses a problem for the evident expectation expressed to the son of David as a healer in Matthew. Konradt however argues:

[A]lthough it is true that there is no evidence of a healing messiah in the extant Early Jewish writings, the building blocks necessary for this concept are nevertheless present in some texts, where the elimination of illness, among other things, indicates the messianic time of salvation.<sup>698</sup>

This is also the case on a narrative level in the Gospel as Matthew. It is significant that the title is not used as a plea for healing from the beginning but only after Jesus has proclaimed the kingdom and performed numerous miracles. The use of the title then comes in response to the healings, which Jesus has already performed and the expectations of healing connected with the messianic kingdom. The crowds in Matthew then detect the presence of the king and the kingdom and react accordingly.

At the outset of the narrative it is declared that Jesus is God with us (Matt 1:23). As the narrative progresses it becomes clear that this is meant in a very concrete sense. John the Baptist is described as the one who is preparing the way of the Lord (3:3), which, coupled with John's description of

<sup>696</sup> Konradt, *Israel, Kirche und die Völker im Matthäusevangelium*, 41.

<sup>697</sup> Warren Carter, *Matthew and the Margins, a Socio-Political and Religious Reading* (Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), 213.

<sup>698</sup> Konradt, *Israel, Church, and the Gentiles in the Gospel of Matthew*, 43.

Jesus as the one who will bring the judgment of God, refers to the coming of God in Christ. Jesus is the lord of the sabbath (12:8). It is furthermore remarkable that in Matthew belief is exclusively in Jesus (18:6; 21:25. 32; 27:42) and not in the “good news” (cf. Mark 3:15). That Jesus is more than David is finally made explicit in 22:41-46 where Jesus, with reference to Psalm 110, points out that the Messiah is David's son and David's lord at the same time. “Jesus is indeed the Son of David, but he is also more.”<sup>699</sup>

In Matthew, it is then clear that Jesus as the “Son of David” is not simply a human king. This point is particularly evident in the miracles of Jesus where the healings of Jesus are done in his own power and not by external aid. This is underlined in the first two accounts of healing in Matthew 8:1-13. 4:24 has informed the reader that Jesus did heal many, but this is the first narration of specific persons being healed. In Matthew 8:1-13 there are two accounts in which people come to Jesus and ascribe authority over illness to him. In both instances Jesus confirms their assumption. First the leper says: “If *you* will, *you* can...” and Jesus replies “I will, be clean.”<sup>700</sup> After this the centurion expresses a belief that the mere word of Jesus will be able to heal his servant, and Jesus again confirms his trust.<sup>701</sup>

Perhaps this belief stems from the authority that Jesus has just shown in the Sermon on the Mount, which ends with a statement about Jesus' authoritative teaching (7:29). It is nevertheless clear that Jesus is presented as someone who possesses an extraordinary power. It is also remarkable that Matthew emphasizes that Jesus healed *every* disease and *every* sickness by stating it twice and including it in the summaries of Jesus' ministry (θεραπεύων πᾶσαν νόσον καὶ πᾶσαν μαλακίαν) (4:23; 9:35 cf. Mark 3:10 which has πολλοὺς γὰρ ἐθεράπευσεν). The extent of Jesus' healings is also repeatedly highlighted in the passages where numerous people are healed (8:16; 12:15; 14:14; 14:35-36; 15:29-31).

The power and extent of the healing shows that Jesus is not merely an earthly king. This is evident already from the beginning of the Gospel where Jesus is the son of God in a very real sense, conceived by the Holy Spirit, and becomes the son of David only by adoption (1:16. 18-25).<sup>702</sup> Jesus' divine identity and his earthly identity are thereby fused, though it is possible that his status

<sup>699</sup> Konradt, 30.

<sup>700</sup> Davies and Allison, *Matthew. Vol. II*, 12.

<sup>701</sup> Derrett suggests that use of the passive form of 'γίνομαι' combined with the power of the pure word of Jesus is an allusion to the creation account in Genesis 1 and portrays Jesus as an agent of God's creative power. “New Creation,” 605.

<sup>702</sup> Novaković, *Messiah, the Healer of the Sick*, 50. 63; Konradt, *Israel, Church, and the Gentiles in the Gospel of Matthew*, 27–28.

as the son of God has primacy as the overarching identity.<sup>703</sup> This, however, does not diminish the importance for Matthew that Jesus is the Son of David, the Messiah of Israel in fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies. It is true that the militaristic and political expectations connected with the Davidic Messiah concerning liberation from foreign rule and retribution against Israel's enemies are absent.<sup>704</sup> This should not be taken as a rejection of the Davidic Messiah but rather as a reinterpretation of the Old Testament traditions.

Having shown that there is an identification between the son of God, taken in a very real sense, and the son of David in Matthew, it may also be assumed that the messianic kingdom and the kingdom of God are also fused. The fusion of these also has its background in the Old Testament. Brian M. Nolan notes how the promise to David in 1 Chronicles suddenly changes from the kingdom of David to speak of my (God's) kingdom.<sup>705</sup> The conflation of the messianic kingdom and the kingdom of God may also be seen in the use of the shepherd imagery in the Gospel.

In Matthew Jesus is identified with the Davidic shepherd.<sup>706</sup> This is clear from Matt 2:6: "And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel." 9:36: "When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd." 25:32: "All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats." 26:31: "Then Jesus said to them, 'You will all become deserters because of me this night; for it is written, 'I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered'.'" The shepherd imagery is drawn from different parts of the Old Testament, the most important texts being Jer 23:1-4 and Ezek 34.<sup>707</sup> It is the Ezekiel text which is more relevant here.

In Ezekiel 34 it is first declared that God will be the shepherd of the people (34:11-16) but later in the same chapter it is David who will be the shepherd: "I will set up over them one shepherd, my servant David, and he shall feed them: he shall feed them and be their shepherd." (34:23) Ezekiel 34

<sup>703</sup> Konradt, *Israel, Church, and the Gentiles in the Gospel of Matthew*, 29.

<sup>704</sup> Konradt, 43. Pace Carter, *Matthew and the Margins, a Socio-Political and Religious Reading*; Warren Carter, "Jesus' Healing Stories: Imperial Critique and Eschatological Anticipations in Matthew's Gospel.," *Currents in Theology and Mission* 37, no. 6 (2010): 488-496. In general a socio-political reading must be considered to be secondary in Matthew. The liberation brought by the kingdom of heaven will indeed also be a liberation from the oppressive Roman rule, but nowhere in Matthew is the Roman empire identified as an enemy. The kingdom of Satan is rather identified as the enemy in Matthew (12:25-29).

<sup>705</sup> Brian M. Nolan, *The Royal Son of God - The Christology of Matthew 1-2 in the Setting of the Gospel*, OBO 23 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1979), 173.

<sup>706</sup> For an extensive treatment of this theme in Matthew see Chae, *Jesus as the Eschatological Davidic Shepherd*.

<sup>707</sup> Konradt, *Israel, Church, and the Gentiles in the Gospel of Matthew*, 36.

furthermore includes elements of healing that correspond well with Matthew's portrait of Jesus as the Davidic shepherd-king.<sup>708</sup>

Both 1 Chronicles 17 and Ezekiel 34 combine the Kingdom of God with the Davidic kingdom. The restoration and the perpetuity of the Davidic kingdom is secured through the rule of God, but the two kingdoms are not distinguished, becoming almost interchangeable as the texts move effortlessly from one to the other.

The close relationship between the Davidic kingdom and the Kingdom of God found in these texts show the simultaneous human and divine identity of Jesus in Matthew. The divine identity of Jesus is also a major point in the two passages where Jesus is shown to have authority over the waves on the lake (8:23-27; 14:22-33). These passages are crucial for the understanding of the divine identity of Jesus and will be discussed separately below. The general conclusion here is nevertheless that Jesus, the son of David, does the actions that were reserved for God in the expectations of the messianic kingdom in early Judaism.

Returning to Ezekiel 34 a number of interpreters have found that the Davidic shepherd-king presented in that chapter provides a probable background for a healing Son of David in Matthew.<sup>709</sup>

This clearly connects the healing ministry with the Kingdom, since Ezekiel envisions that God will either come to his people and rule through his appointed shepherd or himself shepherd the people. This vision furthermore includes an in-gathering of the exiles and a restoration of the land which is described in Edenic imagery with a renewal of the land and the people. The vision culminates in Ezekiel 37 with the revivification of the dead bones. Altogether the healings are then part of a restoration vision which involves new creation.

As previously argued the kingdom is closely connected to creation and new creation. By placing the healings and exorcisms of Jesus within this context the miracles are part of the general restoration brought by the kingdom. As the kingdom advances it brings healing and defeats evil as part of the renewal of all creation.

In the following we will take a closer look at how Matthew's quotes from Isaiah in the context of healing supports this comprehensive vision of salvation found in Matthew.

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<sup>708</sup> Chae, *Jesus as the Eschatological Davidic Shepherd*; Baxter, "Healing and the" Son of David"; Konradt, *Israel, Church, and the Gentiles in the Gospel of Matthew*, 37–38.

<sup>709</sup> Novaković, *Messiah, the Healer of the Sick*, 131–32; Chae, *Jesus as the Eschatological Davidic Shepherd*; Baxter, "Healing and the" Son of David"; Konradt, *Israel, Church, and the Gentiles in the Gospel of Matthew*, 18–49.



## 10.2 Healing and the hope for Salvation in Isaiah

In order to find out what significance the healings have for Matthew it makes sense to look at the scriptural background he himself provides. The scriptural background provided by Matthew for the healings includes texts from Isaiah. This background is particularly highlighted through direct quotes. He quotes Isa 53:4 in Matthew 8:17, alludes to Isa 26:19; 29:18; 35:5-6; 42:7 and 61:1 in Matt 11:2-6 and quotes Isa 42:1-4 in Matt 12:18-21, a text which is set between a healing and an exorcism.

A number of these texts describe material transformation.<sup>710</sup> Particularly important are the allusions made to Isaiah in Jesus' answer to John the Baptist in Matt 11:2-6. Here Jesus identifies his own miracles with the promises of eschatological healing made in Isaiah. In Isa 26:19 we find a description of the resurrection of the dead set in the context of eschatological redemption and judgment. Isa 29:18 tells of the opening of the eyes of the blind in the context of a promise for fertility (Isa 29:17) and the eradication of evil (Isa 29:20). Isa 35 as a whole is a description of eschatological redemption including a blooming desert. In Isa 42:7 it is said about the Lord's servant that he will open the eyes of the blind. The Isaianic background indicates that the deeds of the Christ listed in Matt 11:2-6 should be seen as part of new creation.<sup>711</sup>

The quotation of Isa 53:4 in Matt 8:17 is, however, less obviously connected to new creation. The common denominator is the link to the servant songs. The allusion to Isa 42:7 in Matt 11 and in particular the long quotation in Matt 12 suggests that Matthew identified Jesus' healing ministry with Isaiah's servant of the Lord.

One of the ways the passages about the Lord's servant in Isaiah were interpreted in early Judaism was messianic. While servant of God was applied to a number of particular figures in the Old Testament and early Judaism, it is particularly important to notice that in the Old Testament David is called the servant of God in relation to both the historic king and the coming Davidic king (Ezek 34:23). In Isa 53:4 a link to Ezek 34 and the Davidic Shepherd may be detected in the servant.

In this way it may be said that in Isa 53:4a Matthew found a text that presented a healing Messiah.<sup>712</sup> It would be wrong to simply see Isa 53:4 as a proof-text completely detached from its context in Isaiah. While it is true that Jesus in the immediate context is not presented as the

<sup>710</sup> Carter, "Jesus' Healing Stories," 489.

<sup>711</sup> So also Michael Becker, *Wunder und Wundertäter im früh rabbinischen Judentum: Studien zum Phänomen und seiner Überlieferung im Horizont von Magie und Dämonismus*, WUNT II 144 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2002), 441–42; Grindheim, *God's Equal*, 49.

<sup>712</sup> Novaković, *Messiah, the Healer of the Sick*, 130–32.

suffering servant Matthew's use of the verse is still in accord with the larger redemptive vision found in Isaiah. Furthermore it may also be that Matthew wants his reader to detect an anticipation of the cross here. Isa 52-53 is possibly alluded to elsewhere with reference to the cross and atonement (20:28;<sup>713</sup> 26:28;<sup>714</sup> 27:12; 27:57). At the same time it is important to maintain that that does not mean that the healings are just signs pointing to a deeper spiritual reality. Matthew's translation of Isa 53:4 – as opposed to the more spiritualized version in the LXX – makes it clear that physical restoration is included in the salvation he brings.

The healings in Matthew are a crucial part of the comprehensiveness of salvation that is presented in Matthew. In Matthew 1:21 it is stated in programmatic fashion: “She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.” Apart from 1:21 *σῶζω* is used fourteen times in Matthew. Nine times it refers to salvation from physical peril or danger (8:24; 9:21.bis 22; 14:30; 27:40.bis 42.47). Five times it is used about future eschatological salvation (10:22; 16:25; 19:25; 24:13.22). As the story moves on one of the first things Jesus does is to heal every disease and every sickness among the people (4:23). Here the mentioning of *the people* may bring the reader back to 1:21 and *his people*. All of this suggests “that Jesus' healing ministry is viewed by Matthew as saving his people from their sins.”<sup>715</sup>

In Matt 8-9 spiritual and physical restoration are carefully juxtaposed. The two aspects clearly converge in healing/forgiveness of the paralytic (9:2-8). Here there is a clear correlation between forgiveness of sins and healing in which one seems to effect the other. The healing is an indication that the man has in fact been forgiven. Matthias Konradt asks whether the scenario in 9:2-8 should be regarded as having paradigmatic significance. In the end he concludes: “For Matthew, the healing of illnesses also means the removal of the effects of sin.”<sup>716</sup>

In the following text in Matthew 9 the calling of Matthew and Jesus' table-fellowship with sinners is found (9:9-13). Here Jesus characterizes his role among sinners as a physician among sick people: “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick.” (9:12b) This passage speaks of healing in a more spiritual sense. This juxtaposition indicates the holistic salvation that is presented in Matthew. Salvation is not only for the soul but also has physical and social dimensions.

<sup>713</sup> For this interpretation see Gundry, *Matthew*, 404; Davies and Allison, *Matthew. Vol. III*, 95 With further more places where Isa 52-53 is used in Matthew; Hagner, *Matthew 14-28*, 582; France, *Matthew*, 761–62. Against this view is Luz, *Matthew 8-20, A Commentary*, 546.

<sup>714</sup> Konradt, *Israel, Church, and the Gentiles in the Gospel of Matthew*, PAGE.

<sup>715</sup> Novaković, *Messiah, the Healer of the Sick*, 73.

<sup>716</sup> Konradt, *Israel, Church, and the Gentiles in the Gospel of Matthew*, 48.

It is salvation of the entire creation. This is in accord with the overall message of Isaiah 40-55, which, as we have seen, may be called creative redemption with the coming of the rule of God.<sup>717</sup>

The second quote from Isaiah in Matthew in connection with healing and exorcisms is the lengthy quotation of Isa 42:1-4 in Matt 12:18-21. This quote mainly describes the meekness of Jesus in terms of the servant, but the quote is nevertheless set in a context of healing and exorcisms. In fact, it is the many healings he performs that prompt Jesus to tell the people to hide his identity (12:15-16).

The key term in the quotation is κρῖσις (12:18b.20b). The servant will proclaim justice to the nations and establish justice on earth. And this justice that the servant will establish is a good thing for the gentiles. It is portrayed as a justice of liberation. The servant is then acting as a king, since he has regal functions of liberating, ruling and judging. According to Nolan a reference to David as the servant may also be included here.<sup>718</sup>

Again the healings are connected to the coming of the rule of God effected on earth through his servant, the Messiah.<sup>719</sup> In the context of healing justice means liberation from sickness and the right ordering of creation. Justice of course also means judgment of the wicked. This element is primarily a future event in Matthew. The judgment and the defeat of the wicked at present is restricted to Satan and the demons. We will take a closer look at that theme in the next section.

### 10.3 Exorcisms – Defeating Evil

The defeat of evil as an external power that stands against the purposes of God is prominent in Matthew. Jesus' opponent is the Devil (4:1; 13:39; 25:41), also called Beelzebub (10:25; 12:24, 27), Satan (4:10; 12:26), the prince of demons (9:34) or the evil one (6:13; 13:19). That the Devil is offering Jesus the kingdoms of the world could mean that the Devil is understood to be the ruler of the kingdoms of the world (4:11 cf. John 12:31; 16:11).<sup>720</sup> That the Devil has extensive power over humans is clear from the parable of the wheat and the weeds in which the Devil is singled out as the enemy of God and humanity is portrayed as being divided between God and the Devil (Matt 13:24-30.36-43).

<sup>717</sup> See chapter 2.5.4

<sup>718</sup> Nolan, *The Royal Son of God - The Christology of Matthew 1-2 in the Setting of the Gospel*, 171.

<sup>719</sup> That the servant of Isa 42 was understood to be a Messianic figure in some parts of Judaism is evident from 1 Enoch in which a figure called “the elect one” or “the chosen one” appears. This title is recognized to be a reference to Isa 42:1. Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch 2*, 116–17.

<sup>720</sup> Loren T. Stuckenbruck, “Satan and Demons,” in *Jesus among Friends and Enemies*, ed. Chris Keith and Larry W. Hurtado (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2011), 181.

There is a kingdom of Satan (Matt 12:25-26) that is being defeated in the ministry of Jesus.<sup>721</sup> The exorcisms are described by Jesus as the binding of Satan and the plundering of his property (12:29). The exorcisms are explicitly associated with the coming of the kingdom in Matt 12:28: “

The exorcisms are understood as anticipations of the final judgment where evil will be finally eradicated. This is clear from 8:29: “Suddenly they shouted, 'What have you to do with us, Son of God? Have you come here to torment us before the time?’” This utterance by the demons reveals that at a specific time in the future the demons shall be punished. What is significant, however, is that Jesus is identified as the one who will exercise the punishment, and his presence signals the beginning of the end for the demons. This is also the first specific account of an exorcism in Matthew and thus sets the stage for the subsequent accounts. The exorcisms are then proleptic manifestations of the final defeat of evil at the end of the age (25:41).

In apocalyptic literature the final defeat of evil is connected with new creation. 1 Enoch 10 describes a day of judgment when the watchers will be bound forever and their children (demons) will be destroyed (10: 13-15). After this the earth will be cleansed from evil and renewed (10:17-11:2). In Jubilees the final defeat of the devil is part of the vision of new creation: “And there will be no Satan and no evil (one) who will destroy,” (23:29c also 50:5b). A similar scenario is also found in the book of Revelation (Rev 20:7-10; 21:1-4).

In Matthew, then, Jesus is defeating evil through the exorcisms, and it is clear that one day evil will be completely defeated and eradicated from earth as part of a restored creation. In this way healings and exorcisms cohere in the framework of new creation.

## 10.4 Nature Miracles – Lord of Creation

In this context the nature miracles are limited to the two passages in which Jesus is shown to have command over the waves on the lake (8:23-27; 14:22-33). The coin in the mouth of the fish (17:24-27) and the cursing of the fig tree (21:18-22) are both symbolic events, and although they evidence Jesus' power over nature, the main point of these events is not Jesus' power over nature but the deeper symbolic meaning of the events.

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<sup>721</sup> Evans, “Inaugurating the Kingdom of God and Defeating the Kingdom of Satan,” 67.

In the two passages in which Jesus calms a storm, on the other hand, the power and identity of Jesus are major points.<sup>722</sup> The question posed by the first pericope is: “What sort of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him?” (Matt 8:27b) The answer to that question is found in the second stilling-of-the-storm passage: “Truly you are the Son of God.” (14:33). The main point of the passages is then Christological.<sup>723</sup> Who is this man?

Since Jesus is portrayed as someone who has authority over the forces of nature in Matt 8, the obvious inference is that Jesus is acting as God in these passages.<sup>724</sup> The pericope enforces the general point of the miracles in Matthew 8, which is Christological in its focus on Jesus' divine authority and the presence of the kingdom in the works of Jesus.

In the Old Testament God's rule over nature is prominent in the Psalms, and Jesus' action here should be understood against that background (Ps 74:13-14; 89:10-12; 107:23-30).<sup>725</sup> In Psalm 89 God's kingship over creation (89:9-18) is the foundation for the kingship of the Davidic king (89:19-37). In Matthew the son of David is also the one who rules over the waves of the sea. Davies and Allison comment: “The implicit Christology is this. The cosmic forces of evil that threaten the order of creation are brought under the control of one who has authority over them, and who, in the latter days, exercises the sovereign power of God.”<sup>726</sup>

The same may be said about the story of Jesus walking on the water in Matt 14:22-33. Although Jesus is not explicitly said to calm the storm, walking on water shows his control over the sea.<sup>727</sup> The ἐγώ εἰμι at the center of the passage makes the identification between Yahweh and Jesus even clearer than it is in Matt 8:23-27.<sup>728</sup> Many interpreters furthermore notice that the words used to describe Jesus walking on the water resemble Job 9:8 LXX.<sup>729</sup>

Matt 14:25: περιπατῶν ἐπὶ τὴν θάλασσαν

<sup>722</sup> Another prominent theme is that of discipleship and faith. (so famously Gunther Bornkamm, “The Stilling of the Storm in Matthew,” in *Tradition and Interpretation in Matthew*, by Gunther Bornkamm, Gerhard Barth, and Heinz Joachim Held, trans. Percy Scott (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1963), 52–57.) The treatment here will focus on the relevant points with regard to new creation.

<sup>723</sup> France, *Matthew*, 334.

<sup>724</sup> Davies and Allison, *Matthew. Vol. II*, 75; Hagner, *Matthew 14-28*, 222; Nolland, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 372; France, *Matthew*, 334; Andries G. Van Aarde, “Matthew's Intertexts and the Presentation of Jesus as Healer-Messiah,” in *Biblical Interpretation in Early Christian Gospels, Volume 2: The Gospel of Matthew*, ed. Thomas Hatina, LNTS 310 (London: T&T Clark, 2008), 180; Angel, “Crucifixus Vincens.”

<sup>725</sup> Van Aarde, “Matthew's Intertexts and the Presentation of Jesus as Healer-Messiah,” 180.

<sup>726</sup> Davies and Allison, *Matthew. Vol. II*, 75.

<sup>727</sup> For Greco-Roman parallels and the uniqueness of Jesus' walking on water see Brian D. McPhee, “Walk, Don't Run: Jesus's Water Walking Is Unparalleled in Greco-Roman Mythology,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 135, no. 4 (2016): 763–77.

<sup>728</sup> For ἐγώ εἰμι as revelatory see Davies and Allison, *Matthew. Vol. II*, 505; Angel, “Crucifixus Vincens,” 306.

<sup>729</sup> Davies and Allison, *Matthew. Vol. II*, 503; Angel, “Crucifixus Vincens.”

Matt 14:26: ἐπὶ τῆς θαλάσσης περιπατοῦντα

Job 9:8: περιπατῶν ὡς ἐπ' ἐδάφους ἐπὶ θαλάσσης

The implication is again that Jesus is doing what only God can do. It is also significant that different words are used to describe Peter walking on the water: Πέτρος περιεπάτησεν ἐπὶ τὰ ὕδατα (14:29). This difference shows that what Peter is doing is not considered divine.<sup>730</sup>

In these two episodes it then becomes clear that Jesus is identified with the creator who can command the forces of nature.

### 10.5 Food Miracles – Eschatological Abundance

The two accounts in Matthew of Jesus miraculously providing food to a multitude may also fruitfully be understood in terms of new creation. In the survey it was evident that fertility and nutritional abundance were stock features in the expectation of new creation (ref.)

In the context of the Gospel itself this expectation is mainly linked to the expectation of an eschatological banquet (Matt 8:11-12; 26:29 cf. Isa 25:6), sometimes further defined as a wedding feast (Matt 9:14-17; 22:1-14; Matt 25:1-13). The eschatological banquet is only found once in the Old Testament, and clear occurrences are also sparse in early Jewish literature. According to Eric J. Gilchrest the only clear occurrence outside the Old Testament is 1QSa II, 11-22 and less explicitly in 2 Bar 29:1-11 and 1 En 62:12-14.<sup>731</sup> In Matthew the motif is nevertheless widely present. Despite obvious similarities there are also clear differences between the banquets found in the NT and the ones found in the Old Testament and other early Jewish literature. For example the scenario in Isaiah 25 is an eschatological banquet in which victory after combat is celebrated, whereas the Gospels present it as a wedding banquet (Matt 9:14:15; 22:1-14). Peter-Ben Smit has argued that the motif can ultimately be traced back to the ministry of the historical Jesus in light of which various traditions of food and fellowship were re-interpreted and transformed.<sup>732</sup>

The expectation of the eschatological banquet found in Matthew presents a vision of the coming age that includes food and thus a material expectation. At the same time it is also clear that the celebration has already begun because of the presence of the bridegroom (9:14-17). The meals of Jesus found in Matthew should then be understood as proleptic experiences of the future banquet

<sup>730</sup> Angel, "Crucifixus Vincens," 308.

<sup>731</sup> Eric J. Gilchrest, *Revelation 21-22 in Light of Jewish and Greco-Roman Utopianism*, BIS 118 (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2013), 153.

<sup>732</sup> P. B. A. Smit, *Fellowship and Food in the Kingdom: Eschatological Meals and Scenes of Utopian Abundance in the New Testament*, WUNT II 234 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008), 381.

(Isa 25:6). In the final meal of Jesus with his disciples the future orientation of the meal is expressed: "I tell you, I will never again drink of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom." (26:29).<sup>733</sup>

The reference to new wine evokes the motif of new creation. In Isaiah 65:21b the planting of vineyards and enjoyment of the fruit is part of the new heavens and new earth. Wine and vineyards are also found in descriptions of new creation in 1 Enoch 10:19: "They will plant wines on it, and every vine that will be planted on it will yield a thousand jugs of wine." The abundance of wine is increased in 2 Baruch 29:5: "And on one vine will be a thousand branches, and one branch will produce a thousand clusters, and one cluster will produce a thousand grapes, and one grape will produce one core of wine."<sup>734</sup> The abundance of wine is a significant part of the overall expectation of fruitfulness, and it is therefore not only wine but a general expectation of nutritional abundance that is in view (Jer 31:12; Joel 3:18; Amos 9:13; 1 Enoch 10:19-11:1; 2 Baruch 29:4-8; 4Q88 IX 5b-14).

In this regard the food-miracles are particularly instructive as they portray eschatological abundance. The two accounts are very similar. Both are prefaced by healing, and both are set in a desolate place where a small amount of food is multiplied so that there is more than enough for all to be satisfied. The miraculous feedings are evidence of the presence of the kingdom in Jesus. They proleptically offer the enjoyment of the new creation in the coming age and its attendant nutritional abundance.<sup>735</sup>

## 10.6 Summary

In this section I have shown that the miracles of Jesus are all consonant with the motif of new creation.

I have shown that the miracles should be understood primarily within the context of the coming kingdom. As we have seen, however, the kingdom corresponds with creation to such a degree that one can speak of a new creational kingdom.

As the son of God and the Son of David Jesus is presented as the promised king who through the miracles manifests the rule of God. This rule includes healing, exorcisms, rule over nature and abundance of food, all of which can be connected to the hope of new creation.

<sup>733</sup> Davies and Allison, *Matthew. Vol. III*, 476.

<sup>734</sup> Gilchrist, *Revelation 21-22 in Light of Jewish and Greco-Roman Utopianism*, 148.

<sup>735</sup> Similarly Peter-Ben Smit: "The meal thus proleptically offers the enjoyment of utopian conditions, characterizing Jesus as the one who makes them possible. *Fellowship and Food in the Kingdom*, 228.

Through the quotations and allusions to Isaiah in the context of healing, Matthew furthermore draws attention to the comprehensive vision of salvation, which is included in his portrait of Jesus as savior. Jesus has come to save his people from sin, and this salvation also entails the removal of the effects of sin.



## 11 Law, New Covenant and Transformation of the Heart in Matthew

The restoration brought by the new creational kingdom in Matthew does not only concern physical restoration (as we saw in the previous chapter), but also moral restoration, which is the focus of this section.

In this section I argue that Jesus' teaching on the law and ethics in Matthew can fruitfully be understood in light of the motif of restored creation.<sup>736</sup> The teaching on the law furthermore connects with the promise of a new covenant and the transformation of the heart found in the Old Testament (Deut 30:6; Ps 51:10; Ezek 11:19; 36:26; Jer 24:7; 31:31-34) and in early Jewish literature (Jub. 1:22-29; 4 Ezra 6:26-28; Apoc. Mos. 13:1-5; 1QS IV 18-25). This is a theme that concerns moral and anthropological restoration as a part of the motif of new creation.

In Matthew two main metaphors are used in the description of the moral state of humans; the heart and the tree. The use of these metaphors in Matthew will be examined as well as the expectation of final eschatological transformation of the righteous as part of the new creation motif.

### 11.1 Moral Restoration: National or Universal?

In some contexts, the expectation of moral restoration specifically concerns a national restoration, since the Law is perceived as a boundary marker between Jews and Gentiles. This perspective is not present in Matthew.<sup>737</sup> Although Jesus teaches his disciples to distinguish themselves from the gentiles, the main comparison with regard to law and ethics are the Jewish leaders.

In other contexts, the expectation of moral restoration has a universal perspective, since the teaching of the LORD will extend throughout all creation (Isa 2:3; Isa 11:9; Micah 4:2). This perspective may well be present in Matthew (Matt 28:16-20), where all peoples are to be taught to keep the commandments of Jesus. I would now like to take a closer look at the ethical commandments of Jesus in light of the eschatological expectations in Matthew's cultural encyclopedia.

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<sup>736</sup> This has recently been argued by Grant Macaskill and the treatment here will follow his work closely while expanding and reinforcing the general argument through additional observations and aspects. Macaskill, *Revealed Wisdom and Inaugurated Eschatology in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity*, 181–95.

<sup>737</sup> To be sure, the distinction between Jews and gentiles is present in Matthew and the mission of Jesus is initially to the people of Israel (15:24). The point is that the distinction is not made on the basis of law-observance as a national marker.

## 11.2 The Sermon on the Mount

The sermon on the mount (Matt 5-7) is the main source for Jesus' commandments in Matthew. It is perhaps also the most famous part of Matthew's Gospel. Reactions to the sermon range from fascination and praise to outright rejection in the face of its stern demands.

The teaching of Jesus stands out as highly idealistic, and this is exactly the point that will be argued here. The teaching found here describes an ideal humanity, and it reaches backward to Eden as well as pointing forward to the consummation of the Kingdom in the new creation. In the new creation the commandments will logically become obsolete. As with all rules, if everyone always followed them they would become superfluous.

I focus mainly on the first part of the sermon (5:1-48) concerning Jesus' attitude towards the Torah.

The sermon, however, stands out as a separate unit in Matthew, with 5:1 and 8:1 corresponding to each other as Jesus respectively ascends the mountain and begins to speak in 5:1 and ends his speech and descends the mountain in 8:1.<sup>738</sup>

### 11.2.1 The Setting of the Sermon

It is worth considering briefly whether the location for the sermon is coincidental. The setting on the mountain may bring to mind the giving of the law to Israel on mount Sinai (Exod 17:6).<sup>739</sup> There is a possible allusion to the people of Israel at Mount Sinai both with regard to God speaking directly to the people from the mountain and subsequently Moses, who receives the Law on the mountain.<sup>740</sup> Jesus is then presented as a new Moses.

Other less probable allusions may be to Isa 2:3 (cf. Mic 4:2): "Many peoples shall come and say, 'Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths.' For out of Zion shall go forth instruction, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem".

The scenario in the two texts describes Zion and Jerusalem as the place of divine instruction. Since the sermon is set in Galilee, it is obviously not on Zion in any concrete sense. The teaching on the mountain may nevertheless invoke both Sinai and Zion as it involves similar features. The allusion

<sup>738</sup> Dale C. Allison, "The Structure of the Sermon on the Mount," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 106, no. 3 (1987): 429; Jack Dean Kingsbury, "The Place, Structure, and Meaning of the Sermon on the Mount within Matthew," *Interpretation* 41, no. 2 (April 1987): 136.

<sup>739</sup> I do not think there is proper basis for an elaborate temple theory, although there may be a motif of a sacred mountain. (pace John W. Welch, John W. Welch, *The Sermon on the Mount in the Light of the Temple*, SOTSMS (Farnham; Burlington: Ashgate, 2009).).

<sup>740</sup> This position has been argued extensively by Allison, *The New Moses*.

to Isa 2:3 and Micah 4:2 is backed up by the use of Zion imagery in Matt 5:13. Here the city set upon a hill that cannot be hid is probably a reference to Jerusalem.<sup>741</sup>

Overall it is of major importance to recognize the eschatological context of the Sermon on the Mount. Although Zion may not be invoked by the mountain setting, the expectation of an eschatological divine instruction found in the texts may well be in the background.

The sermon has an eschatological framework. The eschatological outlook of the sermon is already evident in the beatitudes, in which eschatological promises are given to a designated group, and at the end of the sermon where we find eschatological warnings. Furthermore the Lord's prayer may be considered the structural center of the sermon, as it expresses<sup>742</sup> the coming of God's kingdom and the effectuation of the rule of God on earth (6:9-10).

We will now turn to the beatitudes and the eschatological blessings that are found there.

### **11.2.3 The Beatitudes as eschatological blessings<sup>743</sup> and the task of the disciples in the world - Matt 5:3-5:16**

The beatitudes open the Sermon on the Mount. There are nine beatitudes in total, which are best understood as eschatological blessings.<sup>744</sup> Guelich points out that there are clear allusions to Isa 61 in Matt 5:3.4.5.6.10. The Isaiah passage presents eschatological blessings about liberation to captives: "Therefore, the Beatitudes are but an expression of the fulfillment of the Isaiah 61, the Old Testament promise of the Heilszeit, in the person and proclamation of Jesus."<sup>745</sup>

The proclamation of the Kingdom of Heaven is the major framework for everything that Jesus says and does (see previous chapter). This is pointed out by the summary of the preaching of Jesus in 4:17 and 4:23. This is also evident in the beatitudes where the promise of the Kingdom is the overarching promise. In the beatitudes the present promise of the kingdom in 5:3 and 5:10 frames the eight main beatitudes, with 5:11-12 best seen as an explanation or elaboration of the eight

<sup>741</sup> William J. Dumbrell, "The Logic of the Role of the Law in Matthew V 1-20," *Novum Testamentum* 23, no. 1 (1981): 14.

<sup>742</sup> See the structures proposed by Allison, "The Structure of the Sermon on the Mount," 437–38; and Luz, *Matthew 1-7, A Commentary*, 172.

<sup>743</sup> There has been discussion on whether the beatitudes are to be understood as demands or promises. Robert A. Guelich, "The Matthean Beatitudes: "Entrance-Requirements" or Eschatological Blessings?," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 95, no. 3 (1976): 415–434; and Davies and Allison, *Matthew. Vol. I*, 420–70, for arguments that they should be understood as promises. See 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)*, Hermeneia 54 (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995) for arguments that they should be understood as requirements.

<sup>744</sup> Davies and Allison, *Matthew. Vol. I*, 466.

<sup>745</sup> Guelich, "The Matthean Beatitudes," 433.

beatitude.<sup>746</sup> The sermon is thus firmly connected to the central proclamation of the coming kingdom in Matthew.

The sermon is spoken to those who already presently possess the kingdom. The present possession of the kingdom is clear from the use of the present tense in 5:3 and 5:10. Each of the other beatitudes contains a promise describing the content of the Kingdom. Because entering the Kingdom is equivalent to salvation (19:23-25), the beatitudes provide a description of the recipients of salvation as well as the content of salvation. The people that are portrayed will be comforted (5:4), on a (new) earth (5:5) where justice (5:6) and mercy (5:7) reign, and they will be in the presence of God (5:8) as his children (5:9).

All of these promises point back to the glorious promises of restoration in the Old Testament and resonate with the eschatological expectations in contemporary Judaism.<sup>747</sup> As already touched upon, commentators have specifically detected a reference to Isaiah 61 in the beatitudes. The promises may even evoke the promise of a new heaven and new earth of Isaiah 65-66.<sup>748</sup>

The promise of inheriting the earth implies a new earth and thus new creation.<sup>749</sup> Scholars commonly detect a parallel with Ps 37:11 (Ps 36:11 LXX) here.<sup>750</sup> This is significant in light of the peshar on Psalm 37 in the DSS (4Q171). 4Q171 employs an Urzeit-Endzeit correlation in the context of possessing the land by describing the land as the inheritance of Adam. In the case of Matthew, however, the inheritance is the earth not just the land. Luz writes:

It is the earth, not only the land of Israel, that belongs to those who are kind, for the traditional promise of land had long since been transposed into the cosmic realm. That does not include the other-worldly beyond, however, for the promise of the earth makes clear that the kingdom of heaven includes a new this-worldly earth.<sup>751</sup>

For the cosmic expansion of the promise of the land Luz refers to Isa 60:21 and Jub 22:14; 32:19.<sup>752</sup> Isa 60:21 stands at the end of a series of glorious promises for Zion, which is described as the capital of the world. All the peoples of the world will bring their riches to Zion (60:5-13). Cosmic changes are also described, since the glory of the Lord will be the eternal light (60:19-20). This text

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<sup>746</sup> Gundry, *Matthew*, 73.

<sup>747</sup> See previous chapters

<sup>748</sup> Russell, *The "New Heavens and New Earth,"* 146.

<sup>749</sup> Davies and Allison, *Matthew. Vol. I*, 450.

<sup>750</sup> Davies and Allison, 448–49; Hagner, *Matthew 1-13*, 92; Nolland, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 201; Gibbs, *Matthew 1:1–11:1*, 236; Luz, *Matthew 1-7, A Commentary*, 194.

<sup>751</sup> Luz, *Matthew 1-7, A Commentary*, 195.

<sup>752</sup> For an overview of the cosmic expansion of the land promises in the Old Testament and in ancient Judaism see Beale, *New Testament Biblical Theology, A*, 750–56.

is taken as a description of the world to come both in Judaism (*m. Sanh.* 10:1)<sup>753</sup> and early Christianity (Rev 22:5). Another text that uses the phrase 'inherit the earth' is found in 1 Enoch 5:7-10. That text may also be cosmic in its vision, and it includes a scenario of final judgment of the wicked and eternal bliss for the righteous in language reminiscent of Isa 65:17-25.<sup>754</sup>

In the context of the Sermon on the Mount that emphasizes righteousness (5:6; 5:10; 5:20; 6:1; 6:33) and wisdom (7:24), it must also be noted that Psalm 37 (Ps 37:31) and 1 Enoch (1 En. 5:8) also emphasize the wisdom of the righteous.<sup>755</sup> In light of these parallels with Psalm 37, Isa 60-61 and their reception in Judaism (1 Enoch 5:7-10; 4Q171; *m. Sanh.* 10:1), the beatitudes may well be understood as a promise of the kingdom (5:3; 5:10) on a restored earth (5:5).

The recipients of these promises are of course to be understood as the people of God, because they are given the promises which were first given to the people of God in the Old Testament. They are now described as the covenant community, a point underlined in 5:13-16. Here the two images of salt and light describe the disciples' function in the world as the people of God.

I will not go into an elaborate discussion of the meaning of salt in 5:13, which has generated several suggestions.<sup>756</sup> Instead I will simply follow Don Garlington here, who, on the background of Biblical and post-biblical data in which salt is used in connection with covenant, convincingly argues that "salt is a covenantal concept." (Lev 2:13; Num 18:19; Ezek 34:24; 2 Chron 13:5; Jub 21:11; 11Q20 IV 24 passim)<sup>757</sup>

In line with this the imagery of the light of the world and the city on a hill in 5:14 is possibly meant to evoke Zion or Jerusalem (cf. Isa 60:1-3; Tob 13:9-11).<sup>758</sup> The scenario in both Isaiah 60 and Tobit 13 is that of Zion as a light that all nations seek. This is the role now given to the disciples, who are to reflect the light of God's teaching and salvation to the world (5:16 cf. Isa 51:4-5 LXX). Fletcher-

<sup>753</sup> "All Israelites have a share in the world to come, for it is written, Thy people also shall be righteous, they shall inherit the land forever; the branch of my planting, the work of my hands that I may be glorified." (*m. Sanh.* 10:1) Quoted in Beale, 757.

<sup>754</sup> Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch 1*, 162.

<sup>755</sup> According to Grant Macaskill Matthew shares the eschatological expectation of 1 Enoch and 4QInstruction in which the eschatological period is inaugurated by a revelation of wisdom to the elect. *Revealed Wisdom and Inaugurated Eschatology in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity*, 181.

<sup>756</sup> Davies and Allison list eleven different suggestions *Matthew. Vol. I*, 98.

<sup>757</sup> Garlington, "'The Salt of the Earth' in Covenantal Perspective," 716; See also Dumbrell, "The Logic of the Role of the Law in Matthew V 1-20," 12; and James E. Latham, *The Religious Symbolism of Salt*, *Theologie Historique* 64 (Paris: Editions Beauchesne, 1982), 206.

<sup>758</sup> K. M. Campbell, "The New Jerusalem in Matthew 5.14," *Scottish Journal of Theology* 31, no. 4 (August 1978): 336-37 Campbell cites von Rad, Jeremias, Trilling and Grundmann; Dumbrell, "The Logic of the Role of the Law in Matthew V 1-20"; Fletcher-Louis, "The Destruction of the Temple and the Relativization of the Old Covenant"; Hagner, *Matthew 1-13*, 100.

Louis furthermore sees an *inclusio* with the parable of the two houses (Matt 7:24-27) at the end of the sermon. He argues that the house built upon the rock is meant to evoke the temple.<sup>759</sup>

In light of what was argued regarding Jesus and the disciples as the eschatological temple in Matthew earlier, the imagery is certainly probable here. As the new temple, the disciples are the nucleus of new creation. In sum Matt 5:3-16 gives a presentation of the disciples as those who now possess the promises of the kingdom (5:3-10). Their task in the present as followers of Jesus is to be present in the world as the new covenant community and the new Jerusalem. This conduct is exemplified in Jesus' teaching in the main body of the sermon (5:21-7:12), of which 5:21-48 will be our focus.

The body of the sermon is prefaced by four significant verses that set the stage by further underlining the eschatological setting of the teaching of Jesus.

#### **11.2.4 Jesus and the Law and the Prophets – Matt 5:17-20**

Matt 5:17 is a Christological statement with the word ἦλθον (“I have come”). It is about what Jesus has come to do and is thereby a programmatic statement concerning the mission of Jesus (cf. 9:13; 10:34-35).<sup>760</sup> According to Meier ἦλθον has eschatological connotations.<sup>761</sup> The word exhibits an understanding of Jesus as someone who has come into the world with a purpose and elsewhere he is described as the coming one (Matt 11:3; 21:9) similar to an eschatological figure like Elijah (Matt 17:10).

The key word here is, however, πληρῶσαι (to fulfill), which is best understood in terms of eschatological fulfillment. The verb πληρόω is found seventeen times in Matthew, thirteen of which are in the context of fulfillment of prophecy. This is also the most natural way to understand the word, as Jesus claims to be the culmination of the history of Israel and the fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies.<sup>762</sup>

<sup>759</sup> Fletcher-Louis, “The Destruction of the Temple and the Relativization of the Old Covenant,” 168–70; Barber, “Jesus as the Davidic Temple Builder and Peter’s Priestly Role in Matthew 16,” 942.

<sup>760</sup> Luz, *Matthew 1-7, A Commentary*, 217; Élian Cuvillier, “Torah Observance and Radicalization in the First Gospel. Matthew and First-Century Judaism: A Contribution to the Debate,” *New Testament Studies* 55, no. 02 (2009): 148.

<sup>761</sup> Meier, *Law and History*, 66.

<sup>762</sup> Meier, 82; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*. Vol. I, 486; Roland Deines, *Die Gerechtigkeit Der Tora Im Reich Des Messias: Mt 5, 13-20 Als Schlüsseltext Der Matthäischen Theologie*, WUNT 177 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004), 74–75.

This fulfillment has consequences for the permanency of the Scriptures (5:18). Both of the temporal limitations found here should be interpreted in light of the eschatological character of Jesus' death and resurrection. As argued earlier the death of Jesus in Matthew is presented in terms of the passing of heaven and earth.<sup>763</sup>

This has consequences for the role of the Torah and how the required righteousness relates to the Torah. In the time of eschatological fulfillment Jesus requires that even the smallest commandments are kept (5:19). Unless one is prepared to make a significant break in the text, the commandments here refer to Old Testament commandments. This could on its own be understood as an indication of strict Torah observance, but in the context of the eschatological fulfillment proclaimed by Jesus, the Torah only maintains its validity in light of that fulfillment. The claim in 5:17 is that the Torah together with the rest of the Old Testament has reached its goal in Jesus and is in fact to be interpreted in light of this fulfillment. The Law will only last as long as heaven and earth stands (5:18); the words of Jesus, on the other hand, are eternal (24:25). At the end of the sermon it is not law, but the words of Jesus that are to be kept, and at the end of the Gospel the disciples are sent out to teach the nations everything Jesus has commanded them (28:18).

The better righteousness that is required in order to enter the Kingdom of Heaven is then based on the commandments of Jesus, not on the law (5:20). How does the righteousness of the kingdom look? This is exhibited in the so-called antitheses in Matt 5:21-48. These verses expound the ethics of the Kingdom of Heaven, which as we have seen is the eschatological in-breaking of God's rule in the world. The will of God will be enforced on earth as in heaven (6:10).

### **11.2.5 The Antitheses – Recovering the Will of God – 5:21-48**

This section, 5:21-48 of the Sermon on the Mount, is called the antitheses due to the basic structure of Jesus' six pronouncements – “You have heard it said... but I say to you” – with minor variations. The words of Jesus are set up against what has been heard. It has been discussed what is actually referred to with the words "You have heard." Is it the Torah or is it interpretations of the Torah? I take it to be interpretations of the Torah. Jesus is providing an interpretation of the Torah in light of the eschatological fulfillment just proclaimed.<sup>764</sup> Jesus' teaching is the originally intended goal of the Torah (7:12). What is striking here is, nevertheless, the authority that Jesus expresses and

<sup>763</sup> Meier, *Law and History*, 64; Fletcher-Louis, “The Destruction of the Temple and the Relativization of the Old Covenant”; Gibbs, *Matthew 1:1–11:1*, 269.

<sup>764</sup> For this view see Gibbs, *Matthew 1:1–11:1*.

claims. Only in the final antithesis a rationale is given, otherwise the words simply rest on the personal authority of Jesus. It is so because he says so.

Part of the explanation for this is found in the preceding verses where Jesus claims that he is fulfilling the Law and the Prophets. The eschatological fulfillment entails a new role for the Torah in light of the eschatological reality that Jesus brings. It is an ethic that is set within the context of the coming of the kingdom. Contrary to the opinion of Schweitzer it is not an interim ethic but an ethic fit for the eternal kingdom in an inaugurated form.<sup>765</sup> The realization of the ethic outlined by Jesus will be Heaven on Earth. The antitheses portray perfect reconciliation, purity, fidelity, truthfulness, humility and love.

Macaskill proposes that a rationale may be found in the design plan of creation.<sup>766</sup> This point can be demonstrated in the case of marital ethics in the Gospel, which is the concern of two of the six antithesis (Matt 5:27-32). When marital ethics is discussed later in Matthew 19:3-12 the gist of Jesus' argument goes like this: "He said to them, "It was because you were so hard-hearted that Moses allowed you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so." (Matt 19:8). Jesus points back to the beginning (the creation) in his argumentation and that the instruction for divorce was given because of the hardheartedness of man. This has been noted by a number of modern scholars. Commenting on the Markan parallel Hartmut Stegemann writes:

Die Phase des Sündeneinflusses und der Verwendbarkeit des ihr eingeordneten Gebotes Dtn 24,1, im Falle der Scheidung der Frau einen 'Scheidebrief' auszufertigen ist nunmehr vorüber. Jetzt wirkt nur noch die ursprüngliche Schöpfungsordnung, nach der ein Ehepaar unverbrüchlich zusammengehört, wie es sich nach zeitgenössischem Verstandnis aus Gen 1,27 ergab.<sup>767</sup>

This interpretation can also be found among ancient interpreters of the text. Hans Joachim Schoeps cites Tertullian on Matt 19:2ff.:<sup>768</sup>

"And thus in Christ everything is referred back to the beginning: thus faith reverts from circumcision to the unimpaired state of the flesh, as it was in the beginning; thus the

<sup>765</sup> Macaskill, *Revealed Wisdom and Inaugurated Eschatology in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity*, 186.

<sup>766</sup> Macaskill, 183.

<sup>767</sup> Hartmut Stegemann, "Der lehrende Jesus. Der sogenannte biblische Christus und die geschichtliche Botschaft Jesu von der Gottesherrschaft," *Neue Zeitschrift für Systematische Theologie und Religionsphilosophie* 24, no. 1–3 (2009): 3–20; See also Joachim Jeremias, *Jesus Als Weltvollender*, Beiträge Zur Förderung Christlicher Theologie (Gütersloh: C. Bertelsmann, 1930); Hans Joachim Schoeps, "Restitutio Principii as the Basis for the Nova Lex Jesu," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 66, no. 4 (December 1, 1947): 453–64; Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God*, 285; Daniel J. Harrington and James F. Keenan, *Jesus and Virtue Ethics: Building Bridges Between New Testament Studies and Moral Theology* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2005), 153; Macaskill, *Revealed Wisdom and Inaugurated Eschatology in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity*, 183–88.

<sup>768</sup> Schoeps, "Restitutio Principii as the Basis for the Nova Lex Jesu," 458.



freedom to eat of all foods and to abstain from blood alone is restored as it was in the beginning; and likewise the indissolubility of matrimony, as it was in the beginning, and the prohibition of divorce, which was not (allowed) in the beginning. Finally, the whole of man will be brought back to paradise, where he was in the beginning.” (On Monogamy V)

In this understanding parts of the commandments in the Torah become obsolete as Christ refers everything back to the beginning. In that sense certain commandments are to be understood as temporary additions to the original will of God.

Dale Allison’s comment is also right to the point: “So the Torah can be, and has been, viewed as containing divine concessions to human sin or compromises for it, as promoting less than ideal human behavior.”<sup>769</sup> Allison observes that for example there “are two different directives on food, one directive for Eden, one for after Eden.”<sup>770</sup> What is then presented in the ethics in the Sermon on the Mount is the ideal human behavior, the original will of God from the beginning of creation.

The other antitheses may also fruitfully be understood in light of creation. Regarding Jesus’ teaching about murder it is important to note that within the biblical storyline, the prohibition against murder is given immediately after the flood before the Torah. The reason for the commandment is that humans are created in the image of God (Gen 9:6). The commandment thus finds its reason in creation.

There are also indications of an allusion to the story of Cain and Abel and the first murder from Genesis 4. There is the element of anger toward your brother (Matt 5:22 cf. Gen 4:6) and the element of bringing a gift to the altar (5:23 cf. Gen 4:3).<sup>771</sup>

The command not to use oaths is a command to always tell the truth, thus making oaths superfluous: “In a sin-free world, a world like Eden or paradise regained, human beings would be invariably committed to every statement; and if they were so committed, then the superstition of the oath would be redundant.”<sup>772</sup>

<sup>769</sup> Dale C. Allison, *Resurrecting Jesus: The Earliest Christian Tradition and Its Interpreters* (New York; London: Bloomsbury, 2005), 185. See also Brian S. Rosner, *Paul's Scripture and Ethics: A Study of 1 Corinthians 5-7* (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 1994), 115, for this observation in the letters of Paul.

<sup>770</sup> Allison, *Resurrecting Jesus*, 185.

<sup>771</sup> Allison, *Studies in Matthew*, 65–78. Allison remarks that the connection is not made by modern interpreters but lists Tertullian, Cyprian, Chrysostom, Chromatius, Geoffrey Babion, Paschasius Radbertus, Rupert of Deutz, Hugh of St. Cher, Albert the Great, Hugo Grotius and Matthew Henry as readers of the text who have seen a link between Matt. 5:21-24 and Gen. 4:1-6. (Allison, 68).

<sup>772</sup> Allison, *Resurrecting Jesus*, 186.

Finally comes the last two antitheses on retaliation and love for enemies (5:38-47). Here Jesus is commanding his followers to represent God as Gods children (5:45) and to be perfect like their heavenly father (Matt 5:48). What is described here is *imitatio dei* (the imitation of God). This is naturally closely related to the concept of *imago dei*, that humans are created in the image of God (Gen 1:26), and thus reaches back to creation.<sup>773</sup>

Simon J. Joseph comments on the command to love enemies: “This is the assertion of an eschatological reversal of the condition of everyday life, a highly idealized description of God’s will for humanity. The wisdom teachings of Jesus in Q<sup>774</sup> thus constitute, in part, a return to an Edenic state of nonviolence, harmony, and providence, echoing the eschatological themes of *Urzeit* and *Endzeit* through a series of Edenic ‘imperatives’”<sup>775</sup> This applies to all the commandments found in the antitheses, as Jesus is interpreting the Torah in light of God’s original will for humanity.

This is how the disciples are called to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world. They are called to display the ethics of new creation for the world. Before these demands, however, stand the promises and the designation of the disciples as the new covenantal community. Law is closely connected to covenant as the law contains the stipulations, which are required within the covenantal relationship. This is particularly clear in Exod 24:7-8 and Deut 28:69. This eschatological lawgiving should then also be understood in the framework of an eschatological new covenant that includes a vision of transformation.

In Matthew 19:3-12 the permission for divorce was given because of hardheartedness. The eschatological law taught by Jesus presupposes a transformation of the hearts. Hans Windisch writes:

Sein Ruf zur Umkehr setzt voraus, daß der innere Zustand bei seinen Hörern und bei seinen Jüngern derart ist, daß sie "nach Gottes Satzungen wandeln können" oder er ist es selbst, der durch sein Wort das Gebot Gottes "in ihr Innerstes legt" und "in ihr Herz schreibt". ... So erklärt sich der Radikalismus und das Vertrauen in seine Verwirklichung aus der eigenen gewaltigen Gottergriffenheit.<sup>776</sup>

<sup>773</sup> Macaskill, *Revealed Wisdom and Inaugurated Eschatology in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity*, 184.

<sup>774</sup> Joseph's work is on Q, but the Q text on the command to love enemies is identical to the text in Matthew and thus applicable to both.

<sup>775</sup> Simon J. Joseph, “‘Love Your Enemies’: The Adamic Wisdom of Q 6:27–28, 35c–d,” *Biblical Theology Bulletin: Journal of Bible and Culture* 43, no. 1 (February 1, 2013): 34.

<sup>776</sup> Hans Windisch, *Der Sinn Der Bergpredigt. Ein Beitrag Zum Geschichtlichen Verständnis Der Evangelien Und Zum Problem Der Richtigen Exegese*, 2., stark umgearbeitete, erweiterte und verbesserte Auflage, 1937, UNT 16 (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1929), 75–76.

According to Windisch the internalization of the law in the heart is presupposed in Matthew.<sup>777</sup> Windisch nevertheless remarks that the Old Testament texts that provide the background for this understanding are never referred to in Matthew. In light of the observations made above on 5:3-16, in which the disciples are described as the new covenant people and the nucleus of new creation, the new covenant seems to have a place in Matthew.

### 11.3 New Covenant in Matthew

Although the word for covenant is not used anywhere in the Sermon on the Mount and only once in Matthew (26:28), the idea of a covenant may well be assumed throughout the Gospel.

This is the argument of Mogens Müller, who argues that the hidden context of Matthew is the congregational setting in which baptism and the idea of a new covenant are fundamental for theological reflection.<sup>778</sup> Although baptism is not elaborated upon in Matthew, it features prominently with John the Baptist at the beginning of the ministry of Jesus, the initial proclamation of the Kingdom and in the final commission of Jesus to his disciples. W. J. Dumbrell points out that the description of John the Baptist's ministry has covenantal connections: "Both the locale (Jordan Valley) and the terminology (*μετανοέω*) the gathering of all Israel, as well as the Elijah parallelism is designed to stress this."<sup>779</sup>

In the Sermon on the Mount we have already noted the possible allusions to Sinai as well as eschatological Lawgiving on mountains (Exod 19-24; Is 2:2-4). Through the allusion to Sinai the Sermon on the Mount may well be seen as the institution of a covenant.<sup>780</sup> We also saw that in the beginning of the Sermon the disciples are given the promises and the function of the people of God in the world. They are described as the covenantal people.

The Sermon furthermore has strong links to Deuteronomy through direct citations of commandments found in Deuteronomy. The link to Deuteronomy is particularly strong since the sermon ends with the reference to the two ways (Matt 7:13-14 cf. Deut 11:26; Jer 21:8) as well as

<sup>777</sup> So also Francois P. Viljoen, "Jesus' Teaching on the Torah in the Sermon on the Mount," *Neotestamentica* 40, no. 1 (January 1, 2006): 149–50; Richard B. Hays, "The Gospel of Matthew: Reconfigured Torah," *HTS Theologiese Studies / Theological Studies* 61, no. 1/2 (October 9, 2009): 187–88; Mogens Müller, "Bundesideologie im Matthäusevangelium. Die Vorstellung vom neuen Bund als Grundlage der matthäischen Gesetzesverkündigung," *New Testament Studies*, no. 1 (2011): 38.

<sup>778</sup> Müller, "Bundesideologie im Matthäusevangelium," 24; Davies, *The Setting of the Sermon on the Mount*, 187.

<sup>779</sup> Dumbrell, "The Logic of the Role of the Law in Matthew V 1-20," 6.

<sup>780</sup> Dumbrell, 5.

employing language at the end of the sermon (7:28) that is comparable to the end of Moses' speech in Deut 31:1.<sup>781</sup>

The connections to Deuteronomy are important because Deuteronomy foresees both a time when Israel will break the covenant and become cursed and driven into exile (Deut 29:15-27) as well as a time of restoration and return from exile (Deut 30:1-10).<sup>782</sup> This vision of restoration involves a circumcision of the hearts of the people. Consequently, the people will love the Lord with all their hearts (30:6). This vision of a transformed heart leading to obedience is also found in the prophetic literature. Both Jeremiah and Ezekiel speak of a transformed heart (Jer 31:31-34; Ezek 36:26). Most notable is Jeremiah 31:31-34:

<sup>31</sup>The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. <sup>32</sup>It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt—a covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, says the Lord. <sup>33</sup>But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. <sup>34</sup>No longer shall they teach one another, or say to each other, “Know the Lord,” for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more. (Jer 31:31-34)

Francois P. Viljoen remarks that Matthew contains the three main elements from Jer 31:31-34, where there is (1) the institution of a (new) covenant (Matt 26:28), (2) an internalization of the law (5:21-48) and (3) forgiveness of sins (Matt 1:21; 26:28)<sup>783</sup> Ancient interpreters have also made the connection between the Sermon on the Mount and a new covenant as they equated the teaching of Jesus with new law and thus also new covenant. Justin writes:

But now—(for I have read that there shall be a final law, and a covenant, the chiefest of all, which it is now incumbent on all men to observe, as many as are seeking after the inheritance of God. For the law promulgated on Horeb is now old, and belongs to yourselves alone; but *this* is for all universally. Now, law placed against law has

<sup>781</sup> Allison, *The New Moses*, 190.

<sup>782</sup> As we have seen the idea of a return from exile, a new exodus features heavily in the first chapters of Matthew. (Page XX).

<sup>783</sup> Viljoen, “Jesus’ Teaching on the Torah in the Sermon on the Mount,” 150; See also Julius Schniewind, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus*, NTD 2 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1936), 257. Schniewind comments on Matt 26:28: “Aber damit wird nur aufgenommen, was Jer. 31,34 erhofft; und Jer. 31-34 klingt in allen Fassungen des Kelchwortes durch; dort spricht die Hoffnung von der neuen Ordnung, dem neuen Testament Gottes, bei der Gott sein Gesetz in Herz schreibt und die Sünde vergibt. Diese Hoffnung klang durch das ganze Kapitel Mt. 5, klang durch 11,27-30; und die Sündenvergebung war ein und alles wie 6,12 (s.d.) so 7,11; 9,1-8 Par.; 11,19; 12,31f.; 18,23ff.; auch 16,19 = 18,18.“ Michael P. Knowles also sees connections between the description of the last supper in Matthew 26 and Jer 31:31-34. Knowles furthermore points to Matt 11:27-30 and 23:8-10 for possible allusions in Matthew to the new covenant in Jeremiah. *Jeremiah in Matthew’s Gospel*, 207–17. See also Robert A. Guelich, *The Sermon on the Mount: A Foundation for Understanding* (Waco: Word Books, 1982), 163.

abrogated that which is before it, and a covenant which comes after in like manner has put an end to the previous one; and an eternal and final law—namely, Christ—has been given to us, and the covenant is trustworthy, after which there shall be no law, no commandment, no ordinance. (Justin Dial. XI)

It is then possible to make a case for a new covenant in Matthew. The key term for our purposes is the heart, since the transformation of the heart was detected as a part of the motif of new creation. The heart will be changed through the intervention of God. Ezekiel even speaks of a heart replacement (Ezek 36:26). This is done through divine action and describes moral transformation, which, as have seen, is part of the eschatological vision of new creation in the Old Testament as well as early Jewish and Christian literature (Ezek 36:22-36, 1 Enoch 5:4-10, Jub 23:26-31, 4 Ezra 6:26-28; Apoc. Mos. 13:1-5, 1QS IV 18-25).

But what is the role of the heart in Matthew?

### **10.3.1 Heart, Trees and Fruit – Anthropological transformation in Matthew**

Mogens Müller argues that the heart-metaphor is a key metaphor in Matthew.<sup>784</sup> He compares the use of καρδία with the other synoptic gospels and concludes that Matthew's use of the heart-metaphor most closely corresponds with the use in the Old Testament as the spiritual seat of a person. Eight of the nine uses of καρδία, which are special for Matthew compared to Mark, concern the 'quality' of persons (5:8; 5:28; 6:21; 11:29; 12:34; 13:15; 13:19; 18:35).<sup>785</sup>

Müller in particular points to Matt 18:35 as the clearest expression of the importance of the heart-metaphor in Matthew: “So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart.” (Matt 18:35).<sup>786</sup> In this conclusion to the parable of the unforgiving servant it becomes clear that a change is expected in the person who receives the forgiveness of God (cf. Matt 6:14-15). It is significant that the heart is here connected with judgment. This is also the case in 12:34b-37.

For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.<sup>35</sup> The good person brings good things out of a good treasure, and the evil person brings evil things out of an evil treasure.<sup>36</sup> I tell you, on the day of judgment you will have to give an account for every careless word you utter; <sup>37</sup> for by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned.

<sup>784</sup> Müller, “Bundesindeologie im Matthäusevangelium,” 37.

<sup>785</sup> Müller, 38.

<sup>786</sup> Müller, 37.

The use of καρδία in the Sermon on the Mount underlines the importance of the heart. The eschatological promise of seeing God is given to those who have a pure heart (5:8), while also pointing to the problem of adultery in the heart (5:28) and the struggle in the heart between the treasures of the earth and the treasure of heaven (6:21). The heart is easily deceived.

The plight of the people is described in terms of a heart that is not perceptible to the word of God (13:15), a heart that is far away from God despite outward appearances (15:8-9), a heart that is the root of evil (15:19). In 7:11 even the disciples are described as evil.<sup>787</sup> It is thus correct when Stephen Westerholm concludes: “It is axiomatic for Jesus that people, in contrast with God, are evil, and that the human heart is bent on evil.”<sup>788</sup>

This description of the human heart resonates with the one found in Jeremiah. According to Jeremiah the human heart is corrupted and unable to change itself (5:23-24; 9:14; 12:2; 17:9). An intervention is needed. The solution is described in Jeremiah’s eschatological vision of a new covenant in which God will write his law upon the hearts of his people, resulting in perfect obedience. In accordance with what is said elsewhere about the heart in Jeremiah this is a dramatic change and must involve a transformation of the heart based on divine agency.

The language of the transformation of the heart is also found in Ezekiel. Mogens Müller observes that while Jeremiah 31:31-34 (38 LXX) contains a promise of a new covenant, Ezekiel 36:25-27 speaks of a changed heart and a new spirit without explicitly mentioning a new covenant. Both passages however focus on the removal of sin and new obedience.<sup>789</sup>

As noted in chapter 5.2.1.3 Nicolas G. Piotrowski has suggested that Ezekiel 36:28b-29 and 37:23b provides the conceptual background for Matt 1:21.<sup>790</sup> This has bearings on the passages about the law and the heart in Matthew: “By selecting a frame from Ezekiel 34-37, Matthew 1:21 evokes Ezekiel's prophecies of a new heart and new spirit for the covenant people (Ezek. 36:26-27; 37:14) which come to bear when Jesus speaks about the law and the heart (Matt. 5:8, 28; 6:21; 15:18-19)”<sup>791</sup> It seems probable that visions of transformation of the heart found in Jeremiah and Ezekiel provide the background for the use of the heart-metaphor in Matthew. This conclusion may be

<sup>787</sup> Luz does not think that this can be used to argue for an anthropological pessimism. “The reference to human evil is a rhetorical means of strengthening the certainty of faith.” Luz, *Matthew 1-7, A Commentary*, 359.

<sup>788</sup> Stephen Westerholm, “Law and Gospel in Jesus and Paul,” in *Jesus and Paul Reconnected: Fresh Pathways Into an Old Debate*, ed. Todd D. Still (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 129.

<sup>789</sup> Müller, “Bundesideologie im Matthäusevangelium,” 28–29; See also Piotrowski, “‘I Will Save My People from Their Sins’: The Influence of Ezekiel 36:28b-29a; 37:23b on Matthew 1:21.,” 52.

<sup>790</sup> Piotrowski, “‘I Will Save My People from Their Sins’: The Influence of Ezekiel 36:28b-29a; 37:23b on Matthew 1:21.”

<sup>791</sup> Piotrowski, 52.

backed up further by exploring another metaphor for the inward nature of person used in Matthew: the image of the tree and the fruit (3:7-10; 7:15-20; 12:33; 13:23; 21:43).

In Matt 3:7-10 the fruit is connected with repentance, or rather conversion, and baptism. The conversion is supposed to bring a change to a person, which will result in fruit corresponding to the conversion. Adela Yarbro Collins suggests that Ezekiel 36:25-28 may stand behind John's baptism.<sup>792</sup> That text describes how a divine sprinkling of water will cleanse the people before they are given a new heart and a new spirit. In the context of John's baptism the expectation of the Spirit is also present (3:11). In general the emphasis of John's preaching is the coming of God's judgment, which requires that one is a fruit-bearing tree.

In Matt 7:15-20 it becomes clear that although fruits are outward actions, the prerequisite for bearing good fruit is to be a good tree. This points to the importance of inward change. This correspondence between the inward nature and outward actions is also present in Matt 12:33-34, where the heart-metaphor is combined with language of people as trees that bear fruit. A good heart is equivalent to a good tree:

<sup>33</sup> Either make the tree good, and its fruit good; or make the tree bad, and its fruit bad; for the tree is known by its fruit. <sup>34</sup> You brood of vipers! How can you speak good things, when you are evil? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.

In this passage the tree and the fruit parallel the heart and the words. Elsewhere in Matthew the two metaphors are also combined. Thus in the parable of the sower (13:1-23) the word is sown into the heart (13:19) and the one who understands the word is likened to good soil, where the word grows and produces fruit (13:23). Furthermore Jesus cites Isa 29:13 in Matt 15:8-9: "This people honors me with their lips but their hearts are far from me". He then continues to talk about plants that are not planted by his heavenly father (15:13 cf. 13:24-30.36-43) and the heart as the source of evil (15:19).

In these passages the quotations from the Old Testament suggest that the imagery is drawn from the Old Testament prophets. This is also Eveline Staalduine-Sulmann's conclusion: "Jesus did not just describe what he saw in the fields of Israel but based his teaching on Scripture."<sup>793</sup> The background for the use of the tree and fruit metaphor is seldom explored by interpreters of Matthew. Perhaps because the meaning of the metaphor seems so obvious. However, a look at the scriptural background may provide insights into the anthropology and soteriology in Matthew.

<sup>792</sup> Adela Yarbro Collins, *Cosmology and Eschatology in Jewish and Christian Apocalypticism*, JSJSup 50 (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 228.

<sup>793</sup> van Staalduine-Sulman, "Agricultural Imagery," 223.

In the survey of the Old Testament the heart-metaphor was particularly important in Jeremiah and Ezekiel. The combination of heart, trees and fruit is found in Jeremiah 17:5-8:

<sup>5</sup>Thus says the Lord:

Cursed are those who trust in mere mortals  
and make mere flesh their strength,  
whose hearts turn away from the Lord.

<sup>6</sup>They shall be like a shrub in the desert,  
and shall not see when relief comes.

They shall live in the parched places of the wilderness,  
in an uninhabited salt land.

<sup>7</sup>Blessed are those who trust in the Lord,  
whose trust is the Lord.

<sup>8</sup>They shall be like a tree planted by water,  
sending out its roots by the stream.

It shall not fear when heat comes,  
and its leaves shall stay green;  
in the year of drought it is not anxious,  
and it does not cease to bear fruit. (Jer 17:5-8).

This passage about the two ways describes two different plants. A shrub in the desert and a tree by the water are used to contrast those who trust in mortals whose hearts are turned away from the Lord and those who trust the Lord resulting in fruitfulness. The text goes on to describe the deviousness of the human heart (17:9). Strikingly, the passage about the new covenant in Jer 31 is also prefaced by language about God sowing the people in the land (Jer 31:27-28). The use of the plant-imagery in Matthew supports the conclusion that according to Matthew the prophecy of a new covenant and transformed hearts is realized in the ministry of Jesus.

The idea of a transformed heart is also found in later Jewish literature as demonstrated in the survey of new creation in the OTP. The most remarkable parallels with Matthew are found in 4 Ezra. In 4 Ezra just as in Jeremiah the plight of humanity is the evil heart: “Yet you did not take away from them their evil heart, so that your Law might bring forth fruit in them.” (4 Ezra 3:20). The solution to this plight is that God one day will change the heart of man, so that the seed of the Law that is sown in them can produce fruit. In a passage with striking similarities with the parable of the sower in Matthew 13 it says:

“For just as the farmer sows many seeds upon the ground and plants a multitude of seedlings, and yet not all that have been sown will come up in due season, and not all that were planted will take root; so all those who have been sown in the world will not be saved.” (4 Ezra 8:41)



Similar to this text Matthew 13 has a farmer sowing seeds upon the ground with various results.<sup>794</sup> Earlier a passage speaks of seeds for the heart and understanding so that the seed will produce fruit:

O Lord who art over us, grant to your servant that we may pray before you, and give us seed for our heart and cultivation of our understanding so that fruit may be produced, by which every mortal who bears the likeness of a human being may be able to live. (4 Ezra 8:6)

The idea expressed here corresponds to the one expressed in Matthew 13:23: "But as for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty."

In both texts we have understanding as a prerequisite for bearing fruit. In both instances it is a word that will bear fruit, although not stated explicitly in 4 Ezra 8:6. The main difference is that in Matthew it is the word of the kingdom that is sown, whereas in 4 Ezra it is the Law.

The number of similarities between Matthew and 4 Ezra suggests that they may fruitfully be read together and illuminate the background for the use of a certain metaphor and imagery. What I am suggesting is that the Gospel of Matthew expresses a similar pessimistic anthropology as the one found in 4 Ezra, a pessimism that is also found in other early Jewish writings as well as later rabbinic literature and can be traced back to the Old Testament and particularly Jeremiah.

Another parallel to the imagery and use of the Old Testament is found in 4Q434 Barki Nafshi:

In the abundance of his mercy he has favoured the needy and has opened their eyes so that they see his paths, and their ear[s] so that they hear <sup>4</sup>his teaching. He has circumcised the foreskin of their hearts and has saved them because of his grace and has set their feet firm on the path. (4Q434 frag. 1, I 3-4)

In this text the imagery of the circumcision of the heart is coupled with language of seeing and hearing as a reversal of the negative imagery used in Deuteronomy 29:3 and Isaiah 6:10 of not seeing and hearing and a heart that does not understand.<sup>795</sup> Isaiah 6:9-10 is quoted in Matthew 13:14-15, where the outsiders (the others (13:11)) are described as people who cannot see, hear or understand with the heart. In contrast, the disciples are those who see and hear (13:16), and they understand (13:51) what is done with the heart. The disciples are then people who had their hearts circumcised. Their hearts have been transformed so they understand. Jesus can therefore pronounce

<sup>794</sup> Daniel J. Harrington, *The Gospel of Matthew*, Sacra Pagina 1 (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1991), 199–200.

<sup>795</sup> David Rolph Seely, "The 'Circumcised Heart' in '4Q434 Barki Nafshi,'" *Revue de Qumran* 17, no. 1/4 (65/68) (1996): 533.

them as those who are pure of heart meeting the requirement to see God (5:8). Since they both hear and understand word, the word can produce fruits in them (13:23).

Several other texts from the DSS espouse a pessimistic anthropology as well as a hope for transformation through cleansing or the circumcision of the heart. This hope is (1QS III 3-12; IV 20-23; V 4-6; 1QH<sup>a</sup> VIII 14-15; XIII 7b-11a; XV 13b-19).

In a number of the passages about a new or renewed heart the promise is connected with a restoration of the land or the world. This is the case in Ezekiel where the promise of the new heart and new spirit (Ezek 36:26-27 cf. 1QS IV 20-26) is connected with a restoration which makes the land comparable to Eden (Ezek 36:35).

In Jubilees the expectation of the transformation of the human heart is also expressed in the context of the process moving toward new creation (Jub 1:23-29). This expectation is also found in the Apocalypse of Moses where it is part of an eschatological scenario of resurrection and return to paradise:

Then all flesh from Adam up to that great day shall be raised, such as shall be the holy people; <sup>4</sup>then to them shall be given every joy of Paradise and God shall be in their midst, <sup>5</sup>and there shall not be any more sinners before him, for the evil heart shall be removed from them, and they shall be given a heart that understands the good and worships God alone. (Apoc. Mos. 13:3-5)

These traditions may well be assumed in the passages about the heart throughout Matthew, thus expressing the idea of an end-time transformation of the human heart as part of the restoration of the people, the land and ultimately the entire creation.

#### **11.4 Future Transformation of the Righteous in Matthew**

In Matthew, however, a future complete transformation is envisioned in different terms. The future transformation is found in Matt 13:43: “τότε οἱ δίκαιοι ἐκλάμπουσιν ὡς ὁ ἥλιος ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ τοῦ πατρὸς αὐτῶν. ὁ ἔχων ᾧτα ἀκούετω.” This verse describes the expectation of a final glorious transformation of righteous humanity. The language here probably has its roots in Dan 12:3 LXX (Theod.): “καὶ οἱ συνιέντες ἐκλάμπουσιν ὡς ἡ λαμπρότης τοῦ στερεώματος καὶ ἀπὸ τῶν δικαίων τῶν πολλῶν ὡς οἱ ἀστέρες εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας καὶ ἔτι.” There are however differences. Significant differences concern the comparison to the sun in Matthew and the sky and stars in Daniel. A parallel description is also found in 4 Ezra 7:97: “The sixth order, when it is shown to them how their face is to shine like the sun, and how they are to be made like the light of the stars, being incorruptible

from then on.” Again there are differences. The basic idea of glorious transformation may nevertheless be considered to be the same. Other similar expectations are found in Jewish apocalyptic (1 Enoch 104:2; 2 Baruch 51:3.10; LAB 33:5).<sup>796</sup>

The common feature of these descriptions is the emphasis on the moral character of those transformed. They are wise (Dan 12:3), righteous (1 Enoch 104:2-6; 2 Bar 51:3) and will become incorruptible (4 Ezra 7:97). The splendor of the righteous then seems to be connected to moral uprightness. In contrast Eve loses her garment of glory when she sins in the garden of Eden (Apoc. Mos. 20:1-2). Michael Stone notes that a series of passages in rabbinic literature describes the brightness of Adam's face that was lost when he was expelled from Eden.<sup>797</sup> All of this suggests that the splendor of the righteous is indicative of their righteousness and purity.

The description of the shining righteous is strikingly similar to that of the description of Jesus in the transfiguration where Jesus 'face shines like the sun: “<sup>2</sup>And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became dazzling white.” (17:2) This description of Jesus seems to be a prefiguration of both the glorious appearance he will eventually have (Matt 16:27; 24:30) and the glory of the righteous in the kingdom.<sup>798</sup> That Jesus is revealed to possess that glory indicates his divinity and, importantly, the Christological model of the transformation of the righteous. This is a further element in the pattern-setting function of Jesus for his disciples in Matthew (cf. the table in the chapter in the eschatology of Matthew).

Another example of the expectation of future transformation is Matt 22:30: “For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven.” The question in this passage is the extent to which the people will be like angels in the resurrection. Does the comparison only concern the aspect of marriage, or is it also a description of physical transformation? In some of the passages cited above concerning the future splendor of the righteous, this appearance is also described as angelic (1 Enoch 104:4; 2 Baruch 51:10). That the splendor is also considered to be angelic in Matthew is confirmed by the description of the angel at the resurrection of Jesus: “<sup>3</sup>His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow.” (28:3). Angelic transformation may also be indicated in the parable of the wedding banquet in

<sup>796</sup> An interesting passage is also found in Joseph and Aseneth describing a presently realized transformation: “And Aseneth leaned (over) to wash her face and saw her face in the water. And it was like the sun and her eyes (were) like a rising morning star.” (Joseph and Aseneth 18:9)

<sup>797</sup> Stone, *Fourth Ezra*, 245. Cf. The newborn Noah who has eyes that shine like the sun and a glorious face in 1 Enoch 106:1-5. This feature that may intend to present Noah as a second Adam.

<sup>798</sup> Davies and Allison, *Matthew. Vol. II*, 431, 696; Sim, *Apocalyptic Eschatology in the Gospel of Matthew*, 144.

which the guests are wearing wedding robes. According to David Sim the robe represents an end-time garment of glory which is equated with the garb of angels in Jewish apocalyptic texts.<sup>799</sup>

In the context of Matt 22:30 the idea of being like angels may imply abstinence and purity, which, again, indicates complete righteousness. Elsewhere in Matthew angels are those who see the face of God (18:10). This also indicates righteousness and purity (5:8).

A look at the parallel passage in Luke may provide further insight into the meaning of being like angels. “Indeed they cannot die anymore, because they are like angels and are children of God, being children of the resurrection.” (Luke 20:36). In Luke there is an emphasis on the immortality of the righteous in the age to come. This may simply provide the reason for absence of marriage, since immortality obviates the need for progeny,<sup>800</sup> a reason that may also be implicitly present in Matthew. The explicit statement of immortality and furthermore becoming the children of God through the resurrection, however, clearly indicates a new state of being.

I have already touched upon the possible Urzeit-Endzeit correlations with the description of the final state of the righteous by mentioning Adam and Eve's loss of glory in Apoc. Mos. above. This possibility is further strengthened in light of 1 Enoch 69:11:

For indeed human beings were not created but to be like angels, permanently to maintain pure and righteous lives. Death, which destroys everything, would have not touched them, had it not been through their knowledge by which they shall perish; death is (now) eating us by means of this power.

And 2 Enoch 30:11:

<sup>11</sup> And on the earth I assigned him [Adam] to be a second angel, honored and great and glorious. (2 Enoch 30:11).

These quotes indicate that the idea that humanity was created to be like angels was present in first-century Judaism. That Adam and Eve ate angelic food in the garden of Eden according to LAE 4:2 may also indicate that. The thought of Adam as an angel is also found in Ezekiel 28:14 in a passage where the fall of the king of Tyre is described in terms of the fall of Adam: “You were an anointed cherub.” (Ezek 28:14a)<sup>801</sup>

<sup>799</sup> Sim, “Matthew 22.13 a and 1 Enoch 10.4 A,” 15–17; Sim, *Apocalyptic Eschatology in the Gospel of Matthew*, 142.

<sup>800</sup> Davies and Allison, *Matthew. Vol. III*, 228.

<sup>801</sup> My own translation. The NRSV follows the LXX which has “μετὰ τοῦ χερουβ ἔθηκά σε”.

Looking to the DSS Crispin Fletcher-Louis has argued for an angelomorphic anthropology at Qumran in which the prelapsarian state of humanity is considered to be angelic. Consequently the hope for “all the glory of Adam” found in the DSS is hope for a return to angelic glory.<sup>802</sup> The idea that the righteous become like angels is found in many texts at Qumran (1QS XI 7-8.; 1QH<sup>a</sup> III 22; XI 12f.; XIX 10-14). That this idea is found in texts that also contain a hope for the glory of Adam makes it probable that “the glory of Adam” and angelic nature are equivalent.

## 11.5 Summary

In this chapter we have seen that the ethical teaching of Jesus in Matthew may be fruitfully understood in light of the eschatological expectation of restored creation. The commandments of Jesus may then be understood as an instruction for his disciples to display ethics of new creation as salt and light in the world. The exhortation to be salt and light in the world designates the disciples as the new covenant community who have received the promises of the kingdom on a restored earth.

The teaching of the law for the new covenant community includes the fulfillment of the prophetic expectation for the transformation of the hearts. In Matthew the hearts of the people are generally described in accordance with the anthropological pessimism found in the Old Testament prophets and Jewish apocalyptic. The ethical teaching found in the Gospel nevertheless presupposes the transformation of the hearts. Those who hear and understand the word of the kingdom so the word takes root in the heart will be like good trees that produce the good fruit required to enter the kingdom.

Finally the vision for anthropological renewal in Matthew includes a final transformation of the righteousness into the glorious splendor of angels, shining like the sun according to the model of Jesus. The transformation into angelic splendor may be an Urzeit-Endzeit correlation in terms of a recovery of the original glory of humanity.

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<sup>802</sup> Fletcher-Louis, *All the Glory of Adam*, 94.

## 12 Summary: New Creation in Matthew

In the preceding five chapters I have demonstrated that the motif of new creation is present in every major aspect of Jesus' life and ministry in Matthew. A number of the elements which were shown to be part of the motif of new creation in the cultural encyclopedia of Matthew are also present in Matthew.

Chapter 7 demonstrated that the expectation of the end in Matthew includes the expectation of a new creation. Matthew presents a view of history which begins in creation and ends in new creation. A close reading of Matt 24 with the description of Jesus death and resurrection in Matthew, however, shows that for Matthew the end and the new creation have already come in the death and resurrection of Jesus.

Chapter 8 focused on the beginning of Matthew (Matt 1-4). In that chapter I argued that Matt 1:1 puts the coming of Jesus on the same level as the creation of heaven and earth and the creation of humankind by alluding to Genesis 2:4 and 5:1. Furthermore, through the emphasis on fulfillment of the Old Testament which is particularly strong in the first chapters of Matthew, Jesus is presented as a new beginning for Israel and consequently for the entire creation.

In chapters 9, 10 and 11, I showed how the motif of new creation is present in the word and works of Jesus in Matthew. It became evident that the Kingdom of Heaven which is the central element of Jesus' preaching and teaching is inextricably connected to new creation and that Jesus' preferred self-designation, the Son of Man, also connotes new creation.

Understood within the context of the new creational Kingdom, the miracles of Jesus should be seen as manifestations of new creation since they all represent elements which are part of the motif of new creation. In the works of Jesus the new creation is then already present.

In addition, I have argued that the ethical teaching of Jesus should be understood as an ethic of new creation. This is linked with the hope, moral restoration and transformed hearts as part of the inauguration of the new covenant which also implies new creation. I furthermore argued that the use of plant-imagery in Matthew to describe the moral status of persons indicates the need for a radical moral transformation which amounts to a new creation. Finally I have shown that future eschatological transformation of the righteous which is envisioned in Matthew is congruent with the motif of new creation.

## 13 Conclusions

This chapter summarizes the observations and conclusions made throughout this work and provides a general conclusion about the research question formulated in the introduction. The results will also be tested against the modified criteria of Richard Hays outlined in the introduction.

The aim of this thesis has been to investigate the presence and the meaning of the motif of new creation in Matthew's Gospel. "New creation" in this study is, in short, understood as the renewal of the entire created order either by renewal of the existing creation or by replacement – a scenario in which eschatology is painted in terms of protology. Scholars have detected traces of new creation in Matthew at various places, but the extent and meaning of the motif in Matthew has not been explored in depth.

The cue was taken from G. K. Beale, who argues for the eschatological orientation of the New Testament in general and "new creation" as the central element of New Testament eschatology. Consequently, the research question was formulated as: "To what extent can new creation be seen as a constituting element in Matthew?"

Even a quick look into the possible background literature of Matthew shows that the motif of new creation was widely present in the religious thought of Matthew's day. It is therefore reasonable to assume that it also played a role for Matthew. The task was then to examine how the Gospel of Matthew participates in the discursive space of the culture of first-century Judaism in which it was originally written and read.

The discursive space of a culture may also be called the cultural encyclopedia as defined by Umberto Eco. The task was to describe the cultural encyclopedia of Matthew's model reader with regard to new creation. To this end a survey of the relevant background literature for Matthew and the configuration of the motif of new creation in Matthew's religious milieu was explored. The purpose of the survey was to provide a heuristic tool for detecting the motif of new creation in Matthew.

The survey of the background literature was conducted through the lens of an initial working definition of new creation that was defined as a cluster of three basic characteristics: 1. Eschatology, 2. Protology, 3. Divine Agency. All three characteristics must be present for the motif of new creation to be present in a given text. The characteristics may however be present in different ways.

Protology for example contains a number of different motifs of which one or more can be present in a given text.

The survey of texts in chapters 2, 3 and 4 from the Old Testament, the OTP and the DSS, of which the last two are taken as representative examples of the literature of Second Temple Judaism, demonstrated that new creation was significantly present in Matthew's religious milieu. It furthermore showed that the motif of new creation can be described as a largely coherent eschatological vision based on the surveyed texts and due to the presence of multiple attested collocations of themes. There were a number of recurring motifs across the different texts— such as the centrality of Zion, the hope for moral restoration and fertility of both people and earth— that make it possible to speak of a common vision of new creation. This configuration of new creation in the cultural encyclopedia of Matthew served as a heuristic tool to find elements of new creation in Matthew.

Turning to Matthew in chapter 6 it was first demonstrated that Matthew presents a view of history that goes from creation to consummation. Both of these poles are explicitly present in the text of the Gospel. The eschatological horizon of Matthew is ultimately the re-birth of the world (19:28). The word *παλιγγενεσία* is best understood as a reference to the expectation of new creation.

In Matthew, however, we also find that the end of the age and the beginning of the coming age does not lie in a distant future. The death and resurrection of Jesus in Matthew are presented in such a way that it should be understood as the eschatological turn of the ages – the beginning of new creation. On the one hand the darkness, the rending of the veil, and the earthquake signal de-creation on the other hand the resurrection of the saints and Jesus' resurrection signal new creation.

A key element here is the temple. The eschatological temple is tightly connected with new creation in Jewish eschatological expectation. In Matthew Jesus and his disciples are presented as the embodiment of the eschatological temple. At the death of Jesus the old temple is prefiguratively destroyed in the rending of the veil. In contrast, the resurrection of Jesus marks the establishment of the eschatological temple, which is the nucleus of new creation (cf. Jub 4:26, 1QH<sup>a</sup> XIV 14-17).

Second, Matthew's beginning highlights the epochal nature of the birth of Jesus. In Matthew 1:1 the reader is led back to the beginning of the world as well as to the beginning of Israel. This way, the coming of Jesus can be seen as a new beginning for Israel and, consequently, for the whole world due to the universal scope of the Old Testament promises that reach their fulfillment in Jesus. As the



Son of David, Jesus will bring an end to the exile of God's people and reestablish the kingdom of Israel.

The renewal of Israel is also illustrated in the presentation of Jesus as the embodiment of Israel who reenacts the exodus. This points to a new exodus, an end of the exile for Israel. In the Old Testament prophets and OTP it is nevertheless clear that the ultimate horizon of eschatological restoration is new creation, a return to Eden.

Third, the Kingdom, which is arguably the single most important element of Jesus' preaching and teaching in Matthew, was connected to creation and new creation. In the Old Testament the universal rule of God is embedded in the fact that God is the creator of the world. Consequently, the reestablishment of the rule of God through the defeat of God's enemies brings order and renewal to creation.

In Matthew the Kingdom of Heaven, which has come near, is described in very earthly terms. The kingdom will come and God's will will be done throughout the earth (6:10). The coming of the kingdom will transform present reality. This is particularly clear in the parables of growth showing that the kingdom will become a universal kingdom and result in universal transformation despite its humble beginnings. The universal and transformative character of the eschatological kingdom of God amounts to the renewal, since the creator will once again rule creation. This conclusion is supported by the use of the epithet "Son of Man" in the Gospel which should be understood against an interpretation of Daniel 7 in terms of new creation and restoration of true humanity.

Fourth, the miracles in Matthew are demonstrations of the material transformation brought by the kingdom. Jesus' healings, exorcisms and rule over nature are all manifestations of the new creational kingdom. They furthermore contribute to show that Jesus, the son of David, is no mere human king, but exercises divine creative power as the son of God.

Matthew quotes Isaiah in the context of the miracles, in order to allow/help the reader understand the miracles within the comprehensive vision of salvation found in Isaiah. Salvation in Isaiah is so tied with creation that one can speak of creative redemption, and Isaiah ends with a vision of a new heaven and earth. The comprehensiveness of salvation in Matthew is also evidenced through the use of the word  $\sigma\phi\zeta\omega$ . Jesus has come to save his people from sin (1:21), and this salvation includes the removal of the effects of sin, amounting to a renewal of creation.

Fifth, the ethics of Jesus in Matthew can fruitfully be understood in light of a vision of a restored creation. Jesus' teaching on marriage and divorce is related to the will of God from the beginning, and the antitheses can all be shown to have a basis in the creation. Matthew furthermore invokes the promises of the new covenant in Jeremiah and Ezekiel, which envisions the transformation of the heart through which people will be able to live according to the will of God. The transformation of the heart is coupled with language in which people are described as plants. Only the good tree will produce good fruit and therefore an inward transformation is required. This change is described either as the heart receiving the word that grows and bears fruit (13:23) or as a plant planted by the Son of Man or the heavenly father (13:24-30.36-43; 15:13). Both the imagery of the heart and the plant are found in scenarios of new creation in the cultural encyclopedia of Matthew's model reader (Ezek, Jer, 1 Enoch, 4 Ezra).

Finally, the righteous will, according to Matthew, be transformed into angelic glory, which may point to a recovery of the original glory of humanity. This glory indicates complete righteousness and purity and may also indicate physical perfection.

Overall it can be concluded that new creation is central to the eschatological expectation in Matthew. According to Matthew the eschatological fulfillment of the Old Testament promises to Israel is realized in Jesus. The promises may initially be seen in terms of a new exodus, the end of exile and a new covenant. Yet, the final horizon of these promises is the renewal of the entire creation through the renewal of Israel.

This perspective is present in Matthew's overall view of history, which proceeds from creation to new creation. It is evident in the opening chapters of the Gospel, which reach back to the first beginning while presenting Jesus as a new beginning. It is furthermore present in the words and works of Jesus in Matthew. Importantly it also includes the death and resurrection of Jesus as the turning of the ages in which heaven and earth pass away in order to make way for the new creation through the resurrection of Jesus. The motif of new creation provides coherence to Matthew as every aspect of Jesus' life and teaching fits into new creation as theological substructure.

Although the salvation of individuals is surely in view in Matthew and the individual judgment is highly emphasized, the Gospel also has a global vision stating that with the transformation of humanity comes the transformation of the world. Yet, it would be wrong to paint this in terms of optimistic progression, since the children of the evil one are in the world together with the children of the kingdom until the end of the age. Renewal comes through persecution, suffering and

vindication according to the traditional Jewish eschatological pattern, which is also present in the eschatological timeline outlined in Matthew 24 and pattern-setting events of Jesus' death and resurrection.

When tested against the criteria of Richard Hays, revamped for the purposes of this study, the following conclusions may be made.

1. The motif of new creation was certainly *available* to both Matthew and his model reader.
2. The *volume* of new creation in Matthew may initially be said to be relatively low based on pure lexical terms in which case only *παλιγγενεσία* in 19:28 speaks explicitly of new creation. On further consideration, however, the echo is louder than it initially appears. The survey of the Old Testament, the OTP and Qumran demonstrated that the Old Testament texts that express the hope of new creation were widely influential in the cultural encyclopedia of Matthew. Consequently only the slightest allusion to the motif of new creation may have been picked up by the model reader. What may seem faint and hidden to us as modern readers would have been clear and obvious to the model reader.
3. It has also been demonstrated that the motif of new creation is not only found in one or two places in Matthew but is a *recurring* motif located throughout the pages of the Gospel from the beginning to the end.
4. The motif of new creation is also *coherent thematically* with the individual pericopes in which it is found in Matthew. It has been shown that new creation fits well with other major themes in the Gospel. Particularly important is the connection with the theme of the kingdom in Matthew.
5. It has also been demonstrated that the proposed readings of Matthew are *historically plausible*. This has been demonstrated through the reconstruction of cultural encyclopedia with regard to new creation and demonstrations of similar use of the Old Testament in the OTP and Qumran.
6. The exegesis of individual passages has drawn on the history of interpretation referring to ancient as well as modern interpreters. It has been shown that a number of interpreters throughout history has seen the motif of new creation at various places in Matthew. Prominence has been given to early interpreters who are closer to the cultural encyclopedia of Matthew.

7. The interpretation of Matthew in light of the motif of new creation produces a high degree of *satisfaction*. The motif of new creation brings coherence to the Gospel as a whole. The whole of Jesus' life, teaching, works, death and resurrection in Matthew is fruitfully understood in light of the motif of new creation.

In the end, it is not too much to conclude that new creation is very much present in Matthew and should be seen as an important element in Matthew.

## **13.1 Implications**

In light of the above conclusion it is worth briefly considering the implications of the conclusion on the understanding of major categories in the theology of Matthew.

### **13.1.1 Christology**

First, since Matthew is a book about Jesus Christ it is necessary to begin with Christology. Matthew sets out with the claim that the coming of Jesus marks a new beginning for heaven and earth and humanity. As the chapters proceed it quickly becomes clear that Jesus is the culmination and fulfillment of all the promises of the OT (Matt 5:17; 11:13). This fulfillment includes the promises of new creation as the ultimate horizon for God's salvation in Jesus. The restoration of the kingdom is not only a restoration for Israel but a restoration for the world through the restoration of Israel through Christ.

At the end of the Gospel the end of the old and the beginning of new creation coincides with the death and resurrection of Jesus who is the new eschatological Temple and the nucleus of new creation.

In his ministry Jesus inaugurates the new creational kingdom by teaching the original will of God and establishing the new creation through healing, exorcism and nature miracles. The miracles point to an eschatological reality and presents Jesus as the one who with the authority of the creation inaugurates new creation.

As the Son of Man Jesus is the restoration of true humanity and all who follow him through persecution and suffering will share in his reward in the renewal of the world.

### **13.1.2 Eschatology and Creation**

Second, the conclusion has implications for the understanding of the relationship between eschatology and the present creation. The traditional view has generally been that Matthew expresses an expectation of the total destruction of the present creation due to the two places in which Jesus talks about the passing away of heaven and earth (5:18; 24:35). Interpreters have, however, suggested that these words should be understood as referring to the destruction of the temple, which due to its cosmic symbolism can be understood as the passing of heaven and earth. This interpretation has been confirmed in this study.

The destruction of the temple is, however, 'only' a proleptic passing away of heaven and earth and a cosmic catastrophe is still to come. Yet, the very earthly and tangible descriptions of the life in the coming world and particularly the instruction to pray for the kingdom to come on earth (6:10) suggest a renewal of the present creation rather than a new creation *ex nihilo*. This is also in accord with expectations found in the Jewish literature surveyed in the first part of the study, in which the expectation for a complete destruction of the cosmos is very rare. The use of *παλιγγενεσία* in 19:28, with its connections to the Genesis flood and the references to the flood in the eschatological discourse, suggests an expectation for a cosmic cataclysm, but one that cleanses rather than destroys.

Matthew may then be said to affirm the present creation, although the evidence is inconclusive with regard to the degree of continuity between the present creation and the new creation.

### **13.1.3 Ecclesiology**

Third, the church may be understood as the epicenter of the new creation according to Matthew. The disciples are described with terminology that indicates that they are the new people of God (5:3-10) and the new Zion/Temple (5:14; 16:18; 18:20). The restoration of Israel, Jerusalem and Zion are central in the motif of new creation as the epicenter of the renewal of the world. In Matthew the disciples are called to conduct themselves in accordance with the ethics of new creation (5:21-48), and through them more people will obey the commandments of Jesus (28:18). Although they are small now they will eventually grow to achieve worldwide dominion and transform the entire world (13:31-33).

This point is of course also highly christological since it is first and foremost Jesus who is the true people of God (2:15) and the new Temple (12:6; 21:42). The disciples are only those things through their association with him and his identification with them (5:11; 10:40).

### **13.1.4 Soteriology**

Fourth, the motif of new creation has impact in the soteriology of Matthew with regard to the question of works and salvation. Interpreters have always recognized the emphasis on works in Matthew as a requirement for salvation (7:21-23; 12:36-37; 19:16-22; 25:14-46). This has led to a discussion of the relationship between the indicative and the imperative in Matthew. The strong demands that are put forward as a requirement for salvation seem to stand in tension with Jesus' mercy towards the helpless in Matthew.<sup>803</sup>

This tension is resolved when the Gospel is read in light of the motif of new creation. Matthew uses the imagery of the tree about a person and his works. According to this imagery it is not the works that make a person good, but rather a good person who does good works. Consequently people need to be transformed in order to do good works. The imagery of the tree is coupled with the heart in Matthew and the transformation thus amounts to a transformation of the heart or the creation of a new heart. In this way the indicative comes before the imperative through the creation of a new heart that makes it possible for people to do good works.

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<sup>803</sup> Luz, *Studies in Matthew*, 123–24; Sigurd Grindheim, “Ignorance Is Bliss: Attitudinal Aspects of the Judgment According to Works in Matthew 25: 31-46,” *Novum Testamentum* 50, no. 4 (2008): 313–331.

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